2016 Ben Hill County And City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update

WORK BOOK

DRAFT
April 2015

Prepared for:
Ben Hill County
City of Fitzgerald

By:

Southern Georgia Regional Commission

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I. Chapter 110-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning

1. Introduction

The 2016 Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2016 Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals

2. Needs and Opportunities

3. Community Work Program

4. Economic Development Element
(as a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category)

5. Land Use Element
(as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

2. Community Involvement

All of the required elements have been developed with extensive opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders throughout the county and cities. The following steps were taken to ensure that this plan reflected the full range of needs and opportunities from the many stakeholders and residents in the county:

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on [insert date] at the [County/City address]. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway; to explain the purpose of the update; and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

3. Identification of Stakeholders

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, elected officials, and residents. A complete list of all the stakeholders is included in this plan in the Appendix.

4. Identification of Participation Techniques

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:
Public Hearings
Workshops
Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders
Special Webpage on SGRC website as well as County and City's websites
Dissemination of information in the newspaper
Fliers

5. Conduct Participation Program

A foundational principle utilized by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in all of its planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from, and coordination with, multiple and diverse interest groups. Due to the relatively small population of the County and City of Fitzgerald, the entire stakeholder group was utilized as the steering committee, ensuring the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update. Outreach to the public, local governments and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, Facebook

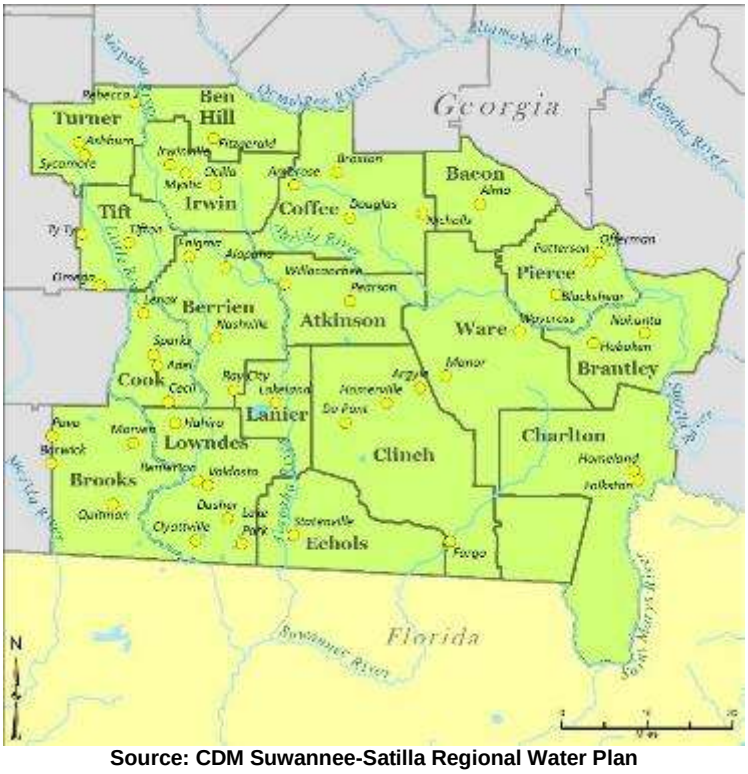
postings, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and at other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and at city and county commission meetings.

6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

During the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the local governments must review both the Regional Water Plan covering its area and the GDNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria, as laid out in Chapter 391-3-16, to determine whether any local implementation practices or development regulations need to be adapted to be consistent with both.

<u>Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan</u>

Ben Hill County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in September 2011.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan has identified 13 goals, listed below, to implement its vision of managing water resources in a sustainable manner under Georgia's regulated riparian and reasonable use laws in order to support the state's and region's economy, protect public health and natural resources, and enhance the quality of life for all citizens; while preserving the private property rights of Georgia's landowners, and in consideration of the need to enhance resource augmentation and efficiency opportunities.

<u>Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:</u>

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).

2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.

3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.

4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.

5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and to optimize water and wastewater infrastructure.

6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.

7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.

8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.

9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.

10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater so as to improve water quality and quantity.

11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.

12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource services to all citizens in the region.

13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition, the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond. The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

<u>Short Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0-10 Years)</u>

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Conserve water
3. Collect data and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (the period of lowest stream flow during a seven-day interval that is expected to occur once every 10 years)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

Short-Term Water Quality Management Practices (0 – 10 Years):

1. Point Sources:
- Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity
- Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry

2. Non-Point Sources:
- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning

- Ensure funding and support for local and state Best Management Practices programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:
- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; identify opportunities to leverage funds, and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

Longer Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands
- Evaluate incentive-based programs to manage, increase, and restore wastewater and storm water returns
- Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
- Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

Chapter 391-3-16, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The Environmental Planning Criteria that are part of the Minimum Planning Standards deal specifically with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains, the last of which is not applicable in this region. These criteria were developed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as mandated in Part V of the Georgia Planning Act and in the Mountains and River Corridor Protection Act.

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction.

Some uses may be grandfathered, such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utilities placements, special forestry, or agricultural services.

The environmental guidelines also spell out criteria for the delineation of small and large water supply watersheds, for the protection of groundwater recharge areas, for the protection of wetlands, and for the protection of river corridors. These criteria shall be incorporated into this comprehensive plan and addressed specifically and in more detail through local ordinances and land development code regulations.

II. Plan Elements

1. Community Goals

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for the future of Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald; to generate local buy-in to the plan; and to ensure that the plan is implemented. Communities are encouraged to amend and update the goals as necessary.

Goal 1: Protect, preserve, and promote the historic and cultural resources of Ben Hill County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, and tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.

Goal 2: Improve the Ben Hill County economy by developing and enhancing new and existing strengths that will draw new business, expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy, and help Ben Hill County compete in the regional economy.

Goal 3: Provide opportunities for homeownership and housing resources for all residents of Ben Hill County through public/private partnerships.

Goal 4: Conserve and protect the functions and values of the natural resources of Ben Hill County for future generations' appropriate use and enjoyment.

Goal 5: Ensure the highest quality living environment possible through a mixture of compatible land uses and character areas reflecting the needs and desires of the local residents and their vision for Ben Hill County. This goal shall be implemented through strict enforcement of the zoning ordinances and building codes, based on the objectives and policies that follow.

Goal 6: Ensure that needed community facilities such as water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, and EMS are provided in an effective, environmentally sound, safe, and economic system, consistent with present demand and future growth.

Goal 7: Provide a safe and efficient transportation system which addresses the future needs of Ben Hill County for movement of people and freight, while taking into consideration the social, economic, energy, and environmental effects of that transportation system.

2. Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities listed in this section were developed through discussions with stakeholders and residents; from the experiences of stakeholders and residents; through analysis of statistical data and information; and through review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities identified in the Greater Ben Hill County 2031 Comprehensive Plan. Each of the following issues and opportunities is addressed by corresponding policies in the "Community Policies" section.

Development Patterns - Housing

Issues

- Vacant parcels downtown
- Clearing of housing debris
- The area needs more diversity in housing choices
- The current zoning ordinance was developed in 1980 and was more of a boilerplate ordinance that does not meet the current needs of the community

Opportunities

- Eliminate slum/blighted old homes to create new affordable housing
- Increase the downtown infill development program
- Provide a diversity of housing choices in various geographic locations in the county

- Continue successful demolition program that demolished 300 blighted homes and constructed 450 new homes
- Continue downtown façade renovation program which has so far renovated 30 facades
- Continue to support Habitat for Humanity Fitzgerald/Ben Hill Affiliate, which has built two homes so far and will be starting another in 2010 in conjunction with the Redevelopment Plan
- Utilize the domino effect of restoration and renovation to bring in new life to investments and increased revenues
- Continue to encourage redevelopment through private/public partnerships.

Development Patterns - Land Use

Issues

- The county's small size requires that development needs to concentrate on quality of land use rather
- than quantity in order to create higher land values and growth to the tax digest
- Need to plan to minimize incompatible uses
- The area needs more dining and entertainment uses
- There is a need to instill more pride in the citizens of this county and to increase beautification efforts
- in the area
- The area needs more shopping and commercial activity

Opportunities

- Utilize more Planned Developments
- Improve planning for residential subdivisions – define where they are needed and most suitable
- Create subdivision regulations to ensure compatibility of uses
- Promote "togetherness" for a higher quality of life (clarify)
- Direct the growth to where water and sewer lines are located
- Collaboration by the City and County to plan for future utilities
- Maintain the rural quality of life
- Review and update the zoning regulations to fit the City and County better than the current ones

Resource Conservation - Cultural Resources

Issues

- Lack of a regional Historic Preservation Tourism map/guide to combine day trips into a several-day historic preservation tour.
- Continual upkeep and rehabilitation of historical and cultural resources is needed

Opportunities

- The City of Fitzgerald is a name brand for historic resources
- The Arts Council is very active
- The Grand Theatre and its relationship to the Fox Historic Theatre Group
- The Carnegie Center
- The Chicken Festival
- The Grand Homecoming is a weeklong traditional event which occurs every three years. It is a homecoming reunion of the African-American Community.
- Blue & Gray Museum
- Bryant Theological Seminary
- Evergreen Cemetery (includes burial site of original founder of the City of Fitzgerald)
- Fitzgerald Cemetery
- Westwood Cemetery
- Kiokee Cemetery
- Grand Theatre Barton Organ Society installation of historic 1926 Barton Theatre Organ
- Encourage and promote participation in the Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails program
- Regional cultural coordination with such area attractions as the Tifton Agrirama
- Currently archaeological research is being conducted on a campsite of Hernando DeSoto along the Altamaha River

Resource Conservation - Natural Resources

Issues

- The natural resources in the county are not sufficiently marketed
- Mixing private and public rights of using the river shorelines
- Lack of “No Polluting” education and awareness for recreational users of the local rivers
- Lack of marketing of agricultural and natural resources of the county

Opportunities

- Ben Hill County has a good supply of ground/drinking water
- Create a long range utility plan to protect groundwater sources
- Ocmulgee River
- Bird Viewing Area behind the Hospital
- Promote the use of Paulk Park, including the wetlands walking trail and the bird sanctuary
- Hunting Land
- There are several Wildlife Management Areas that are in driving distance
- Promote the two Wildlife Preserves of Horse Creek and Mobley Bluff
- Promote the use of existing public fishing docks
- Investigate the potential for an Agricultural Arena to promote the area’s agricultural resources

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

- Water and sewer line expansions are needed in the county
- SR 107 needs to be four-laned as the main access to I-75
- The transportation system needs to be better utilized (clarify)
- The area lacks recreation opportunities for young people, especially teenagers
- The area lacks transportation opportunities for transportation disadvantaged residents

Opportunities

- Create a long range utility plan to protect groundwater sources
- Ben Hill County has a large water capacity
- Ben Hill County has water and sewer lines in place for future development
- Continue to maintain and improve the existing EMS services
- Create an advisory Board for EMS
- Develop a cohesive comprehensive Emergency Plan
- There is a good quality school system
- There is a good quality education system
- Create an assessment survey for public transportation
- Provide a public transportation system
- The airport is an asset for the community
- Senior citizens’ center is state of the art
- The railroad spur connections are good for the area

Economic Development

Issues

- The county is not retaining its young people
- Young families are not attracted by the pay structure and are therefore moving out of the county
- Loss of the locally educated workforce
- Increased promotion of the Hospital is needed, in order to attract more retirees to the area
- Growth and development have slowed considerably due to the economic situation
- Most jobs have low-paying salaries
- High unemployment rate

- The City and County do not have enough tax revenue
- The area is not retaining or attracting enough young professionals
- The area needs more commercial retail facilities
- The hospital has financial problems and steps need to be taken to keep the hospital operating in the area to preserve a minimum quality of life
- The State has a misconception of the area and its needs, especially when federal funds are passed through the State

Opportunities

- The area, with its slower pace and peace, can be promoted as a good retirement area
- Attract more technology industry with higher salaries
- Provide more support and development for agriculture (ag-economy)
- Increase & improve public education to create a better workforce
- Continue the Literacy Program (certified literacy community)
- Work Ready Program
- Increase recruitment of businesses, especially biomass or other alternative energy/fuel industry
- Expand the tax digest by attracting more business and increasing property values
- Attract emergency housing construction industry
- Utilize the airport to attract more industry and better workforce
- Create a technology center to provide assistance to area businesses
- Utilize and improve on the existing timber, cotton, and soybean industries
- Encourage the local banks to offer their good mortgage programs
- City and County are entrepreneurial friendly
- Promote the area as a sportsman's paradise
- Retain the hospital to attract business
- Promote the area's quality school system, from Pre-K to College
- Promote the area's planted pine timber industry
- Promote the area's easy railroad access
- Promotion of Millennium Technology Pointe Park adjacent to ECTC/Wiregrass Tech

Governmental Relations

Issues

- The city and county need to work together to annex some properties
- The city, county, and school system need to work together better
- Relationships with neighbor to the south could be improved
- Increasing regionalization of services is a problem (longer commutes, loss of control over opportunities)
- Coordination with the State

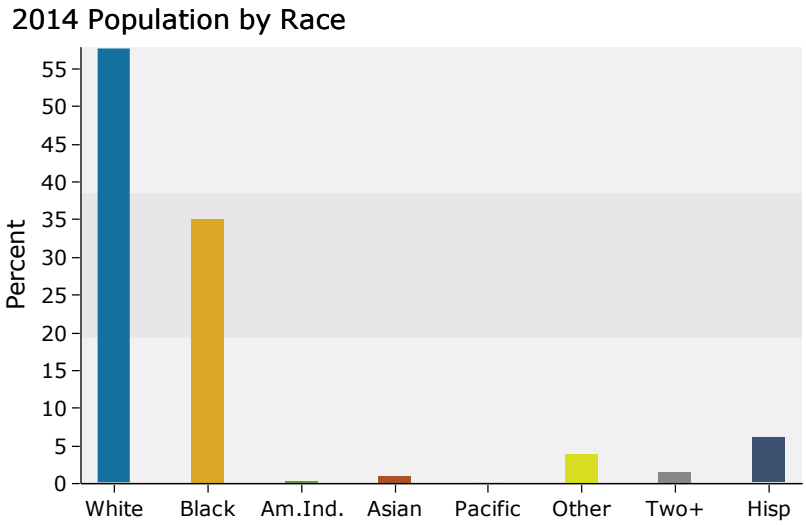
Opportunities

- Increased outreach to involve people and recruit volunteers
- Collaboration by the City and County to plan for future utilities
- The Community has good leadership
- The Mayor's office has an open door policy
- Establish closer coordination with the Hospital Authority through a hospital agreement.
- Establish a dialogue with Tift County and Coffee County (City of Tifton and City of Douglas) to coordinate services in ways that eliminate duplication of services and encourage services to complement each other

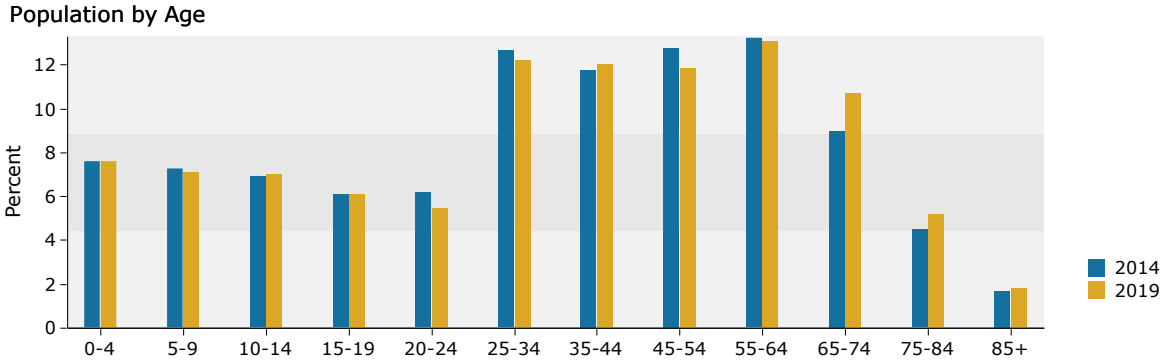
3. Analysis of Data and Information

Ben Hill County

The 2014 population of Ben Hill County is 17,685. The estimated increase for 2019 is 0.02%, indicating barely any change in population. There are 6,836 households and 4,731 families, with an average of 2.54 people per household. 57.9 percent of the population is White and 35.0 percent is Black; other races make up 7 percent of the population. 6.2 percent is of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (regardless of race).

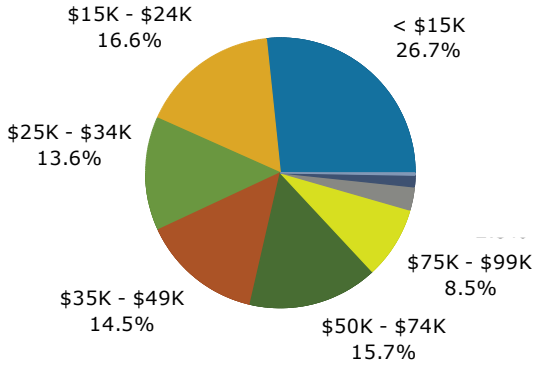


27.9 percent of the county's population is 19 or younger, 56.8 percent is between 20 and 64, and 15.2 percent is 65 or older. By 2019, the proportion of seniors (65+) in Ben Hil County is expected to increase slightly (to 17.7 percent), and only very slight changes are expected in other age groups. The median age in Ben Hill County is 37.1.



The median household income in Ben Hill County is $29,206, the average household income is $39,036, and the per capita income is $15,148. According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, 29.2 percent of households have income below the poverty level.

2014 Household Income



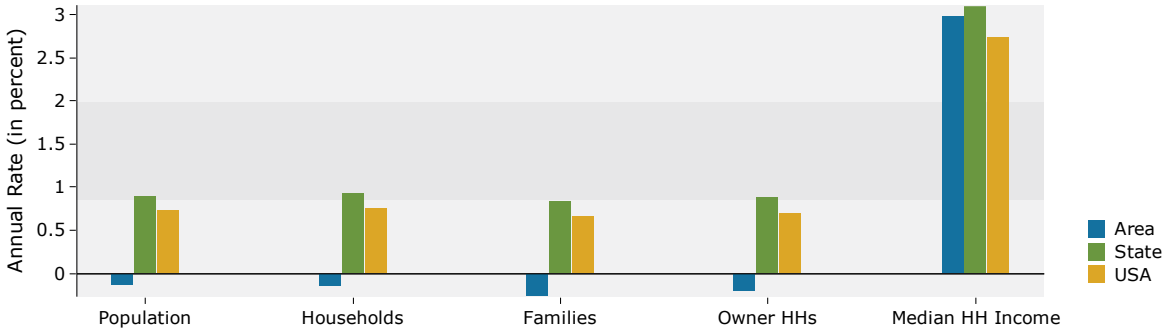
According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, among people age 25 or older in Ben Hill County, 10.4 percent have a bachelor's or higher degree; 6.8 percent have an associate's degree; 65 percent have a high school diploma or GED but no higher degree; and 24.5 percent have no high school diploma or GED.

Among workers age 16+ in Ben Hill County, 18.2 percent have a commute that takes 30 minutes or more each way; 58.7 percent take between 10 and 29 minutes to get to work; and 23.2 percent have a commute lasting less than 10 minutes. 78.6 percent of workers drive alone to work, 15.2 percent carpool, and 2.1 percent walk or bike. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the labor force in Ben Hill County averaged 6,392 people in 2013, and the unemployment rate was 11.1 percent.

There are 8,026 housing units in Ben Hill County. 50.5 percent of housing units are owner-occupied, 34.6 percent are rentals, and 14.8 percent are vacant. Among the owner-occupied housing units, 70.1 percent are valued at less than $100,000, 24.9 percent are valued at between $100,000 and $200,000, and 4.9 percent are valued at more than $200,000. The median value is $72,818 and the average value is $91,704.

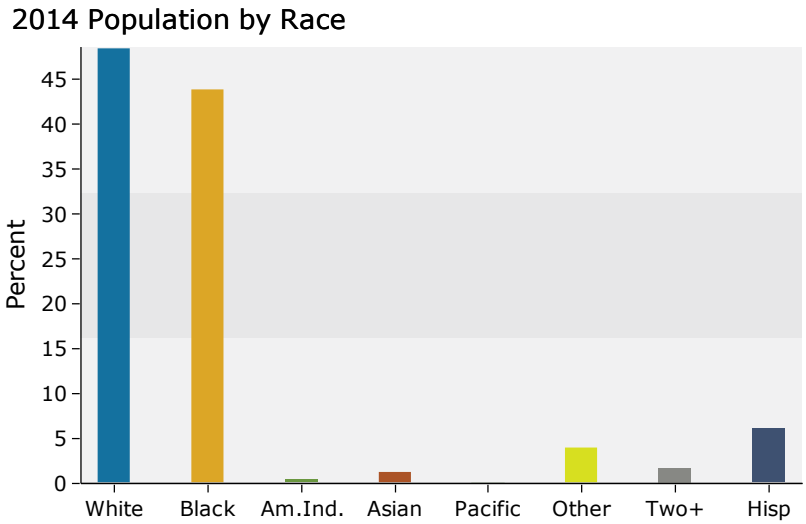
By 2019, Ben Hill County is projected to see almost no change in the total population and in the number of households, families, and owner-occupied households. By contrast, a slight increase in these metrics is projected for the State of Georgia and for the nation as a whole. Median household income is expected to increase at a slightly higher rate than the levels predicted for Georgia and for the nation.

Trends 2014-2019

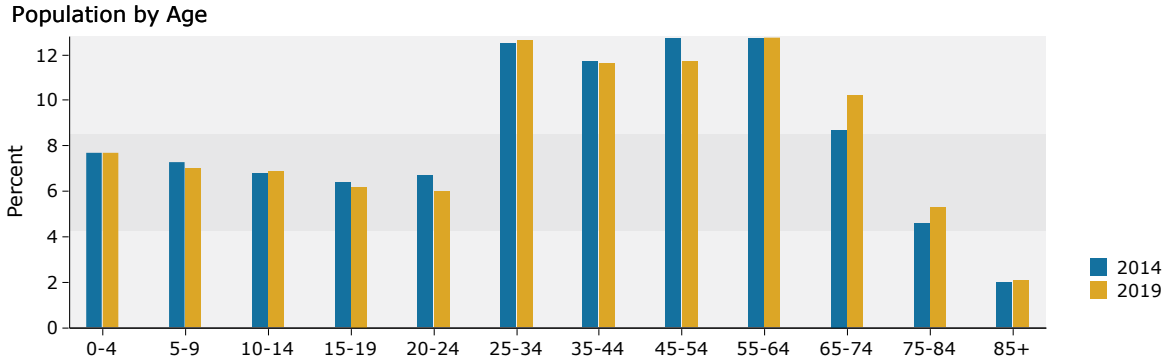


City of Fitzgerald

The 2014 population of Fitzgerald is 8,986. The estimated change for 2019 is -0.14%. There are 3,520 households and 2,317 families, with an average of 2.49 people per household. 48.6 percent of the population is White and 43.9 percent is Black; other races make up 7.5 percent of the population. 6.1 percent is of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (regardless of race).

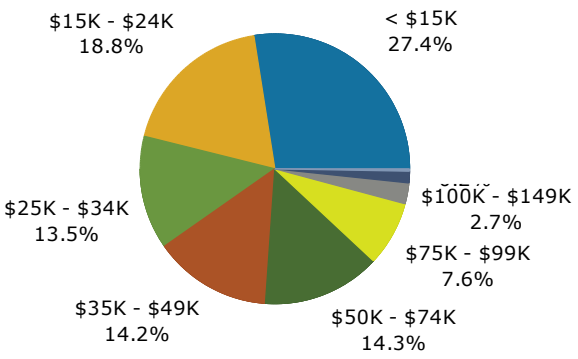


28.2 percent of the city's population is 19 or younger, 56.3 percent is between 20 and 64, and 15.3 percent is 65 or older. By 2019, the proportion of seniors (65+) in Fitzgerald is expected to increase slightly (to 17.6 percent), and other age groups are expected to change only by small amounts. The median age in Fitzgerald is 37.2.



The median household income in Fitzgerald is $27,274, the average household income is $37,089, and the per capita income is $14,528. According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, 36.6 percent of households have income below the poverty level.

2014 Household Income



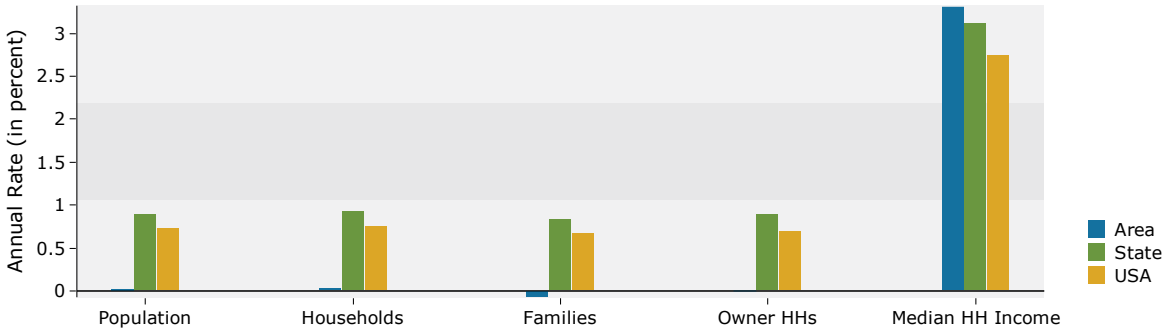
According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, among people age 25 or older in Fitzgerald, 11.8 percent have a bachelor's or higher degree; 5.7 percent have an associate's degree; 58.1 percent have a high school diploma or GED but no higher degree; and 24.4 percent have no high school diploma or GED.

Among workers age 16+ in Fitzgerald, 19.1 percent have a commute that takes 30 minutes or more each way; 53.8 percent take between 10 and 29 minutes to get to work; and 27 percent have a commute lasting less than 10 minutes. 79 percent of workers drive alone to work, 14.2 percent carpool, and 3.7 percent walk or bike.

There are 4,121 housing units in Fitzgerald. 43.9 percent of housing units are owner-occupied, 41.5 percent are rentals, and 14.6 percent are vacant. Among the owner-occupied housing units, 71.4 percent are valued at less than $100,000, 22.8 percent are valued at between $100,000 and $200,000, and 5.9 percent are valued at more than $200,000. The median value is $74,028 and the average value is $98,190.

By 2019, Fitzgerald is projected to see very little change in the total population and in the number of households, families, and owner-occupied households. By contrast, a slight increase in these metrics is projected for the State of Georgia and for the nation as a whole. Median household income is expected to increase at a slightly higher rate than the levels predicted for Georgia and for the nation.

Trends 2014-2019



4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has crafted a series of objectives dealing with a broad range of issues that concern local governments. The objectives, which are listed below, are only recommendations, but provide local governments with a tool to guide them in the assessment of their needs and opportunities and in the development of their implementation activities. If they are used as such a tool by many of the local governments in their planning efforts, these objectives also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals, which may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents.

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; and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

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.

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.

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, and 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

5. Community Policies

The following policies, numbered to align with the Community Goals, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide a qualitative guidance to address the Issues and Opportunities identified in this Plan, and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Issues and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

1. Population

POPULATION GOAL: Ensure that overall community growth and development benefits all segments of the population.

<u>Population Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: LOSS OF YOUNG PEOPLE & YOUNG FAMILIES**
  The county is not retaining its young people, nor are young families attracted by the pay structure.

  Policy 1.1: Coordinate with local businesses and agencies to identify ways to attract and retain more young workforce age population to the area.

  Policy 1.2: Upgrade existing recreational facilities and services, and provide additional facilities and services such as parks, fields, daycare services, etc.

  Policy 1.3: Encourage safe neighborhood designs and active police and neighborhood patrols and watches.

  Policy 1.4: Market the county and the city as safe places to live, work and play.

  Policy 1.5: Work with the School Board, Technical College, local churches and foundations to identify ways to improve the local schools.

- **ISSUE: ATTRACTING RETIREES**
  As more and more retirees reconsider traditional retirement areas such as Florida, the county should focus on attracting these new and relocated retirees.

  Policy 1.6: Identify facilities and services that will attract retirees and older populations to the area, and market the community as a great place to retire, highlighting those facilities and services and the quiet and historic setting, including the Senior Citizens Center.

  Policy 1.7: Work with the Area Agency on Aging to assist local seniors with necessary services.

  Policy 1.8: Work with the hospital to promote the hospital facility and to attract more retirees to the area.

  Policy 1.9: Work with the Area Agency on Aging and the Chamber of Commerce to attract more Adult Daycare, Assisted Living Facilities and elderly care facilities to the county.

2. Economic Development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL: Improve the local economy by capitalizing on new and existing opportunities that will draw new and expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy and help the county compete in the regional economy.

<u>Economic Development Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: SLOW GROWTH**
  Growth and development have slowed considerably due to the economic situation.

Policy 2.1: Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority to identify new target industries that will help diversify the local economy, and work together to recruit those businesses to the area.

Policy 2.2: Encourage the formation of public/private partnerships between the City, the County, local businesses and the School Board for the identification and securing of new businesses in the area.

Policy 2.3: Encourage the redevelopment of greyfields and brownfields within the community.

Policy 2.4: Continue to support industrial development within Millennium Technology Pointe and other industrial areas within the County.

Policy 2.5: Promote the area's good quality of life on the website and within all marketing materials which may be funded through a Georgia Tourism grant.

- **ISSUE: LOW PAY**
  Most jobs have low-paying salaries

Policy 2.6: Work with the Chamber of Commerce and the Development Authority to identify high tech and high pay industries to direct marketing efforts toward.

Policy 2.7: Coordinate with the local college to identify opportunities to develop high tech industries and technologies within the area, and to train the local students for high tech jobs.

Policy 2.8: Work with the hospital on any new hospital facility expansion or growth to increase healthcare industry jobs.

Policy 2.9: Promote the low cost of living in all marketing and promotional materials for the city and the county.

- **ISSUE: HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT**
  The unemployment rate is exceptionally high, even given the current economic downturn.

Policy 2.10: Identify ways to expand marketing efforts throughout the state to attract more jobs to the area.

Policy 2.11: Work with the surrounding counties to identify ways the region as a whole can attract new businesses to the area.

- **ISSUE: LACK OF TAX REVENUE**
  The City and County do not have enough tax revenue

Policy 2.12: Explore ways to revise the County's tax collection system through increased use of computer programs and software.

Policy 2.13: Have an existing staff member trained in the identification and procurement of public grants and loans to help supplement the tax revenues.

Policy 2.14: Research other means to collect additional revenues.

- **ISSUE: ATTRACT AND RETAIN YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**
  The area is not attracting or retaining enough young professionals

Policy 2.15: Market the community on college and university campuses and at job fairs throughout the area and the state.

Policy 2.16: Develop facilities, services (primarily parks and recreation facilities and services) and events for active young people and families.

- **ISSUE: MORE COMMERCIAL FACILITIES**
  The area needs more commercial retail facilities

  Policy 2.17: Develop an online marketing campaign and update the count y and city website.

  Policy 2.18: Advertise the community to national businesses through key industry periodicals and magazine advertisement.

  Policy 2.19: Actively seek out and directly contact target industries.

  Policy 2.20: Develop a set of incentives for the location of shopping and commercial businesses to locate within the downtown area and Ben Hill County, and advertise and promote the incentives through the city and county websites and the Chamber of Commerce.

  Policy 2.21: Encourage infill development throughout the City of Fitzgerald.

- **ISSUE: STATE'S MISCONCEPTION**
  Need to encourage the State to be sensitive to the needs of the city and the county, especially when federal funds are passed through the state.

  Policy 2.22: Actively seek out opportunities to participate in state pilot programs and new procedures to help familiarize state officials with Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald and all the area's opportunities and issues.

  Policy 2.23: Attend online and onsite state meetings and actively participate in discussions.

  Policy 2.24: Work with state and regional agencies to develop more local and on-line training opportunities for local board and authority members.

- **ISSUE: LOSS OF EDUCATED WORKFORCE**
  The county is losing its locally educated workforce.

  Policy 2.25: Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority to identify target industries and recruit new businesses to the area.

  Policy 2.26: Maintain and expand the inventory of available land suitable for development to facilitate the location of new businesses within the county.

  Policy 2.27: Market the County's status as a Work Ready community, and continue to maintain the status.

- **ISSUE: VACANT PARCELS DOWNTOWN**
  The downtown Fitzgerald area has several vacant parcels.

  Policy 2.28: Amend the land use regulations to allow smaller homes to be developed on small parcels (5,000 sf lots) within the downtown Fitzgerald area.

  Policy 2.29: Promote the development of the downtown area through marketing and incentives.

3. **Housing**

HOUSING GOAL: Provide opportunities for homeownership and housing resources for all citizens of Greater Ben Hill County through public/private partnerships.

Housing Issues & Policies

- **ISSUE: CLEARING HOUSING DEBRIS**
-

Many of the older, foreclosed or abandoned homes within the City are littered with debris on the inside and the outside.

Policy 3.1: Continue to participate in the Georgia Community Housing Program, and promote the rehabilitation of housing through existing programs.

Policy 3.2: Utilize local youth, underemployed and Community Service workers to clear housing debris on publicly owned properties.

Policy 3.3: Support Code Enforcement efforts to require the cleanup of debris from residential neighborhoods on private property.

- **ISSUE: DIVERSITY OF HOUSING CHOICES**
A greater diversity of housing choices for people of all incomes and abilities is needed.

Policy 3.4: Encourage quality and affordable housing for all ages and economic groups.

Policy 3.5: Encourage support businesses such as grocery stores to locate within close proximity to residential neighborhoods to attract more quality housing choices.

Policy 3.6: Encourage development and use of second story apartments over commercial businesses within the downtown area.

4. **Natural Resources**

NATURAL RESOURCES GOAL: Conserve and protect the functions and values of the natural resources of Greater Ben Hill County for future generations appropriate use and enjoyment.

Natural Resources Issues & Policies

- **ISSUE: LACK OF MARKETING**
Ben Hill County has insufficient marketing of value –added agricultural and natural resources, and agri-tourism within the county.

Policy 4.1: Develop a page on the county website to highlight the agricultural lands and products, and the natural resources of the county.

Policy 4.2: Develop and distribute a magazine describing the recreational opportunities within Ben Hill County and distribute the pamphlet throughout the region.

Policy 4.3: Promote the local farmer's market.

- **ISSUE: PUBLIC VS PRIVATE USE RIGHTS OF RIVER SHORELINES**
Public access to the river shorelines sometimes creates conflicts with private property owners.

Policy 4.4: Seek state and federal grants for the purchase of riverfront properties to provide public access.

Policy 4.5: Include language within all signage and pamphlets on river usage regarding private property rights and respect of the land.

Policy 4.6: Support and participate in the development of the proposed Ocmulgee River Blueway plan.

- **ISSUE: POLLUTION EDUCATION FOR RIVER USERS**
  Public use of the local rivers leads to littering, dumping and can result in pollution.

Policy 4.7: Promote cleanup of the local rivers, and cleanup efforts.

Policy 4.8: Develop education materials to be distributed via the county website and through regional distribution regarding river pollution and its harmful impact on all river users.

Policy 4.9: Provide signage and trash receptacles at all river access points.

- **ISSUE: PRESERVATION OF TREES AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN FITZGERALD**
  The tree canopy within the City of Fitzgerald needs to continue to be monitored and replenished

Policy 4.10: Investigate the requirements for the development of a Green Space Master Plan for the City of Fitzgerald.

Policy 4.11: Develop and adopt a Tree Protection Ordinance for the City of Fitzgerald.

Policy 4.12: Implement a tree planting program for common space areas throughout the city.

Policy 4.13: Develop and adopt a Street Tree Ordinance requiring private developers to provide street trees along specific major public rights-of-way within the City of Fitzgerald.

- **ISSUE: PROTECTION OF COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES**
  The County's abundant natural resources are often taken for granted.

Policy 4.14: Research the costs and requirements of conducting a natural resources inventory for the county.

Policy 4.15: Develop and implement a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance and encourage the use of conservation easements for the protection of natural resources on private development.

Policy 4.16: Develop local groundwater testing requirements for rural communities within the County.

5. Cultural Resources

CULTURAL RESOURCES GOAL: Protect, preserve and promote the historic and cultural resources of Ben Hill County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.

<u>Cultural Resources Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: LACK OF A REGIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOURISM MAP**
  A regional Historic Preservation Tourism map/guide could encourage combining day trips into a several day historic preservation tour.

Policy 5.1: Update the historical resources inventory for Fitzgerald, and develop a new historical resources inventory for Ben Hill County.

Policy 5.2: Coordinate with Irwin County to identify civil war sites, structures and places of interest for potentially including in a local touring map.

Policy 5.3: Work with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission to develop a Historic Preservation map for the region.

- **ISSUE: UPKEEP AND REHABILITATION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**
  Too often local historical and cultural resources are lost to disrepair and lack of maintenance.

Policy 5.4: Continue to seek grant and loan opportunities for rehabilitation projects.

Polilcy 5.5: Consider placing major rehabilitation projects in the next SPLOST.

Policy 5.6: Partner with local churches and the private sector for minor rehabilitation and upkeep projects.

Policy 5.7: Help identify and encourage private rehabilitation through awards or recognition programs for rehabilitation and maintenance projects.

Policy 5.8: Consider hiring a Downtown Development Coordinator to take the lead on historic preservation, revitalization and development of the downtown area.

Policy 5.9: Evaluate how the county may fund and develop a countywide historic resources inventory.

6. Land Use

LAND USE GOAL: Ensure the highest quality of living environment possible through a mixture of compatible land uses and character areas reflecting the needs and desires of the local residents and their vision of Greater Ben Hill County.

<u>Land Use Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: SMALL SIZE OF COUNTY**
  The county's small size requires development to concentrate on quality of land use rather than quantity in order to create higher land values and growth to the tax digest.

Policy 6.1: Allow higher density and intensity in appropriate areas with adequate services.

Policy 6.2: Identify and map areas suitable for various types of land development.

- **ISSUE: INCOMPATIBLE USES**
  Plan to minimize incompatible uses.

Policy 6.3: Amend the land development regulations, including the zoning ordinance, to require buffers and transitional zones between incompatible uses.

Policy 6.4: Encourage the protection of existing farmland.

Policy 6.5: Research grant and funding sources for monies to develop a property purchase program to avoid major negative impacts from adjacent developments and uses.

Policy 6.6: Ensure adequate education and notification is provided to uses adjacent or close to high intensity development.

- **ISSUE: NEED MORE DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT**
  The City has insufficient dining and entertainment venues.

Policy 6.7: Target marketing to dining and entertainment industries.

Policy 6.8: Work with the Chamber of Commerce to reach out to the dining and entertainment industry.

Policy 6.9: Encourage the use of local grown products at area restaurants.

- **ISSUE: LOCAL PRIDE AND BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS**
  The citizens of this county need to develop more pride for their county and increase beautification efforts in the area.

Policy 6.10: Implement a new Street Tree Planting program and invite public participation on planting efforts on public property.

Policy 6.11: Invite public participation at local public area cleanups, with T-shirts and lunch provided.

Policy 6.12: Establish a "Keep Georgia Beautiful" affiliate for Ben Hill County.

Policy 6.13: Consider developing architectural guidelines for the downtown area, and including the guidelines within the zoning ordinance.

Policy 6.14: Encourage the undergrounding of utility lines.

Policy 6.15: Review the local sign regulations to ensure that there are adequate protections against advertising clutter.

Policy 6.16: Discourage illegal dumping along roadsides, and consider the development of an Adopt-A-Road program.

Policy 6.17: Research available grant monies for local cleanup efforts.

Policy 6.18: Encourage the development of Community Gardens on vacant infill properties within the City.

- **ISSUE: OUTDATED ZONING ORDINANCE**
  The current zoning ordinance was developed in 1980 and was more of a boilerplate ordinance that does not meet the current needs of the community.

Policy 6.21: Work with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission to adopt the updated Zoning Ordinance previously developed.

Policy 6.22: Review and revise any sections in the previously developed zoning ordinance and provide new updates.

Policy 6.23: Consider establishing minimum standards for property maintenance and upkeep in the Zoning Ordinance.

Policy 6.24: Provide for flexibility within the subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance in order to help protect the county's natural resources, allow for mixing of uses within appropriate areas and encourage infill development.

Policy 6.25: Implement the land use goal through strict enforcement of the zoning ordinances and building codes.

7. Community Facilities and Services

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL: Ensure needed community facilities such as water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire and EMS are provided in an effective, environmentally sound, safe and economic system, consistent and concurrent with present demand

and future growth.

<u>Community Facilities and Services Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSIONS**
  Water and sewer line expansions are needed in the county.

  Policy 7.1: Identify and prioritize all water and sewer infrastructure needs.

  Policy 7.2: Consider developing regulations that would require developers to provide all project related infrastructure concurrent with development.

  Policy 7.3: Continue to research all state and federal grant opportunities, including the Georgia Fund Loan Program, the Clean Water Revolving Loan fund and the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan fund for infrastructure funding opportunities.

- **ISSUE: FOUR-LANING SR 107**
  SR 107 needs to be four-laned as the main access to I-75.

  Policy 7.4: Continue emphasizing the need to four lane SR 107 to the Georgia Department of Transportation, and seek opportunities to meet with state officials.

  Policy 7.5: Encourage the provision of interconnectivity, shared access and pedestrian connections along all roads.

- **ISSUE: BETTER UTILIZATION OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**
  The transportation system needs to be better utilized.

  Policy 7.6: Identify areas where there is sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development, and which will result in more efficient use of the existing road network.

  Policy 7.7: Research ways to improve downtown parking and traffic circulation, and provide traffic calming devices and techniques in the downtown area.

  Policy 7.8: Continue to update and implement the Strategic Transportation Program for the City of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County.

- **ISSUE: MORE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**
  The area lacks recreation opportunities for young people, specifically teens.

  Policy 7.9: Amend the zoning ordinance to require sidewalks to connect.

  Policy 7.10: Seek more funding for parks and recreation facilities.

  Policy 7.11: Consider requiring developers to provide recreational facilities to serve their development.

  Policy 7.12: Seek ways to combine parks and recreation projects with other public services and facilities projects.

- **ISSUE: TRANSPORTATION-DISADVANTAGED NEEDS**
  The area lacks transportation opportunities for transportation-disadvantaged residents.

  Policy 7.13: Seek funding for the development of more bicycle and pedestrian facilities on public property, and encourage private developers to install bicycle and pedestrian facilities on their properties.

  Policy 7.14: Continue to work with other jurisdictions and the Regional Commission on a public transit system.

Policy 7.14: Ensure that all existing and new developments know of the requirements for ADA accessibility at their properties and facilities.

Policy 7.16: Continue to participate in all local and regional efforts to develop public transportation within the region.

Policy 7.17: Research potential funding opportunities for the development of a local elderly public transportation system.

- **ISSUE: FINANCIAL ISSUES WITH THE HOSPITAL**
  The hospital has financial problems and steps need to be taken to keep the hospital in the area for a minimum quality of life.

Policy 7.18: Coordinate with the hospital to identify ways to address their financial issues.

Policy 7.19: Offer to help the hospital develop a plan to secure the hospital's financial future.

Policy 7.20: Explore the potential for the consolidation and division of services with adjacent hospitals to increase cost effectiveness, avoid duplication, and provide better services.

8. Intergovernmental Coordination

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION GOAL: Establish effective coordination measures among all pertinent public and quasi-public entities to best maintain Greater Ben Hill County's quality of life and resources.

<u>Intergovernmental Coordination Issues and Policies</u>

- **ISSUE: CITY AND COUNTY COORDINATION ON ANNEXATIONS**
  The City and County need to work together on future annexations.

Policy 8.1: Develop a joint City of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County annexation work group.

- **ISSUE: CITY, COUNTY AND SCHOOL SYSTEM COORDINATION**
  The City, County and the school system need to work together better.

Policy 8.2: Invite the School Board to attend all city and county workshops and public hearings and ensure that a city and county representative attends all School Board meetings.

Policy 8.3: Appoint a member of the School Board to the County Planning and Zoning Board with or without voting privileges.

- **ISSUE: IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING COUNTIES**
  Relationships with the surrounding jurisdictions could be improved.

Policy 8.4: Encourage and facilitate regular contact between the corresponding departments from Ben Hill and each of the surrounding counties, as well as all relevant state, local and regional agencies such as Department of Families and Children, the Wellness Council, Social Services, etc.

Policy 8.5: Hold regular meetings between key staff of Ben Hill County and the surrounding jurisdictions.

- **ISSUE: INCREASING REGIONALIZATION OF SERVICES**
  As regionalization of services increases, need to ensure that Ben Hill County is at the forefront of the provision of services.

  Policy 8.6: Research ways to improve the provision of public services at a regional level.

  Policy 8.7: Identify grants and loans to develop and enhance local services.

- **ISSUE: INCREASED COORDINATION WITH STATE**
  There needs to be more coordination with state agencies and representatives.

  Policy 8.8: Attend all state sponsored meetings and events.

  Policy 8.9: Participate in state training sessions.

  Policy 8.10: Participate in state sponsored local and regional planning efforts.

6. Community Work Program

Ben Hill County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments
(2011 - 2015)

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Support the preservation/reuse of historic schools identified in the Regional Historic Schools Initiative/Multiple Property Register Nomination		x	x	x	x	x
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Continue to support the Joint City/County Economic Development director position		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support JDA in development of Millennium Technology Pointe		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to coordinate with the Georgia Wiregrass Technical College on joint Economic Development projects.		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Development Authority/Joint Economic Development Authority				x	x	
Prepare and maintain an inventory of incentives, business programs, housing stock and available sites to accommodate new businesses and business expansions, and provide the list on the county website.			x			
Develop a guidebook for development that describes the local development process and provides useful information to potential new businesses regarding zoning, site plan approval, permitting and potential incentives.			x			
HOUSING						
Continue to foster and support the rehabilitation/reconstruction of affordable housing		x	x	x	x	x
LAND USE						
Continue to coordinate zoning ordinance administration and enforcement with the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Planning Advisory Commission		x	x	x	x	x
Update the County's Zoning Ordinance		x				
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Transportation:						
Repave County Roads using $2.0 million of SPLOST funds		x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 319 through Ben Hill County		x	x	x	x	x
Promote 4 laning SR 129 to Ocilla		x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 107 to Interstate 75		x	x	x	x	x
Parks & Recreation:						
Upgrades to existing parks and recreation facilities		x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Develop a multi-purpose sports facility at Paulk Park		x	x	x		
Miscellaneous:						
Airport Improvements: Runway extension and Expand Apron; Install MALS-F & PAPI's systems		x	x	x	x	x
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Prepare grant/loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, LDF, etc) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority		x	x	x	x	x
Annually re-evaluate the Ben Hill County Short Term Work Program		x	x	x	x	x
Participate in all amendments/mediation to the 2025 Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan		x	x	x	x	x
Continue exploration of functional cooperation with Fitzgerald		x	x	x	x	x

Fitzgerald 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments
(2011 - 2015)

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Support the preservation/reuse of historic schools identified in the Regional Historic Schools Initiative/Multiple Property Register Nomination		x	x	x	x	x
Develop Downtown Master Plan		x	x	x	x	x
Pursue redevelopment of the Aldine Hotel		x	x	x	x	x
Continue support of DDA, HPC		x	x	x	x	x
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Continue to promote the Façade		x	x	x	x	x
Rehab Program to attract and maintain Downtown businesses		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Joint City/County Economic Development director position		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support JDA in development of Millennium Technology Pointe		x	x	x	x	x
Expand tourism initiative through additional regional cooperation, Grand Theater and Conference Center, fire museum, new museums, scheduled events, and recruitment of complementary Downtown businesses		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to coordinate with the Wiregrass Georgia Technical College on joint economic development projects.		x	x	x	x	x
Apply for expanded water pumping permit		x	x	x	x	x
Seek local electrical generating capacity through traditional generation, alternative generation and/or gas turbine		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Development Authority/Joint Economic Development Authority		x	x	x	x	x
Continue acquisition, rehabilitation, sale, and leasing of Downtown buildings for redevelopment purposes		x	x	x	x	x
HOUSING						
Continue to use HOME, USDA, DCA, NSP, LIHTC and other available Programs		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to clear derelict property and reestablish housing in the City's redevelopment area.		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to refine code enforcement efforts regarding rental housing properties.		x	x	x	x	x
LAND USE						
Continue to coordinate zoning ordinance administration/enforcement with the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Planning Advisory Commission		x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Continue to review Subdivision & Zoning Ordinances for Opportunities to promote Smart Growth and remove barriers to affordable housing		x	x	x	x	x
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Miscellaneous:		x	x	x	x	x
Jaycee Stadium improvements		x	x	x	x	x
Engage the Regional Board regarding the State Transportation Plan		x	x	x	x	x
Renovate A, B & A Depot for preservation and flexible space generation.		x	x	x	x	x
Review existing services for better productivity, pro-activity and fee based operation where possible		x	x	x	x	x
Airport Improvements: Runway extension and Expand Apron; Install MALS-F & PAPI's systems		x	x	x	x	x
Parks and Recreation:		x	x	x	x	x
Upgrades to existing parks and recreation facilities		x	x	x	x	x
Transportation:		x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 319 through Ben Hill County		x	x	x	x	x
Promote 4 laning SR 129 to Ocilla		x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 107 to Interstate 75		x	x	x	x	x
Resurface approximately 25 miles of city streets; Associated transportation improvements: sidewalks, parking, and storm drainage right-of-way.		x	x	x	x	x
Continue to study and implement downtown parking solutions.		x	x	x	x	x
Wastewater System:		x	x	x	x	x
Engage with the Regional Water Board		x	x	x	x	x
Coordinate with Fitzgerald Water, Light and Bond regarding sewer system for annexations		x	x	x	x	x
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Prepare grant/loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, LDF, etc) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority		x	x	x	x	x
Annually re-evaluate the Fitzgerald Short Term Work Program		x	x	x	x	x
Participate in all amendments/mediation to the 2025 Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan		x	x	x	x	x
Continue exploration of functional cooperation with Ben Hill County		x	x	x	x	x

Ben Hill County 5-Year Community Work Program Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
HOUSING									
LAND USE									
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES									
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									

Fitzgerald 5-Year Community Work Program Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
HOUSING									
LAND USE									
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES									
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									

7. Economic Development Element

The 2013-2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), developed by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) under a grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, is hereby incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Plan to serve as the Economic Development Element for Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald.

The SGRC's CEDS was designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The SGRC CEDS analyzes the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, a regional plan of action, investment priorities, and funding sources.

As a performance-based plan, this CEDS plays a critical role in adapting to global economic conditions by fully utilizing the region's unique advantages. This approach will maximize economic opportunity for the region's residents by attracting private investment that creates jobs. The SGRC CEDS is a regionally-owned strategy that is the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with regional public- and private-sector participation. This plan sets forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the Southern Georgia region and clearly defines the measures of success.

The Southern Georgia CEDS gives an overview of the region, briefly describing geography, population, economy, labor and workforce development and use, education, transportation access, environment, and regional resources. It reviews the state of the regional economy and provides a list of achievable Goals and Objectives for the region, a Plan of Action to ensure success, and Performance Measures used to evaluate the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's successful development and implementation of the 2013-2018 CEDS. Implementation of the goals identified in this plan is significant to the economic future of the SGRC District.

Policies, issues and opportunities, and Short-term Work Program implementation strategies located in the current Comprehensive Plans for each of our 18 county region were used extensively to develop the CEDS Goals and Objectives, Vital Projects, and Problems and Opportunities.

Included below are goals and objectives from the CEDS that are aligned with the current economic development goals of Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald:

Goal:
Improve/upgrade the educational levels and labor force skills within the region.

Objective:
Develop and support community-based efforts to address improved educational levels and labor force skills.

Objective:
Support the continued improvement of the educational system in addressing educational/skills improvement and ensure WIA coordination.

Goal:
A well-trained, professional, technical, and skilled workforce, capable of accommodating new industry and maintaining existing industry.

Objective:
Improve educational attainment by reducing high school dropout rates.

Goal:
Public services and facilities adequate to accommodate existing and future growth.

Objective:
Industrial parks/properties with all necessary infrastructure and transportation links, to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.

Objective:
Availability of speculatively built and other buildings to attract new and expanding businesses and industries in the region.

Objective:
Availability of adequate financing and/or financial incentives to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.

Goal:
Maintenance and improvement of existing and future housing and the elimination of the region's substandard housing conditions.

Objective:
Assist local governments with the development of a Building Inspection Program.

Objective:
Encourage local governments to participate in CHIP, CDBG,, and USDA housing programs.

Objective:
Work with local governments to develop ordinances for manufactured home usage and placement.

Goal:
Provide affordable housing options for low- to moderate-income persons.

Objective:
Develop homebuyer programs for low- to moderate-income persons

Goal:
Conservation, maintenance, and improvement of existing/future housing and neighborhoods, and the elimination of substandard housing conditions in the region.

Objective:
All cities and counties should be encouraged to establish and maintain an annual housing condition inventory, and to adopt or revise and update building and housing codes, using applicable state or national models.

Objective:
All substandard housing units that are inventoried and suited for rehabilitation should be scheduled for rehabilitation in a manner consistent with the local comprehensive plan.

8. Land Use Element

Character Areas

<u>Agriculture Character Area</u>

Description
The Agriculture character area designation in Greater Ben Hill County is intended for those areas outside of the urban area which are associated with agricultural farmoperations and related activities, forestry, natural resource conservation, groundwater recharge areas, and very low-density residential development accessory to agricultural or farm operations of varying sizes. Many of these agriculturally utilized lands are under the 10-year conservation designation through the Tax Assessor, and therefore will not be available for development for those years.

Predominant Land Uses
Agriculture and related activities, forestry, conservation, groundwater recharge areas, and very low-density residential development.

Vision for the Future
Preserve farming and conservation options as a viable and important part of Ben Hill County industry by maintaining very low density residential development primarily accessory to farm operations and right-to-farm principles. Use of conservation easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas should be encouraged. Roadways in these areas should be widened only when required to meet public safety standards.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 1: Economic Prosperity
Objective 2: Resource Management
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - General Farming (G-F)
    - Rural Residential (R-R)
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Establish Conservation Subdivision Development Approval Process

- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Provide for buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural uses
    - Allow Conservation Easements to be provided

Commercial Character Area

Description
The Commercial character area consists mainly of larger-scale commercial uses, which are less compatible with residential areas due to the size of their lots and buildings, location on major roadways, and heavy traffic volumes created by the regional draw of the businesses.

Predominant Land Uses
These areas include a wide variety of both established and newer commercial uses.

Vision for the Future
Encourage and maintain higher-intensity commercial areas that are less compatible with residential areas due to their high traffic volumes and automobile-oriented character. Promote a greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve industry employees) to reduce on-site automobile reliance/use.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 1: Economic Prosperity
Objective 4: Local Preparedness
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
  - Professional (P)
  - Community Commercial (CC)
  - General Business (G-B)
  - Wholesale-Light Industrial (WLI)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
  - Provide for flexibility in design standards to allow infill development to take place
  - Provide for regulations to address property maintenance as well as public health, welfare and safety issues.
  - Provide for public/private partnerships to construct and rehabilitate quality commercial and mixed use development.

Downtown Commercial Core Character Area

Description
This is the area within the City of Fitzgerald where public, institutional, and commercial development originally occurred, due to its location along major transportation corridors and at a major intersection. The Downtown Fitzgerald area is located along US Highways 129 and 319 at the intersection of GA Highway 107 and GA Highway 90. As the original site of city development, this area contains most of the county's major cultural and historic buildings and sites, and therefore requires special attention to ensure its preservation.

Predominant Land Uses
City services, entertainment, commercial recreation, traditional Main Street businesses, mixed-use buildings, business support services, urban neighborhoods, and traditional older, stable neighborhoods.

Vision for the Future
Preserve, restore, and reuse historic buildings. Improve the environment for private investment and development. Expand green and civic spaces. Mix land uses and control building typology. Implement a balance of transportation options and design.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 1: Economic Prosperity
Objective 3: Efficient Land Use
Objective 5: Sense of Place
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - Multiple Residential (MR)
    - Professional (P)
    - Community Commercial (CC)
    - General Business (G-B) *(Only allow this Zoning District in the Downtown Fitzgerald Commercial character area along major corridors where general commercial characteristics are already existing and new General Business designations would not detrimentally affect the adjacent residential areas.)*

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Provide for a downtown development coordinator to take the lead on the historic preservation, revitalization and development of this character area

- Provide flexibility in zoning to encourage residential and commercial infill development as well as appropriate mix of uses including higher densities which will allow the roots of a traditional neighborhood to appear
- Provide for incentives to attract private investors and encourage public/private partnerships including financial and density bonuses
- Provide for pedestrian connections and increased walk ability
- Encourage attractive designs, art and landscaping to increase attractiveness of place including architectural design guidelines
- Provide for underground utilities wherever possible
- Provide for traffic circulation and parking that will assist business without detracting from pedestrian experience
- Provide for sign regulations that control visual clutter and prohibit billboards
- Provide for traffic calming improvements to increase traffic safety in the older neighborhoods and encourage the streets as a social gathering space.

Historic Residential Character Area

Description
Located within the historic city 16-by-16-block square, this area is composed of predominantly older residential structures dating back to the 1930s and beyond. The houses, buildings, and properties of these areas are often of historic and of architectural significance, and are located on small lots laid out in a grid pattern.

Predominant Land Uses
Residential, with some smaller schools and churches mixed in, as well as some very limited neighborhood commercial.

Vision for the Future
Protect existing historic structures through the use of incentives and requirements for review and approval of modifications. Promote the preservation of deteriorating historic structures through rehabilitation programs. Ensure neighboring uses do not diminish the historic character of the area through setback and buffering requirements for new development.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 5: Sense of Place
Objective 7: Housing Options
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-6, R-9, R-22)
    - Multiple Residential (MR)
    - Community Commercial (CC)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Provide for very limited commercial businesses at neighborhood scale, and no “big box” development.
    - Provide flexibility to mix compatible uses in order to minimize impacts on infrastructure and maximize use of available space.

Industrial Character Area

Description
This area consists of predominantly industrial uses, with some public/institutional and agricultural mixed in. Of special note is the location of the historic Evergreen Cemetery at Evergreen and Ben Hill Drive within this character area. Overall, the area serves as the City's primary industrial lands. The Ocilla Highway, Frank Road, Evergreen Road, and the old railroad lines run through the area.

Predominant Land Uses
Agricultural Industries, Construction Services, Manufacturing, Millwork, Motor Freight Transportation and Warehousing, Wholesale Trades, and other similar uses.

Vision for the Future
Encourage development, redevelopment and infill within the area to ensure it continues to be a vital part of the local economy. Continue to provide adequate infrastructure and public services to the area to help local businesses succeed while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment. Protect and preserve the historic Evergreen Cemetery.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 1: Economic Prosperity
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - General Farming (G-F)
    - Professional (P)
    - Wholesale-Light Industrial (WLI)
    - Heavy Industrial (HI)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Provide for appropriate buffering between the industrial uses and other uses
    - Provide for adequate education and notification requirements as well as deed restrictions and inclusions on potential impacts from uses permitted in Industrials.

- Provide for adequate property purchase programs where negative impacts from public operations cannot be mitigated.
- Develop a list of targeted industries to be located in this area.
- Ensure sufficient public service capacity and infrastructure is in place prior to or concurrent with development and redevelopment

Public/Institutional Character Area

Description
Government facilities, schools, churches, health care facilities […]

Predominant Land Uses

Vision for the Future

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 6: Regional Cooperation
Objective 9: Educational Opportunities
Objective 10: Community Health
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - Professional (P)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - (insert policies here)

Residential Character Area

Description
These areas are located within the City of Fitzgerald, with small- to medium-size residential lots in a more suburban setting. They typically include single-family residential, and the density ranges from low to medium with predominantly single-family homes and very few commercial uses.

Predominant Land Use
The predominant use is residential, with some mix of smaller schools and churches and some very limited neighborhood commercial.

Vision for the Future
The focus for these areas is to reinforce the stability of the neighborhoods by encouraging higher rates of homeownership and maintenance or upgrading of existing structures.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 3: Efficient Land Use
Objective 4: Local Preparedness
Objective 5: Sense of Place
Objective 7: Housing Options
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - Rural Residential (R-R)
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-6, R-9, R-22)
    - Multiple Residential (MR)
    - Community Commercial (CC)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Interconnectivity between subdivisions
    - Shared access points, mandatory ingress and egress turn-lanes, and right-of-way protection.
    - Provide for very limited commercial businesses at neighborhood scale, and no “big box” development
    - Provide flexibility in subdivision regulation to encourage creative design, green space, open space, and green design, including bicycle and pedestrian way continuity.

Rural Residential Character Area

Description
These are areas of rural land that are likely to face development pressure for large-lot, low-density residential subdivision. Such developments typically consist of large residential lot subdivisions and open space. The majority of the Rural Residential areas can be found on the outer periphery of the City of Fitzgerald, along major collector roads leading into the city. The density ranges from low to medium, with mostly single family homes and very few commercial uses mixed in.

Predominant Land Use
The predominant uses are agricultural and large-lot single family residential.

Vision for the Future
Provide connecting green space and recreational areas in order to maintain the low-density rural character of the area, with an emphasis on rural residential rather than agricultural activities. Include conservation subdivision planning.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 7: Housing Options
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - General Farming (G-F)
    - Rural Residential (R-R)
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-6M)
    - Community Commercial (CC)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Provide for very limited commercial businesses at neighborhood scale, and no “big box” development
    - Ensure public services are adequate to serve new development. This also should include siting and size and type of schools, police and fire.
    - Provide flexibility in subdivision regulation to encourage creative design, green space, open space and green design, including bicycle and pedestrian way continuity.

Rural Village Character Area

Description
The "rural villages" in Ben Hill County are small and mostly historic communities that have developed in the unincorporated county away from Fitzgerald. These are compactly developed areas with varied lot sizes that generally share a historical background, are formed around a natural or cultural feature, or grew around an old intersection. Each community has been given a name (usually of historic origins) and labeled on the associated map. The areas are:

- Player Cemetery
- Queensland
- Bethlehem
- Lulaville
- Brahman
- Bowen's Mill
- Blackshear
- Plantation
- Dickson Mill
- Westwood
- Cotton Mill

Predominant Land Use
The predominant uses are agricultural and single family residential.

Vision for the Future
Promote the continued existence of these historic communities with good communication, coordination, and active protection and guidance. Encourage the development of small, local businesses that will meet the needs of the communities so that the residents will not have to make long, frequent vehicular trips. Ensure adequate enforcement of existing codes to prevent the decline of any of these "villages."

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 3: Efficient Land Use
Objective 4: Local Preparedness

Objective 5: Sense of Place
Objective 7: Housing Options
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - Rural Residential (R-R)
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-9, R-22)
    - Multiple Residential (MR)
    - Manufactured Housing Park (MHP)
    - Professional (P)
    - Community Commercial (CC)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.
- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Interconnectivity between subdivisions
    - Shared access points, mandatory ingress and egress turn-lanes, and right-of-way protection.
    - Provide for very limited commercial businesses at neighborhood scale, and no “big box” development
    - Ensure that water, sewer and road infrastructure is provided concurrent with development. This also should include siting and size and type of schools, police and fire.
    - Provide flexibility in subdivision regulation to encourage creative design, green space, open space and green design, including bicycle and pedestrian way continuity.

Suburban Neighborhood Character Area

Description
These areas are predominantly smaller-lot residential areas outside the historic city, mainly in unincorporated Ben Hill County, with newer and denser development than in the surrounding agricultural areas and older residential communities. These areas are characterized by traditional subdivision development on lots ranging from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet. There is not much pedestrian activity and most commercial development is automobile-oriented and centered around grocery stores. Typical Suburban Neighborhood areas are located at the north, northeast, and southwest edges of the City of Fitzgerald.

Predominant Land Use
The predominant land use is low- to medium-density residential with scattered strip commercial development and civic or institutional uses such as convenience stores, waste collection sites, and churches.

Vision for the Future
The suburban neighborhood areas should be encouraged to develop at lower densities as master-planned developments, with an emphasis on connectivity and walkability. In addition, care should be taken to control growth and ensure that any development will occur concurrent with the provision of necessary infrastructure and to ensure equitable distribution of project-created infrastructure cost to the new developments. The areas should provide for interconnectivity between subdivisions and encourage alternate modes of transportation. These areas should also provide for open space within and outside of subdivisions in order to provide additional green space, as well as passive and active recreation areas that will serve the residents.

Quality Community Objectives
Objective 2: Resource Management
Objective 3: Efficient Land Use
Objective 4: Local Preparedness
Objective 7: Housing Options
Objective 8: Transportation Options
For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.

Implementation Measures

- Allow only the following appropriate zoning districts, which may (but do not have to be) included in this Character Area:
    - General Farming (G-F)
    - Rural Residential (R-R)
    - Residential (R-1, R-1A, R-22)
    - Multiple Residential (M-R)

    - Professional (P)
    - Community Commercial (CC)

  For descriptions of zoning districts, see p. - 51 -.

- Develop policies and regulations that will be carried forward into the Unified Land Development Code, and that will provide action steps for implementation, including but not limited to:
    - Interconnectivity between subdivisions
    - Shared access points, mandatory ingress and egress turn-lanes, and right-of-way protection.
    - Provide for commercial businesses at neighborhood scale, and no big boxes
    - Ensure that water, sewer and road infrastructure is provided concurrent with development. This also should include siting and size and type of schools, police and fire.
    - Provide flexibility in subdivision regulation to encourage creative design, green space, open space and green design including bicycle and pedestrian way continuity.
    - Provide flexibility to mix compatible uses in order to minimize impacts on infrastructure and maximize use of available space

Zoning Districts

G-F General Farming: The purpose of this district is to permit agricultural uses, to encourage the maintenance of the rural countryside, to preserve forests and other undeveloped lands away from areas of population growth, and to allow residents to retain their traditional ways of life. The preferred land use in the district is agricultural, either active in the form of crops, or passive in the form of forest management or pasture lands. The G-F district should be utilized as a land use designation where a more intensive use of the land is unlikely to occur in the near future. The requirements of the district are designed to encourage the maintenance of a rural character until more intensive development is feasible.

R-R Rural Residential: The purpose of this district shall be to allow for residential development on lots of less than three acres in appropriate areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan in unincorporated Ben Hill County. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 800 square feet.

R-1 Single Family Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of one acre (43,560 square feet), said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of these uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 1,500 square feet.

R-1A Single Family Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of one acre (43,560 square feet), said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of these uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 1,200 square feet.

R-22 Single-Family Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of twenty-two thousand (22,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water service.

R-9 Single-Family Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide single-family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of nine thousand (9,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

R-6 Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide residential areas with a minimum lot size of six thousand (6,000) square feet, said areas being protected from uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

M-R Multiple Residential: The purpose of this district is to provide orderly development of higher density residential areas for one (1), two (2), three (3) and multi-family dwellings, with minimum lot sizes of six thousand (6,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for this district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

R-6-M Residential: The purpose of this district is to create an area that, in addition to conventional housing, allows manufactured homes as a matter of right in a conventional subdivision. Lots in this district must have a minimum of 6,000 square feet. These districts shall be protected from the encroachment of incompatible uses which are detrimental to a sound residential environment. Consideration for designation for this district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

M-H-P Manufactured Housing Park: The purpose of this district is to provide for the development of property that is suitably located and planned for manufactured housing park use. Property developed in this district is to remain in single ownership for rental or leasing purposes only. Manufactured housing parks shall be developed only in strict accordance with the Manufacturing Housing Park provisions of this ordinance.

P Professional: The purpose of this district shall be to create an area in which residential, professional, educational, and institutional uses can be compatibly mixed while maintaining a healthful living environment for the residents of the district and at the same time preventing the development of blight and slum conditions. The minimum lot size in this district shall be six thousand (6,000) square feet.

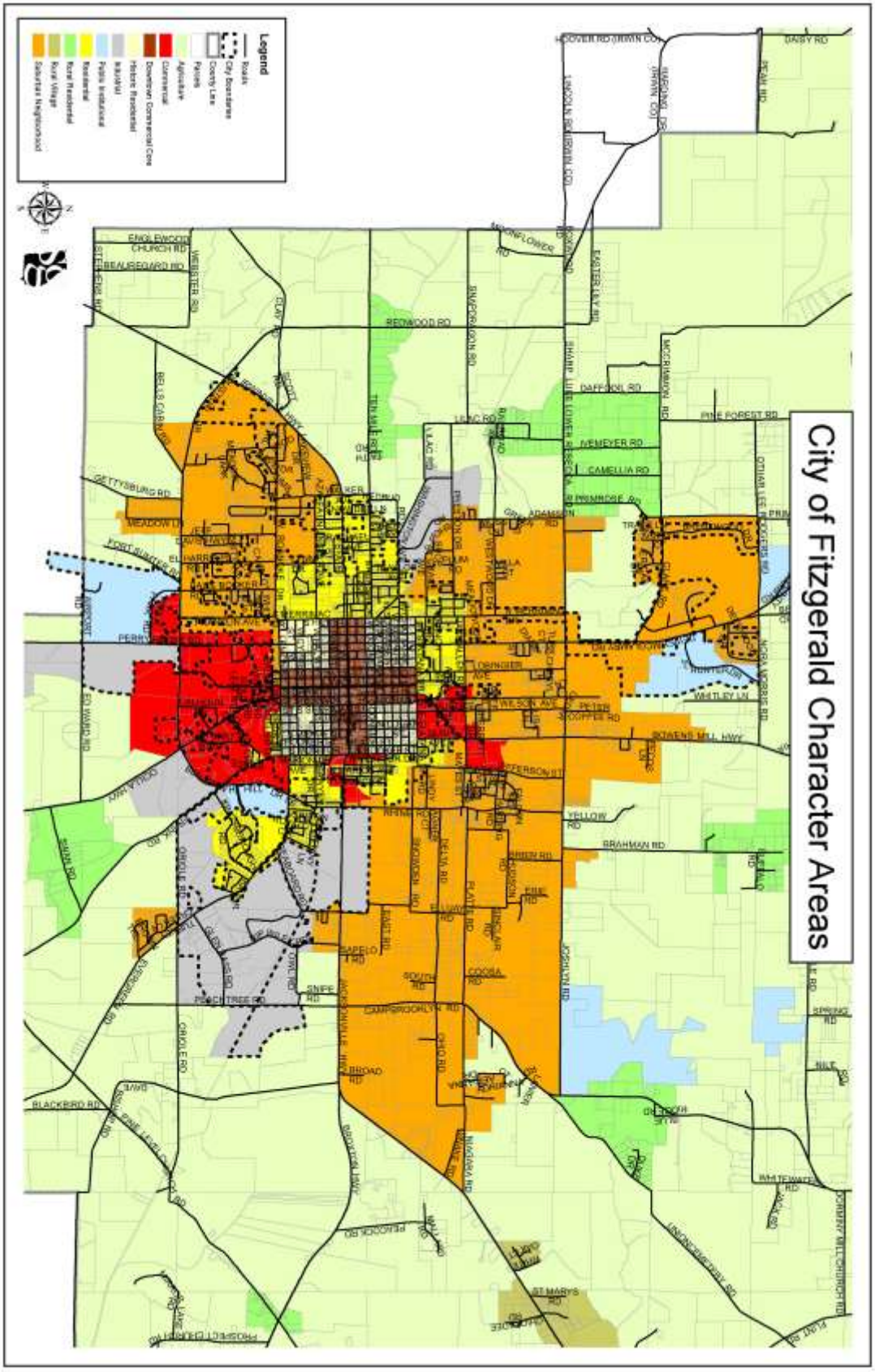
C-C Community Commercial: The purpose of this district is to provide for and protect areas that can accommodate a variety of sales and services that are commonly needed by the Ben Hill County citizens.

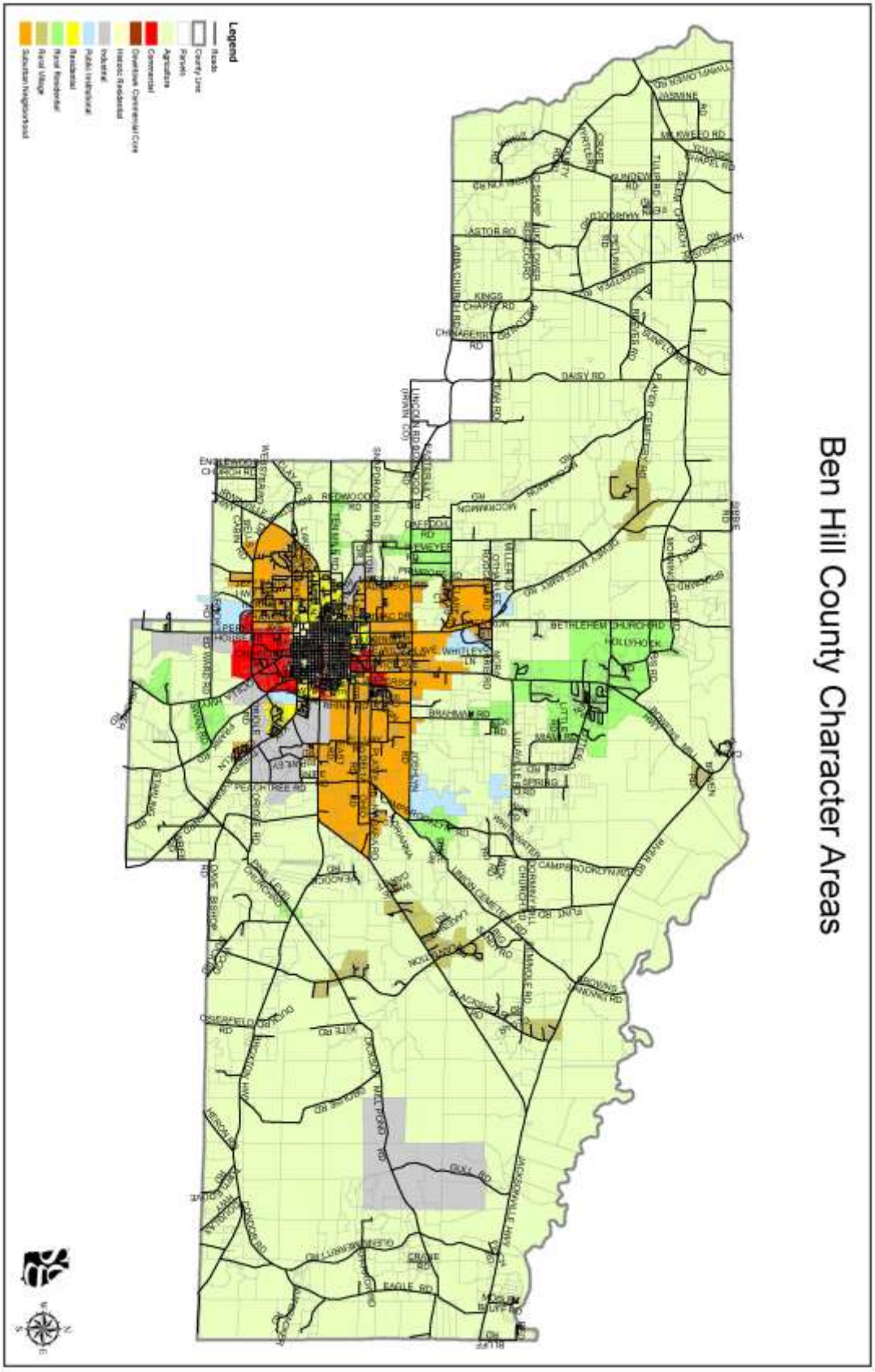
G-B General Business: The purpose of this district shall be to provide for and encourage the proper grouping and development of uses which include a wide variety of sales and services that will best accommodate the needs of the county and the traveling public in order to reduce highway traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and blight along the public streets and highways of the county.

WLI Wholesale-Light Industrial: The purpose of this district shall be to provide and protect areas for those wholesale and light industrial uses which do not create excessive noise, odor, smoke, dust, and which do not possess other objectionable characteristics which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods, or to the other uses permitted in the district.

H-I Heavy Industrial: The purpose of this district shall be to provide and protect areas for those industrial uses which cannot comply with the regulations of the WLI District.

III. Maps


City of Fitzgerald Character Areas
Legend
Roads
City Boundaries
County Line
Parcels
Agriculture
Commercial
Downtown Commercial Core
Historic Residential
Industrial
Public Institutional
Residential
Rural Residential
Rural Village
Suburban Neighborhood


Ben Hill County Character Areas
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Downtown Commercial Core
Historic Residential
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Appendix

Sign-In Sheets
Public Hearing Notices
Transmittal Letters
Adoption Resolutions