

# *2018 Comprehensive Plan*



## **Banks County**

Adopted November, 2018

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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

The purpose of planning and community development is to provide guidance for everyday decision-making by local government officials and other community leaders. This document, the Banks County *2018 Comprehensive Plan*, represents the culmination of the efforts to plan for the future well-being of the government, residents and various stakeholders by identifying the critical, consensus issues and goals for Banks County. Implementing the plan will help the community address those critical issues and opportunities while moving towards realization of the unique vision for its future. These planning strategies are identified by Georgia's planning standards (see below):

### Statewide benefits of comprehensive planning

*(Local) comprehensive planning should be conducted in the context of Georgia's strong and vibrant intergovernmental system that clearly recognizes the important role cities and counties play in fostering the state's image as an attractive place to invest, conduct businesses and raise a family. City and county comprehensive planning enhances coordination at many levels.*

### Local benefits of comprehensive planning

*The highest and best use of comprehensive planning for local governments is to show important relationships between community issues. A local comprehensive plan is a fact-based resource for local constituents that tracks implementation of community-based policies. Furthermore, local comprehensive planning creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, tax payers and the general public. In addition, the plan helps local governments to recognize and then implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives. For these reasons, the state finds that well-planned communities are better prepared to attract new growth in a highly competitive global market.*

*In short, local planning should recognize that:*

*Assets can be **accentuated** and **improved**;*

*Liabilities can be **mitigated** and **changed** over time; and*

*Potential can be **sought after** and **developed**.*

## Scope

This document addresses the local planning requirements and community development of Banks County, Ga. The Cities of Homer and Maysville have developed their own independent comprehensive plans, however the County and the Cities have worked together to ensure the plans do not present any strong conflicts. In the development of this document some consideration has been given to neighboring areas and political entities that influence conditions within the county, but all the cited issues, objectives and opportunities discussed herein are solely focused on the unincorporated parts of the Banks County.



## Plan Elements

This comprehensive plan serves to meet the requirements and intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs's "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as amended in 2013, and the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. It is essential that the plan be prepared in compliance with these rules and guidelines in order for the County to maintain their Qualified Local Government (QLG) status. Further, State law requires that the governments update their comprehensive plan every 5 years.

*"The purpose of Minimum Standards is to provide a framework for the development, management and implementation of local comprehensive plans at the local, regional and state government level. They reflect an important state interest: healthy and economically vibrant cities and counties are vital to the state's economic prosperity."*

**Community Goals.** *The purpose of the Community Goals element is to lay out a road map for the community's future, developed through a very public process of involving community leaders and stakeholders in making key decisions about the future of the community. The Community Goals are the most important part of the plan, for they identify the community's direction for the future, and are intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby leading citizens and leadership to act to ensure that the plan is implemented.*

**Needs and Opportunities.** *This is the locally agreed upon list of Needs and Opportunities the community intends to address. Each of the needs or opportunities that the community identifies as high priority must be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program. The list must be developed by involving community stakeholders in carrying out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or similar analysis of the community.*

**Community Work Program.** *This element of the comprehensive plan lays out the specific activities the community plans to undertake during the next five years to address the priority Needs and Opportunities, identified Target Areas (if applicable), or to achieve portions of the Community Goals. This includes any activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.) to be put in place to implement the plan.*

In addition to the required core elements local comprehensive plans in Georgia must also include 1) an assessment of compliance and consideration for the appropriate regional water plans for each community, and 2) an assessment of their broadband capacity. As of July, 2018 the standards for the broadband element have not been established by the State of Georgia. The intention of the measure, however, is to facilitate the "promotion of the deployment of broadband internet services" throughout each community in recognition of how vital this technology is for economic development. In an effort to provide advance compliance with this standard the County will provide a brief analysis of their needs and objectives regarding broadband technology.

**Consideration of the Regional Water Plan and the Environmental Planning Criteria.** *During the process of preparing its comprehensive plan, each community must review the Regional Water Plan(s) covering its area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria... to determine if there is need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources. The community must certify that it has considered both the Regional Water Plan and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria when it transmits the plan to the Regional Commission for review.*

This is to certify that as part of this planning process appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed the *Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Water Plan*, the *Georgia Mountains Regional Plan*, and the *Georgia State Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria* (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating this local plan. No conflicts were identified between this document and the other documents

In addition to the core required elements Banks County must also include a land use element to aid in the coordination of its development goals and improvement projects. This element is required for communities that have zoning or other land use management policies to ensure the coordination of activities on behalf of partner organizations, and with regards to infrastructure and utilities. To maintain consistency and help coordinate future growth, all three communities are including a land use component to their comprehensive plan.

***Land Use Element.*** *The Land Use Element, where required, must include at least one of the two components listed below:*

*(a) Character Areas Map and Defining Narrative. Identify and map the boundaries of existing or potential character areas (see definition in Chapter 110-12-1-.05) covering the entire community, including existing community sub-areas, districts, or neighborhoods.*

*(b) Future Land Use Map and Narrative. Prepare a Future Land Use Map that uses conventional categories or classifications to depict the location (typically parcel by parcel) of specific future land uses. If this option is chosen, prepare the Future Land Use Map using either of the land use classification schemes described below and include a narrative that explains how to interpret the map and each land use category.*

## **Public Participation**

As a part of the planning process each local government must provide and implement opportunities to encourage public participation. The purpose of this is to insure that citizens and other stakeholders are aware of the planning process, are provided opportunities to comment on the local plan elements, and have adequate access to the process of defining the community's vision, priorities, goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

At a minimum, the public participation program must provide for: adequate notice to keep the general public informed of the emerging plan; opportunities for the public to provide written comments on the plan; hold the required public hearings; and, provide notice to property owners through advertisements in the newspaper (legal organ) of the planning effort soliciting participation and comments. In addition, the local government must provide opportunities for public participation through other means and methods to help articulate a community vision and develop associated goals and implementation program.

Banks County appointed several folks to serve as an advisory committee that would contribute diverse perspectives, with nominees and volunteers encouraged by the County Commission to give their thoughts on the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the community. The Committee met 5 times between November 2017, and July 2018, working to refine and update the critical issues, priorities, and general development strategies that were present in the current Comprehensive Plan. Additional dialogue was spurred through three general public meetings during the same time frame, where citizens were invited to offer their open thoughts. Through these discussions the Committee ratified elements of the current plan

that appeared to remain valid and recommended several prominent changes to ensure the plan properly reflected modern conditions.

In addition, surveys were made available to everyone around the turn of the year. Announcements were made in public meetings and in the media, with the link to the survey available off the Planning department's page of the Banks County web site. Surveys would remain available through May to ensure area residents and stakeholders have ample opportunity to provide their comments and voice their goals for the community. (*A summary of results and comments provided in the appendices.*) Over 200 respondents took the survey, with the results providing valuable insight into the prevailing concerns and desires of area residents.

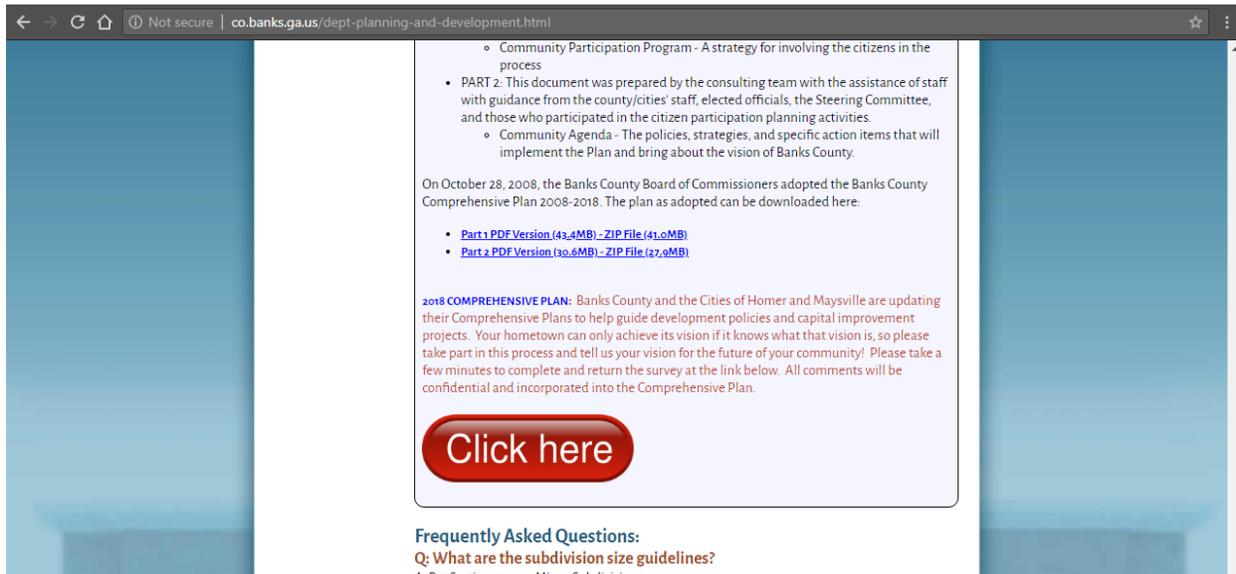


### Advisory Committee

Todd Hubbard  
Scott Ledford  
Vicki Boling  
C J Farmer  
Jodie Goodroe  
Bill Griffin

Russell G Williams  
Carol Williams  
AD Smith  
Ben Ramsey  
Cliff Jolliff  
Julie Jackson

Brad McCook  
Carissa M McFaddin  
Bobby Miller  
Krysta Morrison  
Jud Trapnell



# COMMUNITY VISION

The Minimum Standards and Requirements for Local Comprehensive Planning defines a community vision as something “... *intended to paint a picture of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the jurisdiction.*” It is required as an element of the comprehensive plan so that communities can truly establish a pure and simple ideal for themselves in a format that is easily expressed and understood.

Visioning provides communities with an opportunity to pause and consider the “big picture” as well as to attempt to clearly define their ideal future. Developing a vision means that the community has at least tried to identify current values, describe how they’re to be realized in the future and use that image as a foundation for short and long-term planning. As a process this also requires the community to develop a consensus on what conditions to change or to preserve.

## Community Profile

Banks County was created by an act of the General Assembly in 1858, to be laid out from portions of Franklin and Habersham Counties and named for Dr. Richard Banks, a noted Gainesville physician and surgeon who died three years earlier. Work began on the courthouse in 1860, but the outbreak of the Civil War delayed completion of the building until 1863. The courthouse stills stands with the giant oaks out front memorialized by the “*From the Acorn to the Oak*” depicted at the bottom of the County seal.

The early economy in Banks County was based on cotton and corn, but this gave way to beef and poultry production in the 1920's and textile manufacturing and poultry feeds by the 1960's. Today Banks County remains a predominantly agrarian community situated between the burgeoning metro areas of Gainesville, Athens and Greenville, South Carolina. The proximity to Gainesville helps the county’s agricultural industry as Banks is home to an abundance of poultry farms, plus Gainesville serves as the industrial and medical hub for the region, relieving the pressure for such activity centers directly within Banks County.

Most of the development in the area has followed the Interstate to the southeast and Hwy 365 to the west which doesn’t touch Banks County. The Interstate does feature two exits within Banks and that area, which features some public utilities, has seen some commercial and industrial growth. Between these corridors, however, there is limited development and very minimal public water service.

The County has several municipalities within its boundaries, all of which straddle the County line save one; Homer, the County seat.

### *Total Population*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Banks County</b>	<b>18,395</b>	<b>18,335</b>	<b>18,233</b>	<b>18,299</b>	<b>18,284</b>	<b>18,468</b>	<b>18,397</b>
Alto town (pt.)	516	511	508	508	506	509	504
Baldwin city (pt.)	741	737	739	741	739	746	740
Gillsville city (pt.)	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Homer town	1,141	1,136	1,132	1,134	1,131	1,142	1,136
Lula city (pt.)	158	157	157	158	158	160	159
Maysville town (pt.)	926	933	929	935	938	954	960
Balance of Banks County	14,885	14,833	14,740	14,795	14,784	14,929	14,870

## Quality Community Objectives Assessment

In 1999 the Board of the Department of Community Affairs adopted the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to its fullest potential. This assessment should be used a tool by a community to compare how it is progressing toward the sustainable and livable objectives, but no community will be judged on its progress. The questions focus on local ordinances, policies, and organizational strategies intended to create and expand quality growth principles. A majority of positive responses for a particular objective may indicate that the community has in place many of the governmental options for managing development patterns. Negative responses may provide guidance as to how to focus planning and implementation efforts for those governments seeking to achieve these Quality Community Objectives. Should a community decide to pursue a particular objective it may consider this assessment a means of monitoring progress towards achievement.

### 1. Economic Prosperity

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

*While committed to retaining a rural atmosphere, the County and Cities, together with their partners, are equally committed to securing the economic viability of the region going forward. Economic prosperity enables individuals, households and communities to be stronger, and provide better for each other. The governments support the local Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Development Authority as part of ongoing efforts to foster economic development for the community. The governments also maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the State for pursuit of assistance and outside funding opportunities in support of economic development opportunities.*

### 2. Resource Management

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

*The County and the Cities recognize the value of their location as part of a vital tourist and freight route and the impact of their agrarian heritage. The governments maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the Department of Natural Resources to work for the protection and promotion of natural and cultural resources in the area. The governments also employ policies and practices related to State Vital Areas, National Wetland Inventory (FIRM) data and other applicable sources to monitor and enforce the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.*

### 3. Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount

of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

*Through this planning process, ongoing efforts to update area mapping, and regular communication with each other, the County and Cities work to ensure local development policies support sustainable development that enables economic growth while managing local resources, utilities and infrastructure.*

#### **4. Local Preparedness**

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

*Through this planning process and ongoing coordination among emergency responders, and through regular communication with other stakeholders, the Cities and Banks County work together to ensure the community is properly poised to prevent, manage and respond to growth pressures and natural and man-made hazards.*

#### **5. Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

*Banks County recognizes the value of its location as part of Appalachian foothills and the impact of their agrarian heritage. The governments maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the Department of Natural Resources to work for the protection and promotion of natural and cultural resources in the area. The governments also employ policies and practices related to State Vital Areas, National Wetland Inventory (FIRM) data and other applicable sources to monitor and enforce the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.*

#### **6. Regional Cooperation**

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

*The County and Cities actively coordinate with each other in maintaining their local Service Delivery Strategy and SPLOST program, and participate with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and other appropriate regional organizations. The governments also maintain regular contact with various State Departments to ensure knowledge of, and access to, their programs and resources. The Cities and County are considered active partners in regional activities and do not feel threatened or adversely impacted by any regional partners.*

#### **7. Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs,

and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

*Banks County policies currently has limited options for higher density units or rental housing, but will redress those rules after adoption of this plan update. At the moment the County lacks the utility capacity to stoke major density, and few builders in the area are proactively chasing smaller, cheaper units.*

## **8. Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

*Banks County does support sponsored public transit service through State sponsored rural transit vans and shuttle programs. This is done with Legacy Link and is reevaluated yearly.*

## **9. Educational Opportunities**

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

*The County and Cities work with the Banks County School Board to ensure access for quality primary and secondary educational facilities and programs for area residents. The governments also work with other partners to ensure access to viable post-secondary resources such as Lanier technical College and North Georgia Technical College and other area educational institutions.*

## **10. Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

*Without a facility of their own, Banks County works with regional hospitals in Gainesville, Demorest, Toccoa, and Lavonia as well as the Banks County Health Department to ensure access for quality health care facilities and programs for area residents. The governments also work with other partners to monitor residents' needs and requests in providing access to these services as the area grows*

## Vision Statement

A vision for the community's future must be included in the comprehensive plan. The community vision is intended to provide a complete picture of what the community desires to become. The community vision must be based on public input, the assessment of current and future needs and be supported by the goals, policies and objectives in the comprehensive plan. In addition, there must be consistency between the community vision and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Quality Community Objectives as well as consistency with the community visions of other communities within the region.

In a manner similar to the last significant plan update, citizens and stakeholders for Banks County overwhelmingly celebrated the community's rural nature. They understood full well the potential for growth and the need for economic expansion; however participants in the planning process were adamant in their desire to ensure they didn't simply "*let development run over us.*" They wanted to install policies that would help preserve as much of the rural character and landscape as possible, and to make sure that any growth coming into the area would be properly managed so as to minimize government expenses.

### **Sample comments regarding the values, strengths and weaknesses of Banks County:**

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Values to be emphasized:

- Country life
- emphasis on rural character and agriculture
- Family Atmosphere. Keep Commercial Growth to specific areas with sustainable infrastructure
- Farms
- It's country feel.
- Agriculture.
- Rural beauty small town feel
- Rural lifestyle with working farms
- Rural Setting...Area Parks, Historic Aspect of Banks Co. And The Old 441.
- Scenic rural agricultural areas
- small town feel

Things to be changed:

- infrastructure
- It needs (more grocery options)
- lack of development community centers to draw tourists community centers to promote local involvement
- Lack of housing and infrastructure
- Poorly enforced or non-existent codes. We allow our towns and generally the county to be un-kept, shoddy and dilapidated.
- Roads and availability to resources and amenities
- water and sewer or development

The *Vision Statement* for Banks County is a slight modification of the previous version. The foremost message is the priority given to the rural sense of character that most stakeholders wish to preserve. The opening paragraph reflects the idea that Banks County will strive to orient services on the existing residents and maintaining or improving their rural quality of life. It is to be a great hometown first, and pursue other objectives second.



The remaining passages are designed to complement the first paragraph by reinforcing the notion that as Banks County does pursue economic expansion and improved qualities of services it will not lose sight over the desire to retain a rural sense of place and a fiscally responsible government that strives to keep Banks County affordable. If they can achieve this while still introducing some needed new employment options for younger residents that would go a long way toward seeing the County realize its vision.

### VISION STATEMENT - *BANKS COUNTY*

*Banks County, Georgia, will be...*

- ✓ *A rural community that celebrates small-town charm and a country lifestyle, where residents can enjoy our natural resources and the pastoral setting that defines our home town. Banks County will continually invest in the quality of local schools, parks, public safety, and other elements that provide the social infrastructure to make our hometown a great place to raise a family.*
- ✓ *A community that works to promote our agricultural industry, sustain our natural resources, and celebrate the rural, Appalachian foothill culture that defines our heritage. We will strive to deepen our rural roots by protecting our resources and community assets while embracing growth that complements our existing character.*
- ✓ *A community built on the principles of open, honest, and fiscally sound governance. We will invest in education and leadership, working to provide our citizens with quality services provided in a cost-efficient manner that clearly ties with community goals.*

## Needs & Opportunities

To achieve its stated vision a community must understand those obstacles and issues that must be addressed in order to reach the goals implied. The comprehensive planning process asks communities to assess the information outlined in an effort to identify issues and opportunities that should be considered when trying to plan for the future. In doing so the communities can more effectively define their objectives and actions so as to better achieve the desired vision.

The following represents a refined listing of Issues and Opportunities for Banks County. Some were carried over from the previous plan, but the list has been confirmed and/or refined based on the discussions and analyses throughout the current planning process. *(Also shows year proposed or listed as policy)*

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<b>Economic Development</b>	
Need to maximize use of I-85 for economic benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement traffic improvements on US 441 @ Banks Crossing area</li> <li>• Pursue water and sewer service improvements in the area</li> <li>• Develop industrial park north of I-85/ US 441 interchange</li> <li>• Pursue office park for Martin bridge Road interchange</li> </ul>
Need to attract appropriate industries that match Banks County’ rural ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain development strategy that restricts industrial and heavy commercial growth to I-85 corridor (Policy)</li> <li>• Develop list of preferred industry types for targeted recruitment</li> </ul>
Need to continue improving quality of current/future labor force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support expansion of partnerships between local High School and technical colleges (Policy)</li> <li>• Support networking between local industries, area schools, and the Dept. of Labor (Policy)</li> <li>• Pursue the development of a career academy or vo-tech program within the local school system (Objective)</li> </ul>
Need to retain accessibility to labor/consumer markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a county-wide Transportation Plan, complete with freight traffic assessment</li> <li>• Implement projects from mobility and transportation sales tax program (Policy)</li> </ul>
Need to resolve diverging opinions over growth seeping deeper into the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess county for prime agricultural areas</li> <li>• Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.</li> <li>• Adopt conservation design subdivision regulations</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Character/ Land Development</b>	
Need to better manage where to direct/restrict new development; Need to find balance between Banks Crossing and rural community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop long-term water and sewer plans</li> <li>• Assess county for prime agricultural areas</li> <li>• Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.</li> </ul>
Need to learn how to manage development types new to Banks Co.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt conservation design subdivision regulations</li> <li>• Maintain State Environmental Planning Criteria (Policy)</li> </ul>

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
<b>Public Facilities, Services, Infrastructure</b>	
Need criteria for projecting future sites for schools, parks, other public facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Parks and Recreation Master plan</li> <li>• Develop a long-range school facility plan</li> </ul>
Opportunity to continue investing in high quality of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop preferred design standards for County facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	
Need to increase local appeal for attracting high end housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey realtors about high-end housing trends and favorable conditions for attracting such</li> <li>• Develop a Parks and Recreation Master plan</li> <li>• Develop a long-range school facility plan</li> </ul>
Need to ensure quality options for future workforce/ entry-level housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey realtors about workforce housing trends and favorable conditions for attracting such</li> <li>• Develop report assessing housing costs for developers and owners/renters to confirm viable options within Banks County</li> <li>• Develop a Parks and Recreation Master plan</li> <li>• Develop a long-range school facility plan</li> </ul>
Need to clean up/improve existing dilapidated units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey code enforcement performance</li> <li>• Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices</li> <li>• Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.</li> <li>• Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization</li> </ul>
Need to build public consensus on where best to accommodate suburban-scale development over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop long-term water and sewer plans</li> <li>• Assess county for prime agricultural areas</li> <li>• Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.</li> <li>• Develop a Parks and Recreation Master plan</li> <li>• Develop a long-range school facility plan</li> </ul>
Need to improve capacity for specialized senior housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Banks area (2020)</li> <li>• Identify target sites best suited for senior housing (based on market study) (2021)</li> </ul>

# DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



Land use management policies and programs represent guidelines for shaping development patterns that provide for efficient growth while also protecting sensitive social and environmental areas. As such communities should take into account their current and immediately projected conditions and assess the identified needs and issues regarding the built landscape and community services for the area. This section presents an inventory of existing land use patterns and development trends for the community, allowing the local government to produce the most effective policies needed to manage the demands from projected development.



Banks County is among the more rural counties in the region, particularly for one without the volume of national forest of other counties such as Rabun or Towns. More than 80% of the county is in some form of rural residential, agricultural use or some form of conservation. The topography is not too restrictive, which helps explain the abundance of farms of all types and sizes within Banks County. It also helps that as nearby Gainesville became a hub for poultry processing Banks County became a natural fit for poultry growers.

## Development Trends and Influences

Banks County is among those on the fringe of northern metro Atlanta that should experience some natural suburban pressures as the region continues to grow. The most likely extensions of this into the county should come from the southeast near the Banks Crossing/ I-85 area and from the west/ southwest as possible growth from Hall County near Gillsville and Lula. The former is the pre-eminent magnet for development as the Banks Crossing area provides the retail and dining anchors to support both residential growth and new business and industry centers. The County is actively working with partners to foster new sites for business parks and a proposed convention facility in the area as they explore how best to maximize the I-85 corridor for economic development.

Any influences from the Hall County side are likely to be within rural or suburban residential forms, given the distance from major arterials and the absence of major economic activity centers. There is an increase in industrial development occurring along Ga Hwy 365 northward from Gainesville and moving toward Lula, but it's likely a decade before this growth has substantial effect on Banks County. Most of the supporting residential development expected for this corridor will likely occur within Hall County and nearer to Gainesville at first, then moving toward Lula where the intersection of 365 and 52 is projected to become a commercial focal point for the area.

The northwestern part of the county may also see notable additional growth if development around Baldwin and Cornelia becomes stronger. These cities serve as the northern bookend for the US 441 corridor opposite Banks Crossing and I-85 to the south, and combined they provide a variety of employment and commercial options for residents. Both Cities are working to improve their industrial prospects and have the access to US 441, GA 365, and a railroad line to aid in their efforts. Depending on the shape and directions this growth takes more of it could spill closer to Banks County.

## Environmental Assessment

The following is provided as a simplified assessment of critical environmental conditions in effect in Banks County. The locations for any identified conditions can be found on the correlating map.

### Clean Water Act Compliance

<b>Y</b>	Any “not supporting” 303(d) listed waterbodies? If yes, these waterbodies have been found contaminated to the extent that they are not considered supporting their designated use. As such the local community should seek to manage land uses within the watershed so as to yield healthier water quality.
<b>Y</b>	Any 305(b) listed waterbodies?
<b>N</b>	If yes, do the Implementation Plans/Watershed Management Plans require any outstanding actions from the local government? If so, please include these actions within the Implementation Program.

### Environmental Planning Criteria

<b>Y</b>	Water Supply Watersheds	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Wetlands	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Groundwater Recharge Areas	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Protected River Corridors	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>N</b>	Steep Slopes	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>NA</b>
<b>N</b>	Protected Mountains	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>NA</b>
<b>N</b>	Coastal Areas	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>NA</b>
If any required regulations have not yet been established, please list any action items for achieving compliance within the Implementation Program.			

There are several listed stream segments within Banks County, predominantly for fecal coliform (bacteria) and for sedimentation. As the area grows the county must work to ensure stream banks and buffer areas are protected, and that agricultural operations are employing best practices to keep livestock from getting into the waterways.



**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Ground Water Recharge Areas
- Banks County Flood Areas
- Major Roads
- 305b 303d Streams
- Railroads
- Protected Rivers
- Ponds and Lakes
- Protected Mountains
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Streams and Rivers
- Conservation Lands

**Banks County  
Environmentally Sensitive Areas**



## Broadband Assessment

As communities move forward the importance of access to reliable and high-speed, high capacity internet connections cannot be overestimated. Unserved and underserved areas of Georgia will not remain economically competitive without sufficient internet infrastructure, as this technology becomes the default utility for all manners of communication.

To address this issue in 2018 the Georgia General Assembly amended the provisions of local planning in Georgia by passing the "Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act," intended to facilitate the enhancement and extension of high-speed internet access in communities that lack such infrastructure and the vast resources it provides. In time the State will support programs and initiatives aimed at delivering the community improvement and empowerment potential that reliable, high-speed internet access can provide to even the most difficult-to-serve citizens, schools, and businesses. As the first step in planning for this critical, potentially catalytic infrastructure, the "Ace" Act requires all local governments to incorporate the "*promotion of the deployment of broadband internet services*" into their local plan.

As one of the least populated counties in the region, Banks County is easily among the communities with the weakest access to high-speed broadband capacity. Windstream is the predominant service provider and has a listed capacity for 100 mbps, but that's for premium packages and stakeholders involved in this process indicated that the company's performance was less than acceptable. More importantly, should the County pursue stronger economic development a much faster and stronger connection speed would be considered critical. There are other providers in the Banks Crossing area capable of supplying more options for the current commercial and industrial growth, but it's unknown if they could provide sufficient service if the visions for a fully developed I-85 corridor came to pass.

There is potential, however. The bulk of Banks County is just outside the reach of the North Georgia Network (NGN), an incorporated cooperative providing a regional fiber optic system with over 1,600 linear miles of infrastructure. The NGN was conceived as part of visions for a more prosperous rural Georgia, with the knowledge that a fiber optic network that is fast, reliable and affordable is vital to modern economic development. The NGN provides infrastructure that loops through the northeast Georgia mountains with 100 gigabit core line and connects to almost all the schools and colleges in the region as well as reaching many government structures and prominent business parks. If Banks County could tap into the NGN it would provide a much stronger alternative to current levels of service.

Based on survey results, public comments, and stakeholder input, there remains a strong need for improved internet access in rural Banks County. While improved service into the rural residential areas would be ideal, the priority would be to provide stronger capacity and additional options within the projected suburban areas between Homer and Banks Crossing and especially along the I-85 corridor where the County wishes to pursue economic development.

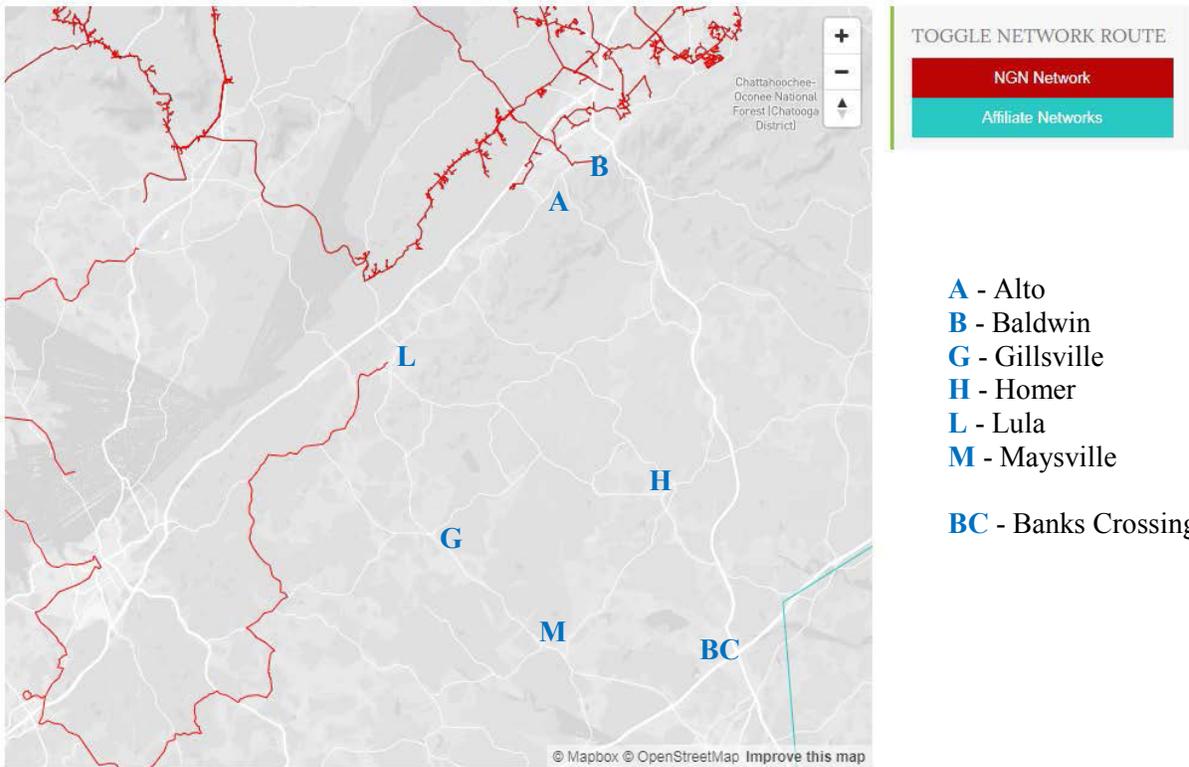
### Priorities for Future Network Enhancements

- Strengthen service within the I-85 corridor; with potential to extend northwest into county
- Ability to increase "last-mile" connections
- Expansion of NGN southeast to Homer

*North Georgia Network Lines Near Banks County*

# Network Map

HOME » NETWORK MAP



- A - Alto
- B - Baldwin
- G - Gillsville
- H - Homer
- L - Lula
- M - Maysville
  
- BC - Banks Crossing

## Areas Requiring Special Attention

Analysis of prevailing trends assists in identifying preferred patterns of growth for the future. Such analyses can identify those areas requiring special attention with regard to management policies, such as natural or cultural resources likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development.

- *Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur*

The I-85 corridor that links Atlanta with Greenville is the obvious choice, as are some of the areas immediately adjacent to this major arterial. The Interstate is becoming more and more popular for all types of traffic and the entire corridor in Georgia is expected to see substantial expansions of commercial and industrial activity developing at most every interchange. This is why Banks County views the corridor as a natural match for their own economic development ambitions and will work to foster this growth at both exits within their county. (See *I-85 Corridor* character area)

- *Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation*

This is the same answer, particular with regard to sewer capacity as that is very limited in its distribution areas in Banks County. For the moment Banks County should be in line with demands, but that could change depending on whether early successes spur faster development. *(Note: There could be considered an exception for high-speed telecommunications, but this issue is a part of a broader matter currently being addressed by the State.)*

- *Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)*

Within unincorporated Banks County there are no significant concentrations of properties that would constitute a major redevelopment opportunity. There are dozens of individual residential or agricultural properties spread throughout that could be improved, but none so large or clustered so as to be considered an area of special need.

- *Large abandoned structures or sites, including possible environmental contamination.*

Within unincorporated Banks County there are no significant concentrations of properties that would constitute a major redevelopment opportunity. There are dozens of individual residential or agricultural properties spread throughout that could be improved, but none so large or clustered so as to be considered an area of special need.

- *Areas with significant infill development opportunities.*

Within unincorporated Banks County there are no significant concentrations of properties that would constitute a major infill development opportunity. There are dozens of individual residential or agricultural properties spread throughout that could be improved, but none so large or clustered so as to be considered an area of special need.

- *Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole*

Within unincorporated Banks County there are no significant concentrations of properties that would constitute a collective area of disinvestment. There are dozens of individual residential or agricultural properties spread throughout that could be improved, but none so large or clustered so as to be considered an area of special need.

- *Areas of significant natural or cultural resources in need of attention*

In the unincorporated County the most notable areas of significant natural resources would be the rivers and tributaries and the various natural woodland and wildlife areas. This includes various wetlands and recharge areas, plus the perennial surface waters and reserved forests. These are critical not only for ecological reasons but also because the County has affirmed its desire to protect and promote its rural-ness! The areas currently exhibiting high degrees/volumes of natural land should be reserved from development for as long as possible. (See *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*)

## Character Area Assessment

Character area planning is designed to focus on the physical appearance (aesthetics) and function of a particular area. Development strategies are tailored and applied to each individual area. The goal is to enhance the existing character/function or promote a new, more desirable character for the future. Character areas identify portions of the community that have a unique or special character that needs to be preserved or require special attention because of unique development issues

A key component of the comprehensive planning process is the development of a Character Area Map that reflects the county's vision for future growth and development during the course of the planning period. This vision was developed through an extensive public visioning process and expresses the unique character of various portions of the city. The various character areas, then, are intended to support the overall future development strategy by organizing common themes of development patterns throughout the community. They promote the desired development patterns and provide a framework for coordination of capital improvement projects that may impact development. The following pages present the map and narratives of each Character Area associated with Banks County.

Each identified character area outlines a specific vision or plan that includes the following:

- Written description and pictures or illustrations that identify the patterns and scales of development encouraged in that area.
- Identification of implementation measures to achieve the desired development patterns for the area, including more detailed sub-area planning, new or revised local development regulations, incentives, public investments, and infrastructure improvements.

**Note:** *Much of this material incorporates that from the original character areas derived from the 2008 Banks County Comprehensive Plan, developed by consulting firm MACTEC. Any material retained from that document has been kept at the direction of the County to maintain continuity of character area definitions and application.*

## CONSERVATION

The Conservation character area describes primarily public or privately-owned land intended to remain as open space for preservation and recreation needs and are not suitable for urban or suburban development. Land can be owned outright or subject to conservation easements. This character area includes major parklands, undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas such as undeveloped, natural lands with significant natural features including steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas, conservation areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development of any kind. Banks County examples of this character area include Wilson Shoals Wildlife Management Area and floodplain areas adjacent to the Hudson and Grove rivers.



*Preserve includes the floodplain area of the Hudson River corridor*

### ***Development Patterns and Land Uses***

- Undeveloped areas left in their natural state
- Passive recreation (for environmentally constrained areas)
- Active recreation (for non-environmentally constrained areas)
- Agriculture (low impact only – see Banks County Watershed Protection Ordinance)
- Preserve natural resources, habitats, views, and rural/agricultural character
- Protect open space in a linear pattern, typically following the flood plain of river and stream corridors and accommodate greenways
- Maintain a high degree of open space
- Prevent degradation to natural resources
- Minimize impervious surfaces
- Prohibition of uses that are prone to pollution
- Provide opportunities for low-impact recreation (e.g. canoeing, fishing, hunting, hiking, etc.) and environmental education

### ***Implementation Strategies***

- Support minimum state requirements for stream and reservoir buffer requirements
- Promote the use of mechanisms to preserve viable farmland including conservation easements, conservation tax credits, Transfer or Purchase of Development Rights
- Incorporate map of state-required stream and river buffers into the County review process.
- Encourage use of agricultural Best Management Practices for Protecting Water Quality
- Encourage the use of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual's Stormwater Better Site Design Standards section to conserve natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces and better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design
- Discourage expansion of the R&B Landfill
- Develop a Greenspace Plan that outlines a countywide system of interconnected greenway/trail corridors and defines specific priorities for property acquisition to develop the system.
- Coordinate with the State of Georgia and FEMA to update countywide floodplain maps, a process that includes determining countywide elevations'

**RURAL AGRICULTURAL**



*Rural Agricultural character shown above is defined here by a horse barn and pastureland along SR 51 east of Homer*



*Wide-open spaces define the Rural Agricultural character shown above*



*Poultry farms dot the landscape throughout the Rural Agricultural character area*

The Rural Agricultural character area includes predominantly rural, undeveloped land that is suited for agricultural and large-lot residential uses. These areas are intended and designed to remain rural; housing tends to be scattered across the landscape on very large lots and is typically not in proximity to major transportation networks, commercial areas, or sewer infrastructure. Development in the area should respect the community's rural tradition and active farms and maintain its rural, open spaces.

Residential uses are expected to take the form of larger lots or "conservation subdivisions." A conservation subdivision allows homes to be clustered on smaller lots, without increasing the density allowed under a property's existing zoning, in order to maximize open space and viewsheds. The concept is an alternate response to development pressures for lower density residential neighborhoods in rural areas.

The Rural Agricultural character area comprises much of the northern/northeastern portions of the County, including the following communities: Berlin, Columbia, Hollingsworth, Silver Shoals, and Washington.

### **Development Pattern and Land Uses**

- Agricultural
- Single family residential (minimum lot size of five acres or conservation subdivisions with a net density of one unit per five acres)
- Passive recreation
- Civic uses/Public/Institutional (at rural scale only)
- Protect farmland, open space and environmentally- sensitive areas by maintaining large lot sizes (minimum lot size of five acres) or conservation subdivisions with a net density of one unit per five acres and develop with significant amounts of protected open space and natural conservation areas
- Preserve economic function of agriculture, livestock and forestry
- Promote and protect historic resources
- Preserve rural character, viewsheds, hillsides, other natural features/resources
- Preserve natural hydrology and drainage ways
- Discourage extension of public sewer infrastructure into these areas
- Carefully design roadway alterations to minimize scenic and environmental impacts
- Minimize impervious cover
- Discourage excessive clearing and grading in order to protect trees, topography and water quality

### **Implementation Strategies**

- Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance
- Adopt and encourage the use of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual's Stormwater Better Site Design Standards section to conserve natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces and better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design
- Adopt typical cross-sections and/or development standards specific to Rural Agricultural and Rural Residential character areas that identify appropriate roadway width and configuration and that require paved roads to use drainage swales in lieu of curb, gutter and sidewalk.
- Adopt Utilities Department policy that discourages extension of public sewer infrastructure into these Rural Residential and Rural Agricultural character areas
- Continue to follow BMPs for any land disturbance activities, including tree harvesting and utility construction
- Prepare and adopt a Rural Conservation District to provide for the long-term protection of large areas of property not suitable for development, including farmland, major recreation areas or historic sites, and environmentally sensitive natural resource systems
- Promote the use of common area drain fields and/or neighborhood-scale sewerage treatment systems to reduce parcel size in areas that must be served by septic tanks (for areas proposing Conservation Subdivisions only)
- Promote the use of mechanisms to preserve viable farmland including conservation easements, conservation tax credits, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)

## EMERGING SUBURBAN

The Emerging Suburban character area addresses areas around the cities of Baldwin, Maysville and Lula, Alto and Baldwin that have experienced some residential development and are poised for additional growth. There are additional Emerging Suburban character areas east of Homer and in central/south Bushville, which are described separately in this chapter.

Generally, the Emerging Suburban character area seeks to protect hillsides and natural resources while accommodating neighborhoods that should provide a range in housing sizes and types as the area builds out over the next 20 years, with sidewalk connections for residents and vehicular connectivity between neighborhoods and to the existing street network.

For the most part, non-residential uses (local goods and services) should be accommodated in downtown areas or at appropriate intersections designated as Community Activity Node on the Future Development Map. It is also appropriate, however, for small, neighborhood-scale, traditional neighborhood commercial and mixed use to occur in town centers created as part of an overall community master planned development. Wastewater collection and treatment services will be essential for ensuring long-range sustainability in this character area.



*Development should blend in with surrounding areas and are encouraged to protect existing trees*



*The Emerging Suburban character area seeks to encourage the connectivity depicted on the bottom of the diagram and discourage conventional suburban sprawl shown in the top of the diagram.*

### **Development Patterns and Land Uses**

- Single-family residential
- Mixed Use (when part of a master plan or outlined by a subarea master plan)
- Multi-family (when part of a master plan or outlined by a subarea master plan)
- Commercial/ Office (along arterial roads)
- Passive and active recreation
- Public/Institutional
- Encourage master-planned, traditional neighborhood development communities that blend walkable neighborhoods with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services that are linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision
- Limit hillside development and protect natural and scenic resources
- Accommodate a variety of housing choices
- Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking and street trees
- Require multiple stub out streets to allow for future connectivity when adjacent properties develop
- Provide connected system of streets within new subdivisions and connect to existing subdivisions and street networks where possible
- Provide safe facilities for pedestrians, schools buses, and bicyclists using the road right-of-way including sidewalks and street trees
- Connect to a network of greenways/trails, wherever possible
- Provide adequate open space with active and passive recreation opportunities for area residents
- Maintain the natural tree canopy as much as possible
- Connect to existing neighborhoods, where possible, to provide alternate routes

### **Implementation Strategies**

- Adopt a collector street plan that provides a long-range plan for developer-driven construction of a connected street system
- Adopt a Landscape and Buffer Ordinance
- Develop zoning districts or overlay that allow for senior living opportunities near other housing
- Development of a county-wide Parks and Recreation Plan that includes study of the feasible providing neighborhood and community park facilities in areas where growth is expected
- Expand sewer service to include all Emerging Suburban character areas
- Prepare and adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance specifically tailored to meet the needs of Banks County
- Prepare and adopt street connectivity requirements that require connected system of streets within new subdivisions and connect to existing subdivisions, including requiring multiple stub out streets to allow for future connectivity when adjacent properties develop
- Require sidewalks or alternative pedestrian path system in all new developments located outside of rural areas

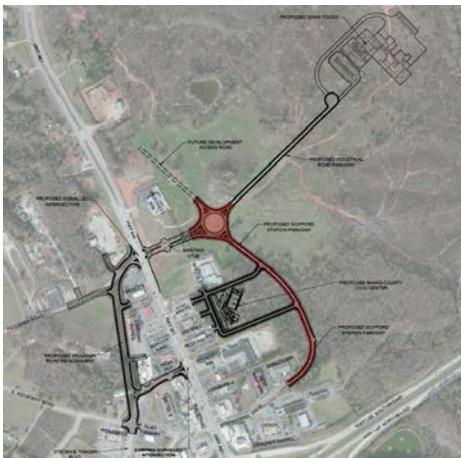
**BANKS CROSSING**



*Existing commercial development in Banks Crossing's Tanger Outlet*



*New commercial development located in Banks Crossing*



The Banks Crossing character area is the retail center of Banks County. Located on both sides of U.S. 441 near the U.S. 441/I-85 interchange, the area includes a portion of the Tanger Outlet Center and other commercial uses that benefit from close proximity to I-85. It also includes adjacent industrial and residential uses. Served by sewer, Banks Crossing has the potential to experience additional growth and development. Existing development along the largely built-out portion of U.S. 441 in the area is automobile-oriented strip commercial development characterized by single-use, generally one-story buildings that are separated from the street and sidewalk by parking lots with few shade trees. The Banks Crossing Corridor and Growth Corridor character areas describe the specific issues and implantation measures related to the U.S. 441 and SR 59 corridors that in conjunction with the Banks Crossing character area defining narrative.

New development is intended to preserve but enhance the area's role as the commercial hub for the County. Development patterns that reflect more urban traits, such as buildings placed closer to the sidewalk, the use of pocket parks and other shared public spaces, and a mix of uses is desired for this area, including for sites suitable for redevelopment. Developments that offer a variety of quality housing choices are also appropriate for this existing employment and activity center. "Big box" retail should be limited to this area and should be designed to fit into mixed-use planned development that shares parking with surrounding uses and is linked with sidewalks.

The County is working with GDOT to coordinate some improvements that will create an upgraded intersection and new road orientation for access to the Outlet Mall and the proposed new industrial park and convention facility. This will help Banks crossing evolve into a more defined economic center and give visitors additional meeting space.

### ***Development Pattern***

- Commercial (retail and office)
- Higher density residential uses (when part of an approved master plan)
- Light industry (adjacent to existing industrial uses)
- Educational institutions
- Encourage attractive and high-quality building and site design, including lighting materials, building height and signage
- Reflect a unique identity for the area
- Accommodate both residents and tourists
- Include a relatively high-density mix of commercial and retail centers, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area
- Encourage redevelopment that reflects a mix of pedestrian-friendly uses and ample landscaped common areas
- Include a diverse mix of higher-density housing types (town homes, apartments, lofts, and condominiums) that can serve a broad range of incomes, including workforce and affordable housing
- Provide strong, walkable connections between different uses
- Provide wide curb lanes or bike lanes to permit bicycling
- Connect to nearby networks of greenspace or multi-use trails, where available
- Establish a connected street network for new development that links to existing streets
- Depict clear physical boundaries and transitions between the edge of the character area and the surrounding rural and low-density areas
- Incorporate landscaping of commercial sites/parking lots
- Discourage strip development
- Reflect a campus or unified development where a horizontal mix of uses is desired
- Require shared driveways and inter-parcel access
- Clearly define road edges by locating buildings at roadside with parking to the side or rear
- Prohibit billboards and limit business sign height/size to minimize “visual clutter”
- Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character
- Encourage parking lots to incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements

### ***Implementation Strategies***

- Adopt a gateway and signage master plan for the Banks Crossing area coordinated with the banner signage and street lights along U.S. 441
- Examine the potential for Commercial Improvement Districts, Business Improvement Districts and Tax Allocation Districts along important corridors and growth areas
- Expand sewer service to include Banks Crossing areas currently underserved
- Implement an overlay district to regulate building placement, design and size, sign placement, size and materials, landscaping, access and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the corridor
- Prepare and adopt Big Box ordinance to specify design parameters, maximum square footage requirements, a plan for re-use, etc.
- Prepare and adopt necessary code amendments to require interparcel access, limit curb cuts, and require sidewalks with new development
- Encourage the redevelopment of existing underutilized shopping centers with mixed use development

## I-85 CORRIDOR

The I-85 Corridor character area represents the Martin Bridge Road/I-85 interchange and surrounding areas. Currently rural and sparsely developed, the Martin Bridge area has the potential to develop as an employment center due to its access to I-85 and planned water and sewer infrastructure expansion. The County envisions the Martin Bridge area providing jobs and economic opportunities for a mix of light industrial, wholesale trade, distribution, assembly, processing, office, limited commercial and other supporting uses. In addition, the area has the potential for attracting high-tech uses that can contribute to the area becoming an employment center.

Industries in Martin Bridge will not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics common with heavier industrial uses. The combined areas of Martin Bridge, Banks Crossing, and major corridors (85, 59, 164 and 441) are intended to form the commercial and industrial center of Banks County.



*Employment center development located in Hall County provides an example of quality office park/warehouse development that incorporates landscaping and high-quality building materials that are appropriate*



*I-85/Martin Bridge Road interchange area provides opportunity for employment center development*

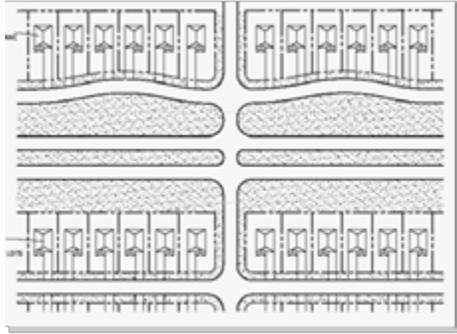
***Development Pattern***

- Light Industrial
- Distribution and Warehousing
- Campus-style office
- Limited supporting commercial uses
- Accommodate diverse employment opportunities for County residents that include low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade and distribution activities balanced with campus-style office development
- Accommodate limited supporting commercial uses to serve employees
- Prohibit strip commercial development and typical interstate highway interchange commercial development such as a proliferation of fast food restaurants, hotels and convenience stores, unless such uses are limited and part of a coordinated, master plan that integrates these uses into the overall design of an employment center.
- Depict clear physical boundaries and transitions between the edge of the character area and the surrounding rural and low-density areas
- Reflect a campus or unified development
- Provide access management measures to maintain traffic flow (e.g. shared driveways and interparcel access for similar uses on adjacent properties)
- Address traffic impacts and circulation in site design
- Incorporate parking lot landscaping
- Encourage parking lots to incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements
- Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character
- Limit grading and clearing during site development
- Protect air and water quality and prevent adverse impacts to natural resources and surrounding population
- Provide adequate buffers and limit visibility of industrial operations/loading docks/parking from the public right of way
- Control signage (height, size, type) to prevent “visual clutter”

***Implementation Strategies***

- Coordinate with Martin Bridge area property owners to develop a master plan for developing the interchange area.
- Establish formal process for coordination with economic development activities for recruiting research and office parks
- Expand sewer service to include Martin Bridge
- Implement an overlay district to regulate building placement, design and size, sign placement, size and materials, landscaping, access and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the corridor
- Prepare and adopt design/development standards for industrial sites
- Examine the potential for Commercial Improvement Districts, Business Improvement Districts and Tax Allocation Districts along important corridors and growth areas

**EAST HOMER / US 441**



***Access management is necessary along U.S. 441 Bypass to allow for development***



**U.S. 441 Corridor is currently relatively undeveloped and offers opportunities for a mix of residential uses and commercial nodal development**

This character area is a largely undeveloped four-lane corridor east of Homer and works in conjunction with the Bypass Emerging Neighborhood and Commercial Activity Node character areas, but focuses specifically on the U.S. 441 corridor. Some development has occurred, but the area is predominantly rural in nature with large tracts of agricultural property.

The character area is intended to support commercial uses and mixed uses at major intersections, in particular 441 North and Old 441, 441 and McCoy Bridge, 441 and 51, and 441 South and Old 441 – all areas falling within Community Activity Node character area – to serve local residents, with higher intensity housing opportunities appropriate at locations between the nodes (see Bypass Emerging Neighborhood character area). This nodal development of commercial uses versus linear, “strip center” development common along U.S. highways is desired for this corridor in order to maintain U.S. 441’s functionality as a bypass.

Controls on site design, including signage, building placement and size, and landscaping will help the area develop in a manner that is attractive, compatible with the surrounding rural character, and continues the theme of U.S. 441 being an important gateway to Banks County and its municipalities.

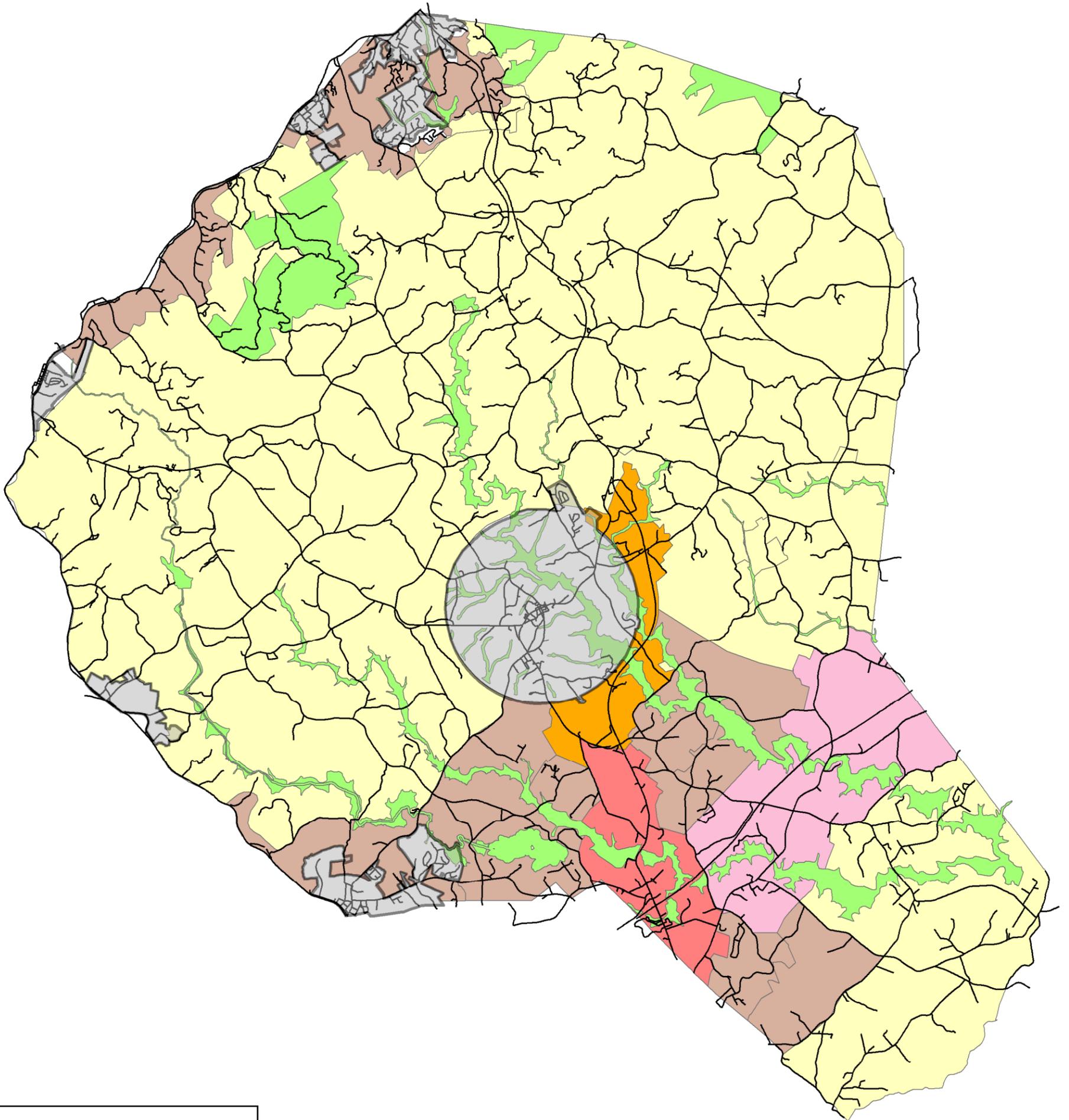
***Development Patterns and Land Uses***

- Commercial and retail uses
- Professional offices
- Mixed use development (including residential uses above ground-floor retail or office space, when part of a master plan or outlined by a subarea master plan)
- Multi-family residential
- Single-family residential
- Maintain traffic flow by limiting access points to uses along the corridor and by use of shared driveways and interparcel access
- Limit signs and billboards
- Cluster commercial and mixed use development at major nodes along the corridor
- Prohibit linear, “strip center” development along the corridor
- Depict clear physical boundaries and transitions between the edge of the character area and surrounding rural and low-density residential uses
- Provide sidewalk connections to adjacent residential areas
- Maintain or increase landscaping along the corridor with new development, including in and along parking lots to provide shade, reduce impervious surfaces, shield parking areas, and improve the appearance of individual sites and the entire corridor
- Encourage commercial and mixed use development that permits minimal building setbacks, parking to the rear of a building, and requires quality materials and design (related to the building, the site, and signage) as well as interior sidewalk connections
- Coordinate land use planning with bike, pedestrian and transit opportunities
- Better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design with additional site design standards

***Implementation Strategies***

- Examine the potential for Commercial Improvement Districts, Business Improvement Districts and Tax Allocation Districts along important corridors and growth areas
- Implement an overlay district to regulate building placement, design and size, sign placement, size and materials, landscaping, access and other elements that contribute to the look and function of the corridor
- Prepare an Access Management Plan with recommendations that include opportunities for driveway consolidation and interparcel access
- Prepare and adopt necessary code amendments to require interparcel access, limit curb cuts, and require sidewalks with new development

# Banks County Character Areas



## Legend

-  Municipalities
-  Banks County Roads
-  Rural/Agricultural
-  Emerging Suburban
-  East Homer/US 441
-  I-85 Corridor
-  Banks Crossing
-  Environmentally Sensitive Areas



## IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Program is the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision and for addressing each of the Community Needs and Opportunities. It identifies specific measures, both short and long-term, that must be undertaken by the community in order realize the community's goals. Identifying these items helps the community organize their actions

### **Policies, Long-Term Activities and Ongoing Programs**

One type of action a community can establish to achieve its vision is the establishment of policy. These are those ongoing principles and practices that the community will observe in order to realize specific objectives. Some policies may compliment single action-items while others may provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Vision or addressing Community Issues and Opportunities.

In addition to establishing policy, communities may also establish long-term or ongoing programs and activities that support identified objectives. These measures compliment policies or may simply be action items that must be employed more than once. These are recognized here so as to distinguish their need and conditions apart from the single-action items and to identify any required special terms or context.

In addition, several items have been identified as policies, general objections and directions for the communities in regards to different areas of concern. These policies will be used as guidelines for general, long-term practices for each government.

## Report of Accomplishments

This is the review of the CWP from the previous five years. As a new CWP is produced every five years, the items within the previous CWP must be identified for their status as either complete, in progress, postponed or cancelled. Those items that have been postponed or are in progress must be shown in the next CWP where appropriate, while those items that have been postponed or cancelled must also include a reason for their status.

### *Banks County*

Action	Status	Comment
Opportunity Zone Designation	In Progress	
Redesign DevelopBanks.com	Complete	
Business Recruitment Package	Complete	
Coordinate with Martin Bridge area property owners to develop a master plan for developing the interchange area	Complete	
Implement and overlay district to regulate building placement, design and size, sign placement, size and materials, landscaping, access and other elements that contribute to the look and function of corridors	Cancelled	Utilized different approach in ordinance language
Require development of small-area master plans with approval of commercial and mixed use zoning districts in each Community Activity Node character area location.	Cancelled	Utilized different approach in ordinance language
Establish meeting twice each year of mayors of the County's municipalities and the Board of Commissioners Chairman to discuss issues and develop opportunities to work together	Complete	Ongoing Policy
Wayfinding signage system	In Progress	
Tourism Enhancement Plan	Complete	
Establish a Community Improvement District	In Progress	
Safety Improvements 441	Complete	
Pottery Intersection Improvement	Postponed	Deferred for lack of funding.
Prepare and adopt design/development standards for industrial sites	Complete	
Prepare Subarea Master Plan for the Bushville Emerging Neighborhood character area	Cancelled	Rethinking approach after this planning process
Prepare Subarea Master Plan for the Bypass Emerging Neighborhood character area	Cancelled	Rethinking approach after this planning process
Develop a road improvement plan	In Progress	
Require sidewalks or alternative pedestrian path system in all new developments	Complete	
Coordinate with the City of Baldwin to adopt and enforce a watershed protection ordinance in order to protect the water quality of the Mountain Creek Reservoir	Complete	
Consider a Visual Landmark	Complete	
Pedestrian upgrades major thoroughfares		
Intersection Development at Walmart and Faulker		

**2018 Comprehensive Plan  
Banks County**

Coordinate with the State of Georgia and FEMA to update the countywide floodplain maps, a process that includes determining countywide elevations.	Complete	
Incorporate map of state-required stream, creek and river buffers into the County review process	Complete	
Tree Plantings	Complete	
Complete a Countywide Water Plan and implement recommendations of the plan	Postponed	Deferred (2020) for lack of funding
Prepare to adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance specifically tailored to meet the needs of Banks County	Postponed	Will reconsider (2019) after current planning process
Streetscape Enhancements	Complete	
Evaluate the feasibility of a Rural Crossroads Zoning District that among other standards includes minimum standards for commercial buildings, signage and site design	Complete	
Expand sewer service to include Martin Bridge currently underserved	Postponed	Deferred (2020) for lack of funding
Adopt a collector street plan that provides a long-range plan for developer-driven construction of a connected street system for areas not included in the Rural Agricultural Reserve or Rural Residential character areas	Postponed	Deferred (2022) for lack of funding
Adopt typical cross-sections and/or development standards that identify appropriate roadway width and configuration and that stipulate paced roads to use either drainage swales or curb, gutter and sidewalk.	Complete	

## Community Work Program

The third forward-thinking element of the Implementation Program is the Community Work Program (CWP). This identifies specific implementation actions the local government or other entities intend to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This can include any ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to realize the plan goals.

### *Banks County*

Year	Action	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Responsibility
2019	Inventory broadband infrastructure and service areas in county	NA	NA	Cities, County
2019	Develop telecom improvement plan with broadband providers, North Ga. Network and GDEcD	TBD	TBD	County, Dev. Auth. GDEcD
2019	Develop monitoring report of code enforcement activity	NA	NA	County
2019	Performance review of code enforcement procedures and policies	NA	NA	County
2019	Adopt/Promote conservation design policies	\$1,000	County	County
2019	Develop bicycle and sidewalk/ pedestrian master plan (w/ Cities)	\$10,000	County, GDOT	County, Cities, GMRC
2019	Review and update development regulations & ordinances	NA	NA	County
2019	Develop and implement a Greenspace Plan	\$5,000	DNR	City, County, GMRC
2019	Develop and implement a Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	DCA	County, DCA
2019	Develop Workforce/ Starter housing strategic plan	\$10,000	DCA	County, GMRC
2019	Develop annual monitoring report of enforcement activity	NA	NA	County
2019	Opportunity Zone Designation	80,000	Local	Dev. Auth.
2019	Wayfinding signage system	100,000	Local / Fed	Planning
2019	Establish a Community Improvement District	20,000	Local	BOC
2019	Develop a road improvement plan	25,000	Local	Roads/Planning/BOC
2019	Pedestrian upgrades major thoroughfares	100,000	Local/State/Fed	BOC/Roads
2019	Intersection Development at Walmart and Faulker	TBD	Local/State/Fed	BOC/Roads/Planning

**2018 Comprehensive Plan  
Banks County**

<b>2019</b>	Prepare to adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance specifically tailored to meet the needs of Banks County	20,000	TBD	Planning
<b>2020</b>	Develop report assessing all State listed waters in need of resource protection	\$1,000	County, EPD	County, GMRC
<b>2020</b>	Pottery Intersection Improvement	250,000	Local/State/Fed	BOC/Roads/ DVA
<b>2020</b>	Complete a Countywide Water Plan and implement recommendations of the plan	100,000	State, local, federal	Utilities
<b>2020</b>	Expand sewer service to include Martin Bridge currently underserved	\$4-5,000,000	Local	Utilities/BOC
<b>2022</b>	Adopt a collector street plan that provides a long-range plan for developer-driven construction of a connected street system for areas not included in the Rural Agricultural Reserve or Rural Residential character areas	No estimate	Local/State/Fed	Roads/Planning
<b>2023</b>	Update Comprehensive plan	\$20,000	DCA	County, GMRC

# APPENDICES

**County Fact Sheet**

**Area Labor Profile for Banks County**

**Summary of Comprehensive Plan Survey Results**

**Public Meeting Sign-in Sheets**

**County Fact Sheet**

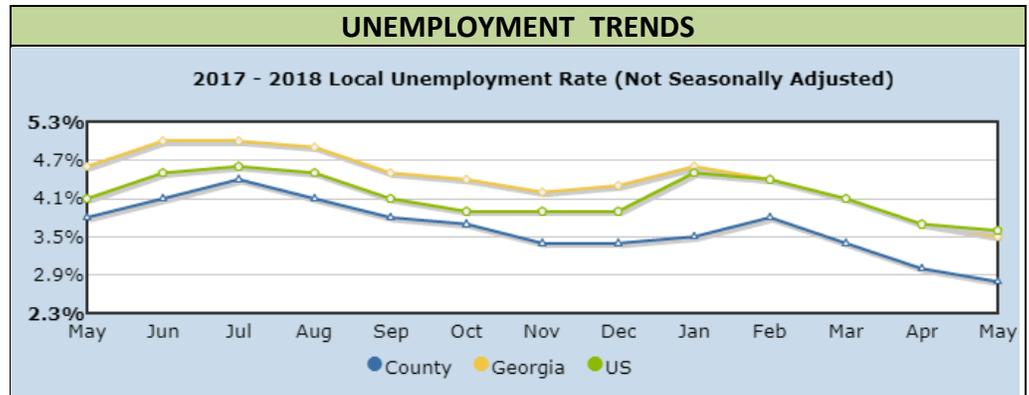


# Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

BANKS COUNTY, GEORGIA				
TOTAL POPULATION				
	2010	2016	CHANGE	
			#	%
Georgia	9,713,521	10,310,371	596,850	6.1%
GMRC Region	601,216	670,327	69,111	11.5%
Banks County	18,408	18,397	-11	-0.1%
Alto town (pt.)	516	504	-12	-2.3%
Baldwin city (pt.)	743	740	-3	-0.4%
Gillsville city (pt.)	28	28	0	0.0%
Homer town	1,146	1,136	-10	-0.9%
Lula city (pt.)	158	159	1	0.6%
Maysville town (pt.)	937	960	23	2.5%
Balance of Banks Co.	14,880	14,870	-10	-0.1%

AGE DISTRIBUTION	
2016	
< 18 yo	23.6 %
18-64	60.2 %
65+	16.2 %

MINIMAL EDUCATION	
Adults age 25+ - 2016	
< 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8.7 %
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	15.9 %
HS Graduate	42.9 %
Some College	15.6 %
Assoc. Degree	6.0 %
Bach. Degree	7.1 %
Grad. Degree	3.9 %



COMMUTING PATTERNS - 2010			
Origination of Banks Co. Employees		Destination of Banks Co. Residents	
Origin	Share	Destination	
Banks Co. GA	45.5%	Banks Co. GA	32.8%
Jackson Co. GA	20.3%	Hall Co. GA	18.1%
Habersham Co. GA	7.0%	Jackson Co. GA	16.3%
Franklin Co. GA	6.1%	Habersham Co. GA	14.7%
Madison Co. GA	4.8%	Gwinnett Co. GA	2.9%
Hall Co. GA	3.9%	Clarke Co. GA	2.9%
Rabun Co. GA	3.4%	Stephens Co. GA	2.7%
Gwinnett Co. GA	2.5%	Franklin Co. GA	1.7%
White Co. GA	1.5%	White Co. GA	1.5%
Other	4.9%	Other	6.3%
<b>Total Trips</b>	<b>5,557</b>	<b>Total Trips</b>	<b>7,707</b>

Demographic data courtesy of the US Bureau of the Census  
 Unemployment Rate courtesy Georgia Department of Labor

**Area Labor Profile for Banks County**



## Area Labor Profile

# Banks

# County



Updated: Jun 2018

## Labor Force Activity - 2017

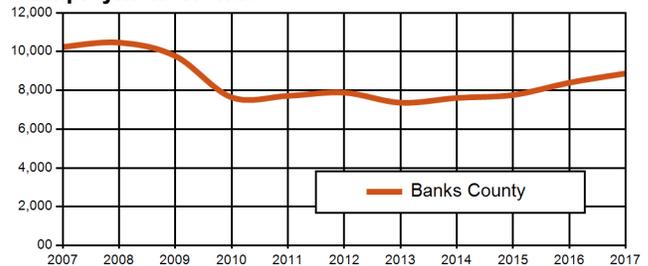
### 2017 ANNUAL AVERAGES

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Banks	9,242	8,876	366	4.0%
Franklin	10,019	9,541	478	4.8%
Habersham	19,372	18,485	887	4.6%
Hall	100,338	96,413	3,925	3.9%
Jackson	35,004	33,729	1,275	3.6%
Madison	13,602	13,020	582	4.3%
Stephens	11,020	10,438	582	5.3%
<b>Banks Area</b>	<b>198,597</b>	<b>190,502</b>	<b>8,095</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Georgia	5,061,399	4,821,622	239,777	4.7%
United States	160,320,000	153,337,000	6,982,000	4.4%

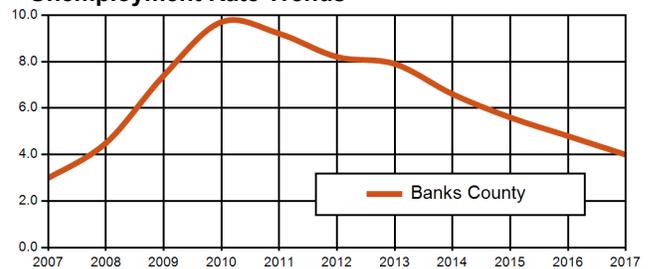
Note: This series reflects the latest information available. Labor Force includes residents of the county who are employed or actively seeking employment.

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

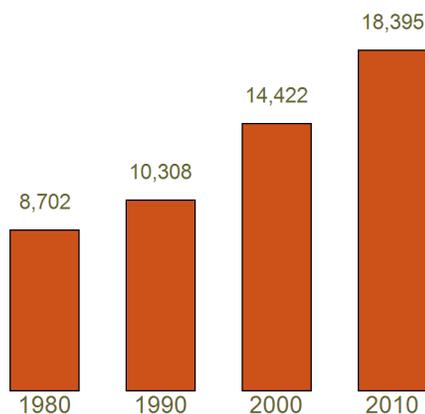
### Employment Trends



### Unemployment Rate Trends



### Population Estimates



### Population

	2010 Census	2017 Rank	2017 Estimate	% Change 2000-2017	2025 Projected*	% Change 2010-2025
<b>Banks</b>	<b>18,395</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>18,634</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>19,279</b>	<b>4.8</b>
City of Homer	1,141					
<b>Banks Area</b>	<b>377,984</b>		<b>408,067</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>452,226</b>	<b>19.6</b>
Georgia	9,687,653		10,429,379	7.7	11,538,707	19.1
United States	308,745,538		325,719,178	5.5	349,439,199	13.2

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

**MARK BUTLER - COMMISSIONER, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**  
**Equal Opportunity Employer/Program**  
**Auxillary Aids and Services Available upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities**

Workforce Statistics & Economic Research; E-mail: [Workforce\\_Info@gdol.ga.gov](mailto:Workforce_Info@gdol.ga.gov) Phone: (404) 232-3875

# Industry Mix - annual averages of 2017

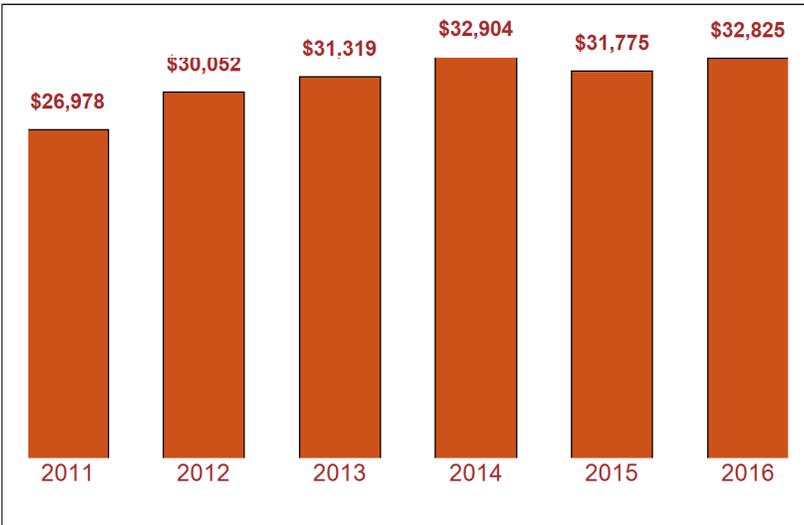
INDUSTRY	Banks				Banks Area			
	NUMBER OF FIRMS	EMPLOYMENT		WEEKLY WAGE	NUMBER OF FIRMS	EMPLOYMENT		WEEKLY WAGE
		NUMBER	PERCENT			NUMBER	PERCENT	
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>1,509</b>	<b>41,200</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>877</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	14	411	9.5	1,201	97	1,215	0.8	907
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0.0	0	9	110	0.1	1,263
Construction	30	176	4.1	828	897	6,272	4.2	945
Manufacturing	15	340	7.9	870	506	33,604	22.3	862
Food	2	*	*	*	59	13,686	9.1	699
Textile Mills	1	*	*	*	21	2,148	1.4	784
Wood Product	2	*	*	*	35	873	0.6	958
Paper	1	*	*	*	5	115	0.1	841
Printing and Related Support Activities	1	*	*	*	28	434	0.3	796
Nonmetallic Mineral Product	1	*	*	*	30	409	0.3	880
Fabricated Metal Product	4	55	1.3	813	95	1,835	1.2	992
Machinery	1	*	*	*	43	4,126	2.7	1,051
Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component	1	*	*	*	10	383	0.3	1,016
Miscellaneous	1	*	*	*	41	1,531	1.0	1,164
Leather and Allied Product	0	0	0.0	0	1	*	*	*
Petroleum and Coal Products	0	0	0.0	0	2	*	*	*
Apparel	0	0	0.0	0	3	*	*	*
Computer and Electronic Product	0	0	0.0	0	6	*	*	*
Primary Metal	0	0	0.0	0	6	583	0.4	1,050
Textile Product Mills	0	0	0.0	0	7	48	0.0	559
Beverage and Tobacco Product	0	0	0.0	0	7	293	0.2	1,042
Plastics and Rubber Products	0	0	0.0	0	23	1,552	1.0	790
Transportation Equipment	0	0	0.0	0	26	3,252	2.2	971
Chemical	0	0	0.0	0	27	1,296	0.9	1,220
Furniture and Related Product	0	0	0.0	0	31	886	0.6	762
<b>Service-Providing</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>2,506</b>	<b>58.0</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>6,465</b>	<b>88,269</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>799</b>
Utilities	0	0	0.0	0	16	607	0.4	1,570
Wholesale Trade	13	138	3.2	943	525	8,163	5.4	1,054
Retail Trade	51	687	15.9	393	1,209	16,352	10.9	526
Transportation and Warehousing	10	53	1.2	668	251	7,037	4.7	822
Information	2	*	*	*	75	1,257	0.8	1,058
Finance and Insurance	4	12	0.3	846	457	3,447	2.3	1,244
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5	6	0.1	578	320	1,954	1.3	623
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12	47	1.1	1,281	666	2,869	1.9	1,101
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0.0	0	45	1,789	1.2	1,697
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	19	378	8.7	560	511	9,048	6.0	530
Educational Services	0	*	*	*	59	2,113	1.4	706
Health Care and Social Assistance	12	100	2.3	1,204	849	16,868	11.2	983
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5	82	1.9	323	108	1,377	0.9	3,646
Accommodation and Food Services	31	924	21.4	294	583	12,393	8.2	308
Other Services (except Public Administration)	17	66	1.5	862	505	2,739	1.8	573
<b>Unclassified - industry not assigned</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>888</b>
<b>Total - Private Sector</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>3,439</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>7,974</b>	<b>129,469</b>	<b>85.9</b>	<b>823</b>
<b>Total - Government</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>21,175</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>727</b>
Federal Government	2	17	0.4	960	60	888	0.6	1,158
State Government	8	20	0.5	484	108	3,557	2.4	701
Local Government	12	846	19.6	602	179	16,730	11.1	709
<b>ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>4,323</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>8,321</b>	<b>150,648</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>810</b>
<b>ALL INDUSTRIES - Georgia</b>					<b>274,910</b>	<b>4,346,073</b>		<b>1,003</b>

Note: \*Denotes confidential data relating to individual employers and cannot be released. These data use the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) categories. Average weekly wage is derived by dividing gross payroll dollars paid to all employees - both hourly and salaried - by the average number of employees who had earnings; average earnings are then divided by the number of weeks in a reporting period to obtain weekly figures. Figures in other columns may not sum accurately due to rounding. All figures are annual averages of 2017.

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

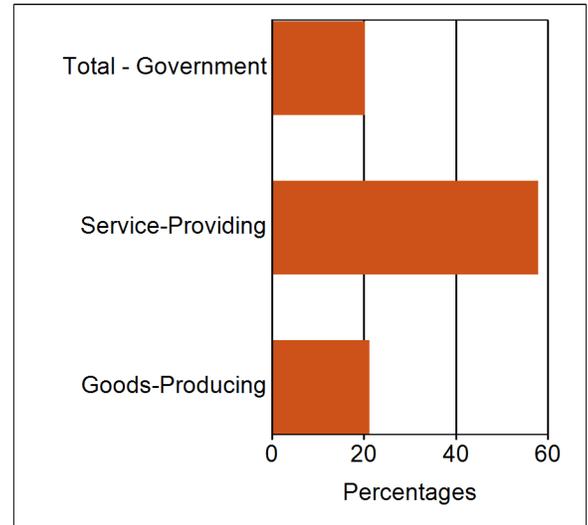
## Banks Per Capita Income

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



## Banks Industry Mix 2017

Source: See Industry Mix data on Page 2.



## Top Ten Largest Employers - 2017\*

### Banks

Arbys  
 Axiom Staffing Group, Inc.  
 Chick Fil-A  
 Country Charm Eggs, LLC  
 Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.  
 Fieldale Farms Corporation  
 Lumite, Inc.  
 Petsense, LLC  
 The Home Depot  
 Travel Centers Of America

\*Note: Represents employment covered by unemployment insurance excluding all government agencies except correctional institutions, state and local hospitals, state colleges and universities. Data shown for the Fourth Quarter of 2017. Employers are listed alphabetically by area, not by the number of employees.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

### Banks Area

Employer	COUNTY
Bed Bath And Beyond, Inc.	Jackson
Fieldale Farms Corporation	Hall
Fieldale Farms Corporation	Habersham
HG Georgia Merchants, Inc.	Jackson
Hire Dynamics, LLC	Jackson
Kubota Manufacturing of America Corporation	Hall
Mar-Jac Poultry	Hall
Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Inc.	Hall
Pilgrim's Pride Corporation	Hall
Victory Processing, LLC	Hall

## Education of the Labor Force

### Banks Area

#### PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

	PERCENT OF TOTAL	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE				
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Elementary	9.5%	5.6%	10.9%	8.8%	7.4%	16.3%
Some High School	14.9%	21.9%	14.2%	13.4%	12.2%	17.8%
High School Grad/GED	34.7%	37.8%	31.9%	34.6%	35.8%	33.1%
Some College	19.4%	29.1%	19.5%	17.2%	19.3%	14.6%
College Grad 2 Yr	5.3%	2.2%	6.8%	6.6%	6.0%	3.1%
College Grad 4 Yr	10.2%	3.3%	10.9%	12.6%	11.6%	9.3%
Post Graduate Studies	6.0%	0.2%	5.9%	6.9%	7.7%	5.8%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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

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

# High School Graduates - 2017



	<b>PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>	<b>PRIVATE SCHOOLS*</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Banks	161	--	161
Franklin	237	--	237
Habersham	392	--	392
Hall	2,062	--	2,062
Jackson	737	--	737
Madison	275	--	275
Stephens	231	--	231
<b>Banks Area</b>	<b>4,095</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>4,095</b>

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

\* Private schools data is not available for 2017 from Georgia Independent School Association.

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

# Colleges and Universities

## Banks Area

### Franklin

Emmanuel College	<a href="http://www.ec.edu">http://www.ec.edu</a>
Emmanuel College	<a href="http://www.ec.edu">www.ec.edu</a>

### Hall

Brenau University	<a href="http://www.brenau.edu">www.brenau.edu</a>
University of North Georgia	<a href="http://www.gsc.edu">www.gsc.edu</a>
Lanier Technical College	<a href="http://www.laniertech.edu">www.laniertech.edu</a>
Oakwood Campus (Satellite campus of Lanier Technical College)	<a href="http://www.laniertech.edu">www.laniertech.edu</a>

### Banks

Milledgeville Campus (Satellite campus of Central Georgia Technical College)	<a href="http://www.centralgatech.edu">www.centralgatech.edu</a>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------

### Jackson

Jackson Campus (Satellite campus of Lanier Technical College)	<a href="http://www.laniertech.edu">www.laniertech.edu</a>
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### Habersham

North Georgia Technical College	<a href="http://www.northgatech.edu">www.northgatech.edu</a>
Piedmont College	<a href="http://www.piedmont.edu">www.piedmont.edu</a>

### Stephens

Currahee Campus (Satellite campus of North Georgia Technical College)	<a href="http://www.northgatech.edu">www.northgatech.edu</a>
Toccoa Falls College	<a href="http://www.tfc.edu">www.tfc.edu</a>

Note: The colleges and universities listed include public and private institutions. This list is updated periodically as information becomes available.

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

# Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping°	126	134	161	6.3	20.1
Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General	61	58	76	-4.9	31.0
Aesthetician/Esthetician and Skin Care Specialist°	20	36	31	80.0	-13.9
Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services, Other°	36	37	22	2.8	-40.5
Autobody/Collision and Repair Technology/Technician°	52	49	71	-5.8	44.9

# Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician°	117	289	220	147.0	-23.9
Business Administration and Management, General°	63	56	109	-11.1	94.6
Business Administration, Management and Operations, Other	17	17	17	0.0	0.0
CAD/CADD Drafting and/or Design Technology/Technician°	6	29	20	383.3	-31.0
Child Care and Support Services Management°	1	5	4	400.0	-20.0
Child Care Provider/Assistant°	82	138	110	68.3	-20.3
Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician	10	18	21	80.0	16.7
Commercial Photography°	13	11	10	-15.4	-9.1
Computer Installation and Repair Technology/Technician°	29	53	82	82.8	54.7
Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General°	187	151	163	-19.3	7.9
Criminal Justice/Safety Studies°	76	85	75	11.8	-11.8
Culinary Arts/Chef Training	17	15	16	-11.8	6.7
Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation	6	3	8	-50.0	166.7
Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, General°	24	19	69	-20.8	263.2
Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/Technician°	13	32	33	146.2	3.1
Dental Assisting/Assistant	14	14	9	0.0	-35.7
Design and Visual Communications, General°	12	24	26	100.0	8.3
Drafting and Design Technology/Technician, General°	6	24	29	300.0	20.8
Early Childhood Education and Teaching°	27	39	35	44.4	-10.3
Electrical and Power Transmission Installation/Installer, General°	14	10	16	-28.6	60.0
Electrician°	39	56	44	43.6	-21.4
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)°	116	173	171	49.1	-1.2
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-Related Fields, Other	7	12	12	71.4	0.0
Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies°	5	3	11	-40.0	266.7
Environmental Control Technologies/Technicians, Other	7	6	8	-14.3	33.3
Fire Prevention and Safety Technology/Technician°	4	3	3	-25.0	0.0
Fire Science/Fire-fighting°	12	11	28	-8.3	154.5
Fire Services Administration	7	2	5	-71.4	150.0
Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant°	13	14	13	7.7	-7.1
Graphic Design°	1	12	13	1100.0	8.3
Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General°	97	125	135	28.9	8.0
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/°	84	85	100	1.2	17.6
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology°	73	120	142	64.4	18.3
Interior Design°	34	11	43	-67.6	290.9
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	76	39	53	-48.7	35.9
Lineworker°	45	59	57	31.1	-3.4

# Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Machine Shop Technology/Assistant°	60	53	73	-11.7	37.7
Marketing/Marketing Management, General	6	6	9	0.0	50.0
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians, Other	6	9	7	50.0	-22.2
Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder°	11	15	29	36.4	93.3
Medical Office Assistant/Specialist°	33	18	23	-45.5	27.8
Medical Office Management/Administration	15	11	13	-26.7	18.2
Medical/Clinical Assistant	113	125	109	10.6	-12.8
Network and System Administration/Administrator°	52	66	61	26.9	-7.6
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide°	135	54	29	-60.0	-46.3
Pharmacy Technician/Assistant°	11	20	12	81.8	-40.0
Phlebotomy Technician/Phlebotomist°	13	15	18	15.4	20.0
Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing°	8	10	6	25.0	-40.0
Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer	13	13	19	0.0	46.2
Retailing and Retail Operations°	4	1	4	-75.0	300.0
Selling Skills and Sales Operations°	6	5	7	-16.7	40.0
Surgical Technology/Technologist	8	25	13	212.5	-48.0
Tool and Die Technology/Technician°	7	3	2	-57.1	-33.3
Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor°	21	23	19	9.5	-17.4
Web Page, Digital/Multimedia and Information Resources Design°	5	19	12	280.0	-36.8
Welding Technology/Welder°	218	316	353	45.0	11.7

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

Source: Technical College System of Georgia

\*Data shown represents Annual 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Note: Please visit TCSG website for any college configuration changes.

## Georgia Department of Labor Location(s)

### Career Center(s)

37 Foreacre Street

Toccoa, GA 30577-3582

Phone: (706) 282 - 4514

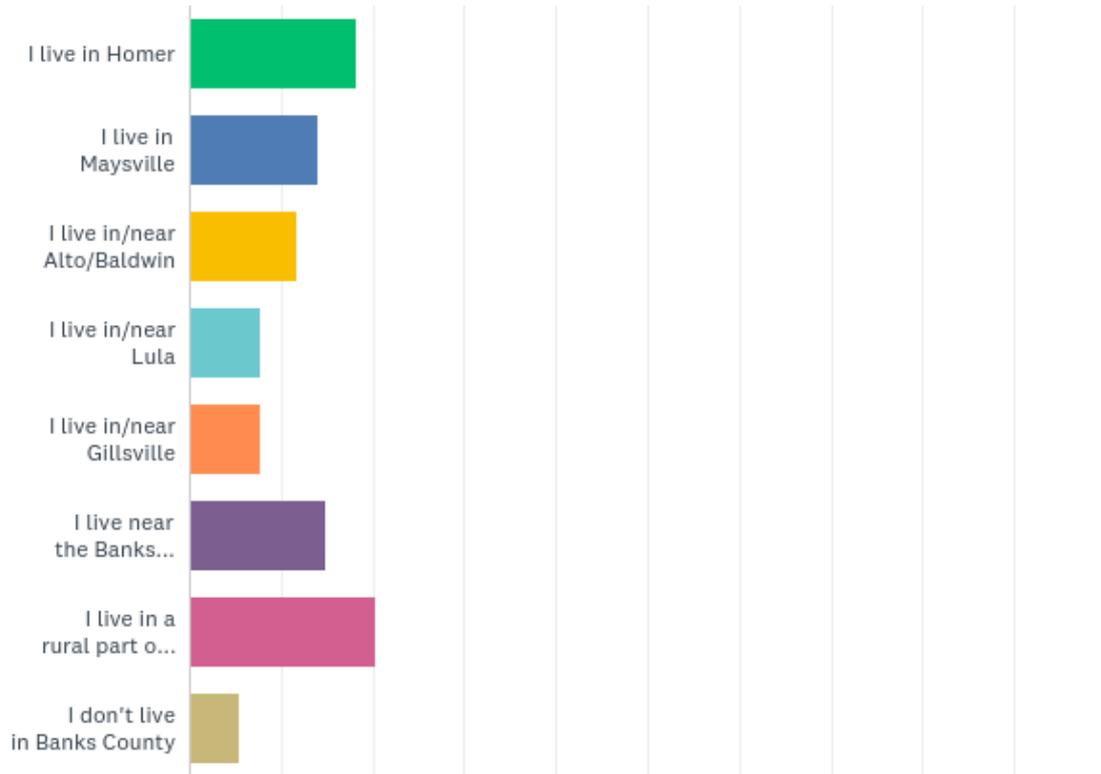
Fax: (706) 282 - 4513

For copies of Area Labor Profiles, please visit our website at: <http://dol.georgia.gov> or contact Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Georgia Department of Labor, 148 Andrew Young International Blvd N.E. Atlanta, GA. 30303-1751. Phone: 404-232-3875; Fax: 404-232-3888 or Email us at [workforce\\_info@gdol.ga.gov](mailto:workforce_info@gdol.ga.gov)

## Summary of Comprehensive Plan Survey Results

# Q1: Please tell us which part of Banks County in which you live.

Answered: 221 Skipped: 0



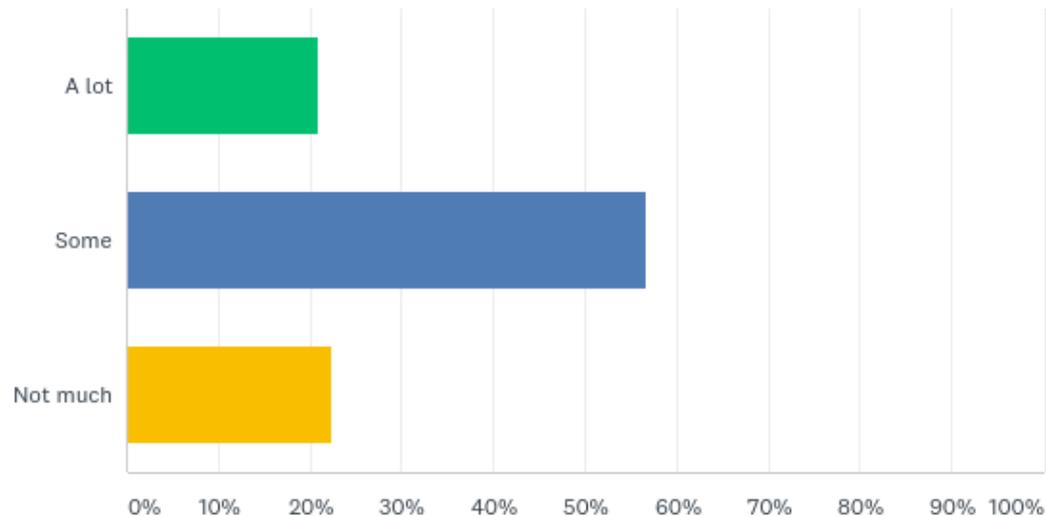
# Q1: Please tell us which part of Banks County in which you live.

Answered: 221 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in Homer	18.10%	40
I live in Maysville	14.03%	31
I live in/near Alto/Baldwin	11.76%	26
I live in/near Lula	7.69%	17
I live in/near Gillsville	7.69%	17
I live near the Banks crossing area	14.93%	33
I live in a rural part of unincorporated Banks County	20.36%	45
I don't live in Banks County	5.43%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>221</b>

# development over the next 10-20 years. How much new development would you like to see come to Banks County?

Answered: 219 Skipped: 2



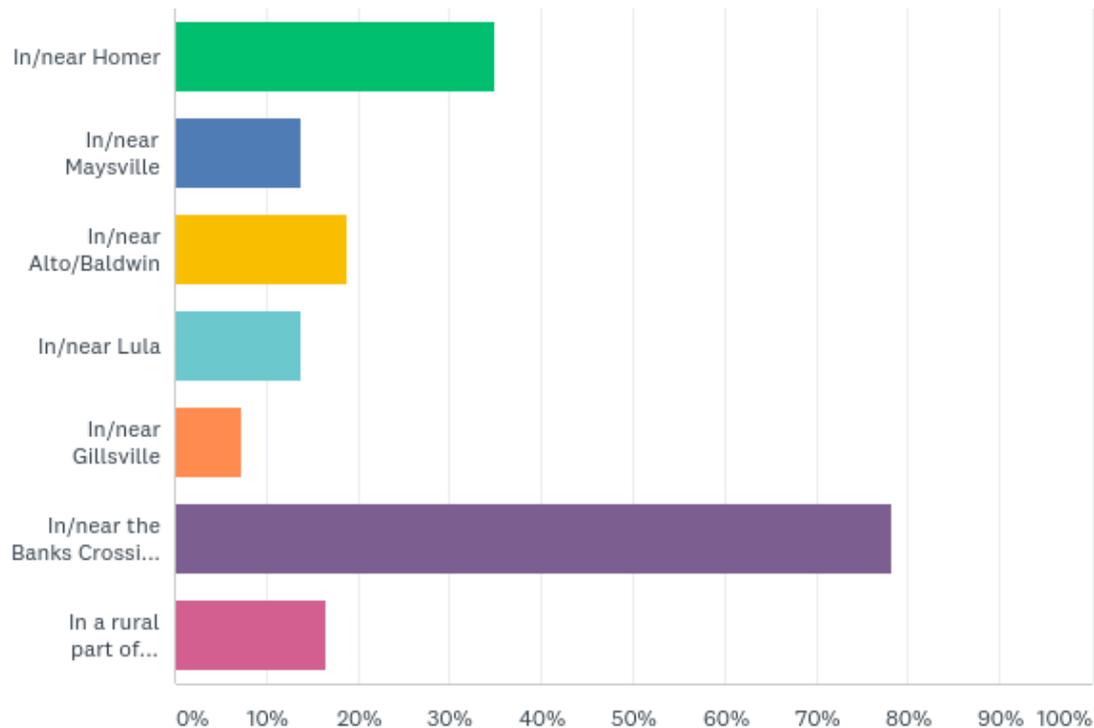
# development over the next 10-20 years. How much new development would you like to see come to Banks County?

Answered: 219 Skipped: 2

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A lot	21.00%	46
Some	56.62%	124
Not much	22.37%	49
TOTAL		219

# parts of the County should receive that growth? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 217 Skipped: 4



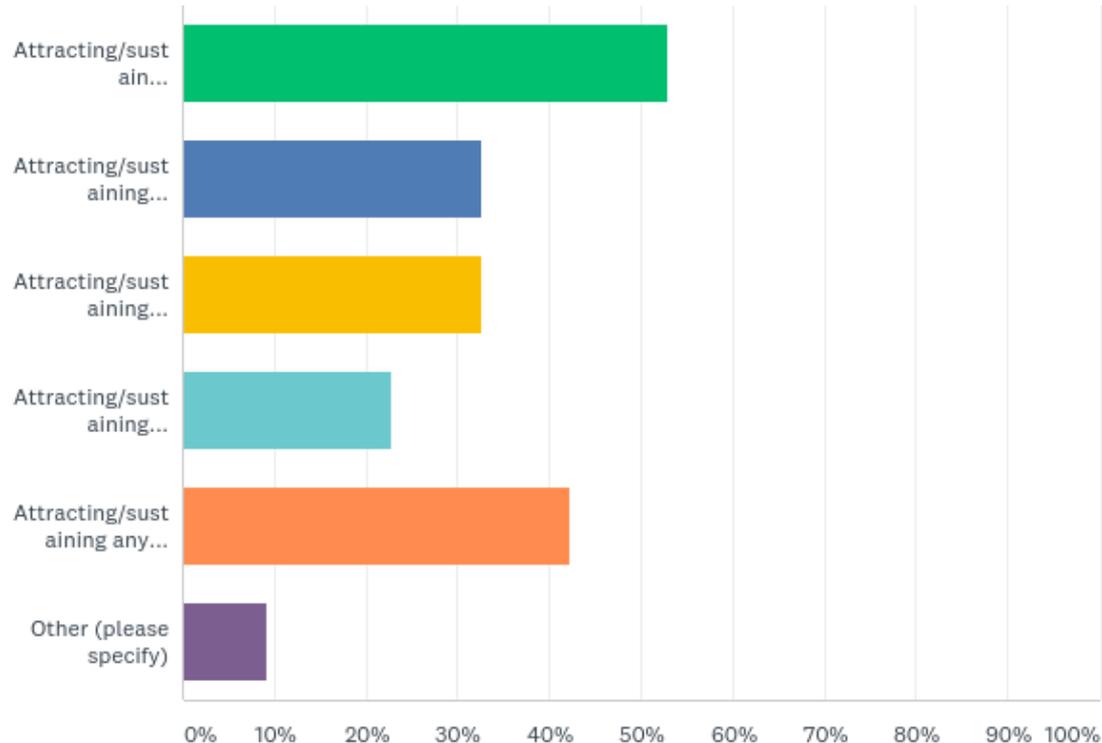
# parts of the County should receive that growth? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 217 Skipped: 4

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In/near Homer	35.02%	76
In/near Maysville	13.82%	30
In/near Alto/Baldwin	18.89%	41
In/near Lula	13.82%	30
In/near Gillsville	7.37%	16
In/near the Banks Crossing area	78.34%	170
In a rural part of unincorporated Banks County	16.59%	36
Total Respondents: 217		

# Q6: Our top two priorities with regard to economic development should be...

Answered: 215 Skipped: 6



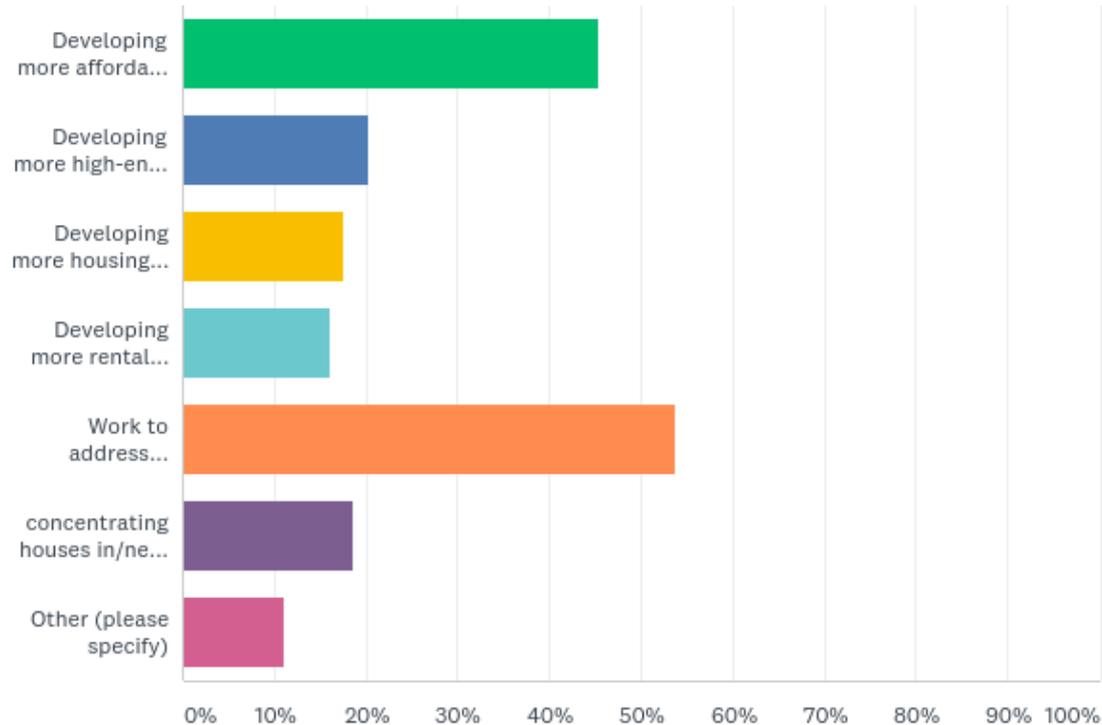
# Q6: Our top two priorities with regard to economic development should be...

Answered: 215 Skipped: 6

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attracting/sustain agricultural businesses	53.02%	114
Attracting/sustaining industrial businesses	32.56%	70
Attracting/sustaining commercial businesses	32.56%	70
Attracting/sustaining businesses within the cities	22.79%	49
Attracting/sustaining any business with high paying jobs	42.33%	91
Other (please specify)	9.30%	20
Total Respondents: 215		

# Q7: Our top two priorities with regard to housing should be...

Answered: 216 Skipped: 5



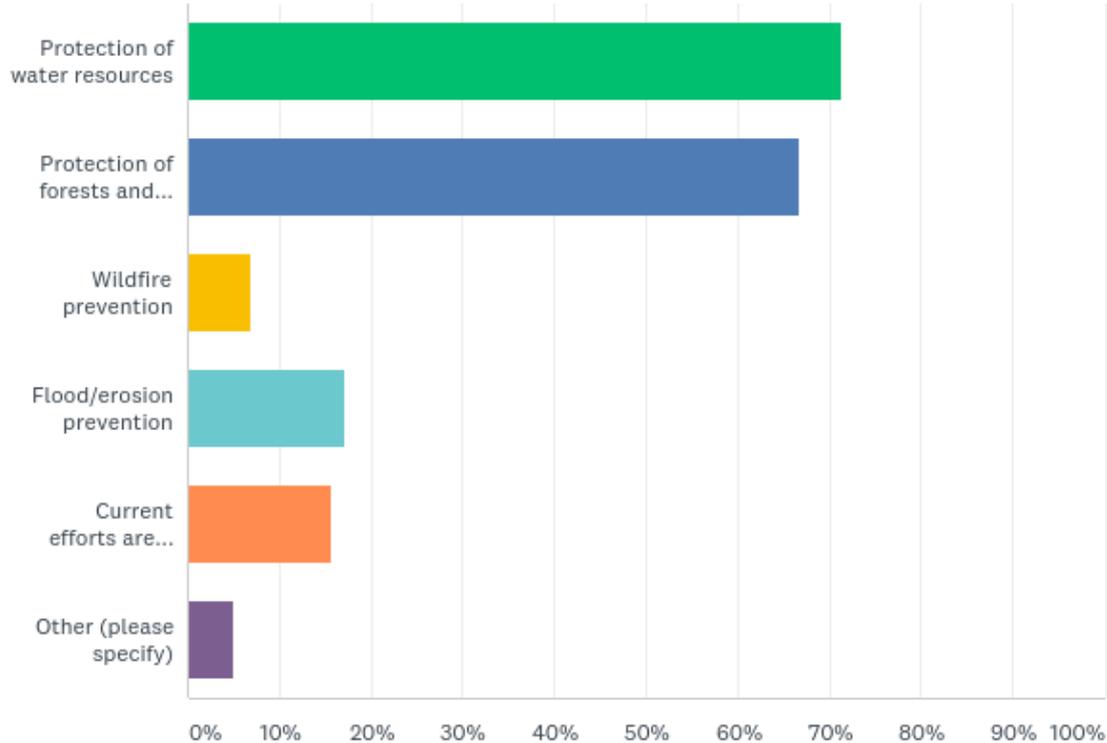
# Q7: Our top two priorities with regard to housing should be...

Answered: 216 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Developing more affordable housing	45.37%	98
Developing more high-end housing	20.37%	44
Developing more housing options for seniors	17.59%	38
Developing more rental options	16.20%	35
Work to address dilapidated properties	53.70%	116
concentrating houses in/near the cities	18.52%	40
Other (please specify)	11.11%	24
Total Respondents: 216		

# Q8: Our top two priorities regarding natural resources should be...

Answered: 217 Skipped: 4



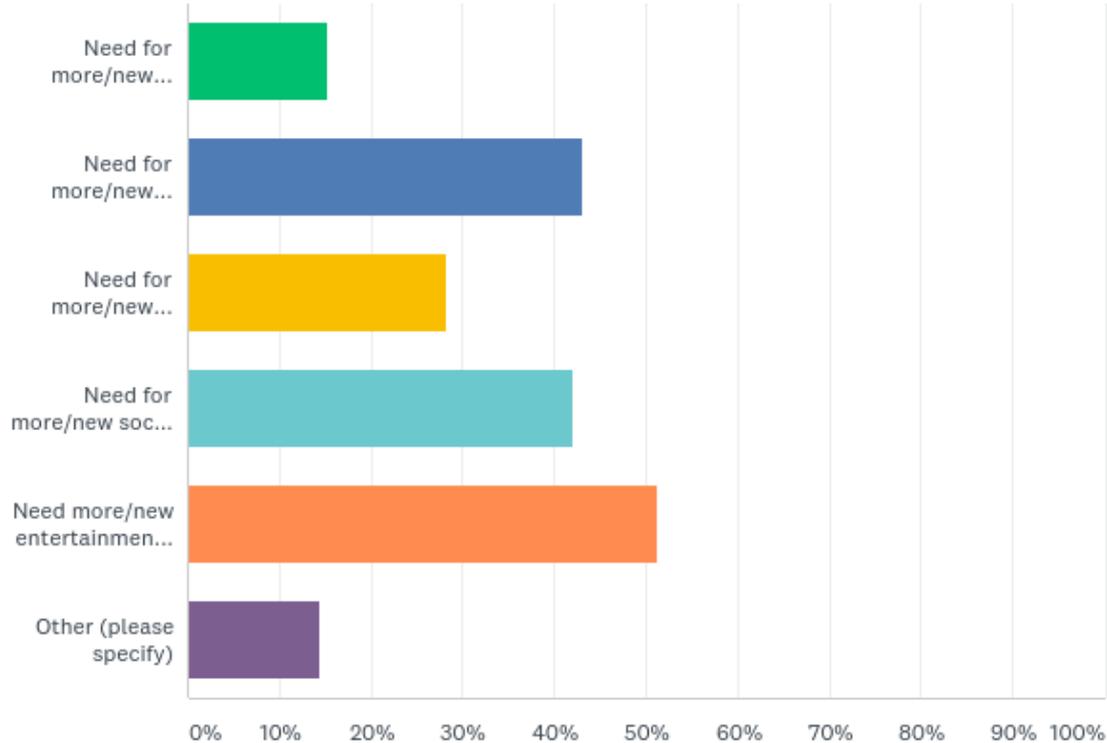
# Q8: Our top two priorities regarding natural resources should be...

Answered: 217 Skipped: 4

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Protection of water resources	71.43%	155
Protection of forests and wildlife areas	66.82%	145
Wildfire prevention	6.91%	15
Flood/erosion prevention	17.05%	37
Current efforts are sufficient	15.67%	34
Other (please specify)	5.07%	11
Total Respondents: 217		

# Q9: Our top two priorities regarding cultural amenities should be...

Answered: 209 Skipped: 12



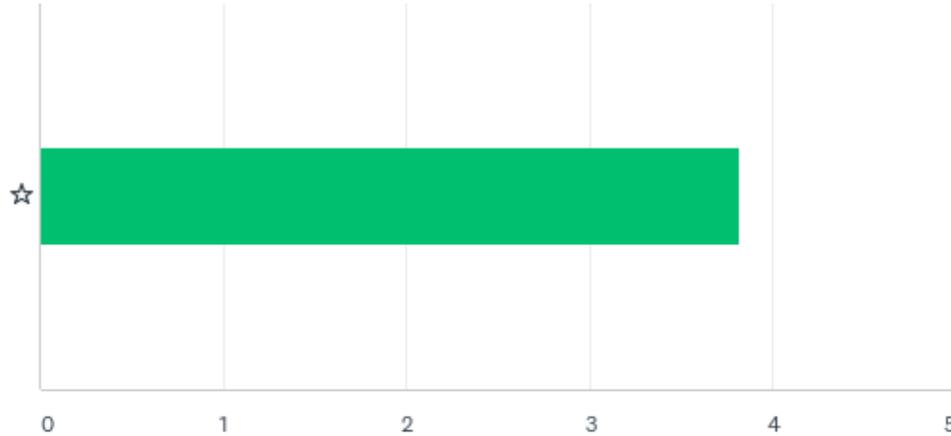
## Q9: Our top two priorities regarding cultural amenities should be...

Answered: 209 Skipped: 12

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need for more/new athletic facilities	15.31%	32
Need for more/new passive use parks and recreation areas	43.06%	90
Need for more/new recreational trails	28.23%	59
Need for more/new social events in our community	42.11%	88
Need more/new entertainment options	51.20%	107
Other (please specify)	14.35%	30
Total Respondents: 209		

your public water service. (Leave blank if you do not use public water.)

Answered: 165 Skipped: 56



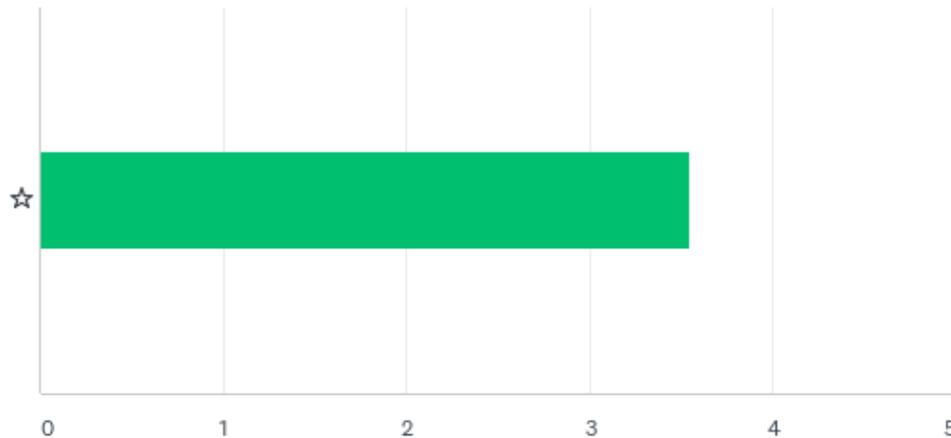
question on a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great), please rate the quality of your public water service. (Leave blank if you do not use public water.)

Answered: 165 Skipped: 56

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	3.64%	6.67%	26.06%	31.52%	32.12%		
	6	11	43	52	53	165	3.82

your public sewer service. (Leave blank if you do not use public sewer.)

Answered: 53 Skipped: 168



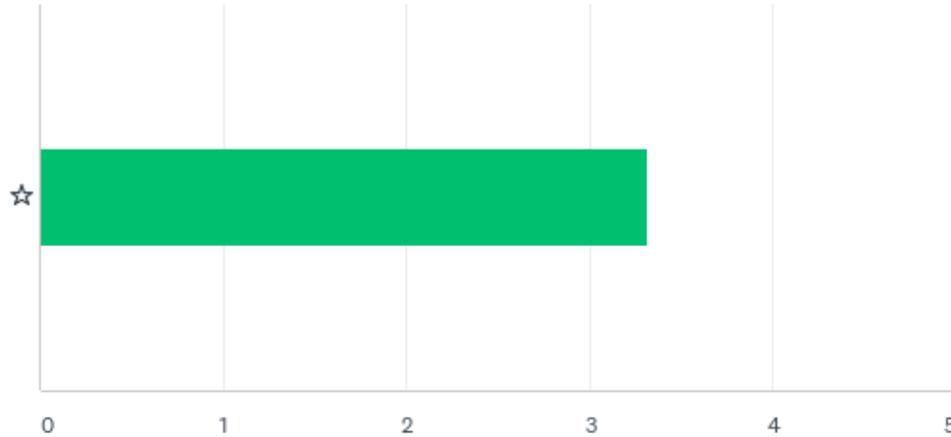
Q11 On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great), please rate the quality of your public sewer service. (Leave blank if you do not use public sewer.)

Answered: 53 Skipped: 168

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	11.32%	5.66%	26.42%	30.19%	26.42%		
	6	3	14	16	14	53	3.55

# Q12: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your parks and recreation facilities and services.

Answered: 211 Skipped: 10



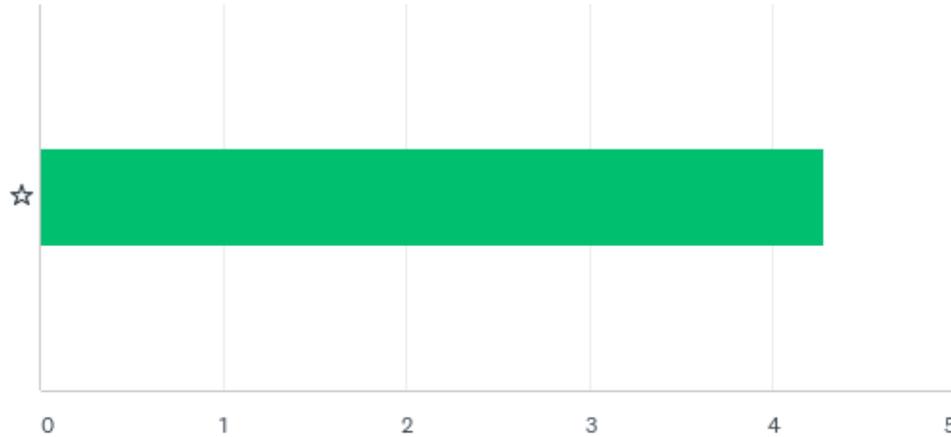
# Q12: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your parks and recreation facilities and services.

Answered: 211 Skipped: 10

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	8.06%	14.69%	33.65%	24.17%	19.43%		
	17	31	71	51	41	211	3.32

# Q13: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your law enforcement services.

Answered: 218 Skipped: 3



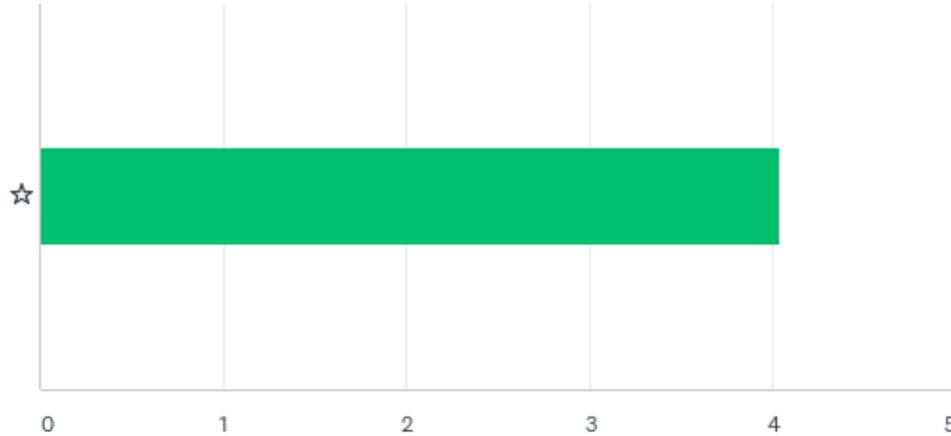
# Q13: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your law enforcement services.

Answered: 218 Skipped: 3

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	0.92%	3.67%	13.30%	31.19%	50.92%		
	2	8	29	68	111	218	4.28

# Q14: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your fire protection/ EMS services.

Answered: 214 Skipped: 7



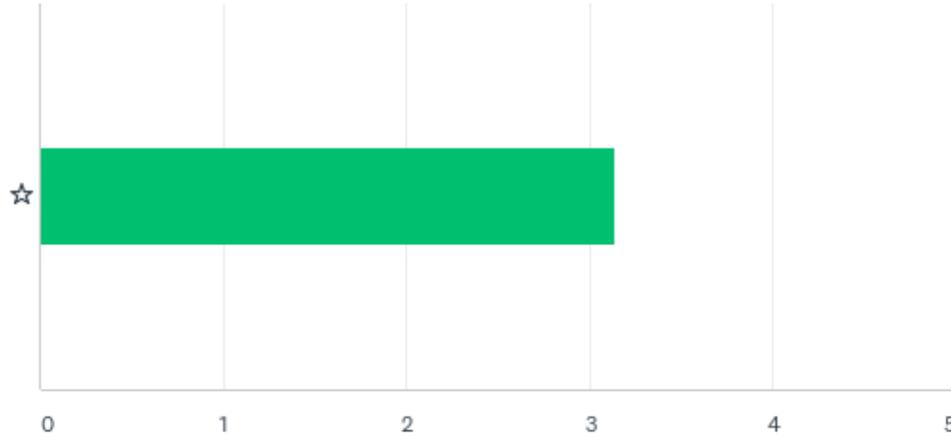
# Q14: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your fire protection/ EMS services.

Answered: 214 Skipped: 7

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	2.34%	7.48%	16.82%	30.84%	42.52%		
	5	16	36	66	91	214	4.04

# Q15: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your local roads.

Answered: 216 Skipped: 5



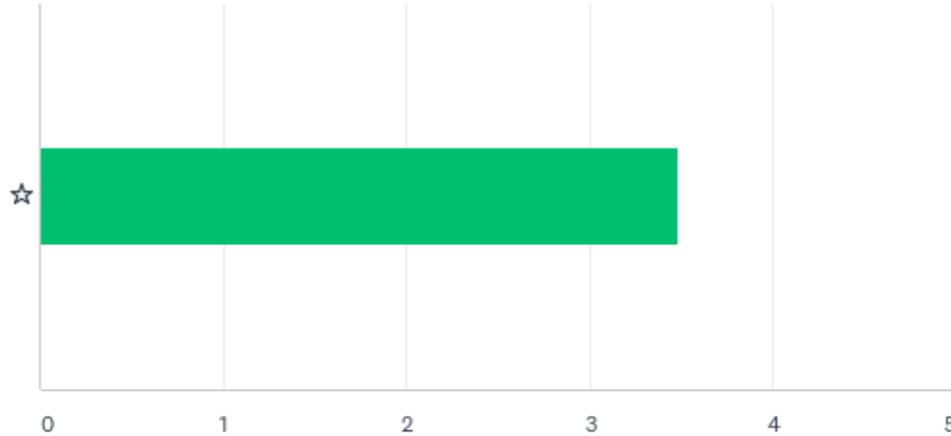
# Q15: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your local roads.

Answered: 216 Skipped: 5

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	5.09%	20.37%	36.11%	31.94%	6.48%		
	11	44	78	69	14	216	3.14

# Q16: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your general government services.

Answered: 214 Skipped: 7



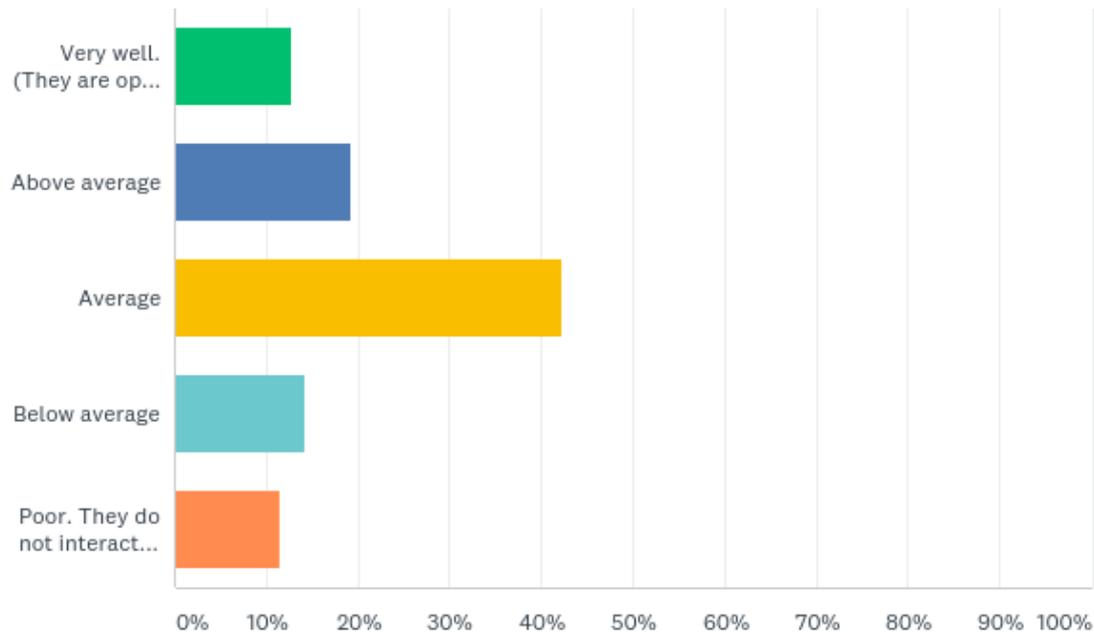
# Q16: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your general government services.

Answered: 214 Skipped: 7

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	4.21%	13.08%	31.78%	32.24%	18.69%		
	9	28	68	69	40	214	3.48

# Q17: How well do you rate your local government with regards to openness and communicating with the public?

Answered: 218 Skipped: 3



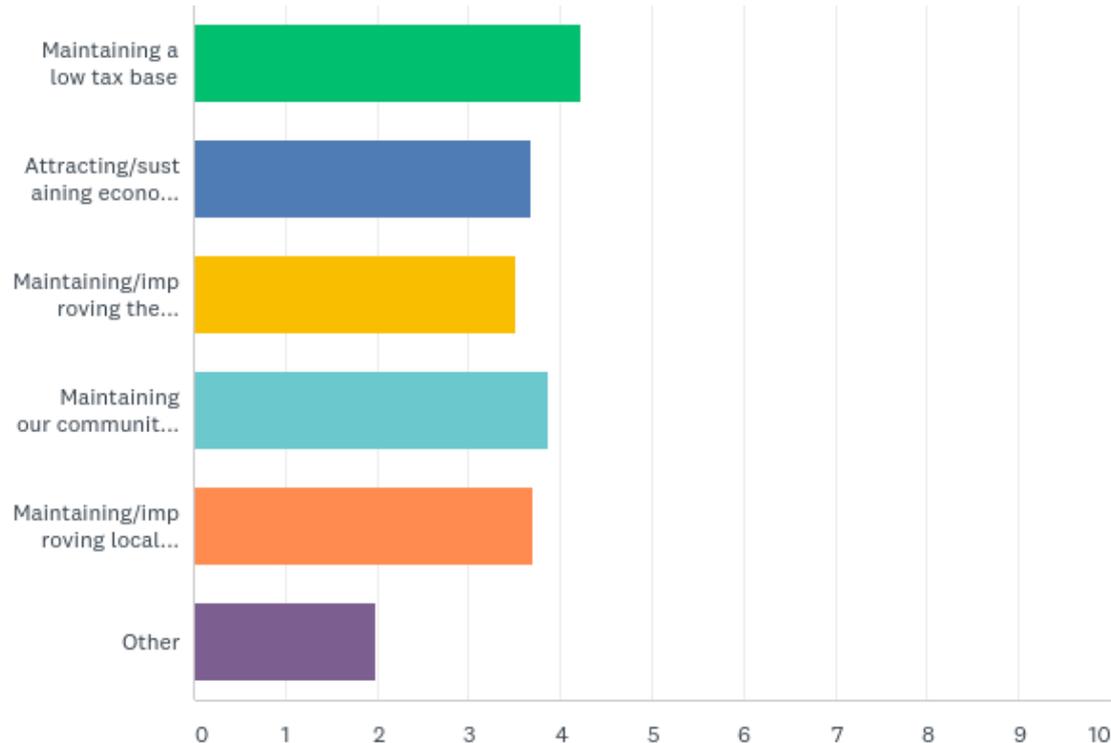
# Q17: How well do you rate your local government with regards to openness and communicating with the public?

Answered: 218 Skipped: 3

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very well. (They are open to requests and responsive to needs.)	12.84%	28
Above average	19.27%	42
Average	42.20%	92
Below average	14.22%	31
Poor. They do not interact well with the public and I feel they don't listen.)	11.47%	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>218</b>

# Q18: For your local government, please rank the following objectives in terms of highest and lowest priority.

Answered: 211 Skipped: 10



# Q18: For your local government, please rank the following objectives in terms of highest and lowest priority.

Answered: 211 Skipped: 10

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Maintaining a low tax base	29.28% 53	20.44% 37	19.34% 35	11.60% 21	13.26% 24	6.08% 11	181	4.23
Attracting/sustaining economic development	15.30% 28	18.58% 34	18.03% 33	19.67% 36	24.59% 45	3.83% 7	183	3.69
Maintaining/improving the quality of local facilities and services	5.35% 10	15.51% 29	25.67% 48	34.76% 65	16.04% 30	2.67% 5	187	3.51
Maintaining our community's rural character	19.05% 36	22.22% 42	18.52% 35	14.29% 27	19.58% 37	6.35% 12	189	3.88
Maintaining/improving local safety	17.73% 36	18.23% 37	17.73% 36	17.73% 36	20.20% 41	8.37% 17	203	3.70
Other	11.36% 5	4.55% 2	4.55% 2	2.27% 1	4.55% 2	72.73% 32	44	1.98

**Public Meeting Sign-in Sheets**

# The Rotary Club of Banks County

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

---

- Welcome
- Invocation & Pledge
- Announcements
- Guest Introduction
- Program
- Four Way Test

Today our program is:

Adam Hazell

Ga Mtn Regional Commission

Banks County Middle School

Student Of The Month:

Kevin Anaya

Rotary: Making A Difference

**LAST WEEK**

Kenny Wilson

Band of Brothers

Our Rotary family will be celebrating Christmas next week with White Elephant Gift Exchange. Everyone come out and help us celebrate

Christmas.

*Weekly programs*

December 20	Christmas Party – White Elephant Gift Exchange
December 27	No Meeting
January 3	Stan Davis – State of the School System Update
January 10	Dave Berry – Diana Food
January 17	Jimmy Hooper – Economic Developer
January 24	Tricia Massey & Sandy Broyles – Piedmont Athens Regional
January 31	Tammy Rauch – GA DOL

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND THAT WOULD MAKE

A GREAT ROTARIAN?

Invite them to join us for Lunch

Remember:

“Service Above Self”

*If you have Program Ideas please see Vicki or email her at [vicki@datsga.com](mailto:vicki@datsga.com).*

# Take the survey

## Citizens asked to give input on county

BY ANGELA GARY

Banks County citizens are being asked to take a survey giving input on how they think the county should develop over the next 20 years, as well as listing priorities for needs in the county.

To take the survey online, go to the county website at [www.co.banks.ga.us](http://www.co.banks.ga.us) and click on "county government." In the middle of the screen, click on "2018 comprehensive plan survey link." It will take less than 10 minutes to complete the survey.

The results from the survey will be used by the citizens committee that is taking an in-depth look into how Banks County should plan for growth over the next 20 years.

The group met several times in the past six months to continue pro-

viding input on the update

of the Banks County Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan addresses issues such as public safety, education, housing, zoning and city-county cooperation.

The 2018 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Advisory Group members include:

- Todd Hubbard – Co-Chairman, Scott Ledford – Co-Chairman, Vicki Boling, C.J. Farmer, Jody Goodroe, Bill Griffin, Julie Jackson, Brad McCook, Carissa M. McFaddin, Bobby Miller, Krysta Morrison, Kim Ledford, Russell G. Williams, Carol Williams, A.D. Smith and Ben Ramsey.

The committee will also meet to discuss Implementation/Draft Review on Monday, March 12,

### 2017 Banks County Comprehensive Plan Update

Want to tell your leaders what your community should be like in 20-30 years?

Want to tell them which issues you feel are most important?

Here's your chance!

Banks County and the Cities of Homer and Maysville are updating their Comprehensive Plans to help guide development, policies and capital improvement projects. Your hometown can only achieve its vision if it knows what that vision is, so please take part in the process and let us know what you think for the future of your community. Please take a few minutes to complete and return the following survey. All comments will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Be sure to also check the [Banks County website](#) for announcements about future meetings & opportunities to participate.

#### 1. Please tell us which part of Banks County in which you live.

- I live in Homer
- I live in Maysville
- I live in/ near AltoBadham
- I live in/ near Lake
- I live in/ near Collinsville
- I live in/ near the Banks creating areas
- I live in a rural part of unincorporated Banks County
- I don't live in Banks County

### SURVEY

County residents are being asked to take this survey to provide input on planned growth in the county.

from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Banks County Courthouse Annex. A public hearing will be held at 6:30 p.m. to receive any public comments on the draft plan. An update of the county comprehensive land use plan is required by Georgia state law to be done every 10 years.

2/12/18

Banks Co. Plan Mtg.

Name

~~CS Farmer~~

Cliff Jalliff

Carol Williams

Kym Ledford

Joseph Goodroe

Jenni Bailey

BOC

Bobby Miller



7/30/18

Banks Plan Mtg

Name

Scott Hedford

Brad McCook

Bill Griffin

Cliff Jolliff

Ben Krausey

Vicki Boling

Paul Luok

**A RESOLUTION OF BANKS COUNTY, GEORGIA  
ADOPTING THE  
2018 BANKS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

**WHEREAS:** The Banks County Commission, the governing authority of BANKS County, Georgia has participated in the update to the Banks County Comprehensive Land Use Plan; and

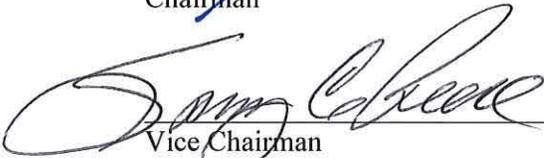
**WHEREAS:** The update was prepared in accordance with the Rules and Procedures of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, including requirements for public hearing opportunities; and

**WHEREAS:** The update has been reviewed and approved by the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs;

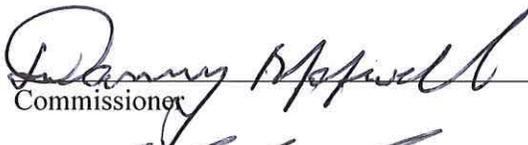
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Banks County Commission that the update to the 2008 Banks County Comprehensive Land Use Plan is adopted.

Adopted by the County Commission this 13<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2018.

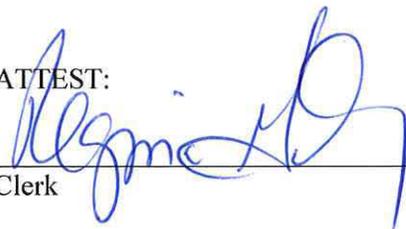
  
Chairman

  
Vice Chairman

  
Commissioner

  
Commissioner

  
Commissioner

ATTEST:  
  
Clerk