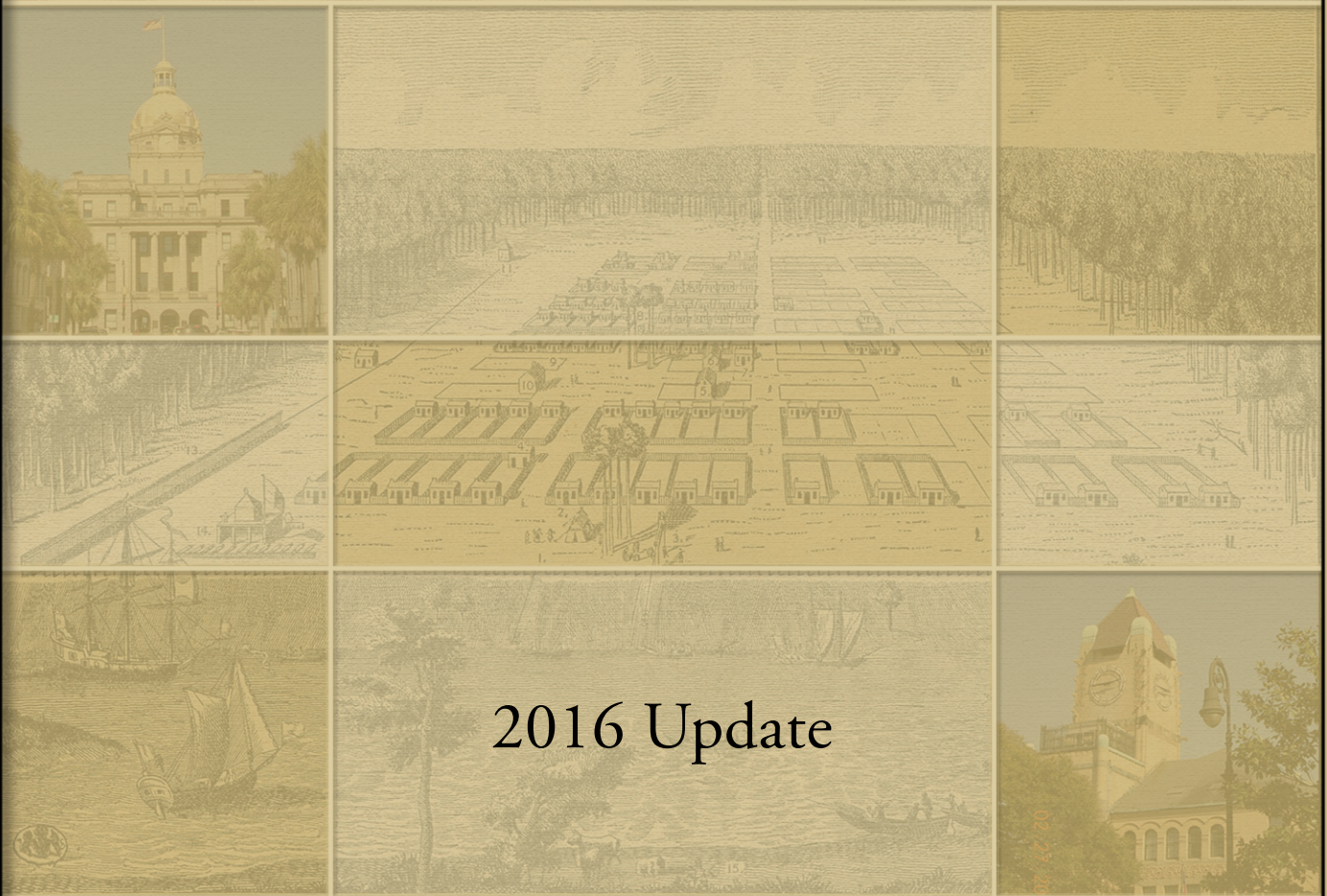


CHATHAM COUNTY - SAVANNAH

1733 - 2040

Comprehensive Plan



2016 Update



CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AUGUST, 2016



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District 8

County Manager
Lee Smith

Technical Assistance to prepare this plan was provided by the following:

Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission Staff

Jackie Jackson, MPC Director of Comprehensive Planning
Debbie Burke, MPC Natural Resources Planner
Nick Helmholtz, MPC Senior Comprehensive Planner
Steve Fox, MPC Senior Natural Resources Planner
James Small, MPC Planner I
Lara Hall, SAGIS Director
David Ramsey, MPC Information and Mapping Services Technician
Kevin MacLeod, MPC GIS Programmer / Analyst
Ellen Harris, MPC Director of Urban Planning and Historic Preservation
Leah Michalak, MPC Preservation Planner
Sara Farr, MPC Preservation Planner
Jack Butler, MPC Senior Planner
Marcus Lotson, MPC Development Services Planner
Mark Wilkes, Director Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
Jane Love, MPC Transportation Planner
Stephanie Rossi, MPC Transportation Planner
Wykoda Wang, MPC Transportation Planner
Charlotte Moore, MPC Director of Special Projects

Chatham County Staff

Linda Cramer, Assistant Chatham County Manager
Michael Kaigler, Assistant Chatham County Manager
Suzanne Cooler, Chatham County Assistant County Engineer
Jefferson Kirkland, Chatham County Engineering

City of Savannah Staff

Martin Sullivan, Chief of Staff
Patty McIntosh, Savannah Department of Community Planning and Development
Chief Middleton, Savannah Fire Chief
Chief Handy, Savannah Fire Department

**CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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PART OF

Executive Summary

CAROLINA

YAMACRAW IN

RIVER

GULF

ALATAMAHA R.

S't AUGUSTINE

JEKYL I.

Cumberland I.

Amelia I.

Talbot I.

S't AUGUSTINE

GREAT S't SIMONS ISLE

JEKYL I.

OCEAN

City of Savannah.

I do hereby Certify, that the annexed Plan is a true representation of the City of Savannah, and the adjoining Rice-fields lying Southwest of it, belonging to Joseph Miles Esq., as also the situation of the Dutch's fort, and where the falls of the city is generally reported. I do also Certify that the swamp of Margrove Creek, and its numerous branches is generally of a rich clay soil, and extent for several miles in a Northwest direction from the City, and in heavy rains, a great body of water must be discharged by this swamp into the River. The land East of this Swamp is generally high pine Land, with the exception of ridges of high dark sand, and some swamps, about which waters extending in a Southwest direction for Ten Miles. This is also a representation of the City of Savannah, and the adjoining Rice-fields lying Southwest of it, belonging to Joseph Miles Esq., as also the situation of the Dutch's fort, and where the falls of the city is generally reported. I do also Certify that the swamp of Margrove Creek, and its numerous branches is generally of a rich clay soil, and extent for several miles in a Northwest direction from the City, and in heavy rains, a great body of water must be discharged by this swamp into the River. The land East of this Swamp is generally high pine Land, with the exception of ridges of high dark sand, and some swamps, about which waters extending in a Southwest direction for Ten Miles. This is also a representation of the City of Savannah, and the adjoining Rice-fields lying Southwest of it, belonging to Joseph Miles Esq., as also the situation of the Dutch's fort, and where the falls of the city is generally reported.

Collected the 31st. Oct. 1795. John McMillen Secy

Note: The Figures are Fathoms at low Water upon the Bars specified on both these Draughts; and at high Water at Jekyl Bar there is 4 Fathoms Water and at Tybee Bar there is 4½ Fathoms Water, and over both Bars 40 Gun Ships may go and Anchor safely in both Sounds.

A Scale of Miles

lately in both Sounds.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chatham County and the city of Savannah, Georgia, have prepared a new comprehensive plan document that guides the communities' collective growth and development decisions over the course of the next 20 years. The *Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan* serves both participating communities as a general statement of intent regarding actions that will be taken, or policies which will be observed, to promote locally generated and preferred goals related to economic development, land use, transportation, housing, quality of life and other interrelated topics.

The *Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan* is the community's principal guiding or "vision" document - designed to formulate a coordinated, long-term planning program to maintain and enhance the health and viability of the jurisdictions. The Comprehensive Plan lays out the desired future for Chatham - Savannah, and relates how that future is to be achieved. The plan serves as a resource to both the public and private sector by projecting how land will develop, how housing will be made available, how jobs will be attracted and retained, how open space and the environment will be protected, how public services and facilities will be provided, and how transportation facilities will be improved. In short, the *Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan* is intended to provide for consistent policy direction.

The Chatham County Commission, City of Savannah City Council and local community leaders will use the Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan in the following ways:

The Future Land Use Map shall be referenced in making rezoning and capital investment decisions: It provides a representation of the community's vision helping to guide development based on community preferences and also indicates character areas where various types of land uses should be permitted.

The Comprehensive Plan provides policies that help guide day-to-day decisions: These policies are reflections of community values identified through public outreach efforts. These policies will be used as guidelines in the analysis of rezoning decisions and other capital investment decisions.

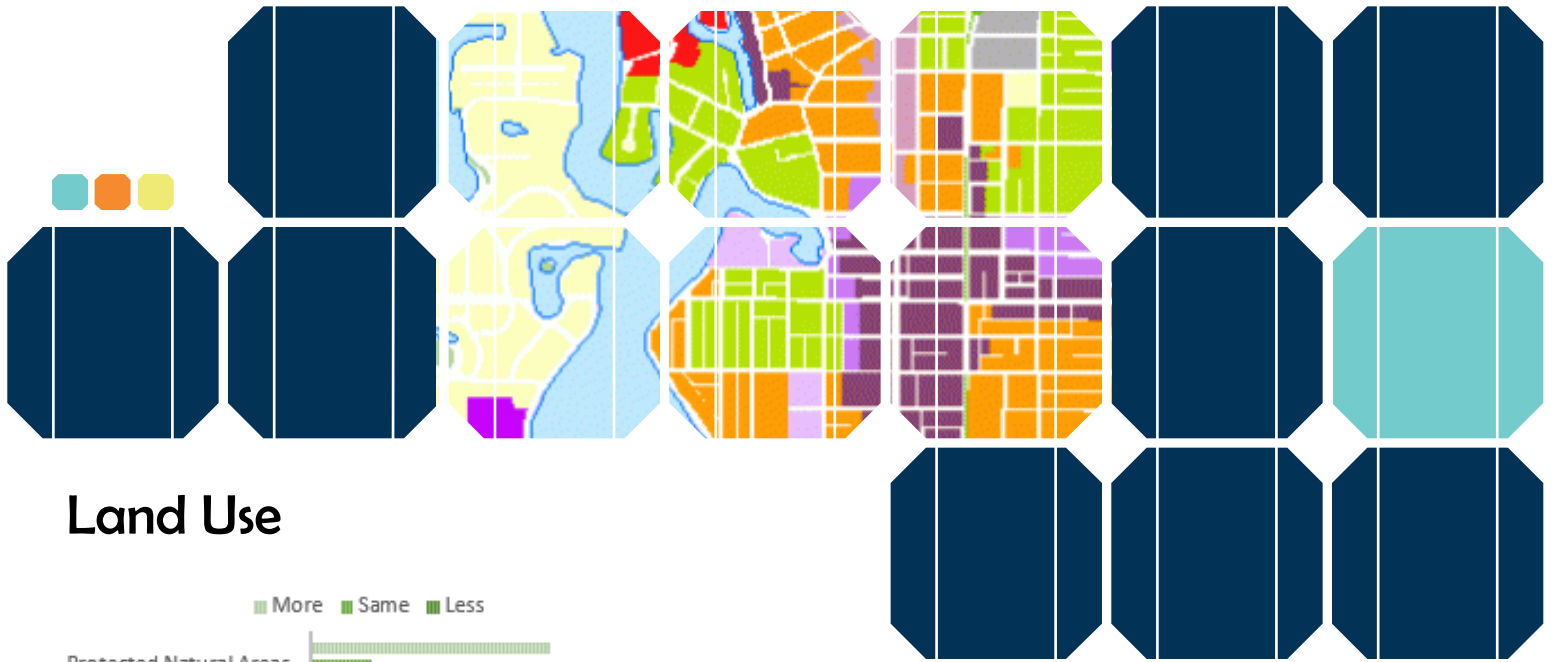
The Comprehensive Plan includes an Implementation Program that will direct public investment and private initiative: Plan implementation is carried out through the adoption and revision of regulations, including zoning and development codes, and through the completion of projects and programs outlined in the Community Goals and Community Strategic Plan and Work Program. The Comprehensive Plan is a living document and should be updated regularly as conditions change and shifts occur in public policy.

The following pages describe the results of public participation that informed and guided the this planning document.

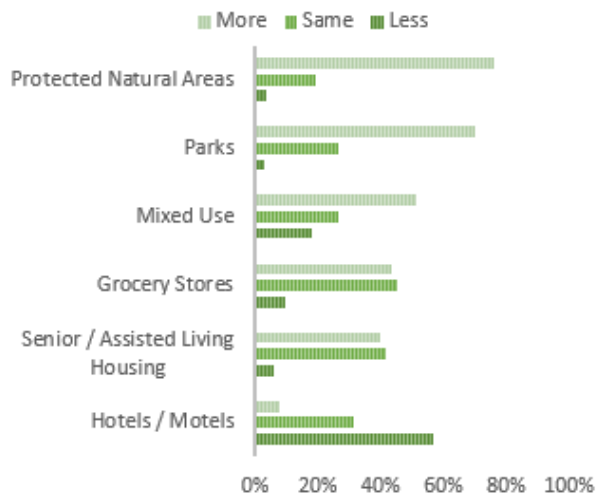


Community Survey Summary





Land Use



Parks and Natural Lands

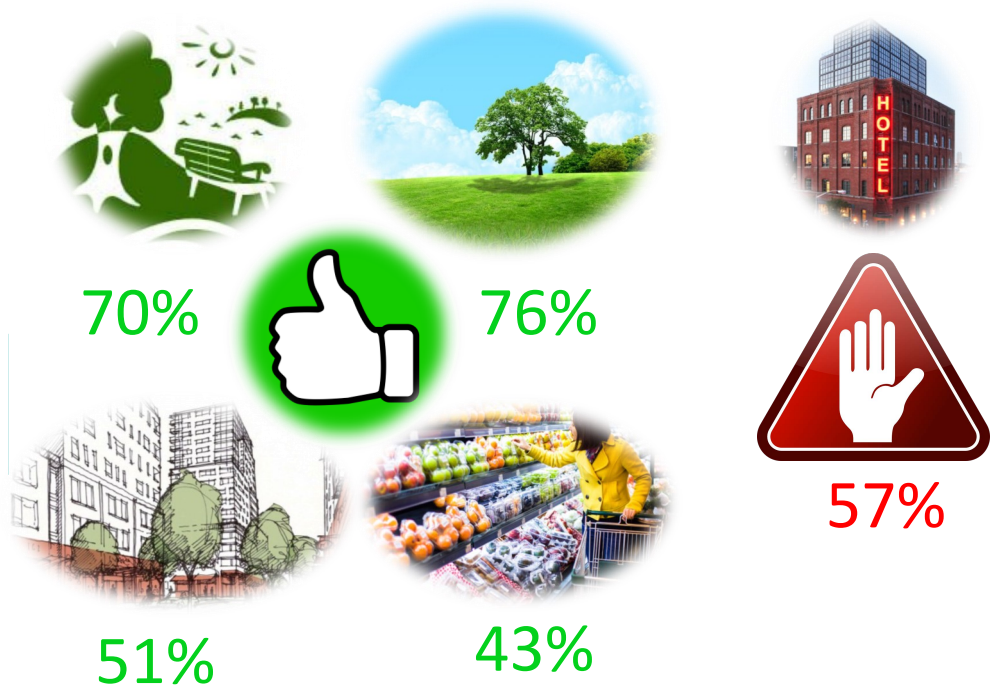
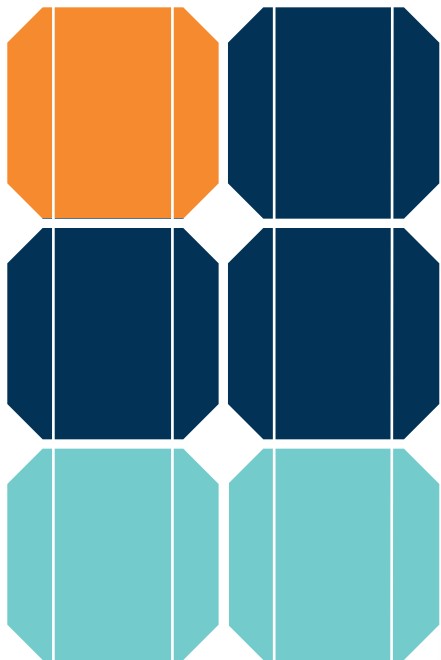
70% and 76% of respondents support increasing the amount of land for “Parks” and “Protected Natural Areas”

Mixed Use and Grocery Stores

51% and 43% of respondents support Mixed Use land development and Grocery Stores

Hotels and Motels

57% of respondents want less Hotel and Motel development.



Community Goals

“New development should be required to protect environmentally critical areas.”

“Long range policies should focus on natural resource sustainability.”

“Roads should be designed for pedestrians and bicyclist as well as cars.”

Transportation Networks

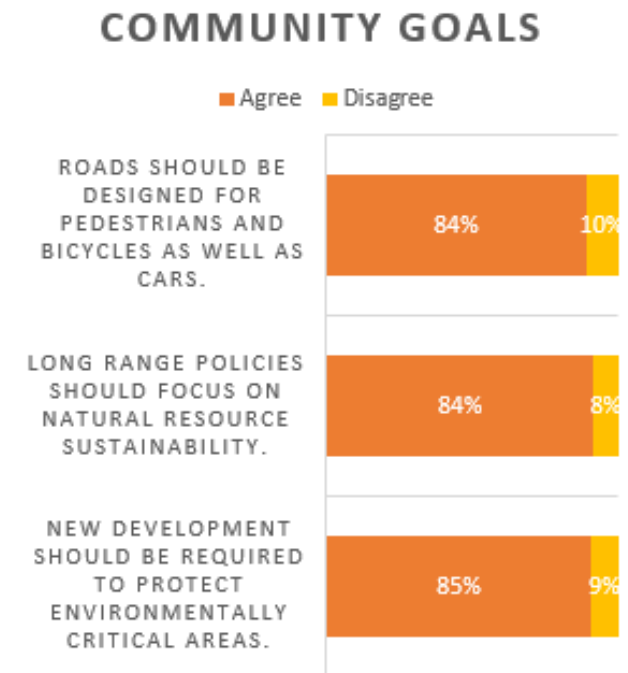
60% of respondents feel the current transportation system is inadequate.

Employment and Education

74% and 60% of respondents feel the availability of high paying jobs and educational opportunities are not adequate within the community.

Housing

69% of respondents feel housing should be created to accommodate all segments of the population.

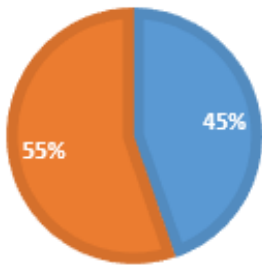




Housing

DO YOU BELIEVE THE
EXISTING HOUSING
OPTIONS MEET THE
COMMUNITY'S NEEDS?

■ Yes ■ No

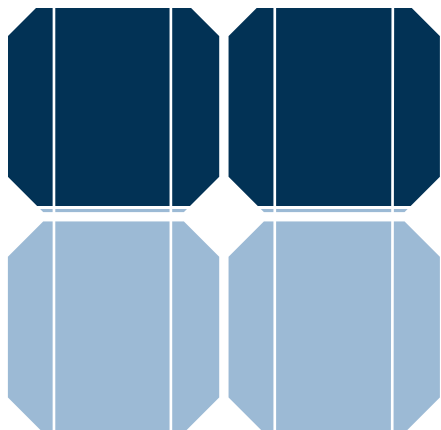


Does current housing meets the community's needs?

55% NO/YES 45%

Is affordable housing “very important”?

25% NO/YES 75%

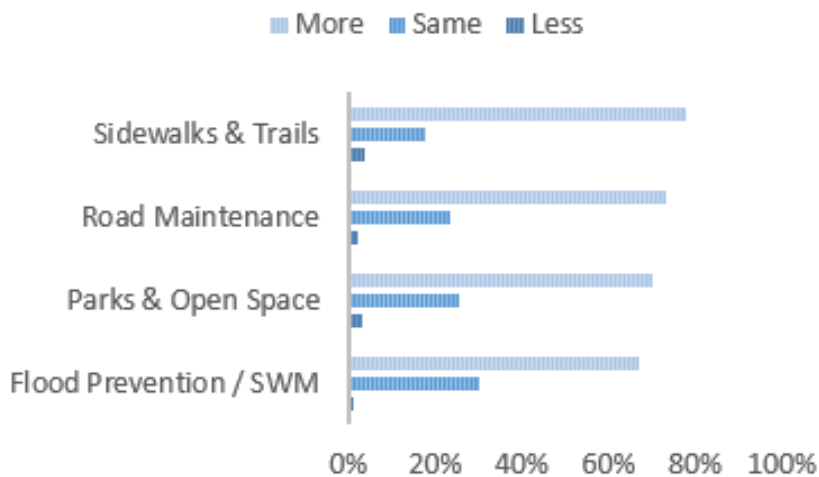
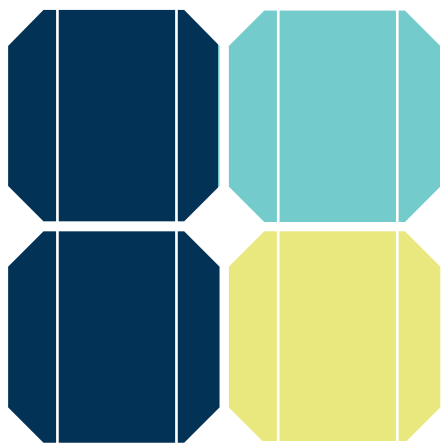


“The needs of low income families and the homeless are not being met.”

“Would prefer that low income families be blended into average neighborhoods rather than separated in public housing zones”

“There is not enough affordable and safe housing for working folks in downtown Savannah.”

Infrastructure



Sidewalks, Road Maintenance, and Open Space

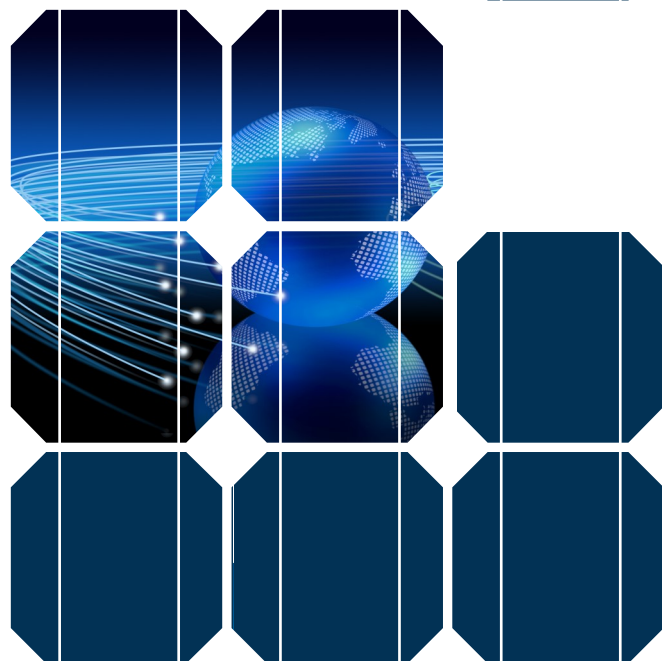
Over 70% of respondents feel there should be a significant increase of investment in Sidewalks and Trails, Road Maintenance and Parks and Open Space.

Road Expansion

A mere 37% of respondents felt there should be an increase in road expansion

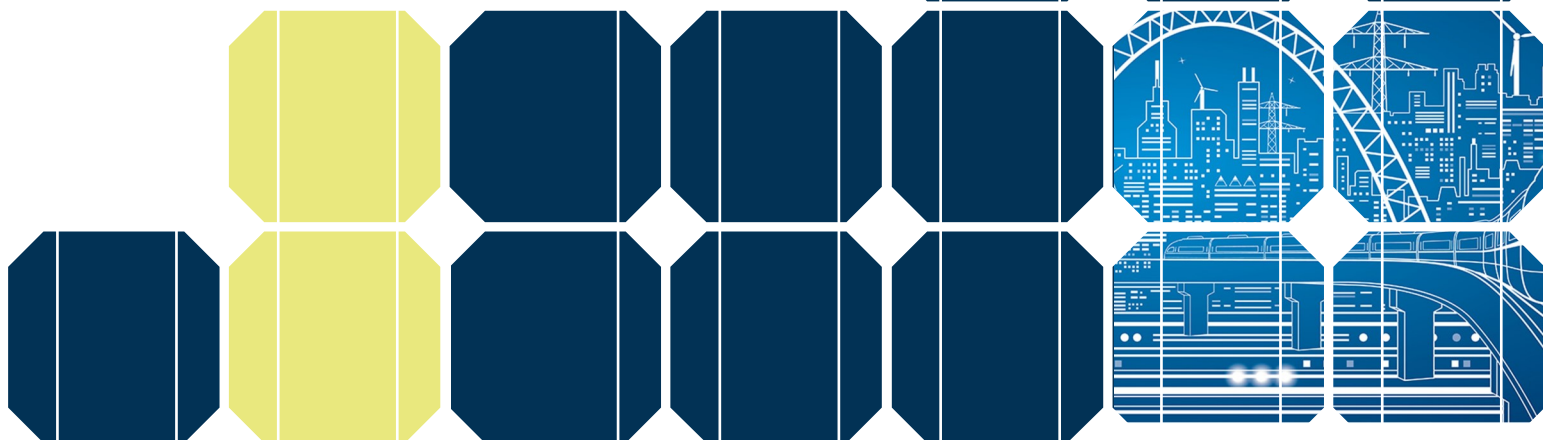
Internet Access

48% of respondents feel there should be an increase in investment for public access to internet.



No Change

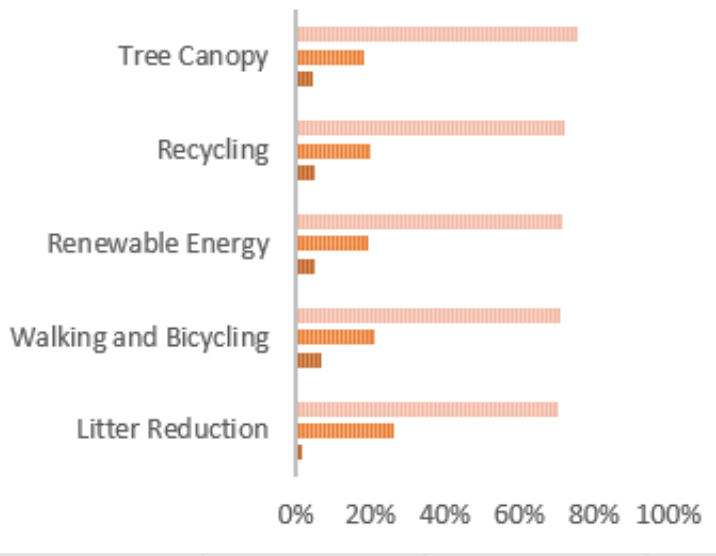
While the majority of respondents felt there should be increased investment in various types of infrastructure, nearly a third of all respondents felt the current infrastructure investments should remain the same.





Quality of Life

More Same Less



Programs

Respondents were asked whether they would favor more or less public backing for a range of programs. The most popular programs were...



Land Use

Purpose

The chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides a history of the development of Savannah and Chatham County. It provides an existing and future development patterns intended for the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

Growth

Chatham County is the most urbanized and populous county in the 200 mile coastal area between Charleston, South Carolina and Jacksonville, Florida. The County serves as an economic, cultural, and governmental hub, as well as an international focal point for trade.

The region has experienced a high rate of growth over the past 20 years, and this is expected to continue at or slightly above this level.

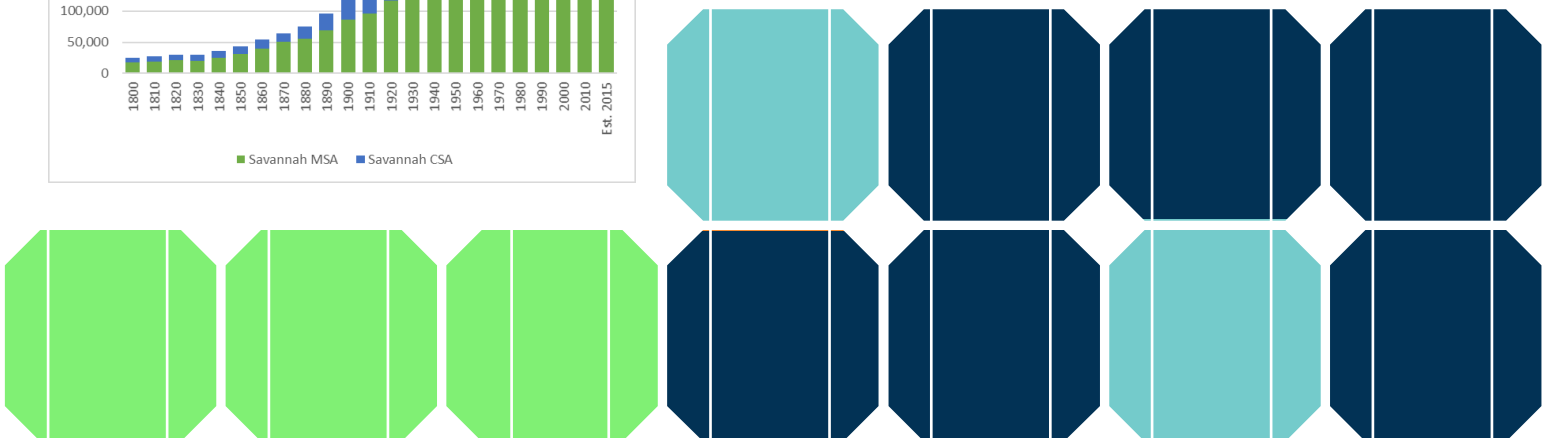
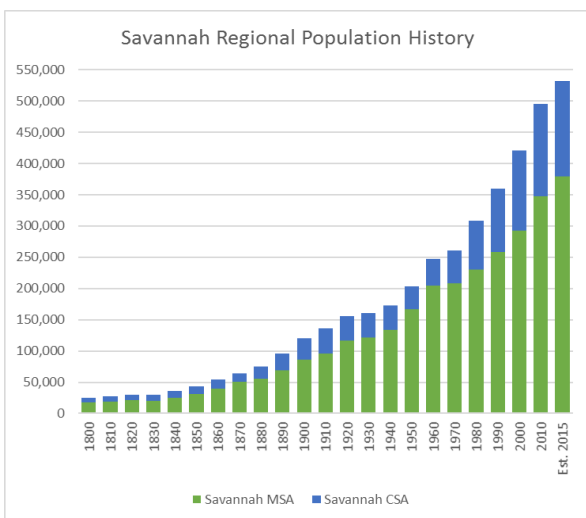
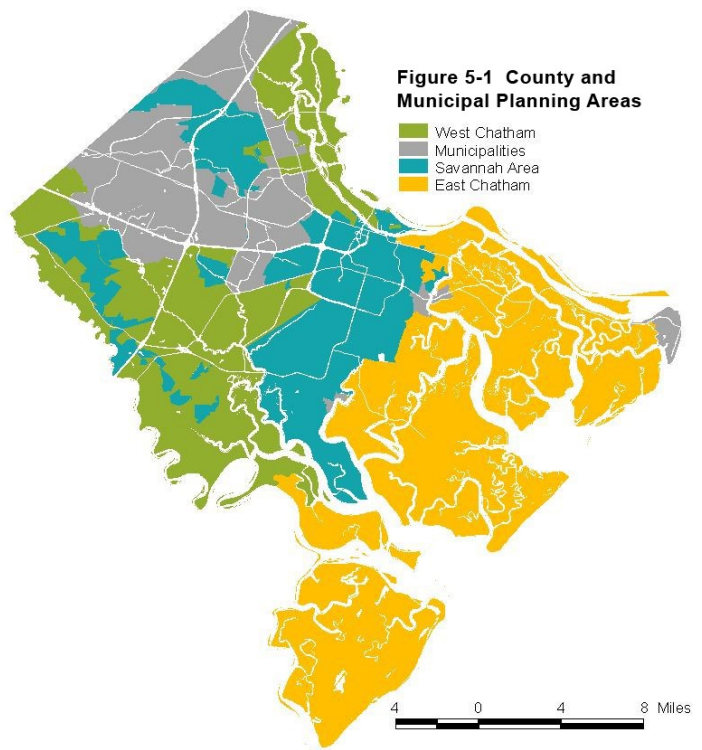
Existing Land Use

The City of Savannah is highly urbanized with large areas of mixed use development. The City is largely built-out and growing predominantly through annexation.

East Chatham is developed at low densities. This development pattern is influenced by its setting amid marshes and tidal creeks. West Chatham contains a high proportion of agricultural, forested, and otherwise undeveloped area. As the City of Savannah and unincorporated East Chatham have built out, West Chatham has emerged as a high growth area.

Historical Patterns

The city's original development patterns, established by James Oglethorpe in 1733, have been remarkably resilient and adaptable. As a result, Savannah enjoys international recognition as a planned city with an enduring legacy.



Housing

Purpose

The chapter attempts to identify major housing problems, determine future housing needs, and develop a plan for managing housing development in the future. Housing strategies presented in this chapter promote coordination of housing policies and programs at the local, state, and federal levels. We have determined that affordable housing opportunities must be available throughout the County to achieve a socio-economically diverse community.

Housing Market

Zoning, which specifies the types of units developers are allowed to build, and market demand, which dictates the types of housing units people want to buy, are the primary factors that determine housing units built in Chatham County. There is a great need for multi-family, affordable , and special needs housing, in Chatham County and the City of Savannah.

Housing Types as a Percent of Total Housing Units, 2000-2014				
	CHATHAM COUNTY		SAVANNAH	
Units in Structure	2009	2014	2009	2014
Total Units	98,528	103,807	53,526	52,264
1 (detached)	65.2%	63.8%	60.6%	57.3%
1 (attached)	5.4%	5.9%	6.3%	7.3%
2	3.5%	3.3%	5.6%	5.6%
3 to 4	6.5%	5.7%	9.1%	8.5%
5 to 9	7.1%	7.0%	8.4%	9.4%
10 or More	7.9%	9.6%	8.3%	10.4%
Manufactured Home	4.6%	4.8%	1.7%	1.5%

Homelessness

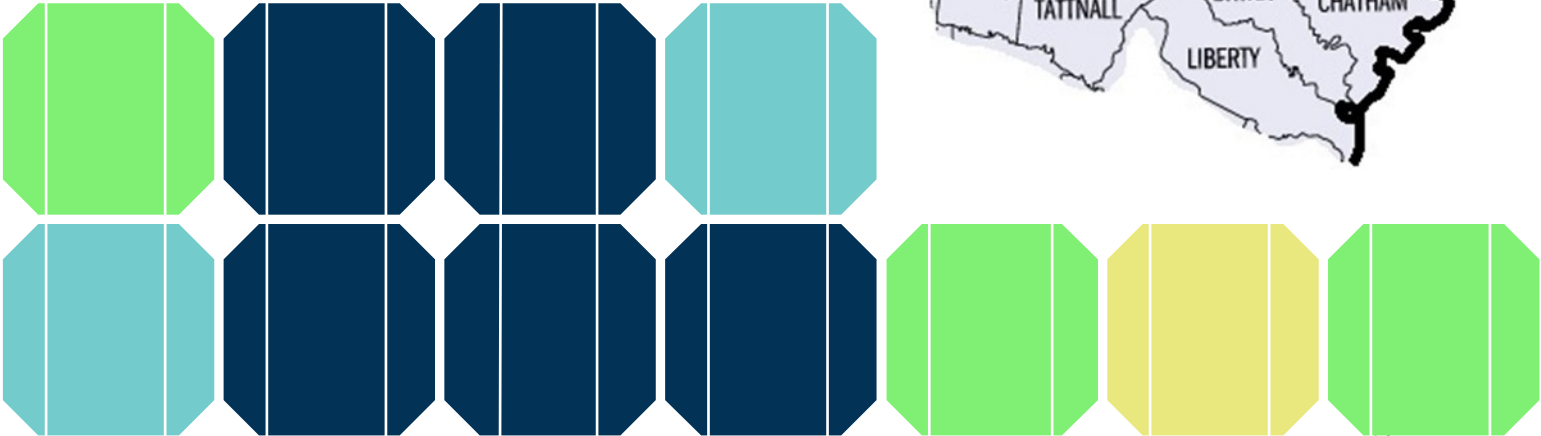
The Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless (CSAH) has gradually shifted away from a shelter-based approach and toward a system of providing care for the homeless by establish safe, clean and sustainable, non-traditional housing options. The Authority offers a “shelter plus care” approach where the homeless are provided with skills training and other services in addition to shelter.

Assessment of Housing

70% of the housing units in both Chatham County and the City of Savannah were constructed between 1940 and 2000. The majority of the units that are 50 years old or older are concentrated in Savannah’s various historic neighborhoods. Median home prices have increased nearly 80% from \$95,000 in the year 2000 to \$171,000 in 2014. During the same time frame, contract rent has increased 96% from \$475 to \$935.

Needs & Opportunities

In order to promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community, the comprehensive plan encourages the development of various housing types, promotes programs that provide housing for residents of all socio-economic backgrounds, and institute sustainable programs to address the issue of homelessness in the City an County.



Transportation

Purpose

Transportation policy decisions and transportation project designs can have a profound effect on things like mode choice, land uses, economic development, the natural environment, health, and general quality of life.

This chapter draws information from the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CORE MPO's) 2040 Total Mobility Plan (TMP), which is the long range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for Chatham County. Based on information from the MTP, issues and opportunities are identified along with quality growth objectives.

Investment

Comprised of local governments in the metropolitan area, The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization is the federally designated organization responsible for cooperatively planning for transportation in the region. The goals adopted for the Total Mobility Plan (TMP) focus on ensuring safety and security, maintenance and preservation, economic vitality, and mobility and sustainability of our road ways.

The Thoroughfare Plan

The CORE MPO, in conjunction with local jurisdictions, developed a Thoroughfare Plan for the region. The Thoroughfare Plan ensures accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for people and freight. It promotes safe and efficient travel for all users and creates a effective trade off between automobile capacity and multimodal design elements. Support for on-street parking, bike travel, land access, and pedestrian friendly intersections are discussed in the plan.

Public Transportation

The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) is the agency responsible for transit services to the Savannah area. The federal and state required Transit Development Plan (TDP), maintained by CAT, provides a 5-year/10-year guide and planning tools outlining the most effective and efficient transit services for residents. According to the recently adopted TDP, CAT has identified a "Family of Services" designed to enhance ridership, the appeal of services to additional markets, and improve existing services.

Parking Matters

In 2015 and 2016, CORE MPO and the City of Savannah developed a strategic plan for parking and mobility in Savannah, called Parking Matters. To encourage a "park once" behavior and generally reduce auto trips and parking demand within downtown, the study looked at the potential needs for capital investment (such as additional garages), the possible transit service revisions, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The study found that existing parking capacity is greater than perceived by the public.

CAT's Prioritized 5-year Program



Quality of Life

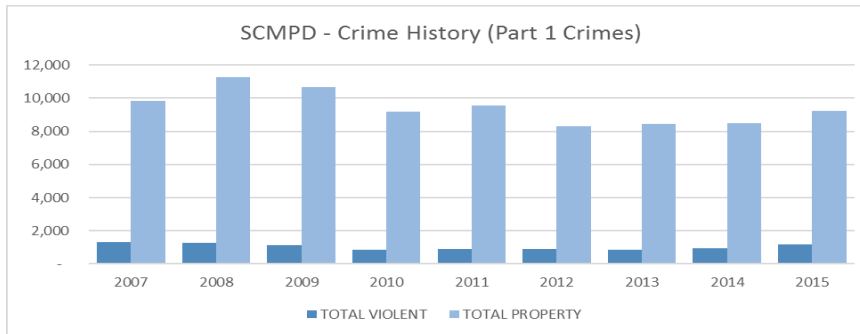
Purpose

Chatham County has a responsibility to promote and support programs and regulations that positively impact quality of life for its citizens. This chapter includes an assessment of the following quality of life issues, Public Safety, Health, Education, Natural Resources, and Historic and Cultural Resources.

This chapter incorporates several items from the *Chatham Community Blueprint* – a strategic plan adopted by both the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

Community Health

The City of Savannah and Chatham County are aware of the interconnectedness between land use and public health. Both have instituted programs and policy changes to improve the public health of their citizens. Healthy Savannah was an initiative launched in 2007 for the purpose of bringing healthy living programs and resources to the community.



Public Safety

It is a primary responsibility of a municipality to ensure public safety that protects and serves its residents. Chatham County and the City of Savannah coordinate efforts to ensure that police, fire, and emergency management services are provided for all residents. A unanimous focus amongst

the City and County is the desire to reduce crime so that all residents feel safe. Data from the Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department (SCMPD) show that crime incidence are lower than the 2008's peak, but the rate of both property and violent crime has increased since 2013. Programs such as "Citizens Police Academy," and "Coffee with a Cop" have been enacted to build relationships between residents and law enforcement.

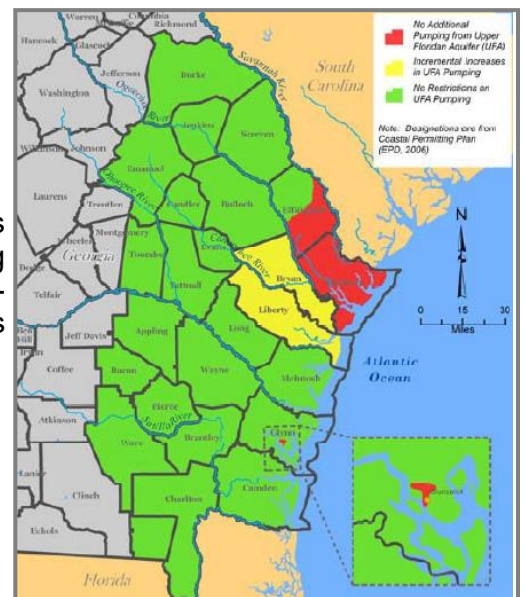
Education

Savannah Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS), strives to improve the education system for all students in the County. Initiatives are in place to develop financial, social and conflict resolution skills, improving upward mobility, and enhancing parental involvement amongst the community's students.

Natural Resources

Due to the City and County's proximity to natural coastal resources and various floodplains and marshes, specific initiatives involving state and local agencies have been implemented in an effort to preserve these natural areas. Also discussed in the chapter are efforts for addressing effective storm water and solid waste management.

Zone Boundary Map



Economic Development

Purpose

The economic development policies and activities of the County and City are to encourage development and expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is an inventory and assessment of the community's economic base, labor force characteristics, and economic development opportunities and resources.



Regional Economy

Chatham County and Savannah are the hub of an 11-county region that features a diversified workforce and growing economy. The region is not only a top tourist destination but also an ideal place for businesses and families. The Region has an available workforce including more than 50,000 college students, all within an hour's drive of the coast and exceptional training opportunities. Unfortunately, the unemployment rate in the region is higher than the national average.

Manufacturing

Some of the largest employers and highest wage earning workers are within the manufacturing segment. Chatham County and Savannah enjoys a diversified manufacturing base ranging from paper and forest products, chemicals, construction equipment, and food processing.

Port

The Port of Savannah is the largest single terminal container facility in North America and the busiest container port in the U.S. Southeast. The port contributes to over 369,000 jobs throughout the State annually and contribute \$20.4 billion in income, \$84.1 billion in sales and \$1.3 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy. The port serves as a major distribution hub due to its access to two major interstate highways. As the Savannah Harbor deepening gets underway, the harbor will soon allow Savannah to better accommodate today's mega-ships.



Military & Government

Together, Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Air Field (HAAF) are one of Coastal Georgia's largest employers. The ratio of military to civilian employees is approximately six to one, with 22,422 officers and enlisted military and 3,891 civilians employed at both installations. Total payroll for both bases is estimated at well over one billion dollars with an annual financial impact of four to five billion dollars.

Tourism

The Savannah National Landmark Historic District is the largest of its kind in the United States. Savannah with its historic architecture, monuments and the coastal area's natural beauty, drew over 13 million tourists in 2014.



**SAVANNAH STATE
UNIVERSITY**

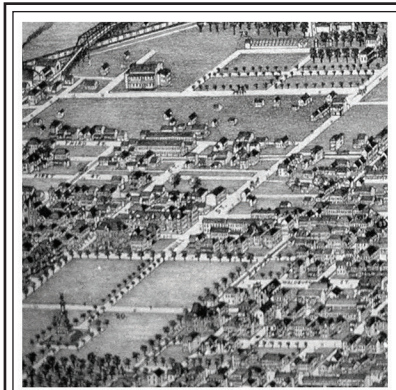
Economic Base

The City of Savannah and Chatham County has a diverse economic base similar to that of many coastal cities. Employment is highest in the service, retail trade, and manufacturing sectors. The largest manufacturing facilities in the City and County produce textiles, paper products, chemicals, transportation equipment, and food products. Major employers in the service sector include health care, hospitality, and educational institutions. Candler, St. Joseph's and Memorial Hospitals are the most visible component of the City's health care industry. The City and County's major educational institutions include Savannah State University, South University, Armstrong State University, Savannah Technical College, Savannah College of Art and Design, and the Chatham County Board of Education.



Community Profile

When James Oglethorpe arrived in 1733 with 120 colonies, the bluff that was to become Savannah was inhabited by a small band of Yamacraw Indians led by an elderly chief, Tomochichi.¹ Oglethorpe concluded peace with Tomochichi, and within a year, the colony had grown to 400 people. In ten years, the population was 1,800. The population continued to grow steadily. In 1790, there were 10,769 people living in the colony. By 1820 when yellow fever wiped out one-tenth of the city's population, the total population was 14,737. Between 1820 and 1830, the population declined as a result of the yellow fever epidemic.



Between 1940 and 1950 the growth rate was 28 percent. This was attributable to the shipyard and port activity during World War II. The growth rate during the following decade, 1950 to 1960 was 24 percent and reflects the beginning of national migration to southern states. Between 1970 and 2000, the rate of growth has remained relatively constant at 7 percent. If development patterns and growth rates of the last 30 years remain relatively constant over the next 30 years, Chatham County will reach its maximum population of 371,000 at the end of 2040, three hundred years after General Oglethorpe founded Savannah.

¹ "The Dawn of Oglethorpe's Georgia" John E. Worth:
Lost Worlds .org

2.1 Introduction

The population growth of Chatham County from 1790 to 2015 has been relatively consistent. The County's stable growth has insulated the area from the perils of "boom and bust" development that have adversely affected the planning efforts of many communities. Chatham County has a long tradition of planning, and the community plans to continue maintaining its historic character and natural resources while welcoming new residents, many of whom become the strongest advocates of local planning.

2.2 Regional Population

Chatham County is the largest county in a three county Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that also includes Bryan and Effingham Counties. This MSA is part of a larger Savannah-Hinesville-Statesboro Combined Statistical Area (CSA) which also includes the nearby Bulloch, Liberty, and Long Counties (Figure 2.1 below). The Savannah CSA is bordered on the north by the Hilton Head-Bluffton-Beaufort MSA and on the south by the Brunswick MSA.

Regional population has grown due to several technological advances and demographic trends. The invention of air conditioning and widespread mosquito control were precursors to the widespread development in the Savannah area and much of the Southeast region. These technologies made life in the area far more comfortable and convenient.



Figure 2.1: Chatham-Savannah MSA

While these technologies made Savannah a better place to live, the area's economy has grown to serve regional, national and international markets in a variety of sectors.

Historically, the City of Savannah and Chatham County have been the region's largest population center and commercial core. However, over the past few decades, suburbanization has led to large population increases in Effingham and Bryan counties. A widespread network of highways and relatively inexpensive land have accelerated population growth in these counties as well.

The net effect of regional development on the population of Chatham County and Savannah can be considered in three broad categories.

- The manufacturing economy has been surpassed by the service economy. The service economy includes health and medical facilities, retail, hospitality, and business services such as insurance, banking, and advertising.

- Approximately 25 percent of the population of Chatham County at any given time is not included in any official population count. The uncounted population includes commuters who live in surrounding counties but who work and trade in Chatham County; second-home owners who spend only part of the year in the County; students at local universities which attract domestic and international students; and military personnel who are stationed in the region temporarily; and tourists.
- Migration from other parts of the country accounts for approximately 50 percent of the annual growth of Chatham County. Many of these individuals are retirees, thus the growing trend is that the sector of the population that is growing fastest tends to be older and more affluent.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the regional population history and a long-range projection for the Savannah MSA and CSA. Population projections are prepared by the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) using a standard cohort component demographic methodology which relies upon recent historical fertility, migration, and age data to develop projected population at a county level.

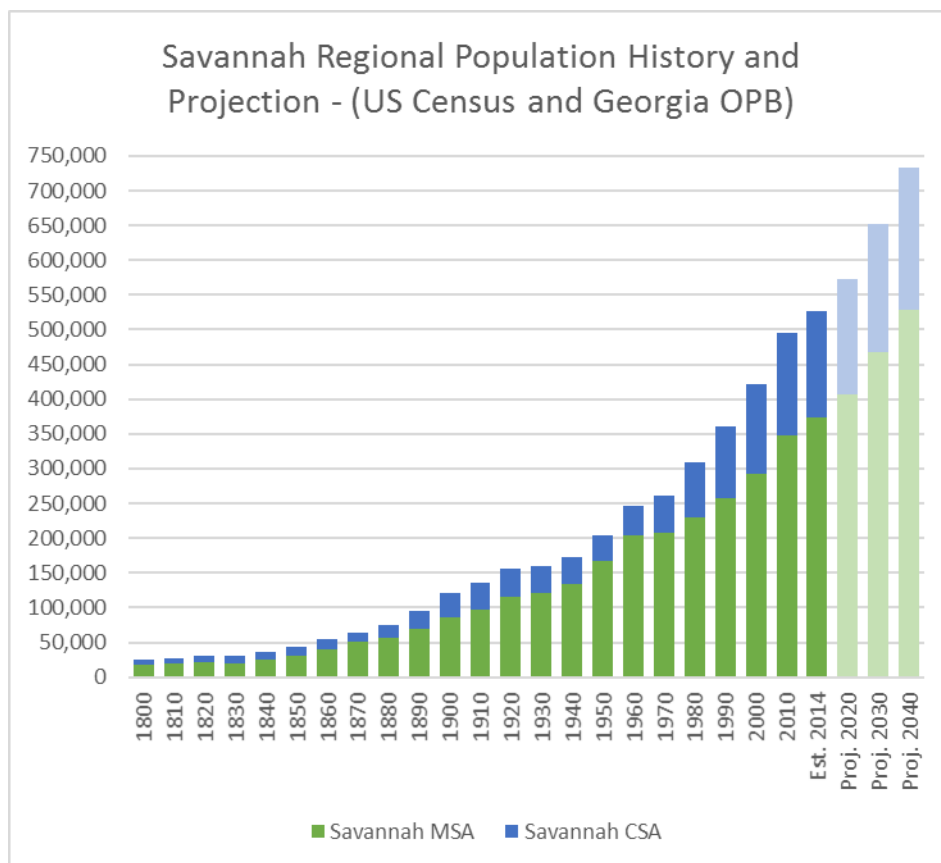


Figure 2.2 Regional Population History and Projections

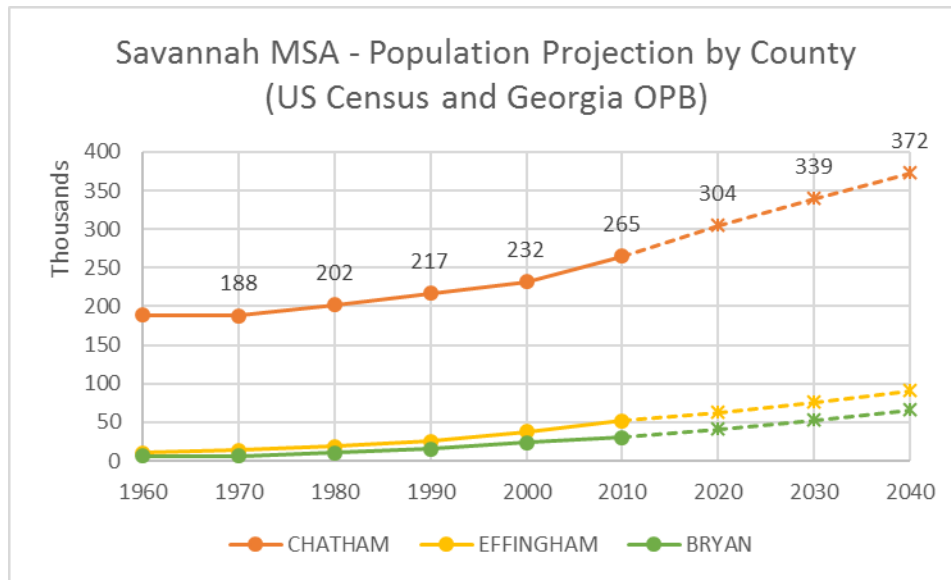


Figure 2.3 Savannah MSA Population Projections

Figure 2.3 examines the recent population history for counties within the Savannah MSA. This chart shows that Chatham County is expected to retain its status as the largest population center in the metropolitan area while its neighboring counties continue to experience growth. The projected Chatham County population for 2040 exceeds 372,000 while the anticipated population of the MSA is over 529,000.

2.3 Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham County

Chatham County includes the City of Savannah, eight other jurisdictions and the unincorporated area. The geographic focus of this plan is the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County.

2.3.1 Residential Population

Records indicate that in spite of regional development outside of these jurisdictions, the combined population of the City and County have generally grown since 1970. However, this growth has occurred primarily in unincorporated Chatham County over the past 30 to 40 years. Many of the same conditions that influenced regional growth affected the growth of the non-urbanized areas of the County.

The 2015 estimated population for the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County is 236,470 (US Census, American Community Survey 2014 estimates of 144,352 in the City and 92,118 in the unincorporated County). Figure 2.4 shows the historical combined population for the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County.

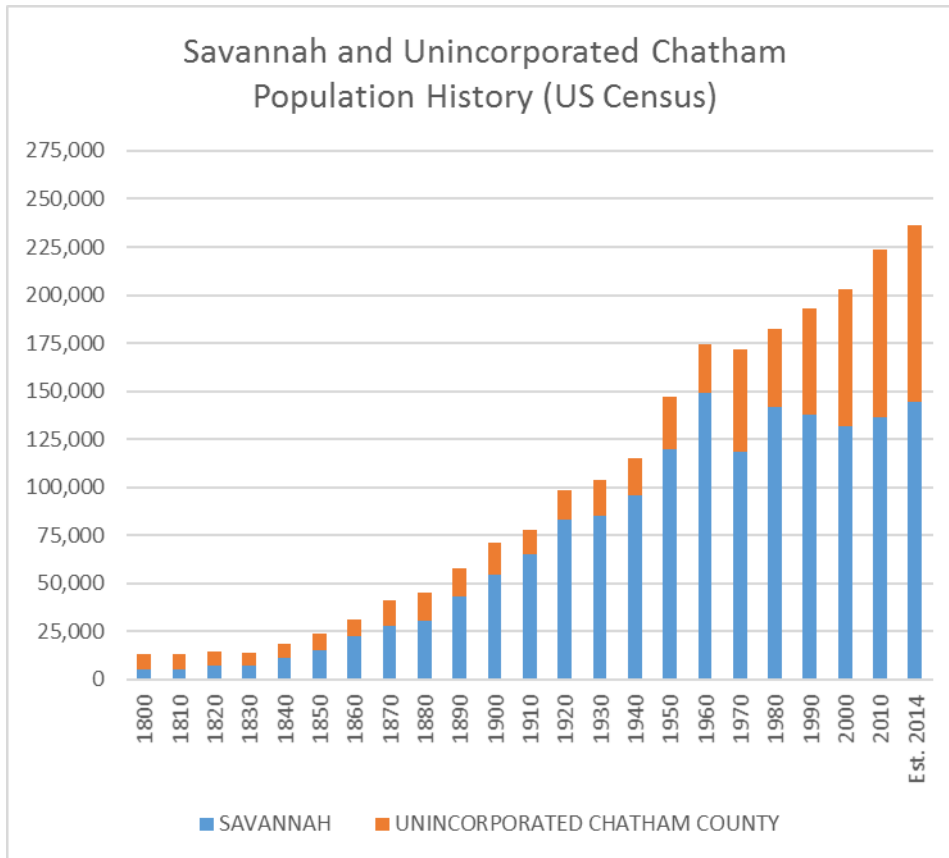


Figure 2.4: Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham Population History

2.3.2 Transient Population

Due to its status as an employment hub and tourism destination there is a substantial population within Chatham County that is transient. There are approximately 127,000 jobs in Chatham County of which approximately 28,500 of these jobs are filled by residents who live outside of Chatham County.¹

Additionally, approximately 13.4 million overnight visitors stayed in Chatham County in 2014. This is a daily average population increase of nearly 37,000 with many of these visitors coming to the downtown Landmark Historic District.² The combination of seasonal, employees and visitor population represents an increase in population of approximately 60,000 people daily.

2.3.3 Demographic Characteristics

There are some relevant demographic differences between the residents of the city of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County. On the whole, City residents are younger than those in the County. The median age of a Savannah resident is 31.4 compared to 34.2 for the County. Figure 2. 5 illustrates the difference in age for the two areas.

¹ Census Transportation Planning Package; Georgia Department of Labor

² *Tourism Forecast*, Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce

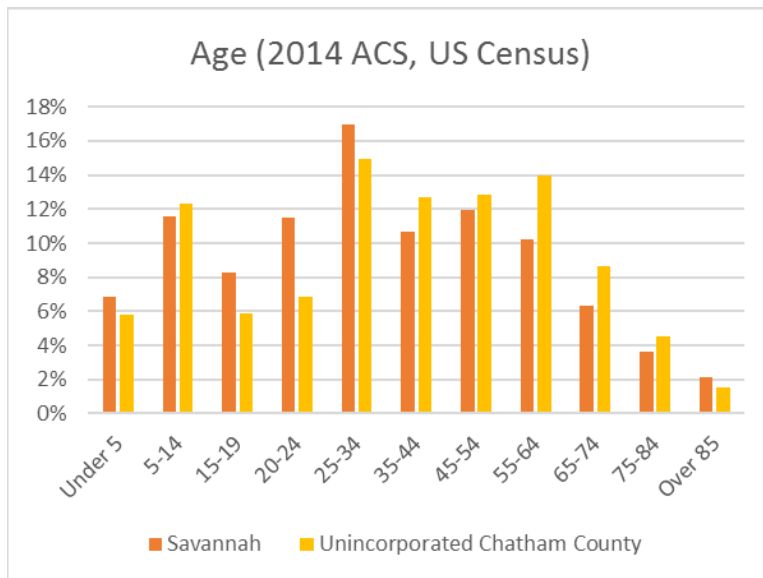


Figure 2.5: Age Differences

There are also differences in the racial composition of county and city residents. While a majority of Savannah’s residents are African American (54%), the largest racial group in the unincorporated county is white (71%). Figure 2.6 shows the differences in racial composition for City and County residents.

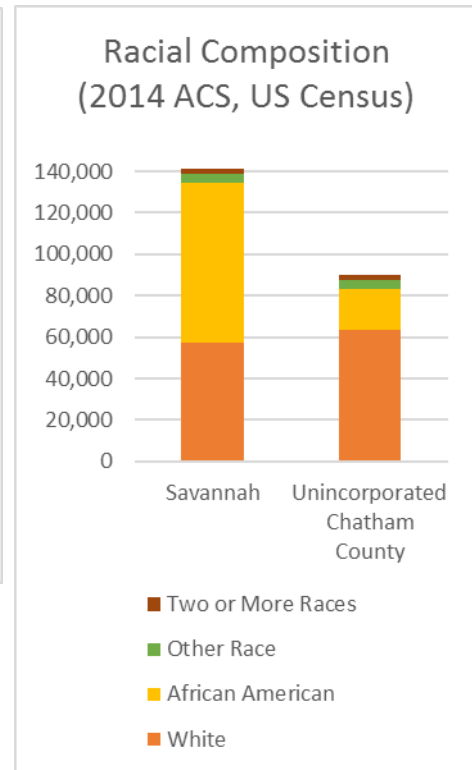


Figure 2.6: Racial Composition

2.3.4 Construction and Family Size

The construction of residential buildings is generally a good indicator of a community’s growth. There has been a steady pace of building in the city of Savannah and Chatham County over the past five years. The majority of this construction has been single family detached homes. Figures 2.7 and 2.8 show the recent residential construction trend in Savannah and Chatham County. Estimating the population based on the number of building permits is useful in planning for roads and utilities because a residential dwelling unit represents the potential for population regardless of the occupant’s official residence.

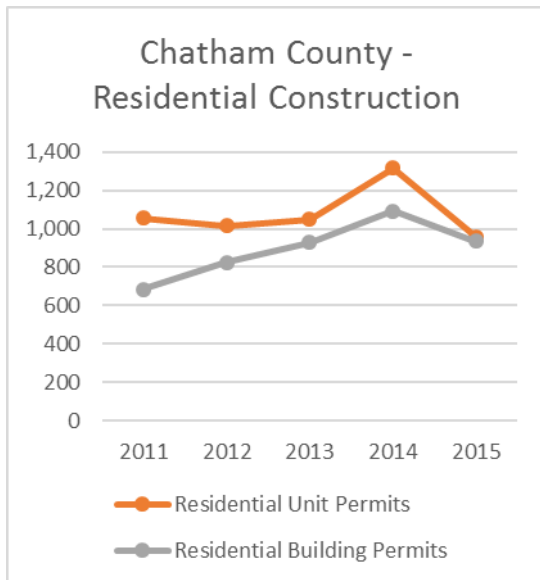


Figure 2.7: Chatham Residential Construction Trends

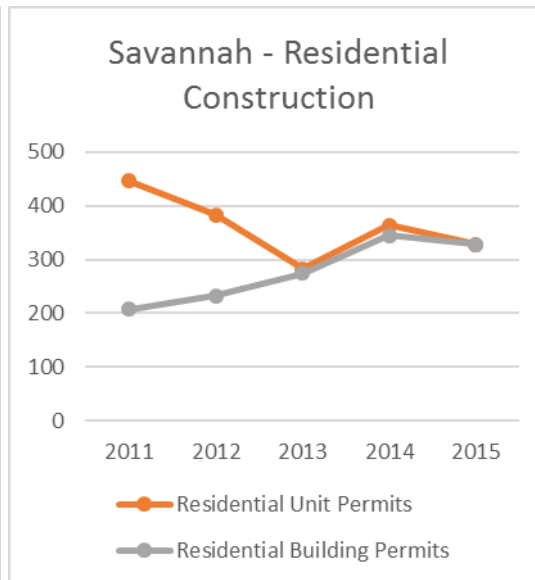


Figure 2.8: Savannah Residential Construction Trends

In 1960, the average household size in Chatham County was 3.47 people. By 2010, the average had decreased to 2.55. The smaller household size in Chatham County reflects the number of retirees who have moved into the area and smaller family sizes. This trend is expected to continue as the area becomes attractive to retirees as an alternative to other areas in the Sunbelt Region which have become congested. In 2030, the household size in Chatham County is expected to be at an all-time low of 2.38.

2.3.5 Education and Employment

Two defining characteristics of a community are the levels of education attained and the employment status of its workers.

While the vast majority of residents over 25 years old in the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County have a high school diploma, fewer than one in three have a Bachelor's Degree. Figure 2.9 illustrates the breakdown of educational attainment for people over 25.

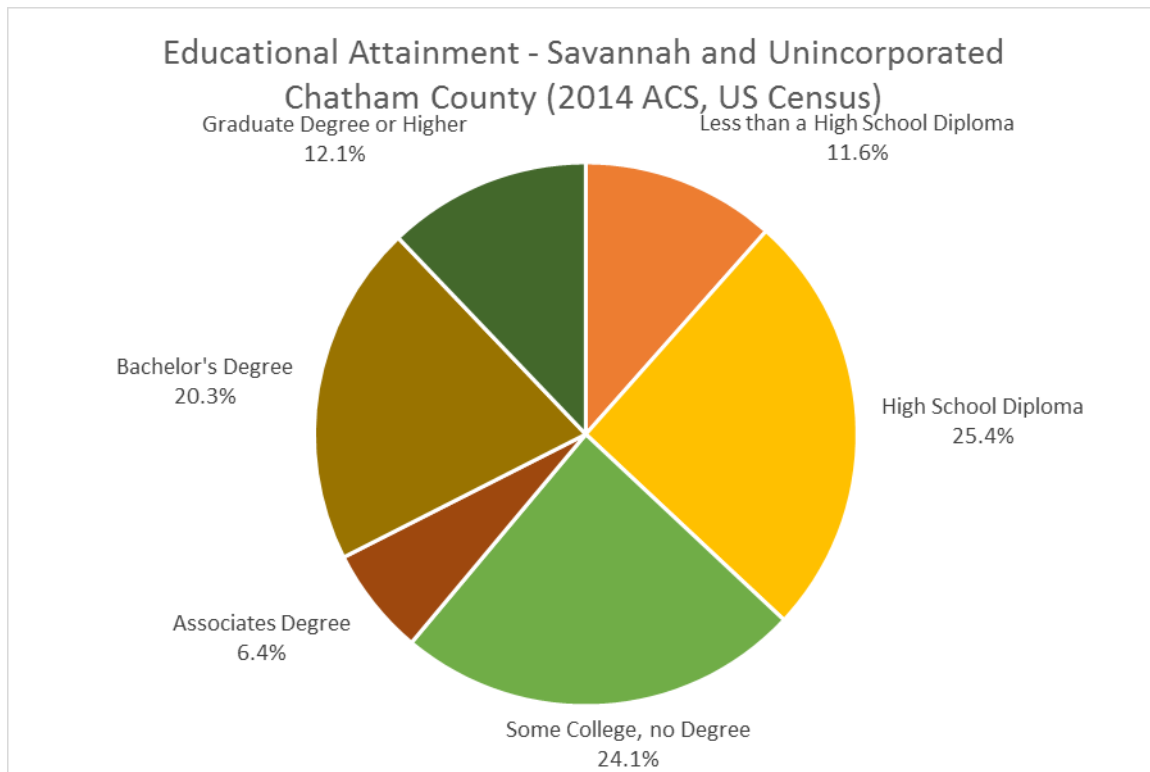


Figure 2.9: Education Attainment for Residents Over 25

Figure 2.10 illustrates the recent local unemployment statistics for Chatham County. The declining unemployment figure indicates that the County is recovering from the recession that hit the nation in 2008.

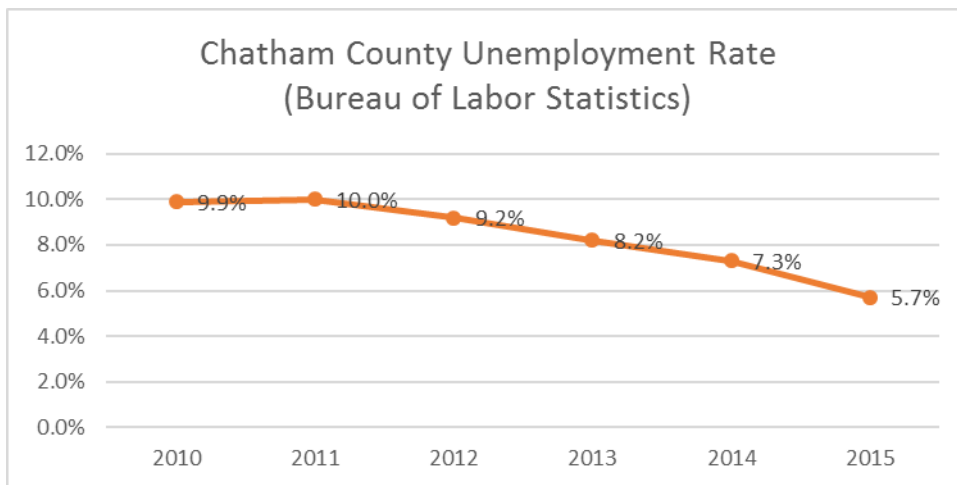


Figure 2.10: County Unemployment Rate

The employment by sector data for the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County is shown in Figure 2.11 next. The figure clearly shows that service, healthcare, education, and retail trade occupations have surpassed manufacturing as the primary source of employment in the area.

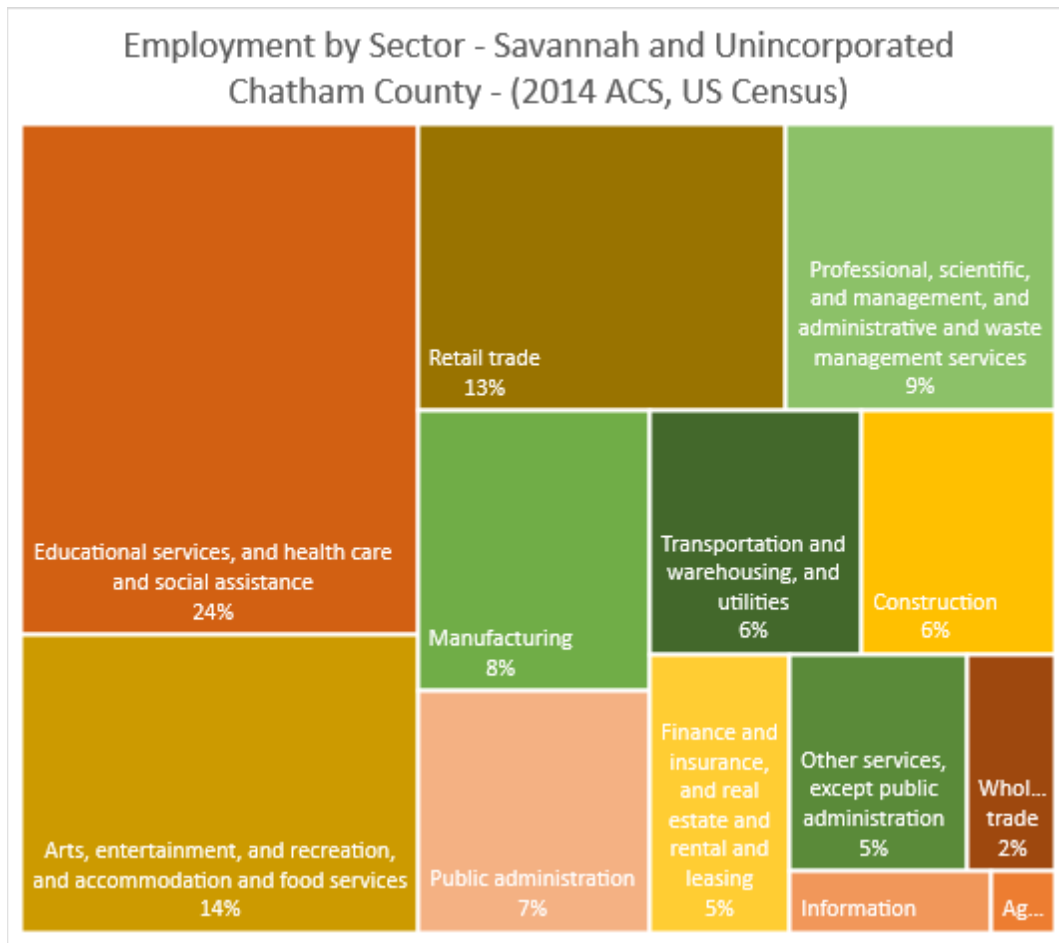
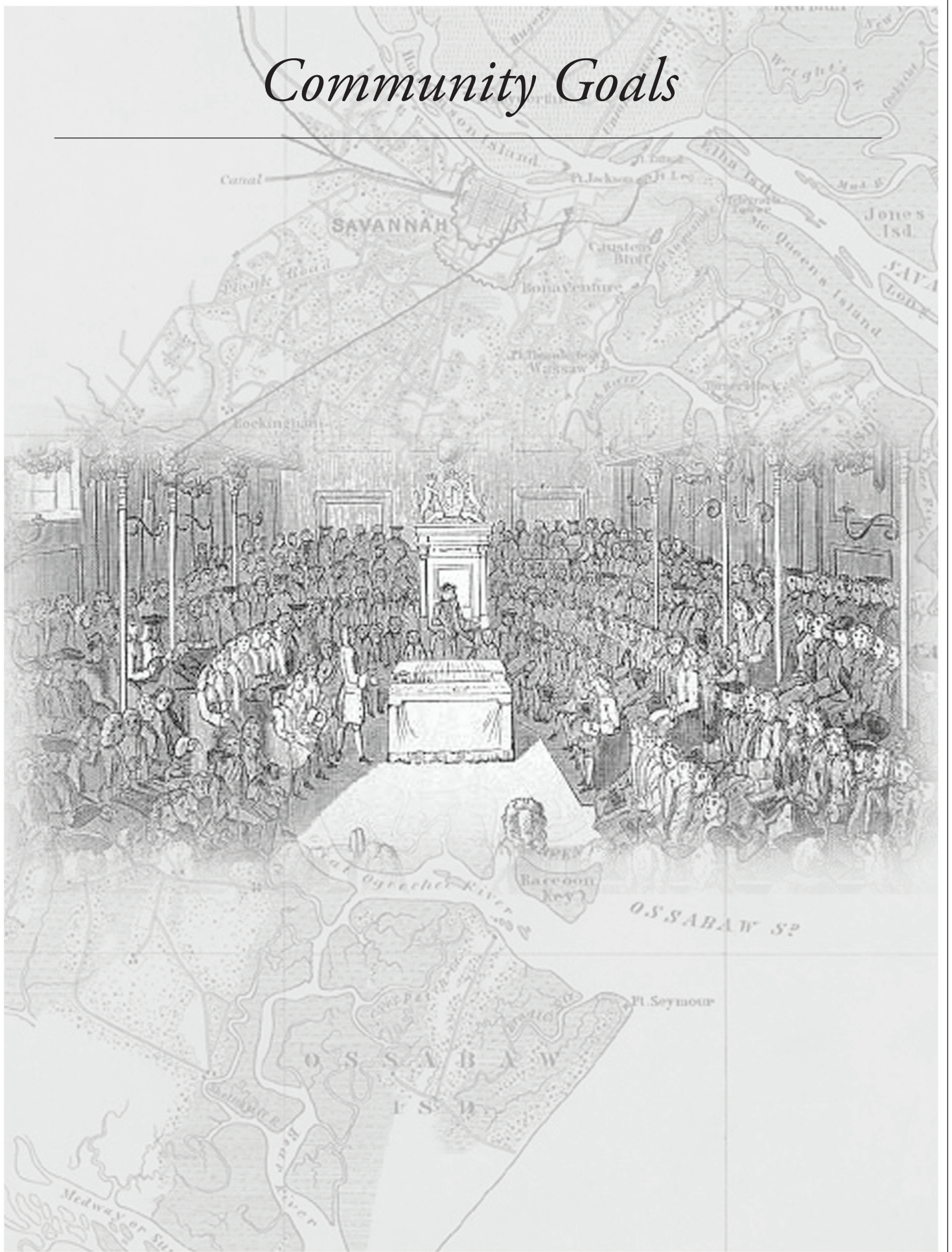


Figure 2.11: Employment by Sector

Community Goals



The Visions and Goals that emerged through the Chatham County Blueprint and the Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan represent the voices of the Community as expressed in meetings and surveys conducted during 2014, 2015 and 2016. The results below describe our community vision and goals for the next twenty years.

Economic Development:

Vision: Chatham County anchors a thriving, business-friendly, regional economy in which all workers are prepared for quality jobs, and residents feel empowered to attain a high quality of life

Goals:

- Develop apprenticeship and vocational programs based on the needs of Chatham County employers
- Increase access to employment opportunities for young adults, the working poor, ex-offenders, and people with mental illness
- Guide entrepreneurial growth through the enhanced presence of small business support resources, and facilitate collaboration among local businesses to promote innovation
- Foster a local business community that is inclusive and provides diverse opportunities
- Facilitate the establishment of physically attractive and economically viable commercial corridors
- Establish transparent processes and procedures for the delivery of effective and efficient economic development policies

Land Use:

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah are healthy and safe places to live, work, play and raise a family, and its social and economic values integrate the area's history, natural resources, efficient government and public mobility system.

Goals:

- Incorporate multi-modal transportation options including walking, bicycling, and transit, into land use patterns
- Ensure that expansions to the downtown area match the scale and urban design of the Oglethorpe Plan
- Establish transparent processes and procedures for the delivery of effective and efficient land use policies
- Provide an accessible system of public open spaces and natural areas, including parks for passive recreation activity
- Prioritize and then establish neighborhood plans that work to better specific communities by involving the neighborhood's residents in the process

Transportation:

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah prioritize safe mobility for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists; offers efficient mobility options to support economic vitality; provides infrastructure that is sensitive to unique local characteristics; connects neighborhoods to education, employment, and services; and sustains environmental quality with clean mobility modes.

Goals:

- Extend neighborhood connectivity through development of a safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation system that serves all modes of travel including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists
- Offer a regional public transportation system that provides all residents access to employment centers, institutions, commercial areas, recreational facilities, and other destinations regardless of their age, income, or disability
- Maintain and preserve transportation infrastructure in a manner that protects unique regional characteristics
- Maintain and enhance transportation infrastructure that supports regional economic vitality

Housing:

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah achieve affordable, diverse and safe housing for its residents through efficient and effective policies and programs.

Goals:

- Improve neighborhood stability where all residents, regardless of income, can occupy, maintain and improve their homes without undue financial hardship
- Provide affordable housing for all levels of income within the community, including the homeless, disabled & elderly
- Improve coordination and delivery of housing services
- Integrate housing, transportation, and land use planning to create healthier communities and connected neighborhoods

Quality of Life:

Vision: Chatham County citizens achieve a superior quality of life within a safe, active and healthy environment inclusive of the area's history, natural resources, public mobility and efficient government.

The Quality of Life section includes five focus areas:

- Community Health
- Education
- Public Safety
- Natural Resources
- Historic & Cultural Resources

Community Health:

Vision: Chatham County has a culture of health including equal access to quality and affordable healthcare, chronic disease prevention, health inclusive policies and environmental design.

Goals:

- Organize, promote, and ensure access to community health services, recreational opportunities and fitness programs to accommodate the special needs of families, the obese, the elderly, and disabled citizens to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Effectively address mental health by educating the public and reducing stigma, increasing early intervention programs, removing gaps and barriers, and increasing access to treatment particularly as it impacts incarcerated individuals, children, and adolescents
- Instill healthy practices in schools by providing comprehensive health education, nutrient-rich foods, opportunities for physical activity, and prevention education including, but not limited to violence prevention
- Develop local and regional collaboration among similar organizations to improve the delivery of social services and to expand the continuum of services
- Increase access to healthy food for populations most likely to experience food-insecurity through community gardens and alternative distribution methods (i.e. farmer's markets)

Education:

Vision: From early childhood education through post-secondary achievement, Chatham County's innovative and inclusive educational systems are a model of academic excellence that enable students to have the knowledge, skills and ability to succeed at chosen pathways.

Goals:

- Ensure that financial skills, social skills, and conflict resolution skills are being offered to parents and taught to all students through the use of technology, community partnerships, and counseling for both parents and children
- Implement mentorship programs between employers and students; while increasing leadership development programs between community organizations and public schools to prepare students for employment and promote upward mobility
- Incentivize and promote parental involvement in schools by teaching parents to advocate for their child(ren), facilitating better communication between parents and school leadership, and eliminating barriers to parent engagement

Public Safety

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah provide a community that is a safe place to live, work, and raise a family, and within which protection of residents is considered an integral part of its social and economic values.

Goals:

- Reduce crime, particularly abuse and violence, by building trust between law enforcement and residents, focusing enforcement in high crime areas, and expanding the visibility of police to ensure all residents feel safe
- Integrate environmental design elements which discourage criminal behaviors into the planning and construction of public space

Natural Resources

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah are enhanced by the protection and maintenance of natural resources and ecosystems.

Goals:

- Incorporate natural resources into appropriate development standards and review procedures
- Expand the preservation of natural areas and open spaces to provide for wildlife habitat, the continuation of ecosystem services, and public recreational opportunities
- Maintain adequate and open floodplains to prevent property damage from floodwaters and natural shoreline migration due to sea level rise
- Develop a time-based and spatial context for climate adaptation and sea-level rise adaptation planning
- Preserve existing trees and accelerate the planting of new trees.
- Improve and expand solid waste management to include additional opportunities for recycling and composting
- Protect and improve the air quality in Chatham County
- Protect the quality and supply of drinking water in Chatham County to include both surface and groundwater sources
- Factor sea level rise into land use and transportation & infrastructure planning
- Establish transparent processes and procedures for the delivery of effective and efficient natural resources policies.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Vision: Chatham County and Savannah's historical and emerging cultural resources provide unique advantages to balance preservation with development and economic growth.

Goals:

- Preserve culturally and historically significant buildings, landscapes and sites throughout Chatham County
- Establish transparent processes and procedures for the delivery of effective and efficient historic and cultural resources policies
- Promote the community's historic character as an important element of its residential quality of life
- Maintain a historic preservation process that is comprehensive, continuous, planned and funded
- Promote tourism development and economic development while considering and supporting the needs of existing residents and businesses

Economic Development

The City of Savannah is built on a history of commerce, innovation, and prosperity. Founded by James Oglethorpe in 1733, Savannah was originally established to increase trade with other colonies. Savannah's business climate was as accommodating as its weather. Settlers quickly discovered that Savannah's soil was rich, and the climate was favorable for the cultivation of cotton and rice. Plantations and slavery became highly profitable systems for whites in the neighboring Lowcountry of South Carolina; therefore, Georgia, the last free colony, legalized slavery.

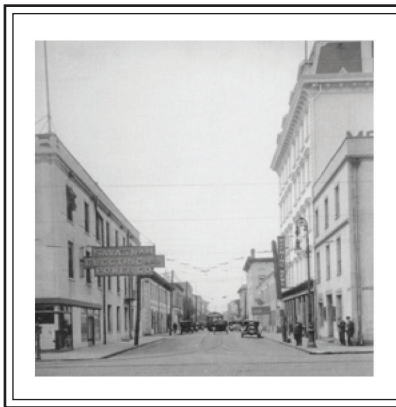
Due to the economic renaissance brought on by the exportation of cotton, residents built lavish homes and churches throughout the City of Savannah that

reflected the wealth of the times. With the growth of trade, especially after the invention of the cotton gin on a plantation outside of Savannah, the city became a rival of Charleston as a commercial port. Many of the world's cotton prices

were set on the steps of the Savannah Cotton Exchange in the 1800s.

Today, Savannah has a diverse economy that includes manufacturing, service, government and military, tourism, port-

related distribution, and a burgeoning number of creative and technical businesses. Savannah has an available workforce and exceptional training opportunities, within an hour's drive. Savannah also enjoys a strategic coastal location.



4.1 Introduction

The Economic Development Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is an inventory and assessment of the community's economic base, labor force characteristics, and economic development opportunities and resources. It attempts to determine the community's needs and goals in light of population trends, natural resources, housing, and land use in order to develop a strategy for the economic well-being of the community.

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

4.2 Regional Economy

The region has a diverse economy that includes manufacturing, higher education, government and military, tourism, port-related distribution, and a burgeoning number of creative and technical businesses. The region has an available workforce and exceptional training opportunities, with more than 50,000 college students all within an hour's drive of the coast, however, the unemployment rate in the region is currently higher than the national average.

Chatham County and Savannah are the hub of an 11-county region that features a diversified workforce and growing economy. The region is not only a top tourist destination but also an ideal place for businesses and families. People want to live and work in the Coastal Empire.

4.3 Chatham – Savannah Economy

Over the past 25 years, the City of Savannah and Chatham County have experienced a boom of economic activities. Energized by the upsurge in tourism in the mid 1990s and other positive economic factors, the city and county have entered the 21st century in the



enviable position of being able to use the past to enhance the present and future. Savannah's Landmark Historic District is experiencing commercial revitalization that is spreading southward into the Victorian District, eastward toward the islands, northward on to Hutchison Island, and finally westward toward the industrialized areas of Savannah.

However, the severe economic recession that hit the entire country beginning in 2008 also effected Chatham County. However, as Savannah and Chatham County again begin to flourish, the need for a trained workforce and higher paying jobs rises. While there are

more employment opportunities today, many of these do not pay wages necessary to support a family. As the City and County's economy continues to diversify, a better balance will be struck between job opportunities and wages.

4.3.1 Manufacturing

Chatham County and Savannah enjoys a diversified manufacturing base. Products range from paper and forest products to chemicals, from construction equipment to food processing, and from corporate jets to drill bits. The significance of the manufacturing segment of the local economy cannot be overstated. Some of the largest employers and highest wage earning workers are within the manufacturing segment.

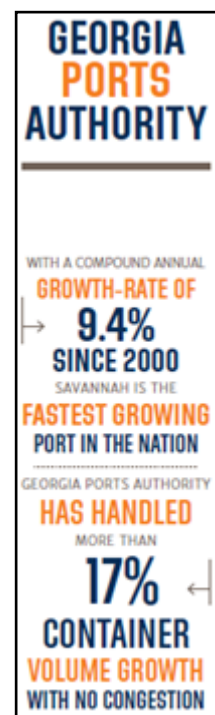
4.3.2 Port

The Port of Savannah is the largest single terminal container facility in North America as well as the busiest container port in the U.S. Southeast. It includes over 1,400 acres and statewide, the port contributes to over 369,000 jobs throughout the State annually and contribute \$20.4 billion in income, \$84.1 billion in sales and \$1.3 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy.

The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) operates two deepwater terminals in Chatham County, the Ocean Terminal and the Garden City Terminal. The port serves as a major distribution hub due in part to location. The port expansion and ready access to two major interstate highways has resulted in the location of major warehouses in Chatham County.

In terms of total annual container trade, import and export, the port has continually seen an increase and is currently poised to continue growing as the Savannah Harbor deepening gets underway. When complete, the Harbor will allow Savannah to better accommodate today's megaships.

The success of Georgia's ports translates to employment opportunities for each of Georgia's 159 counties. Port-related expansions announced during Fiscal Year 2015 will bring more than \$619 million in investment, 4.3 million square feet of development and approximately 3,000 new jobs to Georgia (Georgia Ports Authority).



- Two Railroads, Norfolk Southern & CSX, On Terminal
- Over 3 Million Ft² of Warehouse Space Available Within 30 Miles of Port
- Immediate Access to Two Major Interstates: I-16 (East/West) and I-95 (North/South)
- 9,700 Feet of Contiguous Berth Space
- Four-hour Drive to Major Markets: Atlanta, Orlando and Charlotte
- Largest Concentration of Import Distribution Centers on the East Coast

4.3.3 Creative & Technical Businesses

A burgeoning group of small to large creative and technical firms have chosen Chatham County and Savannah for their location. To support and encourage this growth, organizations such as the Creative Coast were formed through collaborative private and public partnerships to leverage the area's unique blend of bright talent, leading-edge technologies, and exceptionally high quality of life – all to stimulate the growth of entrepreneurial, creative, and technical business in the area.

Since the development of the Creative Coast in 1997, numerous organizations and efforts have come together to better meet the needs of the creative community that is Savannah. By focusing on creative entrepreneurialism, technology, new media, art, music, and food culture these groups are helping to support and shape the future of Savannah.

4.3.4 Military & Government

The Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield military complex is a major sector in Savannah and Chatham County's economy. Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) is located inside the city limits of Savannah. Its mission is to provide air transport to Fort Stewart, home base of the 3rd Infantry Division, located in nearby Liberty County covering nearly 285,000 acres. HAAF has the longest army runway on the east coast, and facilities on the 5,400-acre airfield can handle the largest military aircraft. HAAF is accessed by rail and a major road network. Fort Stewart is located 40 miles from Savannah, in Liberty, Bryan and portions of Evans, Long, and Tattnall Counties.



Fort Stewart and HAAF together are one of Coastal Georgia's largest employers. The ratio of military to civilian employees is approximately six to one, with 22,422 officers and enlisted military and 3,891 civilians employed at both installations. Fort Stewart accounts for nearly three-fourths of the military employment in the area.



In 2015, there were 22,422 officers and enlisted military and 3,891 federal civilian employees totaling to 26,313 workers. Total payroll for both bases is estimated at well over one billion dollars and with an annual financial impact of four to five billion dollars. Fort Stewart and Hunter AAF continue to play an important role in the regional economy.

Daily Working Population				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Military	27,314	23,149	23,315	22,422
Civilian	4,077	4,077	3,883	3,891
Total	27,226	27,226	27,198	26,313

Table 4.1: Daily Working Population at FS/HAAF

The strong presence of military in the area further increases the demand for businesses in retail, food service, real estate, education, and other sectors.

4.3.5 Tourism

Chatham County and Savannah have a well-earned reputation as a favorite tourist destination, and the atmosphere and activities that draw these visitors give it vibrancy unmatched by most coastal areas. The Savannah National Landmark Historic District is the largest of its kind in the United States. To that end, in 2014 over 13 million tourists visited Savannah, in large part to view the historic architecture, monuments and the coastal area's natural beauty.

4.3.6 Aerospace



Aerospace manufacturing has been a key industry in Savannah since Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation planted roots in 1967. As the largest aerospace manufacturer in the Southeast, Gulfstream employs nearly 10,000 workers locally. In addition, more than 30 aerospace-related companies are located in Savannah, making the area a true aerospace supplier cluster.

Savannah's aerospace industries enjoy the same benefits as other businesses in the city's advanced manufacturing sector, including state and local incentives, easy access to

the Port of Savannah, the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport and nationally recognized workforce training programs, among others. (Savannah Economic Development Authority)

4.4 Assessment

4.4.1 Economic Base

The City of Savannah and Chatham County has a diverse economic base similar to that of many coastal cities. Employment is highest in the service, retail trade, and manufacturing sectors. The largest manufacturing facilities in the City and County produce textiles, paper products, chemicals, transportation equipment, and food products. Retail trade establishments are located throughout downtown and the rest of the County, in shopping centers and on individual sites, and provide for the daily needs of area residents. Regional shopping centers attract customers from throughout the southeast.



Major employers in the service sector include the health care industry, the tourist industry, and educational institutions. Candler, St. Joseph's and Memorial Hospitals are the most visible component of the City's health care industry. Additional health care jobs are provided at clinics, nursing homes, laboratories, and the offices of doctors, dentists and other health care practitioners. The healthcare field will continue to grow in the Chatham County region due the growth in numbers of the aging population.



Major educational institutions providing employment include the Savannah State University (SSU), South University, Armstrong State University (ASU), Savannah Technical College, Savannah College of Art and Design, and the Chatham County Board of Education. Major businesses providing support for the tourist industry include hotels, restaurants, gift shops, and museums.

4.4.2 Labor Profile

The following pages detail the 2015 labor profile for Chatham County for the following topic areas as reported by the Georgia Department of Labor:

- Population
- Employment Trends
- Industry Employment Numbers
- Largest Employers
- Commuting Patterns
- Education of the Labor Force

Chatham County Area

Labor Profile



Updated: Jul 2016

Labor Force Activity - 2015

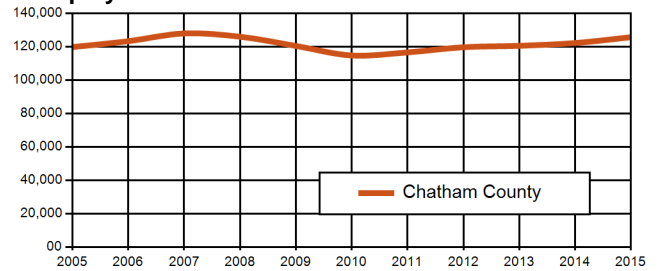
2015 ANNUAL AVERAGES

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Chatham	133,265	125,625	7,640	5.7%
Bryan	15,784	14,967	817	5.2%
Effingham	26,706	25,368	1,338	5.0%
Chatham Area	175,755	165,960	9,795	5.6%
Georgia	4,770,873	4,490,931	279,942	5.9%
United States	157,129,917	148,833,417	8,296,333	5.3%
Beaufort, SC	71,344	67,467	3,877	5.4%
Jasper, SC	11,733	11,132	601	5.0%

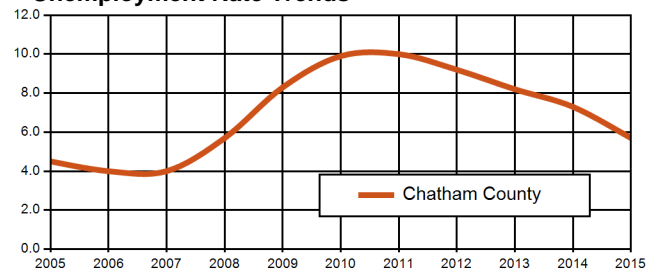
Note: This series reflects the latest information available. Labor Force includes residents of the county who are employed or actively seeking employment.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

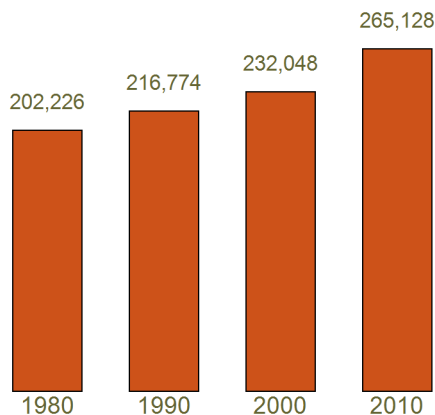
Employment Trends



Unemployment Rate Trends



Population Estimates



Population

	2010 Census	2015 Rank	2015 Estimate	% Change 2000-2015	2025 Projected*	% Change 2010-2025
Chatham	265,128	12	286,956	8.2	307,576	16.0
City of Savannah	136,286					
Chatham Area	527,421		586,612	11.2	678,626	28.7
Georgia	9,687,653		10,214,860	5.4	13,426,590	38.6
United States	308,745,538		321,418,820	4.1	349,439,199	13.2
Beaufort, SC	155,898		179,589	15.2	194,590	24.8
Jasper, SC	23,912		27,824	16.4	27,900	16.7

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, *Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

Industry Mix - 4th Quarter of 2015

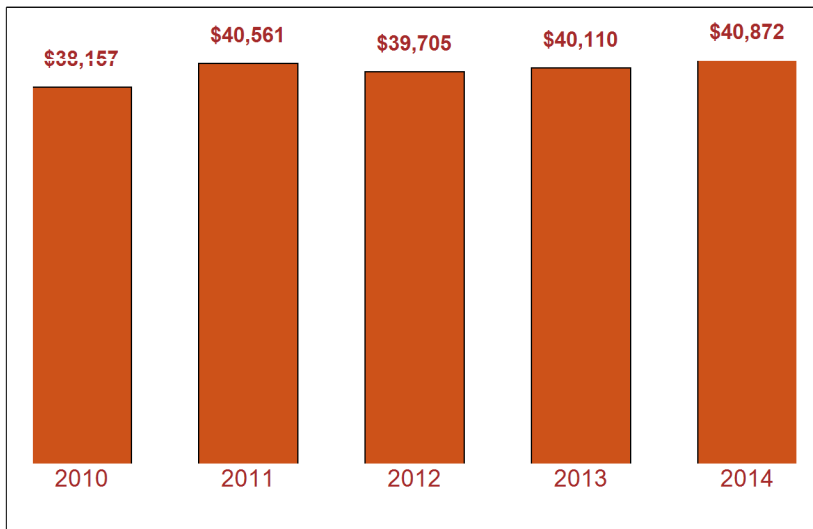
INDUSTRY	Chatham				Chatham Area			
	NUMBER	EMPLOYMENT		WEEKLY	NUMBER	EMPLOYMENT		WEEKLY
	OF FIRMS	NUMBER	PERCENT	WAGE	OF FIRMS	NUMBER	PERCENT	WAGE
Goods-Producing	833	20,857	14.1	1,516	1,099	23,685	14.4	1,470
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	16	141	0.1	849	43	256	0.2	781
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	*	*	*	5	8	0.0	824
Construction	589	5,058	3.4	1,007	777	5,924	3.6	977
Manufacturing	227	15,657	10.6	1,686	274	17,497	10.6	1,647
Food	28	864	0.6	1,313	31	870	0.5	1,307
Beverage and Tobacco Product	6	93	0.1	772	7	96	0.1	757
Textile Mills	1	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Textile Product Mills	7	86	0.1	950	9	93	0.1	889
Apparel	1	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Leather and Allied Product	1	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Wood Product	10	192	0.1	933	15	305	0.2	988
Paper	8	1,094	0.7	1,559	11	2,064	1.3	1,559
Printing and Related Support Activities	15	219	0.1	884	16	247	0.1	832
Petroleum and Coal Products	4	203	0.1	1,230	4	203	0.1	1,230
Chemical	23	803	0.5	1,638	25	805	0.5	1,636
Plastics and Rubber Products	4	*	*	*	5	*	*	*
Nonmetallic Mineral Product	28	579	0.4	1,092	38	841	0.5	1,048
Primary Metal	1	*	*	*	1	*	*	*
Fabricated Metal Product	25	597	0.4	1,255	33	656	0.4	1,244
Machinery	7	414	0.3	1,268	11	490	0.3	1,325
Computer and Electronic Product	5	40	0.0	1,231	5	40	0.0	1,231
Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component	4	38	0.0	1,034	5	*	*	*
Transportation Equipment	24	*	*	*	26	*	*	*
Furniture and Related Product	12	96	0.1	968	13	96	0.1	968
Miscellaneous	13	111	0.1	1,007	16	117	0.1	984
Service-Providing	7,199	108,844	73.6	796	8,731	118,522	71.9	784
Utilities	13	329	0.2	1,551	19	518	0.3	1,572
Wholesale Trade	411	5,157	3.5	1,315	475	5,645	3.4	1,300
Retail Trade	1,282	19,105	12.9	553	1,467	21,434	13.0	547
Transportation and Warehousing	413	10,693	7.2	956	484	11,218	6.8	946
Information	96	1,745	1.2	931	108	1,779	1.1	931
Finance and Insurance	594	3,409	2.3	1,278	659	3,821	2.3	1,225
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	394	2,062	1.4	787	456	2,264	1.4	788
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	873	5,011	3.4	1,284	1,008	5,728	3.5	1,261
Management of Companies and Enterprises	63	1,068	0.7	1,482	69	1,092	0.7	1,465
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	513	10,151	6.9	677	597	10,661	6.5	676
Educational Services	69	3,439	2.3	1,036	75	3,473	2.1	1,030
Health Care and Social Assistance	760	19,476	13.2	1,087	884	20,604	12.5	1,067
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	129	1,908	1.3	516	136	1,973	1.2	510
Accommodation and Food Services	954	20,963	14.2	358	1,088	22,813	13.8	350
Other Services (except Public Administration)	635	4,329	2.9	646	747	5,032	3.1	641
Unclassified - industry not assigned	380	382	0.3	1,088	459	470	0.3	1,035
Total - Private Sector	8,412	130,083	88.0	912	9,830	142,207	86.3	899
Total - Government	128	17,736	12.0	988	221	22,621	13.7	941
Federal Government	64	2,575	1.7	1,375	87	2,866	1.7	1,370
State Government	48	4,984	3.4	1,008	77	5,165	3.1	995
Local Government	16	10,177	6.9	880	57	14,590	8.9	837
ALL INDUSTRIES	8,540	147,819	100.0	921	10,051	164,828	100.0	904
ALL INDUSTRIES - Georgia					296,056	4,232,832		1,002

Note: *Denotes confidential data relating to individual employers and cannot be released. These data use the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) categories. Average weekly wage is derived by dividing gross payroll dollars paid to all employees - both hourly and salaried - by the average number of employees who had earnings; average earnings are then divided by the number of weeks in a reporting period to obtain weekly figures. Figures in other columns may not sum accurately due to rounding. All figures are 4th Quarter of 2015.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor. These data represent jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance laws.

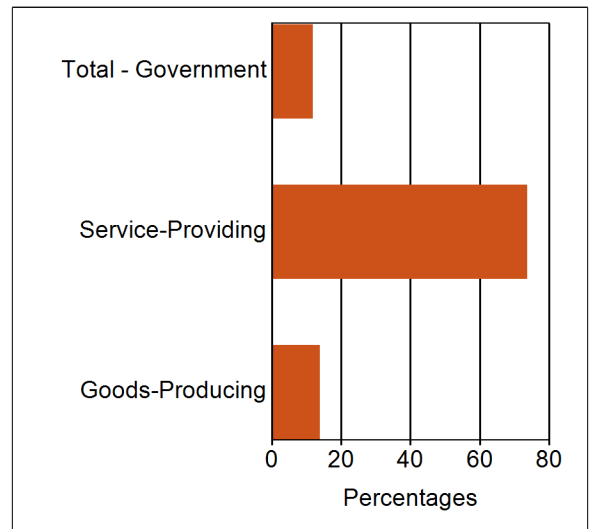
Chatham Per Capita Income

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



Chatham Industry Mix 2015

Source: See Industry Mix data on Page 2.



Top Ten Largest Employers - 2015*

Chatham

Armstrong Atlantic State University
Candler Hospital, Inc.
Gulfstream Aerospace Corp
Marine Terminals Corporation-East
Memorial Health University Medical Center
Savannah College of Art and Design
Snelling Staffing Services
St. Joseph's Hospital, Inc.
The Kroger Company
Walmart

*Note: Represents employment covered by unemployment insurance excluding all government agencies except correctional institutions, state and local hospitals, state colleges and universities. Data shown for the Third Quarter of 2015. Employers are listed alphabetically by area, not by the number of employees.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Chatham Area

Candler Hospital, Inc.
Fort Howard Group
Gulfstream Aerospace Corp
Marine Terminals Corporation-East
Memorial Health University Medical Center
Savannah College of Art and Design
Snelling Staffing Services
St. Joseph's Hospital, Inc.
The Kroger Company
Walmart

COUNTY

Chatham
Effingham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham
Chatham

Commuting Patterns

EMPLOYED RESIDENTS OF

Chatham

COUNTY WHERE EMPLOYED	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Chatham, GA	108,826	93.6
Liberty, GA	1,557	1.3
Effingham, GA	1,474	1.3
Beaufort, SC	1,373	1.2
Bryan, GA	852	0.7
Bulloch, GA	248	0.2
Jasper, SC	188	0.2
Glynn, GA	153	0.1
Other	1,557	1.3
Total Residents:	116,228	100.0

PERSONS WORKING IN

Chatham

COUNTY OF RESIDENCE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Chatham, GA	108,826	74.6
Effingham, GA	13,142	9.0
Bryan, GA	7,171	4.9
Liberty, GA	4,113	2.8
Bulloch, GA	3,620	2.5
Beaufort, SC	1,608	1.1
Jasper, SC	1,040	0.7
Long, GA	431	0.3
Other	5,916	4.1
Total Residents:	145,867	100.0

Note: Other category represents employment from U.S. counties only.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010 County-To-County Worker Flow Files.

Education of the Labor Force

Chatham Area

	PERCENT OF TOTAL	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE				
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Elementary	3.5%	1.4%	2.1%	2.5%	2.4%	10.8%
Some High School	10.5%	18.2%	9.3%	6.8%	8.3%	13.3%
High School Grad/GED	31.6%	32.8%	26.7%	31.7%	33.6%	32.2%
Some College	23.5%	35.1%	23.2%	22.1%	21.5%	17.5%
College Grad 2 Yr	7.1%	5.3%	8.8%	7.9%	7.9%	4.3%
College Grad 4 Yr	15.9%	6.8%	22.2%	20.0%	16.1%	12.1%
Post Graduate Studies	7.9%	0.2%	7.7%	9.1%	10.2%	9.8%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Totals are based on the portion of the labor force between ages 18 - 65+. The "Some College" category represents workers with less than two years of college and no degree.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010 Decennial Census.

High School Graduates - 2015

	PUBLIC SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS*	TOTAL
Bryan	523	--	523
Chatham	1,775	--	1,775
Effingham	712	--	712
Chatham Area	3,010	--	3,010



Note: Public schools include city as well as county schools systems.

* Private schools data is not available for 2015 from Georgia Independent School Association.

Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement of Georgia.

Colleges and Universities

Chatham Area

Chatham

Virginia College-Savannah	http://fusion.erau.edu/ec/www/centerinfo.cfm?code=11
Embry-Riddle - Savannah Campus	http://www.gtsav.gatech.edu/
Georgia Tech Savannah Campus	http://www.gtsav.gatech.edu/
Troy University	savannah.troy.edu
Armstrong Atlantic State University	www.armstrong.edu
University of Phoenix-Savannah Campus	www.phoenix.edu
Savannah Law School	www.savannahlawschool.org/
Savannah State University	www.savannahstate.edu/
Crossroads Campus (Satellite campus of Savannah Technical College)	www.savannahtech.edu
Savannah Technical College	www.savannahtech.edu
Savannah College of Art and Design	www.scad.edu
South University-Savannah	www.southuniversity.edu

Effingham

Effingham Campus (Satellite campus of Savannah Technical College)	www.savannahtech.edu
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Note: The colleges and universities listed include public and private institutions. This list is updated periodically as information becomes available.

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Technical College Graduates - 2015*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2013	2014	2015	2013-2014	2014-2015
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping	47	52	46	10.6	-11.5
Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General°	48	46	55	-4.2	19.6
Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician°	87	78	101	-10.3	29.5
Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services, Other°	269	241	216	-10.4	-10.4
Autobody/Collision and Repair Technology/Technician°	42	35	42	-16.7	20.0
Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician°	272	226	218	-16.9	-3.5
Barbering/Barber	14	22	13	57.1	-40.9
Business Administration and Management, General°	17	54	49	217.6	-9.3
CAD/CADD Drafting and/or Design Technology/Technician°	25	20	40	-20.0	100.0
Carpentry/Carpenter°	19	20	21	5.3	5.0
Child Care and Support Services Management°	11	16	13	45.5	-18.8
Child Care Provider/Assistant°	29	40	68	37.9	70.0
Computer Installation and Repair Technology/Technician°	35	15	36	-57.1	140.0
Construction Management°	17	9	30	-47.1	233.3
Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General°	102	110	138	7.8	25.5
Criminal Justice/Police Science°	26	55	18	111.5	-67.3
Criminal Justice/Safety Studies°	30	107	76	256.7	-29.0
Culinary Arts/Chef Training	23	21	37	-8.7	76.2
Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/Technician°	26	33	43	26.9	30.3
Dental Assisting/Assistant	16	12	22	-25.0	83.3
Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	16	21	24	31.3	14.3
Drafting and Design Technology/Technician, General	9	12	17	33.3	41.7
Early Childhood Education and Teaching°	39	25	38	-35.9	52.0
Electrical and Power Transmission Installation/Installer, General°	1	6	2	500.0	-66.7
Electrical, Electronic and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	6	1	7	-83.3	600.0
Electrician°	43	49	57	14.0	16.3
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)°	57	87	87	52.6	0.0
Fire Prevention and Safety Technology/Technician°	3	2	2	-33.3	0.0
Fire Science/Fire-fighting°	19	9	11	-52.6	22.2
Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General°	16	6	78	-62.5	1200.0
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/°	99	107	64	8.1	-40.2
Hospitality Administration/Management, General°	7	11	5	57.1	-54.5
Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General°	16	34	34	112.5	0.0
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology°	9	37	27	311.1	-27.0
Legal Assistant/Paralegal	9	8	10	-11.1	25.0
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	44	41	27	-6.8	-34.1

Technical College Graduates - 2015*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2013	2014	2015	2013-2014	2014-2015
Machine Shop Technology/Assistant°	27	18	27	-33.3	50.0
Marketing/Marketing Management, General	10	5	6	-50.0	20.0
Mechanical Drafting and Mechanical Drafting CAD/CADD°	7	19	15	171.4	-21.1
Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder°	46	76	32	65.2	-57.9
Medical Office Assistant/Specialist°	42	29	34	-31.0	17.2
Medical/Clinical Assistant	11	19	12	72.7	-36.8
Nail Technician/Specialist and Manicurist°	4	5	2	25.0	-60.0
Network and System Administration/Administrator°	37	35	41	-5.4	17.1
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide°	274	262	225	-4.4	-14.1
Phlebotomy Technician/Phlebotomist°	33	19	17	-42.4	-10.5
Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing°	33	20	32	-39.4	60.0
Solar Energy Technology/Technician°	16	14	22	-12.5	57.1
Surgical Technology/Technologist°	36	46	30	27.8	-34.8
Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor°	146	152	142	4.1	-6.6
Welding Technology/Welder°	280	251	384	-10.4	53.0

Definition: All graduates except those listed as technical certificates(°) are diploma and degree graduates. Diploma and degree programs are one to two years in length. Technical certificates are less than a year in length. Duplication may occur due to graduates with multiple awards.

Source: Technical College System of Georgia

*Data shown represents Annual 2013, 2014, and 2015.

Active Applicants - Georgia Department of Labor

	TOTAL	Mgt.	Bus. and Finance	Comp. and Arch. and Math	Life and Soc. Svcs.	Comm. and Svcs	Legal	Ed. and Training	Arts and Design	Health Prac.	Health Support	
Bryan	161	47	27	12	15	3	11	3	6	12	14	11
Chatham	1,484	444	188	101	98	33	102	13	94	118	110	183
Effingham	178	55	19	18	21	7	6	3	14	9	9	17
Subtotal Area	1,823	546	234	131	134	43	119	19	114	139	133	211

Active Applicants - Georgia Department of Labor (cont.)

	TOTAL	Protect. Svcs.	Food Prep.	Ground Cleaning	Personal Care	Sales	Office Support	Farm. and Forestry	Cons- truction	Installation Main.	Prod.	Trans. and Moving
Bryan	433	16	26	12	8	40	109	1	51	45	70	55
Chatham	5,594	168	657	363	163	616	1,482	7	373	318	604	843
Effingham	672	14	32	24	10	43	198	4	71	71	121	84
Subtotal Area	6,699	198	715	399	181	699	1,789	12	495	434	795	982

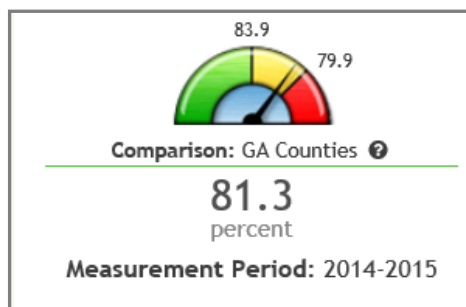
4.5 Issues & Opportunities

The loss of manufacturing jobs to overseas companies is a matter of national concern. A greater, but less publicized, concern is the loss of skilled technical jobs to countries that place a high value on education thereby producing an abundance of engineers, mathematicians, computer scientists, and other highly-trained professionals. The dominance of American universities focusing on scientific research and materials development, handling, and distribution has been a strength that has enabled the national economy to remain competitive in the world even as manufacturing jobs relocated to other countries.



Chatham County appears to be well situated for the challenge to produce highly skilled engineers and scientists who will be critical to the economic health of the nation and of the region. The unique

educational-industrial partnerships that the Savannah Economic Development Authority has promulgated, the technical thrust of the Savannah College of Art and Design and Savannah Technical College, the Georgia Southern University Logistics and Intermodal Transportation (LIT) program, as well as the universities in the area assist in producing a skilled professional base.



While the facilities for tertiary education appear to anticipate the future challenges, the kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) facilities need additional support. Approximately 81.3 percent of students within Chatham County graduate high school within four years of their first enrollment in 9th grade indicating that almost 19 percent of the residents of Chatham County do not have a high school diploma.

The Savannah Chatham County Public School System continues to make strides by replacing aging facilities with new, modern schools and technologies and have placed an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).



Additionally, the Live Oak Library system adopted a progressive Facilities Plan to build and staff libraries throughout its three county service area. These programs are critical to the economic vitality of the region and will be successful only if the residents of the region make the connection between a strong educational system and the region's economic well-being.

Land Use

The plan for Savannah devised by James Edward Oglethorpe and close associates was both a town plan and a regional plan. It encompassed a 70 square mile area that extended ten miles east to west and seven miles southward from the town. The plan may have been drawn up in London to extend 14 miles from east to west, but was interrupted by low topography. The 1735 map shown below is the only existing documentation showing the full extent of the 70 square mile grid laid out by Oglethorpe.



Oglethorpe selected the site for the town in January, 1733 as the first group of colonists awaited word nearby in Beaufort, South Carolina. The colonists were brought to the site in February, 1733. By the end of the year fortifications were in place and 50 houses had been built. The population of Savannah stood at 259 persons, with another 200

strategically located in outlying areas.

The Oglethorpe Plan, as it has come to be called, consisted of four components: a square mile area laid out for the town and commons; a three square mile area on either side of the town laid out for five-acre garden lots; a 24

square mile area beyond the town and gardens laid out for larger 45-acres farm lots; and a 42 square mile area beyond the farm lots laid out for villages, each to occupy a square mile.

Physical constraints such as wetlands and soil conditions prevented the plan from being built out as a perfect grid of square mile units.

Nevertheless, the grid system put in place in 1733 remains etched on the landscape, over the centuries having influenced development patterns and the network of roads and other infrastructure in Savannah and Chatham County.

5.1 Introduction

The Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides a history of the development of Savannah and Chatham County, as well as existing and future development patterns. Unique attributes in both the City and the County require land use categories with character-based categories, consistent with the approach encouraged by the Department of Community Affairs (Minimum Standards that became effective in May, 2005). One of those unique attributes is the extensive area within the City of Savannah that sustains a fine-grained mixed use development pattern. A second unique attribute is the extensive estuarine lowland area that is both environmentally sensitive and vulnerable to storm surge and flooding. Each of these areas required careful assessment and planning to protect physical and environmental resources and chart future growth and stewardship.

5.2 Regional Development

5.2.1 Physical Context

Chatham County is the northernmost county on the Georgia Coast, bounded by the Savannah and Ogeechee rivers. Much of Chatham County is comprised of open water, tidal creeks, or estuarine marsh. Early development was sited on coastal ridges and bluffs. More recent development, however, has occurred on barrier islands, back barrier islands, and lowlands vulnerable to flooding, including hurricane inundation.

Chatham County is comprised of 522 square miles of land, marsh and water. Table 5.1 contains detailed information on land use in Chatham County.¹ Much of the remaining undeveloped land is poorly drained and not suitable for on-lot wastewater disposal. Expansion of private or public water and sewer service would increase development potential in such areas.

Upland areas are interspersed with forested and vegetated isolated wetlands which are not currently protected and frequently filled for development.

5.2.2 Regional Growth

Chatham County is the most urbanized and populous county in the 200-mile coastal area between Charleston, South Carolina and Jacksonville, Florida. It serves as an economic, cultural, and governmental hub, as well as an international focal point for trade, for a six county, bi-state region.

The region has seen a high rate of growth over the past 20 years and is expected to continue at or above this level slightly as the attractiveness of the region to retirees and second home residents increases. Economic growth in the region is also expected to remain strong, supporting forecasts for continued population growth at or above the current level.

¹ The calculation of remaining developable land was obtained through GIS analysis, which identified uplands areas without existing development, roads, airports, canals, golf courses, dedicated lands and other limitations on future development.

Chatham County is the most populous region in the Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which also includes Effingham and Bryan Counties. Chatham is also the largest county in the Savannah Combined Statistical Area (CSA), which includes Liberty, Long and Bulloch Counties. The US Census Bureau defines the boundaries of these areas. The population of the MSA has grown substantially since 1970, and projections show continued growth into future decades.

Within Chatham County, high growth rates were experienced during the 1980s and 1990s in unincorporated areas to the east of Savannah. As those areas approached build-out, growth moved to the western areas of the county. Unincorporated Chatham County and the municipalities of Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, and Port Wentworth experienced an increasing share of area growth. The City of Savannah, with its capacity to supply drinking water, annexed nearly 8,000 acres of unincorporated west Chatham County in 2004 and 2005.

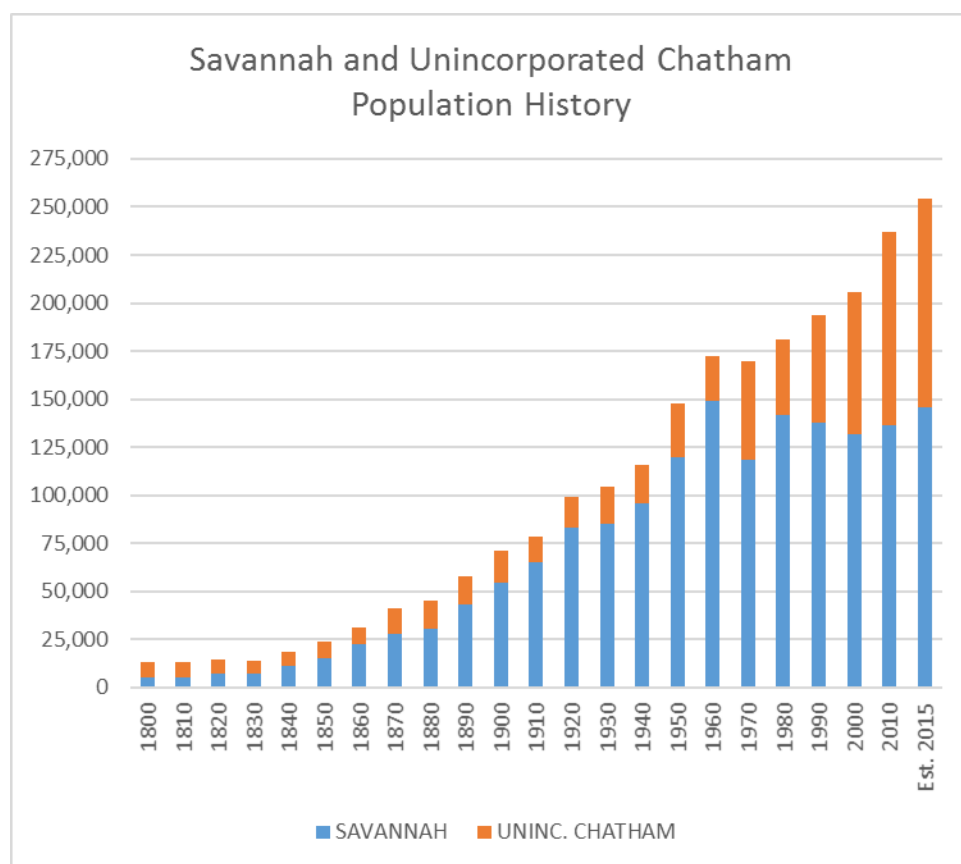


Figure 5.1: Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham Population History

The City of Savannah has preserved the role of its vibrant downtown as the nucleus of regional activity. The city's historic downtown and urban neighborhoods are an exceptional example of colonial-era town planning that survived the centuries and thrives today. For that reason, downtown Savannah maintains a high quality pedestrian environment

Areas lying to the east of the city are extensively developed, and further development is limited by physical as well as zoning constraints. Areas lying to the west of the city are

largely vestiges of farms and large-scale silviculture and are currently undergoing rapid development.

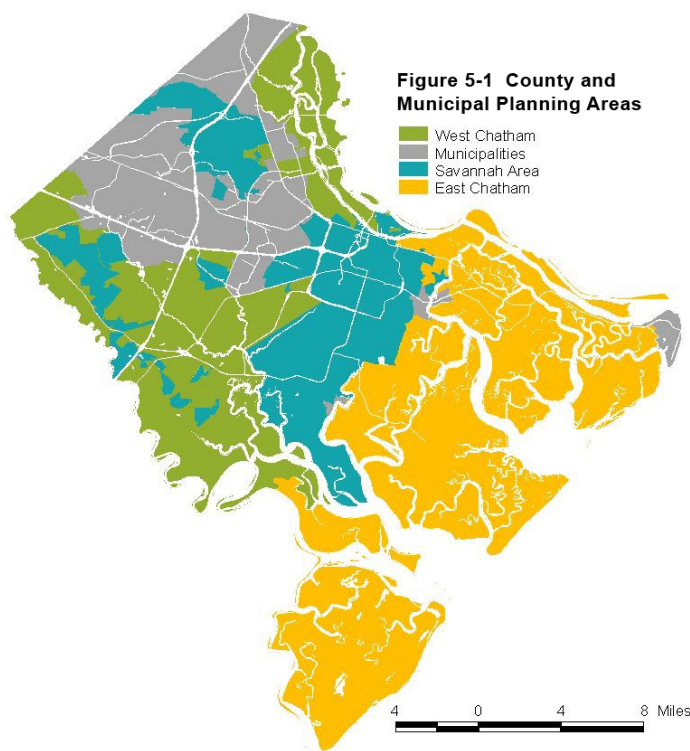
Transportation facilities strongly influence growth and land use patterns in the county. These facilities include the Port of Savannah, Savannah International Airport, road and rail networks serving extensive industrial districts associated with airport and seaport functions, Hunter Army Airfield, Interstates I-16 and I-95, and the Truman Parkway.

5.3 Existing Land Use

The Chatham County Existing Land Use Map is based on recent County tax records. Where multiple uses are found on a single parcel, the dominant land use has been mapped. Conventional land use categories are used to describe existing land use patterns, whereas a character-based classification system is used in discussing and planning future land use. Table 5.2 compares land use in unincorporated Chatham County, the City of Savannah, and the seven other municipalities in aggregate.² The character of each of these areas varies greatly as a result of the distinctly different land use patterns.

The City of Savannah is highly urbanized with exceptionally large areas of mixed use development. Except for the western airport area, the city is largely built-out and growing chiefly through annexation. However, urban neighborhoods that have declined in population and former industrial lands represent an opportunity for internal growth in the form of infill redevelopment.

The other seven municipalities in Chatham County maintain separate planning programs, however the Existing Land Use map shows land use in those areas based on County Tax Assessor property records. Table 5.1 provides a comparison of agricultural and other developable acreage. Nearly all of the development potential lies in the three westernmost municipalities of Bloomingdale, Pooler, and Port Wentworth.



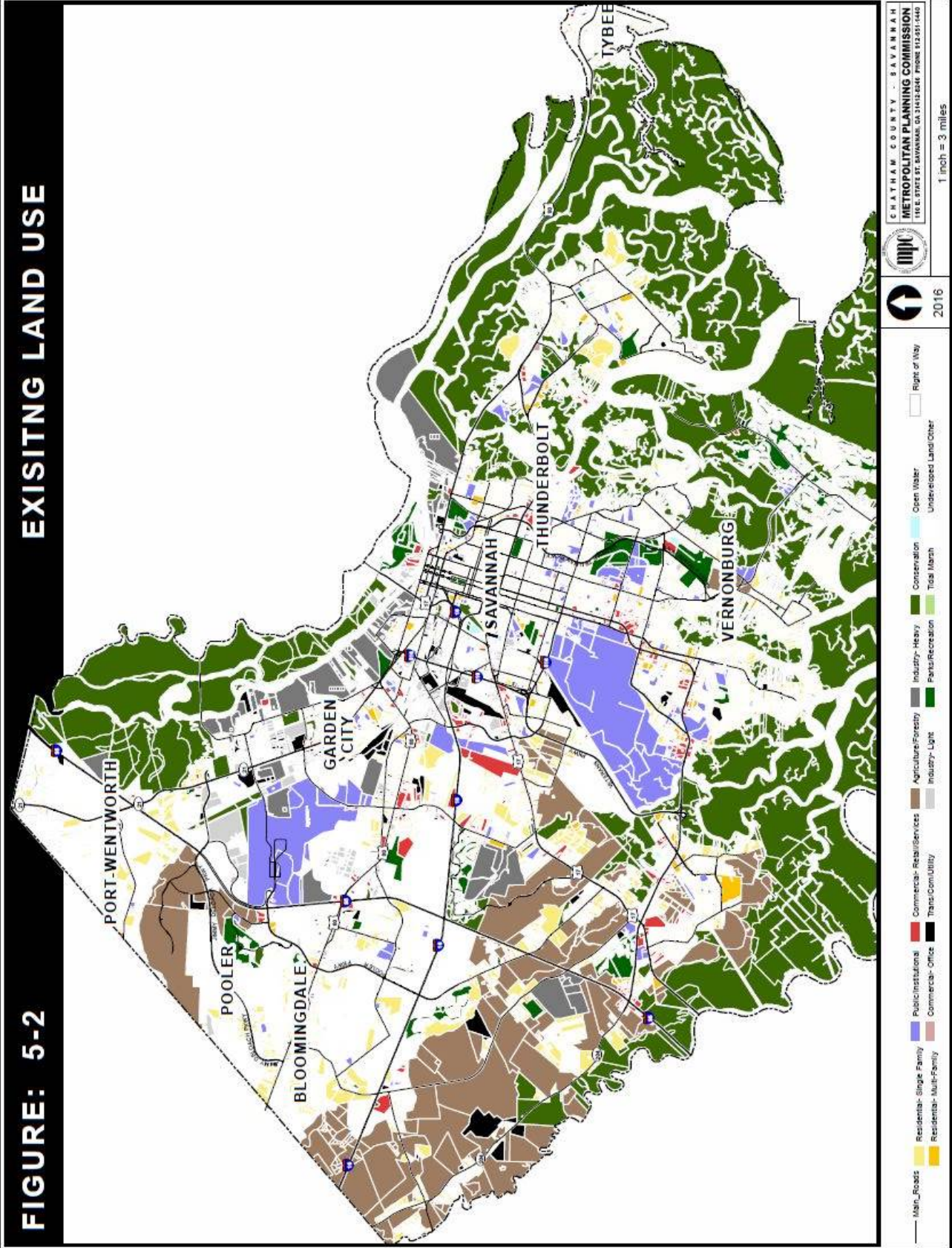
² The Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan is prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Commission for the unincorporated area of the county and the City of Savannah. The seven municipalities each prepare separate comprehensive plans. For more information on this see Chapter 1, Introduction.

East Chatham is developed at low densities and its character is strongly influenced by its setting amid marshes and tidal creeks.³ West Chatham contains a high proportion of agricultural, forested, and otherwise undeveloped area. As the City of Savannah and unincorporated East Chatham have built out, West Chatham has emerged as a high growth area.

³ This contributes to what some residents refer to as a “semi-rural character” (see the *Islands Area Community Plan* and the *Southeast Chatham County Community Plan*).

FIGURE: 5-2

EXISTING LAND USE



LAND USE								
	Chatham County (Unincorporated) Acres		Savannah Acres		Other Municipalities ⁴ _ Acres %		TOTAL (Whole County) Acres	
<i>Residential-Single Family</i>	22,167	49%	10,836	24%	12,417	27%	45,420	10%
<i>Residential-Multi-Family</i>	474	26%	762	42%	575	32%	1,811	.3%
<i>Public/Institutional</i>	1,519	15%	7,078	69%	1,600	16%	10,197	2%
<i>Commercial-Office</i>	3,353	14%	12,587	54%	7,611	32%	23,551	5%
<i>Commercial-Retail</i>	1,335	29%	1,483	32%	1,797	39%	4,615	1%
<i>Trans/Com/Utilities</i>	727	32%	759	34%	759	34%	2,245	.4%
<i>Agriculture/Forestry</i>	21,241	85%	3,746	15%	unknown	-	24,987	5%
<i>Industry-Light</i>	7,315	40%	5,017	28%	5,904	32%	18,236	4%
<i>Industry-Heavy</i>	224	18%	829	68%	176	14%	1,229	.2%
<i>Recreation-Active</i>	498	55%	89	10%	311	35%	898	.1%
<i>Greenspace</i>	188	25%	527	70%	43	5%	758	.1%
<i>Right-of-Way</i>	3,760	24%	7,152	45%	4,926	31%	15,838	3%
<i>Tidal Marsh</i>	85,666	93%	5,824	6%	1,216	1%	92,706	20%
<i>Open Water</i>	47,523	94%	2,505	5%	420	1%	50,448	11%
<i>Undeveloped Land/Other</i>	112,530	63%	34,881	19%	33,137	18%	180,548	38%
TOTAL	308,520		94,075		70,892		473,487	

Table 5.1: Land Use Acres and Percentages in Chatham County

⁴ This Comprehensive Plan covers unincorporated Chatham County and the City of Savannah. The seven other municipalities maintain separate planning programs.

5.4 Historical Development Patterns

The city's original development patterns, established by James Oglethorpe in 1733, have been remarkably resilient and adaptable. For that reason, Savannah enjoys international recognition as a planned city with an enduring legacy. This section describes the Planned Town era established by Oglethorpe and four subsequent eras that further shaped Savannah and Chatham County by reinforcing, redefining, or replacing the Oglethorpe Plan.

5.4.1 The Planned Town Era (1733-1869)

James Edward Oglethorpe (1696-1785) and close associates devised a plan for Savannah and the Georgia Colony that was meant to address deep-rooted social and economic ills of England in the early 1700s. The Oglethorpe Plan proved to be forward thinking for its time and far reaching in its impact.

As a Member of Parliament, Oglethorpe was a reformer who sought relief for imprisoned debtors, unemployed people, and the masses living in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions. After successfully advocating legal reforms to address these problems, he turned his attention to developing the new Georgia Colony, named for King George II, as a model society built on principles of “Agrarian Equality.” The new colony would be free of slavery and the greed associated with it; it would accept religious dissenters; it would provide gardens and farm plots for its citizens to feed themselves and earn a living; it would be free of vice and illness arising from consumption of rum; and it would be physically designed to prevent the overcrowded, unsanitary conditions found in London.

Even though the Georgia Colony sought to ban slavery within its territory, Oglethorpe was able to marshal support for the colony from Carolina plantation owners and English merchants who benefited from the lucrative plantation system. While these interests would have preferred to expand the plantation system into the new colony, they needed Oglethorpe's energy and leadership to create a buffer colony protecting them from the Spanish in Florida and the French to the west.

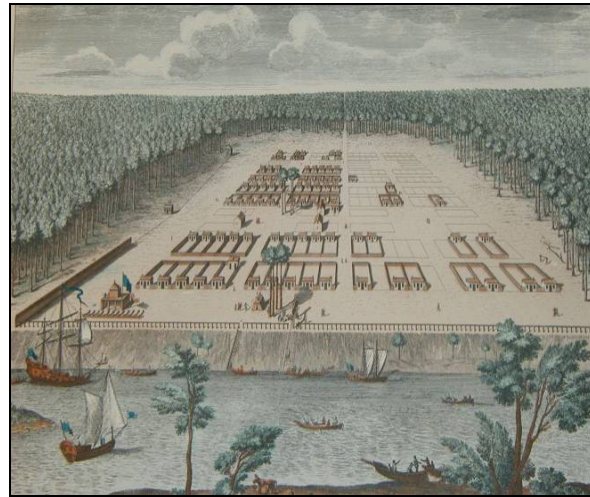


Figure 5.3. Peter Gordon's 1734 Map

Walkable Communities

Town planners have found that people are willing to walk a quarter to a half a mile from home to a variety of destinations in a safe pedestrian environment. Modern downtown Savannah, which has walking distances within that range, is recognized as a model walkable community. Growth of colonial Savannah was limited to an area of less than one square mile because people walked to most destinations. The farthest walking distance in the city remained less than one mile until streetcars provided greater mobility.

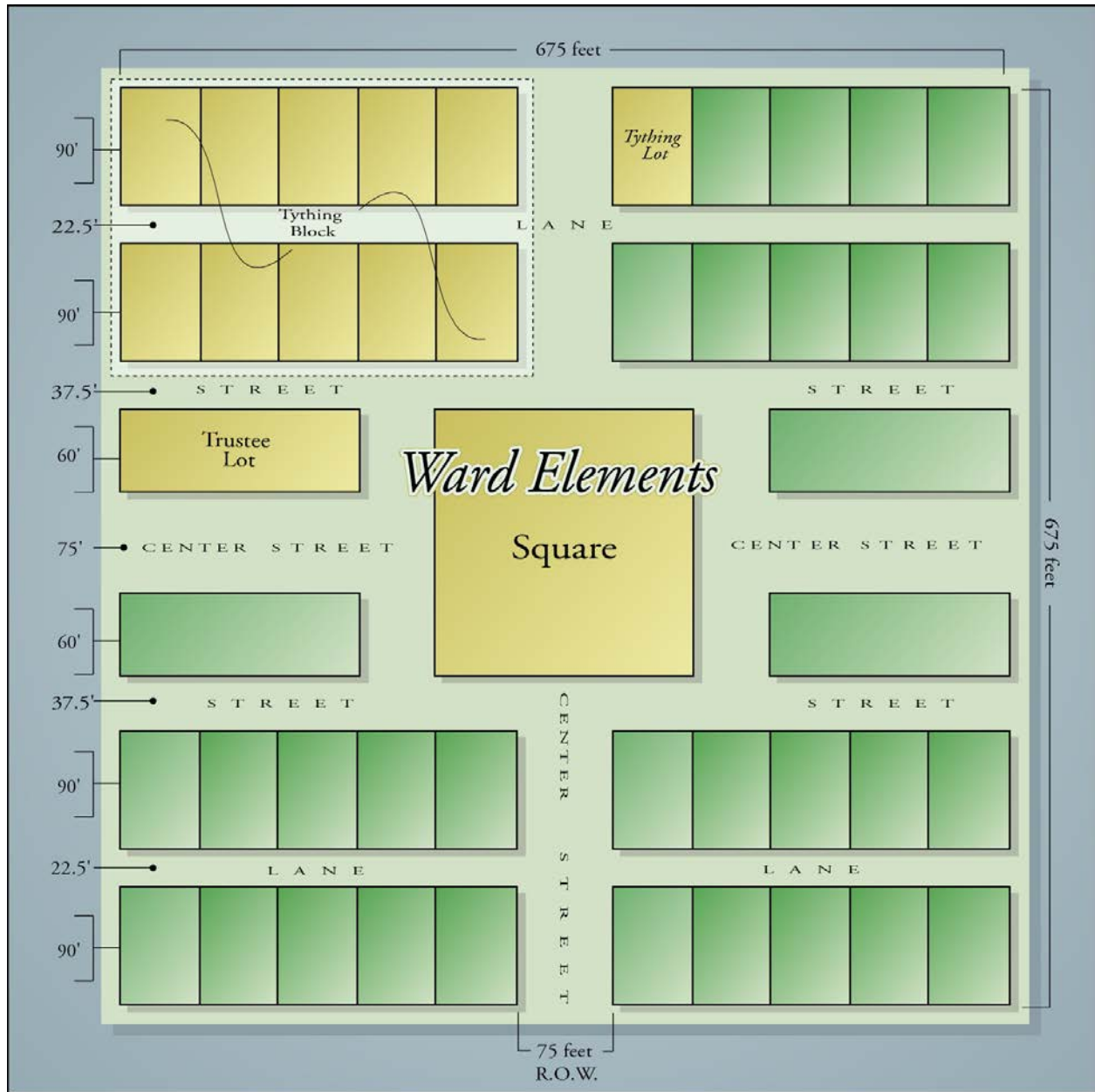


Figure 5.4 Ward Structure in the Oglethorpe Plan

The first six wards in Savannah were laid out by Oglethorpe. Each was identical, except for Johnson Square in Darby Ward, which was wider than the others by 120 feet. Eighteen additional wards were developed in Savannah following the Oglethorpe model with minor variations. Today, 21 wards remain substantially intact.

Oglethorpe's model colony was founded in Savannah on February 12, 1733, when he arrived at the high bluff on the Savannah River, 18 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean, with 114 settlers. He immediately negotiated a right to develop the new town of Savannah and surrounding region with Tomochichi, chief of the nearby Creek village. A year later the town had developed its first four wards and was operating both socially and economically in accordance with Oglethorpe's plan. Peter Gordon, the colony's magistrate, reported to the Trustees on the status of development of Savannah as of March 29, 1734 with the drawing in Figure 5.3, which showed the layout of the first four wards. Oglethorpe eventually laid out a total of six wards, which established the model that directed growth for well over a century.

The physical plan for Savannah synthesized by Oglethorpe and the Trustees consisted of a complex hierarchy of elements, illustrated in Figure 5.4: wards, consisting of 10 lots, four tythings, four trust lots, and a central square; the town, consisting of wards and a town common; gardens, arrayed within a grid on either side of the town; farms, arrayed in square mile units dedicated to each tything in town; villages, each a uniform square mile in size; and 500 acre land grants beyond the villages. Each of these elements was meticulously formulated to be the physical infrastructure for the Trustees' system of Agrarian Equality.

By 1856, Savannah had grown to 24 wards, the ultimate number laid out in accordance with the Oglethorpe Plan. Wards retained the basic configuration established by Oglethorpe in the first six wards, consistently organized with central squares, trust lots, and tithing lots. By providing within each 10.5 acre ward a 1.7 acre civic square, approached at the center by wide streets, the effect was to create a compact yet uncrowded town.⁴

Walkability within the town was essential in an era when most households traveled to every destination on foot. Residents of Savannah during this time walked to obtain goods and services, walked to work, and walked to see friends and family. Even wealthier households owning horses and carriages found it more convenient to take most trips on foot.

Because people walked to most destinations, the town ceased to expand when it reached a size of about one square mile. It then grew inward through subdivision of lots. The original 60-foot tything lots were subdivided into 20 and 30-foot lots, which became the norm by the end of the era.

Trade in heavy goods during the colonial period was primarily water-borne, and thus larger cities were situated at or close to points where rivers met natural harbors. Most crops were brought to market on rafts and barges and either sold for local consumption or shipped elsewhere on sailing vessels. The infrastructure created by trade also supported inter-city travel, and more people traveled by sea or on rivers than on land for non-local trips until the mid-1800s.

For these reasons, cities were compact focal points for trade, local commerce, and other human activity. The Oglethorpe Plan served the needs of this era extremely well. It was

⁴ Squares within the original six wards were 315 feet east to west and 240 feet north to south, except for Johnson Square, which was 435 feet east to west. These dimensions do not include street right-of-way, which later became more prominent.

not until railroads and streetcars became prominent modes of transportation that new growth patterns emerged.

5.4.2 The Streetcar Era (1869-1920)

Savannah's Streetcar Era began in 1869 when the Savannah, Skidaway, and Seaboard Railway Company established steam rail service to Thunderbolt, Isle of Hope, and other communities. Later that year the railroad began operating horse drawn streetcars within the city.

The city's Victorian District was the first area that grew rapidly as a result of new accessibility created by streetcars. Initially it was a transitional area with growth patterns closely resembling those of the Town Plan. Later development produced larger lots with more yard area. Commercial uses were located on corner lots adjacent to residential blocks.

Dr. James J. Waring (1829-1888) pioneered the expansion of the city limits to encompass the first Streetcar Suburbs. In 1866, he acquired and developed a tract on the southern perimeter of the city, which became Waring Ward in 1870 when it was annexed into the city.⁵ Waring continued the street grid pattern consistent with the Town Plan. However, he departed from the lot development pattern by requiring 20 foot setbacks for new construction.⁶

In 1890, electric streetcars were put in service and soon had an enormous impact on the growth of the city. Steam powered trains had already stimulated growth in outlying communities. The electric streetcars stimulated growth in areas adjacent to the city, which resulted in rapid expansion of the city limits. The population of the city increased by 93 percent between 1890 and 1920, the streetcar heyday, while the population of the entire county increased by 73 percent.

As streetcar lines expanded, so did the city. The current Thomas Square Streetcar Historic District, immediately south of the Victorian District developed between 1890 and 1920. Development patterns changed even more during this period. Lot sizes increased to an average of nearly 4,000 square feet, double the size of those in the National Landmark District. The ward structure changed to one comprised solely of rectangular blocks.

The streetcar suburbs became the city's "first ring" suburbs—the first concentric ring of growth to form around the original town that had remained much the same size for a century and a half. The second ring resulted from the introduction of the automobile in the early twentieth century.

5.4.3 Early Automobile Era (1920-1946)

While automobiles were introduced late in the nineteenth century, their impact on development patterns was not felt until the 1920s. By the 1920s families across the country were purchasing automobiles.

⁵ Reiter, Beth L., Victorian District Building Survey and Evaluation, prepared for The City of Savannah, September 1980, p. 6.

⁶ Reiter, Beth L., p. 7.

Greater mobility offered by the automobile stimulated a second ring of suburban growth, which again resulted in larger lots averaging 6000 square feet. Houses sat farther back on their lots, and garages and carports were common features. Multi-family uses were integrated into neighborhoods, but less frequently than in the downtown district. Residential areas also contained less commercial development as automobile owners drove greater distances for goods and services. The inseparability of households and automobiles provided developers with far more opportunities to develop beyond the urban fringe.

5.4.4 Modern Automobile Era (1946-Present)

In 1946 automobile dependence was commonplace for travel to work, accessing goods and services, and visiting friends and relatives. With the war over, family formation occurred rapidly and gave rise to the Baby Boom, which demographers define as beginning in 1946.

Post World War II prosperity spurred a second great economic expansion much like that of the 1920s. However, several factors combined to produce a much greater geographic expansion of American cities. Two factors most often cited are low interest loan guarantees by the Federal Housing Administration and increased funding of suburban road construction by the Federal Highway Administration.

Suburbs formed rapidly, subdivision after subdivision, giving rise to new demand for commercial districts. New development patterns differed greatly from those of earlier eras. Lots again increased in size, averaging near 10,000 square feet. Subdivisions, having replaced wards as a unit of growth, were larger in area and uniformly residential, almost always single family detached homes. Commercial districts were also larger and distinctly separate from residential areas.

5.4.5 Amenity Community Era (Present-Future)

A new era of reduced automobile dependence and increasing mobility options is slowly emerging and producing alternative forms of development, including neo-traditional development, conservation subdivisions, high-amenity communities, and town centers. Combinations and reformulations of these types of development will likely create new land use patterns distinctly different from earlier suburban patterns. Decreased dependence on the automobile is a characteristic of each of these new forms of development. While the change is modest at present, it has the potential to expand as consumers are presented with more options for walking, bicycling, and transit as well as shorter automobile trips to obtain goods and services.

While quality schools and personal safety considerations remain strong market forces, market studies reveal that buyer sophistication is increasing. Many home buyers are seeking “quality of life” enhancements including a sense of community, recreational amenities and greenspace, better access to goods and services, reduced commute times to work, multiple housing options within a community (to trade up or house a parent nearby), and smaller yards (especially for single parent households and aging baby boomers).

Enhancements such as these often require smaller developers to build for specific market segments, while larger developers are producing planned communities with a wider variety of elements. The result is often a larger scale of planned development, greater coordination

among developers to integrate their products, more planned commercial development tied to specific residential projects, increased development near Interstate and other freeway interchanges, and greater orientation to amenities.

There are potential benefits to these trends, including reduced traffic (and therefore less congestion and pollution) as residents are able to walk, bicycle, or use transit to reach more destinations. A potential concern with such communities is increasing income segregation and social insularity resulting from physical separation or gates.

These new development alternatives are not currently recognized in the Chatham County and City of Savannah zoning ordinances. Subsequent sections in part address the need for a modernized zoning ordinance that encourages new, beneficial development.

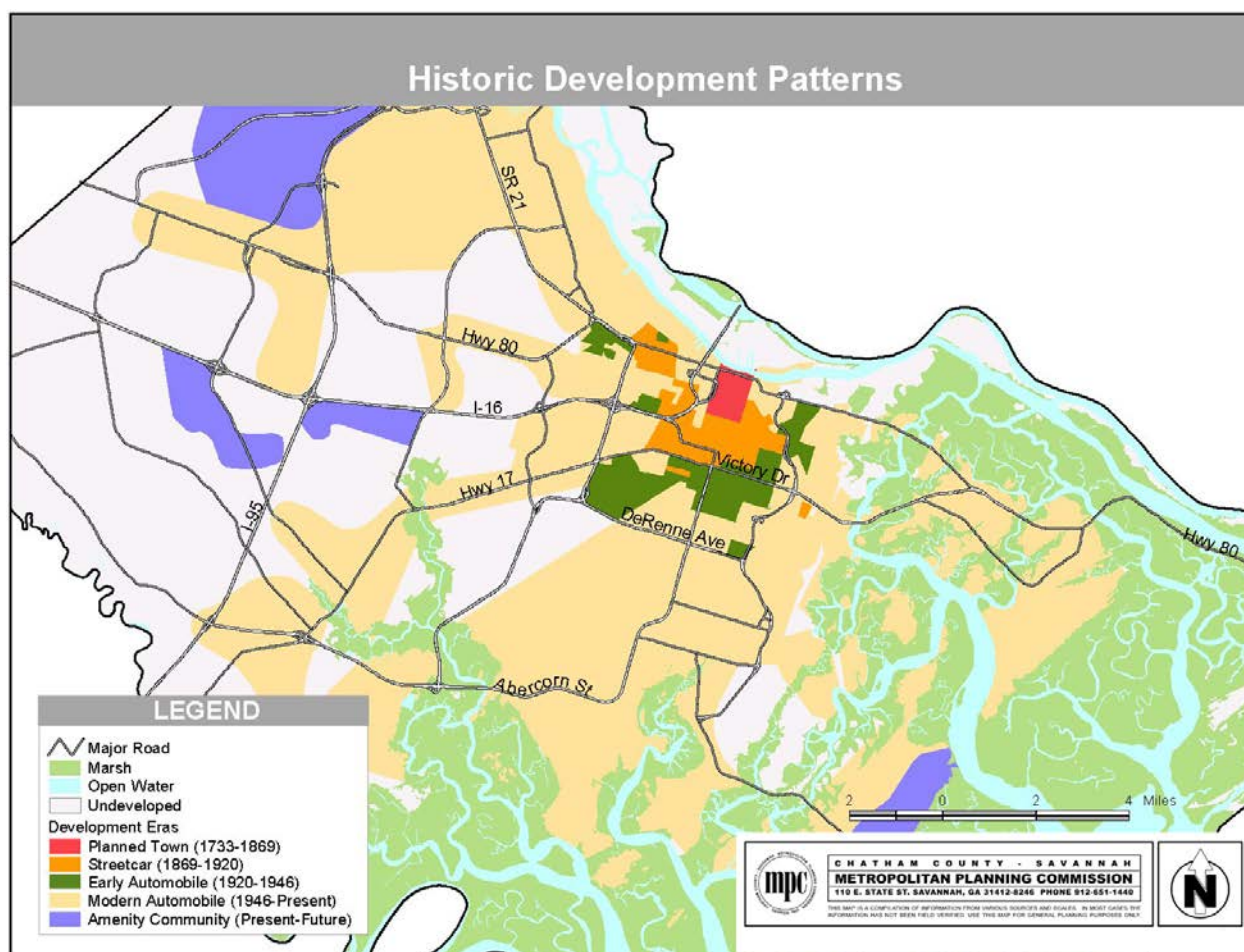


Figure 5.5: Historical Development Pattern

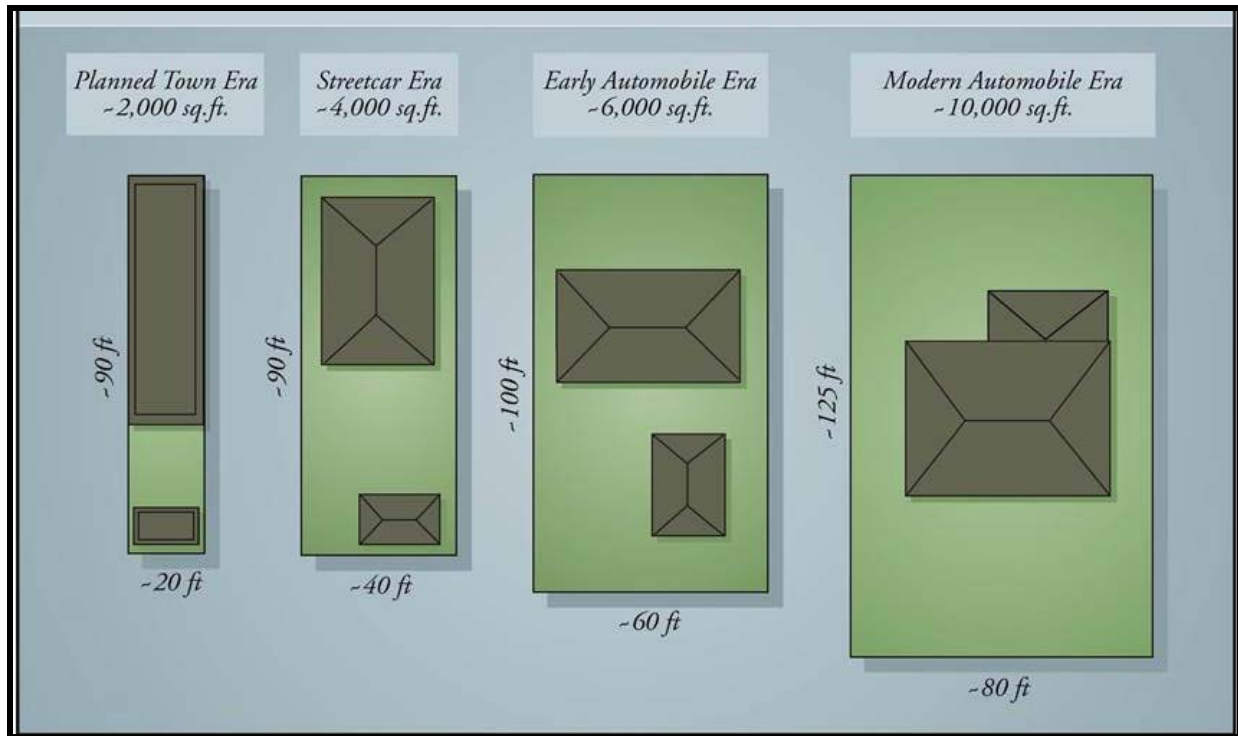


Figure 5.6: Changing Land Use Patterns, 1733-Present
Lot Size and Lot Coverage Characteristics

5.5 Future Land Use Patterns

The Comprehensive Plan sets the vision for the community and includes a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) with several land use categories that serves as a guide for zoning decisions in the community. The FLUM is a visual representation of the City's future development policy. Interpretation of the FLUM should be considered along with all zoning requests, local policy reviews, and conclusions when policy-makers consider land development questions or requests. The FLUM and its uses contained within, give direction for regulating development with the goal of furthering consistent character within each area as defined by a 'vision.'

The FLUM's use categories for the Chatham County and the city of Savannah are shown below in Table 5.2:

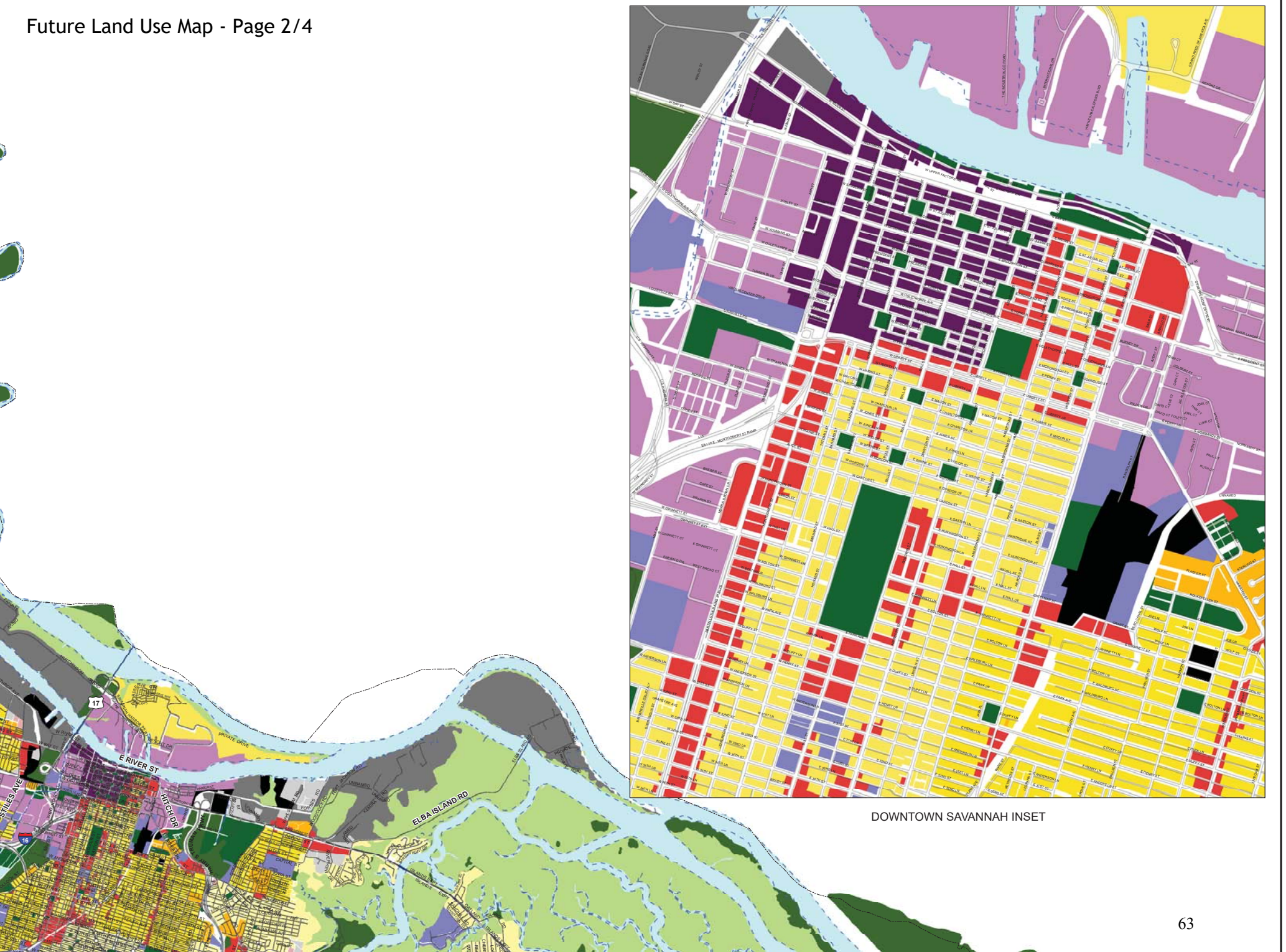
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Downtown	The traditional Central Business District, including retail, office, entertainment, institutional, civic, and residential uses that are integrated into the urban fabric.
Downtown Expansion	Areas in close proximity to the Central Business District that are identified for growth of retail, office, entertainment, institutional,

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	DEFINITION
	civic, and residential uses. This area is intended to be compatible and interconnected with the Downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods, while also accommodating new forms of urban development.
Traditional Commercial	Business areas in close proximity to downtown or in outlying historically settled areas having development patterns characteristic of the Planned Town, Streetcar, and Early Automobile eras. This category includes residential uses that are compatible with the character of adjacent neighborhoods.
Traditional Neighborhood	Residential areas in close proximity to downtown or in outlying historically settled areas having development patterns characteristic of the Planned Town, Streetcar, and Early Automobile eras. This category includes non-residential uses that are compatible with the residential character of neighborhoods.
Civic / Institutional	Areas identified as employment hubs that may consist of office buildings, medical offices, banks, hospitals, and ancillary commercial uses that support the office economy. These areas permit apartments to allow for housing opportunities within close proximity to employment.
Commercial – Neighborhood	Nodal and strip business areas that are within predominately residential areas and are developed at a scale and intensity compatible with adjacent residential uses.
Commercial – Suburban	Business areas supporting shopping centers and corridor commercial uses at a scale and intensity capable of serving regional markets.
Commercial – Regional	Business areas supporting most retail, service, office, and institutional uses. Large scale commercial uses such as shopping malls and lifestyle centers are appropriate.
Commercial – Marine	Land dedicated to marina operations including those ancillary uses that are both marine-related and an integral part of the marina complex.
Industry – Light	Areas supporting warehouses, wholesale facilities, and the manufacturing, assembly or production of parts and products, primarily from previously prepared materials, that may require intensive truck traffic and outdoor storage but that do not produce noise, odor, dust, or waterborne contaminants above ambient levels.
Industry – Heavy	Areas supporting uses that are involved in the large-scale production of finished or semi-finished products from raw materials and that may produce nose, odor, dust, and waterborne contaminants measurably above ambient levels.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Residential – General	Areas with a wide range of residential uses including multi-family dwellings, attached dwellings, small lot single-family dwellings at densities greater than 10 units per gross acre.
Residential – Single Family	Areas identified for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed eight (8) units per gross acre.
Residential – Suburban Single Family	Areas identified for single-family detached residential dwellings at a density not to exceed five (5) units per gross acre.
Planned Development	Master planned areas accommodating cluster development, neotraditional development, or mixed residential, commercial, or civic uses. Such developments are characterized by internal or external linkages among residential, commercial, institutional, or recreational use components. This category includes Amenity Communities, Village Centers, Town Centers, and existing Planned Unit Developments.
Planned Campus	Areas designated for research & development, educational, and business campuses, where landscaping, greenspace, open space, and open water area exceeds impervious area of structures and parking lots (other research and educational campuses may be classified as Office /Institutional).
Agriculture / Forestry	Areas principally used for farming, silviculture, dairy or livestock production, and resource extraction. This category also includes single family detached dwellings not to exceed one-half (0.5) unit per gross acre.
Transportation / Communication / Utility	Areas dedicated principally to railroad facilities, airports,—and similar uses that produce intensive or obtrusive activities that are not readily assimilated into other districts.
Parks / Recreation	Land dedicated to open space that is accessible to the public or land that is dedicated to sports, exercise, or other types of leisure activities.
Conservation	Land that is publicly or privately held and designated for preservation in a natural state or for use for passive recreation (e.g., fishing, hiking, camping). This category also includes all back barrier islands consisting of less than two acres of contiguous uplands.
Conservation – Residential	This category is for back barrier islands that are in private ownership and have uplands exceeding two acres on a contiguous land mass. Such areas shall observe conservation principles, but may be developed for residential use at low densities.
Tidal Marsh	Areas of estuarine influence that are inundated by tidal waters on

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	
FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORY	DEFINITION
	a daily basis and are characterized by spartina (cord grass) habitat.
Transition	Areas having established residential character that due to their location adjacent to shallow frontage lots along arterial streets are confronted with potential commercial intrusion. These properties may be assembled with frontage properties, however they shall only be used to meet the required developments standards such as, but not limited to, parking, greenspace, and buffers. Principle uses are prohibited within these areas.
LAND USE OVERLAY CATEGORIES	
Arterial Corridor Transition Overlay Area	Areas having established residential character that due to their arterial location are confronted with potential commercial intrusion. Within this overlay rezoning petitions may proceed where the combined lot width of property is equal to or greater than 175 feet along the arterial street.
Air Installation Compatibility Overlay Area	Areas adjacent to airport facilities that are within Clear Zones, Accident Potential Zones, and Noise Zones where day-night averages are greater than 65 decibels, or similar zones of influence. This designation shall be applied to areas with the flexibility to plan future development in a manner that will place compatible uses in appropriate locations and at appropriate densities (see Compatible Use Guidelines in Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Joint Land Use Study).

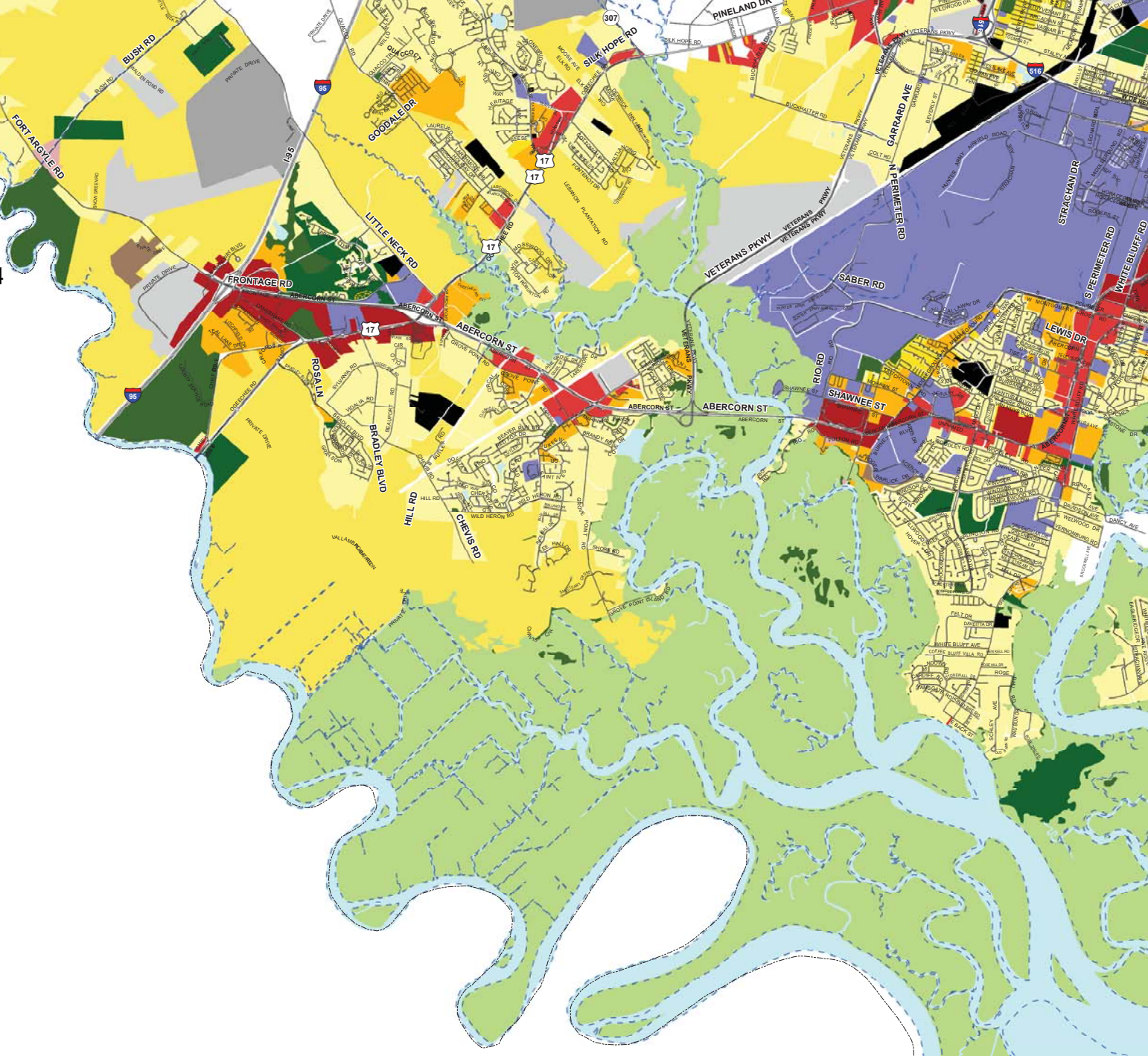
TABLE 5.2 FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES



DOWNTOWN SAVANNAH INSET

Future Land Use Map - Page 3/4

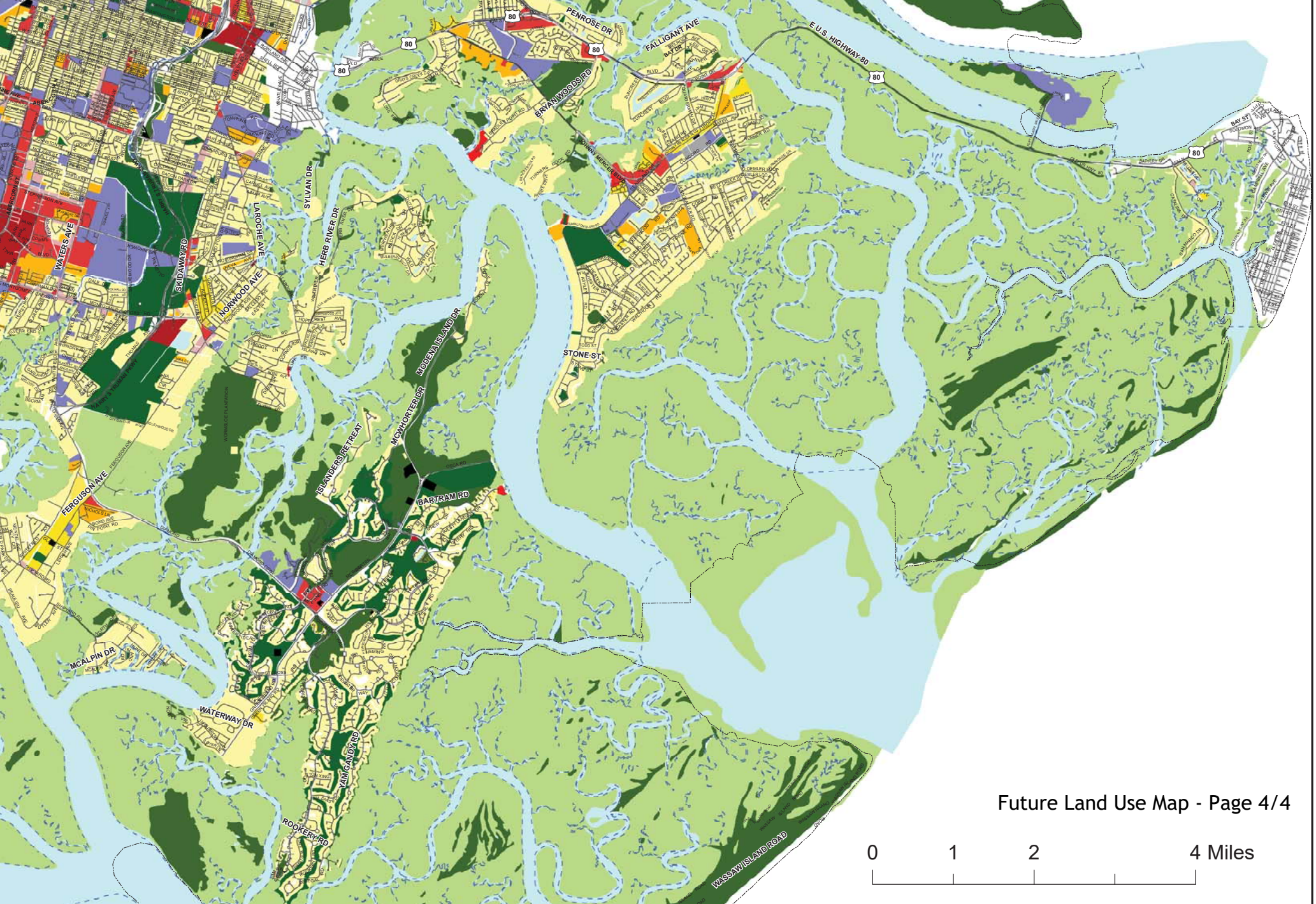
- Downtown
- Downtown- Expansion
- Traditional Commercial
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Commercial- Neighborhood
- Commercial- Suburban
- Commercial- Regional
- Commercial- Marine
- Residential- Suburban Single Family
- Residential- Single Family
- Residential- General
- Planned Development
- Planned Campus
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Industry- Light
- Industry- Heavy
- Civic/Institutional
- Transportation/Communication/Utilit
- Parks/Recreation
- Conservation
- Conservation- Residential
- Tidal Marsh
- Open Water
- Transition
- Surface Mine
- Landfill
- Right of Way
- AICO+Marsh
- AICO+Water
- AICO+Industry- Light
- AICO+Right of Way
- AICO+Suburban Single Family Residential



THIS MAP IS A COMPILATION OF INFORMATION FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND SCALES. IN MOST CASES THE INFORMATION HAS NOT BEEN FIELD VERIFIED. USE THIS MAP FOR GENERAL PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.



8/15/2016



Future Land Use Map - Page 4/4



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



CHATHAM COUNTY - SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
 110 E. STATE ST. SAVANNAH, GA 31412-8246 PHONE 912-651-1440

5.6 Issues and Opportunities

This section identifies needs and challenges associated with growth and development in four geographic areas.

5.6.1 Downtown Savannah

Savannah's central business district and adjacent historic neighborhoods face several major challenges.

- *Suburban Intrusion.* Most development in modern America is suburban in character (e.g., large building envelopes, structures sited behind large parking lots, automobile-oriented access). The experience of most investors, developers, designers, and builders is with this form of development, which occurs throughout suburbia. Integrating compatible development into areas adjacent to downtown Savannah is more challenging and can add cost to a project. The return on the investment, however, should be greater than in a suburban setting.
- *Blight and Redevelopment.* The City of Savannah Neighborhood Planning and Community Development Department manages Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and other programs that address blight and redevelopment. City of Savannah Housing and Economic Development departments also concentrate resources in blighted areas. The CDBG Target Area encompasses most of the City's urban neighborhoods. Blighted areas and redevelopment initiatives to address blight are focused in this area. Brownfields and grayfields also represent forms of urban blight as well as opportunities for revitalization.
- *Reciprocity.* New development situated in close proximity to downtown Savannah and the National Landmark District derives enormous benefit from its location. Residential and commercial uses in particular benefit from the attractiveness of the district, its high volume tourism, regional centrality, and a high concentration of activities and events. Consequently, new development shall be expected to return value to downtown Savannah by enhancing its unique character and sense of place. New development should therefore participate in adding to the following: traditional street grid, general connectivity, river access, public realm, traditional aesthetics, traditional commercial siting, and to the long term viability of the downtown Savannah and the National Landmark District.
- *Brownfields.* Brownfields are vacant or underutilized industrial sites with environmental hazards or other site constraints that inhibit redevelopment. They are primarily located immediately to the east and west of downtown Savannah. However, scattered sites exist throughout Chatham County. Brownfield sites have not been thoroughly inventoried to date. Brownfields may represent a significant opportunity to expand the highly constrained downtown business district once they have been mapped and evaluated.
- *Grayfields.* Grayfields are vacant or under-performing commercial sites, typically shopping centers. They are typically automobile-oriented shopping centers and therefore most often located in second and third ring suburbs. Grayfield sites located in newer suburban areas are often "big box" retail stores vacated to occupy a

new property. Some of these sites may be held off the market to prevent competitors from moving in, potentially creating blight and contributing to urban sprawl.

5.6.2 First and Second Ring Suburbs

Many neighborhoods in these areas contain unique land use patterns and exceptional architectural assets. However, they face two significant challenges.

- *Land Use/Zoning Mismatch.* When the City and County zoning ordinances were adopted, in 1960 and 1962 respectively, they contained an implicit strategy to promote suburban development. First and second ring suburbs were perceived as largely blighted and over-crowded. They were rezoned with larger lot sizes, reduced lot coverage, greater setbacks, and other suburban development characteristics in an effort to induce demolition, replatting, and redevelopment. This intentional mismatch of land use and zoning is inappropriate now that higher density urban neighborhoods enhance land values, reduce automobile traffic, and efficiently use land.

5.6.3 Ring: East Chatham County

East and West Chatham County have very different physical situations and growth characteristics. For that reason, separate discussions of the challenges facing these areas are provided.

The Islands and Southeast Chatham communities' concerns were addressed with community plans and zoning amendments approved in 2001 and 2003. The Environmental Overlay District, in particular, was designed to fit these marshside communities; however, the following challenges remain as issues within these communities:

- *Marsh Buffers and Setbacks.* The Environmental Overlay District increased marsh buffers and setbacks from 25 feet to 35 feet. Buffers are particularly difficult to regulate, and essentially depend on voluntary compliance by landowners. As a result, buffers are often not maintained and yards are extended to the edge of marsh. Pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers applied to yards without buffers result in marsh pollution. Lawns also increase the velocity of runoff, which adversely affects hydrologic regimes. Use of low impact development (LID) strategies coupled with perimeter conservation easements may offer more effective marsh protection.
- *Development on Marshfront and Waterways.* In recent years more development has been built along the marshfront and waterways; architectural styles have moved away from the traditional coastal aesthetic; and private boat storage and boat ramps have become more intrusive along the shoreline. The Environmental Overlay contains standards to prevent excessive building. These should be reviewed and, if necessary, replaced with more effective standards in light of new information regarding the effects of sea level rise.

5.6.4 Third Ring: West Chatham County

Rapid growth experienced in the Islands, Southeast Chatham, and southside communities has shifted to West Chatham County. For that reason, a separate plan for that area was prepared by the MPC in 2004. The plan was prepared in conjunction with the

Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with it. Two major land use challenges facing the area are outlined below:

- *Suburban Density Zoning.* The Rural Agricultural zoning district that encompasses most of West Chatham County was amended during a slower growth period to provide for residential development with 6,000 square foot lots (resulting in densities of five to six units per acre where there is public water and sewer). While this initially had a positive impact by creating opportunities for moderate cost housing, it may now have the effect of promoting “leap frog” urban sprawl as a result of current rapid growth.
- *Commercial Strip Development.* New roads and major improvements such as the widening of US 17 are creating pressure to commercialize most frontage lots where traffic volumes are high and increasing.

5.6.5 Fourth Ring: Amenity Communities

New greenfields development is changing in response to evolving market demands. Homebuyers are increasingly seeking community amenities including open space, sidewalks and trails, community centers for exercise and activities, and convenient access to goods and services. Emerging development patterns require new a reassessment of existing land use and zoning frameworks. Major challenges facing new development are described below:

- *Growth Policy Conflicts with Regulatory Framework.* The policies in the Comprehensive Plan encourage mixed use development, town centers, cluster and conservation design, and New Urban development options. The 1962 Chatham County Zoning Ordinance does not provide districts, uses, or development standards to encourage or even allow these forms of development. Consequently, such developments require complicated approvals involving patchwork zoning text amendments and variances.
- *Connectivity.* Because these developments are often a great distance from established commercial areas, they produce longer commutes to retail and employment centers. This spatial pattern worsens congestion, fuel consumption, water quality (affected by stormwater runoff), and air quality. Mitigation strategies include increasing external access points in new developments, increasing access to adjoining developments, and mixing land uses.

5.7 Assessment

This section identifies and discusses three quality growth strategies – consistency, mixed-use development, and enhancing the public realm – that are common denominators associated with the issues identified above.

5.7.1 Consistency

The 1960 City and 1962 County zoning ordinances are based on planning paradigms and public policy of the late 1950s. The policies of that era, however, were not incorporated into

a comprehensive plan or similar public document. Land use and development decisions were therefore often made in a policy vacuum.

The 1992 Vision 20/20 process was a positive step toward correcting this deficiency. The State-mandated City and County comprehensive plans, adopted the following year, also updated and formalized public policy. Additionally, both the Comprehensive Plan and Chatham County “Blueprint” have specific goals within their respective Quality of Life sections intended to “provide effective government services while ensuring that process and procedures are planned and executed with transparency”.

A weakness of the two policy documents is the absence of a requirement for consistency between policy and programs. Of particular relevance here is the lack of consistency between land use plans, on the one hand, and zoning on the other.

A requirement for consistency was included previously in earlier iterations of the Comprehensive Plan and is now enforced procedurally by requiring approval of a “plan amendment” prior to approval of a zoning map or text amendment that is inconsistent with the Land Use Plan. Thus, official public policy is reviewed prior to considering a zoning amendment that is inconsistent with public policy.

5.7.2 Mixed Use Development

Mixed use development is a growth strategy with roots in traditional development patterns. The success of mixed use development in Savannah, as well as its increasing popularity across the country, has led to greater interest in expanding its implementation in suburban areas of Chatham County, particularly in larger, planned developments.

Savannah is frequently cited as a model for mixed use development. Its success in preserving the National Landmark District and other historic districts is extraordinary, and it accounts for the attractiveness of the city to tourists, new residents, and investors. The fine-grained, mixed use development patterns in these areas have established the city as a vibrant urban center for business, entertainment, and cultural activities.

Mixed use development in a downtown environment, however, is fundamentally different from mixed use development in surrounding first ring neighborhoods and in suburban settings. Characteristics of land use patterns associated with downtown, and first, second, and third ring mixed use development is discussed throughout this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Zoning recommendations for mixed use development options should be compatible with these characteristics.

The importance of compatibility standards in mixed use districts is imperative. Single family, multi-family, professional offices, and neighborhood commercial uses can be mixed if appropriate size and appearance standards are in place. Medical and dental clinics can also be desirable in a mixed use neighborhood if located in nodes and corridors. More intensive commercial uses can be destructive to mixed use neighborhoods. Such uses include hotels, drive-through restaurants, shopping centers, malls, and automobile dealerships.

5.8 State Quality Community Objectives

The Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning require a review of Quality Community Objectives adopted by the Department of Community Affairs for consistency with local plans. Six objectives closely related to land use are identified and discussed:

- **Resource Management:** *Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.* Through development practices, zoning ordinances and environmental compliance regulations, the air quality in the region and environmentally sensitive areas are protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas throughout Chatham County have been identified and receive special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area is preserved and protected.
- **Efficient Land Use:** *Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.* From the urbanized area to the urban fringes, open space preservation continues to be a high priority in Chatham County and the City of Savannah. The Community Assessment establishes a basis for new zoning that will enhance the ability of local government to preserve open space.
- **Local Preparedness:** *Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.* Chatham County is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards, including hurricanes and coastal storms, severe thunderstorms and tornados, coastal and riverine erosion, and floods. In recognition of this vulnerability, Chatham County embarked on a planning process to develop a Disaster Redevelopment Plan (DRP) to help the county address the complications that can arise following a disaster as the community attempts to rebuild. By developing a DRP, Chatham County hopes to be better prepared for the tough long-term recovery and redevelopment period that could face the county following a major disaster.

- **Sense of Place:** *Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as a focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.* Contemporary development is frequently at odds with historic development patterns. Building setbacks, parking configurations, and access controls, for example, produce forms of development that conflict with established development patterns from previous eras. The assessment in this document provides an initial basis for preparing for new growth while enhancing existing development patterns.

Transportation

The road network was one of the primary components of Oglethorpe's original town plan for Savannah. The plan featured adherence to a strict grid pattern that was characterized by roadways featuring regular widths (37.5 feet, 45 feet, and 75 feet, depending on street type) that were spaced at regular intervals. The streets formed the geographic boundaries between wards, and provided a high level of connectivity throughout the city as a whole. The road network that was established at the colony's founding is still in place today.



Transportation technology has been a driving force behind many of the changes to Savannah's spatial pattern that have occurred in the nearly three hundred years since its founding. The downtown core developed during an era of pedestrian and horse-drawn transportation. This lack of mobility helped to keep the city very compact. The advent of streetcar technology in the 1800s and automotive technology in the 1900s led to new eras of growth and expansion, with development patterns changing to accommodate these new modes of transportation.

6.0 Introduction

Topics discussed in each of the individual chapters of the Comprehensive Plan are interconnected. As a result, transportation conditions in the future will be affected by policy recommendations located in other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. Of these, the Land Use Chapter will have a particularly strong impact on transportation. Through its placement of commercial centers and residential areas, the Future Land Use Map will help determine the county's future spatial pattern, which in turn will affect things like road connectivity. Furthermore, the density of those developments will help determine the future viability of other modes of transportation, such as bus and rail.

The impact goes both ways. Transportation decisions can impact issues that are typically considered the realm of other planning sub-disciplines. Transportation policy decisions and transportation project designs can have a profound effect on things like mode choice, land uses, economic development, the natural environment, health, and general quality of life.

The process of suburbanization has proven that transportation decisions regarding street placement and design can be deterministic forces on land use in undeveloped areas. Dramatic changes to an area's transportation network can also have significant impacts on land use and quality of life in developed areas. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s the interstate highway system bisected numerous urban neighborhoods across the country. Many of the affected areas were low income, often vibrant, working class neighborhoods. In most instances, the reality of being bisected by an elevated limited access road contributed to decades of neighborhood decline, some of which continues today. Urban decline, in turn, helped fuel the exodus of residents from central cities across America. This example illustrates the strong impact that transportation projects can have on quality of life when they aren't designed with neighborhood concerns in mind.

This chapter draws information from the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CORE MPO's) 2040 Total Mobility Plan, which is the long range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), for Chatham County¹. Based on information from the MTP, issues and opportunities are identified along with quality growth objectives.

6.1 Transportation Conditions and Trends

Savannah and Chatham County have long served as the regional center for Coastal Georgia and the adjacent Lowcountry of South Carolina for employment, shopping and recreation. In addition to serving as the regional center for residents, Savannah, with its designated Historic Landmark District, is host to over 12 million visitors each year and has become one of the top tourist destinations, both nationally and internationally. Chatham

¹ Transportation planning has its own regional planning process in the form of the **Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO)**. Unlike the Metropolitan Planning Commission, which has planning influence only in the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County, the CORE MPO planning process is region-wide, and includes the eight incorporated municipalities in Chatham County: Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Savannah, Thunderbolt, Tybee Island, and Vernonburg. The MPO also includes a section of Effingham County and Bryan County including Richmond Hill.

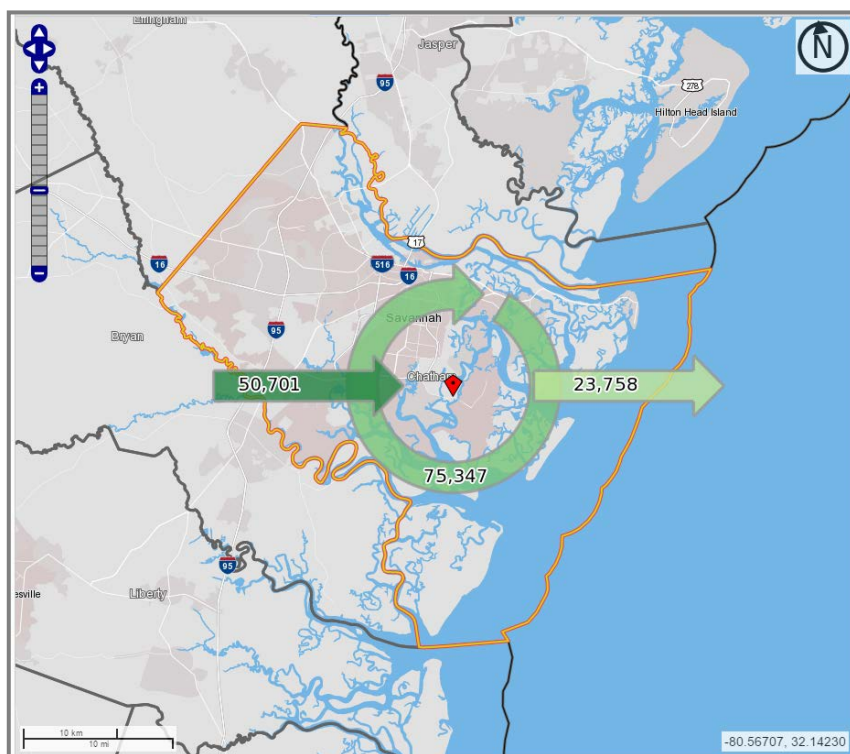
County is also home to the Port of Savannah, which is the second largest export facility in the nation, as well as the fourth busiest container port, moving more than 3.0 million twenty-foot container units in FY 2016. The port is a major economic engine for the region, as well as the State of Georgia.

The CORE MPO region is also home to a number of other regional employment centers, including medical, military and educational institutions, port-related industries and manufacturing centers. An efficient transportation system that effectively provides for the movement of people and goods is critical to the continued economic vitality of the region and the State.

6.1.1 Commuting Patterns

Commuting activity from adjacent counties is one of the principal regional transportation issues in Chatham County today. Chatham County is the economic hub of the region, and as such, it attracts a large number of commuters from adjacent counties. As shown in Figure 6.1, about 50,000 residents from outside of Chatham County commuted into the county for their primary job in 2014.² Because most workers in the region currently choose to drive to work (more on mode choice below), large numbers of commuters pose capacity challenges for the county's regional roadway system, including interstates, US highways, and other major roads.

Figure 6.1 Regional Commuting: Flows for primary work trips into, within, and out of Chatham County, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "On the Map"

6.1.2 Mode Share

The proportion of travelers using a given method of transportation is called the mode share or the mode split. Mode share is influenced by the types of facilities or services that have been emphasized in the past (i.e. provision of more and wider roadways and "free" parking, rather than transit service, bikeways, or sidewalks). Data that is available from the U.S. Census Bureau regarding the various ways that people choose to travel (e.g. driving, taking

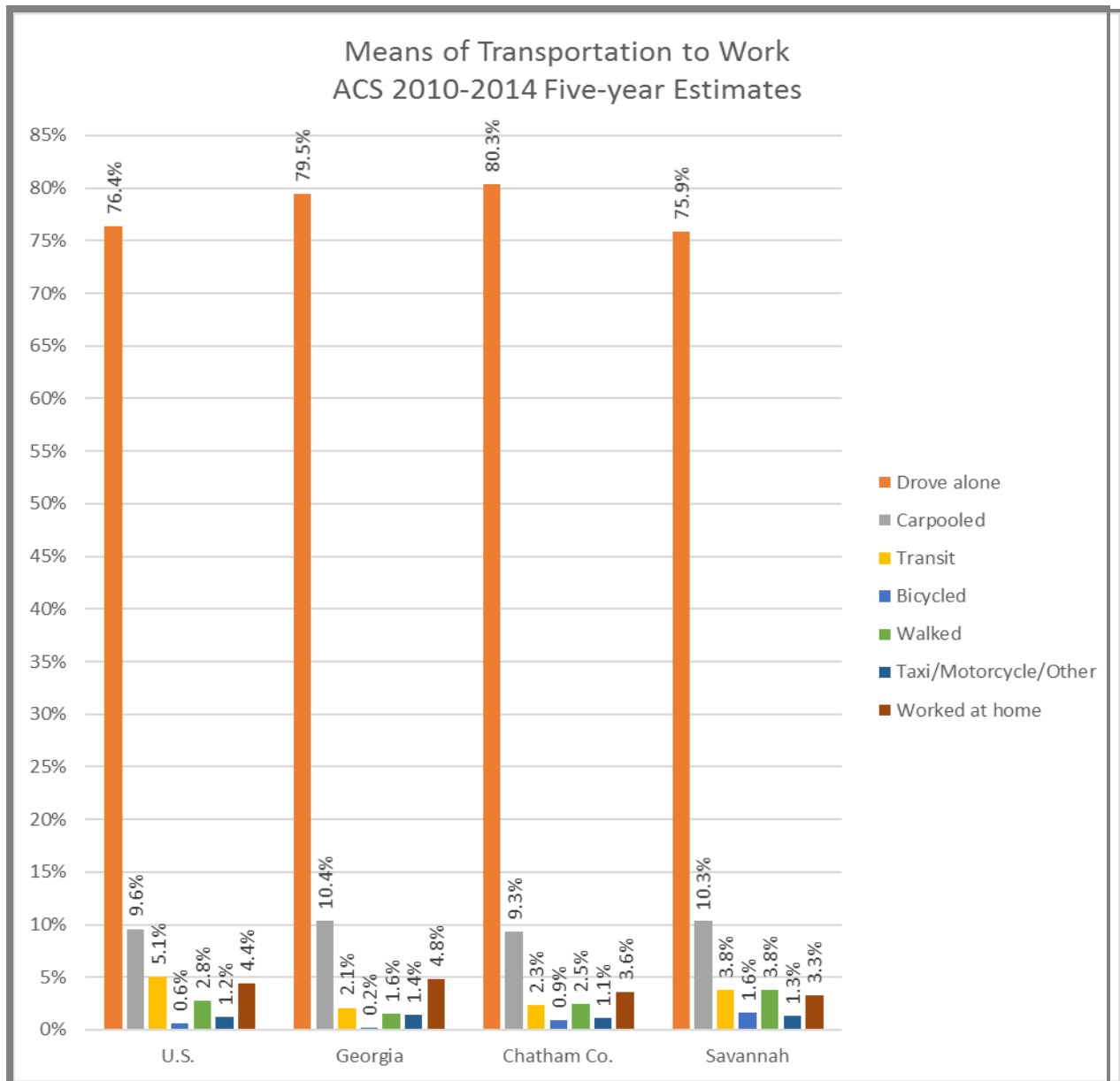
² Source: <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

transit, walking, etc.) focuses on the trips to and from work, as this is one of the most predictable trip purposes. The picture of travel activity implied by this data is also limited by the fact that trips involving multiple modes are counted under whichever mode was used for most of the trip distance (e.g. a commute involving a short bicycle trip to and from the bus stop and longer ride on the bus is counted only as a transit commute).

As the data below show, most work trips in Chatham County are by automobile, as is the case for the state and country overall. Workers living within the City of Savannah are slightly more likely to use alternatives to driving alone, compared to the overall county and state. This is related to certain characteristics of the more urbanized area: higher densities, mixed uses, and jobs/housing balance means more workers have shorter trips; transit service is present and has more route coverage; and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are more consistently present.

It is important to note that today's observed travel behavior does not necessarily reflect the choices people would make if different transportation options were supported at a level to make them safe and feasible. Transportation policy, funding, and design decisions in support of automobile travel initially created great gains in mobility (for the middle and upper classes at least), but have also resulted in some unintended, negative consequences for individuals and society, such as pollution, contributions to the atmospheric greenhouse effect, contributions to obesity, damage to the natural environment and to community social fabric, as well as a high cost for individuals to enter fully into the normal activities of society (i.e. the need to buy a car to reliably get to a job). In other words, although most people in the region today choose to go everywhere by private automobile, there are good reasons to encourage any interest in other modes within the community.

Figure 6.2: Mode Share for Work Trips, by Geography



6.1.3 Road Network

As home to the Savannah urbanized area, Chatham County has the most significant urban road network in the region. Two major interstates, I-95 and I-16, intersect in Chatham County. I-95 runs from Miami, FL to the Canadian border at Houlton, ME, and is the primary north-south interstate on the East Coast. I-16 runs from Savannah to Macon, and is the primary interstate route for traffic from Coastal Georgia to the Atlanta Metropolitan Area. An auxiliary interstate, I-516, which serves as a spur to I-16, provides connectivity within Chatham County.

There are a total of 1,280 miles of roadway within Chatham County. These roadways are state and county roads and city streets. These roadways are categorized by their use and the amount of traffic that is carried. The mileage in each category, as well as the definition per the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are shown below:

- Interstate/Freeway: 46.62 miles

Roads that are fully access-controlled and are designed to carry large amount of traffic longer distances at a high rate of speed; examples include roadways such as I-16 and I-95.

- Arterials: 107.26 miles

Roads that are designed to carry large amounts of traffic at a relatively high speed, often over longer distances. Often some degree of access management is incorporated; examples of arterials include Bay Street, Islands Expressway, SR 204 and US 80.

- Collectors: 11.19 miles

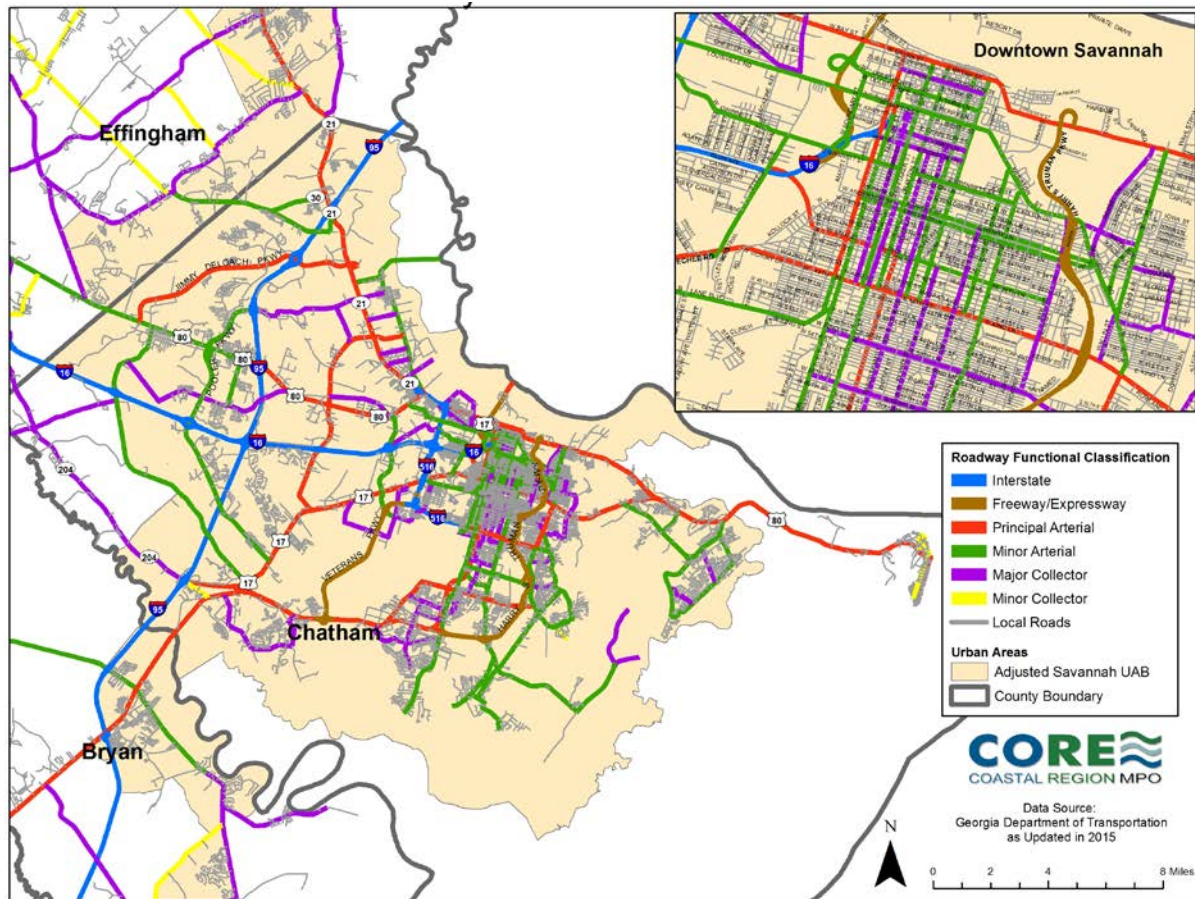
Roads that are designed to carry less traffic at lower levels of speed for shorter distances. These roadways typically “collect” traffic from the local roadways and provide the access to arterials. Examples of collectors include Habersham Street, LaRoche Avenue, and Old Louisville Road.

- Local Roadways: 887.54 miles

Local roadways are those not otherwise classified and tend to serve short, local trips or connect with the collectors to access the broader roadway network.

Figure 6.3 depicts the functional classification of the roadway network. Functional Classifications definitions of roadways are associated with the types of funding available from federal, state, and local sources. Further information on planned road improvements and thoroughfare plans can be found on the MPC’s Transportation page: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tran>.

Figure 6.3: FHWA Functional Classification of Area Roadways



a. Thoroughfare Plan

To achieve the goals of the Total Mobility Plan, as well as those of the updated Comprehensive Plan, the CORE MPO, together with local jurisdictions, developed a Thoroughfare Plan for the region. This Thoroughfare Plan is intended to:

- Ensure/increase accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for people and freight.
- Promote safe and efficient travel for all users and create a framework for common sense tradeoffs between automobile capacity and multimodal design elements.
- Support community development and land use goals and promote a sense of place and support activities with on-street parking, bike travel, land access, and pedestrian friendly intersections. (The Thoroughfare Plan classifications are referenced in the zoning ordinance.)
- Establish transparent expectations for transportation infrastructure and create consistency in code references to the road network, which provides predictable and consistent information to development community. Thoroughfare types are defined by their function in the road network as well as the character of the area they serve.

Thoroughfare planning is promoted as part of a larger movement called context sensitive design or context sensitive solutions. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) defines context sensitive solutions (CSS) as follows: CSS is a different way to approach the

planning and design of transportation projects. It is a process of balancing the competing needs of many stakeholders starting in the earliest stages of project development. It is also flexibility in the application of design controls, guidelines and standards to design a facility that is safe for all users regardless of the mode of travel they choose.

The Thoroughfare Plan also establishes a consistent and transparent set of expectations for transportation infrastructure for developers; with this information, developers are aware from the onset of a project what infrastructure requirements are in place.

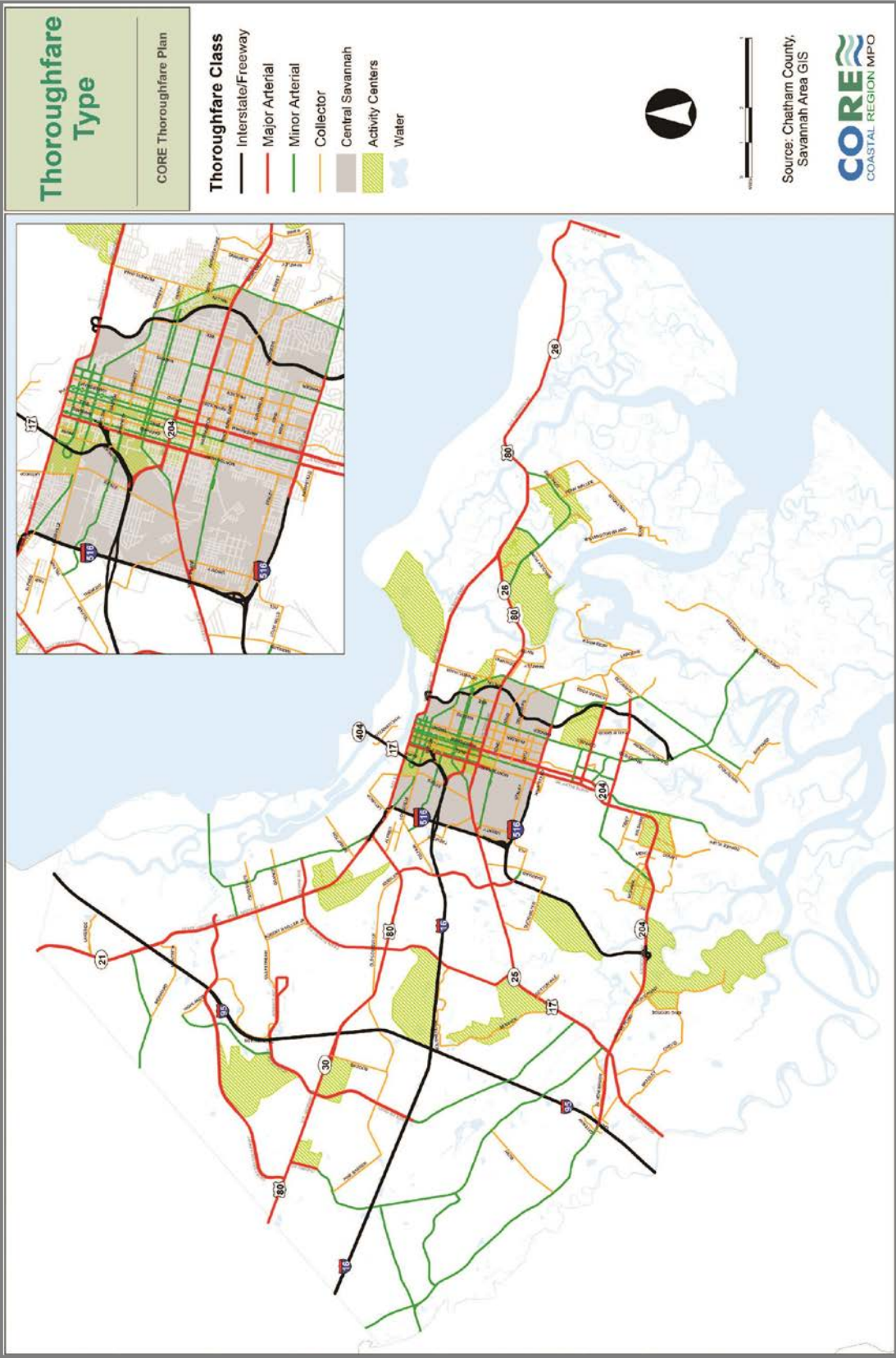
In this planning effort, the CORE MPO worked closely with its local planning partners to identify the appropriate context sensitive parameters for each roadway classification and developed typical sections that incorporated these treatments. The typical sections identified include Major Arterials, Minor Arterials and Collectors. Each of these classifications is then further categorized as Urban or Suburban and the typical sections include the design elements that appropriately serve the transportation need, as well as the adjacent land uses and community character. The descriptions of thoroughfare types, the drawings of cross-sections, and the map of thoroughfare classifications are available in the Thoroughfare Plan document at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Plans>. The map is also shown in Figure 6.10 below.

Each of the identified projects in the MTP has been correlated with the Thoroughfare Plan to incorporate the appropriate design elements based on the roadway typology.

Chatham County faces several specific transportation challenges that will need to be addressed in the future. Major challenges facing Chatham County's road network include:

- *Connectivity.* Without efficient north-south and east-west routes through or around Savannah, congestion will continue to worsen along several local corridors that already have congestion problems.
 - East-West Connector— Improving east-west traffic in and around Savannah is one of the most pressing transportation needs in Chatham County. Adding a high capacity east-west route through or around the city should help alleviate other transportation issues, such as freight traffic on Bay Street and congestion on DeRenne Avenue.
 - Suburban Growth— Population projections predict extensive growth in suburban areas, especially in western Chatham County. Roadway infrastructure will need to be added to accommodate the growth.
- *Congestion Management.* Traffic congestion relief is a commonly-cited goal of road construction projects, especially road widening. However, major construction projects should be viewed as a congestion management tool of last resort. When possible, traffic control techniques should be used (such as retiming traffic signals) to manage congestion. When used effectively, these tools can help minimize congestion and even avoid the need to widen roads or construct new facilities.

Figure 6.4: Thoroughfare Classification



b. Congestion

The CORE MPO periodically studies existing congestion through the Congestion Management Process (CMP). A comprehensive study of travel time runs on all arterial and major collector roadways was conducted in 2003. Subsequent CMP updates evaluated specific corridors and congestion hotspots in finer detail. Another comprehensive CMP update is scheduled for 2016-2017. In preparation for the update, the CORE MPO reviewed the current traffic conditions on the prior top 20 most congested segments and prepared a CMP Report Card to assess the CORE MPO's success in addressing congestion since 2003.

One of the measures of congestion in the CMP was "level of service" (LOS), which is a standard measure reflecting the quality of the traffic flow. There are six levels, with A being free flow and F being a creeping traffic jam. The 20 most congested segments in 2004 all had LOS D, E, or F. Based on the 2016 CMP Report Card, about 90% of the segments have seen improvement in level of service. The CMP update in 2016 and 2017 may reveal other locations of congestion that were not in the top 20 list in 2004.

6.2 The Framework for Transportation Investment Decision-making

6.2.1 The CORE MPO and the Total Mobility Plan

Because transportation projects are typically funded with a combination of federal, state and local dollars, there are specific requirements for transportation planning set forth in the federal transportation legislation known as Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, or CORE MPO, is the federally designated organization responsible for cooperatively planning for transportation in the region. Comprised of the local governments in the metropolitan area, the MPO plans for the expenditure of federal transportation funds through a coordinated, cooperative and continuing process.

The Total Mobility Plan is the federally required Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), is the 20-year plan that identifies the vision, goals and objectives, strategies and projects that promote mobility within and through the region for both people and goods. This long range plan, which is required to be updated every five years, is focused on addressing the changing conditions and transportation needs and currently has a planning horizon year of 2040.

6.2.2 Focus Areas for Mobility

Safety and Security

The goals adopted for the plan include a focus on ensuring and increasing the safety and security of the transportation system for all users, including motorized vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

The traffic crashes in Chatham County over the last five year reporting period (2008-2012) available from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, have fluctuated slightly, but

have remained relatively constant over the period. The number of crashes, the number of injury crashes and the number of fatal crashes for the CORE MPO area (Chatham County) are shown below. The injury crashes have declined over the five-year period and the fatal crashes dropped significantly in 2011 and remained at that level in 2012.

The goal is to coordinate the safety measures with planning efforts. In addition to the county- wide crashes, the top crash locations for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists in the MPO area have been identified. The information also includes the crashes with fatalities, injuries and property damage only. These locations have been identified by GDOT and are shown in the table and map below.

In addition to the safety of the roadway network, the CORE MPO also strives to coordinate with local jurisdictions to ensure the safety of all modes, including the bicycle and pedestrian users. Safety for these modal users is of critical importance, and the CORE MPO has developed a non-motorized plan to address the provision of a safe, connected network.

To meet the goal of ensuring and enhancing the security of the transportation system and users, the CORE MPO, although not the lead agency, coordinates closely with, and supports the local and state agencies that are responsible. Through this coordination and the incorporation of the agencies in the planning process, the CORE MPO can address the overall security goal.

These local and state agencies that are responsible for the emergency management, disaster preparation, and homeland security include the Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA), the Georgia Office of Homeland Security, the area's fire department, and the area's police departments. These agencies are responsible for the preparation of the disaster preparedness plans, the coordination for emergency responses, and working to educate the public on their responses to emergency situations.

With the CORE MPO's coastal location and potential for hurricane evacuation, in addition to the local agencies, GDOT also has a role in evacuation planning. The east-west interstate, I-16 from Chatham County is equipped to utilize all four lanes for evacuation purposes when needed. Drop gate barriers at exit and entrance ramps along the interstate prevent vehicles from traveling in the wrong direction during the evacuation process. Various state routes along the coast, such as US 80 leading from Tybee Island, may also be utilized as one-way routes towards inland areas of Georgia.

System Maintenance and Preservation

Over the last decade, state and local transportation agencies have faced tremendous funding shortfalls. Agencies have struggled to keep up with their expanding transportation needs with continually shrinking budget. In 2012, each region in Georgia identified a list of projects within their region and a vote was taken to implement a one-cent sales tax on the region to fund the identified projects. Three regions in Georgia passed the authorization; however, the Coastal Region was not one of the three.

In addition to the transportation funding shortfalls, many major transportation improvement projects such as additional capacity or new facilities are met with strong opposition from members of the general public, as well as from interest groups focused on elements such as the environment. Within this context, it is critical for the MPO to preserve and maintain the existing system and infrastructure and to maximize the benefits of any transportation investments.

Economic Vitality

One of the goals identified for the Total Mobility Plan is the support of the economic vitality of the region and enabling local, regional and global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency. As discussed, there are a number of critical economic drivers in the region, including the Port of Savannah and the tourism industry, primarily focused in the Historic District and Tybee Island. The transportation network supporting these drivers is a key component in their sustainability and success.

As noted above, good access to the port facilities is key in continuing its growth in the future. The Savannah Hilton Head Airport is another of the modal economic engines for the region. The CORE MPO, in recognition of their impacts on both the transportation system and mobility, as well as the economic vitality of the region, coordinates closely with both entities to ensure that their needs are incorporated into the short and long term transportation assessments.

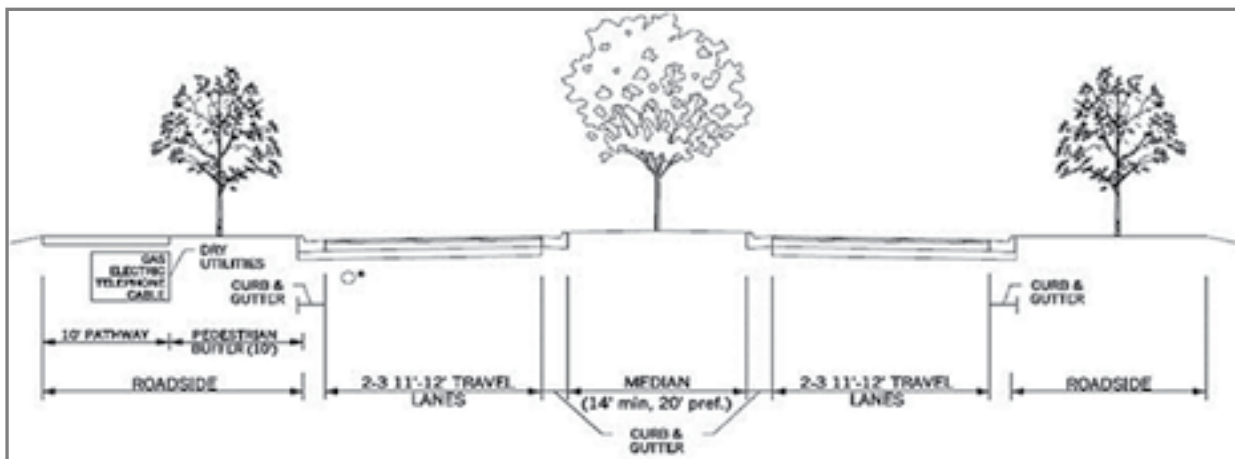
A number of projects in the cost constrained plans over the years have been targeted at addressing accessibility and connectivity issues for these economic engines. The freight plan that the CORE MPO has underway will incorporate these, and other, freight intensive generators to ensure the efficient movement of freight. The freight planning effort will also be coordinated with the Hinesville Area MPO freight plan. Freight movement does not recognize political jurisdictions and this coordinated effort will ensure a regional approach.

Mobility and Sustainability

The goals of the Total Mobility Plan also include a focus on the preservation and enhancement of the environment and quality of life and the provision of an accessible, connected transportation system that provides viable multimodal choices for mobility. The CORE MPO has had a long standing commitment to the provision of safe, connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The CORE MPO has developed a non-motorized plan specifically for identifying and prioritizing the pedestrian and bicycle needs. In addition, in the previous plan, a substantial amount of funding was set-aside for the completion of these types of projects. This set aside of funding is continued and incorporated into this financially feasible plan.

6.2.3 The Thoroughfare Plan

To achieve the goals of the Total Mobility Plan, as well as those of the updated Comprehensive Plan, the CORE MPO, together with local jurisdictions, developed a Thoroughfare Plan for the region.



This Thoroughfare Plan, coordinated with the Non-Motorized Plan, is intended to:

- Ensure/increase accessibility, mobility, and connectivity for people and freight.
- Promote safe and efficient travel for all users and create a framework for common sense trade-offs between automobile capacity and multimodal design elements.
- Support community development and land use goals and promote a sense of place and support activities with on-street parking, bike travel, land access, and pedestrian friendly intersections.
- Establish transparent expectations for transportation infrastructure and create consistency in code references to the road network, which provides predictable and consistent information to development community.

Thoroughfare types are defined by their function in the road network as well as the character of the area they serve. The duality of transportation function and the relationship with the character, or context, of each facility informs each thoroughfare type's recommended design parameters. Thoroughfare planning is promoted as part of a larger movement called context sensitive design or context sensitive solutions. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) defines context sensitive solutions (CSS) as follows:

CSS is a different way to approach the planning and design of transportation projects. It is a process of balancing the competing needs of many stakeholders starting in the earliest stages of project development. It is also flexibility in the application of design controls, guidelines and standards to design a facility that is safe for all users regardless of the mode of travel they choose.

In this planning effort, the CORE MPO worked closely with its local planning partners to identify the appropriate context sensitive parameters for each roadway classification and developed typical sections that incorporated these treatments. These desired typical sections provide the framework for identifying deficiencies in the existing network and a guideline for future infrastructure. In addition, the Thoroughfare Plan established a consistent and transparent set of expectations for transportation infrastructure for the development community; with this information, developers are aware from the onset of a project what infrastructure requirements are in place.

The typical sections identified include Major Arterials, Minor Arterials and Collectors. Each of these classifications is then further categorized as Urban or Suburban and the typical sections include the design elements that appropriately serve the transportation need, as well as the adjacent land uses and community character.

Each of the identified projects in the Total Mobility Plan has been correlated with the Thoroughfare Plan to incorporate the appropriate design elements based on the roadway typology. In addition, the Vision Plan, or unfunded projects, includes the complete list of projects identified through the Thoroughfare Plan. The Thoroughfare Plan was also coordinated with the Non-Motorized Plan to ensure consistency throughout the planning efforts.

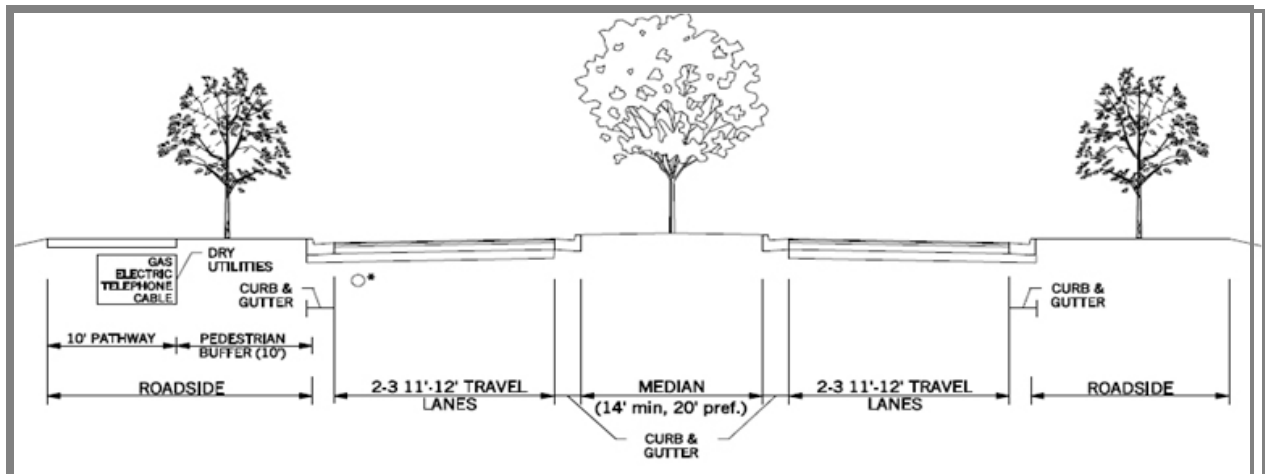


Figure 6.6 Thoroughfare Plan Cross Section: Major Arterial Suburban

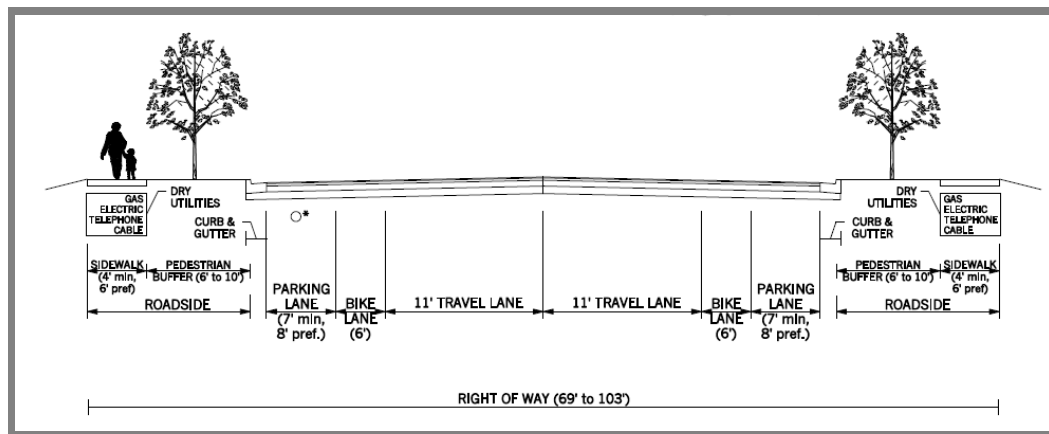


Figure 6.7 Thoroughfare Plan Cross Section: Major Arterial Urban

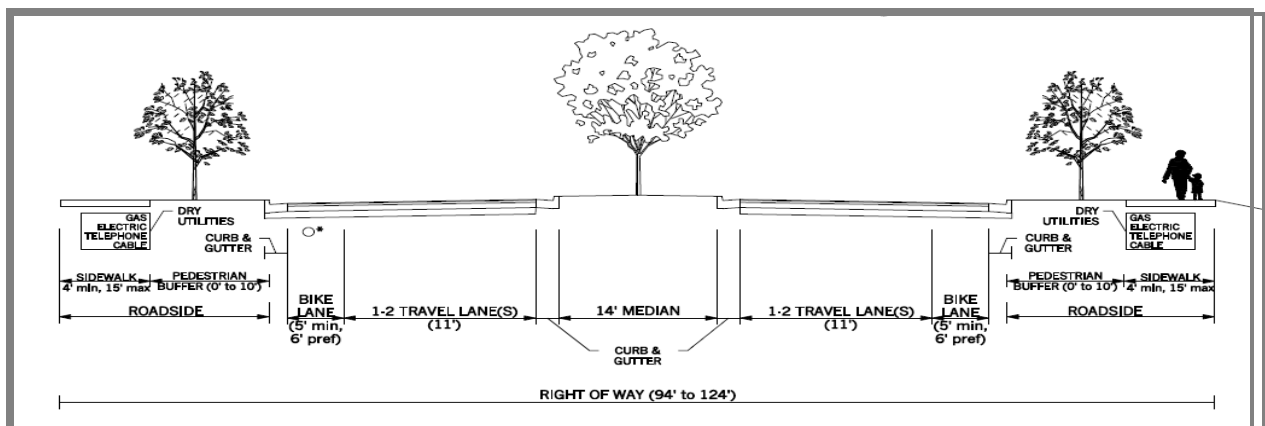


Figure 6.8 Thoroughfare Plan Cross Section: Minor Arterial Suburban

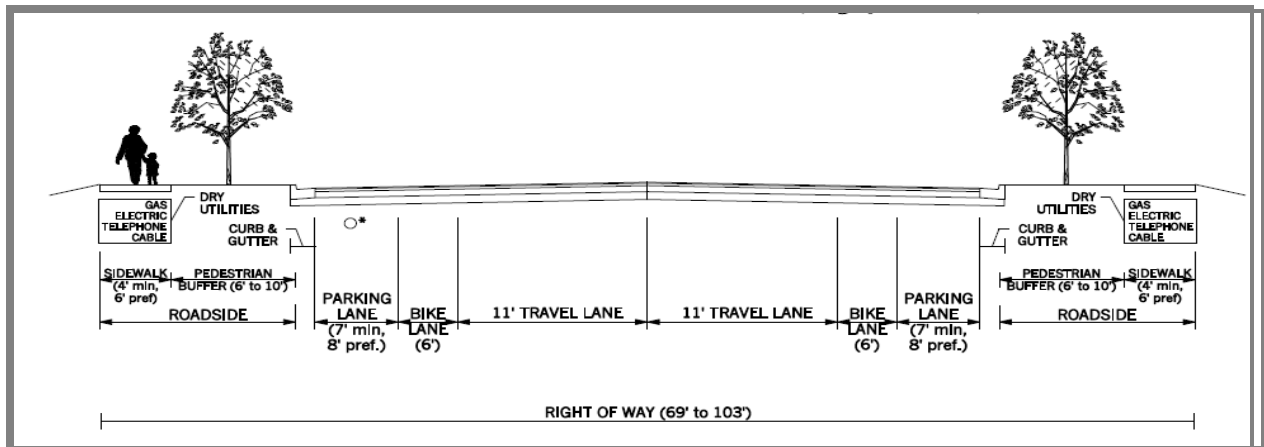


Figure 6.9 Thoroughfare Plan Cross Section: Collector Suburban

6.2.4 CORE MPO Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures

The goals and objectives identified for the CORE MPO's Total Mobility Plan are aligned with federally specified planning factors and provide the framework for the development of the plan. Stakeholders and citizens worked together during meetings to identify these goals and objectives, which provide the framework for the provision of a safe, secure, efficient, multimodal transportation network that meets the mobility needs of both people and freight.

The chart below shows objectives and performance measures that have been identified for each goal, during the cooperative and comprehensive plan development process.

GOAL 1	Economic Activity: Support the economic vitality of the region, matching the community's goals, especially by enabling local, regional and global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.	
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize work trip congestion Promote projects which provide the maximum travel benefit per cost 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project cost/vehicle miles of travel (VMT) Reductions in VMT Work trip vehicle hours of travel (VHT) Sustained or increased funding status Increased Sustainable development incorporating mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented design
GOAL 2	Safety: Ensure and increase the safety of the transportation system for all users, including motorized vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.	

GOAL 3	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eliminate at-grade railroad crossings ○ Minimize frequency and severity of vehicular accidents ○ Minimize conflicts and increase safety for non-motorized users 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total accidents per million miles traveled, involving all user types ○ Injury accidents per million miles traveled, involving all user types ○ Fatal accidents per million miles traveled, involving all user types ○ Implementation of transit and other safety projects ○ Number of increased bike and pedestrian facilities ○ Number of at-grade crossings reduced
	Security: Ensure and increase the security of the transportation system for all users, including motorized vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.	
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote projects which aid in hurricane evacuation ○ Adequately prepare for coordinated responses to incidents ○ Monitor vulnerable infrastructure through visual and other inspection methods 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hurricane evacuation route status ○ Improved emergency responses (e.g., ambulance travel times to hospitals) ○ Maximize transportation system mobility during disruptive events (such as reductions in time to clear major crashes from through lanes) ○ Reduction in vulnerability of the transportation system (such as implementation of monitoring infrastructure for major transportation system)
GOAL 4	Accessibility, Mobility and Connectivity: Ensure and increase the accessibility, mobility and connectivity options available to people and freight, and ensure the integration of modes, where appropriate.	
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimize congestion delays ○ Maximize regional population and employment accessibility ○ Provide efficient and reliable freight corridors ○ Minimize delays in corridors served by transit ○ Encourage use of transit and non-motorized modes, focusing on areas with low rates of automobile ownership or high population of elderly and/or disabled populations ○ Expand transit service area and increase service frequency 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Base year vs. future year volume/capacity ratios for various modes ○ Percent of population within ½ mile of transit route or facility connecting to regional activity center(s) ○ Daily freight truck use/lane ○ Operational performance of transit system (buses arriving/departing on schedule) ○ Percent of population within ½ mile of bicycle facility connecting to regional activity center(s) ○ Transit ridership
G OA	Environment and Quality of Life: Protect, enhance and sustain the environment and quality of life, promote energy conservation and address climate change.	

	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protect wetlands, historic resources, neighborhoods, recreational facilities and other important resources ○ Support infill development ○ Implement green infrastructure to reduce region's impact on stormwater pollution and address potential impacts from a changing climate. 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impacts to natural environment (such as rate of development of greenspace compared to the rate of greenspace preservation). ○ Impacts to historic and cultural resources (such as the strengthening of regulations to protect historic and cultural resources) ○ Strengthening of regulations promoting infill and brownfield development ○ Project utilization of green infrastructure ○ Vehicle miles of travel ○ Energy consumption trends ○ Air quality trends
	System Management and Maintenance: Assess the transportation system to determine what works well, what does not work well, and potential improvement options.	
GOAL 6	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximize efficiency of signalized intersections ○ Expand use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) ○ Continue existing levels of maintenance for highways and bridges 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average Daily Traffic (ADT) per lane ○ Congestion Index (CI) ○ Level of Service (LOS) ○ ITS coverage of region ○ Roadway pavement ratings and bridge sufficiency ratings ○ Bicycle and pedestrian facility surface conditions ○ Transit user satisfaction (such as reliability)
	Intergovernmental Coordination: Ensure coordination in the transportation planning process between intra- and inter-regional partners, including both state and local agencies.	
GOAL 7	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhance coordination between CORE MPO, Georgia Department of Transportation, County departments and with other City governments 	Performance Measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CORE MPO represented at all project development meetings ○ Establishment of coordination policies to promote communications between various agencies

6.2.5 Project Prioritization

The CORE MPO developed the prioritization process within the framework of the identified goals and the eight planning factors. The process also follows the Federal Highway Administration's guidance using the "SMART" principle which focuses on using existing data and avoids placing an unrealistic burden on staff.

Specific
Measurable
Agreed Upon
Realistic
Timebound

6.2.6 Transportation Investment Plan

Thoroughfare Plan Coordination

Each of the projects included in the Cost Feasible Plan were correlated with the Thoroughfare Plan to identify the roadway typology and to incorporate the corresponding design elements. The Cost Feasible Plan projects are shown below with the design elements identified in the Thoroughfare Plan. The phases identified, as well as the cost bands, are also included. Project phases include the following:

- Preliminary Engineering (PE)
- Right of Way (ROW)
- Construction (CST)

The cost bands where the project phase is anticipated is also shown. The cost bands are:

- Cost Band One: 2015 – 2020 (1)
- Cost Band Two: 2021 – 2030 (2)
- Cost Band Three: 2031 – 2040 (3)

Major Arterial - Suburban			
Jimmy DeLoach Parkway Extension	CST 1	SR 26/Ogeechee Road Widening	CST 1
Montgomery Crossroads Bridge Replacement	CST 2	East and West DeRenne Avenue Improvements	ROW 1 CST 2
I-516 Terminus Interchange at DeRenne (DeRenne Blvd. Option)	ROW 1 CST 2	SR 26/US 80 Bridges at Bull River and Lazaretto Creek	PE 1 CST 2
Effingham Parkway	PE 1 ROW 1 CST 2-3	President Street/Truman Parkway Interchange Reconstruction	CST 3

Major Arterial - Urban			
SR 25/West Bay Street Widening	CST 1	US 80/Victory Drive Improvements	CST 3

Minor Arterial - Suburban	
Gwinnett Street Widening	PE 1 ROW 1 CST 2

Collector - Suburban	
Grange Road Reconstruction	CST 1
Crossgate Road Reconstruction	CST 1
Brampton Road Connector	CST 2

No Thoroughfare Plan Cross Section Applicable		
I-516 Widening	CST 1, 3	Interstate
I-95/SR 21 Interchange Reconstruction	CST 1	Interstate/Interchange (SR 21 – Major Arterial Suburban)
Jimmy DeLoach Parkway Interchange	CST 1	Interchange (Major Arterial Suburban)
Traffic Control Center Study and Construction	CST 1	Non-Roadway
SR 21 and SR 25	CST 1	Culvert Replacement at Pipemakers Canal
I-95/I-16 Interchange Reconstruction	PE 1 ROW 2	Interstate/Interchange
I-16 Exit Ramp Removal	PE 1	Interstate/Interchange

There are a number of projects that are not classified by thoroughfare type. These projects include interstate and interchange projects, as well as culvert replacements. It is important to note that the cross sections of the facilities that cross interstates have been identified and will be incorporated into the projects.

Vision Plan

In addition to the cost constrained plan, the Total Mobility Plan also includes the other identified projects not included as financially feasible. These unfunded project needs are incorporated in the priority Vision Plan and Needs Plan.

Note: The Transportation Investment Plan is updated continuously in response to ongoing implementation efforts by GDOT, Chatham County and others. The plan information reflected here reflects the Total Mobility Plan at the time of adoption. For the most up to date information, visit <http://corempo.org>.

6.3 Public Transportation

The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) is the agency responsible for the provision of transit services to the Savannah area, including fixed route and paratransit as well as ferry services. The agency is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of three members of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, one resident from unincorporated Chatham County, one resident with a disability, one resident at-large, one member of the City of Savannah Board of Aldermen, one resident of the City of Savannah, and one resident of a municipality in the County outside of Savannah.

A Transit Development Plan (TDP), required by federal and state agencies, provides a 5-year capital and operating program and a longer term 10-year guide and planning tool for the transit agency to provide consumers with the most effective and efficient transit service. The TDP process includes a major update accomplished every five years, as well as annual updates to address changing conditions. The components of a TDP update include public involvement, coordination with other state and local transportation plans, an assessment of the existing and future conditions, agency goals and objectives, the development and evaluation of alternative strategies and action steps, a financial analysis, a 5-year operating plan and a 10-year implementation plan for the identified longer term strategies.

a. Ridership

In order to better understand the ridership, trips, rider behavior and satisfaction, an on-board survey was conducted. The results were categorized into trip characteristics, demographics, rider behavior and customer satisfaction. According to the TDP, major findings from the survey respondents indicated that the majority of CAT riders walk three blocks or less to the bus stop and to their destination; the trip is primarily for work or shopping; more than half of the trips require a transfer; trips typically end either at home or at work. The majority of the riders are male and fall between the ages of 18 and 54 and almost 80% of the ridership is African American. Over 90% of the riders' income is less than \$30,000 per year. Almost 70% of the riders use transit 5-7 days per week.

A survey was also conducted for the users of the CAT Teleride service. Almost 25% of the riders use the service on a daily basis and over 45% use the service 2 to 4 times per week. The majority of the riders use Teleride for medical appointments. Over 65% of riders were between the ages of 55 and 84 and are primarily African American.

The following are ridership statistics of the CAT transit services.

Mode: Fixed Route Bus

- Average Daily Ridership: 9,923
- Annual Ridership: 3,592,183

Mode: Demand Response Paratransit (Teleride)

- Average Daily Ridership: 237
- Annual Ridership: 86,077

Mode: Ferryboat

- Average Daily Ridership: 2,015
- Annual Ridership: 729,674

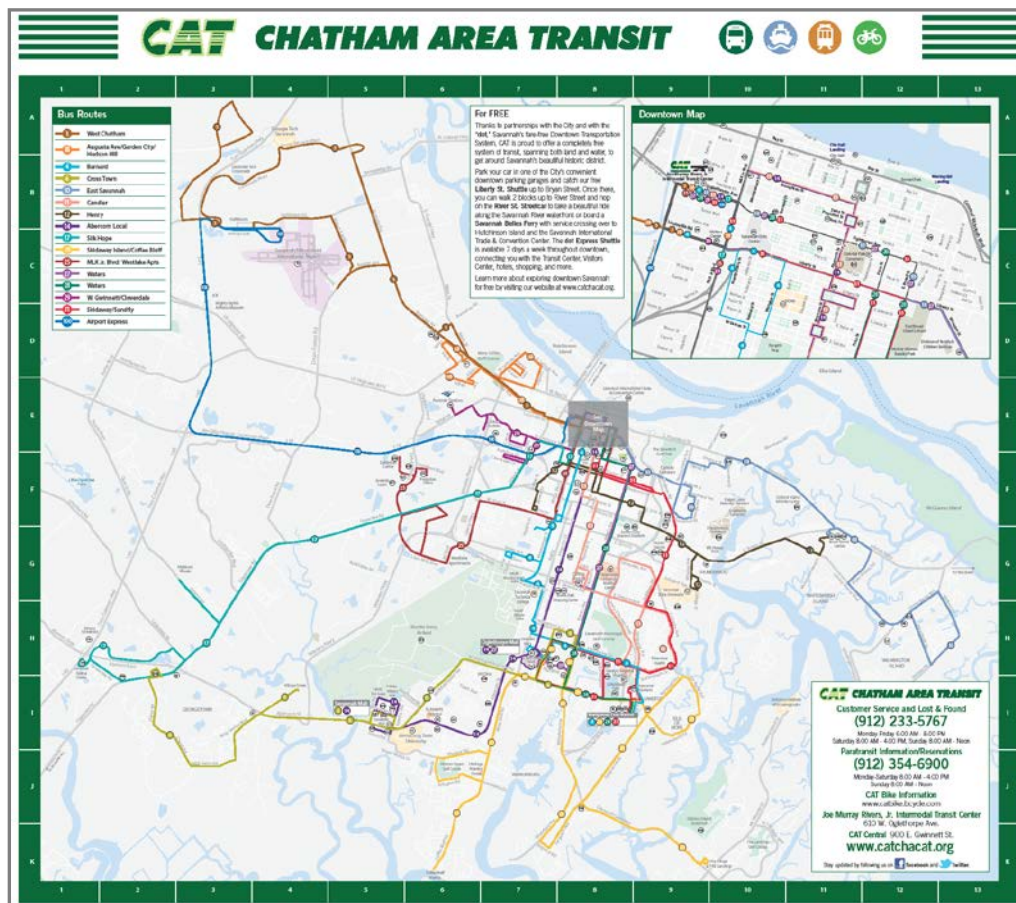
b. Routes and Facilities

CAT currently operates 17 routes, which includes two express routes. These express routes provide service from the Savannah / Hilton Head International Airport to the transit center in downtown Savannah and along Abercorn Street to the transit center from the GDOT-owned Gateway Park and Ride facility located at SR 204 and I-95. In addition, a downtown circulator shuttle is also operated. Another GDOT park and ride lot is located at I-95 and SR 21, although it is not served by public transit.

The Joe Murray Rivers, Jr. Intermodal Transit Center, a new downtown intermodal facility, was completed in 2013 and accommodates both CAT and Greyhound buses. It also provides one of the bike share stations within the bike share system operated by CAT.

Figure 6.4 below displays the current CAT routes. Schedules and a map of the routes can also be found at: <http://www.catchacat.org/maps-and-schedules/bus-maps-schedules/>

Figure 6.10: CAT Routes



c. Planned Transit Improvements

According to the recently adopted TDP, CAT has identified a “Family of Services” designed to enhance the ridership, appeal to additional markets and improve the existing services. This quality of service improvement approach includes:

- Improve service hours of operation and frequency of service, particularly on weekends
- Improve on-time performance
- Add additional routes to improve east-west connectivity and travel options utilizing 37th Street, Victory Drive, 59th Street/Columbus and DeLesseps Avenue
- Add zonal services utilizing smaller vehicles that connect to the fixed route service, including Montgomery/Victory Southwest, Midtown, Savannah State East, and Southside areas
- Implement regional commuter express service from neighboring counties
- Enhance commuter services (carpools and ride matching, employer vanpools)

According to the TDP, the five year prioritized program of improvements is shown in the figure below.

Figure 6.11: CAT's Prioritized 5-year Program



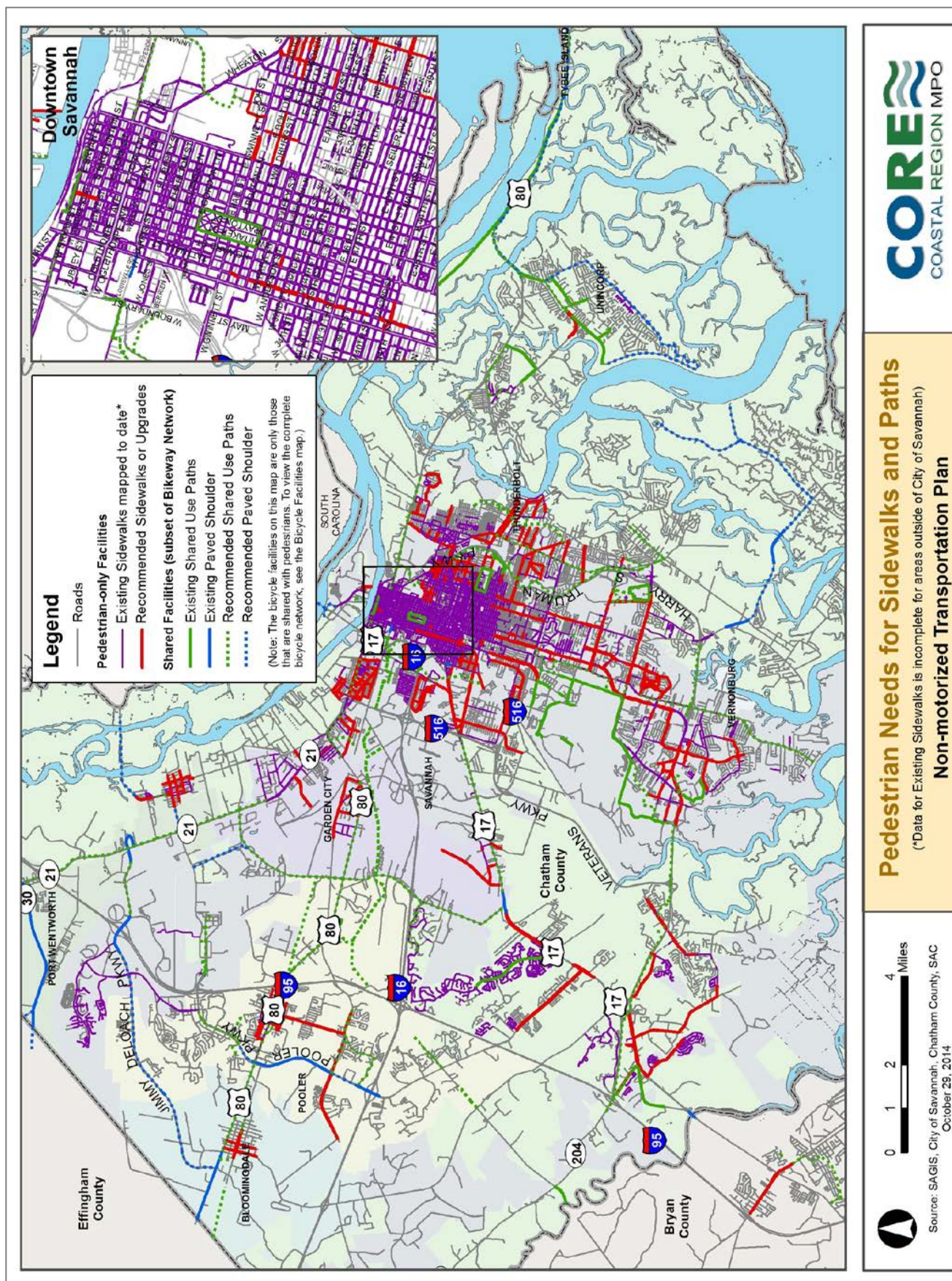
6.4 Walking and Bicycling

Travel by foot and by bicycle plays an important role at the local level, for short trips or even for longer trips, and sometimes in conjunction with motorized modes. CORE MPO adopted the Non-motorized Transportation Plan in 2014. It served to update the 2000 Bikeway Plan and also incorporated pedestrian projects, as reflected in the new document name. The non-motorized projects from the plan are reflected in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) “vision plan” (unfunded section), if not in the MTP’s “cost-feasible plan.”

CORE MPO has used some of its federal urban transportation funds on bicycle and pedestrian projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for several years. That funding was in addition to the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding that CORE MPO began awarding in 2014, after federal transportation legislation in 2012 gave the larger MPOs, like CORE MPO, a defined role in project selection. Delesseps Avenue Sidewalk and Road Improvements, Truman Linear Park Trail (Phase 2), and expansion of CAT’s Bike Share program are some of the pedestrian and bicycle projects advanced with federal funds. Local jurisdictions have also used local funds to make some improvements, such as Savannah’s Price Street bike lane, or Chatham County’s Whitemarsh Preserve Trail.

CORE MPO’s Non-Motorized Transportation Plan contains extensive lists of recommended pedestrian and bicycle projects, which may be implemented with or without federal funds. That plan was developed with several methods of public participation: public mapping exercises, public online survey, and periodic presentations of draft networks and lists. The maps in the figures below, from that MPO-adopted plan, show existing and recommended improvements throughout the MPO’s planning area (which is more extensive than the area covered by the MPC’s Comprehensive Plan).

Figure 6.12: Pedestrian Needs for Sidewalks and Paths



Bicycle Facility Types for Segments on the Bicycle Network

CORE MPO NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

DEFINITIONS OF BIKEWAY FACILITY TYPES

Bike Lane – A portion of roadway that has been designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists, by lane stripes, symbols, and if used, signs. It is intended for one-way travel, usually in the same direction as the adjacent traffic lane, unless designed as a contra-flow lane.

Cycle Track – A type of bikeway that is physically protected from the adjacent motor vehicle traffic by some kind of barrier, such as a parking lane, tactile markers within a buffer area, raised or mountable curbs, or low vegetation. Cycle tracks may be one-way (for an extra protected, conventional bike lane) or two-way.

Narrow Paved Shoulder – Within this plan, this is a shoulder in which the pavement outside the line (and free of longitudinal joints and rumble strips) has width = or > 3 feet but < 4 feet (unless on a road segment having posted speed limit > 45 mph, in which case widths < 5 feet are also considered "narrow").

Paved Shoulder – A paved portion of roadway contiguous with the traveled way that accommodates stopped vehicles and emergency use, and which may be used by bicyclists and pedestrians. Within this plan, the paved area must have at least 4 feet free of longitudinal joints or rumble strips (unless on segments having speed limit > 45 mph, in which case it must have at least 5 feet).

Shared Lane – A lane of a traveled way that is open to bicycle and motor vehicle travel.

Shared-use Path – A bikeway that is shared with other users, such as pedestrians, skaters, and runners, and that is physically separated from the motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier. Such a path may be within the highway right-of-way (i.e. a Sidepath) or within an independent right-of-way.

Wide Curb Lane – A wide travel lane, next to curb or edge of traveled way, which is at least 14 feet wide, not counting the gutter pan or the area used by on-street parking.

Legend

00 Roads and Streets

00 Bikeway Route Numbers (refer to Bikeway Route Notes in the Plan)

Facility Type or Treatment

- Existing Bike Lane
- Existing Paved Shoulder
- Existing Shared Lane
- Existing Shared-use Path
- Existing Wide Curb Lane
- Recommended Bike Lane
- Recommended Cycle Track
- Recommended Narrow Paved Shoulder
- Recommended Paved Shoulder
- Recommended Shared-use Path
- Recommended Wide Curb Lane

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

October 29, 2014

6.5 Intermodal Transportation

The term “intermodal” is used to describe the mass transportation of freight or human passengers, usually over long distances, and via more than one mode of transportation. Three types of intermodal facilities are discussed in this section: ports, railroads, and airports. More detail on freight planning can be found in CORE MPO’s Freight Transportation Plan, at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Freight>.

a. Port Facilities

Chatham County has two modern, deepwater terminals on the Savannah River that are collectively known as the Port of Savannah: Garden City Terminal and Ocean Terminal. Both facilities are run by the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA), which is a state-level quasi-governmental organization. Garden City Terminal is the fourth-busiest container handling facility in the United States, encompassing more than 1,200 acres and moving millions of tons of containerized cargo annually. Ocean Terminal, Savannah’s dedicated breakbulk and Roll-on / Roll-off facility, covers 200.4 acres and handles forest and solid wood products, steel, automobiles, farm equipment, and heavy-lift cargoes.³

The Georgia Ports Authority, which also operates port facilities in Brunswick, has a huge impact on economics and trade in Georgia. As one of the state’s largest public employers, the GPA directly employs almost 1,000 trained logistics professionals. The GPA, however, is responsible for generating far more employment throughout the state. GPA operations, together with private sector, port-related operations, account for more than 352,146 jobs statewide, \$66.9 billion of dollars in revenue, and income exceeding \$18.5 billion annually.

The Port of Savannah, in particular, has experienced rapid growth. For fiscal year 2016, the Port of Savannah has moved 3.6 million TEUs, with imports up by 3.5%.



Photo: Georgia Ports Authority/Stephen Morton

As port operations grow and intensify, the surrounding transportation infrastructure will need to support that growth. The 2040 Total Mobility Transportation Plan includes numerous projects that will help support port operations. It should be MPO policy to include these projects, as needed, in the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process to ensure that they receive adequate funding.

³ <http://www.gaports.com/PortofSavannah.aspx>

b. Railroads

Amtrak provides passenger rail service at its Savannah station. Savannah is served by the Palmetto, Silver Star, and Silver Meteor trains of Amtrak's Silver Service line, which runs from New York City to Miami, and stops at nearly 50 cities in between. The station served 71,658 passengers in 2013, or 37 percent of all Amtrak passengers in Georgia⁴.

In addition to passenger rail service, Chatham County is also served by approximately 221 miles of rail freight facilities, of which CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern, both Class I railroads, provide the major intermodal services. Other rail freight service providers include Georgia Central, Golden Isles and the Savannah Port. Almost all of these railroads and railroad yards are located in the western part of Chatham County and around the Port of Savannah.

Much of Chatham County's extensive rail infrastructure provides freight-oriented service to the Port of Savannah. Overnight rail service is available from the port to Atlanta, while two-to-four-day service is available for other regional freight distribution cities, such as Dallas and Chicago⁵. The integration of the port with rail freight providers allows for a highly streamlined process of intermodal freight movement, all of which is a strong economic generator for the local and regional economies.

c. Airports

The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport is the largest airport in Coastal Georgia. The airport occupies a 3,500-acre site and has two operational runways. The current terminal was completed in 1994 and has since been expanded to have a total of 15 gates. The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport is currently served with regular flights from the following airlines: American, Delta, Jet Blue, Allegiant and United. In 2015, the airport reported 1,017,065 passenger enplanements and 1,010,197 deplanements, as well as 7,654 tons of cargo. Operations (defined as either one takeoff or one landing) were at 88,961.⁶

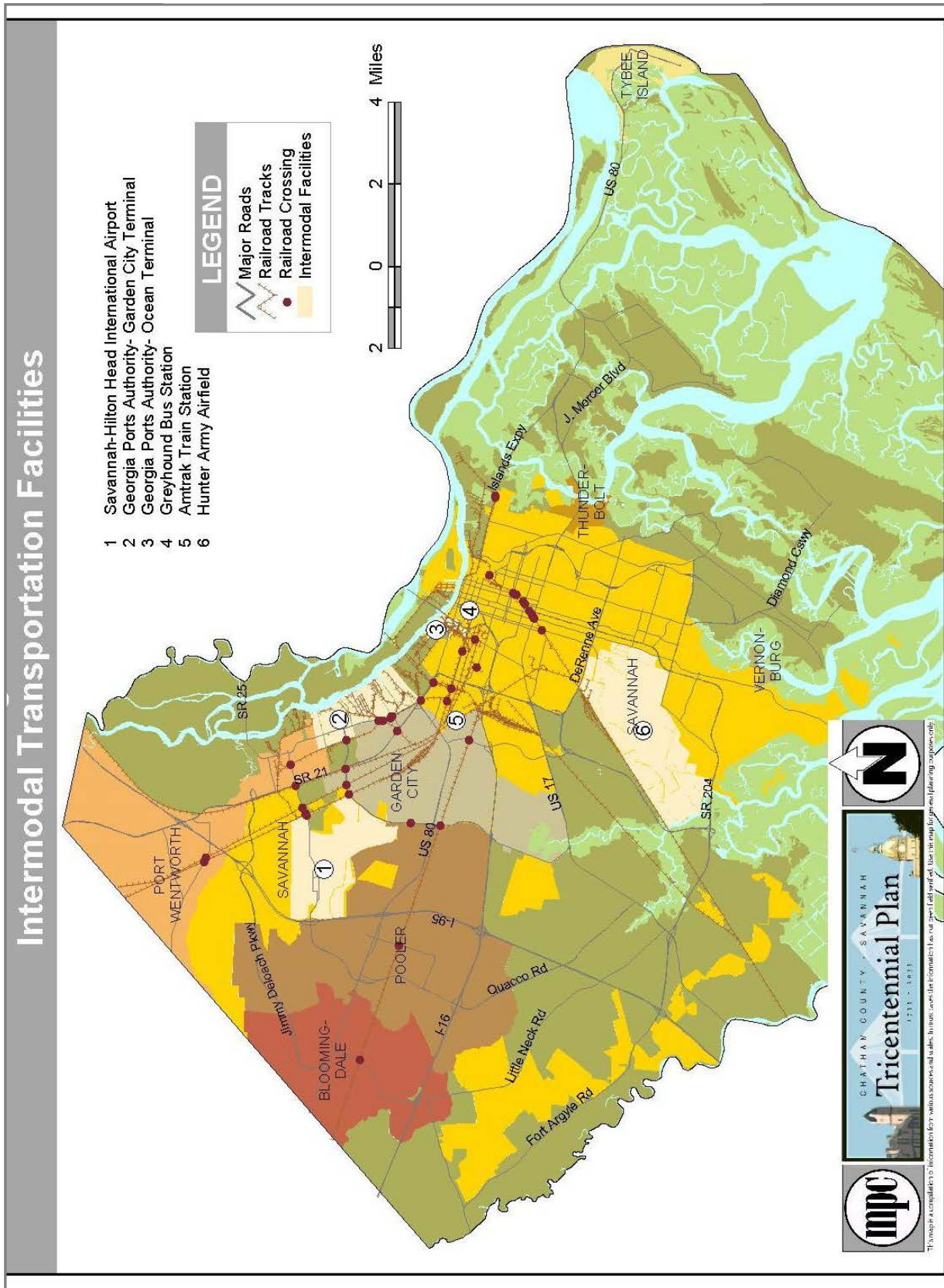
In 2014, the Commission undertook a Master Plan Update that addresses the airport's future needs in a comprehensive manner. The Master Plan provides airport management with a comprehensive assessment of the capital improvements needed to meet projected levels of passenger and aircraft operational activity during the next 20 years. The Master Plan continues the strategic vision established in previous plans while accounting for current needs and anticipating future trends. The Plan projects that enplanements will increase at an annual rate of 3.1 percent and that operations will increase at an annual rate of 0.9 percent. Recommendations of the Master Plan include widening of Airways Avenue and construction of an Emergency Operations Center, in addition to various field and terminal improvements.

⁴ Source: 2003 Georgia Transit Programs Fact Book, Page 50; GDOT Office of Intermodal Programs

⁵ Source: <http://www.gaports.com/index2.html>

⁶ Source: <http://www.savannahairport.com>

Figure 6.14: Intermodal Transportation Facilities



Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) is Chatham County's other major air transportation facility. Hunter AAF is a sub-installation to nearby Fort Stewart, and provides operational support to the 3d Infantry Division as well as numerous other non-divisional and tenant units. It is estimated that Fort Stewart and Hunter AAF together generate more than \$1 billion annually for the regional economy, with more than 19,500 military personnel stationed at the two bases and more than 3,700 civilian jobs⁷.

Diligent land use planning is one of the primary tools that local government can use to help ensure the continued operation of this important military installation. Land use conflicts adjacent to military bases can be an impetus for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Preventing the introduction of incompatible uses adjacent to military bases can help prevent BRAC. Much of the land to the immediate east of Hunter is developed with commercial uses, most of which are compatible with nearby military operations. However, much of the land to the west of Hunter is currently undeveloped. Preventing incompatible development to the west of Hunter is a key objective of the land use plan for that area.

Joint Land Use Study

In 2004 and 2005, personnel from Ft. Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield worked together with surrounding communities to conduct the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). The study used a land use planning approach to address the issue of incompatible development near Fort Stewart and Hunter AAF. Many of the recommendations from the Joint Land Use Study have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan to help ensure that military operations and civilian life can continue to coexist harmoniously in Savannah and Chatham County.

6.6 Parking

Parking is a topic of great interest, especially for dense areas like downtown Savannah. Everyone wants to park very close to the door of their destination, but a city attempting to fully meet those desires for its most urbanized sections would obliterate the qualities that draw people to the popular destinations to begin with.

In 2015 and 2016, CORE MPO and the City of Savannah developed a “strategic plan for parking and mobility in Savannah”, called Parking Matters. It looked not only at potential needs for capital investment (such as additional garages), but also at the ability of transit service revisions, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements, to encourage a “park once” behavior and generally reduce auto trips and parking demand within downtown.

The study found that existing parking capacity is greater than perceived by the public. Garages are often underutilized, partly because they are not priced competitively with on-street parking. Competition for one-street parking is strong in the core of downtown at certain times of the day. More distant parts of the study area often have on-street spaces available. As an example of actual capacity, on the Saturday in April of 2015 that one of the two utilization analyses was performed, overall unitization levels of on-street and off-street parking combined in the entire study area were at a high of just over 50%, in the 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. time frame.

Some of the recommendations of the Parking Matters study were:

⁷ Source: Ft. Stewart-Hunter AAF Joint Land Use Committee Request for Proposals; March, 2004.

- Downtown should have a tiered structure of three parking zones, to simplify the variety of rates and time limits. The core would have a higher price and no time limit; a second zone would have a lower price and no time limit, and a third zone would have no price but time limits between two and four hours;
- Mobility and Parking Services should be able to manage the system more dynamically – e.g. change rates in response to data about data, without needing to get approval from City Council every time.
- Revise and rebrand shuttle services to increase utilization of the parking capacity farther from the core.
- Improve assets to make walking and bicycling more inviting, in order to reduce desire to drive short distances between multiple downtown destinations.
- Revise zoning ordinances to reduce off-street parking requirements where appropriate, by allowing shared parking, remote parking, and on-street parking credit.
- Plan for new garages and other parking expansion as part of future development (e.g. at the edges of downtown), in coordination with land use planning.

6.7 Innovations

Technology continues to influence transportation conditions and trends. In recent years, ridesharing companies and mobile applications have become popular for some people who do not have a car on hand or who simply do not wish to drive themselves for a particular trip. By mid-2016 two companies were operating this type of service in the Savannah area – Uber and Lyft. This type of trip is more likely to be made by segments of the population who are comfortable with smart phones, new mobile applications, and who have credit cards. Thus it does not necessarily fill a gap for the traditionally underserved populations (low income, disabled, elderly). Smart phone applications are also changing the way parking is managed and used.

Other potential technological changes in the future include autonomous vehicle technology. The US DOT released a policy statement on such vehicles in 2013. The agency promotes research and has made recommendations on achieving safe operations during testing. In a more holistic measure, the US DOT held a “Smart City Challenge” in 2016 to award \$40 million to one city for advances in connected vehicles and smart sensors, in addition to autonomous vehicles. More and more technological advances come out every year.

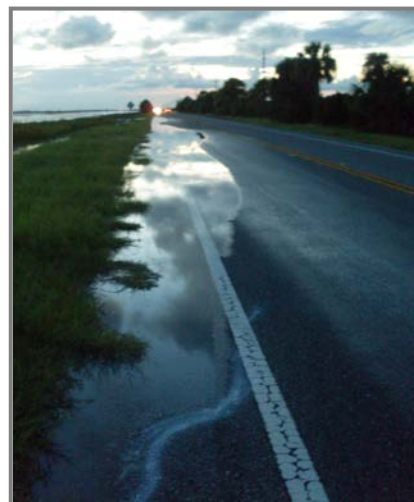
Predicting all impacts on transportation systems from these new technologies is difficult. The ridesharing companies and applications likely reduce parking demands, but may in fact increase trips at various times of day, because in practice the drivers are driving as full-time or part-time jobs and may be frequently circulating (similar to taxi operations) in hopes of grabbing a trip assignment via the mobile application. Uncertainties about autonomous vehicles include the question of whether most individuals will still wish to have their own vehicle, or prefer to use vehicles they don’t own as an on-demand service. The automated nature and vehicle-to-vehicle communications could increase capacity of a given number of lanes by reducing average following distance between vehicles (currently needed for human reaction time), while still improving safety.

6.8 Additional Considerations

6.8.1 Climate Change and Resilience Planning

A frequently-discussed topic on a national level is climate change and its effects, which include sea level rise. There has been an increased focus on the federal level, with the FHWA completing research and providing the findings on best practices for MPOs to develop policies and strategies to deal with the impacts from the changing climate.

With its coastal location, the CORE MPO recognized the need for understanding any potential impacts on the existing and future transportation infrastructure and developing an approach to address and/or mitigate these impacts. An example of the impacts is the higher than normal tides that are occurring more frequently; these tides impact access to the islands, particularly Tybee Island as US 80, the only facility connecting the islands to the mainland, floods and must be closed during these tide events.



Increasing public awareness of the issues and understanding the impacts on infrastructure and mobility is an important focus for the MPO. In this effort, the MPO held a specific workshop focused on climate change. Participants received information regarding impacts of climate change on an international and national level. Participants then identified potential impacts on the local level, as well as potential short and long term strategies to address/mitigate these impacts. Examples of the identified strategies, which incorporated environmental and infrastructure-related approaches, included:

Short Term Strategies	Long Term Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-establishment of oyster beds• Better stormwater retention during high tides• Assessment of infrastructure and potential disinvestments• Bridge footing retrofits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Eco-armoring” or utilizing creative methods of protection such as berms with increased natural vegetation• Elevation of infrastructure• Transition to renewable energy

6.8.2 Transportation Planning and Health

Community and public health as it relates to transportation policy and infrastructure has come to the forefront of planning. Community health is impacted by transportation planning decisions in many ways: the density and design of transportation networks determines the feasibility and attractiveness of active transportation and the ability to economically reach sources of healthy foods; motor vehicle use and the provision of

impervious parking and driving surfaces pollutes drinking water sources through stormwater runoff; vehicle emissions affect air quality and contribute to stressful weather events; highway projects can affect mental health by destroying green space and or by dividing neighborhoods and disrupting social networks.

The CORE MPO recognizes and has implemented strategies to promote a healthier community and health equity. The development of the non-motorized and thoroughfare plans, the long standing commitment to complete streets and context sensitive design principles, and the focus on accessible transportation for all populations provides the policy framework for the promotion of health considerations in transportation planning.

The MTP must be financially constrained, meaning the expected federal, state, and local revenue is allocated to higher priority projects, creating the MTP's "constrained plan," while the remaining needs are listed in the MTP's unfunded "vision plan."

The planned projects are intended to meet the MTP's goals and objectives, and help make progress toward achieving the performance measures. Since CORE MPO amends the adopted MTP from time to time, the best source for the most up-to-date project lists is on CORE MPO's web pages (the Transportation section of the MPC web site), at <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Plans>. A subset of projects in the MTP, those that have one or more phases funded in near-term, four-year window, appear in the MPO's short-range document called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is also available for review on the MPO website at <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Tip>.

6.8.3 Transportation Amenities

In response to growing citizen concerns, CORE MPO developed, in 2003, a formal policy for tree preservation and restoration, landscaping, and the provision of pedestrian and other amenities within roadway projects. A resolution was adopted by Chatham County, City of Savannah, Town of Thunderbolt, and the CORE MPO Board. Two planning phases followed. The first step, during 2004, was the identification and mapping of Transportation Amenities, in categories of: Canopy Roadways and Replanting Areas; Palm-lined Causeways; Scenic Vistas; Historic Road Segments; Community Gateways; and Landscaping and Enhancement of New and Recently Completed Roadways. Figure ?? below shows the resulting map.

The second step was to develop guidelines for implementing road projects in a context sensitive manner that would result in the preservation or restoration of those amenities. The MPO's first effort, in 2007, was the development of a manual of Context Sensitive Design Guidelines through a process including two community workshops. Although the manual described a range of local context zones, each with specifications for urban design and roadway elements, achieving implementable standards for use by local government staffs required a closer look, in coordination with the local staffs, which resulted in the creation of the Thoroughfare Plan, as part of the MPO's 2040 Total Mobility Plan, which is the required Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Each of the identified projects in the MTP has been correlated with the Thoroughfare Plan to incorporate the appropriate design elements based on the roadway typology.

6.8.4 Goal: Coordinate Transportation Planning and Land Use Planning

Transportation and land use are inextricably connected. This connection makes the joint coordination of land use planning and transportation planning all the more important.

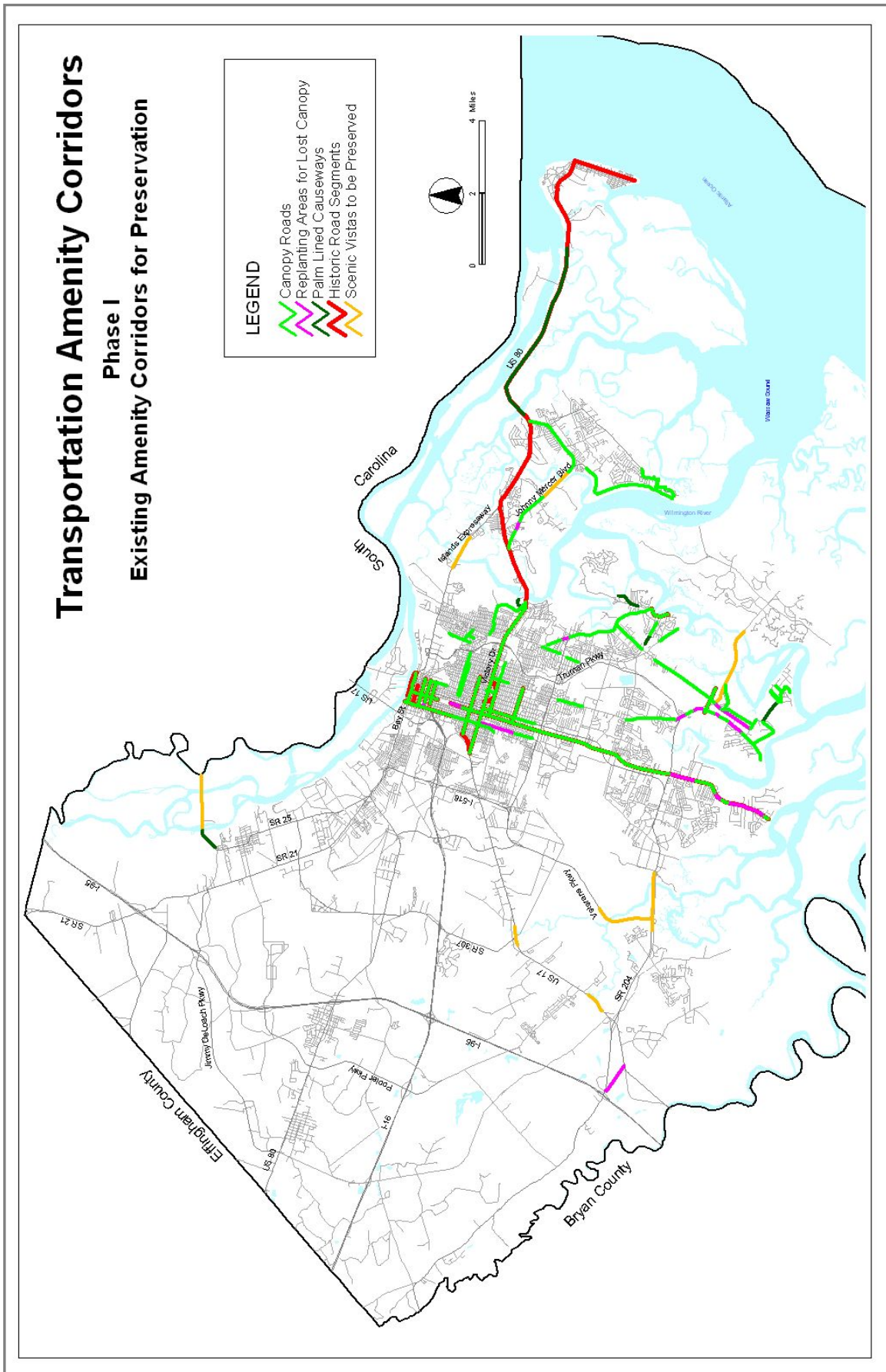
Compared to many other metropolitan areas, the coordination between transportation planning and land use planning in Chatham County is already quite good. CORE MPO, the Savannah area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is housed in the MPC office. Transportation planning functions as a department within the MPC, and MPC management also supervises the MPO's activities. This arrangement helps ensure that the MPC's executive director, in particular, is kept fully in the loop on all land use planning and transportation activity, and can jointly coordinate the two. This helps to ensure that the policies of both the MPC and the MPO work in the best interest of the greater community. One of the primary limiting factors in this arrangement, however, is the fact that the MPC only has planning jurisdiction in the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County. The other seven municipalities in Chatham County (Bloomington, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Thunderbolt, Tybee Island, and Vernonburg) as well as a portion of Effingham county and Richmond Hill in Bryan County do not participate in the MPC, but are members of the MPO. Because of their participation in joint transportation planning, but not joint land use planning, these seven municipalities do not benefit from the MPC and MPO's planning arrangement to the same degree as the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County.

6.8.5 Objective: Provide/Encourage Alternatives to the Private Automobile

Savannah is a historic city with an in-tact mixed use land use pattern, and as such, is often held up as a prime example of a walkable American city. This is especially true of most neighborhoods north of Victory Drive. These neighborhoods were developed in the 200+ years of Savannah's history that predate the widespread use of automobiles. As such, most of these neighborhoods are both well-served by sidewalk facilities, and within walking distance of neighborhood-scale commercial uses. South of Victory Drive, and in East and West Chatham, development occurred in the automobile era, so development patterns tend to be less dense, and mixed use development less common. Many neighborhoods in these areas have sidewalk facilities, but walking destinations such as commercial corridors, parks, schools, and neighborhood-scale shopping centers tend to be located farther away than in older parts of the city.

Bicycles are already a relatively popular mode of transportation in Savannah, especially in the downtown and the neighborhoods adjacent to it. The downtown's compact development pattern is well-suited to transportation via bicycle. In addition, the city's numerous squares serve as traffic-calming devices that help bicyclists and pedestrians alike feel more safe and comfortable on the street.

Figure 6.15: Transportation Amenity Corridors



Bicycles and the downtown are a natural fit, but increasing bicycle use outside of the downtown area will require more aggressive planning practices. There are currently some, but not many, dedicated bicycle lanes outside of the downtown core. Increasing both the prevalence and connectivity of bike lanes will help promote bicycle use outside of the downtown core. Figure 6.7, in sub-section 6.3 above, shows a map of proposed bikeways.

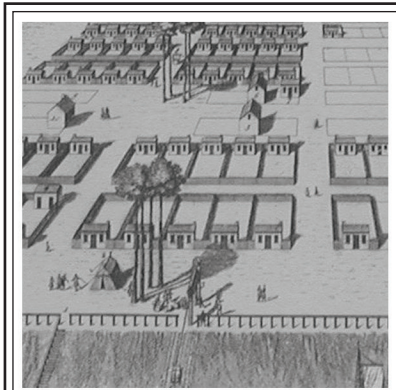
As discussed in Section 6.2, areas that are dense and walkable also tend to be better-suited to support public transit service, and this assertion is supported by the map of Public Transit Service Areas (see Figure 6.4). Public transit in areas with suburban densities and land use patterns is simply not as viable as it is in areas with more urban densities and land use patterns. One solution to this problem is to build denser suburbs, and the Amenity Community category on the Future Land Use Map will lead to new zoning that will allow denser development in new planned communities. But for suburban areas that are already built out at low densities, the primary solution to better transit service is to increase the use of park and ride lots. Park and ride facilities are able to overcome the limitations of low density development by providing a centralized facility from which to provide public transit service. As the county's population grows, and parking becomes more scarce and expensive downtown, park and ride lots will become an increasingly viable option in suburban areas. CORE MPO's report on the Park and Ride Lot Initiative recommends four new lot locations in addition to retention of three out of four existing lots. The full report is on the MPO's web pages at: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/ParkRide>.

A View of Savannah as it stood the 29th of March 1734 Housing

The City of Savannah houses one of the nation's most valuable assemblages of 19th century architecture. Founded by General James Oglethorpe in 1733, Georgia's colonial capital now encompasses fifteen Historic Districts and features a unique design of streets and 22 squares framed by 18th, 19th and 20th century buildings.

The first houses in Savannah were of frame construction, eight feet high, sixteen feet wide and twenty-four feet deep. According to Mills

Lane, author of Savannah Revisited, this was "an echo from the late middle ages in England where the eight foot bay necessary for an ox and cart to pass under shelter had become architectural tradition." Abundant forests ensured that frame construction would predominate for the first 100 years of the colony.



The development of the streetcar and later the automobile enabled the crowded community to develop housing farther and farther from the center of the city. The 20th century saw American cities moving to the suburbs. Savannah was no exception as it

abandoned the grid layout and expanded to the south.

Grand old inner city houses became unfashionable and expensive to maintain.

Many were broken up into apartments. The trend continued unabated until the 50s when several close

calls with destruction of landmarks forced local citizens to act. The Historic Savannah Foundation was established to preserve the historic downtown. It took decades of effort, but they largely succeeded in their task and now Savannah is widely regarded as a model for historic preservation and mixed use development.

7.1 Introduction

The Housing Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is an inventory and assessment of the community's housing stock, as well as a discussion of the issues and needs associated with housing within Chatham County - Savannah. The chapter attempts to identify major housing problems, determine future housing needs, and develop a plan for managing housing development in the future. In order to achieve the community goal of ensuring that every resident has a safe and decent place to live within a satisfactory environment, the housing strategies presented promote coordination of housing policies and programs at the local, state, and federal levels.

Based upon these strategies, we find that a variety of housing opportunities must be available throughout the County, at prices that are affordable, to achieve a socio-economically diverse community.



7.2 Assessment of the Chatham – Savannah Housing Market

Chatham – Savannah is an area rich not only in history, but geography as well, from quiet countryside to salt water marshes and river ways, including Atlantic beaches on Tybee Island. The real estate market here reflects this diversity with housing opportunities ranging from restored 18th century townhomes, beachfront cottages, golf lot patio homes to secluded marsh-view hideaways, with a wide variety of price ranges and sizes.

There are two primary factors that influence the different types of housing units built in Chatham County: zoning, which specifies the types of units developers are allowed to build, and market demand, which dictates the types of housing units people want to buy. The future market demand for specific types of units will depend upon the future demographic changes of various population groups. For example, if the future population is projected to be either very young or very old, the market will likely demand relatively more multi-family units than are provided in the current housing mix.

In addition to estimating the total future demand for housing, population projections can also be used to estimate the future demand for various types of housing. There are three types of housing needs that are addressed in the next section: multi-family housing; affordable housing; and special needs housing.

7.2.1 Housing Unit Types

Residential land uses occupy over 33,000 acres within the County as a whole. The types of housing include a mix of single-family, multi-family, and manufactured homes as shown in Table 7.1 *Housing units by type within Chatham County*. The single-family, site-built home continues to be the most popular type of housing unit in the market, representing over 60 percent of the total units in Chatham County in 2014. In 2014, multi-family housing units (structures with two or more units) comprised almost 26 percent of the housing stock. Manufactured homes accounted for less than five percent of the housing units.



7.2.2 Multi-Family Housing

One major factor in estimating the future need for various housing types is the age distribution of the future population. Age is a major factor in housing choice because people within a given age group tend to share various characteristics. People in their early twenties are more likely to rent an apartment than buy a house because young people tend to have fewer financial resources than an older population, and they also tend to be more mobile. People in their working years are likely to choose to live in single-family homes because they have more capital and are likely to be raising children. People who are retired may opt for a simpler lifestyle, which may involve selling their single family home and moving into a townhouse, garden apartment, or other type of multi-family unit. An area's age distribution, along with its wealth and cultural characteristics, is therefore a major factor in determining that area's demand for various types of housing units.

Table 7.1: Projected Age Distribution, Chatham County

AGE	2010	2020	2030	% Chg. 2010-2030
<5	17,219	17,442	17,514	1.7
5 to 14	34,008	34,911	35,141	3.3
15 to 24	33,666	35,056	35,221	0.5
25 to 34	35,959	34,690	35,354	-1.7
35 to 44	35,318	35,370	34,949	-1.0
45 to 54	35,318	35,370	37,340	5.8
55 to 64	29,466	35,494	34,789	18.1
Over 65	33,772	48,040	57,696	70.8

Source: MPC Projections

The aging of the overall population is a nationwide trend as the “Baby Boom” generation approaches retirement and the generation of the “Baby Bust” that follows it is significantly smaller. This nationwide aging effect will be even more pronounced in the South, which continues to be a retirement destination. The local effect in Chatham County will likely be even more pronounced because of its desirable coastal location and the close proximity to resorts and retirement communities.



As shown in Table 7.2, Chatham County’s population is projected to age significantly over the next 15 years. The largest population gains will be in older age groups. The effect will be increasingly pronounced among the oldest age groups, with 45 to 54 year olds increasing 5.8 percent from 2010 levels, and 55 to 64 year olds increasing 18.1 percent and people who are over 65 increasing by over 70 percent. Younger age groups, by contrast, are projected to experience either very modest growth or slight reductions from current level.

As people grow older many find it advantageous to relocate from single-family homes to multi-family dwellings, making it likely that an increase in demand for multi-family units will accompany the aging population. The future demand for multi-family units will continue

To ensure there are sufficient amounts of multi-family housing units available for the ever growing young adult and senior population, it is essential that more multi-family units come into the market.

to rise because of the projected increase in the population of college students. Although Chatham County’s total population of young adults is projected to decrease slightly between 2010 and 2030, it is expected that the County’s population of college students will increase as Chatham County’s major institutions of higher learning continue to expand and attract students from outside the County.

To ensure there are sufficient amounts of multi-family housing units available for this ever growing population, the County needs to see more multi-family units come into the market.

7.2.3 Affordable Housing

Projecting the future demand for affordable housing is challenging because the affordable housing market is dependent upon economic conditions, which are difficult to forecast. Affordable housing is also a relative issue; all housing is affordable to somebody. One of the answers to the question of developing affordable housing, from a regulatory standpoint, is to require new development to provide a range of housing types and sizes, in various locations, to help ensure a diverse housing stock and maximize housing choices for the individual.

There are numerous zoning strategies that can be used to help ensure a diverse housing stock. One strategy is to allow a variety of housing types within residential zones. It is often a common zoning practice to separate different housing types, which prevents developers from building a mix of housing types. This practice limits differentiation within the housing stock, as many local governments and developers are biased in favor of single-family detached housing.



However, the zoning ordinance can also include affordable housing incentives such as density bonuses to help make constructing affordable housing more attractive to developers. Another strategy is to allow innovative housing types, such as accessory dwelling units, in new and existing residential areas. This is already a common

practice in many of Savannah's historic neighborhoods, where carriage houses have been converted into rental units. Infill development of this type not only creates a second source of income for the landowner (thereby helping to increase the affordability of the primary unit), it also decreases costs for the City, which benefits from the gain in residential population without investing in additional infrastructure. Additionally, the renters of accessory units gain the opportunity to live in a neighborhood that may otherwise be unaffordable to them.

Because low income and elderly populations have a higher reliance on public transportation than other groups, the County and City's zoning ordinance should encourage affordable housing units in walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with access to reliable public transit. A walkable development pattern will reduce dependency on automobiles to include special needs populations (who either cannot afford cars or are physically unable to drive), and will also help make the provision of mass transit more effective and feasible.



7.2.4 Housing Mix

Maintaining a mix of housing types is one of the most important housing strategies. It helps to ensure a socially and economically diverse community by providing viable housing options for residents from the full spectrum of personal preference and economic buying power.

The most popular form of housing in the area is single-family detached housing (See Table 7.2) The concentration of single-family detached homes is highest overall in the unincorporated area, and lowest in the City of Savannah with Chatham County having a higher percentage at 63.8 percent versus the City of Savannah at 57.3 percent.

Table 7.2: Housing Types as a Percent of Total Housing Units, 2000-2014				
	CHATHAM COUNTY		SAVANNAH	
Units in Structure	2009	2014	2009	2014
Total Units	98,528	103,807	53,526	52,264
1 (detached)	65.2	63.8	60.6	57.3
1 (attached)	5.4	5.9	6.3	7.3
2	3.5	3.3	5.6	5.6
3 to 4	6.5	5.7	9.1	8.5
5 to 9	7.1	7.0	8.4	9.4
10 or More	7.9	9.6	8.3	10.4
Manufactured Home or other type	4.6	4.8	1.7	1.5

However, the trend for the past five years indicates an increasing development of multifamily structures which will assist with meeting the demand discussed in Section 7.3.2.

7.2.5 Public and Assisted Housing



The demand for public and assisted housing is likely to grow as total population continues to increase in Chatham County. The Housing Authority of Savannah (HAS) operates public housing and rental assistance programs in the Savannah area. As of July 2016, the HAS serves approximately 7,500 residents in over 2,900 units via the Section 8 housing assistance payment program¹. In recent years, HAS has made great strides toward achieving its goal of producing Savannah's first integrated mixed income/mixed use housing projects at the Fellwood and Savannah Gardens public housing sites.

7.2.6 Homelessness

Although it seems unlikely that the problem of homelessness will ever be completely solved, the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless (CSAH) is taking steps toward helping the homeless population. The Authority's strategy has gradually shifted away from a shelter-based approach and toward its current system of providing a continuum of care for homeless persons, including a project to establish safe, clean and sustainable, non-traditional housing options. The Authority offers a "shelter plus care" approach where the homeless are provided with skills training and other services in addition to shelter. Future goals include the

¹ Source: Housing Authority of Savannah

establishment of a managed campsite, a self-governed “tiny homes village” with prefabricated micro shelters located in clusters within a fenced area. CSAH’s Strategic Plan for 2015-2018 that details how the community will continue to serve the homeless can be found at www.homelessauthority.org

Again, as the population continues to grow in Chatham County, the need for housing assistance for the homeless will also grow and therefore, must be an issue raised and addressed together by all of the local governments and its residents.



7.3 Assessment of Housing

7.3.1 Age and Condition of Housing

The age of Savannah's housing stock reflects the area’s early development. In 2014, more than 60 percent of the housing stock in Savannah was at least 30 years old and 38 percent was over 50 years old (Table 7.4). Homes that are more than 30 years old are generally at the greatest risk of being substandard and/or subject to deterioration associated with improper maintenance and repair. The highest rehabilitation need usually occurs in communities with a concentration of the following characteristics: an older housing stock; non-subsidized rental housing; and low-income households. All of these characteristics could apply to the City of Savannah at one point in time.



Table 7.3 also indicates that 70 percent of the housing units in both Chatham County and the City of Savannah were constructed between 1940 and 2000. Generally speaking, the majority of the units that are 50 years old or older are concentrated in Savannah’s various historic neighborhoods (see additional discussion in the Historic Resources Chapter).

Table 7.3: Age of Housing Structures (Percentage of Total)				
	CHATHAM COUNTY		SAVANNAH	
	#	%	#	%
Total Housing Units	103,807	100	52,264	100
Built 2010 or later	1,453	1.4	1,254	2.4
Built 2000 to 2009	22,318	21.5	5,749	11.0
Built 1980 to 1999	31,661	30.5	9,982	19.1
Built 1960 to 1979	25,017	24.1	15,261	29.2
Built 1940 to 1959	16,298	15.7	12,072	23.1
Built 1939 or earlier	7,059	6.8	7,996	15.3

Source: American Community Survey

7.3.2 Owner and Renter Occupied Units

In Chatham County, 56 percent of all households are owner occupied. This is a substantially higher incidence of owner occupancy than in the City of Savannah (45 percent). Over the last 30 years, owner occupancy rates within the County as a whole, the City of Savannah, and the unincorporated area have remained fairly stable.



In 2014, an estimated 45 percent of Savannah's occupied housing units were owner-occupied, representing a decrease from the city's 50 percent owner occupancy rate in 2000. Prior to 2000, a majority of the occupied units in Savannah were owner-occupied units. This characteristic had been a part of Savannah's housing market for several decades, owing in part to the age of the housing stock and a small concentration of public housing complexes in the City. Until the 1990s, the renter-occupancy rate had been steadily increasing in Chatham County. The construction of several

apartment complexes during the 1980s pushed the percentage of renter-occupied units up. Table 7.4 summarizes housing tenure in Chatham County and the City of Savannah.

Table 7.4: Housing Tenure 1980-2014				
	CHATHAM COUNTY		SAVANNAH	
	Number	%	Number	%
Year 2014				
Total Occupied	103,807	100	52,264	100
Owner Occupied	58,158	56	23,525	45
Renter Occupied	45,649	44	28,739	55
Year 2000				
Total Occupied	89,865	100	51,375	100
Owner Occupied	54,293	60	25,842	50
Renter Occupied	35,572	40	25,533	50
Year 1990				
Total Occupied	81,111	100	51,943	100
Owner Occupied	47,727	59	26,319	51
Renter Occupied	33,384	41	25,624	49
Year 1980				
Total Occupied	71,323	100	50,681	100
Owner Occupied	42,334	59	26,621	53
Renter Occupied	28,989	41	24,060	47

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

7.3.3 Costs of Housing

The cost of housing countywide, both owner-occupied and renter-occupied, has increased steadily over the past three decades. In 2000, the median price for a home in Chatham County was \$95,000. By 2014, the estimated median price of a home rose to \$171,000, an 80 percent increase in a fourteen-year period. In Savannah, during the same time period, the

cost of housing rose a little over 82 percent from \$78,500 in 2000 to \$143,200 in 2014 (Table 7.5). If housing prices continue to increase faster than incomes, an increasing percentage of Savannah and Chatham County residents will find housing costs unaffordable.

Between 2000 and 2014, the median contract rent for Chatham County increased by 96 percent, from \$475 to \$935. In Savannah, during the same time period, the median contract rent also rose 98 percent from \$450 in 2000 to \$891 in 2014. (Table 7.6) Contract rent is the dollar amount a renter pays under a rental or lease agreement, excluding utility costs (unless these costs are included in the rental agreement).

However, it should be noted that the Census reports do not necessarily provide an accurate measure of market rents. The rents reported by the census may be inaccurate because many rental units in Savannah are either income and rent restricted (government subsidized rental apartments) or a part of the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program, where residents pay no more than 30 percent of their incomes for rent.

Table 7.5: Median Home Value/Rent for Specified Owners and Renters 1980-2000		
	CHATHAM COUNTY	SAVANNAH
Owner-Occupied		
1980	\$36,100	\$33,200
1990	\$63,300	\$54,800
2000	\$95,000	\$78,500
2014	\$171,000	\$143,200
Renter-Occupied		
1980	\$133	\$125
1990	\$296	\$281
2000	\$475	\$450
2014	\$935	\$891

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey (Not adjusted for inflation)



income tenant with a federal housing voucher. The federal government pays the difference between the fair market rent and the tenant's payment.

An indication of the difference between contract rents and market rents is the federal government's estimate of fair market rents for the coastal area (Savannah, MSA). The fair market rent is the dollar amount a property owner is entitled to receive, less utility costs, for a rental unit occupied by a low-

7.3.4 Special Needs

A considerable number of the population within Chatham County and Savannah have special housing needs. Table 7.6 includes an inventory of some disabilities accounted for by the Census Bureau. In terms of how these disabilities affect housing needs, many simply require modifications to existing residences such as replacing steps with ramps and improving wheelchair accessibility. Other disabled residents, such as individuals with cognitive difficulties, require long-term residential care.

Chatham County and Savannah have an array of residential services to include shelters for victims of domestic violence and their families, rehabilitation centers for individuals recovering from drug addiction and mental illness, residential facilities for people with developmental disabilities, and transitional housing for homeless families and individuals. In addition, a number of agencies provide subsidized or affordable housing for older adults as well as hospice residences for patients with terminal diseases.

Although not all-inclusive, Table 7.6 below displays the number of residents within Chatham County and the city of Savannah with a disability as defined by the US Census that may have special housing needs.

Table 7.6 Disability Characteristics		
	CHATHAM COUNTY	SAVANNAH
Disability status	5.9%	5.8%
Hearing difficulty	3.8%	3.7%
Vision difficulty	4.2%	4.1%
Cognitive difficulty	4.7%	4.6%
Ambulatory difficulty	4.5%	4.5%
Self-care difficulty	4.5%	4.5%
Independent living difficulty	4.8%	4.7%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimate, 2010-2014

7.3.5 Historic Housing Inventory

By far, the greatest numbers of identified historic resources in the City of Savannah are located within neighborhoods that are listed on, or are eligible for National Register of Historic Places listing. Ninety-two percent of these resources are residential structures. These pedestrian-oriented urban residential neighborhoods offer numerous advantages for rehabilitation such as established shade trees, paved streets, sidewalks, water and sewer, trash pick-up and public transportation. It makes more economic sense to maintain and upgrade older neighborhoods than to further expand suburban construction, which places new demands on transportation and other infrastructure systems.

The historic housing stock provides opportunities for a variety of housing types. Additionally, the quality of materials, craftsmanship, and detail would be prohibitively expensive to duplicate today. Listing on the National Register qualifies these houses for various federal and local rehabilitation tax incentive programs. For further discussion of the advantages and challenges faced in historic neighborhoods see Chapter 9: Quality of Life - Historic and Cultural Resources. A complete list of individual historic resources can be reviewed at the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC).

7.4 Regional Housing Market

The housing characteristics of the region reflect the area's history and early development patterns. More recent trends show how and where housing development is expected to occur in the future. This section of the Housing Chapter addresses the relationship between the existing housing stock and commuting patterns as well as looks at the housing market in



surrounding counties. These aspects of the community, when compared with existing housing stock, are a good measure of how well the housing market meets the residents' needs.

7.4.1 Commuting Patterns

Examining Chatham County's commuting patterns provides insight for economic development and housing planning, land use issues, and traffic patterns. Overall, the commuting patterns data indicates that Chatham County remains a principal job center for the region, although surrounding counties are improving their position as job providers. In 2000, around one in five workers in Chatham were commuters from surrounding

counties of Bryan, Effingham, Liberty, and Jasper and Beaufort counties in South Carolina. In 2012, that number had dropped to around one out of seven workers in Chatham County who commuted from a surrounding county to work in Chatham County.

7.5 Chatham – Savannah Housing Market Needs & Opportunities

Chatham County and the City of Savannah intend to continue identifying community needs and opportunities for adapting local activities, development patterns and implementation practices that will promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community.

This will be achieved in Chatham County and the City of Savannah by:

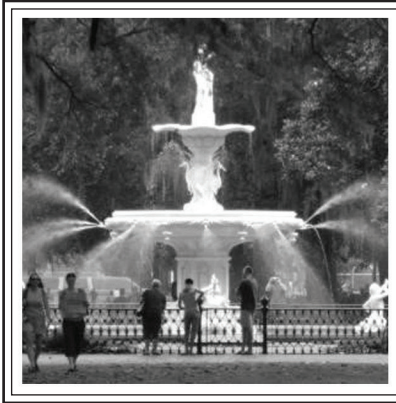
- Encouraging the development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood;
- Promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socio-economic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options;
- Instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; and
- Coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

Quality of Life

Not many landscapes can match the beauty and romance of the coastal environment. A temperate climate, abundant wildlife, and spectacular scenery have made Chatham County an ideal location for human settlement. From shell rings to mid-20th century subdivisions, there is physical and cultural evidence of over 4,000 years of human habitation and activity in Chatham County. Our streams, rivers and marshes are now more attractive than ever as a place to live.

Southeast Georgia is experiencing phenomenal growth due in large part to the County's positive quality of life attributes. With such population growth, come the other elements

of development. The vision of a community that is a safe and healthy place to live, work, and raise a family can be accomplished with forethought and when reverence for what makes Savannah and Chatham County unique is taken into account.



To control and manage the development of our unique area, residents and local government must continue in their efforts

of overseeing, protecting, and enhancing our vast resources while providing a safe and healthy environment for all our residents.

With proper planning, we can ensure that Chatham County will continue to be a place of beauty with a high quality of living for centuries to come.

8.0 Quality of Life Introduction

Chatham County seeks to provide an excellent quality of life for its citizens. In an effort to maintain such a high level, the County has a responsibility to promote and support programs and regulations that positively impact the quality of life of its citizens. The citizens of this community achieve a superior quality of life in a safe, active, and healthy environment.

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan includes an inventory and assessment of the following quality of life issues: Public Safety, Health, Education, Natural Resources, and Historic and Cultural Resources¹.

In order to ensure consistent priorities across local government bodies, this section incorporates several items from the *Chatham Community Blueprint* – a strategic plan adopted by both the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

8.1 Community Health

Public health- especially access to healthy foods, open spaces/recreational facilities, and active transportation (roads and trails safe for bicycles and pedestrians)- is a vital quality of life issue. The City of Savannah and Chatham County are cognizant of the interconnectedness between land use and public health. As such, they have instituted programs and policy changes to improve the public health and are committed to continue these efforts into the future.

8.1.1 Healthy Savannah

During the summer of 2007, Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson launched Healthy Savannah, with the aim of making Savannah a healthier place to live. Today Healthy Savannah is a strong 100-plus member coalition of public, private, and non-profit organizations that works to improve the overall health of Savannah. Over the past nine years, Healthy Savannah has spearheaded or partnered with other organizations on several efforts that positively impact the public health in Savannah-Chatham County. Recent accomplishments include the adoption of ordinances regarding mobile farmers' markets, the establishment of a community gardens program, and promoting school programs such as the walking school bus to encourage healthy habits.

8.1.2 Chatham Community Blueprint 2035

Chatham County continues to make efforts to improve public health for all its citizens. In 2008 the city of Savannah, Chatham County, and United Way of the Coastal Empire partnered to evaluate and address community needs, including public health issues. The

¹ The Quality of Life section contains aspects of this plan which are considered optional to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The *Chatham Community Blueprint* also contains a section titled "Quality of Life."

outcome of the partnership and countless hours of community involvement was the *Chatham County Blueprint*, which established visions, goals, and strategies to improve social and economic issues that can negatively impact the community.

The *Chatham Community Blueprint* identified the following vision with regard to land use related public health:

Chatham County has a culture of health including equal access to quality and affordable healthcare, chronic disease prevention, health inclusive policies and environmental design.

8.1.3 Issues and Opportunities

Community Health Services

Several barriers to health services were identified in the development of the *Chatham Community Blueprint* especially for families with children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities. There is a community-wide need to encourage and provide opportunities to incorporate physical activity into daily routines.

Mental Health & Social Services

A recurring topic of discussion during the formation of the *Chatham Community Blueprint* was the needs of the mentally ill and the provision of social services. A suite of policy recommendations was established in this document to address issues such as the stigma facing mental health patients and improving access to treatment. Additional goals were prepared to improve the delivery of social services at the neighborhood and regional scales.

Health in Schools

Several opportunities to improve public health were identified relating specifically to the role of schools. The *Chatham Community Blueprint* recommends increased physical activity, provision of nutrient-rich food, and education focused on healthy lifestyle choices.

Healthy Food

Access to healthy food was found to be a major issue affecting health in our community. The *Chatham Community Blueprint* proposed policy and funding mechanisms to increase access to produce to various “food deserts,” create farmer support programs, and expanding community gardens and urban farmers.

8.2 Education

A high-performing education system is a key ingredient for the future success of Savannah and Chatham County. Educational attainment unlocks future opportunities for personal

and community growth for generations to come. The provision of education to students is a vital function of local government – in this area it is provided by the Savannah Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS).

SCCPSS strives to improve the education system for all students in the County. The official vision for the school system is “From school to the world: All students prepared for productive futures.” This plan identifies ways to achieve a common vision for an improved community education system.

8.2.1 Chatham Community Blueprint 2035

The previously recognized *Chatham Community Blueprint* identified the following vision with regard to education:

From early childhood education through post-secondary achievement, Chatham County’s innovative and inclusive educational systems are a model of academic excellence that enable students to have the knowledge, skills and ability to succeed at chosen pathways.

8.2.2 Issues and Opportunities

Development of Financial, Social & Conflict Resolution Skills

Public outreach performed for the *Chatham Community Blueprint* revealed a need to improve students’ aptitude regarding financial and social skills. Inadequate financial literacy was found to cause students to make inferior decisions regarding saving and spending. Improvements to conflict resolution skills could help students reduce disciplinary actions that impair their future success. The discussions and community engagement performed as a part of the *Blueprint* provided a host of strategies for improving the integration of these life skills into the education system.

Improving Upward Mobility of Students

A gap between students, graduates, and employers was identified in the course of the outreach performed for the *Chatham Community Blueprint*. This limits the opportunities of local students and disconnects employers from future generations of young talent. Discussion found key barriers to address that would assist local students in finding employment and achieving upward mobility including: pre-kindergarten reading; improve reading and math achievement; access to apprenticeship, mentorship, and volunteering; and increasing hands-on experiences for students.

Enhancing Parental Involvement

Parental involvement and engagement in student’s education was found to be a strategy to improve educational outcomes. The *Chatham Community Blueprint* identified a host of methods to activate parents in their children’s studies including: incentives to maintain involvement (such as transit vouchers and paid time off), improved coordination of services, and education of parents about various policies.

8.3 Public Safety

A safe community creates better neighborhoods, economic development and overall quality of life for all residents. It is a primary responsibility of a municipality to ensure public safety that protects and serves its residents. Chatham County and the City of Savannah coordinate their efforts to ensure that police, fire, and emergency management services are provided for all residents.

8.3.1 Chatham Community Blueprint 2035

The *Chatham Community Blueprint* identified the following goal with regard to public safety:

Reduce crime, particularly abuse and violence, by building trust between law enforcement and residents, focusing enforcement individuals involved in risky behaviors and activities, and expanding the visibility of police to ensure all residents feel safe.

8.3.2 Issues and Opportunities

Improve Neighborhood Safety

A persistent theme in the public engagement for the *Chatham Community Blueprint* and this plan was the desire to reduce crime so that all residents feel safe. Data from the Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department (SCMPD) show that, while crime incidence is lower than the 2008 peak, the rate of both property and violent crime has increased since 2013.

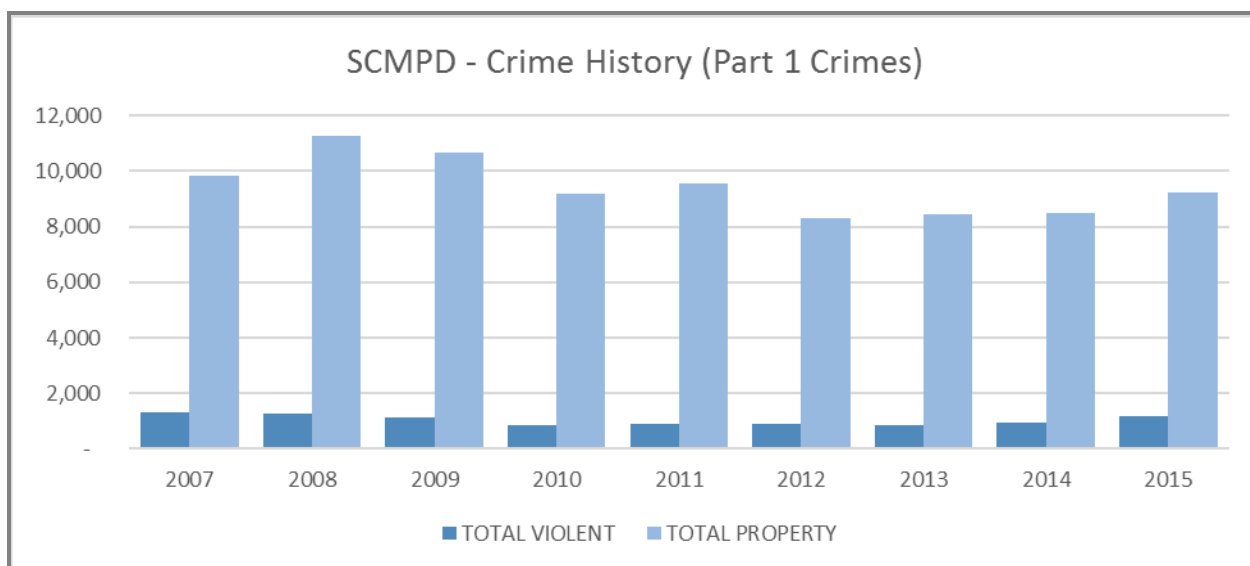


Table 8.1 Part 1 Crimes 2007-2015

Reducing crime is a top priority for the police department and many members of the community. Lower rates of crime benefits residents, businesses, and the long term development of the area. At the neighborhood level, trust between officers and

citizens is an essential component to improving safety. Programs such as “Citizens Police Academy,” “Coffee with a Cop,” and “National Night Out” are underway to establish these ties to the community. Targeted crime reduction programs such as “End Gun Violence” and “Neighborhood Watch” have also been established in response to community concerns about safety.

Improve the Safety of Public Spaces

Discussions about revitalizing commercial corridors and the provision of affordable housing often touched on the perception of safety. This concern about the risk of criminal activity is a barrier to people’s willingness to visit commercial areas and neighborhoods. Research in the realm of environmental psychology and criminal justice shows that specific physical attributes of a space can influence the incidence of crime. Collectively, this body of knowledge and practices is referred to as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).

8.4 Natural Resources

Chatham County contains exceptional natural resources which are vitally important to its economy and development potential. The County has an interest in promoting, developing, sustaining, and protecting its natural resources for future generations.

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan includes an assessment of specific natural resources and natural resource issues found in Chatham County as well as specific goals and objectives for the management and protection of these resources.

8.4.1 Water Resources

8.4.1.1 Water Supply Watersheds

Chatham County is located within the Atlantic Coast Flatwoods section of the State within both the Savannah and Ogeechee River Basins and more specifically within the boundaries of the Lower Savannah, Lower Ogeechee and Ogeechee Coastal Watersheds.

The Ogeechee River Basin headwaters are located in the southeastern edge of the Piedmont province and the basin continues southeastward to the Atlantic Ocean. The river basin is located entirely in the State of Georgia and drains approximately 5,540 square miles and plays a significant role in forming Wassaw, Ossabaw, Saint Catherine’s, Black Beard and Sapelo islands off the coast of Chatham County.

The Savannah River Basin is a 10,577 square mile watershed whose headwaters originate in the Blue Ridge Province of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The Savannah River forms the boundary between South Carolina and Georgia as it flows southeast to the Atlantic Ocean at Savannah. The Savannah River is the most extensively used surface water source in the Savannah River Basin.

8.4.1.2 Public Water Supply Sources and Management

The groundwater resources of Coastal Georgia, specifically the Floridan Aquifer system, are recognized as some of the most productive in North America. This particular system underlies an area of about 100,000 square miles in southern Alabama, southeastern Georgia, southern South Carolina and all of Florida. The depth below the ground surface to reach the top of the Floridan Aquifer increases from less than 150 feet in coastal South Carolina to more than 1,400 feet in Glynn and Camden counties, Georgia.

Approximately 95 percent of the population of Chatham County is served by municipal or community water systems². Ninety-eight percent of the water provided by these systems is pumped from the Floridan Aquifer and meets or exceeds drinking water standards. Water is pumped directly into the distribution system with chlorine and fluoride being the only treatment necessary.

As population growth increases the demand for drinking water and reduction in groundwater usage becomes necessary to prevent saltwater intrusion, the existing capacity of the treatment facility will play a major role in meeting the future demand for water.



Figure 8.2. Floridan Aquifer System

As a result of extensive pumping in the developed areas of Savannah and in the adjacent coastal areas in Georgia and South Carolina, as the aquifer has experienced changes in the groundwater levels, the rates and distribution of recharge and discharge, the rates and direction of groundwater flow, and the overall quality of the water in the aquifer system.

Measures to reduce the amount of groundwater pumped from the Floridan Aquifer were instituted in 1995 when the *Comprehensive Water Supply Management Plan for Chatham County* was adopted. The Plan was the result of a cooperative effort by the municipalities, major domestic water companies, and major industrial water users to reduce groundwater pumping.

In 1997, the State of Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) limited the amount of groundwater that could be withdrawn from the Floridan Aquifer. The moratorium on additional groundwater withdrawal was viewed as a temporary measure pending a study to measure saltwater intrusion into the groundwater supply.

² Chatham County Comprehensive Water Supply Management Plan (2000 Update).

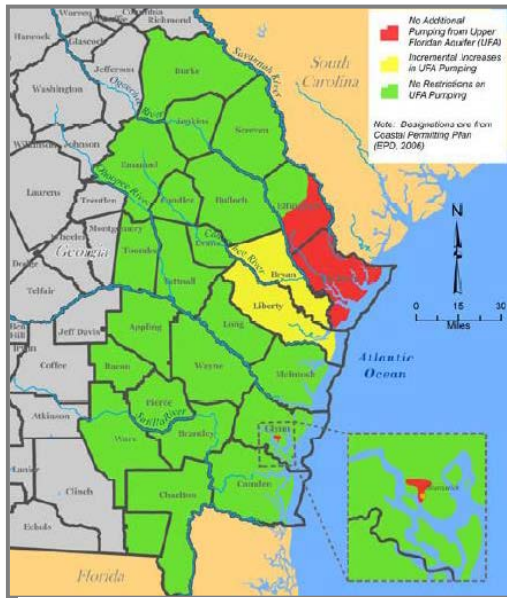


Figure 8.3: Zone Boundary Map

This study, called *The Sound Science Initiative* was completed in May 2010. This led to a multi-step approach to managing groundwater withdrawals along the coast.

The State of Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) capped the amount of groundwater that could be withdrawn from the Aquifer and mandated a 10-million-gallon reduction in pumpage by 2005. Annual updates of the Plan indicated that the measures were effective. Again, in October 2015 EPD mandated a reduction in pumping from all groundwater withdrawal permittees within the Red Zone with reduction milestones for 2020 and 2025 included.

In light of the new directives from EPD, the municipal water providers within Chatham County and southern Effingham County, will explore opportunities to coordinate water supply

management and conservation efforts in the future.

The issues affecting groundwater quality (domestic, industrial, and agricultural pumpage and vertical and horizontal migration of saltwater into the aquifer) must continue to be addressed on a regional basis because groundwater withdrawal in one area affects the piezometric pressure throughout the aquifer, and salt water intrusion in one part of the aquifer may eventually contaminate the entire aquifer system.

8.4.1.3 Groundwater Recharge Areas

If hazardous or toxic substances pollute the water that seeps into the ground in a recharge area, these pollutants are likely to be carried into the aquifer and contaminate the groundwater, ultimately effecting our drinking water source. Once polluted, it is almost impossible for a groundwater source to be cleaned up. For this reason, local wellhead protection ordinances have been passed and the Chatham County Inspections Department routinely performs inspections of community wells to prevent wellhead contamination and to address any stormwater pollutants that have the potential to impact groundwater and drinking water quality through the wellhead.



In Chatham County and Savannah, the protection of groundwater recharge areas is also overseen by restricting land uses that generate, use, or store pollutants within groundwater recharge areas and by establishing minimum sizes for lots within groundwater recharge areas that are served by on-site sewage management systems. Prior to the issuance of a building permit or a demolition permit, the Zoning Administrator assesses whether the proposed activity is located within a groundwater recharge area as identified by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR). All lands identified as groundwater recharge areas are subject to restrictive development standards.

8.4.1.4 Wetlands

Wetlands are vital features in the landscape of Chatham County and the City of Savannah that provide benefits for people and wildlife. Wetlands are able to improve our water quality, provide natural habitat, and store floodwaters. A wide variety of amphibians, insects, birds, fish, plants and microbes inhabit wetlands, making them some of the most productive ecosystems in the world.

Over the past sixty years, many wetlands in Georgia have been altered and converted to other uses due to development, many of these conversions were of freshwater wetlands on the coastal plain. Conversion rates in Georgia have accelerated during the last 40 years due to changing demands for agricultural and forest products, population growth and urban expansion in the Piedmont, mountains and along the coast.

Directly related to the need for wetland conservation, under the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria, Chatham County and the city of Savannah adopted Wetlands Protection Ordinances that provide a procedure for local governments to coordinate federal wetlands permitting with local permitting. These ordinances provide a regulatory framework by which potential wetland impacts should be evaluated before local permits for land disturbance and building are issued.



The future of wetlands is closely linked to land-use decisions made not only by governments but by the private landowner as well. Therefore, land-use regulations are the most commonly used wetland protection techniques among local governments throughout the country since regulations are inexpensive relative to acquisition and can provide substantial protection for wetlands.

Chatham County has enacted a zoning requirement for a 35-foot marsh buffer setback that is intended to, a) protect and enhance community character; and b) to protect environmental quality, especially the estuarine system surrounding the community.

Wetland regulations can be contained in other codes in addition to the zoning ordinance to provide comprehensive wetland protection. Floodplain ordinances such as those adopted by Chatham County and Savannah are addressed in the Floodplains section of the Natural Resources Element can be amended by adding standards to prevent fill and drainage of wetland portions of the floodplain. Subdivision and planned unit development codes can be used to encourage clustering of buildings on upland sites and to require dedication or permanent preservation of wetland areas. Building codes can be used to control development on hydric soils and in flood hazard areas.

Stormwater management ordinances such as those implemented by all of the jurisdictions within Chatham County can be used to protect wetlands as a means of reducing non-point-source pollutants and to create artificial wetlands for the treatment of surface runoff. In addition, pollution controls may be used to prohibit discharges into area wetlands.

8.4.1.5 Protected Rivers and Corridors

River corridors are the strips of land that flank major rivers. These corridors are of vital importance since they help preserve those qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation, and a source for clean drinking water. River corridors also allow the free movement of wildlife from area to area within the State, help control erosion and river sedimentation, help absorb floodwaters during natural events, and allow the natural migration of floodwaters due to sea level rise.

The Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center prepared a Regional River Corridor Protection Plan for counties within their jurisdiction. The Plan describes the ten local governments and the associated rivers that are affected by the River Corridor Protection Act, and puts forward a regional plan for the protection of river corridors. Chatham County is one of the eight coastal counties affected by the River Corridor Protection Act and therefore, as required, has adopted a Regional River Corridor Protection Plan for the Savannah River.

The maintenance of a 100-foot natural vegetative buffer, often referred to as a “riparian buffer”, on both sides of any protected river is required under the River Corridor Protection Act. Similarly, under the State of Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act, a requirement is in place that land-disturbing activities shall not be conducted within 25 feet of the banks of any State waters.

Riparian buffers are of particular importance to the overall protection of water quality and habitat within the coastal areas of Georgia. Scientific research has found many reasons for riparian buffers, including: a) to reduce the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff in order to protect the



hydrological profiles of the surrounding waterways; b) to reduce the sediment and pollutants going into the open water; c) to provide upland wildlife habitat areas and; d) to help maintain the in-stream temperatures provided by the shade within the tree canopy of the buffer system; e) buffering adjacent neighborhoods, and f) enhancing community appearance.

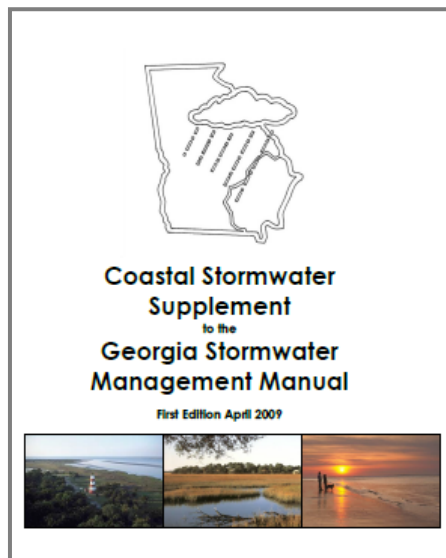
Under related environmental protection measures, section 303(d) of the 1972 Clean Water Act mandates that all states develop lists of impaired waters within their jurisdiction. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division has a complete “303(d) list” for the State of Georgia and Chatham County. Currently, there are a number of impaired waterways within Chatham County that are being monitored and investigated for measures to improve the water quality. The current can be found on EPD’s website at: <https://epd.georgia.gov/georgia-305b303d-list-documents>

8.4.1.6 Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff is generated from rain that flows over land or impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground. The runoff picks up pollutants like trash, chemicals, oils, dirt, and sediment that can harm our rivers, streams, lakes, and coastal waters. To protect these resources, communities, construction companies, industries, and others, use stormwater controls, known as best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs filter out pollutants and/or prevent pollution by controlling it at its source.

The State and Local National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater programs regulate stormwater discharges through municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). Depending on population size, operators of the MS4s are required to obtain an NPDES permit before they can discharge stormwater. This permitting mechanism is designed to prevent stormwater runoff from washing harmful pollutants into local surface waters.

Stormwater Management Programs (SWMP) have been adopted by the municipalities in Chatham County as a requirement of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) administered by the State of Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR). The management plans include: routine water quality sampling and testing; calculation of pollutant loads; identification and elimination of illicit discharges; preparation of annual reports to the Georgia Environment Protection Division (EPD); and education and public awareness programs.



By 2012, all of the jurisdictions within Chatham County had adopted the *Coastal Stormwater Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (CSS)*. The CSS is that tool intended to provide Georgia's coastal communities with comprehensive guidance on an integrated, green infrastructure-based approach to natural resources protection, stormwater management, and site design.

8.4.2 Coastal Resources

Georgia's coastal marshlands and beaches are seen as one of the State's greatest resources and a defining characteristic feature of Chatham County.

Chatham County has enacted a zoning district for marsh conservation. According to the county's 2001 zoning ordinance, the purpose of the Conservation Marsh (C-M) District is to encourage all reasonable public and private uses and developments of the marshlands. The uses are not to be significantly detrimental to the biological ecology, aquatic life, wildlife, recreation, and scenic resources of the marshlands. The uses will not pollute the inlets and coastal waters with human or industrial wastes or the long-term silting that would result from unduly disturbing the marshlands. The purpose of the C-M district is to protect and conserve a natural land and water condition for the recreational, economic and general welfare of the citizens of Chatham County.



The landscape along the Georgia coast is also dotted with marsh hammocks — back barrier islands or small upland areas surrounded by tidal waters and marshes that provide a haven for wildlife. As the State's coastal population grows, hammocks are under increasing development pressure so, in order to effectively protect Georgia's coastal habitat, public policies regarding hammock conservation must be enacted.

8.4.2.1 Floodplains

Floodplains are flat or lowland tracts of land adjacent to lakes, wetlands, and rivers that are typically covered by water during a flood. The ability of the floodplain to carry and store floodwaters should be preserved in order to protect human life and property from flood damage. However, undeveloped floodplains also provide many other natural and economic resource benefits. Floodplains often contain wetlands and other areas vital to a diverse and healthy ecosystem. By making wise land use decisions in the development and management of floodplains, beneficial functions are protected and negative impacts to the quality of the environment are reduced. Both the City of Savannah and Chatham County have recently updated their Floodplain Protection Ordinances to begin addressing sea level rise and the natural migration of waters along the coast however more attention must be given and measures must be enacted in the near future to allow for further protection of the coastal community from rising waters due to changes in the environment.

8.4.3 Major Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas

The natural and scenic amenities of Chatham County offer many recreational and cultural opportunities. Due to the amount of open space in Chatham County being reduced annually primarily due to the impacts of development, surveys were performed and a resulting countywide *Open Space Plan* was completed by the MPC in 1996. This plan was drafted to provide direction in providing and conserving adequate amounts of natural open space for Chatham County to enjoy in the years to follow.



As a follow-up to the 1996 plan, the County completed the Chatham County Greenway Implementation Study and BMP Manual in 2016. This plan included a comprehensive assessment of stormwater drainage canals and retired rail corridors located throughout Chatham County, Georgia. The goal was to determine their viability as potential greenway trails. To ensure that the trails systems and adjacent habitats are properly maintained, a guide, “Best Management Practices for Canal Greenway Maintenance” was developed as a separate companion document.

Ultimately three corridors were selected and included: Old Savannah Tybee Railroad (extension of the McQueen’s Island Historic Trail), Placentia Canal, and

Wilmington Park Canal.

The final Greenway Implementation Study and BMP Manual can be found online: <http://www.thempc.org/Dept/Comp>

8.4.4 Solid Waste Management

Historically the method for handling solid waste in Chatham County has been primarily through the disposal of solid waste in area landfills. This arrangement has been satisfactory from the standpoint of the landfill operators and their customers who enjoy the benefits of the profits generated (operators) and the relatively inexpensive disposal fees (customers). However, because of the high land costs in Chatham County, it is unlikely that land will be available to construct new landfills in the County when the landfills in the County reach capacity, at which time the residents of the County will be required to pay the additional transportation costs to new landfills in other counties. In addition, it is likely that the surrounding counties will demand a premium to accept waste generated outside of their area.

The City of Savannah successfully started a curbside single-stream recycling program in 2008 and the County has had drop-off facilities/transfer stations for a number of years before 2008.



Preserving the capacity of the landfills through reduction of the waste stream by recycling, composting, and mulching of yard waste should be a priority of the County. Because the management of solid waste requires a long term perspective, a regional outlook and discussion on solid waste management is warranted.

8.4.5 Issues and Opportunities

In order to determine the adequacy of existing policies and programs, an assessment is needed. This will ensure that resources are utilized, developed, managed and preserved wisely for maximum long range benefits for each community within Chatham County.

After careful review, the following list was created to highlight those points that may need careful attention in the future.

- Coastal Resources-* The Islands and Southeast Chatham areas of the County are environmentally unique in that they are marsh side communities. Some elements that need increased protection within these communities are the hammocks, wetlands and back barrier islands as well as the individual marsh buffers and setbacks on each site. More intense local programs and development standards for marsh, wetland and island protection need to be established, implemented and maintained once put into place. There is also a strong need for those natural resource sites in need of protection to be identified and ultimately “protected” through a number of means: possible acquisition using SPLOST funds, zoning, conservation easements, donation, etc. Also in need of continued protection are those coastal species of flora and fauna in danger of population decline and extinction. The previously active Chatham County Resources Protection Commission (CCRPC) was a viable mechanism for this type of protection effort, however, due to discontinued funding, the program has stalled as of 2015.
- Efficient Land Use-* Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and minimizing the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community should continue. This is achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning investment in public infrastructure; and maintaining open space in conservation uses. Enhancements to the existing regulations to require and/or incentivize open space preservation are

needed. The desire is that new development will continue to be designed following Oglethorpe's Plan that minimizes the amount of land consumed and allows for more open space to be set aside from development for use as public parks, greenways and wildlife corridors.

- *Major Park, Recreation, and Conservation Areas-* State and Federal laws provide some protection and management for these resources but too often these laws are not sufficient to protect sites from adjacent development impact. More restrictive zoning regulations and buffer requirements may be needed in the future to limit or prohibit future uses in these areas. In addition, the CCRPC program cited above could be a possible viable mechanism for increasing the percentage of protected acres within the County should funding again become available.
- *Scenic Views and Sites-* Overall, some of the area's scenic views are being lost with the rise in commercial and residential development. Without adequate land use and buffer controls, the likelihood of these scenic areas to be impacted will increase and long term loss will occur.
- *West Chatham County-* Rapid growth in Western Chatham County has led to separate, unique challenges. A definite program for natural resource protection is needed to ensure that the area's isolated wetlands, tree canopies, and greenspace are not lost due to the rapid development.
- *Stormwater-* Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as Low Impact Development (LID) strategies that reduce stormwater runoff must continue to be implemented throughout the County to lessen the impacts of runoff on the coastal environment. There is also a need county-wide to determine whether stormwater utilities are feasible for the continued maintenance management, and treatment of the area's stormwater systems.
- *Salt Water Intrusion-* Salt water intrusion into the Floridan Aquifer system needs to continue being addressed regionally to ensure the protection of the coastal area's groundwater source of drinking water.
- *Solid Waste-* Solid waste control and disposal needs to be evaluated and addressed on a regional basis to allow for a more thorough approach to management, reduction and continued capacity for the coastal areas. This effort should include the reduction of waste streams through recycling, composting and mulching of yard waste.



- *Sea Level Rise*- Chatham County and the city of Savannah need to evaluate current standards, regulations, and procedures to ensure the adequate protection of the existing built environment, the design of future construction, and the resiliency of the natural environment to periodic permanent inundation over time due to sea level rise.
- *Local Preparedness*- Chatham County's Disaster Redevelopment Plan (DRP) completed by the Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) in 2016 is the beginning of a multi-phase effort to help the County address the complications that can arise following a disaster as the community attempts to rebuild. The DRP is the "tool" that can identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. Continued efforts are needed around planning for infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, housing) to pinpoint where to direct new growth.

8.5 Chatham County – Savannah Historic and Cultural Resources

Although other British-planned cities preceded Savannah in the New World, Savannah has proven to be a utopian town plan carried through to completion. The aesthetic qualities embodied in James Edward Oglethorpe's original town plan have influenced the City's quality of life for more than 280 years. The power of Savannah's unique plan, its uncommonly pedestrian-oriented setting and open spaces as well as its tree canopy tolerates significant architectural diversity.

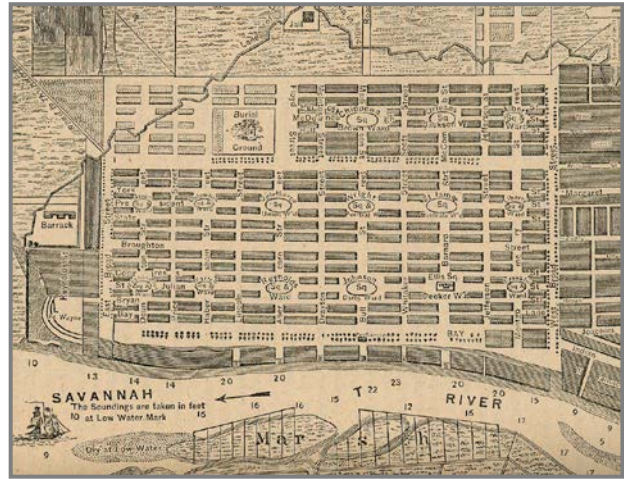
Over 8,000 historic and cultural resources have been identified in Savannah and Chatham County. These resources contribute to the character of the community's neighborhoods and are the basis of the area's robust tourist economy. In the 1960s, the Historic Savannah Foundation, the local non-profit preservation organization coined the phrase "In Savannah, historic preservation goes hand-in-hand with economic progress." At that time tourism was generating yearly revenues of less than \$100,000. In 2015, thirteen million visitors came to Chatham County to enjoy the tree canopied neighborhoods and historic architecture of the County, contributing over two billion dollars to the local economy.

Even without considering the significant impact of tourism, historic preservation provides a significant, measurable influence on the economy and community. Foreclosure rates are lower in historic districts, property values are more stable during uncertain times and increase at a greater rate than in non-historic areas in favorable economic times. Historic districts and rehabilitation both create and attract more jobs.

The preservation and revitalization of these historic and cultural areas is a primary goal in Chatham County.

8.5.1 Development History

Permanent European settlement came to the Chatham County – Savannah region in 1733 when the British settled the Colony of Georgia to buffer their northern colonies from the Spanish in Florida. James Edward Oglethorpe founded Savannah as the seat of the thirteenth English colony near a Creek Indian village called Yamacraw. Oglethorpe forged friendly relations with the Indians which enabled him to establish a successful town 18 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean. Oglethorpe devised a colonial settlement plan that set it apart from other cities in the New World.



The nucleus of the plan was the ward. Each ward had a name and was a part of a larger integrated regional land system that included town commons, gardens, farms, estates, agricultural villages and fortified outposts. The plan informed the architecture, resulting in a dense urban pattern of townhouses and carriage houses in the old town and a more and more suburban pattern as development advanced into the former farm lots. Modern-day street patterns closely follow the old land divisions between the farm lots.

Savannah's regional plan with its town lots and squares, garden lots, and farm lots formed a blueprint for growth that is evident in the street patterns even today. Major boulevards such as 37th Street, Victory Drive, Bull Street and Waters Avenue follow the former divisions between the farm lots.

Beyond the farms were agricultural villages such as Hampstead and Highgate (now occupied by Hunter Army Airfield) and private estates on the water such as Wormsloe and Beaulieu. The plan was completed by fortified farming villages such as those at Thunderbolt and Modena on Skidaway Island.



The outlying settlements were connected to the City of Savannah by waterways and colonial road systems. These colonial roads followed the high ground (usually the ridges of old barrier island dune structures). Early development naturally occurred along these routes including the Western Road (Louisville Road), the White Bluff Road (an extension of Bull Street), the Great Ogeechee Road (Southern Road), Wheaton Street (to Thunderbolt and the ferry to Skidaway Island), and the Augusta or River Road. Plantations were established along the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers and on the islands such as Ossabaw, Skidaway and Wassaw.

After the Civil War, street railroads, also known as streetcars, encouraged suburban and river resort development. With the arrival of the automobile, many of these summer resorts became year-round residential suburbs and palm-lined causeways connected these



communities to the mainland. Street railroads enabled urban expansion into the former farm lots where larger lots and deeper setbacks were the norm and are today desirable residential neighborhoods.

Industrial development replaced the Savannah River plantations in the Twentieth Century. Like the Nineteenth Century canals and railroads, industries spurred the development of industrial worker communities like

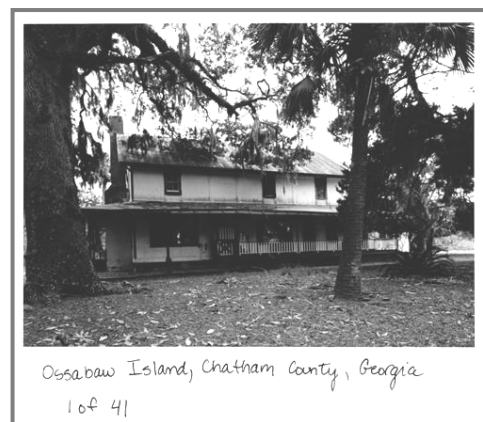
Woodville and West Savannah. Prior to World War II, the Savannah urban area was bounded roughly by DeRenne Avenue on the South, Pennsylvania Avenue on the East, and Lathrop Avenue and Laurel Grove Cemetery on the West. Outside of several smaller municipalities, the remaining areas were rural in character, dominated by dairy farms, timber and truck farming.

Since World War II, automobile-related mobility enabled urban expansion and suburbanization, which spread to all quadrants of the County. With the exception of the estates of Wormsloe, Beaulieu, Grove Point, Oakland, Lebanon and the islands of Wassaw and Ossabaw, there is little rural landscape left in modern day Chatham County.

8.5.2 Historic Districts and Neighborhoods

The City of Savannah and Chatham County have dozens of historic districts listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. There are two different kinds of historic districts: National Register historic districts and local historic districts. National Register historic districts are recognized by the Federal government, but are primarily honorific in nature. They qualify property owners for significant tax incentives but do not provide protection of the resources except in situations where federal funds or permits are involved.

Local historic districts are established by ordinance by the local government and include specific design standards which ensure that new construction, alterations and



Ossabaw Island, Chatham County, Georgia
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rehabilitations are consistent with the historic character of the district by requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations.

Historic properties can also be listed individually on the National Register or as a local property. Only the districts are discussed here.

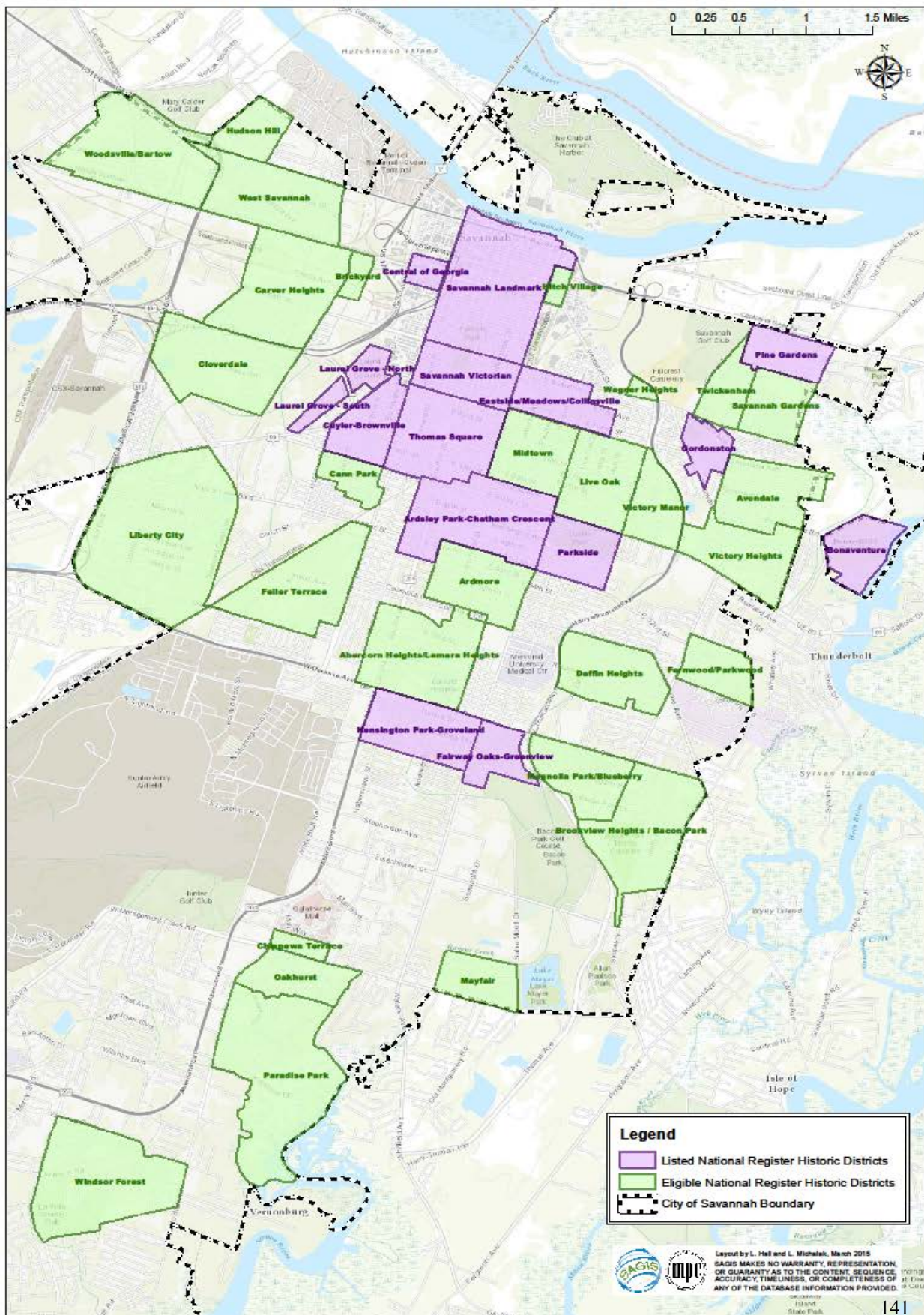
Tables 8.4 and 8.5 below lists each of the historic districts within the City of Savannah and Chatham County and the year they were formally accepted.

TABLE 8.4 CITY OF SAVANNAH HISTORIC DISTRICTS	AREA (in Acres)	NATIONAL REGISTER	LOCAL DISTRICT
SAVANNAH NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK	533.6	1966	1973
VICTORIAN*	167.7	1974/82	1980
CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILROAD SHOPS AND TERMINAL FACILITY*	41.3	1976/78	1973
LAUREL GROVE SOUTH CEMETERY	35	1978	-
LAUREL GROVE NORTH CEMETERY	67	1983	-
ARDSLEY PARK - CHATHAM CRESCENT	394.0	1985	-
THOMAS SQUARE STREETCAR/MID-CITY	310.0	1997	2005
CUYLER-BROWNVILLE	193.8	1998	1998
DAFFIN PARK – PARKSIDE PLACE	161.7	1999	-
GORDONSTON	86.2	2001	-
BONAVENTURE CEMETERY	160	2001	-
EASTSIDE	156.7	2002	-
FAIRWAY OAKS – GREENVIEW	105	2009	-
KENSINGTON PARK - GROVELAND	160	2014	-
PINE GARDENS	100	2014	-
TOTAL	2672.0		

* Originally listed and then subsequently increased the boundary at a later date.

TABLE 8.5 UNINCORPORATED CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORIC DISTRICTS	AREA (IN ACRES)	NATIONAL REGISTER	LOCAL DISTRICT
FORT PULASKI		1966	-
WORMSLOE PLANTATION	750	1973	-
BETHESDA		1973	-
ISLE OF HOPE	91.5	1984	-
OSSABAW ISLAND	25,000	1996	-
SAVANNAH AND OGEECHEE CANAL		1997	-
PIN POINT	135	-	2007
PENNYWORTH ISLAND	174.5	-	2011
TOTAL	26,151		

City of Savannah National Register of Historic Places LISTED AND ELIGIBLE HISTORIC DISTRICTS



Layout by L. Hall and L. Michalek, March 2015
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8.5.3 Issues and Opportunities

Historic buildings require periodic rehabilitation and buildings in the various historic districts are a magnet for investment which directly impacts the local economy. Appraised property values in targeted areas have increased exponentially thereby making historic preservation a powerful engine for Savannah's economy.



Historic commercial buildings provide interesting space for retail, inns, lofts and condominiums. The housing stock in historic neighborhoods provides a range of housing choices in unique landscape settings close to existing transportation lines. New developments in proximity to historic neighborhoods gain value from that location. In turn, these developments need to reinforce the street patterns, public accessibility and aesthetics of the surrounding historic neighborhoods.

Despite the positive statistics, not all communities recognize the value of historic preservation, therefore, historic resources continue to be lost.

Issue: Surveying Historic Resources

Completing historic resource surveys is one of the most basic ways to document a community's historic assets. Understanding what historic resources exist is the first step to protecting them. Historic resource surveys should be completed at least every ten years, with updates every five years to ensure accuracy and completeness. The last comprehensive survey completed in unincorporated Chatham County was in 1993. Savannah's survey is piece meal with many areas having never been surveyed, and some areas not having been surveyed since the 1970s. A comprehensive approach to a County-wide survey should be developed and funded, which should include provisions for future updates.



Issue: Listing Properties and Districts in the National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is a Federal program administered by the National Park Service. Authorized under the 1935 Historic Sites Act and expanded under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the register is a guide to be used in identifying the nation's historic resources. Those resources listed in the National Register are worthy of preservation and consideration in local, state and national planning processes.

Continued efforts need to be made to list all eligible properties and districts in the National Register. These nominations to the National Register typically originate locally, usually sponsored by a neighborhood association or other non-profit group. The final authority to list neighborhoods in the National Register rests with the National Park Service.

A listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing property to a National Register Historic District, places no restrictions on the use or disposition of the property or otherwise obligates the private property owner in any way, unless federal funds or permits are being utilized.

One million dollars spent on the rehabilitation of a Savannah historic building will generate about 1.2 more jobs and \$62,000 more in income than the same amount spent on new construction.

Resources listed in the National Register are eligible for significant federal and state tax incentives which can make a major impact on the viability of a project. An updated list of sites designated in the National Register within the City of Savannah and Chatham County is available on the National Register website (<http://npgallery.nps.gov/nrhp/>).

Issue: Local Historic District Designation and Design Standards

Contemporary residential developments customarily have mandatory covenants governing what can be built within the community. Covenants are also used to protect the property from future development that might adversely affect its character. Without similar design review, character-defining features of historic neighborhoods can be eroded away. However, only four neighborhoods in the City of Savannah have historic zoning that allows review of alterations and new construction for adherence to specific neighborhood design criteria. They are the Savannah Historic District, the Victorian Planned Neighborhood Conservation District (PNC), the Cuyler-Brownville PNC District and the Mid-City Historic District (Thomas Square-Streetcar Historic District).



Clearly articulated and illustrated design standards are essential to preserving the architectural and community character of a neighborhood. Standards should be

periodically updated with public input to ensure the standards are effective and responsive to evolving urban design trends. Design standards can be incorporated into the base zoning district or included within an overlay historic district.

Preservation ordinances are in place so that the quality and character of the neighborhood will be maintained for future generations.

The need for standards in these neighborhoods is critical. Modest historic buildings are being torn down and replaced by incompatible new buildings. Inappropriate materials are being used, such as fixed plate glass in lieu of double hung windows, and new infill buildings are being built that do not reflect the neighborhood in terms of scale, materials and setbacks. In short, design standards help property owners conserve the character-defining features of their property while helping the owner to comply with new standards.

The City of Savannah in particular should create a clear policy on how a neighborhood can establish a local historic district.

Issue: Additional Policies Related to Historic Resources

Both the City and County also need clearer policies about how they consider and determine historic resources when making internal decisions. Development/zoning ordinances should have provisions on evaluating impact to historic resources and identify mitigation strategies.

Issue: Maintenance Regulations for Historic Areas

Demolition by neglect can result in the loss of character defining features and building fabric and even the complete loss of the resource.

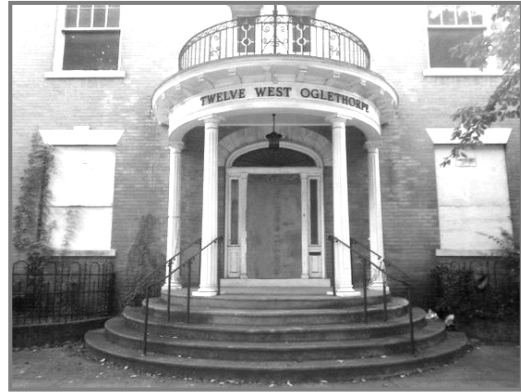
Minimum maintenance requirements and enforcement need to be strengthened to require that a vacant building be maintained in a completely weather-tight condition.

Additionally, vacant and abandoned buildings contribute to reduced property values, blight, crime, and have an overall negative impact on neighborhoods. Additional incentives should be developed to assist property owners in rehabilitating vacant buildings. Disincentives and penalties should also be implemented to prevent properties from becoming vacant in addition to bringing vacant properties back into occupied status.



Issue: Adequate Funding to Protect Cultural and Historic Resources

Funding for historic preservation has always been scarce and often requires innovative use of existing programs. Listing in the National Register enables districts and properties to be eligible for consideration for federal and state funding incentives. Such funds have been used by the City to fund its affordable housing programs and by individual developers and homeowners to complete their rehabilitation funding package. Future sources of funding such as tax increment financing, and affordable housing funds need to be explored. In addition, the MPC Historic Preservation staff is a vital resource aiding in the protection of the areas cultural and historic resources. This program continues to require adequate funding to provide historic preservation planning, oversight and enforcement of the City of Savannah's regulations.



Opportunity: Archaeology

Virtually every tract of land in Chatham County has the potential to contain cultural remains from the community's prehistoric and historic past. A handful of these sites have been identified and researched, but many others go undetected. These sites are subject to damage during land disturbing projects, to the detriment of scientific, historical, and anthropological knowledge. Steps to protecting archaeological resources include:

- Develop policies and procedures regarding the ownership, treatment, and curation of artifacts found on City or County-owned property by municipal employees, contractors, or other entities.
- Develop a policy to incorporate archaeology into every municipally-funded project.
- Develop and adopt an archaeology ordinance which could require research and excavation prior to any development.

8.5.4 Meeting the State of Georgia's Quality Growth Objectives

Chatham County – Savannah's heritage preservation objectives are to maintain the traditional character of the community through the preservation and revitalization of its historic areas; to encourage new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; and to protect other scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character. In short, efforts to expand this objective should include:

- Preservation ordinances have been adopted for four City historic neighborhoods. Revisions are needed to protect character-defining features for the remaining neighborhood zoning regulations. These standards should include traditional lot sizes and building coverages and height limitations.

- The Historic District Height Map sets limits on the height of new construction that helps encourage appropriate and compatible new development. New development needs to be sensitive to the character-defining features of a neighborhood to include the characteristic height that defines that area.
- Often, rural neighborhoods are not old enough to qualify as historic districts, and yet they maintain character-defining natural and scenic features. The City and County should consider protecting these areas with conservation districts.

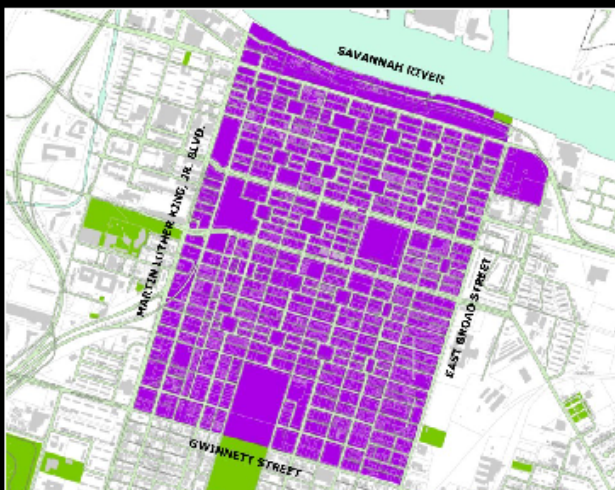
SAVANNAH NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

DISTRICT

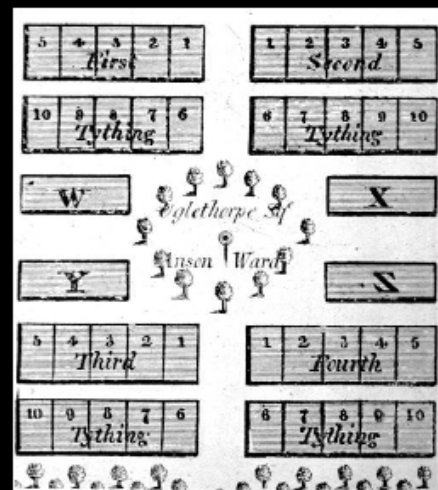


FORSYTH PARK

The Savannah National Historic Landmark District is unique because of its city plan. James Edward Oglethorpe, founder of the colony of Georgia, was responsible for this innovation in urban design. Savannah was laid out in 1733 with four wards along the Savannah River. A typical Savannah ward plan (see below) has an open square in the center which is flanked on the east and west by trust lots; trust lots were originally intended for public buildings. To the north and south of each square are two sets of tything blocks with 10 lots each. These lots were originally intended for use as dwellings or small shops with dwellings above for use by early residents. This ward pattern extended southward through the 1800s and, at its peak, totaled 24 squares. 22 of the original 24 squares survive today. The district encompasses approximately two square miles and over 1,100 noteworthy buildings. Architectural styles represented include Georgian, Federal, English Regency, Greek Revival, Italian Villa, Gothic Revival, and several types of row houses. Many buildings are high style residences, demonstrating Savannah's wealth prior to the Civil War. Many buildings types, including residential, commercial, and civic, have been carefully maintained, rehabilitated, and restored throughout the district. The Savannah National Historic Landmark District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



TYPICAL WARD LAYOUT



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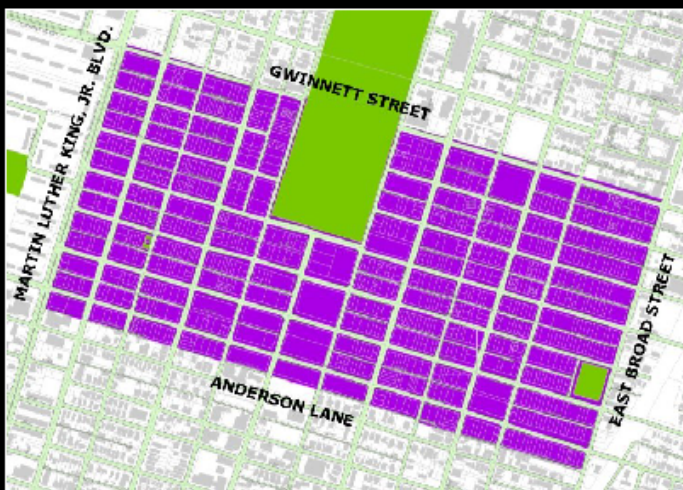
VICTORIAN

HISTORIC DISTRICT



BLOCK OF SIMPLIFIED QUEEN ANNE STYLE HOUSES

Following the Civil War, crowded living conditions downtown and technological advances - such as paved streets, a streetcar system, and electricity - promoted the development of the Victorian Historic District. When a streetcar system was installed in 1869, real estate developers followed its tracks building inexpensive frame houses at the southern edges of, what were then, the city limits. The district is bounded by Gwinnett Street on the north, Anderson Lane on the south, East Broad Street on the east, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard on the west. It is Savannah's first streetcar suburb and parallels the development of other mid to late 19th century neighborhoods. Instead of Oglethorpe's ward pattern of streets and squares, the streets are arranged in a typical gridiron pattern of streets, lanes, and blocks. Frame construction is the most common building technique in the Victorian District because fire ordinances, which prohibited frame buildings in the older sections of the city, did not extend to this area. A variety of architectural styles that were popular during the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century are found throughout the district. The Victorian Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 with a boundary expansion in 1980.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



ELABORATE GINGERBREAD DETAILS



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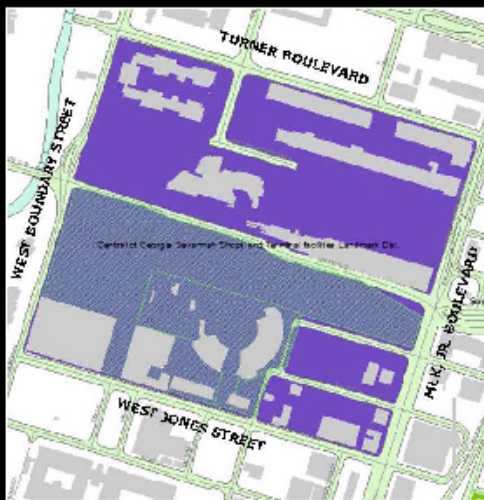
CENTRAL OF GEORGIA RAILROAD SHOPS & TERMINAL

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT



DISTRICT AERIAL

This National Historic Landmark site is the oldest and largest existing 19th century railroad operation complex in the nation. The complex handled freight, passengers, maintenance, and manufacturing all at this single location. The 33.2 acre complex contains thirteen of the original structures. The majority of the site is owned by the City of Savannah and is operated by the Coastal Heritage Society. The site houses a multitude of new uses including: the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) Architecture and Interior Design programs in the former railroad offices and freight warehouses, which was designed in the Romanesque Revival style by Eichberg and Fay. SCAD also rehabilitated the original administrative offices; the 1856 Greek Revival building is now the SCAD Museum of Art. The Savannah History Museum is located in the former trainshed, while the shops and terminal facilities now house the Georgia State Railroad Museum. Other uses on the site include the Savannah Visitor's Center, the Savannah Children's Museum, Battlefield Memorial Park, and the Whistlestop Café. The Central of Georgia District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, with a boundary increase in 1978.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



SAVANNAH CHILDREN'S MUSEUM



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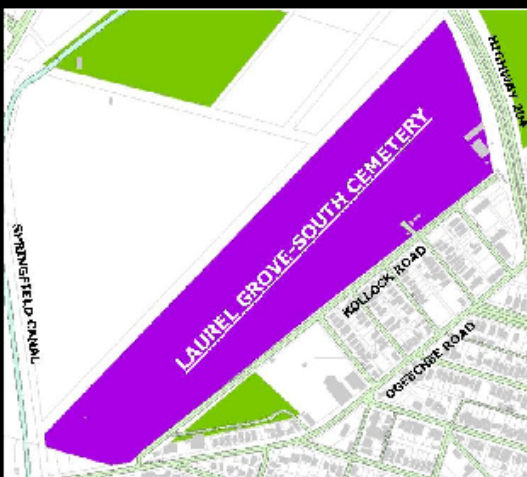
LAUREL GROVE SOUTH CEMETERY

HISTORIC DISTRICT



CEMETERY DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE AND LANDSCAPE

The 35 acre Laurel Grove-South Cemetery is a significant record of African-American history in the Savannah area. In 1852, this portion of Laurel Grove Cemetery was set aside for the burial of "free persons of color and slaves." Tombstones are predominately small markers with little or no ornamentation with very few monumental markers having elaborately carved figures. Live Oak trees with dripping Spanish Moss are set back from the sandy lanes which traverse the cemetery. Inscriptions on many of the tombstones document various aspects of social history in the 19th century not extensively reported in traditional historical media. The cemetery was, historically, physically separated from the "white" Laurel Grove-North Cemetery and still is today by Highway 204. It contains the largest number of free African-Americans of any cemetery in Georgia, including Andrew Bryan and Andrew Marshall. Both were leaders of, what is now known as, the First Bryan Baptist Church on West Bryan Street. Accessed from the terminus of West 37th Street, Laurel Grove-South Cemetery was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



OBELISK MONUMENT AND LANDSCAPE



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LAUREL GROVE NORTH CEMETERY

HISTORIC DISTRICT



FUNERARY SCULPTURE, MONUMENTS, IRON WORK

Laurel Grove-North Cemetery is located on the southwestern side of Savannah with its entrance at the end of West Anderson Street. Laid out in 1852, the cemetery is 67 acres and contains a plethora of mausoleums in various architectural styles including Italianate, Greek Revival, and Egyptian Revival. It also has fine examples of cemetery-related architecture such as a receiving vault, keeper's lodge, and porter's lodge. The art, including sculpture, stained glass, iron work, is also significant; the cemetery contains more iron work than any other cemetery in the area. Laid out on the grounds of a former plantation, the cemetery is an informal, park-like setting; this style of landscape architecture was popularized during the first half of the 19th century and Laurel Grove was used as a public park in the Victorian cemetery tradition. As the only public cemetery in Savannah for several decades, it houses people from every level of "white" society; African-Americans were buried in Laurel Grove-South Cemetery. Laurel Grove-North Cemetery was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



IRON WORK SURROUNDING A FAMILY PLOT



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ARDSLEY PARK CHATHAM CRESCENT

HISTORIC DISTRICT



NEOCLASSICAL HOUSE

Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent is a large residential neighborhood which began developing in 1909 as two adjacent planned subdivisions. Ardsley Park is to the west of Habersham Street and has a regular gridiron layout with landscaped squares at regular intervals. Chatham Crescent is to the east of Habersham Street and has a Beaux Arts inspired plan with a grand mall, crescent shaped avenues, and small circular parks within a basic grid design. The underlying street pattern from the older parts of Savannah is extended through the district. Lots vary in size, houses are set back uniformly close to the street, and are centered on their lots. Architectural styles represented include both textbook examples and local interpretations of almost every Revival style popular during the early 20th century, as well as many eclectic variations on these styles, and many fine examples of the Craftsman style. Many of Savannah's leading architectural firms of the time are represented in the district, including: Henrik Wallin, Hyman Witcover, Henry Urban, Olaf Otto, E. Lynn Drummond, Levy and Clark, and Cletus Bergen. The Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



CHATHAM CRESCENT GRAND MALL



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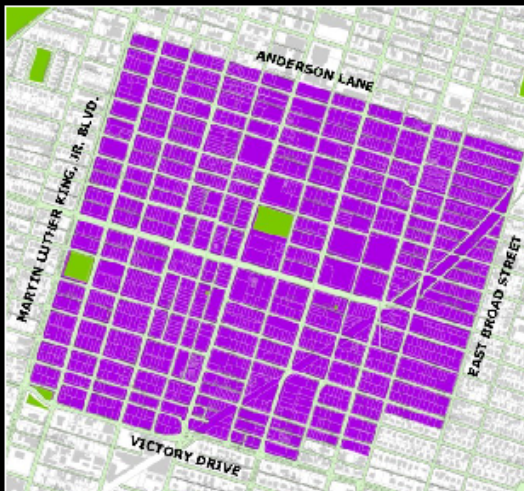
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THOMAS SQUARE STREETCAR HISTORIC DISTRICT



FORMER RICHARD ARNOLD SCHOOL, NOW SCAD'S ARNOLD HALL

Originally farm lots in the 18th century, the Thomas Square Streetcar Historic District contains a collection of historic, intact residential, commercial, and community buildings associated with the Thomas Square Neighborhood. Developed in the late nineteenth century, Thomas Square is bounded by Anderson Lane on the north, East Broad Street on the east, roughly East Victory Drive on the south, and MLK, Jr. Boulevard on the west. The city electrified and extended the streetcar in 1888 south along Whitaker, Abercorn, and Barnard Streets into this district, creating a streetcar suburb. The streetcar lines were removed in 1920 due to the increased use of the automobile. In this district one finds significant examples of Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Italianate, Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, Greek Revival, and Craftsman style residential architecture. This area is also rich in community landmarks, such as the Little Sisters of the Poor Convent, the Bull Street Library, and the Starland Dairy. This district also has surviving architectural examples of its first use as farm lots; one such example is the 1799 Drouillard House, a former "plantation" cottage on Abercorn Street. The Thomas Square Streetcar District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR



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CUYLER-BROWNVILLE

HISTORIC DISTRICT



TWO-STORY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Cuyler-Brownville developed in, what was then, southwest Savannah between West Anderson Street, West Victory Drive, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (West Broad Street), and Ogeechee Road. The district mainly consists of residential buildings interspersed with civic and commercial buildings, primarily located along the north-south thoroughfares. It is one of Savannah's oldest intact African-American neighborhoods which developed as a result of the migration of former slaves from rural areas to the city. The neighborhood is named after the Brownville community in the southern section of the district and the Cuyler School area in the northern section of the district. The community of Brownville was laid out in a grid pattern by Dr. Louis A. Falligant. Dr. Falligant, a physician, was concerned with the welfare of the recently emancipated slaves and established a residential community on, what was then, the outskirts of the city. The majority of the buildings date from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries and consist of building forms such as shotgun, rowhouses, bungalows, and single detached residences in the Folk Victorian, Craftsman, Neo-Classical, Colonial Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne styles. Cuyler-Brownville was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



ROW OF EARLY 20TH CENTURY BUNGALOWS



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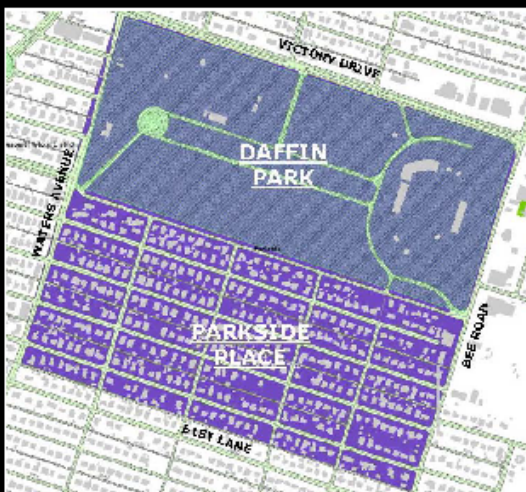
DAFFIN PARK PARKSIDE PLACE

HISTORIC DISTRICT



ENGLISH VERNACULAR REVIVAL HOUSE

The Daffin Park-Parkside Place Historic District features two distinct elements: the Beaux Arts inspired Daffin Park that occupies the north half of the district and Parkside Place, a residential subdivision that contains mostly early 20th century single dwellings on 20 square blocks. Named for Philip Daffin, the first Chairman of the Savannah Park and Tree Commission, Daffin Park was designed by renowned planner, John Nolan, and features the symmetry and axuality of the neighboring Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent Historic District to the west. A circular node at the west end and Grayson Stadium to the east are linked by a mall that consists of four rows of live oak trees set between two oak-lined allees. Parkside Place, is located south of Daffin Park and continues the city's gridiron plan. The houses of Parkside Place are mostly one and two story single family homes built between 1914 and 1947. They feature a variety of architectural styles that include: Craftsman, Georgian/Colonial Revival, Cape Cod, and English Vernacular Revival. The houses are set on small lots with uniform setbacks and tree lawns along the sidewalks. The Daffin Park-Parkside Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



DAFFIN PARK



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GORDONSTON

HISTORIC DISTRICT



CRAFTSMAN STYLE HOUSE

The Gordonston subdivision was conceived in 1917 by William Washington Gordon III, a member of the influential Gordon family. In May 1917, Gordon proclaimed his Beaux-Arts subdivision as "high and dry, very healthy, strictly suburban ... no smoke or turmoil, an 80-acre residential park." It is characterized by broad avenues, landscaped medians, parks, and radial traffic nodes. Like Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent it is a product of the "City Beautiful" movement. Unlike Ardsley Park-Chatham Crescent, the neighborhood developed slowly; by 1930, only 40 lots had been sold. More than a quarter of the lots were developed between 1945 and 1950. The architecture of Gordonston is characterized by Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles as well as post-war architecture with low hip roofs, open plans, carports, and garages. The neighborhood is representational of the growing trend to move away from downtown and into a suburban development, however, it remained connected to downtown via a streetcar. The Gordonston Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



BROAD AVENUE WITH COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE HOUSE



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BONAVENTURE CEMETERY

HISTORIC DISTRICT

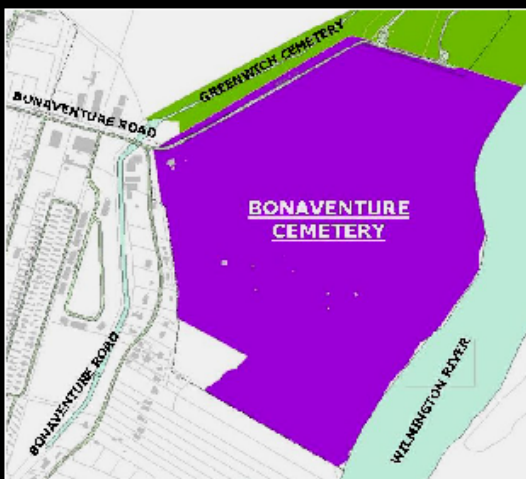


MASOLEUM

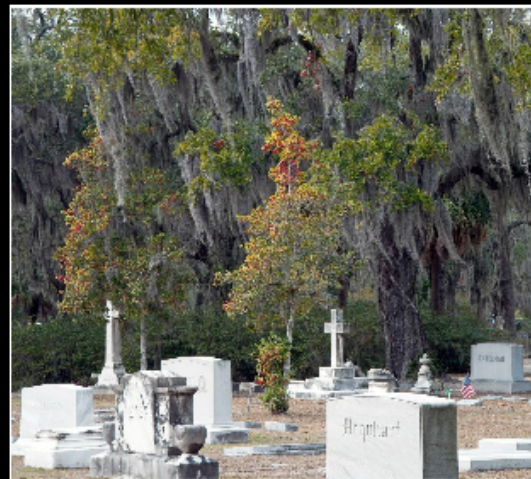


JOHN WALZ'S GRACIE SCULPTURE

Located off of Bonaventure Road, on a bluff overlooking the Wilmington River, Bonaventure Cemetery is 160 acres and has over 6,000 burial sites. Always intended for a cemetery, it began in 1846 as 70 acres of the Bonaventure Plantation tract. The City of Savannah acquired the cemetery in 1907 and still operates it today. An astonishing quantity and variety of funerary architecture, monuments, and sculptures can be found here including mausoleums, crypts, tablets obelisks, and statuary which reflect various eras and architectural styles. The cemetery contains a large number of sculptures by John Walz, including the famous Gracie, which is one of the few funerary monuments in Georgia that is carved in someone's exact likeness. Two historic buildings are located within the cemetery, the late 19th century caretaker's house (now offices and gatehouse) and the 1917 Jewish chapel is the only one known to be in a public cemetery in Georgia. Live Oak trees planted in the 1800s, and a plethora of other flora and fauna, line the irregular unpaved avenues and foot paths. Bonaventure Cemetery is still an active burial cemetery and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



BONAVENTURE IN AUTUMN



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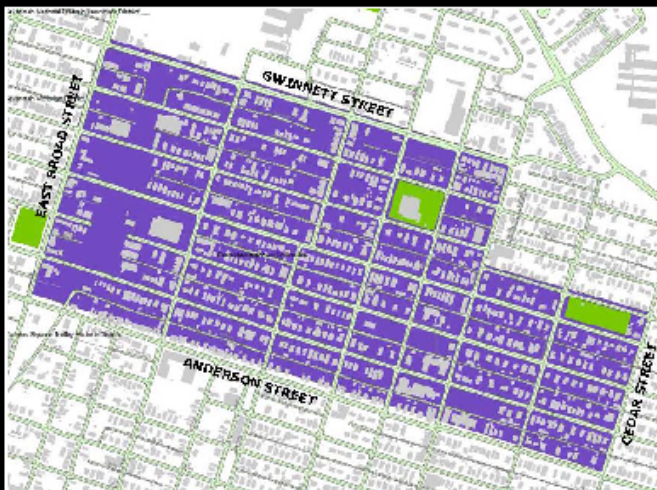
EASTSIDE

HISTORIC DISTRICT



CRAFTSMAN STYLE (BUNGALOW) HOUSE

The Eastside Historic District is a large, residential neighborhood with significant commercial and community landmark buildings. This was a fashionable area that developed as a series of subdivisions that followed the establishment of streetcar lines through the area. In 1890, Jacob S. Collins received a charter for the Electric Railway Company and established a streetcar line on Gwinnett and Bolton Streets. The streets were laid out by 1900 and mostly continue the city's gridiron pattern of streets. The earliest houses reflect the architecture of the adjacent Victorian District with large, two-story, frame houses set on small lots in Queen Anne and other Victorian Era styles. These houses, especially those located on the main east-to-west thoroughfares, feature large porches, towers, picturesque rooflines, and jig-sawn details. Some houses, built early in the 20th century, reflect the Craftsman style; these appear as large, two-story Foursquare houses and smaller bungalows. The district represents a transitional architectural period, exemplified by the streetcar's incorporation into the urban plan. The Eastside Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



ENGINE HOUSE NO. 7



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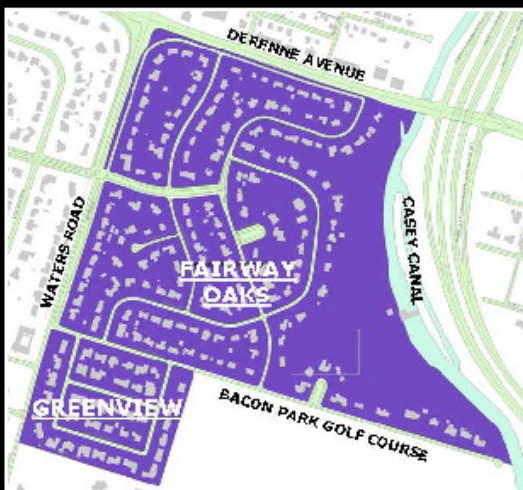
FAIRWAY OAKS GREENVIEW

HISTORIC DISTRICT



SPLIT-LEVEL HOUSE

The subdivisions of Fairway Oaks-Greenview developed in the 1950s and 60s on the outskirts of Savannah to capitalize on suburban living and a country-club lifestyle, adjacent to a county park and golf course. Fairway Oaks, the older of the two subdivisions, was developed between 1950 and 1957 by James Richmond and is the first residential development in Savannah to break the traditional gridiron street pattern. It features curvilinear streets, three cul-de-sacs, and two perimeter roadways. The major house type found within Fairway Oaks is the Ranch house with a mix of American Small Houses, Colonial Revivals, Contemporary and Modern styles dotting the landscape. Most of the houses are wood-framed and feature salvaged Savannah Grey bricks. Greenview was developed by Max Hostetter in 1956 as a continuation of Fairway Oaks accessed through the older subdivision. It features an H-shaped street layout and house types similar to Fairway Oaks, but larger and more architecturally elaborate. Several of the houses were designed by Savannah architects, including Juan Bertoto, Carl Helfrich, Jr. and John LeBey. The Fairway Oaks-Greenview Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2009.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



RANCH HOUSE: LINEAR-WITH-CLUSTERS SUBTYPE



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KENSINGTON PARK GROVELAND

HISTORIC DISTRICT



CONTEMPORARY STYLE HOUSE WITH SAVANNAH GREY BRICK

Kensington Park-Groveland is a post-World War II residential neighborhood located along East DeRenne Avenue, east of Abercorn Street. Originally outside the city limits, which have now expanded, Kensington Park began in 1950 and planning began for the smaller adjacent Groveland the same year. These neighborhoods were originally intended to be moderately exclusive, suburban developments catering to Savannah's young middle- and upper-middle class. The neighborhoods include public parks and amenities with wide, curvilinear streets. Some of the streets have landscaped medians and others are lined with Live Oak trees. As in most mid-20th century subdivisions, there are no lanes, the houses are in the center of the lots, and have uniform street setbacks. The predominant architectural form is the Ranch, which presents in a variety of styles and types. The styles include Colonial Revival and Contemporary; the types vary from long linear and L-shaped houses to smaller compact, courtyard and bungalow. More than half of the houses have garages or carports and the more substantial houses are constructed from Savannah Grey bricks. These bricks were obtained from the demolition of Savannah's 19th century buildings as the bricks became a sought-after material for upscale suburban houses. Kensington Park-Groveland was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2014.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



WIDE CURVILINEAR STREET LINED WITH LIVE OAK TREES



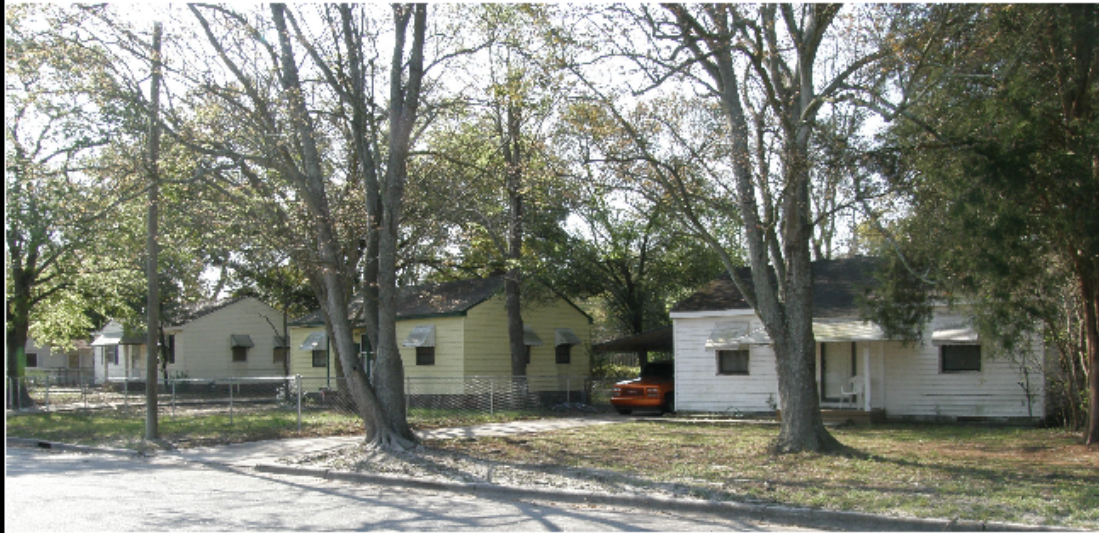
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PINE GARDENS

HISTORIC DISTRICT



STREETSCAPE OF AMERICAN SMALL HOUSES

Significant as the largest and most intact concentration of World War II defense housing in the State of Georgia, Pine Gardens began in 1942. It was developed to provide housing for civilian shipyard workers employed at the nearby Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation. The shipbuilding facility was located along the Savannah River just east of downtown – it no longer exists but the housing exists less than one mile south of where the facility once was. The neighborhood was built in the midst of WWII, when the need for “victory ships” was at its peak and the company was in dire need for worker housing close to their facility. Five hundred and twenty houses, twelve businesses, two churches, one school, and a fire station were built to accommodate the workers and their families. As one of only 18 Liberty ship manufacturers in the United States, the workers from this neighborhood produced 88 Liberty ships and 18 C-1 ships by war’s end and the facility employed 15,000 workers at any given time. After the war, the Pine Gardens Annex was developed to the east of the original subdivision to provide much-needed housing for returning veterans. The exclusive architectural form in Pine Gardens is the American Small House; the four- and five-room houses line the long-straight streets in this gridiron development. Pine Gardens was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2014.



DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH



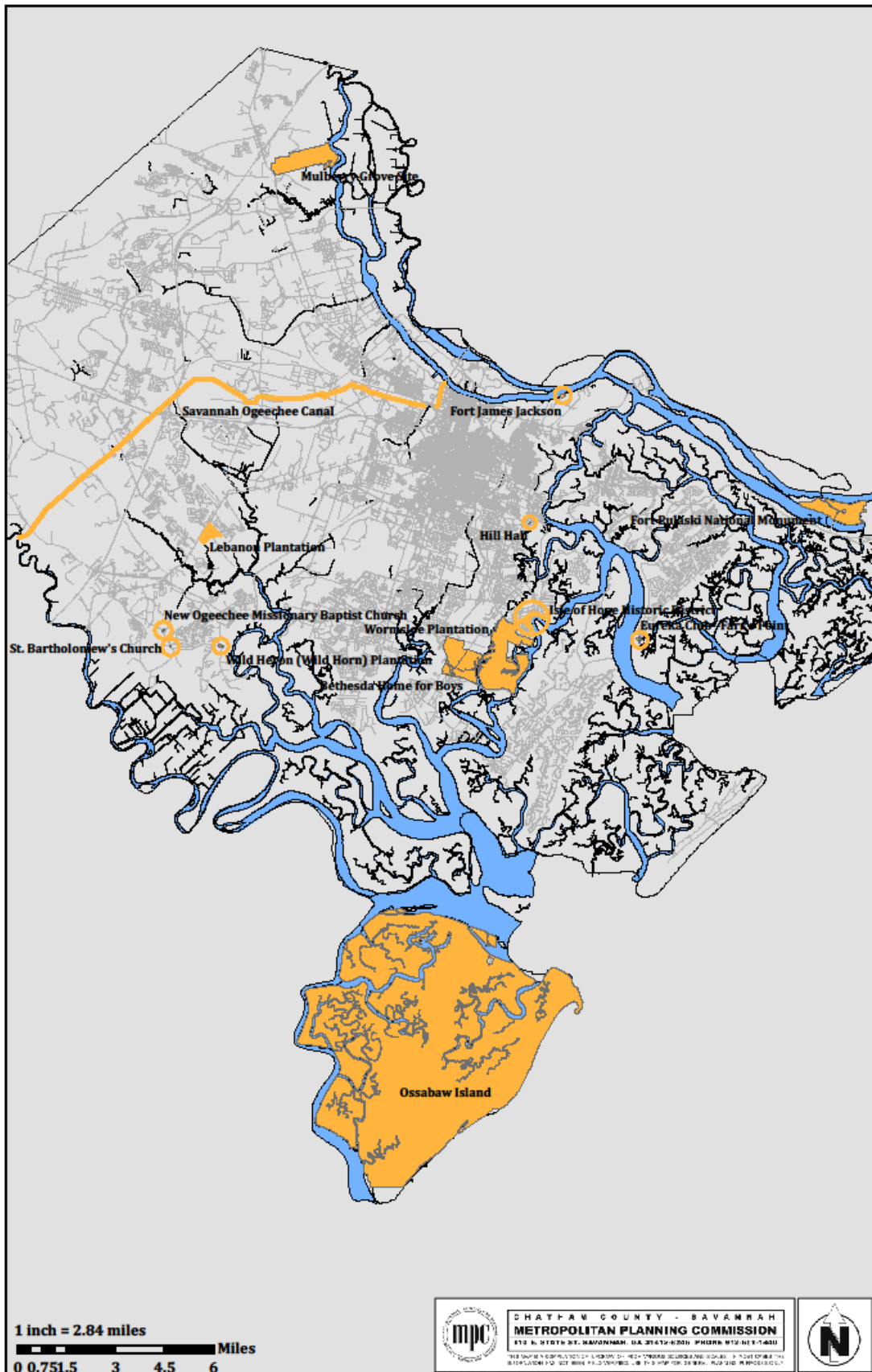
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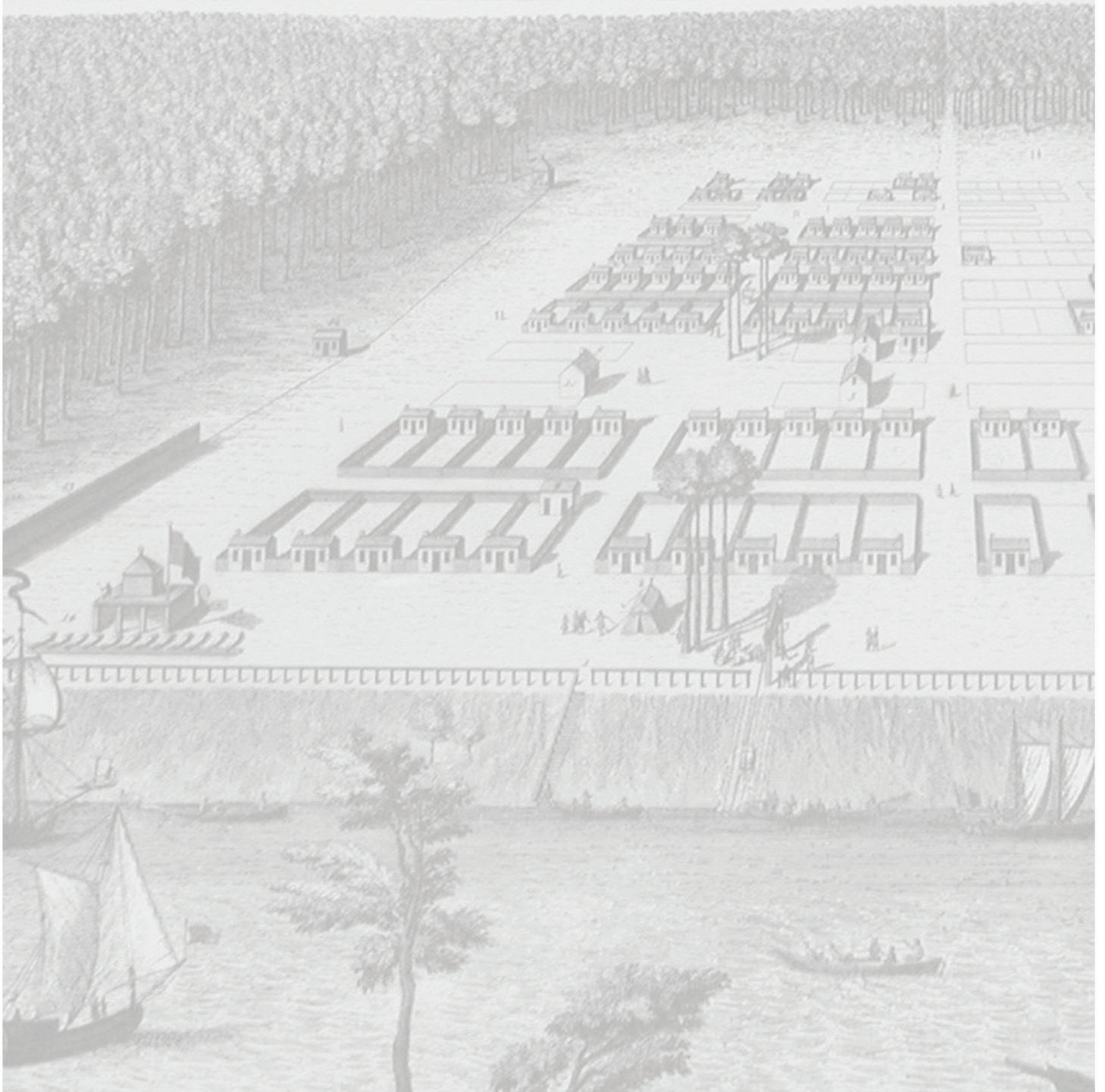
National Register of Historic Places UNINCORPORATED CHATHAM COUNTY



...view of Savannah as it stood the 20th of March 1734

Community Strategic Plan &

Work Program



9.1 Introduction

The Short Term Work Program lays out specific activities to be performed in the next five years as they are related to community goals (Chapter 3). Each activity has a list of participating organizations and an estimated cost range. Progress on the activities and goals established in this section will be tracked and reported on an annual basis.

9.2 2016-2017 Work Program

The following actions were identified for the first year of the Short Term Work Program.

ECONOMY

- Increase the number of opportunities for job shadowing, apprenticeship programs, and internships to include “green” careers, particularly targeted to youth and young adults.
- Increase awareness and use of tax incentives for those employers serving and employing specific populations.
- Increase efficiency of permitting and licensing policies for businesses through streamlining procedures, educating about the process, and potentially matching county and municipality requirements.
- Promote mixed use development where appropriate with densities higher than 25 units per acre to encourage safe, sustainable neighborhoods.

LAND USE

- Provide for pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development options in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Refine policies to reduce on-site parking requirements and enhance walking and bicycling infrastructure.
- Refine policies to extend Complete Streets design principles into land development plans.
- Prioritize transportation projects that link parks and open spaces by walking, biking, and public transit.
- Develop a set of criteria to determine which neighborhoods can benefit from action plans that address issues such as housing, vacant property, transportation, and quality of life.
- Assemble stakeholders within neighborhoods and develop action plans to inform land use, housing, transportation, and economic development priorities.

TRANSPORTATION

- Propose a policy to prioritize pedestrian infrastructure improvements (such as sidewalks and crosswalks) near schools, bus stops, and commercial corridors.
- Propose a Complete Streets policy for Chatham County.
- Work with municipalities in order to explore funding options to expand public transportation for Chatham County.
- Refine policy to accommodate people with disabilities on all sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Prioritize the placement of bus route and schedule information at every stop and provide real-time bus location and arrival information online.
- Identify funding to enhance the usefulness and appearance of bus stops by adding shelters, lighting, benches, wastebaskets, and other amenities.
- Evaluate the impact of Sea Level Rise on proposed transportation systems, particularly relating to improvements of existing roads, bridges and related infrastructure.
- Explore alternate routes for heavy equipment, trucks and those carrying hazardous materials county-wide.
- Reference the Context Sensitive Design Manual when designing streets and roads.

HOUSING

- Refine policies to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing units.
- Gather information on best practices to encourage and improve housing counseling programs.
- Develop a regional housing plan.
- Evaluate policies that allow infill development using unconventional housing styles such as “tiny homes” and prefabricated homes.
- Adopt and implement “complete streets” ordinance to include appropriate roads (new, expanded and resurfaced) county wide restripe while adding traffic calming improvements and green space where appropriate.
- Evaluate the vulnerability of proposed residential and commercial developments to increased flooding due to sea-level rise.

QUALITY OF LIFE: HEALTH

- Improve access to and enrollment in affordable health insurance, including Peachcare and Medicaid, and connection with primary care providers.
- Increase access to crisis services and increase capacity of service providers to provide for those who lack resources.
- Encourage employers to provide health enrichment and wellness programs to all employees.
- Consider community based facilities for use of a multi-agency resource center (MARC) to include behavioral health, wellness, and child development, learning center, computers, youth and senior activities.
- Explore policy and funding mechanisms to increase access to produce to various “food deserts” on a rotating schedule.
- Create farmer support programs to support and expand community gardens, urban farmers, and educational programming for residential sharing, cooking, learning, etc.
- Propose policy to support the development and maintenance of community gardens and reduce regulatory barriers to urban agriculture.

QUALITY OF LIFE: EDUCATION

- Facilitate comprehensive child development from birth through age three.
- Increase number of opportunities for youth and young adults to access job shadowing, apprenticeship programs, and internships to include “green” careers.
- Promote early reading and vocabulary development beginning at birth.
- Encourage employers to provide incentives such as transit vouchers, paid “leave” time for parents to attend/participate in school functions.

QUALITY OF LIFE: PUBLIC SAFETY

- Increase capacity of “diversion” program for first-time offenders to reduce case load; providing case management, restorative justice program and wrap around services via community partners and/or multi-agency resource center (MARC).

QUALITY OF LIFE: NATURAL RESOURCES

- Identify funding for the Chatham County Resource Protection Commission and its land conservation efforts that include protecting high priority habitats.
- Develop a long-range regional plan for sea level rise which evaluates multiple adaptation methods.
- Propose a No Net Loss policy to protect existing tree canopy.
- Explore feasibility of composting for institutional, commercial, and residential areas.
- Gather information and best practices for the integration of sea level rise projections into planning practices.

9.3 Glossary

The following symbols and terms are used in the Short Term Work Program table.

Cost Estimate	Range
ST	Staff Time
\$	Under \$100,000
\$\$	\$100,000 to \$1,000,000
\$\$\$	\$1,000,000 to \$10,000,000
\$\$\$\$	Over \$10,000,000

Abbreviation	Organization
ASU	Armstrong State University
CAT	Chatham Area Transit Authority
CCSD	Chatham County Sheriff Department
CEMA	Chatham Emergency Management Agency
CES	Chatham Extension Services (University of Georgia)
CGIC	Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition
CHD	Coastal Health District
CHSA	Community Housing Services Agency
CWDB	Coastal Workforce Development Board
DCA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
EOA	Equal Opportunity Authority
FG	Federal Government
GA	State of Georgia
GC	Georgia Conservancy
GCSB	Gateway Community Service Board
GDCS	Georgia Department of Community Supervision
GLT	Georgia Land Trust
GPA	Georgia Ports Authority
HAS	Housing Authority of Savannah
HS	Healthy Savannah

HSF	Historic Savannah Foundation
LG	Local Government (City and County)
LH	Local Hospitals
LIB	Local Libraries
LIFE	Living Independence for Everyone
MPC	Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission
RPC	Chatham County Resource Protection Commission
SACC	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
SBA	Savannah Business Alliance
SBAC	Small Business Assistance Corporation
SBDC	Small Business Development Center
SBEC	Small Business Entrepreneurial Center
SBEN	Small Business Entrepreneurial Network
SCCPSS	Savannah Chatham County Public School System
SCMPD	Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department
SDRA	Savannah Development and Renewal Authority
SEC	Savannah Entrepreneurial Center
SEDA	Savannah Economic Development Authority
SN	Safety Net Planning Board
SSU	Savannah State University
STC	Savannah Technical College
STF	Savannah Tree Foundation
SU	Step Up Savannah
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
UW	United Way of the Coastal Empire

9.4 Economy

VISION: Chatham county anchors a thriving, business-friendly, regional economy in which all workers are prepared for quality jobs, and residents feel empowered to attain a high quality of life.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Source	Fund
<i>GOAL: Develop apprenticeship and vocational programs based on the needs of Chatham County employers</i>							
Create a network of employers and training providers, through incentives to align training programs with opportunities for jobs.		X		CGIC, CWDB, SACC, STC, SU	\$	General Fund, Grants	
Increase the number of opportunities for job shadowing, apprenticeship programs, and internships to include “green” careers, particularly targeted to youth and young adults.	X			ASU, CGIC, CWDB, LG, SACC, SEDA, SSU, STC, SCCPSS, SU	\$	General Fund, Grants	
Increase capacity and opportunities for individuals to receive skills that lead to employment.			X	CGIC, STC, EOA, SU, UW, ASU, SSU, CWDB	\$	General Fund, Grants	
<i>GOAL: Increase access to employment opportunities for young adults, the working poor, ex-offenders, and people with mental illness.</i>							
Improve access to education and trades to help the working poor, ex-offenders, and those with mental illness by providing a community-based scholarship program or similar incentive to help those who can’t afford educational programs.		X		CGIC, SACC, SEDA, SU GDSCS	\$\$	General Fund, Grants	
Increase capacity of case management to provide employment, wrap-around and support services for families; and provide case management with education regarding best practices on the provision of services.			X	CGIC, HAS, SU, UW	\$\$	General Fund, Grants	
Increase awareness and use of tax incentives for those employers serving and employing specific populations.	X			CGIC, LG, SACC, SEDA	ST	N/A	
Explore funding mechanisms in order to provide more financial support to a more diverse economy and establish action steps that will promote regional innovation.		X		CGIC, SEDA, SACC, LG	\$\$	General Fund, Grants	

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Source
Increase efficiency of permitting and licensing policies for businesses through streamlining procedures, educating about the process, and potentially matching county and municipality requirements.	X			CGIC, SACC, SEDA, LG	ST	N/A
Expand capacity of formal and informal support system to sustain and expand current, growing business throughout the county while considering the establishment of a program for existing business to mentor start-ups.			X	CGIC, SEC, SEDA, SACC	\$	General Fund, Grants
<i>GOAL: Foster a local business community that is inclusive and provides diverse opportunities.</i>						
Continue to facilitate the establishment of minority and women-owned businesses (M/WBE) as defined by the United States Small Business Administration Federal Contract Program.		X		LG, SACC, SEDA, SBA, SBAC, SBDC, SBEN,	ST	N/A
Identify and remove obstacles to existing and proposed businesses in targeted redevelopment areas.		X		LG, SACC, SEDA, SBA, SBAC, SBDC, SBEN,	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Facilitate the establishment of physically attractive and economically viable commercial corridors.</i>						
Promote mixed use development where appropriate with densities higher than 25 units per acre to encourage safe, sustainable neighborhoods.	X			MPC	ST	N/A
Propose a policy to prioritize active transportation infrastructure to facilitate walking, biking, and transit to commercial corridors.		X		MPC, LG, CAT	\$	General Fund, Special Service District
Evaluate a policy to reduce regulatory barriers for new businesses by establishing "code-light zones."		X		MPC, LG	ST	General Fund, Grants
Evaluate flexible corridor-specific design standards to create attractive, functional, and harmonious buildings and public space.			X	MPC, LG	ST	N/A

9.5 Land Use

VISION: The land use vision is for a community that is a healthy and safe place to live, work, play, and raise a family, where the area's history, natural resources, public mobility system and efficient government is considered in integral part of its social and economic values.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Source
<i>GOAL: Incorporate multi-modal transportation options including walking, bicycling, and transit, into land use patterns.</i>						
Provide for pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development options in the Zoning Ordinance.	X			MPC, LG	ST	N/A
Refine policies to reduce on-site parking requirements and enhance walking and bicycling infrastructure.	X			MPC, LG	ST	N/A
Refine policies to extend Complete Streets design principles into land development plans.	X			MPC, LG	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Ensure that expansions to the downtown area match the scale and urban design of the Oglethorpe Plan.</i>						
Establish new public realm, consistent with that of the town plan, in areas adjacent to downtown Savannah.			X	MPC, LG	\$\$\$	SPLOST, Bonds, Grants
Implement urban development plans for areas affected by the removal of the I-16 flyover and the construction of a new arena.			X	MPC, LG, SDRA	\$\$\$\$	SPLOST, Bonds, Grants
<i>GOAL: Establish transparent processes and procedures for the delivery of effective and efficient land use policies.</i>						
Review and consolidate policies, procedures where appropriate county wide.		X		MPC, LG, CGIC	ST	N/A
Consider consolidation of local government.			X	MPC, LG, CGIC	\$	General Fund
<i>GOAL: Provide an accessible system of public open spaces and natural areas, including parks for passive recreation activity.</i>						
Use principles of ecology to establish a minimum percentage of the total land area within Chatham County to be maintained as open space.		X		MPC, LG	\$\$	SPLOST, Grants
Prioritize transportation projects that link parks and open spaces by walking, biking, and public transit.	X			LG, CAT	\$	General Fund, SPLOST, Special Service District

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Source
<i>GOAL: Prioritize then establish neighborhood plans that work to better specific communities by involving the neighborhood's residents in the process.</i>						
Develop a set of criteria to determine which neighborhoods can benefit from action plans that address issues such as housing, vacant property, transportation, and quality of life.	X			MPC, LG	ST	N/A
Assemble stakeholders within neighborhoods and develop action plans to inform land use, housing, transportation, and economic development priorities.	X			MPC, LG	\$	General Fund

9.6 Transportation

VISION: The transportation vision is to become a region which prioritizes safety for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists; offers efficient mobility options to support economic vitality; provides infrastructure that is sensitive to unique local characteristics; connects neighborhoods to education, employment, and services; and sustains environmental quality with clean mobility modes.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Source		
<i>GOAL: Extend neighborhood connectivity through development of a safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation system that serves all modes of travel including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists.</i>								
Identify opportunities to create multi-modal transportation that links employees to employers.		X		LG, CAT	\$\$	General Grants, District	Fund, Special	SPLOST, Service
Continuously evaluate opportunities for road diets and traffic calming on existing streets and implement cost-feasible projects.		X		LG	\$	General Fund		
Propose a policy to prioritize pedestrian infrastructure improvements (such as sidewalks and crosswalks) near schools, bus stops, and commercial corridors.	X			LG, CAT	\$	General Grants, District	Fund, Special	SPLOST, Service
Propose a Complete Streets policy for Chatham County.	X			LG	ST	N/A		
<i>GOAL: Improve and expand a regional public transportation system that provides all residents access to employment centers, institutions, commercial areas, recreational facilities, and other destinations regardless of their age, income, or disability.</i>								
Work with municipalities in order to explore funding options to expand public transportation for Chatham County.	X			LG, CAT, CGIC, SACC	\$\$	General Grants, District	Fund, Special	SPLOST, Service
Identify funding to provide convenient pedestrian and bicycle access from public transportation termini to employment centers, institutions, commercial areas, schools, and recreational facilities.		X		LG, CAT	\$	General Grants, District	Fund, Special	SPLOST, Service
Refine policy to accommodate people with disabilities on all sidewalks and crosswalks.	X			LG	\$	General Fund, SPLOST		

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Source	
Evaluate enhancing the transit system to make it more frequent and reliable on corridors with high densities of residents and jobs.		X		CAT	\$\$	Special Grants	Service District,
Prioritize the placement of bus route and schedule information at every stop and provide real-time bus location and arrival information online.	X			CAT	\$	Special Grants	Service District,
Identify funding to enhance the usefulness and appearance of bus stops by adding shelters, lighting, benches, wastebaskets, and other amenities.	X			LG, CAT	\$\$	General Special Grants	Fund, Service SPLOST, District,
Evaluate new partnerships to expand transit service beyond current district and ridership.			X	CAT	ST	N/A	
<i>GOAL: Maintain and preserve transportation infrastructure in a manner that protects unique regional characteristics.</i>							
Evaluate road construction projects to ensure they are compatible with local characteristics with particular attention for historic areas and transportation amenity corridors.		X		LG, CORE MPO	ST	N/A	
Evaluate the impact of Sea Level Rise on proposed transportation systems, particularly relating to improvements of existing roads, bridges and related infrastructure.	X			LG, CORE MPO	ST	N/A	
Explore alternate routes for heavy equipment, trucks and those carrying hazardous materials county-wide.	X			CGIC, LG, MPC, CEMA	ST	N/A	
Consider policy and infrastructure recommendations from the Freight Transportation Plan to enhance safety and efficiency.			X	LG, CORE MPO	ST	N/A	
Reference the Context Sensitive Design Manual when designing streets and roads.	X			LG	ST	N/A	
<i>GOAL: Maintain and enhance transportation infrastructure that supports regional economic vitality.</i>							
Consider policies that maintain and enhance an intermodal transportation system which sustains economic activity by linking trucking facilities, rail terminals, airports, and seaports with limited access roads.			X	LG, FG, GPA, CORE MPO	\$\$\$	User Fees, Grants, SPLOST	

9.7 Housing

VISION: The housing vision is to achieve affordable, diverse, and safe housing for the residents of Savannah and Chatham County through efficient and effective policies and programs.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Improve neighborhood stability where all homeowners, regardless of income, can occupy, maintain and improve their homes without undue financial hardship.</i>						
Refine policies to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing units.	X			LG, CHSA, HSF, HAS	\$\$	General Fund, User Fees
Gather information on best practices to encourage and improve housing counseling programs.	X			LG, CHSA, HAS	\$	General Fund
Evaluate and consider policies that increase the range of approved home occupations.		X		LG, MPC	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Provide affordable housing for all levels of income within the community, including the homeless, disabled & elderly.</i>						
Develop a regional housing plan.	X			LG, CHSA, HAS	\$	General Fund, Grants
Evaluate an Inclusionary Zoning policy as a way to increase the supply of affordable housing.		X		MPC, LG	ST	N/A
Propose policies to allow for a wider variety of housing types to be built in existing neighborhoods.			X	MPC, LG	ST	N/A
Evaluate policies that allow infill development using unconventional housing styles such as "tiny homes" and prefabricated homes.	X			MPC, LG	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Improve coordination and delivery of housing services.</i>						
Create clearer process of use of SPLOST funding in regards to neighborhood improvements, infrastructure, parks, and community centers.		X		CGIC, LG	ST	N/A

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Integrate housing, transportation, and land use planning to create healthier communities and connected neighborhoods.</i>						
Adopt and implement “complete streets” ordinance to include appropriate roads (new, expanded and resurfaced) county wide restripe while adding traffic calming improvements and green space where appropriate.	X			CGIC, LG, MPC, HS, SBC	ST	N/A
Provide public/private incentives to encourage an array of transit opportunities to include car pool, park and ride sites, public transit, cycling, etc.			X	CGIC, LG, MPC, CAT	\$	General Fund, User Fees, Grants
Conduct a feasibility study in order to provide a more efficient safe, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities in all areas, with special focus on high crime areas.			X	CGIC, LG, SCMPD, HS	\$	General Fund, Grants
Evaluate the vulnerability of proposed residential and commercial developments to increased flooding due to sea-level rise.	X			LG, MPC, HAS	ST	N/A

9.8 Quality of Life: Community Health

VISION: Chatham County has a culture of health including equal access to quality and affordable healthcare, chronic disease prevention, health inclusive policies, and environmental design.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Organize, promote, and ensure access to community health services, recreational opportunities and fitness programs to accommodate the special needs of families, the obese, the elderly, and disabled citizens to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors.</i>						
Expand availability of preventive services while including screening tests, counseling services, preventive medicine, and treatment that medical providers employ to identify and prevent illness before symptoms or problems associated with illness occur.		X		CGIC, LG, LH, GCSB, SN, CHD	\$\$	General Fund
Improve access to and enrollment in affordable health insurance, including Peachcare and Medicaid, and connection with primary care providers.	X			CGIC, LG, LH, GCSB, SN, CHD	\$\$	General Fund
Assist healthcare providers and patients with promising opportunities for successful implementation of clinical guidelines for chronic illness; including but not limited to cancer, diabetes, weight management, heart, respiratory and other significant community illness and diseases.		X		CGIC, LH, SN, CHD	\$\$	General Fund
Develop a comprehensive parks & recreation plan that address the special needs of families, the obese, elderly, and disabled citizens while providing multi-use facilities including swimming pools, improved access to water for boating and fishing, and an improved bikeway system.			X	LG, HAS, GA, LIFE, MPC	\$	General Fund, User Fees, Grants
<i>GOAL: Effectively address mental health by educating the public and reducing stigma, increasing early intervention programs, removing gaps and barriers, and increasing access to treatment particularly as it impacts incarcerated individuals, children, and adolescents.</i>						
Encourage network of providers to meet regularly and provide better coordination of services and leveraging of resources. Consider a pilot or demonstration project as a tool for collaboration.		X		CGIC, LH, GCSB, SN, CHD	ST	N/A
Increase access to crisis services and increase capacity of service providers to provide for those who lack resources.	X			CGIC, LH, GCSB, SN, CHD	\$	General Fund, Grants

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
Advocate for high quality transition service for specifically targeted population, and advocate for expanded health insurance funding to equip supportive and rehabilitative housing services.		X		CGIC, LH, GCSB, SN, CHD, SCMPD, CCSD	ST	N/A
Integrate behavior health screening with primary care assessments and services.			X	CGIC, SN, CHD	ST	N/A
Enhance accessibility to mental health services by developing community-based and/or school-based mental health/counseling centers that operate on a sliding fee scale.			X	CGIC, SN, CHD, GCSB	\$\$	General Fund, Grants
Identify an organization or steward who will create and maintain an online resource directly specific to mental health services.			X	CGIC, GCSB, SN	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Instill healthy practices in schools by providing comprehensive health education, nutrient-rich foods, opportunities for physical activity, and prevention education including, but not limited to violence prevention.</i>						
Provide health and wellness educational programming specific to adolescents regarding risky behaviors.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, HS, CES, CHD, LH	\$	General Fund, Grants
Implement 30 minutes a day of physical exercise that fosters leadership, sportsmanship and social skills for all students.			X	CGIC, SCCPSS, HS, CES, CHD, LH	ST	N/A
Encourage employers to provide health enrichment and wellness programs to all employees.	X			CGIC, SCCPSS, HS, LH, CHD	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Develop local and regional collaboration among similar organizations to improve the delivery of social services and to expand the continuum of services.</i>						
Provide additional resources for the mentally ill through a continuum of care facility rather than jail.		X		CGIC, SCMPD, CCSD, GCSB, SN	\$\$	General Fund
Consider community based facilities for use of a multi-agency resource center (MARC) to include behavioral health, wellness, and child development, learning center, computers, youth and senior activities.	X			CGIC, SCMPD, CCSD, DJJ, LG	\$\$\$	Bonds, SPLOST, Grants
Expand the collaboration effort through the use of a common platform for social services registration.		X		CGIC, UW	\$	General Fund, Grants

Create and maintain community centers in low-income and disadvantaged districts with expanded operating hours and diverse services and resources.	X	CGIC, HAS, LG	\$\$	General Fund
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	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Increase access to healthy food for populations most likely to experience food-insecurity through community gardens and alternative distribution methods (i.e. farmer's markets).</i>						
Explore policy and funding mechanisms to increase access to produce to various "food deserts" on a rotating schedule.	X			CGIC, HS	ST	N/A
Create farmer support programs to support and expand community gardens, urban farmers, and educational programming for residential sharing, cooking, learning, etc.	X			CGIC, HS	\$	General Fund, Grants
Provide educational programming and nutritional counseling specific to healthy cooking (serving sizes, use of local – home ground foods and herbs), health eating habits.			X	CGIC, HS, CHD, CES	\$	General Fund, Grants
Propose policy to support the development and maintenance of community gardens and reduce regulatory barriers to urban agriculture.	X			LG, MPC, HAS	ST	N/A

9.9 Quality of Life: Education

VISION: From early childhood education through post-secondary achievement, Chatham County's innovative and inclusive educational systems are a model of academic excellence that enable students to have the knowledge, skills, and ability to succeed at chosen pathways.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Ensure that financial skills, social skills, and conflict resolution skills are being offered to parents and taught to all students through the use of technology, community partnerships, and counseling for both parents and children.</i>						
Integrate financial literacy into curriculum throughout all aspects of learning to include schools, clubs and youth serving organizations.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW	\$	General Fund, Grants
Facilitate comprehensive child development from birth through age three.	X			CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW	\$	General Fund, Grants
Expand Georgia's BEST curriculum (incorporation of soft skills, communication, and leadership skills) in all middle and high schools, and consider expansion into post-secondary education courses.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, SACC, SEDA, CWDB	\$\$	General Fund, Grants
Implement school safety curriculum (include conflict resolution, bullying, social media safety) across the school district.			X	CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, CES, SCMPD	\$\$	General Fund, Grants
Reduce discipline referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions and address the racial disparity in out-of-school suspensions.			X	CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, DJJ	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Implement mentorship programs between employers and students; while increasing leadership development programs between community organizations and public schools to prepare students for employment and promote upward mobility.</i>						
Promote reading and numeracy achievement on grade level through early intervention and comprehensive development.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, LIB	\$	General Fund, Grants
Increase number of opportunities for youth and young adults to access job shadowing, apprenticeship programs, and internships to include "green" careers.	X			CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, SEDA, SACC, CWDB	\$	General Fund, Grants
Promote early reading and vocabulary development beginning at birth.	X			CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW	\$	General Fund, Grants

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Incentivize and promote parental involvement in schools by teaching parents to advocate for their child(ren), facilitating better communication between parents and school leadership, and eliminating barriers to parent engagement.</i>						
Increase understanding and diversification of parental engagement and involvement to include assessment of family dynamic and supports needed.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW	\$	General Fund, Grants
Coordinate service and resources between youth serving organizations for better integration and reduce silos.		X		CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW, CES	ST	N/A
Increase parental understanding of school attendance and ensure enforcement of truancy policies and facilitate broad awareness of barriers to school attendance.			X	CGIC, SCCPSS, LG, UW, CES	ST	N/A
Encourage employers to provide incentives such as transit vouchers, paid “leave” time for parents to attend/participate in school functions.	X			CGIC, SCCPSS, LG., SEDA, SACC	ST	N/A
Increase and diversify use of alternative methods of communication with parents; implement use of smart phone notification methods to all parents – school specific.			X	CGIC, SCCPSS, LG	\$	General Fund, Grants

9.10 Quality of Life: Public Safety

VISION: A community that is safe place to live, work, and raise a family, where the protection of its residents is considered an integral part of its social and economic values.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Reduce crime, particularly abuse and violence, by building trust between law enforcement and residents, focusing enforcement in high crime areas, and expanding the visibility of police to ensure all residents feel safe.</i>						
Increase capacity of “diversion” program for first-time offenders to recue case load; providing case management, restorative justice program and wrap around services via community partners and/or multi-agency resource center (MARC).	X			CGIC, SCMPD, LG, DJJ, CCSD	\$\$	General Fund
Provide training for law enforcement specific to cultural diversity, confidentiality and sensitivity to reporting as well as to mental and behavioral health issues in the community.		X		CGIC, SCMPD, LG, CCSD, GCSB, SN	\$\$	General Fund
Expand, market and engage community based organizations with police activity through programs such as; Citizens Academy, Police Activity League. Develop opportunities for law enforcement and families/children to interact peacefully at community events.		X		CGIC, SCMPD, LG	\$	General Fund
Reduce access to guns by re-instituting waiting periods for purchase, limited local gun shows, explore gun buy-back programs.			X	CGIC, SCMPD, LG, GA	ST	N/A
Implement Project Step Forward (taking guns off the streets, breaking up gangs and groups.)			X	CGIC, SCMPD, LG	\$\$	General Fund
<i>GOAL: Integrate environmental design elements which discourage criminal behaviors into the planning and construction of public space.</i>						
Implement environmental design practices shown to discourage criminal activities.		X		MPC, SCMPD	ST	N/A

9.11 Quality of Life: Natural Resources

VISION: The natural resources vision is a community that is a healthy place to live, work, and raise a family, where the protection of natural resources is considered an integral part of its social and economic values.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Incorporate natural resources into appropriate development standards and review procedures.</i>						
Propose policies limiting allowable impervious coverage for new development.		X		LG, MPC	ST	N/A
Gather information on incentives to support energy efficiency and natural resource protection in new construction.		X		LG, MPC, GA	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Expand the preservation of natural areas and open spaces to provide for wildlife habitat, the continuation of ecosystem services, and public recreational opportunities.</i>						
Identify funding for the Chatham County Resource Protection Commission and its land conservation efforts that include protecting high priority habitats.	X			LG, MPC, RPC	\$\$	SPLOST, Grants
Develop a plan to repurpose publicly owned natural areas and open spaces to provide permanently protected habitat areas and public recreational spaces.		X		LG, MPC, RPC, GC, GLT	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Maintain adequate and open floodplains to prevent property damage from floodwaters and natural shoreline migration due to sea level rise.</i>						
Develop policies to facilitate coastal ecosystem migration through the maintenance and restoration of open space.		X		LG, GA, MPC	\$\$	General Fund, Grants
<i>GOAL: Develop a time-based and spatial context for climate adaptation and sea-level rise adaptation planning.</i>						
Develop a long-range regional plan for sea level rise which evaluates multiple adaptation methods.	X			LG, MPC, GA	\$	General Fund, Grants

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Preserve existing trees and accelerate the planting of new trees.</i>						
Develop policies and procedures to improve tree preservation and replanting during development.		X		LG, MPC, STF	ST	N/A
Propose a No Net Loss policy to protect existing tree canopy.	X			LG, MPC, STF	ST	N/A
Gather data on tree canopy coverage standards for new development and internal practices			X	LG, MPC, STF	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Improve and expand solid waste management to include additional opportunities for recycling and composting.</i>						
Develop policies to reduce the volume of waste entering Chatham County landfills through increased recycling and material reuse.		X		LG, MPC, GA	\$	General Fund, Grants
Gather data on best practices to reduce illegal dumping throughout Chatham County.		X		LG, MPC, GA, SCMPD	ST	N/A
Explore feasibility of composting for institutional, commercial, and residential areas.	X			LG, MPC, GA	ST	N/A
Explore the feasibility of economic development that utilizes locally sourced recycled materials.			X	LG, MPC, GA	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Protect and improve the air quality in Chatham County.</i>						
Gather information on all sources of air pollution and best practices to reduce air pollution.		X		LG, MPC, GA, FG	ST	N/A
Propose policies that will protect air quality and benefit human health.			X	LG, MPC, GA, FG	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Protect and improve the quality and supply of drinking water in Chatham County.</i>						
Amend existing wetlands protection regulations to include protection for functional wetlands and functional isolated wetlands.		X		LF, GA, FG	ST	N/A
<i>GOAL: Factor sea level rise into land use and transportation & infrastructure planning.</i>						
Gather information and best practices for the integration of sea level rise projections into planning practices.	X			LG, MPC, GA, FG	ST	N/A
Propose policies and procedures that integrate sea level rise into land use planning.		X		LG, MPC	ST	N/A

9.12 Historic & Cultural Resources

VISION: The historic preservation vision is to protect, preserve, and enhance historical, architectural, and environmentally significant resources; to promote the community's historic character as an important element of its quality of life; and to maintain a historic preservation process that is comprehensive, continuous, planned, and funded.

	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	Participating Agencies	Cost Estimate	Potential Fund Sources
<i>GOAL: Preserve culturally and historically significant buildings, landscapes and sites throughout Chatham County.</i>						
Continuously identify culturally and historically significant resources.		X		LG, MPC, HSF	ST	N/A
Refine policies to conserve and enhance the distinguishing characteristics of historic neighborhoods, including intangible characteristics such as language, art, music and foods.		X		LG, MPC, HSF	ST	N/A
Propose a policy regarding the ownership, treatment and curation of archeological artifacts.		X		LG, MPC	ST	N/A

Community Participation Program



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

In 2014, Chatham County initiated the first ever county-wide strategic planning process that led to the development of the *Chatham Community Blueprint*. As this effort fell within the timeline for completion of the update to the Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan, approval was given by the Department of Community Affairs to allow the County and city of Savannah to align all of the community outreach and feedback efforts of the countywide *Blueprint* with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, both the details of the community participation plan for the Comprehensive Plan as well as the *Blueprint* are detailed here.

Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan ultimately belongs to the citizens of Savannah and Chatham County. MPC planning staff sought to gather the community's opinions, priorities, and visions about the future of the area. An intensive public engagement effort was made in the months leading up to the draft of the Comprehensive Plan. This effort built off previous community outreach activities performed for the Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition (CGIC), Savannah Consolidated Housing & Community Development Plan (HCD Plan), the Total Mobility Plan / 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and various neighborhood plans. Specifically, this community participation effort sought to engage the public on issues which are addressed primarily in the comprehensive plan.

The goal of the community participation program was to guide and inform the visions, goals, and strategies. The program used two primary mechanisms to collect public input: a survey and open house meetings. Planning staff intended to create two instruments which facilitated honest communication of diverse viewpoints on topics of particular interest to the comprehensive plan. In addition, there have been opportunities for public comment on the comprehensive plan at a variety of meetings of the MPC, City Council, and County Commission.

STAKEHOLDERS AND STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC):

Tanya Milton, MPC Chairman *

James Overton, MPC Board *

Lee Smith, Chatham County Manager/MPC Board *

Tom Thomson, MPC Executive Director *

Jackie Jackson, MPC Director of Comprehensive Planning *

Jack Butler, MPC Staff

Debbie Burke, MPC Staff *

Sara Farr, MPC Staff

Steve Fox, MPC Staff *

Lara Hall, SAGIS Director *

Ellen Harris, MPC Director of Historic Preservation

Nick Helmholdt, MPC Staff *

Marcus Lotson, MPC Staff

Jane Love, MPC Staff

Kevin MacLeod, MPC Staff

Leah Michalak, MPC Staff

Charlotte Moore, MPC Staff

David Ramsey, MPC Staff

Stephanie Rossi, MPC Staff

James Small, MPC Staff *

Wykoda Wang, MPC Staff

Mark Wilkes, Director Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
**Steering Committee Member*

Chatham County:

Al Scott, Chairman Chatham County Commission
Lee Smith, County Manager *
Linda Cramer, Assistant Chatham County Manager *
Michael Kaigler, Assistant Chatham County Manager
Suzanne Cooler, Chatham County Assistant County Engineer
Jefferson Kirkland, Chatham County Engineering
**Steering Committee Member*

City of Savannah:

Eddie DeLoach, Mayor *
Bill Durrence, Alderman *
Brian Foster, Alderman
Julian Miller, Alderman
Martin Sullivan, Chief of Staff
Patty McIntosh, Savannah Department of Community Planning and Development *
Chief Middleton, Savannah Fire Chief
Chief Handy, Savannah Fire Department *
**Steering Committee Member*

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Planning staff developed a survey instrument in June 2016. In the interest of gathering a wide range of input, the survey was intended to be completed in approximately five minutes. The survey covered a wide range of topics including future land use preferences, housing, community goals, infrastructure priorities, quality of life programs, and sea level rise. The 11-question survey had nine multiple choice items and two open response items. All MPC staff were invited to comment on initial drafts of the survey.

The survey was available online and in paper format. The goal of the survey was to gather results from a diverse cross-section of the Savannah – Chatham County community. Staff determined that a sample of 385 valid results would yield a statistically relevant result.

The survey was distributed through a wide variety of channels. The following list summarizes the primary distribution methods which were employed:

- Newsletter articles/highlights (over 3000 recipients)
- Radio advertising for a 2-week period
- Prominent placement on the MPC, City of Savannah and Chatham County webpages
- Posters placed in city-owned parking garages (16)
- Posters placed in Broughton Street kiosks (4)
- Posters and questionnaires placed at MPC office and near MPC Hearing Room
- Email notification to MPC email list serve
- Email notification to all neighborhood associations (over 30)
- MPC social media distribution (2 websites)
- Presentations at neighborhood association meetings during the survey window
 - Metropolitan Community Organization, Inc. (6/22)
 - West Savannah Neighborhood Association (6/28)
 - Parkside Neighborhood Association (6/28)

- Paper survey distribution at Live Oak Public Library branches
 - Bull Street (6/30)
 - Southwest Chatham (7/5)
 - Islands (7/6)
 - Garden City (7/7)
- Phone call notification to all faith communities listed on the Savannah Morning News Church Database (over 400)
- Newspaper articles
 - Savannah Morning News (6/14)
 - Savannah Tribune (6/29)
 - Savannah Business Journal (7/5)
 - Connect Savannah (7/13)
- Flyers advertising the survey posted at the following locations
 - Chatham County Community Center & Chatham County Aquatic Center
 - City of Savannah Community Centers
 - Live Oak Public Library branches
 - Grocery stores, cafes, and other community bulletin boards (18)
 - Housing Authority of Savannah
 - United Way of the Coastal Empire
 - Chatham Area Transit
- Email and social media distribution by external groups
 - Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition
 - Healthy Savannah
 - Savannah Bicycle Campaign
 - Step Up Savannah

The survey was open from June 13 to July 15, 2016. The highest periods of activity for the survey were the first and final weeks – this may be due to the fact that the Independence Day holiday was in the middle of the survey period. The majority of responses were submitted online.

In total, 855 responses were received to the survey. Of these, 750 were from residents of the City of Savannah or Unincorporated Chatham County. The remaining 155 lived in other jurisdictions in Chatham County (62), outside the County (31) or did not respond (12). Based on the current population, this sample size allows us to claim a 3.57% margin of error for the results of this survey.

All survey results reflect those provided by residents of the City of Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham County only.

Question 1

Please state if you would like more, less, or about the same amount of the following land uses in our community.

	More	About the Same	Less	Not Sure / No Opinion
Residential - Single Family	35%	53%	8%	4%
Residential - Multifamily	28%	37%	31%	4%
Senior / Assisted Living Housing	40%	42%	6%	13%
Mixed Use	51%	26%	18%	5%
Light Industrial / Manufacturing	24%	37%	31%	9%
Grocery Stores	43%	45%	10%	2%
Retail Stores	30%	49%	18%	3%
Hotels / Motels	8%	31%	57%	4%
Professional Office	20%	57%	15%	7%
Service Businesses	40%	49%	9%	2%
Parks	70%	27%	3%	1%
Protected Natural Areas	76%	19%	3%	2%
Agriculture	39%	39%	10%	12%

Question 2

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Agree	Not Sure / No Opinion	Disagree
The current park system is adequate.	40%	14%	46%
The current community facilities are adequate.	31%	17%	52%
New development should be required to protect environmentally critical areas.	85%	7%	9%
Long range policies should focus on natural resource sustainability.	84%	8%	8%
Roads should be designed for pedestrians and bicycles as well as cars.	84%	6%	10%
The current public transportation system is adequate.	19%	22%	60%
The design and character of new buildings should match the design and character of the neighborhood.	72%	11%	18%
The current availability of healthy food is adequate.	30%	17%	53%
The current availability of high paying jobs is adequate.	8%	18%	74%
The current educational opportunities are adequate.	23%	17%	60%

Question 5

How important is it to have housing that is:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure / No Opinion
Affordable	75%	21%	2%	2%
Market Rate	48%	42%	4%	5%
Luxury	16%	41%	38%	4%
First Time Homebuyers	45%	42%	8%	5%
Seniors	46%	42%	6%	5%
People with Disabilities	59%	33%	4%	4%

Question 6

Do you support more, less, or about the same level of investment in the following infrastructure projects:

	More	About the Same	Less	Not Sure / No Opinion
Parks & Open Space	70%	26%	4%	1%
Community Facilities	60%	30%	8%	1%
Sidewalks & Trails	78%	18%	4%	1%
Road Maintenance	73%	24%	2%	1%
Road Expansion	37%	34%	28%	2%
Public Transportation	58%	27%	10%	5%
Flood Prevention / SWM	67%	30%	1%	2%
Drinking Water Supply	59%	37%	1%	3%
Public Access to the Internet	48%	33%	10%	8%

Question 7

Please state if you support more, less or about the same level of public backing for the following quality of life initiatives:

	More	About the Same	Less	Not Sure / No Opinion
Walking and Bicycling	70%	21%	7%	1%
Recycling	72%	20%	5%	2%
Green Infrastructure	69%	18%	9%	3%
Tree Canopy	75%	19%	4%	1%
Litter Reduction	70%	26%	2%	2%
Commuting Options	60%	27%	10%	3%
Composting	53%	31%	8%	8%
Energy Efficiency	70%	21%	5%	3%
Historic Preservation	63%	25%	8%	3%
Water Conservation	69%	27%	3%	1%
Community Gardens	70.7%	20%	6%	3%
Renewable Energy	71.6%	20%	5%	3%

Question 8

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
Our community should discourage future development and redevelopment of areas vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding, and other coastal hazards.	73%	11%	16%
Our community should encourage conservation of land vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding, and other coastal hazards.	80%	8%	11%

Question 9

(Optional) Please share any other thoughts you have regarding the future of Chatham County and Savannah.

(265 written responses received)

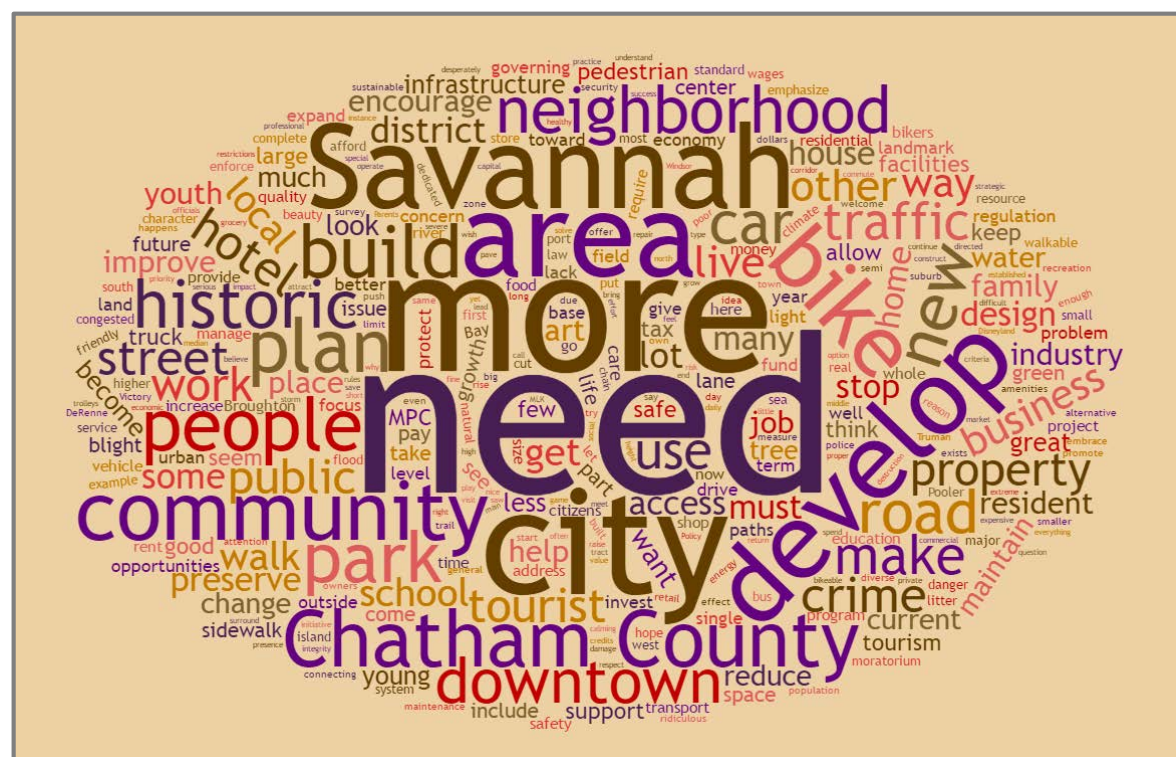


Figure 2.0 Word Cloud of open responses with the larger the word, the more frequently that word was used in responses.

Question 10

Where do you live?

City of Savannah	70%
Unincorporated Chatham County	17%
Other Jurisdiction in Chatham County *	7%
Outside Chatham County	4%
Unspecified	1%

* Other Jurisdictions in Chatham County include Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Town of Thunderbolt, and Tybee Island.

Question 11

What is your age?

Under 20	1%
20-39	31%
40-54	27%
54-74	35%
Over 74	4%
Unspecified	2%

SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

Land Use: Widespread support was found for increasing the amount of land for “Parks” and “Protected Natural Areas” – 70% and 76% respectively. Other land uses which were supported broadly included “Mixed Use” (51%) and “Grocery Stores” (43%). The only category with a majority of opposition was “Hotels/Motels” with over half (57%) of respondents indicated a desire for fewer.

Community Goals: The respondents indicated consensus around several questions. 85% agreed with the statement “New development should be required to protect environmentally critical areas.” 84% agreed with the following two statements: “Long range policies should focus on natural resource sustainability” and “Roads should be designed for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as cars.”

Housing: Over half (55%) of respondents stated they believed the existing housing options do not meet the community’s need. Over three-quarters (75%) of respondents indicated they felt affordable housing was “very important.” An open-response question with 300 responses revealed a common sentiment that the housing needs of low-income families and homeless people were not being met.

Infrastructure: Respondents indicated broad agreement for increased investment in the following types of public infrastructure projects: “Sidewalks and Trails” (78%), “Road Maintenance” (73%), “Parks & Open Space” (70%), and “Flood Prevention / Storm Water Management” (67%). The infrastructure category with the least support was “Road Expansion” with only 37% of respondents favoring increased investment.

Quality of Life: Respondents were asked whether they would favor more or less public backing for a range of programs. While all items had over 50% of respondents favoring more public support, the most popular were “Improve & Protect the Tree Canopy” (76%), “Recycling” (72%) and

“Renewable Energy” (72%). Additionally, the following three programs had over 70% of respondents favoring more public support, “Community Gardens,” “Walking and Bicycling,” and “Litter Reduction.”

Sea Level Rise: A large majority of respondents favored policy responses to address sea level rise and flooding. Four-fifths (80%) agreed that “our community should encourage conservation of land vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding & other coastal hazards.” Conversely, three-quarters of respondents (73%) agreed that “our community should discourage future development and redevelopment of areas vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding and other coastal hazards.”

Open Response: Respondents were given the opportunity to share any other thoughts regarding the future for Chatham County and Savannah – 265 responses were provided. Most of the themes mirrored the results of the survey. Popular topics which were not addressed elsewhere in the survey included tourism, education, crime, archeology, and art.

Two final public open house meetings were held on July 14, 2016 to gather final comments and ideas from members of the community. The first meeting was held from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, forty-seven (47) people attended. The second was held from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, twenty-nine (29) people attended. Both meetings took place at the MPC Arthur Mendonsa Hearing Room at 110 E. State St., Savannah, Georgia.

[illegible][illegible]

Attendees at each meeting could provide input in a variety of ways. Laptop computers were set up to allow people to take the survey if they had not already done so. Sticky notes and pencils were available for people to make comments about specific items on posters and maps. Four discussion tables were set up to hold conversations about topics of special interest. Each discussion was

moderated by MPC or city of Savannah staff and focused on one of the four topics: affordable housing, commercial corridor redevelopment, sea level rise, and public transportation.

Each discussion lasted 12 to 15 minutes. Many attendees participated in multiple discussion tables and also provided feedback via the survey or sticky notes. A thematic analysis of the discussion notes yielded the following common themes:

- Affordable Housing
 - Allow and incentivize a mix of housing types, land uses, incomes, and home sizes.
 - Create access to transportation networks including walking, biking and public transit, consider reduced parking requirement.
 - Promote in-fill housing, “tiny homes”, and pre-fabricated/container housing.
 - Ensure that property is maintained in good condition and fits with the community’s character.
- Commercial Corridor Redevelopment
 - Improve multi-modal transportation options with sidewalk networks, bike paths, and transit connections.
 - Allow a mix of land uses based around resident needs
 - Create incentives to promote redevelopment and reduce regulatory barriers
 - Preserve the unique history and enhance the aesthetic qualities of corridors.
 - Ensure public safety.
- Sea Level Rise
 - Discourage development in flood prone areas.
 - Create green infrastructure such as permeable pavement, green roofs, and strategically placed conservation lands.
 - Create a stormwater utility to incentivize low impact development.
 - Educate the public and developers about the impacts of sea level rise.
- Public Transportation
 - Ensure that transit is frequent and reliable.
 - Add maps & schedules to stops and provide real-time data on bus location online.
 - Improve bus stop quality by adding shelters, benches, and lighting.
 - Connect frequent transit to downtown parking garages and dense neighborhoods.
 - Partner with industries, institutional employers so residents can access areas that are not served by current public transit provider.

Chatham Community Blueprint

In 2014 Chatham County engaged the Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition (“CGIC”) to lead the development of the *Chatham Community Blueprint*. The Blueprint is a long-term plan for the Community. It will strategically move the Chatham community towards the accomplishment of specified goals in four key theme areas: Economy, Education, Health and Quality of Life. By focusing on the Community’s interests and concerns, the Blueprint serves as a catalyst for improvement.

Community members have identified all of the plan’s components, indicating that they have embraced the process and support resource allocation toward each area. The Community will need to collaborate across public sector entities, non-profit groups, and private industry to take ownership of listed Strategies and coordinate necessary Action steps for each identified item. The Blueprint proposes a Timeline in which to implement each Strategy over the next twenty years through 2035. Performance metrics will be used to monitor accomplishment of stated Goals.

The choice of CGIC as the project leader was a natural one. CGIC had already been monitoring community indicators, performance measures and trend data at the local level. CGIC’s membership reflects an array of community interests. Many of CGIC’s members and sponsors had been working separately within the same community toward similar goals for years. By combining resources and objectives, more could be accomplished.



1. Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition (CGIC) Background

1.1. History:

Over the past few years there has been a growing awareness of the need to integrate community indicators and performance measurement efforts at the local level. This integration leads to a better assessment of the community; defining the current position and progress needed. Integration allows for higher levels of engagement with citizens and stakeholders working with governmental, business, and non-profit organizations to increase

quality of life through the development and use of community indicators and performance measures.

The City of Savannah, Chatham County, and United Way of the Coastal Empire (UWCE) partnered in 2008 to evaluate and address community needs. These efforts were undertaken to identify significant issues of importance to community stakeholders. *The Savannah Chatham Community Indicators* project was established to monitor the current state of progress on priority areas of public interest in the City of Savannah and Chatham County. The indicators were grouped into four categories of primary interest: education and youth development, health and wellness, economic independence, and regionalism. In each of these four sections there was a collection of baseline measurements. For the first couple of years the data was observed to define conditions and characterize trends. The trend data was helpful in guiding funding decisions for the three charter organizations.

In 2012 after interest from the local hospital systems, St. Joseph/Candler and Memorial the coalition expanded to support the collection of local data and completing a community needs assessment to be in compliance with federal requirements. The larger group with an array of representatives became the Community Indicators Coalition (CIC). This expansion also widened the role of the coalition. In addition to reviewing and analyzing data, CIC now advocates for data driven decision among local leadership for greater community impact.

Under the leadership of the CIC the “project” expanded beyond its charter organizations to include community partners and sponsors.

Although a formal agreement was put in place in 2008 among the charter organizations, as the interest of other community partners began to grow there was a need for a more formal agreement for sharing of information and collaboration. While many of the Coalition sponsors have worked in the same community and toward similar goals for years, the idea of working side-by-side and agreeing to focus on the same outcome and the idea of leveraging funds to support community wide projects was an innovative idea. Savannah is known for its historic preservation and its ability to attract visitors, however the concept of “change” is difficult for some to accept. Individuals working in non-profit, government and social services often change, causing barriers to consistent messaging, working through long-term commitments, and building of trustful relationships. These challenges led the newly expanded group of concerned advocates to develop an Executive Partnership Agreement.

The Coalition Executive Partnership Agreement (Appendix 9.1) outlines a formalized structure. The initial agreement was signed in December 2012. While this provided some structure for the group, it was quickly noted that standard procedures needed to be implemented to outline how additional organizations became part of the Coalition, how the Coalition would be organized and more specifically, the ultimate goal of the Coalition.

Leaders researched other communities with similar projects and met with other cities where a variety of formats were considered. The group also contracted with America Speaks to assist in the development of the organizational work plan, but it wasn’t until a trip to Jacksonville, Florida and discussion with staff of Jacksonville Community Council, Incorporated (JCCI) that the group realized it had more structural work to do before the collaborative building experience could be successful.

After much consideration, the group agreed that while data was important, it was not the only purpose of working together. Therefore the Standard Operating Procedures incorporated the Executive Partnership Agreement defining the administrative role of United Way along with levels of sponsorship, the purpose and goal. At the same time, the group became members of the International Community Indicators Consortium which provided an even wider view of how communities work together and approached opportunities for capacity building as well as leveraging of resources.

The purpose of the Community Indicators Coalition is to *improve community well-being* by engaging and leading the community to work collectively in its development of strategic priorities that guide policy, programs, and resource allocation. The Coalition is comprised of community members and advocates working together through a comprehensive, coordinated approach for planning and accountability while serving as a resource for agencies addressing overall health and well-being through leveraging of resources for community initiatives.

While working to strengthen capacity of the Coalition in Chatham County is a priority, the group has also been working to increase partnerships and diversify network members across a four county sub-region. The charter organizations were Chatham County based but when the Coalition decided to expand there were members representing public health and postsecondary education who had interest in enlarging geographically with data.

Based on feedback from JCCI, the Coalition decided to work in sub-groups to review the enormous amount of data, gather community input and engage with various populations.

In 2013 the Coalition began hosting neighborhood forums to increase awareness of the community indicators work and gathered insight from residents regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. All of this information was compiled and presented back to the community in a summit in 2014. Much of the resident feedback was consistent with the data. While the Coalition had much information, there were still areas with limited data. Coalition leaders began exploring options of a community wide survey which would “fill in the gaps” and allow for a comparison to previous survey work.

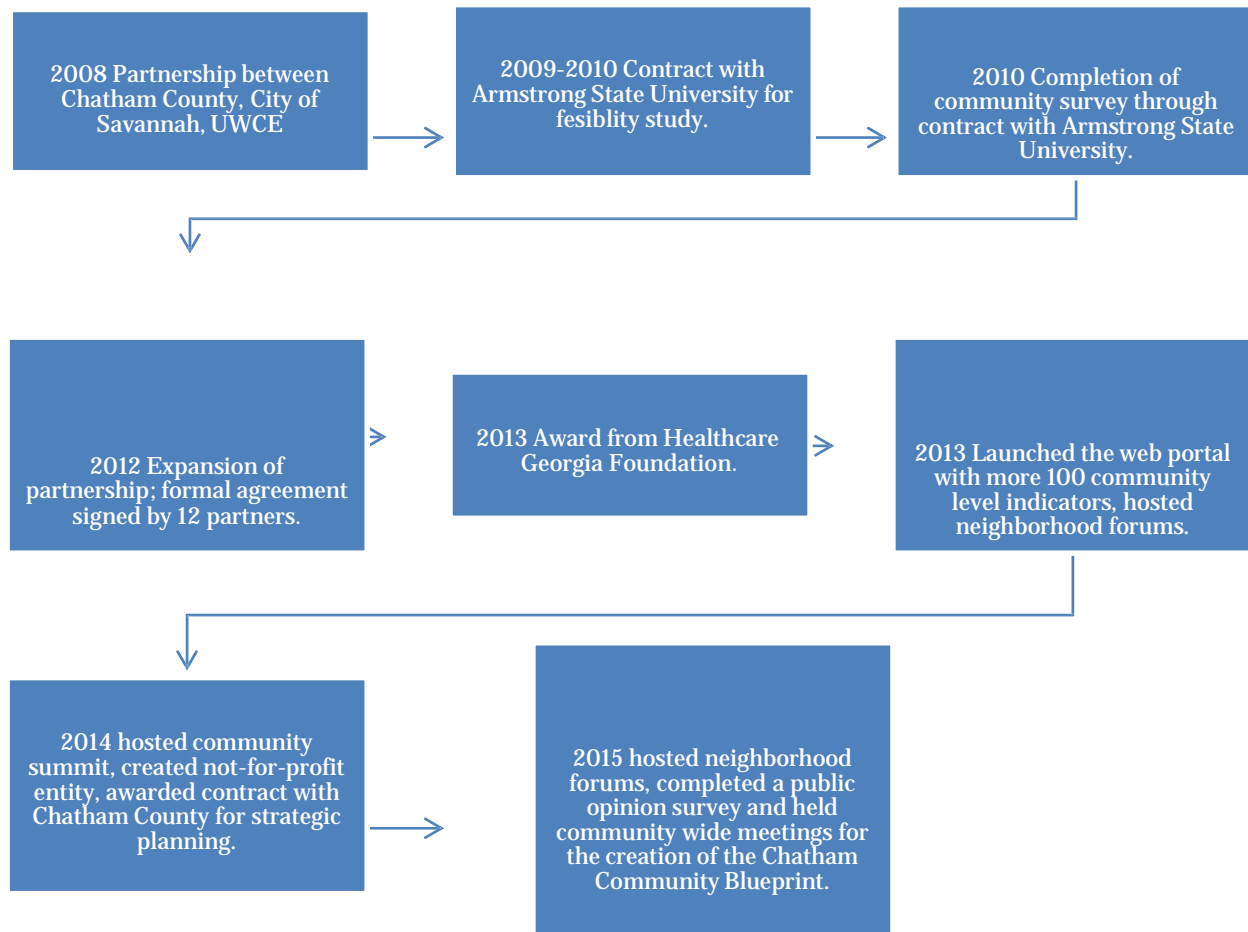
The Coalition continued to work through committees and was afforded an opportunity to apply to serve as the oversight group for developing a strategic plan with Chatham County. In 2014 the Coalition completed paperwork required for creation of a not-for-profit entity in order to submit a proposal to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners for the development of a community strategic plan. The contract was awarded and the CGIC began work with Chatham County late 2014 with expectations of launch in early 2015. A Steering Committee was created to help guide the strategic planning process and build advocates to encourage and diversify community participation.

2015 provided an array of opportunities to affirm community and stakeholder concerns, validate data, and complete a public opinion survey. The community assessment process was then used to facilitate community meetings where opportunities were discussed and prioritized. All of the meetings were open to the public and planning documents were made available through the coalition website. The creation of the Chatham Community Blueprint; a strategic plan which outlines the vision, goals, strategies, and metric for work specific to health and human services in Chatham County for the next years has been completed. Once

the Chatham Community Blueprint outline has been established, project teams will be convened to discuss and sketch an implementation plan.

Although the Coalition has grown from the original three charter organizations to approximately twenty (20), the efforts to expand beyond Chatham County are still in progress. Through strong, on-going relationships in Bryan, Effingham and Liberty County's we continue to provide access to data, encourage open lines of communication, and explore sub-regional projects when appropriate.

Planning Process Timeline



1.2. Governance Structure

Although the Coalition began in 2012 as a meet and confer group, as partners continued to increase and areas of interest turned into “projects”; it was noted that we need to become more organized with committee structure and bylaws. Committees were created as work groups to ensure an open, transparent process but also to ensure that certain activities were accomplished. Bylaws were created which defined the roles and responsibilities of sponsors and partners, delegated votes and outlined reporting and accountability of staff and the Executive Leadership.

In 2014 the coalition decided to become a standalone not-for-profit organization. This decision was made after much conversation among charter organizations and funders as well as legal investigation. Services for application were completed by Russ Simpson on behalf of the Coalition. During this same time members of the Coalition felt that there needed to be a formalized name of the group which would identify who they were, interest of membership and the geographic area represented. As a result of this discussion Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition (CGIC) was formed.

1.3. Funding

Thanks to leadership of the three Charter Organizations (City of Savannah, Chatham County and United Way of the Coastal Empire); it was decided that organizations and/or individuals wishing to be included in the decision making process and guide the direction of coalition needed to make a monetary investment. The annual budget was drafted, potential sponsors were identified, and initial financial commitments were made in the fall of 2012.

Financial reports were reviewed through the year along with review and approval of an annual operating budget. As the work of the coalition grew the need for additional funds increased. It was the decision of the leadership to explore one-time grants for start-up funds, but the ultimate goal is for the organization to become self-sufficient.

In the fall of 2012, a proposal was submitted and awarded by the Healthcare Georgia Foundation to create a user-friendly community indicator web portal so that members would be using the same set of data when making decisions while being open to the public and being updated as new information became available with access to promising practices and funding opportunity notifications. CGIC was awarded \$60,000 over a twelve-month time frame to convene the group, create and release the web portal, along with hosting community meetings to gather input from the people.

United Way of the Coastal Empire (UWCE) served as the lead agency, providing designated staff to convene interested parties and facilitate the work of the coalition. As of December 2015 UWCE continues to serve as the fiscal agent for CGIC providing not only accounting services but also acting as the conduit for contracted staff. In December 2014, CGIC secured a full-time staff.

1.3.1. Sponsors and Partners:

Although the coalition began as a project between three entities there is now an array of sponsors and partners. Sponsors are those who provide monetary contribution toward the work of the coalition; partners are those which provide in-kind services and other supports. There are signed Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (Appendix 9.2) on file with each organization. The following is a listing of the various sponsors and or partners:

- 1.3.1.1. Armstrong State University (Research Center & Savannah Graduates)
- 1.3.1.2. City of Savannah
- 1.3.1.3. Chatham County Commission
- 1.3.1.4. Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

- 1.3.1.5. Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council
- 1.3.1.6. Coastal Health District (Chatham County Health Department)
- 1.3.1.7. Effingham Chamber of Commerce
- 1.3.1.8. Effingham Family Connection
- 1.3.1.9. Georgia Regents University (Previously known as Medical College of Georgia)
- 1.3.1.10. Housing Authority of Savannah
- 1.3.1.11. Memorial Health University Medical Center
- 1.3.1.12. Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- 1.3.1.13. Savannah Business Group
- 1.3.1.14. Savannah Chatham County Public School System
- 1.3.1.15. Savannah-Chatham Youth Futures Authority
- 1.3.1.16. Savannah Economic Development Authority
- 1.3.1.17. Savannah State University
- 1.3.1.18. Savannah Technical College
- 1.3.1.19. St. Joseph's/Candler Health System
- 1.3.1.20. Step Up Savannah
- 1.3.1.21. United Way of the Coastal Empire



1.3.2. Resources, Consultants and Contracts

1.3.2.1. Healthy Communities Institute (HCI)

CGIC contracted with (HCI) for the embedded web portal. This system includes county and selected sub-county level data as compared to state and national data. Beginning in 2013 the indicators project expanded from the original 20 indicators (maintained by Armstrong State University – Research Center and reported annually) to more than 100 indicators and

growing; from three sponsor organizations to at least eight sponsors and or partners. The annual cost of HCI is included in the annual operating budget of the coalition.

1.3.2.2. Expanded relationships with Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI) The charter organizations had already identified JCCI as a potential “mentor” when exploring a community-indicators project in 2007. At that point a few staff from Jacksonville visited with local, Chatham-based, leaders to discuss how the project was started and JCCI made some suggestions regarding a feasibility study. In the fall of 2013, prior to the neighborhood forums, the coalition took about 15 leaders to speak with JCCI once again regarding potential expansion. In the fall of 2015, once CGIC was awarded a contract with Chatham County, a contract was executed between JCCI and CGIC for technical assistance in the planning process and implementation of a community needs assessment.

1.3.2.3. Staffing

United Way of the Coastal Empire (UWCE) served as the lead entity and fiscal agent since the initial indicators project began and as of December 2015 still serves as the fiscal agent. UWCE assigned staff to work on the project along with other tasks for the first few years. As the project grew it was obvious that dedicated staff would be necessary for a successful project. In the fall of 2012 there was discussion of hiring staff for the coalition but due to funding limitations it was not possible. However upon receipt of funds from Chatham County for a community wide strategic plan UWCE and CGIC signed an agreement for an individual to serve as full-time director to the coalition using UWCE as the payroll administrator.

1.3.2.4. Additional Support

CGIC also has contracts with a variety of individuals and companies for technical support, marketing and outreach services. These contracts are reviewed annually and revised as needed on a case by case basis.

2. Community Assessment (Web portal, Neighborhood Forums, Summit)

2.1. History of Planning

In 2013, following a presentation to Healthcare Georgia Foundation there was some inquiry as to the difference of the current project from that of a similar project conducted under the leadership of Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce in the late 1980’s. Due to limitation with technology this was difficult to research, but thanks to some historians the Coalition was able to locate *“Blueprint for Action Vision 20/20”* a report to the community presented in January 1992.

The report outlined an implementation plan across thirteen different focal points to include:

- housing
- economic development

- environmental protection
- public facilities, recreation
- public safety
- education and more.

This “blueprint” provided background information gathered through community meetings, identified action steps, and outlined goals and strategies for each focus area. Community “champions” were self-selected or appointed to address specific pieces of the blueprint and the community was called to action. While the report was comprehensive in many ways it lacked baseline data and measurement tools. The implementation plan also lacked an identified staff person who would serve as the “point” person for documentation, tracking and accountability. Although there is evidence that much of the plan has been implemented there are a few areas of interest that have not been successfully tackled.

These are specific to education and health; with a focus on the lack of a comprehensive plan for the coordination of health and human services.

The review and assessment of the *Blueprint for Action* encouraged the Coalition to continue to focus on health and human services and to work toward a comprehensive, coordinated approach for planning and accountability with the goal of improving the communities’ well-being. The Coalition compiled a document to show measurements and accomplishments of the *Blueprint for Action* in comparison to the Savannah County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission’s (MPC) Comprehensive Plan for Savannah and the unincorporated areas of Chatham County. Review of this document showed some positive improvements had been accomplished while also showing that there are still areas that need improvement and require community leaders to work together for continued success.



2.2 History of Data Collection & Reporting

From 2008 through 2012 on an annual basis the data collected from the American Community Survey, local opinion surveys, data provided by public organizations and data compiled from local non-profit public service were presented in a bound notebook to community leaders and made available online through Armstrong State University’s website. As the Coalition began to explore ways in which data should be used for community planning and allocation, the leadership was excited about an opportunity to embed more than 100

indicators (data sets) in a live, up-to-date site through a contract with Healthy Communities Initiatives (HCI). Data available on the site is provided through an array of public entities with at least two years of comparison information. Through the generous support of local sponsors and a grant received from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation the information is now provided in a user-friendly website with live, up-to-date, concise data across multiple areas such as:

- education,
- economic development,
- quality of life, and
- health, for improved community-wide evaluation and planning.

2.1.1. Web Portal

The web portal was originally embedded within the United Way of the Coastal Empire website when released in 2013 with links to partner and sponsor organizations. While much of the indicator data is imported through a contract; the upload of local reports and updates regarding the work of the Coalition is managed by staff and local contractors. As of December 2014, CGIC created a standalone website known as www.coastalgaindicators.org. All of the embedded data and resources were transitioned to the new site which allowed CGIC to market the site with opportunities to be more specific to the local work and provide access for collection and sharing of data. The website provides an array of information and resources free and open to the public.

This includes more than 100 indicators with two to three years of data, and a visual perception of our current status as compared to either other Georgia counties or counties nationally.

Data can be broken-out and sorted specific to race, age, gender and geographic location with the ability to compare various selections. Disparities are highlighted for each indicator and individuals can query the site for comparison of indicators along with promising practices specific to the desired outcome along with funding opportunities within a focused area. Archived coalition documents are available on the website along with a calendar specific to CGIC events and call-to-action options for individuals. The site provides a brief history of the coalition along with active planning documents for review and input from community advocates. In addition, the portal has access to the local public school data along with reports produced by local post-secondary schools and the Metropolitan Planning Commission.



2.1.2. 2013 Neighborhood Forums

In 2013, the Coalition hosted sixteen (16) neighborhood forums two in each of the eight county commission districts over a twelve week time span. Events were held at community centers, churches and schools. Through support of community partners, the coalition solicited and trained more than forty (40) individuals to serve as Community Facilitators. These individuals completed a seven hour training session and then agreed to serve as a facilitator for at least two events. Promotion of the events was provided by the Marketing and Outreach Committee through public television and social media in conjunction with the downtown Savannah Neighborhood Association. Unfortunately, participation in the forums was lower than anticipated, but the information gained from “followers” and the identification of other potential partners was beneficial. Although less than 100 attended the forums, the individuals confirmed the data and affirmed what the leaders felt were concerns within each community.

While some residents identified neighborhood-specific issues (such as unavailable bus routes and crime), most residents presented concerns related to jobs and education.



2.1.3. 2014 Community Summit

Information gleaned from the neighborhood forums was then added to the work already done by the coalition members within each topic area and presented to the larger community at the Community Summit on March 1, 2014. Although still challenged to incorporate participation representative of all demographics across a community of more than 250,000

people the leadership was pleased with the specific effort to include stakeholders in the Summit.

The Coalition engaged more than 100 stakeholders and solicited support in determining priorities within each topic area. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 75 with the highest percentage age group represented being 45-59. The group was made up of 60% women, 40% male; this break down included: 49% White, 40% African- American, 7% Asian, 1% Hispanic and 3% other. Each Chatham County district had representation with some participants living outside the County. More than 65% of participants indicated homeownership while more than 70% were currently employed.

It was noted that 90% had an educational level of bachelor's degree or higher with less than 2% having less than high school degree. 57% signified an annual income of more than \$50,000.

Participants were led through a series of facilitated small group discussions to narrow the focus within each of four themed areas. Some data and background information was provided but the true unmeasured success was the conversations that took place within each small group. Results of those dialogues provided approximately twelve or so issues separated by topic area.

1. Economy: vocational pathways and job training, solid jobs for solid wages, affordable housing for rental and ownership.
2. Education: increased parental and community involvement in schools, increased access to high-quality, affordable child care, provide coordinated-consistent resources for all schools, and offer parent skills classes.
3. Health: expand and sustain programs that promote healthy lifestyles, access to preventive education, care and services and increased education around healthy lifestyles.
4. Quality of Life: promote positive youth involvement, crime prevention and reduction, solutions for neighborhood safety.



CGIC Committees

2.2. The Coalition utilizes participating Charter Organizations, Sponsor Organizations and Partner Organizations to provide an organizational structure that consists of an Executive Leadership, various committees, the community advisory council and the Director.

The Executive Leadership is responsible for the short-term and long-term oversight of the Coalition. The Executive Leadership shall: (a) Support the Coalition's vision, mission, and purpose. (b) Approve the strategic direction of the organization and ensure effective organizational planning to achieve the Coalition mission. (c) Hire, supervise and evaluate the Director/Project Manager. (d) Recommend for approval, the Coalition's annual budget, provide financial oversight and ensure there are adequate resources to implement the Coalition's mission. (e) Determine, monitor, and strengthen organizational programs and services. (f) Enhance the organization's public standing. (g) Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability. (h) Make decisions on behalf of the Coalition as deemed appropriate. The Executive Leadership is composed of the following positions: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Past Chair and should consist of at least one representative from each Charter Organization, as appointed by the Elected Body or Senior Management of that Organization.

3. Strategic Planning Contract with Chatham County

3.1. Purpose & Intent of the Blueprint

3.1.1. Elected Officials

Chairman Al Scott was elected to office in November 2012. During his campaign he ran on the platform of developing and implementing a community strategic plan through community engagement to set a vision for the local community. Mr. Scott is known for his visionary approach to leadership and government. Prior to his current position, he had served in both Houses of State Legislature, and as Georgia's Labor Commissioner.

Scott has previously served on the State Board of Education, where he held meetings throughout the First Congressional District to try and learn how he could help local school systems by eliminating red tape. Scott served as Secretary, Vice Chair, and Chairman of the Georgia Ports Authority, and was responsible for staff implementing several reforms, including creating a Five Year Strategic Plan.

3.1.2. Strategic Planning Impacts Funding Decision

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners expressed interest in the development of a long-range strategic plan that would directly and indirectly guide priorities of the Commission as well as other community stakeholders. Once the Strategic Plan has been presented to the Board of Commissioners, it will be used as

the guideline by which funding decisions are aligned. The intent is to use the Chatham Community Blueprint along with other historical and existing planning documents for guiding internal work plans and discretionary funding as deemed appropriate. The Blueprint should serve as a consensus plan – keeping leaders accountable for what the residents deem important.

3.2. Role of CGIC

In recognition of the strong relationships, community engagement, and extensive work performed by CGIC between 2008 and 2014 the Coalition was selected to serve as the management team for the planning project to create a community wide strategic plan, with responsibilities which include oversight and implementation of the final adopted Chatham Community Blueprint.

It is the intention of the Coalition to serve as the responsible third party for the initial purpose of creating a community long-range strategic plan for Chatham County and surrounding areas which is to be known as the Chatham Community Blueprint. Upon presentation of the Blueprint, the Coalition will serve as the implementing organization to include: activating project teams for each theme area, identifying a reporting matrix for each strategy and activity, continuing to seek community input and exploring diverse funding options to support the Blueprint. One of the major tasks will be the coordination of services and supports within each themed area both across and among the areas as well as the geographic area.

3.3. Project Approach

3.3.1. Project Framework

The Coalition designed a project framework utilizing sub-contractors and creating the Community Steering Committee with leadership to ensure structure for long- range impact. This process not only explored historical and recent endeavors, but it also serves as a roadmap to guide the future of the project, focusing on implementation and sustainability.

3.3.2. Document Scan

JCCI conducted a scan of existing and relevant planning documents located through both online research and input received from the Steering Committee. This scan includes vision statements and planning documents from local governments, service providers, advocacy groups, and more. This scan allowed the planning process to build on, rather than replace, existing efforts to improve the quality of life in Chatham County.

JCCI reviewed 92 documents, which included 331 vision or goal statements. These statements were then catalogued into 17 areas, such as land use, economy, natural resources, infrastructure, and transportation to name a few.



3.3.3. Communication & Outreach

In order to increase visibility and broaden community engagement, the Coalition has a contract with a local public relations firm to assist the Outreach Committee with ongoing marketing and communication of the progress through a variety of sources.

3.3.3.1. CGIC has an identifiable logo which has been and will continue to be a consistent image on all information and material. The logo shows the desire to move indicators and measurements from red (at the bottom) toward green (at the top) along with the image of a lighthouse which not only reflects the coast of Georgia but also serves as reminder that lighthouse symbolic of guidance and direction. The slogan; “Lighting the way to a better community” was added.

3.3.3.2. Web Site: CGIC launched a standalone website in December 2014. The site as previously mentioned provides a matrix of community level indicators,

best practice models, funding opportunities, a photo gallery, a community events calendar, historical and current reports as well as access to the planning process.

3.3.3.3. Electronic Newsletters: Using a list serve of active Coalition sponsors and partners, interested individuals from various meetings and those who self-selected, a monthly electronic newsletter is submitted to more than 400 people with updates on activities, community news, sponsor highlights, and much more.

3.3.3.4. Awareness and Engagement: Print materials have been created at every stage of the process and shared with media partners as well as delivered to stakeholders. (Appendix 9.5) Early in the process, media packets were mailed to 75 neighborhood association leaders though Chatham County. The coalition has also created a Facebook page and a Twitter account to increase communication with younger populations. In addition, CGIC worked with Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD) volunteer students to interview and produce a promotional video using members/students of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Savannah and the West Broad YMCA. This 30 second public service announcement (PSA) was then provided to all local media outlets for the promotion of community-wide events.



3.3.4. Community Engagement

3.3.4.1. 2015 Neighborhood Forums

CGIC hosted 14 neighborhood forums; with at least one meeting in each of the 8 county districts. Building upon what was learned from the initial forums in the fall of 2013 and input from the summit in the spring of 2014, we listened intently and asked more specific questions to ensure that key information was not missed.

Events were conducted at public libraries and/or government facilities during early evening hours or on the weekend when deemed most appropriate. There were over 400 participants in the forums with each Chatham County zip code represented along with attendees of Bryan and Effingham counties. While the 31415 zip code had the most attendees, there was a close tie between 31401, 31419 and 31406; with the lowest participation in 31407 and 31408. It should be noted that 8.9% of attendees were residents outside Chatham County. Over half of the participants were female at 61.2%. Similar to the Savannah MSA (metro static area), attendees were diverse in race/ethnic group with 55.2% Caucasian, 32.4% African American, 7.6% Hispanic, 2.8% Asian and other.

The majority of attendees were representative of the 54-65 age range (22.8%) followed by 35-44 (19.5%) and then 45-54 (17.1%).

The format of the forums included a brief introduction to CGIC and the strategic plan. A brief highlight of the four themed areas was presented and participants were asked to affirm what data indicated was a concern within each area or add to the list of concerns. While many things were mentioned, all individuals were encouraged to share thoughts, insights, frustrations, and opportunities. The top concerns are as follows:

- Economy: Vocational-training, poverty, affordable housing, higher paying jobs.
- Education: Vocational-training, cultural-diversity, inequality and basic/life skills.
- Health: Need for more, diverse mental health providers, healthy eating and prevention.
- Quality of Life: Crime, recreation, diverse, wide-spread transportation, transparent-effective government.



3.3.4.2. 2015 Community Conversations

CGIC took the information from the neighborhood forums along with data of various indicators and created a schedule that included specific conversations for topic areas of high interest. As a result, 12 conversations were hosted with seven different topics discussed to include:

- Economy,
- Education,
- Health,
- Housing,
- Natural Resources,
- Transportation and Safety.

Specific information within each topic area was presented to attendees and conversations were facilitated around the following questions; (a) what concerns were missing, (b) what is currently working and (c) what do we want our community to be like in twenty years specific to the topic. While much of this was consistent with previous meetings; it did allow for a more forward- thinking process and provided individuals with the chance to think of greater possibilities.



The Outreach team worked with local collaborative groups and partner agencies to promote the events. While some of the participants had previously attended neighborhood forums; it was noted that many of these participants were also those who worked in the field or held a vested interest in the topic being discussed.

Secondly, we convened government staff to glean insight and determine if their perception was similar to the general residents. What was also learned is that the awareness of the problems was similar, but they also provided some insight into what was currently being planned within the boundaries of their individual department or unit of government.

In addition, two conversations with outlying counties were hosted to ensure more regional approach. While there were some differences because of geographic boundaries, there were

still concerns about mental health, transportation and the need for more diverse jobs opportunities. This allowed for other conversations related to potential cross-county projects to begin.

Finally, local youth groups were visited to gather insight and discuss opportunities for improvement. While many young people are concerned with the immediate problems such as passing class and having enough money for socialization with peers; the students also shared some of the same ideas for their future. Each of them want a job that pays enough so that they can make personal choices of where to live, what to eat and what clothes to buy. They expressed concern with the recent crime rates and growth of gang activity but also conveyed that they feel the new leadership will help improve the situation. As a result of this work along with feedback gathered, we were able to create vision statements for each of the themed areas along with a listing of potential goals.

3.3.4.3. 2015 Public Opinion Survey

As a part of community assessment, in September 2014 CGIC contracted with the Public Research Service Center at Armstrong State University (PRC ASU) to distribute a public opinion survey to approximately 30,000 houses in Chatham County in 2015. Although previous surveys had been done in 2010 and 2012 with plans to reassess again in 2014. The timeline was delayed so that we could be more thoughtful of the survey content to meet needs of a community wide strategic plan.

Previous surveys were done by random sampling but specific by county commission districts. Project objectives for the 2015 survey included a random sampling of the 205,121 adult population as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau and then stratified by the eight Chatham County commission districts.

The survey instrument was substantially expanded and re-designed by the Data, Evaluation and Survey Committee of CGIC and Professional Resource Center of ASU staff. Objectives of the community wide survey included assessing citizens' satisfaction with various aspects of their neighborhoods in Chatham County and seeking input from respondents regarding their insight into community challenges, both now and in the future. The survey instrument consisted of 57 closed-ended questions, 13 demographic questions, and three open-ended questions regarding "the big picture".

The results of the survey can be used to monitor progress towards improving the well-being of community life in a number of major areas. The survey results supplement the information gathered from neighborhood forums and focus groups held by CGIC between February and April of 2015.

Outreach specific to survey completion was divided into three parts and promoted with incentives. The first step involved mailing postcards to the randomly selected residents, informing them of the survey, and it's identified objectives. The individuals were mailed the actual survey along with return envelopes. Individuals were given the option of completing

the survey online using a unique token code or via paper. As incentives for completing the surveys, the token numbers were entered in a random drawing for six cash prizes.

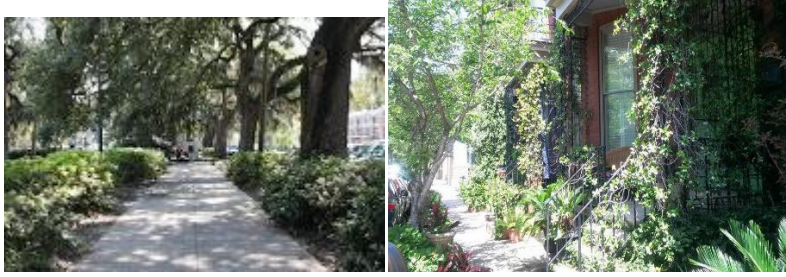
The PRC of ASU received a total of 1927 completed surveys; 29% via web and 71% paper. Responses from the Chatham County Commission Districts range from a low of 159 from District 8 to 332 from District 1. Crime, educational concerns, economic concerns (employment/income) and local government were among the top four issues written in as problems facing our County today. Additionally these were the top four issues residents would like to change over the next 10 years, and are willing to engage in to improve the concerns. (Complete report in appendix 9.7)



3.3.4.4. 2015 Community Wide Meetings

Three community-wide meetings were held between August and October 2015 in order to further develop the content for the Blueprint. The results of the document scan, all work performed to date, and information from the community survey informed the first community meeting with the intent of presenting the vision statements, prioritizing and refining the goals for each vision, and orienting the public to the process and the project's roadmap.

Participants of previous forums, focus groups and conversations were encouraged to attend all of the meetings, as each built off the work from the previous meeting. In addition, the Outreach Committee made contact with each individual through phone calls, emails or personal visits. The results of each meeting were then posted online to ensure community transparency as well as take additional comments.



4.3.5.4.1. Meeting 1:

The first community-wide meeting was held on August 19, 2015 at the Armstrong Center of Armstrong State University. Approximately 240 people attended. A brief overview of the Chatham Community Blueprint process and purpose was provided. CGIC history, community planning back ground and work done to date by the coalition was reviewed to provide context of the work. JCCI staff presented the Blueprint process using a diagram to illustrate the process' trajectory from vision through to action (vision – goal – strategy – action). Each phase of the project was then explained as linking to the process diagram. Susan explained that at each one of the three community-wide meetings, the Blueprint's content would be added to and refined even further so that action becomes meaningful and efficient. The role of the meeting participants was explained – prioritization and feedback as the content gets more and more specific. The four vision statements were presented, and it was explained that these vision statements are a result of the Phase I work.

Individuals self-selected the theme of their choice. Attendees participated in two interactive exercises. The first exercise asked each participant to prioritize their theme's goal statements by selecting which were the most important to them using three dot stickers. At the end of the exercise each table had to arrive at the top three collectively. This information was then used to format the second exercise.



Economy

- Link curriculum (education) with the needs of employers
- Reduce poverty throughout the county
- Promote and encourage small business growth and support of local business

Education

- Incentivize and promote parental involvement and responsibility
- Facilitate partnerships between businesses and educational institutions (work-based learning opportunities)
- Ensure that life skills and conflict resolution are being taught to students

Health

- Address mental health issues and the related stigma in specific populations (e.g. youth, prison population)
- Increase access to healthy food
- Instill health in schools
- Quality of Life
- Reduce crime to ensure all residents feel safe
- Promote and provide use of sidewalks, bike paths, crosswalks, trails, and greenways
- Develop collaboration, a network, among similar organizations to improve efficiency of social services

For the second exercise, participants were asked to review the prioritized goal statements for their theme area, and through consensus at their table, decide how to make each goal more relevant for Chatham County, specifically with regards to location, target population, and institution or organization involvement. The table scribe recorded the group's decisions.

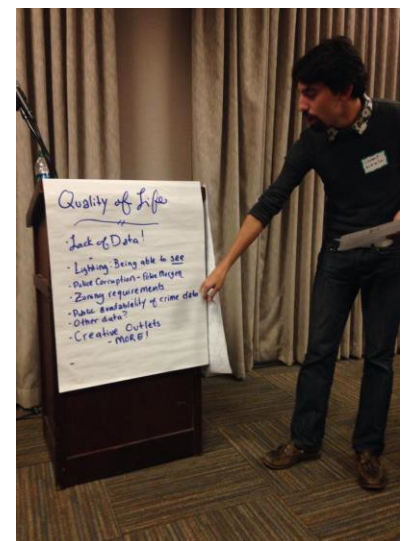
It was noted that this information will be reviewed and provided back to the group at the future meeting where we will continue to refine the blueprint.

4.3.5.4.2. Meeting 2:

The second community wide meeting was held on Saturday September 26, 2015 at Savannah Technical College – Eckburg Auditorium.

Approximately 110 people attended. A brief explanation of the work done to date was provided with emphasis on the community engagement efforts. The blueprint process was reviewed using a diagram to illustrate the process' trajectory from vision through action. It was noted that at each community wide meeting, content is added and refined so that the action becomes more meaningful and efficient.

Attendees participated in two interactive group exercises. Each small group was asked to select and weight top three metrics for each vision based on the list of community level indicators provided for each themed area. The second exercise allowed individuals to transition to another theme area and work in small groups to brainstorm strategies for each goal. Through consensus, small groups were tasked with identifying at least



one strategy per goal that involves (a) individual involvement and (2) institutional involvement.

It was noted that the planning process is intended to be as transparent as possible. Attendees were encouraged to participate in the upcoming meeting.

4.3.5.4.3. Meeting 3:

The final Chatham Community Blueprint community-wide meeting was held on Wednesday evening, October 21, 2015 at Savannah State University. Approximately 84 people attended. As attendees began to arrive at 4:30pm, CGIC members and Blueprint Steering Committee members served as volunteers to welcome them and instructed them to walk around the room and comment on the different goals and strategies that were placed on large sheets of paper around the room. This exercise provided an opportunity for both networking and for public comment on the various goals and strategies.

A brief explanation of the Phase I work performed to date, including the document scan, neighborhood forums, neighborhood focus groups, survey, and data analysis was reviewed. Emphasis was placed on all of the community engagement efforts performed to date. The process trajectory was reviewed, followed by review of the four vision statements and the prioritized goals. Participants were encouraged to revise and rework the strategies, and come to consensus around detailed strategies. Following this exercise, participants were asked to switch tables, moving to a different goal and strategy set and repeating the first exercise. Everyone had the opportunity to work through this process twice. Then attendees were encouraged to make a personal and organizational commitment. Lee Smith, Chatham County Manager, presented and shared his personal and organizational (County) commitments. He explained the importance of committing to action at both the individual and institutional level.

It was noted that the next step in the process will include prioritization of goals and action steps followed by completion of logic model through project teams consisting of subject matter experts, advocates and stakeholders. Everyone was encouraged to stay involved in the process.

