A New Way Forward

Georgia’s New Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning

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“Wayfinding”
An Outline of Today’s Discussion

1. Building the New Rules
2. Fundamental Changes
   A Streamlined Process
3. A Brief Interjection on Community Involvement

Break

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update
   The Document In-Depth
“Wayfinding”
An Outline of Today’s Discussion

1. Building the New Rules

2. Fundamental Changes
   A Streamlined Process

3. Community Involvement: In Brief

Break

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update
   Document In-Depth
A Brief History

How We Got Here

• The Planning Act – 1980s Context
• A Different Situation since 2008 Economic Downturn
• Criticisms of the Planning Rules
• 2011 Legislation and Veto
• Planning Advisory Task Force

1. Building the New Rules
## Planning Advisory Task Force

<table>
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<th>Organization</th>
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<td>ACCG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Appoint three county officials: small, medium, large counties</td>
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1. Building the New Rules
Guiding Principles

The Task Force “Speaks”

• Simplicity (Reduced Cost)
• Flexibility (& Choice)
• Custom Fit
• Incentives
• Continuity
• State Use of Local Plans
The New Standards

Overview

• Menu of Plan Elements (Community Chooses)
• Each Element Has Only Brief, Flexible Guidance
• Only Three Elements are Required of All
• Five Elements are Required for Some Communities (depending on local conditions)
• Substitution of Existing Plans/Elements Encouraged
• No Update Required for Some Plan Elements
• Other Elements Updated Every Five Years
• RCs and communities can adapt the rules to fit local needs (e.g. plans may be significantly scaled-down for very small communities)
Questions?
“Wayfinding”
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A Streamlined Process

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The Document In-Depth
Reducing Costs

Regional Commissions will prepare plans that meet the minimum requirements at NO COST to the community.

- For *required* elements of the comprehensive plan
- At *normal* plan update deadlines

*Inclusion of Optional Elements or planning “early” may incur charges.*
From

Tons of Required Elements

Prix Fixe Menu

• Required for Every Community
  – Housing
  – Human Services
  – Natural Resources / The Environment
  – Vital Areas
  – Historic & Cultural Resources
  – Infrastructure
  – Land Use
  – Recreation
  – Transportation
  – Economic Development
  – Etc.

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
To Options
A La Carte Menu

- A few elements required for everyone

- Several elements required for communities with specific characteristics

- Everything else is optional, based upon communities’ own determination of their needs
From

Transmittal Resolutions

• Required official action/vote by the elected body

• Frequently led to confusion (adopting the document, itself, rather than adopting a transmittal resolution)

• Difficult to coordinate appropriate timing if dealing with a compressed timeline (especially with joint plans)

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
To
Cover Letters

• Signed by the Jurisdiction’s Chief Elected Official

• Certifies:
  – Public Hearings were Conducted as Required by Law
  – Regional Water Plan was Consulted
  – “Part 5” Environmental Planning Criteria were Reviewed

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
From Mandatory 60-Day Review

• Local Governments can take no action until 60 days following initial submittal

• Unnecessary thumb-twiddling

• Mistiming the process frequently leads to QLG Loss
To
Immediate Action

• Local governments can adopt their updates as soon as they’re approved
From Two Types of Updates

FULL PLAN UPDATES
• Completed Every Ten Years
• “Reinventing the Wheel”
• Large Investment of Time and Money

WORK PROGRAM UPDATES
• Completed at the Plan’s Mid-point
• Very Limited Scope—Ignoring Other Potentially Important Changes
• Relatively Cheap and Easy
To One Type of Update

A PLAN UPDATE IS A PLAN UPDATE IS A PLAN UPDATE

• Completed Every Five Years
• Smaller than a “Full” Plan Update, Larger than a 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update
• Allows Permanence in Some Plan Elements, Allows Responsiveness to Rapid Change in Others

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
From

3 Submittals in 2 Steps

- Community Assessment
  What do you have?

- Community Participation Program
  What do you want?

- Community Agenda
  How’re you gonna get it?

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
To 1 Submittal in 1 Step

Comprehensive Plan Update

What do you have?
What do you want?
How’re you gonna get it?

2. Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process
From Community Assessments

• Focused on gathering Tons of Required Data Assembly and Analysis
• Required Analysis of Consistency with the QCOs
• Supposed to be Assembled in a “Vacuum”
• A Bulky Document Rarely Consulted by Community Leaders
• Approval Required Before Moving Forward
To

“DCA Provides...”

- Statistical and demographic data provided by DCA for FREE, upon request
- QCOs provide useful “conversation starters”
- Use to educate the public and fact-check their input
- **No requirement** to include in the final document—*if you do, PLEASE keep it separate from the “meat” of the plan*
Submitted Before Community was Actively Engaged

• Included:
  – Identification of Stakeholders
  – Identification of Involvement Techniques
  – Schedule for Completing the Community Agenda

• Approval Required Before Moving Forward
To
“Document What You Did”

• Still have to:
  – Identify Stakeholders
  – Identify Participation Techniques
  – DO it
  – Hold Legally-Required Hearings

• But, there’s no longer a front-end approval
• In your plan (appendix?), **Document what you did**.
• MUST have a Steering Committee that MUST include Elected Officials

2. **Fundamental Changes—A Streamlined Process**
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“In many cases, involving the public is a contentious and even messy process...but plans developed without citizen involvement....lack the buy-in necessary for success and make it more difficult to build support.”

- ICMA and APA
Why?

- Plan should reflect COMMUNITY’s vision
- By the people
- Public ownership
- Broad input from varied sectors
- Public support for the plan’s implementation
- Public knowledge of plan’s use by officials
How?

Identify the Stakeholders

Identify the Participation Techniques

Implement the Participation Program
Who?

- Everyday citizens
- Individuals
- Groups
- Any- and every-body affected by plan recommendations and policies
Who? (cont.)

• Geographically
• By interests
  – Locally elected or appointed
  – Board of Education or PTA
  – HOAs
  – Major landowners or employers
  – Religious groups
  – Environmental or civic organizations
  – Etc., etc., etc.
Expectations

• The public
  – To be engaged
  – To find it interesting
  – To see a purpose to it
  – To have follow-up information
  – To have a timeframe for expected results

• The planners
  – Be given facts as a solid foundation
  – Get useable information
  – Receive manageable amounts of information
  – Be able to separate facts from feelings
How?

Lots of different ways to involve folks—
to get AND give information:

– Public displays
– Speakers bureau
– Public info meetings
– Traditional means
– Website
– Social media
– Interviews
– Interactive events
– Surveys
– MANY OTHERS

Mix and match to suit your community.
Points to ponder

• How much time do you have? Need?
• How much can you spend?
• How to market your process?
• How many meetings to hold? Where?
• How to present the plan when completed?
• Which techniques worked best in the past?
• What ways will work best in the community?
Now, who wouldn’t want to go to this meeting? Sounds exciting and well worth spending my valuable time attending! NOT!!!

Just because you invite them doesn’t mean they will come.

3. Community Involvement: In Brief
It is an opportunity to communicate what you’re doing and how you plan to do it

• Web site notifications
• E-newsletters
• Community bulletin boards
• Local government newsletter(s)
• PTA or Civic club newsletters
• Utility bill inserts
• Displays at the library and other spaces
But, more importantly, to get answers to those questions you have

- Popular use of 3 meeting format
  - Some used 3 rounds of meetings, geographically scattered
- Some held “summits”
- Others used focus group format
- Another consideration is follow-up staff meetings shortly after any of the public meetings—what worked, what didn’t, how to make it better
3. Community Involvement: In Brief

Public information

Public outreach
Draw Attention to the Effort

Develop a plan process logo and a theme for the process to use on all materials and in speeches.

Our Logo & Theme...

SHARED VISIONS
Planning Smart Choices

Our Comprehensive Planning Process
Macon-Bibb County Planning and Zoning Commission

Underscoring our commitment to establish, promote and sustain strong citizen involvement
Reach out to everybody!

Student programs and projects

- Elementary through high school
- Very public competition
- Prizes awarded
- Publication of winning art or photography or essays

3. Community Involvement: In Brief
VISION COMPETITION

ON THE FUTURE OF CHATHAM COUNTY AND SAVANNAH

CATEGORIES

**Essay Competition**
1. Essays should describe the writer’s vision of the future of Savannah and Chatham County at the Tricentennial in 2033;
2. They should relate the past and the future by describing the founding of Savannah in 1733;
3. They should mention the community’s many assets, such as its diversity, historic and cultural resources, and environment;
4. They should not exceed 500 words (two double spaced pages in 12 point type).

**Artistic Competition**
1. Artistic renderings should represent the future of Savannah and Chatham County at the Tricentennial in 2033;
2. They should creatively relate the past and the future of the City and County;
3. They should capture the essence of the community’s many assets, such as its diversity, historic and cultural resources, and environment;
4. They should be in the form of paintings, drawing, or computer images on paper or canvas.

AWARDS

Anyone who is a resident of the City of Savannah or unincorporated Chatham County is encouraged to submit entries in one or both of the categories. Cash awards of $250, $150, and $50 will be provided for first, second, and third place in each category. A framed award certificate will be given to all placing contestants.

DEADLINE

Entries must be received no later than September 2, 2005. They should be addressed to: MPC Vision Competition, 110 East State Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401.
Find out what the community wants

Visual Preference Survey© was done by Macon-Bibb
Surveys are good tools

To participate in the Walker County 20-Year, Joint Comprehensive Plan Update, please [download and print the survey](#) and return it to the Walker County Planning & Development Office at 101 Napier Street, Suite A, LaFayette, Ga 30728 or email it to [planning@walkerga.us](mailto:planning@walkerga.us).
Don’t forget current tools

3. Community Involvement: In Brief

Madison, GA

Welcome to Twitter.
Find out what’s happening, right now, with the people and organizations you care about.
For more information

The SPRs

Supplemental Planning Recommendations

• Suggested Stakeholders
• Recommended Community Participation Techniques

• Also-
  – Optional Plan Elements
  – Suggested Community Goals and Policies
  – Other suggestions to include as relevant


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   --Required for All
   --Required for Some
   --Optional
The New Standards

Overview / Flashback

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Menu of Plan Elements

**REQUIRED**
- **COMMUNITY GOALS**
- **NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES**
- **COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM**

**REQUIRED** for some communities
- **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT**
- **LAND USE**
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- **TRANSPORTATION**
- **HOUSING**

**OPTIONAL**
- **TARGET AREAS**
- **PUBLIC SAFETY**
- **GREENSPACE**
- **EDUCATION**
- **RECREATION**
- **HUMAN SVCS**
- **NATURAL RESOURCES**

- **INTER-GOVERNMENT COORDINAT’N**
- **SOLID WASTE MANAGE-MENT**
- **INFRA-STRUCTURE & FACILITIES**
- **COMMUNITY SUSTAIN-ABILITY**
- **HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES**
- **DISASTER RESILIENCE**

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4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—*The Document In-Depth*
Overview of the New Rules

REQUIRED for all

COMMUNITY GOALS

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Overview of the New Rules

REQUIRED for all NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

REQUIRED FOR ALL communities
1 or a Combination of any of the following:
- General Vision Statement
- List of Community Goals
- Community Policies
- Character Areas & Defining Narrative

Create this element ONCE potentially drawing from previous plans.
Update it at the discretion of the local government.

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Vision Statement

FROM THE RULES

• “General Vision Statement. Include a general statement that paints a picture of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the jurisdiction.”
Vision Statement

“We want our community to be a happy, friendly place where people want to live, play, and do business.”

This is useless to the community.
Vision Statement

“A walkable, historic community of neighborhoods located between the mountains and Atlanta, where a mix of housing types, a diversity of employment opportunities, shopping, entertainment and greenspaces create a modern day village.”

This is MUCH more useful to the community.

It clearly paints a picture and allow you to envision their intended development patterns.
Or, you can provide a much more detailed narrative like this.

**From Whitfield County**

### Vision Statement

**VISION STATEMENT - A statement of Goals, Objectives, Principles, Policies & Standards**

The Vision Statement is a collaborative effort of the Commissioners; Planning Commission; Parks, Recreation, and Streets Board; Community and Economic Development Committee; local Chamber of Commerce; and community input through a focus group, electronic survey of local residents, and public hearings. The previous Master Plan, dated February 22, 2005, served as the foundation for this plan. The Vision Statement is the cornerstone of the Master Plan and contains a summary of the goals of the community and specific objectives to support those goals.

The prides itself on being a caring community with small town values and character that endeavors to ensure that present and future residents are able to enjoy this lifestyle. Residents have stated that is a wonderful place to live and raise a family and have expressed a strong desire that small-town character be protected and enhanced.

The goal of this Master Plan is to establish a guide to ensure that the characteristics that make unique are preserved and strengthened in future years.

A number of objectives are key to realizing this vision:

1. **Small Town Character** - Citizen input attests to their strong desire to maintain the small town or village characteristics that are the essence of. A small town or village can be described as a clustered community with homes in close proximity to a town center with commercial businesses, public facilities, and pedestrian traffic. In concert with the objectives of ensuring some growth and protecting’s small town image, this Master Plan outlines steps toward incremental and limited growth and a town population of approximately 6,500 in the foreseeable future (see the Municipal Growth Element Section).

2. **Town Center** - Much of what gives its small town character is the Town’s Old Town Center and associated historic structures. To enhance and maintain the Town, a Streetscape Concept Plan has been developed, approved, and begun (see Appendix D). When completed, this plan will strengthen and improve the appearance and safety of’s core downtown and business district and may encourage renovation. The aim of any future development in the Commercial District should be to enhance these desirable features and incorporate them into the design of new construction in an aesthetically consistent manner. Additionally, the restoration of old structures is encouraged (See Appendix C) and guidelines are included in this plan to promote construction and upgrades of buildings in the Central Business and Commercial Districts that are in harmony with existing older architecture.

3. **Schools** - Maintaining schools in and ensuring these schools have opportunities and resources at least equal to other schools in the County is a high priority for Town residents. The Town of needs to continue to inform the Board of Education and local legislators of’s unique location within the Agricultural Reserve and the impact of our unique
Vision Statement

Or, you can provide a much more detailed narrative like this.

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth

location on school population. Given the stabilization of the High School enrollment through the creation of the High School magnet curriculum programs, consideration should be given to creating magnet programs at Middle School if student enrollment declines.

(4) Business Community/Economic Development - The linchpin to a Town’s identity and existence is a strong and vibrant business community. Local businesses contribute to the economic and social fabric of the community by providing goods and services, local job opportunities and non-profit organization support. In order to maintain a town’s small town character, it is imperative to encourage, sustain and promote the economic viability of the town’s businesses. The Town’s Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC) needs to continue and expand its efforts to encourage support of existing businesses and seek creative efforts to encourage viable businesses to locate in the Town.

(5) Streetscape/Parks & Recreation - The Town should continue to be improved consistent with the current Plan for Park and Recreation Facilities and current Streetscape Plan. Under these plans, the continued implementation of the Park and Recreation Plan will create a more pedestrian friendly community by connecting neighborhoods to community recreational facilities and the Town Central Business District. The continued implementation of the Streetscape Plan along Fisher Avenue will enhance the appearance and appeal of the downtown area while contributing to the integration of the business, residential, park, and recreation resources in Town. In addition to providing facilities for active recreation, it is also important to preserve green space within the Town by encouraging land uses and densities compatible with the adjacent agricultural preserve and by conserving sensitive natural resource areas.

(6) Water/Sewer Quality - Ensuring safe, adequate water and wastewater capacity is essential for the health and safety of Town residents and the preservation of the Town as a desirable place to live. The Health Department is responsible for monitoring and managing the state’s aquifers, and the Town work together to ensure that the aquifer continues to be a source of high quality water and that groundwater withdrawal rates are less than recharge. This partnership has been successful and is fortunate to have an adequate supply of high quality water that requires very little treatment. is taking pro-active measures to reduce naturally occurring radon and alpha emitters in the groundwater to an extent that surpasses State and Federal guidelines and standards.

This Plan is designed to ensure that development within and adjacent to the Town’s boundaries is compatible with its rural setting in an agricultural preserve and that the resources, health and safety of the Town are not adversely impacted. Consistent with this goal, the Town has enacted stringent requirements for petroleum products storage and a Wellhead Protection Ordinance that recognizes areas of influence external to the Town’s limits. Protection of the wellhead area to minimize the risk of ground water contamination is a continuing concern to the Town and State. The Town must remain vigilant to ensure that existing Town Codes and Regulations limiting potentially detrimental activity in the wellhead areas are enforced. Continued monitoring of the wellhead protection area within the Town and in adjacent areas is of critical concern.
4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—*The Document In-Depth*

**Vision Statement**

Or, you can provide a much more detailed narrative like this.

The Town and State are also concerned with wastewater discharge. During the past six years, the Town has made major improvements to its wastewater treatment plant and reduced the level of contaminants entering Creek; however, efforts need to continue to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration (I&I) of groundwater into the wastewater system. The reduction of I&I increases treatment efficiency and reduces the cost of processing input that is not wastewater.

(7) **Historical Heritage/Tourism** - has a long history and roots that run deep, including local families whose ancestors lived in and settled the Town and its surrounding areas. The Town was a key crossroads during the Civil War and large encampments of soldiers bivouacked in and around . While can never become a major Civil War destination like , its location in beautiful rural surroundings, its location on the way to other nearby points of interest such as and and its historical legacy does offer an opportunity for visitors. This Plan provides support for initiatives to promote as a place to visit or live.

In support of these efforts to build on the Town’s historic assets, has adopted and should maintain designation as a heritage area. Volunteer groups in have developed initiatives to help support the Town’s heritage area status and there should be plenty of assistance in the form of time and energy from Town volunteers to take advantage of available grants and programs.
Public Policy Structure
*A Primer*

• **Goals** articulate a set of broad, overarching ideals for which the community is working.
  
  – **Policies** provide ongoing guidance and direction to local officials for making decisions that support achieving the community’s vision/goals.

• **Objectives are** specific activities the community plans to undertake (e.g. activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems) in order to implement policies and achieve goals.

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—*The Document In-Depth*
• **Goal 1:** Our community will employ innovative tools and processes to attract new businesses that complement our Vision and retain existing ones.
  - **Policy 1:A** → Collaborate with the development authority to provide financial incentives to local businesses.
    - **Objective 1:A(1)** Increase funding to existing façade restoration program by at least 5%.
  - **Policy 1:B** → Ensure that review processes do not unnecessarily hamper (re)development.
    - **Objective 1:B(1)** Develop a simple process flowchart that the lay public can understand and provide it to each applicant at the beginning of every review process
    - **Objective 1:B(2)** Revise our zoning ordinance to provide an “expedited review” path for projects that meet a set of specified “Excellence” criteria.
List of Community Goals

FROM THE RULES

• List of Community Goals. Include a listing of the goals the community seeks to achieve.
List of Community Goals

**Examples**

• **Economic Prosperity:** We encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community.

• **Resource Management:** We ensure the efficient use of natural resources and we identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

• **Efficient Land Use:** We maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community.

• **Local Preparedness:** We identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve.

• **Sense of Place:** We protect and enhance our community’s unique qualities.

• **Regional Cooperation:** We cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs.

• **Housing Options:** We provide an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community.

• **Transportation Options:** We address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents.

• **Educational Opportunities:** We make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, and pursue their life ambitions.

• **Community Health:** We ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities.
List of Community Goals

*Using the QCOs as a Resource*

**Economic Prosperity:** Encourage development or 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; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

**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.
Community Policies

FROM THE RULES

• Community Policies. ...provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Goals. These are general, guiding principles that you want to help define your community.
Community Policies

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• Should address a wide variety of topics of concern/interest.

• NOT specific projects/activities
Community Policies

**Good Example**

**Land Use**

- Review and update our comprehensive plan on a regular basis to ensure planned growth, and enact appropriate growth management ordinances.
- Decisions on new development will contribute to, not take away from, our community’s character and sense of place.
- Encourage development that is sensitive to the historic context, sense of place, and overall setting of the community.
- Seek development whose design, landscaping, lighting, signage, and scale add value to our community.
- Use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.
- Preserve the rural character of our community and provide the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of the community.
- Gateways and corridors will create a "sense of place" for our community.
- Encourage the development of downtown as a vibrant center of the community in order to improve overall attractiveness and local quality of life.
- Commit to creating walkable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the community, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- Creation of recreational facilities and set-aside of greenspace are important.
- Commit to providing pleasant, accessible public gathering places and parks throughout the community.
- Commit to redeveloping and enhancing existing commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development in Greenfield (previously undeveloped) areas of the community.

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—*The Document In-Depth*
FROM THE RULES

• ‘Character Area’ means a specific geographic area or district within the community that:
  – has **unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced** (such as a downtown, a historic district, and arts district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
  – has **potential to evolve into a unique area** with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into a more attractive village development pattern); or
  – requires **special attention** due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.).

Each character area is a planning sub-area within the community where more **detailed, small-area planning** and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the Community Goals.
The Character Area Map

FROM THE RULES

• Character Areas Map and Defining Narrative. Identify and map the boundaries of existing or potential character areas (see definition in Chapter 110-12-1-.05) covering the entire community, including existing community sub-areas, districts, or neighborhoods. ...Community improvement districts, tax allocation districts, Livable Centers Initiative planning areas, designated redevelopment areas and the like are good candidates for delineation as character areas.
The Character Area Map

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• It’s a map—apply basic, cartographic, common sense
  – No blank spots,
  – Map & Legend should match,
  – Map and Text (Defining Narrative) should match.
  – At a high enough resolution to be easily read, not blurry
  *A properly oriented North-arrow is always handy

• A high-quality map can do more than simply illustrate boundaries . . .
Character Area Maps

Good Examples
Character Area Maps

Good Examples

Early Draft

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Future Development Map

Character Area Boundaries
- Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Mixed Use
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Water Bodies

Town of Braselton - 2030 Comprehensive Plan
Character Area
Defining Narrative

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• Detailed discussion of EACH character area presented on the map

• Required to Include
  – Basic description with text and Illustrations/photos/etc.
  – Allowable land uses
  – Implementation measures
Suburban Area Developing

This area has seen much residential development pressure over recent years and will likely continue during the plan horizon. The appeal of this area to developers and buyers may be the country-like atmosphere, while still being in close proximity to the amenities associated with city life. This area was not previously serviced by City of Moultrie utilities until development began. The potential for annexation into the City of Moultrie in the near future exists if current annexation practices continue. Much residential development has been approved for the area but only a small amount has begun construction. The finished homes located here are large detached single-family houses on large lots, situated on a curvi-linear street pattern with no connectivity to neighboring subdivisions. Pedestrian access is low, as there are no sidewalk provisions as of yet.

Vision: An area of low density single-family development with links to the city by way of decentralized services that still maintains a suburban feel and fosters a neighborhood atmosphere.

Development Patterns

- Urban growth or service boundaries that discourage/prohibits development outside border.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to natural features of the site, including topography and views.
- Clustering development to preserve open space within the development.
- New developments that contain a mix of residential, commercial uses and community facilities at small enough scale and proximity to encourage walking between destinations.
- Site built single-family housing that incorporates traditional colonial design elements including columns, shutters, large front porches and any other additional elements reminiscent of Southern plantation style homes.
  - Residential development that offers a mix of housing types (single family homes, town homes, live/work units and apartments) densities and prices in the same neighborhood.
  - Distribution of affordably-price homes throughout locality/region.
  - Retrofitting existing residential communities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity with nearby commercial areas.

Specific Land Uses

- Single-family residential
- Light Commercial
- Community Facilities (i.e. Community Centers, schools, libraries etc.)
- Recreational Facilities
Defining Narrative

Good Example

Implementation Tool Box

Conservation Subdivision Ordinance
Residential or mixed use developments with a significant portion of site set aside as undivided, protected open space while dwelling units or other uses are clustered on remaining portion of site.

Maximum Block Length, Width and/or Perimeter
Maximum distances for block length, width and/or perimeter, to keep the scale of development small and allow for short distances that are walkable by pedestrians.

Landscaping Guidelines/Ordinance
Such an ordinance should include but is not limited to requirements for protection of existing trees, planting of trees that will create a certain amount of shade over time, establishment of landscaped strips as buffers between developments, etc.

Adopt Inclusive Land Use Regulations
Requiring developers to include a certain percentage of affordable homes in a market-rate home development.
Overview of New Rules

- REQUIRED FOR ALL communities
- Update EVERY 5 YEARS with in-depth community involvement
- Use previous “Issues/Needs & Opportunities”, current statistical and demographic data, and the QCOs as starting points.
- Like a SWOT Analysis.
Needs and Opportunities

FROM THE RULES

• Needs and Opportunities. (Required for all local governments, updates required every five years.) ... locally agreed upon list of Needs and Opportunities the community intends to address. ...The list must be developed by involving community stakeholders in carrying out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or similar analysis of the community.
SWOT
Strengths

Consider this from the community’s point of view. Base this on the input from the citizens and organizations that make up your community. Don't be modest. Be realistic.

- What are your advantages?
- What do you do well?
- What relevant resources are available to you?
- What do other people see as your strengths?
SWOT

Weaknesses

Consider these questions from internal and external viewpoints: Do other people/organizations seem to perceive weaknesses that you do not see? Are other communities doing better than you? It is best to be realistic now, and face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible.

– What could your community improve?

– What do you do poorly?

– What should you avoid?
SWOT
Opportunities

Look at your strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities. Alternatively, look at your weaknesses and ask yourself whether you could open up opportunities by eliminating them.

- Where are the positive opportunities for your community?
- What are the promising trends?

Useful opportunities can come from such things as:

- Changes in technology and markets on both broad and narrow scales
- Changes in government policy
- Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyles, etc.
- Local conditions
Carrying out this analysis will often be illuminating - both in terms of pointing out what needs to be done, and in putting problems into perspective.

- What obstacles do you face?
- Are the threats facing your community undergoing change (more or less threatening)?
- Is changing technology threatening your position?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your community?
Needs and Opportunities

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• Should be comprehensive
• A simple list is *totally* acceptable—but you *can* be creative
• It should make sense for the community
• NOT a “to-do” list (that comes later)
Good Example (City of Covington)

**Community Facilities and Services Issues**

1. **Meeting the Service Demands of Explosive Population Growth.** Recently, the City has experienced rapid population growth, and this growth is expected to continue throughout the planning horizon. With that growth has come increasing demands for public services. Careful planning is required to ensure that adequate services are available over the next 20 years.

2. **Diminishing Supply of Regional Water.** Septic and land application systems are consumptive uses of water. As a result, there may be future political pressure to develop sewer systems with surface water discharges, as opposed to continued use of septic systems or land application systems.

3. **Solid Waste Planning.** Both the City and County currently are operating under a 1993 Solid Waste Master Plan. Under state law, the Solid Waste Master Plan will need to be updated by 2008.

**Community Facilities and Services Opportunities**

1. **Expanding the City’s Trail System.** The County Recreational Authority has plans to expand the City’s trail system, providing both recreational and practical pedestrian and bicycle connections between local housing and City destinations.
Needs and Opportunities

*Other Ideas...*

• Identify observed trends or events then explain the specific needs and opportunities that may result. For example:

**TREND** → Eleven percent increase in retired population since the last census.

**NEEDS:**
~ Increased access to medical services
~ Greater variety in senior-oriented recreational activities

**OPPORTUNITIES:**
~ Expanded volunteer base for local nonprofits
~ More potential daytime “neighborhood watch” members
Overview of New Rules

• **REQUIRED FOR ALL** communities
• **Update EVERY 5 YEARS** with in-depth community involvement.
• **A Report of Accomplishments and a new Five-Year Work Program.**
  • Report of Accomplishments = Status Report
  • Work Program = “To Do” List
• **Use previous Work Program as a starting point.**
Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• Report on the status of all the projects that were included on the last work program approved by DCA

• This is REALLY simple. Don’t over-think it.

• It looks just like an STWP. Addition of columns for “Completed”, “In-Progress”, “Postponed”, “Not Accomplished/Cancelled”

• Any item noted “Postponed/Cancelled” Requires an explanation”

• Anything “In-Progress” or “Postponed” must be carried over into the new Work Program. Items postponed beyond five years can be added in a new section for “Long-Term Projects” if you prefer.
FROM THE RULES
Community Work Program. (Required for all local governments, updates required every five years.) ...the specific activities the community plans to undertake during the next five years ...This includes any activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems ...(Note that general policy statements should not be included in the Community Work Program, but instead should be included in the Policies section of the Community Goals.) ...
Community Work Program

FROM THE RULES, cont’d.
The Community Work Program must include the following information for each listed activity:

• Brief description of the activity;
• Legal authorization for the activity, if applicable;
• Timeframe for initiating and completing the activity;
• Responsible party for implementing the activity;
• Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity; and
• Funding source(s), if applicable.
Community Work Program

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER

• This is simple. There’s a basic template—just fill in **ALL** the blanks.

• This is the place for specific projects/activities. Avoid “projects” that begin with words like “encourage”, “promote” and “consider.”

• Focus on projects that will meaningfully move you toward your vision—**NOT** general government stuff (like buying guns for the police, getting new computers for the tax office, or building maintenance issues).

• No clear responsible party, cost estimate, funding source, and/or start and end dates → Probably a policy statement or a non-specific project
Community Work Program

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
## Community Work Program

### Other Ideas...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<td>(authority: CIE / Impact Fee Program, adopted 04/05/2012)</td>
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<td>Buffer / Contingency</td>
<td>As needed</td>
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<td><strong>From the City of Union City</strong></td>
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</table>
Questions?
Overview of New Rules

REQUIRED for all:
- Community Goals
- Needs & Opportunities
- Community Work Program

REQUIRED for some communities:
- Capital Improvements Element
- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Housing

OPTIONAL elements:
- Target Areas
- Public Safety
- Greenspace
- Education
- Recreation
- Human SVCS
- Natural Resources
- Inter-Government Coordinat’N
- Solid Waste Management
- Infrastructure & Facilities
- Community Sustain-Ability
- Historic & Cultural Resources
- Disaster Resilience

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Overview of New Rules

REQUIRED for some communities

- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT
- LAND USE
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- TRANSPORTATION
- HOUSING

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Overview of New Rules

• **REQUIRED FOR SOME:** communities charging impact fees
• Updates required annually. **SEPARATE RULES** provide more detailed guidance.

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—*The Document In-Depth*
Overview of New Rules

**LAND USE ELEMENT**

- **REQUIRED FOR SOME:** communities with zoning and similar development regs
- **Update every Five Years**
- **Options:**
  - Traditional Land Use Map, and/or
  - Character Area Map & Defining Narrative
    - (also satisfies requirement for Community Goals element)
Land-Use Map & Narrative

IMPORTANT BITS TO REMEMBER
• Pick 1 of the 2 Standard classification schemes
• No blank spots—entire community covered
• Parcel-specific
• All the colors/patterns on the map are in the legend and vice-versa
• Provide the map at a useful resolution—not blurry
• Use insets to provide better detail in dense areas
• A properly oriented North Arrow always helps
• Narrative simply explains what each land-use category is
Land-Use Map

**Good Example**
Overview of New Rules

REQUIRED for some communities

- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT
- LAND USE
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- TRANSPORTATION
- HOUSING

• These three have additional analytical requirements—specific items that must be considered when planning

• It's ALREADY BEEN DONE in separate, stand-alone documents:
  • CEDSs
  • MPO Transportation Plans
  • Consolidated Plans

• Adopt the plans by reference to address analytical requirements—BUT THAT’S NOT ALL. YOU MUST...

• ...Extract priorities into appropriate sections of the comp plan
• Update when the underlying plan has changed since the last Comp Plan Update

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Overview of New Rules

REQUIRED for qualifying communities

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

REQUIRED for communities in Job Tax Credit Tier 1

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Economic Development Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Economic Development Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

**Goals & Policies**

**Regional Comprehensive Economic And Community Development Goals 2012-2016**

**Job Creation And Retention**

**GOAL 1.** ENSURE that all counties are adequately prepared to accommodate continued industrial development in the region.

**OBJECTIVE 1.** DEVELOP regionally significant industrial and commercial sites with complete infrastructure in place that can immediately accommodate prospects coming into or expanding in the region.

**OBJECTIVE 2.** IMPROVE each county’s competitiveness for industrial development.

- Use market research and analysis to assist small business and industry to identify markets and expand their customer base etc.
- Use best available data and research to inform regional priorities.

**Industrial Development**

**GOAL:** CONTINUE to diversify the manufacturing base.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** FOCUS industrial recruitment on diversified industry types that are compatible with available labor supply.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** DIVERSIFY the region’s economic base to decrease reliance on a major industry sector and lessen the impact of economic cycles.

**Strategy 1:** Assist business and manufacturing to start up and/or expand in the region through programs such as:

- Export trade assistance
- Expand alternative financing assistance including SBA 504, EDA Revolving Loan Fund, USDA IRP and other funding programs, and partner with other funding agencies
- Industrial planning, engineering and other services
- Business planning and other services
**From the NWGRC CEDS**

### Economic Development Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Economic Development Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

**Needs & Opportunities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Layoff aversion (retrain or reassign employees rather than laying off)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities (From outside region)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Changing business models can open the door for new businesses (what will come after current changes in manufacturing?)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Redefine job perception among students- emphasize importance of technical skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Teach critical thinking skill set to make workforce more flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation in Infrastructure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths (Within region)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Water Resources- quality, amount of water</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Broadband- public/private partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Interstate System/Highways (Connecting metro areas and rural areas and meeting the needs of these diverse areas)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Sustainability in conservation, culture of natural resources conservation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Georgia Power-Georgia EMCs, etc -Dalton Utilities, Plant Bowen, Plant Hammond, Rocky Mountain Project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Air Carrier System</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Aging infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Public Perception of public sector spending (impact on local leaders/elected officials)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Savannah Harbor Deepening -rail, roads</td>
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<td>2. Proximity to Chattanooga/Birmingham/Alabama</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Funding infrastructure- TSPLOST and what happens after</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Funding (grants more competitive), local taxing ability and public opinion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Governmental regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Water Dispute FL/AL/GA</td>
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**Workforce Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Georgia Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy</td>
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Economic Development Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Economic Development Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

Specific Projects ➔
Overview of New Rules

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- USE
- HOUSING

REQUIRED for communities in an MPO

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Transportation Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Regional Transportation Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

Goals & Policies ➔

**From the Columbus-Phenix City Long Range Transportation Plan**
Transportation Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Regional Transportation Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

Specific Projects ➔
Overview of New Rules

- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- LAND USE
- TRANSPORTATION

HOUSING ELEMENT

REQUIRED for HUD Entitlement communities

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Housing Element

Pull High-Priority items from stand-alone Local Consolidated Plan into the Comprehensive Plan.

Goals, Policies, Specific Projects ➔

**From the City of Valdosta Consolidated Plan**

---

**Goals, Policies, Specific Projects**

**Homeless**

**Objective:**
- Provide at least 5 additional emergency shelter units (beds) for individuals and families by 2015.
- Provide at least 10 additional transitional housing units by 2015.

**Goal:** Work with existing agencies to provide assistance to and reduce the number of at-risk persons and families.

**Objectives:**
1. The SGCEH, LAMP, The Salvation Army, and other agencies provide case management for at-risk families.
2. Valdosta Housing Authority will continue its public housing program for very low-income families.
3. Collaborate with Coastal Plains, LAMP, and the Salvation Army to provide emergency rental and utility assistance to at-risk households.
4. Support programs that provide services to at-risk persons and families through referrals and public information programs.

**Goal:** Work with current agencies to coordinate program and funding opportunities to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services to those in need.

**Objectives:**
1. Provide technical assistance to service providers in identifying funding sources to assist with the implementation of programs.

**Special Needs**

**Goal:** Support agencies and programs that work to improve the quality of life of our citizens with special needs.

**Objectives:**
1. Work with local agencies to provide long-term transitional beds and ongoing services for women with addictive diseases and their children.
2. Seek supportive housing opportunities and other housing opportunities for the elderly and mentally ill in collaboration with local agencies and project developers.
Questions?
4. The Comprehensive Plan Update—The Document In-Depth
Optional Elements

• You can take the “Required for Some” approach with any other free-standing plans you may have. Greenspace Plans, Rec Plans, Hazard Mitigation Plans, LCIs, Water/Sewer Plans, etc.

• If you don’t have a free-standing, special purpose plan, this might be a good segue into that, or you might be able to simply wrap it into the comp planning process by just focusing very closely on it during plan development.
“Wayfinding”
An Outline of Today’s Discussion

1. Building the New Rules
2. Fundamental Changes
   A Streamlined Process
3. A Brief Interjection on Community Involvement

   Break

4. The Comprehensive Plan Update
   The Document In-Depth
Wrap-Up / FAQs

• Some things change and get updated, others stay the same. What do we submit?

• What if we choose to plan early?

• What about Plan Amendments?

• What about Joint Plans?