

Executive Summary

I do hereby Certify, that the annexed Plan is an 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 Palmetto Joss, and where the fields of the City is generally reported. I do also Certify that the Swamp of Musgrove Creek, and its numerous branches is generally of a rich clay soil, and extends for several miles in a Southern direction from this City, and in heavy rains, a great body of water would be discharged by the swamp into the River. The land east of this Swamp is generally high pure land with the exception of a strip of high salt land and some Swamp, about which water, extending in a Southern direction for 7 or 8 miles. He is also 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 Palmetto Joss, and where the fields of the City is generally reported. I do also Certify that the Swamp of Musgrove Creek, and its numerous branches is generally of a rich clay soil, and extends for several miles in a Southern direction from this City, and in heavy rains, a great body of water would be discharged by the swamp into the River. The land east of this Swamp is generally high pure land with the exception of

Wellington Murgores back show the boundary of City, per Johnston
Coloquid the 31st Oct. 1825. John M. Kimmerer

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 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Fathoms Water, and over both Bars 40 Gun Ships may go and Anchor safely in both Sounds.

N.B. a fathom is 6 feet.



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.

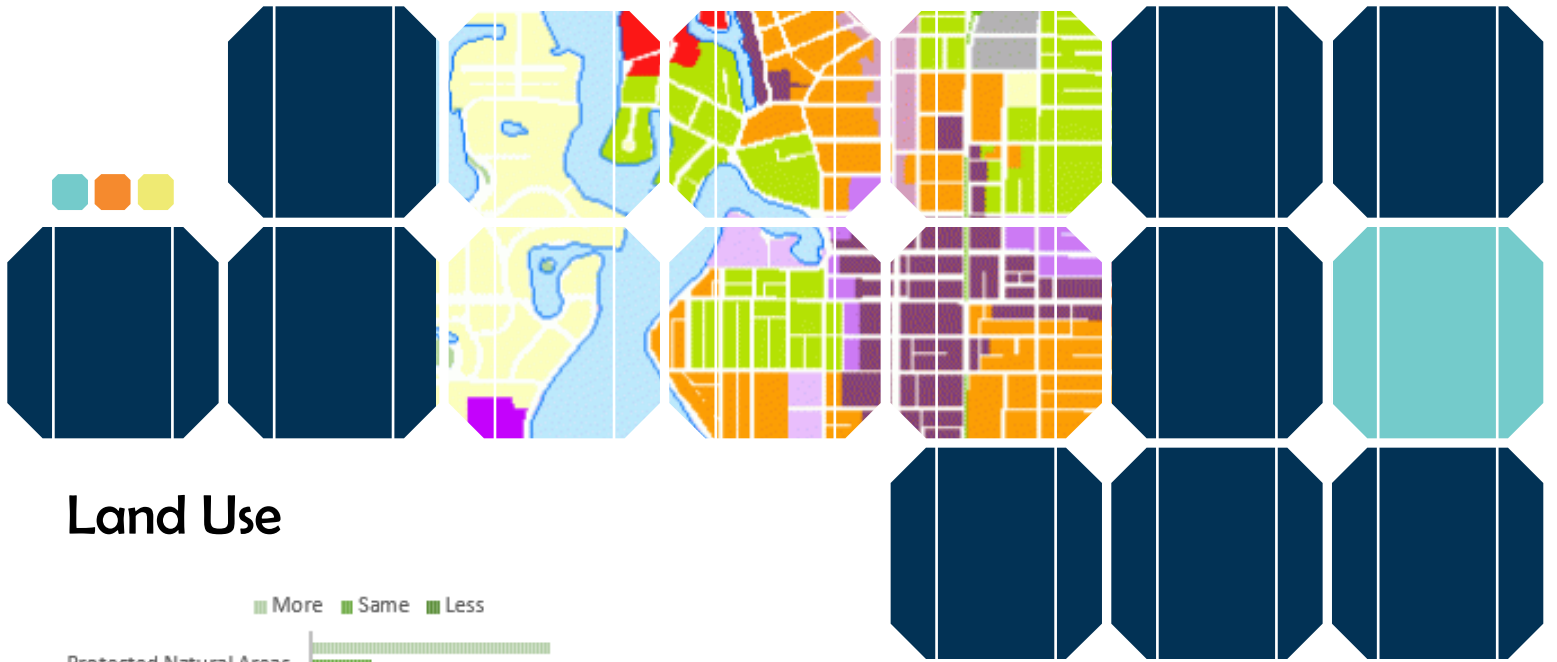
The Chatham County Commission, City of Savannah City Council and local community leaders will use the Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan in the following ways:

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.

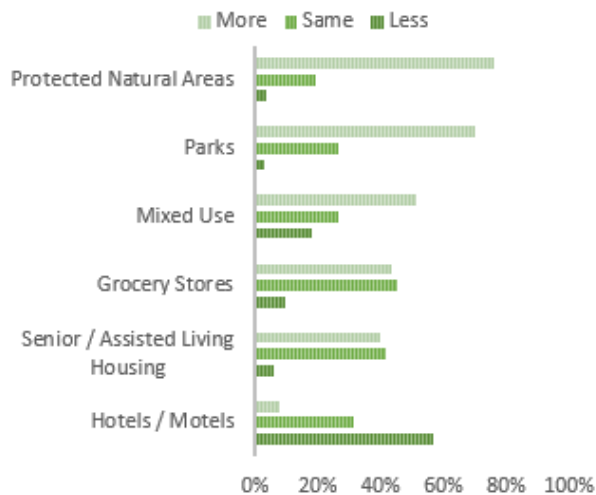
The Comprehensive Plan provides policies that help guide day-to-day decisions: These policies are reflections of community values identified through public outreach efforts. These policies will be used as guidelines in the analysis of rezoning decisions and other capital investment decisions.

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.



Land Use



Parks and Natural Lands

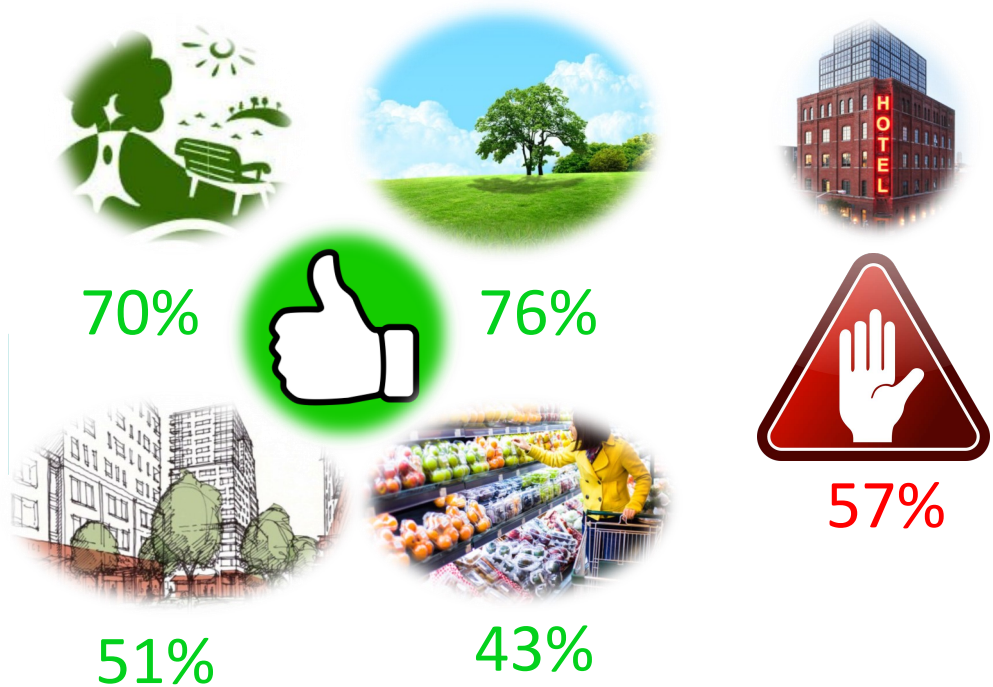
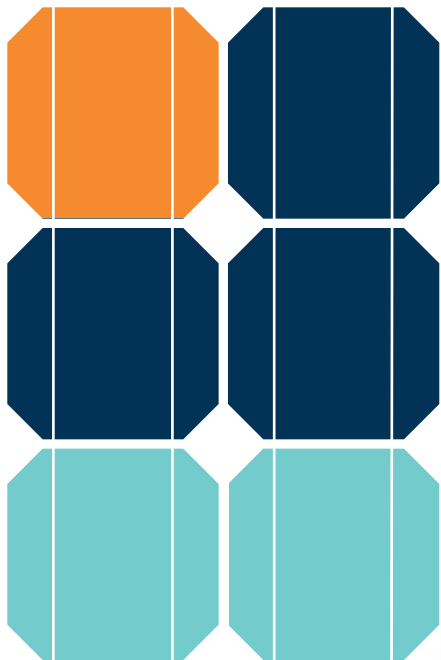
70% and 76% of respondents support increasing the amount of land for “Parks” and “Protected Natural Areas”

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.

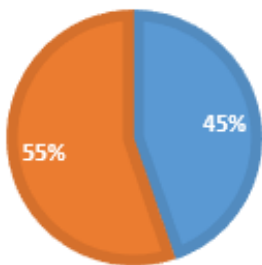




Housing

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%

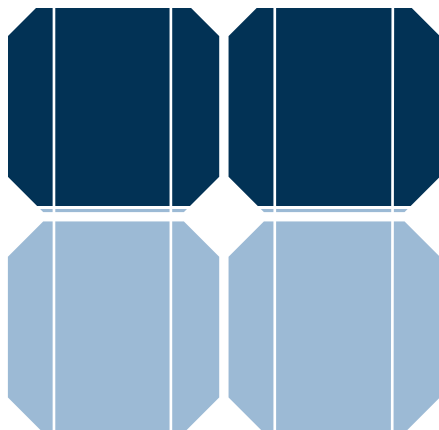
Is affordable housing “very important”?

25% NO/YES 75%

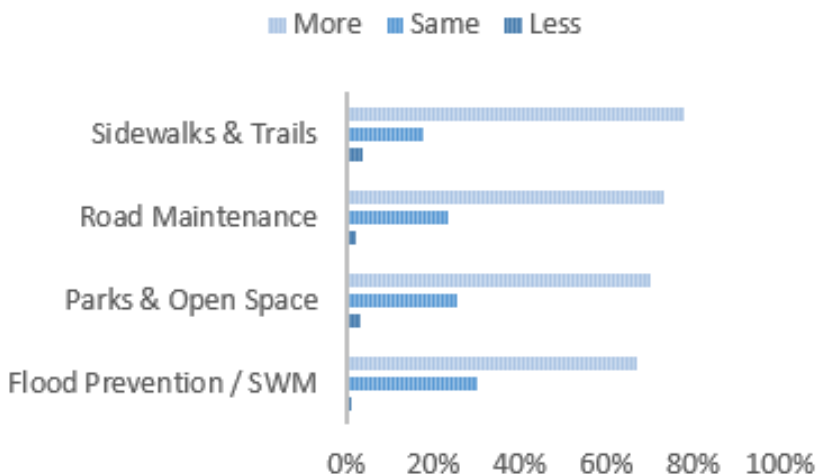
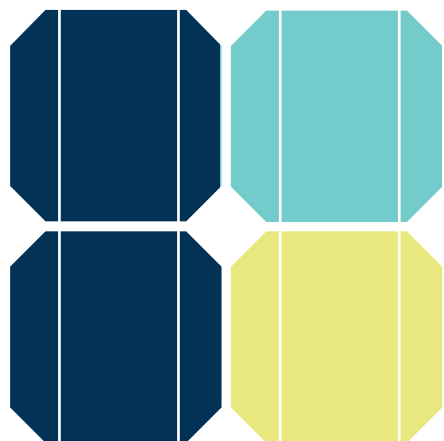
“The needs of low income families and the homeless are not being met.”

“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

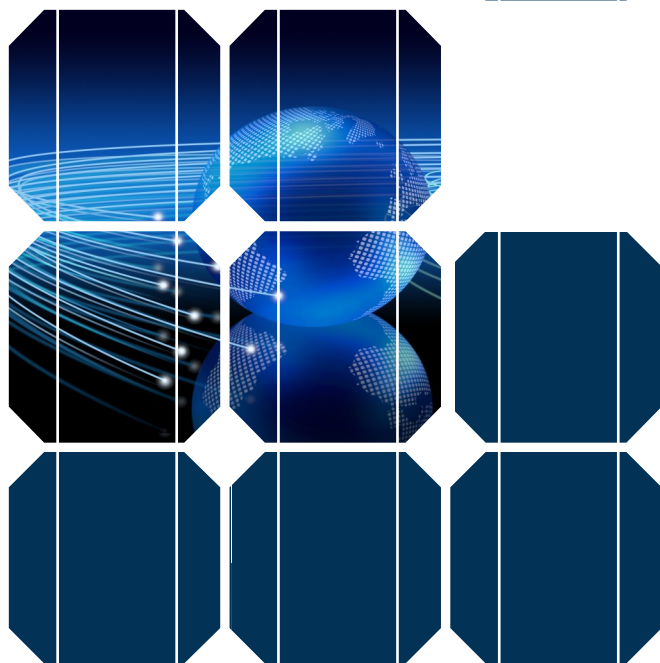
Over 70% of respondents feel there should be a significant increase of investment in Sidewalks and Trails, Road Maintenance and Parks and Open Space.

Road Expansion

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

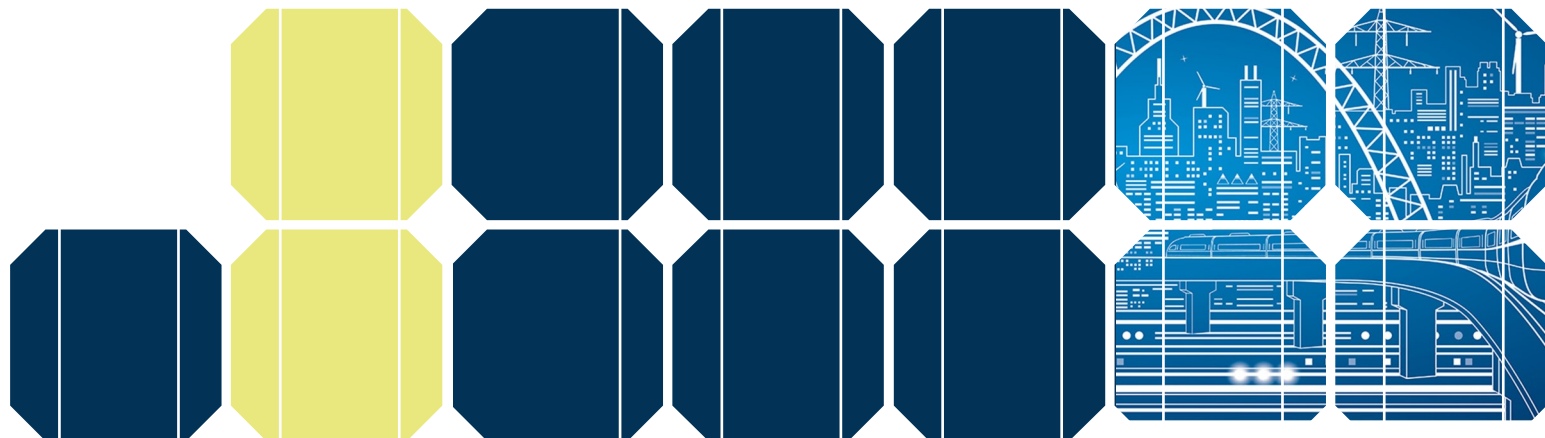
Internet Access

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



No Change

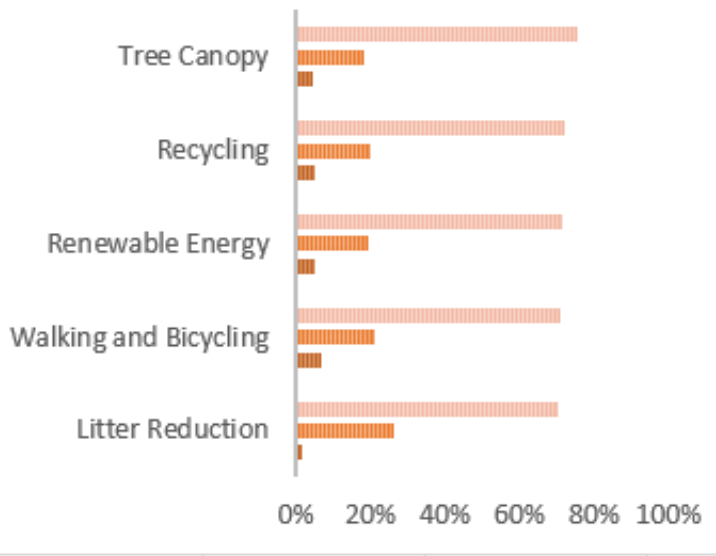
While the majority of respondents felt there should be increased investment in various types of infrastructure, nearly a third of all respondents felt the current infrastructure investments should remain the same.





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.

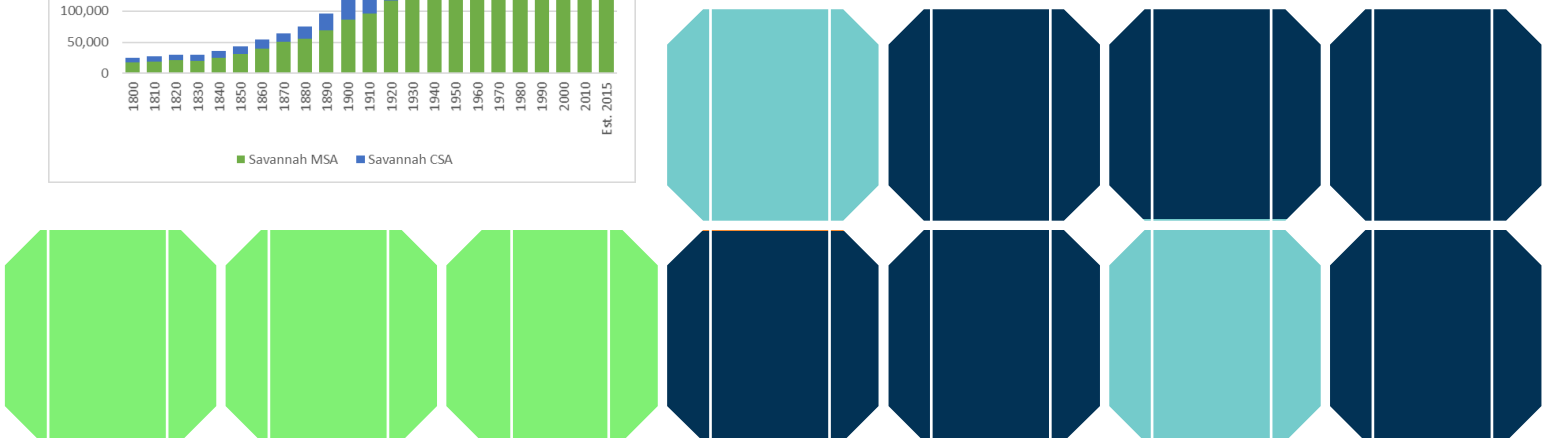
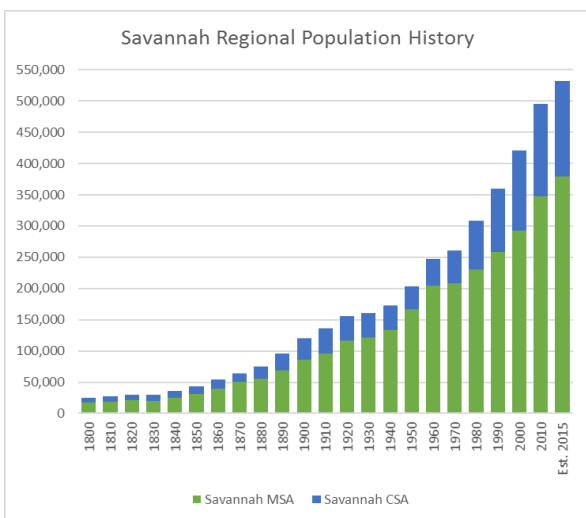
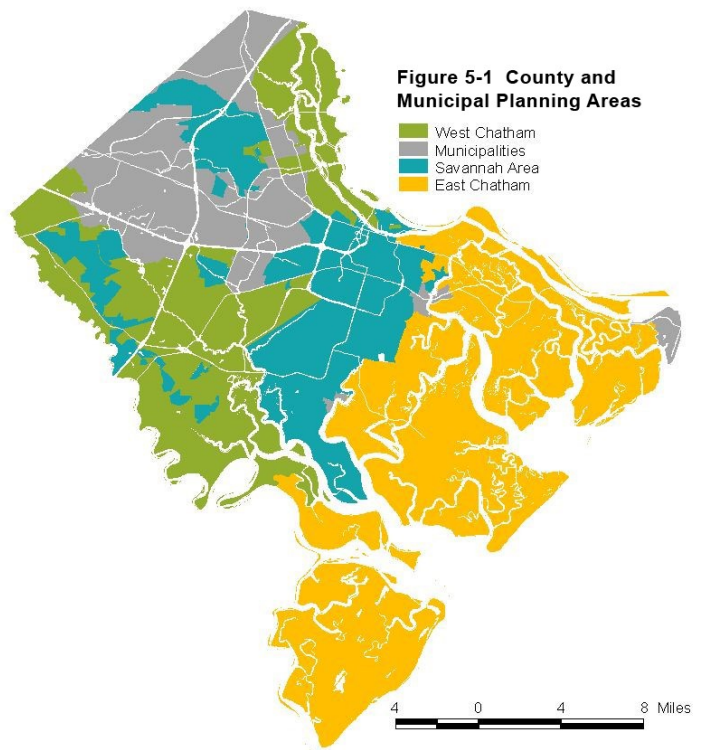
Existing Land Use

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

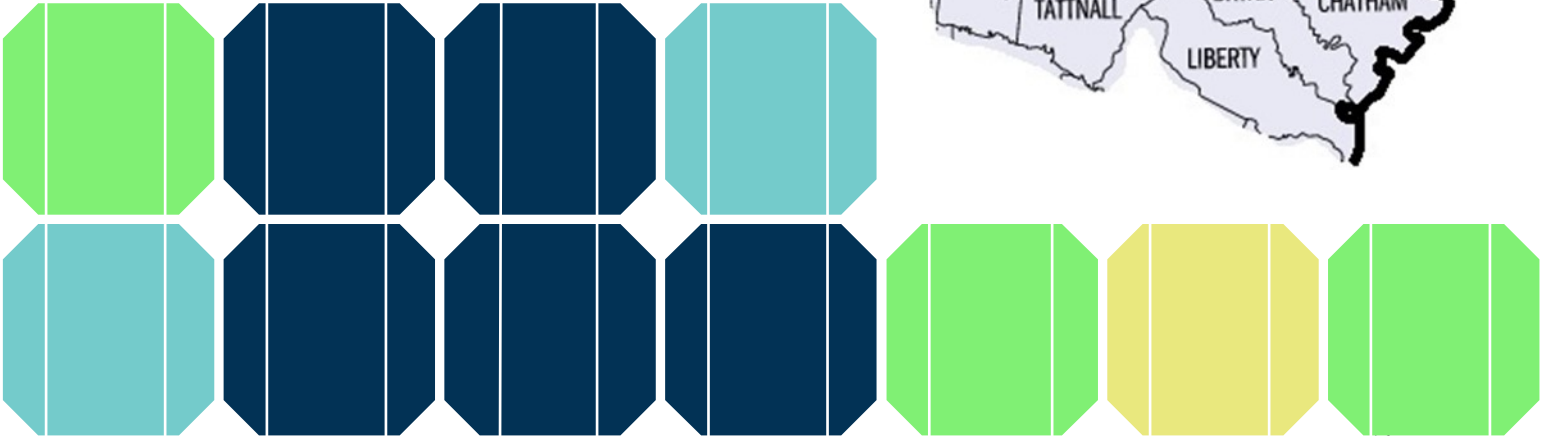
The Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless (CSAH) has gradually shifted away from a shelter-based approach and toward a system of providing care for the homeless by establish safe, clean and sustainable, non-traditional housing options. The Authority offers a “shelter plus care” approach where the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

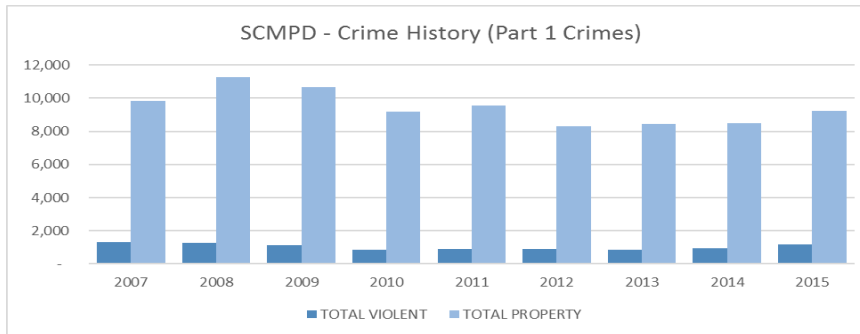
Purpose

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.

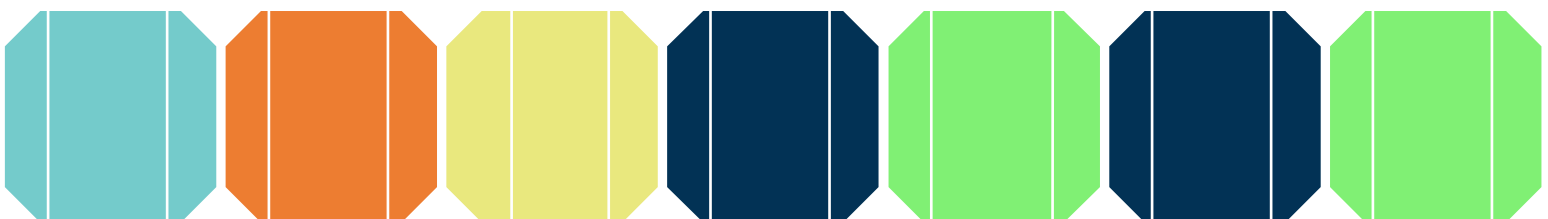
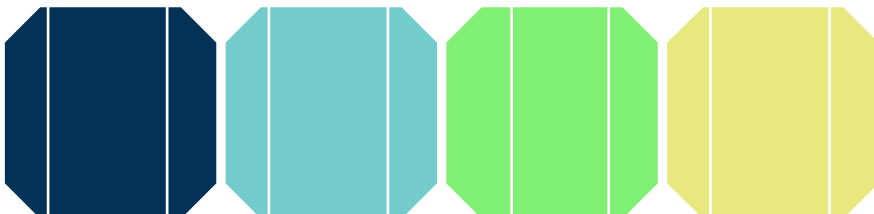
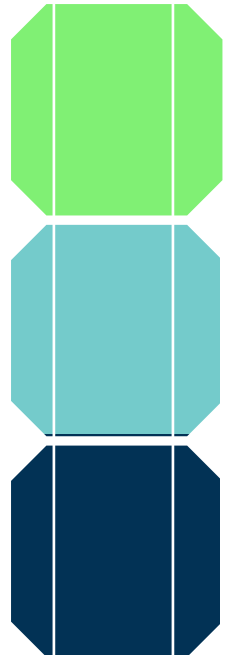
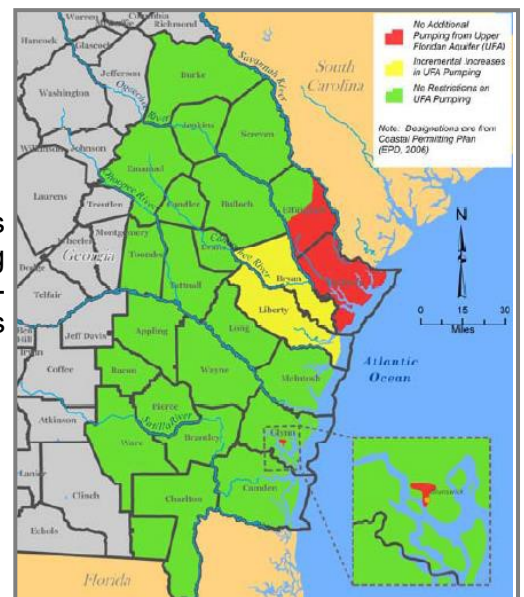
Education

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 it's 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 it's historic architecture, monuments and the coastal area's natural beauty, drew over 13 million tourist 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.

