



**H**istory  
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**W**ide Open Spaces

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

August 2019

# History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces

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

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 2019

# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction and Executive Summary</b>	1
<b>Community Goals</b>	10
Community Vision	11
Alamo Municipal Description	17
Glenwood Municipal Description	19
Community Goals	22
Long Term Community Policies	24
<b>Needs and Opportunities</b>	29
Needs and Opportunities	30
<b>Economic Development</b>	38
<b>Broadband Services</b>	47
Broadband Services	48
<b>Land Use</b>	57
<b>Community Work Programs</b>	73
Wheeler County	74
Report of Accomplishments	75
Community Work Program, 2020-2024	77
City of Alamo	79
Report of Accomplishments	80
Community Work Program, 2020-2024	82
City of Glenwood	84
Report of Accomplishments	85
Community Work Program, 2020-2024	86
<b>Maps</b>	
Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network Availability	51
Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network DSL Speed	52
Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network Fiber Speed	53
Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network Cable Speed	54
Wheeler County Digital Economy Wireless 4G LTE Availability	55
Wheeler County Digital Economy Wireless 4G LTE Speed	56
Wheeler County Existing Land Use	61
City of Alamo Existing Land Use	62
City of Glenwood Existing Land Use	63
Wheeler County Future Land Use	67
City of Alamo Future Land Use	68
City of Glenwood Future Land Use	69

**Table of Contents  
(continued)**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	88
Community Involvement	89
<b>Appendix B</b>	110
Natural, Historical, and Cultural Amenities	111
<b>Appendix C</b>	116
Healthcare and Human Services/Education	117

# Introduction and Executive Summary

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*History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces: The Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan* is a comprehensive plan prepared in compliance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The current Minimum Standards became effective on October 1, 2018. It is a joint plan for Wheeler County and its municipalities – the City of Alamo and the City of Glenwood.

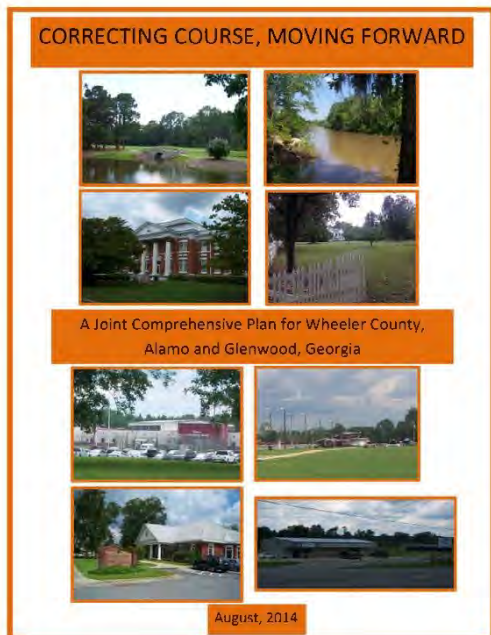


Wheeler County is a small, rural county in south central Georgia with a 2018 Census estimated population of 7,879. This is roughly a 6.2% population increase from the 2010 Census population of 7,421. The county's size of 300.3 square miles ranks 100<sup>th</sup> in Georgia (out of 159 counties) giving it a population density of only 26 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 47<sup>th</sup> 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 29.3% of its population, compared to 16.9% in Georgia overall. This poverty rate is in the top 25 worst in the state. The unemployment rate in Wheeler County was 8.8% in 2019, compared to Georgia's 3.9%. 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, the Little Ocmulgee State Park, and the recently opened Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area. 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 CoreCivic, has allowed Wheeler County to provide services for its citizens it may not otherwise been able to afford.



## Previous Plans



This comprehensive plan is the fourth 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. These first two adopted plans were intensively data and state requirement driven, although local objectives can be discerned. The second plan, in particular, contains much local information which may not easily be found elsewhere and may remain of use. In 2014, the third joint comprehensive plan, *Correcting Course, Moving Forward*, was adopted in accordance with the then new state requirements and set in motion a

locally driven planning process that produced a more user friendly document. Each 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, including the partial update, and *Correcting Course, Moving Forward* are available in digital format on the state ([www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com)) and region ([www.hogarc.org](http://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 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](http://quickfacts.census.gov) which will provide 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](http://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.georgiadata.org](http://www.georgiadata.org), 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 in its Georgia Labor Market Explorer as organized by the Georgia Department of Labor at [explorer.gdol.ga.gov](http://explorer.gdol.ga.gov). Additional state sponsored economic data is available at [www.georgia.org](http://www.georgia.org). Excellent overall private data sources include [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com), [datausa.io](http://datausa.io), and [www.usa.com](http://www.usa.com), while [www.headwaterseconomics.org](http://www.headwaterseconomics.org) is an excellent source for socioeconomic information, including data and interpretation through its economic profile system.

## Population Projections

As noted earlier, the official 2010 Census population of Wheeler County was 7,421, up 20.1% from 2000's 6,179. While 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%, unfortunately much of this growth is believed to have been prison population growth. Wheeler County's location close to Dublin and Vidalia has helped. The U.S. Census Bureau estimate for 2018 Wheeler County population is 7,879, an increase of 458 persons, or 6.2% 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 Wheeler Correctional Facility in 1998. Wheeler County's location, its natural and cultural resources,



quality of life, the prison, and easy access to larger surrounding growth centers are positive factors and influences for future growth and development.

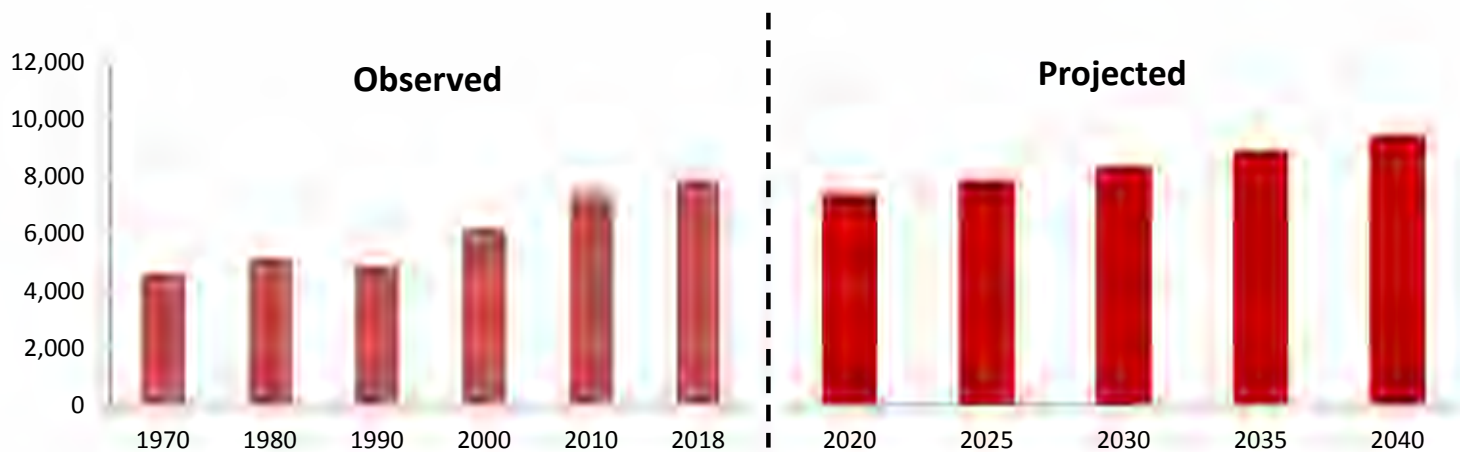
While past and present population levels are readily available on the world wide web, population projections are not so easily accessed. The Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for generating official state population projections for Georgia counties. Current OPB projections for Wheeler County from the 2015 series are 8,337 persons in 2019, 9,182 in 2030, extrapolated to 9,932 in 2040. 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 2019 Regional Plan, Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Plan 2040, show lower expected population levels in 2030, but higher expected levels in 2040 than current OPB projections. These include 9,069 in 2030 and 10,234 in 2040. A lower population was projected by the Regional Commission for this plan using the latest U.S. Census estimate (2018) and the most current prison inmate count. These figures are 8,271 in 2030 and 8,339 in 2040.

### Population Projections, Wheeler County

	2010	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
<b>OPB, 2015</b>	7,421	8,191	7,869		8,652		9,361
<b>HOGARC Regional Plan</b>	7,421	7,952	8,036	8,537	9,069		10,234
<b>Regional Commission</b>	7,421	7,952	8,072	8,137	8,204	8,271	8,339

Sources: State Office of Planning and Budget, 2015, Daniel Adams, email, 2018; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Plan, 2019; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission staff projection using Microsoft Excel GROWTH formula, 2019.

### Wheeler County Population Projections



Source: U.S. Decennial Census, ACS Estimates; HOGARC Staff Projections, 2019.

### Coordination with Other Plans

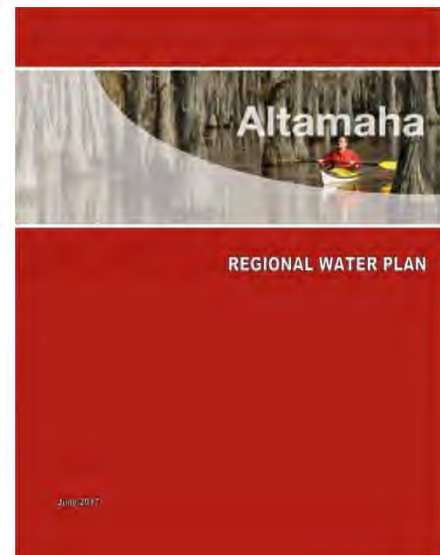
Wheeler County has an approved and adopted hazard mitigation plan prepared for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to remain eligible for federal disaster assistance. The latest hazard mitigation plan is the 2013 Wheeler County Hazard Mitigation Plan. While both plans have been cross-consulted and coordinated, 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, and offer implementation of, the hazard mitigation plan recommended actions.

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 & 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) and its 2017 update, were 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.



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 an implementing, consistent "Environmental Conservation, On-Site Sewage Management, and Permit" Ordinance 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.

## **Community Involvement**

As noted earlier, the Wheeler County local governments clearly wanted to take advantage of the 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. The committee did include elected and appointed members from the governing authorities, local economic development practitioners, and local government staff, as well as others concerned with community and economic development and other issues within the entire community. 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 initial meeting of the Local Plan Coordination Committee included a formal identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community, including opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). This identification was utilized in developing all plan elements. The newly required Broadband Services element highlights the lack of broadband service in Wheeler County. 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. Citizens were also provided the opportunity to give their opinions during a community drop-in/input session held at the Wheeler County Service Center in Alamo from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. which was both publicly posted and announced in

the local newspaper. A webpage specifically devoted to this plan was promoted throughout the community which allowed for administration of a Community Vision survey. A more detailed summary of community involvement is included in Appendix A.

*History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces* 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 overcome challenges 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 an outstanding Community Vision which essentially and succinctly summarizes the community's aspirations and plan's objective.



# 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, 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

## Wheeler County Is:

“A community focused on the promising road ahead. We aim to foster a vibrant, prosperous future for our citizens by promoting our strategic location, the abundance of natural resources, and our home town charm. We will strive to make our historic city centers destinations by offering year-around events and amenities for all ages; and we will seek to diversify our economic base through the stepped-up marketing and utilization of our natural resources, through renewed business and industry recruitment, and through committed support of existing commerce.”

Situated in the rolling hills of South-Central Georgia, Wheeler County is a 300-square-mile area graced by pastoral farm settings and forested with thousands of acres of pine and hardwood trees. Bordered on the west by the black water Little Ocmulgee River, on the south by the historic Ocmulgee River, and on the east by the mighty Oconee River, the area is a sports enthusiast’s paradise whether the activity is fishing, hunting, boating, kayaking, canoeing or hiking. The recent addition of the 3,086-acre Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area in the county’s southern section offers additional outdoor experiences, as does Little Ocmulgee State Park on the county’s western edge.

Trees have formed the bedrock of Wheeler County’s economy from its earliest days when rafts carried hand-hewn logs down river to the coast; when pines were tapped for turpentine; and in the 21st century, as lumber is harvested and hauled to Georgia mills and as far away as China. Wheeler County is now one of the state’s top 10 producers of timber products, and Georgia is consistently ranked as the top forestry state in the nation.

Wheeler County’s two incorporated cities of Alamo, the county seat, and Glenwood, near the Oconee River, retain their rural charm with a slower pace, lower crime, and a high quality of life conducive for growing a family, retirement, and outdoor enjoyment.

**TO FULFILL OUR VISION, WE WILL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING GOALS WHEN PROMOTING OUR COMMUNITY:**

	<b>Utilize our strategic location to help recruit diverse business and industry</b>
	<b>Increase marketing and compatible use of abundant natural and cultural resources to enhance tourism and other economic opportunities</b>
	<b>Seek promotion of our agricultural base and hobby farm possibilities</b>
	<b>Maintain Wheeler County’s sense of place and small-town character, including revitalization of its historic downtowns</b>
	<b>Support of modern technologies, such as broadband connectivity and Broadband Ready Community designation</b>
	<b>Attract new residents, including retirees, seeking an excellent climate and affordable living costs</b>
	<b>Increase qualified, local workforce</b>
	<b>Promote a healthy, transparent citizen/government relationship</b>

Wheeler County has many celebrated natural and cultural resources including quaint, historic homes constructed in farm related folk styles, rural churches, and three National Register of Historic Places-listed structures, (Wheeler County Courthouse, Woodland, and the Glenwood High School). 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. Wheeler County is also home to Little Ocmulgee State Park, a 1,360 acre state-owned recreational facility including a 256 acre lake. Although originally dating from the 1930s and developed with assistance from the Civilian



Conservation Corps (CCC), the park has an updated 60 room lodge and conference center, and other amenities, including the popular 18-hole Wallace Adams Golf Course. Its natural landscape includes towering pines, moss-draped live oaks, cypress and oak swamps, and scrub oaks all accessible through well marked and maintained nature trails. The recently opened Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area in southern Wheeler County provides public access to nature lovers engaged in bird watching, hunting, and other outdoor activities. Georgia travelers often take Georgia Highway 19 through Wheeler County between Lumber City and Dublin not only as a less-traveled motoring shortcut, 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 with its history of farming and forestry transition, known for its eclectic 19-room Queen Anne Victorian residence dating from 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 part, because of local business and community support with a desire for improvement, which enlisted political and Civilian Conservation Corps assistance. For more detailed information on Wheeler County's Natural, Historical, and Cultural Amenities, see Appendix B.



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 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 currently operated by CoreCivic. This facility has become the principal business engine of the County, expanding twice from its initial 1,700 prison beds to house 2,680 inmates with a capacity of 3,109 beds in 2019. Even so, the 7,879 persons estimated in the official 2018 Census population of the County remains about 20 percent less than the County's 1920 population of 9,817 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 Wheeler County Correctional facility, the community is moving forward. Both Alamo and Glenwood, with state assistance, have completed major expansions of their water and wastewater systems. The Wheeler County Library, a branch of the



Ocmulgee Regional Library System, was opened in 2004 in Alamo. The community has upgraded its general aviation airport and extended its runway to 5,000 feet and added aviation gas and jet fuel facilities to better accommodate economic development. Local health care is provided through the Wheeler County Health Department and the non-profit CareConnect Family Practice, both located in Alamo. The community has also supported 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's vision is "Destination: Graduation!" The community has attracted continued operation of 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. For more detailed information on Healthcare and Human Services, including Education in Wheeler County, see Appendix C.

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, rural 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, while utilizing them in a complementary manner to attract more nature-based and other tourism. 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. Continued use of signature community events, and perhaps the creation of new events centered on the local youth, will be pleasant reminders of the unique charm present in the community. 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 moving forward, but without loss of its unique and outstanding charm and character.



# City of Alamo

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, a new health clinic, and the Wheeler Correctional Facility operated by CoreCivic. 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 2018 Census population estimate for Alamo is 3,321; however, this would include the current 2,680 prisoners in the Wheeler Correctional Facility. The population of Alamo in 1990 was 855, but swelled after the prison opened in 1998 to 1,944 in 2000 and 2,797 in 2010.

## City of Alamo 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**.

## City of Alamo Needs

**Infrastructure upgrades and maintenance, particularly for enhanced fire protection**

**Street improvements, sidewalks, and landscaping**

**Recreational facility improvements**

**Further downtown revitalization**

**Development of Long Leaf Legacy and Interpretive Center**



## City of Alamo Opportunities



**U.S. 280 and its future widening**

**Heart of Georgia Railroad**

**Historic fabric**

**New Care Connection Family Practice health clinic**

**Wheeler Correctional Facility**

**Development of Long Leaf Legacy and Interpretive Center**

# City of Glenwood

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 Glenwood High School, which remained in use as a regional alternative school until recent years. The community had been central to healthcare within Wheeler County with the location of one skilled care nursing home and the former 25-bed Lower Oconee Community Hospital, which closed in 2014. The smallest, still independent telephone company in Georgia, Glenwood Telephone Company dates from 1898. Glenwood 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 2018 Census estimated population for Glenwood is 646, down from 747 in 2010 and nearly 900 in 1990 and 2000. The newly revitalized Sweetwater Horse Event Park facility is located only about a mile east of the community.



## City of Glenwood 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, HEALTHCARE, and RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**. The community's historic resources and downtown area would be preserved and adapted with appropriate uses.





## City of Glenwood Needs

Infrastructure upgrades and maintenance

Street improvements, sidewalks, and bike facilities

Continued downtown revitalization



## City of Glenwood Opportunities



U.S. 280 and its future widening

Georgia 19 and tourism

Heart of Georgia Railroad

Historic fabric

Private industrial Site

Glenwood Telephone Company

Sweetwater Horse Event Park and nearby natural resources

# Community Goals



## Economic Development

- Enhance intergovernmental cooperation
- Retain local graduates
- Improve education levels
- Address continuing education/job skills improvements
- Nurture existing businesses/industries/entrepreneurs
- Attract new businesses/industry/jobs
- Address/improve infrastructure needs
- Improve transportation access/quality
- Develop/enhance tourism
- Support improvements at 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 Wheeler Correctional Facility at Alamo
- Promote quality of life/livability/location

- Protect significant natural resources of Wheeler County
- Seek compatible development/utilization
- Continue support for improvements at Little Ocmulgee State Park
- Utilize/preserve/adaptively use historic resources/heritage of Wheeler 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



## Natural & Cultural Resources



## Housing

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

- 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



### Land Use



### Community Facilities & 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 quality educational facilities/services
- Maintain/enhance solid waste management/recycling facilities/programs/initiatives
- Maintain 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
- Enhance passive park infrastructure and variety of offerings
- Expand senior services

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



### Intergovernmental Coordination

# Long Term Policies

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## Economic Development

The community will seek improvements to internet/broadband access/service/facilities supportive of state-of-the-art technology

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 businesses/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 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 to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure, including broadband telecommunications 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, roads/streets, 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, museum development, 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 and coordinate with existing local, regional, and state agencies to improve all of Wheeler County

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 Wheeler Correctional Facility 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 & 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 Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area 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 & 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, and will pursue Broadband Ready designation

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 infrastructure 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 Wheeler 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 local healthcare 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 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, equipment, and facilities to improve quality of

service and better coordinate in times of emergency and disasters, including improved communications links

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 expansion of 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 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 & Opportunities

## Needs

- Improvements to Internet/broadband access/service/facilities supportive of state-of-the art technology (Economic Development (ED), Community Facilities and Services (CFS), Intergovernmental Coordination (IC))
- Broadband education for local leadership (ED, CFS, IC)
- Adoption of DCA's model broadband services ordinance and certification as Broadband Ready Community countywide (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing education/job skills improvements (ED, CFS, IC)
- Support for increased local post-secondary education resources through nearby technical colleges, such as Oconee Fall Line (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing support for the local school system and increasing high school graduation rate/improving literacy rate (ED, CFS, IC)
- Existing business/industry/entrepreneur support and retention (ED, Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR), CFS, IC)
- New business/industry/jobs attraction/creation (ED, NCR, Land Use (LU), CFS, IC)
- Small business incubator development (ED, CFS, IC)
- Promotion of proximity to Cordele Inland Port (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Diverse mix of jobs to fit local workforce (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Retention of local graduates (ED, Housing (HO), CFS)
- Participation in local or multi-county leadership program to groom future community leaders (ED, CFS, IC)
- Increased/improved local day care options (ED, CFS, IC)
- More after school youth programs (ED, CFS, IC)
- Maintenance/extension/development of infrastructure necessary for desired growth/quality of life, including transportation, water/sewer, and broadband high speed connectivity (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued improvements/promotion of all kinds of transportation access/quality, including highway, roads/streets, airport, rail, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and multi-modal/Complete Streets (ED, CFS, IC)

- Continuing street and road improvements, including paving and resurfacing projects utilizing TIA and other funding (ED, CFS, IC)
- Passage of second T-SPLOST in Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Completion of TIA Band 2 and 3 projects, including bridge replacement on Mt. Olive Church Road (County); 1st and 2nd avenues and Steward Street in Alamo; North and South 4th streets, E. Roberson and E. Gillis streets (Glenwood) (ED, CFS, IC)
- Sidewalk installation along Snowhill Road, 5th Street, and S.R. 19 North in Glenwood (CFS, IC)
- Repair Heart of Georgia Railroad crossing in Alamo (ED, CFS, IC)
- U.S. 280 upgrading to 4-lanes (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/upgrades to Telfair-Wheeler Airport located in Wheeler County, including extension of taxiway parallel to runway and construction of new hangars (ED, CFS, IC)
- Enhancement/growth of local/regional tourism through existing and new signature community festivals/events, recreation/leisure, bicycling, agri-tourism, nature based tourism, horse event park, museum development, and historic and cultural sites (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of Long Leaf Legacy Museum and Interpretive Center (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Encourage tourism use of GA Highway 19, including possible Georgia Scenic Byway designation (ED, NCR, IC)
- Retail trade/service sector and hospitality business development, including local grocery store (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Increased awareness of existing and promotion of new tourism attractions/events along U.S. 441 (Heritage Highway), U.S. 280, and GA Highway 19 through driving tour development, increased signage at historic and natural landmarks, and other means (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Coordination/enhancement of economic development marketing through active Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, regional cooperation, and regional/state agencies (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continuing local, regional, and state agency cooperation/coordination (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Community appearance improvements/redevelopment of declining areas/upgrade commercial areas and substandard housing (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued downtown revitalization of Alamo and Glenwood (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Compatible development supportive of community's unique landscapes, natural beauty, and rural character/quality of life (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)

- Maintenance of agriculture/forestry as viable economic land uses through traditional and alternative means, such as agritourism and nature-based tourism (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Proactive growth management of future compatible development through community investment/appropriate regulation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Support continuing operation of Wheeler Correctional Facility in Wheeler County, including any future expansions (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Attraction/maintenance of residential growth, including retirees, through quality of life and small town/rural promotion (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Conservation/protection of Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers, significant natural resources, and open spaces/landscapes of Wheeler County (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Promotion/development of greater compatible economic use/tourism of parks, rivers, other natural/cultural resources (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Upgrades to Clarks Bluff Landing, including possible relocation (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Conservation/protection of Little Ocmulgee State Park and Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of bike route linking Little Ocmulgee with Region's other state parks (Gordonia-Alatamaha and George L. Smith) (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Historic resources preservation/reuse/promotion, such as rehabilitation of downtown commercial structures in Alamo and Glenwood (ED, NCR, HO, CFS, IC)
- Continued downtown revitalization of Alamo and Glenwood (ED, NCR, HO, CFS, IC)
- Complete renovation of historic calaboose in downtown Alamo (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Continued stewardship and local government use of National Register-listed historic Wheeler County Courthouse (ED, NCR, CFS)
- Continuing protection of Wheeler County's significant natural and cultural resources through community investment and appropriate regulation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Enforcement of model ordinance based on Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and protected river corridors (NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Appearance/aesthetics improvements through landscaping, beautification efforts, codes enforcement, and other means (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Tree planting beautification project along West Railroad Street in Alamo (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)

- Existing and new housing quality/appearance improvements through rehabilitation, removal, code enforcement, and regulation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Substandard housing/concentrations of blight elimination, including dilapidated manufactured housing developments (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Diverse mix of safe, quality housing (affordable, rental, workforce, and manufactured) (ED, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Additional affordable housing (ED, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of detailed housing revitalization strategies (HO, CFS, IC)
- Marketing of available housing for residential attraction, including retirees (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- State/federal housing programs utilization, such as CDBG/CHIP grants and others (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Utilization of existing and new infrastructure location/planning/regulation to guide desired/compatible residential growth/development supportive of community's vision/rural character (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Updated, coordinated land use planning/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations/increased code enforcement/nuisance ordinances/growth management implementation and enforcement to improve appearance/quality of housing developments (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Part-time building codes enforcement officer for Alamo (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Cooperative implementation and enforcement of updated/coordinated/comprehensive land use planning, manufactured housing/land use regulations, and code enforcement (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Encouragement of appropriate infill and intense development/land uses through planning, infrastructure location, and regulation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development compatible with existing infrastructure location to guide future growth (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued conservation/protection of flood zones countywide (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance and provision of adequate local governmental facilities/services, including city administrative facilities (ED, CFS, IC)
- New Alamo City Hall (LU, CFS)
- Continued maintenance, upgrades, and expansion of existing public infrastructure/services, as needed (ED, HO, LU, CFS, IC)

- Maintain/upgrade/expand water/sewer service provision as needed, including larger line sizes for fire protection (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Replace all water lines less than 6 inches in diameter in Alamo (ED, HO, CFS, IC)
- Install additional 6 inch water lines and fire hydrants along U.S. 280 and East U.S. 280 in Glenwood (ED, HO, CFS, IC)
- Purchase new generator for well #5 in Glenwood (HO, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/enhancement of local educational facilities/services/technology (ED, CFS, IC)
- Maintenance/upgrades to County's solid waste/recycling facilities and programs in conjunction with community appearance improvement efforts (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Purchase dump truck for yard waste in Alamo (CFS)
- Continued maintenance/upgrades of local healthcare facility/services/equipment, as needed (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continued support/promotion/maintenance/enhancement of existing cultural facilities/programs/events and development of additional ones (NCR, CFS, IC)
- Continued support for local Wheeler County Public Library through facility, equipment, staffing, program, and other improvements/expansions, as needed, including upgrading/replacing AC units (ED, CFS)
- Continued improvements to local public safety/fire/emergency medical services, equipment, and facilities, as needed (CFS, IC)
- Provide new offices and storage space for Sheriff's Department and EMS headquarters (LU, CFS, IC)
- Purchase new police car for Alamo (CFS, IC)
- Upgrade technology at Alamo Police Department (CFS, IC)
- Purchase new utility truck for Glenwood Fire Department (CFS, IC)
- Parks/recreation facilities/activities maintenance/improvements/promotion/new development (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Expansion of senior services (CFS, IC)
- Continued efforts to seek sharing/cooperation/consolidation in delivery of services (ED, CFS, IC)

## Opportunities

- Availability of DCA’s model Broadband Services ordinance and Broadband Ready Community certification (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing existing local, regional, and state agency cooperation/coordination (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs (ED, IC)
- Post-secondary education access locally at Oconee Fall Line Technical College’s Wheeler Learning Center in Alamo, and other nearby institutions (ED, IC)
- Good local schools, including planned new Wheeler County K-12 facility, technology, and dual enrollment opportunities (ED, CFS, IC)
- E-SPLOST funding (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Wheeler County Chamber of Commerce/Development Authority (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Existing businesses/industries, such as EP American Footwear, Little Ocmulgee EMC, Glenwood Telephone Company, Wheeler County State Bank, Sweetwater Race Track, and others (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Local employment and vocational training at Wheeler Correctional Facility (ED, CFS, IC)
- Low unemployment/local workforce (ED, IC)
- Existing agricultural/forestry uses, such as timber, pine straw, wheat and oat straw, catfish farming, honeybees, pork finishing, and watermelon production (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Private Stevens-McRae industrial site in Glenwood (ED, CFS, IC)
- Available water/sewer capacity in Alamo and Glenwood (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Transportation improvements, including TIA funded resurfacing and paving projects (ED, CFS, IC)
- Proximity to I-16, U.S. 280, Savannah Port, Dublin, Macon, and Inland Port at Cordele (ED, CFS, IC)
- Telfair-Wheeler Airport improvements (ED, CFS, IC)
- Wheeler Transit Program (ED, CFS, IC)
- Heart of Georgia Railroad access (ED, CFS, IC)
- Historic downtowns in Alamo and Glenwood with rehabilitation opportunities (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- New local restaurants in Alamo and Glenwood (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Local/regional tourism events/venues, such as Alamo’s July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)

- Nature-based, agri-tourism, recreation, heritage, and other tourism venues, including the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers; Little Ocmulgee State Park, Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area, and the Long Leaf Legacy Museum and Interpretive Center (under development in Alamo), U.S. 441 Heritage Trail, and scenic GA Highway 19 (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Highway 46, Mt. Vernon Bridge, and Clark’s Bluff landings on Oconee River in Wheeler County (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Local cultural/historic resources, such as Wheeler County Courthouse, Woodland Plantation, Milly Troup Tomb and the Big Oak Tree, Alamo calaboose, Glenwood School, and opportunities for increased heritage tourism (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Community’s rural character/small town quality of life (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Lower property values/lower property taxes (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Significant natural resources, including Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers and their corridors, and others (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Ocmulgee River eco-tourism/Ocmulgee River Water Trail/Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership/Oconee River Greenway Authority (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Georgia Forestry Conservation Easement along Oconee River (NCR, LU, IC)
- Ample undeveloped land (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Availability of good water (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Lower cost of living and housing costs (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Low population density (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- County’s subdivision ordinance (ED, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Existing zoning in Alamo (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Alamo’s newly appointed Zoning Board (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Land available for sale (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Availability of CDBG/other public/private programs to rehabilitate low and moderate income housing (ED, NCR, HO, CFS, IC)
- Continued use of historic Wheeler County Courthouse (NCR, CFS)
- SPLOST funding (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Wheeler County Senior Center (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Wheeler County Recreation Complex (ED, CFS, IC)
- Strong local public safety/enforcement and low crime rate (CFS, IC)



- E-911 with Telfair County (CFS, IC)
- New Care Connection Family Practice health clinic and Wheeler County Health Department services (CFS, IC)
- Wheeler County Library with Wi-Fi available (ED, CFS, IC)
- Existing local, regional, and state partnerships, including public safety/fire service cooperation, Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, and others (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)



# 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 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 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.

Wheeler Correctional Facility (WCF), owned and operated by CoreCivic, has become a principal economic engine in the county. The facility expanded from its initial 1,700 beds to the contract level of 3,109 beds in 2019. Named CoreCivic's top facility in 2018, Wheeler Correctional Facility is one of the two largest correctional facilities operated in Georgia by CoreCivic. The facility opened in 1998 and currently houses 2,680 medium security adult male offenders. Its government partner is the state of Georgia. The facility is a valuable contributor to the local economy and a vital revenue source for local government. WCF employs approximately 345 people and has an annual payroll of \$16.3 million. It contributes \$1.6 million in annual utilities and \$1.5 million in annual property taxes to the local economy.

Several utility companies are headquartered in Wheeler County, including Little Ocmulgee EMC and Glenwood Telephone Company. Little Ocmulgee EMC was organized by farmers and rural residents from this area in 1938 with support from the federal Rural Electrification Administration (REA). At that time, investor-owned utilities contended there was not enough profit to be made to warrant the expense of building power lines into



the countryside. REA offered low-cost loans for bringing electricity to un-served homes and farms so residents began forming electric cooperatives to meet the need. A fee of \$5 was collected from each member – making them co-op members and owners – to generate capital for borrowing. In 2019, Little Ocmulgee EMC marked its 82nd year and today serves Telfair and Wheeler counties as well as parts of Laurens, Dodge, and Montgomery counties from their headquarters in Alamo. In the 21st century, Little Ocmulgee EMC continues to provide electricity to over 7,725 members with 11,433 meters and maintains over 2,000 miles of energized lines, covering over 1,000 square miles of service territory.

Glenwood Telephone Company, the smallest privately owned telephone company in Georgia, was originally founded in 1898 by W.R. Stanford. Today its service area encompasses approximately 13 square miles along the bluff side of the Oconee River in Wheeler and Laurens counties. In April, 2019 Glenwood Telephone announced a multi-million dollar Fiber

to the Home (FTTH) project in its service area, with plans to have an initial FTTH area online by the end of 2019. The goal is to eventually serve all its Incumbent Local Exchange area customers with FTTH. FTTH is the most advanced communications system in the world today. Glenwood Telephone is making this large financial investment with the hope of attracting new businesses to the area that require state-of-the-art technology and high speed internet, as well as to enhance opportunities for telephone customers to telecommute, access distance learning and telemedicine, and utilize other available services and resources.

Wheeler County State Bank (WCSB), chartered in 1934, has its headquarters in Alamo. The bank has approximately 30 employees, who work at the main facility and at Atlantic South Bank, a division of WCSB located in Dublin. Wheeler County State Bank has consistently earned a five-star rating from Bauer Financial, which reports on and analyzes the performance of U.S. banks and credit unions. The bank is well capitalized and continues to report strong earnings.

EP American Footwear, a subsidiary of McPherson Manufacturing in nearby Hazlehurst, Georgia, launched operations in Alamo in the summer of 2018. The company,



which has its molded shoe manufacturing base located in Hazlehurst, opted to expand its operations to Alamo to increase the labor pool. Once the plant became fully operational, it began processing 15,000 to 22,000 pairs of shoes per day. The shoes are transported from Hazlehurst to the Alamo plant at the rate of three to five trucks per day. The trucks can carry about 6,000 adult shoes or approximately 20,000 children's shoes per load. The plant employs 50 to 60 persons depending on production needs and handles finish work on molded shoes produced at the Hazlehurst facility. Tasks performed at the Alamo site include gluing insoles and ornamentation. When the shoes are finished they are packed into large containers for transfer back to the Hazlehurst site. There, they are stored for future shipping.

The recent closing in June, 2019 of the Husqvarna Plant in nearby McRae-Helena, Georgia, which resulted in the loss of approximately 1,000 jobs, adversely impacted a number of

Wheeler County workers who had commuted to work there. Almost 20 percent of Wheeler County residents commute to Telfair County. The Atlanta Business Chronicle had ranked Husqvarna, the producer of push mowers and snow throwers, as Georgia's 25th largest manufacturing company in August, 2018.

The timber and straw industries continue to be important economically in Wheeler County. The timber industry is still the largest industry in the county, accounting for millions of dollars a year, including pine straw, a byproduct of growing timber. The county ranks eighth (8) in the state in pine straw production, with 20,000 acres involved, and contributed 3% of the state's total production for a value of \$2.5 million in 2017.

Additionally, the county ranks number three (3) in the state in the production of straw from wheat and oats, with 4,000 acres in cultivation in 2017 for a contribution of 7% to the state's production total and \$1.2 million in revenue.

Farming continues to be big business in Wheeler County:

- Wheeler ranks in the top 10 counties in the state for catfish farming. The 2017 Farm Gate report notes that the county boasts 27 ponds with 3,000 pounds per acre of catfish for a total income of \$243,000.
- Honeybees are also big revenue for Wheeler. The county ranks number 11 in the state for this commodity bringing in \$783,700 in 2017.
- Pork (finishing only) was also big business for Wheeler County in 2017. Ranking number 12 in the state in this category, Wheeler's revenue was \$66,918 in 2017.
- Watermelons are also growing big in Wheeler County. In 2017 this crop brought in \$1.2 million.

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 2013-2017 is \$11,192, only about 35% that of Georgia as a whole. The reader should note the per capita figure is skewed lower due to the high percentage of prison inmates figured in the totals. Median household income is \$28,490, about 56% that of

Georgia. Thirty percent of Wheeler County citizens are in poverty, compared to only 17% in Georgia as a whole. Over 43% 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 6.3% in 2019, compared to 4.7% in the Region and 3.9% in the State. Half of county workers work outside Wheeler County, including 19% in neighboring Telfair County. Job skills of local residents are also a concern; about 23% of local residents are without a high school diploma compared to 13% statewide. Transfer payments represent about 35% of total personal income compared to about 16% 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 (12%), government (30%), and agricultural, forestry, fishing (16%) sectors. This reflects the stability and importance of agriculture and forestry and the prison within the county, as well as the 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.**

- **Improve 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, CoreCivic, civic groups, and

continuing intergovernmental cooperation. The Great Promise Partnership will be investigated. The “Destination: Graduation” 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, CoreCivic, 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 be a priority and addressed, in part, through seeking Broadband Ready Community certification countywide.

- **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 CoreCivic 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 continue to explore the feasibility of

working jointly with neighboring counties to increase the number of available jobs. 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), scenic GA Highway 19, and U.S. 280 as well as its farms and scenic countryside offer much more potential to increase visitors. The new Long Leaf Legacy and Interpretive Center in Alamo will be an important asset. There is potential for a U.S. 280 cooperative yard sale.

- **Improve Transportation Access/Quality**

The Regional T-SPLOST has delivered many needed local resurfacing and other road improvements which have enhanced the community as a place to live and work. Continued support for a Regional TSPLOST will be considered in 2020 with a Regional referendum for continuation of the program after 2022. 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 private Stevens-McRae industrial site in Glenwood needs further improvement and marketing. The potential site is currently comprised of multiple parcels with various landowners. Located just east of Glenwood, this site borders the Oconee River to the east and has short line rail along the southern boundary. Future rail spur expansion would be needed.

- **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; CoreCivic; 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.

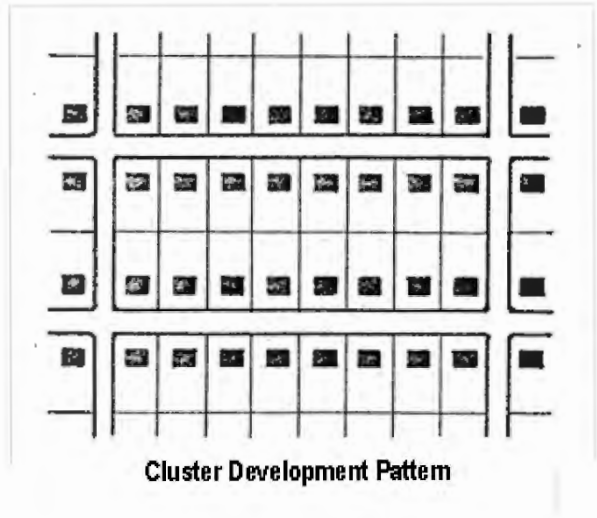


- **Enhance Intergovernmental Cooperation**

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/Community Aesthetics**

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 stronger, more 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 CoreCivic 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 CoreCivic/Little Ocmulgee State Park**

The Little Ocmulgee State Park and CoreCivic’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.

# Broadband Services

The Broadband Services Element is a descriptive snapshot of the areas of the community served by broadband technology. The deployment of broadband technologies has become a major selling point for those communities which offer high speed connectivity, and conversely, a detriment to economic development for those areas lacking the infrastructure. The Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes this element to outline a strategy for attracting an increased level of broadband deployment by the private sector and to preemptively meet anticipated changes to the State Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

# Broadband Services



Since the discovery of electricity, people all over the world have dreamed about the exciting possibilities of technology sure to be right around the corner. Each new invention or innovation brought increased excitement. What made electricity service vital to people and industry of the United States in the 20th century will make broadband service a necessity in the 21st century. We recognize high speed technology has developed in disparity across the nation and the state of Georgia largely due to population densities and cost- return on infrastructure investments. It is Wheeler County's goal to determine the broadband infrastructure shortfall within the county and seek ways to improve its current position.

Broadband is defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a minimum of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed. It should be noted the broadband definition has changed twice since its inception in 1996 due to technology advancements. Broadband delivery methods include, but are not limited to, digital subscriber lines, cable modems, fiber, wireless, broadband over power lines, and satellites. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region, within which Wheeler County is located, was determined in a 2015 Digital Economy Plan to rank 12 out of 12 areas of Georgia for technological capability. It is significant to note the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region is the only region of Georgia without a metropolitan area included. Nationally, 98.1 percent of the population have access to either fixed terrestrial service at 25 Mbps/3 Mbps or mobile LTE at 10 Mbps/3 Mbps. This

percentage drops to 89.7% in rural areas. In the FCC's 2018 Broadband Deployment Report, it was found that 38.8 percent of the population in Wheeler County have access to fixed broadband technology served by DSL and Cable networks.

DSL service is available with speed up to 25 Mbps in the area in and around Alamo and west to the City of McRae-Helena. Other areas, including the City of Glenwood and various blocks in the unincorporated county, have access to DSL technology with download speeds up to 10 Mbps. Cable line access is available in the city limits of Alamo and Glenwood. The areas served by cable service have download speeds exceeding 50 Mbps. No fiber optic network is reported in Wheeler County according to the FCC's 2018 Broadband Deployment report. Local data concerning the Glenwood Telephone Company (GTC) reports a long term initiative by the company to complete Fiber To The Home in just a few years. Currently, GTC customers have access to broadband speeds and will in time have increased options and speeds at lower rates. 99.8% of Glenwood Telephone Company's line infrastructure is buried underground and considered to be resilient to natural disasters.

Other avenues of broadband service technologies available in the community are through either satellite or wireless 4G LTE service. Satellite service speeds are generally slower download speeds compared to wired infrastructure and are prone to weather related outages. Wireless 4G LTE technology is widely available throughout the State of Georgia and is used by smartphones and tablets to download content reliably, although speed is determined by proximity to a communications tower and the speed at which the tower is capable. Wheeler County has a reported 4G LTE coverage area over the majority of the county except for areas northeast of the City of Alamo. This avenue of service is generally sufficient for a homeowner or cell service subscriber; however, according to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Digital Economy Plan in 2015, service reliability can be an issue with this technology.

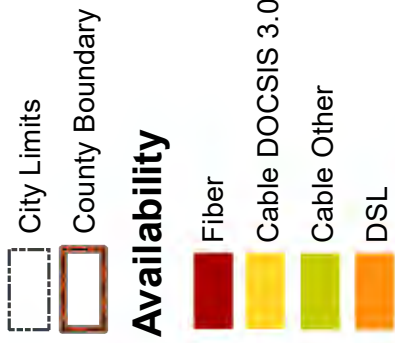
Certainly an industry desiring an improved communications network will seek a fixed connection service provider and will need at minimum 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds. According to data provided by the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA), National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and the FCC, the infrastructure for broadband services is located in portions of Wheeler County; however, the fixed broadband technology does not provide adequate speed outside of the incorporated boundaries to be considered "Broadband." Wireless 4G LTE in the county meets minimum

speeds of wireless broadband, but it is inadequate for industry seeking to locate in the county. The need for broadband service in Wheeler County is critical as it is determined to be underserved by both fixed broadband technology and wireless broadband technology. Wheeler County, the City of Alamo, and the City of Glenwood desire to be fully served by broadband capability through broadband deployment with service areas reaching the minimum speeds to be considered “Broadband Service.”

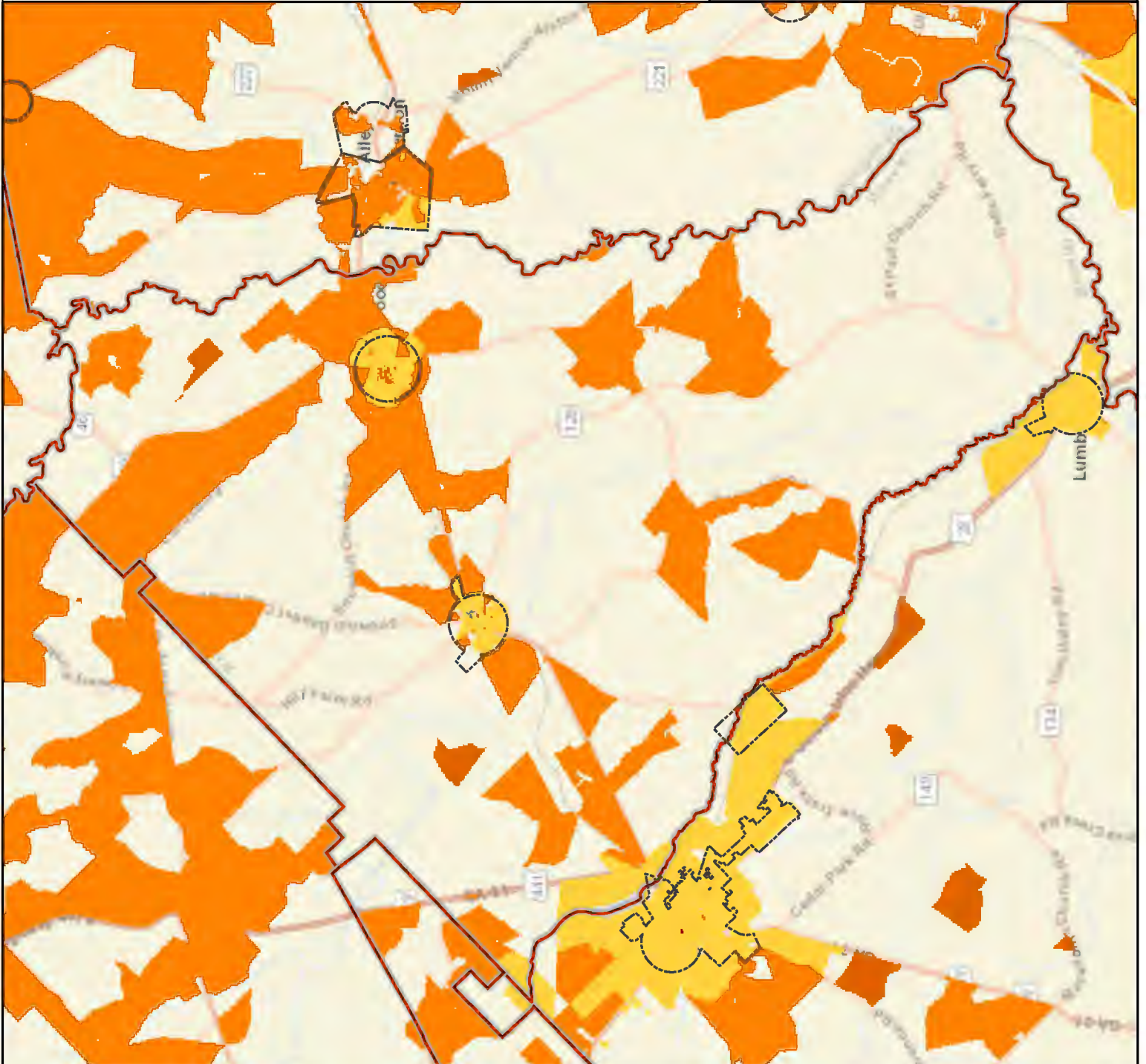
**The Wheeler County community has chosen a multi-faceted approach and strategy to improve the availability of broadband and broadband deployment. The following items are actions steps the community will take to increase economic, educational, and social opportunities for citizens and businesses through the deployment of universal broadband and other communications technologies.**

- Develop and maintain an inventory of Community Anchor Institutions (schools, library, medical and healthcare providers, public safety entities, and higher education facilities) within the community to determine areas of greatest broadband need.
- Develop or otherwise enact a model ordinance which determines a contact person for any broadband projects within the community, outlines a streamlined permit process for broadband projects, keeps broadband project permit fees reasonable, and ensures equal treatment for applicants applying for use of jurisdictional rights-of-way.
- Apply to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for certification as a “Broadband Ready Community” or similar certification by the State of Georgia.
- Partner with state agencies (Georgia Technology Authority, Department of Community Affairs, and Department of Economic Development) and area local governments to promote broadband deployment in the community, region, and state.
- Identify broadband deployment projects eligible for OneGeorgia Authority funding and/or other state and federal grant or loan opportunities.

# Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network














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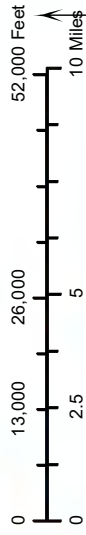


# Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network DSL

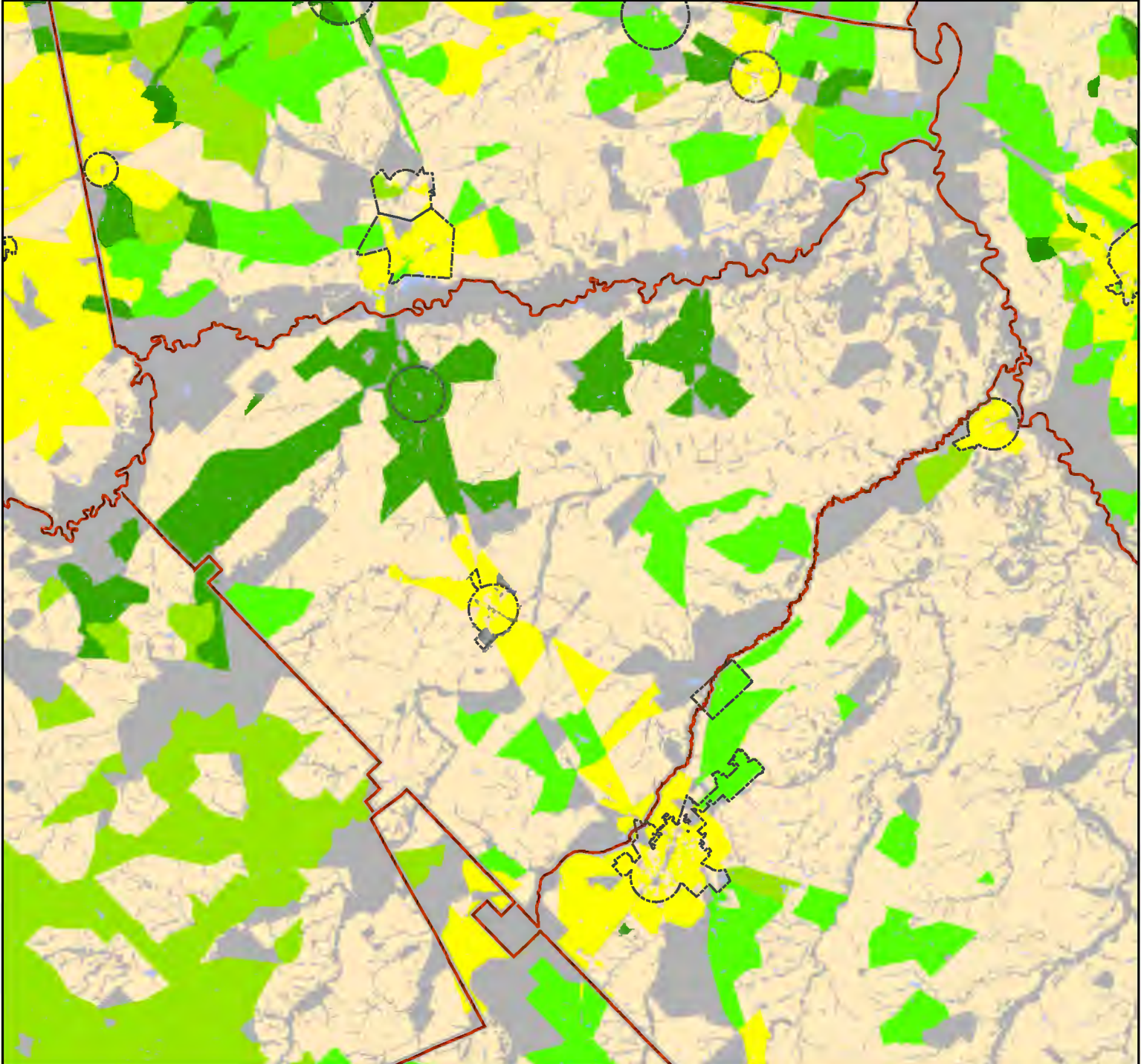
-  City Limits
-  County Boundary

## Speed Availability

-  3 mbps or less
-  3 mbps - 6 mbps
-  6 mbps - 10 mbps
-  10 mbps - 25 mbps
-  25 mbps - 50 mbps
-  50 mbps - 100 mbps
-  100 mbps - 1 gbps
-  Greater than 1 gbps
-  Water
-  Unpopulated Lands
-  Unserved Areas Less than 768 kbps Down



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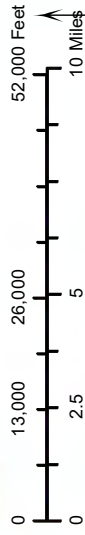


# Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network Fiber

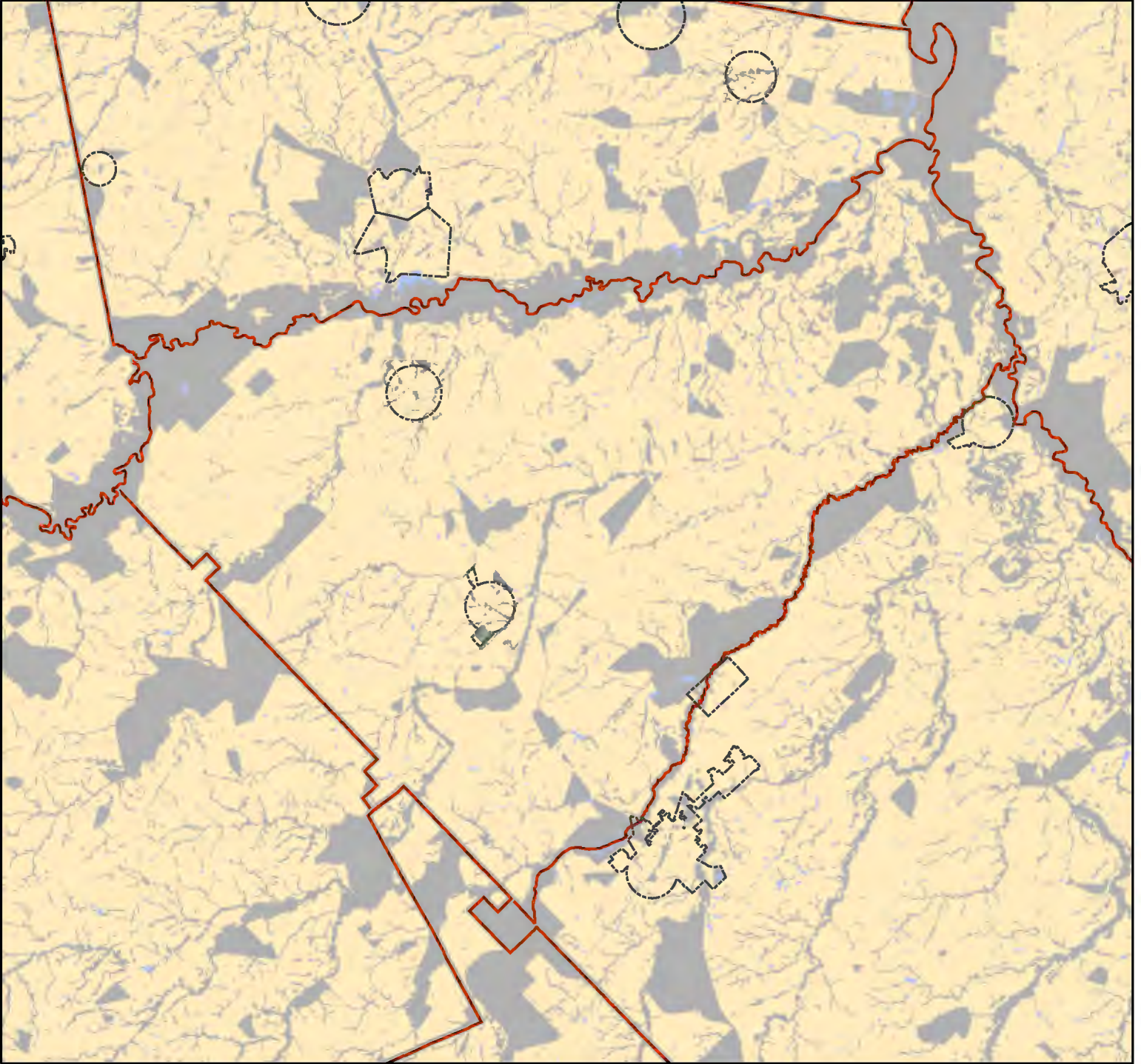
City Limits  
County Boundary

## Speed Availability

- 3 mbps or less
- 3 mbps - 6 mbps
- 6 mbps - 10 mbps
- 10 mbps - 25 mbps
- 25 mbps - 50 mbps
- 50 mbps - 100 mbps
- 100 mbps - 1 gbps
- Greater than 1 gbps
- Water
- Unpopulated Lands
- Unserviced Areas Less than 768 kbps Down














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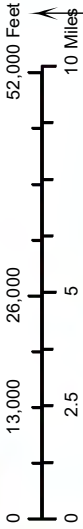


# Wheeler County Digital Economy Fixed Network Cable

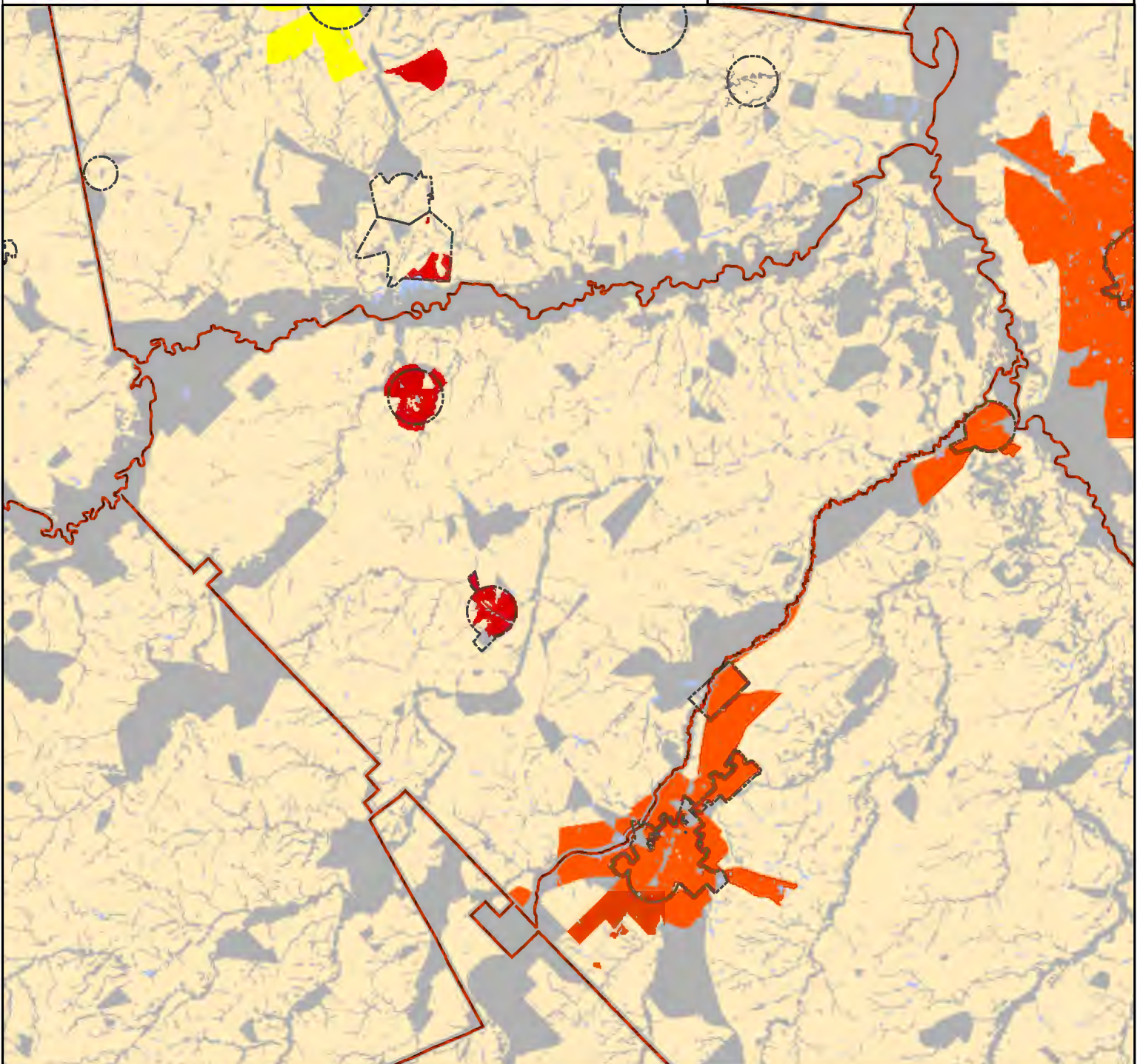
-  City Limits
-  County Boundary

## Speed Availability



-  3 mbps or less
-  3 mbps - 6 mbps
-  6 mbps - 10 mbps
-  10 mbps - 25 mbps
-  25 mbps - 50 mbps
-  50 mbps - 100 mbps
-  100 mbps - 1 gbps
-  Greater than 1 gbps
-  Water
-  Unpopulated Lands
-  Unserved Areas Less than 768 kbps Down



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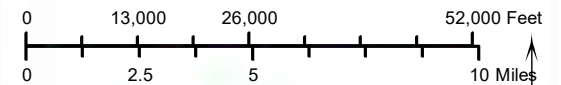


# Wheeler County Digital Economy Wireless 4g LTE

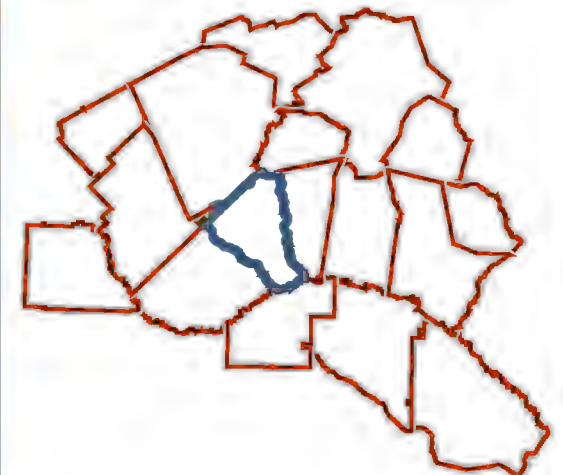
-  City Limits
-  County Boundary

## Availability

-  Wireless 4G LTE

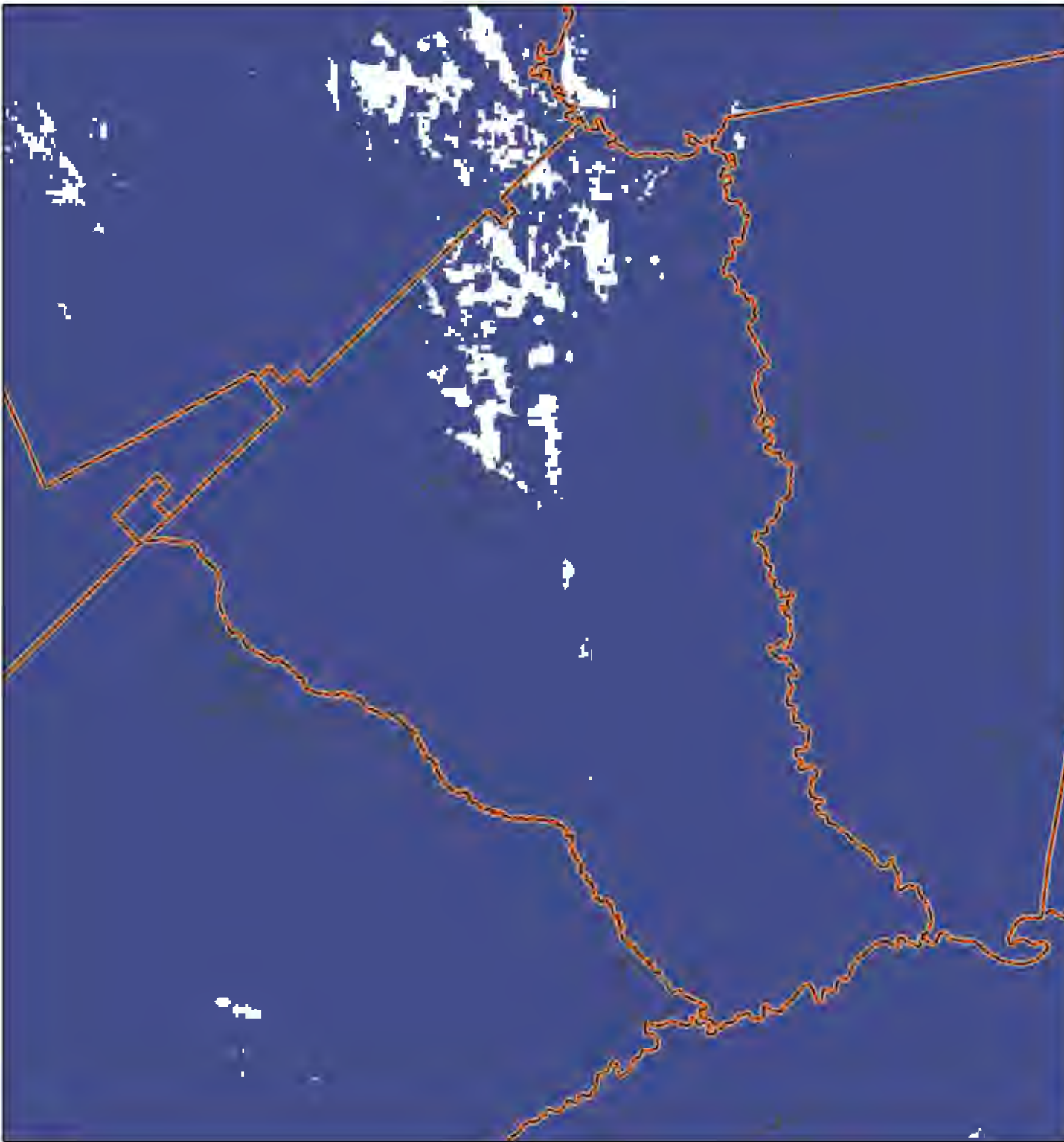


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Date: 7/27/2018

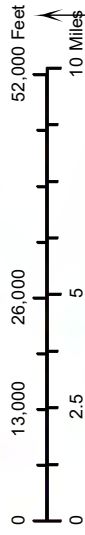
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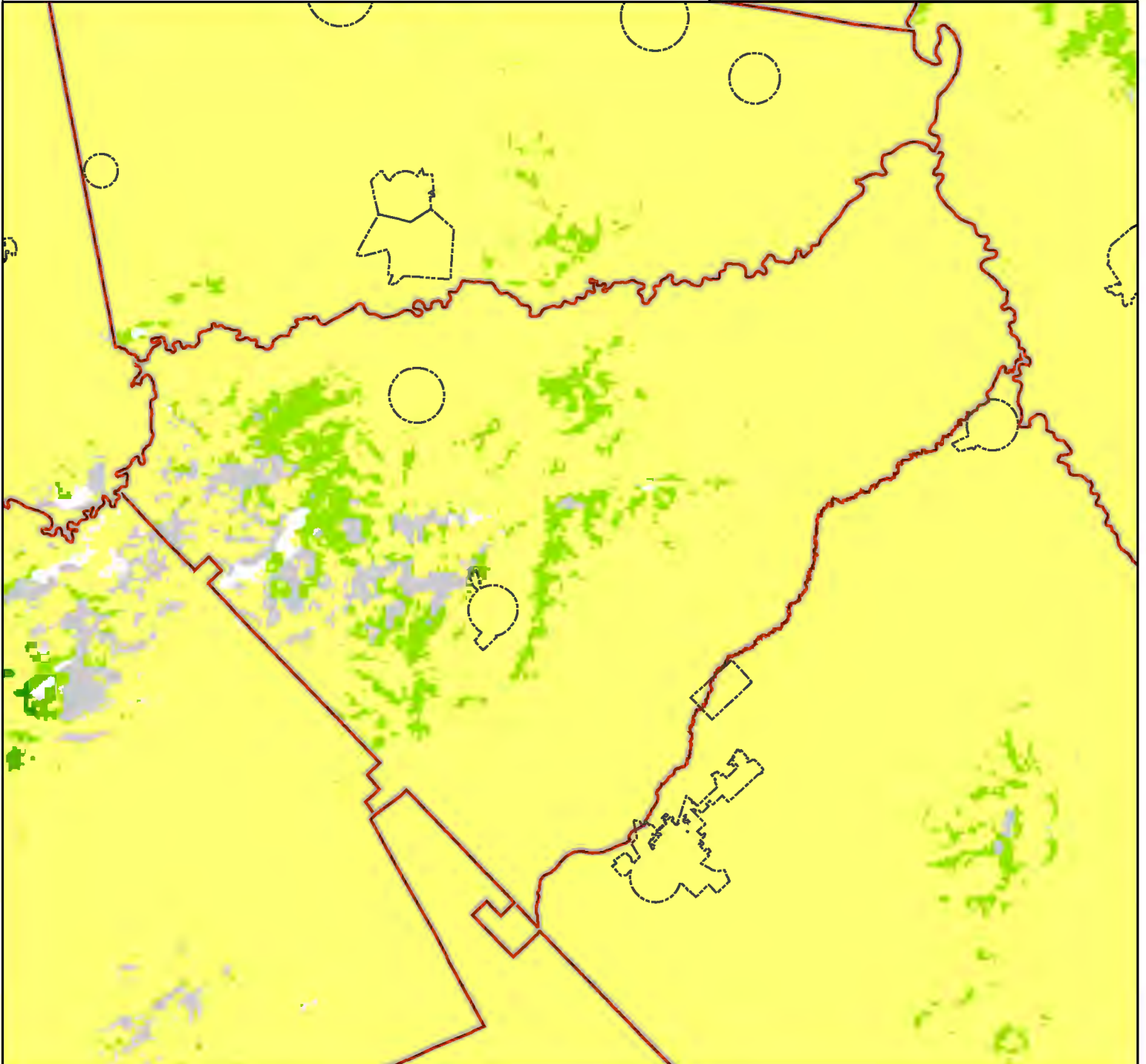
# Wheeler County Digital Economy Wireless 4g LTE



## Speed Availability



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# Land Use

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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 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 uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

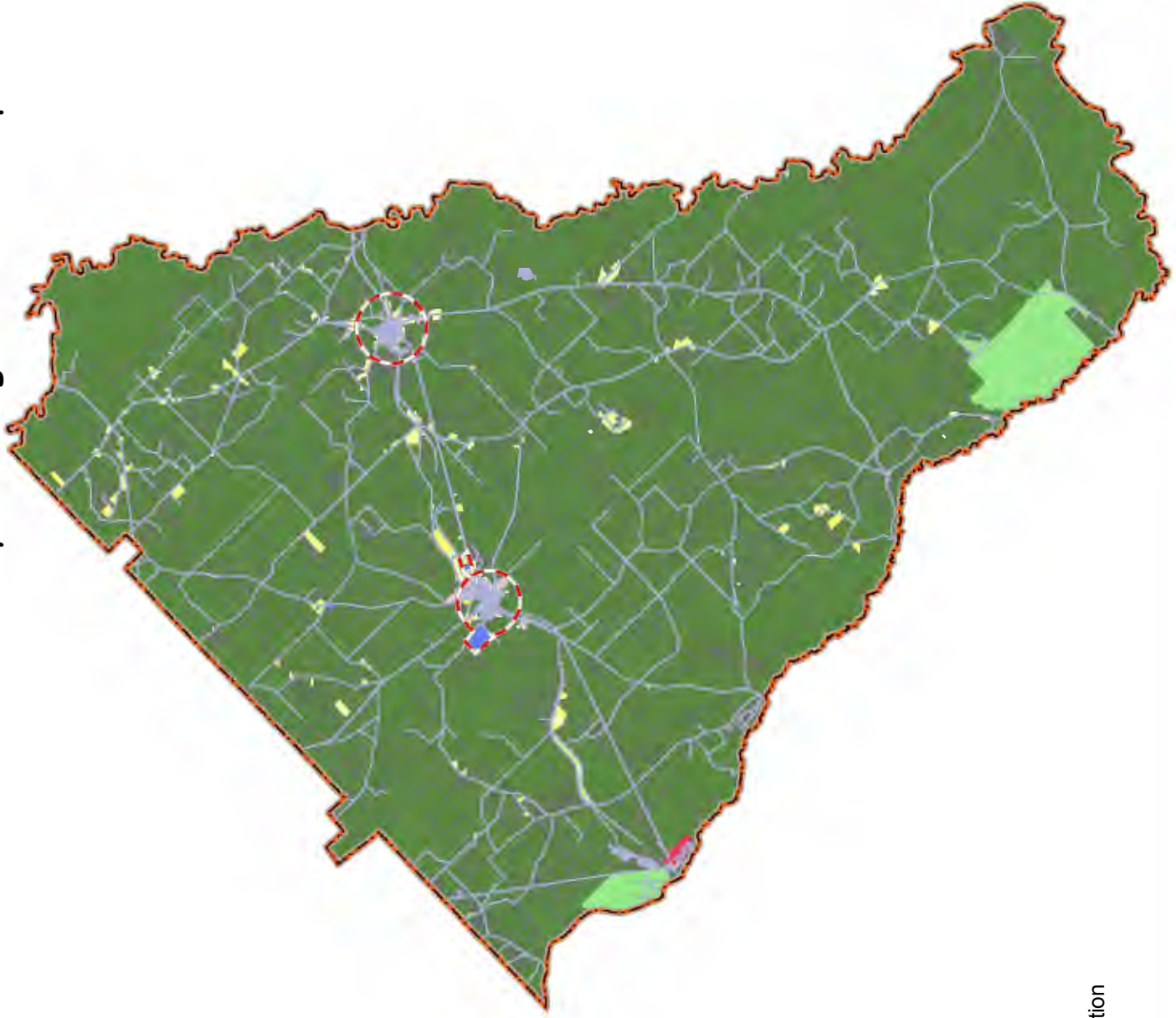
**AGRICULTURE** This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or similar rural uses.

**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
  - Alamo City Limits
  - Glenwood City Limits
- Landuse**
- Agriculture/Forestry
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Park/Recreation/Conservation
  - Residential
  - Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Date: 4/22/19



"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

# Alamo Existing Land Use Map



## Legend

Alamo City Limits

## Landuse

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Date: 4/22/19



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# Glenwood Existing Land Use Map



- Legend**
- Glenwood City Limits
  - Landuse**
  - Existing Land Use**
  - Agriculture/Forestry
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Park/Recreation/Conservation
  - Public/Institutional
  - Residential
  - Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Date: 4/22/19



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<b>Existing Land Use Distribution, 2019</b>		
<b>(Acres)</b>		
<b>Wheeler County</b>		
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>66,826</b>	<b>34.78</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>0.09</b>
<b>Forestry</b>	<b>113,600</b>	<b>59.12</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>0.09</b>
<b>Park/Recreation/Conservation</b>	<b>4,355</b>	<b>2.27</b>
<b>Public/Institutional</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>0.09</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>1.49</b>
<b>Transportation/Communications/Utilities</b>	<b>3,972</b>	<b>2.07</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>192,145</b>	<b>100</b>

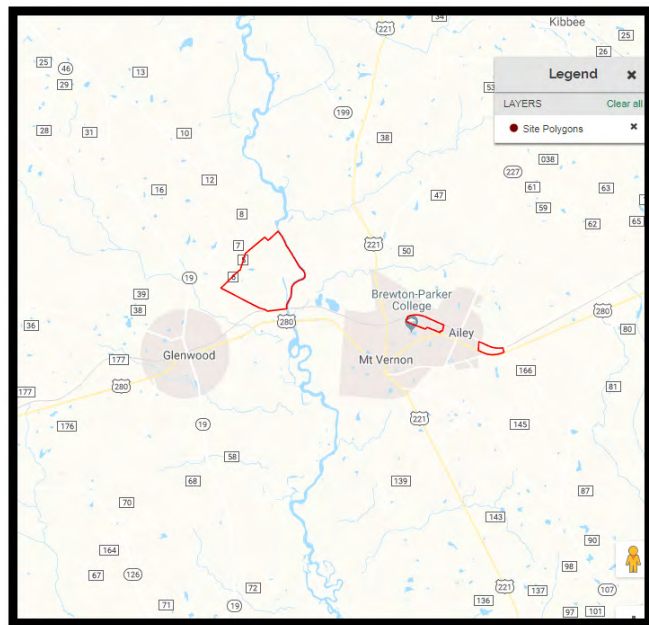
Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Geographic Information System, 2019.

## 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. Industrial growth will likely occur near Alamo or Glenwood due to the municipal infrastructure; however, currently only one site near Glenwood is marketed for industrial use. Without land use protections in the unincorporated county, large scale industrial land uses are difficult to predict outside of the need for municipal water and sewer services. The Sweetwater Horse Event Park along U.S. 280 East of Glenwood could stimulate additional development.



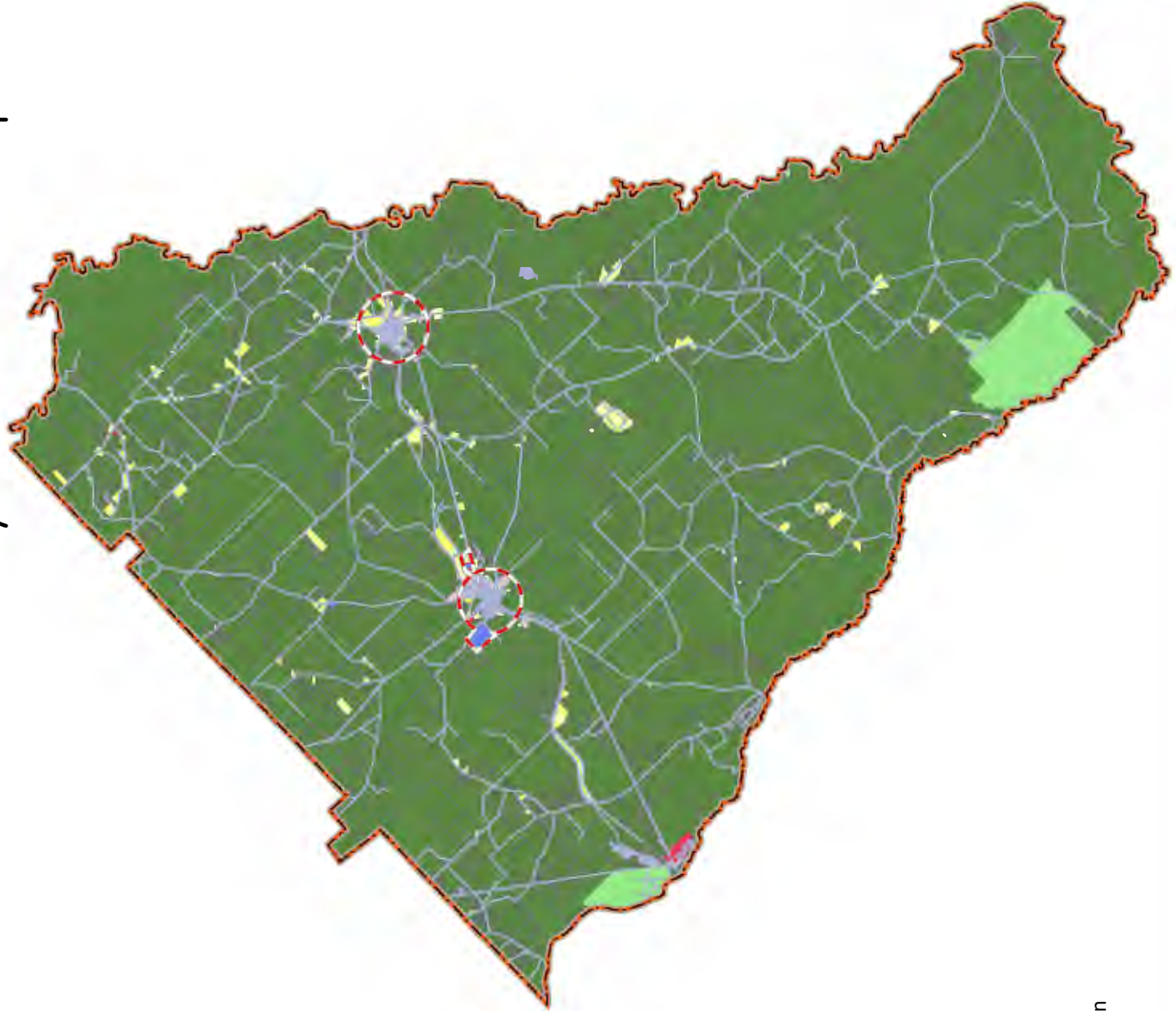
Recent residential growth has also primarily occurred in or near Alamo and Glenwood, particularly in north and east Alamo, near Snowhill Road and south of U.S. 280. Residential growth in Glenwood has been more piecemeal, but primarily concentrated near Culver Street north of U.S. 280 and east of Cemetery 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.



# Wheeler County Future Land Use Map



## Legend

- County Boundary
- Alamo City Limits
- Glenwood City Limits
- Landuse
- Future Land Use
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Date: 4/22/19











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Transportation/Communication/Utilities

# Alamo Future Land Use Map



- Legend**
-  Alamo City Limits
  - Landuse**
  - Future Land Use**
  -  Agriculture/Forestry
  -  Commercial
  -  Industrial
  -  Park/Recreation/Conservation
  -  Public/Institutional
  -  Residential
  -  Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Date: 4/22/19











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# Glenwood Future Land Use Map



- Legend**
-  Glenwood City Limits
  - Landuse**
  - Future Land Use**
  -  Agriculture/Forestry
  -  Commercial
  -  Industrial
  -  Park/Recreation/Conservation
  -  Public/Institutional
  -  Residential
  -  Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Date: 4/22/19



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Transportation/Communication/Utilities

## Land Use Goals

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

- **Address Growth Management/Community Aesthetics**

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.

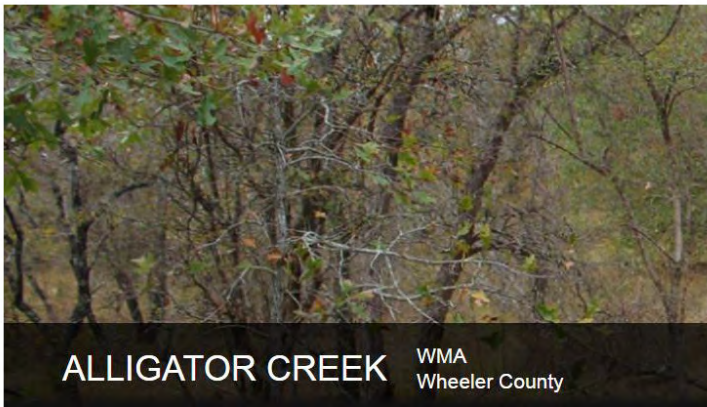
- **Improve Subdivision/Manufactured Housing/Land Use Regulation/Code Enforcement**

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 plans to employ a part time building code enforcement officer. 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 Recreational/Leisure Use Facilities and Encourage Utilization/Access/Tourism for Natural/Cultural Resources**



The Oconee, Ocmulgee, and Little Ocmulgee rivers, the Little Ocmulgee State Park, the new Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area, 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,

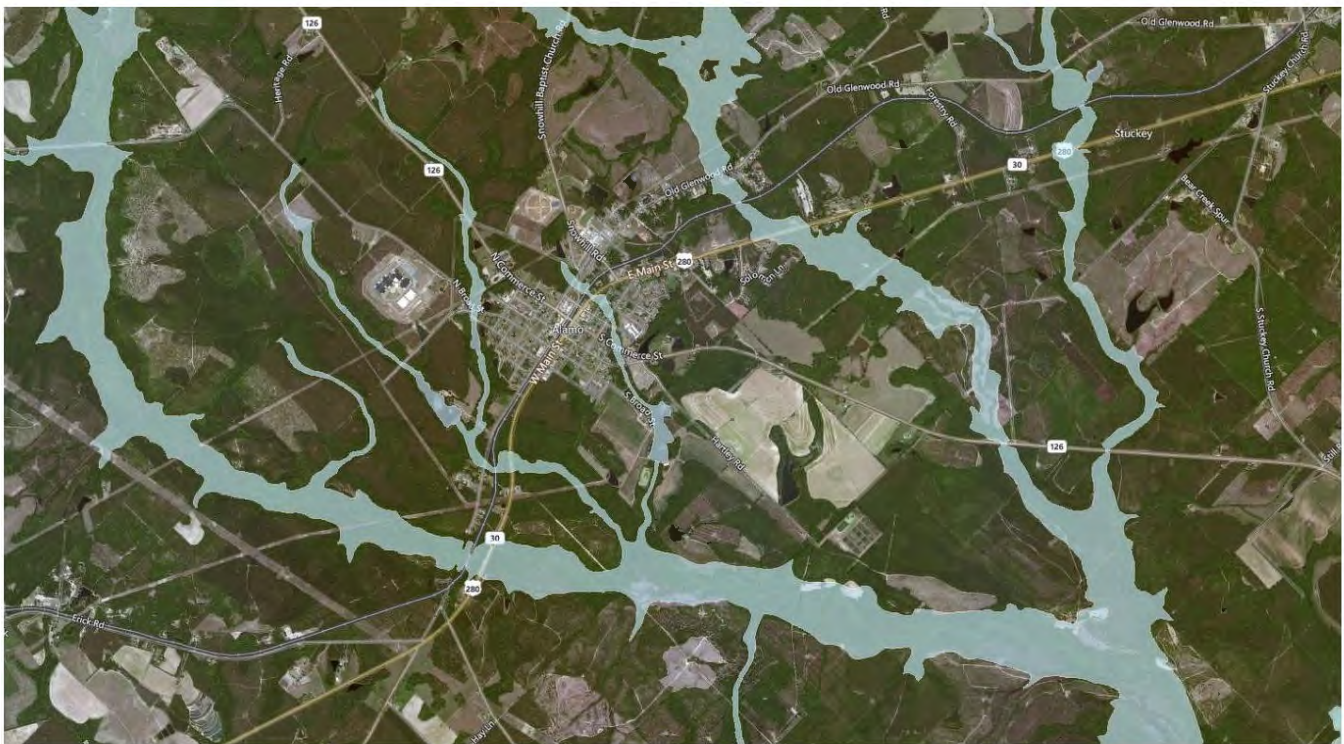
general clean-up, and rehabilitation/upgrade of existing structures/areas will serve to accent and highlight this.

- **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**

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## **Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program**

**WHEELER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date		
CFS	Install a new roof on the County Commissioners Office	Y	2018					Y/N	The new roof was installed in 2018.
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	Y	2019						New radios were purchased and continue to be purchased on an ongoing basis as needed and as funds are available.
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Roads Department	Y	2019						The County purchased new equipment for the Roads Department and continues to do so each year as needed.
CFS, ED, IC	Extend taxiway parallel to runway at the airport			Y	2021				Plans are complete, but no work has been done on site. Expected to bid by 2020.
CFS, ED, IC	Construct a fuel station at the airport	Y	2018						Project completed at a cost of \$390,000.
CFS, ED, IC	Construct new hangars at the airport					Y	2020		Project in 5 Year Airport Work Plan, but not done due to lack of funds.

**WHEELER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped		Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Y/N	
CFS	Expand the Recreation Department by installing a new playground, soccer field, and gym.	Y	2016							New playground was completed in 2016, and football field is being used for soccer. Decided gym is not needed.
CFS	Construct a new offices and storage building for the Sheriff's Department					Y	2020			Project amended on SPLOST to include new offices for Sheriff's Department, EMS offices, and County records storage. This project modification is reflected in new CWP entry.
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 1 (Snow Hill Church Road)	Y	2018							New bridge completed on Snow Hill Church Road in 2018 with TIA and LMIG funds; resurfacing completed in 2017.



**WHEELER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years								Responsibility				Estimated Cost	Funding Source		
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City	Other	Local	State		Federal	Private	
Extend taxiway parallel to runway at the airport	X	X						X		Telfair County; Airport Authority; FAA; GDOT	X	X	X			
Construct new hangars at the airport	X	X						X		Telfair County; Airport Authority; FAA; GDOT	X	X	X			
Construct multi-purpose building for EMS headquarters, Sheriff's Department offices, and County records storage	X	X						X		SPLOST	X					
Replace bridge on Mt. Olive Church Road (TIA Band 3)	X	X	X					X		GDOT (TIA)	X	X				
Upgrade AC at Wheeler County Library (replace all 5 units)	X	X						X			X					
Upgrade Clarks Bluff Landing on Oconee River, including possible relocation due to shifting sandbar blocking boat ramp/river	X	X						X		DNR	X	X				
Adopt DCA's model Broadband Services ordinance	X							X						N/A		

**WHEELER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years								Responsibility				Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City	Other	Local	State		Federal	Private		
Obtain Broadband Ready Community certification	X							X		HOGARC	X						
Obtain grocery store in Wheeler County						X		X	Alamo Glenwood	Development Authority	X			X			
Purchase 3 Class A pumper firetrucks				X				X		FEMA GEMA	X	X	X				
Purchase turnout gear for 20 volunteer firefighters		X						X		GEMA FEMA SPLOST	X	X	X				
Purchase SCBA (breathing apparatus) for 20 volunteers (20 BAs and 40 oxygen tanks)		X						X		GEMA FEMA SPLOST	X	X	X				

# **City of Alamo**

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## **Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program**

**CITY OF ALAMO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date		
CFS	Construct a new City Hall					Y	2021		Temporarily postponed due to lack of funds and change in leadership. Focus has been on rebuilding City shop building, which sustained hurricane damage.
CFS	Improve the sidewalks throughout the City	Y	2018						Completed sidewalk improvements along SR 126 to Wheeler County High School (Lucille Avenue sidewalk in TIA Band 2).
CFS	Upgrade the technology utilized by the Police Department	Y	2017						Police Department obtained new computers/server and camera systems in several cars.
CFS	Upgrade broadband and telecommunications at City Hall	Y	2018						Upgrade led to increased service speeds.
CFS, NCR	Renovate the Old City Recreation Department and its equipment							Y	This project was dropped as this facility is no longer used since Wheeler County now has a county-wide Recreation Department.
CFS	Replace the sewer lines in the southeastern quadrant of the City	Y	2017						Completed using CDBG funds.
CFS	Replace all water lines with a diameter less than 6 inches					Y	2022		The City does not currently have matching money for possible grant funding.
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	Y	2019						New radios were purchased and continue to be purchased on an ongoing basis as needed and as funds are available.
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 1 (Broad Street; Railroad Street)	Y	2015						Resurfacing of Broad and Railroad streets was completed in 2015 with TIA Band 1 funds.
CFS	Complete projects listed on TIA Band 2 (Lucille Avenue Sidewalk)	Y	2018						Lucille Avenue sidewalk improvements were completed with TIA Band 2 funds in 2018.

**CITY OF ALAMO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped		Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Y/N	
CFS	Complete the historical/archeological study for sidewalk improvements	Y	2015							Historical/archeological study completed in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA prior to sidewalk improvements.

**CITY OF ALAMO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City		Other	Local	State	Federal
Construct new City Hall		X							X		X			
Replace all water lines with a diameter less than 6 inches			X						X	DCA (CDBG)	X	X	X	
Complete resurfacing along portions of 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> avenues and Steward Street (TIA Band 2)	X								X	GDOT (TIA)	X	X		
Repair/replace sidewalk along West Railroad Street (approx. 500')	X								X	LMIG (GDOT)	X	X		
Purchase dump truck for yard waste					X				X		X			
Hire part-time building codes enforcement officer to serve Alamo	X								X		X			
Purchase new Police car					X				X	SPLOST	X			
Obtain computers for use in Police cars	X	X							X		X			
Upgrade technology at Police Department					X				X		X			

**CITY OF ALAMO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years								Responsibility				Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City	Other	Local	State		Federal	Private		
Repair Heart of GA Railroad crossing in Alamo	X								X	Heart of GA Railroad GDOT		X			X		
Seek funds for Downtown beautification, including tree planting along West Railroad Street		X				X			X	Chamber of Commerce					X		
Long Leaf Legacy and Interpretive Center development and expansion of exhibits/educational offerings	X	X						X	Alamo Glenwood	Chamber of Commerce		X			X		
Complete historic calaboose renovations (sanding/interior painting)	X								X			X					
Adopt DCA's model Broadband Services ordinance	X								X								
Obtain Broadband Ready Community certification	X								X	HOGARC		X					
Obtain grocery store in Wheeler County						X		X	Alamo Glenwood	Development Authority		X			X		

# **City of Glenwood**

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## **Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program**



**CITY OF GLENWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
2015-2019**

Element	Activity	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date		
CFS	Install a new lift station on US 280 West, to replace the existing lift station	Y	2017						Completed using CDBG funds.
CFS	Replace sewer lines on the western half of the City	Y	2017						Completed using CDBG funds.
CFS	Install additional 6-inch water lines along US 280			Y	2020				About 50% complete as of May, 2019. Expected to be completed in late 2019 or early 2020.
CFS	Install additional fire hydrants along US 280			Y	2020				About 50% complete as of May, 2019. Expected to be completed in late 2019 or early 2020.
CFS	Purchase new equipment for the Fire Department	Y	2019						City spends approximately \$30,000 on fire equipment over 5-6 years.
CFS	Purchase a new utility truck for the Fire Department					Y	2022		Purchase postponed due to other unexpected Fire Department related expenses. Funding has not been available.
CFS	Upgrade the communications system for the Emergency Management Service	Y	2019						New radios were purchased and continue to be purchased on an ongoing basis as needed and as funds are available.
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 1 (SW Third Avenue; N 5 <sup>th</sup> Street)	Y	2017						SW Third Avenue and N. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street resurfacing projects completed in 2017 with TIA Band 1 funds.
CFS	Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 2 (N 5 <sup>th</sup> Street; N First Street)	Y	2017						N. 5 <sup>th</sup> and N. First streets resurfacing completed in 2017 with TIA Band 2 funds.

**CITY OF GLENWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years						Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City		Other	Local	State	Federal
Install additional 6-inch water lines along U.S. 280	X								X	DCA (CDBG)	X	X	X	
Install additional fire hydrants along U.S. 280	X								X	DCA (CDBG)	X	X	X	
Purchase a new utility truck for the Fire Department			X						X	FEMA/Fire fighters Grant	X	X	X	
Purchase new turnout gear and/or other equipment for Fire Department						X			X	FEMA/Fire fighters Grant	X	X	X	
Purchase new generator for Well #5	X								X	FEMA	X	X	X	
Install additional 6-inch water lines and fire hydrants along East U.S. 280		X	X						X	DCA (CDBG)	X	X	X	
Install sidewalks along 5 <sup>th</sup> Street (total approx. 0.6 mile)				X	X				X	GDOT (New TIA)	X	X		
Resurface roads listed on TIA Band 3 (N. & S. 4 <sup>th</sup> Street; E. Roberson and E. Gillis streets; W. 6 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> avenues)	X	X							X	GDOT (TIA)	X	X		
Adopt DCA's model Broadband Services ordinance	X								X					N/A

**CITY OF GLENWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM  
2020-2024**

Activity	Years							Responsibility				Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Each Year	Beyond 2024	County	City	Other	Local		State	Federal	Private	
Obtain Broadband Ready Community certification	X								X	HOGARC	X					
Install new sidewalks along S.R. 19 North (approx. 0.4 mile)				X	X		X		X	GDOT (New TIA)	X	X				
Obtain grocery store in Wheeler County						X		X	Alamo Glenwood	Development Authority	X				X	

# **Appendix A**

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**Community Involvement  
Public Hearing Notice 1  
News Release  
Comprehensive Plan Website  
Community Vision Survey  
Public Hearing Notice 2  
Meeting Agendas  
Stakeholders Invited to Participate  
Active Participants**

## Community Involvement

The Local Planning Requirements established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) encourage and require that each element of the comprehensive plan “be prepared with considerable opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders, local leadership, and the general public.” The Wheeler County local governments took this requirement to heart and placed increased emphasis on getting community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public involved. The need for strong community involvement from a broad spectrum of stakeholders was emphasized by the Regional Commission in communications with the local governments. As a result, the local governments put forth considerable effort for broad community involvement and participation in this comprehensive plan’s development.

The local governments coordinated establishment of a steering committee which they called the “Local Plan Coordination Committee” approximately one to two months ahead of the scheduled first committee meeting, and invited through formal email and direct contact as many stakeholders and community leaders as they could envision. Regional Commission planning staff had previously counseled the local governments to make such efforts a priority a number of times, including in a plan implementation assessment meeting held in December, 2018, in the letter offering Regional Commission plan preparation assistance, and in direct communication and follow-up for plan development organization. DCA’s Suggested Community Plan Stakeholder List, some specific known local candidates, and a model invitation for stakeholder participation were provided for local government use. In addition to local government direct contact, the local governments used their public meetings to notify the general public and any other interested parties to participate. The official public advertising of the required public hearing further invited all those interested to participate. Similar efforts occurred prior to the final committee meeting and public hearing to review the draft plan prior to its formal submittal.

In another attempt to reach out to the general public and to provide further opportunity for community involvement and input outside of the formal public hearing setting, an open community-wide drop-in session was held from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Wheeler County Service Center in Alamo where people could attend at their convenience, receive a one-on-one explanation and introduction to the

planning process, and offer their input. In addition, a webpage for this plan was developed which provided basic information, the meeting schedule, copies of the documents being developed at each meeting, and an online Community Vision survey. Notice of both of these extra efforts to invite community stakeholder involvement and participation were officially posted.

These considerable efforts for achieving meaningful community involvement were considered a success by the local governments. The committee meetings participation did include numerous appointed and elected local officials, local economic development practitioners, other local agencies and organizations, and many others. The first committee meeting, as well as the first public hearing, included a strengths/weakness (SWOT analysis) exercise. The results of these strengths/weaknesses exercises were also reviewed at the second committee meeting. In standard practice, the first order of business at each committee meeting was to review all prior committee inputs and their summary by staff for committee amendment before moving to the next input topic. Much community involvement and input was provided in all facets and elements of the comprehensive plan's development. The local governments were very pleased both with the community involvement/input and the results.

The actual documents utilized or published during the community involvement and comprehensive plan preparation process are provided in this appendix. These include the local government stakeholder invitation, the local government official public hearing advertisements, the community drop-in session notice, screen captures of the Wheeler Plan website (<http://bit.ly/WheelerComp2019>), and the Local Plan Coordination Committee meeting agendas. A list of stakeholders invited to participate in the comprehensive plan preparation process and a list of active participants on the Local Plan Coordination Committee and involved in plan preparation are also included.

## **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

### **Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan “The Future of All of Wheeler County”**

The local governments of Wheeler County and the municipalities of Alamo and Glenwood are in the initial stages of a process to develop a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law. It is desired that this plan not only meet state requirements, but also truly express the Community’s wishes for the future growth and development of the Community.

Please come to this meeting and express your desires about the Community’s future vision, the issues and opportunities facing the Community, and what should be done to make Wheeler County and its municipalities better places to live and work. What should be the Community’s guiding principles, and what can be done to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of all of Wheeler County?

**PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Monday, February 25, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.**

**LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo**

Please attend, voice your opinions, and be involved. Help your community be proud about its future. All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Wheeler County Board of Commissioners, 20 W. Forest Avenue, Alamo, Georgia, or call (912) 568-7135.

# NEWS RELEASE

## **PUBLIC INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN DROP-IN SESSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**DATE:**                **Tuesday, February 19, 2019    4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**LOCATION:**        **Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo**

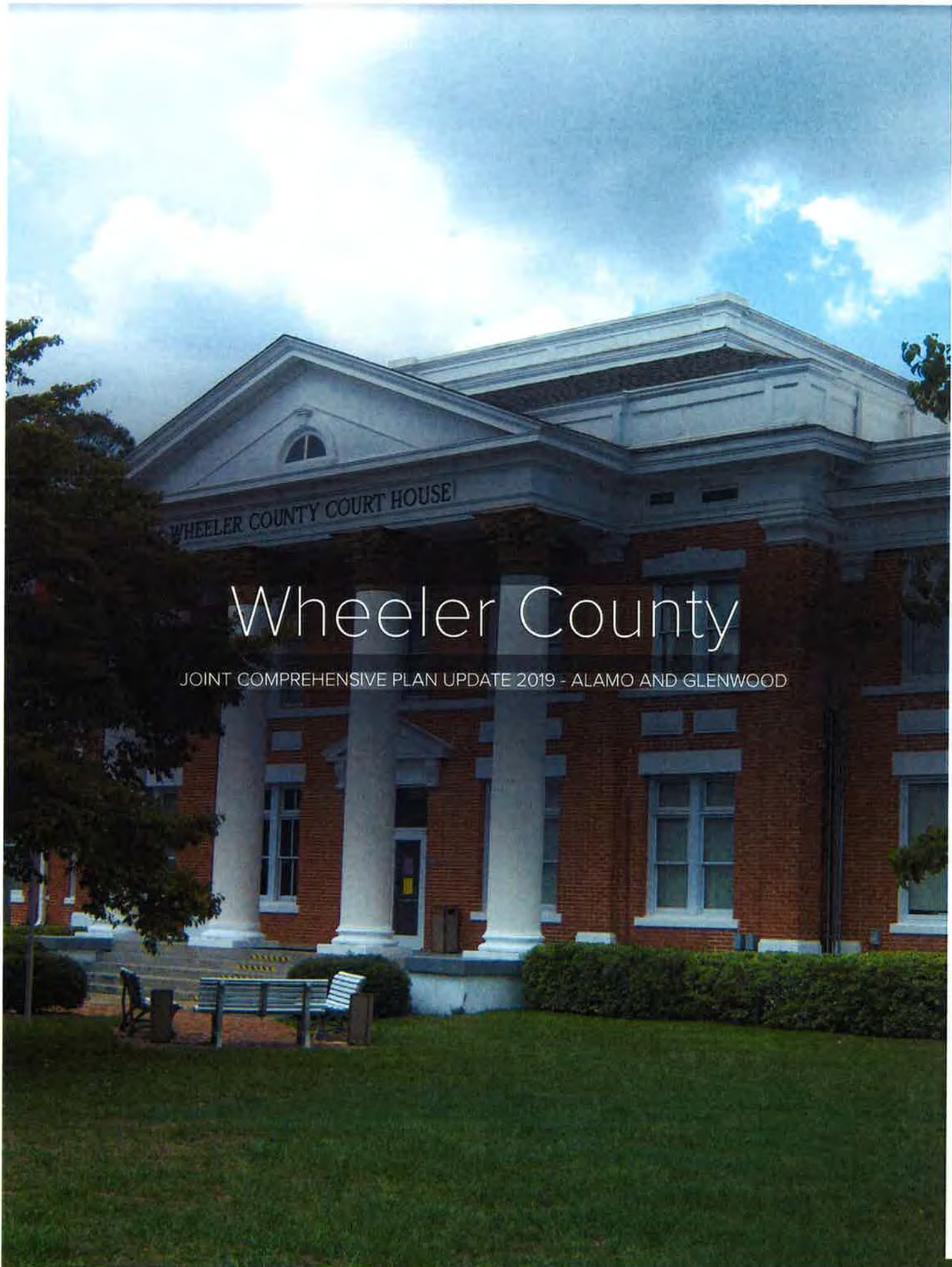
Are you concerned about the future of Wheeler County, Alamo, and Glenwood? Do you have thoughtful ideas on what needs to be done to make the community a better place? What do you consider to be pressing needs and issues in the community?

The local governments of Wheeler County, the Wheeler County Board of Commissioners, and the cities of Alamo and Glenwood, are in the process of updating their comprehensive plan required by state law. The current joint comprehensive plan dates from 2014, and is the principal guide to the long-term growth and development of Wheeler County and its municipalities. The new update will focus on achieving a vision set by the community on what it wants to be, and addressing identified needs and opportunities.

You are cordially invited to get involved and to participate in this plan update process. You may do so by attending a public drop-in session concerning the comprehensive plan update to be held at the Wheeler County Service Center in Alamo from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19, 2019. The session is designed to be informal, to answer any questions you may have, and to allow for one-on-one input at your convenience. Planning staff from the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission will be on hand to discuss the plan and its process, and to receive your input and ideas. There will be no formal presentation. The event is designed as a drop-in at whatever time is convenient for those wishing to participate or learn more.

Please attend and voice your ideas. We want to hear them. Let us know what you think. Do your part in making Wheeler County an even better place to live, work, and play.





WHEELER COUNTY COURT HOUSE

# Wheeler County

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2019 - ALAMO AND GLENWOOD



## Welcome!

Welcome to the home of the Wheeler County Comprehensive Plan Update. The County and the Cities of Alamo and Glenwood are currently undergoing strategic planning meetings to guide the future growth and development for the community. Issues discussed include economic development, community facilities, natural and cultural resources, housing, intergovernmental coordination, and other important concerns. In a series of meetings, to be held January-August, local government leadership will be seeking citizen input and participation concerning these topics. This page will provide periodic updates and working documents from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.



**CORRECTING COURSE, MOVING FORWARD**



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



**August, 2014**

**[Download a Copy of the 2014 Plan Here.](#)**



## Why is the comprehensive plan important?

Effective planning ensures that future development will occur where, when, and how the community and local government wants. There are several important benefits to the entire community that result from the planning process:

- Quality of life is maintained and improved.
- There is a vision, clearly stated and shared by all, that describes the future of the community.
- Private property rights are protected.
- Economic development is encouraged and supported.
- There is more certainty about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met.

To encourage local governments' engagement in comprehensive planning, Georgia incentivizes it by allowing cities and counties with DCA-approved comprehensive plans access to a special package of financial resources to aid in implementing their plans. This includes Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), water and sewer loans from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA), economic development funding from the OneGeorgia Authority, and a variety of other programs from DCA and partner agencies (a detailed list is available in the "Fact Sheets" section, below). Eligibility for this package of incentives is called Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.

<https://dca.ga.gov/local-government-assistance/planning/local-planning/local-comprehensive-planning>



## Whocoler County 2019 Comprehensive Plan Timetable

- Thursday, 1.31.2019, 10:30 AM - Initial Meeting/Strengths/Weaknesses (SWOT)
- Tuesday, 2.19.2019, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM - Community Input Drop-In
- Tuesday, 2.25.2019, 5:30 PM - Initial Public Hearing
- Thursday, 2.28.2019, 10:30 AM - Community Vision/Issues and Opportunities
- Thursday, 3.28.2019, 10:30 AM - Issues and Opportunities/Goals/Policies
- Thursday, 4.25.2019, 10:30 AM - Goals/Policies/Economic Development/Broadband/Land Use
- August, TBD - Draft Plan
- August, TBD - Final Public Hearing
- September, 2019 - Local Government Submittal

[Click to View Files From First Planning Meeting 1.31.2019](#)

[Click to View Files From Second Planning Meeting 2.28.2019](#)

[Click to View Files from Third Planning Meeting 3.28.2019](#)

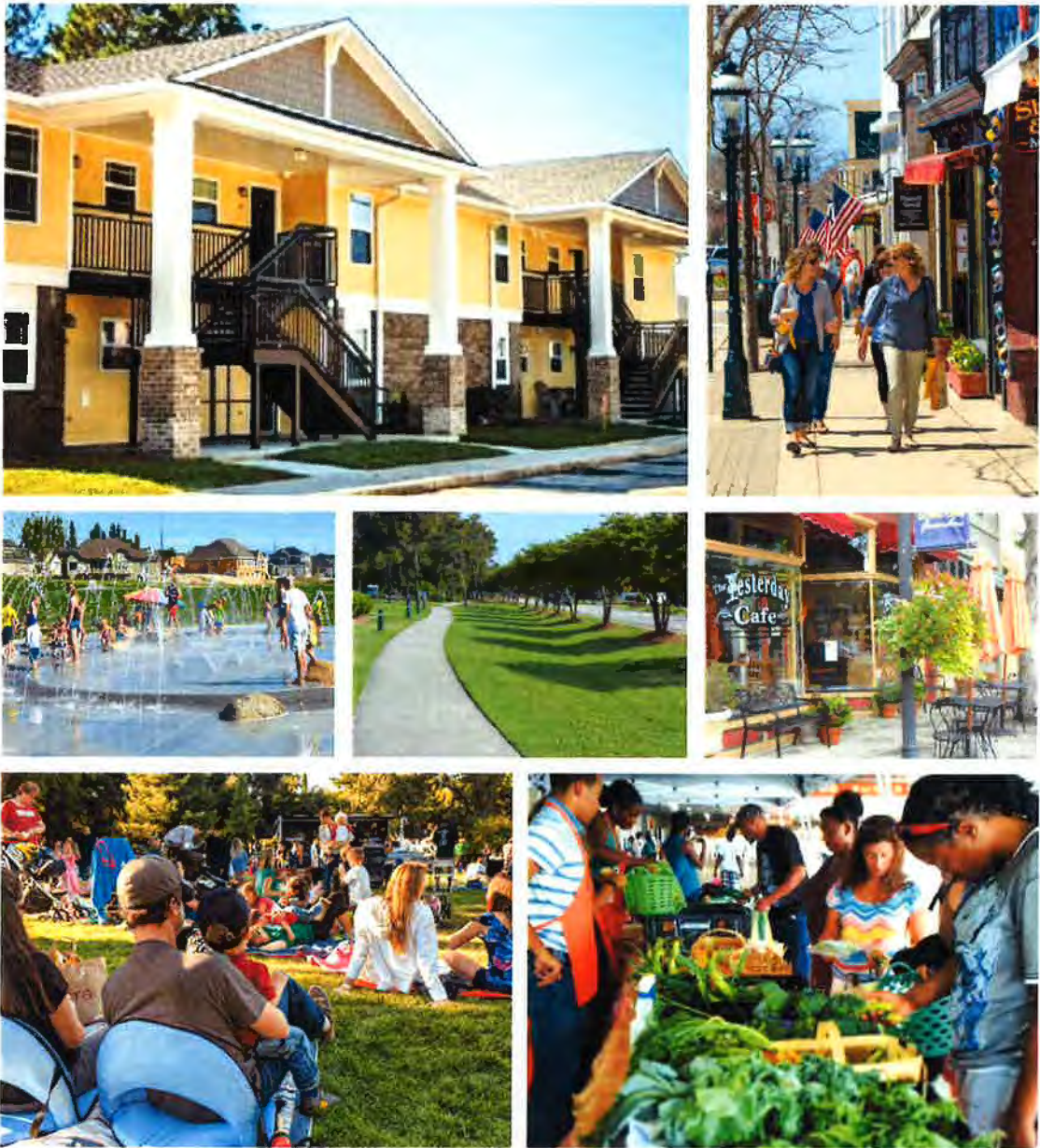
[Click to View Files from Fourth Planning Meeting 4.25.2019](#)

[Click to View Files from Fifth Planning Meeting 8.1.2019](#)



## Our Vision

Wheeler County is a community focused on the promising road ahead. We aim to foster a vibrant, prosperous future for our citizens by promoting our strategic location, the abundance of natural resources, and our home town charm. We will strive to make our historic city centers destinations by offering year-around events and amenities for all ages; and we will seek to diversify our economic base through the stepped-up marketing and utilization of our natural resources, through renewed business and industry recruitment, and through committed support of existing commerce.



What is your vision for Wheeler County? Help define it by taking the survey below!

Wheeler County Community Vision Survey

FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE  
2019 WHEELER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE  
PLANNING PROCESS, CONTACT US:

331 West Parker Street - Baxley, GA 31513

912. 367. 3648

[pope@hogarc.org](mailto:pope@hogarc.org)





# Wheeler County Community Vision Survey

1. How would you describe your community, particularly to someone who knows nothing about it?
2. What makes your community unique and special as a place to live?
3. What improvement(s) to your community would you most like to see happen?
4. What are the greatest strengths or assets of your community?
5. What are your community's greatest needs, especially long-term?
6. What specific projects/improvements are critically needed in the short term?
7. What opportunities for positive change/improvement/growth are there in your community?
8. How do you think your community will change/grow in the next five to ten years?
9. What would you like your community to be like in 20 years?

## **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

### **Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan**

The Wheeler County Board of Commissioners and municipalities of Alamo and Glenwood are in the process of finalizing a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law.

The comprehensive plan outlines a community vision, identifies needs and opportunities, and delineates long term policies and a community work program to provide a guide and blueprint for future growth and development within the community jurisdictions. The plan is in draft finalization before submittal to the state for review.

The purpose of the hearing is to brief the community on the content and strategies outlined in the draft comprehensive plan, to address the issues and opportunities facing Wheeler County and the municipalities of Alamo and Glenwood, obtain any final citizen input, and notify the community of the pending submittal of the comprehensive plan for state and regional review.

**PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.**

**LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo**

Please attend and voice your opinions. Help your community achieve a better future. All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Wheeler County Board of Commissioners, 20 W. Forest Avenue, Alamo, Georgia 30411, or call (912) 568-7135.

**WHEELER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo, GA**

**January 31, 2019**

**AGENDA**

**Introductions**

**Background/Committee's Purpose**

**Proposed Timetable for Plan Development**

**Community Strengths/Weaknesses Identification (SWOT)**

**Community Vision Input**

**Next Meeting**

**Draft Community Vision Review**

**Issues and Opportunities Input**

**WHEELER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo, GA**

**February 28, 2019**

**AGENDA**

**Introduction**

**Draft Community Vision Review**

**Plan Title**

**Draft Issues and Opportunities**

**Next Meeting – Thursday, March 28, 2019, 10:30 a.m.**

**Revised Draft Community Vision Review**

**Draft Issues and Opportunities Review**

**Goals/Policies Input**

**WHEELER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo, GA**

**March 28, 2019**

**AGENDA**

**Introduction**

**Plan Title**

**Revised Draft Community Vision Review**

**Revised Draft Issues and Opportunities Review**

**Goals Input**

**Long Term Policies Input**

**Next Meeting – Thursday, April 25, 2019, 10:30 a.m.**

**Revised Community Vision Review**

**Revised Issues and Opportunities Review**

**Revised Goals Review**

**Revised Long Term Policies Review**

**Economic Development/Land Use/Plan Coordination**

**WHEELER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wheeler County Service Center, Alamo, GA**

**April 25, 2019**

**AGENDA**

**Introduction**

**Plan Title**

**Revised Draft Community Vision Review**

**Revised Draft Issues and Opportunities Review**

**Revised Draft Goals Review**

**Revised Draft Long Term Policies Review**

**Economic Development**

**Draft Broadband Element**

**Land Use**

**Plan Coordination**

**Next Meeting – Date to be determined to review draft plan.**

**WHEELER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
WHEELER COUNTY SERVICE CENTER,  
ALAMO, GA**

**August 1, 2019**

**AGENDA**

**Draft Plan Review**

**Submittal Discussion**

**Public Hearing – Tuesday, August 13, 2019, Wheeler County Service Center,  
5:30 p.m.**

## **Stakeholders Invited to Participate in Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan Preparation Process**

**Wheeler County Board of Commissioners**  
**City of Alamo**  
**City of Glenwood**  
**Wheeler County Board of Education**  
**Wheeler County Development Authority**  
**Wheeler County Chamber of Commerce**  
**Wheeler County Cooperative Extension**  
**Wheeler County Health Department**  
**Wheeler County Board of Registrars**  
**Wheeler County Probate/Magistrate**  
**Wheeler County Fire/Emergency Management Agency**  
**Wheeler County Sheriff's Department**  
**Wheeler County Code Enforcement**  
**Wheeler County Tax Office**  
***Wheeler County Eagle***  
**Wheeler County Superior Court**  
**Little Ocmulgee EMC**  
**Glenwood Telephone Company**  
**Wheeler Correctional Facility**



## Active Participants in Wheeler County Local Plan Coordination Committee Meetings and Plan Preparation

### Wheeler County Board of Commissioners

Keith McNeal, Chairman

Rochelle Culver, Vice Chairman

Elaine Clark, County Clerk/Finance Officer

### City of Alamo

Tommy Spell, Acting Mayor

Marie Carrillo, City Clerk

Bobby Cox, Council Member

### City of Glenwood

G.M. Joiner, Jr., Mayor

Brenda Cornett, City Clerk

### Wheeler County Chamber of Commerce

Laura Leyland, Executive Director

Janice Mock, President

Carol Bragg, Vice-President

Deborah H. Clark, Secretary

Jolinda Harrelson, Board Member

Brooke Hampton, Board Member

G.M. Joiner, Jr., Board Member

Keith McNeal, Board Member

Tommy Spell, Board Member

### Wheeler County Development Authority

G.M. Joiner, Jr., Chairman

Laura Leyland, Executive Director

### Wheeler County Board of Registrars

Sheila Cheek, Registrar of Elections

### Wheeler County Cooperative Extension

Brooke Hampton, County Extension  
Coordinator/Agent

### Wheeler County EMA

Steve Adams, Director

### Wheeler County Board of Education

Dr. Suzanne Couey, Superintendent

### Wheeler County Tax Commissioners Office

Kim Clark, Tax Commissioner

### Wheeler County Superior Court

Carol Bragg, Clerk of Courts

### Wheeler County Code Enforcement

Steve Adams, Code Enforcement Officer

### Wheeler County Probate/Magistrate Court

Jolinda Harrelson, Probate Judge

### *The Vidalia Advance*

Deborah H. Clark, Reporter

### Wheeler County Sheriff's Department

Curtis Hay, Deputy Sheriff/Investigator

### Alamo Police Department

Roger Bryant, Chief

### Wheeler County Health Department

Suzanne Usher, Nurse Manager

### Glenwood Telephone Company

Janice O'Brien, President/CEO

Jim O'Brien, Executive Vice-  
President/General Manager

### Wheeler Correctional Facility

Tommy Spell, Safety Manager

Note: Both elected and appointed local government and local economic development officials participated.

## **Appendix B**

# **Natural, Historical, and Cultural Amenities**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Natural, Historical, and Cultural Amenities**

Wheeler County has numerous natural and historic amenities. Among them are the following:

- **The Wheeler County Courthouse, Alamo**

The original Wheeler County Courthouse was designed by architect E.C. Hosford and completed in 1914. The structure burned in 1916 and was rebuilt the next year in the Neoclassical style designed by architect Frank P. Milburn. The two-story, red brick structure has a columned facade on three sides featuring elaborate pilasters and Corinthian capitals. It was renovated in 1961, and again in 2001, and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. It remains in use housing many County offices, including the Clerk of Superior Court, Tax Appraiser, Probate and Magistrate Court, Tax Commissioner, Tax Assessor, and an office for the Sheriff.

- **The Old Calaboose**

The red-brick structure which is thought to be Alamo's first permanent jail was likely constructed around the time the city was incorporated in 1909. Located at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Steward Street next to the city's water tower, the structure is known locally as "the old calaboose." The jail contains two cells with their original iron bars. The heavy, metal door is believed to be original. The building is ventilated by two small windows near the ceiling. It is currently undergoing renovation.

- **Woodland**

Built by prosperous businessman and state legislator Walter T. McArthur between 1870 and 1877, Woodland is considered to be a fine example of a Victorian eclectic country house with Gothic-style scroll detailing. The house, which is owned by a descendant of the McArthur family, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The extensive grounds feature a three-acre garden originally landscaped under McArthur's direction. The estate also features many original structures, including a two-story barn, a two-story commissary, the estate office, and the McArthur pioneer cabin (c. 1830) which was constructed of hand-hewn logs which are pegged together.

A family cemetery on the estate is the resting place of McArthur, his immediate family, and others connected with the family.

- **St. Paul's Church**

Near Woodland is St. Paul's Church. The church, which fronts the road for which it was named, was built on land sold by Walter T. McArthur for \$5 per acre to the African-American residents who lived in the community of McArthur. The building once served as a school. Services still are held at the site each week. A historic African-American cemetery is located nearby.

- **Shiloh Methodist Church**

Shiloh Methodist Church is located three miles from Woodland on Georgia Highway 19. The structure was built in 1885 by Walter T. McArthur, and dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1886, in honor of McArthur's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McArthur. The Rev. James D. Anthony, famous "Bishop of the Wiregrass," conducted the dedication service. The church sanctuary looks much as it did when the church was dedicated. The church still has its original heart pine pews and walnut pulpit furnishings. Stained glass windows were added by the congregation in the early 1990s. Services are still held at the church which was founded near the original site in 1805. Old Shiloh School was located directly opposite the church on Highway 19.

- **Spring Hill Methodist Church**

Settled in 1807, Spring Hill was a preaching place on the Ochoopee Circuit by 1814. The first church building in the area was a log cabin located two miles above Spring Hill at Washington's Mill. It is believed the present Spring Hill Church is the fourth and final building erected by the congregation in the 1870s. In 1850 Spring Hill founder John Carmichael gave land for a campground and camp meetings were held here for seven decades. A school built at Spring Hill, later known as Clements Institute (Spring Hill Academy), became the first Methodist District High School in South Georgia. In 1879 Spring Hill became the home of the Rev. J.D. Anthony, "The Bishop of the Wiregrass." Services are still held regularly at the church. The site is located in southwestern Wheeler County on Spring Hill Road, between Georgia Highway 126 and U.S. Highway 341.

- **Joyce Grave Marker**

Revolutionary soldier Henry Joyce died at the age of 71 in 1826 and was buried at Joyce's Bluff in Wheeler County. An early settler in this area, Joyce had come to America at the expense of President George Washington's father and served his indenture in the Washington household. At his death, President Washington commissioned an Italian marble gravestone which was shipped by water from the nation's capital to South Georgia to be erected on Joyce's grave. In an effort to protect it, the stone was removed in 1954 from its site on Joyce's Bluff and relocated to Glenwood Cemetery by the Glenwood Garden Club. Joyce's descendants still live in Wheeler County.

- **Milly Troup Grave and Big Oak Tree**

Three miles south of Glenwood off of Georgia Highway 19 is the site of Georgia Governor George M. Troup's Mitchell Place Plantation. Troup died here in 1856 and was buried at Rosemont Plantation on the Oconee River in what is now Treutlen County. Both Treutlen and Wheeler counties were once part of Montgomery County. The site of Mitchell Place Plantation is also remarkable as the burial place of Milly Troup. Milly, who is said to have been the housekeeper for the master of Mitchell Place, reportedly died of food poisoning in 1863. The master of the plantation had a live oak sapling planted near her grave and gave orders that it was never to be cut down, but to shade her grave for its lifetime. A stone was erected at the site to honor Milly. It reads: "Sacred to the memory of Milly Troup who departed this life on the 8th day of October 1863, aged 22 years. She died a perfect Christian, trusting her Lord, Jesus Christ."

- **Cotton Acres**

Built between 1870 and 1873, this two-story house was once the centerpiece of a 3,000-acre cotton plantation. The original owner was Judge John McRae, Alamo's founder. McRae was one of five members of the Secession Convention who voted against secession from the Union prior to the War Between the States. He served in the Georgia Senate and missed becoming governor of Georgia by one vote. McRae deeded land just a few hundred yards from his home for the construction of rail lines

by the Savannah-Montgomery Railroad, and railroad engineers laid out the streets for the new community of Alamo. McRae died in 1902. The house, located at the corner of Georgia Highway 126 and Lucille Avenue in Alamo, is now a funeral home.

- **Glenwood High School**

Built in 1920, the Glenwood Consolidated School was enlarged in 1930 to accommodate Glenwood High School. In 1933, a second story was added to the addition. The community raised funds later to build a gymnasium on the school grounds. An auditorium was constructed in the early 1950s. The school was attended by local students for generations and was utilized until recently as an alternative educational facility. Now, the building is used as a site for annual reunions of former Glenwood School students. The Glenwood High School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997 in conjunction with its receipt of a Georgia Heritage 2000 Grant the previous year for structural and historic window repairs.

- **Harrelson-Crowe Log House and Harrelson Family Cemetery**

The dog-trot style log house occupied for generations by the Harrelson and Crowe families was built in 1848. Hugh Henry Harrelson, a private in the 49th Cavalry during the War Between the States, began living in the house when he was three. He and his brothers, as well as many other family members who founded the community, were laid to rest in the family cemetery across the road from the house. The house and cemetery are located on Rosa Crowe Lane off of U.S. Highway 441.

## **Little Ocmulgee State Park**

The county is also home to Little Ocmulgee State Park, a state-owned, recreational facility offering a 256-acre lake, recently renovated 60-room lodge and conference center, a restaurant, camping and group accommodations (10 cabins, 54 campsites for tents, trailers, and RVs), seven picnic and two group shelters, private pool, children's splash pad, and miniature golf). Hiking trails and the newly-restored, 18-hole Wallace Adams Golf Course and club house are also very popular amenities.

## **Alligator Creek WMA**

A partnership between the state, conservation organizations and individuals enabled the purchase of a unique tract of land which will continue to benefit both wildlife and the public for generations. With assistance from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and other partners, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) purchased the 3,086-acre tract which is now open to the public as the Alligator Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in southern Wheeler County. In addition to being a prime site for bird watchers and other nature enthusiasts, it will be available for hunting during all statewide hunting seasons.

## **Longleaf Legacy Museum & Interpretive Center**

The development of the Longleaf Legacy Museum & Interpretive Center will focus on Wheeler County's past, present, and future. Organized through the Wheeler County Chamber of Commerce, the museum and interpretive center located at the Chamber of Commerce building in Alamo will not only spotlight the county's natural and cultural heritage, but, at the same time, join an important, national campaign to preserve the longleaf pine ecosystem, which is currently found in only a few areas of the country. Because of Wheeler County's long association with the longleaf pine system, the board chose to name the new enterprise, "The Longleaf Legacy Museum and Interpretive Center." The Center has a mission to create awareness and appreciation of the natural, cultural, economic, and historical aspects of Wheeler County and the Coastal Plain. The Center is intended to foster programs for education, preservation, community involvement, and promotion of the area's amenities and resources.

# **Appendix C**

## **Healthcare and Human Services/Education**



## **APPENDIX C**

### **HEALTHCARE AND HUMAN SERVICES/EDUCATION**

#### **Wheeler County Health Department**

As a component of the South Central Health District in Dublin, the Wheeler County Health Department provides a wide range of programs:

- Child/Adolescent Services including immunizations, well child check-ups and high-risk newborn outreach
- Women’s Health Services including cervical cancer screening, pregnancy screening and prenatal care
- Adult Health Services including diabetes and high blood pressure screening
- Nutrition Services, including WIC and breastfeeding counseling
- Environmental Health Services including food service establishment inspections and water sample testing
- Vital Records (birth and death certificates)
- Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) medical exams
- Family Planning
- And, Breast Test and More Program for women aged 40 to 64.

A nurse-practitioner is available part-time at the clinic.

#### **CareConnect Family Practice**

CareConnect Family Practice, located in Alamo, offers healthcare for the whole family under the supervision and guidance of nurse-practitioner Sarah Simmons. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome and most insurance is accepted. Payments can also be set according to one’s income level and family size.

CareConnect is a leading, independent non-profit healthcare provider in the state of Georgia with 38 locations and more than 120 providers.

## **Wheeler County Drug Company**

Located in Glenwood, Wheeler County Pharmacy accepts e-prescriptions and offers delivery, compounding, a drive-up window, and durable medical equipment sales. The pharmacy is closed on Sundays. Matthew Adcock is the pharmacist.

## **Glenwood Healthcare**

Glenwood Healthcare is a 50-bed nursing facility located at 303 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St. in Glenwood that specializes in short-term rehabilitation, respite care and long-term care. The facility accepts Medicaid and Medicare patients and has a rating of 2 compared to the state average of 2.81. This facility has "for profit" ownership.

## **Wheeler County Senior Citizens' Nutrition Center**

Located at 104 W. Stubbs Street in Alamo, the center provides free meals to anyone over the age of 60. The center also sponsors activities for seniors Monday-Friday during the day. Free assistance is available with Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps and legal services.

## **Wheeler County Transit System**

Wheeler County offers transportation through the Wheeler County Transit System. The service is open to all county residents. **It provides transportation within Wheeler County only and averages 300 to 400 rides per month.**

## **Tri-County Family Connection (Region 9)**

The Tri-County Family Connection, Inc. Collaborative (TFC) was established to bring state, local, and community partners together to work on a variety of issues facing children and families in Treutlen, Wheeler, and Montgomery counties. TFC is the only collaborative in the state of Georgia covering three counties which mirror each other in several areas including population, issues impacting children and families, and socioeconomics.

Initiatives include: Youth Action Team, Family Support Services, Boys to Men Mentoring Program, GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) Mentoring Program, and Georgia Family Connection Partnership. TFC has partnerships with a number of community resources, including Wheeler County Schools; Meadows Regional Medical Center; Community Service Board of Middle Georgia; the South Central Health District; The Council on

Alcohol and Drugs; United Way of Toombs, Wheeler and Montgomery counties; Parent to Parent of Georgia; Safe Kids of Toombs and Surrounding Counties, and many other organizations and agencies.

## **Wheeler County School System Serves “The Whole Child”**

The Wheeler County School System is proud of its family atmosphere and its efforts to serve “the whole child.” The district has approximately 1,000 students in grades Pre K-12 and presently has two campuses that serve all students in the county. Wheeler County Elementary School serves grades Pre K-5, and Wheeler County Middle/High School serves grades 6-12. The district is in the planning process for a Pre K-12 facility that will house all district students in one location.

Wheeler County School System’s small size ensures that each child and staff member becomes a member of the “Wheeler County Family.” Administrators know all students by name, and teachers ensure that all students feel welcome and supported. The district strives to create a challenging, but positive learning environment where learning is an ongoing process and students feel safe to explore and take risks.

In 2018-2019, the district implemented the *Leader in Me* program, based on Stephen Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Staff members first received training on the *Seven Habits* so they could serve as positive role models for all students, and they model these behaviors for students on a daily basis. *Leader in Me* unites students, staff, and families around the common goal of preparing students for their future, developing pride in their gifts, and utilizing their strengths to lead others. Elementary school walls are decorated with inspirational, student-created murals that project affirmative messages of student worth and pride. Middle and high school students participate in lessons that foster “soft skills” and positive work ethics.

The district’s dedication to ongoing improvement is evidenced in their early-release Wednesdays, which began in 2018-2019. Students are released at 1:00 on these days to provide extended time for teacher professional development, collaboration, and planning for student-based instructional activities. Other recent initiatives include digital literacy/STEM classes in grades K-5, computer coding classes in grades 6-8, and summer Maker Camps that promote STEM learning opportunities for students in grades K-8.

Wheeler County School System is proud of its dedicated staff which constantly strives to provide a quality education to all students. When possible, staff members incorporate cultural activities to expand student horizons, with recent activities, including trips to the Jacksonville Zoo, the Georgia Aquarium, Six Flags Math and Science Day, the Atlanta Symphony, Mission San Luis, and the Georgia Southern Raptor Center.

Both school campuses have school resource officers to ensure students' safety. Fifth and eighth grade students participate in the D.A.R.E. program, and frequent small-group sessions in middle/high school focus on current issues such as e-cigarettes, social networking safety, and mental health awareness. Wheeler County School System strives to address all students' needs and assist them in becoming well-rounded citizens prepared for work and school, but also positive contributors to their communities.

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 "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, 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 municipalities of Alamo and 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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

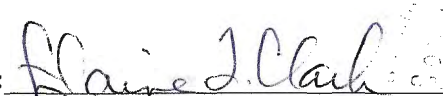
WHEREAS, Wheeler County is now desirous of adopting *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

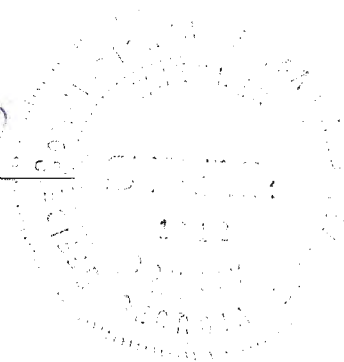
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wheeler County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and adopts the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, as Wheeler County's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2014.

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 7<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2019.

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 "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, 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 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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

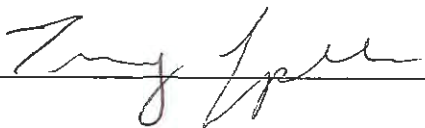
**WHEREAS**, the Wheeler County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department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

**WHEREAS**, the City of Alamo is now desirous of adopting *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces* 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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 2014.

**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 28<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2019.

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 "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, 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 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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 *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces* 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, *History, Hospitality, and Wide Open Spaces*, 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 2014.

**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 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2019.

**BY:** 

**ATTEST:** 