# A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the CSRA Regional Commission has prepared a Regional Assessment and a Stakeholder Involvement Program as part of the creation of a Regional Plan; and

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared in accordance with the standards and procedures of the *Rules of Georgia's Department of Community Affairs Chapter 10-12-6,* the "Regional Planning Requirements;" and

WHEREAS, a copy of the Regional Assessment and the Stakeholder Involvement Program must be submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission does hereby approve the transmittal of the CSRA Regional Commission's Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Program to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Andy Crosson, Executive Director of the CSRA RC, is instructed by the Board of Directors to forward a copy of this resolution acknowledging the official approval of the transmittal of the Regional Assessment and the Stakeholder Involvement Program to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

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I hereby certify that the above and foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission's Board of Directors on the 28th Day of June, 2012 and recorded in the official minutes of the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission.

~~James Henry, Chairman~~
John Luther Vice-Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Anthony Crosson, Executive Director

# CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

## Regional Assessment
## Stakeholder Involvement Program

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# CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

## Regional Assessment

# Section 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Regional Plan Overview

The CSRA Regional Plan 2035 (hereinafter ëthe Planî) is the long-range plan for the management of the regionôs projected growth by local governments and the CSRA Regional Commission. The Planôs horizon is twenty years but will be updated in ten years to address changing regional conditions. The process is divided into three distinct parts, per the *Regional Planning Requirements* established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA):

- Regional Assessment: Identification and analysis of existing conditions using available data
- Stakeholder Involvement Program: Strategy for public participation in the development of the Regional Agenda
- Regional Agenda: Regional vision and implementation program

The resulting analysis will assess the state of the regionôs socioeconomic, land use, and environmental opportunities and threats. The CSRAôs vision and goals, together with an appraisal of the region, will set the strategic direction for the regional agenda. The regional agenda establishes program priorities for implementation.

This document contains the Regional Assessment and the Stakeholder Involvement Program, which will set the stage for the development of the Regional Agenda.

## 1.2 Regional Assessment Overview

This Regional Assessment includes a thorough analysis of issues and opportunities backed by extensive data gathering and analysis. It contains a map of Projected Development Patterns and an assessment of Areas Requiring Special Attention, which includes a range of categories, such as areas where rapid development is occurring or where infill or redevelopment is desirable. Finally, it includes an assessment of the regionôs development patterns in light of the stateôs Quality Community Objectives.

## 1.3 Stakeholder Involvement Program

This program outlines the process for participation by stakeholders in the creation of the Regional Agenda. It identifies stakeholders, outlines participation techniques and includes a schedule for the completion of the Regional Agenda.

## 1.4 Regional Agenda

The Regional Agenda is the culmination of the planning process. It will include a vision of the CSRAôs future, along with an implementation program for how to get there.

## 1.5 How to Use This Plan

The CSRA Regional Plan is intended to serve as a reference and implementation point for potential users. A number of companion planning documents should be used in conjunction with the Regional Plan. These include:

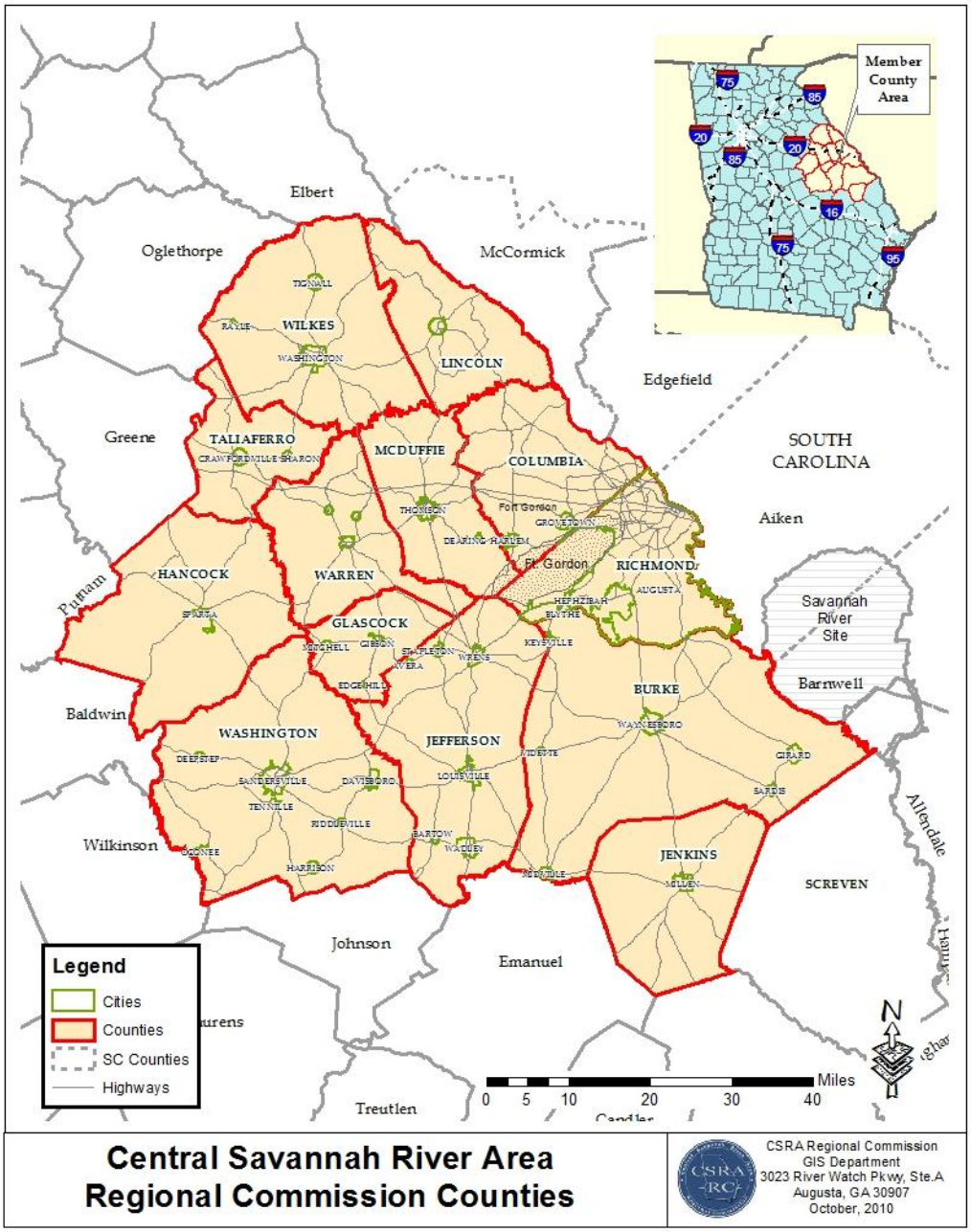
- CSRA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Augusta Area Diversification Initiative
- Fort Gordon Joint Land Use Study
- CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan
- County and City Comprehensive Plans

- Statewide Plans

## 1.6 The Central Savannah River Area

The Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) encompasses an area nearly 6,500 square miles ð the largest political region in the state. Located in the east-central Georgia, along the Savannah River, the CSRA includes 13 counties: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes (Figure 1). The largest city in the CSRA is Augusta ï the economic core of the region.

**Figure 1: CSRA Location Map**



## 1.6 About the CSRA Regional Commission

The CSRA Regional Commission (CSRA RC) serves thirteen counties and 41 municipalities in east-central Georgia, providing services in the areas of planning and land-use development, grant writing and administration, economic development, historic preservation, and geographic information systems development and implementation to member jurisdictions.

Additionally, the CSRA RC serves as the state-designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the region. In this capacity, the CSRA RC works with local providers to ensure that services for the elderly are provided and monitored. By utilizing pass-through funds from state and federal sources, the Commissionôs AAA serves as a gateway for programs and resources aimed at helping senior citizens improve the quality of their lives during their retirement years.

The CSRA RC is also the parent company of the CSRA Business Lending. CSRA Business Lending makes loans to small and start-up businesses for the purposes of creating jobs and economic development opportunities within its service area.

# Section 2: POTENTIAL REGIONAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## 2. Potential Issues and Opportunities

This section provides an objective, professional analysis (not based on public or stakeholder input) of the region. This section, presented in divisions relating to classical planning analysis areas such as housing and transportation, presents a preliminary catalog of potential focal points to be examined during the development of Plan.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) publishes a list of typical issues and opportunities as part of the *State Planning Goals and Objectives*. This list, in addition to an evaluation for the regionôs consistency with the DCAôs *Quality Community Objectives*, was used as the starting point for developing the Potential Issues and Opportunities list (please refer to the Appendix of this document for an assessment of the region based on these objectives). Further issues and opportunities were identified as part of a thorough analysis of regional datasets and regional development patterns. The issues and opportunities compiled in this Regional Assessment are preliminary in nature; they will be reexamined and a final list will be assembled as part of the Regional Agenda planning process.

### 2.1 Population

The population growth illustrated in historical trends is expected to continue over the twenty-year period. However, this growth is not uniform across the CSRA.

- By 2035, the 13-county regionôs population is projected at 575,304, an increase of approximately 26.5 percent over the 2010 population and 67.4 percent from 1980. This increase will have implications for housing, jobs, transportation, land use, environmental resources, and infrastructure.

- While the urbanized area (Augusta-Richmond and Columbia Counties) has enjoyed population growth, the rural areas continue to lag. Eight of eleven rural counties lost population since the last census. What little population growth is occurring in rural areas is further away from incorporated municipalities, where infrastructure is already established. Should this trend continue, county governments will have to pay more to extend and maintain public services in these areas.

- Household incomes continue to lag the state average. Most concerning, nearly a third of CSRA households are at income levels near or below the poverty line.

- The CSRA is aging rapidly. The proportion of residents 45 years and older has increased 10 percent since 1990, while the proportion of residents under 29 years declined by 8 percent. Needs associated with an aging population (affordable housing, transportation, and medical services) are anticipated to increase over the next twenty years.

Detailed data on population can be found on pages 21 through 25.

## 2.2 Housing

***State Planning Housing Goal**: To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.*

The CSRAâs housing stock is both a strength and weakness for residents.

- The regionâs housing stock contains a good balance of owner and rental units (55 percent and 30 percent respectively).
- Housing stocks are plentiful in the urbanized area but inadequate in rural counties. Although the official vacancy rate stands at 15 percent, over a third of vacant units are unavailable for purchase or rent. Another 17.2 percent of the regionâs housing is valued at less than $50,000, an indicator of poor housing conditions.
- Median ($99,937) and average ($127,997) housing values are among the lowest in the state and nation. Low housing costs are a major reason for the CSRAâs low cost of living, and a major strength for new residents and business attraction.
- While affordable housing values are a benefit for the region, sprawl threatens county budgets by requiring public services further away from established municipalities. Sprawl also makes it more likely that transportation costs will increase for residents as they have to commute farther to work.

Detailed data on housing can be found on pages 25 through 27.

## 2.3 Economic Development

***State Planning Economic Development Goal**: To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population.*

The CSRA regionâs economy is diverse, and communities typically make concerted efforts to attract new business. However, coordinated economic development planning and promotion could be strengthened, both on a region-wide scale and between proximately-located communities.

- The CSRA RC serves as the regionâs Economic Development District in coordination with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), and encourages cooperation between local government officials, community-based organizations, and the private sector. Per EDA requirements, the CSRA RC developed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in 2011.
- The CSRAâs job base has shifted significantly in the last two decades. The service sector now accounts for 60 percent of all CSRA jobs, an increase of 20 percent since 1990. The goods-producing sector has declined from 35 percent in 1990 to less than 15 percent of employment today.

- The regionâs jobs balance is heavily slanted towards the urbanized area. Augusta-Richmond and Columbia Counties account for 78 percent of the CSRAâs 233,147 jobs. The urbanized area also accounted for over 90 percent of job growth since 1990. Seven of 11 rural CSRA counties have fewer jobs today than they did in 1990. This corresponds to trends in population, which saw eight of those counties lose residents since 2000.

- Unemployment levels in the CSRAâs rural counties have been chronic during the last decade. All rural counties have unemployment rates above the state average (9.7 percent). Three counties (Hancock, Jenkins, and Warren) have unemployment rates of 17 percent or higher. All rural counties meet the criteria of Economically Distressed Areas, according to the federal Public Works and Economic Development Act. The rapid increase in rural unemployment was caused by the closure of major manufacturing employers, which had sustained local economies.

- The CSRA lags behind the state in educational performance, raising concerns about workforce readiness in the new service economy. CSRA scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Georgia High School Graduations Tests, and End-of-Course Assessments all fall below the state average.

Detailed data on economic development can be found on pages 27 through 50.

## 2.4 Land Use

***State Planning Land Use and Transportation Goal****: To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the state in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.*

The CSRA is a primarily rural region, with an urban core in the Augusta-Richmond County and Columbia County area. Approximately 88 percent of the regionâs land area is rural.

- The vast majority of the regionâs housing and commercial growth has occurred in the urbanized area. This corresponds to population trends, which saw the two urban counties gain 35,509 residents since 2000, while the 11 rural counties saw a net gain of only 433 people. Even that figure masks population decline in much of the area. In fact, eight counties - Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes ï combined to lose 2,550 residents since 2000.

- The growth effect that has occurred in the last three decades (development away from established municipalities) resulted in sprawl beyond cities and city centers.

- While cities and downtown areas still have the largest densities, this is quickly eroding as residents locate into unincorporated areas. Revitalization efforts are critical in stemming city population decline.

- If the trend of growth in unincorporated areas continues, this will result in the regionâs county governments incurring additional costs of providing public infrastructure (such as water & sewer lines, parks, libraries, etc.) further away from established population centers.

Detailed data on land use can be found on pages 50 through 52.

## 2.5 Transportation and Community Facilities

***State Planning Community Facilities and Services Goal**: To ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the state to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of Georgia's residents.*

The regionôs physical infrastructure is extensive and diverse, featuring state and federal highways, hospitals, facilities to manage solid waste and wastewater, and other resources. Most community facilities are locally operated and maintained.

- The CSRA has a small network of interstates and four-lane U.S. highways that provide east-west and north-south access to regional and national markets. Interstates 20 and 520, as well as U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 link the CSRAôs major cities to each other as well as to the stateôs major cities, such as Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah (Figure 25). However, the highway system does not fully meet needs throughout the region. Combined, the interstates and U.S 1 and U.S. 25 serve only portions of the CSRA, leaving large areas in the northern and southern part of the region without adequate highway infrastructure.

- While the transportation system serves automobiles relatively well, it is less friendly to other users. Many streets are designed only with vehicle traffic in mind, making them unsafe or unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. Moreover, development patterns in many cases continue to separate uses and rely on arterial roads to make connections. These two factors limit mobility for many residents and contribute to inactivity and growing obesity levels for children and adults in the region.

- The regionôs two primary rail freight carriers: Norfolk Southern and CSX Rail Service carry among the lowest volumes of rail freight in the state. Only Augusta-Richmond and Warren Counties have direct connections to major rail freight hubs in Atlanta and Macon.

- Augusta Regional Airport provides regularly-scheduled commercial flights. The airport currently has 21 daily departures and 22 daily arrivals to three major hubs (Atlanta, Charlotte and Dallas) from three carriers (Delta, U.S. Air and American). In calendar year 2010, the annual passenger volume at the Augusta airport was 246,587, compared to 198,489 (24.2 percent increase) in 2009. Between 2005 and 2010, Augusta Regionalôs growth rate was 57.9 percent, making it one of the fastest growing small commercial services airports in the nation. Air freight information is unavailable.

- Fixed-route public transit in the CSRA is limited to Augusta-Richmond County. Augusta Public Transit operates nine routes from Monday through Saturday, with daily ridership averaging approximately 3,000. The rest of the CSRA is served with demand-response service.

- Most areas of the CSRA outside of the urbanized parts of Columbia and Augusta-Richmond Counties lag in both choice and quality of broadband service. Most of these areas are not served by any land broadband service provider, making slower satellite internet service the only option. The CSRA RC considers broadband the regionôs top infrastructure priority and has been aggressively pursuing state and federal funding to remedy this deficiency by extending broadband infrastructure to areas of the region that currently lack it.

- Local community facilities such as parks, water and sewage services, public water, libraries, and medical facilities, are mostly located within incorporated municipalities. Access to some public facilities, however, remains a concern as rural county populations are widely dispersed.

Detailed data on transportation and community facilities can be found on pages 52 through 58.

## 2.6 Natural and Environmental Resources

***State Planning Natural and Cultural Resources Goal**: To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.*

The CSRA contains a wealth of natural and environmental resources that provide the region with numerous social, economic, and environmental benefits. However, these same resources are in need of protection if they are to continue providing these benefits.

- Timber resources account for 2.3 million acres in the CSRA, and are a major driver of the regionôs forest products industry.

- Kaolin, a type of clay, is the major mineral extracted in the region, providing substantial employment in Jefferson and Washington counties. This sector is under pressure from South American kaolin, which is now being exported around the world.

- Farmland accounts for 22.1 percent of the CSRAôs land mass, and sustains approximately 5 percent of the regionôs employment. The number of farms in the region today is less than half the number of farms in operation in 1982, highlighting a trend towards large, industrial-scale farming.

- The CSRA contains a number of protected watershed areas in Lincoln, Wilkes, McDuffie, Warren, Burke, and Augusta-Richmond counties. The regionôs watersheds will need to be monitored to ensure future development does not render them vulnerable.

- The regionôs river basins and major lakes ensure adequate water supplies. However, continued growth of the urbanized area and out-of-region impacts over the next twenty years will place pressure on these supplies, as well as pollution threats from growth.

- The CSRA has a rich history and counts no less than 184 properties and districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including National Historic Landmarks, State Historic Parks and Sites. Most of these resources, however, lack preservation plans.

Detailed data on natural and environmental resources can be found on page 58 through 73.

## 2.7 Intergovernmental Coordination

***State Planning Intergovernmental Coordination Goal**: To ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with state and regional plans and programs.*

The CSRA RC, founded in 1962, offers member governments avenues to coordinate planning, economic development, workforce development, and aging services. Other instances of intergovernmental coordination takes place between municipalities within a given county, between counties, from region to region, and with state and federal government agencies.

- The CSRA RC Area Agency on Aging provides consolidated services for seniors (including transportation) for the CSRA.

- The CSRA RC serves as the Economic Development District for the region.

- The CSRA RC serves as the coordinating mechanism for CSRA Unified Development Council (UDC). The UDC is a project-oriented volunteer organization comprised of economic, industrial, and regional development organizations, as well as service and educational institutions representing the entire CSRA. The UDC serves as the marketing arm for the CSRA.

- The CSRA RC serves as the coordinating mechanism for CSRA Unified Development Authority (UDA). The UDA promotes the economic development of the CSRA and encourages cooperation among economic development organizations within the member counties.

- The CSRA RC reviews and comments on applications for federal and state grant, loan, and permit assistance submitted by local governments and other applicants within the region. This is known as the Georgia Intergovernmental Consultation Process (Executive Order 12372), and is intended to offer comment on a proposed projectôs consistency with local and regional comprehensive plans.

- The CSRA RC develops and maintains the CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan and the CSRA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

# Section 3: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

## 3. Regional Development Patterns

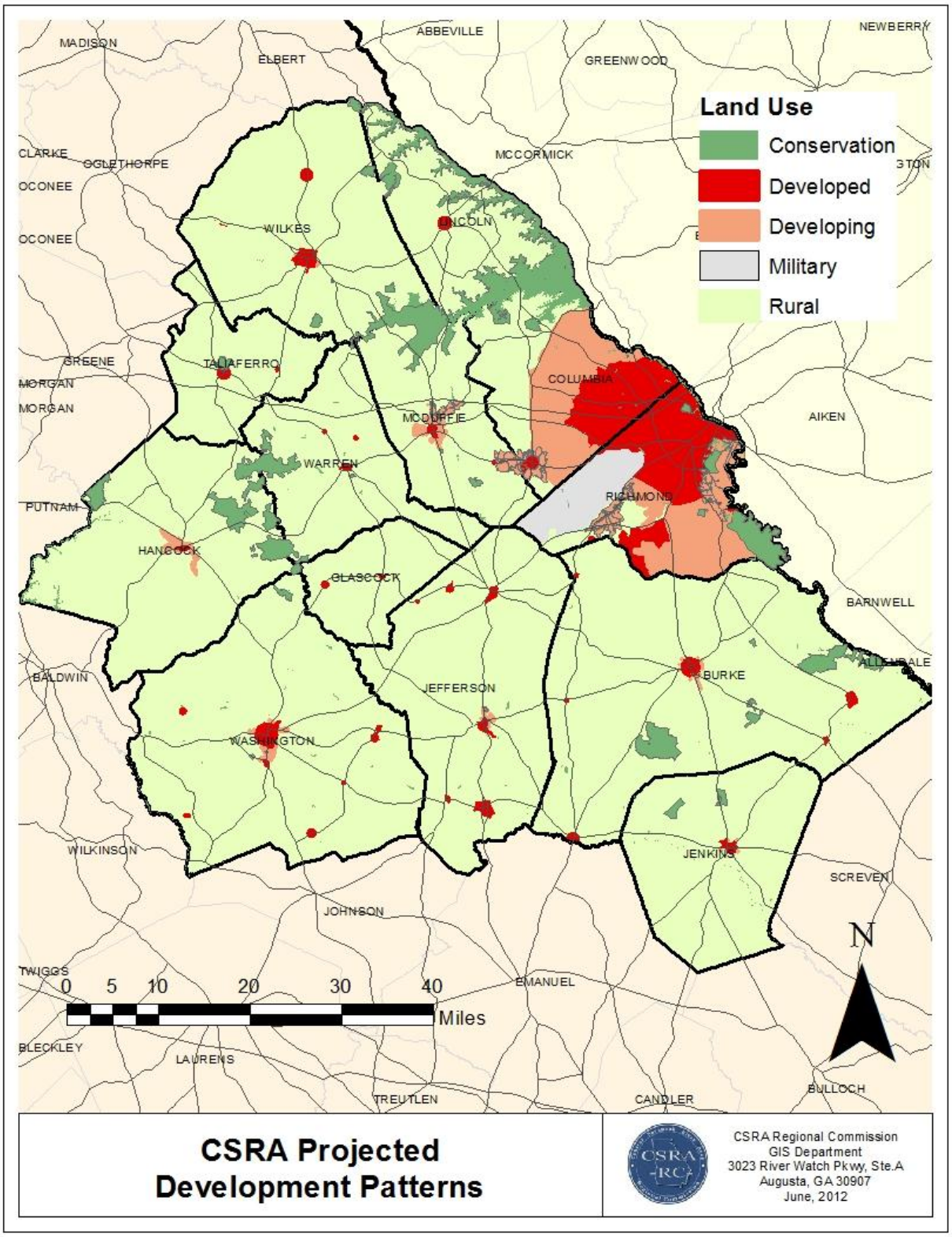
The type of development that occurs in a region has implications on transportation, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, and infrastructure. This section examines projected future development patterns in the CSRA, and discusses areas that will require special attention as the regional planning process unfolds. Analyzing development patterns allows for a broader review than simply looking at land use. It provides insights into relationships between different sectors of a community or region, and helps show intended (or current) scenarios more plainly than land use analysis. Further analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention is used to discover potential conflicts between desired future development patterns and identified natural and cultural resources, as well as opportunities for quality growth.

### 3.1 Projected Development Patterns

Using the Regionally Important Resources Map as a starting point, the CSRA RC compiled datasets of desired future development patterns, assigned land classification (categories such as residential, commercial, conservation, etc.) to one of five broader classifications of development types mentioned below, and combined them into one regional land map (Figure 2). The Projected Development Patterns map utilizes the following five classifications of development types:

- Conservation: protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas
- Rural: not expected to become urbanized or require urban services
- Developing: likely will become urbanized and require provision of new urban services
- Developed: built-up areas in which urban service provision already exists
- Military: a special designation for Fort Gordon.

**Figure 2: Projected Development Patterns**



## 3.2 Analysis

In analyzing the PDP map, it becomes clear that the CSRA values retaining its agricultural heritage, exhibited by the vast majority of the regionôs land mass designated as rural. Additionally, several communities anticipate, and are planning for residential, commercial, and industrial growth. This is not surprising, given the regionôs population will increase by 120,403 through 2035; physical development is certain to accompany the projected growth. The following areas have been identified where the majority of growth is anticipated:

- Columbia County will continue the rapid population growth it has seen since the 1980s through the next 20 years. Land uses will change as more residential and commercial development will occur in growth areas identified in the Columbia County Growth Management Plan.

- Augusta-Richmond County will continue to grow at a moderate pace in the southern part of the county where land is still available. Virtually all of Augustaôs growth has occurred in this area in the last two decades. Based on national trends toward more urban living, at least among certain demographic groups (singles, couples without children, seniors), more infill development in established or redeveloping neighborhoods might be seen during this time.

- McDuffie County will grow at a moderate pace as development from the urbanized area continues westward. With low land prices, strategic location along I-20, available infrastructure, and development pressures in Columbia County, McDuffie County is poised to see continued growth just north of Thomson over the next twenty years.

- Burke County will grow at a moderate pace over the next twenty years. Job growth (particularly from Plant Vogtle) and development expanding south from Augusta-Richmond County will ensure that the growth the county has seen in the last two decades will continue.

- Areas around Fort Gordon. The pressures of urban growth will continue to challenge the facility and its activities in coming decades, as residential land uses increasingly occupy land in the nearby area.

The regionôs more rural counties ï Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes ï are not expected to see significant growth during the coming decades. These counties have seen population either decline in recent years or stay relatively flat, and future growth is likely to be limited.

The areas designated as conservation include lakes, rivers, floodplains and other water resources; Wildlife Management Areas; and other state and federal lands. There currently is no reason to expect that resources will be available to significantly expand these areas in the future.

The PDP map does not show all of the green infrastructure areas shown on the Regionally Important Resources Map. Specifically, wetlands and groundwater recharge areas, which cover very large swaths of the region, were not included in the conservation designation. These areas are regulated in a number of ways, regardless of whether specific areas might be subject to rural or urban growth in the future, and including them in this map would have decreased its legibility.

## 3.3 Areas Requiring Special Attention

As a region evolves over time, different places within it find often themselves facing new challenges. In many cases, these issues require particular attention during the long-range planning process. This

section is focused on identifying and describing the region's Areas Requiring Special Attention. These areas were selected through a process that involved analyzing the Regionally Important Resource and Projected Development Patterns maps; discussions with CSRA board members; and evaluations of local comprehensive plans.

Within the CSRA, areas in the following categories were identified:

- Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map. These include:
    - Water and other resources, including rivers, lakes, wetlands, floodplains and other ecologically sensitive areas;
    - Federal and state lands;
    - Wildlife Management Areas;
    - Military land (Fort Gordon);
    - Cultural and government resources (historic districts, courthouses, historic sites).
- Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development. These include:
    - Water resources, particularly in the fast-growing suburban portions of the urbanized portions of the region surrounding Augusta;
    - Lakefront areas in Columbia, Hancock and Lincoln counties;
    - Areas where kaolin, a type of clay that is a significant area export, is mined;
    - Traditional downtowns, neighborhoods and historic districts that are still experiencing a lack of new investment due partially to new development on the urban fringe.
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur, especially where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation. These include:
    - Areas on the urbanizing fringe surrounding Augusta. These areas are characterized by automobile-oriented development that is straining road capacities due to the lack of other travel options. In many cases, these areas are without the natural gathering places that characterize traditional patterns of development, places such as parks, squares or walkable commercial areas.
    - The area along U.S. 78 north of Thomson;
    - The area in Columbia and McDuffie counties stretching from Grovetown to Harlem to Dearing;
    - Areas where public infrastructure is unevenly provided, spurring development but also creating future liabilities.
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors). These include:
    - Numerous commercial corridors in the urbanized area, such as Washington Road, Gordon Highway and Wrightsboro Road;
    - Parts of commercial corridors extending out of smaller cities and towns in the region;
    - Portions of many downtown areas in both larger cities and smaller towns;
    - Residential neighborhoods in Augusta and smaller towns that have seen disinvestment in recent decades.
- Areas with significant infill opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated. These include:

  - Significant portions of Augusta-Richmond County where disinvestment has occurred and the infrastructure and traditional street grid are well-positioned to support substantial amounts of development;
  - Older suburban areas around the urban core that are beginning to see disinvestment. These areas are candidates for suburban ñretrofitsò that can better connect them with surrounding neighborhoods, make them more accessible to pedestrians, create more of a sense of place, and provide a community amenity for residents.
  - Numerous vacant industrial properties scattered throughout the region.

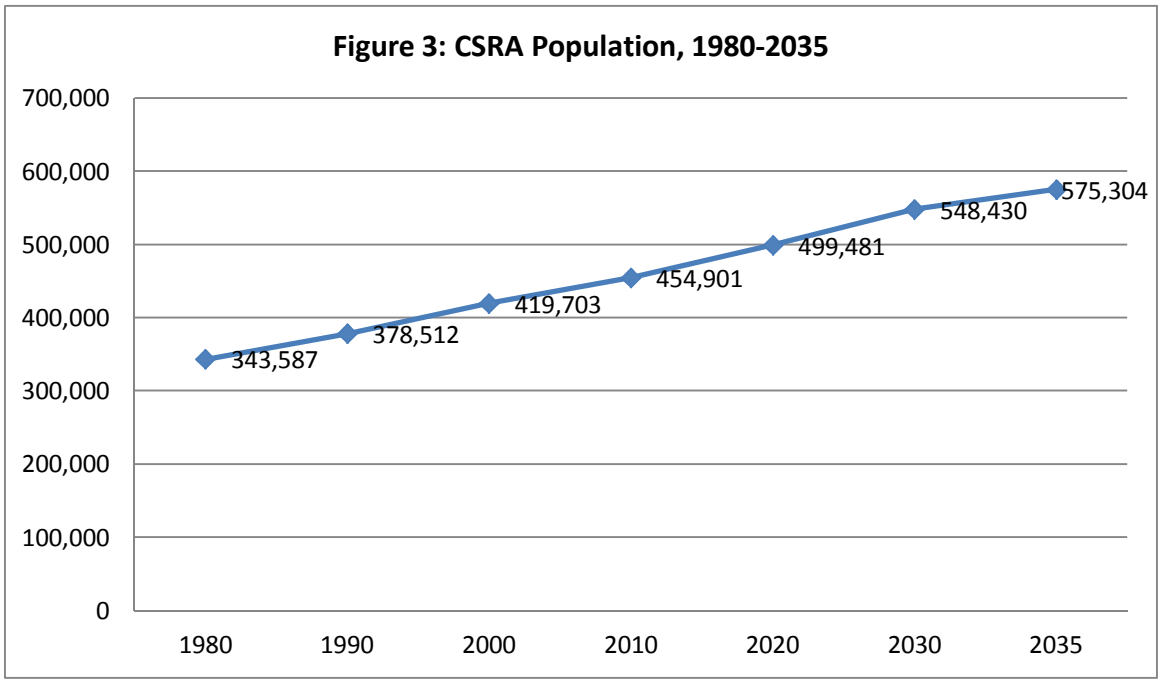
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels of the region as a whole. These include:

  - Hancock, Jenkins and Warren counties, where unemployment is at or over 17 percent in each county (compared to 12 percent for the region);
  - Jefferson and Wilkes counties, which have each seen negative job growth of more than 18 percent since 1990;
  - Portions of Augusta-Richmond county where significant disinvestment has occurred;
  - At least portions of all the regionôs 11 rural counties.

# Section 4: Supporting Data

## 4.1 POPULATION

The CSRA has enjoyed steady population growth since 1980. Anchored by the Augusta metropolitan area (Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties), new residents have been attracted by jobs - initially in the manufacturing sector but recently in the growing services sector - and the low cost of living. The regionôs population currently stands at 454,901, an increase of 32.4 percent from 1980 (Figure 3). Through 2035, the CSRAôs population is projected to increase to 575,304.

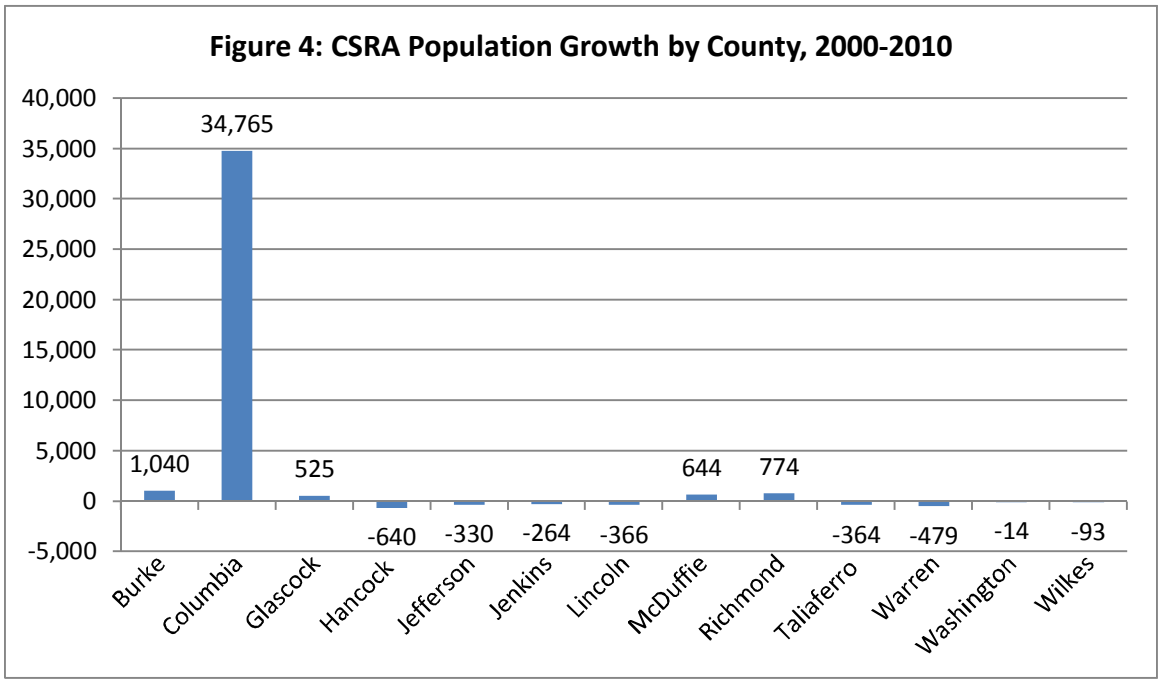



*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Projections by CSRA RC*

Population growth, however, has not been evenly distributed throughout the region. Virtually all the CSRAôs population growth in the last decade has come from Columbia County, which accounted for 98.7 percent of the regionôs population growth since 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, eight of eleven rural CSRA counties posted population losses (Table 1, Figure 4). In aggregate, CSRA rural counties lost 341 residents during that time, with Hancock (-640), Warren (-479), and Lincoln (-366) accounting for most of the population loss.

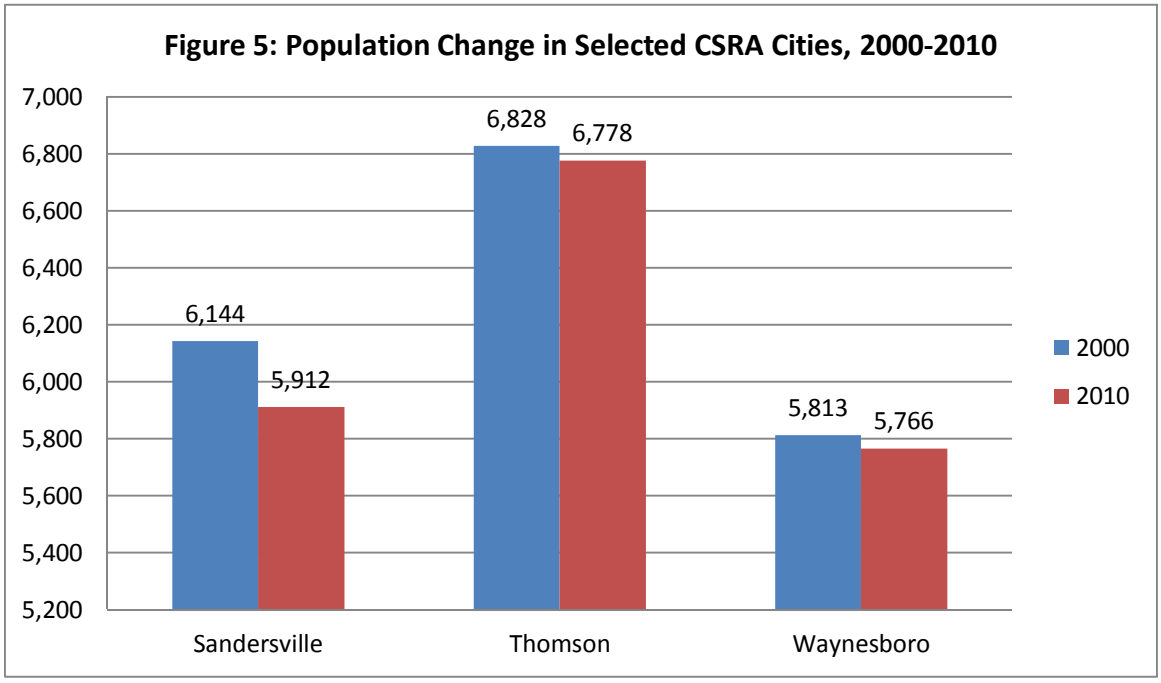
Population loss in rural counties has been occurring since the 1980s. Six of 13 CSRA counties have lost population since 1980. Warren County had the highest rate of population loss (-12.6 percent), followed closely by Taliaferro County (-10.8 percent) and Jefferson County (-10.5 percent). The regionôs highest growth rate occurred in Columbia County, with its population close to tripling since 1980. Augusta-Richmond County, the most populous county in the CSRA, has kept adding to its population, albeit at a slower rate than the regional average. Overall, the regionôs population growth rate (28.3 percent) lags significantly behind the state average (79.9 percent).

| Table 1: CSRA Population by County, 1980-2010 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1980** | **1990** | **2000** | **2010** | **1980-2010 change** | **1980-2010 percent change** |
| **Burke County** | 19,349 | 20,579 | 22,276 | 23,316 | 3,967 | 20.5 |
| **Columbia County** | 40,118 | 66,031 | 89,288 | 124,053 | 83,935 | 209.2 |
| **Glascock County** | 2,382 | 2,357 | 2,557 | 3,082 | 700 | 29.4 |
| **Hancock County** | 9,466 | 8,908 | 10,069 | 9,429 | -37 | -0.4 |
| **Jefferson County** | 18,403 | 17,408 | 17,260 | 16,930 | -1,473 | -8 |
| **Jenkins County** | 8,841 | 8,247 | 8,604 | 8,340 | -5,01 | -5.7 |
| **Lincoln County** | 6,716 | 7,442 | 8,362 | 7,996 | 1,280 | 19.1 |
| **McDuffie County** | 18,546 | 20,119 | 21,231 | 21,875 | 3,329 | 17.9 |
| **Richmond County** | 181,629 | 189,719 | 199,775 | 200,549 | 18,920 | 10.4 |
| **Taliaferro County** | 2,032 | 1,915 | 2,081 | 1,717 | -315 | -15.5 |
| **Warren County** | 6,583 | 6,078 | 6,313 | 5,834 | -749 | -11.4 |
| **Washington County** | 18,842 | 19,112 | 21,201 | 21,187 | 2,345 | 12.4 |
| **Wilkes County** | 10,951 | 10,597 | 10,686 | 10,593 | -358 | -3.3 |
| **CSRA** | 343,857 | 378,512 | 419,703 | 454,901 | 111,044 | 32.4 |
| **Georgia** | 5,463,105 | 6,478,216 | 8,186,453 | 9,687,653 | 4,224,548 | 77.3 |
| *Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census* | | | | | | |




*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census*

Much of the CSRAôs rural population loss has come from incorporated municipalities. The population of the CSRAôs cities (outside the urban area) was 48,767 in 2000. By 2010, these citiesôpopulation declined to 47,787. This population loss is seen even in the CSRAôs largest cities, including those adjacent to the urban area. The cities of Sandersville, Thomson, and Waynesboro have all lost population since the last census (Figure 5).



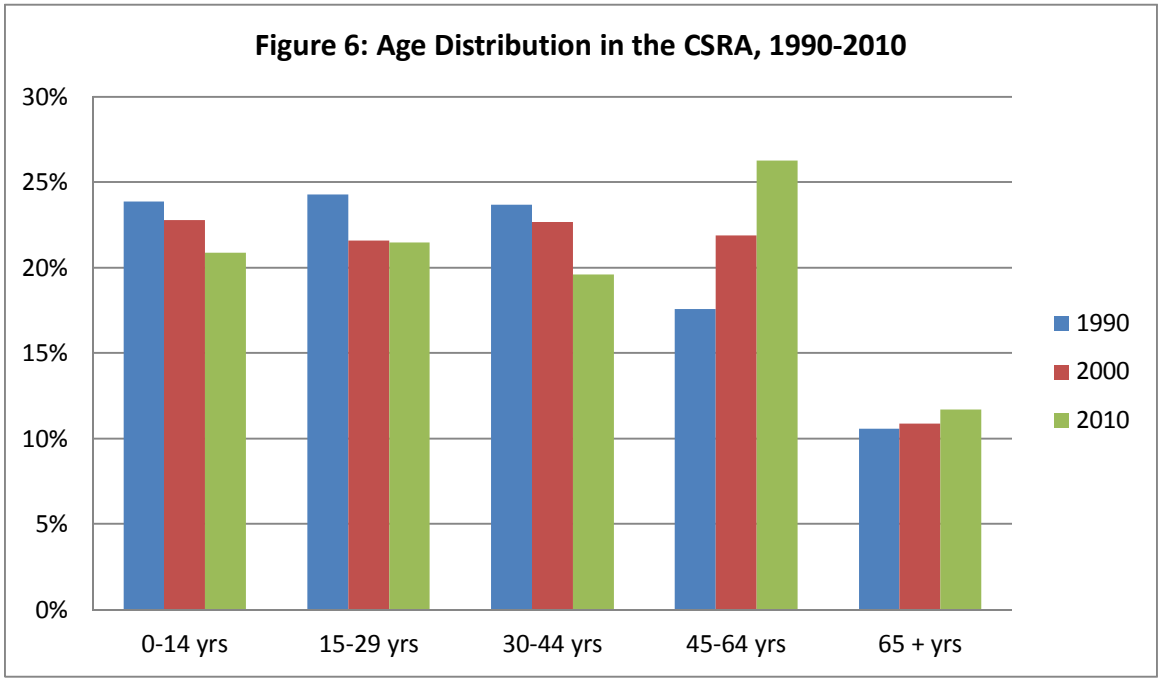

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census*

The decline in the CSRAôs rural population coincides with the loss of employment in those same counties. As discussed further in the economic development section of this plan, many CSRA rural counties suffer from chronic unemployment, triggered by the closure of several large manufacturers in the last decade.

What little growth has occurred in rural CSRA counties has been in unincorporated areas. Should this trend persist, those counties will incur increasing infrastructure costs related to residential and commercial development (such as water and sewer lines, county roads, etc.). Most of the CSRAôs infrastructure is in incorporated cities. The more residents move out into the unincorporated areas, the higher those costs will be.

### 4.1.1 Age Distribution

The CSRA contains a diverse age distribution but one that has changed substantially in the past two decades. The proportion of residents older than 45 has increased nearly 10 percent since 1990 while residents in lower age groups have declined at a similar rate (Figure 6). In addition to natural increases in population, Augusta area chambers of commerce have heavily promoted the region to retirees.




*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census*

### 4.1.2 Race and Ethnicity

The CSRAâs race and ethnicity composition has not changed in the last decade. Approximately 95 percent of the CSRAâs residents are black or white, a proportion that has remained virtually constant since the 2000 census.

| Table 2: Race and Ethnicity in the CSRA, 2000-2010 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2000** | | **2010** | |
| | Number | Percent* | Number | Percent |
| **White Alone** | 228,961 | 54.6 | 238,127 | 52.3 |
| **Black Alone** | 173,703 | 41.4 | 190,044 | 41.8 |
| **American Indian/Alaska Native** | 1,097 | 0.3 | 1,361 | 0.3 |
| **Asian Alone** | 6,283 | 1.5 | 8,618 | 1.9 |
| **Pacific Islander Alone** | 359 | 0.1 | 646 | 0.1 |
| **Other Race Alone** | 3,432 | 0.8 | 5,940 | 1.3 |
| **Two or More Races** | 5,799 | 1.4 | 10,165 | 2.2 |
| **Hispanic Origin (any race)** | 9,567 | 2.3 | 17,452 | 3.8 |
| *Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 2000, 2010. * Does not add to 100 percent because residents of Hispanic origin also included in other categories* | | | | |

### 4.1.3 Household Income

CSRA household income has not changed dramatically since 2000. There has been a decline in the percentage of households earning less than $25,000, going from 35.8 percent in 2000 to 32.8 percent in 2010. The region also saw an increase in the portion of households earning more than $75,000, rising from 16.2 percent in 2000 to 22.6 percent in 2010 (Table 3). That nearly one-third of CSRA households earn less than $25,000 is worrisome, as these income brackets are at or below the poverty line.

**Table 3: CSRA Household Income, 2000-2010 (not adjusted for inflation)**

| | 2000 | | 2010 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| **< $15,000** | 32,673 | 21.4 | 32,338 | 18.8 |
| **$15,000 - $24,999** | 22,010 | 14.4 | 24,167 | 14.0 |
| **$25,000 - $34,999** | 20,786 | 13.6 | 21,304 | 12.4 |
| **$35,000 - $49,999** | 25,665 | 16.8 | 25,564 | 14.9 |
| **$50,000 - $74,999** | 27,160 | 17.7 | 30,019 | 17.4 |
| **$75,000 - $99,999** | 12,646 | 8.3 | 17,435 | 10.1 |
| **$100,000 - $149,999** | 7,909 | 5.2 | 13,777 | 8.0 |
| **$150,000+** | 4,180 | 2.7 | 7,678 | 4.5 |
| **Total** | 153,029 | 100 | 172,312 | 100 |

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC*

## 4.2 HOUSING

The CSRAôs housing stock includes a good balance of owned and rental units. Approximately 30 percent of housing units are rental units and 55 percent are owner units, a healthy balance that addresses different housing needs (Table 4). The regionôs vacancy rate is 15 percent, a figure that has increased by 42 percent since 2000, when it stood at 10.6 percent.

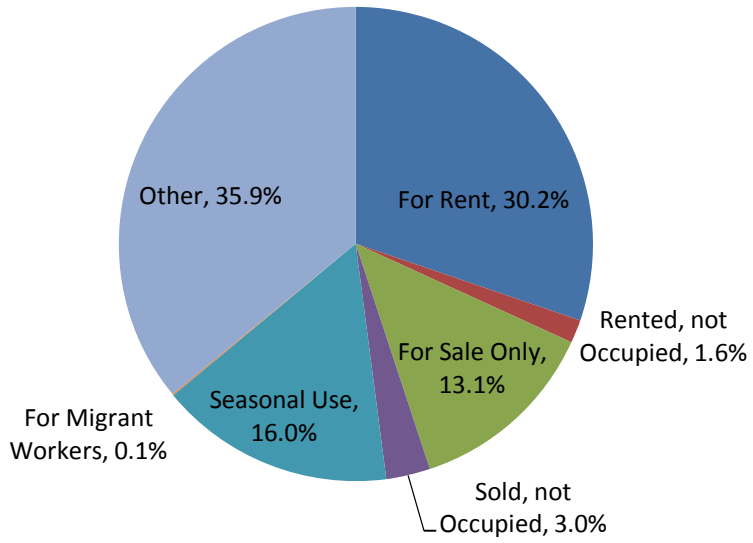
**Table 4: CSRA Household Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure, 2000-2010**

| | 2000 | | 2010 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| **Total Housing Units** | 189,176 | 100 | 213,733 | 100 |
| **Occupied** | 169,175 | 89.4 | 181,712 | 85.0 |
| **Owner** | 111,444 | 58.9 | 119,139 | 55.7 |
| **Renter** | 57,731 | 30.5 | 62,573 | 29.3 |
| **Vacant** | 20,001 | 10.6 | 32,021 | 15.0 |

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC*

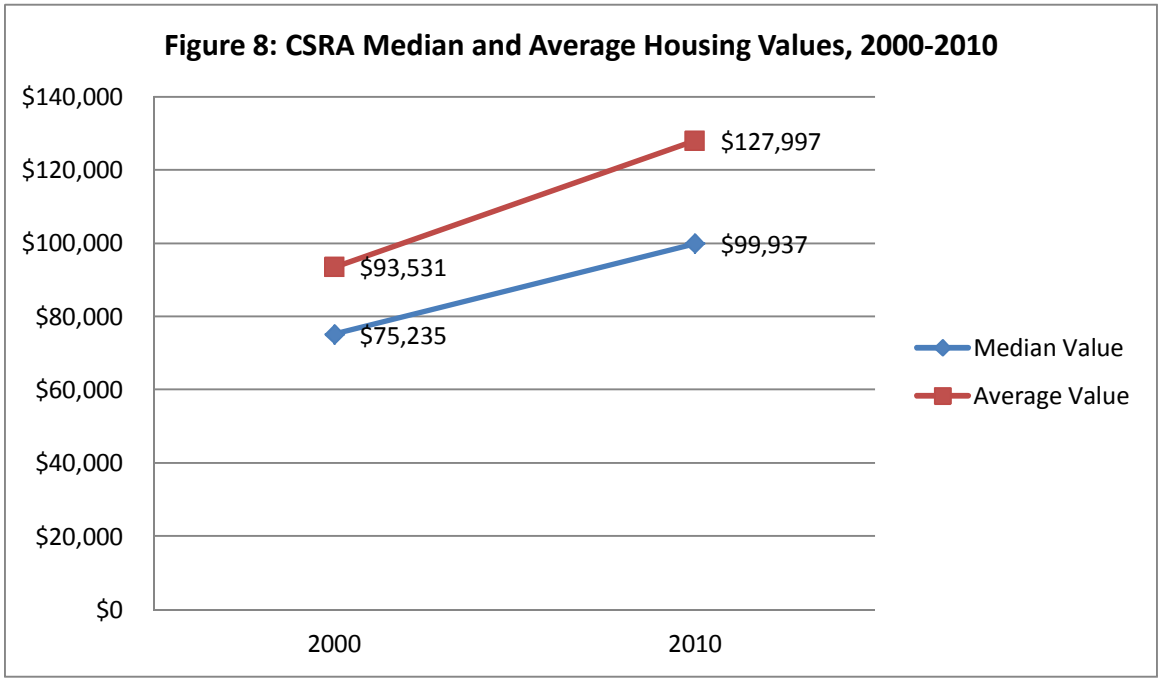
Although the vacancy rate is relatively high at 15 percent, the regionôs housing stock is not adequate. Close to 36 percent of vacant units are unavailable for purchase or rent (Figure 7), cutting the effective vacancy rate by over a third. Furthermore, a significant portion of the regionôs housing is substandard. Over 42,713 units or 35.8 percent in the region are worth less than $80,000, and 17.2 percent are valued at less than $50,000. The value of a home is good indicator of housing condition, and housing values in these ranges point to an inadequate supply of quality housing. The CSRA has a need for more housing options for those who are retired, elderly, and in poverty. The demand for affordable housing is rising in the region.

**Figure 7: Distribution of CSRA Vacant Housing Units, 2010**

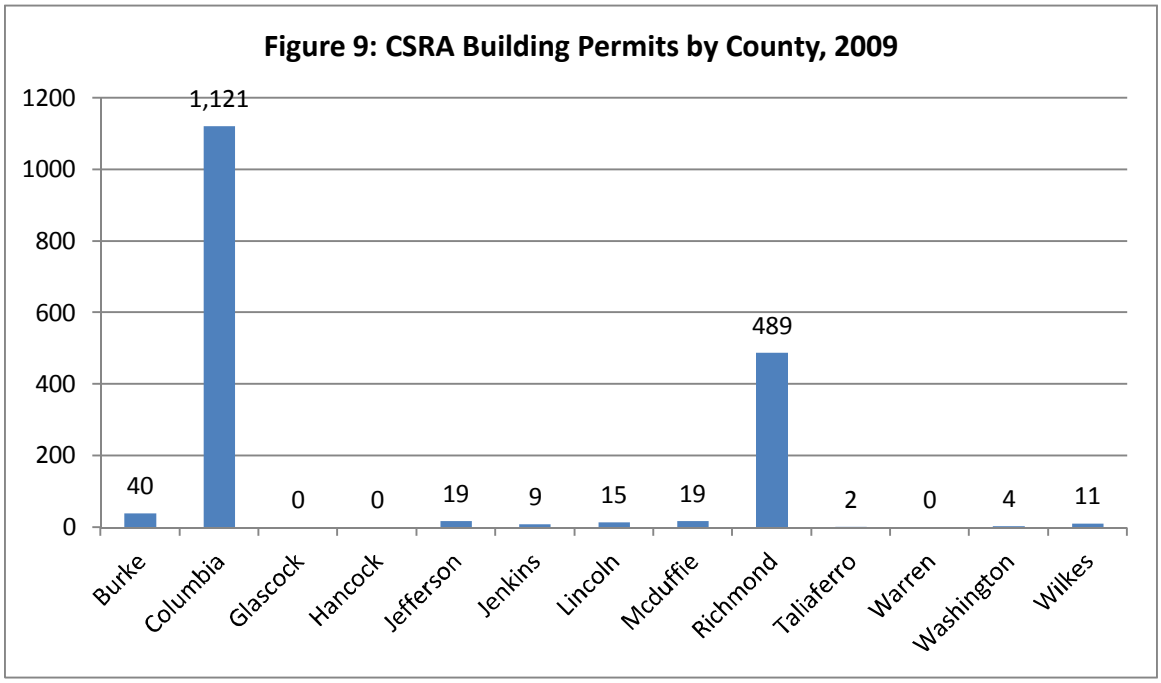



*Source: ESRI Business Analyst*

CSRA median and average housing values have increased substantially in the past decade. Fueled by new housing construction in the urban area, the average and median value of housing in the region has increased by approximately 35 percent (Figure 8). Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties accounted for over 95 percent of all CSRA building permits in 2009 (Figure 9). The low number of building permits in the rural CSRA is another indication of housing need in those counties.




*Source: ESRI Business Analyst*




*Source: Georgia County Guide*

## 4.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The CSRA region includes a diverse economy that spans both urban and rural counties. The region contains economic clusters that range from highly concentrated medical industries at the core of the Augusta area to an industrial/manufacturing beltway that extends throughout the rural counties of Central Georgia.

The last three decades were a period of sustained economic growth throughout the CSRA. Economic and employment growth emerged from the addition of new service-providing firms and expansion of existing industries. While the regionôs competitive strengths and location of new industries have supported the growth of the 1980s, 1990s and the early part of the 2000s, growth has slowed and even declined in some counties during the past decade. The manufacturing sector has been especially hard hit, with a number of major plant shutdowns in the region.

The data presented in this section captures the changing trends of the CSRA economy. Primary data includes the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Georgia Department of Labor. Due to the different methods used by these agencies in counting employment data, some discrepancies in employment characteristics may occur.

### 4.3.1 Occupational Profile

The occupational profile of the CSRA reflects the work performed by the regionôs residents, whether they work in the CSRA or another region.

Occupational profiles for CSRA residents are presented in Table 5. The workforce is well diversified with Management/Professional occupations (36.6 percent) accounting for the highest share of employment, followed by Sales, Office & Administrative Support (22.2 percent) and Service Workers (19 percent). This reflects strong employment orientation in service and government sectors. The smallest shares of occupations are found in Farming, Fishing & Forestry (0.6 percent) and Construction, Extraction & Maintenance (5.5 percent), reflecting the decline of agricultural and natural resource-based industries.

**Table 5: Occupational Profile of CSRA Residents**

| | 2000 | | 2010 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** |
| **Management/Professional/Financial** | 52,996 | 30.9 | 67,591 | 36.6 |
| **Services** | 27,402 | 16 | 35,087 | 19 |
| **Sales, Office & Admin Support** | 40,585 | 23.7 | 40,997 | 22.2 |
| **Farming/Fishing/Forestry** | 1,173 | 0.7 | 1,108 | 0.6 |
| **Construction/Extraction/Maintenance** | 18,236 | 10.6 | 10,157 | 5.5 |
| **Production/Transportation/Material Moving** | 30,870 | 18 | 29,732 | 16.1 |
| **Total** | 171,262 | 100 | 184,672 | 100 |

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC*

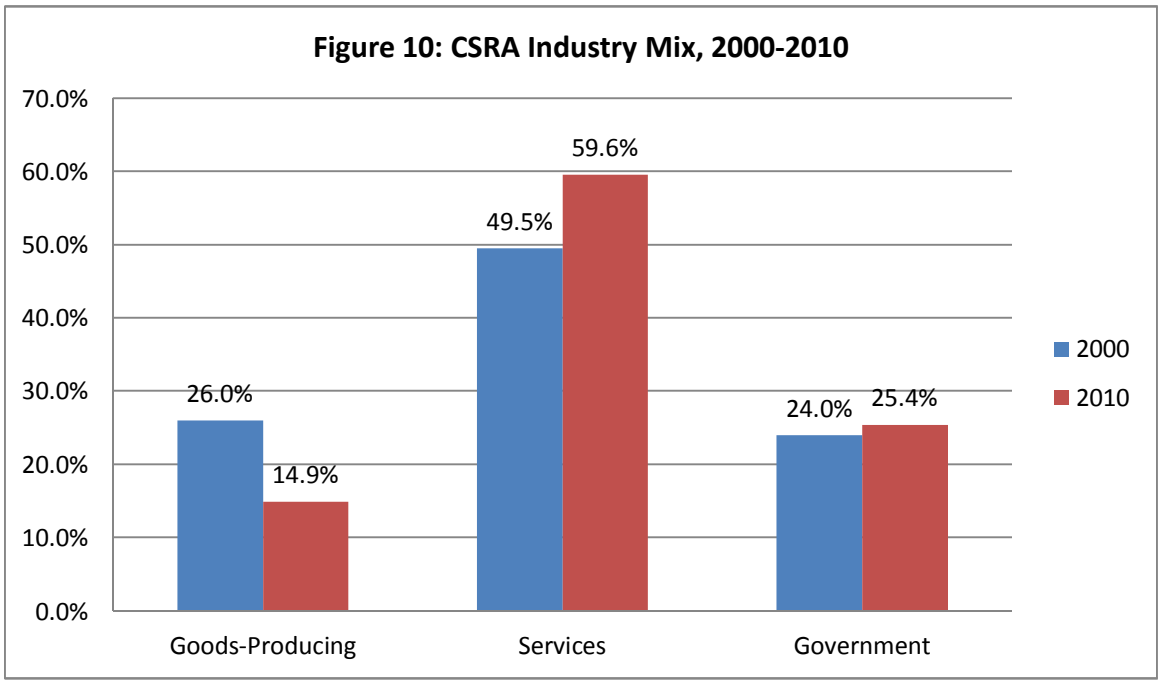
Industry employment trends reflect the regionôs occupational profile. Services (51.5 percent) account for the highest share of employment among CSRA residents (Table 6). Other important sectors include Retail Trade (11.2 percent) and Manufacturing (9.1 percent).

| Table 6: CSRA Residents Employment by Industry | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2000 | | 2010 | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| **Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining** | 3,372 | 2 | 3,509 | 1.9 |
| **Construction** | 11,668 | 6.8 | 11,265 | 6.1 |
| **Manufacturing** | 26,711 | 15.6 | 16,805 | 9.1 |
| **Wholesale Trade** | 4,719 | 2.8 | 4,247 | 2.3 |
| **Retail Trade** | 20,108 | 11.7 | 20,683 | 11.2 |
| **Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities** | 10,774 | 6.3 | 10,711 | 5.8 |
| **Information** | 3,624 | 2.1 | 2,955 | 1.6 |
| **Finance/Insurance/Real Estate/Rental/Leasing** | 7,352 | 4.3 | 8,495 | 4.6 |
| **Services** | 73,027 | 42.6 | 95,106 | 51.5 |
| **Public Administration** | 9,907 | 5.8 | 10,896 | 5.9 |
| **Total** | 171,262 | 100 | 184,672 | 100 |
| *Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC* | | | | |

### 4.3.2 Sector and Industry Trends

Sector and industry trends reflect jobs within the CSRA region, including out-of-region residents. The CSRAâs employment base is largely a mix of small businesses across a variety of sectors. There are 17,097 businesses in the region, employing 233,147 people. The majority of businesses employ ten or fewer people. The small business sector of the economy is supplemented by major employers such as manufacturers, education institutions, and government agencies.

A majority of jobs in the region are in service-producing industries, which have increased by over 10 percent since 2000 (Figure 10). Approximately 60 percent of the CSRAâs jobs are in this sector, followed by government (25.4 percent) and goods producing (14.9 percent). These data highlight the shift from manufacturing to service industries that has occurred in the past twenty years.




*Source: Georgia Department of Labor Local Area Profile*

Table 7 presents a detailed breakdown of employment sectors in the CSRA. Services (37.4 percent) and Government and Government Enterprises (23.5 percent) account for the highest share of employment. Other important job concentrations include Retail Trade (10.1 percent) and Finance, Insurance & Real Estate (5.8 percent).

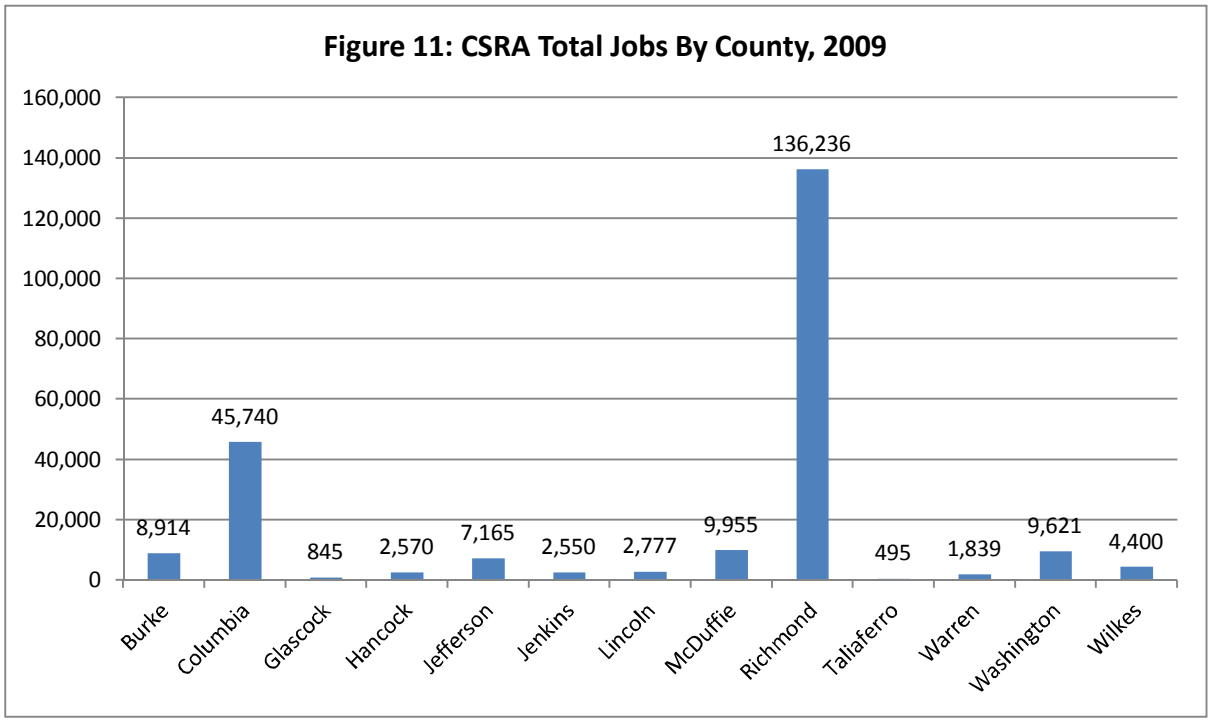
**Table 7: CSRA Total Jobs by Sector, 1990-2009**

| | 1990 | | 2000 | | 2009 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** | **Number** | **Percent** |
| **Farm** | 4,674 | 2.3 | 4,305 | 1.9 | 3,567 | 1.5 |
| **Agriculture, Forest & Fishing** | 1,313 | 0.7 | 2,061 | 0.9 | 2,694 | 1.2 |
| **Mining** | 2,331 | 1.2 | 2,472 | 1.1 | 1,075 | 0.5 |
| **Construction** | 13,722 | 6.9 | 13,279 | 5.9 | 12,606 | 5.4 |
| **Manufacturing** | 29,780 | 14.9 | 27,673 | 12.4 | 16,322 | 7 |
| **Trans. & Utilities** | 7,063 | 3.5 | 9,615 | 4.3 | 12,943 | 5.6 |
| **Wholesale Trade** | 6,334 | 3.2 | 5,413 | 2.4 | 4,777 | 2 |
| **Retail Trade** | 32,461 | 16.3 | 38,001 | 17 | 23,614 | 10.1 |
| **Finance, Insurance & Real Estate** | 9,029 | 4.5 | 10,190 | 4.6 | 13,443 | 5.8 |
| **Services** | 43,891 | 22 | 57,868 | 25.9 | 87,251 | 37.4 |
| **Government and Govt. Enterprises** | 48,757 | 24.5 | 52,631 | 23.5 | 54,855 | 23.5 |
| **Total** | 199,355 | 100 | 223,508 | 100 | 233,147 | 100 |

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Economic Analysis, CA 25 and CA 25N; GA DOL; Calculations by CSRA RC*

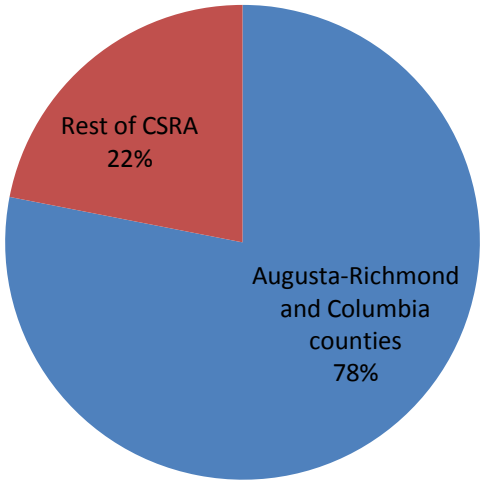
Between 1990 and 2009, the number of jobs in the CSRA increased from 199,355 to 233,147, or 17 percent. Major shifts have occurred both in the total number of jobs within sectors and their relative value to the economic base. Sectors such as Manufacturing, Farm, and Retail Trade have declined in both total and proportional terms while Services and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate have increased since 1990. Some sectors, such as Government and Government Enterprises, have remained stable in employment levels.

The majority of the CSRAôs jobs are in the urbanized area. Together, Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties account for over 78 percent of jobs within the region (Figures 11, 12).




*Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA 25N)*

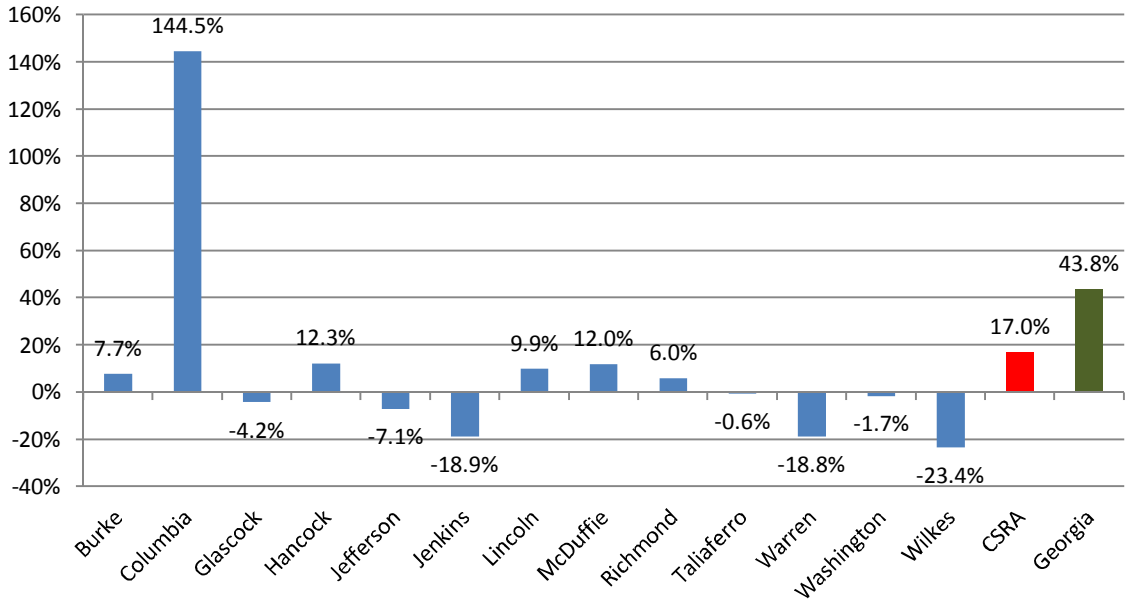
**Figure 12: CSRA Urban and Rural Jobs Balance, 2009**




*Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA 25N); Calculations by CSRA RC*

Job growth rates for all counties except Columbia County fall significantly below the state average (Figure 13). Seven of thirteen CSRA counties had fewer jobs in 2009 than in 1990, the result of a declining manufacturing sector that these counties dependent on for most of their economic activity. In contrast, 34,687 jobs were created in the urban area during that same period.

**Figure 13: CSRA Job Growth By County, 1990-2009**




*Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA-25 and CA-25N; Calculations by CSRA RC*

### 4.3.3 Regionally Significant Industries

Location quotients are analytical tools used to determine which industries are concentrated in a region by comparing each industryôs share of employment to the same measure for the nation as a whole. The CSRAôs location quotient for a particular industry (i.e. manufacturing) is the ratio of the manufacturing share of total employment in the region to the manufacturing share of total employment in the United States. If the ratio is greater than 1, the industry is of more importance in the region than the U.S. as a whole and is, therefore, likely to be an exporting industry.

Table 8 presents location quotients for the CSRA and the nation. The CSRAôs primary export sectors are manufacturing, hospitality, construction and education and health services, all with location quotients at or above 1.1. The relatively low location quotients for information (0.8) and finance (0.7) suggest the region has not achieved its full employment potential in these sectors.

**Table 8: Location Quotient, CSRA and the United States, 1990-2009**

| | CSRA | | United States | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Jobs** | **Percent** | **Jobs** | **Percent** | **Location Quotient** |
| **Natural Resources & Mining** | 1,917 | 1.6 percent | 1,783,558 | 1.7 percent | 0.9 |
| **Construction** | 7,142 | 6.0 percent | 5,948,837 | 5.6 percent | 1.1 |
| **Manufacturing** | 15,569 | 13.0 percent | 11,810,371 | 11 percent | 1.2 |
| **Trade, Transportation & Utilities** | 27,080 | 22.6 percent | 24,651,647 | 23 percent | 1.0 |
| **Information** | 2,337 | 2.0 percent | 2,807,721 | 2.6 percent | 0.8 |
| **Financial Activities** | 5,635 | 4.7 percent | 7,589,821 | 7.1 percent | 0.7 |
| **Professional & Business Services** | 15,750 | 13.2 percent | 16,488,835 | 15.4 percent | 0.9 |
| **Education & Health Services** | 22,852 | 19.1 percent | 18,321,635 | 17.1 percent | 1.1 |
| **Leisure & Hospitality** | 16,891 | 14.1 percent | 13,001,028 | 12.1 percent | 1.2 |
| **Other Services** | 3,974 | 3.3 percent | 4,369,780 | 4.1 percent | 0.8 |
| **Unclassified** | 124 | 0.1 percent | 173,872 | 0.2 percent | 0.5 |
| **Total** | 119,749 | 100 percent | 106,947,104 | 100 percent | 1 |

*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Location Quotient Calculator (Based on 2009 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages); Omits jobs classified as non-disclosed.*

### 4.3.4 Major Regional Employers

Military Sector

The U.S Department of Defense is a major employer in the CSRA. Occupying approximately 55,600 acres in four counties, Fort Gordon is the largest communications training facility in the

Armed Forces and is the focal point for the development of tactical communications and information systems.

Fort Gordon is the Augusta areaõs largest employer and drives the regional economy. According to the *Economic Impact of Fort Gordon on Columbia and Richmond Counties*, *Georgia* (2003) study commissioned by the Alliance for Fort Gordon, Fort Gordon accounts for over 18,000 civilian and military jobs and generates $1.2 billion dollars in economic activity and tax revenue annually. The facility provides direct and indirect employment to 27.7 percent of working individuals in Augusta-Richmond County and 14 percent in Columbia County.

Health Care

The health industry employs more than 25,000 medical professionals in the CSRA. The region has seven major medical facilities: Georgia Health Sciences University, University Hospital, Veteranõs Administration Hospital, Dwight D. Eisenhower Hospital, Gracewood State Hospital, Doctorõs Hospital, and Trinity Hospital. Georgia Health Sciences University, formerly called Medical College of Georgia, consistently ranks among the nationõs top 25 medical schools and has received national recognition for its work in the field of telemedicine, where it is considered a pioneer. Dwight D. Eisenhower Hospital and Veteranõs Administration Hospital are exclusively for military personnel.

Energy Sector

The Savannah River Site (SRS), a U.S. Department of Energy facility, is the largest energy sector employer in the region, with over 10,000 employees. Although located in South Carolina, it is a major employer for CSRA residents. The facilityõs functions include producing Tritium, a radioactive hydrogen gas used to enhance the explosive yield of nuclear warheads, and cleanup activities related to old nuclear weapons. SRS is home to the nationõs only operating radiochemical separations facility.

### 4.3.5 Income and Wages

Incomes throughout the CSRA have historically been lower than the state average. With the exception of Columbia County, average CSRA per capita income is approximately 20 percent below the state average (Table 9). However, income levels in eleven of thirteen CSRA counties have increased at a faster rate than the state average in the past two decades. Most CSRA counties have seen income rates more than double since 1990.

**Table 9: Per Capita Personal Income for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009 (not adjusted for inflation)**

| | 1990 | 2000 | 2009 | 1990-2000 percent change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Burke County** | $11,888 | $17,739 | $25,666 | 115.9 |
| **Columbia County** | $19,571 | $30,532 | $41,943 | 114.3 |
| **Glascock County** | $13,455 | $20,035 | $24,230 | 80.1 |
| **Hancock County** | $10,808 | $13,796 | $21,208 | 96.2 |
| **Jefferson County** | $12,153 | $18,694 | $25,429 | 109.2 |

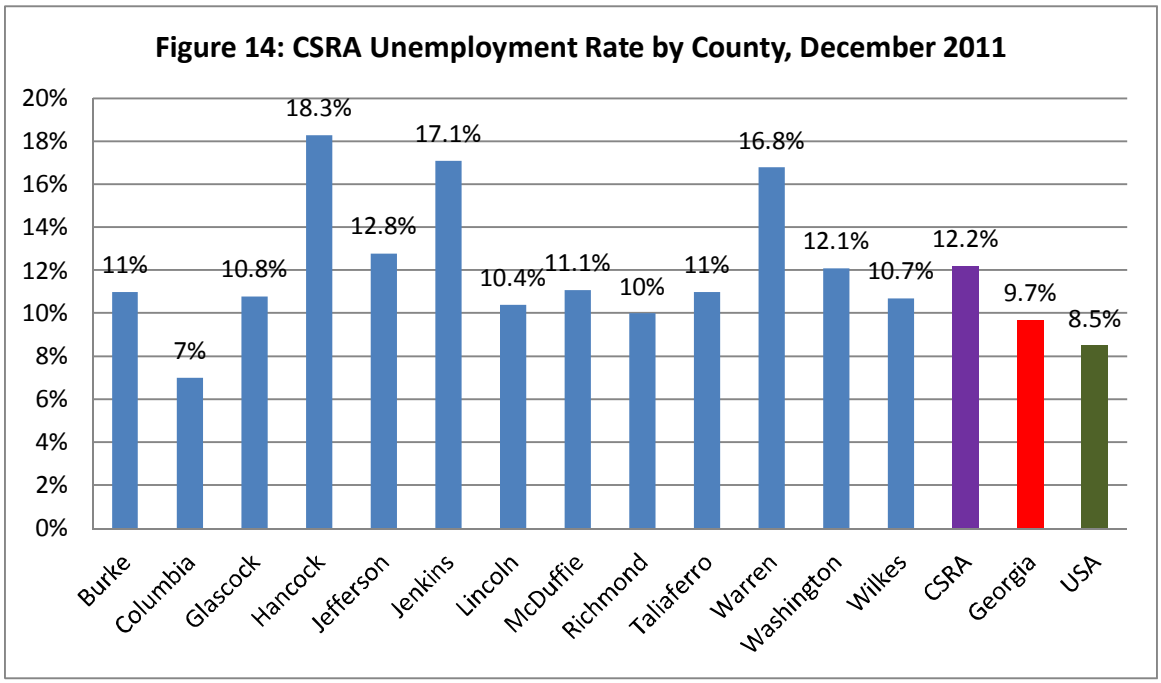
| Table 9: Per Capita Personal Income for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009 (not adjusted for inflation) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jenkins County** | $11,411 | $18,042 | $23,332 | 104.5 |
| **Lincoln County** | $13,131 | $19,738 | $27,980 | 113.1 |
| **McDuffie County** | $14,178 | $22,797 | $31,499 | 122.2 |
| **Richmond County** | $16,827 | $22,437 | $29,907 | 77.7 |
| **Taliaferro County** | $12,342 | $16,030 | $26,037 | 111.0 |
| **Warren County** | $11,286 | $17,972 | $26,107 | 131.3 |
| **Washington County** | $14,750 | $20,821 | $28,745 | 94.9 |
| **Wilkes County** | $14,687 | $20,863 | $28,142 | 91.6 |
| **CSRA Average** | $13,576 | $19,961 | $27,709 | 104.1 |
| **Georgia Average** | $17,563 | $28,531 | $34,129 | 94.3 |
| *Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA 1-3; Calculations by CSRA RC* | | | | |

Wages constitute the largest component of income. At $30,706, the average wage per job in the CSRA is well below the state average of $43,961 (Table 10). Since 1990, the average wage per job statewide has increase faster (100.7 percent) than in the CSRA (95.7 percent). In the region, wages are highest in Augusta-Richmond County ($41,285) and lowest in Glascock County ($23,233).

| Table 10: Average Wage per Job for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1990** | **2000** | **2009** | **1990-2009 percent change** |
| **Burke County** | $20,211 | $28,679 | $40,483 | 100.3 |
| **Columbia County** | $17,051 | $24,889 | $34,010 | 99.5 |
| **Glascock County** | $14,813 | $24,207 | $23,233 | 56.8 |
| **Hancock County** | $13,231 | $20,427 | $27,708 | 109.4 |
| **Jefferson County** | $15,643 | $25,046 | $32,503 | 107.8 |
| **Jenkins County** | $13,311 | $20,764 | $27,256 | 104.8 |
| **Lincoln County** | $13,208 | $20,775 | $27,583 | 108.8 |
| **McDuffie County** | $15,530 | $23,774 | $31,118 | 100.4 |
| **Richmond County** | $20,766 | $29,180 | $41,285 | 98.8 |
| **Taliaferro County** | $11,221 | $17,252 | $24,217 | 115.8 |
| **Warren County** | $13,653 | $25,428 | $28,662 | 109.9 |
| **Washington County** | $19,730 | $29,617 | $32,708 | 65.8 |
| **Wilkes County** | $15,564 | $22,629 | $28,411 | 82.5 |
| **CSRA Average** | $15,687 | $24,051 | $30,706 | 95.7 |
| **Georgia Average** | $21,899 | $34,318 | $43,961 | 100.7 |
| *Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA 34; Calculations by CSRA RC* | | | | |

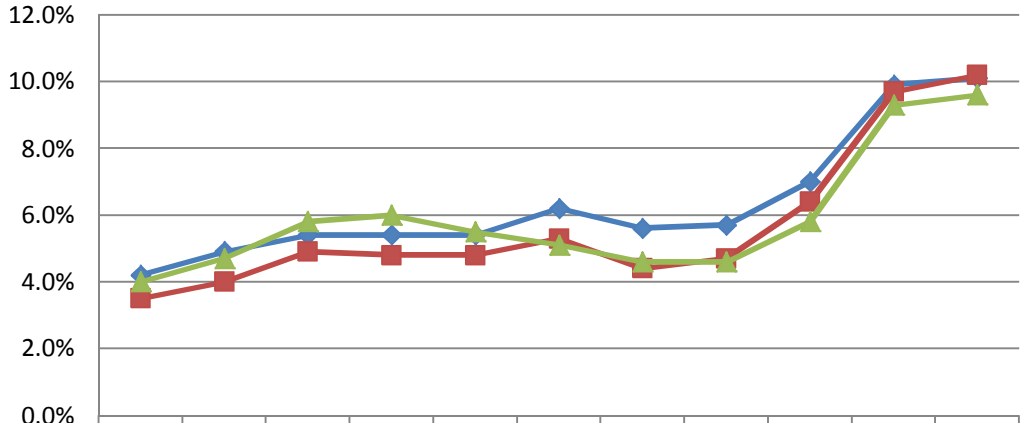
### 4.3.6 Labor Force Estimates

As of December 2011, the CSRAâs unemployment rate is 12.2 percent, significantly higher than the state and national averages (Figure 14). The CSRAâs unemployment rate has traditionally been slightly above the state and national averages (Figure 15). However, for the past four years, the regionâs rural counties experienced spikes in the overall unemployment far surpassing those found elsewhere in the state and nation.




*Sources: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Department of Labor*

**Figure 15: Unemployment Rate for Selected Jurisdictions, 2000-2010**

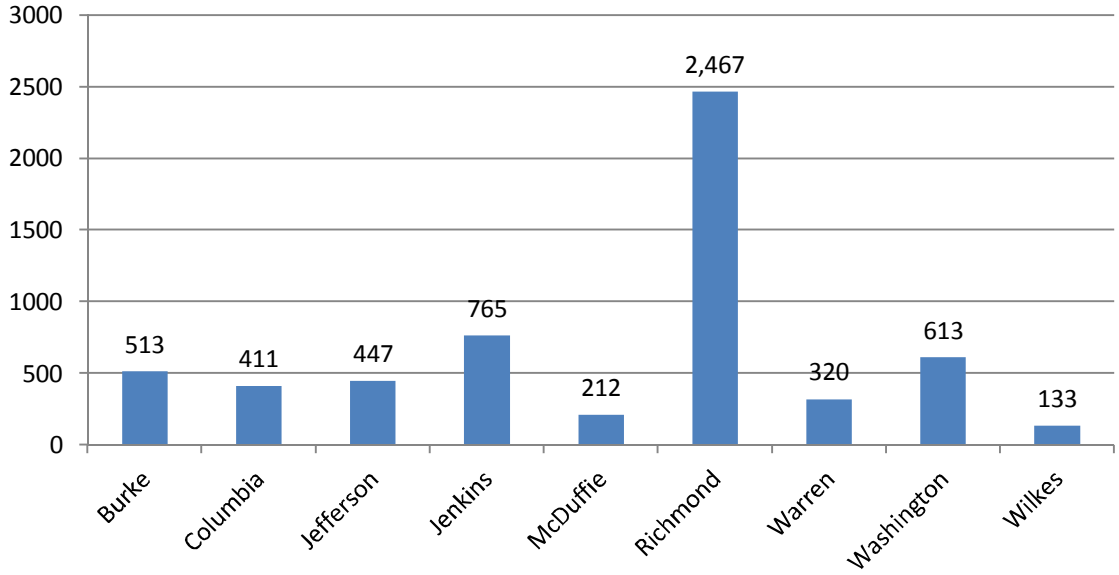



| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSRA | 4.2% | 4.9% | 5.4% | 5.4% | 5.4% | 6.2% | 5.6% | 5.7% | 7.0% | 9.9% | 10.1% |
| Georgia | 3.5% | 4.0% | 4.9% | 4.8% | 4.8% | 5.3% | 4.4% | 4.7% | 6.4% | 9.7% | 10.2% |
| USA | 4.0% | 4.7% | 5.8% | 6.0% | 5.5% | 5.1% | 4.6% | 4.6% | 5.8% | 9.3% | 9.6% |

*Sources: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S Department of Labor*

Since 2005, 5,175 job losses were reported to the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) for listing in the Business Layoff & Closure listing directory (Figure 16). It is important to note that these represent only major employers which are required to report closures by federal labor law requirements. It does not include employers that are not required to report closures (smaller employers), or jobs impacted directly and indirectly by major employer closures, such as suppliers.

**Figure 16: Major Job Losses in the CSRA, 2005-2011**




*Source: GDOL Business Layoff & Closure Listing* [http://www.dol.state.ga.us/em/layoff_closure_listing.htm](http://www.dol.state.ga.us/em/layoff_closure_listing.htm)

Hancock, Jenkins and Warren counties have been particularly hard hit with plant closures, reflected in unemployment rates that are double the state and national averages. The unemployment problem

in the rural CSRA has persisted since 2007 and has now become chronic. All of the CSRAôs rural counties are Economically Distressed Areas according to the criteria contained in the Public Works and Economic Development Act. For this reason, job retention and creation is the top regional priority in the CSRA.

### 4.3.7 Projected Regional Job Growth

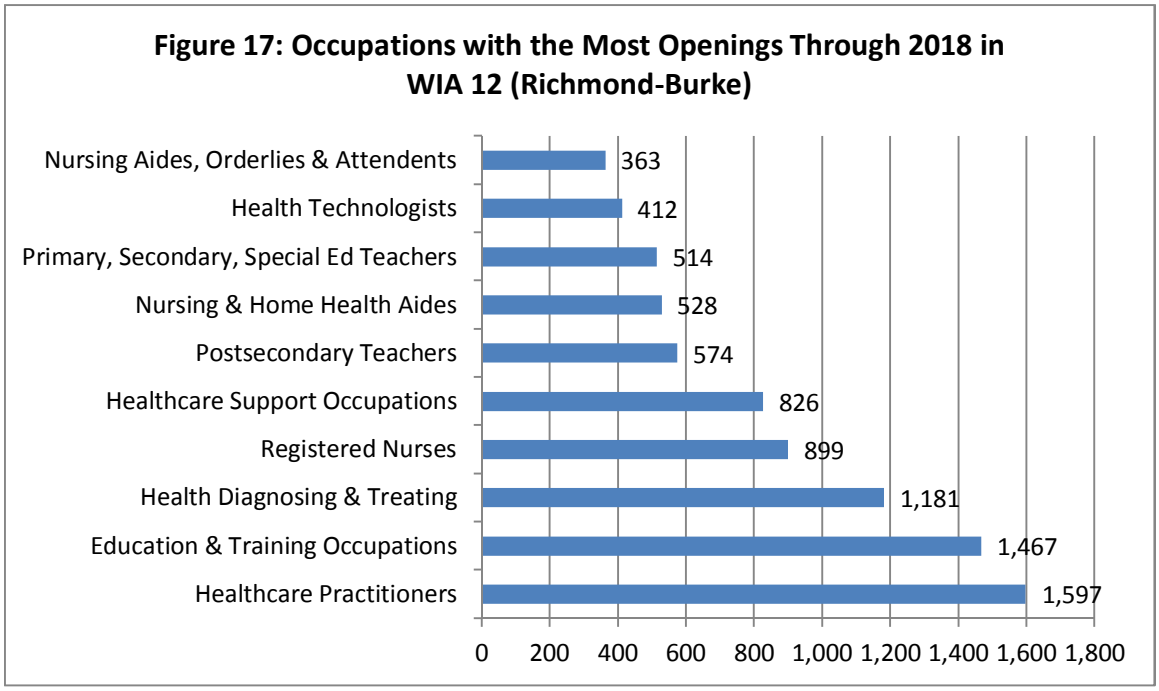
The CSRA economy was built on traditional industries such as manufacturing, which remains a critical sector. Changes in the regional economy have made growth industries such as health care, social services as well as finance and information technology, the areas in which job creation will occur. These industries will play an increasing role in the regionôs employment picture over the next decade.

The following projected job projections are based on the *Georgia Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018*. The analysis is at the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) as defined by the Georgia Department of Labor. WIA #12 includes Richmond and Burke counties. WIA #13 encompasses 12 counties in east central Georgia: Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes. For analysis purposes, the two WIAs must be examined separately because WIA #13 includes Screven County, which is not part of the CSRA.

The Georgia Department of Labor projects approximately 20,000 new jobs in the region through 2018.

<u>WIA Area #12 ï Richmond & Burke Counties</u>

Given national trends as well as Augustaôs status as a major regional health care center, health-related occupations dominate the list of job sectors with the highest projected gains (Figure 17).




*Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018*

Top industry growth is detailed in Table 11. The Health Care & Social Assistance and Educational Services sectors will account for the vast majority of industry growth rates. Combined, these two sectors will contribute 5,571 new jobs through 2018.

**Table 11: Top Industry Growth Sectors through 2018 in WIA 12 Richmond-Burke**

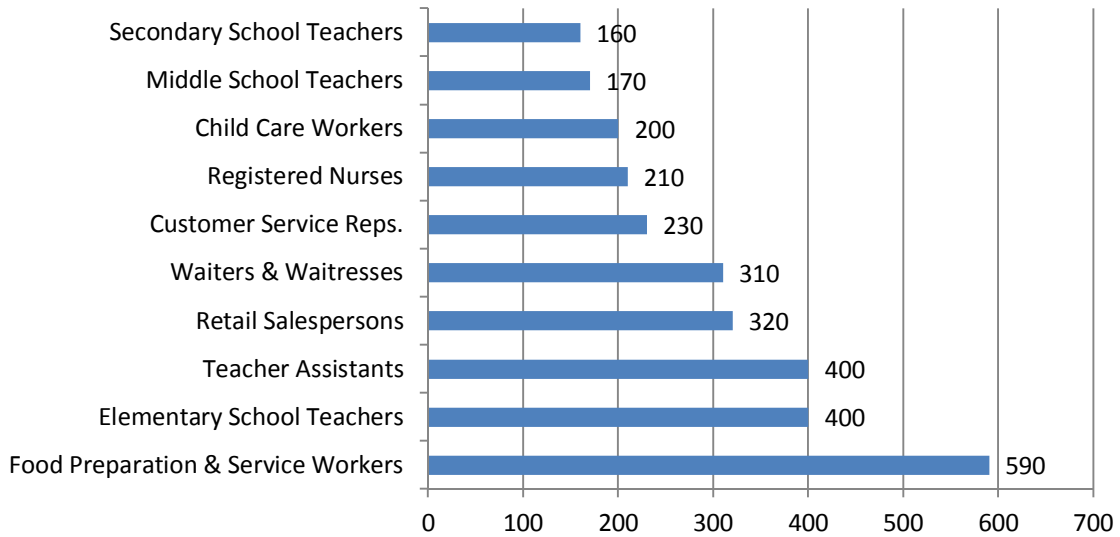
| | 2008 Estimated Employment | 2018 Project Employment | Total 2008-2018 Employment Change | 2008-2018 percent Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Health Care & Social Assistance** | 18,515 | 21,805 | 3,290 | 17.8 |
| **Educational Services** | 13,780 | 16,061 | 2,281 | 16.6 |
| **Transportation & Warehousing** | 2,648 | 3,223 | 575 | 21.7 |
| **Professional & Technical Services** | 3,921 | 4,474 | 553 | 14.1 |
| **Utilities** | 1,149 | 1,342 | 193 | 16.8 |
| **Other Services (Except Government)** | 4,538 | 4,727 | 189 | 4.2 |
| **Local Government** | 3,501 | 3,549 | 48 | 1.4 |
| **Management of Companies/Enterprises** | 252 | 269 | 17 | 6.7 |
| **Arts, Entertainment & Recreation** | 1,133 | 1,142 | 9 | 0.8 |

*Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018*

WIA Area #13 ï East Central Georgia

The fastest growing occupations in WIA #13 are diverse and associated with various industry sectors (Figure 18). Most of these occupations will require formal education beyond high school and pay above-average wages.

**Figure 18: Occupations with the Most Openings Through 2018 in WIA 13 (East Central Georgia)**




*Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018*

Total employment in WIA Area #13 is expected to grow from approximately 74,000 jobs to more than 83,000 by the year 2018, which equates to almost 1,000 new jobs added each year. The top ten industries in this area with the highest job growth are listed in Table 12. Similar to WIA #12, the Educational Services and Health Care & Social Assistance sectors will lead growth sectors, accounting for almost half the projected job growth through 2018.

| Table 12: Top Industry Growth Sectors through 2018 in WIA 13 East-Central Georgia | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2008 Estimated Employment** | **2018 Project Employment** | **Total 2008-2018 Employment Change** | **2008-2018 percent Change** |
| **Educational Services** | 8,214 | 10,479 | 2,265 | 27.6 percent |
| **Health Care & Social Assistance** | 6,061 | 7,819 | 1,758 | 29 percent |
| **Accommodation & Food Services** | 5,145 | 6,439 | 1,294 | 25.2 percent |
| **Professional & Technical Services** | 1,770 | 2,316 | 546 | 30.8 percent |
| **Other Services (Except Government)** | 2,778 | 3,233 | 455 | 16.4 percent |
| **Arts, Entertainment & Recreation** | 627 | 986 | 359 | 57.3 percent |
| **Retail Trade** | 8,357 | 8,683 | 326 | 3.9 percent |
| **Government** | 6,193 | 6,493 | 300 | 4.8 percent |
| **Transportation & Warehousing** | 1,610 | 1,896 | 286 | 17.8 percent |
| **Waste Management & Admin. Support** | 3,185 | 3,422 | 237 | 7.4 percent |
| *Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018* | | | | |

### 4.3.8 Development Agencies

Table 13 identifies various development organizations that support economic development initiatives in the CSRA.

All play different but complementary roles in recruiting and sustaining jobs in the region. County Chambers of Commerce promote the region to visitors and are responsible for non-industrial business recruitment, while Development Authorities focus on industrial recruitment. Downtown Development Authorities focus on recruiting and sustaining downtown businesses. Regional economic development organizations, such as the CSRA Unified Development Authority and the CSRA Unified Development Council, serve to promote the economic development of the CSRA, and encourage cooperation among economic development organizations.

| Table 13: CSRA Economic Development Organizations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number of Employees** | **Mission/Purpose** | **Services Offered** |
| **Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce** | 5 | Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Burke County Chamber of Commerce** | 2 | Promoting the health and general well-being of Burke County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |

| Table 13: CSRA Economic Development Organizations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number of Employees** | **Mission/Purpose** | **Services Offered** |
| **Burke County Development Authority** | 1 | Promoting the health and general well-being of Burke County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau** | 1 | To recruit and support business location in Columbia County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Columbia County Development Authority** | 2 | To encourage new and expanding economic growth in the County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Development Authority of Richmond County** | 3 | Attract new business to the Augusta-Richmond County area | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Development Authority of Washington County** | 1 | Leading the economic development for the county | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Forward McDuffie** | 3 | Attract new business to McDuffie County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Jefferson County Development Authority** | 2 | Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Jenkins County Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | To recruit and support business location in Jenkins County | Data and information, existing business promotion. |
| **Jenkins County Development Authority** | 1 | To recruit and support business location in Jenkins County | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Lincoln County Development Authority** | 1 | Promote economic development in our county, to create jobs and enhance the quality of life for citizens | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Lincolnton-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Millen Downtown Development Authority** | 1 | Promoting downtown Millen for investments and business location | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Warren County Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | To play an active profitable role in the community | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Warren County Development Authority** | 1 | To assist existing industries, and prospective companies with expansion or site location. | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Washington County Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | To provide the leadership necessary for the growth and development of all East Central Georgia | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Washington Downtown Development Authority** | 1 | Promote downtown Washington for investment | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Washington Economic Development Authority** | 1 | Promote the City of Washington for business location | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Washington Urban Redevelopment Authority** | 1 | Revitalize needed parts of the City of Washington | Data and information services, grants, project management. |

| Table 13: CSRA Economic Development Organizations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Number of Employees** | **Mission/Purpose** | **Services Offered** |
| **Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce** | 1 | Promoting Washington-Wilkes County for investments and business location | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **Washington-Wilkes Payroll Development Authority** | 1 | Promoting Washington-Wilkes County for investments and business location | Data and information services, recruiting, property tours. |
| **CSRA Business Lending** | 3 | To assist CSRA small business through partnerships with area banks | Loan processing, bank and Small Business Center referrals |
| **CSRA Regional Commission** | 5 | To provide planning, management and information services to members in a professional, ethical, cost effective and efficient manner; and to serve as a forum for addressing local government and its citizens' needs. | Data and information, project planning, grant writing. |

The large number of economic development organizations reflects the regionôs emphasis on creating and sustaining jobs. Gradual losses in traditional manufacturing industries and a declining population base have resulted in concern about the CSRAôs economic future, particularly in the rural areas.

### 4.3.9 Economic Development Programs and Tools

In Georgia, the direct actions that local governments can take to encourage economic development have historically been less limited than in other states. In the past two decades, several important tools have been made available to local communities to help encourage development and attract or retain jobs. These include:

- Community redevelopment financing (similar to tax increment financing)
- Tax abatement
- Community empowerment zone designation
- Community renewal programs
- Tax deferrals and exemptions for certain business investments
- Industrial revenue bonds

Table 14 inventories local, state and federal development tools.

| Table 14: CSRA Economic Development Incentives | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Incentive** | **Provider** | **Explanation** |
| Revenue Bonds | Local | Financing instruments issued through development authorities. Both taxable and tax-exempt revenue bond financing is available at competitive, below-prime interest rates. RBs provide financing for land, building and equipment acquisition for new and expanding manufacturing plants. |

| Table 14: CSRA Economic Development Incentives | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Incentive** | **Provider** | **Explanation** |
| SPLOST Funds | Local | The development authorities also have SPLOST funds available for short-term loans. |
| CSRA Revolving Loan Fund | Local | CSRA Revolving Loan Fund – An internal revolving loan fund of CSRA Business Lending. Loans up to $150,000 are available for most purposes. |
| OneGeorgia Edge Fund | State | Special financial assistance is provided to eligible applicants for locating economic development projects. Response to applications is quick due to the sensitive nature of projects and their tight timeframes. Eligible applicants include city/county governments, development authorities or other public entities. |
| OneGeorgia Equity Fund | State | The purpose of this fund is to provide a program of financial assistance that includes grants or loans and any other form of financial assistance to provide for infrastructure, services, facilities and improvements. |
| Georgia's Business Expansion and Support Act Job Tax Credit | State | Tax liability for any one-year may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent. Eligible businesses include those involved in manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, processing, tourism and research and development. This credit may be carried forward up to ten years. For Augusta, a $2,500 tax credit is available for the creation of 10 jobs |
| Georgia's Business Expansion and Support Act Investment Tax Credit | State | Available to manufacturers or telecommunications companies having a presence in Georgia for at least 5 years. The company must spend at least $50,000 on an expansion project. |
| Optional Investment Credit | State | Larger credits can, depending on location, offset up to 90 percent of a manufacturer's increased income tax liability following a major expansion. These larger investment tax credits can be carried forward for 10 years but may not be taken in conjunction with the job or investment tax credits. For Augusta, a minimum investment of $10 million results in an 8 percent tax credit. |
| Retraining Tax Credit | State | Firms providing retraining for employees may receive a tax credit of 25 percent of their costs, up to $500 per participant, to a maximum of 50 percent of state income tax liability. |
| Corporate Headquarters Tax Credit | State | Companies establishing or relocating their headquarters to Georgia may be eligible for a tax credit if the headquarters is defined as the principal central administrative offices of a company. New jobs created at the new headquarters must be full-time and must pay above the average wage. |
| Ports Job Tax Credit | State | Companies that increase traffic shipped through Georgia ports by 10 percent or more in a year may be eligible for larger job tax credits. The amount of the bonus tax credit for qualifying firms is $1,250 per job. Applicants must also be eligible for job tax credits under the B.E.S.T. legislation. |
| Research and Development Tax Credit | State | A tax credit is allowed for expenses of research conducted within Georgia for any business or headquarters of any such business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism and research and development industries. |

| Table 14: CSRA Economic Development Incentives | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Incentive** | **Provider** | **Explanation** |
| Sales Tax Exemptions | State | In certain circumstances, sales tax exemptions are available for manufacturing machinery, raw materials, purchase for resale, machinery purchased new and used directly in the manufacturing process, pollution control equipment, machinery components, computer equipment, primary material handling and electricity. |
| Small Company Business Growth Tax Credit | State | A tax credit is granted for any business or headquarters of any such business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, and research & development industries having a state net taxable income which is 20 percent or more above that of the preceding year if its net taxable income in each of the two preceding years was also 20 percent or more. |
| SBA Loans | Federal | SBA 504 can be used for fixed assets, such as land, buildings, machinery and fixtures. SBA 7(a) and Low-Doc can be used for most purposes, including inventory, working capital, vehicles and business acquisitions. CSRA Business Lending administers the SBA 504 program. A bank is the lender on the 7(a) and Low-Doc programs, with the SBA guaranteeing the loans |
| *Sources: OneGeorgia Authority; Georgia Business Expansion and Support Act; SBA Loan Program; CSRA Business Lending* | | |

The CSRA's county development authorities have formal business incentive programs and evaluate each request for assistance on a case-by-case basis. Incentives decisions are made by the respective development authorities and local governments based on the availability of resources, and the cost-benefit of providing the incentives.

OneGeorgia Authority

CSRA counties have historically participated in a variety of state and federal programs and services designed to foster and promote economic growth. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) industrial access funding, and the Governor's Discretionary Fund (GDF) have all been used to support local economic development initiatives.

State government also provides assistance through discretionary grants and loans to local governments under the OneGeorgia program for industrial infrastructure and other economic development support programs. During the last several years, infrastructure improvements for economic development have accelerated. Since 2002, OneGeorgia grants have been awarded to 62 CSRA projects totaling $30,069,933 (Table 15).

| Table 15: Awarded CSRA OneGeorgia Funds by County | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Recipient** | **Number of Awards** | **Awards Amount** | **Award Type** | **Major Projects** |
| Burke County | 4 | $3,020,000 | BRIDGE, EDGE | Acquisition and rehabilitation of former Kwikset facility |

| Table 15: Awarded CSRA OneGeorgia Funds by County | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Recipient** | **Number of Awards** | **Awards Amount** | **Award Type** | **Major Projects** |
| Columbia County | 2 | $227,968 | BRIDGE, EDGE | Road improvements to support John Deere plant |
| Glascock County | 2 | $750,000 | EQUITY | Land acquisition to develop the county's first industrial park |
| Hancock County | 4 | $2,915,000 | EQUITY, EDGE | Construction of a 67,000 s.f. facility |
| Jefferson County | 4 | $1,539,954 | EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE | Land acquisition and water infrastructure |
| Jenkins County | 6 | $2,848,650 | EQUITY, BRIDGE | Airport improvements, land acquisition, infrastructure improvements |
| Lincoln County | 6 | $2,155,005 | EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE | Building acquisition, sewer line extension |
| McDuffie County | 6 | $2,362,000 | EQUITY, BRIDGE | Airport improvements, rail spur, industrial park development |
| Richmond County | 10 | $7,875,725 | EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE | Facility construction, equipment acquisition |
| Taliaferro County | 1 | $292,000 | EQUITY | Water and sewer design study |
| Warren County | 6 | $2,308,979 | EQUITY, BRIDGE | Water and rail infrastructure improvements, land acquisition |
| Washington County | 7 | $2,499,794 | EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE | Airport improvements, site preparation, infrastructure improvements |
| Wilkes County | 4 | $1,274,858 | EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE | Land acquisition, building rehabilitation |
| **Total** | **62** | **$30,069,933** | | |
| *Source: OneGeorgia Authority, Project Database http://www.onegeorgia.org/awards-map/all-awards* | | | | |

- The EDGE Fund provides financial assistance to eligible applicants that are being considered as a relocation or expansion site and are competing with another state for location of a project.

- The Equity Fund provides a program of financial assistance that includes grants and loans to finance activities that will assist in the recruitment and retention of employment opportunities in areas of greater need.

- BRIDGE provides grants and loans for publicly owned infrastructure.

### 4.3.10 Education and Training Opportunities

Four-Year Colleges and Technical Schools

Although many educational institutions have broad missions that include meeting the needs of a wide range of individuals and employers, it is primarily regional two- and four- year institutions that are best able to focus on and respond to regional economies. Technical colleges in particular have done an excellent job of responding to the needs of small and mid-sized businesses, and have demonstrated they can successfully juggle a variety of missions.

Table 16 presents an inventory of area technical and comprehensive four-year colleges. Technical colleges graduate thousands of CSRA students annually in over 100 diploma and certificate programs that include a wide variety of technical skills.

Four-year colleges and universities are important for businesses needing highly-skilled workers as they provide advanced educational opportunities for CSRA residents. They also serve as major employers, generating significant economic impacts. There are two major colleges in the CSRA (Augusta State University and Medical College of Georgia), and a major comprehensive university (Georgia Southern University) in nearby Statesboro.

**Table 16: Area Technical and Comprehensive Colleges**

| School | Enrolled Students | Program Areas |
|---|---|---|
| Augusta State University | 7,061 | Undergraduate degree, some graduate degree |
| Augusta Technical College | 5,028 | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| East Georgia College | 2,754 | Liberal arts |
| Jefferson County Campus (Satellite of Sandersville Technical College) | ** | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| Georgia Southern University | 19,086 | Comprehensive undergraduate, graduate & professional |
| McDuffie Campus (Satellite of Augusta Technical College) | ** | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| Medical College of Georgia | 2,515 | Medicine, health sciences, doctoral |
| Ogeechee Technical College | 1,921 | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| Paine College | | Undergraduate degree |
| Sandersville Technical College | 776 | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| Swainsboro Technical College | 664 | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| University of Phoenix (Augusta Campus) | N/A | Undergraduate professional programs |
| Waynesboro/Burke County Campus (Satellite of Augusta Technical College) | ** | Certificates and diplomas in technical fields |
| *Source: Collegeboard.com; ** included in flagship college numbers; N/A: Not Available* | | |

Quick Start Program

The award-winning Quick Start program, administered by state technical colleges, offers companies screening of potential workers as well as specific training at no cost to the employer. This program benefits new and existing businesses. Quick Start covers two areas: manufacturing and service training. The manufacturing training covers company orientation, core skills, job-specific skills, productivity enhancement, employee involvement, and human resource development. The service training covers company orientation, customer service, interaction skills, product information training, job procedures, and professional development.

Job Training Partnership

CSRA counties participate in the Job Training Partnership, a federally-funded program established to prepare youth and adults facing employment barriers by providing job training and other services that will result in increased employment and earnings. The program trains or retrains workers to find better jobs, and offers employers reduced training costs, wage subsidies, screening and tax credits.

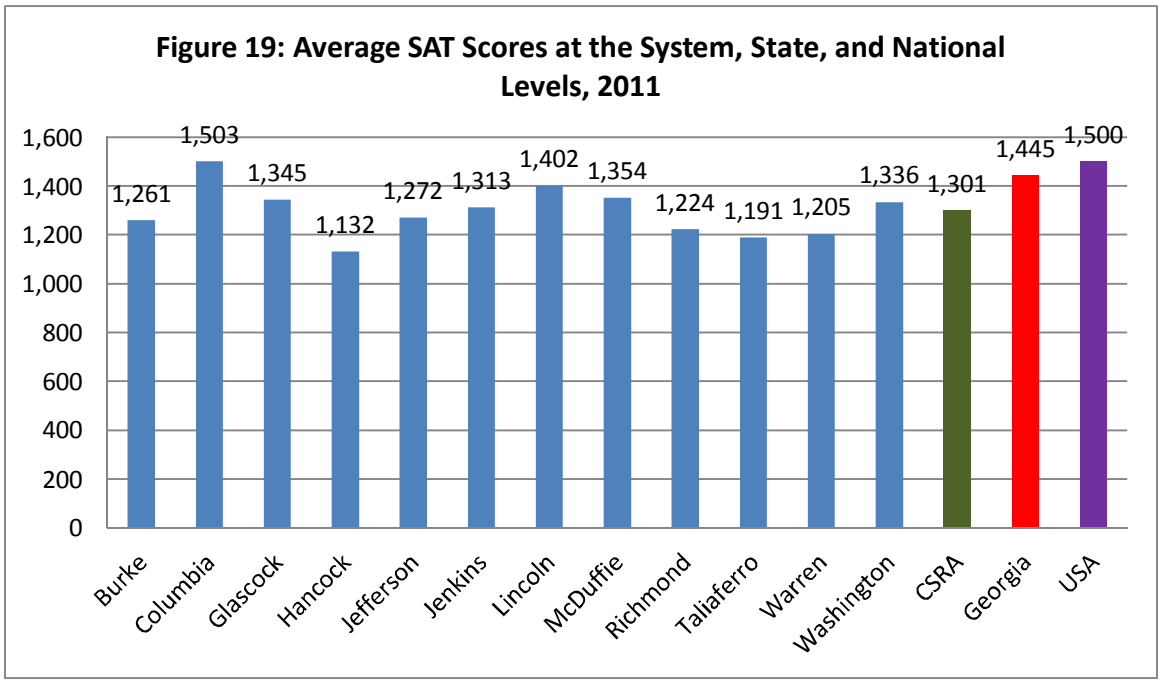
### 4.3.11 High School Performance

Public school systems are critical in providing the education and skill foundation for future employees and business leaders. The quality of public schools is also a significant consideration to business leaders deciding where to locate their companies.

The CSRA counts nearly two dozen high schools that enroll thousands of students. How these schools perform on state and national standardized tests helps to measure readiness for higher education and employment opportunities.

Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores

The SAT is among the widest used college admissions tests. SAT scores throughout the CSRA fall well below the state and national averages. The latest scores for the region as a whole (1,301) are 11.7 percent below the state average and 16 percent below the national average (Figure 19). Columbia County is the only county in the CSRA with SAT scores above the state and national averages. Low test scores have been particularly concerning to industrial recruiters, who indicate that a skilled workforce is usually at the top of business location decisions.




*Sources: Georgia Department of Education; Collgeboard.com*

All students seeking a Georgia high school diploma must pass the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) in four content areas as well as the Georgia High School Writing Assessment. These assessments ensure that students qualifying for a diploma have mastered essential core academic content and skills.

Averaged results of GHSGT test scores point to CSRA students at approximately the state average across all categories (Table 17).

**Table 17: CSRA GHSGT Average Test Scores Pass Rates, 2011**

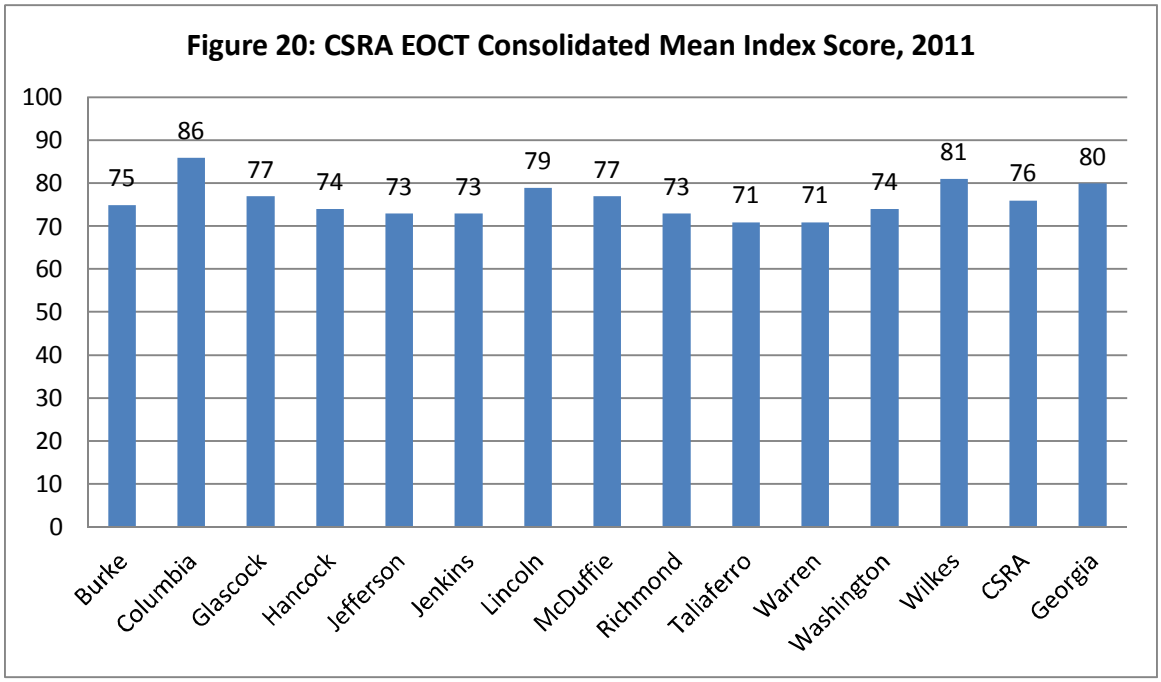
| | Languages Arts, & Reading | Math | Science | Social Science | Percent Passing All Tests |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Burke** | 91 percent | 90 percent | 91 percent | 81 percent | 76.8 percent |
| **Columbia** | 95 percent | 95 percent | 97 percent | 90 percent | 88.1 percent |
| **Glascock** | 88 percent | 94 percent | 90 percent | 81 percent | 82.4 percent |
| **Hancock** | 96 percent | 96 percent | 94 percent | 93 percent | 89.9 percent |
| **Jefferson** | 79 percent | 68 percent | 87 percent | 61 percent | 52 percent |
| **Jenkins** | 87 percent | 65 percent | 90 percent | 67 percent | 56.1 percent |
| **Lincoln** | 87 percent | 86 percent | 93 percent | 74 percent | 71.8 percent |
| **McDuffie** | 89 percent | 89 percent | 93 percent | 83 percent | 76.6 percent |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Richmond** | 85 percent | 70 percent | 86 percent | 70 percent | 59.4 percent |
| **Taliaferro** | 64 percent | - | 100 percent | 45 percent | - |
| **Warren** | 83 percent | 80 percent | 95 percent | 73 percent | 55 percent |
| **Washington** | 86 percent | 87 percent | 91 percent | 71 percent | 66.8 percent |
| **Wilkes** | 91 percent | 94 percent | 93 percent | 85 percent | 85.7 percent |
| **CSRA Average** | 86 percent | 84 percent | 92 percent | 75 percent | 72 percent |
| **State Average** | 91 percent | 84 percent | 93 percent | 80 percent | 73.7 percent |
| *Source: Georgia Department of Education (2011), Georgia High School Graduation Tests* | | | | | |

### Georgia End-of-Course Assessments (EOCT)

End-of-course assessments are given to students in grades nine through twelve for core subjects in math, social studies, science, and English language arts. The assessments provide diagnostic information to help students identify strengths and areas of need in learning, therefore improving performance in all high school courses.

The consolidated index of test scores (which examines specific subjects in literature and composition, biology, economics, math, physical sciences and history) shows CSRA schools falling just slightly below the state average (Figure 20).




*Source: Georgia Department of Education (2011), End-of-Year Course Tests*

## 4.4 LAND USE

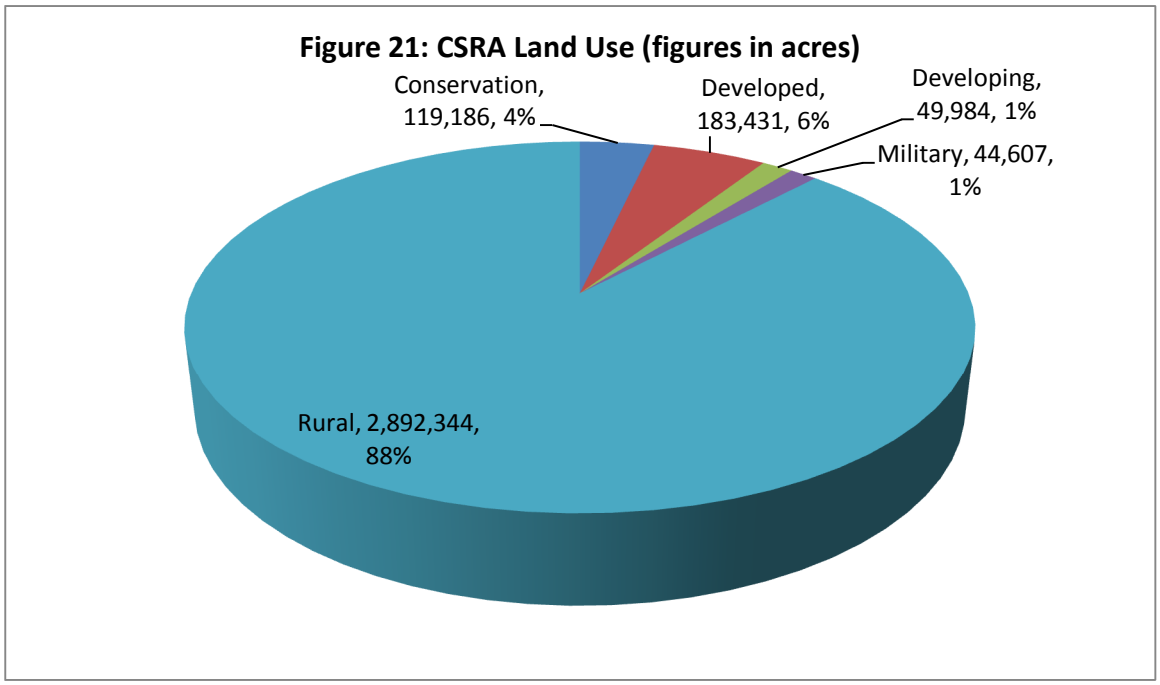
From the early trading post along the Savannah River to the growing cotton and kaolin industry and the expanding medical and science research center, changes in population and economic development have led to changing land use patterns in the CSRA.

In the 1700s, Augusta became a river settlement and busy trading post along the Savannah River, and was a focal point for the rapidly expanding land and river commerce in the then new world. Following the Revolutionary War, Augusta boomed in the tobacco economy, then cotton, and by 1820 was the terminus for riverboats, barges, wagon trains and traders connecting the interior with the sea. During the antebellum years, land use in the CSRA consisted of large plantation fields, concentrated housing, and centralized control and management. A tenancy system evolved and resulted in new spatial arrangement of land holdings. It is at this point that settlement began in what we today refer to as the rural CSRA counties.

The events that had the greatest impact on the redistribution of regional settlement were the location of major highways and railroads. The regionâs socioeconomic and settlement characteristics show that the cities and towns that have experienced a significant population increase in the CSRA are located along rail mainlines and major regional highways. Improvements in the regionâs transportation system initially established certain cities and towns as centers for agriculture, product marketing and shipping, and thus enhanced their growth.

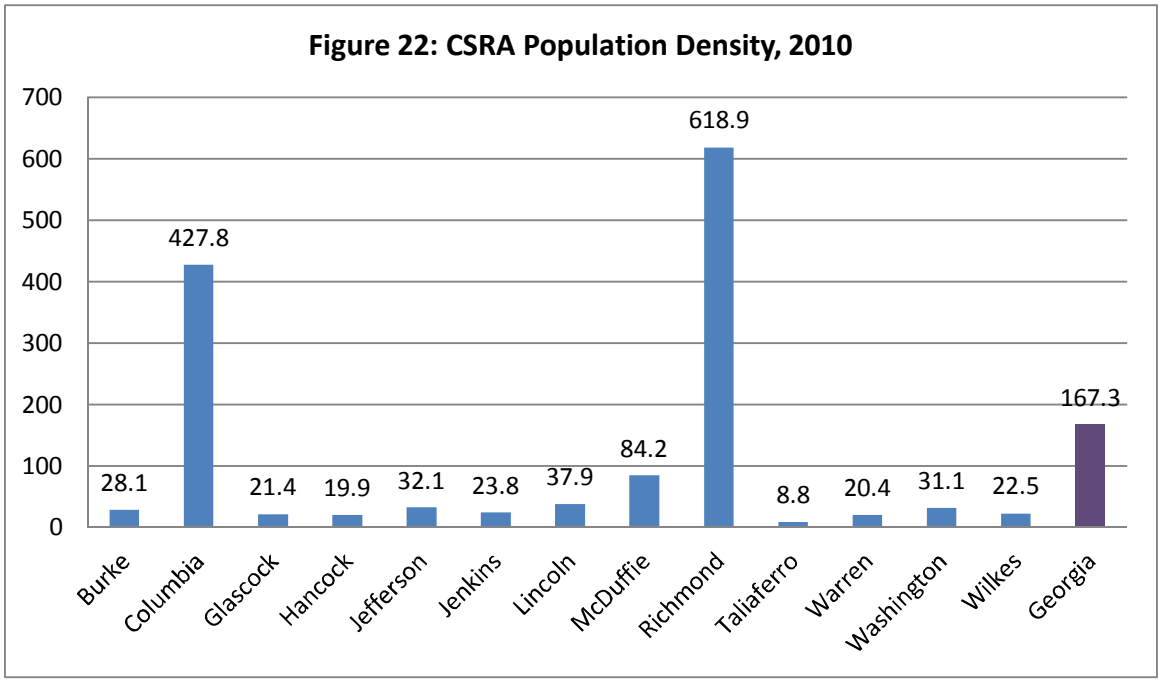
The growth effect that has occurred in the last two decades resulted in sprawl beyond cities and city centers. While cities and downtown areas still have the largest densities, this is quickly eroding as residents locate into unincorporated areas. The immediate risk of this development pattern is that the regionâs counties will bear higher infrastructure costs and the inability to keep up with demand for public services. Longer-term, many cities may lose their viability if population loss continues.

The CSRA has historically been largely a rural region. With the exception of Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties, rural land uses dominate the CSRAâs landscape. The CSRA Regional Plan (2005) notes that approximately 88 percent of the CSRAâs land uses are rural (Figure 21).




*Source: CSRA Regional Plan (2005)*

The primarily rural land uses of the CSRA are also evident when examining the region's population density. Statewide, there are 141.4 people per square mile. Among the CSRA counties, only Columbia and Richmond exceed the state average (Figure 22).




*Source: U.S Bureau of the Census; Calculations by CSRA RC*

### 4.4.1 Projected Growth Areas

- Columbia County will continue the rapid population growth it has enjoyed since the 1980s through the next 20 years. Land uses will change as more residential and commercial development will occur in growth areas identified in the Columbia County Growth Management Plan.

- Augusta-Richmond County will continue to grow at a moderate pace in the southern part of the county where land is still available. Virtually all of Augustaâs growth has occurred in this area in the last two decades.

- McDuffie County will grow at a moderate pace as development from the urbanized area continues westward. With low land prices, strategic location along I-20, available infrastructure, and development pressures in Columbia County, McDuffie County is poised to see continued growth just north of Thomson over the next twenty years.

- Burke County will grow at a moderate pace over the next twenty years. Job growth (particularly from the Plant Vogtle nuclear power facility) and development expanding south from Augusta-Richmond County will ensure that the moderate growth the county has enjoyed in the last two decades will continue.

## 4.5 TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

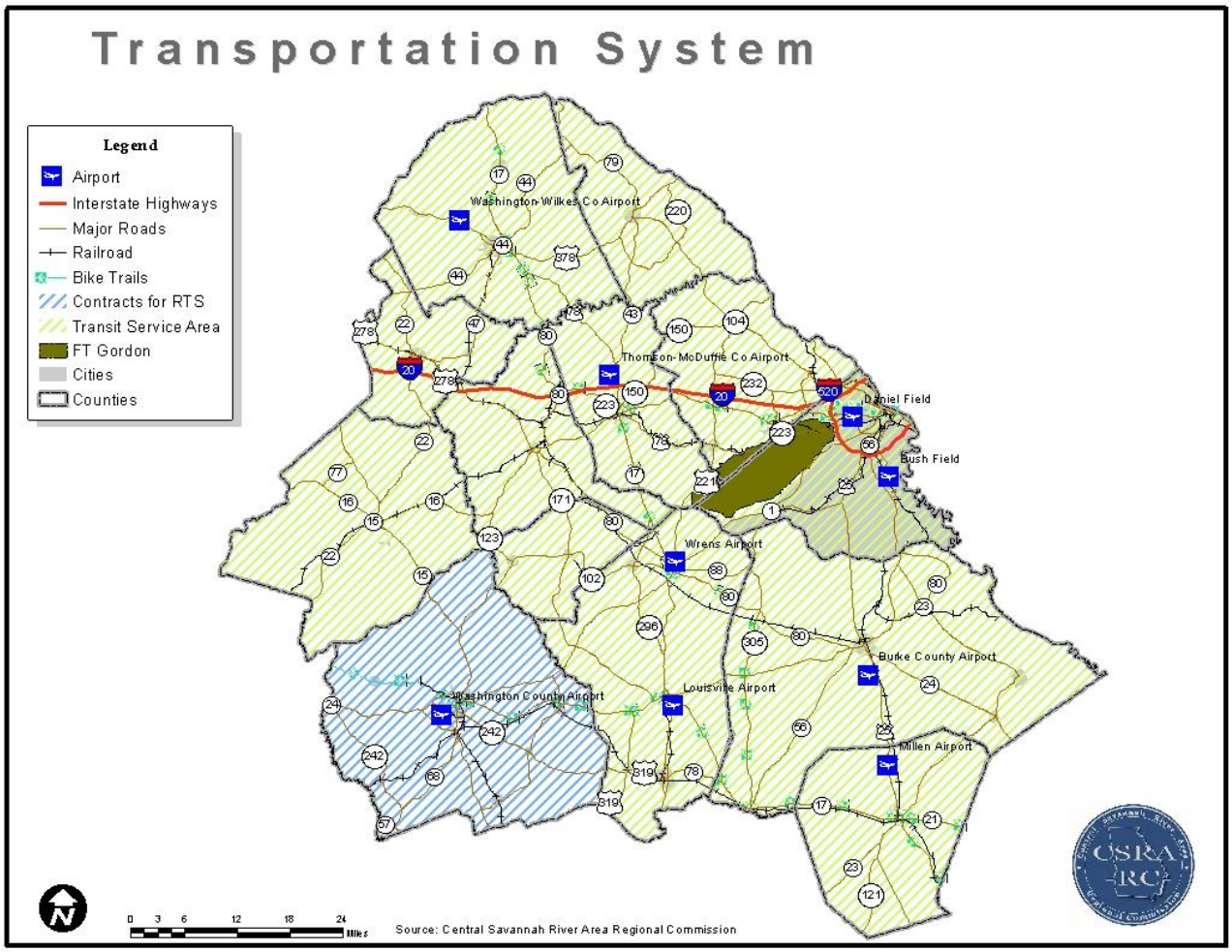
Community facilities in the region are primarily locally maintained and operated. Most CSRA counties provide annual expenditures for services such as fire and police protection, road maintenance, and library facilities. Most operate solid waste management systems of varying capacity and service. Other necessary services such as water and sewer are provided primarily by metropolitan counties, while the smaller, sparsely populated counties in the region are either provided for by their incorporated cities, use private means such as wells or septic systems, or contract for services with private companies.

Zoning, building inspection and regulations are services that are not widely provided in the region outside the urbanized area. Smaller, sparsely population counties cannot support planning, zoning and code enforcement services because of financial, administrative and managerial restrictions.

### 4.5.1 Transportation

The CSRA has a small network of interstates and four-lane U.S. highways that provide east-west and north-south access to regional and national markets. Interstates 20 and 520, as well as U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 link the CSRAâs major cities to each other as well as to the stateâs major cities, such as Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah (Figure 23). However, the highway system does not meet traveler and freight mobility needs throughout the region. The interstates and U.S 1 and U.S. 25 cover only a part of the CSRA, leaving entire areas in the northern and southern part of the region without adequate highway infrastructure.

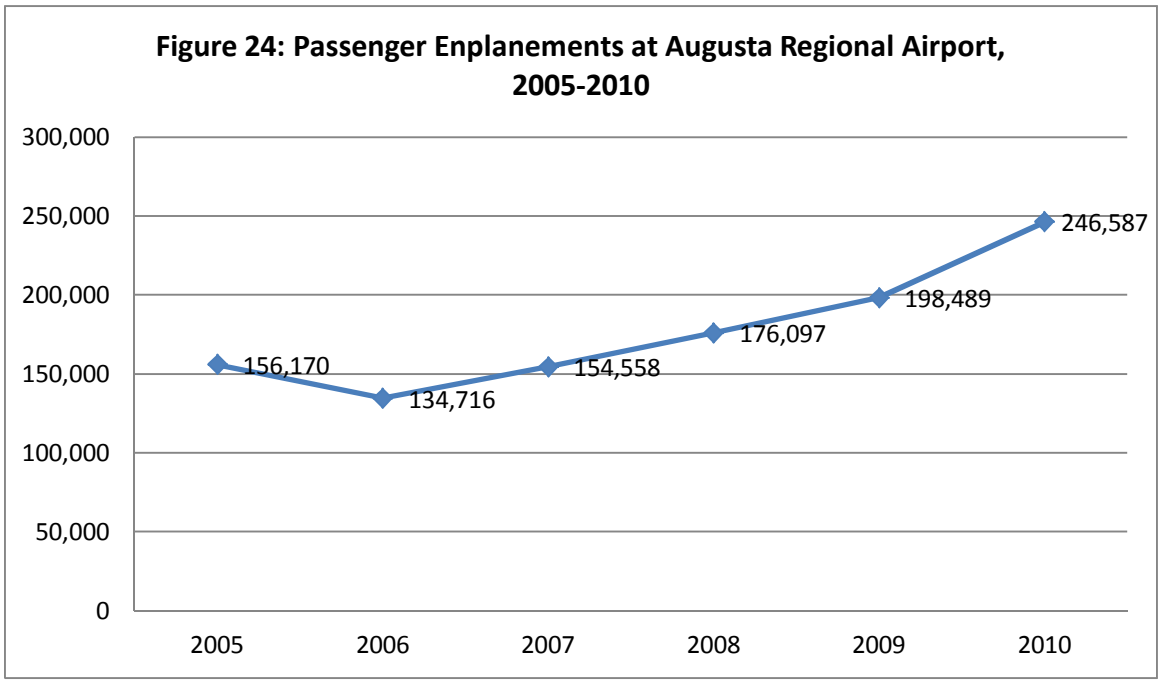
**Figure 23: CSRA Transportation Network**




The CSRA has two primary rail freight carriers: Norfolk Southern and CSX Rail Service. Rail lines in the region carry among the lowest volumes of rail freight in the state, according to the Georgia Rail Plan (2009). Only Augusta-Richmond and Warren counties have direct connections to major rail freight hubs in Atlanta and Macon.

There are eleven airports that service the CSRA but only Augusta Regional Airport provides regularly-scheduled commercial flights. The airport currently has 21 daily departures and 22 daily arrivals to three major hubs (Atlanta, Charlotte and Dallas) from two carriers (Delta and US Airways). In 2010, the annual passenger volume at the Augusta airport was 246,587, compared to 198,489 (24.2 percent increase) in 2009 (Figure 24). Between 2005 and 2010, Augusta Regionalôs growth rate was 57.9 percent, making it one of the fastest growing small commercial services airports in the nation. Nationally, passenger enplanements during that period actually declined by 3.2 percent. As a small airport, the Federal Aviation Administration does not collect air freight data for the Augusta Regional Airport.

*Source: Federal Aviation Administration*




Fixed-route public transit in the CSRA is limited to Augusta-Richmond County. Augusta Public Transit operates nine routes from Monday through Saturday, with daily ridership averaging approximately 3,000. The rest of the CSRA is served with demand-response service, paid for by state and federal agencies that provide transportation benefits, such as Medicare and Medicaid.

The CSRA developed a bicycle and pedestrian plan in 2005. The plan aimed to designate a regional bicycle network as well as recommend actions to improve pedestrian facilities, particularly in downtown areas.
http://www.csrardc.org/docs/planning/Transportation/CSRABikeandPedPlan.pdf

CSRA cities and counties have been very active in implementing numerous bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Most of the regionôs Transportation Enhancements projects have been focused on these transportation modes, both to improve facilities and as part of wider downtown revitalization, and for recreation efforts. Over $7.3 million has been invested in these projects within in the past three years alone (Table 19).

**Table 19: CSRA Transportation Enhancements Awards**

| Project | Amount |
|---|---|
| **FY 2011** | |
| Augusta Entryway & Corridor Master Design, Augusta-Richmond County | $200,000 |
| Euchee Creek Trail Connector, City of Grovetown | $250,000 |
| Thomson-McDuffie Downtown Walkway Revitalization, Phase III, City of Thomson | $275,000 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Euchee Creek Greenway Phase I, Columbia County | $250,000 |
| Lincolnton TE Phase III, City of Lincolnton | $250,000 |
| Hancock County Depot Welcome Center, Hancock County | $525,040 |
| Warren Depot - Trailhead Convenience Center & Streetscape, Phase III, Warren County | $316,463 |
| Tennille Freight Depot Rehabilitation and Streetscape Phase II, City of Tennille | $500,000 |
| Millen Downtown Streetscape/Green Space Preservation Phase II, City of Millen | $1,000,000 |
| Downtown Sparta Streetscape Phase II, City of Sparta | $500,000 |
| | |
| **FY 2008-2009** | |
| Euchee Creek Trail 3, City of Grovetown | $500,000 |
| Thomson Depot Community Center, City of Thomson | $400,000 |
| Augusta State University History Walk Phase IV, Augusta State University | $600,000 |
| City of Tignall Improvements, City of Tignall | $80,000 |
| City of Waynesboro Greenway Project--Phase III, City of Waynesboro | $300,000 |
| Historic Sparta Downtown Streetscape, City of Sparta | $300,000 |
| Wadley Downtown Streetscape, City of Wadley | $283,320 |
| Louisville Streetscape Enhancements, Phase II, City of Louisville | $283,320 |
| James Brown Boulevard Streetscape, Augusta DDA/Main Street | $200,000 |
| Sandersville Streetscape Improvements, City of Sandersville | $300,000 |
| **Total** | $7,313,143 |
| *Source: Georgia Department of Transportation* | |

### 4.5.2 Telecommunications

Explosive growth in wireless and fiber-optic communication has provided many urban areas in Georgia with excellent broadband infrastructure. In many larger cities of the state, there are multiple providers who compete by offering lower prices and faster broadband speeds. However, not all the regions of the state have benefited from fiber-optic growth. Most areas of the CSRA outside of the urbanized parts of Columbia and Augusta-Richmond counties lag in both choice and quality of service. Most of these areas are not served by any land broadband service provider, making slower satellite internet service the only option. The CSRA RC considers broadband the regionôs top infrastructure priority and has been aggressively pursuing state and federal funding to remedy this deficiency by extending broadband infrastructure to areas of the region that currently lack it.

In todayôs high-tech economy, telecommunications infrastructure is as vital to business development decisions as water, sewer and transportation systems. Telecommunications is critical in attracting and cultivating new employers as well as keeping existing businesses competitive. From small

businesses to large manufacturers, telecommunications is a critical element in operating efficiency and access to the global marketplace.

### 4.5.3 Solid Waste

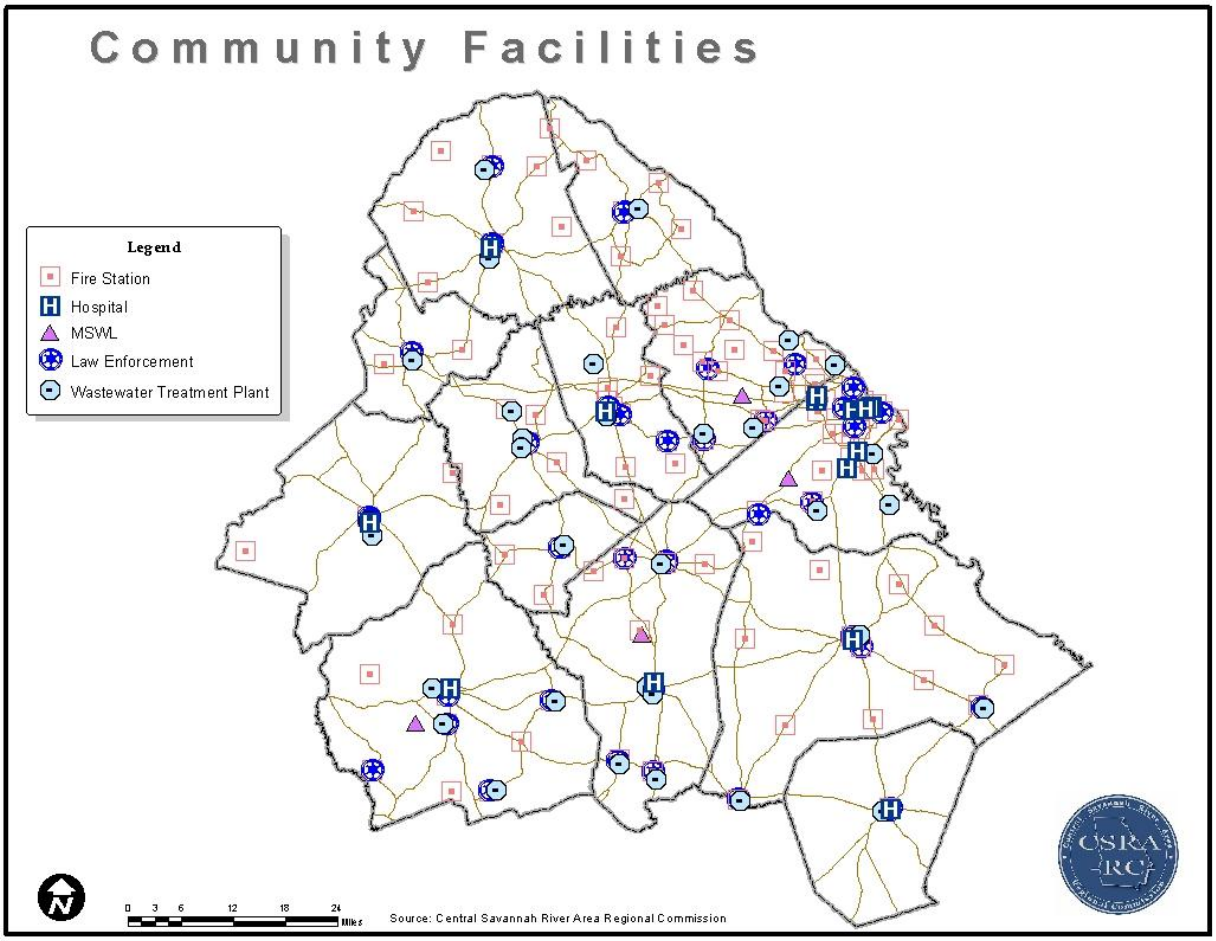
Five counties within the CSRA (McDuffie, Wilkes, Burke, Lincoln and Augusta-Richmond) provide for both collection and disposal of solid waste in landfills and transfer stations. The other counties either provide dumpster sites for residents or collection through contracts with private haulers, who themselves dispose of the waste, usually in one of the nearby counties.

### 4.5.5 Fire and Police Protection

There are 864 full-time and volunteer firefighters in the CSRA. Despite having over 40 fire stations spread throughout the region (Figure 25), and one of the highest firefighter per capita rates in the state, most CSRA counties had high fire insurance ratings, indicating a need for additional funding for equipment or human resources.

The various municipal police departments and sheriffs' offices in the CSRA counted 603 police officers, the vast majority in Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties. Crime rates throughout the CSRA are approximately similar to those found in other regions of the state.

**Figure 25: CSRA Community Facilities**



### 4.5.6 Libraries

The CSRA has six different library systems serving the region, counting a total of 35 libraries (Table 20).

| Table 20: CSRA Regional Library System | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Library System** | **CSRA Counties Served** | **Number of Libraries** |
| Bartram Trail | McDuffie, Taliaferro, Wilkes | 3 |
| East Central Georgia | Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Lincoln, Richmond, Warren | 15 |
| Jefferson County | Jefferson | 3 |
| Oconee | Washington | 4 |
| Screven-Jenkins | Jenkins | 2 |
| Uncle Remus | Hancock | 8 |
| **Total** | | 35 |

### 4.5.7 Hospitals

The Augusta area is renowned for its concentration of medical facilities. Its hospital bed per capita rate is among the highest in the nation, led by the areaôs major hospitals: Georgia Health Sciences Medical Center (formerly MCGHealth Medical Center), Doctorôs Hospital, and University Hospital (Table 21).

| Table 21: CSRA Hospitals | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Hospital** | **County** | **Number of Hospital Beds** |
| Burke Medical Center | Burke | 40 |
| Jefferson Hospital | Jefferson | 37 |
| Jenkins County Hospital | Jenkins | 15 |
| McDuffie Regional Medical Center | McDuffie | 25 |
| Georgia Health Sciences Medical Center | Augusta-Richmond | 478 |
| Doctors Hospital of Augusta | Augusta-Richmond | 264 |
| University Hospital | Augusta-Richmond | 495 |
| Trinity Hospital of Augusta | Augusta-Richmond | 121 |
| Washington County Regional Medical Center | Washington | 116 |
| Wills Memorial Hospital | Wilkes | 25 |
| **Total** | | 1,616 |

## 4.6 NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

### 4.6.1 Land Area and Soils

The CSRA includes three major land area types**,** the Southern Piedmont-Mountain Province, the Carolina and Georgia Sandhills and the Southern Coastal Plan. Through a variety of natural processes, each of these areas have differing mineral composition, structure, texture, drainage, and fertility and construction constraints.

- The Southern Piedmont is characterized by steep to gently rolling thin, well drained red soils with sandy loam surface layers over sandy clay to clay sub-soils. Much of the original topsoil has been eroded by past agricultural abuses, leaving red clay sub-soils exposed in some areas. Soybeans and forages are grown in remaining topsoil. Small grains and pastures are better adapted where topsoil is gone. Suitability for building foundations is fair to good; septic tank suitability is fair to poor.

- The Carolina and Georgia Sand Hills, consists of a belt of gently sloping to steep, well drained and sandy soils originally derived from marine sands, loams, and clays deposited on the crystalline and metamorphic bedrock of adjacent uplands. Soils in this region are generally infertile and dry. The land area is largely covered with sparse forest of scrub oak and pines. This area offers poor to good suitability for residences and industry. The sand hills comprise a rather narrow strip less than 10 miles wide with very irregular boundaries.

- Southern Coastal Plain is characterized by gently sloping, well-drained sandy loam to sandy soils over friable sandy clay loam to clay sub-soils that are sticky when wet. When fertilized and limed soils produce high yields of corn, peanuts, tobacco, small grains and soybeans. This province provides a fair to good suitability for residential and industrial foundations.

The soil and land characteristics of an area play a significant role in dictating the type and amount of development that can occur. As the amount and intensity of development increase in the future, continued consideration of the constraints and suitability of the land must be carefully weighed and considered before development can proceed. For instance, it is important for counties with areas that are poorly suited for industrial and residential development to steer development to suitable areas, or require necessary alterations to render the land more suitable for development. The costs associated with such options are major factors in development decisions.

A soil inventory for each CSRA jurisdiction has been included in local comprehensive plans. The Soil Conservation Service has developed a soil rating system which indicates the overall suitability of land for development based on the following limiting factors: flooding, steep slopes, depth to bedrock, high water table, excessive shrink-swell capacity of the soil and poor percolation. A soil with a rating of slight indicates that there are few or no limitations for development. A rating of moderate indicates that some planning and engineering are needed to overcome limitations. A severe rating indicates that engineering practices and a large capital investment are needed to overcome soil limitations. Before development can occur, a local jurisdiction can check these maps and soil ratings to ensure the land is suitable or to determine what steps will be taken to make the land suitable for the pending development.

The quality and quantity of the various soil resources in the CSRA is an issue deserving of regional attention. Three contributing factors to soil erosion are steepness of slope, rainfall intensity and duration, as well as the construction methods used in development. Excessive erosion can be avoided if these factors are taken into consideration in both the design and construction phases of

development. Control mechanisms such as retention/detention ponds, vegetative cover, and sediment fencing can greatly reduce the amount of erosion if utilized properly throughout the development process. Each county and city has addressed soil protection from erosion and degradation in their local comprehensive plans. At a minimum, local jurisdictions should consult the soil maps and tables in these plans to assess general site suitability before either proceeding with public projects or allowing private development projects in a given area.

In addition, many jurisdictions throughout the region have adopted Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinances as prescribed by the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1989, and are thereby certified by the State Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to issue permits for land disturbing activities.

### 4.6.2 Timber Resources

Timber is a very important resource in the CSRA, whose 2.3 million timber land acres account for 12 percent of Georgia's total timberland acreage. Timber is the most extensive natural resource in the region with 67.7 percent of all CSRA land acres classified as timberland (Table 22).

Types of pine plantations include longleaf slash, slash, loblolly, shortleaf and oak. The largest increases have occurred in areas of planted loblolly pine stands. The loblolly-shortleaf is the dominant species of timber grown in the CSRA Region.

**Table 22: CSRA Forest Land by County, 2009**

| | Forestland (thousands of Acres) | Forestland, percent of land use |
|---|---|---|
| **Burke County** | 333.6 | 64.3 |
| **Columbia County** | 107.7 | 57.4 |
| **Glascock County** | 76.7 | 76.2 |
| **Hancock County** | 267.2 | 90.7 |
| **Jefferson County** | 251.8 | 70.8 |
| **Jenkins County** | 150.4 | 66.3 |
| **Lincoln County** | 109.4 | 78.8 |
| **McDuffie County** | 123.5 | 73.6 |
| **Richmond County** | 135.5 | 58.5 |
| **Taliaferro County** | 118.4 | 90.9 |
| **Warren County** | 161.9 | 89.0 |
| **Washington County** | 313.9 | 71.6 |
| **Wilkes County** | 238.6 | 78.6 |
| **CSRA** | 2,388.6 | 74.4 |

*Source: Georgia County Guide*

Forest production in Georgia is a multibillion dollar industry, comprised of processors, loggers, and secondary manufacturers. Georgia is the largest timber producing state in the Southeast and ranks third nationally behind Oregon and Washington State in the output of timber for lumber and plywood production. Georgia's production of pulpwood is second only to Alabama. The CSRA is home to a number of primary wood using industries, mostly sawmills.

Timberland is in abundant supply and an economic asset throughout the CSRA region. Regional cooperation could result in promoting the entire CSRA as a target location for timber and related businesses.

### 4.6.3 Mineral Resources

The CSRA contains a wealth of mineral resources. Kaolin, a type of clay, is the most extensively mined mineral in the region, followed by structural clays and stone crushed granite (Table 23). These minerals appear in most CSRA counties, with strong concentrations in Jefferson and Washington counties.

**Table 23: CSRA Minerals by County, 2008**

| | Type of Minerals |
|---|---|
| **Burke County** | Fill Material |
| **Columbia County** | Structural Clays, Fill Materials, Crushed Granite, Construction Sand, Crushed Granite |
| **Glascock County** | Kaolin |
| **Hancock County** | Kaolin, Crushed Granite, Crushed Granite |
| **Jefferson County** | Fuller's Earth, Kaolin |
| **Jenkins County** | Not Available |
| **Lincoln County** | Gold, Dimension Granite (stone) |
| **McDuffie County** | Kaolin, Fill Material, Construction Sand |
| **Richmond County** | Kaolin, Structural Clays |
| **Taliaferro County** | Not Available |
| **Warren County** | Kaolin |
| **Washington County** | Kaolin |
| **Wilkes County** | Feldspar, Gold |

*Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources Mining Directory*

- **Kaolin** - a white, slightly plastic, nearly pure commercial clay composed of the mineral kaolinite. The world's richest high-grade kaolin reserves lie in a 10-25 miles wide band along the Fall Line from Macon to Augusta. Occurring in discontinuous deposits varying from 6 to 50 feet in thickness, the kaolin is mined by giant drag like machines. The biggest use of kaolin is papermaking, paints, plastics and rubber, and base for white porcelain ware. Kaolin is also used as filler in pesticide carriers, adhesives, seed coating, fabrics, food, ink, leather, and pharmaceuticals.

- **Structural Clays** - These clays are mined in Augusta-Richmond and Columbia County. They are used for brick, tile, sewer pipe, and road materials. Nonstructural clay may be refined for highly specialized uses such as papermaking. Some of the northern CSRA counties have structural clay deposits but are not being mined at this time.

- **Feldspar** - Mined in Wilkes County, it is an aluminum silicate group with various amounts of potash, soda and lime. It is ground and used in glass, pottery, enamels, glazes, scouring powders and soaps.

- **Fuller's Earth** - Mined in Jefferson County and is used for cat litter, oil and grease absorbent, insecticide carrier, drilling mud, pesticides, paints, soup and medicines.

- **Gemstones/Gold** - This mineral is located in two major belts in crystalline rock form. Deposits are found in Columbia, Lincoln, McDuffie and Wilkes County. Uses include jewelry and electrical uses. Phosphate deposits are found in the Southern portions of Jenkins County. The uses include fertilizer, baking powder, water softeners, pharmaceutical, ceramics and animal food supplements. Granite is found in Columbia, Glascock, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes County. The uses include dimension stone for building, monuments, curbing, paving blocks, crushed stones for concrete aggregate, road material, and chicken grit.

Georgiaôs industrial minerals industry is dominated by kaolin, which accounts for more than half of total mineral production value. Nearly all of the kaolin is mined in the Georgia Kaolin District. Despite its abundance in the region, kaolin faces increasing competition in many foreign markets. South American kaolin now appears in Europe and is even imported into the United States.

### 4.6.4 Agricultural Resources

The CSRA has an abundant supply of agricultural resources in the form of cropland and pastures. In recent years, the number of farms and croplands has declined, mirroring a national trend of farm consolidation and larger-scale operations. Prime farmland is available land that is best suited for producing food and fiber. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply necessary to produce sustained yields of crops. Prime agricultural lands are primarily located in the southern part of the region, with Burke, Jefferson and Washington counties having the largest farm land acreage in the CSRA (Table 24).

**Table 24: CSRA Farmland by County, 2009 (note that figures also include some land classified as timberland)**

| | Land Use in Farms (in Acres) | Land in Farms, percent of Land Use |
|---|---|---|
| **Burke County** | 191,790 | 36.2 |
| **Columbia County** | 18,836 | 10.2 |
| **Glascock County** | 21,233 | 23.1 |
| **Hancock County** | 38,022 | 12.6 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Jefferson County** | 108,932 | 32.3 |
| **Jenkins County** | 84,730 | 38.1 |
| **Lincoln County** | 27,612 | 20.5 |
| **McDuffie County** | 36,109 | 21.9 |
| **Richmond County** | 12,519 | 6.0 |
| **Taliaferro County** | 14,096 | 11.3 |
| **Warren County** | 37,196 | 20.4 |
| **Washington County** | 110,164 | 25.4 |
| **Wilkes County** | 89,785 | 29.9 |
| **CSRA** | 791,024 | 22.1 |
| *Source: Georgia County Guide* | | |

The total number of farms in the CSRA has decreased since the 1980s. Today, there are less than half the 3,400 farms in operation in 1982. For the region as a whole, acreage devoted to farmland has decreased 30 percent since 1982. The type of farming operation has also changed in the last three decades. While crop production has declined, the production of bushels or bales has increased. The major farm commodities produced in the CSRA include: beef cattle and calves, milk cows, hogs, sheep, corn for grain or seed, cotton, soybeans, pecans, and peaches.

Although farmland is presently abundant, the irreversible conversion of prime agricultural lands throughout the CSRA could prove problematic in the future. There are few incentives for owners to retain prime agricultural farmland and agricultural users cannot compete on strictly an economic basis with urban development. Nonetheless, public policies such as taxing practices and land use planning can be adopted and utilized to provide needed incentives as deemed appropriate. Zoning ordinances that offer incentives, such as density bonuses to the developer if they preserve certain parts of the land for open space or agriculture, can be promoted and adopted. The CSRA needs to assess the rate at which prime farmlands are being irreversibly converted in the region. Policies should be encouraged to preserve prime farmland, and ensure that any land converted is not irreversibly converted preventing future agricultural use as required.

**ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS**

This section provides inventories of environmentally sensitive areas. For complete inventories, including all Regionally Important Resources, please refer to the CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan ï
http://www.dca.ga.gov/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/Regional percent20Plans/Adopted percent20Regional percent20Plans/CSRA/2011-10_CSRA_RIR_Plan_ADOPTED.pdf

### 4.6.5 Aquifer Recharge Areas

The amount and quality of groundwater is a function primarily of geology. Water resources vary within the CSRA because of the differing soil types and aquifers within the region. There are three major aquifers underlying the CSRA region, the Crystalline Rock aquifer in the North above the fall

line; the Cretaceous aquifer system in the Center of the region; and the Floridian aquifer system in the southern CSRA.

- The Cretaceous Aquifer is a system of sand and gravel.
- The Floridian aquifer is made of confined limestone, dolostone and calcareous sand. It supplies approximately 50 percent of the state's groundwater.
- The Coastal Plain is underlain by five aquifers, including the Principal artisan aquifer, which may be the world's largest, covering a third of Georgia, most of Florida and parts of Alabama and South Carolina.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has mapped all groundwater recharge areas in the State which are vulnerable to pollution from surface and near surface activities. The largest continuous area of aquifer recharge is found in Augusta-Richmond, Glascock, Jefferson, Washington, and northern Burke counties. There are also significant pockets of recharge areas in the rest of the counties.

Each city and county that has a DNR designated significant recharge area within its boundaries is required to enforce, at the minimum, the DNR's guidelines to ensure that development in significant recharge areas will minimize groundwater pollution. Guidelines include limitations on the amount of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots and building pads. The sub-surface integrity of aquifer recharge areas should also be maintained by avoiding development that may contaminate water supply (e.g. landfills).

Regional cooperation for the protection of aquifer recharge areas could involve an effort headed by the CSRA RC to consider the cumulative environmental effects of septic tank systems being used in close proximity to one another. While local health departments are responsible for governing septic tank installation and locations, regional cooperation could include developing inventories and assessing existing systems and their effects on the aquifer systems. Regional guidelines could be established to ensure appropriate development densities on lots served by septic tanks and within aquifer recharge areas. Clean and safe water sources are issues deserving of regional attention.

### 4.6.6 Water Supply Watershed

Water supply watersheds are defined by DNR as the areas of land upstream of a publicly owned drinking water intake. Many different factors determine the volume of water in a stream or other body of water, including precipitation, land cover, slope, soil type and capacity and speed of absorption into the soil. Any water not absorbed by the soil, detained on the surface by lakes or ponds, or used by vegetation, runs off as overflow or surface runoff. Water that is later released by the soil adds to this overflow to produce total runoff. As runoff flows to areas of lower elevation, it collects in drainage areas, the boundaries of which form watersheds.

The removal of vegetation and the introduction of paving for roads, parking lots, etc. increase the total runoff on a site which in turn increases erosion, flooding, and sedimentation of water sources. To protect drinking water supplies downstream, DNR has established buffer requirements and impervious surface limitations to be applied to certain watersheds. For watersheds with an area in excess of 100 square miles, all perennial streams within seven miles of a public water supply intake have a required 100-foot buffer on each side beyond which no development can occur (150 feet for impervious surfaces and septic tank drain fields).

For watersheds with less than 100 square miles and including a reservoir, DNR recommends:

- A 150-foot buffer around the reservoir;
- A 100-foot buffer on each side of perennial streams within a 7-mile radius from the reservoir boundary;
- A 50-foot buffer on each side of the perennial streams outside the 7-mile radius;
- A 150-foot setback on each side of the perennial stream within a 7-mile radius of the reservoir boundary;
- A 75-foot setback on each side of the perennial stream outside the 7-mile radius;
- Impervious surfaces may not cover more than 25 percent of the total land area in the watershed.

Protected Watershed Areas are located in Lincoln, Wilkes, McDuffie, Warren, Burke, and Augusta-Richmond Counties. All of these communities have addressed water supply watershed protection in their local plans and, where necessary, have adopted regulations and encouraged health department permitting, to protect these resources.

The next 20 years is likely to bring additional development and change to the region, potentially rendering CSRA water supply watersheds vulnerable to pollution. A proactive approach to groundwater protection is necessary because it is much less expensive to protect a pristine groundwater source than to restore a contaminated source. A regional inventory of watershed protection and enforcement of such guidelines would help the region ensure the future availability of quality water supply from these sources. A regional effort could be induced to ensure that local regulations are consistent with those of surrounding jurisdictions who have an effect on the same water supply watershed, those areas lacking adequate protection would be notified and assisted in making any additional regulation conform to their community. An additional regional effort may include having the CSRA RC provide technical assistance for areas that may need resources in areas such as enforcement, application of regulations, or public awareness.

### 4.6.7 River Basins and Major Lakes

The main rivers in the CSRA region include the Savannah, the Little, the Ogeechee and the Ohoopee Rivers with a combined shoreline of 1,140 miles. The northern CSRA, which falls in the Southern Piedmont landform, contains the Clarks Hill Dam and Reservoir with a surface area of 78,500 acres. The Clarks Hill Dam creates a great multipurpose storage reservoir for flood control and hydroelectric power and in conjunction with the Sevens Creek Dam below it has almost complete control over the flow to provide a relatively uniform flow for navigation in the Coastal Plain below Augusta. Virtually all of the flow from the area above Clarks Hill Dam is used for hydroelectric power. Other downstream uses include navigation and irrigation.

The northern border of the Georgia/Carolina Sand Hills region is commonly the head of navigation for large rivers and the site of water power dams. The flow of larger streams is relatively uniform with high yields due to groundwater inflow. Larger streams are sluggish, flowing in deep, meandering, low-banked, tree-choked channels. River water is used for steam power plants and some manufacturing, but artisan wells supply most towns and many industries in this region. The cretaceous aquifer underlying the Fall Line for a distance of 30-60 miles consists mostly of sand and gravel.

Relatively few natural lakes are found in the Coastal plain, created by the dissolution of underlying limestone formations. The state has, however, some 27 major constructed reservoirs, covering approximately 325,000 acres. In the Southern Coastal Plain, river water is used for steam power plants and for wastewater disposal. Most cities and industries obtain water supplies from artisan

wells. Some of the largest water users take water from rivers. There are a few reservoir and low head water power sites.

River corridors (rivers and the immediate shore land environment ï sometimes referred to as the ñriparian zoneò) are areas of critical environmental significance. They provide a number of benefits, including drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, flood storage capacity, and assimilative capacity for wastewater discharges ï the river or streamôs ability to dilute wastewater to a point where it is no longer a threat to human health.

DNR has identified those rivers in the state which should be protected. By definition, river corridors are strips of land that flank major rivers in Georgia. Such rivers include the Savannah, Ogeechee, Ohoopee and Oconee Rivers. Communities along these rivers are required to adopt River Corridor Protection Plans as part of the comprehensive planning process. Columbia, Richmond, Wilkes, Burke, Jenkins, and Hancock Counties have all addressed river protection in their comprehensive plans either through amendments or through the original process.

The CSRA region has an abundance of water resources. Water has seldom been a limiting factor in the development of the regionôs economy. However, the population of the urbanized area is growing and becoming more dispersed, placing an increased burden on water supplies. An increase in the region's economic base suggests that an adequate supply of usable water cannot be taken for granted. In addition, threats from outside the region ï including demand for water supplies and the effects of pollution ï may place additional pressures on the regionôs water resources. Competition for available water is already widespread, and a regional approach to ensuring future water availability is needed.

Regional Water Needs

Drinking water in the CSRA is plentiful and found in surface and ground sources. Surface water availability is abundant, other than during periods of drought. The only constraint to surface water availability is the extent of systemsôtransmission lines. In eastern Georgia, Clarks Hill (Thurmond) Reservoir, Lake Sinclair, Usry Pond, Brier Creek, Ford Creek, and the Savannah River all supply water to municipal governments for domestic use. There are 10 community drinking water systems using surface water as a source. Combined, they serve approximately 167,000 people. The table on the following page provides information on community drinking water systems using a surface water source.

Future availability of groundwater is more difficult to predict. Throughout the CSRA, there are 60 community drinking water systems (approximately 85 percent of all community systems) using groundwater as a source and serving nearly 130,000 people. Groundwater levels fluctuate extensively; predictions as to available quantities of groundwater are difficult due to variations in recharge and discharge. Recharge varies in response to precipitation and surface-water infiltration into an aquifer.

There are three major aquifers in the Southeast United States that are used for drinking water in the CSRA region:

- Floridian aquifer system and Cretaceous aquifer system. Counties served include Jenkins, most of Burke, the southern two-thirds of Jefferson, and southeast Washington.

- Cretaceous aquifer system. This is the major source of water in east-central Georgia. The Cretaceous aquifer supplies water for kaolin mining and processing. Well depths range from 30 feet to 750 feet. Common yields range from 50 to 1,200 gallons per minute. Counties

served include Washington, Glascock, the upper portion of Jefferson, Richmond, the northwestern tip of Burke, and a small piece of McDuffie.

- Crystalline-rock aquifers. These aquifers are not laterally extensive. Depths range from 40 feet to 600 feet. Common yields range from up to 25 gallons per minute. Counties served include Hancock, Warren, Taliaferro, Wilkes, Lincoln, McDuffie, and Columbia counties.

Due to the uncertain supplies of groundwater and the relative predictability of surface water, local governments should use surface water resources when available. Although groundwater sources are less predictable, it is unlikely that an aquifer as a drinking water source would become exhausted during the planning period. Measures to protect an aquifer's quantity and quality of water as mentioned previously can be implemented now. Consolidation of groundwater systems to make them more efficient is another option. A long-range (50-year) plan for a regional water system using only surface water may be appropriate if depths to groundwater show significant declines over the planning period.

### 4.6.8 Wetlands

Preservation of wetlands is vital because of the many important functions they serve. These functions include water purification, water storage and the creation of fish, animal and plant habitats. Wetlands are an invaluable resource both ecologically and economically. They are among the world's most biologically productive ecosystems and serve as crucial habitats for wildlife. Wetlands can help maintain water quality or improve degraded water by performing functions similar to a wastewater treatment plant, filtering sediment, toxic substances and nutrients. Wetland vegetation filters and retains sediments which otherwise enter lakes, streams and reservoirs often necessitating costly maintenance dredging activities. Wetlands are also important to flood protection, as they act as water storage areas, significantly reducing peak flows downstream, and the meandering nature of wetlands combined with abundant vegetation reduce flood velocities.

Wetlands are found is every county within the CSRA, with Burke County containing the most with 110,000 acres. The loss of wetlands has become of increasing concern as the public becomes more informed about the values and functions of wetlands. In 1991, the US Fish and Wildlife Service developed the National Wetlands Inventory to adequately assess the amount of and losses of wetlands.

The wetlands permitting program under Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act ("Clean Water Act") is enforced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Activities or developments planned for wetland areas require a thorough environmental and public interest review. Although federal laws govern wetland protection, local governments should encourage conservation of wetlands through wetland protection ordinances or land development regulations, or land trust purchases. Small, local projects may be having a cumulative, negative impact on wetland acreage, thereby decreasing the total acreage or otherwise damaging the resource. A regional inventory and assessment of wetland loss should be considered. The CSRA RC can play a role in wetlands public awareness programs and propose ways to balance wetland conservation and land development.

### 4.6.9 Historic Resources

The CSRA has one of the richest histories in Georgia. The National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) is the nationõs list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. Individual historic properties and historic districts are listed in the National Register at the local, state and national level of significance. The following is an inventory by county of CSRA properties listed in the NRHP:

Burke County

- Burke County Courthouse (1980)
- Sapp Plantation (1980)
- Jones, John James, House (1980)
- Hopeful Baptist Church (1993)
- Waynesboro Commercial Historic District (1993)
- Haven Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church (1996)
- McCanaan Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery (2001)
- Waynesboro Historic District (2009)

Columbia County

- Stallings Island, archaeological (1966)
- Kiokee Baptist Church (1978)
- Woodville, state (1979)
- Columbia County Courthouse (1980)

Glascock County

- Glascock County Courthouse (1980)

Hancock County

- Shivers-Simpson House (Rock Mill) (1970)
- Glen Mary Plantation (1974)
- Sparta Historic District (1974)
- Camilla-Zack Community Center District (Mayfield) (1974)
- Linton Historic District (1975)
- Cheely-Coleman House (Jewell) (1976)
- Shoulderbone Mounds (1976)
- Rockby (1978)
- Pearson, Stephen Edward, House (1978)
- Jewell Historic District (1979)
- Jackson, John S., Plantation House (1984)
- Pearson--Boyer Plantation (1993)
- Hurt--Rives Plantation (1996)
- Sparta Cemetery (2001)

Jefferson County

- Old Market (1978)
- Jefferson County Courthouse (1980)
- Cunningham-Coleman House (1984)
- Louisville Commercial Historic District (1994)
- Bartow Historic District (2009)

Jenkins County

- Birdsville Plantation (1971)

- Camp Lawton(Magnolia Springs State Park) (1978)
- Jenkins County Courthouse (1980)
- Carswell Grove Baptist Church and Cemetery (1996)
- Downtown Millen Historic District (1996)
- Millen High School (2002)

Lincoln County

- Chennault House (1976)
- Matthews House (1976)
- Lincoln County Courthouse (1980)
- Lincolnton Presbyterian Church and Cemetery (1982)
- Lamar-Blanchard House (1982)
- 
- Amity School (1993)
- Double Branches Historic District (1993)
- Lincolnton Historic District (1993)
- Woodlawn Historic District (1993)
- Simmons--Cullars House (1999)

McDuffie County

- Old Rock House (1970)
- Usry House (1974)
- Thomas Carr District (1975)
- Hickory Hill (Thomas E. Watson House), (1979)
- Bowdre-Rees-Knox House (1979)
- Sweetwater Inn (1985)
- Thomson Commercial Historic District (1989)
- McNeill House (1992)
- Hardaway, James L., House (1993)
- Pine Top Farm (1996)
- Wrightsboro Historic District (1998)
- Hayes Line Historic District (2000)
- Hillman--Bowden House (2002)
- Boneville Historic District (2002)
- Hillman--Bowden House (2002)

Richmond County

- Harris-Pearson-Walker House (1969)
- Augusta Canal Industrial District (1971)
- Benet, Stephen Vincent, House (1971)
- College Hill (1971)
- First Baptist Church of Augusta (1972)
- Old Medical College Building (1972)
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church (1972)
- Academy of Richmond County, state (1973)
- Brahe House (1973)
- Gertrude Herbert Art Institute (1973)
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1973)
- FitzSimons-Hampton House (1976)
- Meadow Garden (1976)
- Augusta Cotton Exchange Building (1978)
- Old Richmond County Courthouse (1978)
- Fruitlands (1979)
- Gould-Weed House (1979)
- Lamar Building (1979)
- Reid-Jones-Carpenter House (1979)
- Wilson, Woodrow, Boyhood Home (1979)
- Broad Street Historic District (1980)
- Greene Street Historic District (1980)
- Pinched Gut Historic District (1980)
- Summerville Historic District (1980)
- Springfield Baptist Church (1982)
- Laney-Walker North Historic District (1985)
- Engine Company Number One (1988)
- Seclusaval and Windsor Spring (1988)
- Harrisburg--West End Historic District (1990)
- Darling, Joseph, House (1991)
- Tubman High School (1994)
- Bethlehem Historic District (1996)
- Lamar, Joseph Rucker, Boyhood Home (1996)
- Shiloh Orphanage (1996)
- Church of the Most Holy Trinity (1997)
- First Presbyterian Church of Augusta (1997)
- Liberty Methodist Church (1997)

- Sands Hill Historic District (1997)
- United States Post Office and Courthouse (2000)
- Academy of Richmond County--1926 Campus (2004)
- Augusta Downtown Historic District (2004)
- Bath Presbyterian Church and Cemetery (2004)
- Cauley-Wheeler Memorial Building (2008)

Taliaferro County

- Liberty Hall (1970)
- Colonsay Plantation (1974)
- Taliaferro County Courthouse (1980)
- Stephens, A. H., Memorial State Park (1995)
- Chapman--Steed House (2002)
- Crawfordville Historic District (2006)
- Locust Grove Cemetery (2006)

Warren County

- Jewell Historic District (1979)
- Roberts-McGregor House (1979)
- Warren County Courthouse (1980)
- Warrenton Downtown Historic District (2002)
- Warrenton Gymnasiumð Auditorium (2002)

Washington County

- Francis Plantation (1975)
- Washington County Courthouse (1980)
- Church-Smith-Harris Street Historic District (1987)
- City Cemetery (1987)
- Elder, Thomas Jefferson, High and Industrial School (1981)
- North Harris Street Historic District (1989)
- Holt Brothers Banking Company Building (1994)
- Johnson, James E., House (1994)
- Kelley, James, House (1994)
- Madden, Charles, House (1994)
- Smith, Thomas W., House (1994)
- Tennille Banking Company Building (1994)
- Tennille Baptist Church (1994)
- Washington Manufacturing Company (1994)
- Wrightsville and Tennille Railroad Company Building (1994)
- Warthen Historic District (1997)
- Tennille Woman's Clubhouse (1998)
- Sandersville Commercial and Industrial District (2002)
- Forest Grove (2005)

14. Wilkes County

- Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum (1970)
- Campbell-Jordan House (1971)
- Arnold-Callaway Plantation (1972)
- Cedars, The (1972)
- Gilbert-Alexander House (1972)
- East Robert Toombs Historic District (1972)
- Holly Court (1972)
- Mary Willis Library (1972)
- Peacewood (1972)
- Poplar Corner (1972)
- Toombs, Robert, House (1972)
- Tupper-Barnett House (1972)
- Washington Presbyterian Church (1972)

- Water--Liberty Street District (1972)
- North Washington District (1973)
- West Robert Toombs District (1973)
- Old Jail (1974)
- Kettle Creek Battlefield (1975)
- Anderson House (1976)
- Pharr-Callaway-Sethness House (1976)
- Willis-Sale-Stennett House (1976)
- Gilmer, Thomas M., House (1977)
- Daniel, James and Cunningham, House (1980)
- Wilkes County Courthouse (1980)
- Fitzpatrick Hotel (1982)
- Washington Commercial Historic District (1986)
- Gartrell Family House (2002)
- Smith, Robert Shand, House (2002)
- Washington Historic District (2004)

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks are recognized as the nationôs most important historic and cultural resources. They are buildings, historic districts, structures, sites, and objects that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. They are monitored for condition by the National Park Service. The following CSRA historic resources are National Historic Landmarks:

- Stallings Island, Columbia County (1961)
- College Hill (Augusta), Richmond County (1971)
- Stephen Benet House, Richmond County (1971)
- Robert Toombs House (Washington), Wilkes County (1973)
- Tupper-Barnett House (Washington), Wilkes County (1973)
- Thomas E. Watson House (Thomson), McDuffie County (1976)
- Augusta Canal and Industrial District, Columbia and Richmond Counties (1977)
- Meadow Garden/George Walton House (Augusta), Richmond County (1981)
- Liberty Hall, Taliaferro County (1983)
- Old Medical College Building (Augusta), Richmond County (1996)
- Woodrow Wilson Boyhood Home (2008)

State Historic Parks and Recreation Areas

- Elijah Clark State Park, Lincoln County
- A.H. Stephens State Park, Taliaferro County
- Hamburg State Park, Glascock County
- Magnolia Springs State Park (Camp Lawton), Jenkins County

State Operated Historic Sites

- Liberty Hall, home of Alexander H. Stephens, Taliaferro County
- Robert Toombs House, Wilkes County

Given the sheer number of historic resources in the CSRA, the regionôs officials continue to make great strides in identifying and preserving these resources. The CSRA RC plays a significant role in securing funding, providing research, and completing the appropriate forms to ensure that these resources are maintained, preserved or simply listed in the National Register. However, not every resource can be maintained continuously and perpetuated as a historic structure. For example, every eligible courthouse in the region is listed on the National Register, but not every courthouse has a preservation plan. The lack of preservation plans subjects these landmarks to "quick fix" additions. This is one example of a larger issue taking place in the region. A community may have a historic district, but if an opportunity arises for new development, there are few plans in place to

encourage compatible uses near these historic areas. Deterioration of historic housing stocks is another issue that has become important to many local governments as they see many historic resources as eyesores. Rehabilitation of as many historic resources as possible is important, as they are a component of the infrastructure of a cityôs character and historic integrity.

Some Transportation Enhancements funding has been used to preserve a number of historic depots in the region (Bartow, Warrenton, and Tennille), breathing new life into structures that have been in continuous use for over 100 years.

Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government program extends the federal and state preservation partnership to the local level. It enhances the local government role in preservation by strengthening a communityôs preservation program and its link with DNR/Historic Preservation Division. A historic preservation ordinance designates a target area called a ñlocally designated districtò for governing external change of appearance within the district for protection of historic resources. Lincolnton, McDuffie County, Washington, Harlem, and Wrens all are participating in the CLG program, beginning with the process of designating historic districts for resource protection. This program will assist with protection of all kinds of resources within designated districts by local governments. Design guidelines can be created to assist citizens and governments with the design review process of historic resources.

Downtown Revitalization

Historic resources are an integral component of downtown revitalization. Downtown revitalization is a region-wide due to concern over aging downtowns, out-migration, and vacancies. Most historic commercial building stock was constructed from 1900-1940 and facade rehabilitation is deemed a high priority. Historic downtown storefronts have undergone great indignities through the years with aluminum or synthetic siding covering brick facing, inappropriate signage, window change outs, door removal, and awnings of wrong scale or design. There are several low-cost or free programs which can assist in enhancing downtowns.

- The Georgia Downtown Design Team is a team of volunteer architects who visit towns to examine downtown buildings and provide recommendations for their rehabilitation. The University of Georgiaôs School of the Environment (historic preservation graduate school class) conducts survey and preservation analyses. The school offers a design charrette ï a participatory design process ï
  that cities participate in. The full color report shows facade transformations utilizing preservation design standards.

- The Main Street program is for downtowns with population over 5,000. It requires a three-year funding commitment to employ a director, but is an excellent way to access technical expertise in the organization, promotion, economic restructuring, and design of historic downtowns.

- The Better Home Town program focuses on cities with a population less than 5,000. The program develops local vision and leadership while actively facilitating the economic development of downtown using the National Main Street Centerôs ñFour-point Approachò Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring and Promotion.

- The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation offers technical visioning and design assistance.

# Appendix: Analysis of Quality Community Objectives

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs publishes a local assessment form to be used in analyzing consistency with its Quality Community Objectives (QCO); this assessment is also designated for use in regional analyses for consistency with QCOs. The following summary provides a general, regionalized assessment of the QCOs.

***Quality Community Objectives***
***Local Assessment***

***Development Patterns***

**Traditional Neighborhoods**

**Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district. | ○ | ○ | Most zoning regulations in the area separate land uses. |
| 2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process. | ○ | ● | No specific provisions for this type of development. |
| 3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate. | ○ | ● | Lacking in most communities. |
| 4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer. | ○ | ● | No specific programs within the region. |
| 5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose. | ○ | ○ | Maintenance of facilities varies. |
| 7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired. | ● | ○ | |
| 8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely. | ● | ○ | |
| 9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely. | ● | ○ | |
| 10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community. | ○ | ○ | Variable. |

**Infill Development**

**Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development. | ● | ○ | |
| 2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment. | ● | ○ | Several areas working on assessment and cleanup. |
| 3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment. | ○ | ○ | |
| 4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road). | ○ | ○ | Contained in several comprehensive plans. |
| 5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses. | ○ | ○ | Few areas with zoning allow lots of this size. |

**Sense of Place**

**Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics. | ○ | ○ | Depends on where they landed. |
| 2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas. | ○ | ○ | Most CSRA communities are active in preservation. |
| 3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas. | ○ | ○ | Aesthetic controls are more substantial in metro areas. |
| 4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community. | ● | ○ | Consistently found in development regulations. |

***Quality Community Objectives***
***Local Assessment***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community. | ○ | ○ | Infrequent examples within the region. |
| 6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland. | ○ | ● | Farmland preservation efforts do not exist in the CSRA. |
| **Transportation Alternatives**<br>**Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.** | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We have public transportation in our community. | ○ | ○ | Fixed-route service exists only in the city of Augusta. |
| 2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit. | ○ | ○ | Requirements are minimal in most communities. |
| 3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community. | ○ | ○ | Some local bike-ped plans exist. Little implementation. |
| 7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible. | ○ | ○ | Some local land use ordinances include shared parking. |
| **Regional Identity**<br>**Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.** | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.). | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership. | ○ | ○ | Most CSRA communities participate in the partnership. |
| 5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region. | ○ | ○ | Many CSRA communities try to leverage their heritage. |
| 6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| ***Resource Conservation*** | | | |
| **Heritage Preservation**<br>**The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.** | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We have designated historic districts in our community. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 2. We have an active historic preservation commission. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this. | ○ | ○ | A handful of communities have done this. |

***Quality Community Objectives***
***Local Assessment***

**Open Space Preservation**

**New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our community has a greenspace plan. | ○ | ● | |
| 2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development. | ○ | ● | The CSRA Land Trust does operate in the metro area. |
| 3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community. | ● | ○ | Augusta metro communities work with CSRA Land Trust. |
| 4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity. | ○ | ○ | A few areas have conservation subdivision provisions. |

**Environmental Protection**

**Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, 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 should be preserved.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory. | ○ | ○ | Within CSRA communities' comprehensive plans. |
| 2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas. | ○ | ● | |
| 3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced. | ○ | ● | |
| 6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development. | ● | ○ | Varies. |
| 7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development. | ○ | ○ | Varies. Many communities lack staff resources. |
| 8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.). | ○ | ○ | Varies. Many communities lack staff resources. |

***Social and Economic Development***

**Growth Preparedness**

**Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals. | ○ | ● | |
| 5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |

***Quality Community Objectives***
***Local Assessment***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community. | ○ | ● | |
| 9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development. | ○ | ○ | Varies. Depends on community size and resources. |
| 10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process. | ○ | ● | |

**Appropriate Businesses**

**The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them. | ● | ○ | Annual plan by the CSRC RC. |
| 2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible. | ● | ○ | Monitored by the region's UDA/UDC. |
| 3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products. | ○ | ● | |
| 4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy. | ○ | ● | Varies. |

**Employment Options**

**A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program. | ○ | ○ | Continual participation in state programs. |
| 2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs. | ○ | ○ | Principally in the Augusta metropolitan area. |

**Housing Choices**

**A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average). | ○ | ○ | Varies, but condition of housing stock is a concern. |
| 4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks. | ○ | ● | |
| 5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development. | ○ | ○ | Limited options available. |
| 6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing. | ● | ○ | |
| 7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community. | ● | ○ | |
| 8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households. | ● | ○ | |
| 9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas. | ○ | ○ | |

**Educational Opportunities**

**Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens. | ○ | ○ | We participate in state programs such as Quick Start. |
| 2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community. | ● | ○ | |
| 3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does. | ○ | ○ | Varies. Access is relative to means. |
| 4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose. | ○ | ○ | Varies. Availability primarily in the Augusta metro area. |

***Governmental Relations***

**Regional Solutions**

**Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. We participate in regional economic development organizations. | ● | ○ | ARTS MPO air quality task force. |
| 2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues. | ● | ○ | ARTS MPO air quality task force. |
| 3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc. | ○ | ○ | |
| 4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders. | ○ | ○ | Varies by topic. |

**Regional Cooperation**

**Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.**

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies. | ○ | ○ | Varies. |
| 4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern. | ○ | ○ | County municipal cooperation is generally strong. |