

SWEET! SO MUCH MORE THAN THE VIDALIA ONION



A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Toombs County, Lyons,
Santa Claus, and Vidalia, Georgia

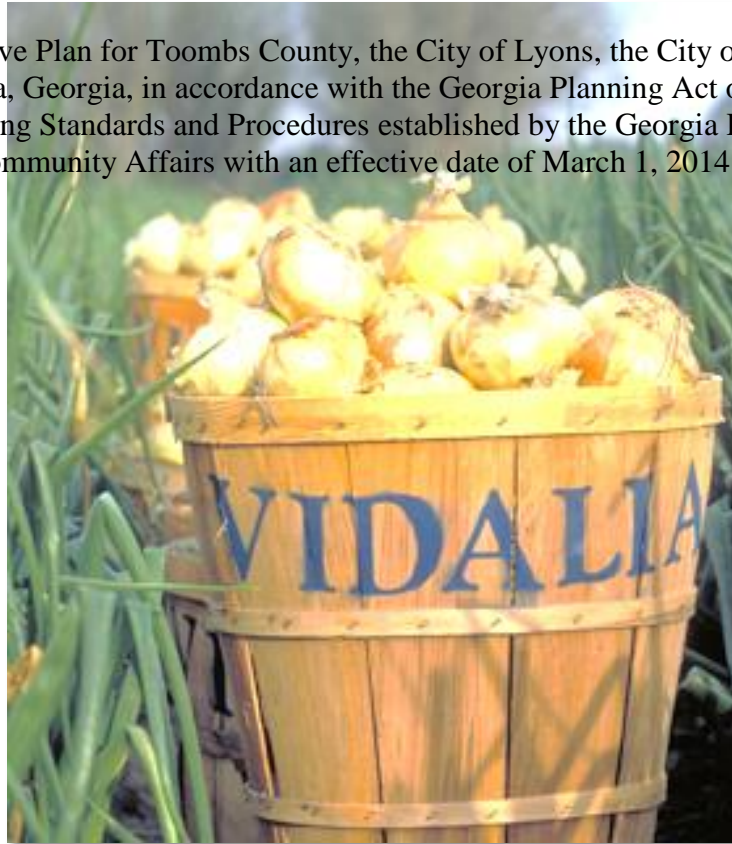


August, 2014

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A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Toombs County, Lyons, Santa Claus and
Vidalia, Georgia

A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Toombs County, the City of Lyons, the City of Santa Claus, and
the City of Vidalia, Georgia, in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the
Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures established by the Georgia Department of
Community Affairs with an effective date of March 1, 2014



Prepared By:

The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee
The Toombs County Local Governments

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

August, 2014

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion -- The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan is a comprehensive plan prepared under the new Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) first with an effective date of January 1, 2013, and after minor changes, an effective date of March 1, 2014. It is a joint plan for Toombs County and its municipalities – the City of Lyons, the City of Santa Claus, and the City of Vidalia.

Toombs County is a rural, progressive community in Southeast Georgia located just south of I-16 interchanges along U.S. 1 and Georgia 297. Toombs County's advantageous location is about equi-distant between the metropolitan areas of Augusta, Macon, and Savannah. The county has a population of nearly 30,000 persons (27,323 at 2010 Census). The county contains the incorporated communities of Vidalia (11,000 persons), Lyons (4,500 persons), and Santa Claus (150 persons). The community is designated by the Census Bureau as the Vidalia, Georgia Micropolitan Statistical Area. The community is a thriving regional trade, job, healthcare, and service center. Toombs County is now the third most populous county in its rural Region which lacks a metropolitan area. The county has per capita retail sales almost 14 percent above Georgia's average (\$13,914 vs. \$12,326), and is second in the Region with workforce employed (12,371 jobs), almost 12 percent of the Region total. The community's hospital, Meadows Regional, constructed a new medical center in 2011 which continues to expand offerings and services and its regional status at a time when many rural hospitals are struggling. Meadows Regional is one of the top ten regional employers. The community also offers many other outstanding governmental facilities and services which belie the community's relatively small size and rural status. Vidalia has constructed an expansive and impressive municipal annex in its downtown out of a vacated grocery store greyfield. Lyons has also constructed a charming new city hall downtown. Both projects have provided additional impetus to impressive, ongoing downtown revitalization in both municipalities. Even Santa Claus has improved facilities with a new community center and Christmas themed museum/gift shop. The community has an

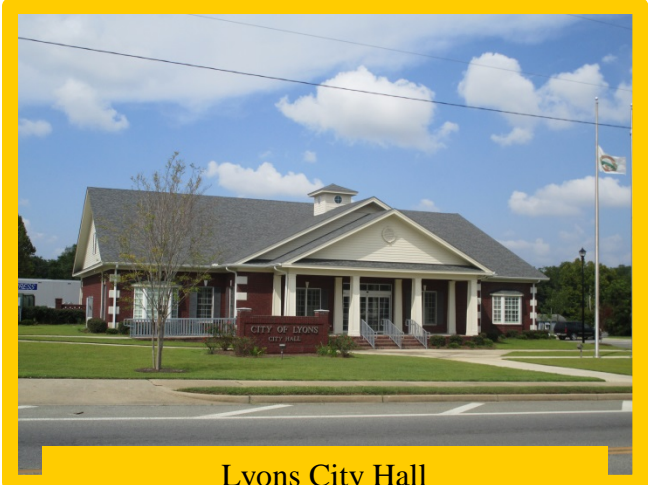
outstanding airport with 6,000 foot runways; is home to Southeastern Technical College; two public school systems as well as two private academies; and excellent multi-venued, local recreational areas with expansive facilities and offerings. Family, cultural and arts are also celebrated as well with many offerings, including multiple museums, festivals/events, and a celebrated folk life play. Vidalia's Sweet Onion Festival is ranked as one of the five best in the U.S.; Lyons hosts an annual "Tales from the Altamaha" folk life play; and the community hosts the renowned Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library.

The community is well-served by highway and rail access with U.S. 1, U.S. 280, and Georgia highways 15/29, 56, 292, and 297. It has easy access to I-16 and both of Georgia's coastal ports. Even with all these advantages for growth and development, including location, access, facilities, and existing job diversity, the community is most well-known as home to arguably the world's sweetest onion, the Vidalia Sweet Onion. Agriculture and forestry remain integral components of the local economy, and continue to diversify as well. The community's fields and forests and other natural resources, including Georgia's Altamaha River, a world-class ecosystem with much natural and scenic beauty, are abundant and create an appealing landscape. All of this only adds further dimension to an extraordinary quality of life in the community. The community truly is "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion."

While there is much to celebrate and be optimistic about future growth and development within the community, there are issues requiring attention. Almost 15 percent of Toombs Countians are 65 or older, compared to 12 percent in Georgia. Over a quarter (26.7 percent) of the population lives in poverty, compared to 17 percent in Georgia. The county is one of a number in Georgia with poverty levels exceeding 20 percent for decades. Incomes overall are low. Per capita money income in the county, as measured by the Census Bureau from 2008-2012, (\$18,433) is about 73 percent of that of Georgia (\$25,309). Even worse, the county median household income for the same period (\$31,757) is only about 64 percent that of Georgia (\$49,604). Unemployment in the county remained at double-digit level (10.0 percent) as an annual average in 2013, compared to Georgia's 8.2 percent. Such statistics have resulted in Georgia ranking Toombs County as a 2014 Job Tax Tier 1 county. While this ranking is for



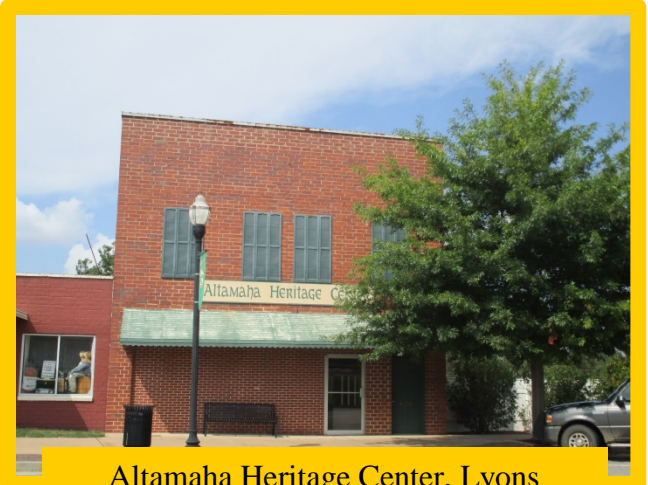
Vidalia Municipal Annex



Lyons City Hall



Santa Claus Welcome Center and Gift Shop



Altamaha Heritage Center, Lyons



Vidalia Regional Airport



Southeastern Early College and Career Academy, Vidalia

Georgia's bottom 40 percent or so of counties needing an economic boost, it has the advantage of offering Georgia's largest tax breaks for job creation within Toombs County.

The future Toombs County will take advantage of its assets and opportunities, and address its issues. It will be known worldwide as the home of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, but for so much more as well. It will continue to be a vibrant and thriving regional leader, economic center, and renowned model in rural Georgia. The community will be a desired address for both business and residential growth, and an exceptional place to live, work, recreate, or visit. Growth will be well managed and guided to locate near existing infrastructure and services of Vidalia/Lyons, and will be respectful and protective of existing character, and the community's fields, forests, open spaces, and natural and cultural resources. The community will truly remain "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion."

The new DCA planning standards reduced and simplified requirements seeking to engender local plans more attentive to individual needs and generating more local pride, ownership, and use. This Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan was developed with this as an overarching objective. It was intended to be a locally driven plan principally addressing local needs and cultivating widespread community interest, support, and buy-in, while meeting state standards. Even the title of this plan was chosen carefully to stimulate and encourage interest, reading, and implementation. "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion" captures reference to Toombs County's worldwide renowned agricultural crop and to its extensive reach in other aspects, and to its future aspirations. This certainly should generate more curiosity and interest, and hopefully, more ownership and utilization, than the more bland "The Joint Toombs County Comprehensive Plan." The Toombs County community wants to protect its heritage and rural character; conserve its fields and forests and natural splendor; improve its infrastructure; attract new residents and retirees; locate businesses and compatible jobs; utilize and celebrate its natural resources and heritage; and grow tourism, among its guiding aims and principles outlined herein. The community truly wants to be a thriving regional rural center, and "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion" in many aspects.

Previous Plans. This comprehensive plan is the third within the County prepared under the auspices of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The first was adopted in 1992, while the second comprehensive plan was adopted in 2009 in accordance with state requirements. Both of these plans were intensively data and state requirement driven, although local objectives are outlined and portrayed. The second plan, in particular, contains much local information which may not easily be found elsewhere and may remain of use. All of these plans should remain, at least in hard copy, available from the Toombs County local governments and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission. At the time of this plan preparation, the second comprehensive plan is available in digital format on the state (www.georgiaplanning.com) and region (www.hogarc.org) websites.

Data. The emergence of the world wide web with its vast data repositories accessible through free search engines allows anyone easy access to significant amounts and a wide variety of data, and profiles of any jurisdiction, including Toombs County and its municipalities. For this reason, this comprehensive plan includes only limited data to depict or illustrate points. The new DCA planning standards actually encourage such non-inclusion of data. Almost any data depicted at a moment in time quickly becomes dated, and maybe irrelevant. The world wide web offers the opportunity of more relevant and up-to-date data at the time of access.

There are a variety of reliable public and private sources of data. Of course, the traditional source of official community data is the U.S. Census Bureau. Data on Toombs County, its municipalities, or any other jurisdiction is quickly accessed at quickfacts.census.gov which provides a summary community profile on many popular data items, and links to even more data. Another quality source of data is the website, www.statsamerica.org, which provides a compilation of primarily government data on many items for any county in any state of the U.S. The site is maintained by Indiana University in partnership with the federal Economic Development Administration. The University of Georgia maintains a website, www.georgiastats.uga.edu, where county level data for nearly 1,300 variables related to a wide variety of subjects on population, labor, natural resources, government, health, education, and crime can be accessed. The data can be compared to other counties and the state as well as on a historical change basis, among various user options. The data is compiled from *The Georgia*

County Guide and the Farmgate Value Report prepared by UGA's Extension Service. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has available data for cities and counties under "Community Planning Resources," and will also prepare community data reports when requested under "Other Resources." The State of Georgia has official labor and economic data and other links to state data at georgiafacts.org. Additional state sponsored economic data is available at www.georgialogistics.com. Excellent overall private data sources include www.city-data.com, and www.usa.com; while www.headwaterseconomics.org is an excellent source for socioeconomic information, including data and interpretation.

Population Projections. As noted earlier, the official 2010 Census population of Toombs County was 27,223, up 4.4% from 2000's 26,067. This growth was only about one-quarter (24%) that of Georgia's 18.3% and less than half of the national U.S. rate of 9.7%. Toombs County's location inland from the Georgia coast and close to I-16 and Georgia's metro areas has helped. The U.S. Census Bureau estimate for 2013 Toombs County population is 27,273, an increase of only 50 persons from 2010. This suggests very little current growth. The high mark of population in Toombs County is now, and with the exception of slight dips from 1930-1940 during the Great Depression and again from 1950-1960 after WWII, the county has always exhibited slow, but steady growth. Toombs County's location, the Vidalia Sweet Onion and other agricultural crops, existing businesses, quality of life, and easy access to larger metro areas and Georgia's ports are positive factors and influences for future growth and development.

While past and present population levels are readily available on the world wide web, population projections are not so easily accessed. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for generating official state population projections for Georgia counties. OPB's official projections for Toombs County were contained in the Altamaha Regional Water Plan and showed growth to 35,059 in 2030 (2010 was overestimated), extrapolated to 38,619 in 2040. Current OPG projections for Toombs County, as shown on the www.georgiastats.uga.edu website, are 31,489 persons in 2030. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission (HOGARC) also prepares population projections which have proven to be relatively accurate in the past. HOGARC's population projections for Toombs County, as noted in the 2013 Regional Assessment of its Regional Plan, show lower population levels than the Regional Water Plan

(overestimated 2010), and similar, but slightly lower, levels than current OPB projections. These include 31,940 in 2030 and 32,938 in 2040.

Population Projections, Toombs County

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
OPB, Water Plan	28,858		32,189		35,059		38,619
OPB, georgiastats	27,223	28,377	29,419	30,454	31,489		
Regional Commission	27,223	28,243	29,125	30,035	30,973	31,940	32,938

Sources: Altamaha Regional Water Plan, 2011, www.altamahacouncil.org; www.georgiastats.uga.edu (county by county analysis, population, estimates and projections, State Office of Planning and Budget); Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Plan, Regional Assessment, 2013.

Coordination with Other Plans. Toombs County has an approved and adopted hazard mitigation plan prepared for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to remain eligible for federal disaster assistance. This Hazard Mitigation Plan's preparation was coordinated with past comprehensive plan preparation. It is clear that the two most prominent hazards facing Toombs County that can be influenced by the comprehensive plan are the hazard mitigation plan goals to reduce damage from flood hazards and wildfire, and thereby protect life and health. The comprehensive plan objectives to conserve the county's river and stream corridors, to maintain healthy working forests and fields (including employing proper management techniques), to improve fire/emergency management and other public safety services, and to enhance growth management/code enforcement regulation are generally consistent with, and offer implementation to, the hazard mitigation plan.

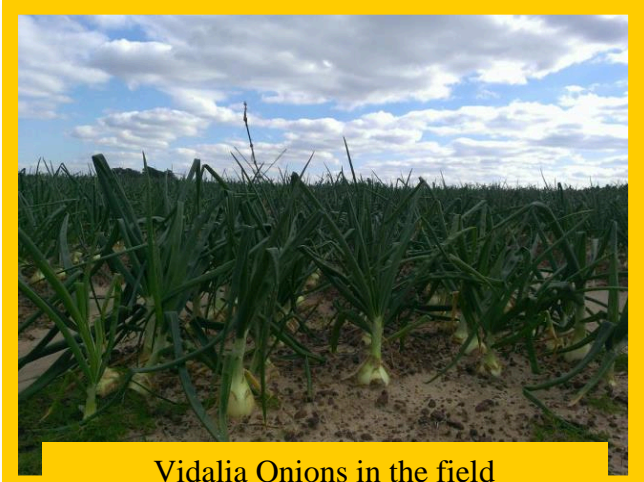
The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan is also consistent with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy's goals and objectives to develop industrial parks; develop/improve local infrastructure; enhance telecommunications infrastructure; retain existing businesses/industry; attract new industry; and spur non-traditional economic development, like tourism and downtown development, are repeated as principal goals in the Toombs County Comprehensive Plan. The local plan is similarly supportive of espoused state economic goals.

Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria Consideration. Toombs County is part of the Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council. The adopted regional water plan, *Altamaha Regional Water Plan* (2011), was considered by the Toombs County Local Plan Coordination Committee and the local governments in preparation of this plan. This local comprehensive plan's objectives to maintain viable agriculture/forestry uses, protect/conservate natural resources, to enhance intergovernmental coordination and government/efficiencies, and upgrade local infrastructure all help implement, and maintain consistency with, the regional water plan. The vision of the regional water plan, "to wisely manage, develop and protect the region's water resources...to enhance quality of life..., protect natural systems..., and support the basin's economy," is inherent in this comprehensive plan's community vision and goals. In the Regional Water Planning Council's 2014 implementation report, are specifically cited as supportive implementation activities.

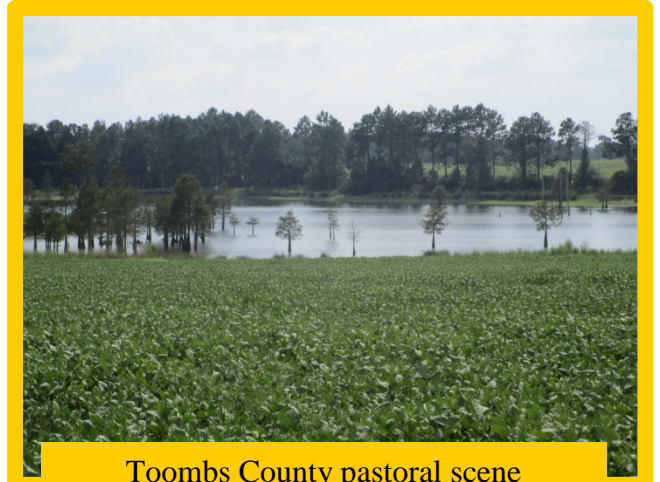
Similarly, the Environmental Planning Criteria were also considered in the development of this comprehensive plan. The local governments of Toombs County, including Toombs County, the City of Lyons, the City of Santa Claus, and the City of Vidalia, are not yet in compliance with the Environmental Planning Criteria, not having adopted implementing, consistent ordinances. The local governments, with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, plan to adopt the Region's model "Environmental Conservation, On-Site Sewage Management, and Permit" Ordinance soon. The Regional Commission's minimum planning performance standards require this within three years of the new Regional Plan adoption in 2014.

Consistency with Quality Community Objectives. In 2011, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs changed its Quality Community Objectives to a more general listing and summary of the 10 objectives. These include: Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options, Educational Opportunities, and Community Health.

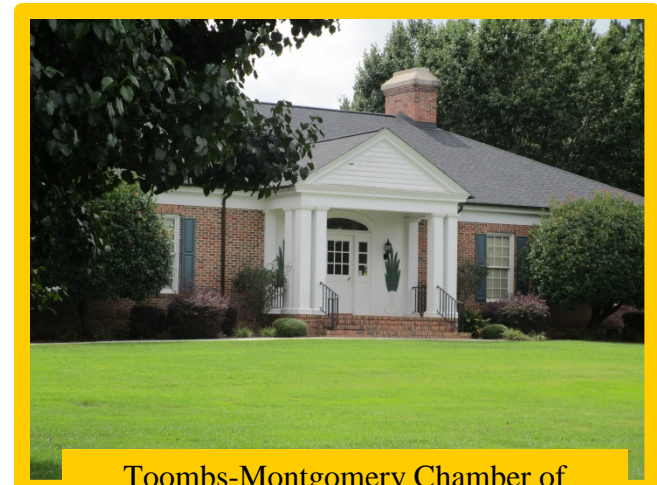
The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan directly espouses (many of) these objectives and therefore, is very consistent with, and supportive of them. This comprehensive



Vidalia Onions in the field



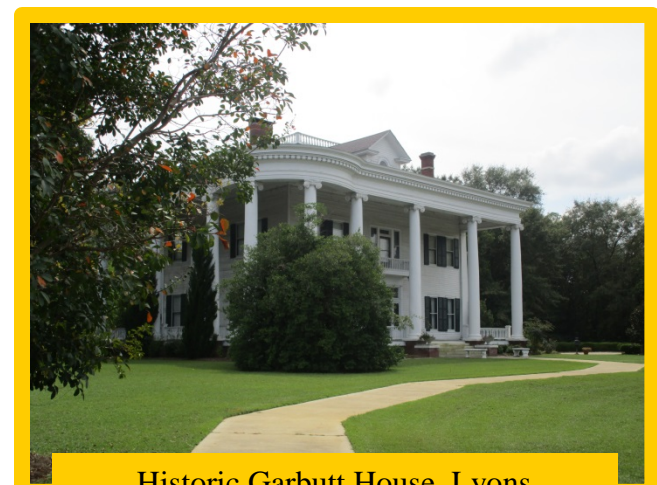
Toombs County pastoral scene



Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, Vidalia



Vidalia Onion Museum



Historic Garbutt House, Lyons



Meadows Regional Medical Center, Vidalia

plan has goals to achieve a brighter future and better community for Toombs County, which is consistent with a quality community and the DCA Quality Community Objectives. The Toombs County Local Plan Coordination Committee reviewed and considered these Quality Community Objectives at one of its meetings.

Community Involvement. As noted earlier, the Toombs County local governments clearly wanted to take advantage of the new DCA planning standards to develop a broad-based community plan which would involve and excite all concerned, both public and private, with the future growth and development of Toombs County and its municipalities. To accomplish this, they created a steering committee, the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, of all local stakeholders who could be envisioned to help guide this plan's development, and make the community a better place to live, work, recreate, and learn. This committee did include members from the governing authorities, local economic development practitioners, and local government staff, as well as others concerned with community and economic development within the entire community. This Coordination Committee had outstanding participation, was actively involved in the development of all facets of this comprehensive plan, and had numerous opportunities to both help develop, review, and revise all components. The first orders of business at any Coordination Committee meeting were review of any revisions to previous elements based on committee input, and chances to return to and modify earlier elements, if desired. The initial meeting of the Local Plan Coordination Committee included a formal identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community, including opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). This identification was utilized in developing all plan elements. The general public was offered the chance to participate at the two required public hearings (and with the Coordination Committee, if desired, after the initial public hearing). These hearings were advertised through unique wording to specifically generate interest and participation. The initial public hearing was held near the beginning of the plan development process to explain the process, offer opportunity for further participation, and solicit input on an improved community vision and local issues/opportunities. The final public hearing was held after a plan draft was developed and reviewed by the Coordination Committee to allow citizen review, solicit any final input, and inform of pending submittal.

“Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion” is truly a locally developed guide to, and framework for, future growth and development of Toombs County designed to generate local pride and enthusiasm, to accentuate assets and improve weaknesses, and ultimately bring about a desired future which makes the Toombs County community an improved place to live and work with an outstanding and enhanced quality of life. It is realized that to take advantage of opportunities and to make a difference will take time and considered effort, but it is felt this plan is pragmatic and practical in outlining a course and roadmap for steps and actions which can be achieved and which will move the community forward. The plan continues with delineation of the Community Goals element and a Community Vision which essentially and succinctly summarizes the community’s aspirations and plan’s objectives.



New Downtown Vidalia Amphitheater Park



Historic residence, Vidalia



Meadows Regional Medical Center, Vidalia



Historic Downtown Vidalia streetscape

COMMUNITY GOALS

The Community Goals Element is described in the State Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive planning as the most important part of the comprehensive plan. It is a concise summary of future community desires and wishes, and is an easily referenced roadmap for community leaders and all concerned with growth and development of the community and its future. The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes three of the four possible components detailed in the Minimum Standards for the required element. These include: a general Community Vision, separate municipal descriptions/visions, listing of Community Goals, and a description of Long Term Community Policies. These components seek to paint a picture of the desired future community, and answer the planning question, “Where does the community wish to go?” To some degree, the Long Term Community Policies also outline guidance strategy of, “How are we going to get where we desire to go, and also, what do we desire for other development parties to pursue?”

COMMUNITY VISION

Sweet! So Much More Than The Vidalia Sweet Onion

“Sweet!” has become a commonly used modern expression and adjective defined by the Urban Dictionary as a term expressing excitement and high praise describing something which is awesome, amazing, or excellent. The Toombs County community is all that, and has much to offer. Toombs County is home to Georgia’s official state vegetable, the Vidalia Sweet Onion. This culinary delight is now marketed worldwide, but is only grown in a USDA regulated area centered around Vidalia where it was first grown and marketed. The community celebrates this delicious treat, so sweet you can eat it like an apple, each April with a four-day festival recognized by MSNBC as one of the Five Don’t Miss Festivals across the U.S. The Vidalia Onion is not the only thing “sweet” in Toombs County. The community offers a high quality of life and economic opportunity to business, industry, resident, or visitor alike. The community is a regional leader in commerce, industry, health care, and recreation located close to larger metropolitan areas with easy access by highway, rail, or air, but surrounded in abundant outdoor beauty and adventure, and steeped in small town and rural character, and celebrated heritage. As the local chamber of commerce notes, “the Vidalia area is full of flavor and we don’t just mean on your dinner plate!” Toombs County is definitely “Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Sweet Onion.”

Toombs County is a rural, progressive community of nearly 30,000 persons located just south of I-16 in south central Georgia about equi-distant between the metropolitan areas of Augusta, Macon, and Savannah. It is a thriving regional trade center with a diverse local economy best known for its world famous Vidalia Sweet Onion, but with many assets and attractions for business and residential growth. The county’s cities include Vidalia with a population of about 10,500 persons; Lyons, the county seat, with 4,500 persons; and the small town of Santa Claus with a population of about 175 persons. All are located close together in the center of the county. The community has excellent transportation access given its location just south of Interstate 16 at the junction of two U.S. highways in process of multi-lane upgrade, the

east-west U.S. Highway 280, and the north-south U.S. Highway 1. The community is served by the Georgia Central Railway, the Heart of Georgia (Georgia DOT) Railroad, and the City of Vidalia Railroad. There is also access to the Norfolk Southern and CSX Railway systems. For air travel, the community has a modern Level III airport with a 6,000 foot runway. The community has easy access to Georgia's two world class seaports, the Port of Savannah, North America's largest single terminal container facility, and the Port of Brunswick, known for both its auto/heavy machinery processing and bulk imports/exports.

Toombs County as a community is a thriving regional trade, service, employment and educational center located in a verdant and scenic landscape dominated by pastoral agricultural fields and towering southern yellow pines. There continues to be expanding growth and development because of coordinated, progressive leadership, increasing and improving community facilities and services, and continuing success in economic diversification. The community gained about 2,000 persons in the 1990s, 1,500 in the 2000's, and continues to grow despite having to overcome the loss of many apparel manufacturing jobs during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The community has attracted new service, manufacturing, distribution, and agricultural processing businesses. The community is home to a major Trane plant, one of DOT Foods' (the US's largest food redistributor) distribution centers, and has attracted both Chicken of the Sea and U.S. Pet to its US 1 Corporate Center during the post 2008 recession. In 2014, the community is constructing its third industrial speculative building in the last five years. It has broadly expanded its Vidalia Onion agricultural base and reach, while diversifying into additional vegetable crops, timber/pine straw production, and other alternative crops, like olive trees. The community is a growing regional leader in retail trade and services, education, and health care services. The City of Vidalia has opened a state-of-the-art, large municipal annex in a reclaimed vacant grocery store, and created a new downtown passive park and gathering place complete with amphitheater stage. The City of Lyons has also constructed a new city hall, revitalizing a blighted area of its downtown in the process and facilitating other private investment. The City of Santa Claus has renovated its city hall, constructed a 4,500 square foot community center, and made other improvements to enhance its attraction to tourists and residents alike. Southeastern Technical College has expanded facilities, campuses, programs, enrollment, and its service area. Local healthcare services have also shown tremendous growth in



expansion of specialties, practitioners, and regional reach. The community opened a new modern regional medical center hospital in 2011 at a time when many rural hospitals are closing. Meadows Regional Medical Center is a fully accredited hospital which continues to expand services offerings and outreach clinics to the surrounding multi-county rural area. In 2013, the hospital opened a cutting-edge cancer center, and provides some of the most modern and advanced cardiology services available, both at exceptional levels which belie the community's size and rural status. The hospital, like the community, states it is there "to help you get more out of life."

The community and its leadership have always had a determined commitment to support a high quality of life, pay homage to heritage, and provide superlative cultural opportunities. Both Vidalia and Lyons are Main Street Program communities which use a preservation-based approach to downtown revitalization and economic development. Many stately historic residential structures on Vidalia's South Jackson Street have been adaptively recycled for office business uses. The community has developed a new Vidalia City Park complete with amphitheater in its downtown on the site of its former police station. The City of Lyons has transformed its historic downtown theater into the "Blue Marquee," which hosts a widely acclaimed annual folklife play on colorful local characters and events centered on the natural gem, the Altamaha River, and written about in the local newspaper, along with other events. Lyons also hosts "The Real Squeal Barbeque and Music Festival" in the fall, as well as a traditional soapbox derby for all of south Georgia. In addition, Lyons has renovated its historic railroad depot into a community center and special event space. Appropriate to the community's outdoor heritage, the historic Lyons Post Office has a terra cotta relief sculpture, funded by the Works Progress Administration and crafted by the well-known Italian sculptor Albino Manca, entitled "Wild Duck and Deer." The community is home to the Altama Museum of Art and History housed in Vidalia's historic Brazell House, as well as the headquarters of the Ochoopee Regional Library serving four surrounding counties. The Ochoopee Regional Library also operates the large, preeminent Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library in Vidalia. The City of Santa Claus, one of two towns so-named in the U.S., has taken advantage of the Christmas theme, providing hand-cancellations for letters to Santa Claus, Santa Claus entrance signs, as well as a museum and gift shop, and having its streets appropriately theme named. The Toombs

County community has, unlike many small towns, an organized multi-county Vidalia Convention and Visitors Bureau to seek tourism, and to coordinate local events and facilities.

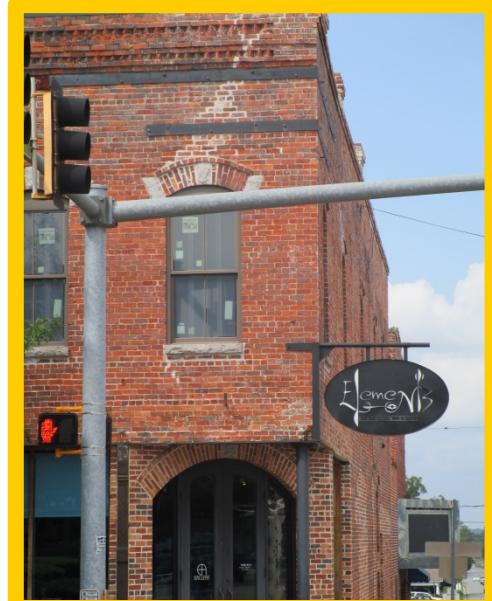
Beyond the varied abundant cultural and outdoor recreational opportunities the Toombs County community offers, it is a regional leader in organized recreation activities and facilities. The City of Vidalia has two large community and regional parks, with many fields and facilities, the Ed Smith Complex and the newer Ezra Taylor Road Park; several neighborhood parks; four walking tracks at different locations; and a number of passive parks, including two located downtown. The City of Lyons hosts several parks, including one of Georgia's finest, most well-rounded small town parks, Partin Park. This park can host multiple meetings or parties, both large and small, as well as provide playing fields, picnic areas, walking and nature trails, a skate park, and other facilities. It is home to one of the South's largest youth baseball tournaments, ongoing for over 50 years. There are other recreational facilities in the rural, unincorporated community of Cedar Crossing, and a walking track in Santa Claus. The community offers many choices for an active and healthy lifestyle.

All of this growth, and attention to heritage and quality of life, is occurring in a relatively unspoiled environment of outstanding natural beauty and quality of life. Over 75 percent of the county's land use remains in agricultural or forest use. The county is home to two scenic blackwater rivers, the great Altamaha River and the lazy meandering Ochoopee River. There is abundant wildlife and outdoor recreational opportunities. The Altamaha River forms the southern border of the county and has been designated by The Nature Conservancy as one of 75 great natural places in the world. The climate is also outstanding with a growing season lasting about eight months and an average annual temperature of 66 degrees.

Toombs County was first settled by farmers and stockmen of Scotch Highland descent attracted to its fertile lands, and later by large numbers of timber and naval stores operators from the Carolinas because of its vast pine forests. The real growth period came after the establishment of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad and the other railroads through the county in the late 1800s. Lyons and Vidalia both originated as railroad stops, and Vidalia soon became a railroad center and junction point for several railroads. Toombs County



Downtown Vidalia Association/Main Street Program office



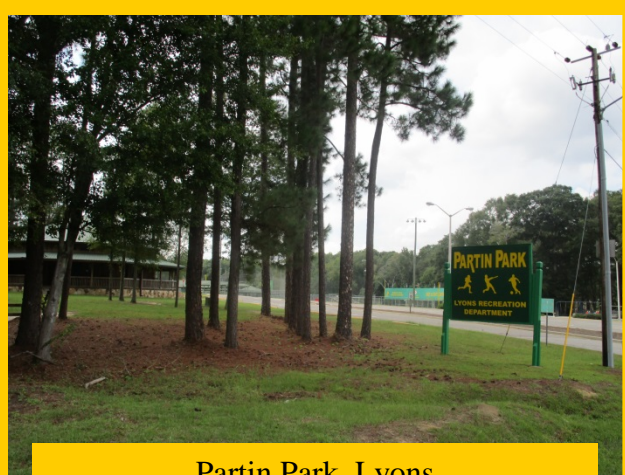
Historic Downtown Lyons



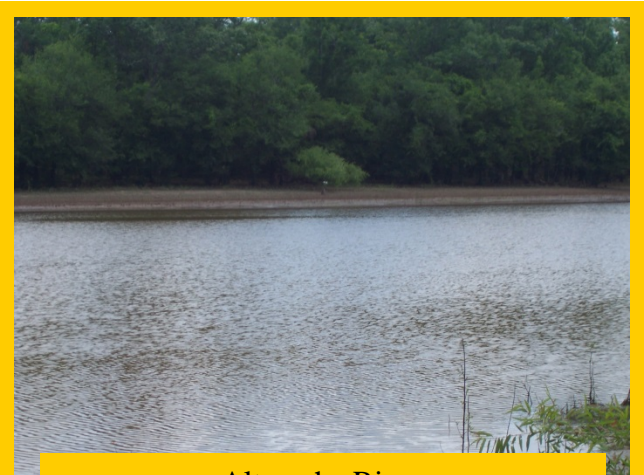
Altama Museum of Art and History, Vidalia



"Wild Duck and Deer" sculpture in historic Lyons Post Office



Partin Park, Lyons



Altamaha River

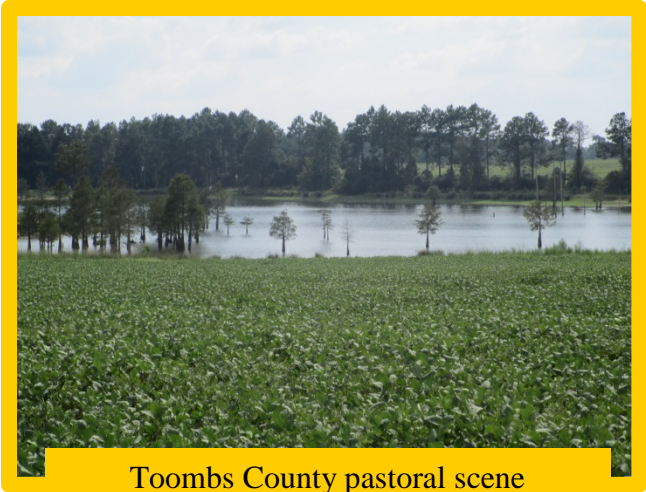
was created in 1905 through the political outcry and advocacy for local governance by involved leadership. This local leadership has also been evidenced in more recent years through the growth and marketing of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, and other economic and community success.

Though the modes have changed, Toombs County's current and future growth parallels that of its past. Steady growth will continue because of the strengths of location, transportation access, its abundant natural resources, its regional economic and service center status, its investment in infrastructure, and the progressive local leadership. The community's location between major metropolitan areas, near I-16, and at the crossroads of U.S. Highways 1 and 280, is key to future growth. This key location, as well as the presence of Plant Hatch Nuclear Plant just south of the Altamaha River, will provide much impetus for additional economic and residential growth and development. The fertile fields and vast pine forests will feed the continued growth of the Vidalia Sweet Onion as well as other agricultural and value added enterprises, such as vegetable production, cellulosic biofuels, and food processing and distribution. The rural and pastoral landscapes created by these functioning fields and forests and other natural beauty added by the creeks and rivers of the county, particularly that of the Altamaha River, will be integral to continued and enhanced high quality of life which attracts additional residential and other growth. The expanding regional services, retail trade, employment opportunities, especially those in education and health care, will also attract additional residential and other growth. The progressive leadership enables the community to continue to expand the facilities and services necessary to attract and support this growth; to market, shape, and facilitate the growth; and to build upon successes.

The future Toombs County community will be known worldwide as the home of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, but for much more. The community will be "Sweet!" and "So Much More than the Vidalia Sweet Onion." The community will be a vibrant and thriving regional leader and economic center and renowned model of rural Georgia. It will be a desired address for both business and residential growth and be known as an exceptional location to live or work. The community will have expanded retail and service businesses, and a diverse offering of well-paying jobs, quality employers, and a well educated and motivated work force. The community will be a recognized leader in health care, education, retail trade, service, and recreational

facilities and services. The accompanying intense growth and development will be well managed and guided to locate near existing infrastructure and services of Vidalia/Lyons and the U.S. 1 to I-16 corridor, and will be of quality, well-maintained appearance. The downtowns and historic areas of Vidalia and Lyons will be immaculate, well preserved, and attractive government, social, cultural, and economic centers of the community, as well as important diverse, functioning contributors to robust local and regional economies. Santa Claus will be of unique charm to residents and visitors alike. All of this quality growth will take place in an environment offering diverse choices of exceptional housing and well-kept neighborhoods for all, while maintaining a scenic countryside and unique quality of life. The farms and forests will be working contributors to the local economy, while again adding to the preserved rural character and natural and scenic beauty. The abundant natural resources will remain relatively unspoiled backdrops to extraordinary living whose natural functioning and contributions to wildlife habitat, enhanced quality of life, and recreational outlets are retained and preserved.

Toombs County will enjoy much continued success, and be an even better place to live, work, visit, or do business. The community will be the envy of many others, and not just in rural Georgia. Toombs County will be an even more exceptional community enjoying widespread identity for so much more than the delectable Vidalia Sweet Onion. The community will definitely be “Sweet!” by anyone’s definition. Others will want to duplicate the Toombs County community’s reputation and successes in many areas. Toombs County’s continuing successes will be enhanced through ongoing community cooperation and progressive leadership working together. This exceptional community with a widely known outstanding reputation will be accomplished through continuing local investment in quality, modern and improved public and private facilities, infrastructure, and services. Compatible growth and development which implements the community’s vision will be attracted, well managed, and appropriately directed by well planned public investment, incentives, and other guidance.



Toombs County pastoral scene



Vidalia Onions in field



Historic residence, Vidalia



Historic residence, Lyons



Historic Downtown Vidalia



DOT Foods, Vidalia

LYONS

Description

The City of Lyons is located in the center of Toombs County at the intersection of Georgia Highway 292 and U.S. 1. It is also served by U.S. 280 and Georgia Highways 152 and 178. The community lies adjacent and east of, and sharing city limits with, the larger Toombs County city, Vidalia, but Lyons serves as the county seat. Lyons was established as a railroad station stop on the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad (later the Seaboard Air Line Railway) in 1891, and was formally incorporated in 1897. It became the county seat of the newly created Toombs County in 1905. The City of Lyons was named for Lyons, France at the urging of the railroad president, Sam Hawkins. While Lyons may not have the sophisticated culture and long history of its sister city in France, it has always been a social and governmental center within the county and a bastion of small town, southern hospitality and culture. The community's downtown Elberta Hotel opened in 1905, and immediately became the county's social center. Today the community remains active in downtown revitalization of its historic district through long, active participation in the Better Hometown, now Main Street Program. The community maintains a small-town, family friendly atmosphere of southern hospitality and culture attractive to residents and visitors alike. The community's population has remained relatively constant in the low 4,000s since 1980. Four of five county school system schools, as well as a large, private Christian academy, are located within the city limits. A renowned historic WIA terra cotta relief sculpture, "Wild Ducks and Deer" by Italian artist Albino Mancu, is located inside the city's post office. The community's historic Pal Theater has been revitalized into the Blue Marquee, which hosts an annual folklife play, and other events. The play, "Tales from the Altamaha," featuring changing performances about colorful events and characters from the local area, has received widespread acclaim. The community also hosts an annual, regional Soapbox Derby, and the Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival. These events and the focus on town history, culture, and downtown revitalization have all contributed positively to enhanced public and private investment, and improved economic and community development within the community. The City of Lyons recently constructed a new compatible city hall along GA. Hwy 292 in the eastern part of its downtown. The community

and its long time recreation director have developed the local Partin Park into a showcase of small town recreation and community gathering place for all ages. Partin Park is home to its own “Green Monster,” four different venues for meetings of all sizes, nature and walking trails, and many other varied facilities which belie the community’s size. It is the host site each year for one of the South’s largest youth baseball tournaments, which has been held for over 50 years. Lyons has prepared for its industrial economic future by jointly extending water/sewer service to the county’s U.S. 1 Corporate Center north of town toward I-16. The community truly is an evolving and expanding beacon of southern culture and family fun which utilizes its heritage and hospitality to stand out and remain vital and viable. It retains unique identity and appeal for business, industry, residents, and visitors.

Vision

The City of Lyons wants to retain its status as a viable and vital small town oasis of family oriented fun and southern hospitality and culture. The community will remain the educational and governmental center of county government. Downtown Lyons will continue to utilize and revitalize its history and architecture as an economic stimulus and cultural center for the community. The U.S. 1 Corporate Center and the U.S. 1 Corridor north of town to I-16 will become the address for new business location within Toombs County, creating further economic and community development impetus and appeal for the community. The community will continue to invest in and promote its infrastructure, culture, and identity.

Needs

- Continued water/sewer/infrastructure improvements
- Continued street and streetscape improvements
- Continued downtown revitalization/utilization
- Police station/public safety improvements
- Continued recreation/Partin Park improvements

Opportunities

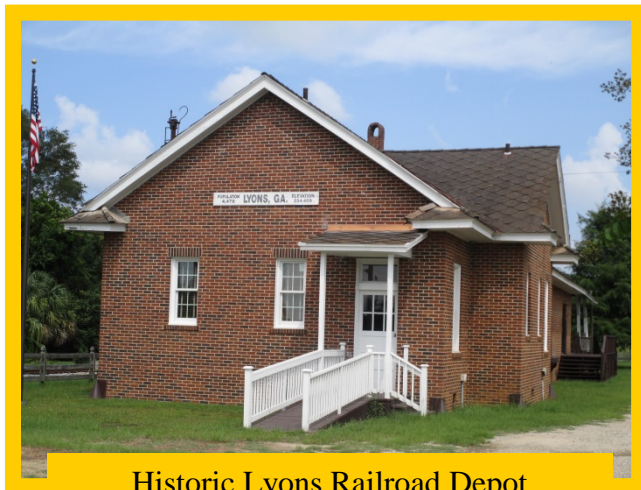
- Downtown Lyons/Main Street Program
- “Tales from the Altamaha” and other events
- Partin Park
- U.S. 1 Corporate Center
- Nelle Brown Public Library
- Altamaha Heritage Center



Lyons City Hall



Historic Lyons Post Office



Historic Lyons Railroad Depot



Historic Downtown Lyons streetscape

SANTA CLAUS

Description

The City of Santa Claus is a quiet, friendly municipality, almost a neighborly hamlet, of about 160 persons located about one mile south of Lyons, lying adjacent and east of U.S. 1. The community wholeheartedly embraces and celebrates its namesake and the associated Christmas holidays. City hall is located at 25 December Drive; all city streets, save one, are appropriately theme named; the City's motto is "The City that Loves Children;" and six-foot, welcoming Santas are located alongside the City's entrance signs on both edges of town. The community is one of two such named incorporated municipalities in the U.S. (the other is a larger Indiana town). The City of Santa Claus was incorporated in 1941 at the behest of C. C. (Farmer Green) who operated a roadside stand there to sell his pecans and other novelties to passing tourists. The development of the physical town was principally the work of real estate broker Bill Salem and his brother. The one, non-themed street in town is named, Salem, in his honor. The city's name, Santa Claus, was chosen to generate additional traveler interest and attention. The growth of Santa Claus was thwarted by the opening of interstates, and the resulting decline of U.S. 1 as a tourist route. Today, the community merrily continues to embrace its holiday traditions and beginnings. Although without an official post office, the citizens of the community voluntarily hand-cancel many holiday letters and packages with a special stamp. The City has recently constructed a welcome center, historical museum and gift shop, and a new 4,200 square foot community center which hosts an annual community-wide, public Christmas party and other events. The community also hosts a public Christmas tree, replete with a town-wide decorating event and carol sing. An especially inspiring and beautiful celebration is the City's Christmas Eve Luminary Lighting which attracts many visitors to ride through town to see the many traditional luminaries (paper bags filled with sand and candles) lining its streets. Light from fire has been a destination beacon for weary travelers for centuries. The luminaries do succinctly capture the heritage and spirit of Santa Claus, the small, neighborly city of Toombs County, Georgia.

Vision

The City of Santa Claus wishes to be a warm and caring community with a friendly, neighborly population which embraces the Christmas spirit and holiday year-round. The magic and selfless traditions of Christmas will be evident and embraced all year. The community will welcome both visitors and residents alike, and instill both joy and tangible reminders of the holidays with appropriate decorations, shops, and community facilities, services, and events.

Needs

- Improved water/sewer infrastructure
- Street improvements, especially Prancer Street
- City website with online shop
- Establishment of a local arts/crafts festival
- Local candy shop/restaurant

Opportunities

- Municipal name and heritage
- Location on U.S. 1
- Proximity to Lyons/Vidalia
- Community cohesiveness



Santa Claus entrance sign



Santa Claus City Hall



Santa Claus Community Center

VIDALIA

Description

The City of Vidalia is located in southeastern Georgia along U.S. 280 just south of I-16, about equidistant between the Georgia metro areas of Augusta, Macon, and Savannah. The current municipality is by far the largest in Toombs County, with a population of nearly 11,000 persons, although it is not the county seat. Vidalia's history is tied to fields and forests, and lies in the rich fertile river valleys between the famed Altamaha River on the south, the scenic Ochoopee on the north and east, and the mystic Oconee on the west. Even today, Vidalia is best known as the home of the world's sweetest onion, the Vidalia Sweet Onion. Vidalia had its municipal beginnings as Jenkins Station when the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery (SAM) Railroad came through the county in 1890. There is some dispute as to how Vidalia officially got its name, with many long assuming it was named in honor of Miss Vidalia Hawkins, daughter of Sam Hawkins, who was president and principal owner of the SAM Railroad. However, it has never been proved that Mr. Hawkins had a daughter named Vidalia. Other sources attribute the naming to another railroad president, the Central of Georgia's William M. Wadley, in honor of his daughter, Virginia Wadley in the 1880s prior to incorporation, and others to geographic meaning. Even as a station stop on the SAM, Vidalia languished until the Macon, Dublin and Southwestern Railroad was extended from Dublin to a junction with the Seaboard Air Line Railroad (formerly the SAM) in 1902. Vidalia is said to have exhibited Georgia's largest percentage growth from 1900 when its official Census population was 500 to 1910, when it was 1,800. By 1917, Vidalia's population is estimated to have doubled to 3,500. The Vidalia City Directory of 1917 noted that Vidalia had the best railroad facilities of any little city in Georgia, radiating in six directions from the city and with direct lines to "Savannah, Macon, Augusta, and Florida cities." The Directory further noted that the railroads handled "fully 500 cars of freight" daily during the busy season. It was further pointed out that the community had "splendid clayed highways (which) lead out in every direction in making it easy and pleasant for automobile travel." The local businesses were still agricultural, forest, and agribusiness related. The community was noted as manufacturing the best cotton gin on the market, having the biggest wire fence market in

Georgia, and the second largest mule market. Vidalia was also a leader with its newspaper, its Leader and Rosansky Department Store, and its large number of retail dry goods and grocery stores. It was additionally a regional leader in education, including its schools for African-Americans. Vidalia's first school for blacks was a converted Odd Fellows Hall made into a one-room school in 1904. It was established by James DeWitt Dickerson, who was instrumental in Vidalia education until his death in 1947. Professor Dickerson was instrumental in securing the local support of Vidalia's black and white citizens needed to attract the aid of the Julius Rosenwald Fund to build a two-story Rosenwald school on Third Avenue in 1918-1919, eventually known as the Vidalia High and Industrial School. Under the tutelage of Professor Dickerson, the school achieved Georgia Department of Education aid and elevated designation as the Toombs County Training School in the early 1930s. The Toombs County Training School also attracted Works Progress Administration funding in 1935 to build a new brick veneer school in 1937, appropriately named the Dickerson Training School. Dickerson Training School was said to be the most modern school building in South Georgia for blacks at that time. Even today, Vidalia operates one of the few city school systems in the state, and has a J.D. Dickerson Elementary School.

Vidalia's elevated status today as a regional center of retail, service, economic opportunity, and health care can be traced again to location, agricultural heritage, and progressive leadership. Seeking to recover from the Great Depression, a local farmer, Moses Coleman, planted onions as an alternative crop and early spring cash source. Coleman's foresight was rewarded when he discovered the low sulfur soils of the area made the onions exceptionally sweet, therefore commanding a premium price. This price led other local farmers to follow suit and also plant onions. Vidalia was located at the juncture of some of South Georgia's most widely traveled highways. Given this and the fortuitous location of a state farmer's market in Vidalia in the 1940s, the fame of the sweet "Vidalia Onions" soon spread. The community also landed a distribution center for the Piggly Wiggly grocery store chain in the early 1950s. The business acumen of the local Piggly Wiggly distribution center manager, quickly led to much wider marketing of the sweet "Vidalia Onions." The state of Georgia gave the Vidalia Onion legal status in 1986, protecting it by restricting its production area to a surrounding 20 county area. Local onion producers received further federal protection under a marketing order in 1989. The Vidalia Onion was made Georgia's official state vegetable in

1990, and its season was extended by controlled atmosphere storage adapted from apples. Today the Vidalia Onion is a cash crop worth an estimated 90 million dollars to the regional economy.

The Vidalia Onion is certainly one of Georgia's agricultural and economic success stories, and a state treasure. However, Vidalia is a success on many levels. The community has diversified itself economically by focusing on its location, maintaining the excellence of local education and other facilities, preserving and reusing tangible reminders of its heritage, and growing itself as a regional trade, service and healthcare center. The community was successful in getting the state to locate Southeastern Technical Institute (now College) in 1988 to the city. The community did not stop there. Through a local option sales tax, it expanded the state project to include the construction of a local funded 776 seat auditorium for both school and community use. Vidalia has been a Main Street Program participant since 1989, and has long been a proponent of downtown revitalization. Vidalia's City Hall is in a rehabilitated, expanded downtown WPA post office. The downtown commercial area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The community continues to invest in its heritage, downtown, and infrastructure. In 2011, the community constructed a new, modern Meadows Regional Medical Center in Vidalia, which continues to expand its regional focus and level of services at a time when many small-town rural hospitals are severely struggling. During the same year, the City of Vidalia converted a downtown vacated grocery store into an imposing, state of the art Municipal Annex which will serve the community well into the future. In 2014, Vidalia created an amphitheater and passive city park on the former police station site behind City Hall, vacated after the Municipal Annex construction. The Vidalia Sweet Onion Festival is now a nearly week-long celebration of the world famous onion, recognized by MSNBC as one of the five don't miss festivals in the U.S. The community operates a Convention and Visitors Bureau, despite its relatively small size. It also has excellent recreation facilities, an airport with a 6,000-foot runway, along with many other amenities. Vidalia is home to a regional library, the Ohoopsee Regional Library, and to a renowned, pre-eminent genealogical library, the Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library. Many of the city's historic homes have been converted to professional, office, and community use, including the Altama Museum of Art and History, located in the National Register-listed Brazell House. This museum is home to 24 original Audubons. The local chamber of commerce notes, "the Vidalia area is full



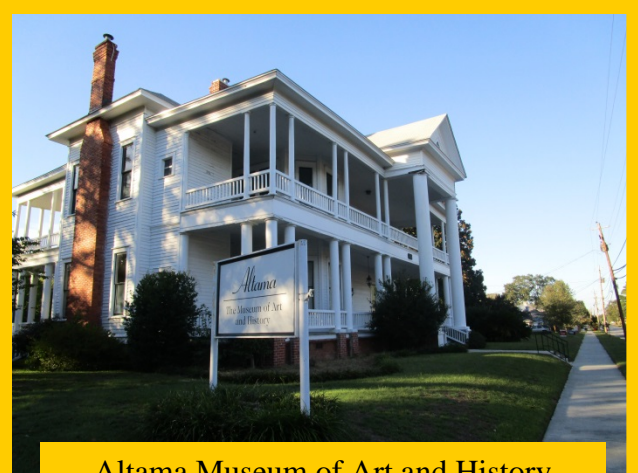
Vidalia City Hall



Vidalia Municipal Annex



Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library



Altama Museum of Art and History



Southeastern Early College and Career Academy



Vidalia Regional Airport

of flavor, and we don't just mean on your dinner plate!" Vidalia truly is a modern urban area with small-town atmosphere, progressive leadership, outstanding facilities, expanding economic status, and with much attention and celebration to its heritage. The U.S. Census Bureau recognizes Vidalia's growing economic status, as the City of Vidalia is the central component of the Vidalia, Georgia Micropolitan Statistical Area, which includes all of Toombs County. The community is most definitely "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion."

Vision

The City of Vidalia will continue its status as a regional center of retail trade, services, job opportunities, and health care. The Vidalia Sweet Onion and other local heritage will continue to be celebrated and utilized as a platform for economic diversification and community improvement. Vidalia's downtown and historic fabric will be lovingly preserved and incorporated into ongoing improvements, even as facilities and services are modernized and expanded. Education, culture, the arts, and tourism will continue to be major focal points of attention. The City and surrounding community will be a model of rural development respective of, and complementary to, existing heritage and culture.

Needs

- Continuing water/sewer/infrastructure improvements
- Continuing downtown revitalization
- Drainage improvements
- Information technology and broadband/Wi-Fi improvements
- Continuing public safety improvements
- Continuing transportation system improvements
- New signage
- Continuing landmark/historic fabric preservation
- Housing stock improvements
- Solid waste management service improvements
- Continuing culture/arts/tourism support/development
- Recreational facilities/parks improvements

Opportunities

- Vidalia Sweet Onion, Museum, and Festival
- National Register-listed downtown commercial area
- Vidalia City School System
- Vidalia Municipal Annex
- 2010 TIA T-SPLOST
- Vidalia Main Street Program
- Vidalia Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Intergovernment cooperation
- Meadows Regional Medical Center
- Southeastern Technical College
- Vidalia Regional Airport
- Ezra Taylor Regional Recreation Facility
- Leadership



COMMUNITY GOALS

Economic Development

- Address continuing education/job skills improvements
- Address low education levels
- Support Southeastern Technical College
- Retain local graduates
- Attract new businesses/industry/jobs
- Support small business/entrepreneurial development
- Continue development of industrial parks/sites
- Maintain/upgrade water/sewer infrastructure
- Improve transportation access/quality
- Seek broadband/fiber availability upgrades
- Attract green businesses
- Enhance intergovernmental cooperation
- Maintain viability/support/enhance agricultural/forestry uses
- Promote/enhance tourism
- Organize local cultural arts umbrella group
- Regional center promotion/enhancement
- Maintain/increase local retail trade/service sectors
- Continue downtown revitalization of Lyons and Vidalia
- Continue support for active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Toombs County Development Authority
- Continue promotion of Vidalia Onion
- Develop new/involved local leadership



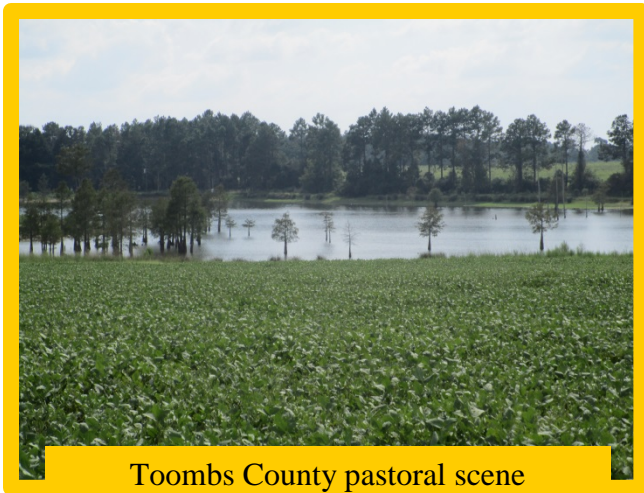
Southeastern Technical College, Vidalia



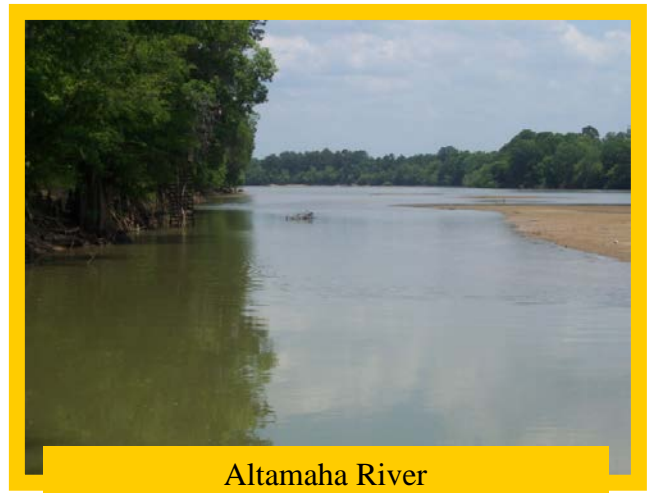
Toombs Corporate Center, U.S. 1, Lyons

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Protect significant natural resources of Toombs County
- Seek compatible development/utilization
- Utilize/preserve/adaptively use historic resources/heritage of Toombs County
- Continue downtown revitalization of Lyons and Vidalia
- Conserve/protect Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers in Toombs County
- Maintain open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses
- Promote nature-based, recreation and agri-tourism opportunities
- Address growth management/natural and cultural resources protection



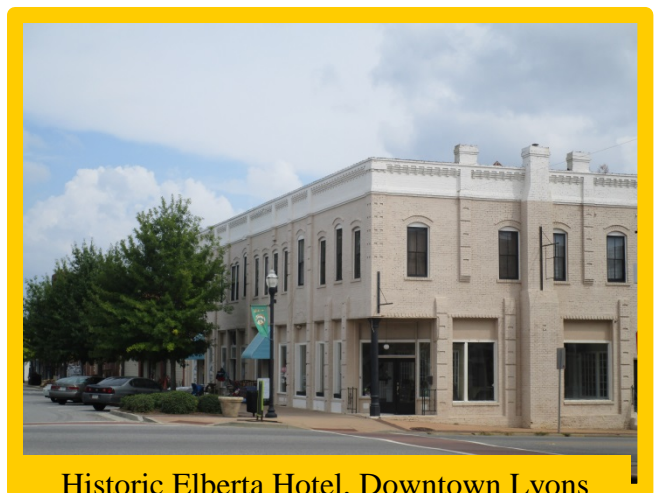
Toombs County pastoral scene



Altamaha River



Historic Downtown Vidalia streetscape



Historic Elberta Hotel, Downtown Lyons

Housing

- Encourage diverse housing mix
- Utilize state/federal programs
- Improve quality/appearance of housing
- Support Lyons and Vidalia housing authorities
- Implement/enforce need for land use planning/subdivision/manufactured housing/code enforcement
- Collaborate on housing rehabilitation measures/programs

Land Use

- Implement/enforce need for land use planning/subdivision/manufactured housing/code enforcement
- Improve community appearance/aesthetics
- Maintain open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses
- Improve/promote transportation access/quality
- Continue to maintain local Subtitle D landfill
- Rural character/quality of life protection
- Promote compatible development/utilization



Historic residence, Vidalia



Vidalia Onions in field

Community Facilities and Services

- Maintain/upgrade/expand infrastructure/services, as needed
- Maintain/upgrade water/sewer facilities and service, as needed
- Upgrade quality/availability of broadband/fiber technology
- Improve/promote transportation access/quality
- Maintain Toombs Subtitle D landfill
- Continue to upgrade public safety/emergency medical facilities/services
- Maintain/upgrade local healthcare facilities/services within the community and regional healthcare provider status
- Develop/improve/maintain recreation facilities and programs countywide
- Provide/maintain appropriate governmental facilities/services
- Maintain quality educational facilities/services
- Support Southeastern Technical College
- Encourage utilization/enhancement/promotion of cultural facilities/activities
- Maintain/enhance Ochoopee Regional Library and local libraries
- Support/enhance local museums

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Maintain/enhance local, regional, state cooperation
- Seek sharing/cooperation/consolidation in service delivery
- Coordinated land use planning/code enforcement



Long Term Policies

Economic Development

The community will work together to improve educational and skills levels to ensure a better qualified workforce for existing and future employers

The community will collaboratively support the local school systems and otherwise develop cooperative efforts to improve the graduation rate, and to engage students to remain in school

The community will continue to support Southeastern Technical College and its continued enhancement of educational and technological opportunities

The community will work together to develop, support, and promote programs which will enhance opportunities for local graduates to both live and work in the community upon graduation

The community will seek to maintain and enhance its diversified industrial base

The community will actively recruit new industry and commercial/retail development, utilizing the Industrial Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and other means, which is compatible with, and supportive of, the resources, infrastructure, existing economy, and the natural environments of the county

The community will continue to work with Montgomery and Tattnall counties as part of the Tri-County Regional Entrepreneur Support Team (TRI-CREST), to maintain its Regional Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation

The community will continue to maintain a Certified Industrial Park and other industrial sites through technological improvements, infrastructure maintenance/improvements, and/or additional enhancements as needed

The community will work to maintain and upgrade, as necessary, its excellent water and sewer infrastructure (with excess capacity) and extend service to growth areas

The community will continue to seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance and support economic development efforts

The community will continue to support and maintain the Vidalia Regional Airport, through necessary infrastructure/equipment upgrades and maintenance, service expansions and other means

The community will pursue obtaining broadband/fiber availability upgrades, including Wi-Fi accessibility in public parks and spaces

The community will seek to attract green businesses that improve the quality of life for the community and environment

The community will cooperate and coordinate with existing local, regional, and state agencies to improve all of Toombs County

The community will maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as value-added agribusiness and exporting

The community will continue to cooperatively develop and promote itself as a regional tourist attraction through festivals, the local folk play (Tales from the Altamaha), recreation and leisure facilities/activities, museums, cultural events, heritage tourism, agri-tourism, and nature-based tourism

The community will seek to organize an umbrella group to improve cultural arts facilities/programs coordination throughout Toombs County

The community will continue to maintain and enhance its position as a regional center for surrounding counties in terms of shopping, job opportunities, healthcare, education, recreation, and cultural opportunities

The community will work with the Toombs-Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Toombs County Development Authority to maintain and increase the local retail trade and service sectors and their market share

The community will continue the revitalization of Downtown Lyons and Vidalia as vibrant, functioning commercial, governmental, and social centers through the Main Street Program and other means

The community will continue to support the Toombs-Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and the Toombs County Development Authority's active efforts to attract economic development

The community will continue to promote the Vidalia Onion in terms of community identity and marketing

The community will seek to improve its social and economic fabric and overall quality of life by developing new and involved leadership, by inviting greater community involvement, and by marshalling broad-based efforts and initiatives to address pressing issues and concerns

Natural and Cultural Resources

The community will seek to conserve and protect the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers, the county's significant groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, other important natural resources, and the open spaces and landscapes of the county while promoting compatible utilization and recreational development

The community will maintain, utilize, promote, and preserve its heritage, and will seek to encourage public and private adaptive use/reuse of its historic buildings, historic districts, and landmark structures and pursue listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as appropriate

The community will continue the revitalization of historic downtown Lyons and Vidalia through the Lyons and Vidalia Main Street programs, Downtown Vidalia Association, and other means, including improved coordination and use of available state and federal preservation tax incentives

The community will seek to conserve and protect the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers and support their sensitive use

The community will capitalize on its agricultural lands/forestry economic opportunities, and will seek to promote, develop, and cultivate additional compatible uses of these resources, including agri-tourism and nature-based tourism initiatives

The community will proactively manage and guide its growth and development, and protect and conserve its important natural and cultural resources

Housing

The community will seek to encourage a diverse mix of safe, quality housing, including affordable, rental, elderly, assisted living, starter homes, and compatible workforce housing

The community will encourage the use of state and federal programs to improve availability of quality housing, and to encourage homeownership

The community will continue to support the Lyons and Vidalia housing authorities in their efforts to provide affordable subsidized housing

The community will cooperate to implement and enforce the need for land use planning, subdivision/manufactured housing ordinances, and code enforcement

The community will continue to work collaboratively on housing rehabilitation measures and programs, where appropriate

Land Use

The community will cooperate to implement and enforce the need for land use planning, subdivision/manufactured housing regulations, growth management and code enforcement

The community will work to improve its appearance and aesthetics, including enhancing gateways/entranceways through landscaping/beautification and other means

The community will encourage growth that preserves and maintains forestry and agriculture as viable, functioning land uses

The community will pursue, develop, and promote transportation improvements of all types (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) that are compatible with, and supportive of, the community's desired economic development, future growth, and quality of life

The community will continue to maintain its Subtitle D landfill through technological and/or other improvements, as needed, and otherwise develop and expand its solid waste management services and facilities

The community will work to protect/conservate its existing rural character/landscape and quality of life, and will promote appropriately compatible development

Community Facilities and Services

The community will maintain, upgrade, and expand its existing infrastructure and services to enhance the quality of life; to attract desired, compatible growth and development; and to support its status as a regional trade/growth center

The community will seek to maintain and upgrade existing water and sewer facilities, as needed, and to extend service to areas of growth

The community will pursue obtaining upgraded broadband/fiber availability upgrades, including Wi-Fi accessibility in public parks and spaces

The community will pursue, develop, and promote transportation improvements of all types (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) that are compatible with, and supportive of, the community's desired economic development, future growth, and quality of life

The community will continue to maintain its state-of-the art Subtitle D landfill through technological and/or other improvements, as needed

The community will continue to improve public safety services, facilities, and personnel training to support an expanding population, improve quality of service, and better coordinate in times of emergency and disasters

The community will work together to maintain and upgrade healthcare facilities and services, as needed, and seek to continue its status as a regional healthcare provider

The community will maintain and improve existing parks/recreational facilities as needed and establish new parks/recreational facilities and activities to serve existing and future populations

The community will continue to provide and maintain adequate government facilities, including city and county administrative facilities

The community will seek to continue to enhance educational and technological opportunities by continuing to maintain and upgrade its educational facilities and programs

The community will continue to support Southeastern Technical College and its continued enhancement of educational and technological opportunities

The community will continue to support its cultural facilities, programs, and events and provide enhanced service and programs, as feasible, in conjunction with organization of an umbrella group to coordinate efforts throughout Toombs County

The community will maintain and work to enhance its status as headquarters of the Ochopee Regional Library and continue to upgrade its local libraries and the Ladson Genealogical Library

The community will support and enhance its museums and their offerings both to preserve local heritage and encourage tourism

Intergovernmental Coordination

The community will continue to cooperate locally, regionally and on the state level to improve, develop, and plan for the desired future of Toombs County

The community will continue to seek ways to cooperate and coordinate efforts in the delivery of services, and will investigate the possibility of shared and consolidated services where appropriate and feasible

The community will cooperate in coordinated land use planning and code enforcement to manage and guide its future growth and development

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Needs and Opportunities Element is required of all local governments by the Minimum Standards and Procedures. The community needs are those weaknesses or liabilities which have to be addressed, changed, or mitigated to help achieve the desired community future. The community opportunities are strengths and assets which can be utilized as starting points and foundations to easily accentuate or capitalize on to move the community forward on its desired future path. The Needs and Opportunities Element generally answers the planning question, “Where are we currently?” The answers can provide the compass point guidance necessary to begin and advance along the improvement journey. The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan identifies each community goal as an issue for improvement, and further identifies local needs and opportunities, as appropriate, for each issue.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Economic Development

Issue 1: Continuing education/jobs skills improvements

Needs:

- Improve continuing education/job skill levels to provide better qualified workforce
- Diverse mix of jobs appropriate to the educational/skills levels of local workforce
- Retention of local graduates

Opportunities:

- Southeastern Technical College
- Southeastern Early College and Career Academy
- Certified Work Ready Community designation
- Workforce Investment Act One Stop
- Ochoopee Regional Library

Issue 2: Low education levels

Needs:

- Improve drop-out rates
- Improve literacy rates
- Support local Vidalia and Toombs County school systems efforts/programs to encourage graduation and increase literacy
- Cooperatively support needed education facility, technology, and other upgrades

Opportunities:

- Support/participate in programs, such as statewide Great Promise Partnership,

which target at-risk youth to complete high school/prepare for post-secondary life

- Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community
- Southeastern Early College and Career Academy
- Ohoopie Regional Library
- Quarterly meetings of community collaborative consisting of local boards of education, Southeastern Tech, Family Connections/Vidalia, Chamber, and others seeking to keep youth in school

Issue 3: Southeastern Technical College

Needs:

- Support continued enhancement of Southeastern Tech's educational and technological opportunities
- Continued participation of College with community collaborative working to keep youth in school

Opportunities:

- Southeastern Certified Literate Community
- Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia and its programs/services
- Southeastern Early College and Career Academy
- Fiber optic line linking Southeastern Technical College campuses in Vidalia and Swainsboro

Issue 4: Local graduate retention

Needs:

- Increased job opportunities and diversification to retain local graduates
- Jobs with wages of all levels
- Utilize local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One Stop
- Participate in classes/programs offered at Southeastern Technical College

- Business/industry retention/expansion
- Attraction of new economic development
- Increased small business/entrepreneurial development

Opportunities:

- WIA One Stop
- Southeastern Technical College
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Toombs County Development Authority
- Vidalia Board of Education program
- Southeastern Early College and Career Academy
- Existing businesses/industry, including Trane, DOT Foods, Chicken of the Sea, U.S. Pet
- Chamber’s Existing Industry Program

Issue 5: New business/industry/jobs attraction

Needs:

- Attract new economic development, including small business/entrepreneurs, supportive of/compatible with local resources, infrastructure, existing economy, and natural environments
- Create more jobs to address high local unemployment rate
- Maintain/upgrade/expand local industrial parks/sites, including spec buildings, pad ready sites, and infrastructure, as needed
- Construct new spec building at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park
- Upgrade broadband/fiber availability
- Support/enhance agribusiness development
- Retain local graduates through provision of increased job opportunities
- Diverse mix of jobs appropriate to education/skills levels of local workplace
- Continue downtown revitalization in Lyons and Vidalia
- Continue to work with Montgomery and Tattnall counties as part of Tri-County

Regional Entrepreneur Support Team (TRI-CREST) to maintain Regional Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation

- Complete development of 25-acre site in Vidalia for prospective aviation business
- Expand capacity of North Sewer Plant (Lyons) to accommodate new development at Toombs Corporate Center

Opportunities:

- Location/proximity to retail markets/ports/I-16
- Certified Work Ready Community
- Regional Entrepreneur Friendly Community/TRI-CREST
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community
- Existing industrial parks and sites with infrastructure, spec buildings, and pad ready sites
- Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) designated Toombs Corporate Center at U.S. 1
- New spec building under construction at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park (to be completed late 2014)
- Toombs County Development Authority
- Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Regional center status
- Vidalia Regional Airport
- Strong local leadership
- Diversified industrial base
- Dedicated millage funding for Toombs County Development Authority

Issue 6: Small business/entrepreneurial development support

Needs:

- Support small business/entrepreneurial development to promote job diversification

- Create more jobs to address high unemployment rate
- Support/enhance agribusiness development
- Retain local graduates through provision of increased job opportunities
- Diverse mix of jobs appropriate to education/skills levels of local workplace
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts in Lyons and Vidalia, and seek retail and restaurant location
- Seek candy shop and restaurant development in Santa Claus
- Upgrade broadband/fiber availability

Opportunities:

- Location/proximity to retail markets/I-16
- Regional Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation/TRI-CREST
- Certified Work Ready Community
- Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Vidalia and Lyons Main Street Programs
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community

Issue 7: Industrial parks/sites continuing development

Needs:

- Further develop/improve existing industrial parks and sites in Toombs County, as needed, including spec buildings, pad ready sites, and infrastructure
- Complete construction of new spec building at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park
- Expand capacity of North Sewer Plant (Lyons) to accommodate new development at Toombs Corporate Center
- Complete development of 25-acre site in Vidalia adjacent to existing industrial park for prospective aviation business

Opportunities:

- Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) designated Toombs

Corporate Center at U.S. 1

- Existing local industrial parks/sites with infrastructure, spec buildings, and pad ready sites
- New spec building under construction at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park (to be completed late 2014)
- Toombs County Development Authority
- Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority

Issue 8: Water/sewer infrastructure provision/maintenance/upgrades

Needs:

- Maintain adequate water/sewer service provision and pursue facility/service upgrades and expansion to growth areas, as needed, to promote future development
- Upgrade water, sewer, and drainage systems in areas of Vidalia (Bay, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th streets), and complete current project along Adams Street (GA 130)
- Expand capacity of North Sewer Plant (Lyons) to accommodate any new development at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park on U.S. 1
- Expand capacity of East Sewer Plant in Lyons to provide upgraded service to downtown and remainder of service area
- Replace two lift stations annually in Lyons until all are upgraded
- Purchase one new vehicle annually for Lyons Utilities Department
- Replace water meters in Vidalia
- Seek funding for and improve drainage (install curb and gutter) in areas of Santa Claus, as needed

Opportunities:

- Excellent water/sewer infrastructure with excess capacity
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other potential federal/state funding sources

- Completed water/sewer service improvements in Poe Street Neighborhood CDBG target area, Vidalia (2010)

Issue 9: Transportation access/quality

Needs:

- Seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance/support economic development efforts
- Develop ranking program for road improvement projects in Toombs County
- Improve transportation access/quality, including completing 4-laning of U.S. 1 and U.S. 280 through Toombs County
- Make additional streetscape improvements in downtown Lyons and Vidalia, as needed
- Maintain and upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements, including reducing mileage of dirt roads in County each year
- Pave Ezra Taylor Road to new park (Vidalia)
- Complete TIA-listed projects
- Improve/establish Prancer Street in Santa Claus (current dirt golf cart path)
- Construct new U.S. 1 bridge over Altamaha River
- Complete road/sidewalk improvements from North Main to Pine streets and Morris to Thompson streets in Vidalia
- Complete addition of center and right turn lanes along GA 292 from former Seawinder Restaurant to Morningside Drive, Vidalia (expected completion by late 2014)
- Purchase mini-excavator for Lyons Road Department and replace department's outdated equipment each year, as feasible
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities, including completion of Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons
- Support/promote bicycling through Toombs County, including annual Sweet Onion Century Ride, bicycle connector route along U.S. 1, state designation of

central regional bicycle route and its connections along U.S. 280, and other improvements to bike corridors

- Continue to maintain/upgrade Vidalia Regional Airport as modern airport facility through infrastructure/equipment upgrades/maintenance, as needed, such as new corporate hangar, new striping and lighting, and drainage improvements currently underway
- Seek funding to extend City of Vidalia Railroad to Emanuel County
- Seek funding to improve gateways into Toombs County, Vidalia, and Lyons with new signage/landscaping
- Establish memorial garden at U.S. 1 north entrance to Santa Claus
- Replace all street signage in Vidalia

Opportunities:

- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide
- One-way pairing along U.S. 280 in Vidalia
- I-16 proximity
- Sweet Onion Cyclists
- Annual Sweet Onion Century Bike Ride
- Upgrades at Vidalia Regional Airport, including new A-wash and navigational beacons (2010)
- Rail service via City of Vidalia Railroad, Georgia Central Railway, and Heart of Georgia (Georgia DOT) Railroad
- Gateway improvements along U.S. 280 West and GA 297 North in Vidalia and in Santa Claus (2013)

Issue 10: Broadband/fiber availability

Needs:

- Seek broadband/fiber availability upgrades countywide, including Wi-Fi accessibility in public parks and spaces
- Establish free Wi-Fi in various public locations throughout Lyons, Santa Claus,

and Vidalia

- Work with Ochoopee Regional Library to provide free Wi-Fi to select public locations in all municipalities through federal subsidized e-rate program

Opportunities:

- Southeastern Technical College fiber optic line between Swainsboro and Vidalia campuses
- Ochoopee Regional Library federal subsidized e-rate program

Issue 11: Green business attraction

Needs:

- Recruit sustainable/environmentally friendly and energy efficient businesses/industries to local Toombs County community, including small businesses and entrepreneurs, which improve quality of life for community as well as environmental quality
- Continue to support/enhance agricultural/forestry uses, and encourage organic and alternative crop cultivation
- Establish local farmers market(s)
- Develop increased local recreation, nature-based, and agri-tourism venues and opportunities

Opportunities:

- Regional Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation (TRI-CREST)
- Strong local agricultural/forestry sector
- Toombs County Industrial Development Authority
- Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Vidalia Onion
- Herndon Farms greens processing operation
- Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers and other significant natural resources

Issue 12: Intergovernmental cooperation enhancement

Needs:

- Enhance intergovernmental cooperation on the local, regional, and state levels
- Organize local cultural arts umbrella group
- Continue to work with Montgomery and Tattnall counties as part of Tri-County Regional Entrepreneur Support Team (TRI-CREST)

Opportunities:

- Local intergovernmental communication
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community Program (Montgomery, Tattnall, and Toombs counties)
- Development of Toombs Corporate Center on U.S. 1
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Continued active participation with Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau

Issue 13: Agricultural/forestry uses viability

Needs:

- Maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as value-added agribusiness and exporting and agri-tourism and nature-based tourism
- Market agricultural/forestry uses
- Promote/develop agri-tourism venues and events, such as Vidalia Onion Festival and Lyons' Real Squeal Barbeque and Music Festival
- Work to support/enhance local agriculture and agribusiness

- Seek development compatible with and supportive of existing rural/agricultural character
- Encourage local cultivation of new crops (such as vegetables and olive trees) and other agricultural enterprises, including timber/pine straw production
- Establish local farmers market(s)

Opportunities:

- Vibrant agricultural base
- Low population densities
- Vidalia Onion's worldwide recognition
- Herndon Farms greens processing operation
- Existing events, such as Vidalia Onion Festival and Lyons' Real Squeal Barbeque and Music Festival
- Vidalia Onion Museum (completed in 2010)

Issue 14: Tourism promotion/enhancement

Needs:

- Continue to cooperatively develop/enhance/promote the Toombs County community as a regional tourism attraction, through festivals, cultural events, recreation, nature-based, agri-tourism, and heritage tourism
- Conserve and protect Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers in Toombs County, and promote for increased recreation usage
- Seek increased heritage tourism utilizing downtown Lyons and Vidalia and other Toombs County historic resources
- Promote quarterly events held at Vidalia's new downtown amphitheater
- Expand Sweet Onion RV Park in Vidalia
- Support/promote bicycling through county, including improvements to bicycle corridors and related transportation, including bicycle connector route along U.S. 1 and state designation of central regional bicycle route and its connections along U.S. 280, as well as hosting BRAG

- Support existing community festivals, such as Vidalia’s Vidalia Onion and Lyons’ Real Squeal Barbeque and Music festivals, and develop others, as appropriate
- Establish arts and crafts festival in Santa Claus
- Seek entrepreneur to open candy store and restaurant in Santa Claus
- Develop City of Santa Claus website with online shop
- Upgrade Ed Smith Recreational Complex, Vince Faison (formerly Hallmark) Park, and Ezra Taylor Park in Vidalia, as needed, to host tournaments and provide facilities/amenities to attract users
- Develop splash pad at Ben Smith Park, Vidalia
- Replace all field lighting, construct new soccer complex, and other upgrades as needed at Partin Park, Lyons
- Complete Downtown Lyons Historic District National Register of Historic Places nomination
- Complete Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons
- Complete historic renovations to Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia, and utilize regularly for events/performances

Opportunities:

- Vidalia Onion Festival
- Lyons’ Real Squeal Barbeque and Music Festival
- Annual South Georgia Soapbox Derby, Lyons
- Annual “Tales from the Altamaha” folk play, Lyons
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons
- Pal Theater, downtown Vidalia
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Altamaha Heritage Center, Lyons (opened 2014)
- Vidalia and Lyons Main Street Programs
- Partin Park, Lyons and annual youth baseball tournament
- Ed Smith Recreation Complex, Vidalia
- New Ezra Taylor Park, Vidalia

- New Vidalia City Park with amphitheater downtown
- Altama Museum of Art and History
- Santa Claus Welcome Center/Museum/Gift Shop
- Downtown Vidalia and Lyons
- Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library, Vidalia
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Convention and Visitor's Bureau and joint Chamber of Commerce

Issue 15: Local cultural arts umbrella group

Needs:

- Organize local umbrella group to improve cultural arts facilities/programs coordination throughout Toombs County
- Utilize Toombs-Montgomery Convention and Visitors Bureau to assist with coordinated marketing efforts for cultural arts events/facilities

Opportunities:

- Active arts community in Toombs County
- "Tales from the Altamaha" annual folk life play
- Museums including Altama Museum of Art and History (Vidalia), Altamaha Heritage Center (Lyons), Vidalia Onion Museum, Santa Claus Museum
- Southeastern Technical College Auditorium
- Blue Marquee Theatre, Lyons
- Pal Theater, Vidalia
- Amphitheater at new downtown Vidalia City Park

Issue 16: Regional center promotion/enhancement

Needs:

- Continue Toombs County community promotion as regional center/leader for job opportunities, shopping, healthcare, education, cultural opportunities, and

recreation

Opportunities:

- Location/logistics
- Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Industrial parks and sites, including certified industrial park
- Downtown Vidalia and Lyons Main Street programs and ongoing revitalization efforts
- Meadows Regional Medical Center
- Museums, including Altama Museum of Art and History (Vidalia), Altamaha Heritage Center (Lyons), Vidalia Onion Museum, Santa Claus Museum
- Ochoopee Regional Library, Vidalia
- Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library, Vidalia
- Southeastern Technical College
- Pal Theater, Vidalia
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons
- Recreation/park facilities, including new Ezra Taylor Park and Ed Smith Recreation Complex (Vidalia) and Partin Park (Lyons)

Issue 17: Local retail trade/service sectors

Needs:

- Work with Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Toombs County Development Authority to maintain/increase local retail trade and service sectors and their market share
- Seek additional retail and restaurants to locate in downtown Lyons and Vidalia
- Attract candy store and restaurant to open in Santa Claus

Opportunities:

- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce

- Active Toombs County Development Authority
- Toombs County community’s recognized status as “regional trade center”
- Downtown revitalization efforts in Lyons and Vidalia

Issue 18: Downtown Lyons and Vidalia revitalization

Needs:

- Support/target downtown revitalization and investment efforts in Lyons and Vidalia to maintain them as important, functioning economic, social, and governmental centers
- Improve downtown Vidalia community coordination through active Vidalia Downtown Development Authority
- Utilize/maintain existing historic structures
- Install new banners through downtown Vidalia
- Provide free public Wi-Fi at various locations throughout Lyons and Vidalia, including downtown
- Complete historic renovations to Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia, and utilize for events/performances on regular basis
- Seek additional retail and restaurants to locate in downtown Lyons and Vidalia
- Promote quarterly events to be held at new downtown Vidalia amphitheater
- Continue development of downtown loft apartments/residences
- Expand capacity of Lyons’ East Sewer Plant to serve downtown area
- Complete Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons
- Maintain streetscape improvements in downtown Lyons and Vidalia and enhance as needed
- Complete Downtown Lyons National Register Historic District nomination
- Utilize local, state, federal, and private incentives/programs, as available and appropriate to assist downtown improvement efforts
- Encourage use of federal and state historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

Opportunities:

- Main Street Vidalia and Lyons programs
- Vidalia Downtown Development Authority
- One-way pairing of U.S. 280 in downtown Vidalia
- Vidalia and Lyons City Hall facilities located in or adjacent to downtown
- Altamaha Heritage Center (Lyons)
- New downtown Vidalia passive park with amphitheater
- Pal Theater, Vidalia
- Elberta Hotel, Lyons
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons
- Downtown Vidalia loft apartments
- Historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

Issue 19: Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Toombs County Development Authority

Needs:

- Continue support for Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Toombs County Development Authority's active efforts to attract economic development

Opportunities:

- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce
- Active Toombs County Development Authority

Issue 20: Vidalia Onion promotion

Needs:

- Continue promotion of Vidalia Onion in terms of community identity and marketing

Opportunities:

- Vidalia Onion’s worldwide recognition
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Vidalia Onion Festival

Issue 21: Local leadership development

Needs:

- Develop new and involved leadership through greater community involvement
- Utilize local civic groups/citizens to help address pressing local issues/concerns
- Continue sponsoring Leadership Toombs Program
- Participate in Region 9 Leadership Development Academy
- Vital youth leadership programs

Opportunities:

- Leadership Toombs Program
- Region 9 Leadership Development Academy
- Active local civic organizations
- Toombs-Montgomery Youth Leadership Program

Natural and Cultural Resources

Issue 1: Protection of significant natural resources

Needs:

- Conserve/protect Toombs County community’s significant natural resources, including Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and other important natural resources, as well as open spaces and landscapes
- Adopt Environmental Conservation Ordinance addressing significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers corridors
- Develop/implement ordinance to protect water quality and implement

recommendations of Vidalia watershed assessment

- Support sensitive utilization and recreational development compatible with and supportive of natural resources, open spaces, and landscapes, as appropriate
- Manage desired growth through appropriate countywide land use and environmental regulations and code enforcement
- Preserve rural agricultural and forestry character

Opportunities:

- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia
- Vidalia’s completed watershed assessment for EPD
- Cooperation with Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Resource Plan

Issue 2: Compatible development/utilization of natural resources

Needs:

- Encourage and cultivate compatible uses/economic development of Toombs County’s natural resources, as appropriate
- Promote increased recreational usage of Altamaha and Oohoopee rivers in Toombs County, maintain/upgrade landings, as needed, and seek additional public access
- Encourage development of “green” businesses/industry in Toombs County community
- Proactively manage/guide growth and development through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Promote increased recreation and nature-based tourism in Toombs County
- Participate actively in Altamaha River Partnership

Opportunities:

- Increased usage of Altamaha and Oohoopee rivers, including existing public landings
- Cooperation with Georgia Department of Natural Resources

- Altamaha River Partnership

Issue 3: Local historic resources preservation

Needs:

- Continue to maintain, utilize, promote, and preserve significant historic resources of Toombs County
- Encourage public and private rehabilitation of historic structures for compatible new uses, as appropriate
- Continue utilization and preservation of local historic landmarks, including Brazell House (Altama Museum of Art and History), Lyons Post Office with WPA sculpture, Vidalia City Hall, Lyons Depot, Blue Marquee and Pal theaters, Elberta Hotel (Lyons), and others
- Support continuing historic downtown revitalization efforts in Lyons and Vidalia, including participation in Main Street Program
- Preserve/rehabilitate minimum of one historic building annually in Vidalia for business or public use, if feasible
- Complete sensitive rehabilitation of historic Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia, and utilize on regular basis
- Continue development of loft apartments/other residential uses in historic structures
- Maintain an active Toombs County Historical Society
- Complete Downtown Lyons Commercial Historic District National Register of Historic Places nomination
- Pursue National Register of Historic Places listing for eligible historic districts and individual properties countywide, as appropriate
- Support Altamaha Heritage Center in downtown Lyons, and promote as heritage tourism attraction
- Continue to support annual production of “Tales from the Altamaha”
- Continue to celebrate local heritage themed festivals, such as Lyons’ Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival, Vidalia Onion Festival, and develop others, as

appropriate

Opportunities:

- National Register-listed Brazell House, Leader-Rosansky House, Peterson-Wilbanks House, Citizens Bank of Vidalia; Garbutt House/Twenty Columns and Lyons Woman's/Garden Club; Downtown Vidalia Commercial Historic District; McLemore-Sharpe Farmstead, and Jim Smith House
- Main Street Lyons and Vidalia programs
- Downtown Lyons and Vidalia revitalization
- Lyons Depot
- Elberta Hotel, Lyons
- Planned completion of historic rehabilitation of Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons
- Annual "Tales from the Altamaha" folk life play
- Toombs County Historical Society
- Altama Museum of Art and History (Vidalia)
- Altamaha Heritage Center, Lyons
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library (downtown Vidalia)
- Local heritage festivals, including Lyons' Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival and Vidalia Onion Festival
- Available historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives, which provide economic assistance to private property owners

Issue 4: Downtown Lyons and Vidalia revitalization

Needs:

- Support/target downtown revitalization and investment efforts in Lyons and Vidalia to maintain them as important, functioning economic, social, and governmental centers
- Improve downtown Vidalia community coordination through active Vidalia

Downtown Development Authority

- Utilize/maintain existing historic structures
- Install new banners through downtown Vidalia
- Provide free public Wi-Fi at various locations throughout Lyons and Vidalia, including downtown
- Seek additional retail and restaurants to locate in downtown Lyons and Vidalia
- Promote quarterly events to be held at new downtown Vidalia amphitheater
- Complete historic rehabilitation of Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia, and utilize on regular basis
- Continue development of downtown loft apartments/residences
- Expand capacity of Lyons' East Sewer Plant to serve downtown area
- Complete Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons
- Maintain streetscape improvements in downtown Lyons and Vidalia and enhance as needed
- Complete Downtown Lyons National Register Historic District nomination
- Utilize local, state, federal, and private incentives/programs, as available and appropriate, to assist downtown improvement efforts
- Encourage use of federal and state historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

Opportunities:

- Main Street Vidalia and Lyons programs
- Vidalia Downtown Development Authority
- One-way pairing of U.S. 280 in downtown Vidalia
- Vidalia and Lyons City Hall facilities located in or adjacent to downtown
- Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library (downtown Vidalia)
- Altamaha Heritage Center (Lyons)
- New downtown Vidalia passive park with amphitheater
- Pal Theater, Vidalia
- Elberta Hotel, Lyons
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons

- Downtown Vidalia loft apartments
- Historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

Issue 5: Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers conservation/protection

Needs:

- Continue to conserve/protect Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers and support sensitive use
- Adopt Environmental Conservation Ordinance protecting Toombs County community's significant natural resources, including the Altamaha's and Ochoopee's protected river corridors
- Support sensitive utilization and compatible recreational development along the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers in Toombs County
- Promote increased recreational usage of the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers in Toombs County, maintain/upgrade existing landings, as needed, and seek additional public access
- Proactively manage/guide growth and development through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Promote increased recreation and nature-based tourism in Toombs County
- Participate actively in Altamaha River Partnership
- Utilize Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC's Multi-Regional River Corridor Feasibility Study

Opportunities:

- Increased usage of Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers, including existing public landings
- Cooperation with Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Altamaha River Partnership
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Multi-Regional River Corridor Feasibility Study

Issue 6: Open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses viability

Needs:

- Maintain viability of open spaces and agricultural/forestry uses through traditional and alternative enterprises
- Continue promotion of Vidalia Onion in terms of community identity and marketing
- Encourage development of agri-businesses, agri-tourism, nature-based tourism, and other economic efforts supportive of agriculture and forestry
- Market agricultural/forestry uses
- Develop community farmers market(s)
- Encourage local cultivation of new crops and other agricultural opportunities
- Preserve rural agricultural character
- Seek development compatible with and supportive of existing rural character
- Manage desired growth through appropriate land use and environmental regulations countywide

Opportunities:

- Unspoiled open spaces
- Low population density
- Valuable agricultural and timber lands
- Agricultural/forestry traditional land uses
- Vidalia Onion and its worldwide recognition
- Annual Vidalia Onion Festival
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Herndon Farms greens processing operation
- Vibrant agricultural base
- Planned development of community farmers market(s)

Issue 7: Nature-based, recreation and agri-tourism promotion

Needs:

- Promote increased nature-based, recreation, and agri-tourism opportunities throughout Toombs County
- Conserve/protect Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers within Toombs County, and encourage their increased recreation usage through maintenance/upgrades of public landings, as needed, and additional public access
- Complete Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons
- Support/promote bicycling through Toombs County, including annual Sweet Onion Century Ride, bicycle connector route along U.S. 1, state designation of central regional bicycle route and its connections along U.S. 280, and other improvements to bicycle corridors
- Support existing community festivals, such as the Vidalia Onion Festival and Lyons' Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival, and develop others, as appropriate
- Promote increased usage of Ezra Taylor, Ed Smith Complex, and Partin regional parks, as well as local parks countywide
- Develop splash pad at Ben Smith Park in Vidalia
- Promote usage of Toombs County's outdoor recreation/nature venues, including the new Vidalia City Park amphitheater, Altamaha river landings (McNatt Falls, Gray's, U.S. 1 Bridge, and Cobb's Creek), local and regional parks, and other outdoor/nature-based tourism venues in Toombs County
- Expand Sweet Onion RV Park in Vidalia

Opportunities:

- Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers
- Public landings along Altamaha River (McNatt Falls, Gray's, U.S. 1 Bridge, and Cobb's Creek)
- Ezra Taylor Regional Park
- Ed Smith Recreation Complex
- Partin Park

- Local parks countywide
- Sweet Onion RV Park, Vidalia
- Sweet Onion Cyclists and annual Sweet Onion Century Ride
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Vidalia Onion Festival
- Lyon’s Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival
- Santa Claus Welcome Center/Museum/Gift Shop
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Altamaha River Partnership

Issue 8: Growth management/natural and cultural resources protection

Needs:

- Proactively manage and guide growth and development and protect/conservе Toombs County community’s significant natural and cultural resources through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Encourage growth compatible with existing rural character and quality of life
- Seek and promote development in areas already served by public infrastructure
- Encourage development of “green” businesses/industry in Toombs County community
- Pursue annexation, as needed, to extend municipal boundaries and infrastructure service areas

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage

Housing

Issue 1: Encourage diverse housing mix

Needs:

- Seek to encourage diverse housing mix of safe, quality housing, including affordable, rental, elderly, assisted living, starter homes, and compatible workforce housing
- Seek additional assisted living facilities
- Strengthen/establish coordinated, comprehensive land use/subdivision/manufactured housing/code enforcement regulations
- Continue development of loft apartments and other residential uses in downtown Lyons and Vidalia

Opportunities:

- Georgia Department of Community Affairs and other housing assistance programs
- New nursing home under construction
- Existing loft apartments and others under construction in downtown Vidalia and Lyons

Issue 2: Utilize state and federal programs

Needs:

- Encourage use of state and federal programs for affordable/quality housing and to encourage home ownership
- Seek to develop public/private partnerships to enhance local housing availability and quality

Opportunities:

- Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Georgia Department of Community Affairs Housing Programs, and others
- Progressive housing authorities in Lyons and Vidalia
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CHIP funding for substandard

housing rehabilitation/removal, supporting infrastructure, and related improvements

Issue 3: Existing/new housing stock quality

Needs:

- Improve quality of existing and new housing stock through rehabilitation, removal, codes enforcement, regulation, and/or other means
- Improve and/or remove substandard housing/eliminate blight
- Develop countywide program for removal of dilapidated housing
- Adopt Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes and establish building permit system
- Hire county building codes inspector and/or consider establishing joint construction codes enforcement
- Establish building permit system for new construction in Santa Claus
- Utilize available state/federal programs, such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), as appropriate
- Improve community aesthetics/appearance
- Establish/strengthen coordinated, countywide land use/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations and code enforcement

Opportunities:

- Pursue CDBG, CHIP, and other public/private programs to rehabilitate low and moderate income housing
- Lyons and Vidalia building codes enforcement officers
- Vidalia's program for dilapidated housing removal (began in 2010)

Issue 4: Lyons and Vidalia housing authorities support

Needs:

- Continue to support Lyons and Vidalia housing authorities in their efforts to

provide affordable subsidized housing

- Maintain and upgrade, as needed, existing public housing complexes/individual units

Opportunities:

- Progressive housing authorities in Lyons and Vidalia

Issue 5: Subdivision/manufactured housing/land use regulation and construction code enforcement

Needs:

- Establish/strengthen coordinated and comprehensive land use planning/manufactured housing/land use regulations and construction code enforcement countywide
- Hire County building codes inspector and/or consider establishing joint construction codes enforcement
- Adopt Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide
- Develop countywide program to remove dilapidated housing units
- Establish building permit system for unincorporated Toombs County and Santa Claus

Opportunities:

- Lyons and Vidalia building codes enforcement officers
- Vidalia's program for dilapidated housing removal (began in 2010)
- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia

Issue 6: Housing rehabilitation collaboration

Needs:

- Continue to work collaboratively throughout Toombs County on community housing rehabilitation measures/programs, as appropriate

- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or other federal, state, or private funding to assist with housing rehabilitation in low-to-moderate income areas as available
- Support community Habitat for Humanity, Christmas in April, or similar volunteer housing assistance program

Opportunities:

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Federal HUD programs
- DCA Housing programs
- Habitat for Humanity
- Lyons/Vidalia Housing Authorities

Land Use

Issue 1: Subdivision/manufactured housing/land use planning/growth management/code enforcement

Needs:

- Establish/strengthen coordinated countywide land development regulations, including subdivision and manufactured housing standards
- Hire County building codes inspector and/or consider establishing joint codes enforcement
- Adopt Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide
- Develop countywide program to remove dilapidated housing units
- Establish building permit system for unincorporated Toombs County and Santa Claus

Opportunities:

- Lyons and Vidalia building codes enforcement officers
- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia

Issue 2: Community appearance/aesthetics

Needs:

- Improve general community appearance/aesthetics through code enforcement, enhancing community gateways/entranceways, landscaping/beautification efforts, and other means
- Work to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas, and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and/or other federal, state, private funding to assist with improvements
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts in Lyons and Vidalia as appropriate, including additional streetscape improvements, as needed
- Establish/strengthen coordinated countywide land development regulations, including subdivision and manufactured housing standards
- Adopt Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide
- Maintain/upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements
- Develop countywide program for removal of dilapidated housing
- Establish building permit system for unincorporated Toombs County and Santa Claus
- Improve gateways/entrances in Toombs County and Lyons and complete remaining Vidalia gateways upgrades
- Establish memorial garden at north entrance along U.S. 1 into Santa Claus

Opportunities:

- Lyons and Vidalia building codes enforcement officers
- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia
- CDBG or other funding assistance for blighted areas, substandard housing, infrastructure upgrades
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide

- Completed Vidalia gateway improvements along U.S. 280 West and GA Highway 297 North
- Santa Claus gateway improvements, including new fencing and landscaping

Issue 3: Open spaces maintenance and agricultural/forestry uses viability

Needs:

- Seek to maintain undeveloped, open spaces
- Maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as agri-tourism and nature-based tourism
- Market agricultural/forestry uses
- Continue promotion of Vidalia Onion in terms of community identity and marketing
- Promote/develop agri-tourism venues and events
- Work to support/enhance local agriculture and agribusiness
- Seek development compatible with and supportive of existing rural/agricultural character
- Encourage local cultivation of new crops and other agricultural enterprises
- Establish community farmers market(s)
- Manage desired growth through appropriate land use and environmental regulation countywide

Opportunities:

- Low population densities
- Unspoiled open spaces and ample undeveloped acreage
- Valuable agricultural and timber lands
- Vibrant agricultural base
- Agricultural/forestry traditional land uses
- Vidalia Onion and its worldwide recognition
- Annual Vidalia Onion Festival
- Vidalia Onion Museum

- Planned development of community farmers market(s)
- Herndon Farms greens processing facility
- Olive tree cultivation

Issue 4: Transportation access/quality

Needs:

- Seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance/support economic development efforts, future growth, and quality of life
- Develop ranking program for road improvement projects in Toombs County
- Improve transportation access/quality, including completing 4-laning of U.S. 1 and U.S. 280 through Toombs County
- Make additional streetscape improvements in downtown Lyons and Vidalia, as needed
- Maintain and upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements, including reducing mileage of dirt roads in County each year
- Pave Ezra Taylor Road to new park (Vidalia)
- Complete TIA-listed projects
- Improve/establish Prancer Street in Santa Claus (current dirt golf cart path)
- Construct new U.S. 1 bridge over Altamaha River
- Complete road/sidewalk improvements from North Main to Pine streets and Morris to Thompson streets in Vidalia
- Complete addition of center and right turn lanes along GA 292 from former Seawinder Restaurant to Morningside Drive, Vidalia (expected completion by late 2014)
- Purchase mini-excavator for Lyons Road Department and replace department's outdated equipment each year, as feasible
- Support/promote bicycling through Toombs County, including development of bicycle connector route along U.S. 1 and state designation of central regional

route along U.S. 280, as well as annual Sweet Onion Century Ride

- Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities
- Continue to maintain/upgrade Vidalia Regional Airport as modern airport facility through infrastructure/equipment upgrades/maintenance, as needed, such as new corporate hangar, new striping and lighting, and drainage improvements currently underway
- Seek funding to extend City of Vidalia Railroad to Emanuel County
- Seek funding to improve gateways into Toombs County, Vidalia, and Lyons with new signage/landscaping
- Establish memorial garden at U.S. 1 north entrance to Santa Claus
- Replace all street signage in Vidalia

Opportunities:

- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide
- One-way pairing along U.S. 280 in Vidalia
- I-16 proximity
- Upgrades at Vidalia Regional Airport, including new A-wash and navigational beacons (2010)
- Rail service via City of Vidalia Railroad, Georgia Central Railway, and Heart of Georgia (Georgia DOT) Railroad
- Gateway improvements along U.S. 280 West and GA 297 North in Vidalia and in Santa Claus (2013)
- Sweet Onion Bicycle Club and annual Sweet Onion Century Ride

Issue 5: Toombs County Subtitle D landfill maintenance/solid waste management development/expansion

Needs:

- Continue to maintain Toombs County Subtitle D Landfill through technological and/or other improvements, as needed
- Develop/expand Toombs County community's solid waste management

services/facilities, as needed

- Install another convenience center south of Vidalia (exact location not yet determined)
- Complete removal of all remaining green boxes throughout county after installation of new convenience center
- Establish 5 year program to replace Solid Waste Department equipment
- Seek funding to construct new Lyons recycling facility
- Purchase equipment to remove yard debris, and establish yard debris removal program for City of Vidalia
- Keep a current Toombs County joint solid waste plan

Opportunities:

- State-of-the-art Toombs County Subtitle D Landfill with long-term capacity available
- New convenience center on Resmondo Road (2014)
- Existing recycling programs in Lyons and Vidalia
- Toombs County Joint Solid Waste Plan

Issue 6: Rural character/quality of life protection

Needs:

- Proactively protect community's rural character through community investment and appropriate regulation which encourage/support compatible uses
- Encourage growth compatible with existing rural character and quality of life
- Seek and promote development in areas already served by public infrastructure
- Market continued agricultural and forestry land uses
- Promote/develop increased agri-tourism

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage
- Historic small cities

- Local festivals
- Lower cost of living
- Low crime rate

Issue 7: Compatible development/utilization

Needs:

- Establish/strengthen/enforce updated coordinated countywide land use/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations
- Preserve agricultural and forestry land uses
- Preserve rural character/quality of life
- Encourage compatible infill development and location of use management
- Utilize infrastructure to guide growth

Opportunities:

- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia
- Vidalia Onions, olive tree cultivation, other vegetable production/processing

Community Facilities and Services

Issue 1: Infrastructure/services needs, including water/sewer

Needs:

- Maintain, upgrade, and expand existing infrastructure and services, as needed, to enhance quality of life, attract desired/compatible growth/development, and support Toombs County community's status as regional trade/growth center
- Maintain adequate water/sewer service provision and pursue facility/service upgrades and expansion to growth areas, as needed, to promote future development
- Upgrade water, sewer, and drainage systems in areas of Vidalia (Bay, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th streets), and complete current project along Adams Street (GA 130)

- Expand capacity of North Sewer Plant (Lyons) to accommodate any new development at Toombs Corporate Center industrial park on U.S. 1
- Expand capacity of East Sewer Plant in Lyons to provide upgraded service to downtown and remainder of service area
- Replace two lift stations annually in Lyons until all are upgraded
- Replace water meters in Vidalia
- Seek funding for and improve drainage (install curb and gutter) in areas of Santa Claus, as needed

Opportunities:

- Excellent water/sewer infrastructure with excess capacity
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other potential federal/state funding sources
- Completed water/sewer service improvements in Poe Street Neighborhood CDBG target area, Vidalia (2010)

Issue 3: Broadband/fiber availability

Needs:

- Seek broadband/fiber availability upgrades countywide, including Wi-Fi accessibility in public parks and spaces
- Establish free Wi-Fi in various public locations throughout Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia
- Work with Ochoopee Regional Library to provide free Wi-Fi to select city locations in Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia through federal subsidized e-rate program

Opportunities:

- Southeastern Technical College fiber optic line between Swainsboro and Vidalia campuses
- Ochoopee Regional Library federal subsidized e-rate program

Issue 4: Transportation access/quality

Needs:

- Seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance/support economic development efforts, future growth, and quality of life
- Develop ranking program for road improvement projects in Toombs County
- Improve transportation access/quality, including completing 4-laning of U.S. 1 and U.S. 280 through Toombs County
- Make additional streetscape improvements in downtown Lyons and Vidalia, as needed
- Maintain and upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements, including reducing mileage of dirt roads in County each year
- Pave Ezra Taylor Road to new park (Vidalia)
- Complete TIA-listed projects
- Improve/establish Prancer Street in Santa Claus (current dirt golf cart path)
- Construct new U.S. 1 bridge over Altamaha River
- Complete road/sidewalk improvements from North Main to Pine streets and Morris to Thompson streets in Vidalia
- Complete addition of center and right turn lanes along GA 292 from former Seawinder Restaurant to Morningside Drive, Vidalia (expected completion by late 2014)
- Purchase mini-excavator for Lyons Road Department and replace department's outdated equipment each year, as feasible
- Support/promote bicycling through Toombs County, including development of bicycle connector route along U.S. 1 and state designation of central regional route along U.S. 280, as well as annual Sweet Onion Century Ride
- Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities/corridors
- Continue to maintain/upgrade Vidalia Regional Airport as modern airport facility through infrastructure/equipment upgrades/maintenance, as needed, such as new

corporate hangar, new striping and lighting, and drainage improvements currently underway

- Seek funding to extend City of Vidalia Railroad to Emanuel County
- Seek funding to improve gateways into Toombs County, Vidalia, and Lyons with new signage/landscaping
- Establish memorial garden at U.S. 1 north entrance to Santa Claus
- Replace all street signage in Vidalia

Opportunities:

- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide
- One-way pairing along U.S. 280 in Vidalia
- I-16 proximity
- Upgrades at Vidalia Regional Airport, including new A-wash and navigational beacons (2010)
- Rail service via City of Vidalia Railroad, Georgia Central Railway, and Heart of Georgia (Georgia DOT) Railroad
- Gateway improvements along U.S. 280 West and GA 297 North in Vidalia and in Santa Claus (2013)
- Sweet Onion Cyclists bicycle club and annual Sweet Onion Century Ride

Issue 5: Toombs County Subtitle D landfill maintenance/solid waste management development/expansion

Needs:

- Continue to maintain Toombs County Subtitle D Landfill through technological and/or other improvements, as needed
- Develop/expand Toombs County community's solid waste management services/facilities, as needed
- Install another convenience center south of Vidalia (exact location not yet determined)
- Complete removal of all remaining green boxes throughout county after installation of new convenience center

- Establish 5 year program to replace Solid Waste Department equipment
- Seek funding to construct new Lyons recycling facility
- Purchase equipment to remove yard debris, and establish yard debris removal program for City of Vidalia
- Keep a current Toombs County joint solid waste plan

Opportunities:

- State-of-the-art Toombs County Subtitle D Landfill with long-term capacity available
- New convenience center on Resmondo Road (2014)
- Existing recycling programs in Lyons and Vidalia

Issue 6: Public safety/emergency medical

Needs:

- Continue to upgrade/improve public safety/emergency medical facilities, manpower, and services, as needed, countywide
- Continue to provide adequate training of public safety/emergency medical personnel and upgraded equipment, as needed
- Renovate existing or construct new Lyons Police Department, and obtain new equipment to keep up with technology
- Renovate Lyons Fire Department building
- Purchase new equipment as needed for Lyons Fire Department, including new pumper truck and new ladder truck (to be shared with Vidalia Fire Department)
- Purchase new fire truck for Vidalia Fire Department
- Purchase three new police cars annually for Vidalia Police Department
- Seek to obtain additional law enforcement services from City of Lyons for Santa Claus
- Improve local coordination during emergency or disaster situations
- Purchase one new public safety vehicle annually for City of Lyons
- Purchase two new ambulances every two years for Toombs County EMA

- Replace one-half of County sheriff's office fleet with new vehicles

Opportunities:

- New Vidalia Police Department and courtroom facility in recently renovated (2013) Vidalia Municipal Annex (former grocery store building)
- Intergovernmental cooperation (major equipment purchases, mutual aid agreements)

Issue 7: Local health care access/regional hub status

Needs:

- Continue to maintain and upgrade local health care facilities and services at Meadows Regional Medical Center and other providers, and continue status as regional healthcare hub
- Maintain Toombs County Health Department's facilities and services

Opportunities:

- Meadows Regional Medical Center
- Local physicians and other healthcare professionals
- Regional healthcare hub status
- Toombs County Health Department
- R.T. Stanley Health Clinic

Issue 8: Recreation facilities/programs/activities

Needs:

- Maintain/improve existing parks/recreational facilities, as needed, and develop new facilities/programs/activities countywide
- Conserve/protect Altamaha and Ochopee rivers within Toombs County, and encourage their increased recreation usage through maintenance/upgrades of public landings, as needed, and additional public access
- Complete Rails to Trails project in downtown Lyons

- Support/promote bicycling through Toombs County, including annual Sweet Onion Century Ride, bicycle connector route along U.S. 1, state designation of central regional route and its connections along U.S. 280, and other improvements to bicycle corridors and facilities
- Pave Ezra Taylor Road to new park
- Promote increased usage of Ezra Taylor, Ed Smith Recreation Complex, and Partin regional parks, as well as local parks countywide
- Upgrade Partin Park in Lyons, including constructing new soccer complex on former Bob Moore property, renovate recreation office, and replace all field lighting
- Develop splash pad at Ben Smith Park, Vidalia
- Renovate Vince Faison (formerly Hallmark) Park in Lyons
- Complete installation of new tennis courts and soccer fields at Ed Smith Recreation Complex in Vidalia
- Schedule/promote quarterly events at new Vidalia City Park amphitheater
- Promote usage of Toombs County's outdoor recreation/park venues, including the new Vidalia City Park amphitheater, Altamaha river landings (McNatt Falls, Gray's, U.S. 1 Bridge, and Cobb's Creek) and local and regional parks in Toombs County
- Expand Sweet Onion RV Park in Vidalia
- Upgrade Santa Claus city park through replacement of old playground equipment/addition of more equipment

Opportunities:

- Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers
- Public landings along Altamaha River (McNatt Falls, Gray's, U.S. 1 Bridge, and Cobb's Creek)
- Ezra Taylor Regional Park (2011)
- Ed Smith Recreation Complex
- Partin Park
- Vidalia City Park amphitheater (2014)

- Santa Claus walking track (2012)
- Local parks countywide
- Sweet Onion RV Park, Vidalia
- Sweet Onion Cyclists and annual Sweet Onion Century Ride
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Altamaha River Partnership

Issue 9: Governmental facilities/services

Needs:

- Provide/maintain adequate government facilities and services, and enhance as needed
- Work to increase efficiency of local governments in Toombs County
- Seek to relieve overcrowded condition in Toombs County Courthouse through renovations to existing courthouse or construction of new facility
- Construct new County maintenance barn
- Upgrade/repair County buildings annually using Georgia Department of Corrections construction crew
- Purchase one new vehicle annually for Lyons Utilities Department
- Develop former National Guard Armory building for business or public use
- Complete Vidalia City Hall renovations
- Complete upgrades to Vidalia's computer software system to integrate all City departments
- Employ City Clerk for Santa Claus
- Develop new City of Santa Claus website with online store

Opportunities:

- New Lyons City Hall completed in 2010
- New Vidalia Municipal Annex (2013)
- Expanded Vidalia Community Center (2010)

- Updated Code of Ordinances for Santa Claus (2012)

Issue 10: Educational facilities/services

Needs:

- Maintain quality educational facilities/programs/services, including post-secondary, to enhance educational and technological opportunities
- Increase high school graduation rate
- Reduce high illiteracy rate
- Continue to support enhanced educational/technological opportunities through expansion/improvements, as needed, at Southeastern Technical College

Opportunities:

- Toombs County and City of Vidalia public school systems
- City of Vidalia becoming charter school system
- Robert Toombs Christian Academy
- Heritage Christian Academy
- Southeastern Technical College
- Ohoopsee Regional Library

Issue 11: Southeastern Technical College

Needs:

- Continue to support Southeastern Technical College and its continued enhancement of educational and technological opportunities
- Continued participation of College with community collaborative working to keep youth in school

Opportunities:

- Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia and its programs/services
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community

- Southeastern Early College and Career Academy
- Fiber optic line linking Southeastern Technical College campuses in Vidalia and Swainsboro

Issue 12: Cultural facilities/activities/programs

Needs:

- Support local cultural resources/facilities, and enhance service/programs as feasible
- Organize umbrella group to coordinate cultural arts efforts throughout Toombs County
- Promote local cultural resources/opportunities, such as quarterly events at Vidalia’s new downtown amphitheater, annual “Tales from the Altamaha” folk life play, and education programs for tourism, enhanced quality of life, and new resident/retiree attraction
- Support existing community festivals, including Lyons’ Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival and Vidalia Onion Festival, Soapbox Derby, and develop others, such as Santa Claus arts and crafts festival, as appropriate
- Complete historic renovation of Pal Theater in downtown Vidalia, and utilize for regularly scheduled events/activities

Opportunities:

- Annual “Tales from the Altamaha” folk life play production
- Toombs County Historical Society
- New Vidalia City Park with amphitheater downtown
- Blue Marquee Theater, Lyons
- Pal Theater, Vidalia
- Downtown Lyons and Vidalia
- Lyons and Vidalia Main Street Programs
- Vidalia Onion Festival
- Lyons’ Real Squeal BBQ and Music Festival

- Soapbox Derby
- Southeastern Technical College
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Convention and Visitors Bureau

Issue 13: Ochoopee Regional Library and local libraries

Needs:

- Maintain and enhance status of Ochoopee Regional Library headquarters in Vidalia
- Continue to upgrade local libraries in Lyons and Vidalia and Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library, as needed
- Assist in establishing free Wi-Fi at select public locations in Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia utilizing federally subsidized e-rate
- Maintain current hours of operation for Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library to accommodate researchers, who often travel long distances to utilize the extensive collections of resources

Opportunities:

- Ochoopee Regional Library in Vidalia
- Nelle Brown Memorial Library, Lyons
- Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library, Vidalia

Issue 14: Local museums support/enhancement

Needs:

- Continue to support and enhance local museums in Toombs County to preserve local history and encourage tourism

Opportunities:

- Altama Museum of Art and History, Vidalia
- Vidalia Onion Museum
- Altamaha Heritage Center, Lyons

- Santa Claus Museum
- Active Toombs-Montgomery Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issue 1: Local, regional, state cooperation

Needs:

- Maintain/enhance local, regional, and state cooperation
- Coordinate planning/growth management
- Continue to work with Montgomery and Tattnall counties as part of Tri-County Regional Entrepreneur Support Team (TRI-CREST)
- Improve local intergovernmental communication/cooperation in areas of recreation, fire protection, and others
- Establish umbrella organization for local cultural arts coordination

Opportunities:

- Active Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Southeastern Certified Literate Community Program (Montgomery, Tattnall, Toombs counties)
- Participation on Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Development of Toombs Corporate Center on U.S. 1 North

Issue 2: Service delivery

Needs:

- Seek services sharing/cooperation/consolidation/coordination/joint delivery whenever feasible
- Establish countywide program for removal of dilapidated housing

Opportunities:

- Existing Service Delivery Strategy among Toombs County governments

Issue 3: Coordinated planning/growth management

Needs:

- Establish countywide program for removal of dilapidated housing
- Strengthen/establish coordinated, comprehensive land use/subdivision/manufactured housing/code enforcement regulations
- Adopt Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes and establish building permit system
- Hire county building codes inspector and/or consider establishing joint codes enforcement

Opportunities:

- Lyons and Vidalia building codes enforcement officers
- Land use regulations in Lyons and Vidalia

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic prosperity is a key to community improvement. A community's comprehensive plan seeks at its core to make the community a better place to live, work, and recreate. To improve quality of life, there is a need for income and an increased tax base to help enhance the ability to afford needed and desired improvements, and afford better housing and a higher standard of living. Commerce and economic development have a major influence on overall population growth and development. The relationship is quite evident in Toombs County. Much of Toombs County's early growth resulted first from Altamaha River commerce and its farms and forests, and then, more importantly, from railroad establishment in the late 1800s. The Vidalia Sweet Onion, the location of I-16 along with other improving highways, the county's convenient location near the Georgia ports and between Georgia's metro areas, the location of the nearby Plant Hatch Nuclear Plant and continuing success in diversifying and transforming local industry, have stabilized and stimulated growth in the county. Establishing itself as a regional leader in retail service, health care, and jobs and the worldwide marketing of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, have distinguished Vidalia/Toombs County. The opening of I-16, continuing improvement to local infrastructure and facilities, improvements to rail and airport service, attention and celebration to local heritage and culture have further opened doors of growth, opportunity, and exposure for the Toombs County community.

The Toombs County area was an early frontier area of Georgia, originally primarily part of Montgomery/Tattnall counties, settled because of its natural beauty, fertile soils, and abundant pine forests, and access to the Altamaha River. Its growth and formal establishment in 1905 followed economic growth and the further opening of outside markets with the arrival of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery and other railroads in the 1880s/1890s. The abundant natural resources provided for important economic opportunities, and a profitable farming, and then lumber and naval stores industry resulted. Local leadership and improvement of infrastructure have always been important to Toombs County, beginning with its establishment and later with the Vidalia Sweet Onion and other improvements/diversification. The county's

architecture, character, and many natural and cultural resources have always attracted attention and investment. The local economy received further boosts from transportation with the coming of major highways, most notably U.S. 1, U.S. 280 and I-16. The Altamaha and Ochopee rivers the county's pastoral settings, Vidalia's Sweet Onion Festival, and now Lyons' "Tales from the Altamaha" folk life play have been calling cards of the community's outside natural resources, beauty, and heritage. Quality of life, family orientation, devotion to culture and heritages, small-town charm, outdoor scenic beauty, and celebration of local heritage are local economic strengths and opportunities available today for supporting and developing additional economic development opportunities. These efforts are already paying dividends through the attraction of visitors, the location of retirees, new residents, and the location of businesses even during the current recession. The community truly is "Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Sweet Onion" offering many facets of appeal, charm, opportunity, and quality of life.

There are continuing needs for Toombs County's economic development. Incomes in Toombs County remain relatively low, ranking about two-thirds to three-fourths that of the state. The per capita money income in Toombs County as reported by the Census Bureau for 2008-2012 is \$18,433, compared to \$25,309 in Georgia as a whole. Median household income is \$31,757 only about 64% that of Georgia. About one-fourth of Toombs County citizens are in poverty, compared to only 17% in Georgia as a whole. This high poverty has persisted for a number of decades. Despite recent job recruitments, there have also been setbacks, and there are needs for more jobs. Unemployment in the county was 10.0% in 2013, considerably more than Georgia's 8.2%, and much higher than the U.S.'s 7.4%. The good news is that about 75 percent of county workers do work inside Toombs County. Job skills of local residents are also somewhat of a concern; about 25% of local residents are without a high school diploma compared to 16% statewide.

There are opportunities and cause for optimism for economic development in Toombs County as well. Employment within the county remains concentrated within manufacturing (13%), government (13%), retail trade (13%), and healthcare (20%) sectors. This reflects the stability and importance of the local retail sector, Meadows Regional Medical Center and other healthcare facilities, as well as local schools and technical college, and continuing manufacturer

attraction. Toombs County does remain a regional leader in many categories providing nearly 13,000 jobs, and more than one in nine of jobs regionwide. There are additional opportunities related to the Vidalia Sweet Onion and other crops, the abundant fields and forests and outstanding natural and cultural resources of the county, tourism, and the county's location and transportation access. The cost of living in Toombs County is relatively very low, and the crime rate is low making it even more attractive as a place to live for families and new residents and retirees, especially in the context of overall high quality of life, attractive open spaces, and a verdant landscape punctuated by outstanding natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities. The same can be said for location of business and entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly given county history and recent successes in having companies locate within the community, despite the recession. The community's overall high quality of life in a rural area with excellent access beyond will continue to pay dividends.

The Toombs County community has chosen a multi-faceted approach and strategy to improve its economic status and further economic development in the county. The following goals and objectives were chosen to address identified economic development issues in Toombs County.

Address Low Educational Levels/Improve Jobs Skills

Toombs County will continue to support its local school systems, Southeastern Technical College and regional Workforce Investment Act programs. It will develop public/private partnerships through its Chamber of Commerce, civic groups, and continuing intergovernmental cooperation particularly on the regional levels. The Great Promise Partnership will be investigated, and other local programs will be supported. The retention of local graduates through enhanced opportunities will be pursued. Certified Literate Community participation will continue.

Support/Enhance/Maintain Viability of Agriculture/Forestry Uses

The community will support efforts to continue to expand the reach and depth of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, create additional markets, explore alternative crops, and seek value-added

businesses which keep such uses viable and profitable. The marketing and development of agri-tourism and nature-based tourism are other means. Support of existing forest industries and uses will be maintained. Olive tree cultivation and other vegetable production/processing are already showing promise.

Develop/Maintain Necessary Infrastructure

The Toombs County community will jointly work to solve any infrastructure deficiencies, including highway needs, drainage issues, and otherwise individually address water/sewer and other needs. The lack of appropriate broadband telecommunications access, particularly outside Vidalia, will also be addressed.

Nurture Existing Businesses/Entrepreneurs

The Toombs County community will work through its Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce, and in cooperation with Southeastern Technical College and state agencies, to meet local industry and business needs and encourage expansions and new local business development. The community will utilize the Chamber's Existing Industry Program, the Tri-County Regional Entrepreneur Support Team (TRI-CREST), state Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation, and other avenues to accomplish this.

Attract New Businesses

The Toombs County community, through its Development Authority, the Toombs-Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, and intergovernmental cooperation, will seek compatible business and industrial development. The community will participate in state designation programs, and will work diligently to effect economic development through a multi-faceted approach. Downtown revitalization, tourism enhancement, and development of a new airport industrial site and other infrastructure improvements will all be emphasized. Support of the U.S. 1 Corporate Center and the U.S. 1 to I-16 corridor will also be employed. Continuing local leadership development is key to all economic development strategies.

Promote/Enhance Tourism

Toombs County's Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers and outdoor amenities; the Vidalia Sweet Onion Festival; the "Tales from the Altamaha" folk play; the Ladson Genealogical and Historical Library; Santa Claus' Christmas themes; other festivals, museums, and community centers; bicycle facilities and events; many historic structures; its location near I-16, and along U.S. 1, and U.S. 280; its farms and scenic countryside; its existing downtown revitalization; its culture/arts; Partin Park and other recreational facilities; bicycling events/routes; and more offer much more potential to increase visitors. An umbrella organization for local cultural arts would be beneficial. The community already has much momentum.

Improve Transportation Access/Quality

The recently passed regional T-SPLOST will result in many needed local resurfacing and other road improvements which will enhance the community as a place to live and work. The new bridge across the Altamaha River and the complementary U.S. 1 multi-laning will open up other opportunities for job creation, as well. The completion of widening of U.S. 1 and U.S. 280 under Georgia's GRIP program would bring more usage and travelers to the county. These and other improvements could enhance local travel and make business markets more accessible. It would also make it easier to live or retire in Toombs, but work or travel elsewhere. Promotion of trails and bicycling and other tourism would also help quality of life and economic development. The Vidalia Regional Airport and its continued improvement are also important, as are connecting bicycle facilities and trails.

Revitalize Downtowns

The historic fabric and available buildings in downtown Lyons and Vidalia allow for additional opportunity, even as much already is being realized. Their historic nature allows for development incentives, preservation of unique character, and enhanced quality of life. Community projects in historic structures create civic pride, community cooperation and further avenues for community use and celebration. They also can stimulate private investment. The

further implementation of preserving and improving surrounding historic neighborhoods and connecting them to the downtowns, other commercial areas and other traffic destinations and landmarks will also help.

Support/Continue Development of Local Industrial Parks/Sites

The community has a number of available sites and buildings to market, and continues to have success with speculative building construction. The U.S. 1 Corporate Center and the newly developing airport industrial site do need the provision of additional improvements and amenities. Services and marketing have to stay ahead of opportunities, especially given recent local successes in industrial recruitment.

Enhance Intergovernmental Cooperation

Community efforts working together both within the county, and through neighbors, the region, and state agencies can only facilitate success and scope of effort. An active chamber of commerce, development authority, and many civic groups can only make public/private partnerships easier to achieve and more successful. Active participation in regional economic, tourism, and natural resource partnerships, offer much potential and benefit.

Address Growth Management/Rural Character Preservation

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community overall has developed individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more stronger, general, and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location and civic organizations and programs to assist. There is already built in local support given the community's success in preserving the natural and built environment, and utilizing the culture, arts, and history of the community.

Retiree/Resident Attraction

Toombs County's location and high quality of life are already paying economic dividends. These advantages can be attractive to retirees, families, and other residents as well, especially given the outstanding health care, recreational, and other facilities available locally.

Support Meadows Regional Medical Center/Southeastern Technical College

As noted earlier, the Meadows Regional Medical Center has been a very important continuing contributor to a growing local economic base. It is already one of the top ten Region employers. Educational facilities like Southeastern Technical College are also crucial to a diversified and stable economy, and educational levels/job skills improvement so critical to today's economy. The community needs to be vigilant to support and ensure these pillars and foundations for other growth remain strong and vibrant.

Utilize/Promote/Conserve Outdoor Amenities/Natural Resources

The fields, forests, and rich natural resources of Toombs County have always been important to community and economic development within the county, as is evidenced by the fame and success of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, and the growing promise of other vegetable production/processing and olive tree cultivation. Much of the community's high quality of life rests with the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers, fields, forests, and pastoral countryside; and local heritage preservation and celebration efforts. These amenities are treasured both for their contribution to quality of life and economic development.

Regional Center Development

Vidalia and Toombs County and its other municipalities have become recognized leaders in retail, job creation, infrastructure/services, health care, attention to historic preservation, culture, patronage of the arts. It is a model for rural development across Georgia and beyond.

Continued cultivation and support of this status is necessary and will continue to pay dividends in community and economic development. It is important to continue to cultivate/promote this status.

Vidalia Sweet Onion Protection/Promotion

The Vidalia Onion is now synonymous with community fame/association. Not only should this state vegetable production continue to be protected/expanded, it can also be the stimulus and door opening for broader community marketing.

LAND USE

The landscape and the way land is used is often visible and tangible evidence of planning or the lack thereof. It reveals the pattern of growth and development, and how we relate to the natural environment. It often defines what we view as the character of our community, and is a major component in our determination of quality of life. As science evolves, we realize with greater certainty that the way our land is used and managed has definite implications for air and water quality, and the diversity and health of our ecosystems.

The awareness of the impacts and consequences of the way land is used illustrate the need for wise use of our finite supply of land, and the necessity of sound decisions in its development or protection. The need for sustainable growth and development, which accommodates our development needs while maintaining balance and control, and limiting impacts on the natural and built environment, is recognized in the state quality community objectives.

Sound, quality growth and development results from effective and balanced land use planning that anticipates, prepares, and exercises control over development decisions. It guides and directs growth and development into a desirable and efficient pattern of land use to achieve compatibilities in use, proper return and effective use of public investments in infrastructure and services, and minimal impacts to environmentally or aesthetically important natural and cultural resources.

The lack of planning, on the other hand, can result in uncontrolled and unmanaged growth which can wreak havoc on community desires and plans, negatively impact property values, degrade the environment and landscape, and foster other detrimental effects or burdens in a short period of time. It can destroy important natural functions and treasured views or other parts of the landscape. It can cause new public tax or service burdens while lowering return or lessening use of public infrastructure already paid for or invested in. Public desires or future

plans or options can be precluded or prevented by such uncontrolled growth, while other ill-advised consequences or burdens upon the general public can result.

A community's land use planning efforts are an attempt to provide a policy guide and framework or blueprint for desired growth and development. Sound planning provides for managed growth and development, allowing for necessary land use and development, but guiding it in such a manner that balances and protects resources, systems, and other aspects of the landscape important to the community. Such planning tries to lessen, mitigate, or avoid inconsistencies, inefficiencies, or conflicting land use efforts. Existing patterns and trends of land uses, community investment in and location of facilities and services, important natural and cultural constraints, and overriding community desires are considered and accommodated in developing and delineating the desired pattern of growth and development.

Toombs County and its municipalities are united in their vision and desires for growth. Despite being a regional growth and economic center and a Census designated micropolitan statistical area, it remains a rural county with abundant natural and cultural resources, great natural beauty, fortuitous location, continuing success diversifying economically, excellent infrastructure, progressive local leadership, and many other assets for growth. It is home to the world famous Vidalia Sweet Onion, but also to so much more. The community's vision for its growth and development is one that protects and utilizes its natural and cultural resources and landscape to continue growth and development conducive to maintaining its regional leadership, and compatible with such natural beauty and important agricultural and forest resources. Land uses would continue to look similar to those existing, and the rural character would be maintained. Infrastructure and amenities would be expanded and developed to support and attract both population and business growth, primarily in or adjacent to the existing municipalities, developed areas and along U.S. 1 to I-16. Agricultural and particularly forestry uses would be kept viable and remain the principal land uses of the county, and diversification beyond the Vidalia Sweet Onion would continue. They would be an integral component of the economy of the county, and the preservation of rural character supportive of open space and natural resource protection. The natural beauty, landscape, and preserved historic landmarks would be utilized for tourism development and treasured for their quality of life contributions. Downtown

revitalization and attention to developing cultural and arts programs and facilities would be integral components to the extraordinary high quality of life. Commercial and industrial growth would be compatible and supportive of continued agricultural/forestry/conservation uses, and would maintain the high quality of life and rural character while providing additional jobs and economic opportunity.

While technically only Lyons and Vidalia, because of their zoning ordinances, are technically required to have a Land Use element in its comprehensive plan under the new DCA planning standards, all local governments in the county have chosen to participate and include the element in this joint comprehensive plan. Existing land use maps visually convey to all concerned the current landscape and correlation of extant development. Future land use maps illustrate to all concerned the community's vision and desires for additional growth and development. Such depictions also lend credence and supporting background information important to understanding and illustrating official local government policy in designating lands unsuitable for solid waste handling facilities in local solid waste management plans. Land use maps do provide official display of community desires and goals for compatible future growth and development.

The community's land use maps are, however, a general policy guide and framework, not necessarily a rigid or unchangeable picture of future growth and development. Not all growth or developments can be foreseen, and other events could necessitate a change in community vision or desires. The depicted pattern of desired future growth and development displayed on future land use maps is a current statement and reflection of community expectations and desires. It provides a context, framework and background for the public and private sector to utilize to plan, evaluate, shape, guide, and evaluate proposed developments and other decisions affecting the use of the land and community growth and development. The plan provides a context for forethought, examination of impacts and consequences, and mitigation of land use decisions on the community's growth and development and desired future patterns and community vision.

Existing Land Uses. Existing land use patterns for Toombs County and the cities of Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia are depicted on the following maps. A table depicting the

existing distribution of land use acreages is shown below.

Land use categories utilized in the development of this plan and in the land use maps are the standard categories established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and defined in the planning standards as below.

- **Residential.** The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units.
- **Commercial.** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.
- **Industrial.** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.
- **Public/Institutional.** This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- **Transportation/Communications/Utilities.** This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
- **Park/Recreation/Conservation.** This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational and conservation uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, other wild lands, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.
- **Agriculture.** This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures,

farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or similar rural uses.

- **Forestry.** This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber, pulpwood production, or other woodland use.

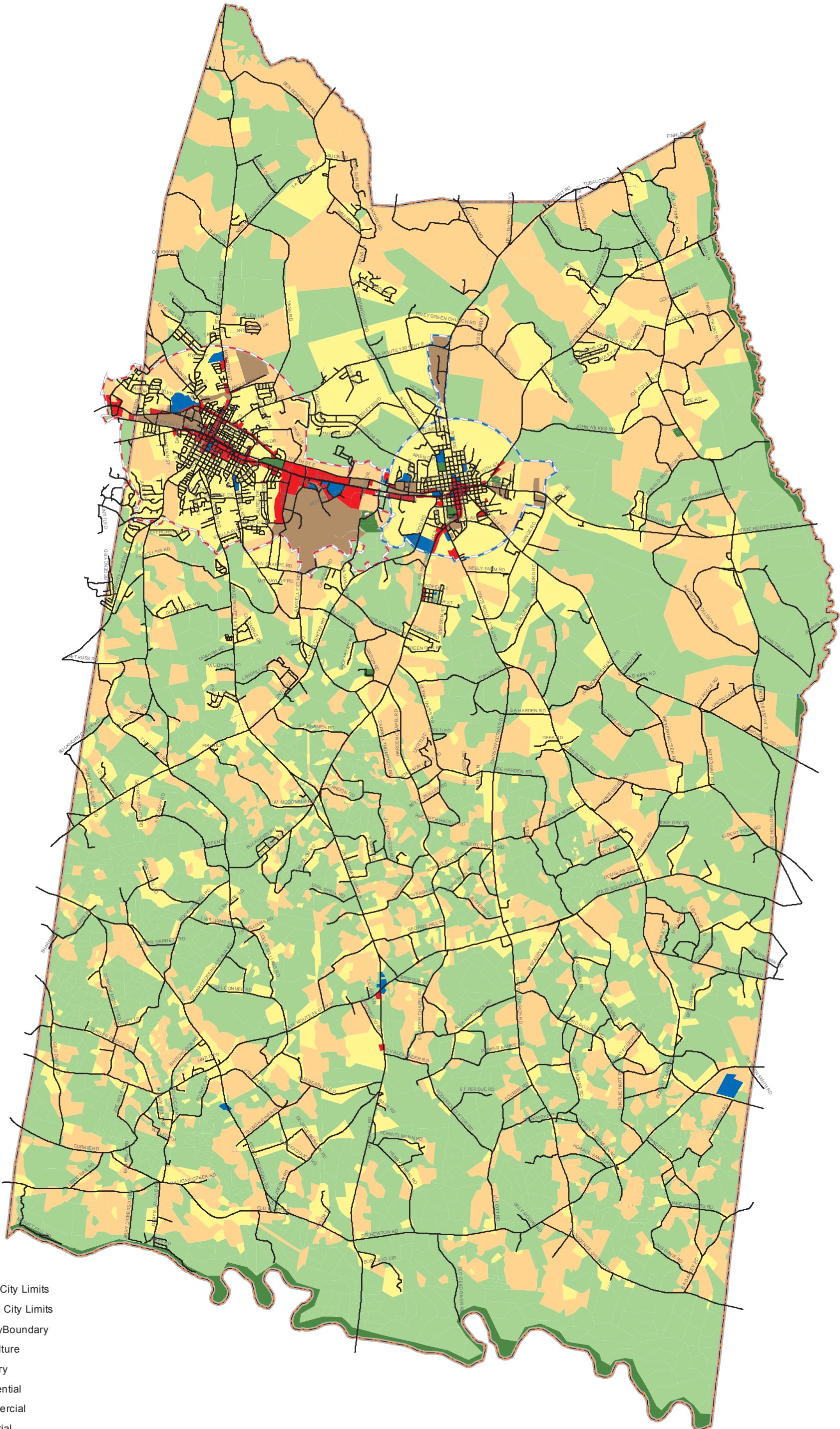
Existing Land Use Distribution, 2014
(Acres)
Toombs County

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Agriculture	64,319	27.28
Commercial	1,396	0.59
Forestry	117,855	49.98
Industrial	2,408	1.02
Park/Recreation/Conservation	3,178	1.35
Public/Institutional	620	0.26
Residential	41,625	17.65
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	4,398	1.87
Total	235,799	100.00

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Geographic Information System, 2014.

Future Land Uses. Toombs County is one of Georgia's newer counties (144th in creation), created in 1905 from Emanuel, Montgomery, and Tattnall counties. Initially settled because of the Altamaha River, its pine forests and fertile soils, the county was dominated by small farms and sparse population until the arrival of railroads in the 1880s. This attracted settlers from nearby counties and particularly, North Carolinians. Both Lyons and Vidalia originated as stops on the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad in the 1890s. The growth fueled by railroad development led local leadership to create the county. Later growth can be traced to the opening of U.S. highways 1 and U.S. 280 through the county and the establishment of Toombs County as a regional trade center. The population of the county quickly grew from 11,206 in 1910 to 17,165 in 1930. The Great Depression, then World War II, and a general decline in agriculture took a toll on the county, and its population remained stagnant until the 1960s. In the

Toombs County Existing Land Use Map



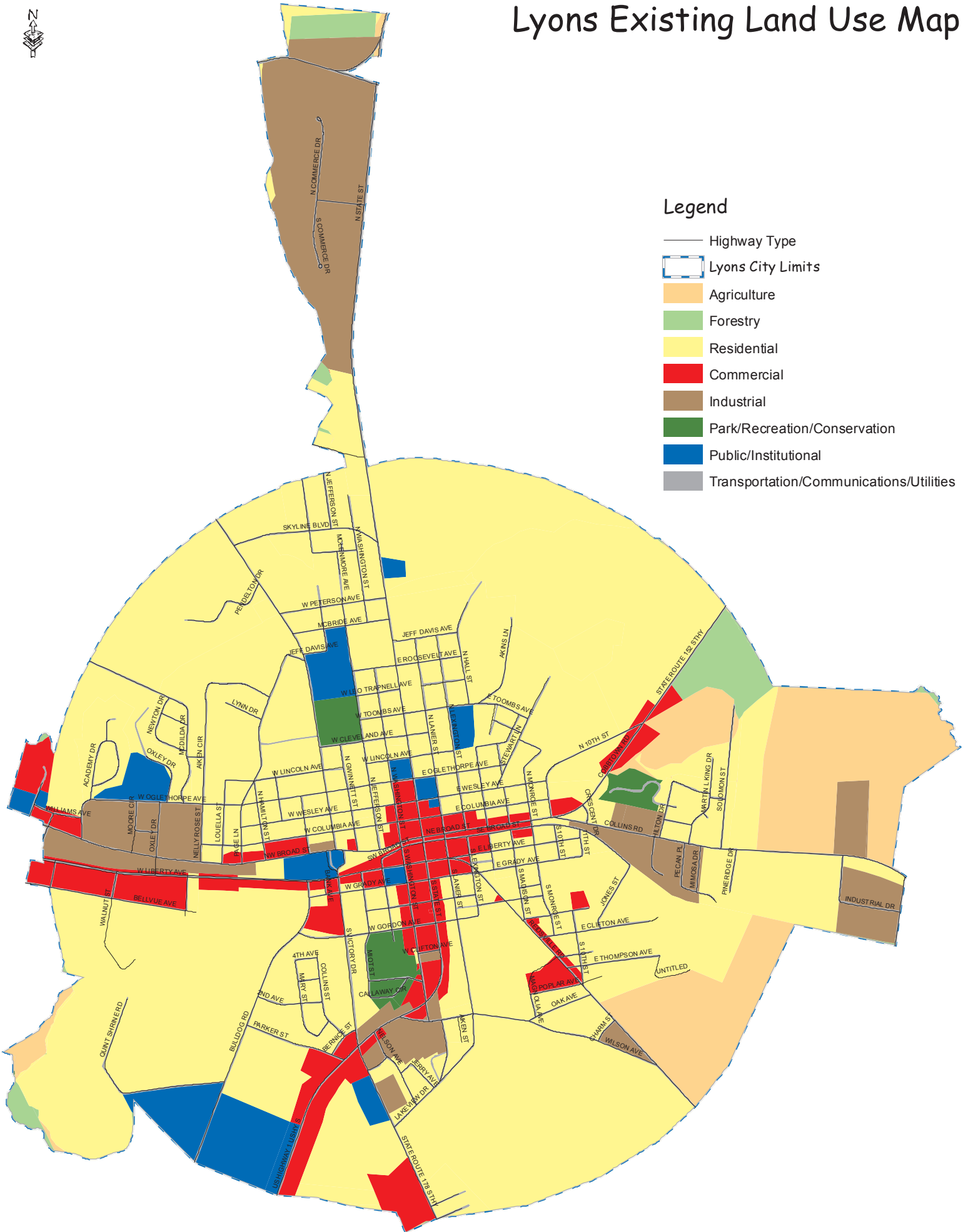
- Roads
- Lyons City Limits
- Vidalia City Limits
- County Boundary
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities



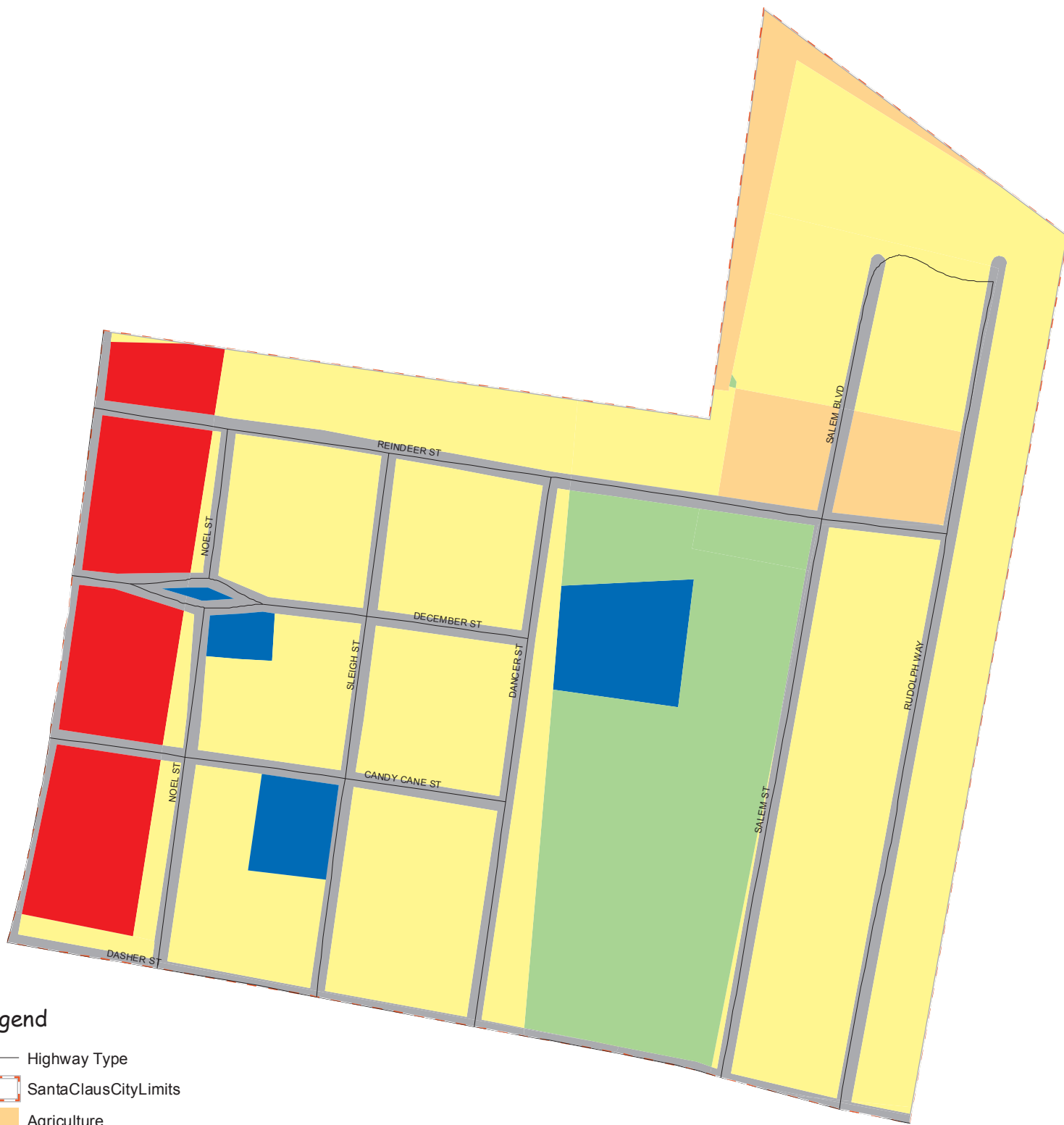
Lyons Existing Land Use Map

Legend

- Highway Type
- Lyons City Limits
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities



Santa Claus Existing Land Use Map



Legend











- Highway Type
- Santa Claus City Limits
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities

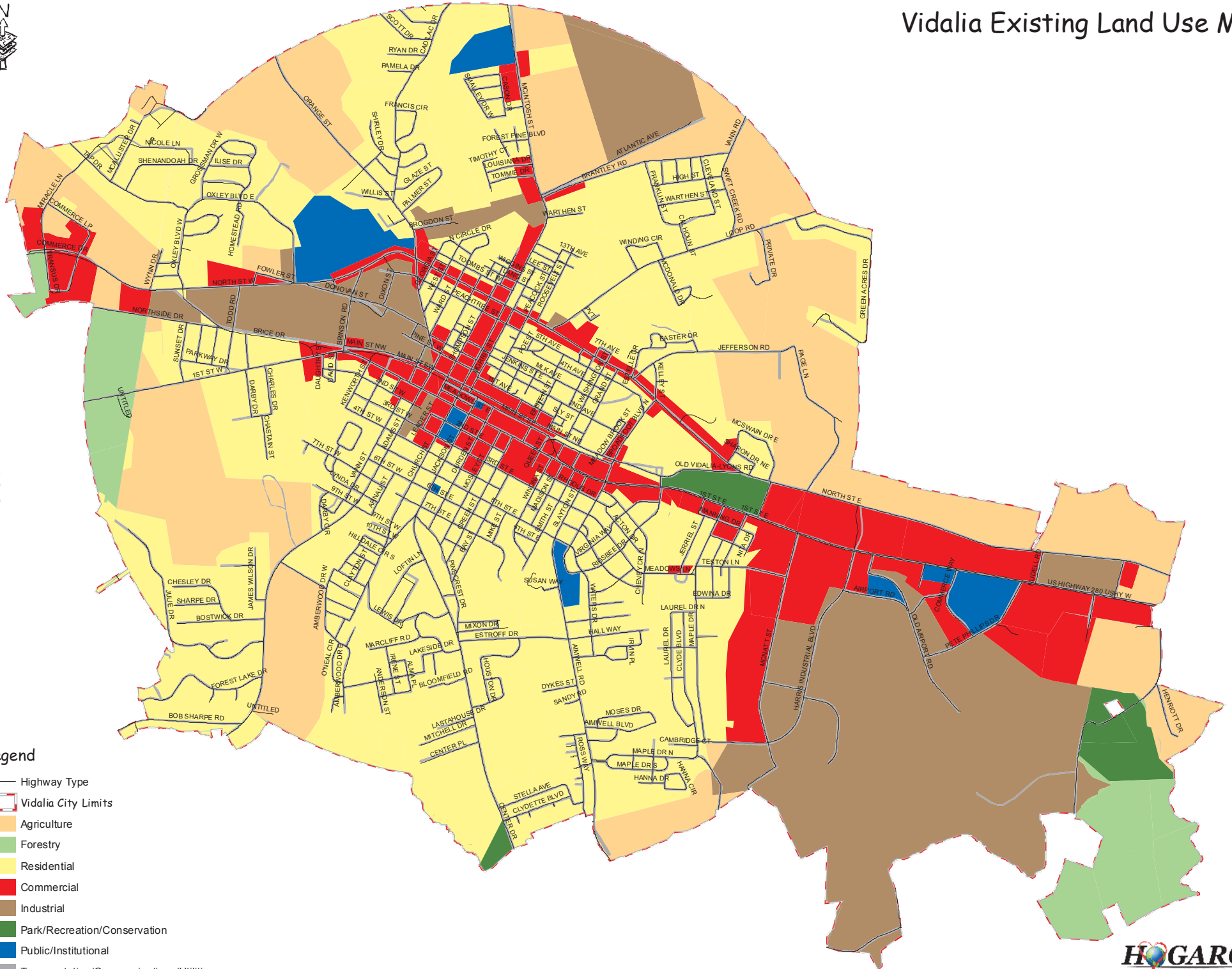


Vidalia Existing Land Use Map

106

Legend

-  Highway Type
-  Vidalia City Limits
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities



1960s, the emergence of the Vidalia Sweet Onion, followed by the location of the Plant Hatch Nuclear Plant just across the Altamaha River in neighboring Appling County, the development of I-16 just north of the county, and local success in economic diversification once again fueled slow, but steady population and economic growth since 1970. Toombs County's location, transportation access, local progressive leadership, and economic diversification continue to be key stimulators and facilitators of this growth. The growth of the Vidalia Sweet Onion marketing; the diversification of local agriculture into additional crops; the access provided by I-16, U.S. 1, U.S. 280 and local rail and airport facilities; the proximity to Georgia's ports and larger metro areas; and the overall quality of life because of the rural environment, extraordinary natural resources, and the community's preservation of, and attention to, local heritage and culture remain positive growth and development influences. The community leadership continues to progressively invest in its infrastructure, including not only water/sewer, but broadband, downtown revitalization, administrative modernization, and recreation, among others. The community continues its growth as a regional center in many areas. A new Meadows Regional Medical Center was opened in 2011 at a time when many rural hospitals were struggling, and continues to expand coverage and services. The community's population was 27,223 in 2010, and is estimated at 27,273 in 2013 by the Census Bureau showing growth despite the general recession. The county is the Region's third largest county by population but Vidalia is the Region's second largest city, and the county is the second largest employment center.

Most current growth is concentrated in the Greater Vidalia/Lyons Area in and mostly south and west of Vidalia, and between Vidalia and Lyons. There is some growth east and south of Lyons in rural Toombs County. Commercial growth is concentrated in Vidalia along U.S. 280 East, and between U.S. 280 and Georgia 292 between Vidalia and Lyons. Industrial growth is concentrated in/near Vidalia near the Airport, and north of Lyons in the U.S. 1 corridor north to I-16. Residential growth has been scattered across the county, but has been particularly concentrated south and west of Vidalia/Lyons between Center Road and Georgia 130. There has also been some growth north of Vidalia near the Vidalia Country Club and east to Lyons.

Growth momentum in Toombs County can trace its life to its location along U.S. 280 and U.S. 1; its proximity to I-16; ongoing economic and job growth; the availability of services and infrastructure; its current position as a rural retail trade/service center; its existing population and size; quality of life; and ample land availability for all uses. These same factors will continue to spur future growth particularly because of I-16; the existing economic opportunities, services, and diversity; the availability of infrastructure; the Vidalia Regional Airport; Meadows Regional Medical Center and other quality medical services; Southeastern Technical College; the abundant natural resources and the Altamaha River; the community's vibrant downtowns and available cultural resources; and the overall excellent quality of life. Future growth will likely continue to concentrate in the Greater Vidalia/Lyons Area, and along the U.S. 1 North corridor, as it has recently. The county's future land uses will closely resemble existing land uses. Agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses will continue to predominate the landscape, and maintain the existing rural character.

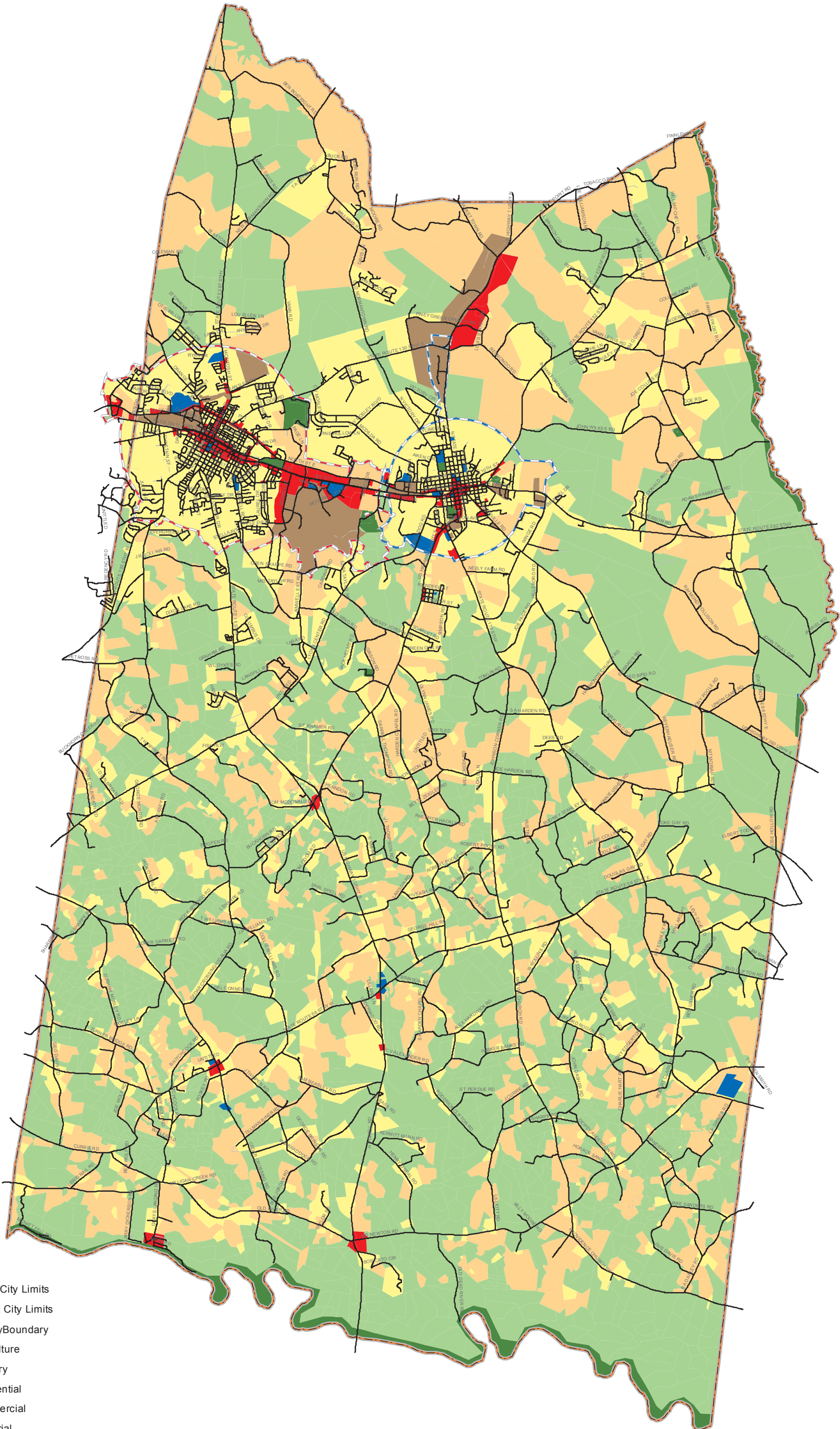
Future land use maps for Toombs County, Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia are included following this description.

Land Use Goals. Toombs County and its municipalities seek future growth and development respective of its rural character, scenic natural and cultural resources and agricultural/forestry uses, and the existing quality of life. It desires growth patterns which maintain and keep viable existing agricultural and forestry uses, which sustain its heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, and which are otherwise compatible and complementary of existing uses and scale of development. The community has chosen the following land use goals to help bring about its desired future and delineated community vision.

Address Growth Management/Compatible Development

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community, outside of Lyons and Vidalia, has developed only limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more general and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community

Toombs County Future Land Use Map











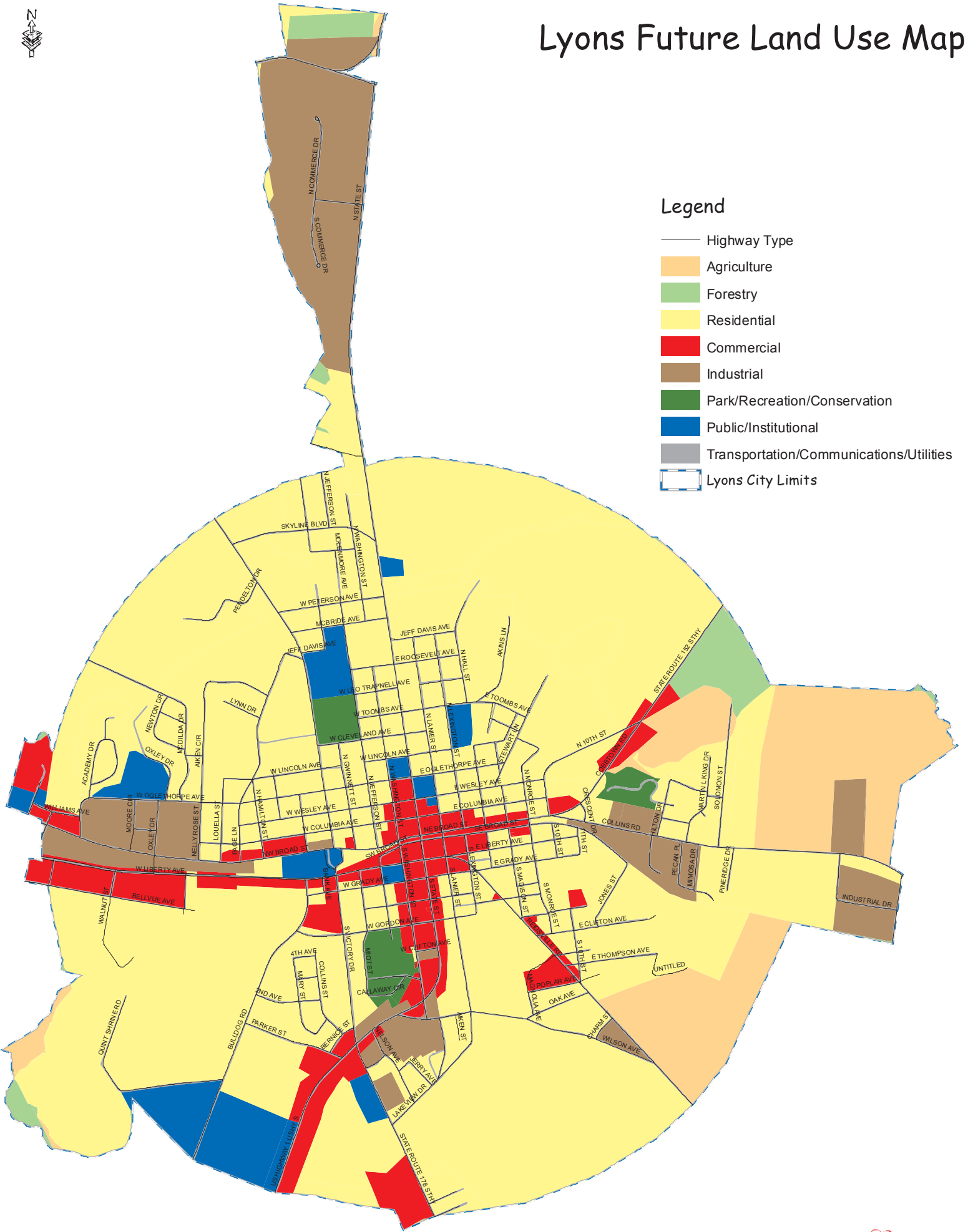
- Roads
- Lyons City Limits
- Vidalia City Limits
- County Boundary
- Orange Agriculture
- Light Green Forestry
- Yellow Residential
- Red Commercial
- Brown Industrial
- Dark Green Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Blue Public/Institutional
- Grey Transportation/Communications/Utilities



Lyons Future Land Use Map

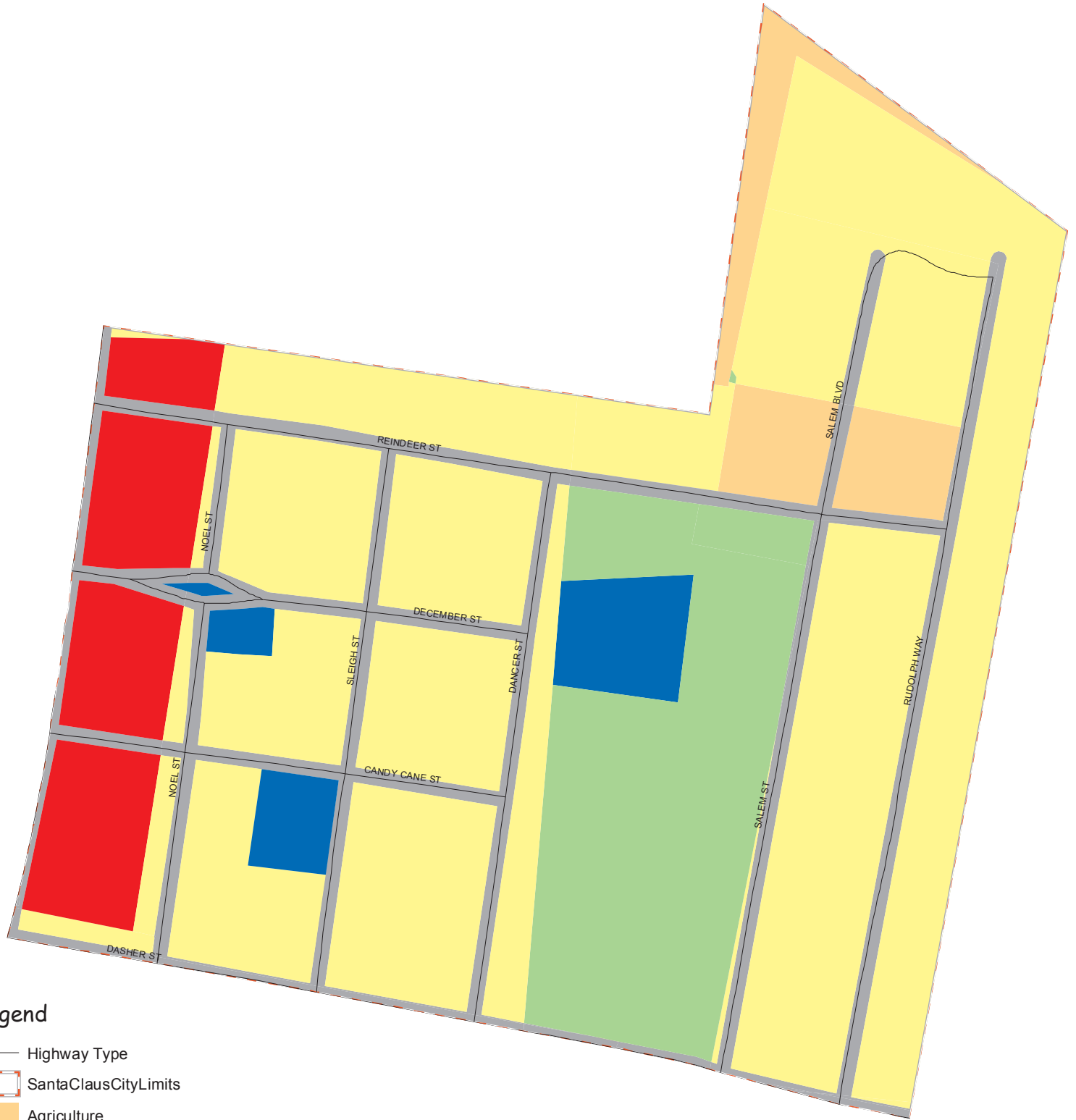
Legend

-  Highway Type
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities
-  Lyons City Limits















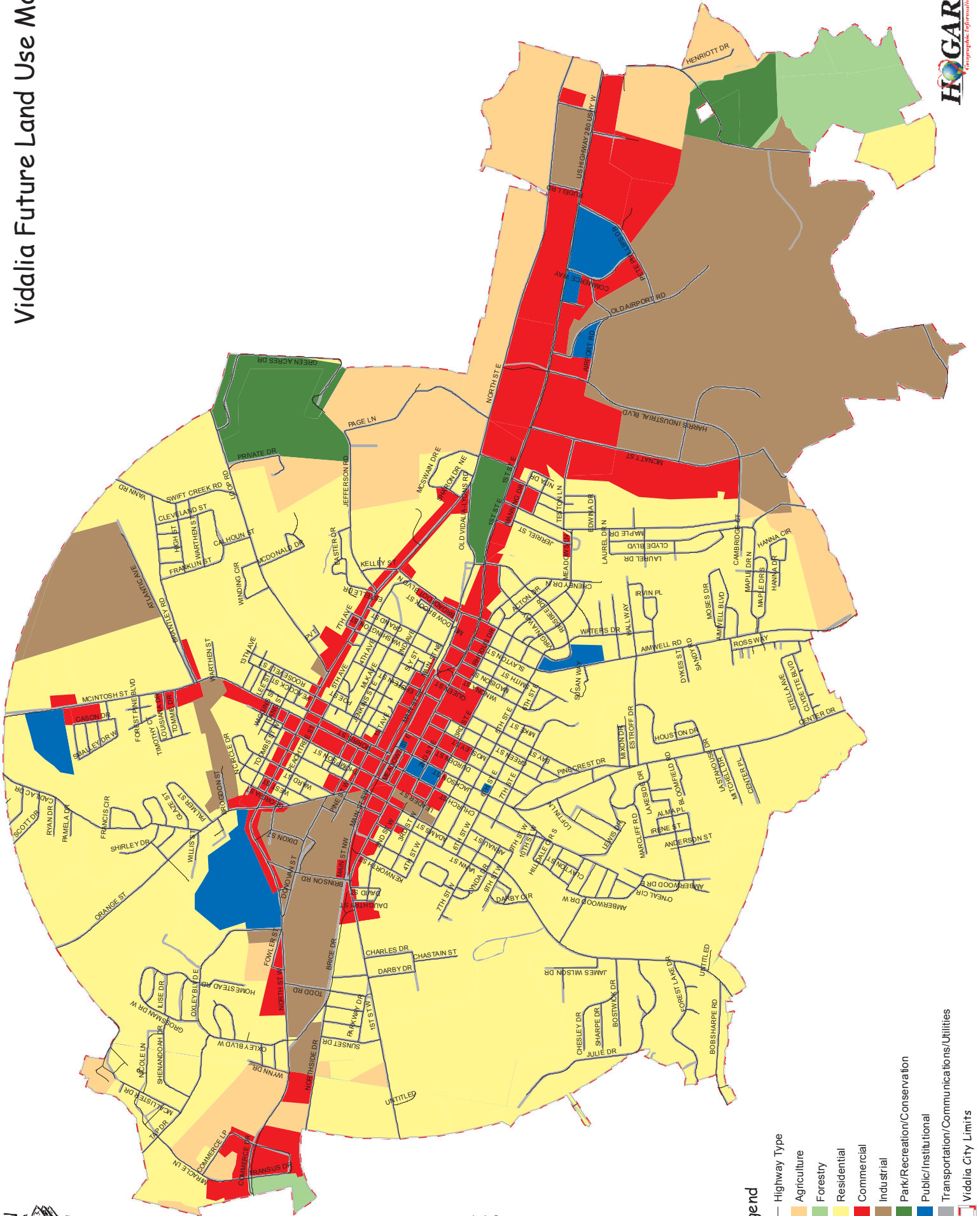
Santa Claus Future Land Use Map



Legend

-  Highway Type
-  Santa Claus City Limits
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities

Vidalia Future Land Use Map



- Legend**
- Highway Type
 - Agriculture
 - Forestry
 - Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Park/Recreation/Conservation
 - Public/Institutional
 - Transportation/Communications/Utilities
 - Vidalia City Limits

can also utilize infrastructure location; improvement of facilities and services; support of agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses; downtown revitalization; and involvement of its citizenry to assist.

Implement/Enforce Subdivision/Manufactured Housing/Land Use Regulation/Code Enforcement

As noted above, Toombs County has only narrow, specific land use regulations, road acceptance/subdivision ordinances, a manufactured home ordinance, and others to address specific issues or nuisances. Only Lyons and Vidalia have a zoning ordinance and building code enforcement. The County needs to update, expand, and coordinate joint collaborative countywide land use/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations and code enforcement to initiate a more comprehensive approach.

Maintain Open Spaces/Agricultural/Forestry Uses/Rural Character/Quality of Life

Development of new markets, continuing support and expansion of the Vidalia Sweet Onion supporting creation of alternative crops and uses, ongoing celebration of the Vidalia Sweet Onion and local heritage, providing professional support, and attracting compatible agribusiness or other supportive economic development ventures all can help achieve this. The celebration of the community's heritage and resources in festivals provides outside exposure and recruitment of residents and businesses. The Sweet Onion Festival has national clout, and "Tales From the Altamaha" continues to garner increasing notoriety. Protection of the Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers; continued downtown revitalization; and development and support of history, culture, and the arts; and the existing high quality of life will also help. Regulation should also be utilized.

Encourage/Protect Utilization/Access/Tourism for Natural/Cultural Resources

The Altamaha River, U.S. 1, the Sweet Onion Festival; Partin Park and "Tales From the Altamaha" all have much history for recreation, tourism, and motoring within the county. Santa Claus' recent charm-related, the ongoing downtown revitalization and enhancements, historic

preservation efforts, attention to trail development, and Altamaha River access will also enhance both protection and utilization. Increased recreational and outdoor usage through continued park development, promotion, and growth of tourism of many kinds offers much unrealized potential to both enhanced economic utilization and conservation of the County's significant natural and cultural resources. Vidalia's historic districts and ongoing efforts in downtown revitalization in Lyons and Vidalia are already garnering increased attention. This can also attract more visitors, and more residents, and build a larger audience of citizen support for protection and enhancement of these resources. Improvement and promotion of U.S. 1 also hold promise. Continued improvement of Altamaha River access, bicycle venues, and local recreational facilities; museums; enhancement of events or festivals; and continued preservation of community landmarks and heritage will also reap benefits.

Encourage Infill Development

It only makes sense to utilize lands and buildings where taxpayers and private interests have invested in providing costly infrastructure and construction in the past before extending additional infrastructure or incurring completely new construction costs. Both Lyons and Vidalia are already reaping benefit from both public and private investment in its historic, downtown structures. There are an abundance of available vacant commercial, industrial and residential structures within the community, as well as areas with readily available infrastructure. Available historic buildings countywide are avenues for preservation of character and heritage and opportunities for economic and community development utilizing existing served areas. Public preservation of landmarks and important structures and public investment downtown, as has already happened in all three municipalities, can further stimulate nearby private investment.

Improve Community Appearance/Aesthetics

Toombs County and its municipalities have much intrinsic natural and cultural beauty and Southern charm attractive to residential location and tourism. Landscaping/beautification efforts, general clean-up, and rehabilitation/upgrade of existing structures/areas will serve to accent and highlight this. Continuing gateway improvements, particularly along U.S. 1, U.S. 280,

and Georgia 292, can enhance community image and attractiveness. Upgrade of the housing stock quality and planned resurfacing of local streets under T-SPLOST will also help.

Seek Compatible Development/Utilization

Growth supportive, not disruptive through use, scale, or intensity, of the community's existing rural character, small-town atmosphere, extant heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, and current agricultural/forestry uses is desired.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS

The Community Work Program Element is the chosen implementation strategy which the community has identified to begin its path toward improvement and its desired future growth and development. These are the immediate steps the community has chosen to address identified community issues, needs, and opportunities, and begin the journey to achieve the desired community vision. This plan element answers the questions, “How are we, as a community, going to get where we desire, given where we are?” The Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes a separate community work program for each local government involved, as well as a report of accomplishments on their previous work program. The Long Term Policies identified under the Community Goals element identifies implementation activities and ideals which may take longer than five years, or because of circumstances involved, including finances, are not envisioned to begin in the near future.

TOOMBS COUNTY

TOOMBS COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2009	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation	Y	2011						Toombs County achieved certification in 2011, and has maintained that designation since then.
ED, IC	2009	Pursue the development of a community collaborative between the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, Family Connections, the Chamber, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs to keep youth in school			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				Toombs County actively works with these entities to further education in the community. There is a quarterly meeting held, which is open to all of these entities, that allows for the discussion of education and other programs. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, IC	2010	Pursue the development of a community collaborative among the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, the Chamber, the Development Authority, existing businesses/industries, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs and policies aimed at helping graduates find viable employment at home			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				Toombs County supports all programs that will help graduates find suitable employment within the community. Currently, programs established by Southeastern Technical College and the City of Vidalia Board of Education are the only programs in the county. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2010	Seek to complete Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) requirements	Y	2010						The Toombs Corporate Center at US 1 received GRAD designation in 2010, certifying that it is market ready and can accommodate new global industry.

TOOMBS COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, LU	2009	Pursue funding as needed to further develop the county's industrial parks and sites, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate			Y	2014 Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The construction of a new spec building is currently in progress and will be completed by the end of 2014. The County will continue to seek funds to further develop the industrial parks. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, LU, IC	2009	Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain spec buildings and pad ready sites at all industrial sites			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The County has and will continue to maintain all spec buildings and pad ready sites at its industrial parks. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
NCR	2010	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria to conserve and protect the Altamaha/Ohoopee rivers, significant groundwater recharge areas, and wetlands					Y	2017		A model ordinance based on the DNR Part V Environmental Planning Criteria has not been adopted as of yet. However, it is anticipated to be adopted by 2017.
CFS, LU	2009	Seek funding to establish additional convenience centers countywide	Y	2014	Y	2015				The installation of a new convenience center on Resmondo Road was completed in 2014. Plans to install another convenience center south of Vidalia is underway, with the exact location to be determined.
CFS, LU	2009	Pursue the removal of green boxes throughout the county					Y	2015		After the installation of the new convenience centers, the remaining green boxes will be removed.

TOOMBS COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS, LU	2010	Pursue the acquisition of additional land for top soil cover and waste stream reduction programs, including gasification, to enhance local solid waste disposal/recycling efforts	Y	2014						The County purchased an additional 400+ acres for purposes of the landfill, in 2014.
CFS	2009	Seek funding for additional space for county offices to relieve overcrowded conditions in the courthouse			Y	2019				The County is currently considering options to remodel the courthouse, or to construct a new courthouse facility.
CFS	2010	Seek to relocate the county's maintenance barn			Y	2015				The county has purchased land to relocate the maintenance barn, and is scheduled to complete the construction of a new barn in 2015. The land is within the 440 acres purchased for landfill use.
HO	2009	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide			Y	2015				Discussion are currently taking place to establish a program to remove abandoned/dilapidated homes. The new program is expected to be implemented in 2015.
HO	2009	Adopt Georgia Uniform Building Codes and establish a permit system			Y	2016				The County is in the process of establishing a permit system and hiring a codes inspector, to be implemented by 2016.
LU	2009	Seek funding as appropriate to upgrade and improve landscaping/appearance/signage of gateways/entranceways countywide					Y	Unknown (Long Term)		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funds. It remains an interest of the County, and a project to be reconsidered in the future.

**TOOMBS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS, LU	Complete the removal of all green boxes throughout the County	X						X			\$1,000	X			
CFS, LU	Establish a new convenience center south of Vidalia	X						X			\$10,000	X			
CFS	Construct a new maintenance barn	X	X					X		SPLOST	\$200,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace half of the county sheriff's office fleet with new vehicles		X					X		SPLOST	\$300,000	X	X		
CFS	Establish a 5 year program to replace equipment of the Solid Waste and Roads departments		X					X			N/A				
CFS	Begin renovation of the existing courthouse or begin construction of a new courthouse			X	X			X	Lyons	SPLOST Historic Society	Dependent upon decision	X	X		
CFS	Develop a program to rank road improvement projects based on need and grade	X						X		GDOT	N/A				
CFS	Decrease the mileage of dirt roads within the County each year						X	X		TIA GDOT LMIG	\$1,000,000	X	X		

**TOOMBS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Purchase 2 new ambulances every 2 years			X		X		X		EMA	\$175,000	X			
CFS	Upgrade/repair County buildings, utilizing a building crew from the Department of Corrections, each year						X	X		Dev. Authority Chamber SPLOST	N/A	X	X		
CFS, HO	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide	X	X					X	All Cities within County		N/A				
CFS, HO	Adopt Georgia Uniform Building Codes and establish a permit system	X	X					X			N/A				
CFS	Complete projects listed in TIA Band 1 (Lyons Center Road; County-wide Striping; 130 Accel-decel Lane)	X						X		TIA GDOT	\$1,074,474	X	X		

**TOOMBS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Complete projects listed in TIA Band 2 (Providence Church Road; Donald Anderson Road; Five Point Resurfacing; Mt. Moriah Church Road; Marvin Church Road)		X	X	X	X		X		TIA GDOT	\$2,438,800	X	X		
NCR	Adopt and enforce Environmental Conservation Ordinance to conserve and protect significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and Altamaha and Ohoopsee rivers protected corridors			X				X	All Cities within County		N/A				

CITY OF LYONS

CITY OF LYONS
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2009	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation	Y	2011						The Toombs County community achieved certification in 2011.
ED, IC	2010	Pursue the development of a community collaborative between the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, Family Connections, the Chamber, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs to keep youth in school	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City supports community collaboration for youth development and will continue to do so. The City has 2 member on the Family Connections panel, and actively encourages any educational program offered within Toombs County. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, IC	2010	Pursue the development of a community collaborative among the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, the Chamber, the Development Authority, existing businesses/industries, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs and policies aimed at helping graduates find viable employment at home			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City is an active supporter of all employment programs for graduates within Toombs County. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2009	Seek to complete Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) requirements	Y	2010						The City received this designation in 2010, with the County and the City of Vidalia.
ED, LU	2009	Pursue funding as needed to further develop the county's industrial parks and sites, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City is currently constructing a new spec building and has extended water and sewer services to the industrial park. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

CITY OF LYONS
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, LU, IC	2009	Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain spec buildings and pad ready sites at all industrial sites			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City is planning on expanding the capacity of the North Sewer Plant to accommodate any new development at the industrial park along US 1. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, NCR, CFS	2009	Seek to develop a festival for Lyons as feasible and appropriate	Y	2010						The City developed the Real Squeal Festival and has held it annually since its establishment.
NCR	2010	Pursue completion of the Downtown Lyons National Register Historic District nomination and its listing in the National Register of Historic Places					Y	Unknown (Long Term)		Lyons Main Street Program has had other priorities and is developing volunteer network/group to accomplish.
NCR, CFS	2009	Complete the development of the Altamaha Heritage Center	Y	2014						The City established the Altamaha Heritage Center in 2014, and it is currently open to the public.
CFS	2009	Pursue funding to construct a new recycling facility					Y	2017		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding, but is still a project to be completed once appropriate funding is allocated.
CFS	2009	Complete the construction of the new city hall	Y	2010						The City completed a new City Hall in 2010. It is located at 161 N.E. Broad Street.
HO	2009	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide			Y	2015				The City adopted a new ordinance and hired a code enforcement officer, who is currently developing a formal program to remove dilapidated homes within the City. The program is expected to be established by the end of 2015.

CITY OF LYONS
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
LU	2009	Seek funding as appropriate to upgrade and improve landscaping/appearance/signage of gateways/entranceways countywide			Y	2016				The City has allocated funding in its 5 year budget to make improvements to its gateways. Improvements are expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

**CITY OF LYONS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
ED, IC	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation		X						X		\$1,000	X			
CFS	Construct a new recycling facility			X					X	SPLOST GEFA	\$500,000	X			
CFS	Purchase one new public safety vehicle each year						X		X	SPLOST	\$35,000	X	X		
CFS	Purchase one new vehicle for the Utilities Department each year						X		X	SPLOST	\$20,000	X	X		
CFS	Renovate existing Police Department or construct a new one			X			X		X	SPLOST	\$300,000	X	X		
CFS	Renovate the Lyons Fire Department building		X						X	SPLOST	\$100,000	X	X		
CFS, LU	Develop the Bob Moore property to construct a new soccer complex at Partin Park		X						X	SPLOST, Rec. Authority	\$150,000	X	X		
CFS	Renovate Hallmark Park			X					X	SPLOST, Garden Clubs	\$50,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace 2 lift stations each year, until all are upgraded						X		X	GEFA	\$300,000	X			
CFS	Purchase a mini-excavator for the Roads Department	X							X	SPLOST	\$40,000	X			

**CITY OF LYONS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Purchase a new pumper truck for the Fire Department		X						X	SPLOST	\$250,000	X	X		
CFS	Renovation the recreation office at Partin Park			X					X	SPLOST	\$100,000	X	X		
CFS, IC	Purchase a new ladder truck for the Fire Department, shared with the City of Vidalia				X				X	SPLOST, Vidalia	\$300,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace all lighting on the fields at Partin Park					X			X	SPLOST, Rec. Authority	\$240,000	X	X		
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Police Department, to keep up with technology						X		X	SPLOST	\$17,000/year	X			
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Fire Department, to maintain ISO rating standards						X		X	SPLOST	\$20,000/year	X			
CFS	Replace outdated equipment of the Roads Department, each year as feasible						X		X	SPLOST	\$18,000/year	X			
CFS	Develop the National Guard Armory building for business or public use				X	X			X	Dev. Authority, Chamber	\$100,000	X			

**CITY OF LYONS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Expand the capacity of the east sewer plant to accommodate downtown services and applicable areas of the City			X	X	X			X	GEFA CDBG	\$3,000,000	X	X		
CFS, ED, NCR	Complete the Rails to Trails project in the downtown area	X	X						X	TE GDOT	\$812,500	X	X		
CFS, HO	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide	X	X					X	All Cities within County		N/A				
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 1 (South Victory Drive)	X							X	TIA GDOT	\$200,000	X	X		
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 2 (West Oglethorpe Avenue; North Lanier Street; North Lexington Street)		X	X	X	X			X	TIA GDOT	\$401,316				
NCR	Adopt and enforce Environmental Conservation Ordinance to conserve and protect significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and Altamaha and Ohoopsee rivers protected corridors			X				X	All Cities within County		N/A				

CITY OF SANTA CLAUS

CITY OF SANTA CLAUD
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2009	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation	Y	2011						The Toombs County community achieved certification in 2011.
NCR	2010	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria to conserve and protect wetlands						Y	2017	A model ordinance based on the DNR Part V Environmental Planning Criteria has not been adopted as of yet. However, it is anticipated to be adopted by 2017.
CFS, LU	2009	Seek funding towards the drilling of a new well and the construction of an elevated water storage tank							Y	This item has been dropped since the current water system in place is adequate to meet needs.
CFS, LU	2009	Seek the construction of a walking track	Y	2012						The City completed the construction of the walking track in 2012. It is located on Dancer Street.
CFS	2009	Seek to update the City's Code of Ordinances	Y	2012						The City updated its ordinances and organized them all into a readable booklet, and would like to place them on a City website for online use.
CFS	2009	Pursue funding for drainage improvements (install curb and gutter) in areas of need	Y	2012						The City completed drainage improvements along Dancer Street, which included the installment of curbs, gutters, and underground drainage.
HO	2009	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide						Y	Long Term	The City does not have a formal program to remove dilapidated homes, but may develop a program in the future. The City rescinded the mobile home license and will no longer allow any mobile homes within its limits.

CITY OF SANTA CLAU
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
HO	2009	Adopt Georgia Uniform Building Codes and establish a permit system	Y	2012				Y	2018		The City adopted the Georgia Uniform Building Codes in 2012, but has not established a permit system. The City plans to establish a permit system by 2019.
LU	2009	Seek funding as appropriate to upgrade and improve landscaping/appearance/signage of gateways/entranceways countywide	Y	2013							The City installed new fences at the entrances; improved the landscaping at the entrances; and remodeled City Hall.
LU	2009	Seek to update the City's zoning ordinance								Y	The City has dropped this item as they do not have zoning.

**CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
ED, HO	Establish a permit system for new buildings		X						X		\$1,000	X			
CFS, IC	Obtain additional law enforcement services from the City of Lyons	X							X	Lyons	N/A				
CFS, NCR	Establish a memorial garden at the north entrance along US 1		X						X		\$3,000	X			
CFS	Replace any old playground equipment with new equipment and/or add more new equipment		X	X					X	SPLOST	\$20,000	X			
CFS	Re-establish Prancer Street			X					X	SPLOST	\$5,000	X			
NCR, ED	Establish an arts & crafts festival			X	X				X		N/A	X			
CFS	Establish and hire a formal City Clerk		X	X					X		\$30,000	X			
NCR, CFS, ED	Create a new City website with an online store	X	X						X		\$7,000	X			
NCR, ED	Attract entrepreneurship for the establishment of a candy store and restaurant				X	X			X		\$15,000	X			

**CITY OF SANTA CLAUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS, HO	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide	X	X					X	All Cities within County		N/A				
ED, IC	Finalize, maintain, and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation				X	X			X		N/A				
NCR	Adopt and enforce Environmental Conservation Ordinance to conserve and protect significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and Altamaha and Ochoopee rivers protected corridors			X				X	All Cities within County		N/A				

CITY OF VIDALIA

CITY OF VIDALIA
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2009	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Ready Community designation	Y	2011						The Toombs County community achieved this certification in 2011.
ED, IC	2010	Pursue the development of a community collaborative between the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, Family Connections, the Chamber, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs to keep youth in school	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City took over the Family Connections program in 2014, and is attempting to move the program forward. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, IC	2010	Pursue the development of a community collaborative among the Toombs County Board of Education, City of Vidalia Board of Education, Southeastern Technical College, the Chamber, the Development Authority, existing businesses/industries, and other agencies as appropriate to establish programs and policies aimed at helping graduates find viable employment at home			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City is an active partner of the Southeast Career Academy, supports the program offered by Southeastern Technical College, and has a program of their own through the City of Vidalia Board of Education. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2009	Seek to complete Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) requirements	Y	2010						The Toombs Corporate Center at US 1 received GRAD designation in 2010, certifying that it is market ready and can accommodate new global industry.

CITY OF VIDALIA
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, LU	2009	Pursue funding as needed to further develop industrial parks and sites, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City is in the process of developing 25 acres to accommodate a prospective aviation business. The City will continue to improve and maintain its industrial parks and infrastructure. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, LU, IC	2009	Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain spec buildings and pad ready sites at all industrial sites			Y	2014				The construction of a new spec building is currently in progress and will be completed by the end of 2014. The City will continue to seek funds to further develop the industrial parks. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, CFS, LU	2009	Seek funding to develop new multi-purpose recreation facility on Ezra Taylor Road	Y	2011						The new recreation facility on Ezra Taylor Road was completed in 2011.
ED	2009	Complete the development of the Vidalia Onion Museum	Y	2010						The establishment of the Vidalia Onion Museum was completed in 2010.
ED	2009	Pursue Signature Community status							Y	This item has been dropped as the Signature Community program is now obsolete.
NCR	2010	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria to conserve and protect wetlands						Y	2017	A model ordinance based on the DNR Part V Environmental Planning Criteria has not been adopted as of yet. However, it is anticipated to be adopted by 2017.

CITY OF VIDALIA
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
CFS, LU	2009	Seek funding to extend the City of Vidalia Railroad to Emanuel County						Y	Unknown (Long Term)		This item has been postponed due to the lack of funding opportunities available for such projects. It remains a long term interest for the City however.
CFS, LU	2009	Complete water/sewer improvements in Poe Street Neighborhood CDBG target area	Y	2010							The water/sewer improvements to Poe Street were completed in 2010.
CFS	2009	Complete rehabilitation/renovations from N. Main to Pine Sts. and from Morris to Thompson Sts. (sidewalks, roads, etc.)			Y	2015					This item is currently under contract and awaiting approval from the GDOT.
CFS	2012	Add center and right-turn lanes along GA 292 in Vidalia from Seawinder Restaurant to Morningside Drive			Y	2014					This project is currently under construction and will be completed by the end of 2014.
CFS	2009	Complete airport drainage improvements, apron pavement and stub improvements, and pavement rehabilitation	Y	2010	Y	2015					The City installed a new A-wash and navigational beacons in 2010. Contract for the design of a new corporate hangar, new striping, new lighting, and drainage improvements is underway.
CFS, NCR	2009	Complete watershed assessment to satisfy EPD requirements	Y	2010							The watershed assessment was completed in 2010.
CFS	2009	Seek to expand City Hall and the Community Center	Y	2010	Y	2014					The City expanded the community center in 2010, and is currently expanding City Hall; expected to be complete by the end of 2014.

CITY OF VIDALIA
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2011	Seek to construct a new police department facility	Y	2013						After completing the City of Vidalia Municipal Annex, the police department was relocated into a new facility within that building in 2013.
HO	2009	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide	Y	2014						The City allocates \$50,000 each year for the removal of dilapidated homes. This program began in 2010, and has provided for the removal of over 140 dilapidated properties up to 2014.
LU	2009	Seek funding as appropriate to upgrade and improve landscaping/appearance/signage of gateways/entranceways countywide	Y	2012			Y	Long Term		In 2012, the City improved the gateway on US 280 on the west and the gateway along GA 297 on the north. The City will improve the remaining gateways as funding becomes available.

**CITY OF VIDALIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
ED, LU	Construct a new industrial spec building at the industrial park	X	X						X	Dev. Authority, Chamber	\$3,000,000	X			
CFS	Complete remodeling of City Hall	X							X	SPLOST	\$500,000	X	X		
CFS	Upgrade the software system to integrate all departments for better networking and connectivity	X							X		\$300,000	X			
CFS, NCR	Promote quarterly events to be held at the amphitheater						X		X	Chamber Arts Committee	\$100,000	X			
CFS	Complete installation of new tennis courts and soccer fields at the Recreation Department	X	X						X	SPLOST	\$1,500,000	X	X		
NCR	Replace entrance signs	X	X						X	Chamber	\$50,000	X			
CFS, NCR	Replace all signage within the City	X	X						X		\$200,000	X			
CFS	Improve water, sewer, and drainage systems along Bay, 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , and 6 th streets	X	X	X	X	X			X	SPLOST CDBG	\$2,000,000	X			
CFS, NCR	Expand the Sweet Onion RV Park				X	X			X	Dev. Authority	\$100,000	X			
CFS	Complete the upgrading of infrastructure along Adams Street (GA 130)	X	X						X	SPLOST	\$500,000	X			

**CITY OF VIDALIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Pave Ezra Taylor Road	X	X						X	SPLOST	\$500,000	X	X		
CFS	Purchase a new fire truck	X							X	SPLOST	\$700,000	X	X		
CFS	Purchase 3 new police cars each year						X		X	SPLOST	\$80,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace water meters until all are upgraded and for maintenance						X		X		\$20,000	X	X		
CFS	Purchase equipment for the removal of yard debris	X							X	SPLOST	\$182,000	X	X		
CFS	Establish a yard debris removal program	X							X	Garden Clubs	N/A				
CFS, NCR	Install new banners throughout the City				X				X		\$50,000	X			
CFS, ED	Establish free public Wi-Fi in various locations throughout the City					X			X		\$250,000	X			
CFS, ED, NCR	Complete historic renovations to Pal Theater and operate for community use	X	X						X	Dev. Authority Vidalia Main Street	\$100,000	X			

**CITY OF VIDALIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS, ED, NCR	Save and rehabilitate at least 1 historic building for business or public use each year, if feasible			X	X	X			X	Historical Society Dev. Authority Chamber Vidalia Main Street	\$1,000,000	X			
CFS, IC	Purchase a new ladder truck for the Fire Department, shared with the City of Lyons				X				X	SPLOST Lyons	\$300,000	X	X		
CFS, HO	Pursue the establishment of programs to remove dilapidated manufactured homes/housing units countywide	X	X					X	All Cities within County		N/A				
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 1 (Mose Coleman Road; Michael Collins Drive)	X							X	TIA GDOT	\$1,261,567	X	X		
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 2 (Airport Road; Adams Street)		X	X	X	X			X	TIA GDOT	\$2,515,497	X	X		
NCR	Adopt and enforce Environmental Conservation Ordinance to conserve and protect significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and Altamaha and Ohoopsee rivers protected corridors			X				X	All Cities within County		N/A				
NCR	Develop and implement ordinance protecting water quality consistent with watershed assessment in Vidalia	X	X						X	HOGARC	\$2,500	X			

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established new "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective March 1, 2014, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, Toombs County, Georgia has participated with the municipalities of Lyons, Santa Claus, and Vidalia in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, for Toombs County and its municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

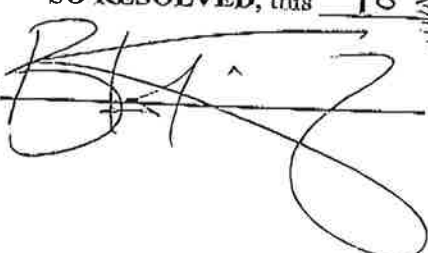
WHEREAS, Toombs County is now desirous of adopting *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

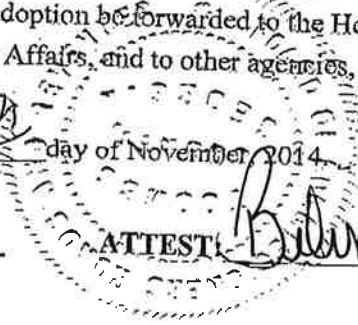
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Toombs County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and adopts the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, as Toombs County's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2009.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Toombs County Board of Commissioners hereby instructs and directs that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.


SO RESOLVED, this 18th day of November 2014.

BY:





ATTEST:



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established new "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective March 1, 2014, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lyons, Georgia has participated with Toombs County and the municipalities of Santa Claus and Vidalia in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, for Toombs County and its municipalities, including the City of Lyons; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

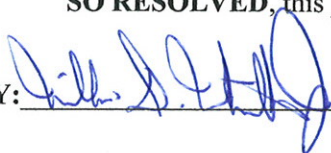
WHEREAS, the City of Lyons is now desirous of adopting *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lyons hereby approve and adopt the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, as the City of Lyons' official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2009.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lyons hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 6th day of January, 2014.

BY: _____



ATTEST: _____



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established new "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective March 1, 2014, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Claus, Georgia has participated with Toombs County and the municipalities of Lyons and Vidalia in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, for Toombs County and its municipalities, including the City of Santa Claus; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Claus is now desirous of adopting *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Santa Claus hereby approve and adopt the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, as the City of Santa Claus' official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2009.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Santa Claus hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 18th day of November, 2014.

BY: 

ATTEST: 

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established new "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective March 1, 2014, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Vidalia, Georgia has participated with Toombs County and the municipalities of Lyons and Santa Claus in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, for Toombs County and its municipalities, including the City of Vidalia; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

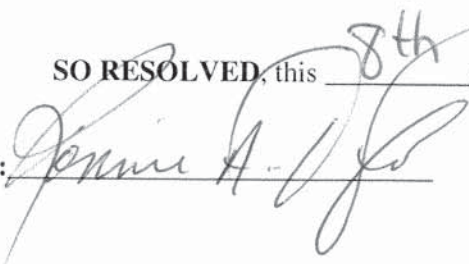
WHEREAS, the City of Vidalia is now desirous of adopting *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Vidalia hereby approve and adopt the Toombs County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Sweet! So Much More than the Vidalia Onion*, as the City of Vidalia's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2009.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Vidalia hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 8th day of December, 2014.

BY:



ATTEST:

