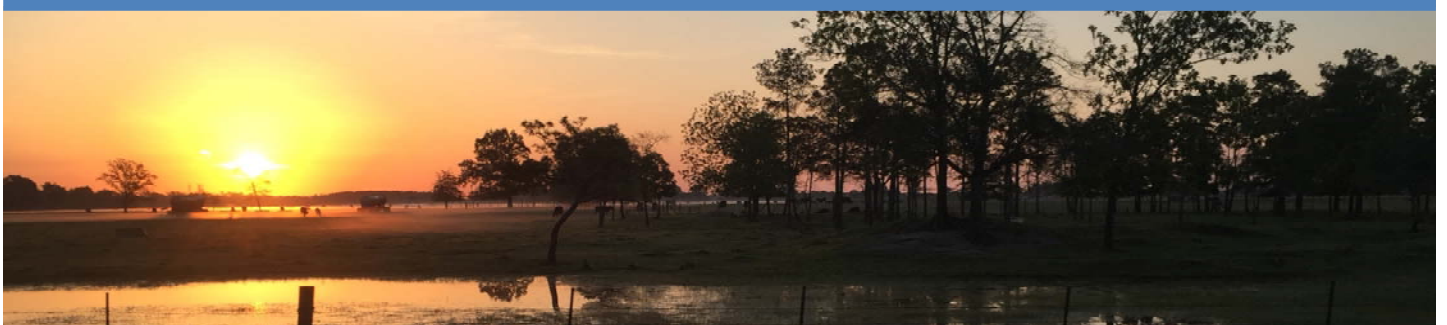


Americus and Sumter County Comprehensive Plan 2023-2027



2022-015

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
AMERICUS and SUMTER COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2023-2027

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to institute local comprehensive planning by city and county governments throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, it is a desire of the board of Commissioners to wisely use existing resources and supplement same for the long-term well-being and improved quality of life of residents, and

WHEREAS, said Act requires local governments to prepare, maintain and periodically update a state-approved, local comprehensive plan to maintain eligibility for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits, and

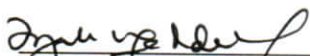
WHEREAS, the Sumter County Board of Commissioners has been notified by appropriate authority that the recent effort updating the local comprehensive plan adequately addresses the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to facilitate compliance with said Act.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved by the Sumter County Board of Commissioners that the Americus and Sumter County Comprehensive Plan 2023-2027 be adopted.

Duly considered and approved by the Board of Commissioners in session this 19th day of July, 2022.

SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY:


Mark Waddell, Chair




County Clerk

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
AMERICUS and SUMTER COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2023-2027

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to institute local comprehensive planning by city and county governments throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, it is a desire of the Mayor and City Council to wisely use existing resources and supplement same for the long-term well-being and improved quality of life of residents, and

WHEREAS, said Act requires local governments to prepare, maintain and periodically update a state-approved, local comprehensive plan to maintain eligibility for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits, and

WHEREAS, the City of Americus has been notified by appropriate authority that the most recent effort updating the local comprehensive plan adequately addresses the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to facilitate compliance with said Act.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved by the Mayor and City Council of Americus that the Americus and Sumter County Comprehensive Plan 2023-2027 be adopted.

Duly considered and approved by the Mayor and City Council in session this 28th day of July, 2022.

CITY OF AMERICUS

BY: 

Lee Kinnamon, Mayor

ATTEST: 

City Clerk



City of Americus

Hon. Lee Kinnamon

Mayor

Hon. Juanita Wilson

Hon. Nelson Brown

Hon. Nicole Smith

Hon. Charles Christmas

Hon. Kelvin Pless

Hon. Daryl Dowdell

Ms. Diadra W. Powell

City Manager

vacant

City Clerk



Sumter County

Hon. Mark Waddell

Commission Chairman

Hon. Clay Jones

Commission Vice-Chairman

Hon. Scott Roberson

Hon. Jessie Smith

Hon. Jim Reid

Rayetta Floyd

County Administrator

Latoya McCants

County Clerk



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Vision Statement

We envision Americus-Sumter County as a vibrant, culturally-diverse community with an excellent educational system, a well-balanced transportation network, an appropriate balance of industry, retail, restaurants, corporations and housing stock that provide quality development for the places we live, work, learn and play. We will utilize our land, make public investments and manage our natural and cultural resources in a manner that encourages growth that is both economically viable and environmentally responsible in order to build a robust future for all citizens.

Community Objectives

Economic Prosperity

Development and expansion of suitable businesses and industries

Resource Management

Efficient use of natural resources and protection of environmentally sensitive areas

Efficient Land Use

Maximize use of existing infrastructure and minimize costly conversion of undeveloped land

Local Preparedness

Establish prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve

Sense of Place

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities

Regional Cooperation

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs

Housing Options

Promote safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community

Transportation Options

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents

Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available

Community Health

Provide access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities

Quality of Life

Enhance daily living with access to wholesome food, clean air and water, enjoyment of nature, conservation of natural resources, security from crime, and protection from toxic substances

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Purpose

The comprehensive planning process, at its inception and culmination, is a vision for the future. The aim of the process is to develop a strong community. To achieve that objective, a meaningful comprehensive planning process must solicit and integrate the input of community citizens, government officials, and staff. The result will be a well-balanced comprehensive plan addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow, and outlining the steps necessary to bring about positive change over the next fifteen (15) years. The intent of the Americus and Sumter County Comprehensive Plan Update process is to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue and communication as possible, seeking to build consensus among Americus and Sumter County residents that will result in better government decisions and greater community agreement with those decisions.

Comprehensive Planning Process

The State of Georgia updated the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective January 1, 2013 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-1) and were revised slightly effective March 1, 2014. The first iteration of this plan was prepared in compliance with the 2014 regulations. The Standards and Procedures were revised again, effective October 1, 2018, primarily with the addition of a new element. This update covers the planning period 2023-2027 and was prepared in compliance with the 2018 standards addressing the following elements:

- Needs and Opportunities Element
- Community Work Program Element
- Broadband Services Element (new element)
- Economic Development Element
- Land Use Element

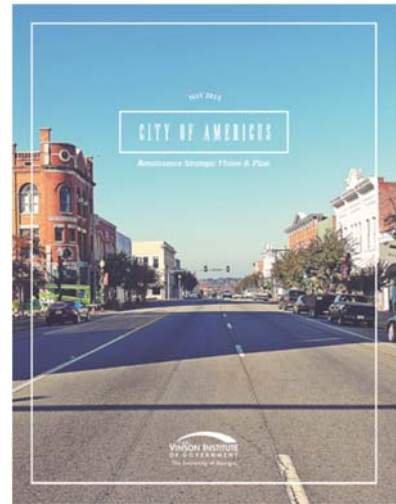
The Comprehensive Plan should generate local pride and enthusiasm, engage interest in its implementation and serve as a handbook to guide daily decision making by local government officials and community leaders.

Past Planning Efforts

Residents of Americus and Sumter County have gone through several planning processes in the past ten to fifteen years. Some of these plans focused on specific areas within the community while others were community in scope. Needs and opportunities identified during these processes centered on the themes of land use, economic development, design/visual character, housing, transportation and healthy living. (List of past efforts on page 109).

Participation Techniques

The Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning require at least two public hearings be held in development of the plan update. The initial public hearing was held January 11, 2022, to inform the public the planning process was beginning, to review the plan's timeline and solicit public participation in the process. The second public hearing was held April 25, 2022, at which time a draft of the five-year update was presented for final public comment and input prior to being submitted for mandatory regional and state reviews. Both hearings were held remotely. In response to the governor's COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, neither the city nor county were convening in-person public meetings during the time of either of these hearings.¹



Between these two hearings local government staff were contacted for information pertaining to the status of projects and activities in the current work program and needs and issues to be considered for inclusion in the update. Meetings were held with elected officials for progress reports and their input pertaining to past and present needs and issues. Three public input sessions were advertised for virtual participation reviewing the needs and issues, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the community, all remote. Public notification of these sessions included web-posted links with direct links to documentation for review prior to the sessions. Stakeholders were contacted via e-mail directly soliciting their participation. (List on page 119).

Initial plans for this update included release of a SWOT survey and analysis for additional direct public input. As a result of the preceding November election a new mayor assumed office in January having already formulated plans of his own for a similar SWOT input. After a review of the two agenda, it was determined simultaneous implementation of processes so similar would likely degrade the value of both efforts. With benefit of the three planned public input sessions targeted toward the same audience and topics but just in a different format, the SWOT survey intended to be part of this planning effort was abandoned in favor of the new mayor's initiative, the results of which would not be completed in time for inclusion herein. It is recognized; however, that this update may need to be amended to incorporate some findings and recommendations of the mayor's SWOT survey. (Documentation of public hearings and input on page 121)

¹ The Sumter County Board of Commissioners hosted the first public hearing with staff present; hence, the sign-in sheet in the Appendix. The public attended virtually and interacted with commissioners during the meeting but their attendance was not documented.

DATA, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Population

The first census (1840) of Sumter County credited the community with 5,759 residents. After a small loss recorded in 1860 the community experienced robust growth for the next half century, averaging almost 4,000 each decade. Two negative developments early in the 1900s reversed the favorable population trend.

The cotton boll weevil arrived around 1915 and immediately began to diminish the yield of the local economy’s major agriculture commodity. The negative impacts were first measured at the end of the decade as population growth 1910-1920 barely exceeded 500. With cotton yields decreasing, cotton prices falling from foreign competition, development of man-made fabrics such as rayon, farmers’ reliance on destructive agricultural practices and successive drought years mid-decade, the population decreased by almost 3,000 between 1920 and 1930.

The Great Depression, which compounded the misery caused by the boll weevil and was itself enough to force mass out-migration, hastened the loss of an additional 2,300 residents 1930-1940. Many of these residents who had been living on small family farms scattered across the countryside found some measure of relief, however small, by migrating to towns and cities nearby, Americus being the largest in the county. Many others, however, resettled in the more economically diversified and stable urban areas elsewhere in Georgia or out-of-state.

Not until U. S. entry into World War II did the nation’s economy start improving, but the recovery was slower developing in rural areas as the 1950 Census credited the county with loss of another 300 residents. An insignificant increase (+450) between 1950 and 1960 marked the beginning of another half century of uninterrupted growth (+37%). One-quarter of this growth occurred during the 60s and again in the 70s, and the largest share, one-third, occurred during the 90s.

Figure 1: Population

Jurisdiction	1930 ¹	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Sumter	26,800	24,502	24,208	24,652	26,931	29,360	30,232	33,200	32,819	29,616
Americus	8,760	9,281	11,389	13,472	16,091	16,120	16,516	17,013	17,041	16,230
Unincorporated	16,207	13,708	11,266	9,479	9,000	11,604	12,020	14,550	14,143	12,108

¹ The earliest date for which US Census populations could be located for all local jurisdictions
 Source: US Decennial Census, Table P1, "2020: DEC Redistricting Data, (PL 94-171)".

But for the single exception of the 1920s when Americus’ population decreased by 250, the county seat increased in population across the century. The city’s period of greatest growth was the 1960s

(+2,600/19%), 88% of which was the result of annexation. In absence of the corporate boundary extension Americus' increase would have been limited to 2% (317). The following decade was a period of significant growth for the Sumter community (9%), but it was most heavily concentrated on the periphery of Americus' expanded corporate limits.

At the time of each decennial census during this period (1930-2020) Americus' proportion ranged from a low of 33% in 1930, peaking at 60% in 1970. Since then, Americus has been relatively stable in the low to mid 50s; 55% in 2020. The unincorporated area ranged between its low of 33% (1970) and peak at 60% (1930). The unincorporated area stabilized in the low to mid 40s after the 1970 low. The 1950 Census was the first to document most of total county population was concentrated in the municipalities.

The 2010 Census documented Sumter County's first decennial decrease (-400) since 1950. 2020 documented another but significantly greater decrease (-3,200) with every local jurisdiction and the unincorporated area contributing to the decrease. Among the ring of eight counties abutting Sumter seven recorded a population decrease 2010-2020. Lee County was the only which increased, a bedroom community in the Albany Metropolitan Statistical Area. In the second ring of thirteen counties around Sumter ten recorded decreases; two of the three increases were 1% or less. Of the forty-five counties comprising the state's southwest quadrant twenty-eight recorded population decreases in the most recent decennial census. Among the seventeen counties which recorded an increase five were 1% or less.

The state's official twenty-five-year (2020-2045) population projections for Sumter County are presented in the following table.² The state does not generate official projections for municipalities. For present purposes municipal projections have been derived by proportion; (1) totaling the decennial populations from 1990-2020 for Sumter County and Americus separately, (2) the single number this generated for Americus was divided by the single total for the county, yielding the city's average proportion of total county population across the four census periods, and (3) the city's municipal percentage was then applied to the state's official countywide projections across the twenty-five year projection period. The projected unincorporated area population is the official county projections minus Americus, Andersonville, DeSoto, Leslie and Plains.

The result of applying this static methodology is that it locks the cities' projections into the same trend as the county totals and in constant proportions. Except for Americus, this is very descriptive of the past eight decades. The greatest historical variation in municipal proportion was Americus which varied between 33% (1930) to a peak of 60% (1970), averaging 50% across the period. The proportions for Andersonville, DeSoto and Plains were a constant 1%, 1% and 2%, respectively. Leslie's proportion decreased from 2% to 1% in 1990 and maintained the lower share through 2020. The unincorporated area, of course, accounted for the balance; ranging between 33% and 60% with a decennial average of 44%.

Official state projections for Sumter County are negative to mid-century, as they are for most area and most southwest Georgia counties. Among the ring of eight counties abutting Sumter, six are projected to lose population over the next twenty-five years, and even to 2050. In the second ring

² The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget is the supplier of official demographic and statistical data for the state.

of thirteen counties nine are projected to decrease in population during the same time frames. Of the five counties among these two groups projected to experience growth, the numerical increase is significant in only two; Lee and Houston. The former is a bedroom community in the Albany Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and the latter is itself classified as a MSA. Of the forty-five counties which constitute the state's southwest quadrant, only sixteen are projected to increase in population 2020-2045. But for Dougherty County at 95,000 residents, Sumter is the largest of these counties projected to decrease in population.

Figure 2: Population Projections						
Jurisdiction	2020¹	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Sumter County	29,616	28,147	27,033	25,855	24,789	23,838
Americus	16,230	15,424	14,814	14,168	13,584	13,053
Unincorporated	12,108	11,511	11,051	10,574	10,139	9,751

¹2020 figures are from the 2020 Census.

County projections provided by Governor's Office for Planning and Budget, Series 2020; all city and unincorporated area calculations reflect their respective average shares of the total county population from 2000, 2010 and 2020.

The school age population (0-19 yrs.) in 2020 was at its lowest level in fifty years, with most of this decrease occurring since 2000. With the 2020 Census younger workers (20-39 yrs.), historically the time of new family formation, recorded the second consecutive decennial decrease, along with the larger population, despite retaining the same proportional share. After four decades of uninterrupted growth the 2020 Census documented fewer older workers (40-64 yrs.), despite retaining proportional share. Only the oldest of the four age cohorts was credited with a population increase in the most recent census, contributing to an increased share of the total population and an increase in the community's median age, outpacing Americus and the state.

Figure 3: Age Distribution 2010-2020						
Age Group	Sumter		Americus		Georgia	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
0-19	30%	27%	32%	30%	29%	27%
20-39	27%	27%	31%	30%	28%	27%
40-64	30%	30%	26%	21%	32%	32%
65+	13%	17%	11%	19%	10%	14%
Median	33.8	35.7	29.2	29.7	35.0	36.9

Sources: 2010 Census, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2006-2010, Table S0101; 2020 U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2016-2020, Table S0101

Community Facilities

Community facilities include buildings, sites and services that support efficient growth and development patterns which protect and enhance quality of life. Often new visitors judge a community by the appearance or availability of facilities. An efficient system is both economical for existing residents and an incentive to attract new residents. If the public amenities are well-

maintained and attractive, potential residents are more likely to be encouraged to become part of the community and participate in its well-being. The following lists identify local facilities.

Community Owned Buildings

The City of Americus owns the following buildings, facilities and sites:

- Municipal Building
- Rees Park Economic Development Center
- Lee Street Public Safety Building
- 3 Fire Stations
- Eastview Cemetery
- Rylander Theater
- Art Studio
- Oak Grove Cemetery
- Americus Public Works
- Furlow School
- Rees Park
- Joyce Meyer Park
- McCoy-Hill Park
- Muckalee Park
- Lenny's Famers Market
- Shady Acres Park
- McGlamery Park
- SAM Shortline Depot
- Brookdale Park
- Founders Park
- Rylander Park

These facilities are in good to excellent condition except for the public works building on Railroad Street (poor) and former Furlow School on West College Street (dilapidated).

Sumter County owns the following buildings, facilities and sites:

- Probation Services Building
- District Attorney Office
- Warden Residence
- Repair Garage
- Warden Office
- Prison with Office and Dormitory
- Old Parks and Recreation Office
- 21 Fire Stations
- Sumter County Stockyards
- 3 Contiguous Livestock Pavilions
- Sheriff's Office and Jail
- Former Humane Society Building
- Concession Building/Fieldhouse
- Commissioner's Office
- Courthouse Annex
- Heavy Equipment Repair Shop
- Agriculture Center
- Courthouse Former Humane Society
- Humane Society Building
- Records Storage and Office Building
- Americus-Sumter Exposition Center,
- Barn and Fairgrounds
- District Attorney's Office
- Warden's Garage
- Workshop
- 3 Voting Precincts
- Firing Range House
- Turning Targets Assembly
- Pump House A and B
- Football Fieldhouse
- Vehicle Storage Hangar
- Tire Storage
- Bell Street Park and Play Unit
- Hwy 19S Play Unit and Pavilion
- Deriso Horse Park
- Boone Park
- Plains Pool
- Rock Hill Park
- Barlow Street Park
- R.L. Freeman Park
- Russell Street Park
- Emergency Operations Center

Most of these facilities are in fair to good condition; recreational facilities in excellent condition.

Utilities

Water

Groundwater aquifers are the source of local water for municipal, commercial, industrial and agricultural use. Americus has a water supply and distribution system servicing virtually all city residents while water needs throughout most of the unincorporated area are met with privately-owned wells drilled into one of three groundwater aquifers. Per county-to-county agreements, residential concentrations near the north and east county boundaries are served by the water systems owned and operated by neighboring Crisp County and Schley County, respectively. Water service capacities are sufficient for the foreseeable future.

Figure 4: Water Usage & Storage							
City/County	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply
Americus	7,000,000	3,000,000	1,360,000	1,640,000	Ground	1,500 gpm	16,255

Source: RVRC Local Government Survey 2012/2017, Georgia Drinking Water Watch and Georgia Water and Wastewater Rates Dashboard 2016

A large proportion of the city's ±100 miles of water mains and water service lines are antiquated, undersized and deteriorating cast iron, galvanized or (hazardous) asbestos lined pipes, all of which were state-of-the-art materials for water systems at the time of construction. Iron and manganese oxidizing bacteria line the interior walls of galvanized pipe. As these bacteria grow, they effectively constrict the interior diameter of service lines degrading water service by impeding water flow. The bacteria degrade water quality with turbidity, staining plumbing fixtures, laundry, cooking utensils and infusing food and drink with objectionable taste and color. Of greater significance is dilution of fluoride and chlorine treatments by the bacteria and the increased risk of disease-causing pathogenic organisms that may result.

Sanitary Sewer

Unincorporated Sumter County is served by privately-owned septic systems, not public sewer. Although septic systems can cause groundwater pollution problems, they are generally not an issue in the county due to the lack of population density where the systems are utilized. Because the county overlies an area of significant groundwater recharge, owners of these on-site treatment systems have a higher level of regulatory compliance than is the case in some other parts of the state. Public collection and treatment facilities to serve unincorporated areas are usually cost prohibitive because system capital costs are so disproportionately higher than the sparse customer base. Residential density on the west shore of Lake Blackshear should be such that cost feasibility should not be an issue, however. Water quality of the lake should be monitored to ensure non-point source contamination, including septic system drain fields, does not become critical.

Americus owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection and treatment system servicing virtually all residents. In a small number of pockets of development public wastewater collection and treatment is not economically feasible or sustainable. Hence, the presence of some on-site sewage management systems in the city. The provision of sanitary sewer service in Americus is adequate to meet the projected growth. The community has adequate treatment capacity for the foreseeable future.

Figure 5: Sewage Treatment Capacity		
City/County	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Average Daily Load (gal/day)
Americus	4,400,000	2,682,000

Source: RVRC Local Government Survey 2017

However, the city’s sanitary sewer system needs extensive rehabilitation. Common issues are offset joints in gravity-flow collection lines, longitudinal cracks, broken service connections, root intrusion, and extensive lengths of terra cotta mains. State-of-the-art at the time of construction, these clay sewer mains have become seriously degraded from inflow and infiltration. Manholes throughout the city have surcharged due to inflow and infiltration resulting in public health hazards and other unsafe conditions. The portion of the city’s current \$12M sanitary sewer and stormwater sewer bond allocated to sanitary sewer will mitigate system deficiencies but will not be sufficient to resolve system issues.

Streets:

Americus has almost 90 miles of local streets, virtually all paved. There is an additional ±12 miles (unidirectional) of paved state and U.S. roadway. The asphalt surface of local streets is in various stages of increased deterioration requiring attention and rehabilitation to avoid pavement failure. Specific problems include rutting, longitudinal cracking, traverse cracking, shoving, alligator cracking and potholes. These deficiencies can be resolved with engineered techniques including resurfacing, patching, seal coating, micro surfacing, crack sealing and others.

Stormwater Drainage

With a ±90-mile network of local streets the city has essentially a ±180-mile stormwater drainage “system” comprised of improved and unimproved components. Approximately twelve additional miles (unidirectional) of state and U.S. routes are part of the system. Unimproved components are minimally graded rights-of-way allowing uncontrolled stormwater to flow onto surrounding properties having zero to little slope. The improved component consists of rudimentary and engineered elements. Rudimentary elements consist of swales and open ditches on street rights-of-way directing stormwater flows directly or indirectly to nearby streams or creeks. Engineered and constructed elements are more typically considered to be “infrastructure” and consist of curbing and curbs and gutters directing stormwater flows to catch basins for diversion through culverts and storm sewers for treatment in the municipal wastewater treatment plant. The city created a stormwater utility in 2012 through which user fees were assessed to partially mitigate

current and anticipated stormwater issues. An engineering assessment of the system at that time estimated getting the infrastructure “up to date” would cost approximately \$4.5M. Local resources alone will not be sufficient to resolve the city’s stormwater issues.

Stormwater management issues are numerous and extensive. New construction must incorporate stormwater flows into design plans within the context of past drainage miscalculations/oversights and address both simultaneously. The community’s current building footprint and drainage infrastructure are contributing to more and larger flood events affecting increasing numbers of public and private properties. The stormwater utility user fee and that portion of the current \$12M sanitary sewer and stormwater sewer bond issue allocated to stormwater issues will only partially mitigate the widespread problems. While numerous drainage projects are complete or underway, a short list of remaining deficiencies include:

1. non-functioning storm drainage collection boxes,
2. failing and crushed pipe,
3. debris in earthen ditches and subsurface drainage pipes impeding storm flow,
4. no drainage ditches in some areas,
5. improper grading and drainage designs,
6. curbs and gutters lacking catch basins or subsurface piping to the appropriate outfall, and
7. inadequate curbs and gutters and storm drainage collection boxes in certain areas.

Natural Gas

The City of Americus owns and operates a natural gas distribution system, providing services for residential, commercial and industrial customers in the city. This utility is comprised of a 20-pound pressure system for residential customers and small businesses and a 150-pound pressure system for large commercial and industrial customers. There are over 103 miles of service mains in the system, with 2,672 MCF per day dedicated for customers.

Planning and Zoning

Planning and zoning are tools local governments use to guide and shape future growth in an effort to promote development and retain natural characteristics in the highest and best use. Conventional zoning divides a community into districts of similar land uses to minimize conflicts and sets standards for permissible uses of land within. This provides the multiple benefits of:

- conserving and protecting natural, economic and scenic resources,
- securing safety from fire, panic and other dangers and promote health, aesthetics, morals, convenience, order, prosperity and general welfare,
- providing adequate light and air and preventing the overcrowding of land,
- promoting desirable living conditions and stability in neighborhoods,
- facilitating the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

The City of Americus and Sumter County have zoning ordinances and have trained staff to oversee the administration of this tool.

Law Enforcement

The Americus Police Department is a state certified and nationally accredited law enforcement agency with 44 sworn officers and 7 civilian employees. The Sumter County Sheriff's Office investigates complaints and criminal activities, provides emergency response, facilitates dispute resolution, makes arrests, provides security of the courthouse and for employees there, operates the county jail and execution of warrants. The Office provides backup and assistance to police departments in the county.

Emergency Medical Service

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) is a critical element in the tripod that is emergency response. The county service is provided from an Americus base under contract with a private sector service provider.

Needs

- Create maintenance schedule for infrastructure
- Keep information on county and city websites current
- Raise salaries of first responders to reduce employee turnover

Opportunities

- Revitalize the fairgrounds
- Develop new recreational facilities (i.e., skateboard park, ball fields, mountain bike trail)
- Create a pedestrian space/park in downtown Americus
- Evaluate expanding utility services into the county to spur development

Transportation

As is the case in all surrounding communities, privately-owned vehicle is the predominant mode of transportation and will be for the foreseeable future. Americus is addressing the need for public transportation with the additional benefit of reduced traffic volume by providing public transit in and beyond the county. Rail freight and aviation services are also available. Both jurisdictions are working to promote other forms of transportation; pedestrian and cycling.

Figure 6: Sumter County Road Data

Road by Function	Linear Miles
County Road (unpaved)	539 miles (171)
City Street (Americus) (Andersonville, DeSoto, Leslie and Plains)	107 miles (87) (20)
U.S./State Highway	169 miles
Total Mileage	815 miles

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation-Office of Transportation Data. 2020 441 Report, 449 Report

The city offers a fare-box, handicapped accessible, general transit service for both local and out-of-county trips. These can be arranged by call-demand or appointment, but all on a first come basis. Medicaid eligible clients can schedule transit for medical appointments.

There are three railroad services operating locally on two sets of tracks. Norfolk Southern Railroad

(NS) is one of the nation’s few remaining Class I³ railroads (7 freight, 1 passenger). NS has twenty-nine miles of track in the county. Genesee and Wyoming is a railroad holding company with two local rail services in its portfolio. Georgia Southwestern Railroad (GSR) and the Heart of Georgia Railroad (HOG) are both Class III short line rail freight carriers. They operate on a thirty-six-mile segment of track owned by the State of Georgia, Department of Transportation. HOG also operates the SAM Shortline excursion train between Plains and Cordele.

Figure 7: Freight Railroad Systems Operating in Sumter County			
Freight Railroads	Classification	Mileage in Sumter	Operator
Norfolk Southern (NSR)	Class I	29 miles	NSR
Genesee and Wyoming*	Class III Short Line	36 miles	Georgia Southwestern RR Heart of Georgia

* The SAM Shortline Excursion Train operates under terms of an agreement with the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad, which in turn operates under terms of an agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation, owner of the trackage.

Source: Georgia State Rail Plan 2020

The Jimmy Carter Regional Airport is one of ninety-five general aviation airports in the state, and among the thirty-five with the higher, Class III ranking, indicating a higher level of service than the other sixty and having regional business impact. The airport is owned and operated by the Americus-Sumter County Airport Authority and located on the periphery of the Americus city limits.

³ Annual revenues in excess of \$500M

In April, 2016, the Americus City Council passed a “Complete Streets” policy, a national initiative to facilitate the multimodal capacity of existing and future transportation corridors. It is now city policy that transportation needs of all motorists, bicyclists, riders of public transit, pedestrians and handicapped of all ages be addressed as integral elements of all future street and street improvements on local and state routes within the city.

In 2019 the city secured the services of a specialized consultant to help identify and design strategic bicycle/pedestrian projects to foster and further advance these “Complete Street” and related goals. In addition to multi-use trails an in-town network of potential cycling corridors was mapped. The recommendations that resulted from this cooperative effort were adopted by Americus City Council in April, 2020.

(County transportation map on page 100)



Figure 8: Americus Bicycle Corridors

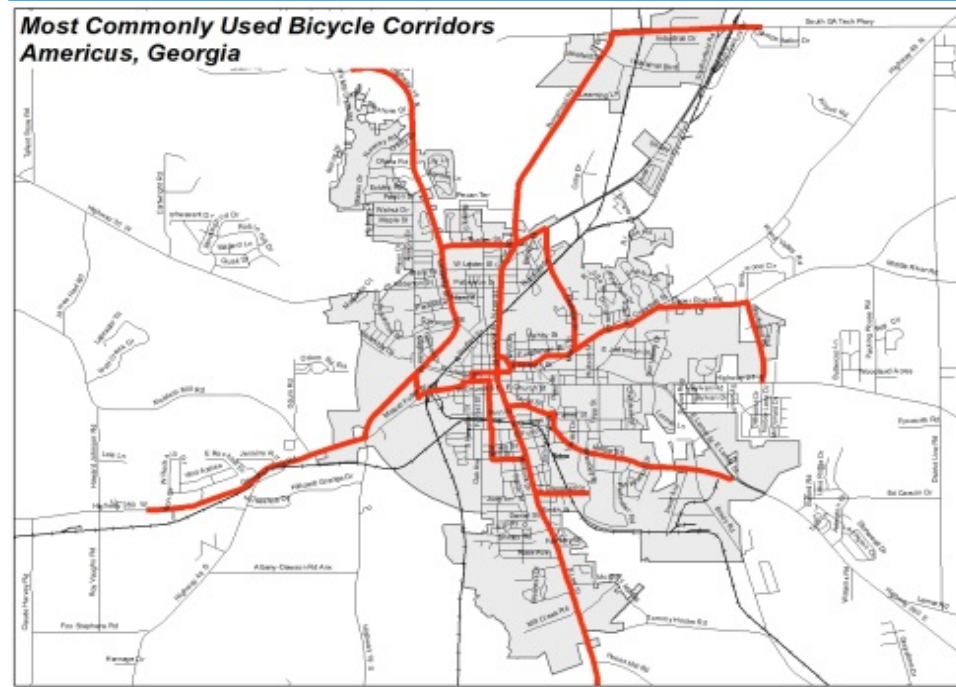
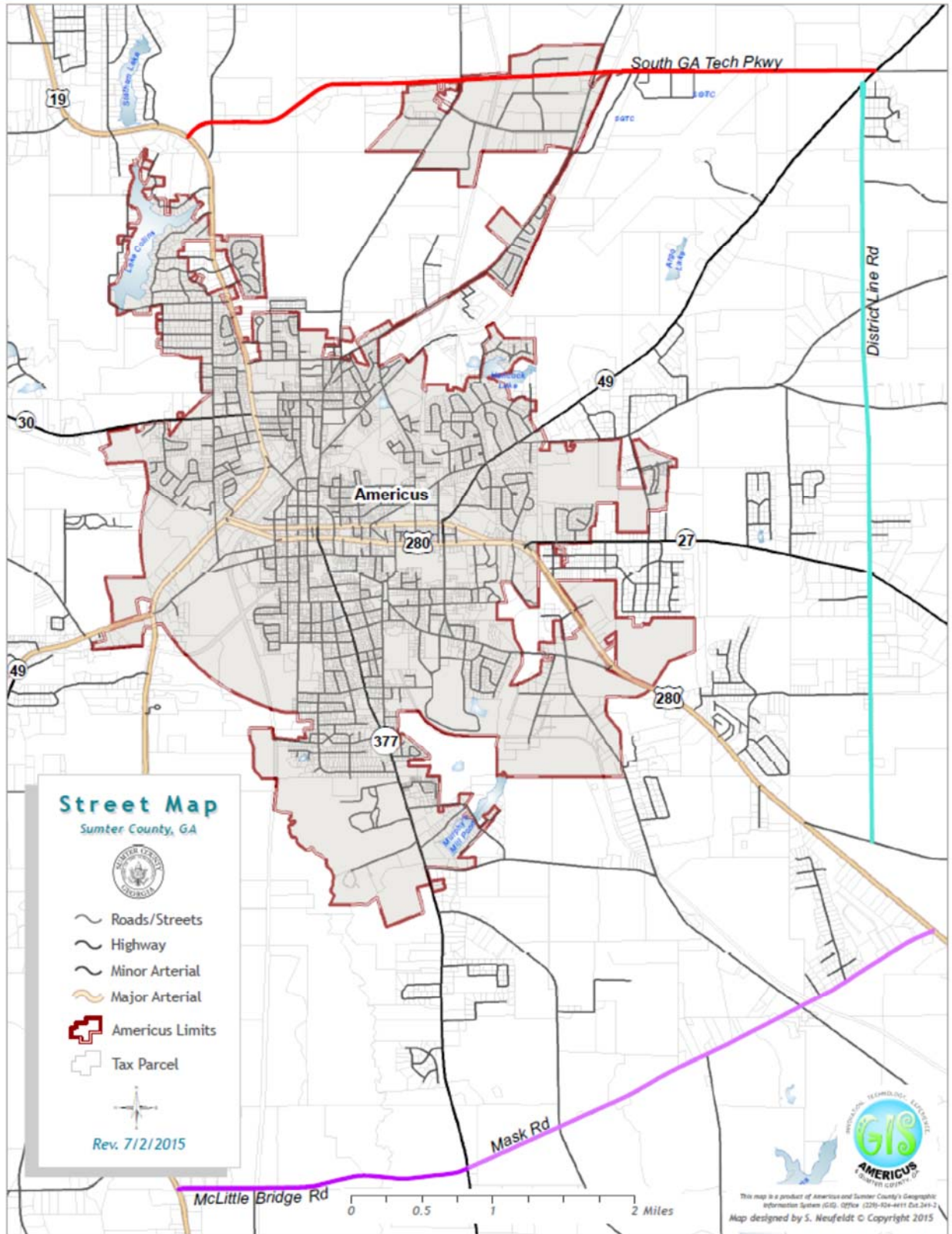


Figure 9: Proposed Truck Route



Needs

- Improve pedestrian/bicycle connectivity
- Repair/replace sidewalks and construct new sidewalks throughout Americus
- Enhance major gateways
- Increase sidewalks on secondary downtown streets
- Improve public transportation offerings
- Complete truck route bypass of downtown
- Maintain roadways
- Facilitate higher capacity rail freight availability
- Determine transportation needs among Sumter business and industry

Opportunities

- Add bicycle lanes and shared-lane markings
- Develop multi-use trails
- Increase the number of designates rural bicycle routes and mileage
- Improve signage design and placement
- Streetscape improvements to pre-approved standards and specifications
- Improve GA 377 (Lee Street) from GA 49 to US 19 for bicycle usage
- Offer transportation for students
- Expand transportation services at the regional airport
- Improve connectivity to everyday destinations such as hospital, school, grocery stores, library, etc.

Housing

The economic boon of the 1960s and early '70s stimulated a demand for housing. Occupied housing increased by 1,850 (+24%) units between 1970 and 1980, 91% of the increase was owner-occupied. This surge in new housing increased the community's owner occupancy rate from 57% (1970) to 64% (1980), a rate which was maintained as of the 2000 Census. The census recorded a one-point decrease in 2010 and a five-point decrease in 2020. Continued decreases, especially in the city, is a potential reason for concern.

In general, communities with a "high" proportion of rental properties have higher occupancy turnover rate resulting in less neighborhood stability and identity. With less investment in their residence and in the community, renters tended to have less community involvement and participation. With less community pride property maintenance often becomes problematic, and re-investment even more so, often leading and contributing to blight and deterioration. What landlords in significant numbers neglect over time becomes a local government issue because of the scale, difficult for jurisdictions with limited resources to redress. While this is not as much an issue in communities with a structurally transit population, i.e., college towns and high population counts among the "Millennial Generation" with a reputation of entering the housing market later in life, it can be an indicator of the income level of many communities.

Figure 10: Housing Tenure and Type 2020			
Tenure	Sumter County	Americus	Georgia
Total Units	13,877	7,304	-
Occupied	82%	85%	88%
Owner	58%	41%	64%
Renter	42%	59%	36%
Vacant	18%	15%	12%
Mobile Home	15%	2%	9%

Source: U. S. Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2016-2020, Table DP04

Statistics in the following table suggest that most recent construction and placement of new housing has been occurring across the state at three times the local rate. Seven percent of the state's housing stock has reportedly been constructed since 2010 compared to 2% locally. Approximately half of the community's housing stock has been constructed or placed since 1979; statewide, since 1990. A significantly larger share of local housing pre-dates 1970, much of which has architectural and/or historic significance.

Approaching half (44%) of local homeowner occupied housing is in the lowest value category (<\$100K); an indicator of housing conditions as 42% of these houses are valued below \$50,000. The median value of owner-occupied housing in 2020 was reported to be 64% of the state median, and local median gross rent 68% of the state median.

Renter households paying over 30% of income for housing are considered cost burdened. The 2020 Census reported that essentially half of local renters and half of them across the state are paying at least 30% of household income on gross rent.

Figure 11: Housing - Year Built and Value 2020			
Year Built	Sumter County	Americus	Georgia
Total Housing	13,877	7,304	-
≥2010	2%	2%	7%
1990-2009	29%	22%	42%
1970-1989	34%	34%	30%
<1970	34%	42%	21%
Value			
Owner-occupied	6,588	2,543	-
< \$100K	44%	55%	21%
\$100K-\$199,999	34%	33%	32%
>200K	22%	12%	47%
Median	\$122,000	\$93,400	\$190,200

Figure 11: Housing-cont.			
Gross Rent			
Renter-occupied	4,563	3,610	-
< \$500	21%	25	8
\$500-\$999	66%	65	38
>\$1,000	13%	10	54
Median	\$713	\$715	\$1,042
Households Paying ≥30% of income on Gross Rent	49%	49%	49%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2016-2020, Table DP04



Example Historic Single-Family Residence
in America



Example Historic Single-Family Residence
in America

Needs

- Increase housing options with the additional goal of creating a sustainable balance of owner and renter housing
- Increase the number and length of sidewalks to facilitate connectivity
- Increase neighborhood density
- Enforce building codes and land use ordinances to sustain adequate housing.
- Continue rehabilitation of historically/architecturally significant housing
- Identify incentives for preservation of historic properties

Opportunities

- Develop/redevelop Lake Blackshear for multi-family and/or increase recreation/leisure use
- Increase “Complete Street” options for residential neighborhoods
- Establish mixed-use/mixed-income neighborhood developments
- Increase downtown housing options (i.e., lofts) and student apartments downtown

Economic Development

In light of negative population projections, -20% city/county over the next quarter century, and negative projections for most area counties and throughout southwest Georgia, the absence of significant actions to mitigate, much less reverse, these projections will likely serve to usher them in. Well before the negative results of the 2020 Census the community undertook such actions.

In 2015, the chamber of commerce and development authority created a tax-exempt economic development foundation to provide the community additional institutional and structural flexibility and financial resources to stimulate economic development. After a successful campaign that exceeded the \$5M fund-raising goal, with the addition of economic development staff and public input a business action plan was developed and implemented with a focus of resolving local issues related to economic development, workforce development, communications and marketing, transportation and community re-branding. Such aggressive actions will be necessary to overcome negative momentum even to retain current resources, much less experience growth in an area of the state projected to account for a declining share of the state's population.

In large part the result of this enhanced economic development initiative, in late 2021/early 2022 the community received announcements of local investment by an indoor, organic, vertical farming enterprise, purportedly the largest solar panel manufacturer in the nation and a food processor/packager. These commitments total tens of millions of dollars with the promise of jobs in the hundreds. The community also successfully competed for a multi-million-dollar award of federal COVID-related recovery funds for expanded broadband internet service in much of Sumter County. And, as this plan was being finalized voters in Sumter and fifteen surrounding counties extended, for another ten years, a 1% regional Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. With receipts from this levy and a sizeable match from the state, the final and longest segment of U.S. Highway 280 between Americus and I-75 will be expanded from two to four lanes. The two additional lanes will facilitate transportation and development between the two largest employment centers in the area. While any of these five developments individually would be a significant boost to the economy, collectively they provide great momentum that can be compounded with additional efforts resulting in a future population much more attractive than the current projections.

Industrial employment is a measure of the number of jobs in the community at a given time (reference following table). These jobs may be performed in the jurisdiction, such as a farmer or furniture-maker, or it may be based in a local office from which a salesperson travels the state. The 2000 Census was the first to document Educational Services/Health Care/Social Assistance to be the community's largest employment sector. Replacing Manufacturing at that time with 25% of local jobs, for the past two decades these two sectors collectively have accounted for a disproportionately large share of jobs in the community; ±43%. 2000-2020 only one other sector was in double digits, Retail Trade at 10%-11%.

Figure 12: Employment Distribution by Industry
Industry Rank in Median Earnings ^{1,2} *

Industrial Category	Sumter County			Americus		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Construction	6%	6%	4%	5%	4%	2%
Manufacturing	20%	13%	18%	18%	10%	21%
Wholesale Trade	3%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3% ²
Retail Trade	11%	11%	10%	12%	9%	8%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	4%	2% ¹	5% ¹	3%	2% ¹	6% ¹
Information	1%	2%	5%	1%	2%	4%
Finance/Insurance Real Estate, Rental/Leasing	3%	3% ²	3% ²	2%	4% ²	<1%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Management Svcs.	5%	5%	8%	4%	5%	9%
Educational Svcs, Health Care, Social Assistance	<u>25%</u>	<u>28%</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>29%</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>25%</u>
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Svcs.	8%	8%	7%	7%	9%	9%
Other Svcs, except Public Admin.	7%	7%	4%	7%	9%	4%
Public Administration	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Civilian Employment	14,174	13,455	12,490	6,683	6,841	6,712
Median Earnings	\$24,131	\$24,397	\$31,296	\$23,612	\$23,904	\$29,029

Largest employment sector; second largest employment sector

^{1,2} largest and second largest earnings sectors for the period-could not be located for 2000

* 2000 earnings data could not be located

Sources: 2000 Decennial Census, TableDP3,

2010 U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2006-2010, Tables S2403 and S2413

2020 U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020, Tables S2403 and S2413.

These larger sectors are no competition in the ranking for highest earnings, however. Much smaller employment sectors, accounting for 2%-6% of jobs in the community, are credited with the highest earnings. Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities has most consistently had the highest median earnings (2020-Sumter \$58,000, Americus \$64,000), followed by Finance/Insurance, Real Estate, Rental/Leasing (2020-Sumter at \$50,000) and Wholesale Trade (2020-Americus at \$43,000). Educational Services/Health Care/Social Assistance and Manufacturing median earnings were \$16,000-\$19,000 below the second ranked median earning (2020).

Unlike industrial employment, occupation is descriptive of the worker and the type of work performed at a given time, irrespective of where work may be performed. The community exhibited strong consistency of employment within and between occupational sectors 2000-2010-2020. Management, Business, Science and Arts, the largest of the five sectors, consistently accounted for approximately one-third of working residents, with Sales and Office workers contributing almost one-quarter. While the third ranked sectors for the county and county seat record virtually identical employment levels across the three periods, they are in different sectors; Production, Transportation... and Service, respectively.

Figure 13: Employment Distribution by Occupation
Rank in Median Earnings ^{1, 2 *}

Industrial Category	Sumter County			Americus		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
Management, Business, Science and Arts	<u>30%</u>	<u>29%</u> ¹	<u>33%</u> ²	<u>33%</u>	<u>33%</u> ¹	<u>32%</u> ²
Service	16%	20%	15%	21%	21%	18%
Sales and Office	22%	20%	21%	22%	22%	25%
Natural Resources, Construction and Maintenance	12%	11% ²	12% ¹	9%	9% ²	7% ¹
Production, Transportation, Material Moving	20%	20%	19%	16%	16%	18%
Civilian Employment	14,174	13,455	12,490	6,683	6,841	6,712
Median Earnings	\$24,131	\$24,397	\$31,296	\$23,612	\$23,904	\$29,029

Largest employment sector; second largest employment sector

^{1, 2} largest and second largest earnings sectors for the period

* Earnings data for 2000 was not found.

Source: 2000 U.S. Decennial Census, DP3,

2010 U.S. Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2006-2010, Tables S2401 and S2411

2020 U.S. Census American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2016-2020, Tables S2401 and S2411

The occupation sectors ranked first and second in median earnings consistently rotated between the largest, Management, Business... and smallest, Natural Resources.... employment sectors.

The community's median household income (MHI) not only lagged the state level over the past twenty years but decreased consistently relative to MHI statewide. Across these three time periods Sumter MHI averaged two-thirds of the state level. At the time of the 2000 Census Sumter was equivalent to 73% of the state MHI, 66% in 2010, 61% in 2020. In 2020, this amounted to a difference of \$24,000 per household at the county level.

Figure 14: Median Household Income			
Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020
Sumter County	\$30,904	\$32,430	\$37,174
Americus	\$26,808	\$29,549	\$33,405
Georgia	\$42,433	\$49,347	\$61,224

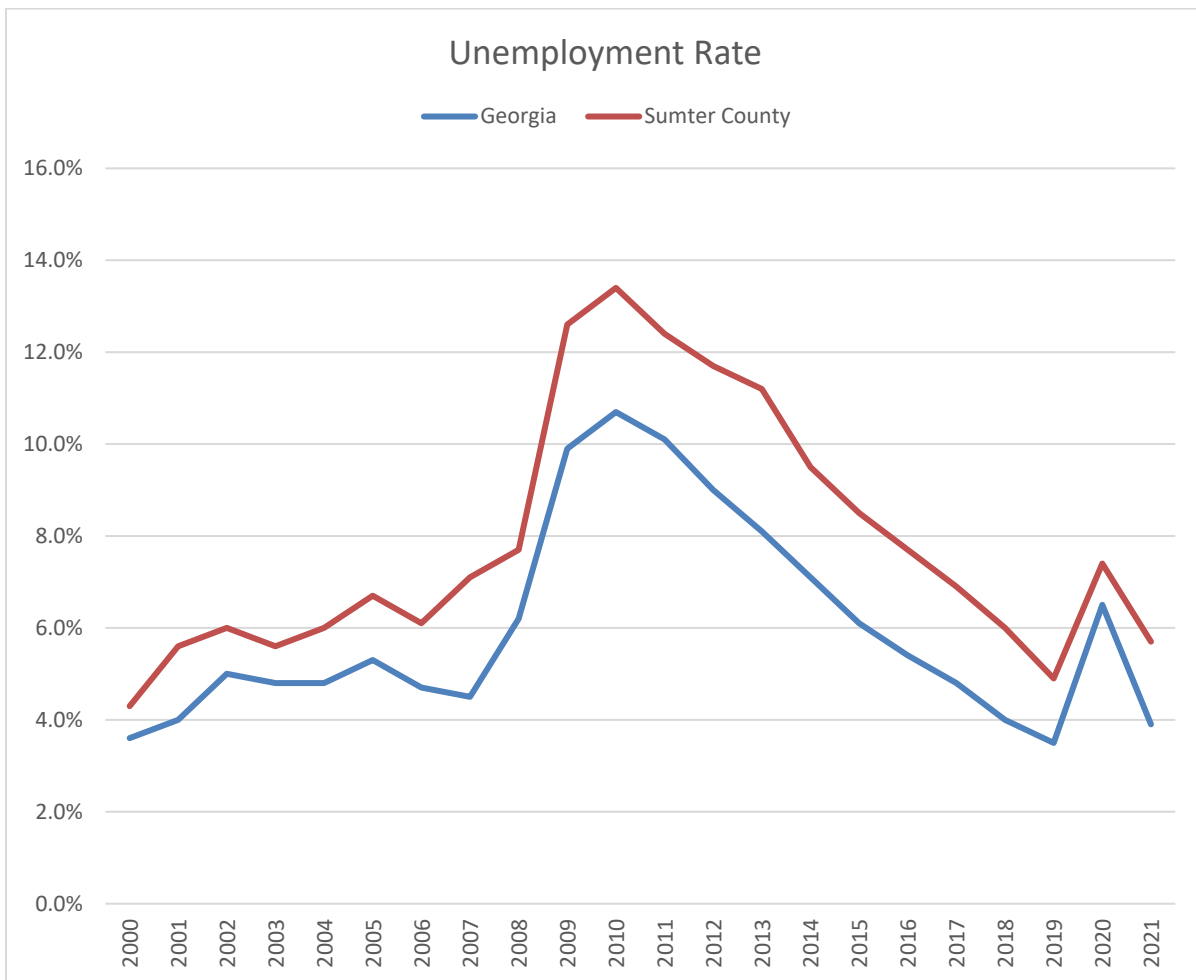
Median Income - The midpoint dividing the total income distribution into two equal groups, those above and those below the median, or midpoint.
 Household – all the persons who occupy a housing unit. Compare to Family – a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Household is the more inclusive term because it includes families as well.
 Sources: 2000 Decennial US Census, DP3-Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics
 2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2006-2010, Table S1901
 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020, Table S1901

Decennial poverty rates seesawed to start the new century. Rates universally increased the first decade; universally decreased the second. Net differences by jurisdiction (Figure 15). The greatest net rate changes were +3 for Sumter, individual poverty and -4 among Americus families. Otherwise, the net changes were 0 or +1/-1. The gap between (higher) local rates and (lower) state rates among families was reduced; Sumter by two points and Americus by five points. Sumter ranks in the middle among the surrounding counties, but on the higher end of the spread; one point higher than the eight-county average among “families” and two points higher among “individuals”. The 2010 spike coincided with the highest unemployment during the economic downturn that was the Great Recession of 2008.

Figure 15: Poverty Rates 2000-2010-2020				
Category	Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020
Individuals	Sumter Co.	21%	27%	24%
	Americus	28%	34%	28%
	Georgia	13%	18%	14%
Families	Sumter Co.	18%	22%	17%
	Americus	23%	28%	19%
	Georgia	10%	12%	11%

Sources: 2000 Decennial Census, DEC SF3, DP3-Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics
 2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2006-2010, Tables S1701, S1702
 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020, Tables S1701, S1702

Between 2000 and 2020 the county was most often positioned in the mid-range of unemployment rates among the adjoining, predominantly rural counties. A comparison of annual rates during this period reveals the local rate consistently higher than the state, averaging 1.7 points higher (graph follows). The rate differential increased to 2.7 in 2010 at the peak of unemployment caused by the Great Recession of 2008. Local unemployment averaged 2.3 points higher than the state during the nine-year recovery from the recession. As these rates returned to pre-recession levels economies were beset with COVID-19 pandemic-induced rise in unemployment which began in 2019.



A sustainable economy is most likely to have a diversity of jobs, support for and among local businesses and maintenance of a stable, growing tax base. The employment mix among the community's largest employers includes Manufacturing-electrical; Mining-and processing bauxite; Post-secondary education; Healthcare-medical/retirement; Trucking; Financial and Retail.

Figure 16: Largest Employers 2021 *

Sumter County	Sumter Area**	
Cooper Lighting	Big Tex Trailer Manufacturing	Crisp
Georgia Southwestern State University	Cooper Lighting, LLC	Sumter
Imerys	Crisp Regional Hospital	Crisp
J & M Tank Lines	Employee Professionals	Lee
Magnolia Manor, Inc.	Georgia Southwestern State University	Sumter
Phoebe Sumter Medical Center	International Paper Company	Macon
South Georgia Technical College	Phoebe Sumter Medical Center	Sumter
Tape Specialists of Georgia	Thrift Savings Plan	Sumter
Thrift Savings Plan	Tyson Farms	Dooley
Walmart	Woodgrain Millwork	Lee

* in alphabetical order

** eight surrounding counties

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Labor Profile

Note: Represents employment covered by unemployment insurance excluding all government agencies except correctional institutions, state and local hospitals, state colleges and universities. Data shown for the Fourth Quarter of 2021. Employers are listed alphabetically, not by the number of employees.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Agriculture is a significant component of the local economy; not surprising since half of the land area is classified as prime farmland. Because of heavy mechanization across the industry, direct employment in agricultural production does not account for a significant share of the labor force. But, when supporting labor in the manufacture of farm equipment, processing of raw farm commodities and the transportation and sales/marketing related to both are factored in, agriculture does create a lot of jobs. Admittedly, little manufacturing of agriculture equipment or processing of farm commodities takes place locally. Nevertheless, Sumter is among the leading producers of farm commodities and a significant contributor to the state’s largest industry.

The community is also a strong player in the state’s fifth largest industry, tourism. The attractions developed to date support ±450 local jobs, generate ±\$50 million in direct tourism spending and ±\$1.5 million in local tax revenues. Most of these benefits are derived from two of the more nationally known assets. In 2012, the CNN Travel website listed the Andersonville National Historic Site and Prisoner of War Museum among the nation’s twelve most fascinating Civil War sites. Within the City of Andersonville is the Drummer Boy Civil War Museum, one of the nation’s largest collections of civil war memorabilia. On the other side of the county, in and around Plains, is the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site and Preservation District with state welcome center. With these, Sumter has been credited with being the only county in the nation home to two national historic sites.⁴ Americus and Sumter not only provide additional tourist attractions but the city provides most of the services needed to support the tourist traffic. There are other resources in the larger community with tourist potential, among them the Georgia Rural Telephone

⁴ Although a portion of the ±500 acres making up the Andersonville National Historic Site and National Prisoner of War Museum extends across the county line into Sumter County and the City of Andersonville, the National Cemetery and Prisoner of War Museum are physically located in an adjoining county. Named after the City of Andersonville the site it is often confused with being in Sumter County. Because of proximity and its impact of the local economy it is referenced in this text.

Museum in Leslie, and the potential historic site in DeSoto related to Hernando DeSoto’s exploration of this area in the 1500s for Spain. In Americus, currently undergoing development and with great promise is the renovation of the Americus Colored Hospital and subsequent Civil Rights Museum.

Because of Sumter’s relative population and location, it is a sub-regional employment and trade center. One measure or indicator of this position is found in worker commuting patterns. Statewide, 41% of workers are employed outside their county of residence (2000, 2010, 2015). At each of these points in time less than one-quarter of workers living in Sumter commuted to work out-of-county. While this reveals the local job market is sufficient to support over 75% of employed residents, there were more jobs in the community than resident workers. The Census reported that in 2000, 2010 and 2020, with ±2,500 Sumter County residents commuting out of the county, ±3,500 non-residents were commuting in. Based on this data, even if all of Sumter’s out-commuters had been employed locally the local labor market was sufficient to support an additional 1,000 workers.

Figure 17: Sumter Cross-County Worker Commuting Patterns

Year	Place of Residence of Most In-commuters			Total In	Place of Employment of Most Out-commuters			Total Out
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
1980	Schley-349	Lee-306	Macon-298	1,437	Macon-265	Schley-156	Lee-151	1,009
1990	Schley-520	Macon-478	Lee-299	2,864	Macon-322	Dougherty-316	Schley-186	1,775
2000	Schley-560	Macon-530	Lee-384	3,431	Dougherty-458	Schley-376	Macon-307	2,311
2010	Schley-601	Macon-482	Lee-445	3,137	Dougherty-484	Schley-284	Macon-279	2,282
2015*	Schley-839	Lee-487	Macon-473	3,551	Dougherty-498	Crisp-417	Macon-335	2,562

Respondent reported place of work for the week immediately preceding the survey

* Latest data available – 2020 data not released as of this writing.

Source: US Census-Workplace County Flows

While most local out-commuting is to the eight surrounding counties, recently, the most popular out-commuter destination has been more distant; with twenty percent commuting to Dougherty County. More attractive wages were, no doubt, a significant factor contributing to the high commuter rate, as average weekly wages in Dougherty 2000-2010 were 20%-30% higher than in Sumter. More recent data documents a significantly lower wage differential; 10% higher in Dougherty in 2015 and 2020. Dougherty has been the most populated county and southwest Georgia’s regional trade center for decades. However, the county’s population has been in decline since peaking in 1980, having just recorded the fourth successive decennial decrease (2020). Like much of southwest Georgia, Dougherty’s population projections are negative.

As was the case in six of the eight adjoining counties, Sumter recorded significant job loss (4,150/-29%) 2000-2020 (Figure 18). During the same period, the average weekly wage in the county reportedly increased \$350, or 79%. Annualized per employee that equated to a wage increase from \$23,300 to \$41,600, a 79% increase. The national inflation rate during the period was 53%. The economic benefit at the community level; however, was not as favorable. In the face of significant job loss (-4,200), the increased weekly wage did generate a larger gross payroll, \$431M v. \$338M, but that 28% increase was significantly lower than the 53% national inflation rate during that period.

Figure 18: Jobs and Wages Sumter County		
Year	Average Monthly Employment	Average Weekly Wages
2000	14,519	\$448
2005	12,623	\$524
2010	10,716	\$561
2015	10,924	\$677
2020	10,366	\$800

¹ Jobs covered by unemployment insurance laws, approximately 96% of wage and salaried civilian jobs.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Industry Mix by County

Needs

- Expand and enhance economic development efforts
- More diverse businesses
- Job creation and retention
- Expand and improve access to broadband internet with increased options, e.g., WiFi
- Broaden retail variety
- Mid-level neighborhood retail
- Get feedback from tourists regarding improvements
- Further develop and promote the community as a destination venue
- Improve lighting downtown to keep the area clean, safe and thriving
- Offer information regarding grants/incentives to attract businesses
- Recruit businesses for recreation and eco-tourism (i.e., bike shops and sporting goods)
- Market Americus and Sumter County statewide

Opportunities

- Maintain strong partnership with Business Expansion Center at SGTC and the Center for Business and Economic Development at GSW
- Entrepreneur development program
- Redevelop underutilized buildings and sites
- Host more events downtown—5k run, more arts initiatives, local-oriented events, cooking competitions, tailgate events, etc.
- Keep businesses/restaurants open at night/holidays/weekends
- Programming and partnerships to develop a workforce with soft skills
- Locate college facilities and support facilities downtown
- Offer internships and networking opportunities/events targeted at young professionals to keep graduates in Sumter County
- strengthen regional partnerships to accelerate economic development
- Continue development of the community as a retirement destination
- Improve and enhance vacant industrial sites
- Enhance agriculture with support businesses

Health

Americus and Sumter County are fortunate to have a medical center with affiliated doctors of wide-ranging specialties focused on the health care needs of the community, and surrounding area. Phoebe Sumter Medical Center (PSMC) collaborated with strategic community partners to complete a Community Health Needs Assessment to develop a comprehensive plan prioritizing needs of the PSMC service area. The three most significant issues that were designated for future planning efforts included child and adult obesity, the provision of behavioral health and addictive disease prevention and treatment, and diabetes prevention and management.

Many factors contribute to a community's overall health and wellness, but Americus and Sumter County face challenges specific to current available housing, employment opportunities, access to and availability of community exercise opportunities, abundance of healthy, cost-effective food choices, and neighborhood and community safety. With healthy growth of the economy and fostering smart business and growth, the employment rates, household median income levels, improved medical provider access and coverage rates, means to access of healthy food choices, and other related improvements can significantly impact the current health challenges of the community. Recognition of these current challenges and the subsequent hardships on its residents will allow community leaders and affiliated partnerships to focus efforts on short term goals which help contribute to and attain the larger established goals of the region.

Needs

- Increase public knowledge of Phoebe-Sumter Outpatient Dietitian services and Health and Wellness programming
- Study the feasibility of centralized community fitness center like a YMCA

- Continue recruitment for internal medicine and primary care providers to offer disease management
- Create fitness programs and opportunities for healthy activities and educate parents and children on exercise and healthy life choices

Opportunities

- Improve access to education, testing supplies and risk assessments for people in danger of developing chronic disease
- Improve access to healthy foods, educate parents and children on how to prepare easy nutritional meals

Education

This century to date, the Sumter community has recorded a 50% reduction in the proportion of residents 25 years of age and older lacking a high school diploma; an improvement of 14-15 percentage points since 2000. Continued progress at the current pace will result in a single-digit percentage of non-graduates by the time of the 2030 census. The state is progressing at a pace to achieve the single-digit rate well before the next census.

There is an increasing local interest in post-secondary education, as well. Since 2000, participation in two-year certification and diploma programs increased 9-10 points. Deeper level census data reveals only one-third of these completed their program of study (2020). Nevertheless, the desire to begin the process indicates an increasing appreciation for and/or value placed on higher education. State-level data does not show strong movement at this education level; rather, the larger population is showing stronger focus on four-year degrees and higher. According to the 2020 Census, almost one-third of the state’s adult population has attained at least a four-year degree.

Figure 19: Educational Attainment									
Level	Sumter County			Americus			Georgia		
	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020
HS Diploma	30%	25%	16%	31%	22%	16%	21%	17%	12%
HS Diploma GED	30%	34%	35%	27%	32%	33%	29%	30%	28%
Associate Degree	20%	23%	29%	21%	24%	31%	26%	27%	28%
Bachelor’s Degree and higher	19%	19%	20%	21%	23%	20%	24%	27%	32%

Population 25 years of age and older

Note: some percentages do not total 100 because of separate rounding

* Any level of attainment from some college credit to as much as an associate degree

Sources: 2000 U.S Census: SF4-QT-P20;

2010 Census American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2006-2010, Table S1501;

2020 U.S Census American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2016-2020, Table S1501

The Sumter community compares favorably among area counties with “timely” high school graduation rates.⁵ “On time” graduation improves the likelihood of higher attainment levels and lower dropout rates. For the purpose of this analysis the trend line is considered a better indicator of performance than any single year. Sumter’s three- year average, 90, is third best among seven neighboring counties,⁶ behind Schley (93) and Lee (92). Sumter’s rate is seven points above the statewide average.

Figure 20: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates Sumter - Surrounding Counties - Georgia				
Jurisdiction	2019	2020	2021	3-year ave.
Sumter	86	93	92	90
Crisp	88	91	86	88
Dooly	83	88	90	87
Lee	90	92	94	92
Macon	85	77	78	80
Marion	85	91	85	87
Schley	90	92	98	93
Terrell	86	79	89	85
Webster	100	91	*	*
Georgia	82	84	84	83

Percent of students who graduated in four years

* too few students

Source: Georgia Department of Education

Needs

- Increase education attainment levels and reduce the dropout rate
- Encourage parental involvement in schools
- Continue to support the GED program
- Coordination of program initiatives with GSW and SGTC
- Establish workforce training program in local schools
- Determine future workforce skills needed

⁵ graduation in four school years

⁶ Webster is not included in the calculation because of only two years of data.

Opportunities

- Encourage partnerships between schools, businesses and civic organizations to create internship/mentorship opportunities
- Improve on the job training opportunities/career pathways to encourage students to stay following graduation
- Communicate and publicize available jobs
- Partner with One Sumter, SGTC, GSW and other economic development entities to host an annual job fair and business showcase

Quality of Life

The current quality of life for residents of Americus and Sumter County can be attributed to several criteria within the region. While the definition of and factors impacting quality of life could vary substantially from one individual to another based on personal interests or hardships, the term can be used to describe the health of an economy or community which is evaluated on the positive features it boasts and impacts it can have on residents and visitors. Some of the broad spectrum dynamics a community can expect to impact residents' quality of life are community involvement and awareness, neighborhood and community safety, employment opportunities and economic stability, as well as the availability and ease of access to community amenities, public facilities and utilities, quality education and enrichment programs, and healthcare systems and information.

Maintaining and improving upon community outreach and involvement efforts between local governments, civic societies, economic development organizations, local businesses, and volunteer groups will ensure issues facing residents are clearly identified and appropriately addressed by all involved parties. Transparency within the local governing bodies will bolster community support and trust enabling further progress and advancements through a joint and unified effort.

Recognizing and enhancing community features and potential through neighborhood charrettes and workshops would spark local interest and aid in support from sponsors and local funding sources to begin revitalization and upgrades to Sumter County's sense of place. Wayfinding and place-making efforts promote local tourism and investment in community pride and awareness, strengthening resident ties and investments into the local economy. Creating and investing in Americus and Sumter County's quality of life will continue to benefit all facets of planning and development within the region.

Needs

- Reduce Crime Rate
- Improve lighting throughout the community to keep the area clean, safe and thriving

Opportunities

- Create opportunities for public roundtable discussions among residents and local leaders to encourage civic engagement and community unity

Natural Resources

Water Resources Planning

Water Supply Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land that drains all rainfall to a common outlet, such as a stream, river, or lake. The boundaries of a watershed are delineated by the highest points of land which surround it. These land areas can be infinitesimally small or very large and are comprised of all surface water—lakes, streams, reservoirs and wetlands—and all underlying ground water within the given boundary (water.usgs.gov/edu/watershed.html). However, when discussing watersheds, one must first consider the flowing water, streams, which create them.



Upper Flint River Regional Planning Council June, 2017

Streams are ranked based on the number of the tributaries flowing into them. There are several methods used to classify streams in this manner; however, the Strahler method is the most used. In this method, streams without tributaries, or headwaters, are given a value of 1 and are called first order. As streams of the same order begin to intersect, the resulting stream is assigned an order one value higher (ex. $1+1=2$). When streams of different orders come together, the resulting stream retains the order of the stream with the greatest order (ex. $1+2=2$) (pro.arcgis.com/en/pro-app/tool-reference/spatial-analyst/how-stream-order-works.htm).

Just as smaller streams come together to create greater bodies of water, large watersheds are created by numerous small watersheds. All watersheds are measured by hydrologic unit codes (HUC). The HUC is a sequence of numbers or letters that identify a unique hydrological feature such as a watershed. The smallest watersheds can have a ten- or twelve-digit HUC identification (HUC-10 or HUC-12). These areas come together to create watersheds with eight-digit codes (HUC-8) (water.usgs.gov/GIS/huc.html). The State of Georgia is divided into 52 large HUC-8 watersheds. Sumter County is included in two of these, the Muckalee Watershed and the Middle Flint Watershed. However, due to the number of first and second order streams in Americus and Sumter County, there are multiple small watersheds (HUC-12) which can affect the streamflow and water quality of rivers downstream (water.usgs.gov/edu/watershed.html). (Map on page102)

Watersheds are important because they support ecological processes that sustain diverse populations of plants and animals and provide humans with water that can be used for a multitude of purposes. The activity occurring within watersheds affects the quantity and quality of the water that flows downstream (water.usgs.gov/edu/watershed.html). Water quantity can be altered by drought, excessive rainfall, withdrawals, or transfers between watersheds. Water quality can be negatively impacted by pollution, which can enter the water through point or non-point sources, causing it to become impaired or threatened. When the quality of water in a watershed is degraded,

the ecosystem can suffer and the water that we use for drinking, irrigation, and recreation is compromised. As a result, watershed protection is vital to ensuring the health of the environment and the health of the people who live and play in them (www.cwp.org/mission-vision/) (See Appendix for Maps).

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Groundwater recharge is the process by which precipitation, primarily in the form of rain, infiltrates soil and rock to add to the volume of water stored in pores and other openings in groundwater aquifers, the source of water for south Georgia. The county is in that portion ($\pm 23\%$) of the state concentrated along the north side of the Coastal Plain Province where the most significant groundwater recharge occurs. But for $\pm 2\%$ of the county in the north panhandle around Andersonville and additional area along creeks, all of Sumter's land area overlies one of three significant groundwater recharge aquifers; the Claiborne, Clayton or Floridan/Jacksonian Aquifer systems. Recharge areas have the greatest vulnerability to pollution from the surface and near-surface activities of man, and both the city and the county have adopted and enforce a groundwater recharge area ordinance to provide the level of resource protection stipulated in state law. Malfunctioning septic systems, especially in densely developed areas, are a near-surface activity of man that poses a significant threat to groundwater supplies. Municipal wastewater collection and treatment systems greatly mitigate such a threat. (Map on page 103)

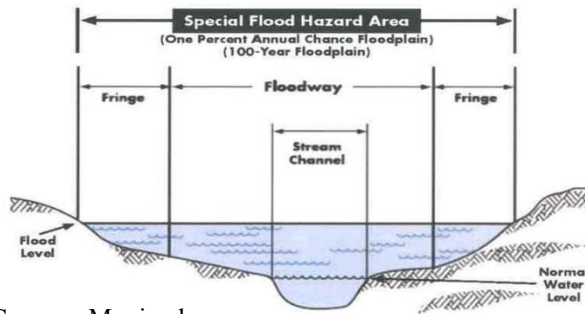
Wetlands

There are approximately 25,000 acres of jurisdictional wetlands scattered across the county, most heavily concentrated in the southeast quadrant. Wetlands serve vital ecological purposes by retaining overflows during flood periods and acting as water storage basins during dry seasons. Wetlands replenish both surface water and groundwater systems and filter sediments and non-point source pollutants from water supplies naturally. Wetlands are areas where the frequent and prolonged presence of water at or near the soil surface drives the natural system, meaning the kind of soils that form, the plants that grow, and the fish and/or wildlife communities sustained therein. Swamps, marshes and bogs are well-recognized types of wetlands, but many important specific wetland types have drier or more variable water systems than those familiar to the public. Some examples of these are vernal or seasonal wet-weather pools, playas (areas at the bottom of undrained desert basins that are sometimes covered with water) and prairie potholes. The U.S. Clean Water Act requires a permit be secured for dredging or placing fill in a wetland and prescribes penalties for anyone found guilty of violating terms and provisions of the Act. (Map on page 106)

Floodplains

Floodplains are defined as any land area susceptible to being inundated by water. Flooding is among the nation's most common natural disasters, sometimes occurring in previously unaffected areas. Floodplains are found along the Flint River and the many creeks/branches in the community. There are numerous instances of low-level flooding locally, but Tropical Storm Alberto, July 5, 1994, released 2' of water over the community, almost half the annual average. Unprecedented flooding caused numerous local deaths and damages in the millions of dollars. Americus and Sumter County have been mapped for flood prone areas and participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), a national insurance subsidy that makes flood insurance (more) affordable for many owners of property located in or near a designated floodplain. A

community must be a NFIP participant for owners of flood prone property to be eligible for the subsidized insurance program. Communities must be participants to be eligible for federal flood disaster mitigation and or post-flood disaster recovery assistance.



Source: Municode

Soil Types

Soil quality is the capacity of the soil to function as a vital living ecosystem sustaining plants, animals and human beings. Soil that is well cared for can regulate the movement of water, provide essential nutrients, filter and buffer pollutants, aid in nutrient cycling, and create physical stability and support for roots and other structures. Healthy soil provides clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife and beautiful landscapes. Soil has both inherent and dynamic properties. For example, sandy soil drains faster than clayey soil and deep soils have more room for roots than soils with bedrock near the surface. Soils respond differently to management techniques based on their inherent properties and the surrounding landscape (<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/health/>). The following table illustrates the many soil types found in Sumter County and a partial list of uses for each. (Map on page107)

Figure 21: Soil Suitability

Soil Classification	Dominant Slope %	Drainage	Permeability	Use and Vegetation
Americus	0-15	Excessively Drained Slow Runoff	Moderately Rapid	Most of the soil on gentle slopes has been cleared and is used for general agriculture. The remainder is in forest of pine and blackjack oak.
Carnegie	2-12	Well drained	Moderately Slow	Much of this soil has been cleared and is used for cropland and pasture. Some areas formerly cultivated have been planted to pine trees. Forested areas consist of longleaf pine, slash pine, and loblolly pine, along with a few red oak, scarlet oak, pot oak, blackjack oak, hickory, haws and dogwood.
Esto	5-17	Well drained Rapid runoff	Slow	Occur on knolls, short choppy slopes, and ridge crests on gently sloping to steeply sloping landscapes of the Coastal Plain
Grady	0-2	Poor Slow runoff to ponded	Slow	Most areas are in woodland, but a few areas have been cleared, drained, and are used mostly for pasture. Native vegetation includes cypress, black gum, live oak, and water oak. The undergrowth is water tolerant sedges and grasses.
Henderson	2-17	Well drained	Slow	Most are in forest of mixed hardwoods and pines. Cleared areas are used for pasture.
Irvington		Moderately Well drained Slow to Medium Runoff	Slow	Most are cultivated to potatoes, corn, small grains, or soybeans. Forested areas consist of mixed pines, oaks, sweetgum and other hardwoods.
Norfolk	0-5	Well drained Negligible to Medium Runoff	Moderate	Major uses are for general farm crops as mostly cleared land. Where cultivated, corn, cotton, peanuts, tobacco, and soybeans are prominent crops. Where wooded, pines and mixed hardwoods are present.
Lakeland	0-17	Excessively Drained Slow Runoff	Rapid to very rapid	Many areas are cleared and used for peanuts, watermelons, peaches, corn, tobacco, and improved pasture. The natural vegetation consists of blackjack oak, turkey oak, post oak; scattered long leaf pine with an understory of creeping bluestem, sandy bluestem, lopsided indiagrass, hairy panicum, fringeleaf paspalum, and native annual forbs.

Soil Classification	Dominant Slope %	Drainage	Permeability	Use and Vegetation
Lucy	0-15	well drained	moderate	Nearly level to gently sloping areas are used for growing peanuts, corn cotton, and soybeans. Sloping areas are used for hay and pasture. Steeper areas are used for woodland.
		varies, slow to rapid		
Kinston and Bibb	0-2	poor	moderate	<p>Mostly for forest and limited pasture or crops. Where cultivated: pasture, corn, soybeans, and other general farm crops. Where wooded: water tolerant hardwoods such as sweetgum, black gum, water oak, poplar, hickories, beech, elm, and ironwood. Loblolly pine is grown in some drained areas.</p> <p>Most are used for wildlife habitat and watershed protection. The dominant over story vegetation consists of sweetgum, scattered loblolly pine, red maple, water oak, willow oak, green ash, bald cypress, swamp tupelo, and black willow. A few areas have been cleared and used for pasture.</p>
		negligible to slow runoff		
Ochlocknee	0-3	well drained	moderate	<p>Most areas have been cleared and are cultivated to corn, sorghum, soybeans, cotton, small grains, vegetables, and hay. Other areas are in pasture or forest. Common trees growing in wooded areas include sweetgum, water oak, red maple, green ash, American elm, willow oak, Eastern cottonwood, sycamore, American beech, Southern magnolia, hickory, and loblolly pine.</p>
		slow runoff		
Orangeburg	0-12	well-drained	moderate	<p>Mostly for growing cotton, corn, tobacco, and peanuts. Some areas are in pasture and woodland. Forest species include longleaf pine, shortleaf pine, loblolly pine, various oaks, hickory, and dogwood.</p>
		medium to slow runoff		
Faceville	0-8	poorly drained	moderate	<p>Most are cleared and used for growing cotton, corn, peanuts, soybeans, wheat, hay, vegetables, small grains, and tobacco. Some have been converted to pasture or reforested. Dominant trees include loblolly, shortleaf, and slash pine, and a mixture of upland oaks, hickory, and dogwood.</p>
		Medium Runoff		

Soil Classification	Dominant Slope %	Drainage	Permeability	Use and Vegetation
Greenville	0-12	Well-drained Medium Runoff	Moderate	Most areas are cleared and used for production of cotton, corn, small grain, soybeans, truck crops, orchards, and pasture. Wooded areas are in pine, oak, and hickory.
Goldsboro	0-2	Moderately Well drained	Moderate	Mostly cropland. Where cultivated: corn, peanuts, tobacco, soybeans, small grain, cotton, pasture. Where wooded: loblolly pine, longleaf pine, slash pine, sweetgum, southern red oak, white oak, water oak, and red maple, yellow polar. Understory plants include American holly, blueberry, flowering dogwood, greenbrier, persimmon, red bay, southern bayberry, inkberry, honeysuckle, poison ivy, and summer sweet clethra
		Negligible to Medium Runoff		
Rains	0-2	Poor	Moderate to Moderately High	Mostly used for forest or cropland. Dominant vegetation: corn, soybeans, and small grains. Wooded: pond pine, loblolly pine, and hardwoods.
Red Bay	0-12	Well drained	Moderate	Most areas are cleared and used for the production of cotton, corn, small grain, truck crops, fruits, shade grown tobacco, annual legumes, and pasture. Common trees in wooded areas include longleaf pine, loblolly pine, Southern red oak, white oak, yellow poplar, sweetgum, and hickory.
		Slow to Medium Runoff		
Tifton	0-8	Well drained	Rapid to Moderately Rapid	Most are under cultivation with cotton, corn, peanuts, vegetable crops, and small grains. Some areas are in pasture and forestland. The forested areas consist largely of longleaf pine, loblolly pine, slash pine, with some scattered hardwoods on cutover areas.
Vaucluse	2-17	Well-drained High Runoff	Moderately Slow to Slow	— Forest, cropland where cultivated--corn, cotton, small grain, soybeans, or pasture. Where wooded--loblolly and longleaf pine.
Wagram	0-15	Somewhat excessively drained	Moderate	— Cropland where cultivated--tobacco, cotton, corn, and small grains. Where wooded--loblolly and longleaf pine, white oak, red oak, turkey oak, and post oak; hickory, holly, and dogwood.
		Negligible to Medium Runoff		

Source: National Cooperative Soil Survey, U.S.A.

Protected River Corridors

The River Corridor Protection Act (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) defines a protected river as any perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second. These corridors are of vital importance to Georgia in that they help preserve those qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation and in some parts of the state a source for clean drinking water. River corridors also allow the free movement of wildlife from area to area within the state, help control erosion and river sedimentation, and help absorb flood waters. Two local watercourses meet this definition; a twelve linear mile segment of the Flint River on the northeast county line above Lake Blackshear, and a ten linear mile segment of Kinchafoonee Creek on the county's southwest boundary. Sumter has adopted a river corridor protection ordinance in accordance with said law.

Prime Agricultural Land

Prime agricultural land is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as being that land best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oil seed crops. It produces the highest yields with minimum inputs of energy and money and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. This natural resource is of major importance in satisfying the nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber and is also significant in incorporated areas because of numerous characteristics which make it desirable for virtually all other land uses. Sumter County is in a belt of prime farmland stretching along the upper Coastal Plain province. Half of the community's land area is classified as prime farmland; Georgia $\pm 20\%$ and the nation $\pm 15\%$.

Plant and Animal Habitats

The community has many areas that support rare or endangered plants and animals, several of which are known to be present locally. State and federally designated endangered plant and animal species are listed in the following tables.



Gopher Tortoise: Endangered Species in Sumter County



Red Cockaded Woodpecker: Endangered species with habitat in Sumter County

Figure 22: Sumter County Endangered Species

Animal Occurrences		
Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Alasmidonta triangulata</i>	Southern Elktoe	Endangered
<i>Ameiurus serracanthus</i>	Spotted Bullhead	Rare
<i>Anodonta heardi</i>	Apalachicola Floater	Rare
<i>Anodontoides radiatus</i>	Rayed Creekshell	Threatened
<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle	Unknown
<i>Elliptio arcata</i>	Delicate Spike	Endangered
<i>Elliptio purpurella</i>	Inflated Spike	Threatened
<i>Elliptoideus sloatianus</i>	Purple Bankclimber	Threatened
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	Gopher Tortoise	Threatened
<i>Graptemys barbouri</i>	Barbour's Map Turtle	Threatened
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	Threatened
<i>Hamiota subangulata</i>	Shinyrayed Pocketbook	Endangered
<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	Alligator Snapping Turtle	Threatened
<i>Medionidus penicillatus</i>	Gulf Moccasinshell	Endangered
<i>Pleurobema pyriforme</i>	Oval Pigtoe	Endangered
<i>Procambarus gibbus</i>	Muckalee Crayfish	Threatened



Shinyrayed Pocketbook
www.pubs.usgs.gov



Pickering's Morning-glory
www.cumauriceriver.org

Figure 23: Sumter County Endangered Species

Plant Occurrences	
Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Asclepias rubra</i>	Red Milkweed
<i>Carex decomposita</i>	Cypress-knee Sedge
<i>Coleataenia tenera</i>	Panic Grass
<i>Dichantherium hirstii</i>	Hirst Brothers Panic Grass
<i>Eryngium aquaticum var. ravenelii</i>	Ravenel's Eryngo
<i>Fimbristylis perpusilla</i>	Harper's Fimbry
<i>Glyceria septentrionalis</i>	Floating Manna-grass
<i>Hexastylis shuttleworthii var. harperi</i>	Harper Wild Ginger
<i>Hypericum adpressum</i>	Bog St. Johnswort
<i>Liatris pauciflora</i>	Few-flower Gay-feather
<i>Linum harperi</i>	Harper Grooved Flax
<i>Minuartia godfreyi</i>	Godfrey's Stitchwort
<i>Muhlenbergia torreyana</i>	Torrey Dropseed
<i>Oxypolis canbyi</i>	Canby Dropwort
<i>Rhexia aristosa</i>	Awned Meadowbeauty
<i>Rhynchospora harperi</i>	Harper's Beaksedge
<i>Rhynchospora pleiantha</i>	Clonal Thread-leaved Beakrush
<i>Sarracenia leucophylla</i>	Whitetop Pitcherplant
<i>Sarracenia psittacina</i>	Parrot Pitcherplant
<i>Sarracenia rubra</i>	Sweet Pitcherplant
<i>Scirpus lineatus</i>	Drooping Bulrush
<i>Sideroxylon thornei</i>	Swamp Buckthorn
<i>Spermolepis inermis</i>	Rough-fruited Spermolepis
<i>Stylisma pickeringii var. pickeringii</i>	Pickering's Morning-glory
<i>Thelypteris ovata</i>	Ovate Maiden Fern

Major Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Andersonville National Historic Site

The Camp Sumter military prison at Andersonville was one of the largest and deadliest Confederate military prisons during the Civil War. Today, the Andersonville National Historic Site is a memorial to all American prisoners of war throughout the nation's history (www.nps.gov/ande/index.htm). The historic site is comprised of a re-creation of Camp Sumter, the National Prisoner of War Museum and the Andersonville National Cemetery.

The Andersonville National Cemetery was established by an act of Congress in July, 1865. The site of Camp Sumter was purchased by the Georgia Department of the Grand Army of the Republic in May, 1890. Between 1890 and 1910, the prison site was administered by the Woman's Relief Corps, an auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic. In 1910, the Woman's Relief Corps donated the prison site to the United States government. At that time, both the prison site and the National Cemetery were to be managed by the Department of the Army. In 1936, the prison site was officially designated the Andersonville Prison Park by the War Department. In October, 1970, Public Law 91-465 authorized the Andersonville National Historic Site (www.nps.gov/ande/learn/management/statistics.htm). There are 515 acres in the park. The last full year (2018) pre-COVID-19 visitation was 138,000.



Andersonville Site Map



Providence Spring, Andersonville Park

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

Jimmy Carter was the 39th President of the United States (1977-1980). His upbringing in Plains strongly influenced his character, his life choices and his political policies (www.nps.gov/jica/index.htm). The Jimmy Carter National Historic Site is comprised of the Historic District of Plains, Plains High School, Plains Train Depot, the Carter Boyhood Farm and the Rosalynn Carter Butterfly Trail.

The Plains High School serves as the park museum and visitor center. Exhibits feature a furnished classroom, principal's office and auditorium with displays about the Carters' lives, political and business careers, education, family and religion in Plains. The Plains Train Depot, campaign headquarters in 1976, has a self-guided museum with exhibits focusing on the presidential campaign. President Carter lived at the Boyhood Farm in Archery from age four until he left Plains for college. It is restored to its 1938 appearance and is depicted pre-electricity. The Rosalyn Carter Butterfly Trail consists of eight public gardens and highlights the First Lady's love of nature and desire to conserve butterfly habitat (www.nps.gov/jica/planyourvisit/things2do.htm). The last full year (2018) pre-COVID-19 visitation was 51,000.



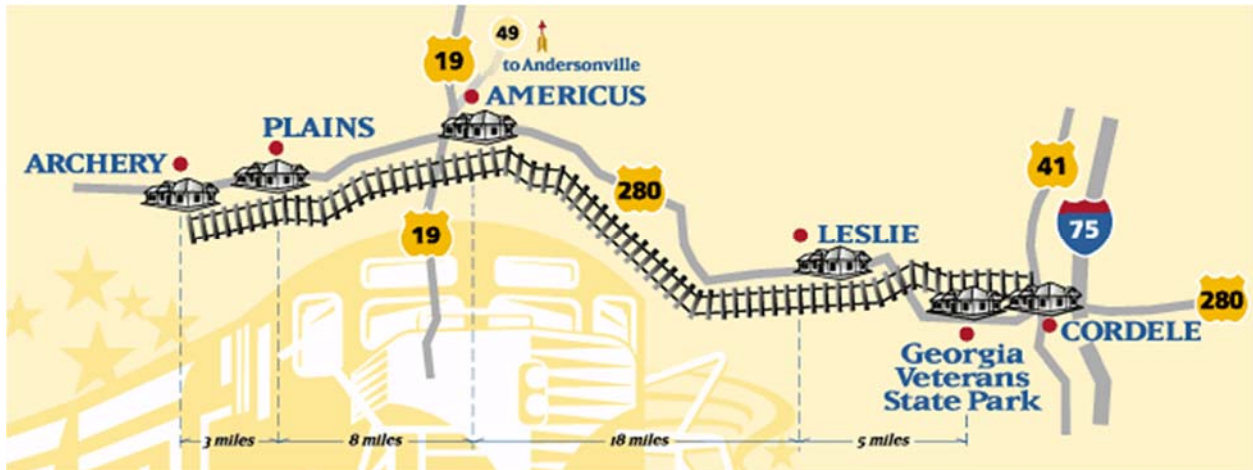
Carter Home at Boyhood Farm in Archery

SAM Shortline Excursion Train

The SAM Shortline Excursion Train, part of the Heart of Georgia Railroad, travels forty-six miles of track from Cordele, across Lake Blackshear through Americus and Plains to Archery. This historic Savannah, Americus and Montgomery (SAM) line operates 17 train cars. The primary service markets of Valdosta, Albany, Columbus and Macon are all within 100 miles of the train.

Expedition features include the Georgia Veterans State Park and Military Museum (Crisp County), Lake Blackshear Resort and Golf Club (Crisp County), The Rural Telephone Museum (Leslie), Café Campesino (Americus), The Rylander Theater (Americus), The Windsor Hotel (Americus), President Carter's Campaign Headquarters Museum (Plains) and President Carter's Boyhood Home (Archery). According to the SAM Shortline Excursion Train Business and Management Plan, the most popular amenities for visitors are:

- Visiting the hometown and boyhood farm of President Jimmy Carter
- Riding a passenger train
- The possibility of seeing President Carter
- The unique opportunity for a full-day experience
- Visiting the Windsor Hotel in Americus



SAM Shortline Route

Local Parks and Recreation Facilities

Sumter County has a number of facilities promoting recreation. The Highway 19 Sports Complex has fields for baseball, softball, football and soccer, an 18-hole disc golf course, a 5K cross country trail, playground and pavilion for family gatherings. The Columns at Boone Park (Americus) has an outdoor splash pad, gymnastics center, two gyms for basketball, an indoor walking track and rooms for other programs.

Scenic Sites and Viewsheds

The natural resources available locally in combination with the rural character yield many scenic sites and viewsheds. The GA Hwy 49 link between Sumter and Macon Counties is particularly tranquil, characterized by views of natural areas, wildlife, pecan groves, rolling farmland and historic farmhouses. There are also many scenic areas along the Flint River and around Lake Blackshear that provide a sense of serenity amid the beauty of nature. Avid bicyclists have established routes that highlight historic homes and neighborhoods in Americus and the rich agricultural heritage of the unincorporated area.



Hwy 280; Sumter County, GA



Hwy 280 Sumter County

Needs

- Review and update Part V Environmental Ordinances
- Insure active presence on the water planning board
- Partner with the Flint Riverkeeper regarding water quality issues

Opportunities

- Reinvigorate the Keep Sumter Beautiful Program
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a county water system in the unincorporated area
- Designate water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and create a Muckalee Creek Kayak Trail and Rec Area
- Increase the number and length of rural bicycle routes



Fishing on Muckalee Creek, Sumter County 1918
Vanishing Georgia Collection, Georgia State Archives

Cultural Resources

People have lived in the State of Georgia and what is now Sumter County for eleven thousand years. Europeans and Africans have had a presence and influence in the state for the last five hundred years. The remains of these groups, their habitation and their activities, are considered cultural resources.

In 1991, a comprehensive survey of Americus and Sumter County historic resources was completed. This survey identified sites, objects, structures and buildings that were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

City of Americus

A 1981 survey identified 1,508 structures potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Architectural styles present in the city include Greek Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne and other high Victorian Eclectic styles, Neoclassical Revival, Folk Victorian, and Craftsman. House types present included everything from Single Pens to Bungalows.

Two areas of Americus were identified as having enough historic integrity to be eligible as districts on the National Register of Historic Places. The northern area consists of the historically African-American business district and residential neighborhoods. The southern area includes the existing Americus National Register Historic District and consists of a historic business district and residential neighborhoods.

There are eight designations in Americus listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Georgia Register of Historic Places. These include: the Americus Historic District (1975, Amended, 1979), Ashby Street Shotgun Row (1997), Campbell Chapel AME (1997), the Dismuke Storehouse (1996), the Guerry Mitchell House (1983), Lustron House (1996), New Corinth Baptist Church (1998), and the Third District Agriculture and Mechanical School (2007).

To protect the city's historic resources the Americus City Council enacted a historic preservation ordinance and appointed a historic preservation commission. The commission is charged with sponsoring National Register listings, overseeing the application for survey funds, maintaining an inventory of local historic resources, and attempting to preserve endangered resources. The city has one locally designated historic district, the Americus Historic District that encompasses the same boundaries as the National Register designation. The local designation grants authority to the city to enforce the local historic preservation code.



Rylander Theater



Windsor Hotel

The City of Americus participates in the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service. As a result, the city is eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office.

Sumter County

The 1991 survey of historic resources identified 2,603 structures in Sumter County as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Of these resources, 1,804 were in incorporated areas while 799 were in rural Sumter County. Identified building types in the unincorporated county ranged from Single Pen, Saddlebag, Central Hallway, Dogtrot, Shotgun, Gabled Ell Cottage, Queen Anne Cottage and Pyramidal Cottage. The Folk Victorian architectural style was predominant in the rural areas of the county; however, Neoclassical Revival and Craftsman were also present.

There are currently fourteen designations in Sumter County listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Georgia Register of Historic Places. The five located in the unincorporated area of the county include: Liberty Hall (1980), McBain-Newman House (1980), the Morgan Farm (1998), the Teel-Crawford-Gaston Plantation (2004) and the Webb Farm (1985).

Although historic sites are taken into consideration while making land use decisions per various county ordinances, Sumter County has not enacted a historic preservation ordinance or appointed a historic preservation commission to protect historic resources. As a result, there are no locally designated historic properties and the county is not eligible for the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service, nor are they eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office. The Sumter Historic Trust is a county-wide non-profit entity that sponsors National Register listings, oversees the application for survey funds, maintain an inventory of local historic resources, and attempt to preserve endangered resources.

Sumter County and the City of Americus understand the significance of cultural resources and place high importance on conservation of the area's history, tradition, and culture through preservation. Both local governments make conservation of the area's history, tradition, and culture through preservation a priority. They also know the benefits of preservation are far-reaching and can lead to a sense of community and tradition, increased heritage tourism and growth in small businesses. (Map on page 109)



Webb Farm National Register Listed Property



Liberty Hall National Register Listed Property



Teel Crawford Gaston Plantation National Register Listed Property

Needs

- Save the historic fabric of the community (take care of historic downtown assets, protect the integrity of downtown)
- Encourage Federal and State governments to improve/enhance National parks in the county

Opportunities

- Determine the best uses for, rehabilitate and utilize vacant historic buildings

Intergovernmental Coordination

Coordination between local governments, community service providers and local/regional authorities is vital when planning for and anticipating growth and development success. A renewed focus sharing information regarding initiatives with elected officials in neighboring jurisdictions will further strengthen partnerships and build new cooperative connections.

Coordination of projects and resources will also reduce costs for large endeavors such as road improvements. This approach will not only foster fiscal responsibility by stretching taxpayer dollars, it will also ensure that planning and development across jurisdictional boundaries is done in a cohesive manner.

By partnering with neighboring jurisdictions, Americus and Sumter County can produce a greater impact on regional environmental/conservation issues such as water quality, the longleaf pine ecosystem and endangered habitats of the gopher tortoise and red cockaded woodpecker. Working together to ensure conservation of natural resources can spur growth in the outdoor recreation industry and be a powerful economic engine for communities.

City and county officials must be actively involved in the planning activities of regional organizations like the River Valley Regional Commission. Confirming that all elected officials, government staff, authority members and other appointed officials are certified by the appropriate agencies according to state law will mean that residents have access to the latest information, tools and best management practices that benefit the Americus and Sumter County community.

The Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and Comprehensive Plan should be updated regularly. The SDS is identification of each service each jurisdiction provides and where and is due for update in 2027. The five-year joint Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for Sumter County, Americus, Andersonville, DeSoto, Leslie and Plains was adopted by all local jurisdictions in 2021.

Needs

- Better means of communication between local governments, local civic groups, youth development organizations, groups that respond to specific community needs, etc.
- Utilize current technology including social media to engage the community in council/commission meetings, planning efforts and civic volunteering opportunities

Opportunities

- Increase the number of civic leadership meetings held annually

- The City and County should partner on projects that cross jurisdictional lines to insure cost-effective use of resources
- Continue to participate in the Sumter County Chamber's governmental affairs division programs
- Continue to work with regional entities on leadership and economic development



River Valley Regional Commission, monthly council meeting

Existing Land Use

A proper mix of land uses ensures that a community can be viable and sustainable. Decisions between the immediate benefits of new development and maintenance of desired public policy can be difficult to make. Not every proposed development will contribute positively to the quality of life in the long-term. Community decision makers must weigh past, present, and future desires and demands when making choices about the uses of the land within a jurisdiction, neighborhood, or even a parcel.

The following section includes the results of how the decision makers of Americus and Sumter County would like to see their communities use the land. The information reflects zoning decisions, ordinances, and public input.

Existing Development Patterns

An analysis of existing development patterns provides an understanding of how land is used at a specific point in time. An existing land use map is the first step in gaining an understanding of not only what land uses exist and where they are, but how they interact. The purpose of this section is to map and review existing land use in Americus and Sumter County, look at areas in need of attention, areas in need of protection, and areas with development opportunities.

To maintain an ideal visual character, Americus has consistently included landscaping and shade trees in its plans and design standards. The city has adopted a zoning ordinance and building codes and is staffed to enforce these regulations. The city primarily relies on overlay districts to insure attractive development. Overlay districts can be used to implement additional requirements in targeted areas without changing a property's underlying land use designation. However, the visual quality of areas without additional overlay regulations is lacking.

Figure 24: Existing Land Use Definitions

Existing Land Use	Definition
Residential	The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities.
Agriculture/ Forestry	This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.
Commercial	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.
Industrial	This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities or other similar uses. This category includes landfills.
Parks/ Recreation/ Conservation	This category is 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, land in a land trust or similar uses.
Public/ Institutional	Community facilities excluding utilities. This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses and institutional land uses. Examples include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, cell towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
Undeveloped/ Vacant	This category is for lots or tracts of land that are served by typical urban public services (water, sewer, etc.) but have not been developed for a specific use or were developed for a specific use that has been abandoned.

City of Americus Existing Land Use Map

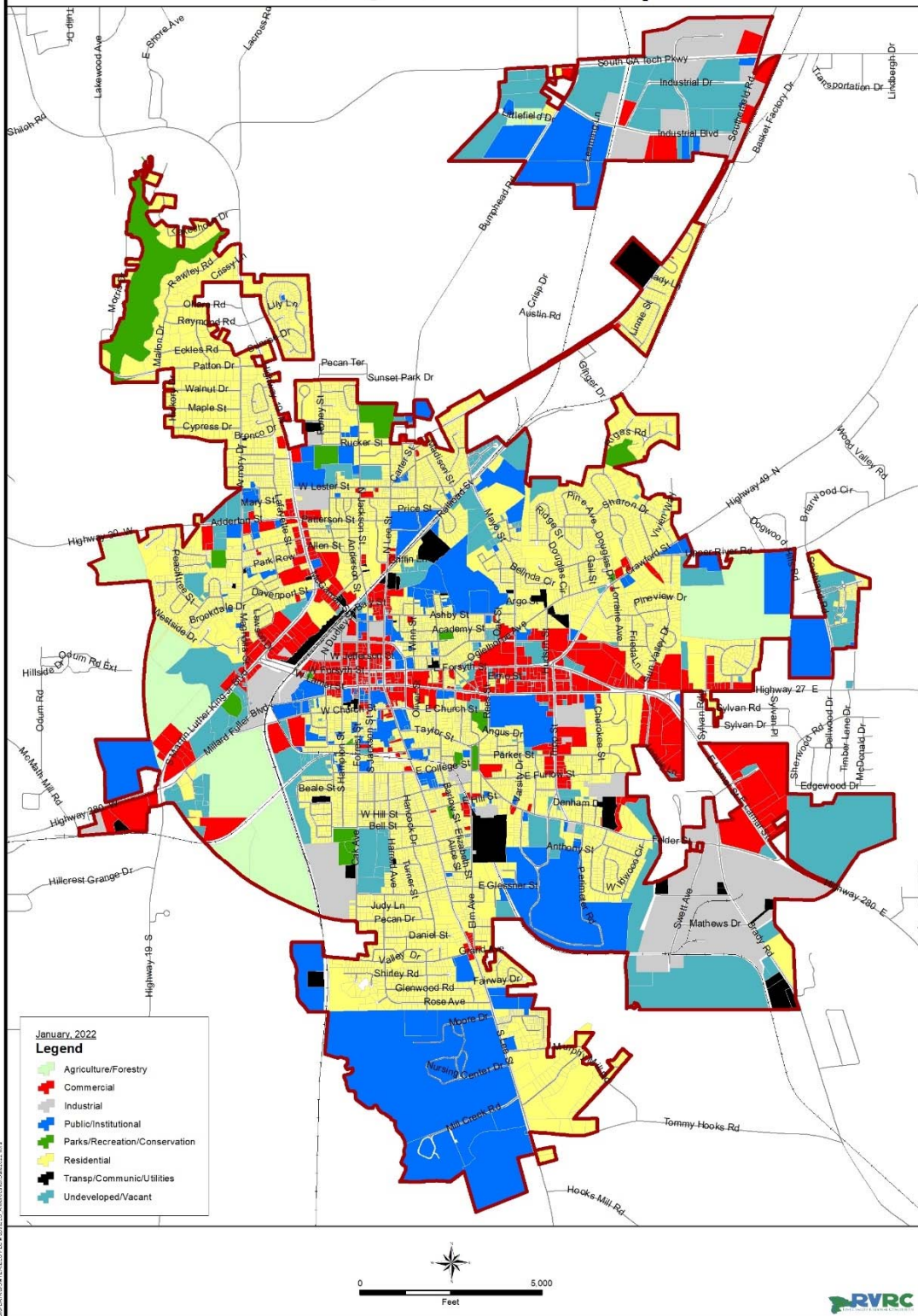


Figure 25: Americus Existing Land Use	
Agriculture/Forestry	8%
Commercial	7%
Industrial	8%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	2%
Public/Institutional	12%
Residential	29%
Transportation/Communication/ Utilities	15%
Undeveloped/Vacant	19%
TOTAL	100%

Needs

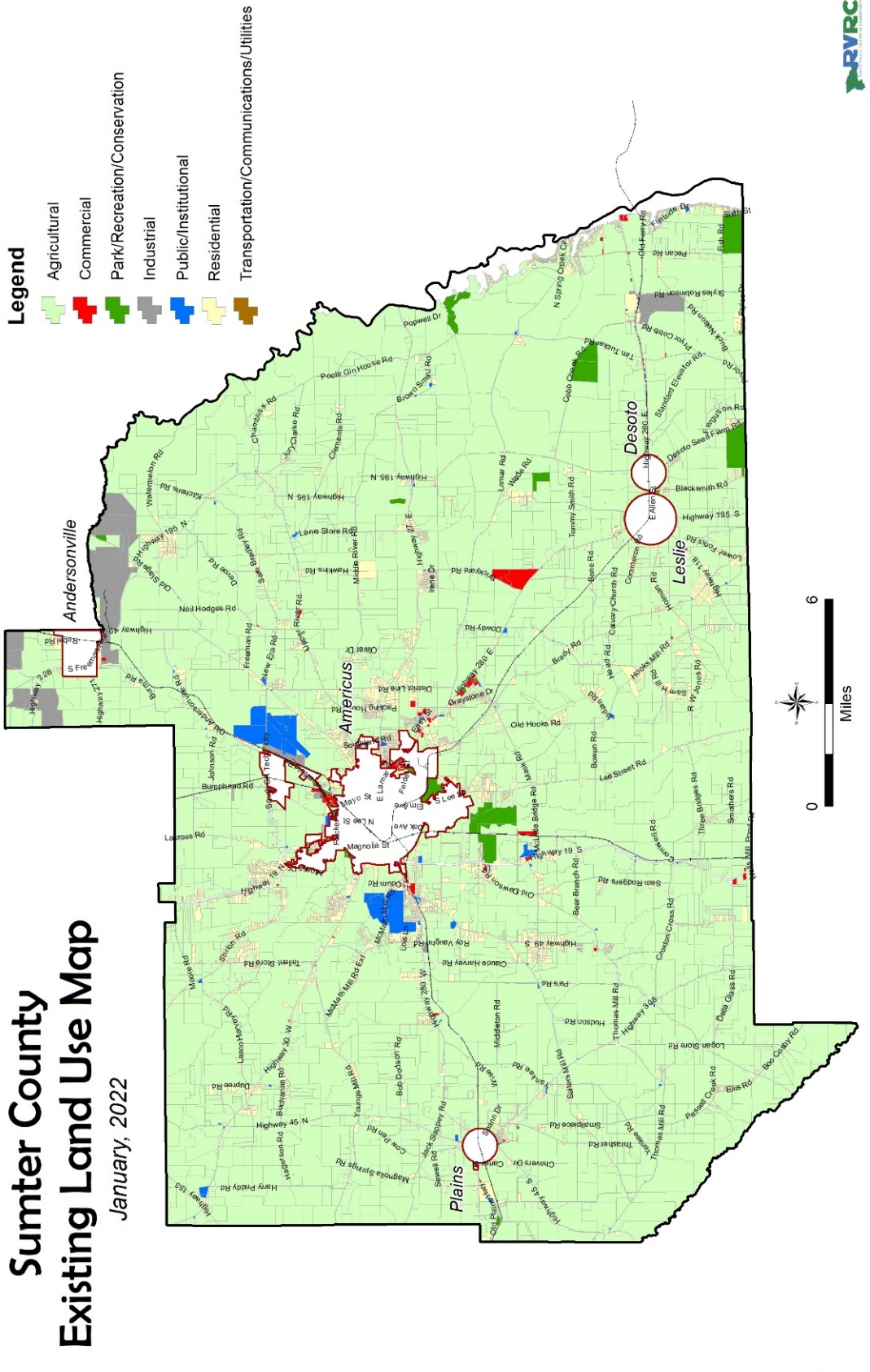
- Review/Update Future Land Use Map for all impacted governmental entities
- Remediate blight

Opportunities

- Review and update zoning ordinance and all other codes and ordinances as necessary
- Review zoning of downtown and institute design standards city wide

Figure 26: Sumter County Existing Land Use	
Agriculture/Forestry	89%
Commercial	<1%
Industrial	1%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	<1%
Public/Institutional	<1%
Residential	5%
Transportation/Communication/ Utilities	2%
Undeveloped/Vacant (included in Ag/Forest)	-
TOTAL	100%

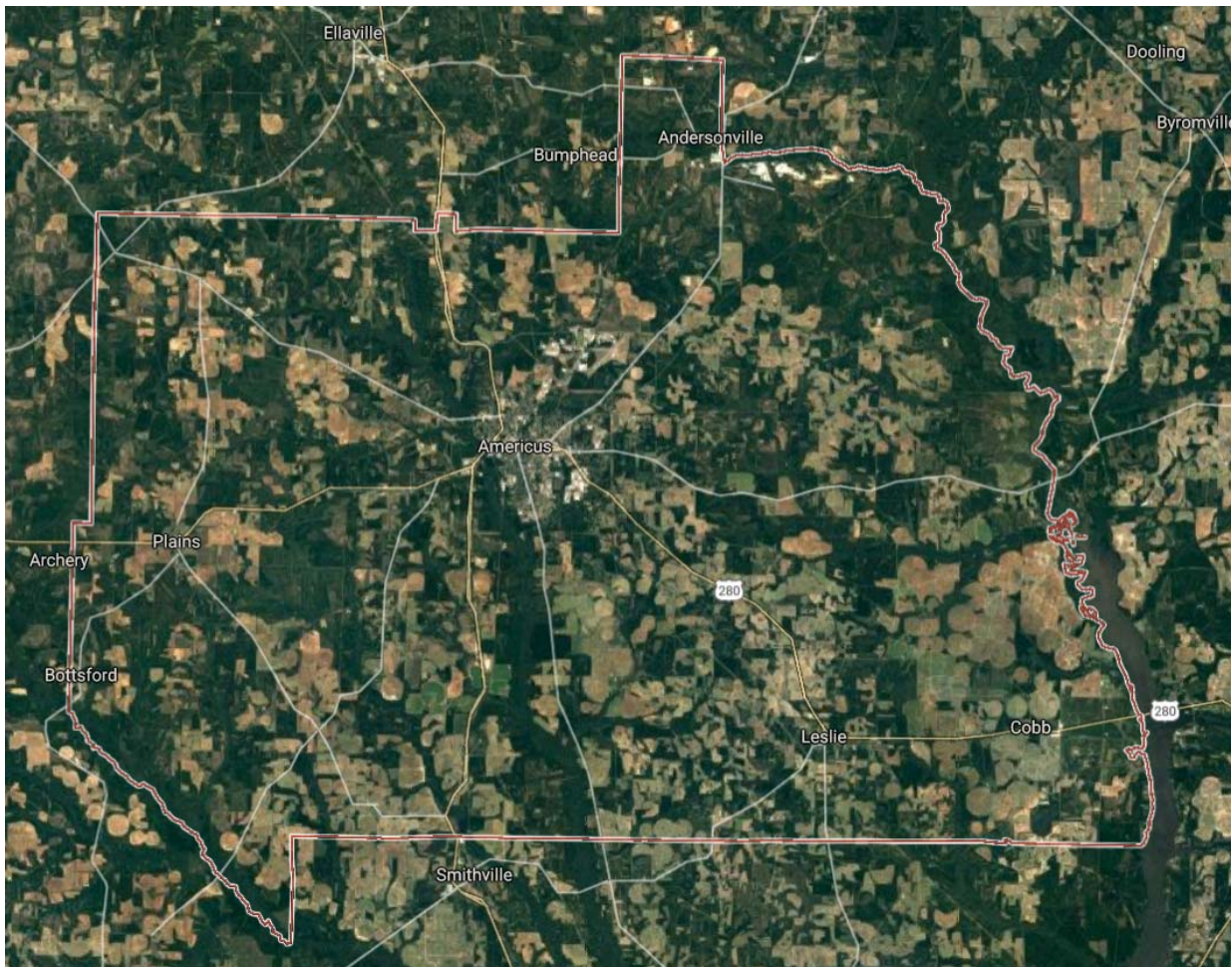
Sumter County Existing Land Use Map January, 2022



Future Land Use

An analysis of probable future development patterns is based on an understanding of how local officials and citizens want land used. The first step in this process is the development of a future land use map. Such a map allows analysis of existing and potential resources, current and possible land uses and where and how they may interact. Due to the population trends, there should be only limited pressure placed on Americus and Sumter County's infrastructure and public facilities caused by future development.

This section will map and review proposed land use in Americus and Sumter County, look at areas in need of attention, areas in need of protection, and areas with development opportunities.

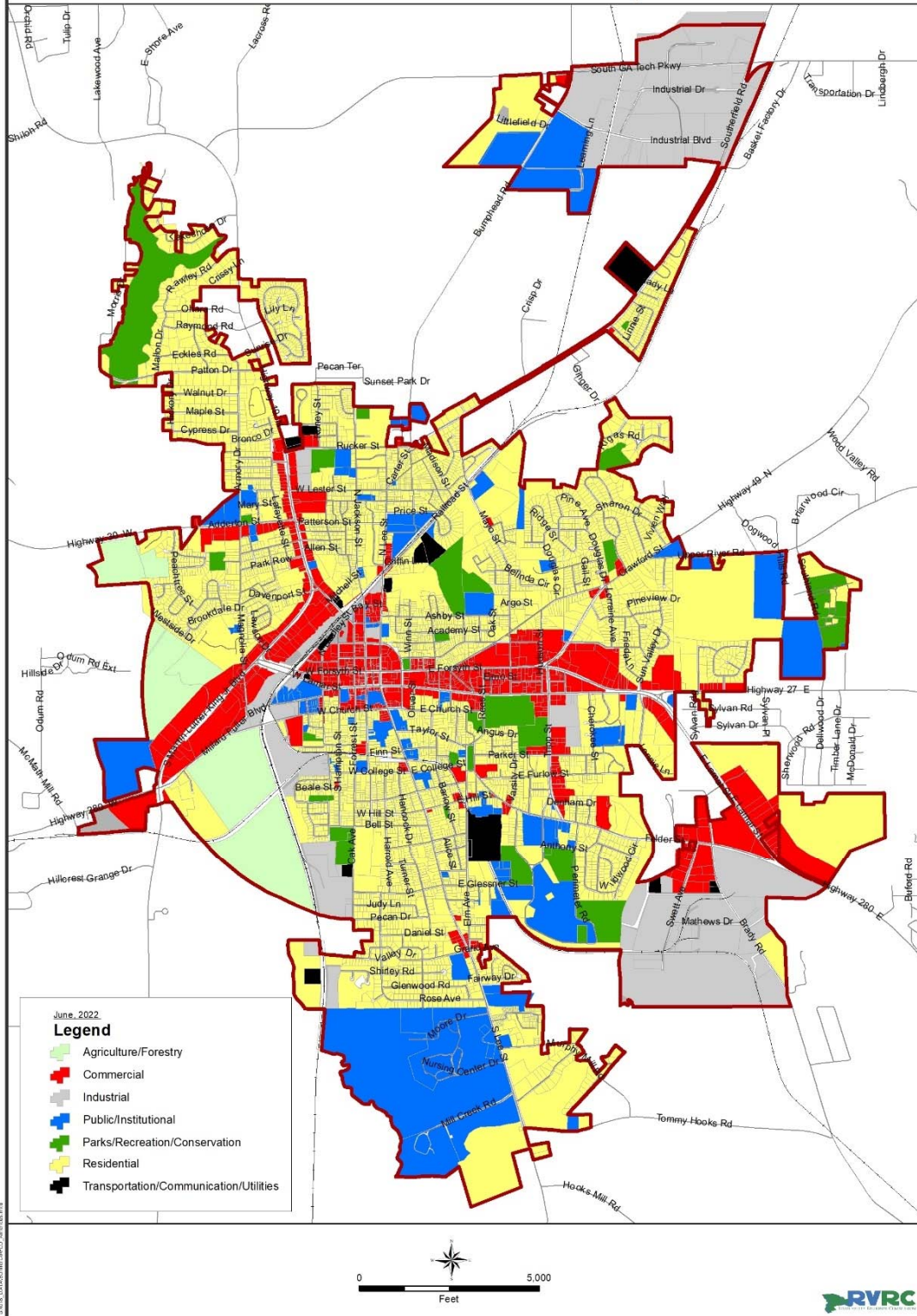


Google Satellite Image of Sumter County

Figure 27: Future Land Use Definitions

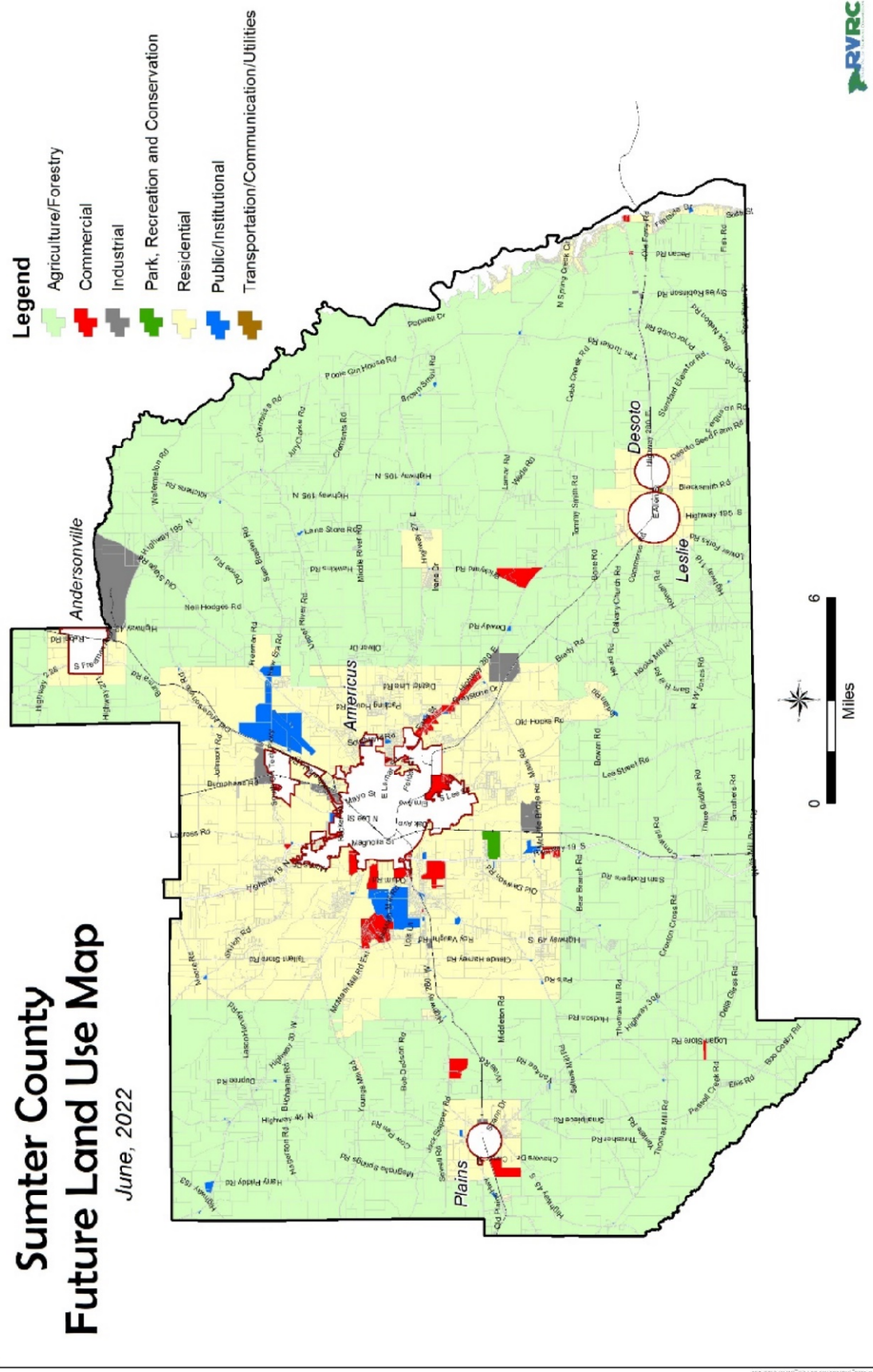
Future Land Use	Definition
Residential	This category is established to preserve land areas for single dwelling unit structures and to promote residential areas with low densities. These areas are intended to be geographically defined and protected from the encroachment of uses not performing a function necessary to a residential environment. Certain nonresidential uses which are more compatible with residential uses may be permitted on review by the planning commission. Public water is required.
Agriculture/Forestry	The agricultural/forestry category is established to maintain those areas with land characteristics, such as soil moisture, temperature and content suitable for farming, forestry operations and other agricultural uses from encroachment by untimely and unplanned residential, commercial or industrial development; to permit the continuation of agricultural uses in areas where development is anticipated, but where the present application of zoning controls for future, more intensive uses would be unreasonable and premature; to prevent the subdivision of land for residential development that requires public services such as paved roads, water and sanitary sewer; and to preserve the rural, open space character of certain areas. Certain agricultural uses are referred to as a conditional use and are subject to approval by the planning commission.
Commercial	The commercial category is established to provide suitable areas for a broad range of retail, wholesale and service uses. General compatibility with abutting different uses is required, this may be achieved through buffering, screening and/or development plan review. Development in these districts should be located on major thoroughfares, arterial streets or collector streets and the associated street network. The location and development of these commercial activities shall be encouraged so as to minimize traffic hazards and interference with adjacent uses.
Industrial	The industrial category is established to provide areas for the development of industrial and assembly plants and their related activities. It is also the intent of this district that noise, odor, dust and glare associated with uses permitted in this district be confined as much as possible. It is also the intent of this district that traffic generated by uses permitted including raw materials, finished products and employees, be minimal but that transportation facilities and routes be easily accessible. Development in these districts should be served by sanitary sewer or have provision for on-site disposal.
Parks/ Recreation/ Conservation	This category is 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, land in a land trust or similar uses.
Public/Institutional	Community facilities excluding utilities. This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses and institutional land uses. Examples include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, cell towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.

City of Americus Future Land Use Map



Sumter County Future Land Use Map

June, 2022



Areas Requiring Special Attention

Significant Natural Resources

The City of Americus and Sumter County have significant environmental features such as soil types, topography, flood prone areas, aquifers and wetlands among others that provide opportunities for and place constraints on the way land is used sustainably. Mapping these natural resources in the community can identify where development can safely and feasibly occur and which zones should be protected. Vegetative areas and natural habitats are best left undisturbed to optimize the environmental health of the ecosystem by providing sun and wind protection, mitigating stormwater runoff, reducing flooding, improving air quality by reducing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. These resources play a key role in the quality of life, providing access to the natural beauty of the community and expanding the economy by virtue of their value as tourist amenities.

Natural Resources should be protected for their ecological and environmental benefits, and for preservation of heritage and character. The environmental resources of Americus and Sumter County are a vital part of the economy, history, and future of the community and should be safeguarded.

Flint River

The Flint River, one of the state's major waterways, has been identified by the River Valley Regional Commission as a regionally important resource. Meandering south from the Atlanta airport into Florida, it travels 350 river miles in-state. The river is unique in that it flows unimpeded for over two hundred of these miles, one of only forty rivers in the contiguous United States free-flowing for such distance. Fifteen of these free-flowing miles constitute Sumter's northeastern boundary, after which the river sustains Lake Blackshear, ten linear miles of which is lakefront property constituting the county's southeast boundary. The Crisp County Power Commission dam, which impounds Lake Blackshear, is the first of two relatively small dams impeding the river's natural water flow.

The river is a much-needed water supply for agriculture and the long-term effects of water withdrawal are still unknown. River advocates are concerned it may be over-utilized in times of prolonged drought, a frequent event in recent decades. In addition, it is feared population-induced growth in metropolitan areas of the watershed might require increased water withdrawals, with adverse reductions of in-stream water flow. The growing need for new water supplies has created pressure for construction of new dams. The potential impacts of such development on fish and aquatic habitats, birds and other wildlife and vegetation is of such concern that in 2009 the national environmental organization, American Rivers, placed the Flint on the list of America's most endangered rivers.



Flint River; Sumter County, GA



Flint River; Sumter County, GA

Lake Blackshear

Lake Blackshear has also been identified by the River Valley Regional Commission as a regionally important resource. Lake Blackshear was created in 1930 when Crisp County constructed a hydro-electric dam near the approximate mid-point of the Flint River. The lake, which is approximately sixteen miles long and a mile wide, covers approximately 8,700 acres on portions of shared boundaries between five counties.

For the avid angler, several varieties of game fish common to southwest Georgia can be found in Lake Blackshear. These include various species of bass, sunfish, perch, crappie, and catfish.

The lake is susceptible to adverse impacts of high concentrations of residential septic tanks along the lakefront, and intensive agricultural activity in the watershed.



Lake Blackshear; Sumter County, GA



Lake Blackshear; Sumter County, GA

Significant Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources are among those components of life that contribute to development of the Region’s sense of place; characteristics that generally distinguish it from other regions. While most events are not known beyond the site of occurrence, some have impacts which reverberate far beyond. Americus and Sumter County has a unique history and many locally significant resources.

Preserving the resources that are the history of this community add to the quality of life for all city and county residents.

Rylander Theatre

The Rylander Theatre seats over 600 people. It was designed by C.K. Howell of New York and opened in 1921. Typical of the Art Deco architectural period, the Rylander has ornate plaster work, beautiful stencils and painted murals. The Rylander was closed for over 40 years but reopened in 1999 after undergoing a \$4.8 million restoration. The Rylander serves as a home for the Sumter Players and hosts many cultural events during the year.



Interior of the Rylander Theatre



Andersonville National Cemetery

Andersonville National Historic Site

The Andersonville National Historic Site has been recognized by the River Valley Regional Commission as a regionally important resource. The stated purpose of the 1970 legislation establishing Andersonville National Historic Site was "...to interpret the role of prisoners-of-war camps in history..." and "commemorate the sacrifice of Americans who lost their lives in such camps.". The site includes Camp Sumter (Andersonville Prison-1864), Andersonville National Cemetery for U.S. military veterans and their immediate family, and the National Prisoner of War Museum (1998) which tells the story of prisoners of war throughout American History.



Andersonville National Prisoner of War Museum Memorial



Memorial at Andersonville National Cemetery

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site

The Jimmy Carter National Historic Site consists of three sites in or near Plains. Plains High School serves as the museum and visitor center for the site. The Plains Train Depot which served as the presidential campaign headquarters now houses a self-guided museum detailing his grassroots campaign. The Jimmy Carter Boyhood farm was bought by the National Park Service in 1994 and consists of seventeen acres of the original 360-acre farm with the residence and surrounding structures restored to their appearance before electricity was installed in 1938.



Jimmy Carter National Historic Site



Downtown Plains, GA



Jimmy Carter National Historic Site



Jimmy Carter Boyhood Farm Site Map

Areas Where Development is Likely to Occur

Sumter County is a rural community heavily populated with pine forests and pecan groves surrounded by open farmland. Growth is most likely to occur in areas with access to water and direct access to state or federal highways. These areas are primarily around the municipalities in Sumter County.

Proximity to the scenic beauty along the Flint River and Lake Blackshear on the county's eastern border can be expected to continue to attract development. This area of the county is a ready draw for recreation, eco-tourism and residential development. U.S. Highway 280, running E-W and U.S. Highway 19, running N-S, are also attractive for new and expanding business, industrial and even residential development. U.S. Highway 280 connects Sumter County to the inland port in Cordele and one of the nation's most heavily traveled rural interstates, I-75. U.S. Highway 19 is a four-lane highway connecting the community to Atlanta and Florida by way of Albany, the nearest metropolitan statistical area.

Areas Where Development May Outpace Available Facilities and Services

There are population pockets along the county's northern and eastern boundaries. The area around Lake Blackshear on the county's southeast boundary is already heavily developed and remains popular. Sumter County has an intergovernmental agreement with Crisp County to supply water to those residents. Another developing area is to the north along the Schley County boundary. Sumter County has an intergovernmental agreement with Schley to supply water to residents along Sumter's north boundary. The county has expressed its intent to monitor development in both areas to determine whether, and if so when to provide these services directly. The city has adequate infrastructure capacity and facilities to meet any foreseeable developments on the municipal periphery. The city would annex any such extra-territorial service area.

Areas of Disinvestment with Significant In-fill Development Opportunities

The City of Americus Urban Redevelopment Plan targeted specific areas for redevelopment. The Jackson and College Street neighborhoods are southwest of the Americus downtown. It is an area characterized by single-family homes and duplexes. However, there is also a trend in these neighborhoods of owner-occupied housing becoming rental units. The primary needs in the Jackson and College Street area are stabilizing the neighborhood, promoting housing development/reinvestment and dealing with nuisance properties.

The Cotton Avenue area is northwest of the Americus downtown. It is characterized by historic warehouse buildings. The primary needs along Cotton Avenue are creating jobs, economic development and increasing commercial and residential opportunities. The Urban Redevelopment Plan also identified this neighborhood as being a potential extension of the downtown shopping district focusing on the arts and providing venues such as an outdoor marketplace.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard is west of the Americus downtown. It consists of major commercial nodes as well as older, established residential neighborhoods. The primary needs along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard are neighborhood stabilization, promotion of housing development/reinvestment, dealing with nuisance properties and addressing existing development in the floodplain.

The Elm Avenue area is located southeast of the Americus downtown and includes neighborhoods on both sides of Elm. The primary needs in this area are neighborhood stabilization, housing development, infill/reinvestment, dealing with nuisance properties and promoting economic development/job creation. The Urban Redevelopment Plan identified these neighborhoods as having the potential for private investment to expand the Georgia Southwestern University campus.

There are also areas of housing throughout much of Americus' older residential neighborhoods that, by virtue of age and/or lower income occupancy, need stabilization. These legacy conditions have been exacerbated by periods of heightened economic setback; elevated unemployment resulting from the Great Recession of 2008 and the prolonged, decade-long recovery period, followed almost immediately by COVID-19 and another period of higher unemployment.

The former Sumter Regional Hospital site on Forsyth Street one mile east of downtown remains undeveloped fifteen years (at this writing) after the 2007 tornado. Some new development followed the event on the east and south sides of the property, but complementary development is needed on the ten-acre site.

In addition to the urban redevelopment plan referenced above Americus and Sumter County have created a land bank, a very useful tool for addressing issues of blight and targeted redevelopment of areas of disinvestment.

Approximately ninety percent of the unincorporated area of the county is in agriculture or forest land uses, areas of significant economic activity but not considered developed in the sense of physical development on-site. At some locations these land uses morph into areas of disinvestment, sites not in use and/or in need of infill development. This makes it difficult to delineate pockets of disinvestment and areas of needed infill, but numerous, individual sites of disinvestment and in need of infill are evident across the community. These most often consist of former industrial and former intensive agricultural uses.

Brownfields

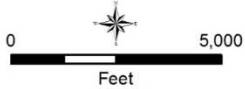
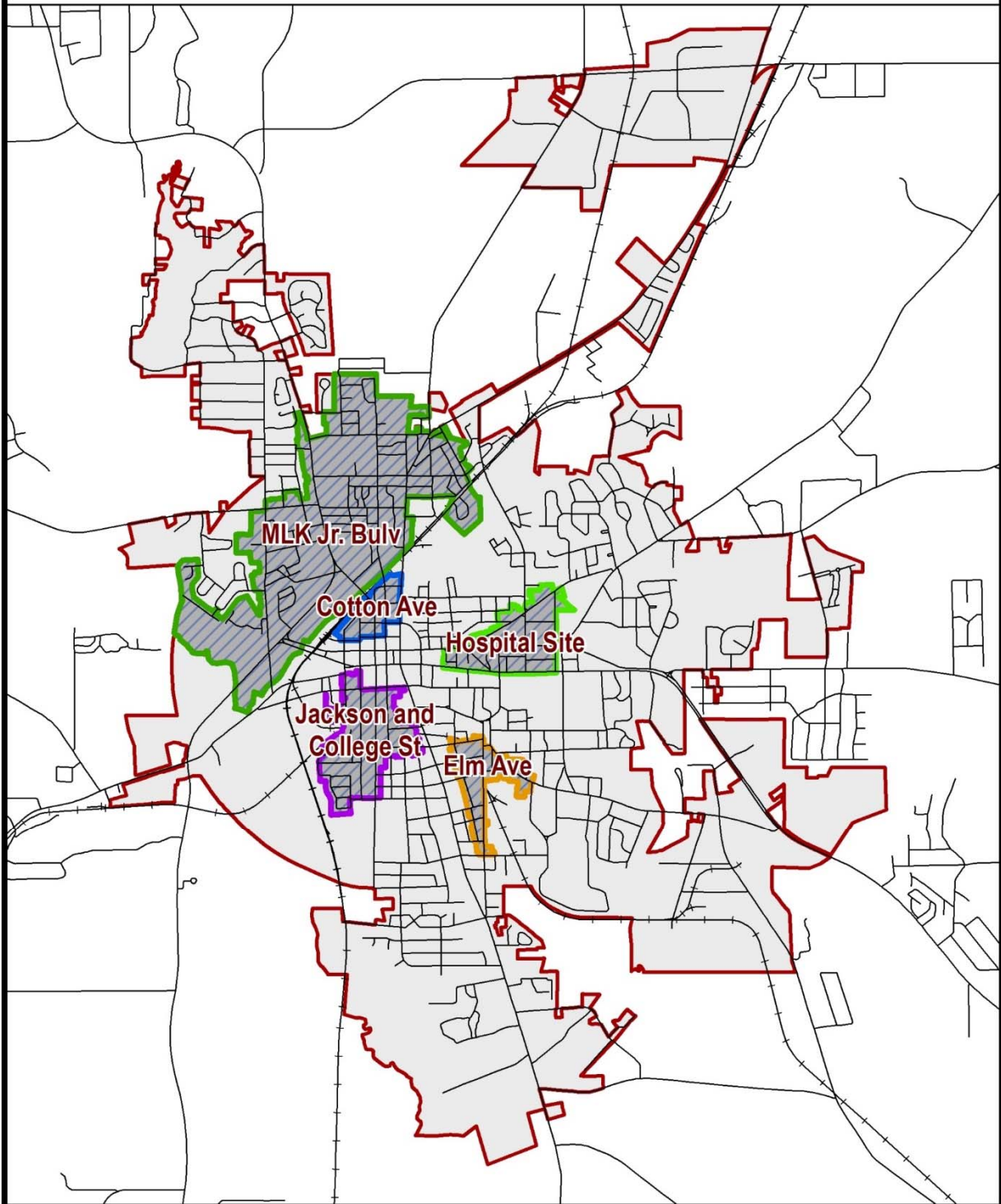
In general terms, Brownfields are abandoned or underused industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is complicated by actual or perceived environmental contamination. There is no specific requirement for Brownfield designation. Such properties have the potential to cause harm to residents and/or the environment, reduce employment opportunities and tax revenue, increase illegal dumping, and reduce the value of the property and surrounding area. Redeveloping Brownfields can restore property to productive use, increase property values, improve public health and the environment, tap onto existing public infrastructure and increase job opportunities and local tax revenues.

There are not any local Brownfields listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund list. However, the community is currently wrestling with costs associated with post-closure requirements of the former landfill. Other potential local Brownfields consist mostly of abandoned industrial/agricultural properties, junk yards, old gas stations and property with abandoned vehicles and equipment. Cooperating in a regional effort one local property has been designated a Brownfield and is currently the subject of the initial environmental review.



Example of a Brownfield

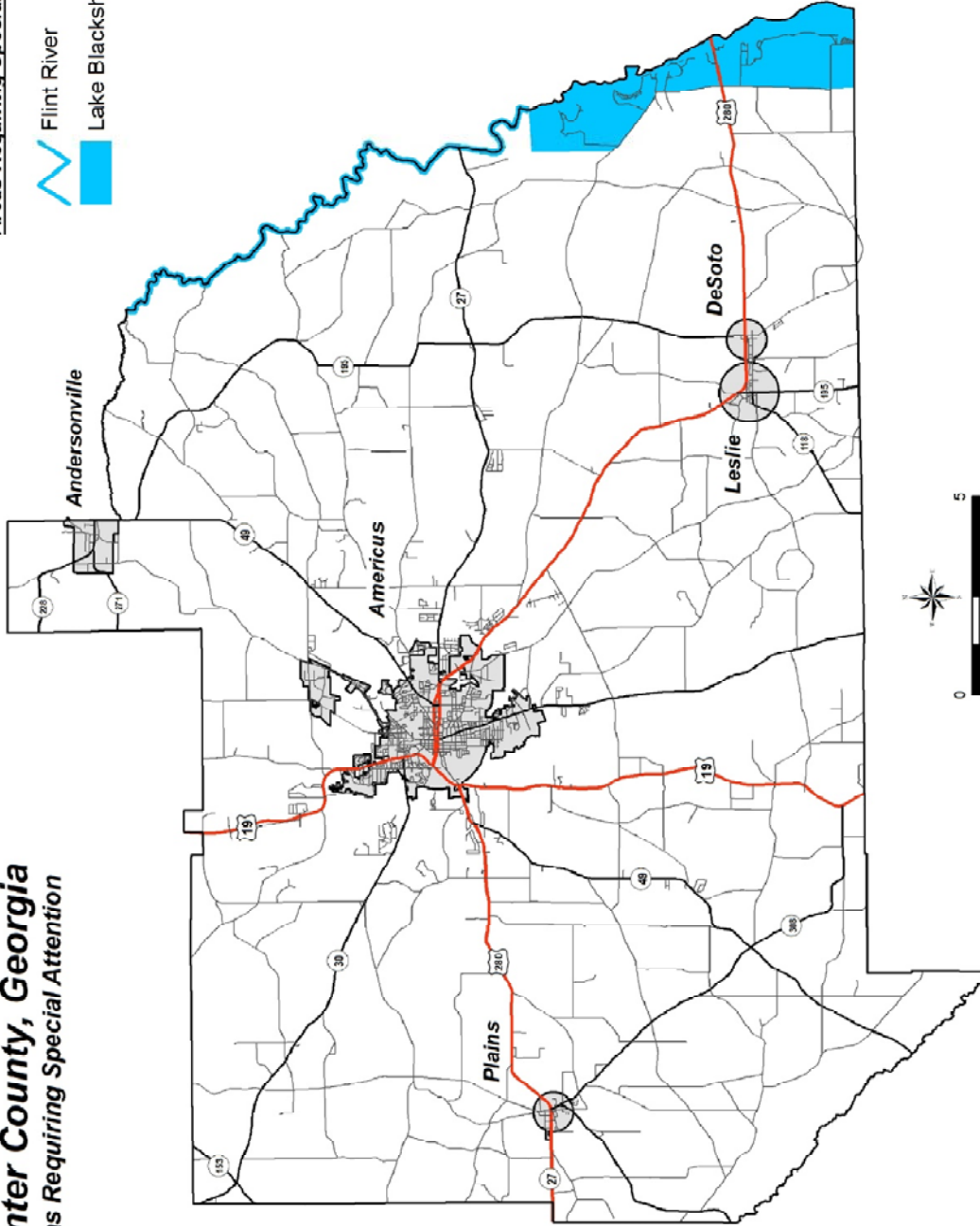
Americus Areas Requiring Special Attention



Sumter County, Georgia
Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas Requiring Special Attention

- Flint River
- Lake Blackshear



Broadband Internet Service Element for Americus and Sumter County

Broadband, or high-speed internet, has become essential to business, education, healthcare, agriculture, and overall quality of life for Georgians. Unfortunately, approximately 10% of the state is currently unserved. There are 507,000 homes and businesses in the state that currently lack access to high-speed broadband, and 70% of the unserved locations are in predominantly in rural communities. Over 30% of Georgia’s rural communities do not have access to broadband service.⁷

The Georgia General Assembly passed the Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act (SB 402) in 2018 to facilitate extension of broadband service to unserved/underserved areas; the purposes being to enable residents to participate fully in society and enjoy the many benefits of the technology. The Act gave rise to the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (GBDI), focused on partnerships and collaboration among government at all levels, and the private sector, to deploy fixed, terrestrial broadband services with minimum download speeds of 25 Megabits Per Second (Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps. The initiative will also assist communities apply for federal funding in support of broadband deployment.

Accurate mapping of broadband availability is critical to identifying unserved locations and implementing the Initiative. The Georgia Broadband Map precisely identifies homes and businesses that do not have access to broadband services. It represents a location-level methodology that precisely maps the availability of broadband services to every home and business in the State, which includes all 159 counties. The map was created by overlaying all the locations of homes and businesses in the State of Georgia with broadband provider service availability for those locations within the State. There are over five million locations used in the mapping process. The Georgia Broadband Map also serves as a tool that can be annually updated in order to track changes in broadband availability for years to come.

Only populated census blocks with more than 80% of the addresses served at this defined minimum speed (25 Mbps/3 Mbps) are delineated as ‘served’. When 20% of homes and businesses in a census block cannot subscribe to these services, the entire census block is deemed unserved. Population and location data are from the 2010 Census and commercially available business listings (2014) with at least three employees and \$150,000 annual sales. These insights assist with broadband planning efforts by allowing better direction of investments to reach unserved areas of the State.

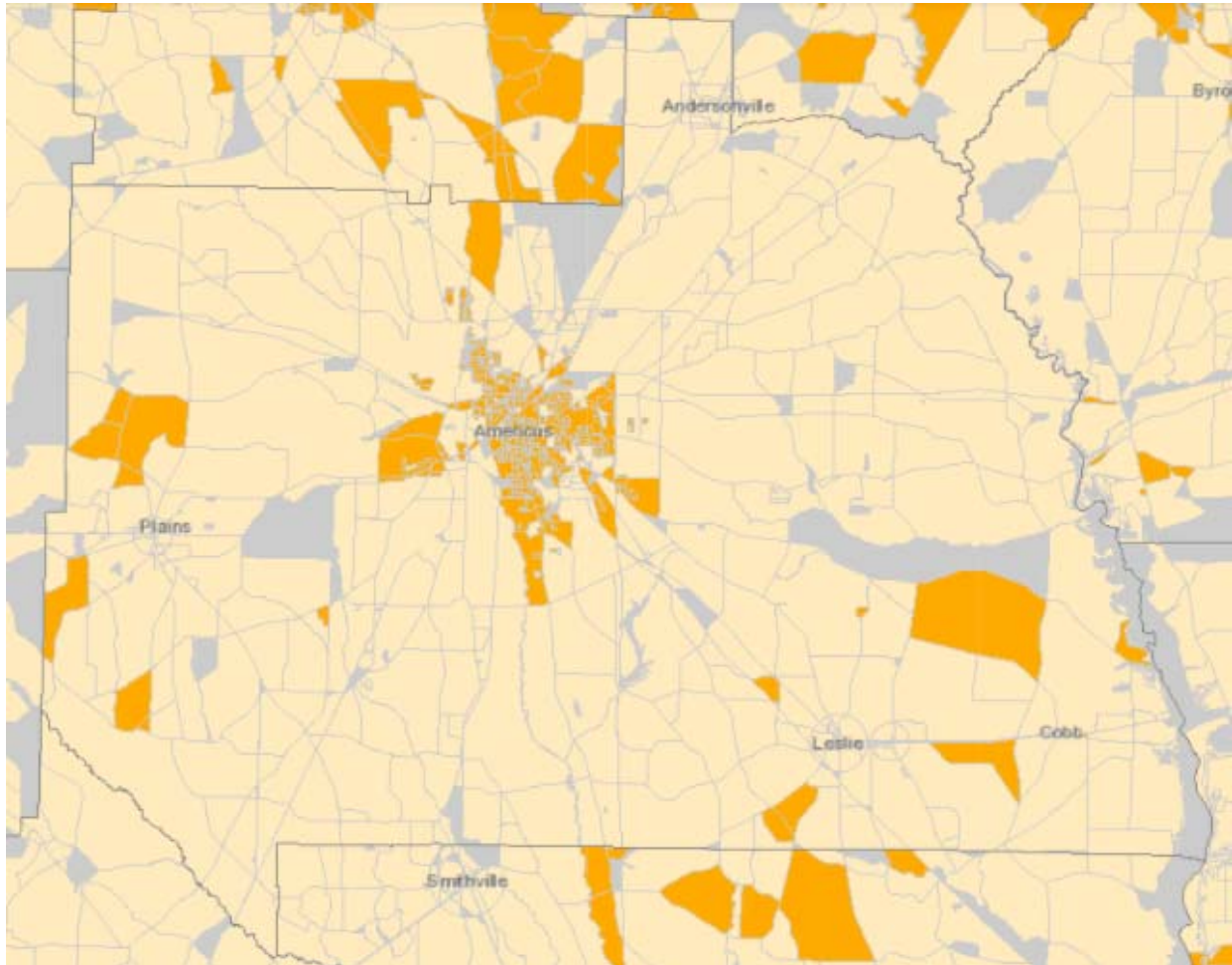
The data used to create the map depict where broadband service is available to at least ONE consumer (whether residential or business) per census block. The map presents every location in the census block as having service, even if there is only one internet consumer in the block. By this standard, the graphic may very well over-estimate broadband service availability, particularly in areas with large census blocks. Nevertheless, this map depicts those areas of the county where fixed, terrestrial broadband services are available with minimum threshold download speeds of 25 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps, and where the minimum service level will be targeted.

The accompanying graphics represent areas which are and are not served at the Initiatives’ threshold speed of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps in yellow. Sumter County has 7,003 Census Blocks with no

⁷ June 2020 data from the Georgia Broadband Initiative’s *2020 Broadband Report* and *Unserved Georgia Map*.

broadband service, and 38% of the population lives in unserved areas. There are 11,563 locations with broadband access at the minimum service level, primarily within the City of Americus.

Broadband Availability in Sumter County



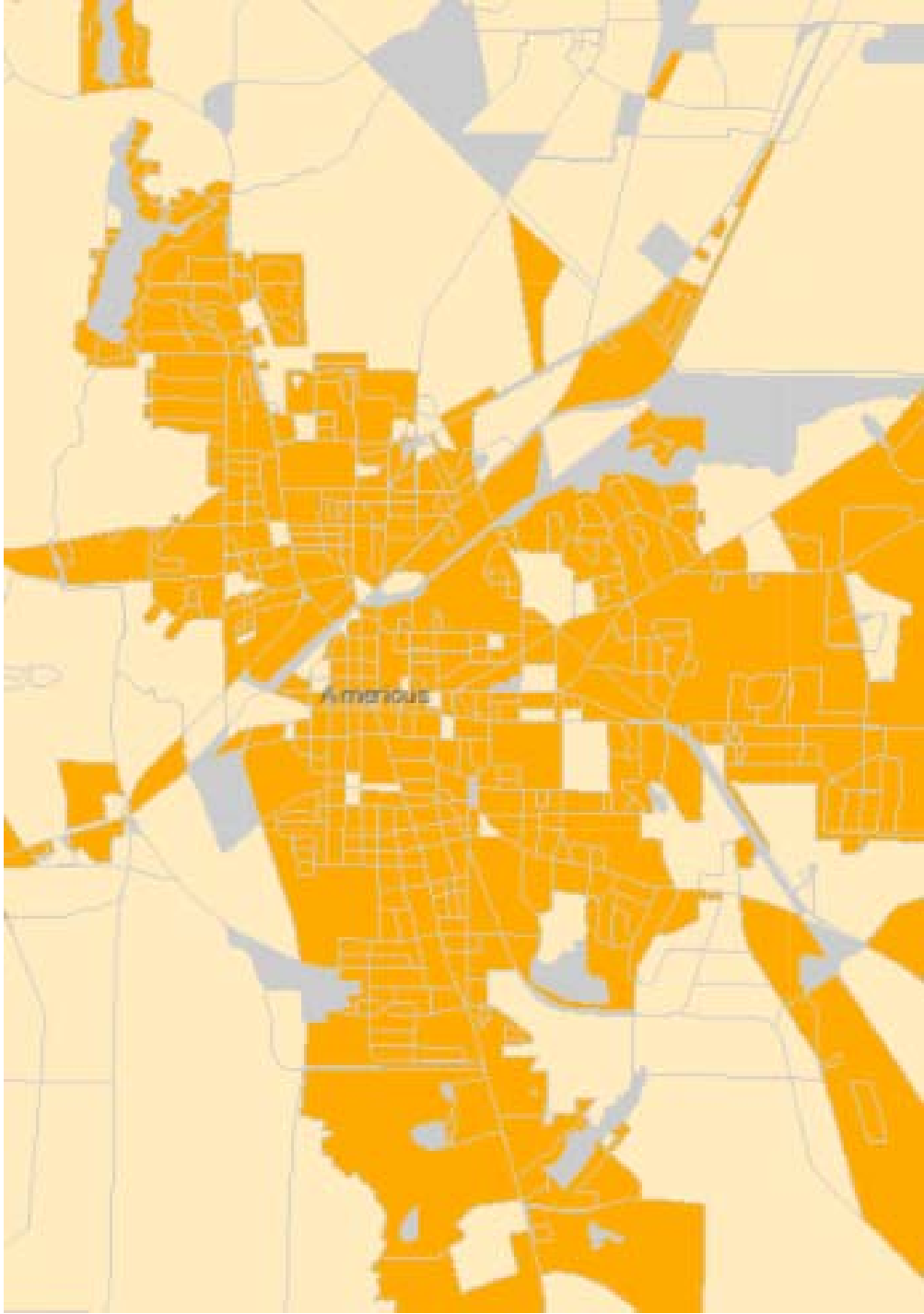
Broadband Availability in Sumter County

■ Served ■ Unserved ■ No Locations

County statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, and where the broadband service is available to more than 80% of locations in a census block. Census blocks that did not meet this definition are delineated as 'Unserved'. The map depicts access to broadband, not subscription to broadband. Broadband data is provided by the various Internet service providers of Georgia. Location data are from commercially available sources.

Source: Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, June 2021.

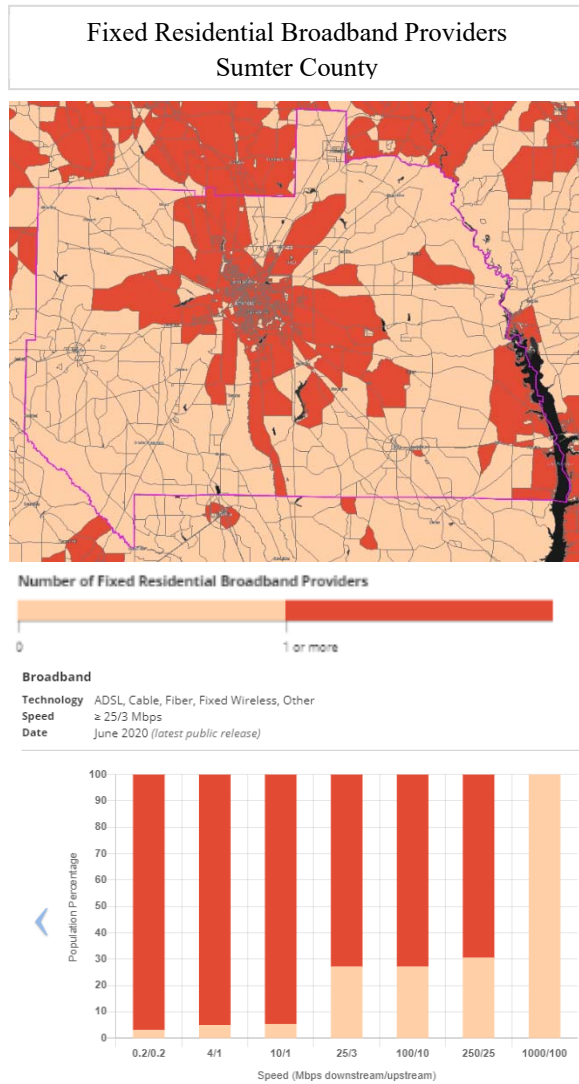
Broadband Availability in Americus



■ Served ■ Unserved ■ No Locations

Source: Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, June 2021.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Fixed Broadband Deployment Area Summary Map (December, 2019) shows fixed terrestrial broadband (ADSL, Cable, Fiber, and Fixed Wireless) service at the minimum level is available to 73% of the population from at least one provider, leaving 27% of the population with no fixed residential broadband service at the threshold level.



Source: Federal Communications Commission Fixed Broadband Deployment Area Summary Map (December, 2019 latest public release).

Asymmetric digital subscriber line (ADSL) broadband service is not available at the 25 Mbps/3 Mbps level. Even at slower, below-threshold speeds, ADSL is only offered by one provider. A single provider offers 10 Mbps/1 Mbps and 4 Mbps/1 Mbps to 19% of the population and .2 Mbps/.2 Mbps to 81% of the population. ADSL is a type of digital subscriber line technology that enables faster data transmission over copper telephone lines than a conventional voiceband modem can provide.

One cable provider offers service to 73% of the population at all speeds below 1000/100 Mbps. One offers cable at 250 Mbps/25 Mbps to 70% of the population. Cable internet service is provided over cable television infrastructure.

As of December 2019, the FCC had no registered fiber service, although fiber is currently being deployed in several areas that will be reflected in the next update of the map. Fiber-optic communication is the transmission of voice and data via pulses of light through an optical fiber.

Two providers offer fixed wireless service at 100 Mbps/10 Mbps 25 Mbps/3 Mbps to .6% of the population. A single provider offers 10 Mbps/1 Mbps to 23% of the population, 4 Mbps/1 Mbps to 29% of the population, and 0.2 Mbps/0.2 Mbps service to 29% of the population. Fixed wireless is internet communication between two sites or

buildings without satellite or telephone infrastructure.

Two satellite providers offer 25 Mbps/3 Mbps residential service or above to 100% of Sumter County, with a third offering service below the threshold.

Broadband Providers Reporting Service in one or more Sumter County Census Tracts

Provider	Tech	Down (Mbps)	Up (Mbps)
Mediacom Communications Corp.	Cable	1000	50
Mediacom Communications Corp.	Cable	100	10
ViaSat, Inc.	Satellite	35	3
Hughes Network Systems, LLC	Satellite	25	3
AT&T Inc. BellSouth	Fixed Wireless	10	5
Citizens Telephone Company, Inc.	ADSL	10	1
Public Service Communications, Inc.	Fixed Wireless	8	1
AT&T Inc. BellSouth	ADSL	6	.512
VSAT Systems, LLC	Satellite	2	1.3

Source: Federal Communications Commission Fixed Broadband Deployment Location Summary Map, (December, 2019 latest public release). Note: Services not available from all providers at all in every Census Tract.

With so many residents not served by the Initiative’s minimum threshold service level or lacking a choice of providers, the community needs to be positioned to facilitate, and to take advantage of any opportunity to facilitate, enhanced service delivery. By reducing obstacles to infrastructure investment and streamlining permitting processes, the community expects to be well-positioned for future funding and partnerships that will support deployment at the level necessary for business, education, healthcare, agriculture, and overall quality of life.

VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Vision Statement

We envision Americus-Sumter County as a vibrant, culturally diverse community with an excellent educational system, a well-balanced transportation network, a proper balance of industry, retail, restaurants, corporations and housing stock that provide quality development for the places we live, work, learn and play. We will use our land, make public investments and manage our natural and cultural resources in a manner that encourages growth that is both economically viable and environmentally responsible in order to build a robust future for all citizens.

Community Objectives

This section is organized with a broad statement defining each community planning objective followed by policies to guide project implementation. The objectives, created by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and known as “Quality Community Objectives,” were “adapted from generally accepted community development principles” (Quality Community Objectives Fact Sheet, Georgia Department of Community Affairs). Americus and Sumter County have reviewed, adopted and used these objectives as a framework for the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The policies accompanying each objective were developed by Americus and Sumter County in response to community identified Needs and Opportunities. Together these objectives and policies will aid community leaders in making local government decisions that affect the county’s future land use patterns, environmental and historical resources, economic development and overall quality of life.

Economic Prosperity

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Americus and Sumter County should partner with the Sumter County Chamber, One Sumter Foundation, SCDA, SGTC, GSW and other entities to develop a strategy for business/ industrial retention and recruitment.*
- *Assist in securing funding for economic development activities.*
- *Identify untapped markets in the economy of Americus and Sumter County and actively recruit businesses to fill those gaps.*
- *Support partnerships between GSW and SGTC to improve training of workforce and development of new businesses in Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Identify entrepreneurs in Americus and Sumter County and assist them with business development.*
- *Ensure Americus and Sumter County have the facilities and services in place to retain existing businesses and recruit new businesses.*
- *Identify new uses for and actively recruit developers for underutilized buildings and sites in Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Improve the variety of retail offerings in downtown Americus, the city at-large and Sumter County by promoting available financial incentives to entrepreneurs.*
- *Identify areas where mid-level neighborhood retail would be feasible and appropriate.*
- *Support the Main Street program and its initiatives.*
- *Enlarge the CBD to provide more businesses with the services and benefits of the Main Street program.*
- *Support the Americus-Sumter County Tourism Board and its initiatives.*



Main Street Downtown Americus



Agritourism in South Georgia



Little Brothers Bistro
Americus, GA

- *Market Americus and Sumter County statewide.*
- *Identify business incentive programs offered by the state and federal governments that would best benefit Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Partner with local businesses, the Sumter County Chamber, One Sumter Foundation, SCDA, SGTC, GSW, and other entities to develop a young professionals program that will provide internships, mentoring opportunities and networking aimed at retaining graduates and recruiting the brightest workers in Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Partner with local businesses, WIOA, the Sumter County Chamber, One Sumter Foundation, SCDA, SGTC, GSW, and other entities to provide internships and mentoring opportunities to assist in the development of soft skills in the workforce.*
- *Support GSW and SGTC in the location of college facilities downtown.*
- *Recruit and develop businesses that will support healthy lifestyles, bicycle tourism and eco-tourism initiatives.*
- *Support the agriculture industry and agri-tourism initiatives in Americus and Sumter County.*

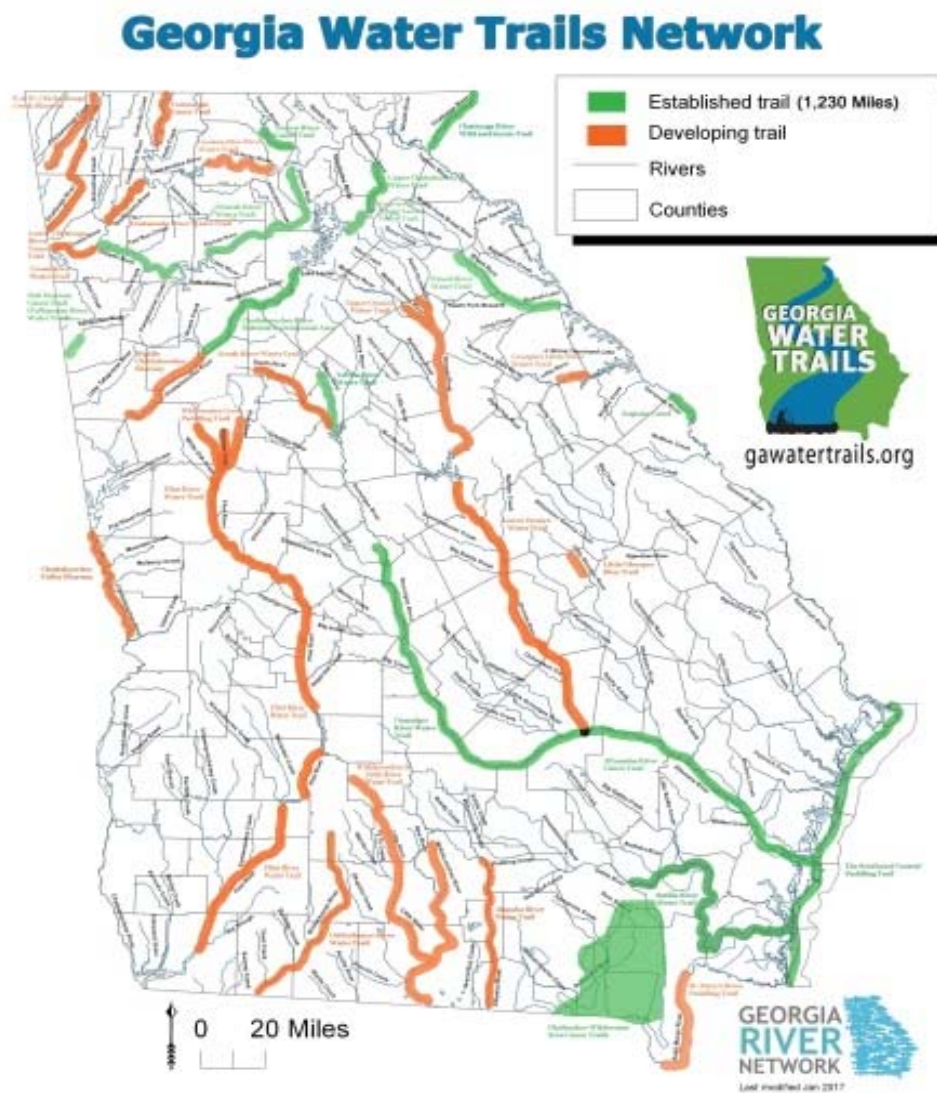
Resource Management

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Ensure EPD Part V ordinances are up to date.*
- *Encourage conservation of water in Americus and Sumter County by providing information on the importance of water quality to the people, businesses and industries of the area.*
- *Partner with local and state organizations that focus on natural resources conservation to develop educational programs for property owners and local schools.*
- *Assist in securing funding for natural resources conservation.*
- *Monitor areas of dense housing and development in the county to identify which areas would benefit from installation or expansion of utilities to improve water quality.*
- *Identify and enhance areas of natural beauty and scenic views to attract tourism.*

- *Determine the feasibility of developing water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and Muckalee Creek.*
- *Provide information to property owners regarding state and federal financial incentives for natural resources conservation.*
- *Encourage the use of alternate energy sources by providing information on financing and installation to property owners.*



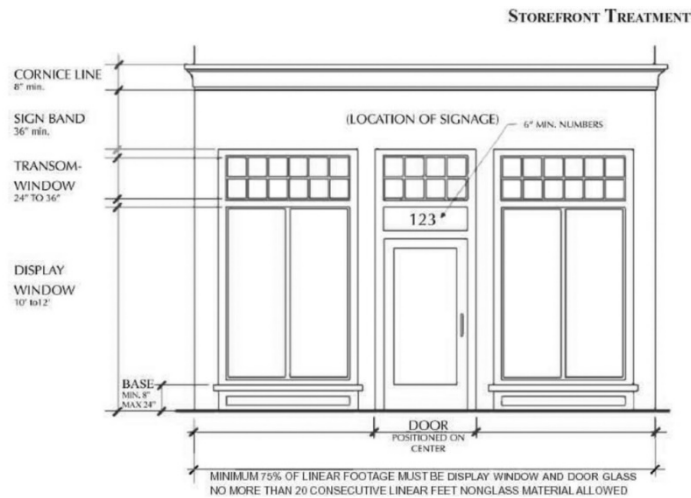
Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community, designing new development

to minimize the amount of land consumed, carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure, or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Ensure all codes and ordinances are up to date and reflect current state law and legal practices.*
- *Implement the work items found in the Urban Redevelopment Plan.*
- *Determine feasibility of form-based codes versus conventional zoning for downtown Americus.*
- *Determine the need for new equipment (vehicles, computers, color copier) and software to better manage zoning and code enforcement cases.*
- *Assist in securing funding for land use initiatives.*
- *Continue to pursue, promote and encourage relationships with all jurisdictions in Sumter County regarding growth and development concerns.*
- *Consider preservation of agricultural resources when making land use decisions.*
- *Support the Land Bank Authority and the Urban Redevelopment Agency in their efforts to revitalize blighted properties in Americus and Sumter County*



Example of form-based code illustration for a downtown

Local Preparedness

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Identify potential uses for the fairgrounds and support revitalization of the space.*
- *Assist in securing funding for facilities and services provided by the local governments to the residents of Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Develop recreational facilities for residents of Americus and Sumter County as needed.*
- *Monitor areas of dense housing and development in the county to identify which areas would benefit from installation or expansion of utilities.*
- *Ensure first responders have necessary training and equipment to guarantee the safety of the residents of Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Review pay scale for first responders and support necessary pay increases to improve recruitment and reduce turnover in the departments.*
- *Determine the feasibility of using existing agricultural irrigation systems as water points for the county fire department to improve ISO rating.*
- *Continue to cooperate with the Georgia Department of Transportation in the design and implementation of projects along state and federal routes.*
- *Maintain, improve and/or expand existing utility systems in the city.*
- *Develop a maintenance schedule for infrastructure.*
- *Maintain and improve community-owned buildings.*
- *Create an integrated web portal for all community entities.*



Sumter County Rec. Facility

Sense of Place

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Promote the identification, protection and enhancement of historic properties.*
- *Ensure that historic buildings in downtown Americus and in the locally designated Americus Historic District are well-maintained.*

- *Assist in securing funding for historic preservation activities.*
- *Determine best uses for, rehabilitate and utilize vacant historic buildings.*
- *Provide information regarding state and federal financial incentives for owners of historic properties.*
- *Communicate regularly with the park rangers, Southwest Georgia Railroad Excursion Authority, DNR, state legislators and federal representatives regarding the importance of the National Parks in Sumter County, their mission and their effect on the local economy.*



Downtown Americus by Allen Forrest

Regional Cooperation

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *All jurisdictions within Sumter County should partner to complete projects, accomplish goals and promote fiscal responsibility that benefits the residents of Sumter County and each jurisdiction.*
- *Determine better means of communication between local civic groups, youth development organizations, groups that respond to specific community needs, and diverse social, economic and racial groups to improve decision making.*
- *Identify the best way to inform the community of local government decisions and to engage the community in planning efforts and volunteering for civic projects.*
- *Participate in regional planning efforts promoted by the River Valley Regional Commission and other regional organizations.*



Americus and Sumter Comprehensive Planning Meeting 2017

Housing Options

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Support development of a variety of housing options to create an optimal balance of housing types between owner-occupied and rental units.*
- *Partner with state and federal agencies to provide information to local residents regarding housing resources.*
- *Assist in securing funding for housing activities.*
- *Support the increase in density of residential development where feasible.*
- *Encourage the development/redevelopment of the area around Lake Blackshear to optimize the return on community investment.*
- *Continue rehabilitation of houses in and near the historic district.*
- *Encourage rehabilitation of historic buildings in Americus and Sumter County through providing information on state and federal grants and incentives.*
- *Support housing downtown to assist in revitalizing the central business district.*
- *Establish mixed-use/mixed-income neighborhood developments where feasible.*



Example of Live/Work Development

Transportation Options

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Maintain and improve transportation infrastructure as needed.*
- *Develop bike lanes and trails to encourage alternative means of transport, healthy living and tourism throughout Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Connect important locations in Americus and Sumter County by well-maintained sidewalks and pedestrian trails to provide residents with alternate ways to get around the community.*
- *Support the Americus-GSW bike share program.*
- *Improve major gateways into Americus and Sumter County with landscaping.*
- *Encourage appropriate design and placement of wayfinding signage throughout Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Improve streetscapes in Americus to encourage bicycle and pedestrian access and revitalize business districts.*
- *Improve connectivity and walkability of Americus by linking important and desirable locations and resources for pedestrians and bicyclists.*
- *Link GA 377 to GA 49 and US 19 among other bicycle routes to be designated creating a pedestrian-bicycle tourism corridor.*



Example of Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathway



Example of a Share row for bicycle paths



Americus Bike to Work Day

- *Provide information regarding public transportation routes and services to residents by placing posters and brochures in places where people gather (i.e., grocery stores, post offices, churches, schools, libraries, etc.).*
- *Provide information regarding public transportation routes and services to students by placing posters and brochures in places where students gather.*
- *Optimize the use of the airport by maintaining facilities and improving services as necessary.*
- *Optimize the use of the railroads in Americus and Sumter County for freight, tourism and economic development.*
- *Coordinate identified transportation issues between Americus, Sumter County and the One Sumter Foundation.*
- *Work with businesses and industry within the community on transportation issues.*

Educational Opportunities

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



Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Support the efforts of the Sumter County Board of Education, local colleges and universities, and other local organizations in the efforts to reduce the high school dropout rate and increase education attainment among students in Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Support the efforts of local organizations to increase parental involvement in the school system.*
- *Partner with local businesses, the Sumter County Chamber, One Sumter Foundation, SCDA, SGTC, GSW, and other entities to develop programming that will provide internships and mentoring opportunities for students in Americus and Sumter County.*
- *Support the Board of Education in their development of a College and Career Academy.*
- *Partner with the WIOA program, local colleges and universities, and other local groups to provide more job training opportunities.*
- *Partner with local colleges and universities and other organizations to ensure facilities for the GED program are sufficient.*
- *Support GSW and SGTC in the coordination of program initiatives.*
- *Support the GSW application to become a Carnegie Community Engaged University.*



Community Health

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

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Provide information on Phoebe-Sumter Health and Wellness programming at local government offices.*
- *Support Phoebe-Sumter in the effort to improve access to health education, testing supplies, and assessments for at-risk populations.*
- *Support Phoebe-Sumter in the recruitment for healthcare providers.*
- *Support the efforts of local organizations to improve access to healthy foods and to educate residents on nutrition management.*
- *Support the efforts of local organizations to provide programming and opportunities on healthy activities and life choices.*
- *Support the Sumter County Health Department and their initiatives to improve the lives of Americus and Sumter County residents.*

Quality of Life

Enhance daily living with wholesome food and clean air and water, enjoyment of unfettered open spaces and bodies of water, conservation of wildlife and natural resources, security from crime, and protection from toxic substances.

Americus and Sumter County Policies

- *Ensure local law enforcement has needed equipment and training.*
- *Support partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and other local groups with initiatives to reduce the crime rate.*
- *Enhance public spaces with amenities to encourage social interaction among residents.*
- *Engage the community in planning efforts and volunteering through regular active communication.*



COMMUNITY SPRING CLEAN

"Keep America Beautiful" Campaign

Saturday, May 21, 2016 @ 9:30 a.m.



Meeting Location:
City Hall/Municipal Building
101 West Lamar Street
(Parking Lot)

Gloves, Vests, &
Trash Bags
will be provided

Please wear a t-shirt of the organization you represent.
The organization that has the most volunteers will
receive \$100 in Downtown Dollars!

To sign up, call the Main Street office at
229-924-4411 ext. 247 or email qwillis@americusga.gov.

Volunteer City Clean Up Event Americus, GA



Bike to Work Event; Rylander Park.
Americus, GA

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS 2023-2027

Sumter County Community Work Program 2023 - 2027

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Community Facilities				
Keep website current	2023-2027	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund
Replace County Fire Department Main Office	2023-2024	Fire Chief	≤\$2.4M	SPLOST
Replace self-contained breathing apparatus	2023-2027	Fire Chief	\$200K/yr	FEMA-SAFER
Replace fire apparatus (8)	2025-2027	Fire Chief	\$1.25M/yr	SPLOST
Replacement site and station for fire station #6	2023-2024	Fire Chief	≤\$750K	SPLOST General Fund
Perform feasibility study for providing water service into selected unincorporated areas	2024-2025	County Administrator	\$5K	General Fund
Relocate Elections Office to One-Stop facility <small>(Carried over from Human Services One-Stop- Shop / Elections)</small>	2024	BOC	\$50K	General Fund
Replace basketball goals Columns @ Boone Park	2023	Recreation Department	\$70K	SPLOST
Sumter County playgrounds/parks improvements	2022-2023	Recreation Department	\$171K	SPLOST
Demolish pool/pool building @ Boone Park, replace with smaller swimming pool	2023	Recreation Department	\$305K	SPLOST General Fund

Replace aging gymnastics equipment	2027	Recreation Department	\$100K	General Fund
Adopt a broadband ordinance	2023	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund
Secure “Broadband Ready Community” designation	2023	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund
Pursue funding and/or provide services to facilitate enhanced broadband service availability	2023	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Economic Development

Facilitate economic and residential development through service delivery, financial packaging, etc.	2023 - 2027	County Administrator	TBD	OneGeorgia CDBG USDA
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Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Housing

Maintain building codes and land use ordinances supportive of the housing stock	2023-2027	Code Enforcement	\$50,000/yr	Department Budget
Pursue housing and housing-related assistance (water, drainage, road, etc)	2023-2027	County Administrator	≤\$1M per	CDBG CHIP USDA

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Land Use

Review and update zoning ordinance	2025	Planning & Zoning	TBD	Department Budget
Prepare and adopt an urban redevelopment plan	2023-2024	Planning & Zoning	\$12,000	Department Budget
Create Urban Redevelopment Authority	2024	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund
Update Comprehensive Plan	2027	County Administrator	Staff Time	Not applicable

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Law Enforcement

Replace patrol vehicles (10) each year	2023-2027	Sheriff	\$400K/yr	S O Budget
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Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Natural and Cultural Resources

Update the County Historic Resources Survey <small>Previously Countywide Historic Resources Survey</small>	2026	County Administrator	\$150,000	Historic Preservation Grant General Fund
Reinvigorate the Keep Sumter Beautiful Program	2023 -2024	County Administrator	\$5,000	General Fund
Conduct a feasibility study regarding water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and Muckalee Creek.	2025-2027	County Administrator	TBD	General Fund

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Transportation

(Designate) additional bicycle lanes (routes)	2023-2024	Public Works	Staff Time	General Fund
Replace road maintenance equipment	2023-2027	Public Works	\$100K/yr	TSPLOST
Pave county roadways	2023-2027	Public Works	\$500K/yr	TSPLOST LMIG
Resurface county roadways	2023-2027	Public Works	\$2.5M/yr	TSPLOST LMIG

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Intergovernmental Coordination

Increase the number of civic leadership meetings held annually	2025	County Administrator	Staff Time	General Fund
Explore economies of scale in bulk procurement of goods and services	2023-2027	County Administrator	TBD	TBD based on project

Americus Community Work Program 2023 – 2027

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Community Facilities				
Replace and upgrade city website with links-keep contents current	2023-2027	City Manager	Staff Time	General Fund
Implement CodeRed emergency alert/communications system	2023	Mayor	TBA	General Fund
Purchase emergency generators (±13)	2023-2024	Public Works Director	\$115K	General Fund GEMA
Purchase sewer vacuum truck	2023	Public Works Director	\$500K	General Fund
Replace asbestos/concrete water mains (7 miles)	2024-2027	Public Works Director	\$4M	General Fund
Remove metal surfaces from water services (2024 mandate)	2023-2025	Public Works Director	\$1.75M	General Fund
Install filtration system-Well #11	2023	Public Works Director	>\$1M	General Fund
Replace belt presser machine at WWTP	2024-2025	Public Works Director	\$600K	General Fund
Replace four gear boxes at WWTP	2023	Public Works Director	\$75K	General Fund

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Economic Development

Host more community events downtown through the Main Street Program	2023-2027	MainStreet Dir. Tourism Board	TBD	Hotel/Motel Tax
Perform a market study for downtown Americus	2025	MainStreet Dir.	TBD	Hotel/Motel Tax
Facilitate economic and residential development through service delivery, financial packaging, etc .	2023-2027	City Manager	TBD	OneGeorgia CDBG USDA

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Housing

Establish mixed-use/ mixed-income neighborhood developments	2024-2027	Community & Economic Dev	TBD	Private Investment Local Incentive
Maintain strong building and land use code enforcement to insure well-maintained housing	2023-2027	Building Risk Management	Staff Time	General Fund
Pursue housing and/or housing-related activities (water, sewer, drainage, street)	2023, 2025, 2027	Planning and Zoning	≤\$1.25M ea.	CDBG CHIP USDA

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Land Use

Review/update Future Land Use Map	2027	Planning and Zoning	Staff Time	General Fund
Review/update zoning ordinance	2023-2024	Planning and Zoning	Staff Time	General Fund

Update the code of ordinances for alignment with the current form of municipal government	2023-2024	City Manager City Clerk	\$50K	General Fund
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Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Natural and Cultural Resources

Update the City's Historic Resources Survey <small>Previously Countywide Historic Resources Survey</small>	2025-2026	Community and Economic Dev	±\$200K	Historic Preservation Fund General Fund
Reinvigorate the Elevate visibility of Keep Sumter Beautiful Program	2023-2027	Public Works Director	Staff Time	General Fund
Designate water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and create a Muckalee Creek Kayak Trail and Rec Area	2025-2027	Community and Economic Dev	TBD	DNR General Fund
Replace basketball goals in Columns @ Boone Park	2023	Sumter Recreation Department	\$70K	SPLOST
Demolish pool and pool building @ Boone Park, replace with smaller swimming pool	2023	Sumter Recreation Department	\$305K	SPLOST General Fund
Replace aging gymnastics equipment	2023	Sumter Recreation Department	\$100K	General Fund

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Intergovernmental Coordination

Review and, as needed, update Intergovernmental Agreements	2023-2027	City Manager	Staff Time	General Fund
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Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
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Transportation

Catch basin rehabilitation	2024-2027>	Public Works Director	≥\$1M	General Fund
Street resurfacing and related drainage (Complete Streets)	2023-2027	Public Works Director	\$500K/yr	TSPLOST LMIG
Increase the length of sidewalk and connectivity (Complete Streets)	2023-2027	Public Works Director	\$100K	General Fund TIA/LMIG
Sidewalk repair	2023-2027	Public Works Director	\$50K/year	General Fund
Designate additional bike lanes (Complete Streets)	2023-2027	City Manager	Staff Time	General Fund

CWP REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sumter County Report of Accomplishments 2017 - 2022

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
Community Facilities				
Keep information on the county's and city's website current and update services provided on the websites as feasible.	X			
Replace Main County Fire Department Office		2023-2024 better option delayed implementation		
Upgrade one bay fire stations in the county to two bay fire stations				Deleted not economically feasible
Continue build out at former Armory site to Establish an Emergency Operations Center	X			
Perform feasibility study for providing utilities to unincorporated areas		2024-2025 was not a pressing issue		
Purchase County Vehicles on Projected Schedule to accomplish Fleet Replenishment	X			
Replace Fair Grounds Facility as SPLOST Priority Project (roof, lighting, restrooms)	X			
Enhance Recreation Facilities as SPLOST Priority Project (batting cages, football/ soccer field, grassing)	X			

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort.

Human Services One-Stop-Shop / Elections (Elections carried over)	X			
Drainage mediation at the Lake Blackshear Library.	X			
Broadband Element adopted June, 2021				
Adopt a broadband ordinance	X			
Secure “Broadband Ready Community” designation		2022-2023 *		
Pursue funding and/or provide services to facilitate enhanced broadband service availability	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Economic Development

Complete a branding study for Sumter County tourism and downtown Americus	X			
Coordinate utilities study being done for Comm Devel with Econ Devel				Deleted no longer needed
Facilitate economic and residential development through <u>service delivery</u> , <u>financial packaging</u> , etc.	X **			

* Turnover in state staff delayed designation

** Eaton-Cooper

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
Housing				
Enforce building codes and land use ordinances to insure well-maintained housing.	X			
Seek CDBG and CHIP Funding	X			

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort.

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
Land Use				
Review/Update Future Land Use Map	X			
Review and update zoning ordinance and all other codes and ordinances as necessary.			2025 Covid	
Adopt Urban Redevelopment Plan			2023-2024 scheduled prematurely	
Create Urban Redevelopment Authority			2024 scheduled prematurely	

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
Natural and Cultural Resources				
Update the Countywide Historic Resources Survey carried over as County Historic Resource Survey			2026 funding, priorities	
Review and update required Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.	X			

Reinvigorate the Keep Sumter Beautiful Program			2023-2024 weightier issues	
Conduct a feasibility study regarding water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and Muckalee Creek.			2025-2027 not urgent	

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort.

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Transportation

Additional Bike Lanes		2023-2024 other priorities		
Complete all segments, including S. GA Tech. Pkwy. improvements, of truck route bypass of downtown Americus.	X			
District Line Road improvements.	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Intergovernmental Coordination

Review and update all Intergovernmental Agreements – as Needed	X			
Increase the number of civic leadership meetings held annually			2025 Covid interference	
Explore Economies of scale in purchasing / paving / shared services opportunities		2024 turnover in key staff		

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort.

City of Americus Report of Accomplishments 2017 – 2022

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Community Facilities

Keep information on the county's and city's website current and update services provided on the websites as feasible.	X			
Construct new training facility/burn tower for first responders	X			
Construct health and wellness upgrade to city gym.	X			
Construct live fire training facility	X			
Fire Protection Sprinkler System for city-owned buildings including the Municipal Building	X			
Purchase emergency generator	X			
Complete Eastview Cemetery beautification Phases 2 and 3	X			
Construct Fire Station #4	X ²			
Purchase engine for Fire Station #4	X ²			
Purchase sewer vac. truck	X			

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort.

² Assumed by the county.

AMENDMENT - MAY, 2021				
Prioritized, incremental upgrades to water system	X			
Prioritized, incremental upgrades to sanitary sewer system	X			
Prioritized, incremental upgrades to stormwater drainage system	X			
Prioritized, incremental upgrades to city streets	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Economic Development

Develop a larger farmer's market with a variety of goods downtown	X			
Host more community events downtown through the Main Street Program	X			
Recruit brewery	X			
Complete a branding study for Sumter County tourism and downtown Americus	X			
Perform a market study for downtown Americus				X Covid

¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Housing

Increase the number of sidewalks and connectivity	X			
Establish mixed-use/mixed-income neighborhood developments			2027 Covid low priority	
Increase “complete street” options for neighborhood residential	X			
Enforce building codes and land use ordinances to insure well-maintained housing.	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Land Use

Review/Update Future Land Use Map for all impacted governmental entities	X			
Review and update zoning ordinance and all other codes and ordinances as necessary.	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed Until	Not Accomplished
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Natural and Cultural Resources

Update the Countywide Historic Resources Survey carried over as City Historic Resource Survey	X		2027 funding, staffing, low priority	
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¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort

Review and update Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.	X			
Reinvigorate the Keep Sumter Beautiful Program	X ²			
Designate water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and create a Muckalee Creek Kayak Trail and Rec Area.			2027 Covid, lower priority	

² Americus initiative

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Intergovernmental Coordination

Review and update all Intergovernmental Agreements.	X			
Increase the number of civic leadership meetings held annually	X			

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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Education

Continue the Town and Gown program.				Deleted ²
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¹ Activity may be completed for the period but retained as part of a longer-term, continuing effort

² Wholesale turnover in program champions

Activity	Complete ¹	Underway	Postponed	Not Accomplished
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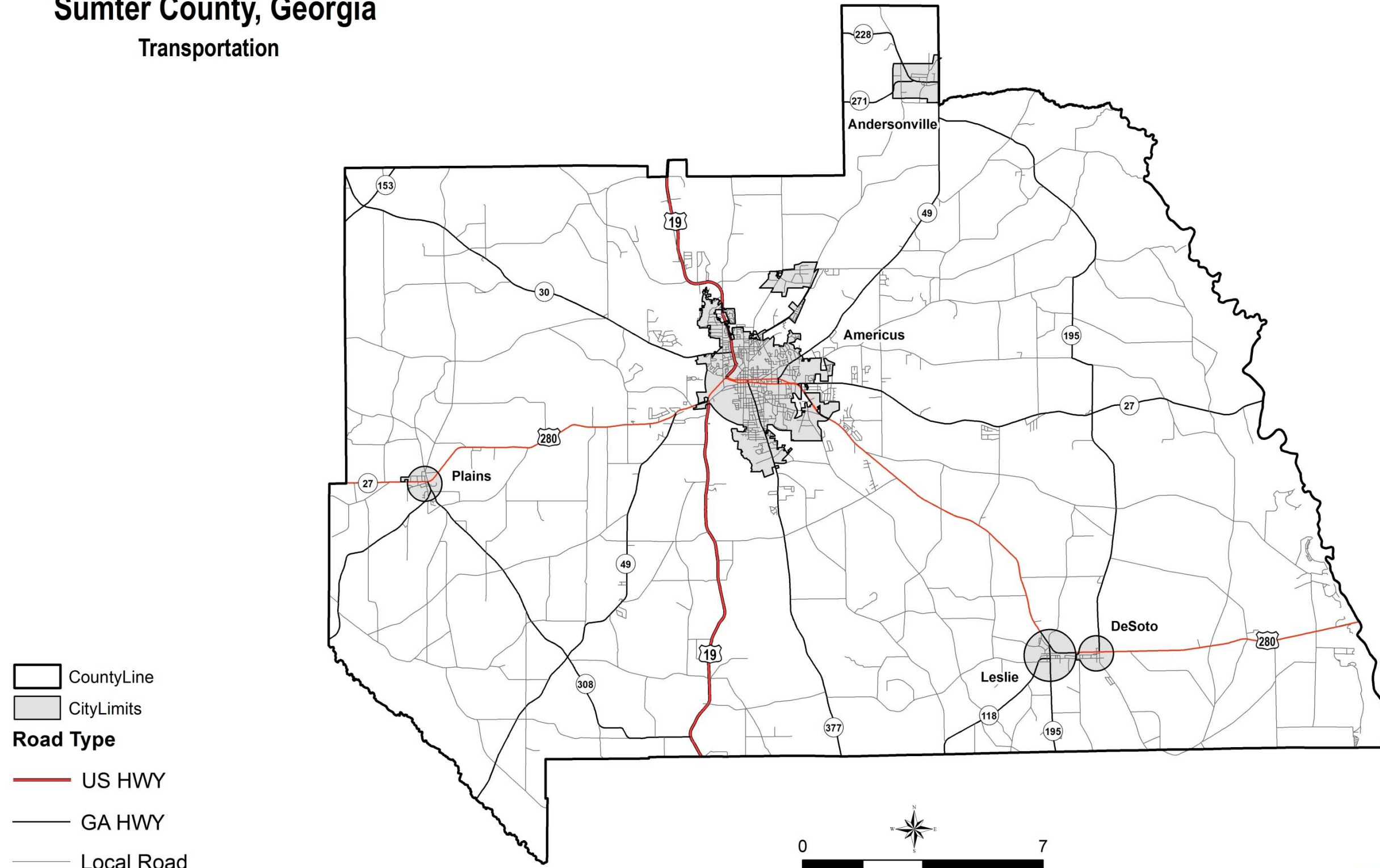
Transportation

Add bike lanes	X			
Evaluate popularity of bike share and enhance if necessary	X			

Conduct a traffic study in the downtown to identify areas in need of streetscape improvements	X			
Connect Downtown and the Hospital	X			
Complete truck route bypass of downtown		2027 Covid et.al.		
Improve U.S. Hwy 280	X			
TE project on U.S. Hwy 19	X			

Sumter County, Georgia

Transportation



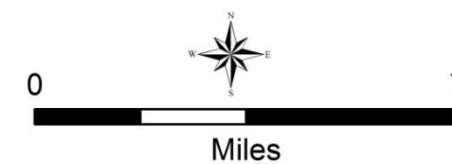
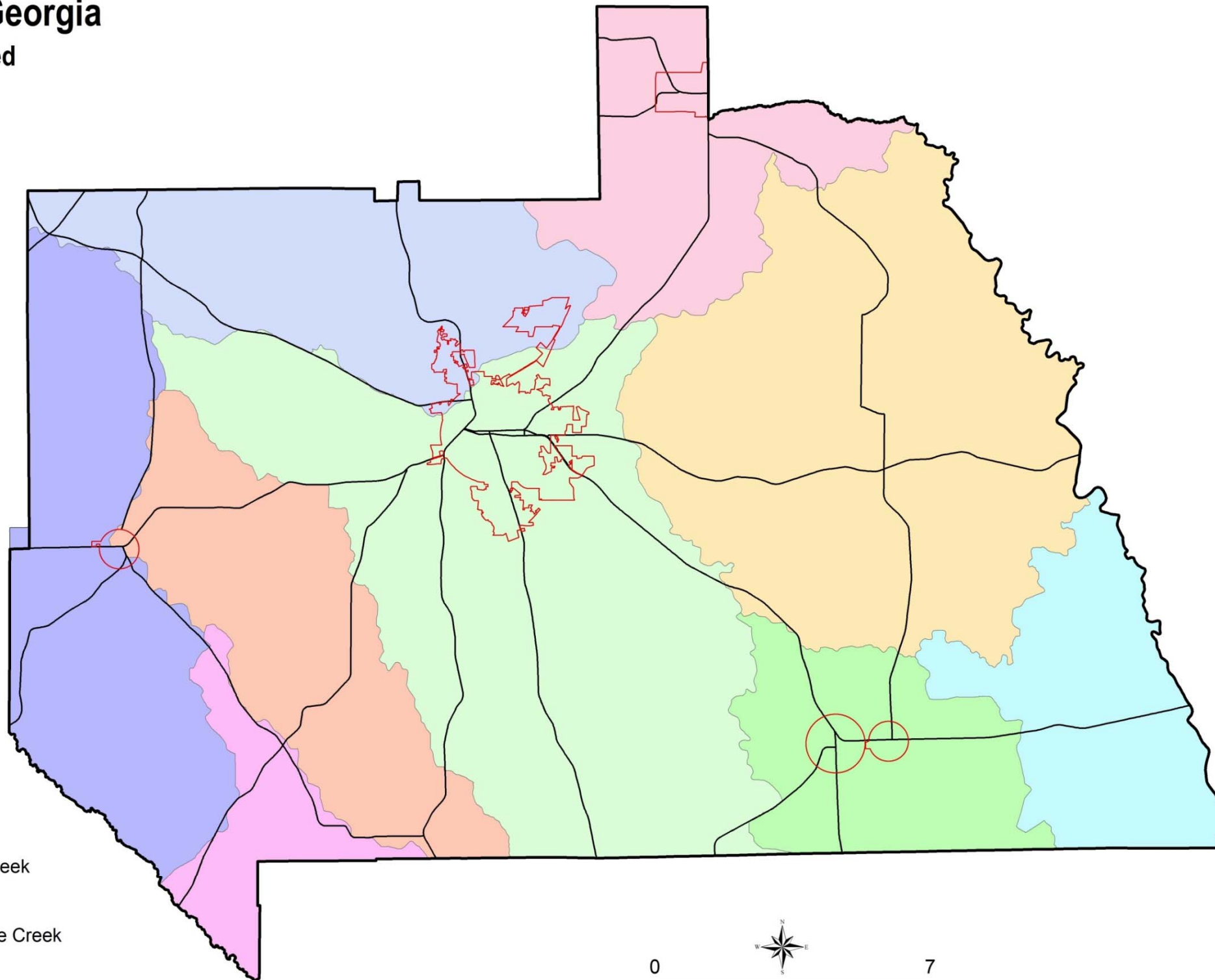
Sumter County, Georgia

HUC10 Watershed

-  CountyLine
-  CityLimits

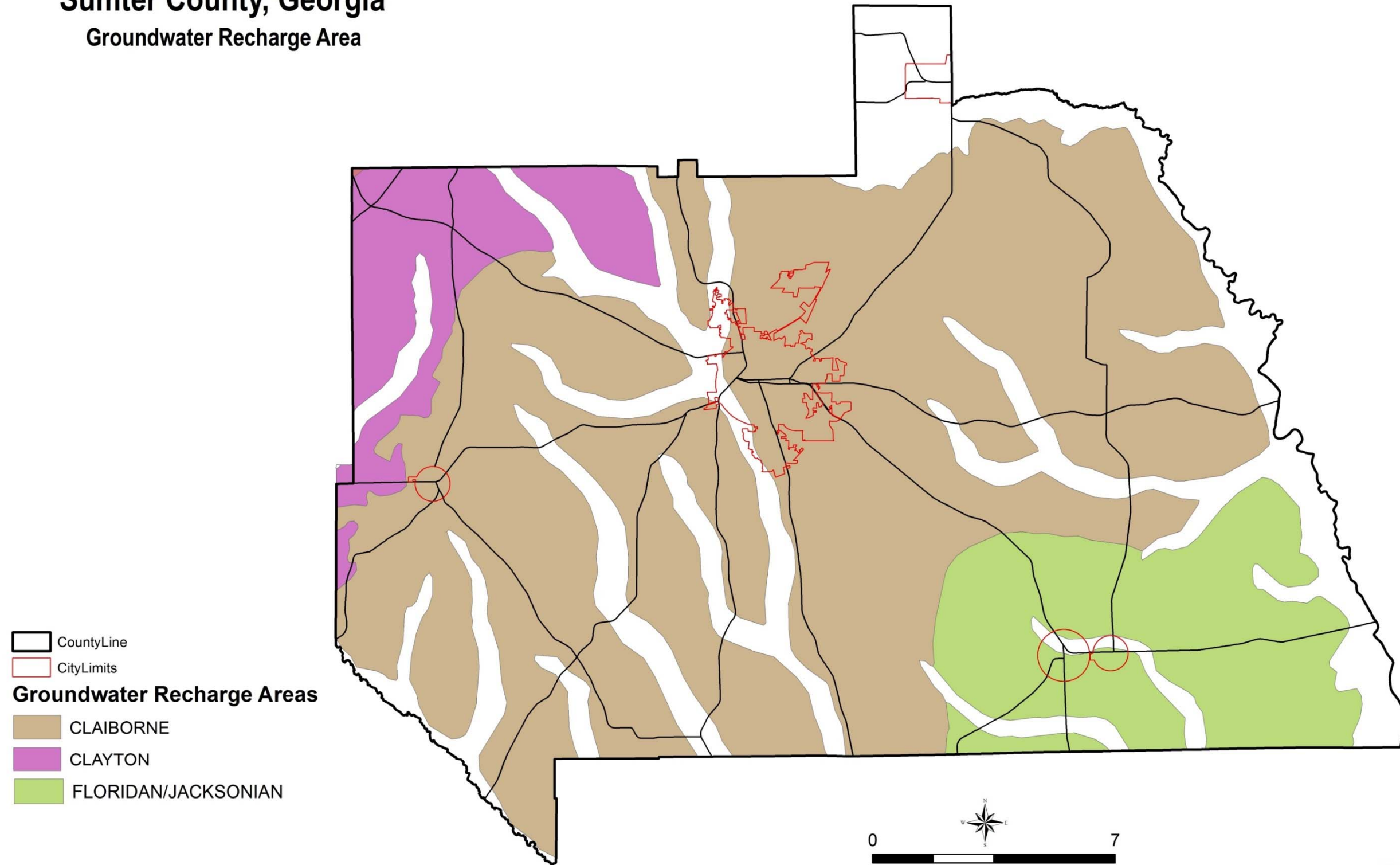
NAME

-  Flint River-Camp Creek
-  Flint River-Jones Creek
-  Flint River-Lake Blackshear
-  Flint River-Lime Creek
-  Kinch Creek-Choctahatchee Creek
-  Kinchafoonee Creek-middle
-  Muckalee Creek-Little Muckalee Creek
-  Muckalee Creek-Wolf Creek
-  Muckaloochee Creek

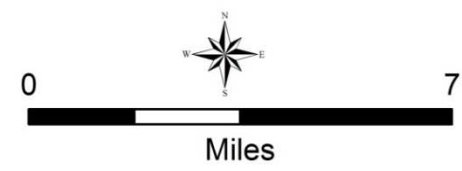


Sumter County, Georgia

Groundwater Recharge Area

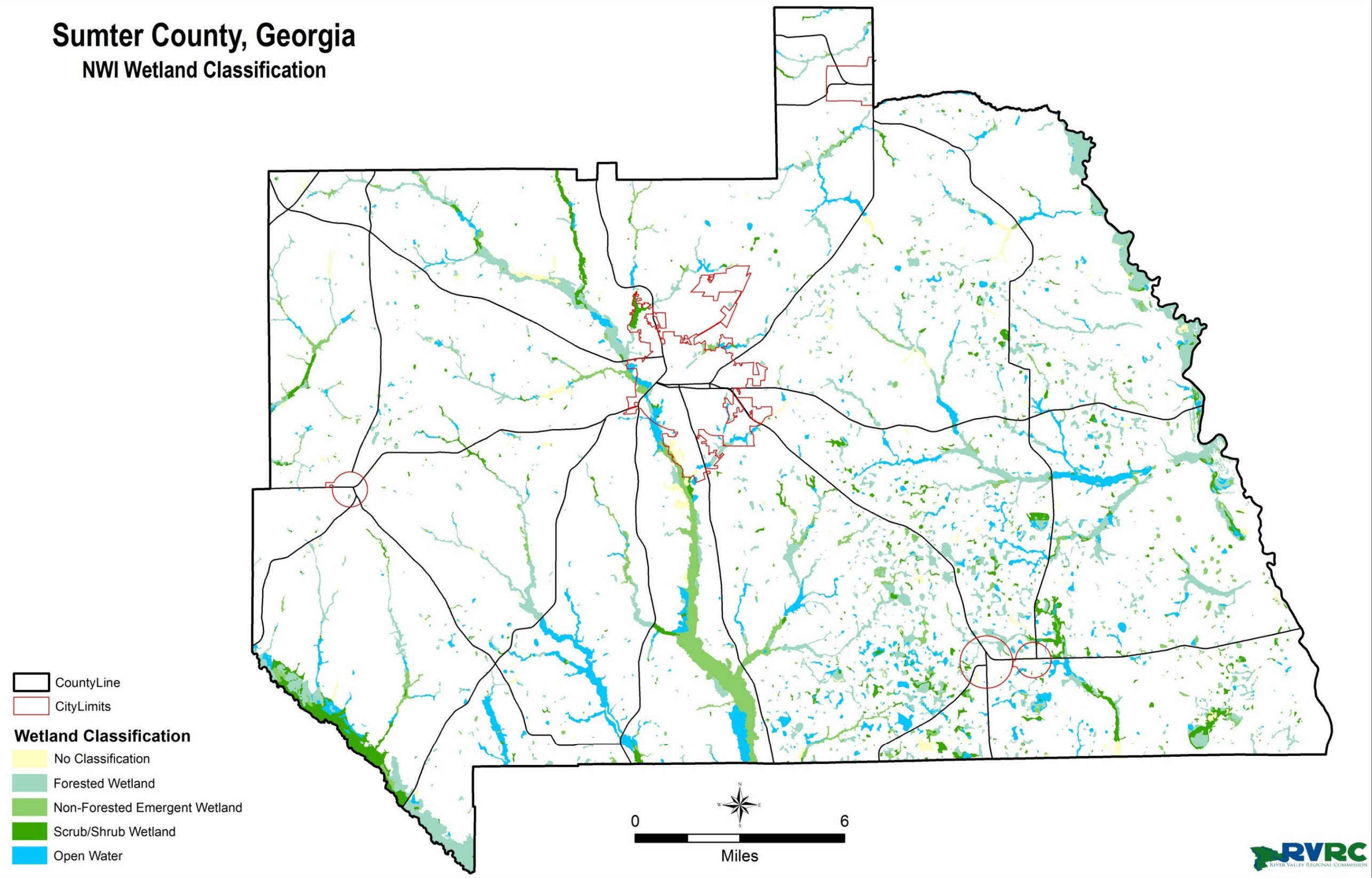


- CountyLine
- CityLimits
- Groundwater Recharge Areas**
- CLAIBORNE
- CLAYTON
- FLORIDAN/JACKSONIAN



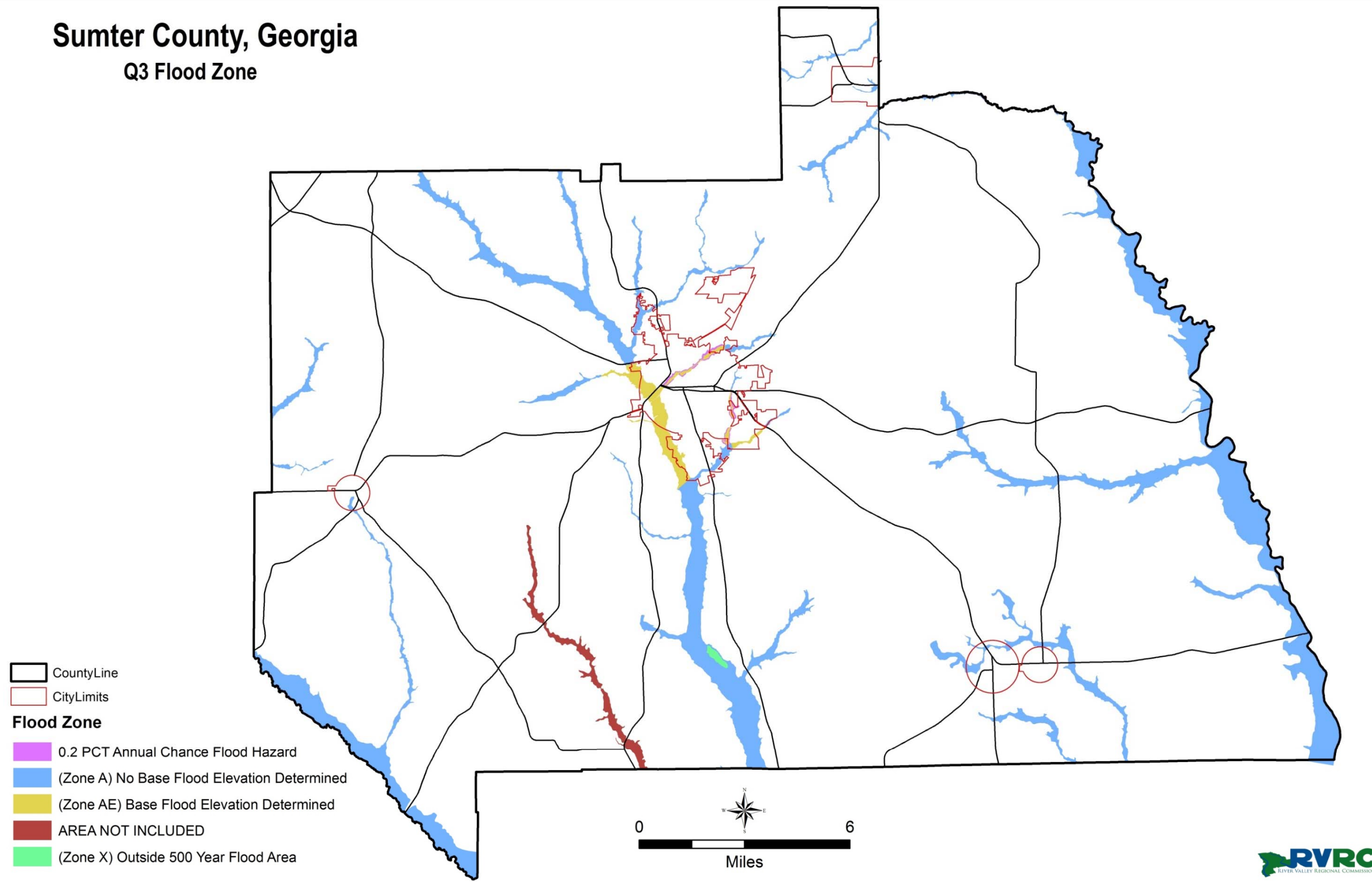
Sumter County, Georgia

NWI Wetland Classification



Sumter County, Georgia

Q3 Flood Zone



Sumter County, Georgia

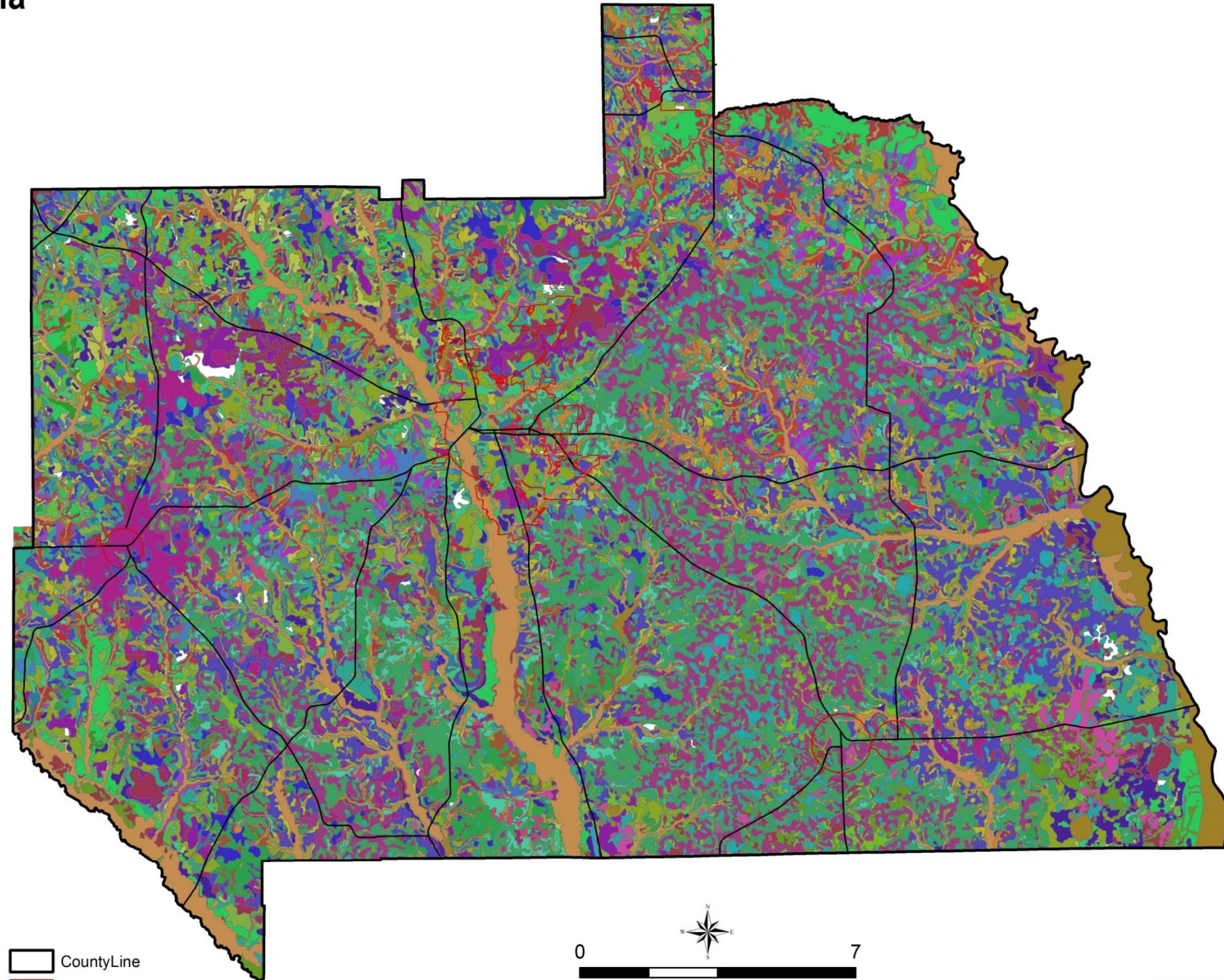
Soil Classification

Legend

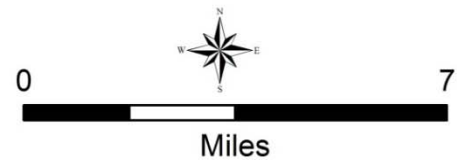
- ArB
- ArC
- ArD
- BP
- CoB2
- CoC2
- CoD2
- EvC2
- EvE
- FuA
- FuB2
- FuC2
- GoA
- GoB
- GoC2
- GqC3
- GqD3
- Grd
- Gt
- HdC
- HdE
- Ig
- Kib
- LMB
- LMC
- LMD
- LpC
- LpE
- NHA
- NhB
- LMD
- LpC
- LpE
- NHA
- NhB
- OeA
- OeB
- OeC2
- OeD2
- Oi
- RhA
- RhB
- RhC2
- RhD2
- Ros
- TuA
- TuB2
- TuC2
- VeB2
- VeC2
- VeE2
- W

SYMBOL	NAME
ArB	Americus loamy sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes
ArC	Americus loamy sand, 5 to 8 percent slopes
ArD	Americus loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes
CoB2	Carnegie sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded
CoC2	Carnegie sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
CoD2	Carnegie sandy loam, 8 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
Grd	Grady soils
EvC2	Esto complex, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
EvE	Esto complex, 8 to 17 percent slopes
FuA	Faceville sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
FuB2	Faceville sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded
FuC2	Faceville sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
GaA	Greenville sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
GaB	Greenville sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes
GaC2	Greenville sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
GaC3	Greenville sandy clay loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, severely eroded
GaD3	Greenville sandy clay loam, 8 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded
Grd	Grady soils
Gt	Goldsboro loamy sand
HdC	Henderson cherry sandy loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes
HdE	Henderson cherry sandy loam, 8 to 17 percent slopes
Ig	Ivington sandy loam
Kib	Kinston and Bibb soils *
LMB	Lucy loamy sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes
LMC	Lucy loamy sand, 5 to 8 percent slopes
LMD	Lucy loamy sand, 8 to 12 percent slopes
LpC	Lakeland sand, 0 to 8 percent slopes
LpE	Lakeland sand, 8 to 17 percent slopes
NHA	Norfolk loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes
NhB	Norfolk loamy sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes
OeA	Orangeburg loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes
OeB	Orangeburg loamy sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes
OeC2	Orangeburg loamy sand, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
OeD2	Orangeburg loamy sand, 8 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
Oi	Ochlocknee soils, local alluvium
RhA	Red Bay sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
RhB	Red Bay sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes
RhC2	Red Bay sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
RhD2	Red Bay sandy loam, 8 to 12 percent slopes, eroded
Ros	Rains sandy loam
TuA	Tifton sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
TuB2	Tifton sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded
TuC2	Tifton sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
VeB2	Vaucluse loamy sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded
VeC2	Vaucluse loamy sand, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded
VeE2	Vaucluse loamy sand, 8 to 17 percent slopes, eroded

* The composition of these units is more variable than that of other units in the survey area but has been controlled well enough to interpret for the expected use of the soils.

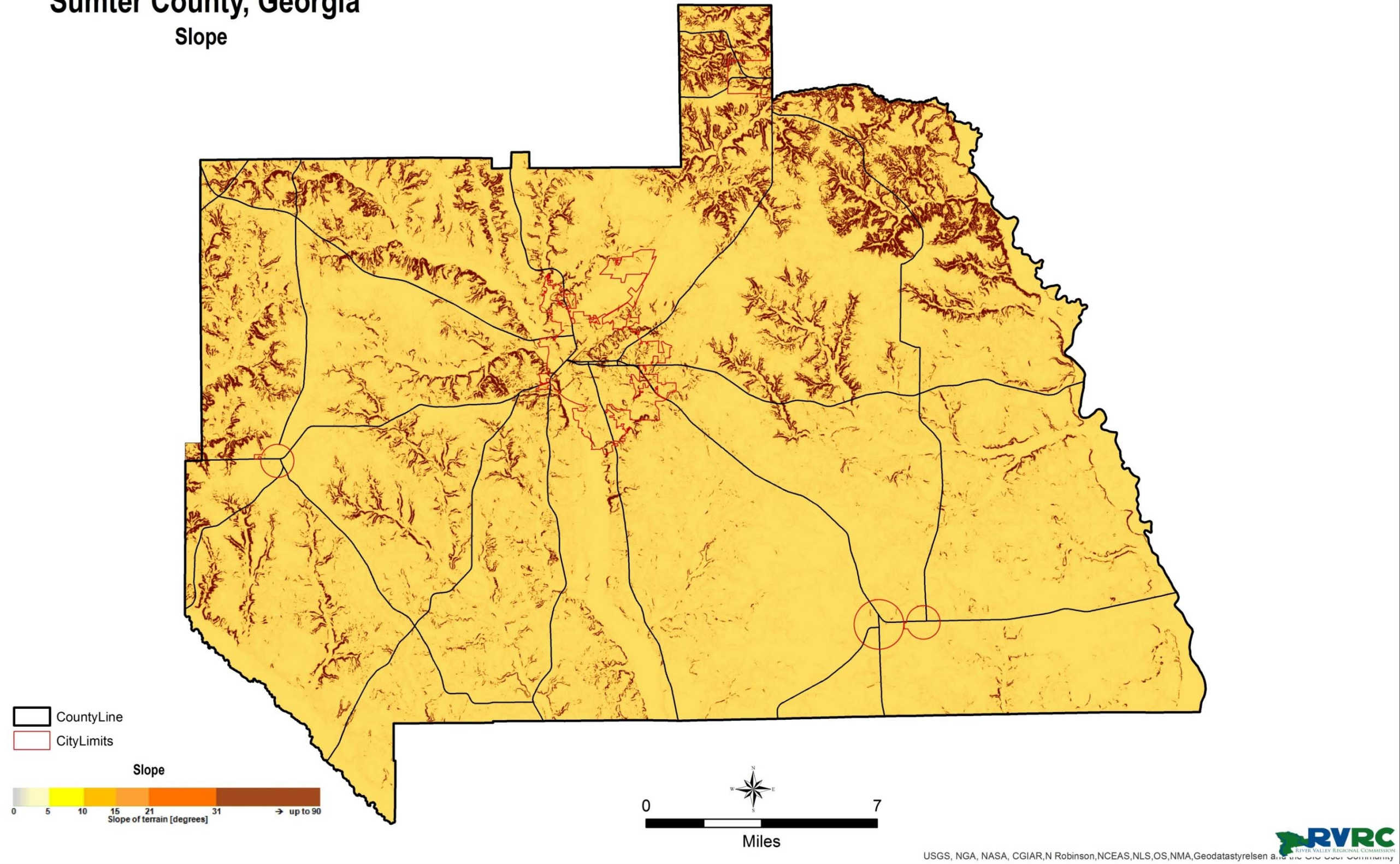


CountyLine
 CityLimits



Sumter County, Georgia

Slope



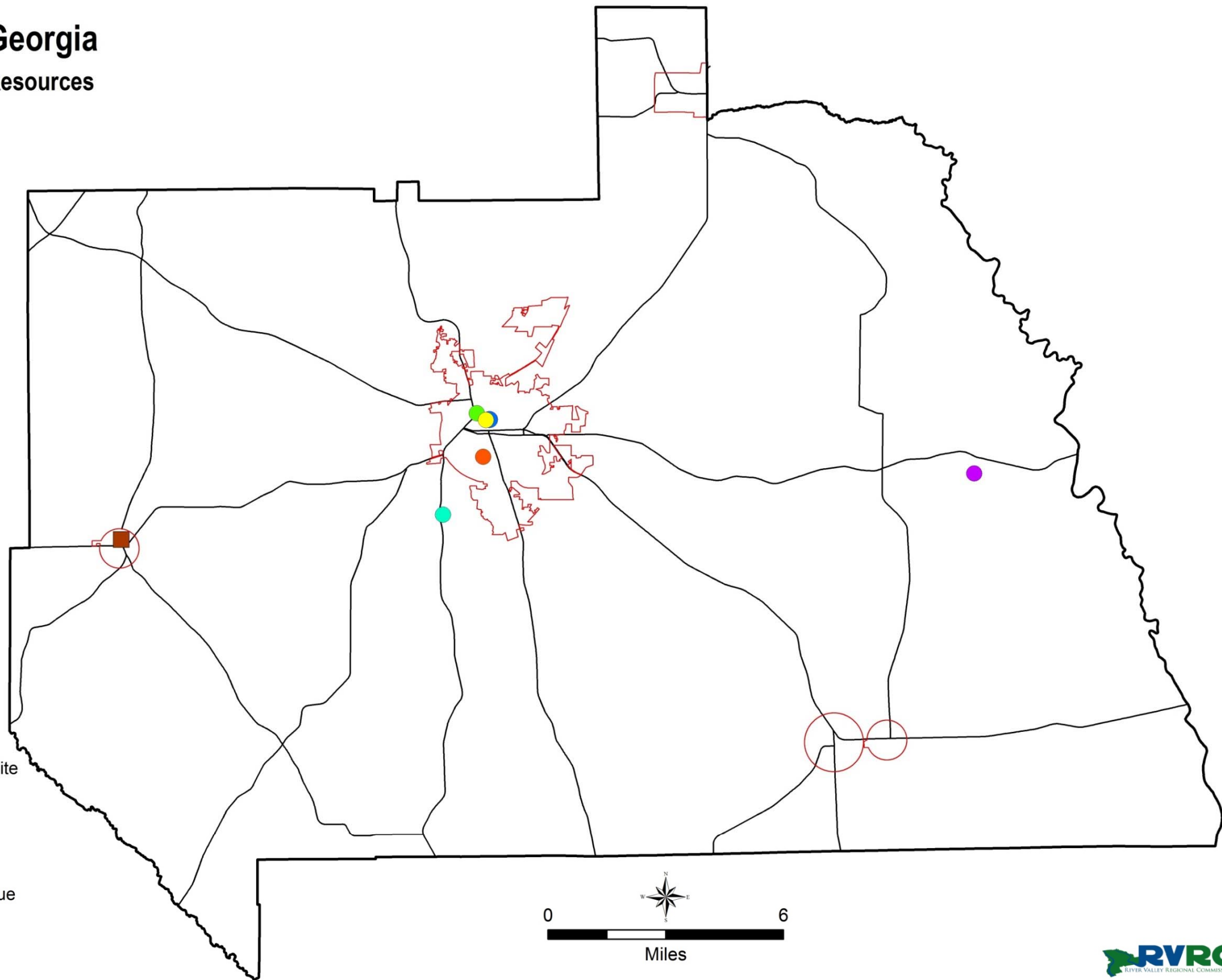
Sumter County, Georgia

Historic and Cultural Resources

CountyLine
CityLimits

Historic and Cultural Resources

- Jimmy Carter National Historic Site
- Campbell Chapel AME Church
- Dismuke Storehouse
- Guerry-Mitchell House
- Lustron House at 547 Oak Avenue
- McBain Newman House
- New Corinth Baptist Church



APPENDIX: PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

Plans, studies and surveys prepared during the past fifteen years and reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Planning development.

Preliminary Americus Report: Retail Market Power Analysis

Retail Market Place Profile and Supporting Research for the Sumter County Area, 2016

City of Americus Wayfinding and Signage, 2016

Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Research

River Valley Regional Commission: Housing Survey for City of Americus

City of Americus Urban Redevelopment Plan, 2012

GeorgiaForward Young Gamechangers Proposals to City of Americus, 2013

City of Americus Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, 2016

2016 Community Health Needs Assessment, Phoebe Sumter, 2016

Phoebe Sumter Implementation Strategy for Tax Years 2017 – 2019

Jimmy Carter National Historic Site Transportation Assistance Group Report, 2016

Sumter County Joint Comprehensive Plan Partial Update, 2009

Georgia Southwestern University Strategic Plan Draft, 2016

OneSumter Growth Task Force and Implementation Strategy

State of the Park Report: Andersonville National Historic Site, Georgia, 2014

SAM Shortline Excursion Train Business and Management Plan, 2013

APPENDIX: FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS

A successful comprehensive plan process will lead to completion of action items included in the work program. In order to further planning efforts, goals and objectives from the comprehensive plan should be referenced throughout all community development activities.

This section is divided into overall strategies for continued planning endeavors and focus groups for specific topic-based development. The strategies, partners and tools listed below are not all inclusive, but should provide a framework for continued planning and development initiatives.

Planning efforts and focus should continue to evolve and progress along with the communities of Americus and Sumter County. The goals and objectives listed in this comprehensive plan should be evaluated consistently and regularly by all parties involved in the development process within the community to ensure specific work items reflect the current nature and future desires of Americus and Sumter County.

Strategies

Communication

Engaging community stakeholders is paramount when planning for and anticipating positive growth and economic development success. Americus and Sumter County have tried in the past to communicate with neighboring jurisdictions and local stakeholders without much success. Effective approaches to communication between groups are community specific. What works well in one community may not be productive in another. However, a renewed focus by Americus and Sumter County on sharing information regarding local government initiatives with residents, civic groups, authorities, development organizations, and other groups that respond to specific community needs will strengthen current partnerships and build new cooperative connections.

Americus and Sumter County should establish and promote regular community workshops, charrettes, or other interactive sessions that will allow residents to become involved in the local government process. Providing these opportunities will not only ensure citizen ideas are included in local decision-making, but also permit local government officials to exhibit their desire to address the concerns of the community. Americus and Sumter County is home to many public sector and nonprofit organizations that could easily facilitate such citizen education and information exchanges. While these organizations can facilitate community meetings, valuable input and assistance from individuals could also be obtained through notice and publication of open forum discussions which are local government led and topic oriented.

Collaboration

Building alliances with and relying on the expertise of community groups will exponentially increase the ability of a local government to accomplish identified development goals. Many of the issues and opportunities developed by Americus and Sumter County residents during this comprehensive planning process did not fall within the purview of the local government. One way the City of Americus and Sumter County can address these community concerns is to partner with local, regional or state organizations whose missions focus on responding to these specific community needs.

Partnerships are often the key to successful policy/project implementation. Following the examples of the efforts to save the Rylander Theater and the Windsor Hotel, cooperating with community organizations empowers residents to take ownership of implementation and, thus, share in the pride of completed ventures.

Implementation

Residents of Americus and Sumter County have gone through several planning processes in the past five to ten years. Some of these plans focused on specific areas within the communities while others were city-wide or county-wide in scope. Each of these documents contains a work program or action plan with several items appearing in multiple work programs. Many of these planning initiatives have been carried over into this comprehensive plan as either projects or policies for both the City of Americus and Sumter County.

By partnering together to implement these identified policies and projects, both Americus and Sumter County will ensure steady accomplishment of tasks and a cohesive approach to development across jurisdictional lines.

Planning Focus Groups

Developing groups of stakeholders with a concentration on individual planning goals identified in this comprehensive plan will assist Americus and Sumter County in targeting projects and policies for implementation. Each group should have no more than seven members including city/county staff and appointed local stakeholders. Each group should report back to the Americus City Council and the Sumter County Board of Commissioners on a regular basis informing the elected officials of community needs to be addressed and specific goals accomplished.

Economic Prosperity

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

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Sumter County Development Authority
- Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Development Authority of the Mayor and City Council of Americus
- Sumter County Industrial Development Authority
- Georgia Southwestern University
- South Georgia Technical College
- Schley, Sumter, Macon, Webster Joint Development Authority
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Middle Flint Workforce Investment Opportunity Act
- Georgia Power Company
- Sumter Electric Membership Corporation
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- Small Business Development Center
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration

Tools

- ✓ Employment Incentive Program (EIP)
- ✓ Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (DDRLF)
- ✓ Tax Allocation Districts/Tax Increment Financing (TAD)
- ✓ Opportunity/Enterprise Zone
- ✓ River Valley Regional Commission Revolving Loan Fund
- ✓ River Valley Area Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund

Resource Management

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

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Sumter County Development Authority
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Upper Flint Regional Water Planning Council
- University of Georgia College of the Environment
- University of Georgia Warnell School of Forest Resources
- Flint River Keeper
- Georgia River Network
- Georgia Conservancy

- Georgia Environmental Management Agency
- Georgia Department of Agriculture
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Forestry Commission
- Cooperative Extension Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Federal Emergency Management Agency

Tools

- ✓ Mitigation/Land Bank
- ✓ EPD 319 (h) Grant—for improving water quality
- ✓ Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan process
- ✓ Georgia Recreational Trails Grant
- ✓ Land and Water Conservation Fund
- ✓ Conservation Tax Credits

Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- Downtown Development Authority of the Mayor and City Council of Americus
- Sumter County Industrial Development Authority
- The Housing Authority of the City of Americus, Georgia
- Schley, Sumter, Macon, Webster Joint Development Authority
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Georgia Planning Association
- Georgia Association of Zoning Administrators
- Building Officials Association of Georgia
- Georgia Association of Code Enforcement
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Emergency Management Agency

Tools

- ✓ Mitigation/Land Bank
- ✓ Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan process
- ✓ Form Based Code
- ✓ Blight Tax
- ✓ International Property Maintenance Code
- ✓ Smart Growth Initiatives
- ✓ Tax Allocation Districts/Tax Increment Financing (TAD)
- ✓ Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission
- ✓ Area Specific Plans
- ✓ Design Guidelines
- ✓ Development Ordinances/Regulations
- ✓ National Flood Insurance Program

Local Preparedness

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of infrastructure the community needs to provide for future development.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Sumter County Development Authority
- Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
- Middle Flint Regional E-911 Authority
- Housing Authority of the City of Americus, Georgia
- Schley, Sumter, Macon, Webster Joint Development Authority
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Upper Flint Regional Water Planning Council
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
- Georgia Rural Water Association
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Tools

- ✓ Develop a Capital Improvements Plan
- ✓ GEFA Loans
- ✓ USDA Loans
- ✓ Tax Allocation Districts/Tax Increment Financing (TAD)
- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ Immediate Threat and Danger Grant

Sense of Place

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- Americus Main Street
- Rylander Theater
- Americus-Sumter County Tourism
- One Sumter Foundation
- Sumter County Development Authority
- Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Development Authority of the Mayor and City Council of Americus
- Americus Theater and Cultural Center Authority
- Sumter Historic Trust
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Flint River Keeper
- Georgia River Network
- Georgia Conservancy
- Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development

- National Trust for Historic Preservation

Tools

- ✓ Tax Allocation Districts/Tax Increment Financing (TAD)
- ✓ Main Street Program
- ✓ Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission
- ✓ Complete Streets Program
- ✓ Form Based Code
- ✓ Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission
- ✓ Area Specific Plans
- ✓ Design Guidelines
- ✓ Transportation Enhancement (TE)

Regional Cooperation

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs.

Partners

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sumter County • City of Americus • City of Andersonville • City of DeSoto • City of Leslie • City of Plains • One Sumter Foundation • Sumter County Development Authority • Sumter County Chamber of Commerce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sumter Electric Membership Corporation • Middle Flint Regional E-911 Authority • Schley, Sumter, Macon, Webster Joint Development Authority • Upper Flint Regional Water Planning Council • River Valley Regional Commission • Georgia Department of Community Affairs |
|---|---|

Tools

- ✓ Regular meetings with neighboring jurisdictions
- ✓ Utilize current technology including social media to engage the community in council/commission meetings, planning efforts and civic volunteering opportunities
- ✓ Participate in regional and statewide organizations

Housing Options

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

Partners

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sumter County • City of Americus • City of Andersonville • City of DeSoto • City of Leslie | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Plains • Housing Authority of the City of Americus, Georgia • Sumter County Development Authority • Sumter County Chamber of Commerce |
|--|--|

- Habitat for Humanity
- Fuller Center for Housing
- Georgia Southwestern University
- South Georgia Technical College
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

Tools

- ✓ Sumter County Community Service Center—Weatherization Program
- ✓ Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP)
- ✓ Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH)
- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ USDA Housing Program

Transportation Options

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Sumter County Development Authority
- Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
- Middle Flint Regional E-911 Authority
- Sumter Cycling
- Americus Public Transportation System
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Federal Highway Administration

Tools

- ✓ Complete Streets Program
- ✓ Tax Allocation Districts/Tax Increment Financing (TAD)
- ✓ Transportation Enhancement (TE)
- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ Transportation Investment Act (TSPLOST)
- ✓ Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG)
- ✓ Safe Routes to School Program
- ✓ Innovative Transit Workforce Development Program

Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto

- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Boys and Girls Club of Americus/Sumter County, Inc.
- Sumter County Board of Education
- Georgia Southwestern University
- South Georgia Technical College
- One Sumter Foundation
- Americus Theater and Cultural Center Authority
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Middle Flint Workforce Investment Opportunity Act

Tools

- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ College and Career Academies
- ✓ Carnegie Community Engagement
- ✓ Internships with Local Businesses
- ✓ Mentoring Programs with Local Leaders

Community Health

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Phoebe-Sumter Medical Center
- Sumter County Health Department
- River Valley Regional Commission
- River Valley Area Agency on Aging
- Cooperative Extension Service
- Georgia Department of Human Services
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Center for Disease Control
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

Tools

- ✓ Health Impact Assessment
- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ Community Health Funding
- ✓ Partnerships to Improve Community Health
- ✓ Prevention and Public Health Fund
- ✓ Rural Health Information Hub
- ✓ Healthy Food Financing Initiative
- ✓ Farm to School Grant program
- ✓ Community Transformation Grants – Small Communities Program

Quality of Life

Enhance daily living with wholesome food and clean air and water, enjoyment of unfettered open spaces and bodies of water, conservation of wildlife and natural resources, security from crime, and protection from toxic substances.

Partners

- Sumter County
- City of Americus
- City of Andersonville
- City of DeSoto
- City of Leslie
- City of Plains
- One Sumter Foundation
- Americus Theater and Cultural Center Authority
- Sumter County Development Authority
- Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
- River Valley Regional Commission
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Tools

- ✓ Community Connectivity
- ✓ Georgia Recreational Trails Program
- ✓ Community Development Block Grants
- ✓ Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- ✓ Community Facilities Grant Program
- ✓ National Scenic Byways Program
- ✓ Brownfields and Lands Revitalization

APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDERS

Beverly Butcher	Americus/Sumter County/GIS
Bill Starr	Sumter Co Extension Agent
Bishop M. McCluster	Friendship Missionary Bapt Ch
Bobby Fuse	Housing Authority
Nicole Smith	City of Americus Councilor
Charles Christmas	South GA Tech
Charles Patterson	GA Southwestern University
Dave Tucker	Business Owner
Eric Bryant	Sumter County Sheriff
Frank Latimore	Bethesda Missionary Bapt Ch
Herschel Smith	Retired Navy
Ivy Oliver	OneSumter
Jerry Harmon	Sumter County Fire Chief
Jim Littlefield	Sumter Public Works Dir.
Jimmy Whaley	Realtor
Roger Willis	Americus Planning and Codes
Juanita F. Wilson	Americus City Council
Kathleen Tucker	Citizen's Bank of Americus
Kim Christmas	CFO, PharmaCentra
Linda S. Harris	Educator
Lee Kinnamon	Mayor of Americus
Mark Waddell	County Commissioner
Nathan Peck	Business Owner
Nicole Thurston	Americus Tourism Director
Pamela Angry	CFO, Life Transformation Ministry
Patrick Kay	Americus Main Street
Paul Farr	South GA Tech
Rayetta Volley	Sumter County Clerk
Robbi S. Latimore	Educator
Scott Roberson	County Commissioner
Shirley Reese (Fr.)	Americus/Sumter County
Diadra Powell	Americus City Manager
SuAnn Bird	South GA Tech
Suleania Bryant	Occupational Health Nurse
Rene Smith	Sumter EMC
Terri Holt	Student
Tom Harrison	Retiree

Tracy Wilson
Victoria L. Harris
Michelle McGowan
Wanda J. Curry
Clay Jones
Heather Tyler

Educator
AKA Sorority
South GA Tech
AKA Sorority
County Commissioner
Sumter zoning

APPENDIX: PUBLIC HEARINGS, PUBLIC INPUT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Americus and Sumter County are initiating an update to their joint comprehensive plan. This will consist of updating the community needs and opportunities, goals, preferred land use and five-year community work program in the current plan. Local elected officials will use the finished document to guide policy and management decisions implementing economic development and revitalization initiatives. A public hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 11, in the county commissioners meeting room (#106) of the Sumter County Courthouse, 500 West Lamar Street. The hearing will also be accessible via ZOOM by dialing 1 – (646) – 558 – 8656; Meeting ID: 853 6485 9621; Passcode: 821292, and by computer link at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85364859621?pwd=NGFKczBkc1B1ZXpEN3RWRVITEk5dz09>

The purposes of this hearing are to brief the community on the process to be used to update the plan, opportunities for public participation and to obtain input on the proposed planning process. The public is encouraged to attend in person or virtually and participate in this and subsequent planning-related meetings. For additional information contact the Sumter County Administrator's Office at 229-928-4500, ext. 1, ext.7., or the Americus City Clerk at 924-4411 ext. 4.

OF GEORGIA IN RE: ESTATE OF WILLIE C. LAWRENCE DECEASED ESTATE NO. P2021-4422

TO: Victor Lawrence, Tawanda Stephens, Dontae Lawrence, Tyshawndra Lowe, Tramaine Lowe, Corey Lawrence, Serina Bailey, Anthony Grimes, Shawndra Porter, Chirriika Woodruff, Shyianna Tra'maine Lee, Aaliyah Charlese McGhee, Yazmine Sharmaine Lee, Jermaine Lee, Jr., Shirlene Williams; and to whom it may concern:

TYSHAWNDR MONIQUE LOWE has petitioned for TYSHAWNDR MONIQUE

Prepared by: J. Michael Greene Greene and Greene Attorneys at Law PO Box 1907 Americus, GA 3170

Americus Times Recorder: Jan. 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2022 P2021-4422

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY OF SUMTER

By virtue of the power of sale contained in that certain Deed to Secure Debt dated May 9, 2017, and executed by Terald Dean Rowe in favor of First

88 degrees 30 minutes west 173.9 feet to a point; thence turn right and run north 19 degrees 30 minutes west 504.07 feet to a point which is the Point of Beginning.

The above-described tract or parcel of land is described and shown by plat of survey dated February 19, 1980, prepared by James R. Littlefield, Surveyor, GA. Reg. No. 1304, and which plat is recorded in Plat Book 12, Page 130, in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court of Sumter County, Georgia, said plat and description being incorporated herein as a part of this description by reference thereto. Said property is known as 1779 GA Hwy 45 N and is also known as Tax Parcel No. 2606 66 1.

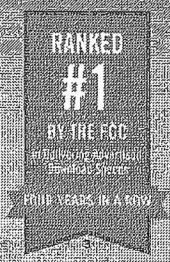
The debt secured by said Deed to Secure Debt is hereby, declared due because of, among other possible events of default, non-payment thereof. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, including attorney's fees.

Said property will be sold as the property of Terald Dean Rowe subject to the outstanding ad valorem taxes and/or assessments, if any, all easements and restrictions of record, if any, and all prior deeds to secure debt encumbering said property, if any, having priority over this Deed to Secure Debt. The notice required by O.C.G.A. §44-14-162.2 has been given as required by such statute.

First State Bank, 800 East Lamar Street, Americus, Georgia 31709, as the holder of the indebtedness, is the entity having full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the Deed to Secure Debt, and the indebtedness secured thereby. The person to contact at such address is Mr. Blake Bennett, and such person's phone number is (229) 924-3200. Nothing herein shall be construed to require the Secured Creditor to negotiate, amend, or modify the terms of the Deed to Secure Debt being foreclosed. This is an attempt to collect a debt, and under the provisions of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

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No Hard Data



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[Learn More](#)



Notice of Public Hearing

Americus and Sumter County are initiating an update to their joint comprehensive plan. This will consist of updating the community needs and opportunities, goals, preferred land use and five-year community work program in the current plan. Local elected officials will use the finished document to guide policy and management decisions implementing economic development and revitalization initiatives. A public hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 11, in the county commissioners meeting room (#106) of the Sumter County Courthouse, 500 West Lamar Street. The hearing will also be accessible via ZOOM by dialing 1 – (646) – 558 – 8656; Meeting ID: 853 6485 9621; Passcode: 821292 and by computer link at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85364859621?pwd=NGFKczBkc1B1ZXpEN3RWRVlITEk5dz09>

The purposes of this hearing are to brief the community on the process to be used to update the plan, opportunities for public participation and to obtain input on the proposed planning process. The public is encouraged to attend in person or virtually and participate in this and subsequent planning-related meetings. For additional information contact the Sumter County Administrator's Office at 229-928-4500, ext. 1, ext.7., or the Americus City Clerk at 924-4411 ext. 4.





River Valley Regional Commission

2m · 🌐



Attention SUMTER COUNTY RESIDENTS: Share input on community needs & opportunities, goals, preferred land use, and a work program to guide local government decision-making. Join a session at <https://tinyurl.com/AmericusSumterPlan> (Meeting ID 878 3116 2803 & Passcode 587146) on Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday at 6:30 pm. Or dial in by phone at 312-626-6799, using the same Meeting ID above. Call 706-660-5374 with questions.



AMERICUS SUMTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Community Planning Input

3 virtual sessions 6:30 pm

Monday, February 28

Tuesday, March 1

Thursday, March 3



👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Americus - Sumter County Comprehensive Plan 2023-2027

1st Public Hearing

Sumter County Courthouse - Tuesday, January 11, 2022

6:00 p.m.

name	representing	telephone	e-mail
JERRY HARMON	Sumter County Fire	229-924-6603	jharmon@sumtercountyga.us
TIM ESTES	SUMTER Co. PARKS & REC.	229-924-4878	Tim.Estes@Sumtercountyga.us
Mark Simmons	Sustainable Sumter	404-274-0592	markesimmons1964@gmail
JIM LITTLEFIELD	SUMTER Co. Public Works	—	—
Deatrice Harris	Sumter Co. YER	229-928-4500	deharris@sumtercountyga.us
Della Griffin	Sumter Co. Finance	229-928-4500	dgriffin@sumtercountyga.us
Ken Gustafson	Americus Times-Recorder	770-378-2569	Ken.gustafson@americustimesrecorder.com
CLAY JONES	SCBOC	229-938-4123	jonesbuildersinc@att.net
SCOTT ROBERSON	SCBOC	229-942-5943	scottroberson452@gmail.com
Jessie Smith	SCBOC	229-938-6310	JSmith@SumterCountyGA.us
Mark Waddell	SCBOC	229/928-6918	mwaddell@sumtercountyga.us

Americus Times-Recorder: Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2022
EST/EDWARDS, S.

waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A § 53-12-261.) All interested persons are hereby notified to show cause why said petition should not be

monied deceased, or said county. (The petitioner has also applied for waiver of bond, waiver of reports, waiver of statements, and/or grant of certain powers contained in O.C.G.A. § 53-12-261.) All interested persons are

ESTATE OF BARBARA WOOLSEY DECEASED
D. p2022-4435
FOR LETTERS ADMINISTRATION NOTICE

Public comment notice is given that Surface Transportation Block Grant federal/state funding is being amended into the State Transportation Improvement Program for Scoping in the amount of \$1,000,000 for Georgia Department of Transportation Project PI# 0013580; which is the widening of SR 30/ US 280 FM CR 311/LAMAR ROAD TO CS 500/FERGUSON STREET.

AMERICUS-SUMTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC INPUT SESSIONS

Americus and Sumter County are preparing a five-year update to their joint comprehensive plan. **Three public input sessions** are being offered on-line in accordance with the COVID policies and protocols of both jurisdictions. You are asked to provide input identifying community needs and opportunities, goals, preferred land use and a work program to guide local government decision-making for the next five years. To participate, type in, precisely, this link, ID and Passcode: <https://tinyurl.com/AmericusSumterPlan>, Meeting ID: 878 3116 2803 and Passcode: 587146. Call in by phone to 312 626 6799 and when prompted key in this Meeting ID: 878 3116 2803. All sessions **will begin at 6:30 p.m. Monday, February 28, Tuesday, March 1 and Thursday, March 3.** Call 706-660-5374 with questions.

my concern:
TH LITTLE has LAURA WORTH appointed as of the estate of ANN WOOLSEY said county. (The also applied for d, waiver of r of statements, of certain powers C.G.A. § 53-12-sted persons are to show cause on should not be actions to the pe-

Such notice is required by the FAST Act federal transportation law. Comments should be directed to Matt Markham, Planning Deputy Director, at One Georgia Center, 600 West Peachtree St NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.

Americus Times Recorder:
Feb. 23 and March 2, 2022
P.I. No. 0013580

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
SUMTER COUNTY

All creditors of the Estate of **Myrtice J. Holloway**, late of said County, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This 27th day of January, 2022.

Deborah Perry,
Executrix of the Estate of Myrtice J. Holloway, Deceased
c/o William W. Rambo
Gatewood, Skipper & Rambo,
P. C.
Post Office Box 488
Americus, Georgia 31709

Americus Times-Recorder: Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2022
File No. 82387/896M

PUBLIC NOTICE

To: Tiffany Robinson, Mother. In the Interest of T.R., date of birth 03/18/2004: A Motion was filed with the Juvenile Court of Sumter County, to modify a June 7, 2007 order that placed the child with a fit and willing relative. You may obtain a copy of the motion from the clerk of the Sumter County Juvenile Court. A hearing will be held on the motion on March 9, 2022 at 1:30 pm., 500 West Lamar Street, Americus GA 31709, ground floor courtroom, Judge Lisa Jones. You are hereby notified that if you fail to appear at that date, time and place, the relief requested may be granted without further notice to you. Witness, Nancy Jimenez, Clerk of the Juvenile Court and Patrick B Calcutt, attorney for the child.

Americus Times-Recorder: Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 2 and 9, 2022
PN/ROBINSON

Looking for

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1. The HughesNet Gen5 service plans are designed to deliver download speeds of 25 Mbps and upload speeds of 3 Mbps. Actual speeds may vary. Service availability varies by location. Service is subject to change without notice. ©2022 Hughes Network Systems, LLC. All rights reserved.

STAKEHOLDER INVITATION

Gerald Mixon

From: Gerald Mixon
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2022 3:53 PM
To: Beverly Butcher; bstarr@sumtercountyga.us; bishopmcluster123_fmhc@yahoo.com; fusega@bellsouth.net; nsmith@americusga.gov; cchristmas@southgatech.edu; charles.patterson@gsw.edu; tucker_amicus@bellsouth.net; ebryant@sumtercountyga.us; franklatimore@bellsouth.net; herschelsmith3@gmail.com; ivy@onesumter.org; jharmon@sumtercountyga.us; jlittlefield@sumtercountyga.us; jwwhaley@ymail.com; rwillis@americusga.gov; wilson1747@bellsouth.net; tucker_amicus@bellsouth.net; kchristmas@pharmacentra.com; teach82@bellsouth.net; Lkinnamon@americusga.gov; mwaddell@sumtercountyga.us; nathan.peck@sloan.mite; nthurston@americusga.gov; pammy1289@yahoo.com; pkay@americusga.gov; pfarr@southgatech.edu; Rayetta Volley (RVolley@sumtercountyga.us); robelatimore@bellsouth.net; reese6363@yahoo.com; dpowell@americusga.gov; sbird@southgatech.edu; suleania1908@yahoo.com; rene.smith@sumteremc.com; terri2622@aol.com; tomharrison4@yahoo.com; tmwilson1908@aol.com; victoriah32590@yahoo.com; mmcgowan@southgatech.edu; wcurry762@gmail.com; jsmith@sumtercountyga.us; gtorbert@sumtercountyga.us; jordan3324@bellsouth.net; cjones@sumtercountyga.us; HTyler@sumtercountyga.us; sroberon@sumtercountyga.us
CITY COUNCILOR
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
Cc: Camille Bielby; john morgan; Kathryn Mournighan
Subject: AMERICUS-SUMTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Tracking:	Recipient	Delivery
	Beverly Butcher	
	bstarr@sumtercountyga.us	
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	nsmith@americusga.gov	
	cchristmas@southgatech.edu	
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	tucker_amicus@bellsouth.net	
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 cjones@sumtercountyga.us
 HTyler@sumtercountyga.us
 sroberson@sumtercountyga.us

Camille Bielby
 john morgan
 Kathryn Mournighan

Delivered: 2/28/2022 3:53 PM

 Delivered: 2/28/2022 3:53 PM

Greetings:

In last week's Times-Recorder the City of Americus and Sumter County announced three remote input sessions for the purpose of updating their joint comprehensive plan. Because of your current and/or past community involvement, you have been identified among the community stakeholders more likely to get involved facilitating the changes identified by virtue of this effort to improve the quality of life in the community.

Because of city and county Covid protocols these sessions cannot be held in person, so they are being made available by Zoom. Admittedly, this is late notice for this evening's 6:30 session (even though you can participate from home), but they will be offered tomorrow (Tuesday) at 6:30 and Thursday at 6:30. Please join as many as you can. We will provide some background at the beginning of each session for a better understanding of the reasons for this effort. You can access these sessions directly at...

Join Zoom Meeting by computer or mobile device:

<https://tinyurl.com/AmericusSumterPlan>

Meeting ID: 878 3116 2803

Passcode: 587146

Or dial in by phone:

312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 878 3116 2803

The River Valley Regional Commission is assisting Americus and Sumter County with this planning process. This invitation is delivered on their behalf and at their request.

Gerald Mixon

Planning Director - Americus Office

River Valley Regional Commission

228 West Lamar Street

Americus, Georgia 31709

gmixon@rivervalleyrc.org

www.rivervalleyrc.org

www.facebook.com/rivervalleyrc

www.activevalley.org

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877-819-6348 toll free

229-931-2917 (fax)

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Americus – Sumter Comprehensive Plan

Virtual **Public Input Session** Participants and Comments

February 28, 2022

Coordinators: Gerald Mixon and Camille Bielby

Participants: Bobby Fuse, Judy Tott, Jimmy Whaley, Diadra Powell, Jessie (on iPad)

Comments:

- D. Powell: Potential for **City water to county subdivisions adjacent to city service lines**. (ie Hidden Lakes on Highway 30); effect of covid on after 5:00 p.m. business hours in downtown; intergovernmental cooperative **agreement in progress with county for maintenance of county roads within city limits**
- J. Tott: gateway, bike route and truck route excluding downtown achieved; sidewalks on Martin Luther King Drive/Highway 19 connecting downtown to hospital; mentioned Healthy Sumter program with Phoebe-Sumter hospital (community gardens and food distribution); College and Career Academy job training pathway for high school students tailored to local occupational demand data.
- B. Fuse: improve **South Lee Street** to equivalent of North Lee Street; extend **State Route 49** for efficiency via South Lee to **Southerfield/Bumphead/Old Andersonville**

March 1, 2022

Coordinators: Gerald Mixon and Camille Bielby

Participants: Ryan Iafigliola, Bobby Fuse, Herschel Smith, Rayetta Volley, John Morgan, Martina Barkley, Brit James

Comments:

- H. Smith: Suggested progress indicators for activity status of previous needs and opportunities.
- R. Iafigliola: Sumter Cycling Member. Reviewed bike/pedestrian plan and inclusion of bike facility. Encouraged opportunities for three specific routes that would benefit the community. He pointed out the **need for a pedestrian facility from Georgia Southwestern to Walmart** which crosses city and county lines and includes drainage ditches. It is an unsafe route with heavy pedestrian activity. A city-commissioned study of the corridor has been conducted. A long-term project could be a **multi-use trail to connect South Georgia Technical College and the High School to the county recreation center would bring 10 miles of trails and link resources** (such as gymnasium). **Formally designate the routes now popular** because of participation in the organized riding events **with permanent signage to bring more attention to the existing resources that attract bicyclists to visit the community**. He noted that a **map of local bike routes could be made available at the visitor center**.
- B. Fuse: Commented on the population declines and noted that neighboring **Lee County is among the counties experiencing growth. He urged the study of trends that led to those gains and see if there are marketable aspects that could be implemented to draw residents to Sumter**. Intercity transit based on the Trailways/Greyhound model is no longer economical, but **van-size transport similar to the model used by Groomes from Warner Robins to Ft. Benning and the Atlanta airport could be a golden opportunity for intercity trips between Americus and Albany, particularly regarding transport for medical services only available at Phoebe-Putney Albany**, such as pre-natal care. Additionally, he outlined concerns for **ambulance service on the southside of Americus in the South Lee Street and Magnolia**

Manor area. He explained that there are **two routes to transport patients** from South Lee Street to Phoebe-Putney Americus—via **Three Bridges Road to U.S. Highway 19 or taking Lee Street northwards to travel west on Forsyth Street to U.S. Highway 19.** He explained that **IV patients cannot be transported over the rough railroad grade crossing on Church Street, but that route could be improved to improve connectivity to the hospital.**

- R. Iafigliola: **Sidewalk extensions** in existing neighborhoods where practical would be beneficial for **encouraging walking.**
- H. Smith: **Coordination** with Georgia Department of Transportation on sidewalk **siting sidewalks should ensure that sidewalks are not constructed in places where there is no pedestrian traffic.** He gave the example of the sidewalk on the **east side of U. S. Highway 19** which stops at the light **and** the example of the **sidewalk at the viaduct.** He expressed concern over operating independently rather than coordinating with all parties on projects. Mixon described the nationwide Complete Streets program, an initiative that requires addressing pedestrian needs on all street projects.
- R. Iafigliola: The **former hospital site’s central location would make an ideal location for a recreational facility.**
- H. Smith: **Suggested that South Georgia Tech and Georgia Southwestern coordinate college fairs for different high schools in the fall to recruit students.** He believes coordinating with schools all over the state could be beneficial. He also mentioned the **need to address the now-vacant former high school building on Harold Avenue in the historic district.**
- H. Smith: A **consolidated event calendar** could improve the quality of life so that the community and visitors could go to a **single site to learn of events rather than having to visit every organization’s website.** R. Volley added that a **previous effort** by Barbara Grogan with the Development Authority **was not successful in getting local organizations to submit event notices.** Smith advised another effort to let people know how to promote events could be beneficial, and that working together would foster synergy.
- R. Volley: The **county has text notification program that citizens can use to report potholes or other problems.** She stated that the **county forwards notices for reports on problems in the city’s jurisdiction to the appropriate contact.**
- B. Fuse: Suggested an **overall look at public communication** and noted that there is **one weekly paper and three radio stations and no succession plan.** He commented that the **closest television station could possibly be persuaded to open a satellite bureau.** He added **no one outside of Americus sees the good activity** as there is no regular news reporting and people are disconnected. He suggested that could be improved with stronger relationships between Americus and the media in Macon/Albany/Columbus. Mixon noted that the television station in Cordele was started by an individual and there could be a chance to incentivize something similar locally.
- H. Smith: A **viable city/county recycling** program is needed.

March 3, 2022

Coordinators: Gerald Mixon and Camille Bielby

Participants: Bobby Fuse, Natalie Bradley, Kathryn Mournighan, Valerie Trice, Colton Mims, Michael Moir, Evan Kützler

Comments:

- B. Fuse: **Commented on extending GA Highway 377 (North Lee) and four-laning GA Highway 49 consider the traffic going to Schley and Macon Counties, and to the new Sumter High School and South Georgia Technical College.** Mixon mentioned recent road improvements to South Georgia Tech Parkway and District Line Road.

- V. Trice: Commented that **outside of school there are no opportunities for parents and students to be informed and get access to resources for children**. She explained the **recreation department does not have opportunities for healthy choices education and exercise**. Offerings are sports-related and opportunities for children to have interactive experiences with positive lifestyle choices for school age youth. She added that **activities are needed in town for people of all ages**.
- M. Moir: Commented on the **remote locations of the recreation department and ball fields and the need for recreation facilities downtown**. He noted that **something for the public that does not require membership**.
- V. Trice: **Parental involvement remains a concern**, ties between school and home are broken, and **parents are not comfortable with the relationship with school administration** and will not be until that is fixed. She mentioned the **drop out rate and incentives to keep students in school, but that there were no opportunities once they graduate**. Covid has made the school-home relationship more difficult. She observed that regarding parental participation, there is a lack of trust on both sides, and that many parents do not have the skills to go into the school to advocate for their child. When students have parents who do not know how to participate, it creates a rift. She said the **schools need more community support to get things done**. The **school ombudsman concept was not used and instead there is the program at the Old Staley School with a team of retired educators working one-on-one, developing job skills, and providing job placement**. **Need more adult classes for job skill training**. She noted that there is **more of a lack of job variety than a lack of jobs**.
- E. Kützler: Raised the **issue of the now vacant old high school on Harold Avenue** and plans for the property in 20 years. He mentioned Cherokee and Furlow and the need to break the **pattern of allowing former schools to become nuisance properties and taxpayer burdens** in the long run. The properties **should be sold off for redevelopment**. He brought up that the **boundaries of the historic district have not been updated since the 1970s and that concepts have changed over the past 50 years**. He encourages **expanding the boundaries of the National Register district and initiate historic preservation efforts to rehabilitate historic buildings**.
- M. Moir: Addressed the topic of **digital infrastructure and city/county government applications to interface with stakeholders**. He described the importance of officials organizing in one place so that people can locate services, be directed to schools and outside places. A centralized location for information—jobs, tourist information, accurate local business hours—keep updated and conduct outreach to draw in the pay to play.
- E. Kützler: Noted that **many don't use social media and that keeping various listings and postings current is a widespread problem**.
- E. Kützler: Raised the concern of the **ammonium fumes from the agricultural chemical plant smokestack in the southside historic district which frequently hangs low and heavily over the neighborhood**. The **traffic volume of big trucks traveling on historic district residential streets designated as the truck route**.

#1283

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Americus Times-Recorder A11

SERVICES

Planning Services

Sumter Professional Planning Services
229-596-8192

Public Notices

Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF SUMTER
OFFICE OF SALE UNDER
EXECUTORIAL POWER**

Notice of a default under the Security Deed executed by Maureen W. Porter to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Nominee of American Loans, Inc. dated

ney-in-Fact for Maureen W. Porter

File no. 22-078444
LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP
Attorneys and Counselors at Law
211 Perimeter Center Parkway
N.E., Suite 300 Atlanta, GA 30346
(770) 220-2535/GR
<https://www.logs.com/>
THE LAW FIRM IS ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE

Americus Times-Recorder
Apr. 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2022
188757

PUBLIC NOTICE
**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF SUMTER COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA**
Annette Catherine Carlisle
Plaintiff
v.
Carroll D. Carlisle
Defendant
**NOTICE OF SUMMONS
SERVICE BY PUBLICATION**

TO: Carroll D. Carlisle

decendent who was domiciled in this county at the time of his or her death or was domiciled in another state but owned property in this county at the time of his or her death, was legally proven in solemn form to be the decedent's will and was admitted to record by order and it was further ordered that George A. Frazier, named as executor(s) in said will, be allowed to qualify and that upon so doing, letters testamentary be issued to such executor(s).

THEREFORE the executor(s), having taken the oath of office and complied with all necessary prerequisites of the law is/are legally authorized to discharge all the duties and exercise all powers of executor(s) under the will of said decedent, according to the decedent's will and the law.

Given under my hand and official seal the 23rd day of February, 2022.

Americus Times-Recorder
Apr. 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2022
EST/FRAZIER, L.

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...the property line of Shumake for 127.8 feet, more or less, to the property line of Shumake. Thence run in northerly direction along the property line of Shumake for 142 feet, more or less, to a stake which located on the property line of Dennis Sheffield. Thence run in an easterly direction along the property line of Dennis Sheffield for 122 feet, more or less to the point of beginning.

Said property is bounded on the east by property of Charlie Angry, on the south and west by property of Mrs. J. H. Shumake Sr. and on the north by other property of Dennis Sheffield.

Tract C, as deeded to Dennis Sheffield from Roy Whitehead and Tarrle Lee Whitehead by virtue of that Warranty Deed dated July 16, 1980, and recorded in Deed Book 184, Page 599, Sumter County Deed Records.

Also, a strip of land 10 feet wide and running from the Pentecost Church property line in a westerly direction along the northern property line of Dennis Sheffield. The intention of this deed is to convey to Dennis Sheffield a strip 10 feet wide off the south part of Roy Whitehead

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Americus and Sumter County have prepared an update to their joint comprehensive plan, identifying community needs and opportunities, goals, preferred land uses and preparing a five-year community work program. Local elected officials can use the finished document to guide policy and management decisions implementing economic development and revitalization initiatives. A public hearing will be accessible via ZOOM by dialing +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 986 659 0361; Passcode: 123321, and by computer link at <https://rivervalleyaging.zoom.us/j/9866590361?pwd=EFtGN2dvdjQwUjU1STUdMS0p4cDVFU09=> at 6:00 pm Monday, April 25. The purposes of this hearing are to brief the community on the contents of the plan, provide an opportunity for residents to suggest final additions or revisions to the draft, and to inform the community of when the plan will be submitted for state-mandated review. The draft work program element of the plan will be accessible directly at <https://rivervalleyrc.org/sumter-county>, beginning Friday, April 22. The public is encouraged to participate. For additional information contact the Americus City Clerk at 924-4411 ext. 4, or Sumter County Administrator at 229-928-4500, ext. 1, ext. 7.

There was one attendee at this, the second public hearing; Sumter County Administrator, Rayetta Volley