

CORRECTING COURSE, MOVING FORWARD



A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Wheeler County, Alamo and Glenwood, Georgia

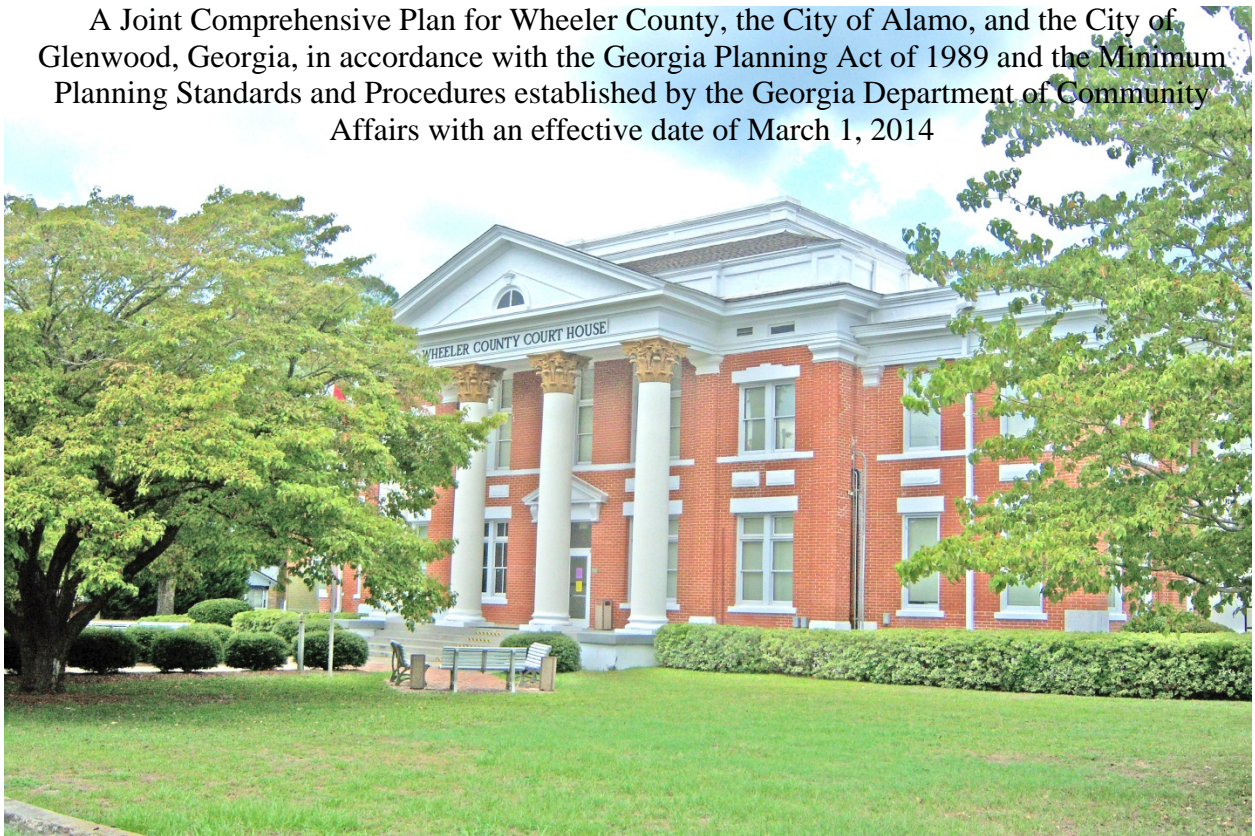


August, 2014

Correcting Course, Moving Forward:

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



Prepared By:

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

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

August, 2014

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Correcting Course, Moving Forward: The Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan is a comprehensive plan prepared under the new Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) first with an effective date of January 1, 2013, and after minor changes, an effective date of March 1, 2014. It is a joint plan for Wheeler County and its municipalities – the City of Alamo and the City of Glenwood.

Wheeler County is a small, rural county in south central Georgia with a 2010 Census population of 7,421 (ranking 144th in the state of Georgia). The county's size of 300.3 square miles ranks 100th in Georgia (out of 159 counties) giving it a population density of only 25 people per square mile, much less than the Georgia total of 168.4/sq. mile. The county's population growth from 2000 to 2010 was 20.1%, according to the Census Bureau. While this population growth rate was higher than that of the State of Georgia (18.3%), ranking 47th in Georgia, and exceeded the U.S. average (9.7%), it is misleading since the vast majority of that growth was actually prison population growth of the Wheeler Correctional Facility, located in the county. Over one-fourth of Wheeler's 2010 population were prisoners. Wheeler County is one of Georgia's counties described as having persistent poverty, currently measured around 28% of its population, compared to 17% in Georgia overall. This poverty rate is in the top 25 worst in the state. The unemployment rate in Wheeler County was 9.4% in 2013, compared to Georgia's 8.2%. Wheeler County's per capita income is less than \$20,000, less than half of Georgia's total, consistently ranking as the lowest in the state. About half of Wheeler County residents working work outside Wheeler County.

Wheeler County considers itself a hidden gem of Old South charm and hospitality located in an environmental tapestry of endless green pine forests, pastoral farm landscapes, and scenic blackwater rivers. This picturesque rural charm offers quiet living and a slow-paced, low-crime lifestyle perfect for raising a family, enjoying retirement, or residing in the countryside and

outdoors while working elsewhere. The community enjoys excellent access to the larger communities of Dublin and Vidalia, and even beyond due to U.S. 280, U.S. 441, and Georgia 19 and the relative closeness of U.S. 341 and I-16. Other advantages of the county include the location of Wheeler Correctional Facility in Alamo, the Sweetwater Horse Event Park near Glenwood, and the Little Ocmulgee State Park. The community has a history of progressive leadership which continues today. There are continuing efforts to upgrade infrastructure and services to make the community even more attractive to residents and visitors, to better serve existing residents, and to prepare for and facilitate future growth and development. The Wheeler Correctional Facility, a private state prison operated by Corrections Corporation of America, has truly allowed Wheeler County to “correct course and move forward.”

The new DCA planning standards reduced and simplified requirements seeking to engender local plans more attentive to individual needs and generating more local pride, ownership, and use. This Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan was developed with this as an overarching objective. It was intended to be a locally driven plan principally addressing local needs and cultivating widespread community interest, support, and buy-in, while meeting state standards. Even the title of this plan was chosen carefully to stimulate and encourage interest, reading, and implementation. “Correcting Course, Moving Forward” captures reference to the importance of the Wheeler Correctional Facility and the improvements it has allowed the community to make, and to its future aspirations. This certainly should generate more curiosity and interest, and hopefully, more ownership and utilization, than the more bland “The Joint Wheeler County Comprehensive Plan.” The Wheeler County community wants to protect its rural character; conserve its fields and forests and natural splendor; improve its infrastructure; attract new residents and retirees; locate businesses and compatible jobs; utilize and celebrate its natural resources and heritage; and grow tourism, among its guiding aims and principles outlined herein. The community truly wants to be “Correcting Course, Moving Forward.”

Previous Plans. This comprehensive plan is the third within the County prepared under the auspices of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The first was adopted in 1994, while the second comprehensive plan was adopted in 2004. A partial update of the second plan was also adopted in 2009 in accordance with state requirements. Both of these plans were intensively data



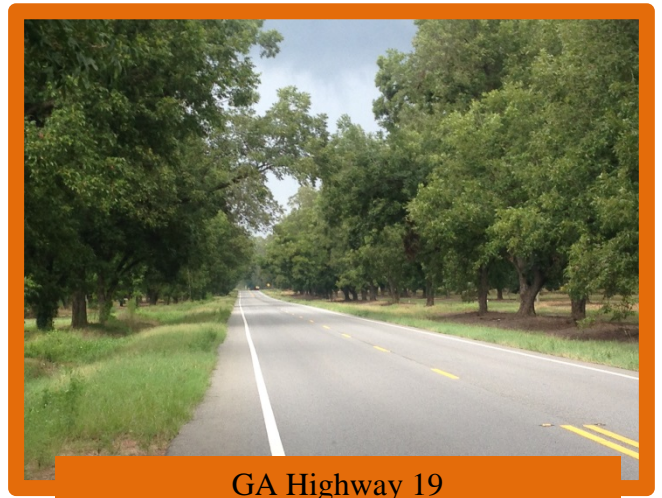
Lake at Little Ocmulgee State Park



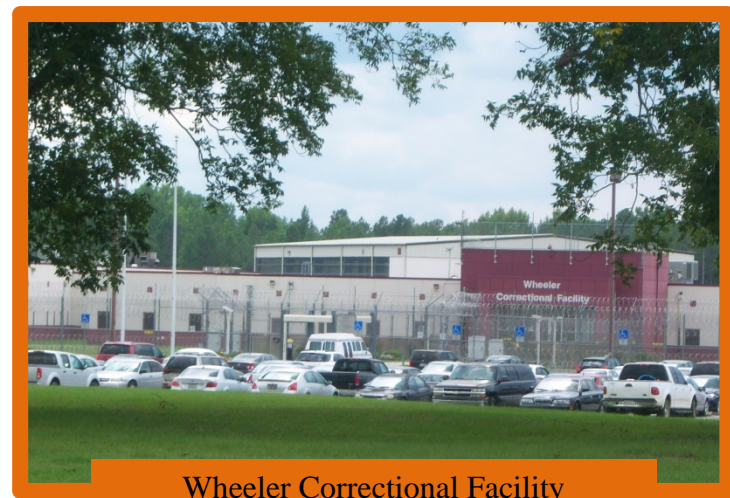
Woodland Plantation



Wheeler County fields and forests



GA Highway 19



Wheeler Correctional Facility



Sweetwater Horse Event Park

and state requirement driven, although local objectives are outlined and portrayed. The second plan, in particular, contains much local information which may not easily be found elsewhere and may remain of use. All of these plans should remain, at least in hard copy, available from the Wheeler County local governments and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission. At the time of this plan preparation, the second comprehensive plan and partial update are available in digital format on the state (www.georgiaplanning.com) and region (www.hogarc.org) websites.

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

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

under “Other Resources.” The State of Georgia has official labor and economic data and other links to state data at georgiafacts.org. Additional state sponsored economic data is available at www.georgialogistics.com. Excellent overall private data sources include www.city-data.com, and www.usa.com; while www.headwaterseconomics.org is an excellent source for socioeconomic information, including data and interpretation.

Population Projections. As noted earlier, the official 2010 Census population of Wheeler County was 7,421, up 20.1% from 2000’s 6,179. This growth was greater than that of Georgia’s 18.3% and more than twice that of the national U.S. rate of 9.7%, but was essentially prison population growth. Wheeler County’s location close to Dublin and Vidalia has helped. The U.S. Census Bureau estimate for 2013 Wheeler County population is 7,909, an increase of 488 persons, or 6.6% since 2010. This again is principally prison population growth. The high mark of population in Wheeler County was essentially at its creation in 1912 (a Census population of 9,817 in 1920), and there was a long period of decline until 1970. There was then essentially population stagnation until the location of the CCA prison in 1998. Wheeler County’s location, its natural and cultural resources, quality of life, CCA, and easy access to larger surrounding growth centers are positive factors and influences for future growth and development.

While past and present population levels are readily available on the world wide web, population projections are not so easily accessed. The Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for generating official state population projections for Georgia counties. OPB’s official projections for Wheeler County were contained in the Altamaha Regional Water Plan and showed growth to 8,652 in 2030, extrapolated to 9,361 in 2040. Current OPG projections for Wheeler County, as shown on the www.georgiastats.uga.edu website, are 9,861 persons in 2030. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission (HOGARC) also prepares population projections which have proven to be relatively accurate in the past. HOGARC’s population projections for Wheeler County, as noted in the 2013 Regional Assessment of its Regional Plan, show higher expected population levels than the Regional Water Plan, but lower expected levels than current OPB projections. These include 8,832 in 2030 and 10,505 in 2040.

Population Projections, Wheeler County

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
OPB, Water Plan	7,039		7,869		8,652		9,361
OPB, georgiastats	7,421	7,983	8,573	9,208	9,861		
Regional Commission	7,421	8,304	8,475	8,651	8,832	9,019	10,505

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

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

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

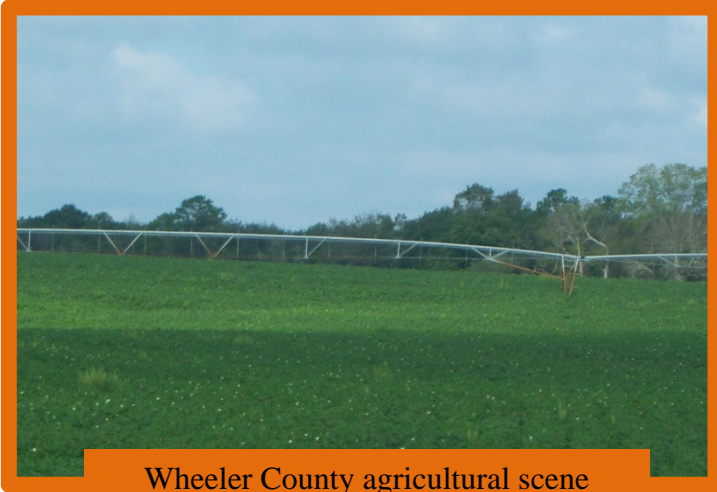
Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria Consideration. Wheeler County is part of the Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council. The adopted regional water plan, *Altamaha Regional Water Plan* (2011), was considered by the Wheeler County Local Plan

Coordination Committee and the local governments in preparation of this plan. This local comprehensive plan's objectives to maintain viable agriculture/forestry uses, protect/conservate natural resources, to enhance intergovernmental coordination and government/efficiencies, and upgrade local infrastructure all help implement, and maintain consistency with, the regional water plan. The vision of the regional water plan, "to wisely manage, develop and protect the region's water resources...to enhance quality of life..., protect natural systems..., and support the basin's economy," is inherent in this comprehensive plan's community vision and goals. In the Regional Water Planning Council's 2014 implementation report, Glenwood's CDBG for sewer improvements is specifically cited as supportive implementation activities. Alamo's similar sewer improvements and water system upgrades would also be considered supportive implementation.

Similarly, the Environmental Planning Criteria were also considered in the development of this comprehensive plan. The local governments of Wheeler County, including Wheeler County, the City of Alamo, and the City of Glenwood, have long been in compliance with the Environmental Planning Criteria, having adopted implementing, consistent "Environmental Conservation, On-Site Sewage Management, and Permit" Ordinances in 2000.

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

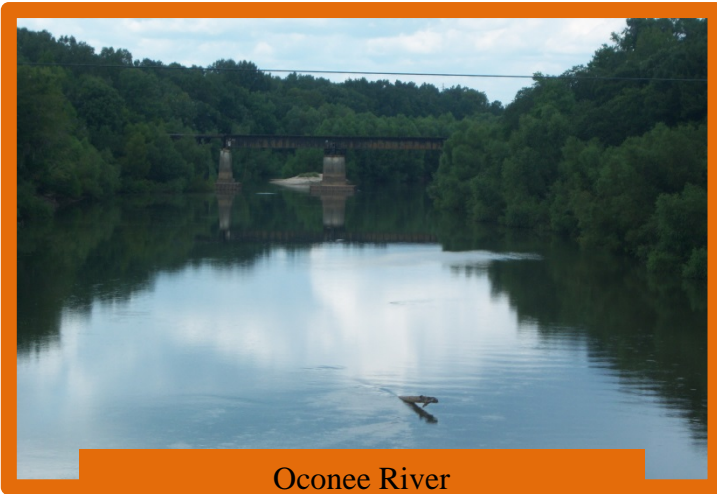
The Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan directly espouses (many of) these objectives and therefore, is very consistent with, and supportive of them. This comprehensive plan has goals to achieve a brighter future and better community for Wheeler County, which is consistent with a quality community and the DCA Quality Community Objectives. The Wheeler County Local Plan Coordination Committee reviewed and considered these Quality Community Objectives at one of its meetings.



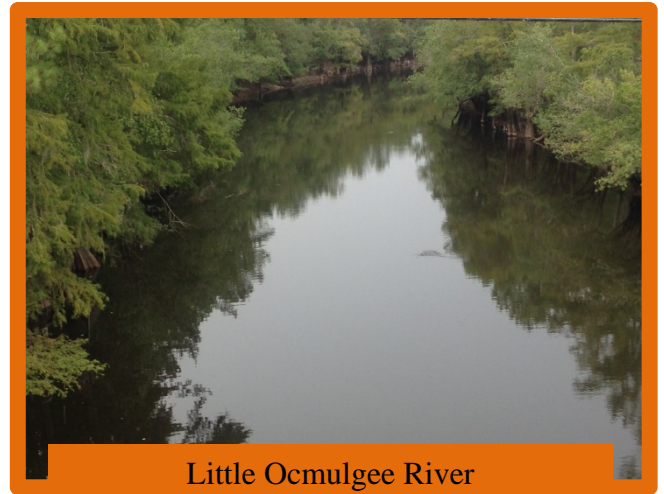
Wheeler County agricultural scene



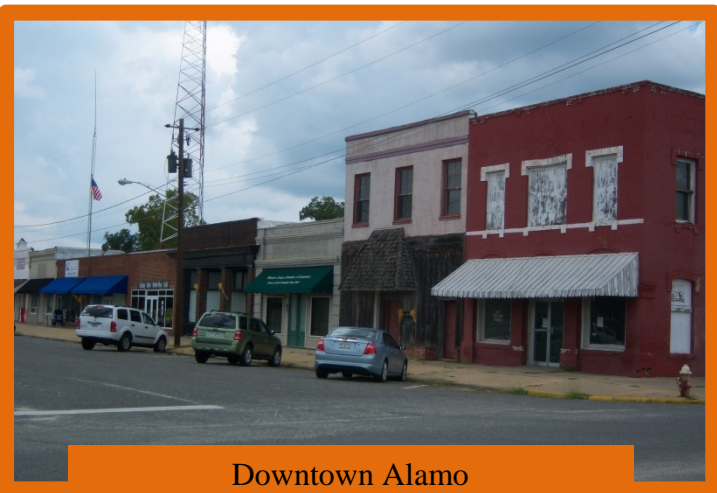
Historic barn at Woodland Plantation



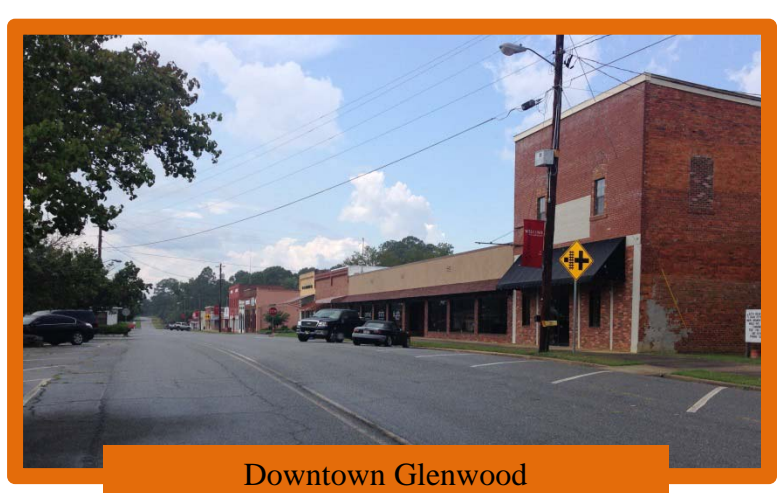
Oconee River



Little Ocmulgee River



Downtown Alamo



Downtown Glenwood

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

“Correcting Course, Moving Forward” is truly a locally developed guide to, and framework for, future growth and development of Wheeler County designed to generate local pride and enthusiasm, to accentuate assets and improve weaknesses, and ultimately bring about a desired future which makes the Wheeler County community an improved place to live and work with an outstanding and enhanced quality of life. It is realized that to take advantage of opportunities and to make a difference will take time and much effort, but it is felt this plan is pragmatic and practical in outlining a course and roadmap for steps and actions which can be achieved and which will continue to move the community forward. The plan continues with delineation of the Community Goals element and a Community Vision which essentially and succinctly summarizes the community's aspirations and plan's objectives. To ensure that municipal aspirations are clearly delineated, particularly for the smaller municipalities, separate

municipal descriptions are included. While the joint plan and the general Community Vision truly address all governments within the county, this should help those concerned with one governmental entity more clearly understand the joint plan in terms of that particular community.

COMMUNITY GOALS

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

COMMUNITY VISION

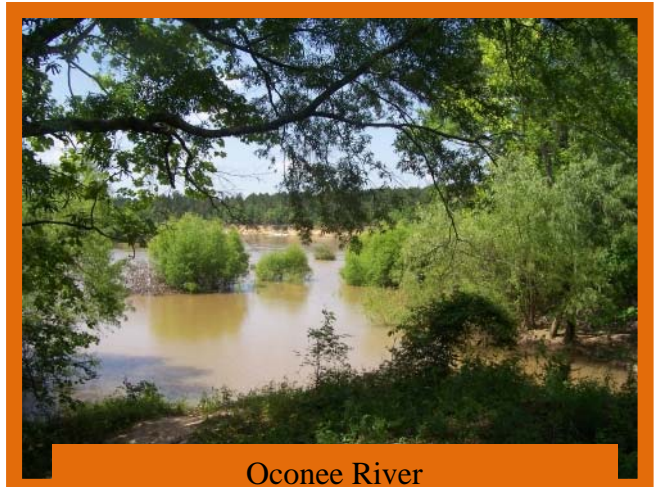
“Correcting Course, Moving Forward”

Nestled among the many green pine trees and relatively undeveloped, meandering blackwaters of south central Georgia is Wheeler County. This small, rural county is located in the “three rivers” area of south Georgia being bordered on the west by the Little Ocmulgee River, on the south by the Ocmulgee River, and on the east by the Oconee River. The seemingly endless green pine forests punctuated by pastoral farm landscapes have always been the mainstays of the economy, first through sawmilling and naval stores production from its early settlement, and to a large extent, remain so today through farming and forest management for pulp, chip-n-saw, and bio-fuels production. The community retains small town and rural charm with a slower-paced, low crime, and high quality of life very conducive to live and work, raise children, enjoy retirement or otherwise enjoy the great outdoors. Both Alamo, the county seat, and Glenwood, the county’s other incorporated municipality, each have only one traffic light in town (each on U.S. 280).

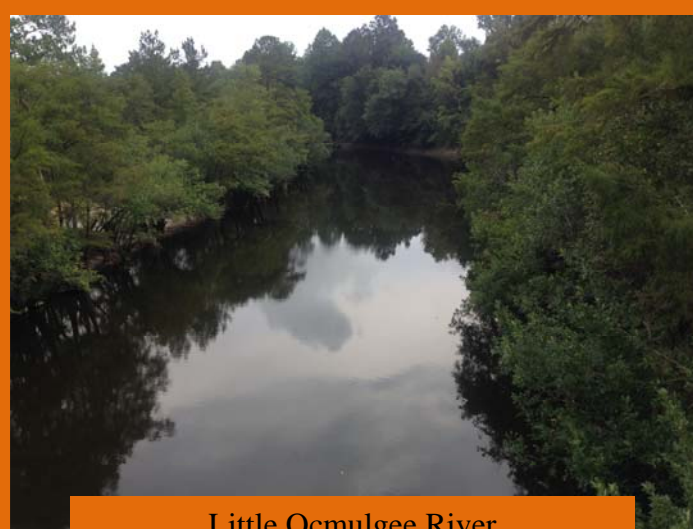
Wheeler County has many celebrated natural and cultural resources including quaint, historic homes constructed in farm related folk styles, and National Register of Historic Places recognized structures, including its Neoclassical style Courthouse and the rural landscape and developmental heritage from Victorian and earlier periods of Woodland Plantation. Wheeler County is home to a celebrated historic site, the Milly Troup Tomb and the Big Oak Tree, reputed to be the tomb of a young slave buried near her master. The adjacent oak now measures 30 feet in circumference with a canopy spreading over 140 feet. The County is also home to Little Ocmulgee State Park, a 1,360 acre state-owned recreational facility including a 256 acre lake renowned for its attractive beach formed from the naturally occurring fine white sands of the area. The park has a 60 room lodge and conference center and an 18-hole, world-class golf course. The park’s natural landscape includes towering pines, moss-draped live oaks, cypress and oak swamps, and surreal scrub oaks midst gleaming white sands, all accessible through well marked and maintained nature trails. Georgia travelers often take Georgia Highway 19 through Wheeler County between Lumber City and Dublin not only as a less-traveled motoring shortcut,



Wheeler County fields and forests



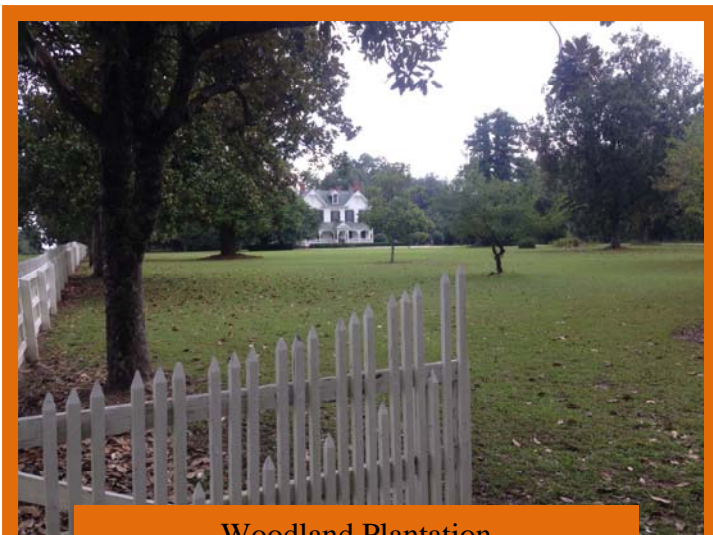
Oconee River



Little Ocmulgee River



Nature trail at Little Ocmulgee State Park



Woodland Plantation



Milly Troup Tomb and Big Oak Tree

but also because of its picturesque rural charm and pastoral beauty. The scenic route of the two-lane state highway meanders past old-fashioned farmhouses; country stores; charming frame churches; the historic community of Jordan; the City of Glenwood; and the nationally recognized Woodland Plantation and its history of farming and forestry transition, including the majestic 19-room Victorian Cottage, constructed in 1877.

Not only does the Wheeler County community enjoy such peaceful and relaxing natural and scenic beauty, but it also has always been noted for involved and progressive community leadership. The community's current two incorporated towns, Alamo and Glenwood, are the result of local leaders taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by the location of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad's extension from Abbeville to Lyons in the late 19th Century. The County's formal establishment in 1912 was led by Rep. William B. Kent with the urging and backing of residents and businessmen located west of the Oconee River in Montgomery County. The courage and leadership of Rep. Kent, who represented Montgomery County and was a judge in Mount Vernon, prevailed even though it led to his political defeat in the next election from upset Montgomery Countians. Rep. Kent, who had been a celebrated football player and hero at the University of Georgia, had also been instrumental with his leadership in saving football at UGA after the tragic on-the-field death of Georgia back Richard Von Gammon. Wheeler Countians were further instrumental in United Methodist Church and educational history of south Georgia. The Spring Hill area of the County was settled in the early 1800s, and was an early preaching place of Methodists. In the mid-1800s, this involvement and leadership led to establishment of a church campground, then local schools, then the establishment of the Clements Institute, the first Methodist District High School. These same local leaders helped establish South Georgia College in McRae in 1891. The Little Ocmulgee State Park, one of Georgia's oldest state parks, was established in the 1930s, in part, because of local business and community support with a desire for improvement, which enlisted political and Civilian Conservation Corps assistance.

Despite the best efforts of local leaders, circumstances, including the advent of the automobile, the mechanization of agriculture, the decline of the railroads and naval stores, and the growth of larger nearby regional economic centers in Dublin and Vidalia, worked against

Railroad in Glenwood



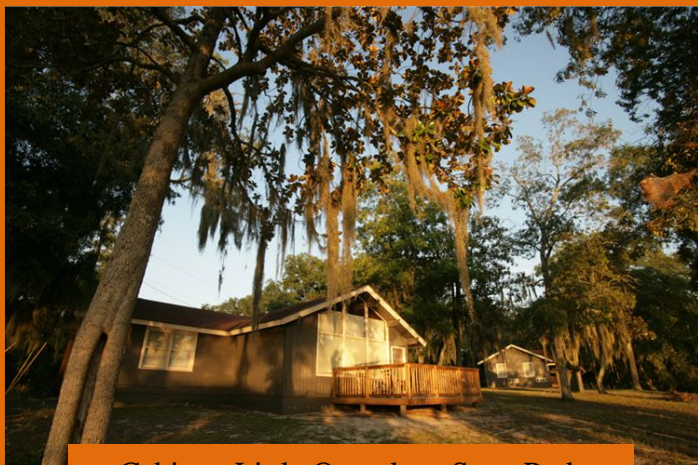
Old store at historic Jordan community



Historic Spring Hill



Historic Spring Hill School



Cabin at Little Ocmulgee State Park



Historic Glenwood School

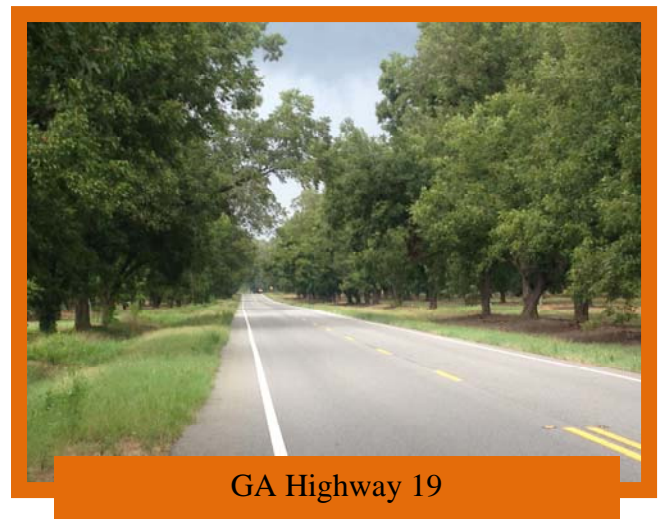
Wheeler County's growth and development from its formal beginnings. Wheeler County's population actually suffered declines from its inception in 1912 all the way to 1970. County population then remained basically stagnant until the 1998 establishment of the Wheeler Correctional Facility in Alamo by the Corrections Corporation of America. This facility has become the principal business engine of the County, expanding twice from its initial 1,700 prison beds to over 3,000 in 2014. Even so, the 2010 Census population of the County of 7,400 plus persons remained about 25 percent less than the County's 1920 population at its first official Census.

The community's desire to improve itself, led by progressive leadership, remains unabated. With the financial and economic push fueled by the CCA prison's location, the community is correcting course and moving forward. Both Alamo and Glenwood, with the aid of state assistance, have recently completed major expansions of their water and wastewater systems. A new library has been constructed in Alamo, and the community has developed a new industrial park. The community has upgraded its general aviation airport and extended its runway to 5,000 feet to better accommodate economic development. Facing financial woes at the local hospital, led to community involvement, private physician ownership enticement, and state political support to first keep the Lower Oconee Community Hospital in Glenwood open, and to now try to reopen it and keep some level of hospital access as an important and necessary functioning community service. The community has also supported recent state employment of a private management company to operate the Little Ocmulgee State Park, and this in turn, has led to facility upgrades and improvements making the state park even more attractive to visitors. The school system has enlisted the involvement of parents and the wider community to establish some innovative programs to reduce drop-out rates and improve graduation rates. The system has adopted the motto, "Graduation – The Only Option," and has the highest graduation rate of region schools. The community has attracted new ownership to the Sweetwater Horse Event Park just east of Glenwood which has brought horse racing, concerts, trail riding and other new outdoor adventures to the County.

Wheeler County envisions continued improvement to its infrastructure and services to facilitate even more compatible economic and residential development which further enhances

its attraction as a superb, “Old South” location in which to live and work. The future of Wheeler County is a larger community of new residents, workers, and retirees enjoying a continuing high quality of life as the community maintains its rural character and preserves its natural beauty and resources. The agricultural base and farming uses would be maintained and utilized for further economic development while compatible new facilities, shops, and industries would be developed to meet the growing needs of residents. The historic downtowns of Alamo and Glenwood would be revitalized, teeming commercial areas utilizing beautiful, rehabilitated historic buildings with charm and character. Both towns would be almost idyllic small town places to live and desired residential addresses.

Wheeler County considers itself a hidden gem of natural beauty and a simple, but high quality of life. It wishes to utilize and exploit these advantages, to continue correcting course and moving forward, but without loss of its unique and outstanding charm and character.



ALAMO

Description

The City of Alamo is located at the intersection of Georgia Highway 126 and U.S. 280 near the county's western border. This intersection has the town's only traffic light. The community is the county seat, and is home to the county's schools, library, and the CCA prison. The community is a microcosm, in many respects, of Wheeler County with its blend of natural and historic resources, and its family atmosphere where home, schools, and community work together. The town has a picturesque, historic downtown; the National Register-listed, columned on-all-sides 1917 Courthouse; a war memorial next to the centrally traversing railroad; and charming historic residences. In many aspects, the town exhibits a rural residential setting. Family, patriotism, and old-fashioned values extend to the town's name. It was named by the daughter of the town's founder, Judge John McRae, for the famous mission in San Antonio. The town development dates to the establishment of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad (later Seaboard Air Line) in 1890, although it was not formally incorporated until 1909. The latest population estimate for Alamo in 2014 is 4,182, but over 3,000 are prisoners in the CCA Wheeler Correctional Facility. The population of Alamo in 1990 was 855, but swelled after the CCA prison location in 1998 to 1,944 in 2000.

Vision

The City of Alamo wants to remain a quiet small town, and the governmental, educational, and social center of Wheeler County. The rural residential ambience and historic character, would be retained as well as the family and community spirit of homes, schools, businesses, and community working together for neighborly assistance and community improvement. The large, family oriented Fourth of July celebration held in the community is a symbol of such cohesion, and would be continued. The downtown and U.S. 280 corridor would house additional retail service, and job opportunities.

Needs

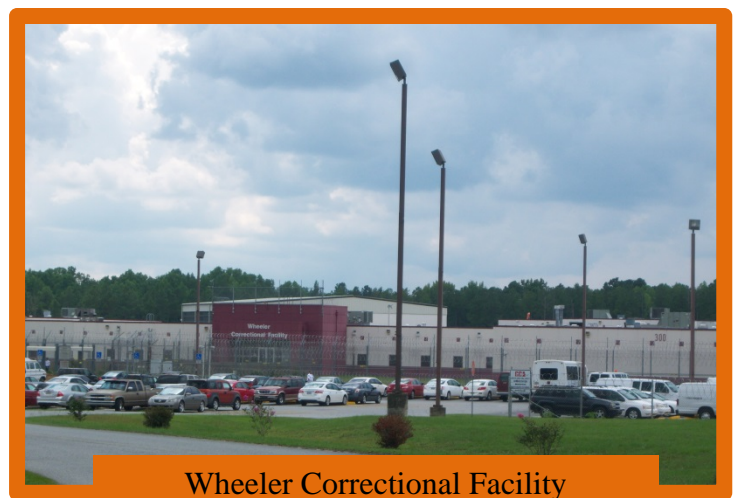
- Infrastructure upgrades and maintenance, particularly for enhanced fire protection
- Street improvements, sidewalks, and bike facilities
- Recreational facility improvements
- Downtown revitalization

Opportunities

- U.S. 280 and its future widening
- Heart of Georgia Railroad
- Historic fabric
- Industrial Park
- CCA Wheeler Correctional Facility



Historic agricultural structures, Alamo



Wheeler Correctional Facility

GLENWOOD

Description

The City of Glenwood is located at the intersection of Georgia Highway 19 and U.S. 280 (home to the City's only traffic light), about five miles west of the county's eastern boundary, the scenic Oconee River. The community is a typical small town of less than 1,000 persons with an intact historic downtown commercial block adjacent to the centrally traversing railroad, although most active commercial activity is adjacent to the parallel U.S. 280. The community is home to the National Register-listed 1920/30 Old Glenwood School, which remains in use as a regional alternative school. The community has been central to healthcare within Wheeler County with the location of one skilled care nursing home and the Lower Oconee Community Hospital. This 25-bed "critical access" hospital at least temporarily shuttered most services in 2014, and officials are exploring multiple avenues to provide at least critical first-response and immediate care. The community was established as a stop on the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad (later Seaboard Air Line) in 1890 because geographically it provided a low place with water for easily stopping and starting trains. The community name is believed to reflect this geography, and to refer to a small valley or glen. The City of Glenwood was formally incorporated in 1908. The current city population is estimated to be about 725, down from 747 in 2010 and nearly 900 in 1990 and 2000. The newly reinvigorated Sweetwater Horse Event Park facility is located only about a mile east of the community.

Vision

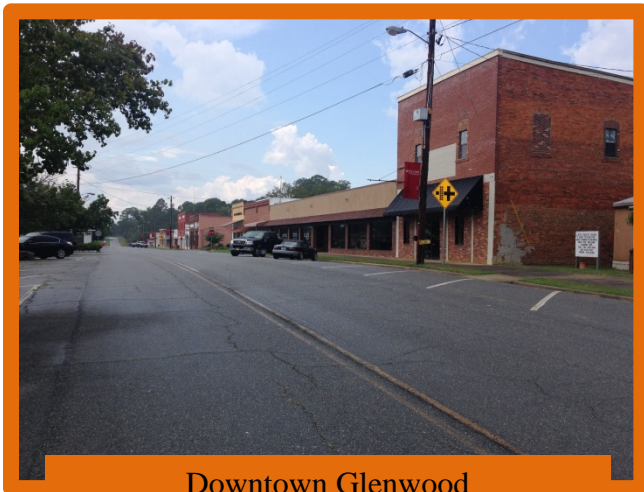
The City of Glenwood wants to remain a quiet, but bustling small town attractive to existing and future Wheeler County residents. The community would essentially remain a mixed use neighborhood filled with friendly, helping folks and with retail service, and recreational opportunities. It would remain the healthcare center of Wheeler County. The community hospital would at least offer immediate care services. The community's historic resources and downtown area would be preserved and adapted with appropriate uses.

Needs

- Infrastructure upgrades and maintenance
- Street improvements, sidewalks, and bike facilities
- Downtown revitalization
- Reestablishment of community hospital services

Opportunities

- U.S. 280 and its future widening
- Georgia 19 and tourism
- Heart of Georgia Railroad
- Historic fabric
- Industrial Site
- Sweetwater Horse Event Park and nearby natural resources



Downtown Glenwood

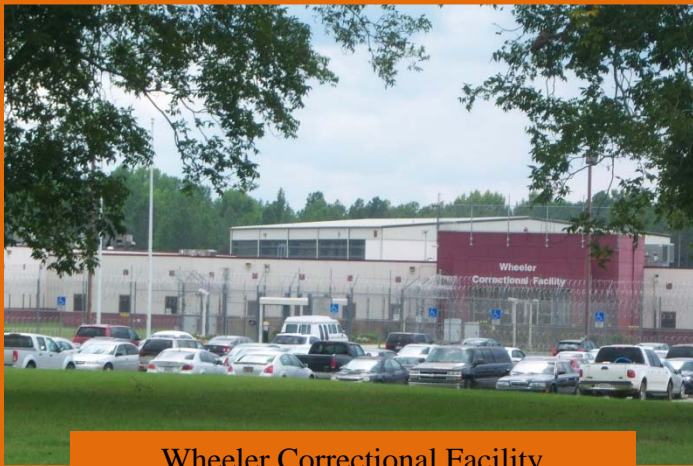


Historic residence

COMMUNITY GOALS

Economic Development

- Enhance intergovernmental cooperation
- Retain local graduates
- Address low education levels
- Address continuing education/job skills improvements
- Nurture existing businesses/industries/entrepreneurs
- Attract new businesses/industry/jobs
- Address/improve infrastructure needs
- Support continued development of existing industrial park/IDA building and site
- Improve transportation access/quality
- Develop/enhance tourism
- Support Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Enhance economic development marketing
- Upgrade community appearance/aesthetics
- Revitalize downtown Alamo and Glenwood
- Rural character preservation
- Assure viability/support/enhance agricultural/forestry uses
- Address growth management issues
- Support continued viability of Corrections Corporation of America prison at Alamo
- Promote quality of life/livability/location



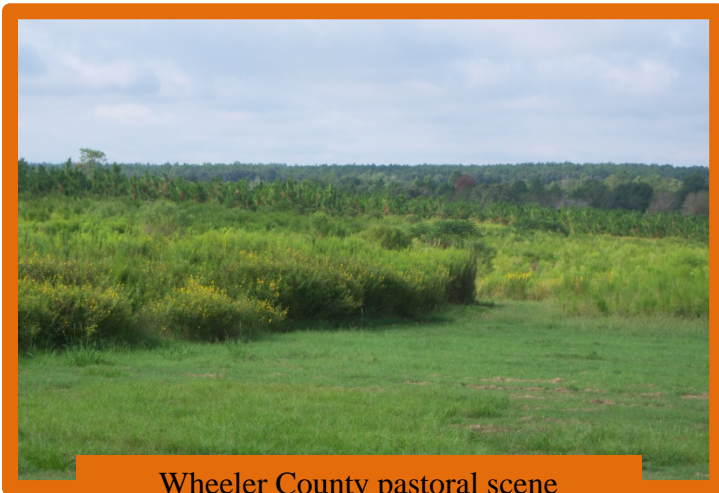
Wheeler Correctional Facility



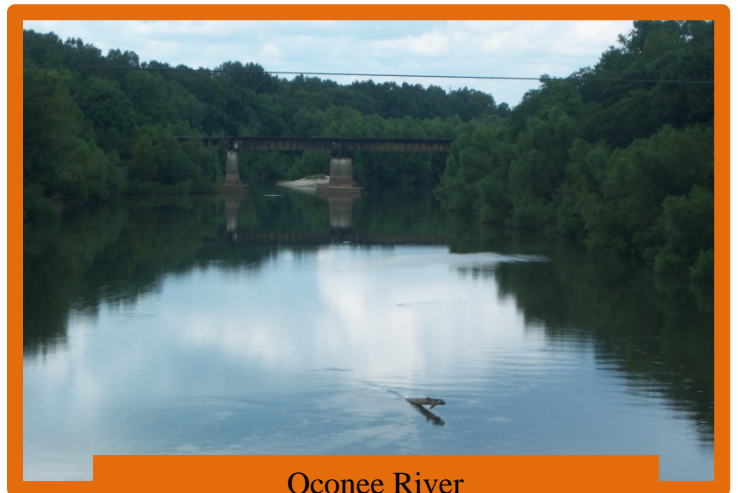
Golf course at Little Ocmulgee State Park

Natural and Cultural Resources

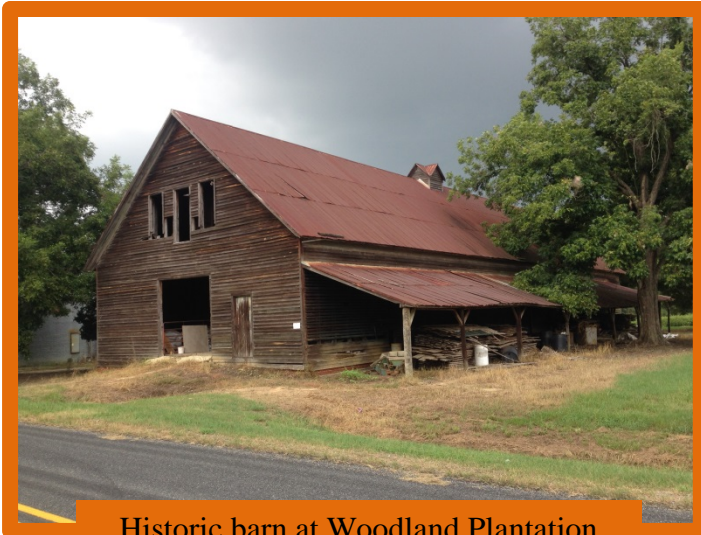
- Protect significant natural resources of County
- Seek compatible development/utilization
- Continue support for Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Utilize/preserve/adaptively use historic resources/heritage of County
- Address growth management/natural and cultural resources protection
- Improve community appearance/aesthetics
- Maintain open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses
- Increase GA Hwy. 19 tourism usage



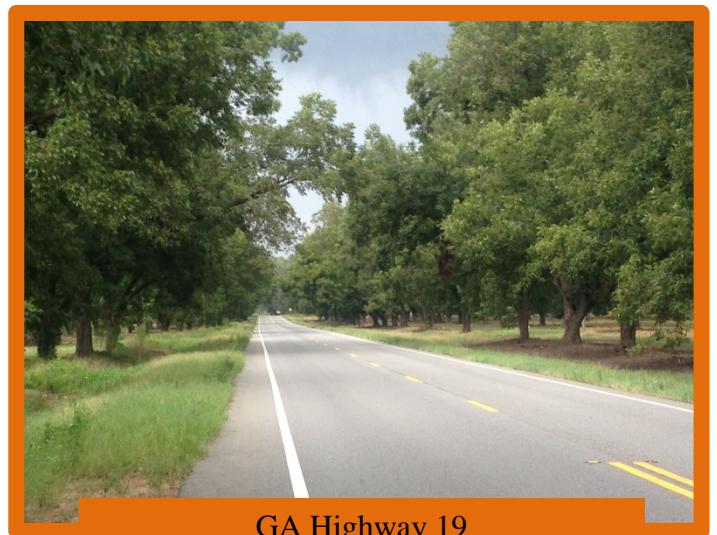
Wheeler County pastoral scene



Oconee River



Historic barn at Woodland Plantation



GA Highway 19

Housing

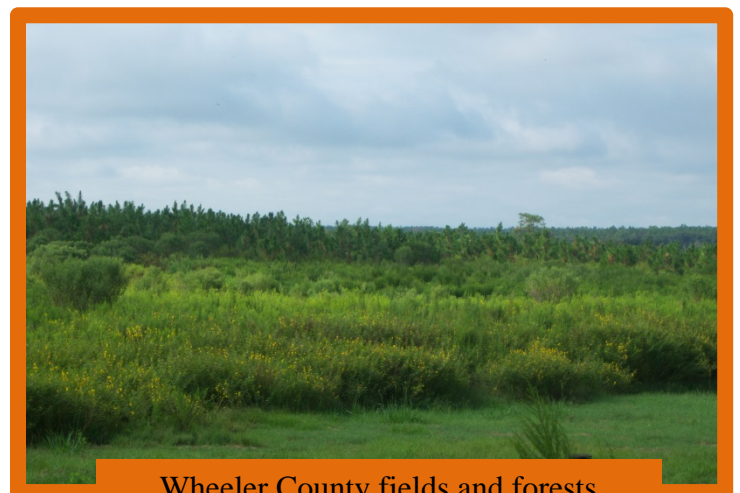
- Improve quality of existing and new housing
- Encourage diverse housing mix
- Market available housing
- Utilize state/federal programs
- Guide/plan residential development
- Upgrade community appearance
- Improve subdivision/manufactured housing/land use regulation/code enforcement

Land Use

- Address growth management/compatible development
- Improve subdivision/manufactured housing/land use regulation/code enforcement
- Protect rural character/quality of life
- Maintain open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses
- Develop/improve recreation/leisure use facilities
- Encourage infill development
- Maintain/improve community appearance/aesthetics
- Seek compatible development/utilization
- Conserve/protect flood zones countywide



Historic residence, Glenwood



Wheeler County fields and forests

Community Facilities and Services

- Maintain appropriate governmental facilities/services
- Address/improve infrastructure needs
- Utilize infrastructure expansion/upgrades to guide growth
- Improve/promote transportation access/quality
- Maintain modern airport with Telfair County
- Maintain/upgrade Wheeler County Industrial Park (Alamo) and IDA building and site in Glenwood
- Maintain quality educational facilities/services
- Maintain/enhance solid waste management/recycling facilities/programs/initiatives
- Maintain/reestablish local hospital and other health care access/facilities/services within the community
- Encourage utilization/enhancement/promotion of cultural facilities/activities
- Continue to upgrade public safety/emergency medical facilities/services
- Improve fire service countywide
- Develop/improve/promote recreation facilities and programs
- Expand senior services

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Maintain/enhance local, regional, state cooperation
- Seek sharing/cooperation/consolidation in service delivery
- Address/continue coordinated planning/growth management



Wheeler County Industrial park



Wheeler County Public Library, Alamo

LONG TERM COMMUNITY POLICIES

Economic Development

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

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

The community will work together to improve education and skill levels to ensure a better-qualified workforce for existing and future employers

The community will continue to support and seek the enhancement of educational opportunities provided to the community by Oconee Fall Line Technical College

The community will collaboratively support the local school system and cooperative efforts to engage students to remain in school, thus continuing to reduce the local dropout rate and improving graduation and literacy rates

The community will support and promote programs for the retention of existing local industries and entrepreneurs in its support and quest of business/industry retention and additional job opportunities for local residents

The community will actively recruit new industry, small business, and commercial/retail development compatible with, and supportive of, the resources, infrastructure, existing economy, and the natural environments of the community

The community will work to attract a diverse mix of jobs appropriate to the educational/skills levels of the local workforce

The community will work to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure, including broadband telecommunications, and industrial park/site improvements to facilitate and accommodate desired commercial and industrial growth

The community will maintain adequate water/sewer service provision and pursue further facility/service upgrades and expansion as needed

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

The community will continue to work together with Telfair County to maintain a modern airport through continued necessary infrastructure/equipment upgrades and maintenance

The community will seek to enhance and grow tourism as an important component of the local economy through existing and new festivals/celebrations, recreation and leisure facilities/activities, bicycling, agri-tourism, nature based tourism, horse event park and facilities promotion, and recognition/promotion of its historic districts/cultural sites

The community will continue to seek retail trade/service sector and hospitality business development to further enhance the local economy and support increased tourism

The community will work cooperatively to increase awareness of existing tourism attractions and create new events/attractions along U.S. 441 (Heritage Highway), U.S. 280, and GA Hwy. 19 and promote use of these routes

The community will continue to support, utilize, and promote Little Ocmulgee State Park, and will encourage the development of additional amenities to further support/cultivate tourism

The community will work to enhance economic development marketing efforts, including promotion of its proximity to retail markets, through an active Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, regional cooperation, and other regional/state agencies

The community will cooperate to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas and substandard housing, and otherwise improve the appearance and aesthetics of the county and its municipalities

The community will support and target downtown revitalization and investment efforts in Alamo and Glenwood to maintain them as important, functioning economic, social, and governmental centers

The community will preserve its unique landscapes and natural beauty and foster development compatible with its existing rural character and quality of life

The community will maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as agri-tourism and nature based tourism

The community will proactively manage and guide its future growth and development through community investment and appropriate regulation

The community will work to support the Corrections Corporation of America prison at Alamo and its future growth, as needed, through infrastructure/equipment upgrades and maintenance

The community will actively strive to attract new residents, including retirees, who seek a slower paced, excellent quality of life in a small town/rural setting

Natural and Cultural Resources

The community will seek to conserve and protect the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers, the county's significant groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, floodplains, other important natural resources, and the open spaces and landscapes of the county

The community will seek and promote development that is respectful of, compatible with, and maintains and supports the existing rural character, open spaces, and landscapes of Wheeler County

The community will capitalize on its economic opportunities associated with its open spaces and natural and cultural resources, and will seek to promote, develop, and cultivate additional compatible uses of these resources

The community will seek to conserve and protect Little Ocmulgee State Park and will work to improve and promote other outdoor recreation or nature venues

The community will maintain, utilize, promote and preserve its heritage through county museum development and other means, and will seek to encourage public and private adaptive use/reuse of its historic buildings, historic districts, and landmark structures

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

The community will work to improve its appearance and aesthetics through code enforcement and other means

The community will seek development compatible with its existing rural/agricultural character and quality of life

The community will encourage tourism use, including possible Georgia Scenic Byway designation, of GA Hwy. 19 for increased nature-based, heritage, and agri-tourism along the route

Housing

The community will work toward both improving the quality of existing housing and promoting quality new development, including manufactured homes

The community will address substandard housing and concentrations of blight, including manufactured housing developments, and will cooperatively upgrade their quality and appearance through rehabilitation, removal, code enforcement and regulation

The community will seek to encourage a diverse mix of safe, quality housing, including affordable, rental, workforce housing, and manufactured homes

The community will work to market available housing throughout the region to attract new residents, including retirees, seeking small town/rural character and quality of life

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

The community will provide guidance to, and for location of, compatible housing development through planning, infrastructure location, and regulation

The community will upgrade its appearance and the quality of its housing developments through the adoption and use of updated coordinated land use/manufactured housing regulations, code enforcement, and volunteer programs

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

Land Use

The community will plan, manage, and guide its future growth and development, and encourage growth compatible with its existing character

The community will cooperate to implement and enforce the need for updated, coordinated and comprehensive land use planning, manufactured housing/land use regulations, and construction code enforcement

The community will encourage growth which preserves and protects its rural character and quality of life

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

The community will enhance existing recreation facilities and develop new facilities/uses, which will complement/promote tourism and the community's character

The community will work to encourage appropriate infill development through planning, infrastructure location, and regulation

The community will continue to maintain and improve its appearance and aesthetics through ongoing landscaping/beautification efforts, code enforcement, and other means

The community will seek and promote development that is compatible with existing infrastructure location to guide future growth

The community will seek to conserve and protect its flood zones countywide

Community Facilities and Services

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

The community will maintain, upgrade, and expand its existing infrastructure and services to enhance the quality of life, and to attract desired, compatible growth and development

The community will guide growth and development to areas of existing infrastructure and will plan and develop expansions to help bring about desired patterns of growth

The community will maintain adequate water/sewer service provision, including larger line sizes for fire protection, and pursue further development of additional facilities and areas of service as needed

The community will seek and support availability of appropriate local broadband telecommunications service

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

The community will continue to work together with Telfair County to maintain a modern airport through further infrastructure/equipment upgrades, as necessary, and ongoing maintenance

The community will continue to develop and maintain the infrastructure at the industrial park in Alamo and the Glenwood site to facilitate and accommodate desired commercial and industrial growth

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

The community will enhance the County's solid waste/recycling facilities, programs, and initiatives, in conjunction with other efforts to improve community appearance

The community will work together to maintain and upgrade Lower Oconee Community Hospital and other local health care facilities and services conducive to economic development and a high quality of life

The community will encourage and support the maintenance, enhancement, and promotion of existing cultural facilities, events, and opportunities, such as the new public library, and will further develop cultural facilities and assets to pursue and promote additional venues/activities

The community will continue to improve public safety and emergency medical services and facilities to improve quality of service and better coordinate in times of emergency and disasters, including improved communications links and jail expansion

The community will work to improve fire service county-wide, including adequate training of personnel

The community will seek to enhance and promote existing parks, including the Wheeler County Recreation Complex, and establish new parks/recreational facilities and activities to serve existing and future populations and to further cultivate/support tourism

The community will continue to seek provision of additional senior services as funds are available

Intergovernmental Coordination

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

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

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

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Economic Development

Issue 1: Intergovernmental cooperation enhancement

Needs:

- Enhance intergovernmental cooperation on the local, regional, and state levels
- Continue participation in Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Participate in Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, Altamaha River Partnership, Oconee River Greenway Authority

Opportunities:

- Continued active participation with Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Recently organized Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership
- Altamaha River Partnership
- Oconee River Greenway Authority

Issue 2: Local graduate retention

Needs:

- Increased job opportunities to retain local graduates
- Utilize local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) One Stop
- Participate in classes/programs offered at Oconee Fall Line Technical College's Adult Learning Center
- Business/industry retention/expansion
- Attraction of new economic development

Opportunities:

- WIA One Stop
- Oconee Fall Line Technical College's Adult Learning Center
- Active Chamber of Commerce
- CCA Prison
- Little Ocmulgee EMC
- Potential solar power company development

Issue 3: Low education levels

Needs:

- Continue to lower drop-out rates and increase graduation rates
- Improve illiteracy rates
- Seek Certified Literate Community designation

Opportunities:

- Oconee Fall Line Technical College's Adult Learning Center
- Public/private partnership with local school system
- Support/participate in programs, such as Great Promise Partnership, which target at-risk youth to complete high school/prepare for post-secondary life
- Support of local school system's "Graduation-The Only Option" emphasis and success

Issue 4: Continuing education/jobs skills improvements

Needs:

- Improve continuing education/job skill levels to provide better qualified workforce
- Diverse mix of jobs appropriate to the educational/skill levels of local workforce
- Retention of local graduates
- Seek Certified Work Ready designation

Opportunities:

- Oconee Fall Line Technical College's Adult Learning Center
- WIA One Stop

Issue 5: Existing business/industry entrepreneur retention

Needs:

- Nurture existing businesses, industries, and entrepreneurs to help retain them and encourage expansion, as appropriate
- Increased job opportunities to retain local graduates
- Seek state support and utilization of state assistance/designation programs

Opportunities:

- CCA Prison
- Little Ocmulgee EMC
- Active Chamber of Commerce

Issue 6: New business attraction

Needs:

- Attract new economic development, including small business/entrepreneurs
- Create more jobs to address high local unemployment and poverty rates
- Retail trade/service sector and hospitality business development
- Investigate feasibility of hiring economic development director, possibly in conjunction with Dodge and Telfair counties
- Enhance economic development funding/activities/marketing through an active Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority, and other regional/state agencies
- Complete development of new community website

- Retain local graduates through provision of increased job opportunities
- Seek state support and utilization of state assistance/designation programs
- Seek Certified Work Ready designation
- Diverse mix of jobs appropriate to education/skill levels of local workplace
- Support/enhance agribusiness development
- Develop infrastructure for industrial recruitment
- Revitalize downtown Alamo and Glenwood

Opportunities:

- Active Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority
- Proximity to retail markets/jobs opportunities
- Potential solar power development company
- Existing industrial park (Alamo)
- Development Authority building/site (Glenwood)
- Tax abatement schedule approved in 2014
- Middle Georgia Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 status

Issue 7: Infrastructure provision/maintenance/upgrades

Needs:

- Maintain adequate water/sewer service provision and pursue facility/service upgrades and expansion, as needed
- Replace all water lines less than 6 inches in diameter in Alamo
- Install additional 6 inch water lines and fire hydrants along US 280 in Glenwood
- Replace sewer lines in southeastern quadrant of Alamo
- Replace existing lift station on U.S. 280 West in Glenwood
- Replace sewer lines in western half of Glenwood
- Seek/support availability of appropriate local broadband telecommunications service, including upgrades at Alamo City Hall

Opportunities:

- Recent major water/sewer system upgrades in Alamo and Glenwood
- Feasibility study for organizing regional utility to provide fiber optic service
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other potential federal/state funding sources

Issue 8: Local industrial/commercial site/park

Needs:

- Further develop/improve county's existing industrial park in Alamo and Development Authority building and site in Glenwood via provision of infrastructure, as needed
- Enhance economic development funding/activities/marketing through an active Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Authority, Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority, and other regional/state agencies
- Seek to employ economic development director, possibly in conjunction with Dodge and Telfair counties

Opportunities:

- Available industrial sites
- Active Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Development Authority
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Tax abatement incentive

Issue 9: Transportation access/quality

Needs:

- Seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance/support economic development efforts
- Improve transportation access/quality, such as U.S. 280 and U.S. 441 4-laning
- Maintain and upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through

resurfacing, paving, and other improvements

- Drainage improvements in Alamo and Glenwood
- Promote usage of U.S. 441 (Heritage Highway) and U.S. 280
- Purchase new equipment for County Roads Department
- Complete cultural resources survey for downtown Alamo sidewalk improvements project
- Improve sidewalks throughout Alamo
- Continue to work with Telfair County to maintain a modern airport, including improvements such as extending taxiway parallel to runway, constructing fuel station and new hangars
- Develop bicycle support facilities

Opportunities:

- Proximity to I-16
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide
- Completed sidewalk and curb rehabilitation along U.S. 280 in Glenwood
- Airport upgrades, including runway extension
- Heart of Georgia Railroad, including rail service to/from Cordele Inland Port

Issue 10: Tourism development/enhancement

Needs:

- Develop/enhance/promote tourism, including festivals, recreation, bicycling, nature-based, agri-tourism, and heritage tourism
- Seek retail trade/service sector and hospitality business development to support increased tourism
- Support Little Ocmulgee State Park's continued viability under private management
- Conserve/protect Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers within Wheeler County and participate in multi-regional river advocacy groups, including Altamaha River Partnership, Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, and Oconee River Greenway

Authority

- Support/promote U.S. 441 (Heritage Highway) and U.S. 280 use and 4-laning, possible regional bike route development, and existing and new tourism attractions/events along the routes
- Seek increased heritage tourism utilizing downtown Alamo and Glenwood, Woodland Plantation, scenic route GA Highway 19, and other resources

Opportunities:

- Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers
- Altamaha River Partnership, Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, and Oconee River Greenway Authority
- Sweetwater Horse Event Park
- U.S. 441 Heritage Highway and U.S. 280
- Downtown Alamo and Glenwood
- Woodland Plantation
- Scenic GA Highway 19
- Spring Hill Methodist Church and School
- Existing 4th of July celebration/fireworks in Alamo
- State scenic byway designation
- Possible cooperative U.S. 280 corridor yard sale

Issue 11: Little Ocmulgee State Park

Needs:

- Support/utilize/promote Little Ocmulgee State Park, and encourage upgrades/development of additional amenities to support tourism

Opportunities:

- Private management of park
- Popular golf course with reasonable user fees

- Addition of new amenities, such as splash pad

Issue 12: Economic development marketing enhancement

Needs:

- Enhance economic marketing of Wheeler County community through active chamber of commerce, development authority, regional cooperation, regional/state agencies, and other means
- Investigate feasibility of hiring economic development director, possibly in conjunction with Dodge and Telfair counties
- Enhance intergovernmental coordination on the local, regional, and state levels
- Continue participation in Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Participate in Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership and Altamaha River Partnership
- Complete development of new community website
- Seek Certified Work Ready and Entrepreneur Friendly community designations

Opportunities:

- Active chamber of commerce
- Continued active participation with Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Recently organized Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership
- Altamaha River Partnership

Issue 13: Community appearance/aesthetics

Needs:

- Improve general community appearance/aesthetics through code enforcement, landscaping/beautification efforts, and other means
- Work to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas, and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing

- Seek Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and/or other federal, state, private funding to assist with improvements
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood, including additional streetscape improvements, as needed
- Maintain/upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements

Opportunities:

- CDBG or other funding assistance for blighted areas, substandard housing, infrastructure upgrades
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide

Issue 14: Downtown revitalization

Needs:

- Support/target downtown revitalization and investment efforts in Alamo and Glenwood to maintain them as vital, functioning economic, social, and governmental centers
- Continue streetscape improvements, as needed, in downtown Alamo and Glenwood
- Complete cultural resources survey required before sidewalk upgrades in downtown Alamo
- Utilize/maintain existing historic structures

Opportunities:

- Downtown Glenwood curb and sidewalk rehabilitation completed and new banners installed
- Alamo's new welcome signs installed
- Historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

Issue 15: Rural character preservation

Needs:

- Proactively protect community's rural character through community investment and appropriate regulation which encourage/support compatible uses
- Support/market continued agricultural land uses
- Promote/develop increased agri-tourism opportunities

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage
- Historic small towns
- Alamo's July 4th celebration/other festivals

Issue 16: Agricultural/forestry uses viability

Needs:

- Maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as agri-tourism and nature-based tourism
- Market agricultural/forestry uses
- Promote/develop agri-tourism venues and events
- Work to support/enhance local agriculture and agribusiness
- Seek development compatible and supportive of existing rural/agricultural character

Opportunities:

- Low population densities
- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage

Issue 17: Growth Management

Needs:

- Proactively manage and guide growth and development and protect/conserv community's important natural and cultural resources through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Encourage growth compatible with existing rural character and quality of life
- Seek and promote development in areas already served by public infrastructure

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage

Issue 18: Corrections Corporation of America prison

Needs:

- Continue to support CCA prison at Alamo and its future growth, as needed, through infrastructure/equipment upgrades and maintenance
- Continued local, regional, state cooperation

Opportunities:

- Presence of CCA prison at Alamo providing jobs and contributing to local population figures

Issue 19: Community pride/location and quality of life

Needs:

- Promote the excellent quality of life of Wheeler County to potential residents/retirees and businesses
- Preserve community's natural beauty and unique landscapes, and encourage development compatible with the existing rural character
- Proactively manage and guide future growth and development through

community investment and appropriate regulation

Opportunities:

- Lower cost of living
- Low crime rate
- Convenient location to Dublin, Macon, and other larger communities
- Little Ocmulgee State Park (and golf course)
- Active chamber of commerce

Natural and Cultural Resources

Issue 1: Protection of significant natural resources

Needs:

- Conserve/protect Wheeler County community's significant natural resources, including the Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, floodplains, and other important natural resources, as well as open spaces and landscapes
- Continue enforcing Environmental Conservation Ordinance addressing significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors
- Support sensitive development compatible with and supportive of natural resources, open spaces, and landscapes, as appropriate
- Manage desired growth through community investment and appropriate land use and environmental regulations
- Preserve rural agricultural character

Opportunities:

- Environmental Conservation Ordinance
- Cooperation with Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Resource Plan
- Conservation easement along Oconee River held by Georgia Forestry

Commission

- Updated County floodplain management ordinance

Issue 2: Compatible development/utilization of natural and cultural resources

Needs:

- Encourage and cultivate compatible uses/economic development of Wheeler County's natural and cultural resources, as appropriate
- Promote increased usage of Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers and maintain/upgrade landings, as needed
- Proactively manage and guide growth and development through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Promote increased nature-based, agri-tourism, and heritage tourism
- Encourage rehabilitation of historic structures for compatible new uses
- Support downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood

Opportunities:

- Public landings along Oconee River in Wheeler County (Highway 46 Boat Ramp, Mt. Vernon Bridge, and Clark's Bluff)
- Multi-regional river advocacy groups, including Altamaha River Partnership, Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, and Oconee River Greenway Authority
- Historic resources, including Wheeler County Courthouse; old Glenwood School; downtown Alamo and Glenwood; Woodland Plantation; Milly Troup Tomb/Big Oak Tree; and others
- Scenic GA Hwy. 19
- Sweetwater Horse Event Park

Issue 3: Little Ocmulgee State Park viability and enhancement

Needs:

- Support continued viability and enhancement and promote use of Little Ocmulgee State Park in Wheeler County

- Seek funding to develop bike path(s) linking Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC Region’s other two state parks, Gordonia-Alatamaha and George L. Smith, with Little Ocmulgee

Opportunities:

- To increase recreation and nature-based tourism in Wheeler County in conjunction with increased utilization of Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Private management of Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Golf course enhancements and splash pads

Issue 4: Historic resources preservation

Needs:

- Encourage public and private rehabilitation of historic structures for compatible new uses, as appropriate
- Promote increased heritage tourism, including utilization of historic landmarks/resources such as the old Glenwood School, Woodland Plantation, Milly Troup Tomb/Big Oak Tree, Georgia Hwy. 19, and others for tours, other special events/activities
- Support historic downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood, including completion of cultural resource survey in Alamo
- Maintain historic architectural integrity of National Register-listed Wheeler County Courthouse and its continued usage
- Seek to organize a local historical society
- Pursue development of a county museum
- Continue to celebrate local July 4th fireworks event in Alamo, and develop other heritage themed activities/festivals, as appropriate

Opportunities:

- National Register-listed Wheeler County Courthouse, Woodland Plantation, and Glenwood School

- Downtown Alamo and Glenwood revitalization
- Local heritage festival, including Alamo's 4th of July celebration
- Available historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives, which provide economic assistance to private property owners

Issue 5: Growth management/natural and cultural resources protection

Needs:

- Proactively manage and guide growth and development and protect/conservе Wheeler County community's significant natural and cultural resources through community investment and appropriate regulation
- Encourage growth compatible with existing rural character and quality of life
- Seek and promote development in areas already served by public infrastructure

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage
- Conservation easement along Oconee River held by Georgia Forestry Commission

Issue 6: Community appearance/aesthetics

Needs:

- Improve general community appearance/aesthetics through code enforcement, landscaping/beautification efforts, and other means
- Provide code enforcement in unincorporated area of Wheeler County and Glenwood
- Work to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas, and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and/or other federal, state, private funding to assist with improvements
- Continue revitalization of downtown Alamo and Glenwood, including additional

streetscape improvements, as needed

- Maintain/upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements

Opportunities:

- Codes enforcement officer in Alamo
- CDBG or other funding assistance for blighted areas, substandard housing, infrastructure upgrades
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide

Issue 7: Open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses viability

Needs:

- Maintain viability of open spaces and agricultural/forestry uses through traditional and alternative enterprises
- Encourage development of agri-businesses, agri-tourism, nature-based tourism, and other economic efforts supportive of agriculture and forestry
- Market agricultural/forestry uses
- Continue to support and utilize UGA Agriculture Extension Service to provide assistance to farmers/landowners countywide
- Preserve rural agricultural character
- Seek development compatible with and supportive of existing rural character
- Manage desired growth through appropriate land use and environmental regulations countywide

Opportunities:

- Unspoiled open spaces
- Low population density
- Agricultural/forestry traditional land uses
- UGA Agriculture Extension service

Issue 8: Georgia Highway 19 Promotion

Needs:

- Encourage increased nature-based, heritage, and agri-tourism along Georgia Highway 19 in Wheeler County
- Consider pursuing Georgia Scenic Byway designation for GA Highway 19 through Wheeler County

Opportunities:

- Increased tourism use of Georgia Highway 19
- Georgia Scenic Byway designation

Housing

Issue 1: Existing/new housing stock quality

Needs:

- Improve quality of existing and new housing stock through rehabilitation, codes enforcement, and/or other means
- Improve and/or remove substandard housing/eliminate blight
- Utilize available state/federal programs, such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), as appropriate
- Improve community aesthetics/appearance
- Update coordinated, comprehensive countywide land use/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations and code enforcement
- Consider rehiring codes enforcement officer in Alamo and sharing with other governments

Opportunities:

- Pursue CDBG, CHIP, and other public/private programs to rehabilitate low and moderate income housing
- Land use regulations in Alamo

Issue 2: Encourage diverse housing mix

Needs:

- Seek to encourage diverse housing mix of safe, quality housing, including affordable, rental, workforce, and manufactured homes
- Additional affordable housing
- Strengthen/establish coordinated, comprehensive land use/subdivision/manufactured housing/code enforcement regulations

Opportunities:

- Georgia Department of Community Affairs and other housing assistance programs

Issue 3: Market available housing

Needs:

- Work to market available housing to attract potential new residents/retirees
- Improve quality of existing housing stock through rehabilitation, codes enforcement, and/or other means
- Promote relatively low housing/living costs
- Improve community aesthetics/appearance

Opportunities:

- Available housing
- Relatively low housing/living costs
- Quality of life
- New resident/retiree attraction
- Chamber of Commerce

Issue 4: Utilize state and federal programs

Needs:

- Encourage use of state and federal programs for affordable/quality housing and to encourage home ownership
- Additional affordable housing

Opportunities:

- Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Georgia Department of Community Affairs Housing Programs, and others
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CHIP funding for substandard housing rehabilitation/removal, supporting infrastructure, and related improvements

Issue 5: Residential development planning

Needs:

- Guide/plan residential development using appropriate coordinated land use, subdivision, manufactured housing, environmental, and other regulations, as appropriate
- Code enforcement for unincorporated area of Wheeler County and Glenwood
- Consider rehiring codes enforcement officer in Alamo and sharing with other governments

Opportunities:

- Codes in Alamo
- Land use regulations in Alamo

Issue 6: Community appearance

Needs:

- Upgrade Wheeler County’s community appearance through codes enforcement, landscaping/beautification efforts, and other means
- Codes enforcement for unincorporated area of Wheeler County and Glenwood
- Consider rehiring codes enforcement officer in Alamo and sharing with other governments
- Work to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas, and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CHIP, and/or other federal, state, private funding to assist with improvements
- Continue downtown Alamo and Glenwood revitalization efforts
- Maintain/upgrade, as needed, existing roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements

Opportunities:

- CDBG or other funding assistance for blighted areas, substandard housing, infrastructure upgrades
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide

Issue 7: Subdivision/manufactured housing/land use regulation and construction code enforcement

Needs:

- Implement/enforce updated, coordinated, and comprehensive land use planning/manufactured housing/land use regulations and construction code enforcement in Glenwood and unincorporated Wheeler County
- Consider establishing joint construction codes enforcement for unincorporated Wheeler County and Glenwood, possibly in conjunction with rehiring officer serving Alamo

Opportunities:

- Land use regulations in Alamo

Land Use

Issue 1: Growth management/compatible development

Needs:

- Address growth management through planning, appropriate regulation, and code enforcement
- Implement/enforce updated, coordinated, and comprehensive countywide land development regulations, including subdivision and manufactured housing standards
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood
- Preserve agricultural and forestry land uses
- Preserve rural character/quality of life
- Utilize infrastructure to guide growth
- Encourage compatible infill development and location of use management
- Improve transportation facilities

Opportunities:

- Alamo and Glenwood downtown revitalization
- Ample agricultural and forestry acreage

Issue 2: Subdivision/manufactured housing/land use regulation/code enforcement

Needs:

- Implement/enforce updated coordinated countywide land development regulations, including subdivision and manufactured housing standards
- Consider establishing joint codes enforcement for unincorporated Wheeler County and Glenwood, possibly in conjunction with rehiring officer serving

Alamo

Opportunities:

- Land use regulations in Alamo

Issue 3: Rural character/quality of life protection

Needs:

- Maintain rural character/quality of life preservation
- Preserve open spaces and agricultural/forestry land uses through land development regulations, conservation use easements, and other means
- Encourage compatible infill development and location of use management
- Utilize infrastructure to guide growth

Opportunities:

- Ample undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage

Issue 4: Maintenance of open spaces/agricultural/forestry uses

Needs:

- Maintain rural character/quality of life preservation
- Preserve agricultural and forestry as viable, functioning land uses

Opportunities:

- Ample open spaces, undeveloped agricultural and forestry acreage

Issue 5: Recreation/leisure use facilities development/improvement

Needs:

- Develop/improve recreation/leisure facilities and programs
- Support needed enhancements at Little Ocmulgee State Park

- Upgrade/maintain public landings along Oconee River in Wheeler County
- Promote local recreation/nature-based tourism resources/opportunities, such as development of bike route(s) linking Little Ocmulgee with George L. Smith and Gordonia-Alatamaha state parks
- Promote increased utilization of Georgia Highway 19 for tourism and possible Georgia Scenic Byway designation

Opportunities:

- Existing Oconee River public access at Highway 46 Boat Ramp, Mt. Vernon Bridge, and Clark's Bluff
- Little Ocmulgee State Park, including recent enhancements to golf course and addition of splash pads
- Sweetwater Horse Event Park
- Georgia Highway 19

Issue 6: Infill development

Needs:

- Encourage infill development and location of use management
- Utilize infrastructure to guide growth
- Continue downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood

Opportunities:

- Alamo and Glenwood downtown revitalization

Issue 7: Community appearance

Needs:

- Upgrade Wheeler County's community appearance through codes enforcement, landscaping/beautification efforts, and other means
- Codes enforcement for unincorporated area of Wheeler County and Glenwood

- Consider rehiring codes enforcement officer in Alamo to enforce existing codes and ordinances and sharing with other governments
- Work to redevelop declining areas, upgrade commercial areas, and rehabilitate or remove substandard housing
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and/or other federal, state, private funding to assist with improvements
- Continue downtown Alamo and Glenwood revitalization efforts
- Maintain/upgrade, as needed, existing county roads and city streets through resurfacing, paving, and other improvements

Opportunities:

- CDBG or other funding assistance for blighted areas, substandard housing, infrastructure upgrades
- T-SPLOST funding, which will help pay for road and street upgrades countywide

Issue 8: Compatible development/utilization

Needs:

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

Opportunities:

- Land use/development regulations

Issue 9: Flood zone protection

Needs:

- Seek to conserve/protect flood zones countywide from inappropriate development

- Complete update of County flood plain management ordinance
- Enforce Environmental Conservation Ordinance

Opportunities:

- Upgraded Alamo flood plain management ordinance in compliance with FEMA regulations (2011)
- Soon to be completed updated County flood plain ordinance
- Environmental Conservation Ordinance
- Oconee River Conservation Easement held by Georgia Forestry Commission

Community Facilities and Services

Issue 1: Governmental facilities/services

Needs:

- Provide/maintain adequate government facilities and services, and enhance as needed
- Install new roof on County Commissioners office
- Construct new Alamo City Hall
- Upgrade broadband and telecommunications at Alamo City Hall
- Complete new community website

Opportunities:

- New County Registrar's Office established

Issue 2: Infrastructure needs

Needs:

- Maintain, upgrade, and expand existing infrastructure and services, as needed
- Provide adequate water/sewer service and expand, as needed
- Replace sewer lines in southeastern quadrant of Alamo

- Seek funding for drainage improvements in Alamo and Glenwood
- Upgrade water lines less than 6 inches in diameter throughout Alamo and Glenwood
- Seek/support availability of appropriate local broadband telecommunications service

Opportunities:

- Water system upgrades in Glenwood, including new fire hydrants, water line replacements along 4th Street and 3rd Avenue (2013)
- City of Alamo sewerage system upgrades, including new lines in northwest quadrant and 2 new lift stations (2013)
- City of Glenwood wastewater treatment facility upgrade, including installation of new spray land application (2013)
- New water tower in Alamo (2012)

Issue 3: Infrastructure to guide growth

Needs:

- Utilize infrastructure expansion/upgrades to guide growth

Opportunities:

- Industrial Park (Alamo) and site (Glenwood)
- Water/sewer improvements
- Transportation improvements
- Broadband improvements

Issue 4: Transportation access/quality

Needs:

- Seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance local quality of life and support economic development

efforts

- Improve/upgrade developmental highways/four-lane connectors, including U.S. 280 and U.S. 441 four-laning and resurfacing
- Pave, resurface, and otherwise maintain/upgrade more county roads and city streets
- Promote usage of U.S. 441 (Heritage Highway), U.S. 280, and Georgia Highway 19
- Seek streetscape/sidewalk/drainage improvements in Alamo and Glenwood, as needed
- Complete cultural resources survey for downtown Alamo sidewalk/streetscape improvements project
- Purchase new equipment for County Roads Department
- Continue to work with Telfair County to maintain a modern airport, including improvements such as extending taxiway parallel to runway, constructing a fuel station and new hangars
- Seek increased public transportation

Opportunities:

- Passage of T-SPLOST in Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC Region
- Traffic light in Alamo and Glenwood on U.S. 280
- Completed sidewalk and curb rehabilitation along U.S. 280 in Glenwood
- Airport upgrades, including runway extension
- Alamo and Glenwood downtown streetscape improvements
- Heart of Georgia Railroad, including rail service to/from Cordele Inland Port

Issue 5: Telfair-Wheeler Airport

Needs:

- Maintain modern airport in cooperation with Telfair County
- Extend taxiway parallel to runway

- Construct fuel station
- Build new hangars

Opportunities:

- Airport upgrades, including runway extension

Issue 6: Wheeler County Industrial Park (Alamo) and Industrial Development Building and site (Glenwood)

Needs:

- Continue to maintain/develop industrial park in Alamo and Industrial Development building and site (Glenwood) infrastructure to facilitate and accommodate desired commercial and industrial growth
- Enhance economic development funding/activities/marketing through active Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Authority, Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority, and other regional/state agencies
- Seek to employ economic development director, possibly in conjunction with Dodge and Telfair counties

Opportunities:

- Existing industrial park in Alamo and Industrial Development Authority building and site in Glenwood
- Active Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Development Authority
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Tax abatement incentive
- Two new businesses located to industrial park in 2013 (Bumper to Bumper and storage company)

Issue 7: Educational facilities/services

Needs:

- Maintain quality educational facilities, programs, and services

- Upgrade aging school facilities

Opportunities:

- Reduced drop-out rates/high graduation rate

Issue 8: Solid waste management/recycling

Needs:

- Maintain appropriate solid waste management/recycling facilities/programs/initiatives as needed
- Address littering countywide, including along U.S. 280 between Alamo and first green box site

Issue 9: Lower Oconee Community Hospital and other health care access

Needs:

- Work together to reestablish community hospital services
- Work together to maintain/upgrade health care access, facilities, services, and equipment in the Wheeler County community
- Physician recruitment

Opportunities:

- Lower Oconee Community Hospital facility with helicopter access
- Wheeler County Health Department
- Local skilled care nursing home
- Assisted living center in Glenwood

Issue 10: Cultural facilities/activities

Needs:

- Enhance and promote utilization of cultural facilities/activities, such as Wheeler County Courthouse, Woodland Plantation, Old Glenwood School, Milly Troup

Tomb/Big Oak Tree, Georgia Highway 19, and others for tours, other special events/activities

- See funding for additional staff, increased book budget, and purchase of computers/software for public use at Wheeler County Library
- Support historic downtown revitalization efforts in Alamo and Glenwood
- Seek to organize local historical society
- Pursue development of county museum
- Continue to celebrate July 4th with festival in Alamo, and develop other local events/festivals/activities as appropriate

Opportunities:

- New Wheeler County Public Library
- National Register-listed Wheeler County Courthouse, Woodland Plantation, and Glenwood School
- Spring Hill Methodist Church and School
- Downtown Alamo and Glenwood revitalization
- Alamo’s 4th of July celebration

Issue 11: Public safety/emergency medical

Needs:

- Continue to upgrade/increase public safety/emergency medical facilities, manpower, and services as needed countywide
- Adequate training of public safety/emergency medical personnel and provision of adequate equipment, including upgraded technology and vehicles for Alamo Police Department
- Upgrade County EMS communications system
- Construct new offices and storage building for County Sheriff’s Department

Opportunities:

- E-911 with Telfair County
- Jail extension (2013)

- Addition of 4 new deputies to Sheriff's Department and 3 more jailers
- Three new Alamo police officers (2012) and two new cars (2013)
- New Glenwood police car/equipment (2014)

Issue 12: Fire service

Needs:

- Seek to improve fire service countywide, including provision of adequate training, facilities, and equipment
- Replace all water lines less than 6 inches in diameter in Alamo and Glenwood to enhance fire service
- Purchase new equipment for Glenwood Fire Department, including new utility truck

Opportunities:

- Water system upgrades in Alamo and Glenwood

Issue 13: Recreation facilities

Needs:

- Develop/improve/maintain/promote park/recreation facilities
- Expand local recreation department by installing new playground, soccer field, and gym
- Renovate old Alamo Recreation Department and its equipment
- Support Little Ocmulgee State Park and its continued viability under private management
- Maintain/upgrade public access to Oconee River in Wheeler County, including Highway 46 Boat Ramp, Clark's Bluff, and Mt. Vernon Bridge
- Seek increased recreation and nature-based tourism

Opportunities:

- New Wheeler County Recreation Complex
- Little Ocmulgee State Park under private management and recent upgrades (golf course, splash pads)
- Oconee River access at Mt. Vernon Bridge, Clark's Bluff, and Highway 46 Boat Ramp

Issue 14: Senior services expansion

Needs:

- Seek funds to provide expanded services to local seniors

Opportunities:

- Existing Wheeler County Senior Center
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issue 1: Local, regional, state cooperation

Needs:

- Maintain/enhance local, regional, and state cooperation
- Coordinate planning/growth management
- Continue participation in Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- Participate in Altamaha River Partnership, Oconee River Greenway Authority, Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership
- Investigate feasibility of hiring economic development director in conjunction with Dodge and Telfair counties

Opportunities:

- Existing local and regional public safety/fire service cooperation
- Participation on Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

- Wheeler-Telfair Airport
- E-911 with Telfair County
- Middle Coastal Unified Development Authority
- State representation

Issue 2: Service delivery

Needs:

- Seek services sharing/cooperation/consolidation/coordination/joint delivery whenever feasible
- Consider rehiring codes enforcement officer in Alamo and sharing with other governments

Opportunities:

- Joint codes enforcement
- Sharing economic development director with neighboring counties

Issue 3: Coordinated planning/growth management

Needs:

- Update/develop coordinated countywide land use/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations

Opportunities:

- Land use regulations in Alamo

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic prosperity is a key to community improvement. A community's comprehensive plan seeks at its core to make the community a better place to live, work, and recreate. To improve quality of life, there is a need for income and an increased tax base to help enhance the ability to afford needed and desired improvements, and afford better housing and a higher standard of living. Commerce and economic development have a major influence on overall population growth and development. The relationship is quite evident in Wheeler County. Wheeler County's heyday came from entrepreneurship and railroad establishment, resulting also in a population boom in the late 1800s. Leadership, attracting the Corrections Corporation of America's Wheeler Correctional Facility and other job diversity, and keeping agriculture relevant and vital, along with highways and location, have stabilized growth in the county, despite suffering major setbacks and a long period of population loss with the decline of turpentine and the railroads, and the growth of larger nearby urban centers.

Wheeler County is an early frontier area of Georgia, settled in the late 1790s and early 1800s, but not formally separated as a county until 1912. Its longleaf pine forests were at first considered less than desirable lands, but were still the source of commerce -- questionable and deceptive land speculation. The abundant natural resources were soon realized to be another opportunity, and a profitable lumber and naval stores industry resulted. Transportation and access to markets were always important, first through the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers and later the advent of railroads. The development of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad through the county stimulated the heyday of Wheeler County development. Farming interests developed as the forests were cut, but forestry remains the mainstay. The local economy received further boosts from transportation with the coming of major highways, most notably U.S. 280, U.S. 441 and Georgia 19. A major transformation of the local economy began in the 1930s with the development of the Little Ocmulgee State Park. The economy truly stabilized with the opening of CCA's Wheeler Correctional Facility in 1998. Quality of life, small-town

charm, and outdoor scenic beauty are local economic strengths and opportunities available today for supporting and developing additional economic development opportunities.

There are continuing needs for Wheeler County's economic development. Incomes in Wheeler County remain very low, with some sources saying the county's per capita income is the lowest in the state. The per capita money income in Wheeler County as reported by the Census Bureau for 2008-2012 is \$8,809, only about 35% that of Georgia as a whole. Median household income is \$27,601, about 56% that of Georgia. Over one-fourth of Wheeler County citizens are in poverty, compared to only 17% in Georgia as a whole. Over 24% of county children remain in poverty. This high poverty has persisted for a number of decades. There are needs for more jobs. Unemployment in the county was 9.4% in 2013, compared to 8.2% in the state. Almost half of county workers work outside Wheeler County, including 19% in neighboring Telfair County. Job skills of local residents are also a concern; about 25% of local residents are without a high school diploma compared to 16% statewide. Transfer payments represent about 31% of total personal income compared to about 17% statewide. These type of statistics do create opportunity for businesses to receive Georgia's largest tax credits for job creation as they place Wheeler County in Georgia's Job Tax Credit Tier 1 (lowest 40 percent or so of counties).

There are opportunities and cause for optimism for economic development in Wheeler County as well. Employment within the county remains concentrated within educational, health care and social assistance workers (11%), government (20%), and agricultural, forestry, fishing (15%) sectors. This reflects the stability and importance of agriculture and forestry and the prison within the county, as well as the hospital and local schools. There remain unrealized opportunities related to the abundant fields and forests and outstanding natural resources of the county. The cost of living in Wheeler County is relatively very low, and the crime rate is low making it even more attractive as a place to live for families and new residents and retirees, especially in the context of attractive open spaces, and a verdant landscape punctuated by outstanding natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities.

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

Address Low Educational Levels/Improve Jobs Skills

Wheeler County will continue to support its school system, its local adult literacy center and other Oconee Fall Line Technical College programs, and regional Workforce Investment Act programs. It will develop public/private partnerships through its Chamber of Commerce, CCA, civic groups, and continuing intergovernmental cooperation. The Great Promise Partnership will be investigated. The “Graduation – The Only Option” motto of the school system will be vigorously implemented.

Retain Local Graduates

This is best accomplished by the development of increased job opportunities and enhancing local educational levels/job skills. Wheeler County will continue cooperative efforts through local schools, Oconee Fall Line Technical College, the Chamber of Commerce, CCA, and state and regional agencies.

Support/Enhance/Maintain Viability of Agriculture/Forestry Uses

The community will support efforts to create additional markets, explore alternative crops, and seek value-added businesses which keep such uses viable and profitable. The marketing and development of agri-tourism and nature-based tourism are other means.

Address/Improve Infrastructure Needs

The Wheeler County community will jointly work to solve any infrastructure deficiencies, including highway needs, and otherwise address water/sewer and other needs,

particularly for fire protection. The lack of appropriate broadband telecommunications access will also be addressed.

Nurture Existing Businesses/Entrepreneurs

The Wheeler County community will work through its Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce, and in cooperation with Oconee Fall Line Technical College and state agencies, to meet local needs and encourage expansions and new local business development. Special efforts will be made for CCA and agricultural/forest interests.

Attract New Businesses

The Wheeler County community, through its Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and intergovernmental cooperation, will seek compatible business and industrial development. The community will participate in state designation programs, and will explore the feasibility of working jointly with neighboring counties to hire a full-time economic development director. State tax credits and local tax incentives for job creation will be marketed.

Develop/Enhance Tourism

Wheeler County's rivers and outdoor amenities; the state park; the horse event park; many historic structures; existing and potential festivals; its location along U.S. 441 (the Heritage Highway) and U.S. 280 as well as its farms and scenic countryside offer much more potential to increase visitors. There is potential for a U.S. 280 cooperative yard sale.

Improve Transportation Access/Quality

The recently passed regional T-SPLOST will result in many needed local resurfacing and other road improvements which will enhance the community as a place to live and work. It may open up other opportunities for job creation, as well. The completion of widening of U.S. 280 under Georgia's GRIP program would bring more usage and travelers to the county, as well as

would upgrades to U.S. 441. These and other improvements could enhance local travel and make business markets more accessible. It would also make it easier to live in Wheeler, but work in nearby urban growth centers. Promotion of trails and bicycling and other tourism would also help quality of life and economic development. The development of the inland port at Cordele will bring impetus for U.S. 280 and Heart of Georgia Railroad improvements. The joint Telfair-Wheeler airport and its continued improvement is also important.

Revitalize Downtowns

The historic fabric and available buildings in Alamo and Glenwood allow for much opportunity. Their historic nature allows for development incentives, preservation of unique character, and enhanced quality of life. Community projects in historic structures create civic pride and community cooperation. They also can stimulate private investment.

Develop/Improve Local Industrial Park/Site

The community has a number of available sites and buildings to market. The Industrial Park in Alamo and the industrial site in Glenwood need further improvement and marketing.

Promote Quality of Life/Civic and Community Pride/Location

Wheeler County has an opportunity to promote its small town and rural character and quality of life through its Chamber and other means. The welcoming, family atmosphere; low crime rate; low cost of living; the state park; the horse event park; CCA; the many, active civic clubs; and the landscape and outdoor amenities are all easy selling cards. The overall county location and ease of access to larger urban areas further contribute to ease of promotion of the county as an excellent place to live, visit, or do business.

Enhance Intergovernmental Cooperation

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

Address Growth Management/Rural Character Preservation

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community has developed limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more stronger, general, and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location and civic organizations and programs to assist.

Enhance Economic Development Marketing

Wheeler County has been noted in the past for its local leadership and community cooperation. Reenergized efforts supported by the local governments, local chamber and local civic groups, and CCA can accomplish much to help the community cooperate and advance in economic development. Participation in regional and state partnerships and utilizing state designation programs can help. State job tax credits and recently developed local tax incentives can be highlighted.

Support CCA/Little Ocmulgee State Park

The Little Ocmulgee State Park and CCA's Wheeler Correctional Facility have been principal contributors to a stabilized local economic base. The community needs to be vigilant to support and ensure these pillars and foundations for other growth remain strong and vibrant.

LAND USE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wheeler County and its municipalities are united in their vision and desires for growth. It is a rural county with abundant natural resources, great natural beauty, and many assets for growth. The community's vision for its growth and development is one that protects and utilizes its natural resources and landscape to continue growth and development conducive and compatible with such natural beauty. Land uses would continue to look similar to those existing, and the rural character would be maintained. Infrastructure and amenities would be expanded and developed to support and attract both population and business growth, primarily in or adjacent to the existing municipalities and developed areas. Agricultural and forestry uses would be kept viable and remain the principal land uses of the county. They would be an integral component of the economy of the county, and the preservation of rural character supportive of open space and natural resource protection. Commercial and industrial growth would be compatible and supportive of continued agricultural/forestry uses, and would maintain the high quality of life and rural character while providing additional jobs and economic opportunity.

While technically only the City of Alamo is required, because of its zoning ordinance, to have a Land Use element in its comprehensive plan under the new DCA planning standards, all local governments in the county have chosen to participate and include the element in this joint comprehensive plan. Existing land use maps visually convey to all concerned the current

landscape and correlation of extant development. Future land use maps illustrate to all concerned the community's vision and desires for additional growth and development. Such depictions also lend credence and supporting background information important to understanding and illustrating official local government policy in designating lands unsuitable for solid waste handling facilities in local solid waste management plans. Land use maps do provide official display of community desires and goals for compatible future growth and development.

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

Existing Land Uses. Existing land use patterns for Wheeler County and its municipalities are depicted on the following maps. A table depicting the existing distribution of land use acreages is shown below.

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

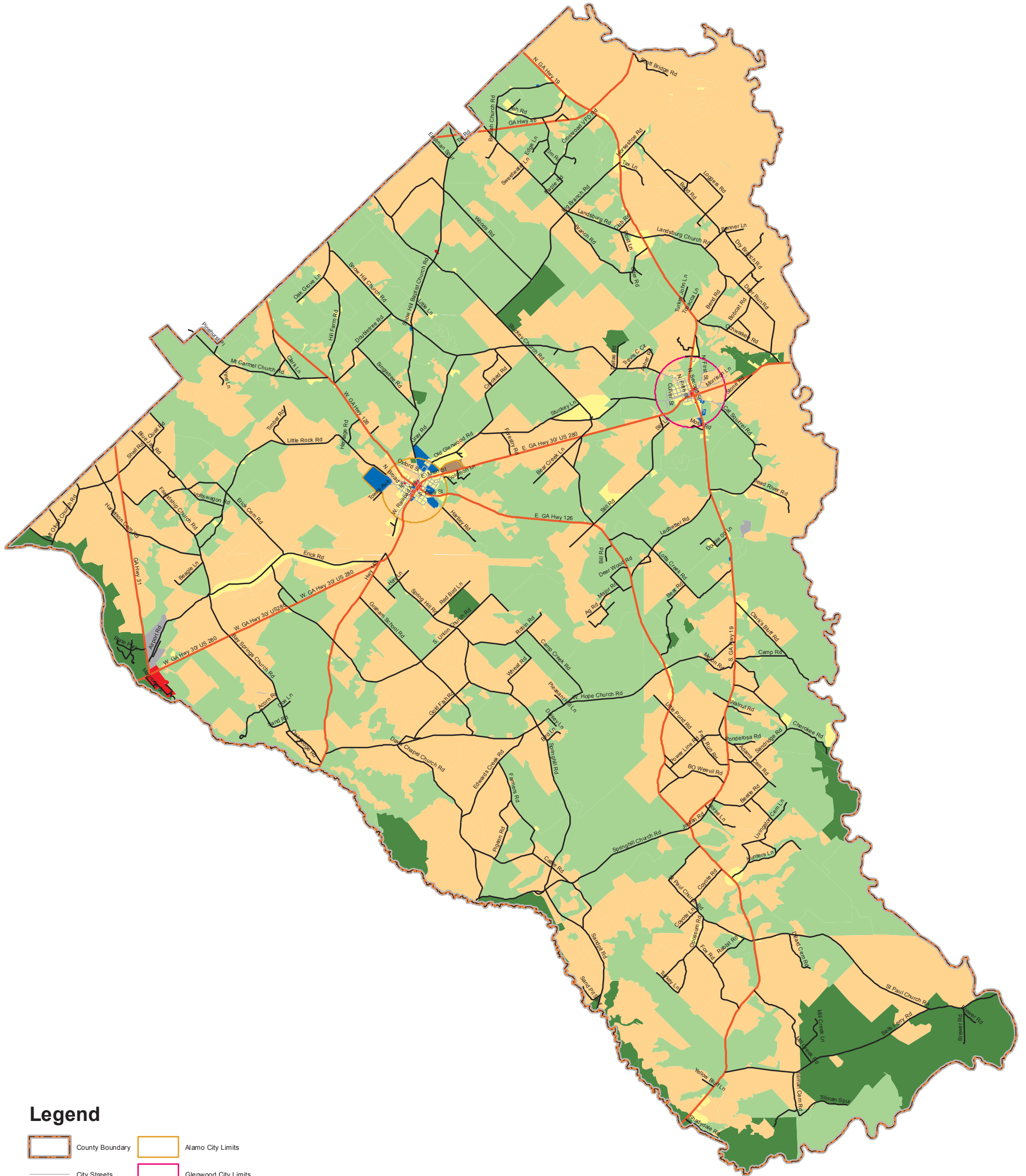
- **Residential.** The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units.
- **Commercial.** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, located as a single use in

one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

- **Industrial.** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.
- **Public/Institutional.** This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- **Transportation/Communications/Utilities.** This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
- **Park/Recreation/Conservation.** This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational and conservation uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, other wild lands, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.
- **Agriculture.** This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or similar rural uses.
- **Forestry.** This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber, pulpwood production, or other woodland use.



Wheeler County Existing Land Use Map



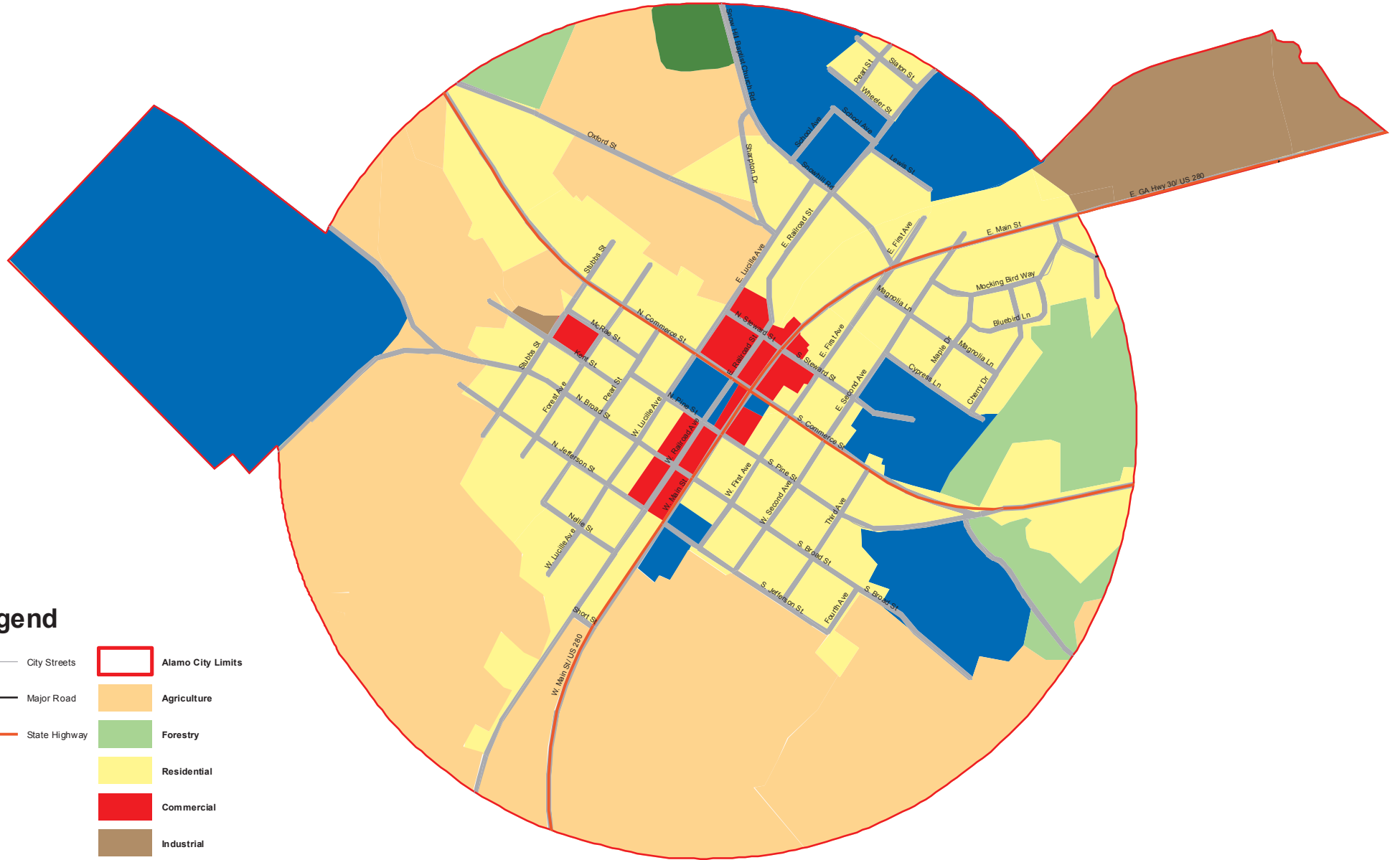
Legend

- County Boundary
- City Streets
- Major Road
- State Highway
- Alamo City Limits
- Glenwood City Limits
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities



Alamo Existing Land Use Map

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Legend



- City Streets
- Major Road
- State Highway
- Alamo City Limits
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities

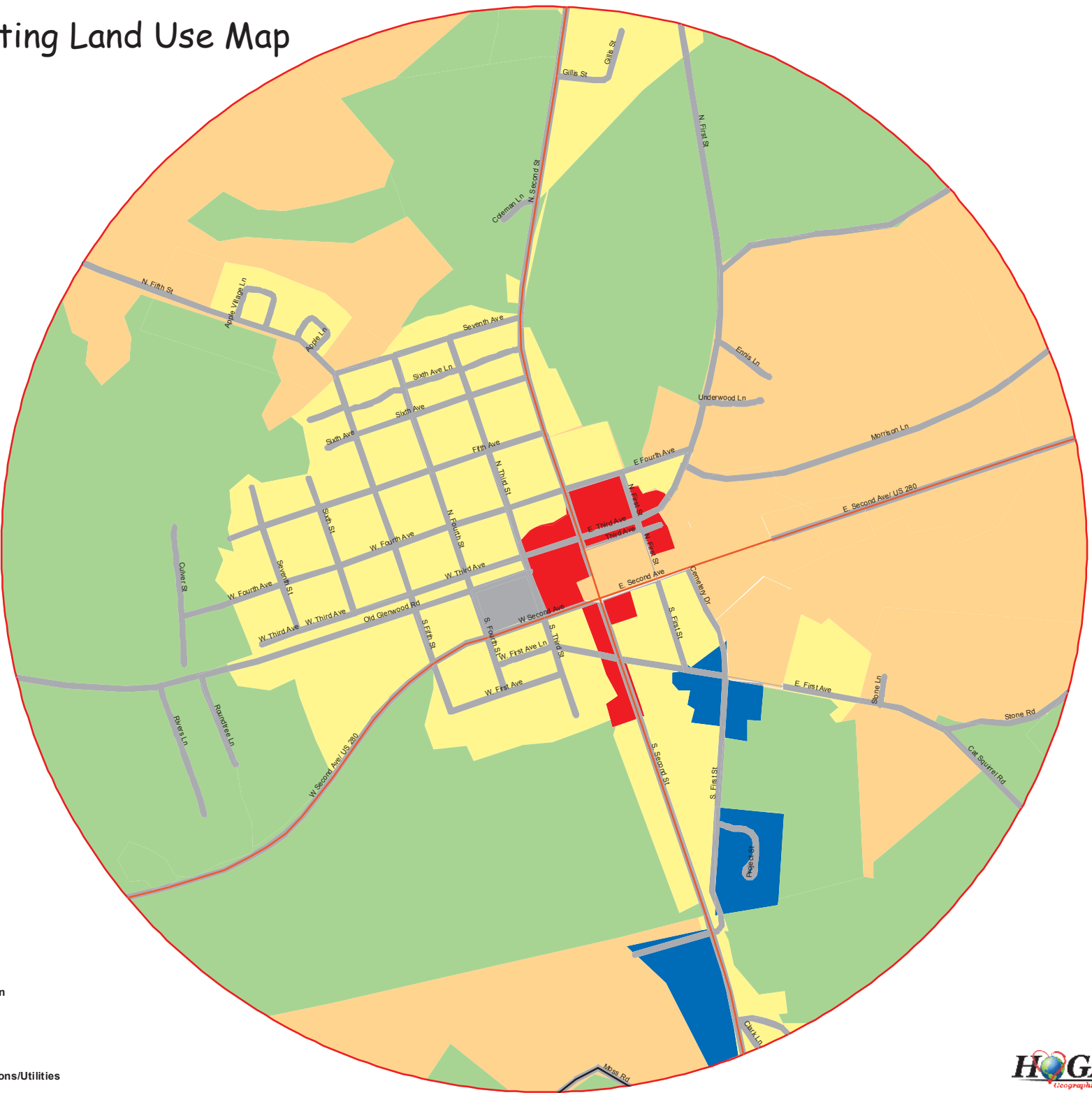
Glenwood Existing Land Use Map



78

Legend

-  City Streets
-  Major Road
-  State Highway
-  Glenwood City Limits
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities



Existing Land Use Distribution, 2014**(Acres)****Wheeler County**

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Agriculture	88,779	46.20
Commercial	193	0.10
Forestry	85,750	44.63
Industrial	71	0.04
Park/Recreation/Conservation	11,203	5.83
Public/Institutional	343	0.18
Residential	2,953	1.54
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	2,853	1.48
Total	192,145	100.00

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

Future Land Uses. Wheeler County's history of development traces to its fields, forests, transportation and leadership. The county was a frontier area originally part of Washington and then Montgomery County. It was initially settled primarily after the Revolutionary War, but was not formally established as a separate county until 1912. Its initial settlement and development centered on the Oconee and Ocmulgee rivers and the county's longleaf pine forests. The county's heyday of growth from the late 1800s to 1900 was related to railroad development, which was the impetus for development of both of the county's current municipalities. The county's population began a long history of population decline from its inception which lasted until 1970. The county high point in population remains 1920's 9,817, and the low point 1970's 4,596.

The location of U.S. highways 280 and 441 through the county, and local leadership which helped develop Little Ocmulgee State Park in the 1930s/1940s helped create an environment of economic stability. However, county population was only truly stabilized with the location of the Wheeler Correctional Facility by Corrections Corporation of America in 1998.

Meanwhile agriculture, and specifically forestry, has continued to remain key to the county's economy. The natural resources of the county, including its fields, forests, and scenic rivers/open spaces; its highway location along U.S. 280, U.S. 441, and Georgia Highway 19; location near growth centers like Dublin and Vidalia; Little Ocmulgee State Park and the Sweetwater Horse Event Park; and the scenic landscapes of the county, as well as the family oriented Old South charm, continue to be assets which portend well for future growth and development within Wheeler County.

Most of the county's more recent growth has been near Alamo and Glenwood, both residential, commercial, and industrial. Commercial developments have primarily occurred within these two cities along U.S. 280. The largest development has been the expansion of the Wheeler Correctional Facility in northwest Alamo. The industrial park along U.S. 280 East in Alamo will likely be the home of most industrial development, although there could be some industrial development at the existing site in Glenwood. The Sweetwater Horse Event Park along U.S. 280 East of Glenwood could stimulate additional development.

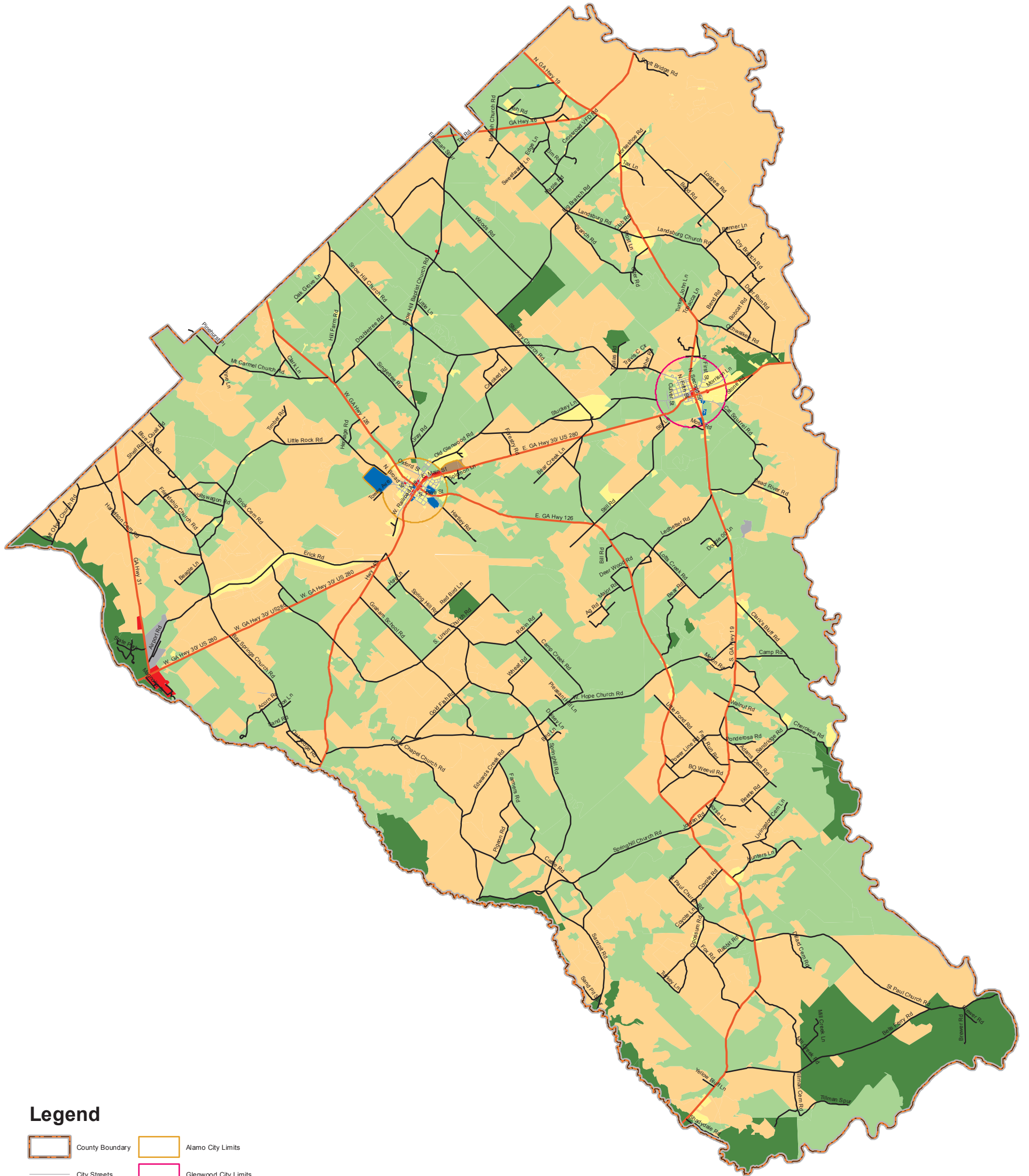
Recent residential growth has also primarily occurred in or near Alamo and Glenwood, particularly in north and east Alamo, near Snowhill Road and south of U.S. 280. Residential growth in Glenwood has been more piecemeal, but primarily concentrated near Culver Street north of U.S. 280 and east of Cemetery Street near U.S. 280 East. There has also been some scattered residential growth in unincorporated Wheeler County, primarily in the southern part of the county and east of the municipalities along or near U.S. 280. These development trends and growth patterns are expected to continue. The county's future land uses will closely resemble existing land uses. Agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses will continue to predominate the landscape, and maintain the existing rural character.

Future land use maps for Wheeler County, Alamo, and Glenwood are included following this description.


Land Use Goals. Wheeler County and its municipalities seek future growth and development respective of its rural character, abundant natural resources and agricultural/forestry



Wheeler County Future Land Use Map



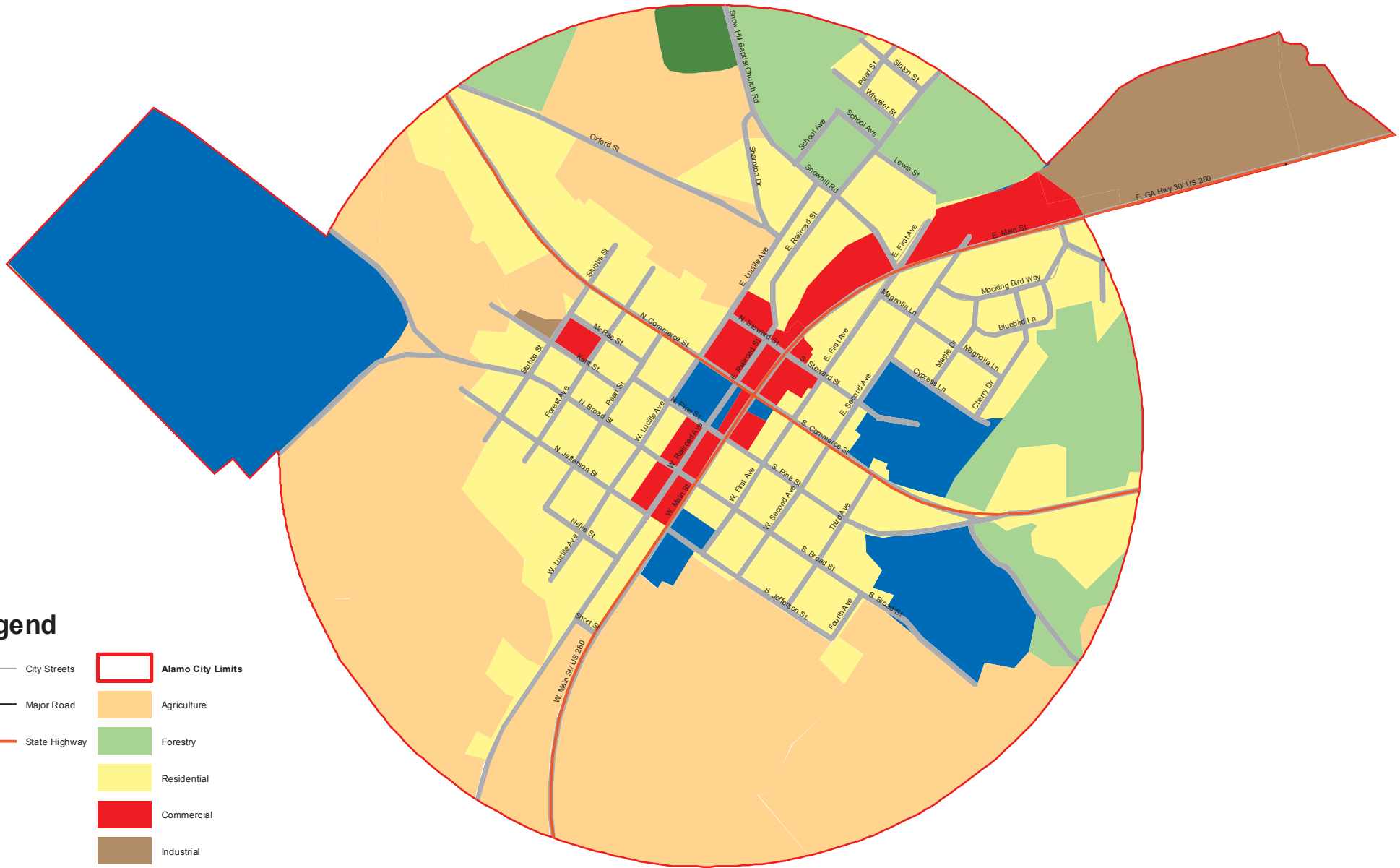
Legend

-  County Boundary
-  City Streets
-  Major Road
-  State Highway
-  Alamo City Limits
-  Glenwood City Limits
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities



Alamo Future Land Use Map

82



Legend


- City Streets
- Major Road
- State Highway
- Alamo City Limits
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communications/Utilities

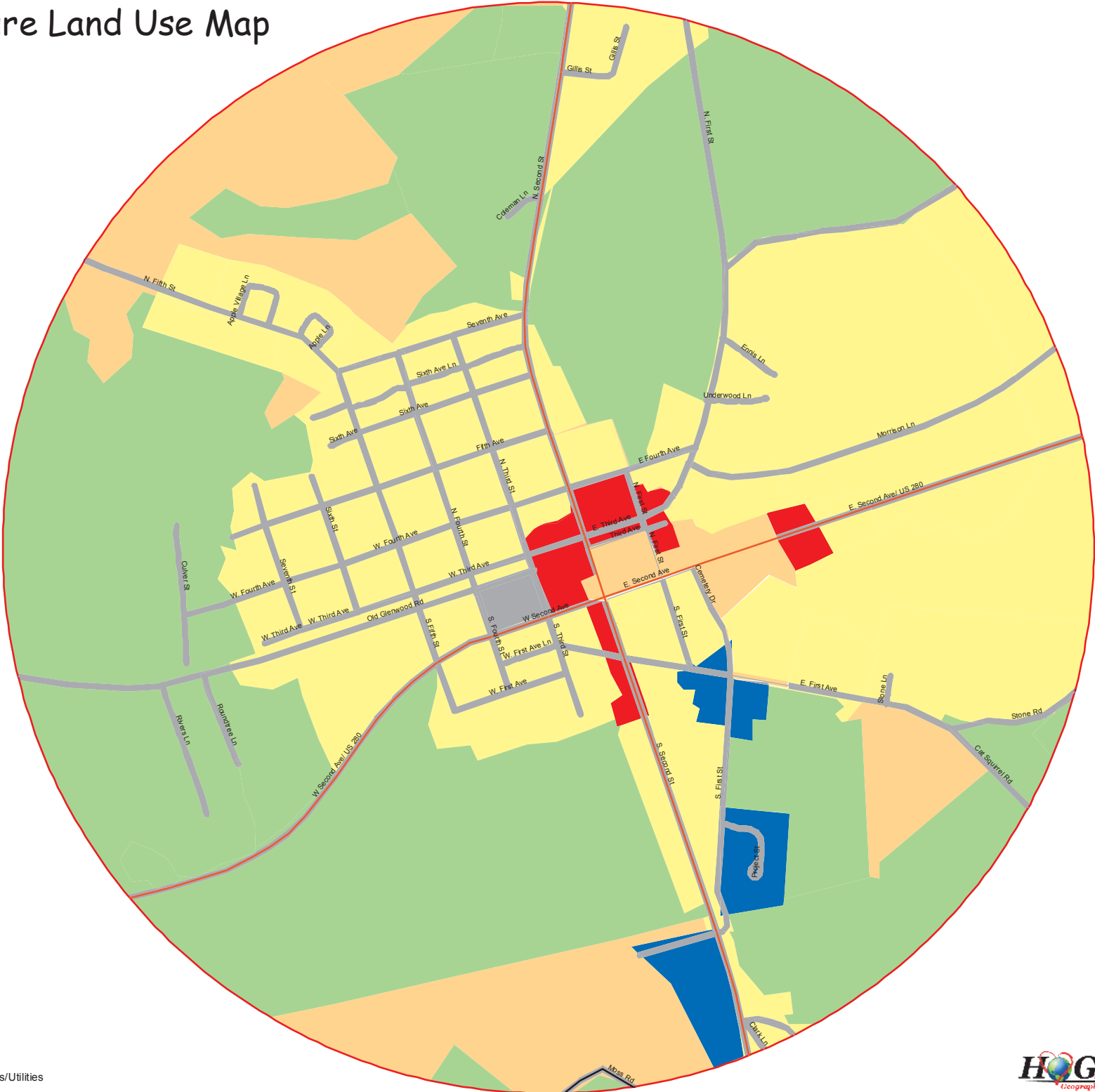
Glenwood Future Land Use Map



83

Legend

-  City Streets
-  Major Road
-  State Highway
-  Glenwood City Limits
-  Agriculture
-  Forestry
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Transportation/Communications/Utilities



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

Address Growth Management/Compatible Development

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community has developed only limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more general and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location; improvement of facilities and services; support of agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses; downtown revitalization; and involvement of its citizenry to assist.

Improve Subdivision/Manufactured Housing/Land Use Regulation/Code Enforcement

As noted above, Wheeler County has only limited, rudimentary land use regulations, road acceptance/subdivision ordinances, a manufactured home ordinance, and others to address specific issues or nuisances. Only Alamo has a zoning ordinance and building code enforcement. These ordinances need update, expansion, coordination, and joint collaboration/code enforcement to initiate a more comprehensive approach.

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

Development of new markets, supporting creation of alternative crops and uses, celebrating the heritage of these uses, providing professional support, and attracting compatible agribusiness or other supportive economic development ventures all can help achieve this.

Developing and supporting outdoor events/facilities, making the county's rivers more accessible, and encouraging tourism will also help.

Develop/Improve Recreation/Leisure Use Facilities and Encourage Utilization/Access/Tourism for Natural/Cultural Resources

The Oconee, Ocmulgee, and Little Ocmulgee rivers, the Little Ocmulgee State Park, and Georgia Highway 19 all have much history for recreation, tourism, and motoring within the county. Increased recreational and outdoor usage through continued park development, promotion, and growth of tourism of many kinds offers much unrealized potential to both enhanced economic utilization and conservation of the County's significant natural and cultural resources. It can also attract more visitors, and more residents, and build a larger audience of citizen support for protection and enhancement of these resources. Improvement and promotion of U.S. 280, U.S. 441, and Georgia 19 also hold promise. Improvement of local recreational facilities; enhancement of events or festivals, like Alamo's Fourth of July Celebration and promotion of the Sweetwater Horse Event Park could also reap benefits.

Encourage Infill Development

It only makes sense to utilize lands and buildings where taxpayers and private interests have invested in providing costly infrastructure and construction in the past before extending additional infrastructure or incurring completely new construction costs. There are an abundance of available vacant commercial, industrial and residential structures within the community, as well as areas with readily available infrastructure. Available historic buildings in both downtowns are avenues for preservation of character and heritage and opportunities for economic and community development utilizing existing served areas.

Improve Community Appearance

Wheeler County and its municipalities have much intrinsic natural and cultural beauty and Old South charm attractive to residential location and tourism. Landscaping/beautification

efforts, general clean-up, and rehabilitation/upgrade of existing structures/areas will serve to accent and highlight this.

Seek Compatible Development/Utilization

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

Protect Flood Zones/Local Rivers

The community is known for its "three rivers." Protection from degradation or inappropriate development is to everyone's advantage. Pristine natural and scenic beauty is a cornerstone advantage for quality of life and economic development within the county.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS

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

WHEELER COUNTY

WHEELER COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED	2010	Initiate entrepreneurial activities through the establishment of a mentoring group of local entrepreneurs through the Chamber of Commerce, or by other programs, that will help to provide the support structure necessary to encourage the increased development of entrepreneurs			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				There has been little participation from the community with this item and a lack of new entrepreneurship as well. However, the County and its cities will continue to support entrepreneurship programs. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, LU	2010	Establish a concerted marketing effort to attract more service-oriented establishments to Wheeler County			Y	2015 (Ongoing)				The Chamber of Commerce is currently working on a new website, expected to be completed in 2015, that will be utilized to attract new business to Wheeler County. Once completed, more activities will be decided upon to improve marketing.
ED, NCR, IC	2010	Participate in the Altamaha River Partnership's regional efforts to enhance and promote the Greater Altamaha River Basin for sustainable nature-based tourism, including golf, hunting, fishing, agri-tourism, and venture biking			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				Wheeler County and its cities actively support the Altamaha River Partnership and other regional efforts that encourage tourism and outdoor activities, and will continue to do so. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2010	Develop additional incentives for business/industry retention and expansion and implement as appropriate			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				There has not been any additional incentives added for retention/expansion due to lack of industry. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

WHEELER COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED	2010	Develop incentives for new business/industry attraction and implement as appropriate	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				A tax abatement schedule was voted on and approved in 2014. These incentives were created to accommodate the establishment of a new solar field through a subsidiary supported by Georgia Power. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, LU	2010	Continue to seek new businesses for the Industrial Park, and otherwise continue to seek infrastructure improvements as needed	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				Two new businesses (Bumper to Bumper, and a storage company) located to Wheeler County in 2013. Efforts to seek new business will continue. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
NCR	2010	Pursue Georgia Scenic Byway status for GA 19 in Wheeler County					Y	Unknown (Long Term)		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding. However, it remains an item of interest for the long term future.
NCR	2010	Upgrade and enforce a countywide flood plain management ordinance in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements			Y	2014				The County is currently in the process of updating the flood plain management ordinance, and expects to complete it by the end of 2014.
CFS	2010	Advocate the completion of four-laning of U.S. 441 and U.S. 280 in Wheeler County					Y	Long Term (Ongoing Policy)		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding and the priority of other regional projects, such as US 1. However, the County will continue to support the completion of the four-laning of US 441 and US 280 through Wheeler County.

WHEELER COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2010	Seek funding for airport improvements including various facilities, expansion of hangars and terminal; construction of a taxi strip; the widening, expanding, and resurfacing of the runway; radio; and automated navigational and landing aids	Y	2010	Y	2015 (Long Term Policy)				The runway was lengthened and a turnaround was installed in 2010. The acquisition of the right of way is currently in progress to allow space for the construction of a fuel station. Seeking funding for airport improvements will continue in the long term future. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funding to upgrade equipment and manpower of the Sheriff's Department as needed	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The employment of 4 new deputies and an additional 3 jailers occurred by 2014. The County will continue to seek funding for the improvement of its Sheriff's Dept. will continue. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funding for additional staff, an increased local book budget, and the purchase of computers and software for public use at the Wheeler County Library, as needed					Y	Unknown (Long Term)		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding for. However, it remains an interest of the County.
CFS	2010	Construct a correction complex with additional deputy offices, jail extension, and storage buildings	Y	2013			Y	2019		The extension of the jail was completed in 2013. The County will continue to seek funding to construct new deputy offices and a storage building for the Sheriff's Dept.

WHEELER COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2010	Seek funds to support the annual July 4 th Celebration							Y	This item has been dropped as it is no longer an interest for the County.
CFS	2010	Seek funding for road improvements and upgrade, as needed	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The County utilizes funding from their T-SPLOST and LMIG accounts to make road improvements/upgrades. The County will continue to seek funding for such projects. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

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

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Install a new roof on the County Commissioners Office		X					X			\$20,000	X			
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	X						X	Alamo Glenwood		\$15,000	X			
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Roads Department		X	X				X		TIA SPLOST	\$70,000	X	X		
CFS, ED, IC	Extend taxiway parallel to runway at the airport	X						X		Telfair Co. GAAP	\$250,000	X	X		
CFS, ED, IC	Construct a fuel station at the airport	X						X		Telfair Co. GAAP	\$250,000	X	X		
CFS, ED, IC	Construct new hangars at the airport				X	X		X		Telfair Co. GAAP	\$400,000	X	X		
CFS	Expand the Recreation Department by installing a new playground, soccer field, and gym.				X	X		X		SPLOST Rec. Dept.	\$500,000	X	X		
CFS	Construct a new offices and storage building for the Sheriff's Department					X		X		SPLOST	\$150,000	X			
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 1 (Snow Hill Church Road)	X						X		TIA GDOT	\$376,000	X	X		

CITY OF ALAMO

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, LU	2010	Continue to seek new businesses for the Industrial Park, and otherwise continue to seek infrastructure improvements as needed	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				Two new businesses (Bumper to Bumper, and a storage company) located to Wheeler County in 2013. Efforts to seek new business will continue. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED, LU	2010	Establish a concerted marketing effort to attract more service-oriented establishments to Wheeler County			Y	2015 (Ongoing)				The Chamber of Commerce is currently working on a new website, expected to be completed in 2015, that will be utilized to attract new business to Wheeler County. Once completed, more activities will be decided upon to improve marketing.
ED	2010	Develop additional incentives for business/industry retention and expansion and implement as appropriate			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				There has not been any additional incentives added for retention/expansion due to lack of industry. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2010	Develop incentives for new business/industry attraction and implement as appropriate	Y	2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				A tax abatement schedule was voted on and approved in 2014. These incentives were created to accommodate the establishment of a new solar field through a subsidiary supported by Georgia Power. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
NCR	2011	Pursue continued “Main Street” type improvements for downtown Alamo and Glenwood, such as building/façade rehabilitations, streetscape projects, etc.	Y	2011						The City installed new welcome signs in 2011. The City will continue to make “Main Street” improvements as funding for such projects become available. This item will be placed in the policy section of the future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
NCR	2010	Upgrade and enforce a countywide flood plain management ordinance in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements	Y	2011						The City upgraded the flood plain management ordinance in 2011, in order to adhere to FEMA regulations.
CFS	2014	Advocate the completion of four-laning of U.S. 441 and U.S. 280 in Wheeler County					Y	Long Term (Ongoing Policy)		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding and the priority of other regional projects, such as US 1. However, the County will continue to support the completion of the four-laning of US 441 and US 280 through Wheeler County.
CFS	2010	Seek CDBG or other funds to upgrade sewerage systems in Alamo and Glenwood to serve all residents by replacing inadequate lines and adding monitors to all lift stations	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City replaced the main sewer lines of the northwest quadrant of town and installed 2 new lift stations in 2013. The City will continue to seek funding for upgrades to the sewer system.

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2010	Seek funding to upgrade equipment and manpower of the Police Departments in Alamo and Glenwood	Y	2012	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City has hired 3 new officers and has encouraged higher certification levels for the current police force. The City will continue to seek funding to upgrade equipment and manpower of the Police Department, as appropriate. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funding to upgrade the water systems in Alamo and Glenwood to serve the entire city limit area by replacing all water lines less than 6-inches in diameter and inadequate appurtenances					Y	2016		This item has been postponed due to a lack of funding and economic conditions. The City expects to begin replacing obsolete water lines in 2016. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funds for city hall renovations							Y	This item has been dropped as the City has determined that the construction of a new city hall is more suitable for their needs.
CFS	2010	Seek funds to replace water tower	Y	2012						A new water tower was installed and functional in 2012.

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2010	Pursue funding as needed to continue to upgrade the police department, including purchasing new vehicles and equipment as necessary	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City purchased 2 new police cars in 2013. The City will continue to seek funding to upgrade equipment, vehicles, and technology of the Police Department, as appropriate. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funds to construct a new fire station							Y	This item has been dropped. The City ruled that a new fire stations is not necessary, since the current fire station is up-to-date and well maintained.
CFS	2010	Seek funding for historical/archeological study for sidewalk improvements			Y	2015				The funding for the historical/archaeological study has been allocated, and the study is in its beginning stages. The study is anticipated to be completed in 2015.
CFS	2014	Seek funding for drainage improvements as needed in Alamo and Glenwood in identified areas of need						Y	Long Term (Ongoing Policy)	The City has not made any drainage improvements due to a lack of funding. However, the City will continue to seek funding to make such improvements in areas of need. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

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

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Construct a new City Hall		X	X					X	SPLOST	\$300,000	X			
CFS	Improve the sidewalks throughout the City		X	X	X				X	TIA GDOT (TE) LMIG	\$50,000	X			
CFS	Upgrade the technology utilized by the Police Department	X	X						X		\$10,000	X			
CFS	Upgrade broadband and telecommunications at City Hall	X							X		\$5,000	X			
CFS, NCR	Renovate the Old City Recreation Department and its equipment	X	X						X	Rec. Authority	\$10,000	X			
CFS	Replace the sewer lines in the southeastern quadrant of the City	X	X	X	X				X	GEFA CDBG LMIG	\$575,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace all water lines with a diameter less than 6 inches		X						X	GEFA CDBG LMIG	\$150,000	X	X		
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	X						X	Glenwood		\$15,000	X			

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

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 1 (Broad Street; Railroad Street)	X							X	TIA GDOT	\$238,000	X	X		
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 2 (Lucille Avenue Sidewalk)		X	X	X				X	TIA GDOT	\$316,800	X	X		
CFS	Complete the historical/archeological study for sidewalk improvements	X							X	SPLOST	\$50,000	X	X		

CITY OF GLENWOOD

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, LU	2010	Establish a concerted marketing effort to attract more service-oriented establishments to Wheeler County			Y	2015 Ongoing				The City of Glenwood is an active supporter in assisting the County with marketing efforts to attract new business. The Chamber of Commerce is currently working on a new website, expected to be completed in 2015, that will be utilized to attract new business to Wheeler County. Once completed, more activities will be decided upon to improve marketing.
ED	2010	Develop additional incentives for business/industry retention and expansion and implement as appropriate			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				There has not been any additional incentives added for retention/expansion due to lack of industry. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
ED	2010	Develop incentives for new business/industry attraction and implement as appropriate	Y	2013 2014	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				A tax abatement schedule was voted on and approved in 2014. In 2013, the City welcomed the establishment of new retail/pharmaceutical store (Get Well Drugs). This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
NCR	2010	Pursue continued "Main Street" type improvements for downtown Alamo and Glenwood, such as building/façade rehabilitations, streetscape projects, etc.	Y	2012						The City rehabilitated all of the sidewalks and curbs along US 280 and installed new banners on US 280 and GA 19. The City will continue to seek Main Street improvements in the future. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

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

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2014	Advocate the completion of four-laning of U.S. 441 and U.S. 280 in Wheeler County			Y	Unknown (Long Term Policy)				The City actively encourages the completion of the four-laning of US 441 and US 280 through their city limits and the County, and will continue to do so. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek funding to upgrade the water systems in Alamo and Glenwood to serve the entire city limit area by replacing all water lines less than 6-inches in diameter and inadequate appurtenances	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City installed new fire hydrants and replaced old ones as well. The City also replaced 6 inch water lines along 4 th Street and 3 rd Avenue. The City will continue to upgrade its water system and replace remaining 6 inch water lines. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.
CFS	2010	Seek CDBG or other funds to upgrade sewerage systems in Alamo and Glenwood to serve all residents by replacing inadequate lines and adding monitors to all lift stations	Y	2013	Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City received CDBG funds in 2013 and 2014, \$500,000 for each year. The City plans to begin upgrading its sewer system in 2015. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

**CITY OF GLENWOOD
Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program
Report of Accomplishments**

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS, LU	2010	Upgrade wastewater treatment facility in Glenwood	Y	2013						The City upgraded its wastewater treatment facility by installing a new spray land application at the southernmost point of the city limits in 2013.
CFS	2010	Seek funding to upgrade equipment and manpower of the Police Departments in Alamo and Glenwood	Y	2014						The City purchased a new police car with equipment in 2014.
CFS	2010	Continue to seek funding as needed for drainage improvements			Y	Ongoing (Long Term Policy)				The City has not made any drainage improvements due to a lack of funding. The City will continue to seek funding for such improvements. This item will be placed in the policy section of future plans due to its nature, and to conform to new standards.

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

Element	Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Each	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
CFS	Install a new lift station on US 280 West, to replace the existing lift station	X							X	CDBG	\$125,000	X	X		
CFS	Replace sewer lines on the western half of the City	X	X						X	CDBG LMIG	\$375,000	X	X		
CFS	Install additional 6-inch water lines along US 280		X	X					X	CDBG LMIG	\$75,000	X	X		
CFS	Install additional fire hydrants along US 280			X	X				X	SPLOST	\$50,000	X			
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Fire Department						X		X	SPLOST	\$30,000	X			
CFS	Purchase a new utility truck for the Fire Department				X				X	SPLOST	\$50,000	X			
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	X						X	Alamo		\$15,000	X			
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 1 (SW Third Avenue; N 5 th Street)	X							X	TIA GDOT	\$119,000	X	X		
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 2 (N 5 th Street; N First Street)		X	X	X	X			X	TIA GDOT	\$142,000	X	X		

RESOLUTION

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

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

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

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, for Wheeler County and its municipalities; and

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

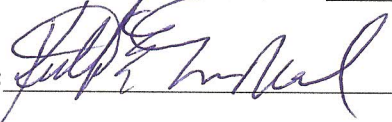
WHEREAS, the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, Wheeler County is now desirous of adopting *Correcting Course, Moving Forward* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wheeler County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and adopts the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, as Wheeler County's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2004, and amended with a partial update in 2009.

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

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

BY: 

ATTEST: 

RESOLUTION

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

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

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

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, for Wheeler County and its municipalities, including the City of Alamo; and

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

WHEREAS, the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alamo is now desirous of adopting *Correcting Course, Moving Forward* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Alamo hereby approve and adopt the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, as the City of Alamo's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2004, and amended with a partial update in 2009.

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

SO RESOLVED, this 13th day of October, 2014.

BY: Mayor Debbie Venturi

ATTEST: Carol L. Brown

RESOLUTION

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

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

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

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, for Wheeler County and its municipalities, including the City of Glenwood; and

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

WHEREAS, the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Glenwood is now desirous of adopting *Correcting Course, Moving Forward* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Glenwood hereby approve and adopt the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, as the City of Glenwood's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2004, and amended with a partial update in 2009.

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

SO RESOLVED, this 7 day of October, 2014.

BY: 

ATTEST: 