

# COVER SHEET FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING SUBMITTALS

Name(s) of Submitting Government(s): **Unified Government of Webster County**

RC: **RVRC**

Submittal Type: **Comp Plan Update**

Preparer:  RC  Local Government  Consultant: Specify

Cover Letter Date: **9/11/2024**

Date Submittal Initially Received by RC: **8/16/2024**

Explain Unusual Time-lags (between RC Receipt and transmittal to DCA) or Other Anomalies, when present:

*Inaccurate/incomplete information, above, and nonconformity with the standards articulated, below, are reportable as performance errors under the terms of the annual DCA/RC contract and may lead to adverse audit findings.*

- **ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY USING THE DEPARTMENT'S SHAREPOINT SITE.**
- Notify DCA via email to **PLANNING@DCA.GA.GOV** that submittal has been transmitted. DCA may not initiate review if notification is not provided.
- COMBINE **ALL** INDIVIDUAL IMAGES, DOCUMENTS AND SPREADSHEETS INTO **ONE SINGLE, SEARCHABLE PDF** (INCLUDING COVER LETTERS, APPENDICES, ETC.), PUT THIS COMPLETED FORM AS THE FIRST PAGE OF THE PDF AND THEN UPLOAD IT.
- REVISED SUBMITTALS **MUST INCLUDE THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT**, NOT ONLY THE REVISED PORTION.
- EMAILED OR HARDCOPY MATERIALS **WILL NOT** BE ACCEPTED FOR DCA REVIEW.
- ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE CHanneled THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE REGIONAL COMMISSION.



**WEBSTER COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024-2029**



**Prepared By:  
River Valley Regional Commission**

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WEBSTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024-2029

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

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

WHEREAS, The Unified Government of Webster County has updated the Unified Government of Webster County Comprehensive Plan for the planning period 2024-2029, and

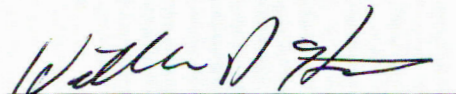
WHEREAS, The Unified government of Webster County has been notified by appropriate authority that the most recent effort updating the local comprehensive plan adequately addresses the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to facilitate compliance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

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved by the Chair and Commission of Webster County that the Unified Government of Webster County Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 be adopted.

SO RESOLVED, this 10 day of Sept., 2024.

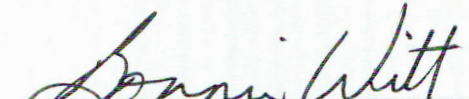
UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WEBSTER COUNTY

BY:



Darrell Holbrook, Chair

ATTEST:



Bonnie Witt, County Clerk



# Unified Government of Webster County

P.O. Box 29  
40 Cemetery Road  
Preston, GA 31824  
P (229)-828-5775  
F (229)-828-2105  
[websterco@windstream.net](mailto:websterco@windstream.net)

## CHAIR

Hon. Darrell Holbrook

## COMMISSIONERS

Hon. Jack Holbrook

Hon. Melvin Crimes

Hon. Darryl Jones

Hon. Ronald Brown

## COUNTY CLERK

Bonnie Kay Witt

Assisted by:  
River Valley Regional Commission  
228 West Lamr Street  
Americus, Georgia 31709  
710 Front Avenue  
Columbus, Georgia 31901

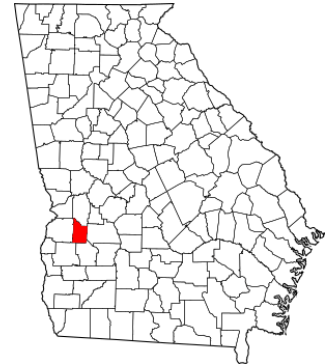
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	4
Background.....	4
Vison Statement .....	4
Needs and Opportunities .....	4
Introduction.....	5
Purpose.....	5
Comprehensive Planning Process.....	5
Identification Stakeholders.....	6
Participation techniques.....	6
Consistency with quality community objectives .....	6
Schedule .....	7
Community Data and Demographics.....	8
Population.....	8
Economic Development.....	9
Housing Development .....	12
Education .....	13
Community facilities.....	14
Transportation .....	16
Health .....	19
Livability and Aging in Place .....	20
Broadband .....	22
Natural resources .....	24
Cultural Resources.....	36
Land Use .....	37
Regional Cooperation .....	40
SWOT .....	41
Strengths.....	41
Weaknesses .....	41
Opportunities .....	42
Threats.....	42
Report of Accomplishments .....	43
Work Program.....	44
Appendix A: Public Participation .....	45

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

Webster County is in southwest Georgia, forty-four miles south of Columbus, forty-seven miles north of Albany, and twenty-seven miles west of Americus. People have lived in the State of Georgia and what is now Webster County for eleven thousand years. The land that became Webster County was inhabited by the Lower Creek Indian Nation until ceded to the United States via the Treaty of Washington in 1826. The land was then surveyed by the State of Georgia and distributed through a land lottery system.



Webster County was created on December 16, 1853. Initially called Kinchafoonee (a Creek Indian word) after a prominent waterway in the area, the area became Webster County in 1856, after Daniel Webster. The first settlement in Webster County was Lanahassee, a community located near the waterway bearing that name. When the county's name was changed, the town was moved three miles west to Preston, which became the county seat.

There were two historical municipalities in Webster County, Preston, and Weston. Both of those cities gave up their charters and consolidated with the county January 1, 2009, to become the Unified Government of Webster County.

### VISON STATEMENT

Webster County is a community where...

- Personal enrichment and community growth and development are prioritized.
- Community development preserves the community's natural resources, such as timber and forestland.
- Events hosted by the county fostered a strong sense of community and familiarity among residents.
- Wise and innovative investment of public resources facilitates the well-being of residents.
- Tourism-based economic development is promoted by marketing local history, natural resources, and support for local and outside investments.
- The community strives to provide services that meet local needs.
- Resources and revenues are utilized to meet the health, safety, and well-being needs of citizens.

### NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### NEEDS

- Expand tourism/agritourism activities.
- Maintain low housing costs to provide safe and adequate housing.
- Retail, businesses, restaurants, and community event space
- Increased transportation for senior citizens
- Development of new daycares

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- TSPLOST
- Increased employment opportunities
- Increased residential, commercial, and industrial development.
- Improve, enhance, and preserve the County's natural and cultural resources

## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

The comprehensive planning process, at its inception and culmination, is a vision for the future. The aim of the process is to develop a strong community. To achieve that objective, a meaningful comprehensive planning process must solicit and integrate the input of community citizens, government officials, and staff. The result will be a well-balanced comprehensive plan addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow, and outlining the steps necessary to bring about positive change over the next twenty (20) years. The intent of the Webster County Comprehensive Plan Update process is to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue, and communication as possible; seeking to build consensus among Webster County residents that will result in better government decisions and greater community agreement with those decisions.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The State of Georgia updated the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning in 2013 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-1). These updates included a list of required and optional elements each community was encouraged to use to supplement their comprehensive planning efforts.

Elements required by the state for each community include:

- Community Involvement--An initial and final public hearing; and
- Community Goals—A review of the community's vision and goals; and
- Needs and Opportunities--A list of potential community needs and opportunities; and
- Community Work Program--The community's action plan for the next five years.

While not included in the Comprehensive Plan Update document, renegotiation of the community's Service Delivery Strategy is also required as part of the process. Other elements encouraged by the state to supplement the comprehensive planning efforts include:

- Capital Improvements—Only required for governments that charge impact fees; and
- Economic Development—Webster County is a Tier 1 county as defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Job Tax Credit Program. An Economic Development Plan is required for Tier 1 communities seeking to improve economic opportunities for their citizens; and
- Land Use—Only required for governments with zoning or other land use regulations; and
- Transportation—Recommended for communities with automobile congestion problems, parking problems, or that are interested in adding alternative transportation facilities (Only required for governments that have a portion of their jurisdiction included in a Metropolitan Planning Organization); and
- Housing—Encouraged for communities with concentrations of substandard housing or a jobs-housing imbalance (Only required for HUD CDBG Entitlement Communities).

The Webster County Comprehensive Plan Update consists of the following elements: Community Vision and Goals, Community Needs and Opportunities, Community Land Use, Community Economic Development and Community Work Program. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a policy guide relating to land use, community infrastructure, housing, and economic development activities. This document should generate local pride and

enthusiasm, engage interest in the implementation of the comprehensive plan, and become a handbook to guide daily decision making for the local government officials and community leaders.

## IDENTIFICATION STAKEHOLDERS

The Board of Commissioners for the United Government of Webster County appointed a leadership team at the beginning of the process. This group consisted of a combination of elected officials, government staff and local citizens. The leadership team developed a list of stakeholders from whom to solicit input regarding the comprehensive plan update (See Appendix).

## PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

The State of Georgia Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning in 2013 (O.C.G.A. 11012-1) require that two (2) public hearings be held in association with the development of a Comprehensive Plan Update. The initial public hearing was held April 9, 2024, to inform the public that the planning process was underway, to go over the plan's timeline, and to discuss how the public could be of help during the planning process. Attendees were also given an opportunity to comment on Webster County's potential Needs and Opportunities (See Appendix).

In addition to the two required public hearings, numerous public work sessions were held to gain input into all elements of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The leadership team, civic leaders, and stakeholders were invited to assist in these citizen involvement opportunities (See Appendix). Session attendees developed a county vision statement. Participants also reviewed information from previous community plans and developed a list of current needs and opportunities via a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. The citizens group then evaluated whether each item on the list was an actionable project that should be in the Webster County Community Work Program or rather a policy to guide elected officials.

A final public hearing was held August 13, 2024, at the Webster County Board of Commissioners' Office. The purpose of the meeting was to allow citizens to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan Update. All draft documents and maps were available for review. Staff were available to answer questions and take comments. Copies of the draft plan, handouts, and other informative materials were distributed. All comments were collected at the conclusion of the meeting, were summarized, and responded to in a timely manner.

## CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The objectives, created by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and known as "Quality Community Objectives," were "adapted from generally accepted community development principles" (Quality Community Objectives Fact Sheet, Georgia Department of Community Affairs). Webster County has reviewed, adopted, and used these objectives as a framework for the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The policies accompanying each objective were developed by Webster County in response to identified community needs and opportunities. Together these objectives and policies will assist community leaders in making local government decisions that affect the county's future land use patterns, environmental and historical resources, economic development, and overall quality of life.



## SCHEDULE

Plan Development Timeline							
Plan Element	Apr 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sept 2024	Oct 2024
Initial Public Hearing	X						
Vision Statement		X					
Needs and Opportunities		X					
Community Goals		X	X				
Land Use			X	X			
Community Work Program				X			
Final Public Hearing					X		
Submit to DCA					X		
Plan Revisions					X	X	
Adoption							X

## COMMUNITY DATA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION

Webster has historically been among Georgia’s least populated counties. At the time of the 2010 Census, only two had fewer residents. The 2000 Census credited Webster County with its first population increase in a century. In 2010, the local population was less than half (42%) of the level recorded in 1900, while in 2020, the population decreased by another 5%. The population continued to decrease between 2020 and 2022 (9%).

Population decrease was the norm for most of the last century in the surrounding area as well. The aggregate population of the five adjoining counties declined 37% between the dates of highest (1910) and lowest (1970) populations, with all area counties contributing to the decrease.

Webster and Surrounding Counties Population 1900 - 2020						
Jurisdiction	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1960
Webster	6,618	6,151	5,342	5,032	4,726	3,247
Marion	10,080	9,147	7,604	6,968	6,954	5,477
Randolph	16,847	18,841	16,721	17,174	16,609	11,078
Stewart	15,856	13,437	12,089	11,114	10,603	7,371
Sumter	26,212	29,092	29,640	26,800	24,502	24,652
Terrell	19,023	22,003	19,601	18,290	16,675	12,742
Jurisdiction	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Webster	2,362	2,341	2,263	2,390	2,727	2,587
Marion	5,099	5,297	5,590	7,144	8,403	8,450
Randolph	8,734	9,599	8,023	7,791	7,724	6,888
Stewart	6,511	5,896	5,654	5,252	5,831	6,446
Sumter	26,931	29,360	30,228	33,200	32,865	29,714
Terrell	11,416	12,017	10,653	10,970	9,647	8,654

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Webster’s projected twenty-year population trend is not as strong as documented during the past two decades. The following table presents population projections prepared by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget. Webster’s population is projected to experience a slight decline of 1.6 % between 2022 and 2050. This is significantly less than the projected population decreases of surrounding counties, excluding Marion County.

Population Projections 2022-2050						
Jurisdiction	2022	2025	2030	2040	2050	'22 – '50 % Change
Webster	2,354	2,367	2,405	2,371	2,316	-1.6%
Marion	7,508	7,276	7,189	7,219	7,492	-0.2%
Randolph	6,365	5,906	5,569	5,294	5,103	-19.8
Stewart	5,121	5,216	5,030	4,674	4,435	-13.4%
Sumter	29,378	27,932	26,711	24,457	22,870	-22.2%
Terrell	9,004	8,728	8,545	8,536	8,628	-4.2%
Georgia	10.7M	11.2M	11.7M	12.7M	13.5M	26.2%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget 2022 series

Webster’s age cohorts 0-4 and 5-14 continued to decline in 2022, while age cohorts 15-24, 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 increased after experiencing a brief decline in 2020. The older cohorts, including 55-64 and 65+, experienced a significant decrease between 2020 and 2022. Most of the population by ethnicity and race decreased between 2020 and 2022. The Black/African American population increased by 23% in 2022, while the Asian/Pacific Islander population experienced no change, remaining at 0 between 2020 and 2022.

Population by Age Group 2000-2022				
Category	2000	2010	2020	2022
0-4	154	140	59	57
5-14	333	417	389	281
15-24	315	299	288	307
25-34	298	232	239	266
35-44	365	442	349	394
45-54	339	392	297	380
55-64	235	384	321	249
65+	351	421	645	420
Total	2,390	2,727	2,587	2,354

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Population by Ethnicity and Race 2000-2022				
Category	2000	2010	2020	2022
White Alone	1,207	1,532	1,413	977
Black/African American Alone	1,124	935	850	1,048
American Indian/ Alaskan Native Alone	2	0	8	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	42	0	0
Other	38	114	281	196
Two or More races	19	104	35	133
Total Hispanic Population	66	138	322	345

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

For Webster County to realize its full potential, the community must expand its economic development efforts. Webster County elected and business leaders must work closely with education partners to enable residents to develop their talents and become productive members of the Webster County workforce. Having a highly skilled workforce allows a community to recruit new quality jobs. This same well-trained workforce is equally important to the success of existing businesses and industries.

In 2022, Webster County had a median household income of \$35,000 with 876 households and a population of 2,354 people. According to the Georgia Department of Labor, Webster County had an unemployment rate of 3.6% in 2024. This rate is higher than the 3.2% found in Georgia but lower than the 3.9% in the United States. The county had a per capita income of 22,246, increasing 36% between 2010 and 2022.

Changes in Household Income 2000-2022				
Income Measure	2000	2010	2020	2022
Total households	919	1,107	1,115	876
Less than \$10,000	172	173	121	95
\$10,000-\$14,999	57	168	149	85
\$15,000-\$24,999	181	189	200	141
\$25,000-\$34,999	148	127	106	117
\$35,000-\$49,999	149	148	160	112
\$50,000-\$74,999	125	140	106	83
\$75,000-\$99,999	53	90	135	119
\$100,000 or more	34	72	138	134
Median Household Income	\$27,992	\$25,708	\$31,629	\$35,000

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table 2024				
Area	Labor Force	No. Employed	No. Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Webster County	970	935	35	3.6%
Georgia	5,402,969	5,230,408	172,56	3.2%
United States	167,960,000	161,356,000	6,604,000	3.9%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor Market Explorer, March 2024

Per Capita Income Webster and Area Counties 2010-2022				
Category	2010	2020	2022	Percent Change '10-22
Webster	16,295	22,034	22,246	36%
Marion	17,729	23,617	24,727	40%
Randolph	17,632	15,931	18,208	3%
Stewart	15,612	17,244	21,096	35%
Sumter	17,436	21,927	23,891	37%
Terrell	15,553	19,987	24,200	56%
Georgia	25,134	32,427	37,836	51%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

A sustainable economy can be defined as one that has a diversity of jobs, supports local businesses, and provides a predictable tax base. In 2022, most employment in Webster County was in the Educational, Health and Social Services Industry (22.4%), followed by Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and Food Services (12.9%), and Transportation and warehousing (12.4%). According to the 2024 Georgia Department of Labor data, the top employers in Webster County are:

- Adams' Food Center
- Birdsong Peanuts
- Castro Labor Solutions
- Dent Trucking, LLC
- Interfor-Preston
- JB Forest Products Inc
- Joes Heavy Equipment Hauling, LLC
- Jones Sanitation Service
- Lyons HR
- Perry Brothers OIL CO., INC.

Employment by Industry, 2000-2022				
Category	2000	2010	2020	2022
Total Employed Civilian Population 16+	985	1,061	939	993
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	9.0%	11.7%	7.5%	7.6%
Construction	5.3%	7.8%	4.7%	7.9%
Manufacturing	26.5%	13.5%	17.3%	8.0%
Wholesale Trade	3.5%	1.9%	7.5%	4.3%
Retail Trade	8.2%	15.4%	6.7%	3.6%
Transportation and warehousing	8.2%	10.4%	4.9%	12.4%
Information	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	2.8%	4.5%	2.2%	3.3%
Services: Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2.7%	0%	3.3%	6.7%
Educational, Health and Social Services	16.0%	22.3%	19.7%	22.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and Food Services	2.5%	0.5%	7.1%	12.9%
Other services	6.4%	3.8%	3.9%	1.6%
Public administration	8.0%	7.5%	14.3%	8.7%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

The ESRI Retail Market Potential Analysis for Webster County depicts various consumption patterns and buying trends of the population. Spending categories in this report include the purchase of apparel, automobiles, groceries, beverages, etc. Every categorical expenditure is ranked by a Market Potential Index (MPI) number, which portrays the “relative likelihood of adults in the specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing pattern compared to the U.S.” (ESRI Business Analyst Retail Market Potential, 2024). In this report, an MPI of 100 is considered the U.S. average.

Webster County is a Tier 1 County regarding the Job Tax Credit Program as determined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (See Appendix). The Job Tax Credit Program provides additional benefits to specified census tracts or additionally designated areas that are less developed or have a higher rate of poverty.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Partner with the SBDC, GDEcD, and RVRC to ensure entrepreneurs have training needed and knowledge of funding options.
- Assist in securing grant funds for economic development activities.
- Cooperate and support the workforce development initiatives promoted by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act through the River Valley Regional Commission.
- Support the expansion of broadband infrastructure and access to technology.
- Encourage eco-tourism and outdoor recreation pursuits in conjunction with the Lanahassee VPA.
- Consider impacts on infrastructure and natural resources in decision making regarding economic development projects.
- Consider costs as well as benefits in making decisions on proposed economic development projects.

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Housing stock in Webster County consists of a mixture of traditional single-family stick-built homes, multi-family units and manufactured housing units (MHU or Mobile Homes). The total number of housing units in Webster County is 1,207. According to the American Community Survey 2022, 82% of the housing in Webster County is owner-occupied.

Housing costs in Webster County are low when compared to the region and the state. Of the surrounding counties, only Stewart has a lower median housing value (\$72,500). With a median housing value of \$77,100 in 2022, Webster County housing is much more affordable as compared to surrounding counties.

With a median income of \$35,000 and an annual median housing expenditures of \$13,128 (\$1,094 X 12 mos.), owner-occupied households in Webster County spend 38% of their income on housing. Any household paying more than 30% of their income on housing is cost-burdened.

Recorded Tenure and Vacancy 2022	
Total Housing Units	1,207
-Occupied	73%
-Vacant	27%
Owner-occupied	82%
Renter-occupied	19%
Homeowner vacancy rate	0%
Rental vacancy rate	24%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Housing Units by Type 2010-2022			
Category	2010	2020	2022
Single Units (detached)	758	811	555
Sing Units (attached)	6	0	11
Double Units	0	0	0
3-4 Units	0	0	0
5-9 Units	27	28	15
10-19 Units	17	5	52
Mobile Homes	626	688	565
Other (RV, Van, Boat, etc.)	0	0	0

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Webster County and Surrounding Counties Median Housing Value and Costs 2022							
	No. of Housing Units	Owner-Occupied Housing Rate	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing	Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost with a Mortgage	Median Gross Rent	No. of Households	Persons per Household
Webster	1,207	82%	\$77,100	\$1,094	\$652	876	2.84
Marion	3,550	77%	\$111,300	\$2,209	\$663	2,872	2.59
Randolph	3,493	48%	\$83,800	\$1,011	\$557	2,553	2.45
Stewart	2,115	60%	\$72,500	\$1,038	\$558	1,738	2.00
Sumter	13,493	79%	\$130,000	\$1,197	\$812	10,639	2.48
Terrell	4,245	59%	\$97,000	\$1,070	\$709	3,300	2.31

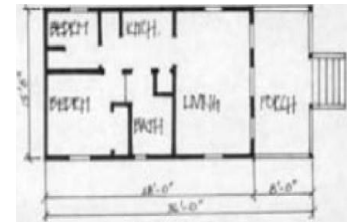
Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICES

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



- Partner with Fuller House and local churches to ensure citizens with disabilities have handicap access to their homes.
- Partner with USDA and DCA to make sure citizens know about housing resources.
- Reduce substandard or dilapidated housing in our community. Example of Historically
- Support affordable housing opportunities for residents. Appropriate Affordable Housing
- Encourage housing policies, choices and patterns promote homeownership.



## EDUCATION

According to the Governor’s Office of Education, the Webster County graduation rate in 2023 was 100%. This exceeds the graduation rates for the surrounding counties as well as the state average of 84.4%. This graduation rate continues from the previous school year.

The educational attainment level of Webster’s adult population exceeds that of the area average. Seventy-two percent of Webster County residents have a high school diploma and/or some college. All surrounding counties beat the Georgia Average of 55% for high school diploma and/or some college. Unfortunately, Webster (9%) and all the surrounding counties have fewer adults with postsecondary education than the State of Georgia at 34%.

Highest Level of Educational Attainment 2022			
Jurisdiction	<HS diploma	High School Diploma and/or Some College	≥Bachelors
Webster	19%	72%	9%
Marion	24%	64%	12%
Randolph	19%	69%	12%
Stewart	27%	57%	16%
Sumter	16%	62%	22%
Terrell	18%	69%	13%
Georgia	11%	55%	34%

Adult population- 25 years of age and older

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates 2018-2023							
Year	Webster	Marion	Randolph	Stewart	Sumter	Terrell	Georgia
2018-2019	100%	85%	84.1%	96.9%	86%	85.6%	82%
2019-2020	91.3%	91.5%	78.6%	92.6%	92.6%	88.5%	83.8%
2020-2021	N/A*	84.9	85.7%	85.7%	92.3%	88.9%	83.7%
2021-2022	100%	87.4%	87.5%	92%	95.7%	87.7%	84.1%
2022-2023	100%	87.1	75.4%	95.8%	98.5%	97.7%	84.4%

Source: Georgia Department of Education; \*Webster County reported too few students in 2021

## EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Collaborate with the Webster County Board of Education, local colleges and universities, and other local organizations in the efforts to reduce the high school dropout rate and increase education attainment.
- Partner with the WIOA program, local colleges and universities, and other local groups to provide more job training opportunities.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities includes buildings/sites and services that support efficient growth and development patterns that protect and enhance the quality of life. These amenities are often the most direct connection between the citizens, the elected government, and the public servants. Often new visitors judge a community by the appearance or availability of the community facilities. An efficient system is both economical for existing residents and an incentive to attract new residents. If the public amenities are well-maintained and attractive, potential residents are encouraged to become part of the community and participate in the growth of the area. The following sections are a description of the United Government of Webster County's community facilities.

### WATER AND SEWER

In Webster County, groundwater is utilized for municipal, commercial, industrial, and agricultural use. Both the Preston and Weston communities have municipal water supply and distribution systems. The areas of Webster County outside of the historic city's boundaries are served primarily by private wells.

Webster County is served by individual septic systems not a sanitary sewer system. Although septic systems can cause groundwater pollution problems, they are not an issue in Webster due to the lack of population density where the systems are utilized.



Water Usage & Storage Information							
Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Service by Public Supply	Connections
500,000	123,600	250,000	N/A	Ground	740 gpm	1,236	*

Source: RVRC Community Survey 2018

Sewer Treatment System Capabilities		
County	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
Webster	N/A	N/A

Source: RVRC Community Survey 2018

## PLANNING

Planning and zoning are tools local governments use to guide and shape the future growth of a community so that areas with natural characteristics are kept in the highest and best use. A zoning ordinance divides a community into districts and sets standards and permissible uses of land within those districts. This provides multiple benefits:

- To conserve and protect natural, economic, and scenic resources; and
- To secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; to promote health, aesthetics, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, and general welfare; and
- To provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; and
- To promote desirable living conditions and stability in neighborhoods; and
- To facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

The Unified Government of Webster County does not have an adopted zoning ordinance or any other types of land use regulations. The comprehensive plan is the only document providing policies intended to guide local elected officials in land use decisions.

## FIRE PROTECTION

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects information on municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the United States, analyzes the data, and assigns a Public Protection Classification from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents superior property fire protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program does not meet ISO's minimum criteria. These criteria include but are not limited to fire station service areas, station staffing, the availability of public water, pumping and storage capacity, among others. The class in which a community is placed plays a significant role in determining individual fire insurance rates.

Webster County has earned an ISO rating of six. The Webster County Fire Department has five fire stations with the possibility of another station being built along Hwy. 41 in the northwestern part of the county.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

In Webster County, all police functions are handled by the Webster County Sheriff's department. The Sheriff's Office handles investigation of complaints, emergency response, resolving disputes, arresting suspects,

investigation of criminal activities, protection of courthouse personnel, operation of the county jail and execution of warrants. The Webster County Sheriff's Department has four full-time certified officers and one vehicle.

---

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE**

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) is a key component of public safety as well. These services are a fundamental part of public safety and should be considered along with fire and police protection.

---

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS AND POLICIES**

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

- Partner with the School Board to develop recreational opportunities for all ages.
- Promote the use and development of Lanahassee Voluntary Public Access Area.
- Expand and improve existing water systems throughout the county in areas with appropriate population densities.
- Work with local health agencies to ensure that all residential and commercial establishments meet the minimum requirements for individual septic systems.
- Continue to support and maintain volunteer fire departments, and EMS facilities and personnel.
- Continue to support law enforcement personnel.
- Continue to support the county health department.
- Provide handicap accessible buildings and public meeting spaces, where feasible, or provide alternative arrangements for public services and meeting locations.
- Continue efforts to follow the goals and objectives laid out in the solid waste management plan.
- Encourage efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities to minimize the need for costly new/expanded facilities and services.
- Ensure that capital improvements needed to accommodate future development are provided concurrent with new development.
- Promote investment in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.

---

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Unified Government of Webster County is not required by the current state planning regulations to develop a transportation section. However, a transportation section is included to provide minimal coverage of the transportation system.

---

## **ROAD NETWORK**

Within a road system there are three classifications of roads. Those classifications are arterial roads, collector roads, and local streets. The arterial roads serve as the main roads which bring traffic to and from a city and the collector roads serve to gather local traffic and disperse that traffic to local roads that provide access to adjacent land or property. Local roads may be designed as grids/blocks, loops, or cul-de-sacs.

The Webster County transportation system consists primarily of arterial roads, collectors, local roads and one inactive railroad. Within the county, fifty-one miles of road are GA Highways, and 210 miles are county roads. The Webster County Department of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all county and former city roads, as well as the associated and appropriate signage along those routes. As the rail line is inactive, it has received no maintenance since that designation.

Many current residents of Webster County rely on the efficient and safe transportation connections to surrounding areas for job related commuting. An influx of commuters demonstrates that any improvements to infrastructure, including future land use, adjacent road planning, and aesthetic enhancements of transportation systems will not only benefit current residents of Webster County, but also commuters, visitors, and future populations of the community.

Transportation Network	
Category	Miles
Interstate	0
State Highway	51
County Road	210
City Streets	0
Total	261

Source: Georgia County Guide 2022

## TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ACT (TIA) 2

Georgia's Transportation Investment Act Program provides a way for congressional regions to fund necessary transportation infrastructure projects through a voter-approved one-cent sales tax. Webster County TIA 2 project to replace a bridge on Churchill Road over Kinchfoonee Creek is underway:

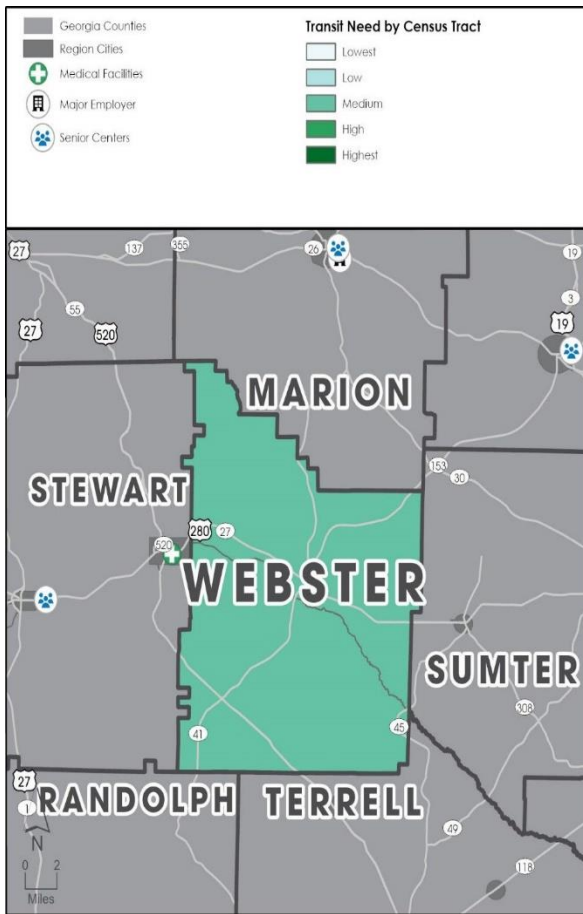
- 0019543 – Churchill Rd over Kinchfoonee Creek (bridge replacement)
  - Replacement of the two Kinchfoonee Creek bridges on Churchill Rd
  - Project is currently in design.
  - Current construction bid is expected in August 2026.
    - Expect approximately 2 years for construction

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND POLICIES

To address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all Webster County residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout areas of dense development; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining neighborhoods; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within Webster County.

- Cooperate with the Georgia Department of Transportation in the design and implementation of proposed projects on state and federal highways.
- Provide necessary improvements for roadways and bridges to handle current and future usage.
- Continue updating roads and prioritize road paving based on households served and severity of need.
- Alleviate drainage problems on county roads.
- Utilize county-owned vehicles to assist senior citizens with non-emergency transportation.
- Encourage walking and biking.
- Promote connectivity of the road network

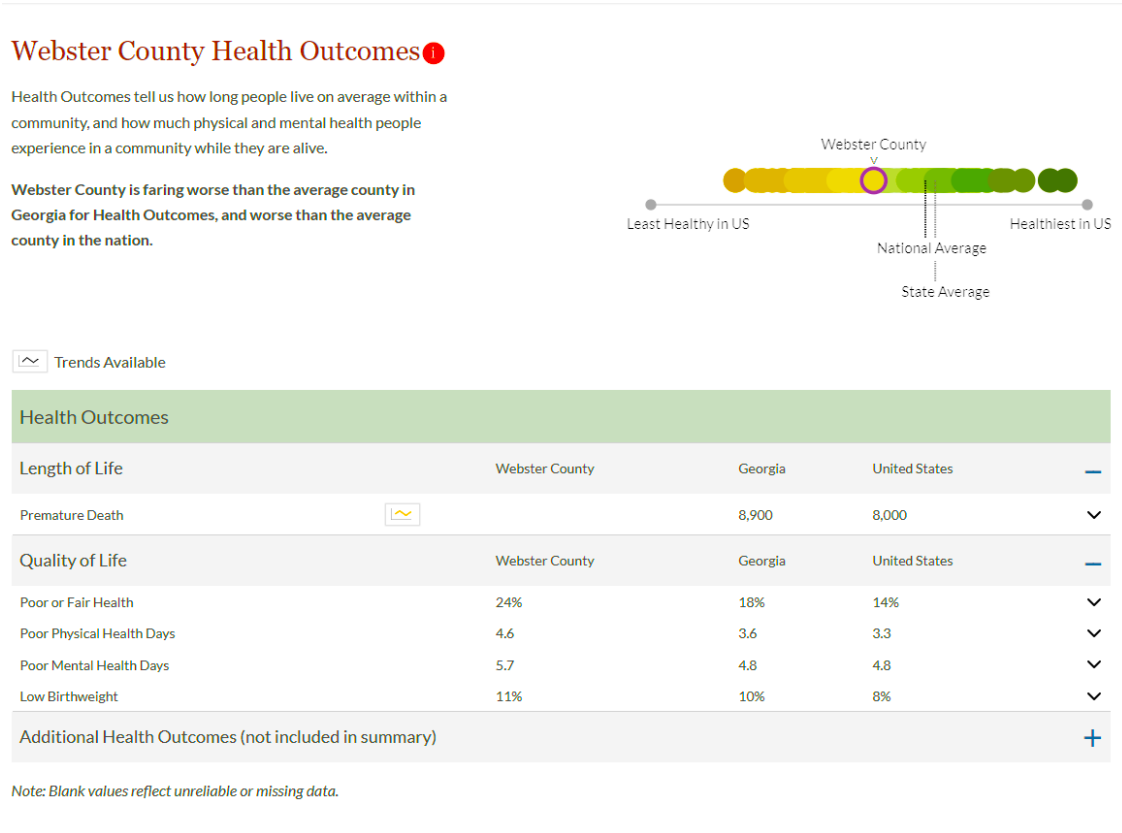
# Webster County Transit Needs



	Existing (2020)	Future (2040)
Population	2,595	2,371
Existing Trips Provided (2022)	0	N/A
<b>Rural Transit Demand</b>		
Total Rural Trip Demand	2,984	2,911
Unmet Rural Trip Demand	2,984	N/A

## HEALTH

According to County Health Rankings, in 2024, Webster County is faring worse than the average county in Georgia for Health Outcomes, and worse than the average county in the nation, with 24% of the county reporting poor or fair health. 43 % of adults are reported as being obese. This is higher than the State of Georgia at 34%. Twenty-two percent of adults are smokers compared to the state’s 16%.



Source: County Health Rankings

## COMMUNITY REACH/HEALTH GOALS AND POLICIES

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



- Support the efforts of local organizations to provide programming and opportunities on healthy activities and life choices.
- Support the Webster County Health Department and their initiatives to improve the lives of Webster County residents.

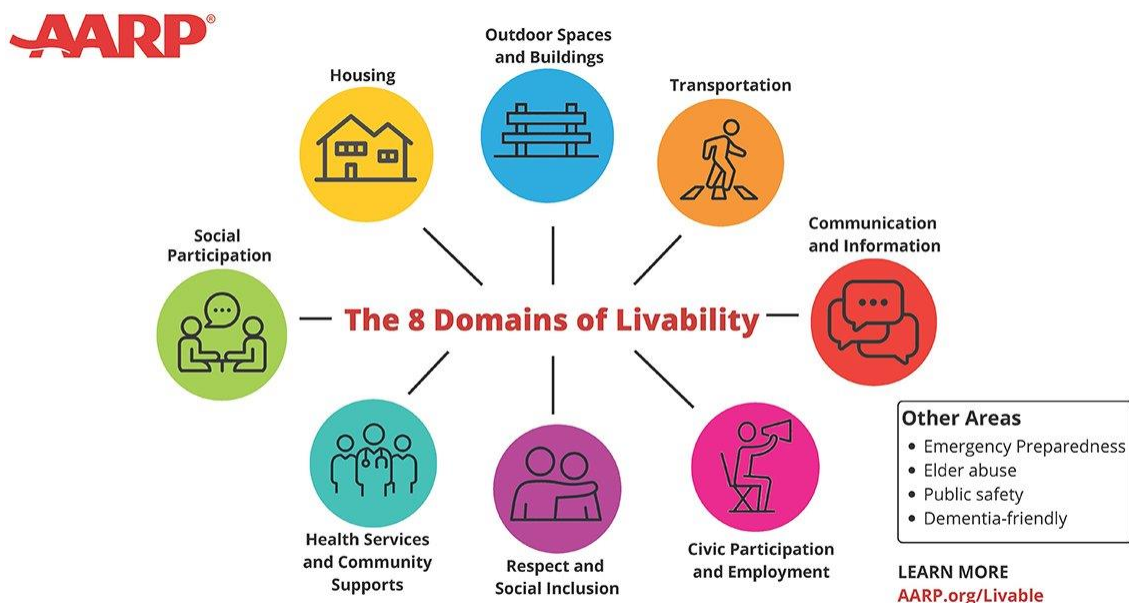
## LIVABILITY AND AGING IN PLACE

People of all ages deserve communities in which they can live and thrive. The CDC defines “aging in place” as “the ability to live in one’s own home and community, safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.” However, quality of life has no age limitations and many of the same issues that confront senior citizens also affect those much younger. Issues regarding the affordability and access of housing, neighborhood security and proximity to needed services, safe and convenient transportation, clean air and water, access to quality healthcare, the opportunity for social engagement, and the desire for individual respect. All these aspects intertwine on a large scale to affect the physical and emotional well-being of individuals and the communities they live in.

## AGE FRIENDLY DESIGNATION

In 2021 the River Valley Regional Commission on behalf of the organization and all member governments applied for and was accepted as a member of AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. The 2018 RVRC Regional Plan and all member community comprehensive plans were evaluated at that time based on AARP’s Eight Domains for Livability. The Age-Friendly designation ends in 2024. However, RVRC has every intention to re-apply for membership.

The Age-Friendly Network is part of AARP’s Livable Communities initiative, a locally driven effort to improve the quality of life for people of all ages. The local governments participating in this program have a common understanding that communities “are more livable, and better able to support people of all ages, when local leaders commit to improving the quality of life for the very young, the very old, and everyone in between” (<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>). All people benefit from local government policies, strategies, and actions that make neighborhoods walkable, feature transportation alternatives, enable access to community services, provide opportunities to participate in community activities, and support quality housing that is affordable and adaptable.



Illustrations from iStock

© AARP 2020 | All rights reserved | Questions? Contact AARP Livable Communities by email at [Livable@AARP.org](mailto:Livable@AARP.org).

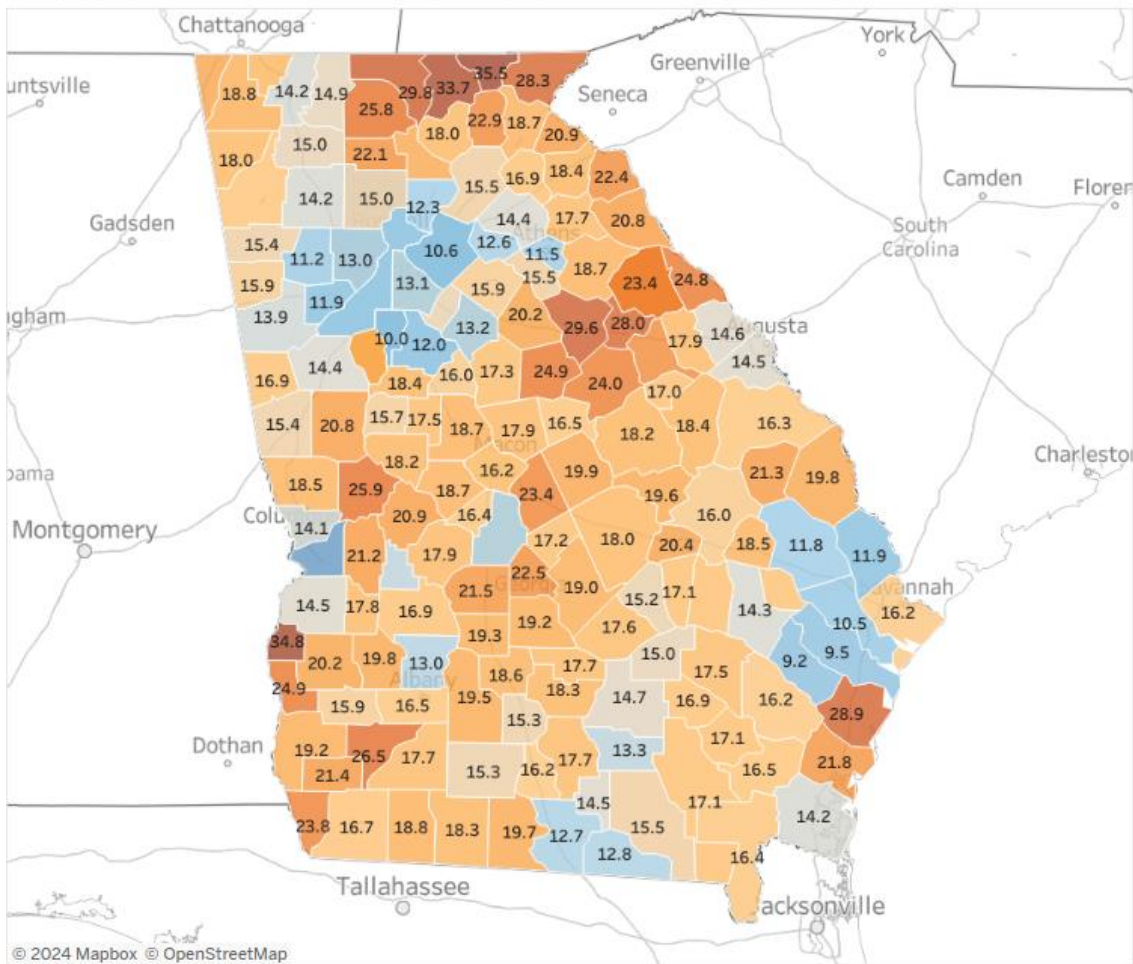
Webster County Senior Population							
Population 2000	65 + Population %	Population 2010	65 + Population %	Population 2020	65 + Population %	Population 2022	65 + Population %
351	14.69%	421	15.44%	645	24.93%	420	17.84%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

According to the U.S. Census, the number of senior citizens in Webster County in 2000 was 351, 14.69% of the total population. By 2010, that number had grown by 20% to 645. By 2020, the senior citizen population experienced a brief but significant increase to 645 citizens (+53%) before decreasing to 421 in 2022.

**STATE BENCHMARK: 14.4 Percent of persons aged ≥ 65 years**

The analysis shows whether measures in each county are higher or lower than the state benchmark.



© 2024 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

23 release

Analysis courtesy of Stroudwater Associates. Learn more at [www.stroudwater.com](http://www.stroudwater.com)

### BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE ELEMENT FOR WEBSTER COUNTY

Broadband, or high-speed internet, has become essential to business, education, healthcare, agriculture, and overall quality of life for Georgians. Of the approximately 5.3 million locations in the data (i.e., homes, businesses, and institutions in Georgia), 4.9 million locations, or 91.5 percent, are served at speeds of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload (25/3) via terrestrial technologies. Of the 454,950 unserved locations, about 90 percent are outside of urban areas.<sup>1</sup>

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

Accurate mapping of broadband availability is critical to identifying unserved locations and implementing the Initiative. The Georgia Broadband Map<sup>2</sup> precisely identifies homes and businesses that do not have access to broadband services. It represents a location-level methodology that precisely maps the availability of broadband services to every home and business in the State, which includes all 159 counties. The map was created by overlaying all the locations of homes and businesses in the State of Georgia with broadband provider service availability for those locations within the State. There are over five million locations used in the mapping process. The Georgia Broadband Map also serves as a tool that can be annually updated in order to track changes in broadband availability for years to come. Only populated census blocks with more than 80% of the addresses served at this defined minimum speed (25 Mbps/3 Mbps) are delineated as 'served'. When 20% of homes and businesses in a census block cannot subscribe to these services, the entire census block is deemed unserved. Population and location data are from the 2010 Census and commercially available business listings (2014) with at least three employees and \$150,000 annual sales. These insights assist with broadband planning efforts by allowing better direction of investments to reach unserved areas of the State.

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

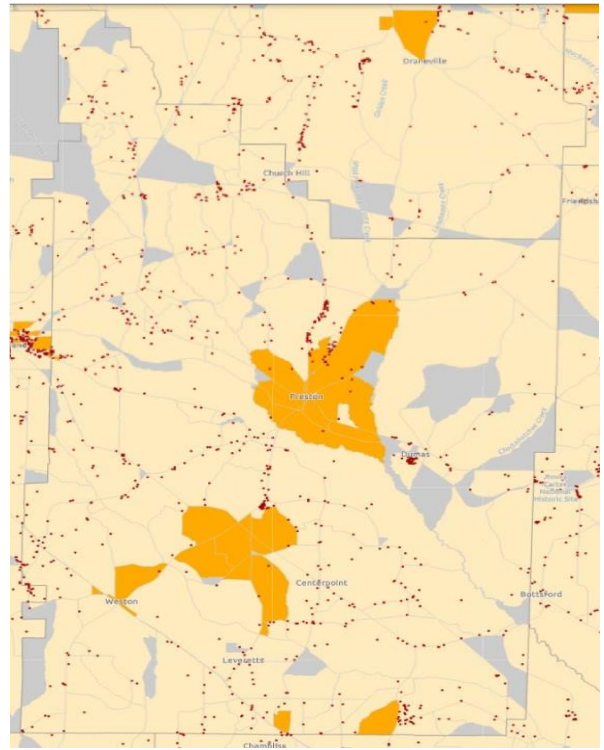
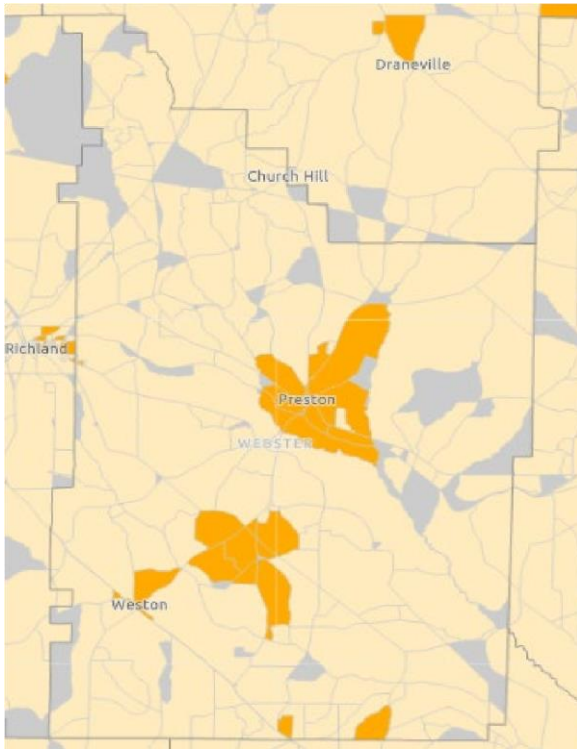
The accompanying graphics represent areas which are and are not served at the Initiatives' threshold speed of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps. Webster County has 907 locations with no broadband service, and 53% of the population lives in unserved areas. There are 798 locations with access to broadband at the minimum service level.

---

<sup>1</sup> Georgia Technology Authority and Georgia Department of Community Affairs, *Georgia Broadband Annual Report 2022*.

<sup>2</sup> June 2023 data from the Georgia Broadband Initiative's *Georgia Broadband Availability Map*.





### Broadband Availability in Webster County

- Location Unserved at Publication
- Served Census Block
- Unserved Census Block
- No Locations

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

Source: Georgia Technology Authority, July, 2024.

According to the Federal Communications Commission<sup>3</sup>, 48 percent of the population has access to fixed broadband service at the 25/3 service level, and 25 percent has access at the 100/20 level. The top internet service providers offering fixed broadband service are Windstream, Public Service Telephone and AT&T.

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

<sup>3</sup> Federal Communications Commission, Fixed Broadband Deployment, Area Summary, Interactive Maps, December 31, 2023.

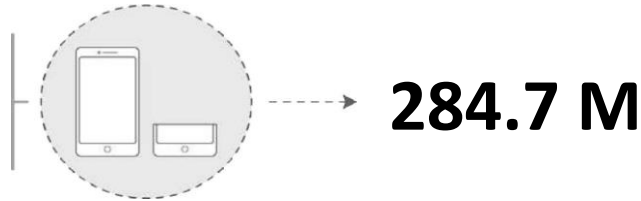
---

## BROADBAND GOALS AND POLICIES

To ensure that all Webster County residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to reliable highspeed internet access that is essential to business, education, healthcare, agriculture, and overall quality of life. This can be achieved by promoting deployment of broadband services and reducing obstacles to investment in broadband infrastructure and in other emerging communications technologies.

- Adopt an ordinance to encourage broadband investment and expansion.
- Secure the Broadband Ready Community designation.
- Pursue funding and/or provide services to facilitate enhanced broadband service availability.

There are nearly 1.3 devices for every person in the county.



---

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Webster County should expand appropriate infrastructures to meet development needs and minimize the effects on environmentally sensitive areas. The natural and cultural resources of Webster County are fundamental components in the development of the area and should be included in the planning process.

---

## WATER RESOURCES PLANNING

Webster County realizes the importance of their location in the Upper Flint River Watershed and understands the significant role current and future development plays in water quality. Jack Holbrook represented Webster County during the regional water planning efforts that created the 2017 Upper Flint River Regional Water Plan. Webster County continues to support the regional water planning process by maintaining an active presence on the regional water council and by making water policy issues a priority in local government decisions.

---

## WATER SUPPLY WATERSHEDS

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

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

Just as smaller streams come together to create greater bodies of water, large watersheds are created by numerous small watersheds. All watersheds are measured by hydrologic unit codes (HUC). The HUC is a sequence of numbers or letters that identify a unique hydrological feature such as a watershed. The smallest watersheds can have a ten-

or twelve-digit HUC identification (HUC-10 or HUC-12). These areas come together to create watersheds with eight-digit codes (HUC-8). The State of Georgia is divided into fifty-two large HUC-8 watersheds. Webster County is included in two of these, the Muckalee Watershed, and the Ichawaynochaway Watershed. However, due to the number of first and second order streams in Webster County, there are multiple small watersheds (HUC-12) which can affect the streamflow and water quality of rivers downstream.

Watersheds are important because they support ecological processes that sustain diverse populations of plants and animals and provide humans with water that can be used for a multitude of purposes. The activity occurring within watersheds affects the quantity and quality of the water that flows downstream. Water quantity can be altered by drought, excessive rainfall, withdrawals, or transfers between watersheds. Water quality can be negatively impacted by pollution, which can enter the water through point or non-point sources, causing it to become impaired or threatened. When the quality of water in a watershed is degraded, the ecosystem can suffer and the water that we use for drinking, irrigation, and recreation is compromised. As a result, watershed protection is vital to ensuring the health of the environment and the health of the people who live and play in them.

---

## **GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS**

Webster County is in the Southern Coastal Plain Province in an important groundwater recharge area. There are five major aquifer systems in the Coastal Plain Province. Webster County is located over the Cretaceous-Tertiary Aquifer system, the Claiborne Aquifer System, and the Clayton Aquifer. Aquifers are geologic formations that are comprised of permeable rock which contribute groundwater to wells and springs. The groundwater supplied by aquifers is an important natural resource, accounting for more than 90% of the drinking water for rural populations across the country. In the Flint River Basin, a strong connection exists between groundwater and surface water. In the past, groundwater withdrawal has resulted in reduced flows in the river as well as its tributaries, especially during periods of drought. This continues to be an area of concern for the region.

The Cretaceous-Tertiary aquifer system, which includes the Providence aquifer system, is an interconnected group of sub-systems that developed in the Late Cretaceous sands of the Coastal Plain Province (Donahue, Groundwater Quality in Georgia for 2002). The Claiborne Aquifer System has a recharge area of 350 square miles and the Clayton Aquifer System has a recharge area covering an estimated eighty square miles. The Environmental Protection Division required that Webster County and the former cities of Preston and Weston adopt a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance. They did so in 2001.

---

## **WETLANDS**

The National Wetlands Inventory conducted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services discovered wetlands scattered throughout Webster County. In Webster County there are 13,350 acres of forested wetlands, 623 acres of freshwater pond wetlands, 326 acres of freshwater emergent wetlands, thirty-four acres of riverine wetlands, and 120 acres of lake/open water wetlands. Georgia Environmental Protection Division required Webster County and the former cities of Preston and Weston to adopt a Wetlands Protection Ordinance. The communities did so in 2001.

---

## **FLOODPLAINS**

Flood plains provide many valuable services for both people and wildlife. Using flood prone areas for community amenities such as parks, bike paths, open spaces and wildlife areas can improve a community's quality of life. Preserving flood prone areas as open space is effective for avoiding damage from flooding and can enhance the natural functions of waterways. Proper management of flood plains and watersheds can keep pollutants out of

ivers, can assist in the maintenance of optimum flow volume and velocity of streams, and can keep sediment loads from overpowering the riverine system.

Flood plains are found along the many tributaries and rivers in Webster County. There are identified flood zones along Kinchafoonee Creek within the boundaries of Webster County. Any development should be closely monitored in areas subject to flooding. Communities built in flood plains should incorporate flood control-infrastructure and evacuation procedures into their design plan. Webster County has been mapped for flood prone areas under the Federal Emergency Management Agency program and participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

## SOIL TYPES

Soil quality is the capacity of the soil to function as a vital living ecosystem sustaining plants, animals, and human beings. Soil that is well cared for can regulate the movement of water, provide essential nutrients, filter and buffer pollutants, aid in nutrient cycling, and create physical stability and support for roots and other structures. Healthy soil provides clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife, and beautiful landscapes. Soil has both inherent and dynamic properties.

Soil Suitability					
Soil Classification		Dominant Slope %	Drainage	Permeability	Use
Benevolence	BeB BeC	0- 5% 0 -8 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Not limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Bonneau	BoB BoC	0-5 % 5-8%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Cowarts	CoB	2-5 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Faceville	FeA FeB FeC	0-2% 2-5% 5-8%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Goldsboro	GoA	0-2%	Moderately well Drained No Ponding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for Recreation</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> </ul>

			No Flooding		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Grady	GrA	0-2%	Poorly Drained Ponding No Flooding	Slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Very limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Very limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Greenville	GsA GsB GsC GvD2	0-2% 2-5% 5-8% 8-15%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Kinston & Bibb	KBA	0-1 %	Poorly Drained Ponding No Flooding		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Very limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Very limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Lucy	LmB LmC LmD	0-5 % 5-8% 8-15%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Nankin	NcD NcF	5-15 % 15-35%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate Slow to Slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited to very limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Norfolk	NoA NoB	0-2 % 2-5%	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Ochlocknee, Iuka, & Bibb	OBb	0-5 %	Poorly to Well Drained No Ponding Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat to Very limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Very limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Very limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>

Ocilla	OcA	0-2 %	Somewhat Poorly Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Orangeburg	OeA OeB OgC2 OgD2	0-2 % 2-5 % 5-8 % 8-15 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for</li> <li>• camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Rains	RaA	0-2%	Poorly Drained No Ponding Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Very limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Very limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Red Bay	ReA ReB RsC2 RsD2	0-2 % 2-5 % 5-8 % 8-15 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for local roads and streets.</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Sunsweet	SuC2 SuD2	2-8 % 8-12 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderately Slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for local roads and streets</li> </ul>
Tifton	TfB2 TfC2	2-5 % 5-8 %	Well Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderately Slow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited for dwellings</li> <li>• Not limited for local roads and streets</li> <li>• Very limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>
Troup	TrB TrD	0-5 % 5-15 %	Somewhat Excessively Drained No Ponding No Flooding	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited for camping, picnic areas and trails</li> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for Dwellings.</li> <li>• Not limited to somewhat limited for local roads and streets.</li> <li>• Somewhat limited for septic tank fields</li> </ul>

Source: USDA Web Soil Survey

---

## SLOPES

Topography, or slope, is a term used to describe the contours and surface features of the earth. Topography includes information such as latitude and longitude, but also data regarding elevation; namely how steep or how flat the land is. Detailed information about the topography of an area is essential for the planning and construction of buildings and structures. Along with soil type, topography dictates what uses are best suited for a parcel of land. Steep areas, by their very nature, are more likely to experience problems with soil erosion and stormwater runoff than flat areas. Due to this, these areas are more likely to have an increased risk for damage from natural disasters.

---

## PROTECTED RIVER CORRIDORS

There are no protected River Corridors in Webster County. As a result, the Environmental Protection Division has not required the Unified Government of Webster County to adopt a river corridor protection ordinance and the county has not done so.

---

## PRIME AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND

Prime agricultural land is defined as those soil types which have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics to produce food crops. Even in rural areas, however, prime farmland is in danger of being taken out of crop production and used instead for residential, commercial, or industrial development. Wise land use planning can minimize the adverse effects of development of prime farmland.

In the 2020 Georgia County Guide, there were 109 farms in Webster County with 59,722 acres in farmland and 25,288 acres in harvested crop production.

The agricultural and forested areas of Webster County are both aesthetically and ecologically valuable in the provision of natural beauty, wildlife habitat, and the maintenance of water quality. The agricultural acreage forestland provides a haven for wildlife. While the hunting and fishing industries have always been popular in Webster County, the designation of Lanahassee VPA means these economic sectors of county's economy will become even more important. To ensure the scenic and environmental value of Webster County, the local elected officials should require that best management practices established by agricultural and forestry agencies be followed.

Webster County Agricultural Trends					
	Number of Farms <sup>1</sup>	Total Acreage of Farms <sup>2</sup>	Acres of Crops Harvested <sup>3</sup>	Forestland Total Acreage <sup>4</sup>	Acres of Harvested Timber <sup>5</sup>
Webster	109	59,722	25,288	95.7 (thousands)	33.6 (thousands)
Georgia	42,439	9,053,730	3,628,707	172.3 (thousands)	73.4 (thousands)

Source: 1,2,3-Georgia County Guide 2018 data, 4 and 5 from 2020 data

---

## PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITATS

Webster County has many areas that support rare or endangered plants and animals. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, there are several known endangered or threatened plant and animal species with critical habitat in Webster County. State and federally designated endangered plant and animal species are listed in the following table.

Endangered Species			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Species	Status
Whooping Crane	Grus American	Bird	Experimental population, non-essential
Alligator Snapping turtle	Macrochelys temminckii	Reptile	Proposed Threatened
Gulf Moccasinshell	Medionidus penicillatus	Clam	Endangered
Oval Pigtoe	Pleurobema pyriforme	Clam	Endangered
Shinyrayed Pocketbook	Hamiota subangulata	Clam	Endangered
Monarch Butterfly	Danaus plexippus	Insect	Candidate
Canby's Dropwort	Oxypolis canbyi	Flowering Plant	Endangered
Harperella	Ptilimnium nodosum	Flowering Plant	Endangered
Pondberry	Lindera melissifolia	Flowering Plant	Endangered

Source: Nature Explorer 2023

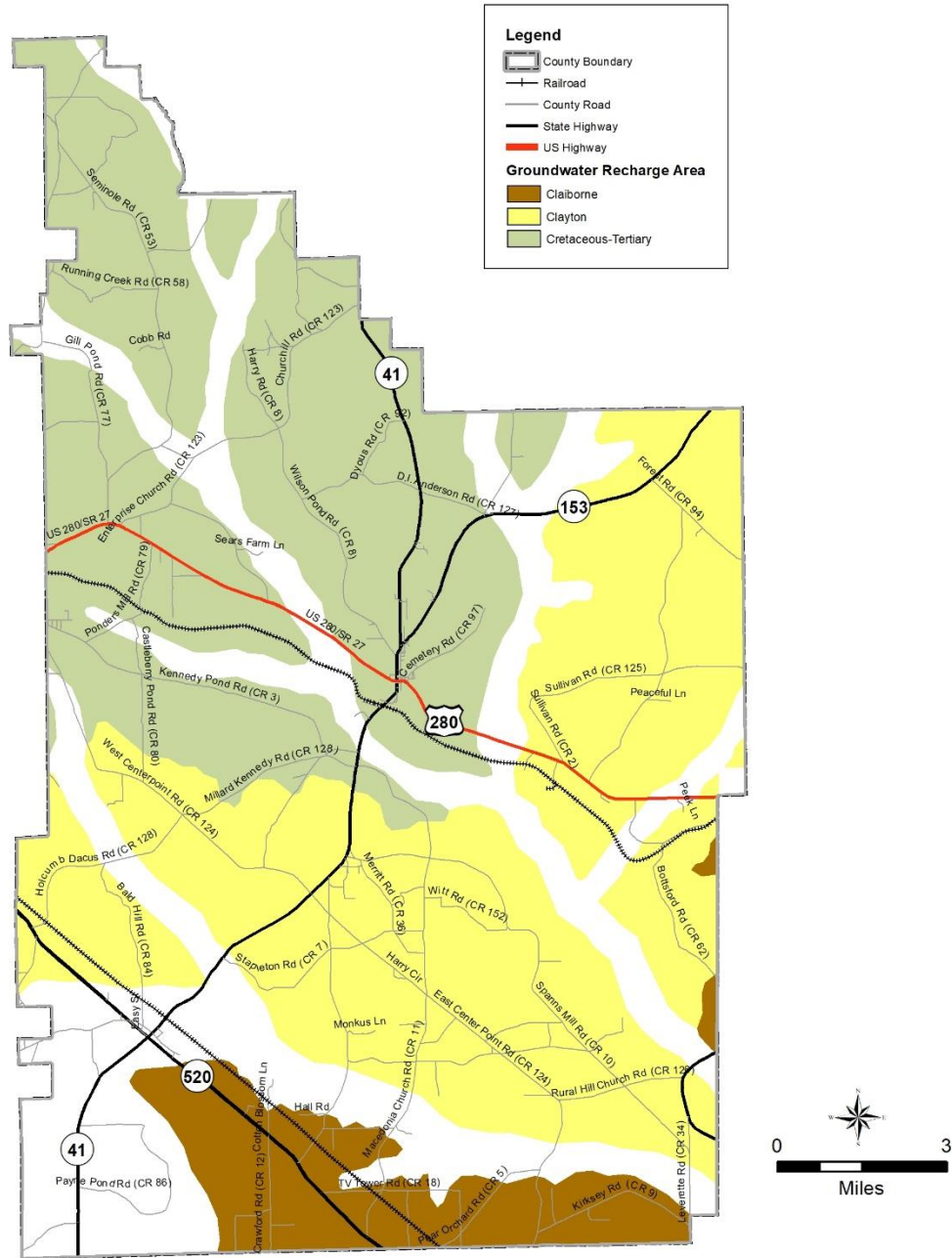
## NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Ensure EPD Part V ordinances are up to date.
- Follow Best Management Practices for development.
- Follow the Comprehensive Plan regarding development.
- Make property owners aware of state and federal financial incentives for natural resource conservation.
- Assist in securing grant funds for eligible conservation activities.
- Consider the protection and conservation of community's natural resources when making decisions about future growth and development.
- Consider potential impacts on water quality in making decisions on new developments and transportation improvements.
- Ensure safe and adequate supplies of water through protection of ground and surface water sources. Promote enhanced solid waste reduction.



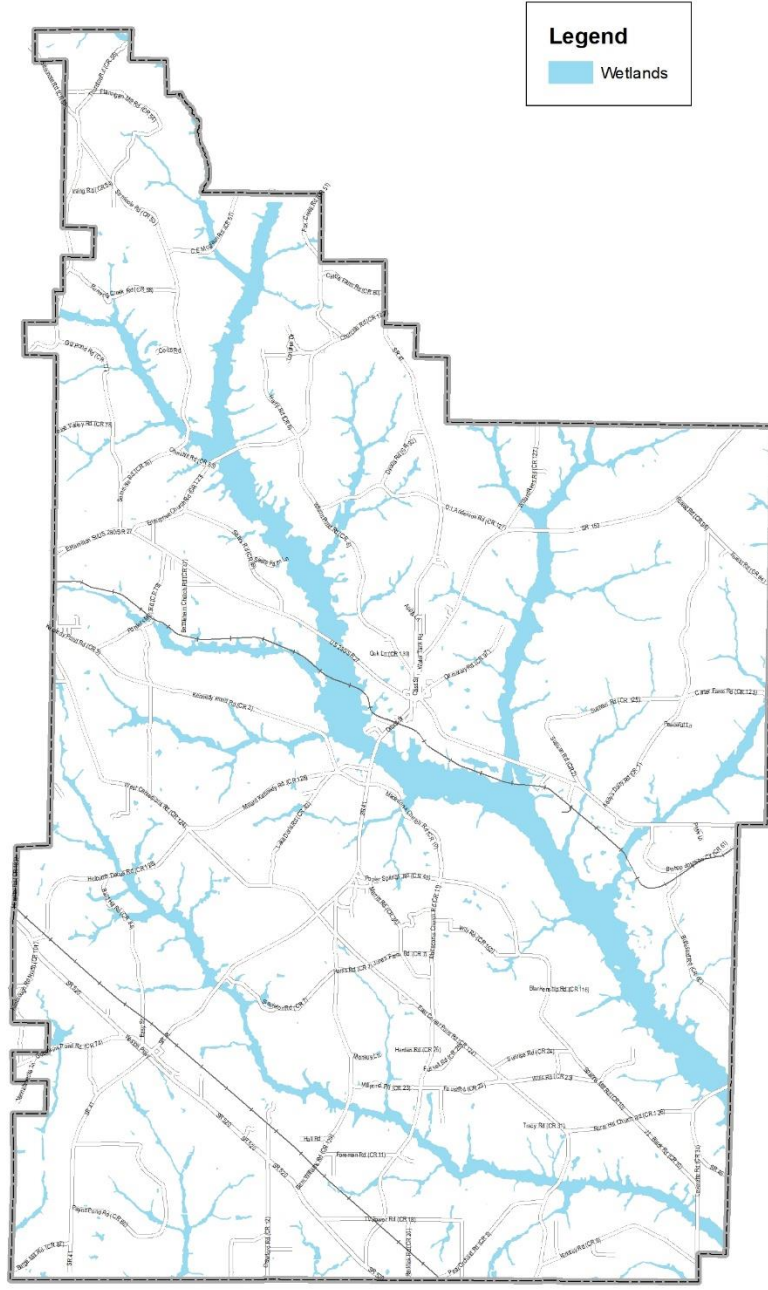
# Webster County Groundwater Recharge Area



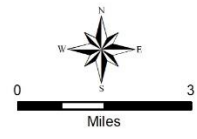
WEEST ERComp Plan\_Visit/CD/groundwaterRecharge.mxd



# Webster County Wetlands Map



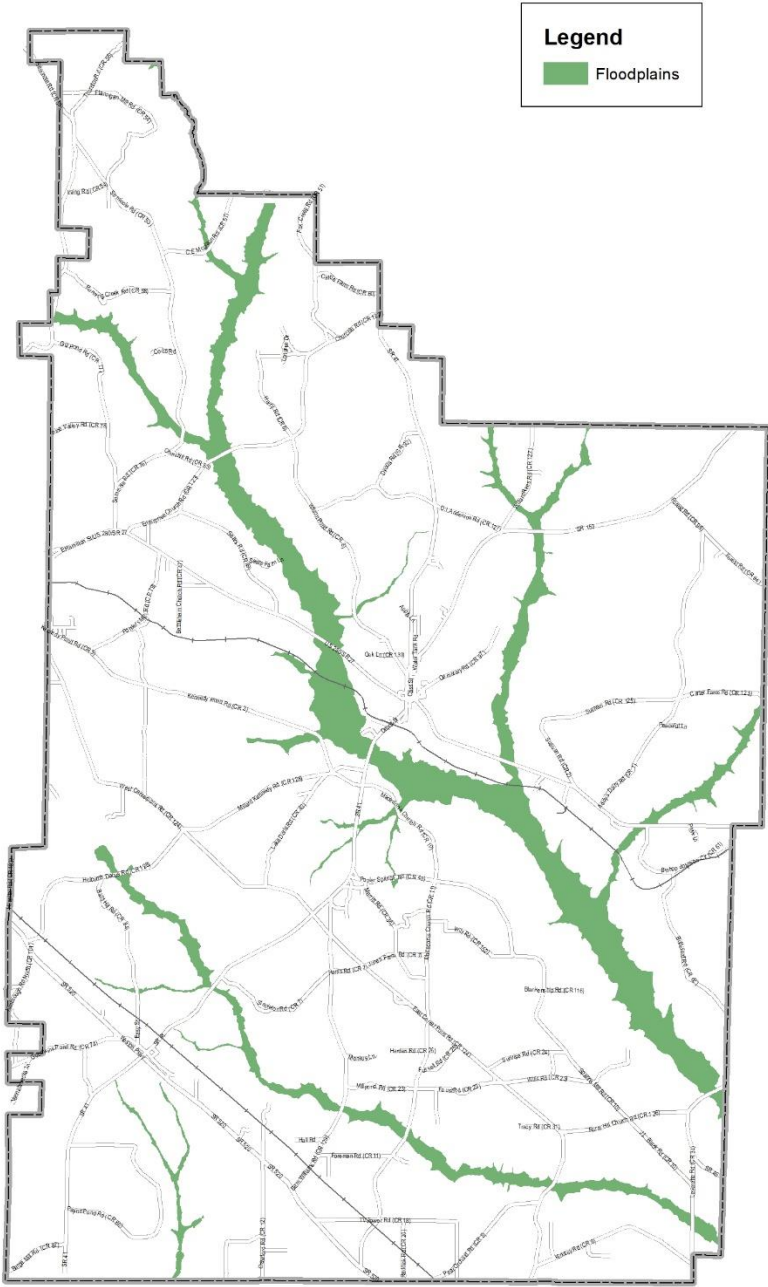
**Legend**  
Wetlands



WEBSTERComp Plan Maps2021WebsterCoELU.mxd



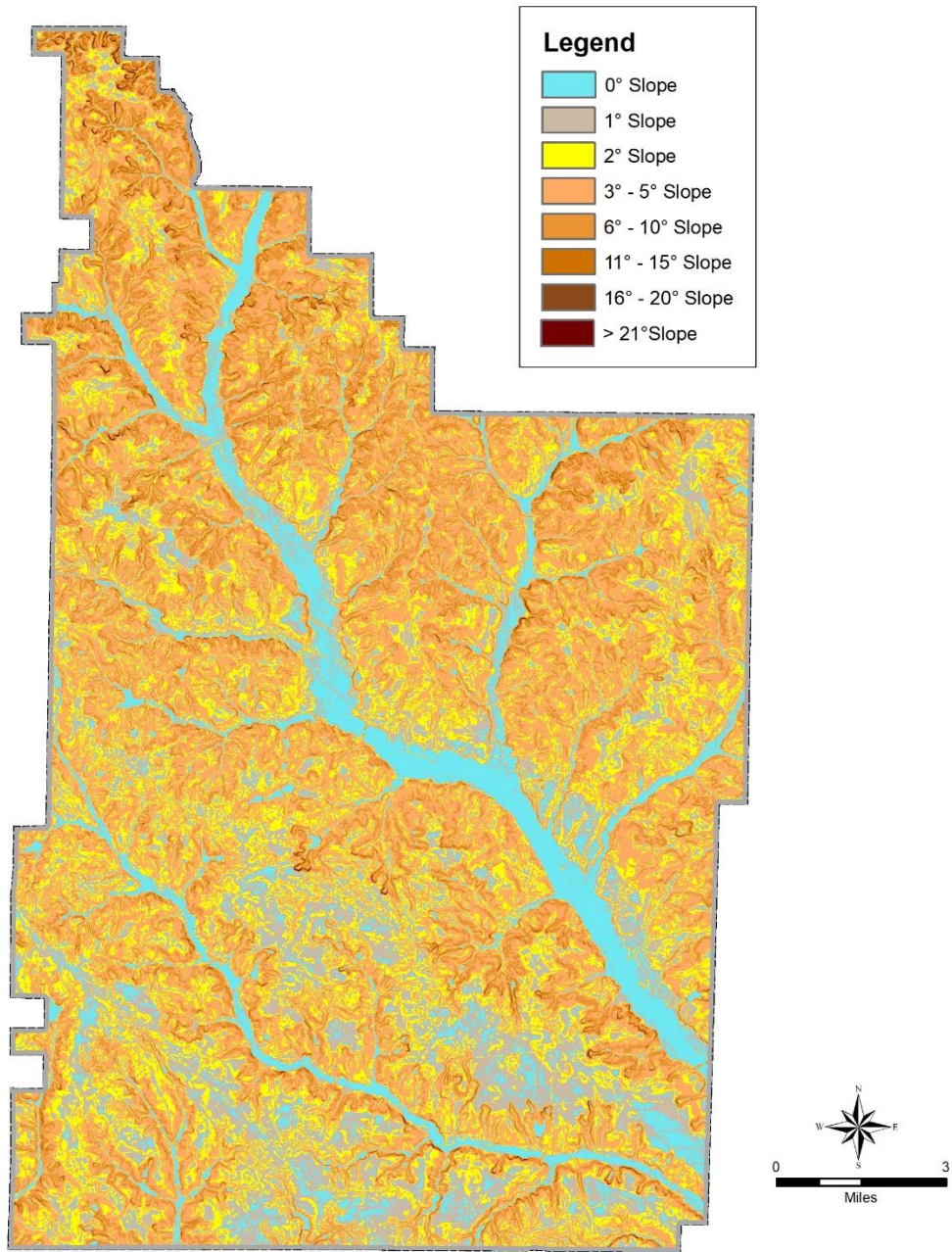
# Webster County Floodplains Map



WEBSTER\Camp Plan Maps\2021\WebsterCOE\_LU.mxd



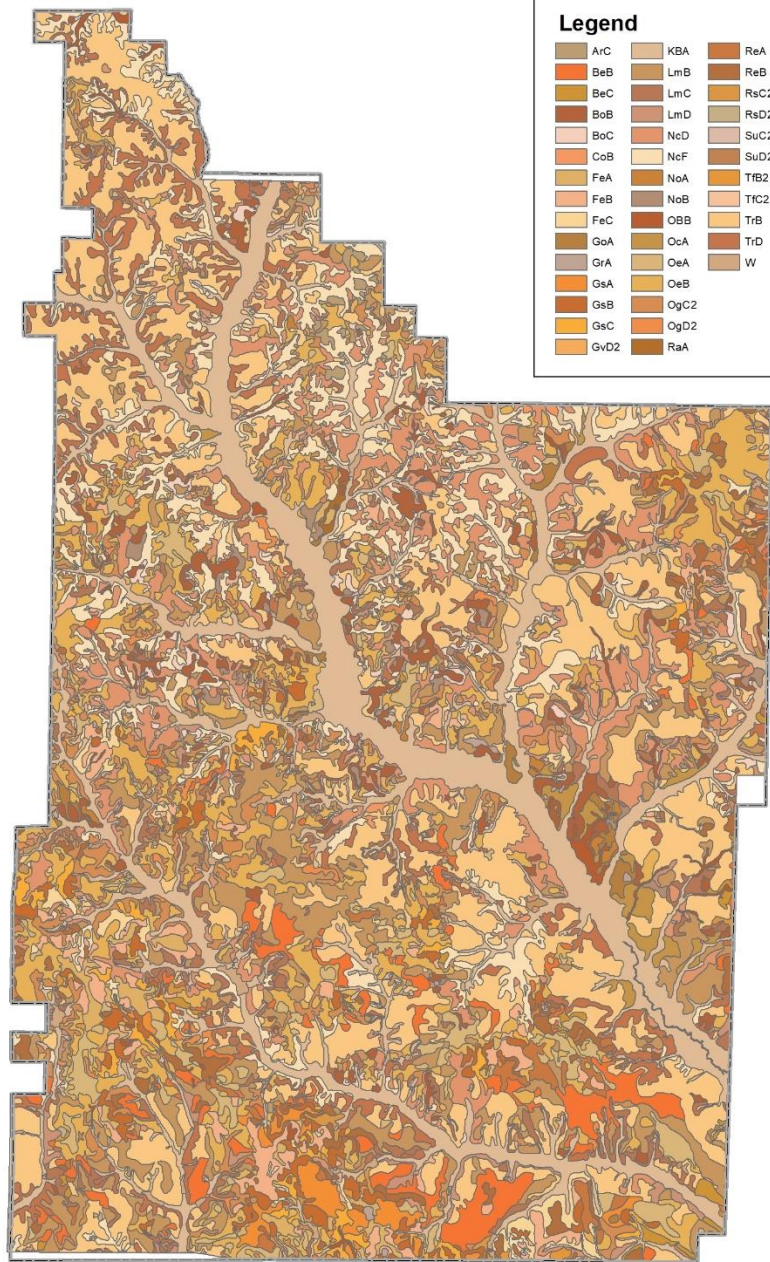
# Webster County Slope Map



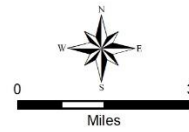
WEBSTER\Camp Plan Maps\2021\WebsterCoELU.mxd



# Webster County Soil Map



WEBSTER\Comp Plan Maps\2021\Soils.mxd



## CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

In 2008, a FindIt survey of historic resources was completed in Webster County. This survey identified sites, objects, structures, and buildings that were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The 2008 survey identified fifty-eight historic resources in Webster County as being eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

There are currently three sites in Webster County listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Georgia Register of Historic Places: Boyd Mill Place (also known as Davenport's Mill), the Webster County Courthouse, and the Webster County Jail. There are also three agricultural properties in Webster County designated as Centennial Farms or Centennial Family Farms by the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the State Historic Preservation Office: Newell F. Wilson Farm (1999), Goodwin Brothers Farm (2013), J.O. Rees-Dillard Farm (2015).

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

Webster County understands the significance of cultural resources and places high importance on conservation of the area's history, tradition, and culture through preservation. The Board of Commissioners also knows the benefits of preservation are far-reaching, and can lead to increased heritage tourism, growth in small businesses, and a sense of community and tradition. As a result, the Unified Government of Webster County makes the conservation of the area's history, tradition, and culture through preservation a priority.

---

## PARKS, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREAS

Webster County has many recreational resources because of its location in Southwest Georgia. The rural nature of the county with its forested areas and agricultural facilities results in many scenic sites and viewsheds.

---

### LANAHASSEE CREEK VPA

Lanahassee Creek VPA is a Voluntary Public Access (VPA) property created through a temporary lease agreement between a private landowner and the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division for public hunting opportunities. Lanahassee Creek VPA covers 4,364 acres and offers opportunities for hiking, primitive camping, wildlife viewing, geocaching, and hunting for bucks, turkey, small game, and quail.

---

## SCENIC SITES AND VIEWSHEDS

The natural resources available in Webster County, combined with the rural character, result in many scenic sites and viewsheds. Additionally, the numerous creeks and streams that traverse the county create hills and valleys, providing beautiful views for the visitors and residents of the county to enjoy.

There are many highways and roads in Webster County that are scenic resources. U.S. Hwy. 280 from Richland (Stewart County) through Preston (Webster County) and on to Plains (Sumter County) is particularly tranquil, characterized by views of natural areas, abundant wildlife, pecan groves, rolling farmland and historic farmhouses.

---

### CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Identify and protect Cultural Resources.
- Make property owners aware of state and federal financial incentives for cultural resource conservation.
- Consider the protection and conservation of the community's cultural resources when making decisions about Historical Marker on Courthouse Square future growth and development.
- Consider potential impacts on cultural resources in making decisions on new developments and transportation improvements.

### LAND USE

The proper mix of land uses ensures that a community is both viable and sustainable. It is a daunting task to determine the amount of new development required to maintain a certain type of lifestyle. No one really wishes to limit growth at the expense of potential income. Many difficult decisions must be made to encourage and improve the economic environment of the community while creating a safe, healthy living environment for the citizens. Often, the balance between the residents and business community are at odds. The community decision makers are asked to weigh the past, present, and future desires and demands when making choices about the uses of the land within a jurisdiction, neighborhood, or even a parcel.

---

### EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The natural environment places certain opportunities and constraints on the way land is used. Soil conditions, slopes, flood frequency and wetlands all affect where development can safely and feasibly. In Webster County, approximately 85% is located over one of the state's significant groundwater recharge areas; areas most vulnerable to pollution of groundwater from the surface and near surface activities of man. According to federal wetland definitions, approximately 7% of total county area is wetland. These areas have been designated significant even at the federal level. Webster County has adopted a groundwater recharge area protection ordinance and a wetlands protection ordinance that regulate development in these sensitive areas. However, due to lack of growth pressures in the county, these natural resources have not been adversely impacted and no threat is anticipated in the near future.

Existing Land Use		
Classification	Acreage	Percentage
Residential	3,166.03	2.35
Agriculture/Forestry	128,244.26	95.33
Commercial	380.66	0.28
Industrial	148.32	0.01
Public/Institutional	215.60	0.16
Recreation/ Parks & Conservation	4362.26	3.24
Transportation/Communication/Utility	2,369.28	1.76
Total Acreage	134,524.15	100

These areas have been designated significant even at the federal level. Webster County has adopted a groundwater recharge area protection ordinance and a wetlands protection ordinance that regulate development in these sensitive areas. However, due to lack of growth pressures in the county, these natural resources have not been adversely impacted and no threat is anticipated in the near future.

Webster County has not adopted a zoning ordinance nor does the county have sub-division regulations. As a result, the comprehensive plan and the two natural resource protection ordinances mentioned in the previous paragraph are the only documents with policies to guide local elected officials as they make land use decisions.

Existing Land Use Definitions	
Land Use	Definition
Residential	The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities.
Agriculture/ Forestry	This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, commercial timber, or pulpwood harvesting.
Commercial	This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service, and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building. Communities may elect to separate office uses from other commercial uses, such as retail, service, or entertainment facilities.
Industrial	This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities or other similar uses. This category includes landfills
Public/ Institutional	Community facilities excluding utilities. This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses and institutional land uses. Examples include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
Recreation/ Parks & Conservation	This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, land in a land trust or similar uses

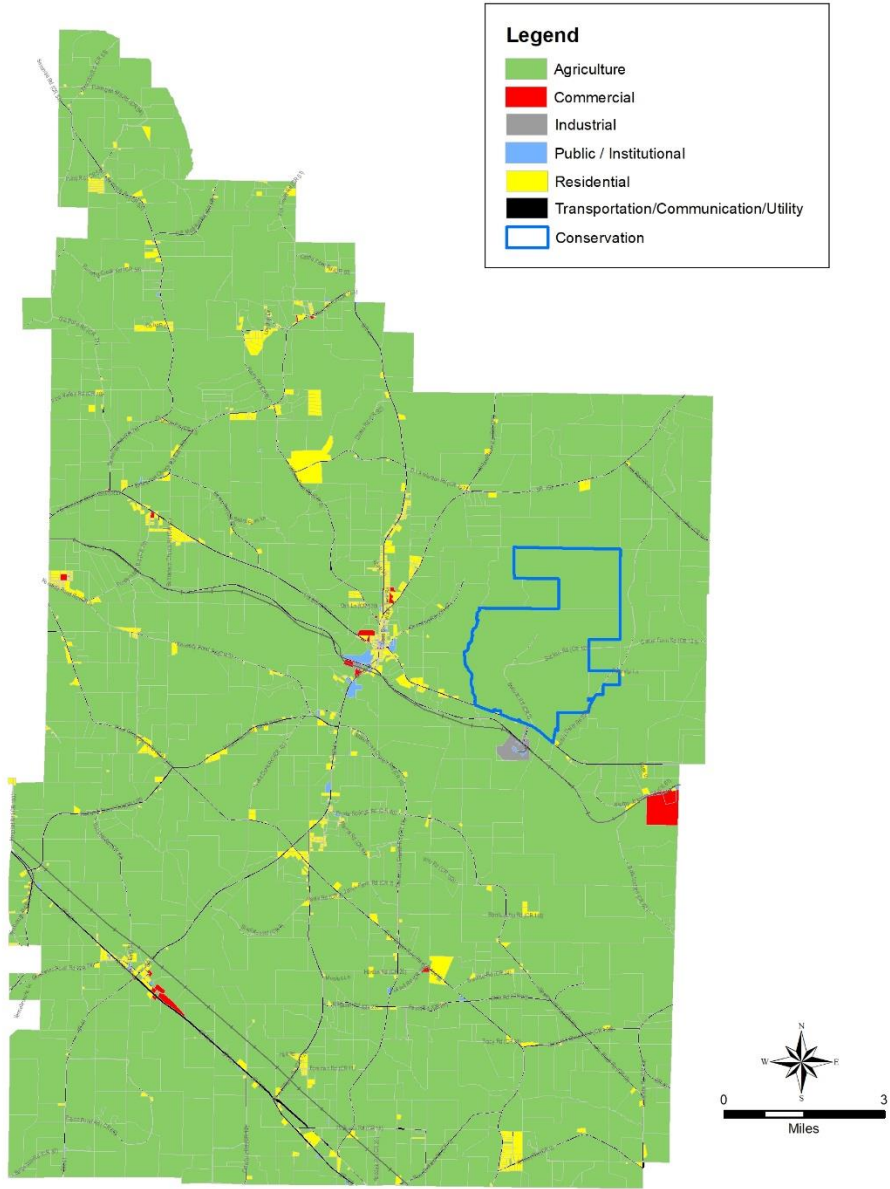
### LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Follow Best Management Practices regarding land development.
- Encourage and promote land use and development that respects the natural limitations of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.
- Pursue, promote, and encourage coordination of the plans of all public boards, agencies, commissions, and other authorities in Webster County in accord with county policies and programs to enhance mutual understanding and improve decision making.
- Encourage new development to contribute, not take away from, the community's character.
- Encourage development that is sensitive to the historic context, sense of place, and overall community.
- Preserve the rural character of our community and provide the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of the community.
- Improve the aesthetics of development in downtown Preston to create a vibrant center of the.
- Create recreational facilities in the community.



# Webster County Existing Land Use Map



WEBSTER Comp Plan Maps10221WebsterCoELU.mxd



## REGIONAL COOPERATION

Coordination between local governments, community service providers and local/regional authorities is vital when planning for and anticipating growth and development success. Synchronizing projects and resources will also reduce costs for large endeavors such as road improvements. This approach will not only foster fiscal responsibility by stretching taxpayer dollars, but it will also ensure that planning and development across jurisdictional boundaries is done in a cohesive manner.

By partnering with neighboring jurisdictions, Webster County produces a greater impact on regional environmental/conservation issues related to water quality, the longleaf pine ecosystem and endangered habitats. Working together to ensure conservation of natural resources can spur growth in the outdoor recreation industry and be a powerful economic engine for the county.

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

Lastly, the Service Delivery Strategy, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and Comprehensive Plan should be updated regularly. The SDS update will be completed in conjunction with this update of the Comprehensive Plan.

---

## REGIONAL COOPERATION GOALS AND POLICIES

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

- Ensure all inter-governmental agreements are up to date.
- Continue to execute service provision agreements in a timely manner.
- Seek opportunities to partner with neighboring jurisdictions to complete projects, accomplish goals and promote fiscal responsibility that benefit all residents.
- Participate in regional planning efforts promoted by the River Valley Regional Commission and other regional organizations.
- Work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions to develop solutions for shared regional issues.
- Consult other public entities in the community when making decisions that are likely to impact them.
- Provide input to other public entities in our area when they are making decisions likely to impact the community or future development.
- Engage in cooperative planning with local school board regarding the location and use of schools as community facilities.



## SWOT

The Webster County Leadership Team and stakeholders went through a strategic planning session where they analyzed internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (threats and opportunities) factors in their community. Going through this process leads participants to better understand the situation facing them as a community, the options available to community leadership, and guidance for the placement of resources.

### STRENGTHS

An internal factor over which a community has control that includes resources, skill level of residents, infrastructure, etc.

- Good East-West highway access
- Active group of community volunteers
- Urgent Care Facility
- Fire Department
- Land available for development.
- School system with good academic reputation
- Available public water
- TSPLOST/ SPLOST
- Natural Resources
- Low crime rates/ Low enforcement
- Sense of safety
- Low property taxes
- Family Connections and the resources they offer.
- The small school systems allow for small class sizes with more individualized attention and support for students.
- A safe, secure school system with high academic expectations

### WEAKNESSES

An internal factor over which a community has control that includes aspects of the community that hinder growth and optimal return on investment.

- Agri-tourism promotion
- Lack of jobs for skilled residents
- County roadways that double as private dams
- Non-redundant water systems
- Lack of retail
- Home healthcare and transit services for the elderly
- Lack of adequate housing/rental property for prospective residents, employees, etc.
- Absence of a water treatment center/sewage system. This may deter commercial industries from building in Webster.
- No recreation department for children
- No access to specialized medical care
- Longer travel times for treatment of serious medical issues and emergencies
- Fewer opportunities for entertainment and cultural activities

- Lack of daycare services for working residents
- The small population and lack of participation creates barriers for the school system to provide and sustain extensive sports programs and other activities.
- Lack of jobs/career development

## OPPORTUNITIES

An external factor over which a community does not have control but can take advantage of to improve economic development and quality of life.

- Active regional, state, and federal agency partners
- Expand code enforcement for residential buildings and to make commercial buildings business ready.
- Reorganization of development authority to support and facilitate economic investment and make a regional issue approach.
- Access SBDC and GDEcD programs for financial, technical, marketing assistance for small business
- Promote new Lanahassee WMA
- Access state and federal grants and loans
- Upgrade the historic gym using a \$15,000 GEFA grant.
- Railroad access
- Affordable living
- Opportunity for strong community support for the local school system and collaboration with other county resources and agencies.
- Farm-to-table initiatives- developing farm-to-table programs in collaboration with the school's Agriculture program and businesses that connect local farmers to consumers.
- Upgrade historic gym.
- Record the history of the county.
- Growth of small businesses

## THREATS

An external factor over which a community does not have control, but which will prevent a community from making the most of its assets.

- Lack of population
- Economic decline (dependency on a limited number of industries in the county makes the local economy vulnerable to market fluctuations and downturns).
- Limited emergency services (dependency on other counties for assistance)
- Outmigration: The younger population is leaving the county for urban areas in search of better job/career opportunities, leading to an aging population and workforce shortages.

## REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Unified Government of Webster County Community Work Program			
Project/Activity	Original Year	Status	Explanation
Reactivate the Industrial Development Authority; have new members attend state-mandated training	2020	Cancelled	Disbanded in 2010
Host a SBDC “seminar” to facilitate small business startups/ development of local cottage industries	2021	On going	
Identify sites and funding available for development of an industrial park in/near Weston along GA 520	2022	On going	
Maintain a revolving loan fund (RLF) to assist small local businesses/startups, provide micro loans	2020	Cancelled	No longer available
Appoint committee to develop a tourism plan for the county	2020	Cancelled	Local government no longer intends to undertake.
Renovate and enlarge the USDA/FSA offices to provide space for consolidated services from these federal programs to surrounding counties	2020	Completed 2024	
Renovate the bathrooms in the annex	2021	Completed 2023	
Work with GDOT on the replacement of two bridges on Churchill Road over Kinchafoonee Creek	2023	Ongoing 2027	Project is currently in design. Current construction bid is expected in August 2026.
Work with owners of large, dilapidated, commercial structures to demolish and clear the site	2023	Completed 2022	
Work with regional communities to prepare for the next TSPLOST	2022	On going	
Acquire right-of-way along Gill Pond Road and Pine Valley Road	2021	Cancelled	Local government no longer intends to undertake.
Pave Gill Pond Road, Pine Valley Road, and Ben Williams Road	2021	Ongoing	Completed Ben Williams Rd in 2022
Identify and pursue extensions of the water system	2023	Postponed	Attempted to receive funding in 2022
Meet with local internet service providers to request expansion of service area	2021	Completed	
Purchase a dump truck.	2022	Ongoing	Needs grant funding
Purchase an ambulance	2021	Completed 2022	
Renovate the old gym	2024	Ongoing	Received grant funds in early 2024
Install an elevator in the courthouse for handicap accessibility	2024	Cancelled	Local government no longer intends to undertake.

## WORK PROGRAM

Unified Government of Webster County Community Work Program				
Project/Activity	Fiscal Year	Funding Amount	Source	Responsible Party
Host a SBDC “seminar” to facilitate small business startups/ development of local cottage industries	2025	Staff Time	Staff Time	Webster BOC Webster IDA
Identify sites and funding available for development of an industrial park in/near Weston along GA 520	2024-2026	Staff Time	Staff Time	Webster BOC Webster IDA
Work with GDOT on the replacement of two bridges on Churchill Road over Kinchafoonee Creek	2026	\$4,000,000	GDOT	Webster BOC
Work with regional communities to prepare for the next TSPLOST	2024-2029	Staff Time	Staff Time	Webster BOC
Pave Gill Pond Road, Pine Valley Road, and Ben Williams Road	2027	± \$500,000	LMIG TSPLOST General Fund	Webster BOC
Purchase a dump truck	2025	± \$250,000	General fund	Webster BOC
Renovate the old gym	2028	± \$250,000	General fund	Webster BOC

## Appendix A: Public Participation Documentation

# Under the Gold Dome

State Representative Gerald Greene



My House colleagues and I returned to the Gold Dome on Monday, March 18, 2024, to begin the eleventh week of the 2024 Legislative Session. This week, we convened in the House Chamber for three legislative days and continued to give passage to a number of Senate bills. There are now only two legislative days remaining in the session until we reach *Senes Die* on Thursday, March 28, 2024. These final legislative days are among the busiest days of the entire session as we finalize our legislative business for the year before the *Senes Die* deadline.

This week, the House took legislative action to combat the growing fentanyl crisis in our state. My colleagues and I unanimously passed this important, life-saving measure, Senate Bill 465, which would create the crime of aggravated involuntary manslaughter when someone intentionally manufactures or sells a controlled substance that contains fentanyl and fentanyl is determined as the sole cause or a contributing factor in a victim's death. In the prosecution of this crime, the government would not need to prove that the defendant knew fentanyl was present in the drug. Anyone who violates this offense could be found guilty of a felony and subject to imprisonment between 10 and 30 years. Additionally, SB 465 would create a felony crime for unlawfully possessing, purchasing, delivering or selling a pill press or tabletting machine if there is reasonable cause to believe that the user will be used to manufacture a controlled or counterfeit substance. A person who commits this crime would be subject to imprisonment between one and 10 years. Under current law, if someone selling drugs claims that they had no knowledge of fentanyl presence in a drug that caused an overdose, that person would not be charged with this felony crime. This bill would update the law so that those who sell drugs and counterfeit drugs containing fentanyl are held accountable for overdoses. SB 465 is known as "Austin's Law," named after a young man who died tragically after unknowingly taking a substance laced with fentanyl. His parents joined us in the House Chamber while we honored his life with the passage of the bill. Later in the day, our counterparts in the Senate voted to give this legislation final passage, sending this important bill to Governor Kemp's desk to be signed into law.

The House has focused its efforts on improving and expanding mental health services across our state in recent years, and this week, we continued those efforts by giving final passage to Senate Bill 480. This legislation would provide student loan repayment assistance to mental health and substance use providers who offer services to underserved youth or practice in geographic areas of the state that lack adequate services. Specifically, SB 480 would allow mental health and substance use providers to apply for student loan repayment through the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce. SB 480 would incentivize

professionals to work in areas of critical need, which would ensure access to vital mental health and substance use services for Georgians in need in all corners of our state. To be eligible, applicants would be required to be legal residents of Georgia with no defaulted student debt, and the repayment amount would be determined by the workforce board, covering a maximum duration of five years. We know that there is a pressing need for increased mental health and substance use providers and services in Georgia, particularly in rural and underserved areas where access to such services are limited. SB 480 now awaits signature into law by Governor Kemp.

We also gave unanimous passage to Senate Bill 449, bipartisan legislation that would make revisions to Georgia's Accelerated Career Diploma program, which is part of the state's dual enrollment program for qualified high school students. SB 449 is a result of the work of the Joint Study Committee on Dual Enrollment for Highly Skilled Talent at Younger Ages, which was established in 2023 in response to requests from Georgia students, families, communities and employers. Throughout last summer and fall, this joint study committee conducted numerous meetings across the state to explore and identify potential solutions for increasing dual enrollment opportunities for highly skilled talent at younger ages. As such, SB 449 would simplify the dual enrollment program and improve academic flexibility to better align with pathway programs. Under this legislation, this diploma path would only be available for an associate's degree in applied science within Georgia's Technical College System (TCSG) or TCSG programs included in the State Workforce Development Board's high-demand career list. Additionally, SB 449 would incorporate the Dual Enrollment ACE (Accelerated Career Education) grant program, which would provide financial assistance to eligible students participating in the Accelerated Career Diploma Program. These students would be exempt from the 30-hour dual enrollment cap, and the bill would allow dual enrollment funding to be distinguished between academic and technical students. Through these changes, this legislation seeks to simplify this important program and encourage greater student participation so that more students are workforce-ready upon their high school graduation.

We also turned our attention to strengthening public safety in our state with the passage of Senate Bill 493, which would introduce several provisions related to the protection of minors and certain regulations concerning individuals on Georgia's sex offender registry. First, SB 493 would make it a crime for a person to use an unmanned aircraft, such as a drone, to intentionally photograph an individual, particularly a minor, without parental consent. Individuals who are found guilty of this crime would be subject to a minimum fine of \$1,500, and subsequent violations would lead to felony charges and im-



Representative Gerald Greene

prisonment between one and 30 years, accompanied by fines ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000. The bill would also prohibit a person who is on the sex offender registry from knowingly using or operating a drone used to photograph or observe any person in any way that violates that person's reasonable expectation of privacy. SB 493 would also allow certain individuals on Georgia's sex offender registry to petition the superior court to be removed from the registry after reaching the age of 80 years old and completing all prison, parole, supervised release and probation for the offense. SB 493 would not only be crucial for protecting Georgia's minors from registered sexual offenders but would also play a significant role in building safer and more secure communities for all Georgians.

My colleagues and I also took action to continue our efforts to support victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Senate Bill 324 would create a victim-centered address confidentiality program within the Office of the Secretary of State. This program would allow certified participants to utilize an address confidentiality card instead of disclosing their personal address to governmental entities in order to prevent their confidential address from being published. By making victims' addresses confidential from public record, we can ensure that victims and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, human trafficking or sexual assault could remain protected from their perpetrators as disclosure could increase the risk that the victim would be harassed or physically harmed by another person. Further, this legislation would prohibit courts from issuing or approving mutual protective orders in certain instances and would provide for the issuance of dating violence protective orders. This bipartisan measure is a crucial step toward providing more protection and support to these victims in our state, allowing them the opportunity to safely rebuild their lives without fear.

Finally, the House passed Senate Bill 464 to improve literacy rates among our students and provide financial relief to educators to purchase classroom supplies. SB 464 would make changes to the Georgia Early Literacy Act to require the Department of Education (DOE) and Georgia Council on Literacy to identify up to five universal reading screeners to help identify students who are experiencing literacy problems. In addition, the bill would make one of these screeners available for free for public schools and local school systems. The second part of SB 464 outlines the School Supplies for Educators Act, which

would establish a program to provide financial and technical assistance to educators to purchase school supplies. The State Board of Education would be tasked with establishing this program for the DOE to allocate funds for eligible educators, to be used at their discretion, for the online purchase of school supplies. SB 464 would help to ensure that we are supporting our students and improving literacy outcomes for Georgia's young learners. Furthermore, this bill would also lessen the financial burden that many teachers face when supplying their classrooms with

necessary learning materials and supplies. We also gave passage to the following Senate bills this week:

- Senate Bill 112, which would create the Workforce EXCELeration Act, which would provide for a pilot program to establish a high school diploma program for adult learners. The program would be facilitated by the State Board of Technical College Systems of Georgia. The pilot program would be required to include at least two distance programs and would be automatically repealed on June 30, 2026.
- Senate Bill 169, which would revise the hearing dates for school suspensions. A hearing would be held no later than 10 school days from the beginning of the suspension unless there is an agreement between the parents and school system, in which case the hearing would be held no later than 15 days after the beginning of the suspension. A hearing could be held later than 15 days upon written request to the school system by a parent or guardian.
- Senate Bill 230, which would add a new item to the bill of rights for

Continued Next Week

## PUBLIC HEARING

The Unified Government of Webster County will hold a public meeting on April 9, 2024 at 4:00 pm in the Webster County Commission Office at 40 Cemetery Road, Preston GA 31824 to review Comprehensive Plan Update activities and a schedule of completion. The public is invited to attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to brief the community on the contents of the plan, provide opportunity for residents to make suggestions, additions, or revisions, and notify the community of when the plan will be submitted to the Regional Commission for Review. We will receive community comments on the contents of the Comprehensive Plan, which includes the Community Work Program Report of Accomplishments, a new Community Work Program, and a final list of Issues and Opportunities and Goals and Objectives, as well as any other portion of the plan to be submitted to the Regional Commission and the state.

The Unified Government Webster County is committed to providing all persons with equal access to its services, programs, activities, education, and employment regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, disability, or age. Person with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language shall contact Bonnie Witt, the Webster County Clerk at (229) 828-5775. For more information about the public hearing, please contact Blaine Hoskins with the River Valley Regional Commission at 706-256-2910.

## High Quality New and Used Construction Equipment Sales and Rentals throughout South Central Georgia.

**PERRY BROTHERS**  
EQUIPMENT COMPANY

(229) 924-0035 | sales@perryequip.com | perryequip.com

## BALDWIN FUNERAL HOME

Baldwin Funeral Home has purchased Smith Funeral Home. All pre-arranged services of Smith Funeral Home have been transferred to Baldwin Funeral Home.

Allow Baldwin Funeral Home to Assist in Time of Sorrow  
Burial • Cremation • Ship In or Out • Pre-need  
Transfer Pre-need Services from Other Funeral Homes to Baldwin Funeral Home • Baldwin Handles All Paperwork  
Large Selection of Caskets • Urns • Vaults 20,000 Sq. Ft. New Building • New Hearse and Limo • Large 225 Seat Chapel

Customers Treated as Family  
Three Dedicated Services, Customers Become Family

Serving Stewart • Webster • Chattahoochee and Surrounding Counties

50 Charles Overby Drive • Richland, Georgia 31825  
229-887-2750 • 229-887-2753 Fax  
baldwinfuneral@aif.net • BaldwinFuneralHome.com





## **UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WEBSTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**

### AGENDA

April 9, 2024

Webster County Community Center

40 Cemetery Road

Preston GA 31824

4:00 p.m.

- I. Open and Introductions
- II. Review of Plan Process
  - a. Plan Elements
  - b. Plan Participation Techniques
  - c. Identification of Stakeholders
  - d. Review of Meeting Schedule
- III. Questions and Comments
- IV. Meeting Wrap-Up

Notes:



# WEBSTER COUNTY

## CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

### Comprehensive Plan Participants

April 9, 2024

Do you want to Receive Plan Updates  
and Meeting Notifications?

Name	Contact Information Email/Cell Phone No.	Do you want to Receive Plan Updates and Meeting Notifications?	
		Email	Text
<del>Garrett Holbrook</del>			
Darrell Holbrook	webstoco@windstream.net	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melvin Crimes	melvin1952@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Holbrook	sjack-holbrook@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ronald Brown	rsb11333@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darryl R. Jones		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bonnie Witt		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marjorie R Hine	webstertc mhine@yahoo.com	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheideka C. Crimes	cheideka.crimes@gsccca.org	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carolyn Crimes	Melvin 1952@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marilyn Crimes	Vernette crimes 07@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desiree Gardner	dgardner.31824@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## WEBSTER COUNTY CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

The Unified Government of Webster County will hold a 2024 Comprehensive Plan public input meeting on **Thursday, May 2, 2024 at 5:00 pm at the Community Center at:**

**40 Cemetery Road**

**Preston, GA 31824**

The meeting is to obtain public input on the Comprehensive Plan which is updated every five (5) years. The River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) will facilitate the meeting and will be reviewing community Goals. Including reviewing the vision statement, listing and reviewing community goals, and community policies.

This is a great opportunity for the public to provide their comments and input.

A copy of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan can be found at [https://www.dca.ga.gov/sites/default/files/webster\\_county\\_comp\\_plan\\_2019\\_11.14.2019.pdf](https://www.dca.ga.gov/sites/default/files/webster_county_comp_plan_2019_11.14.2019.pdf).

Contact Blaine Hoskins at the River Valley Regional Commission (706-256-2910) if you have any questions.



## **UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WEBSTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**

### AGENDA

May 2, 2024

Webster County Community Center

40 Cemetery Road

Preston GA 31824

5:00 p.m.

- I. Open and Introductions
- II. Overview of Meeting Goals
  - a. Review Vision Statement
  - b. Review Goals and Policies
- III. Meeting Wrap-Up

Notes:



# WEBSTER COUNTY

## CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

### Comprehensive Plan Participants

April 9, 2024

Name	Contact Information Email/Cell Phone No.	Do you want to Receive Plan Updates and Meeting Notifications?	
		Email	Text
<del>Darrell Holbrook</del>			
Darrell Holbrook	webstoco@windstream.net	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melvin Crimes	melvin1952@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Holbrook	sjack-holbrook@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ronald Brown	rsb11333@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darryl R. Jones		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bonnie Witt		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marjorie R Hine	webstertcmhine@yahoo.com	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheideka C. Crimes	cheideka.crimes@gsccca.org	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carolyn Crues	Melvin 1952@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marilyn Crimes	Vernette crimes 07@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desiree Gardner	dgardner.31824@yahoo.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# WEBSTER COUNTY

## CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

### Comprehensive Plan Participants May 2, 2024

Name	Contact Information Email/Cell Phone No.	Do you want to Receive Plan Updates and Meeting Notifications?	
		Email	Text
Darrell Holbrook	websterco@windstream.net	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Holbrook	s.jack.holbrook@yates.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bonnie Witt	bonnie@websterfinance@windstream.net	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ronald Brown	rsb11333@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
April Francis	apild74@hotmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Justin Brown	gfamerion4@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Rowland	toolmaker4@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chekeidra C. Crimes	chekeidra.crimes@qsscra.org	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scott Hudson		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF WEBSTER COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024**

**AGENDA**

May 29, 2024

Webster County Community Center

40 Cemetery Road

Preston GA 31824

5:00 p.m.

- I. Open and Introductions
- II. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Process
- III. Review Plan Schedule
- IV. Questions and Comments
- V. Adjourn

Notes:



# WEBSTER COUNTY

## CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

### Comprehensive Plan Participants

May 29, 2024

Name	Contact Information Email/Cell Phone No.	Do you want to Receive Plan Updates and Meeting Notifications?	
		Email	Text
Bonnie Witt	bonnie.witt@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jack Halbrook	(229) 310-6991	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Randy Dely	sherriff@websterco-sheriff.org	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arnell Holbrook	websterco@windstorm.com	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Ingram	757-778-0060	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wynelle Hallbrook	706 329-2012	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bauder Holbrook	229-591-6096	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cherida C. Crines	229 894 7043	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milinda Fussells	229-938-8471	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



#1429

## PUBLIC HEARING

The Unified Government of Webster County will hold a public meeting on August 13th, 2024 at 4:15 pm at the Webster County Commission Office at 40 Cemetery Road, Preston GA 31824 to review a draft Comprehensive Plan update.

The public is invited to attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to brief the community on the contents of the plan and provide opportunities for residents to make suggestions, additions, or revisions to the draft Comprehensive Plan Update.

We will receive community comments on the contents of the Comprehensive Plan, which includes the Community Work Program, Report of Accomplishments, and a final list of Issues and Opportunities and Goals and Objectives, as well as any other portion of the plan to be submitted to the Regional Commission and the state.

Formal written comments on the draft Comprehensive Plan Update will be accepted until August 9th, 2024 at the following address:

River Valley Regional Commission  
ATTN: Webster County Comprehensive Plan  
710 Front Avenue Suite A  
Columbus, GA 31901

# PARTNERS

*Propane of GA, Inc.*

SWJPC - THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024 - 5

ideas about the most effective product to relieve the itch of the little bites.

My grandmother treated chigger bites by dabbing the affected area with a cotton ball soaked with Watkins liniment.

I have followed her on the use of liniment and believed that the slight burning sensation meant it was working.

Liniment is denatured alcohol, camphor, sassafras (found in sassafras), capsicum (from chili peppers), and oil of spruce.

washing your eyes or tender places.

My grandmother favored Watkins spices and black pepper.

Kids in my family have bathed in blankets of bubbles from Watkins lavender bubble bath.

Families kept tins of Watkins salve to treat treat minor cuts, scrapes and minor burns.

It was similar to other salves made of turpentine, petroleum, paraffin and with some other stinky things.


fracts, food coloring and everything else including room "refreshers."

There is a modern choice to treat the itch of chigger bites.

Hydrocortisone creams are available without prescription and while they only contain one percent of hydrocortisone and that seems to be enough.

This cream doesn't stink nor burn.

So, how do you know it works?



## 24-25 HIGH SCHOOL

# SUPPLY LIST

Loose Leaf Paper (no composition notebooks)

Color Pencils

Scissors

**WEBSTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
FINAL PUBLIC HEARING**

**AGENDA**

August 13, 2024

County Commissioners Office

40 Cemetery Road

4:15 P.M.

- I. Welcome
- II. Review Maps
- III. Review Draft Plan
- IV. Questions and Comments
- V. Adjourn

