



Union Point Comprehensive Plan

2018 Update



City of Union Point
GEORGIA

Developed by the Planning & Government Services Division of the
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission



Acknowledgements

Siloam, Union Point, and White Plains Steering Committee

Karen Hill, Siloam Mayor

Edith Jefferson, Siloam Councilmember

Lanier Rhodes, Union Point Mayor

Jill Rhodes, Union Point DDA

Russ Moore, White Plains Mayor

Marvin Bell, White Plains Councilmember

Sam Young, Greene Co. Economic Development Director

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

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Chapter 1

Introduction & Overview

Purpose

This comprehensive plan serves as a decision-making guide for local government officials and community leaders. Based on input from the public and a steering committee, the plan identifies needs and opportunities, goals and policies, land use practices, and an implementation framework for key elements.

Process

The comprehensive plan process follows the rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective 3/1/2014.

Public Involvement

Public Input & Steering Committee

The joint Siloam/Union Point/White Plains planning process began with a public hearing and was followed by a series of community input sessions during which the public and a local steering committee were invited to discuss local trends and aspirations. The availability of steering committee members to take questions and comments throughout the process (as presented at the first public hearing) provided additional feedback opportunities. A final public hearing was held before submittal of the plan to the DCA for review.

NEGRC's Role

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) Planning & Government Services Division oversaw the development of this plan, including facilitating public and steering committee meetings.



Chapter 2

Needs & Opportunities

The following list of needs and opportunities results from a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis conducted at the first input meeting, with both steering committee and public in attendance, as well as professional analysis of relevant data.

**Italicized entries indicate high priorities (with STWP project number in parentheses)*



Population, Community, and Governance

Union Point's population of 1,651 is projected to remain relatively stable through 2022, while Greene County is expected to grow by 1.25% in the same period (ESRI BAO). Union Point does not wish to chase growth for growth's sake, although *the opportunity exists to determine whether there are underlying reasons for the lack of growth. (3)*

The median age in Union Point is 40 years, which is above the state average of 36.5 but below Greene County's average of 50 (ESRI BAO). Given the lack of growth and the fact that 33% of the population is over 55 years of age, the need for senior services will grow. *Union Point should plan for senior service delivery before the need becomes acute. (16)*

Union Point's socioeconomic profile combines above average need with below average resources to meet those needs. Median household income is \$27,376 per year, the poverty rate is 45%, and educational attainment is below the state average (ESRI BAO). Additionally, the number of households with at least one disabled person sits at 31.6%, higher than the state average.

Planning, Land Use, and Housing

Union Point is characterized by a residential district developed on a grid of large, low-density blocks, a strip of traditional downtown commercial development that sits along the railroad, several industrial sites, and the presence of four state highways. Space exists for small-scale residential and commercial infill within existing blocks.

Some areas suffer from blight and vacancy. Given the lack of resources, Union Point should start with small, incremental steps. Improvement projects organized as community-wide events can build momentum for additional improvements and bolster civic pride.

Audits of existing zoning and building codes should be performed to remove barriers (like parking minimums) to walkable, small-scale residential and commercial development. (4)

Since some blighted properties are not locally owned, the city will consider code enforcement measures to encourage absentee owners to maintain their property. (15)

The housing split in Union Point is 75% detached single-family with an even split in the remaining stock between apartments and mobile homes. The median value of a home is \$79,444 and 88% of the housing stock is worth \$200,000 or less (ESRI BAO). Some residents may not have the ability or resources to maintain their housing, elevating the risk of blight. In response, Union Point should identify and pool community resources to maintain properties and prevent blight.

Transportation

The vast majority of Union Point residents drive to work, with 26% commuting outside of Greene County (ESRI BAO). *The city should consider completing streets with bike/pedestrian facilities, enhancing connections with Greene County's rural transit service, and developing local businesses to reduce the need to commute long distances. (9, 7)*

Stakeholders indicate that most residents are unaware of the Greene County public transportation system. (19)

Natural & Cultural Resources

Union Point has identified its Civil War heritage and the Firefly Trail as potential points of interest for residents and visitors alike. Maximizing these resources will require a strategic plan to identify, protect, and promote these resources. (8)

Community Facilities & Services

Union Point has multiple opportunities to program and promote community facilities including Union Point Park, the newly funded Firefly Trail, the welcome center, and an historic theater (currently under restoration). (5)

The city will conduct a tax-value-per-acre study to guide efficient public investment and spur private investment toward more efficient forms. (12)

Intergovernmental Coordination

Several State Routes converge on Union Point, so improvements to these corridors requires cooperation from GDOT.

In preparation for SPLOST and T-SPLOST referenda in the near future, Union Point should identify qualifying projects for potential inclusion. (17)

Economic Development

Union Point has faced past challenges because of industry closure. Several existing firms are exploring expansion, but *Union Point plans to create an economic development strategy to maintain and attract investment. (18)*

Greene County's S.T.E.A.M. Academy for elementary students, which may attract young families, is located in Union Point, representing an opportunity to grow in population and economic activity.

Chapter 3

Vision

Union Point will maximize its resources to revitalize the community and bring vibrancy to the downtown core, anchored by the historic commercial strip and the new Firefly Trail. We will be a place where people can proudly raise a family.

Goals & Policies

1. Revitalize the downtown core
2. Fund and build the Firefly Trail within city limits
3. Develop an historic preservation and heritage promotion strategy
4. Create complete streets and trails networks
5. Provide high-quality community services
6. Address blight and upkeep issues on private property
7. Create a livable city in which residents can age in place
8. Identify priorities for future SPLOST and TSPLOST funding
9. Create opportunities for community-supportive economic development

Chapter 4

Land Use

These future land uses (FLU) correspond to the map that follows. While zoning regulations vary, FLU represents a standardized approach to envisioning and planning for desired scenarios. As such, inconsistencies between FLU and existing land use or zoning maps may arise because FLU presents a blueprint for what is to come.

Agriculture

Predominantly farms. Residential development should maintain a rural character with single-family homes on large lots.

Commercial

Property where business and trade are conducted. Includes retail stores, shopping centers, and office buildings.

Industrial

Property used for warehousing, distribution, trucking, and manufacturing.

Public/Institutional

Used for local community facilities, general government, and institutional purposes. Examples include schools, government buildings, health facilities, places of worship, and libraries.

Single-Family Residential

Conventional residential subdivisions, as well as conservation subdivisions, with supportive recreational amenities and small-scale public/institutional uses.

Multi-Family Residential

Apartments, townhomes, or duplexes.

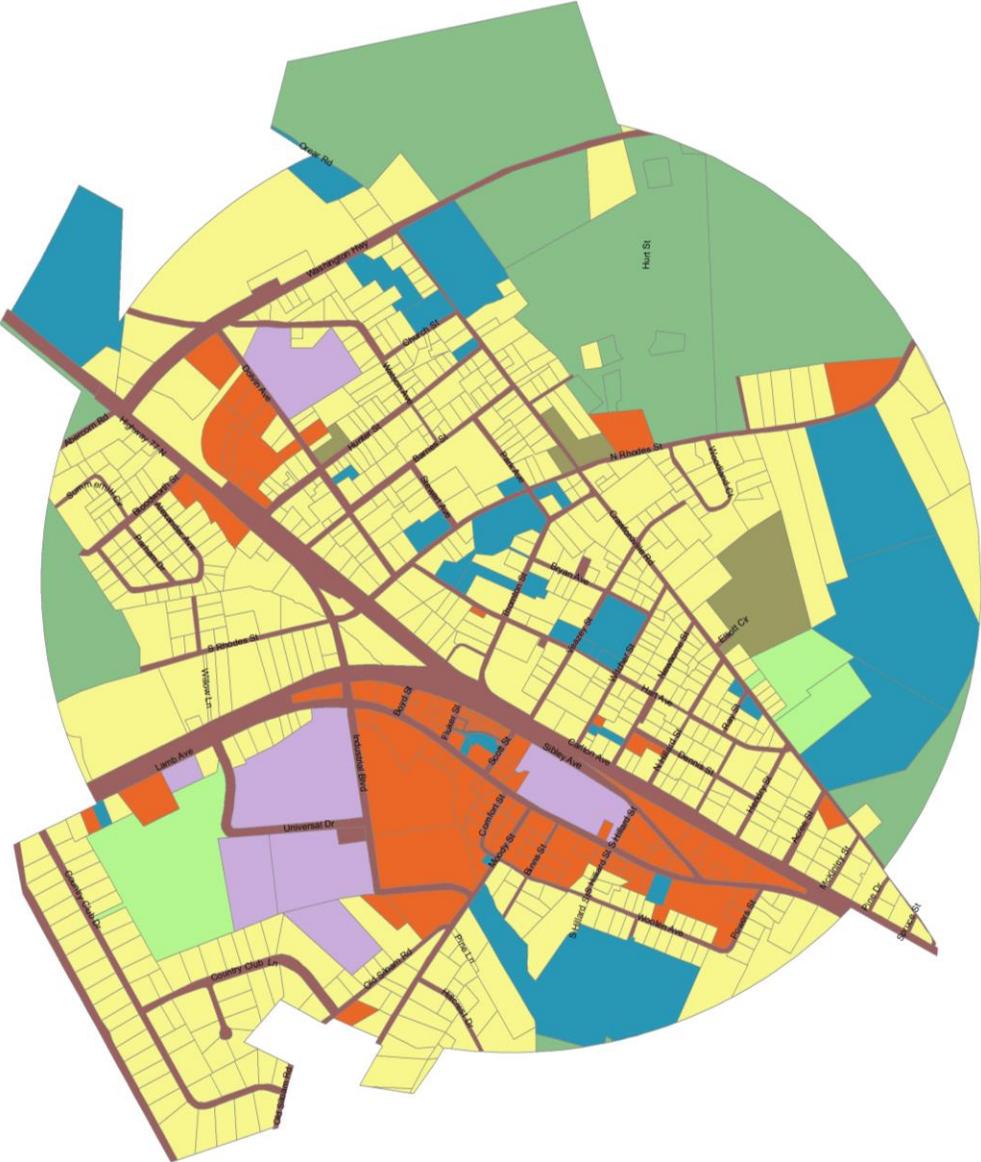
Park/Recreation/Conservation

Recreation areas, lands held for conservation, and floodplains.

Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Areas used for transportation-, communication-, or utility-related activities, such as power generation plants, sewage and water treatment facilities, landfills, railroad facilities, telecom towers, public transit, telephone switching stations, airports, or similar uses.

Future Land Use Map



Legend:

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Parks / Recreation / Conservation
- Transportation / Communication / Utility

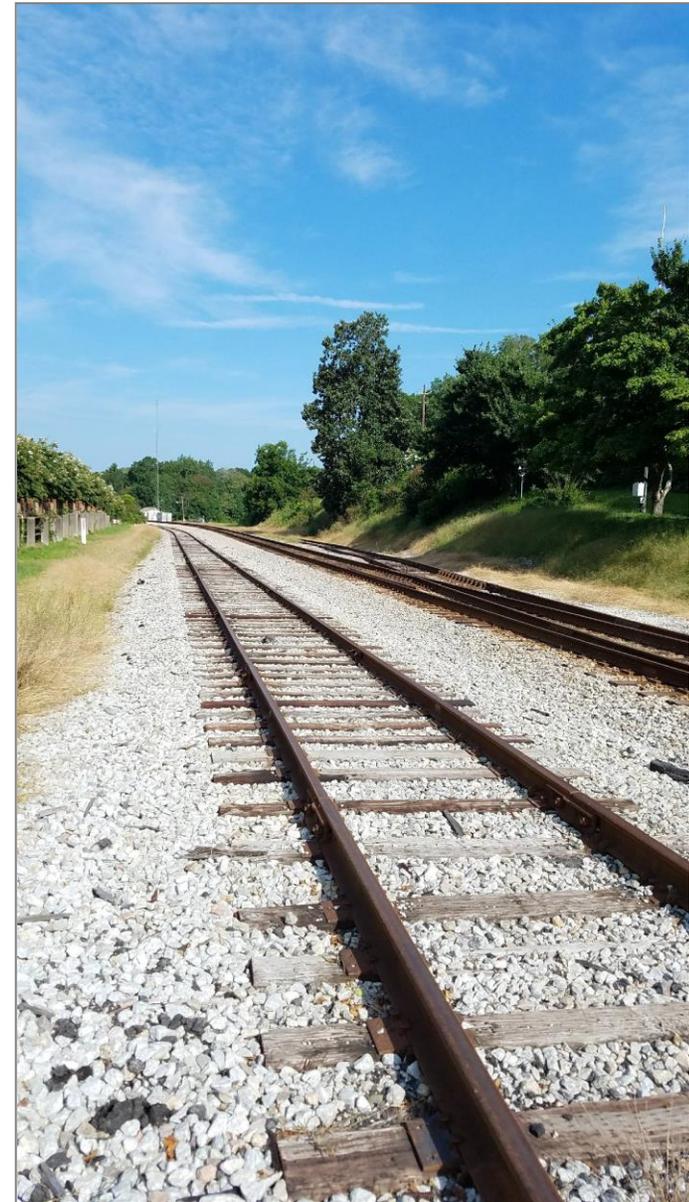
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Northeast Georgia Regional Commission | 08/02/2018

Chapter 5

Community Work Program

The Short-Term Work Program (2018-2022), updated every five years, provides a list of specific activities that the community plans to address as immediate priorities. A Report of Plan Accomplishments, which provides status commentary on the previous work plan (2013-2017), follows.



Short-Term Work Program, 2018-2022

(*carryover from the previous STWP)

#	Activity	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
1	Relocate historic museum to downtown district	2018-2019	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	None	NA
2	Install directional and wayfinding signage	2020-2022	Clerk/Staff, DDA	\$50,000	General Fund, Grants
3	Produce basic report on reasons for slow growth and opportunities to attract development	2018	Mayor & Council	\$1,000	General Fund, DCA
4	Audit existing development patterns and internal city practices to promote compact, walkable development	2019	Mayor & Council	\$1,000	General Fund, GDOT
5	Develop plan to expand city programming offerings (recreational, promotional, and/or economic) to serve the existing community and visitors	2018-2019	Mayor & Council	None	NA
6	Complete restoration of historic theater	2018-2022	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	Unknown	General Fund, Grants
7	Fund and build the Firefly Trail within city limits	2018-2021	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	\$500,000	General Fund, SPLOST, Grants, Firefly Trail, Inc.
8	Identify historic assets and develop a strategy for protecting and promoting them	2020	Mayor & Council	\$1,000	General Fund, DCA, DNR
9	Adopt complete streets and trails plan	2019-2020	Mayor & Council	\$1,000	General Fund, GDOT
10	Construct walking trail at Union Point Park	2020-2021	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	\$10,000	General Fund, Grants
11	Improve Wayside Park with trailhead facilities	2019-2020	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	\$7,000	General Fund
12	Conduct tax-value-per-acre study to guide efficient public investment and spur private investment	2019-2020	Mayor & Council	Minimal	General Fund

#	Activity	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
13	Build new water treatment plant	2018-2020	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	\$4,000,000	USDA
14	Build dog park	2020-2021	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	Unknown	General Fund, SPLOST
15	Create catalog of blighted structures and prioritize specific buildings for rehabilitation and code enforcement	2018	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	\$1,000	General Fund, DCA
16	Create strategy for senior service delivery	2019	Mayor & Council	Minimal	General Fund, DCA
17	Develop projects list for potential SPLOST and TSPLOST funding	2018	Mayor & Council	None	NA
18	Create basic economic development strategy	2019	Mayor & Council	Minimal	General Fund, DCA
19	Publish fact-sheet or other similar informational document to make residents aware of Greene County public transportation	2018-2019	Mayor & Council, Clerk/Staff	Minimal	GDOT
20	*Catalog locations and funding paths for restoring historic commercial buildings for small-scale businesses	2018-2019	Clerk/Staff, DDA	\$1,500	General Fund, DCA, DNR

Report of Plan Accomplishments, 2013-2017

#	Activity	Status	Notes
1	Compile and update digital inventory of vacant sites and buildings for redevelopment	Underway	2019 Completion (STWP element 20)
2	Facilitate renovation and rehab of dilapidated commercial structures	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
3	Seek economic development opportunities and participate in strategy development	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
4	Facilitate water and sewer line rehab through development of a phased implementation program	Completed	
5	Amend zoning code to address county-wide housing needs	Abandoned	No longer a priority
6	Hire code enforcement officer to address violations and safety issues	Completed	
7	Send representative to Firefly Trail project meetings at NEGRC	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
8	Send representative to Regional Bike/Ped Plan meetings at NEGRC	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
9	Complete upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant and sewer	Completed	
10	Utilize Future Land Use Map to encourage new development in appropriate areas serviced by necessary infrastructure	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
11	Evaluate the Future Land Use Map every two years to ensure it reflects current development vision	Ongoing	Will not be carried over to work program
12	Develop and implement a Capital Improvements Program	Completed	

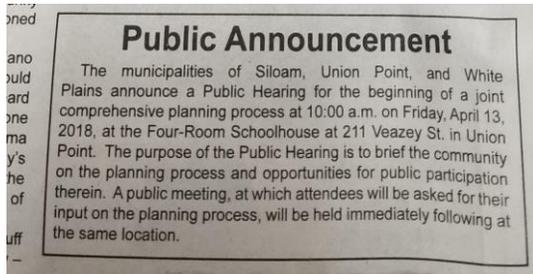
Appendix

Appendix: Participation Records

Public Hearings: 4/13/18 & 8/8/18

NEGRC NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION		Siloam, Union Point, and White Plains: Comprehensive Plan Update Public Hearing #1: April 13, 2018 – 10:00 a.m. Union Point Four-Room School	
NAME	TITLE	ADDRESS	EMAIL
Lanier Rhoads	Mayor	610 Bryan	MayorLrhoads@6mail.com
Maren S. Hill	Mayor	P.O. Box 79	Kahill30@windstream.net
Jill Rhoads	Council person	Siloam, GA P.O. Box 26, Siloam, GA	ljrhoads@gmail.com
Jill Rhoads	DDA	610 Bryan Ave, Union Point, GA	jillrhoads@gmail.com
Sam Young	Brewe Co. Economic Development Director	1034 Silver Drive, Gretna, GA 30142	Syoung@greene-county-ga.gov
John Moran	Deputy Finance Officer	107 Scott St. Union Point	
Barthony Finch	Clerk/Treasurer, UP	P.O. Box 133 Union Point	bfinch@unionpointga.org
Mark Engel	Reporter	Lake Ooma News	ENGEL@MSGR.com
Robert Cash	Chief of Police	107 Scott Street	rcash@unionpointga.org

NEGRC NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION		Siloam, Union Point, Woodville Comprehensive Plan Update Public Hearing #2: Wednesday, August 8, 2018 – 10:00 a.m. Union Point Four-Room School	
NAME	TITLE	ADDRESS	EMAIL
Lanier Rhoads	Mayor	Union Point, GA	mayorlrhoads@6mail.com
Marvin Bell	Council man	6 Greensboro Ln, Lakeey Rd	m.bell.wp.fire@6mail.com
Laura D. Jefferson	Council person	P.O. Box 187, Siloam, GA	lauradiane@gmail.com
Jinda W. Larrard	Council person	P.O. Box 26, Siloam, GA	jlarrard@gmail.com
Karen Hill	Mayor	P.O. Box 79, Siloam, GA	Kahill30@windstream.net
Jill Rhoads	D	Union Point, GA	jillrhoads@gmail.com



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Input Meetings: 4/13/18 & 6/13/18

		Siloam, Union Point, and White Plains: Comprehensive Plan Update Input Meeting #1: April 13, 2018 – 10:15 a.m. Union Point Four-Room School	
NAME	TITLE	ADDRESS	EMAIL
Larry Rhee	Mayor	607 Bryan	larryrhee@cityofwhiteplains.com
Karen S. Hill	Mayor	P.O. Box 79 Siloam, GA	Kahill30@windstream.net
Linda W. Sattard	Councilperson	P.O. Box 26 Siloam GA	lwsattard@gmail.com
Jill Miller	DDA	610 Bryan Ave Union Point	jillmiller@equal.com
Sam Young	Economic Dev. Director Greene Co.	1034 Silver Dr. Gboro 30642	syoung@greencountyga.gov
Shirley Jordan	Deputy Finance Officer	107 Scott St. Union Point	
Brittany Birch	Clerk + Treasurer-UP	P.O. Box 233 Union Point	bbirch@unionpointga.org
Mark Engel	Reporter	Lake Oconee News	ENG02@MS6R.com
Robert Cost	Chief of Police	10250+ Street	rcost@unionpointga.org

		Siloam, Union Point, White Plains: Comprehensive Plan Update Input Meeting #2: June 13, 2018 – 10:00 a.m. Union Point Four-Room School	
NAME	TITLE	ADDRESS	EMAIL
Larry Rhee	Mayor	City of Union Pt	mayor@cityofwhiteplains.com
Jill Miller	DDA	Union Point	"
Karen Hill	Mayor	Town of Siloam	Kahill30@windstream.net
Edith D. Jefferson	Council	Town of Siloam	edj@silodn.com
Linda W. Sattard	Council	Town of Siloam	lwsattard@gmail.com
Marvin Bell	Council	City of White Plains	m.bell@wpfire.com

RESOLUTION

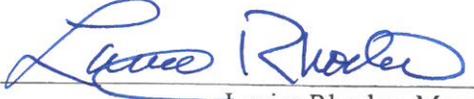
WHEREAS, the 1989 Georgia General Assembly enacted House Bill 215, the Georgia Planning Act, requiring all local governments to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Update for the City of Union Point, Georgia, was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Union Point, Georgia, that the Comprehensive Plan Update for the City of Union Point, Georgia dated 2018, as approved by the Georgia Department Community Affairs is hereby adopted, and furthermore, that the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission shall be notified of said adoption within seven (7) days of the adoption of this resolution.

Adopted this 30 day of October, 2018.

City of Union Point, Georgia


Lanier Rhodes, Mayor


Deputy Clerk / Treasurer