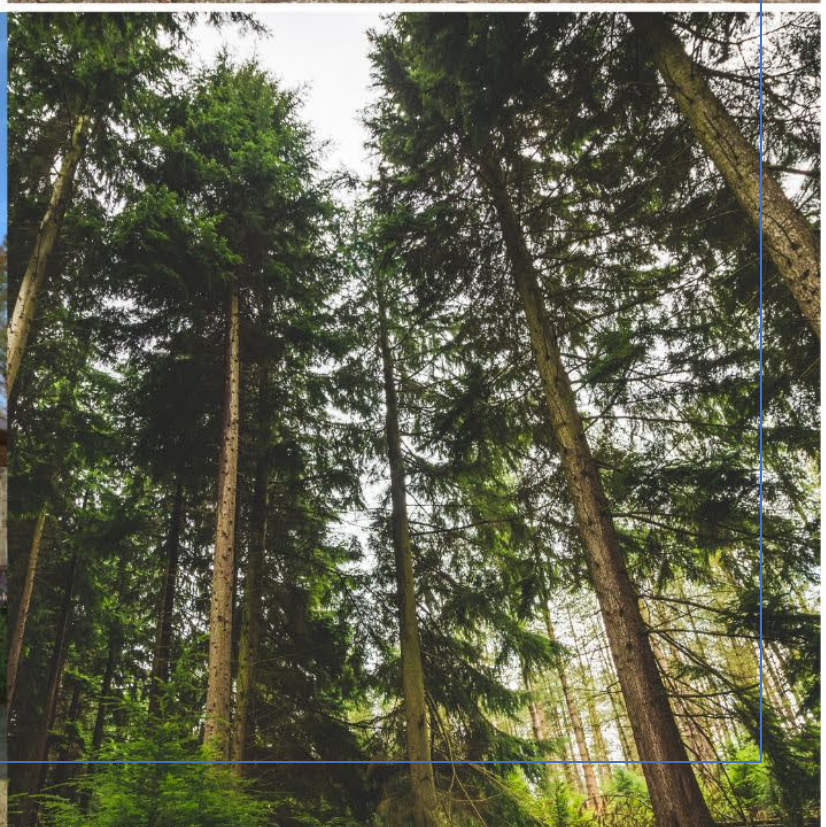




Echols County Comprehensive Plan

2025-2030



Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all those who participated in and assisted with the development of the Echols County 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The content of this plan is the result of a 12-month process involving local government, authorities and various boards, several night meetings, and over 20 stakeholders. The plan was enhanced by the generous input provided by members of the public at public hearings, public workshops and through the online survey. We are extremely grateful for the support we received during the process and look forward to working with these local governments on the implementation of this plan.

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Introduction

The 2025 Echols County Comprehensive Plan was prepared by following 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 2025 Echols County Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

- Community Goals and Vision Statement
- Needs and Opportunities
- Community Work Program
- Broadband Services Element
- Economic Development Element
(As a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category), A separate summarized economic development element is included in this Comprehensive Plan. By reference, it adopts the current regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Also, any economic development goals, policies, needs, opportunities, and objectives about Echols County have been integrated directly into their parallel components in this Comprehensive Plan.



Echols County located on just north of the Georgia-Florida line, on the southeastern border. The county seat is Statenville, which in an unincorporated county seat. Echols County is one of Georgia's least populated counties. Over 90% of the county is forest and under contract to private companies. Hamilton and Columbia County, Florida, borders Echols County to the south, Lanier and Clinch county to the north, Lowndes County to the west, and Clinch County to the east. Echols County is on the Florida border and was created from Clinch and Lowndes County Counties in 1858.

As mentioned earlier, Echols County has a total of 415 square miles. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2020 5-year

estimates, the estimated total population of Echols County was 3,697 in 2020. Therefore, the average population density is approximately 9 people per square mile, which reflects the vast rural character of the county.

The location map in Figure 1.1 reflects the boundaries of the County as well as the jurisdictions within the County.

While there are no incorporated cities located in Echols County, there are several unincorporated communities which include:

- Statenville (county seat)
- Fruitland
- Haylow
- Howell
- Mayday
- Needmore
- Potter
- Tarver

Services provided in Echols County by the following:

- Education (local public school): Echols County School System
- Law Enforcement: Echols County Law Enforcement
- Water: Echols County Water Authority
- Septic Service is private
- Power Utilities: Georgia Power Company
- Medical Services: South Georgia Medical Center is the closest full-service hospital and located in Lowndes County

1.1 Population

Echols County has experienced a continued decline in growth over the last decade. Echols County had 4,034 residents during the 2010 Decennial Census and an estimated population of 3,936 in 2017. Overall population density in the County decreased from 9.72 persons per square mile in 2010 to 9.48 persons per square mile in 2017. Trends suggest that this number is likely to decrease over the next decade. Table 1.2 shows population counts from 2000, 2010, 2017, and 2022 estimates for the county.

Table 1.2 – Echols County Population Counts

Jurisdiction	2000 Census Population	2010 Census Population	2017 Population	2022 Population	Total Change 2010-2022	% Change 2010-2022
Echols County	3,707	4,034	3,936	3,707	-327	-0.08

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 2000, Decennial Census 2010, ACS 2017 and 2022 5-Year Estimates

Demographic characteristics of the county are summarized in the US Census. According to 2016 estimates, Echols County is 11.2% are 65 and over, 56.8 % ages 20-64, and 32% under 18. Echols County's population during that time was 52.5% female and 47.5% male. The total number of people

aged 65 and older in Echols County increased by 1.6% from 2010 to 2016. In the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the median age was 37.9 in Georgia, but in Echols County, it was 34.7 years old. Of the population aged 25 years and over, 82.4% have a high school degree or higher and 14% have a bachelor's degree or higher. While most Echols County residents speak only English at home, approximately 19.2 % speak a language other than English at home, which is 3.5 % higher than the State average. This is due to the higher-than-average Hispanic/Latino ethnicity of the county.

Table 1.3 – Demographic and Social Characteristics Compared to the State and Nation

Demographics & Social Characteristics	Echols County	Georgia	United States
Median Age	34.7	37.9	38.2
Percentage of the Population Under 5 years old	12%	10%	8%
Percentage of the Population over 65 years old	18%	14%	13%
Percentage of the Population over 25 with High School diploma or higher	85%	87%	81%
Percentage of the Population over 25 with a bachelor's degree or higher	14%	14%	12%
Percentage with Disability	12%	15%	14%
Percentage Speak a language other than English	19.2%	15.7%	15.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates.

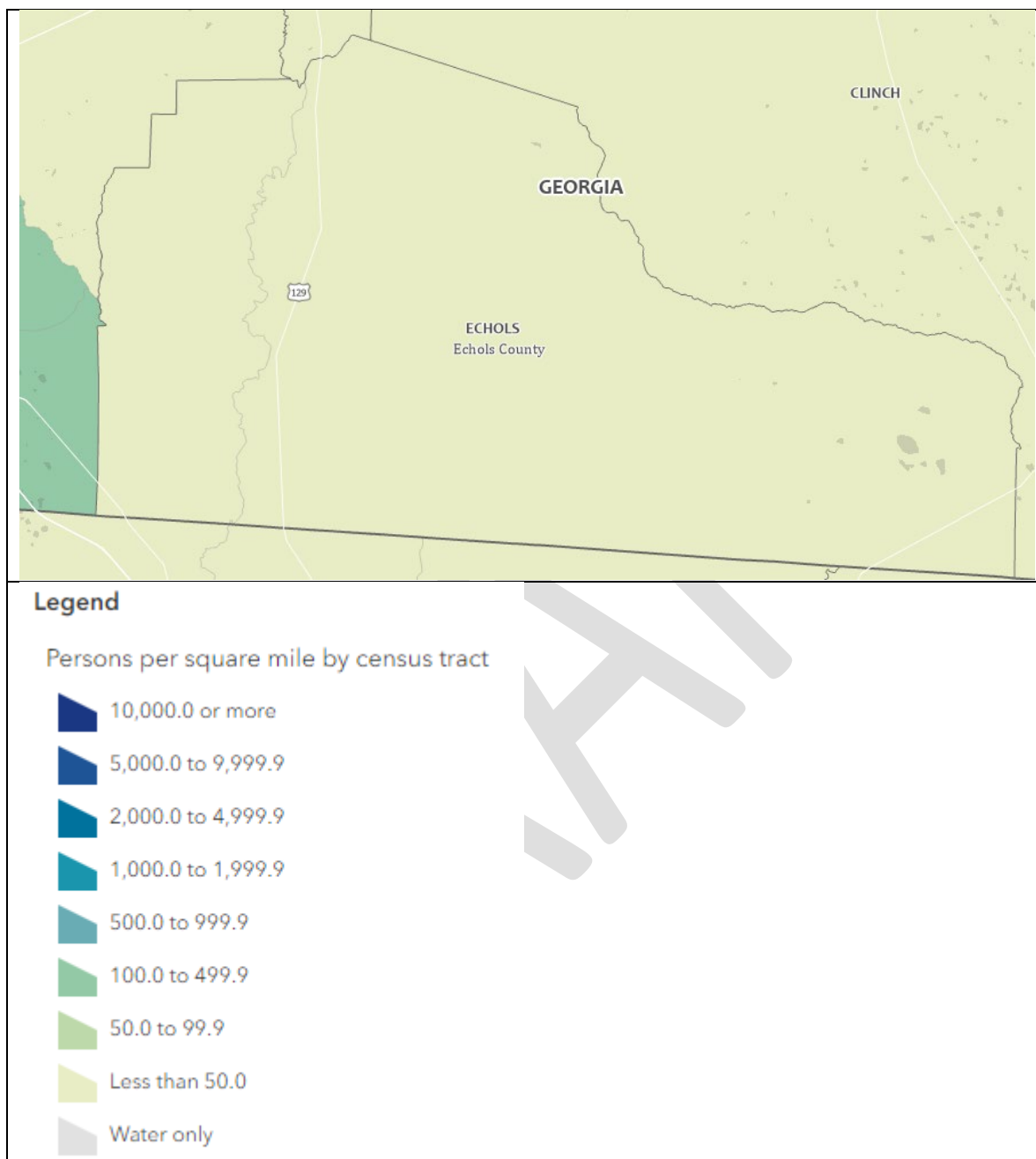


Table 1.4 – Demographics by Race and Sex

Echols County	Population	%
Total Population	3,707	
Male	1,703	46%
Female	2,004	54%
White alone	2,534	68%
Hispanic or Latino	1,091	29%
Black or African American Alone	157	0.04%
Asian	11	0.003%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates

Figure 1.2 Population Density Map



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates; Demographic Data Map Viewer

1.2 History of Echols County



Echols County is located in southern Georgia on the Georgia/Florida line. The county seat is located in Statenville, which is an unincorporated municipality. Echols County currently has no incorporated municipalities. Echols County has become notable in recent years for its agriculture. In March 2005, the County was designated as the “Carrot Capitol of the South” by State Senator Ellis Black.

Echols County was created from Clinch and Lowndes counties on Dec. 13, 1858 by an act of the General Assembly. Georgia’s 130th county was named for Brig. Gen. Robert Echols (1798-1847), a United States officer. He served in the United States Army during the Mexican War as Colonel and commander of the 13th United States Regular Infantry, and was killed in action during the Battle of National Bridge. Before the war he had served in the Georgia State House of Representatives from 1824 to 1829 and in the Georgia State Senate from 1830 to 1844. Originally buried on the field in Mexico, his remains were returned to his native Georgia.

The 1858 act creating Echols County named Harris Tomlinson, Guilford Register, and William B. Cruise as commissioners with authority to select the site and purchase land for location of the county. The legislation further provided that voters of the county assemble at the town of Troublesome on the first Monday in April 1859 and elect county officials. If, by the time of the election, the commissioners had not selected a county seat, the newly elected justices of the inferior court would be empowered to select the county seat. In 1859, neither the commissioners nor the inferior court had designated Statenville as county seat. The settlement had been named for the community’s first storeowner, Capt. James Staten. The General Assembly incorporated Statenville by an act of Dec. 13, 1859. Unfortunately, the act incorrectly identified the new town as “Statesville” rather than “Statenville”. Echols County’s original courthouse was destroyed by fire in 1897, destroying all records.



In 1958, the General Assembly approved a local act redrawing the boundaries of Statenville. According to the legislation, the town’s new boundaries consisted of the Echols County courthouse square — meaning that the city had no official population. In 1965, the legislature approved a local act giving Statenville a new city charter (and one that spelled its’ name

correctly). The legislation required approval in a referendum, but Statenville voters turned down the new charter.

By the early 1990s, Statenville was one of over 100 official towns that provided few if any services to the citizens of Mayday, Fruitland, Howell, Haylow, Needmore, Potter, and Tarver. Some of these towns had long been inactive– but legally they retained the status of an incorporated municipality. In an effort to deal with this problem, the General Assembly enacted legislation mandating that any incorporated city in Georgia must provide its citizens with at least three municipal services or lose its charter. Though given a grace period to comply, Statenville and those towns lost their municipal charters on July 1, 1995. At that point, they became an unincorporated community under the jurisdiction of the county government. Echols County became a Consolidated Government on February 8, 2008. And today, Echols County is one of only three Georgia counties with an unincorporated community serving as the county seat.

Echols County had seven small rail stops on the Atlantic Coast Railroad Line. This stretch was known as the Statenville Railway– from Florida to Wither’s – crossing through unchartered communities of Potter, Tarver, Alexis and Haylow. This line ran from 191-1924. These stops were to pick up water for the steam engines and to pick up stumps and turpentine. Pitch from the stumps was used to make dynamite. However, in the 1970’s the rails were removed. There are remnants of these seven towns – old school building, railroad building, and fire tower.

The east-west line was run by Southern Railroad and moved from Haylow to Mayday. This crossed with the Statenville Railway in Haylow. This data was provided by Echols County resident and historian, Frank Roberts.

Prior industries located in Echols was a Saw Mill at Troublesome Creek and Sewing Mill near the same Creek.

Between 1898 and 1945, there were seventy-seven schools scattered throughout the county, many of them open just six months a year. School-bus transportation was first provided in 1917, enabling some of the schools to consolidate their operations, and by 1928 the number of schools had been reduced to fourteen. In 1931 the Echols Consolidated School, a brick building in Statenville, was built, and by 1950 all white schoolchildren in the county attended it. Black schools began consolidating in 1941, and in 1948 the Herctoma School was built for African American children. The two schools were integrated in 1970, forming the Statenville



Herctoma School for African American Children, located in Echols

Consolidated School. Situated on the campus of the former Echols Consolidated School, the school was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. (Source: <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/counties-cities-neighborhoods/echols-county/>)

Until August 2010, the school system was composed of one K-12 school. In 2009-2010, a new K-8 school was built, and the high school stayed in the original buildings. Now in 2025, the new high school broke ground and will provide a facility where students will have new learning spaces, and modern technology.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 421 square miles of which 415 square miles is land and 5.8 square miles is water. The county contains a notable swamp, Whitehead Bay.

The western half of Echols County is located in the Alapaha River sub-basin of the Suwannee River basin. The eastern half of the county, from just east of Statenville to just west of Fargo, is located in the Upper Suwannee River sub-basin of the same Suwannee River basin.

1.3 Community Involvement

All of the required elements have been developed with extensive opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders throughout the county. 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:

- a) Stakeholders were identified. These included riverkeepers, elected officials, County Staff, and SGRC Staff; local businesses and industries; and the general public.
- b) Participation techniques were identified. Methods used included a kick-off public information meeting, printed public information in local newspapers, and information on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's website and the local government website. A steering committee was formed to oversee and participate in planned development, including representatives from the stakeholders mentioned above.
- c) A participation program was conducted. Identified stakeholders were invited and attended, yielding specific input in plan content. The steering committee reviewed the plan to provide information and feedback.

1st Public Hearing – “Kick-Off”

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on December 5, 2024, at the Echols County Commissioners Chambers in the Echols County Courthouse located at 110 GA Highway 94E, Suite 1, Statenville, Georgia. This meeting made any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review were now underway, explained the purpose of the update, and encouraged residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

Identification of Stakeholders and Steering Committee

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 on page 2, Acknowledgements.

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 Echols County website

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, 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 other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was offered at public hearings and county commission meetings.

In addition to the two required public hearings, SGRC held a series of two workshops to discuss several elements of the plan. The first workshop was used to review the existing goals, needs, and opportunities; in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, participants updated the list of goals, needs, and opportunities to meet current needs. Copies of the sign-in sheets are provided in the appendix, along with public hearing notices.



The Report of Accomplishments was developed in the second workshop, along with the draft of the updated Community Work Program. The Community Work Program was designed by the participants to include specific action items and projects that would be feasible for the County to implement should funding be available.

First Workshop: SWOT Analysis



The first workshop, held on September 12, 2025, was used to review the existing goals, needs, and opportunities; in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, participants updated the list of goals, issues, and opportunities to meet current needs.



S.W.O.T. Analysis

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)

Natural Resources

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Large tracts of land, natural resources, wildlife, etc ✓ Rivers/Waterways ✓ Hunting/Fishing ✓ Good air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Loss of timber due to hurricanes ✓ Minimum access to natural resources rivers/lakes, especially without a boat ✓ Zoning to protect Natural resources ✓ Limited public access due to privately owned property ✓ No sewer system ✓ Large tracts of land are privately owned and make public access difficult ✓ Lots of wetland make development difficult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create Planning & Zoning ✓ Public Events like Public Fishing and Alapaha River ✓ Could improve the appearance and preservation of public buildings downtown ✓ County-supported community events for x4 events per year ✓ Create zoning and planning ✓ More walkways or trails near rivers ✓ More activities on rivers and kayaking, boating, fishing ✓ Local tour guides; host tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Land Owners ✓ Land not public ✓ Lack of safety ✓ Pollution ✓ Loss of historical information due to lack of information ✓ Lack of enforcement for safety & pollution

Cultural Resources

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 6 Historic Buildings ✓ Historic Resources Preservation ✓ Uninhabited land ✓ Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Storms damaged historical buildings. ✓ No education on historical bldgs., cemetery identity & ownership ✓ Minimum access to natural resources rivers/lakes ✓ Limited public access due to privately owned property ✓ Minimal Cultural Resources ✓ Funding Matches ✓ Unkept Buildings in Statenville ✓ No sewer system ✓ Need Cemetery identification & ownership ✓ No room for growth without collaborative effort ✓ Library needs more funding ✓ New businesses not being created ✓ Community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ County supported community events for X4 events per year. ✓ Try to work with private land owners to access resources ✓ Could improve the appearance and preservation of public buildings in Statenville ✓ Greater financial support of our library ✓ Need more human resources to pick up debris and trash ✓ Large fines for littering, stronger enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Loss of historic information due to lack of information ✓ Library may close due to lack of staff funding ✓ Land Owners ✓ Land not public ✓ Loss of historical information due to lack of information ✓ Lack of enforcement for safety & pollution

Economic Development

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School System ✓ Community desires access to local foods ✓ Large Agriculture fields ✓ Timber ✓ Natural Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Few Options for Econ Development ✓ Needs small businesses, restaurants, personal care services, auto repair ✓ Lack Manufacturing & Jobs ✓ Infrastructure ✓ Workforce to support it ✓ No Grocery Store ✓ Limited resources ✓ Loss of local revenue due to lack of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Future Growth ✓ Access local foods grown on farms ✓ Have access to fresh local produce and restaurants ✓ Promote Tourism ✓ Ag. Barn – Multi-Use ✓ Lack of Competition ✓ Doctor in town ✓ Restaurants ✓ Veterinarian care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No Infrastructure ✓ High taxes to homeowners ✓ Citizens do not want growth – reluctant to change ✓ As more development occurs, the school system may be overloaded.

Housing

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Safe neighborhoods and lots of large land lots ✓ Economical housing ✓ Inexpensive rents ✓ Require permits for septic evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mobile Homes not care for ✓ Little options for renting ✓ Lack of structures in M. Homes during storms ✓ Lack of Zoning Regulations and code enforcement ✓ Aged mobile home stocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small apartment Complex ✓ Affordable housing ✓ RV Park ✓ Tourism ✓ Assisted Living ✓ Short term rentals properties ✓ Revenues through fees and penalties from code enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Storms ✓ Some areas lack law enforcement ✓ Lack of diversity in housing stock

Transportation

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sidewalk put in by DOT has been very useful ✓ Good DOT & County Commissioners Collaboration ✓ Senior Meals delivered to homes ✓ Agricultural & Migrant buses take them to resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of upkeep with the sidewalk that was installed ✓ No public transportation ✓ Lack of access to food, healthcare, necessities, mental health resources, because of transportation ✓ Elderly, migrant families etc have greatest disadvantage. ✓ Elderly cannot get to nutrition center because of lack of transportation ✓ Lack of goods ✓ Everyone takes their family away from the county to the doctor or store ✓ Population is spread out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participate in the Regional Transportation by SGRC ✓ Improve Highways and create a bridge at 129 N or a cut-through road from 129 to Hwy 94 on the east side of the red light ✓ Improve road/bridge 376 ✓ Improved bridge at J Frank ✓ Transportation system that accepts medicare/medicaid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of Use ✓ Wear and tear of road if more economic development

Land Use

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ People want to live here ✓ Affordable land ✓ Water system for subdivision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Very little public space ✓ No zoning ✓ Lack of available homes ✓ Lack of code enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RV Park ✓ Small Home Community ✓ Improved current communities ✓ Build more site-built homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Too many homes at once would negatively impact school system

Community Facilities & Services

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We have lots of space and land ✓ Senior Center ✓ Senior meal delivery ✓ Community Center ✓ Recreation Fields ✓ Boat Ramp ✓ School has a walking track and playground ✓ New growth impact Center ✓ Dollar General ✓ Health Dept ✓ Migrant Farmworker Clinic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No large multi-purpose facility ✓ No EMS station or no permanent fire services ✓ E-911 is funded by ??? ✓ No Electric Charging Station ✓ Little Public Land Access ✓ Lack of Maintenance ✓ Lack of Shelter ✓ Lack of Food Bank ✓ No medical services available ✓ No mental health resources ✓ No ob/gyn medical facility ✓ Lack of funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Canning Plant or classes ✓ A park with walking trails ✓ Create unity with events such as street dances, bands & weddings ✓ Urgent Care ✓ Future County facilities for large gatherings ✓ Upgrade community center ✓ Facelift for government buildings & public entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Storms

Intergovernmental Coordination

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We are a small community and we can talk to our neighbors ✓ Several government offices to service citizens like health dept, education, police, fire and county government are willing to work together ✓ Fire dept has aid agreement with neighboring counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of Communication ✓ Conflicting priorities of agencies ✓ Difficulty with funding and forward movement ✓ Lack of local government entities coordination ✓ Lack of community engagement ✓ Fire engines are very old ✓ Lack of volunteer firefighters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Code Enforcement ✓ Collaborate & coordinate more ✓ Need a volunteer coordinator & volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Using resources together with each entity having their own policies and procedures

Broadband

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Expansion of Fiber throughout the County✓ In Process- Monitor to ensure deadlines are met✓ Currently being installed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Fiber is only supplied by Windstream throughout the county✓ Long process✓ Cost✓ Remote areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Other Carriers to offer fiber-competition✓ Multiple companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Natural Disasters

Second Workshop: Policies & Work Program Of Accomplishments

The Vision and Policies and Report of Accomplishments were developed in the second workshop held on February 18, 2025, along with the draft of the updated Community Work Program. The Community Work Program was designed by the participants to include specific action items and projects, feasible for the County and the individual communities to implement should funding become available.



Third Workshop: Economic Development and Land Use Maps

The third workshop, held on March 25, 2025 was to utilized to update the Economic Development Element and the Land Use Element and the Maps as desired by the local government.

2nd Public Hearing – Transmittal of Document

A final public hearing was held on June 3, 2025 to present the final version of the plan to the community, received any addition public input, and approve the transmittal of the draft plan to DCA. The plan was transmitted to DCA directly after the public hearing.

Adoption of Echols County Comprehensive Plan

The Echols County 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted on DATE. The resolution adopting the plan is included in the Appendix.

1.4 Regional Water Plan & 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.

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

Echols County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in June 2023. The 2023 Suwannee Satilla Water Plan has been updated as follows:



Executive Summary

Introduction and Overview of the Suwannee-Satilla Region

Of all of Georgia's natural resources, none is more important to the future of our State than water. Over the last several decades, Georgia continues to be one of the most populous states in the nation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 2010 and 2020, Georgia ranked fifth in total population gain (1.02 million new residents) and 12th in percentage increase in population (10.6%). During a portion of this same period, our State also experienced critical areas of severe drought. Georgia's growth and economic prosperity are vitally linked to our water resources.

As our State has grown, the management and value of water resources has also changed. Ensuring a bright future for our State requires thoughtful planning and wise use of our water resources. The water planning process began in 2008, when the State of Georgia's leadership authorized a comprehensive state-wide water planning process to help address these challenges and take a forward look at how our State is expected to grow and use water through 2060. The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Planning Council (Suwannee-Satilla Council) was established in February 2009 as part of this state-wide process. The Suwannee-Satilla Council completed the initial Regional Water Plan in 2011, and in 2016-2017 the Suwannee-Satilla Council updated the Regional Water Plan. This current update builds upon the original

Water Resource Trends and Key Findings for the Suwannee-Satilla Region

The Suwannee-Satilla Region includes 18 counties in the south central portion of Georgia. Over the next 40 years, the population of the region is projected to increase by 4% growing from approximately 416,000 to 435,000 residents.

Key economic drivers in the region include agriculture, forestry, professional and business services, education, healthcare, manufacturing, public administration, and construction. Recreation and fishing are also important to the area. Water supplies, wastewater treatment, and related infrastructure will need to be developed and maintained to support these economic drivers and maintain a high quality of life.

The rivers in the region are unique in comparison to most of Georgia Rivers in that the watersheds are much smaller in size. This results in more frequent surface water lower flow conditions and increases the importance of groundwater to the region.

Surface water is forecasted to meet about 21% of the region's water use and agriculture accounts for 99% of this use. Surface water use in the region is highest in the Suwannee River basin, followed by the Satilla River basin.

Groundwater is predominately used from the Floridan aquifer and is needed to meet about 79% of the region's water needs. Agriculture, municipal, domestic, and industry are the major demand sectors for groundwater.

Water resource challenges in the region include projected surface water shortfalls during some periods of time throughout the region, associated with flows that would likely be unable to satisfy withdrawal needs or adequately assimilate wastewater discharges; and water quality challenges associated with trophic-weighted residual mercury in fish tissue, fecal coliform, and low dissolved oxygen in some portions of the region.

Management practices are needed to address these challenges including: water conservation; refining planning information; use of existing or new storage to help reduce the frequency/severity of critical low flow conditions; sustainable use of groundwater during times of limited surface water flows; improving/upgrading wastewater treatment; and addressing non-point sources of pollution.



2011 Regional Water Plan and 2017 update. The Suwannee-Satilla Council is one of 11 planning regions charged with developing Regional Water Plans and encompasses 18 counties in the southeastern portion of Georgia (shown in Figure ES-1). An overview of the updated findings and recommendations for the Suwannee-Satilla Region are provided in this Executive Summary. The Suwannee-Satilla Council's Regional Water Plan is available on the Council's website.

Georgia has ample water resources, with 14 major river systems and multiple groundwater aquifer systems. These waters are shared natural resources; streams and rivers run through many political jurisdictions. Rainfall that occurs in one region of Georgia may replenish the aquifers used by communities many miles away. And, while ample water in Georgia is available, it is not an unlimited resource. It must be carefully managed to meet long-term water needs. Since water resources vary greatly across the State, water supply planning on a regional and local level is the most effective way to ensure that current and future water resource needs are met.



Figure ES-1 Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Planning Council

The Suwannee, Satilla, and St. Marys Rivers are a popular fishing resource to the region. There are several species of fish found in the rivers, offering excellent fishing for chain pickerel, warmouth, largemouth bass, bluegill, topminnow, sunfish, crappie, and catfish. The coastal estuaries of the Satilla and St. Mary's Rivers also provide recreationally and commercially important ecosystems for fish, crustaceans, and shellfish. Several parks along these rivers provide an important recreational resource for the region, offering opportunities for various outdoor activities. Perhaps the most well-known natural habitat and recreational resource in the region is the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The Okefenokee Swamp is home to 234 bird species, 50 mammal species, 39 fish species, 64 reptile species, and 37 amphibian species. The swamp is also home to over 620 species of plants.

The Suwannee-Satilla Region encompasses several population centers, including the cities of Valdosta, Tifton, and Douglas. The Suwannee-Satilla Region is projected to grow by approximately 18,000 residents, or 4%, from 2020 to 2060 with the highest growth occurring in Lowndes and Clinch Counties (Georgia's Office of Planning and Budget, 2019). To accommodate this growth, the region requires reliable water supplies and sufficient wastewater treatment to



meet its growing needs. In addition, the region has a vibrant agricultural base that requires water supply to continue supporting the economics of the region.

The primary economic sectors in the region include agriculture, forestry, professional and business services, education, healthcare, manufacturing, public administration, and construction. The rural economies of five counties in the region (Atkinson, Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, and Pierce Counties) are categorized as very or critically dependent on the forestry industry by the Georgia Forestry Commission in the 2008 report "Economic Impact of Forest Products Manufacturing in Georgia." Forested lands and agriculture are major land covers in the region, which are also important drivers for the region's economy.

Establishing a Water Resource Vision for the Suwannee-Satilla Region

A foundational part of the water planning process was the development of a vision for the region that describes the economic, population, environmental, and water use conditions that are desired for the region. On September 23, 2009, the Suwannee-Satilla Council adopted the following Vision for the region.

"The Vision of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Council is to manage water resources in a sustainable manner under Georgia's regulated riparian and regulated reasonable use laws to support the state's and region's economy, to protect public health and natural resources, and to 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."

On November 11, 2009, the Suwannee-Satilla Council identified 13 goals to complement the Vision. These goals can be found in Section 1 of the Regional Water Plan.

In addition to providing these regional vision and goals, the Suwannee-Satilla Council believes it is critically important for the Council to have an ongoing role in regional water planning. The information in the Regional Water Plan is complex and will require ongoing education and an emphasis on cooperation to help obtain local support for, and maximize the effectiveness of the Plan's recommendations. The leadership, knowledge and experience of the Suwannee-Satilla Council establishes a uniquely qualified group to assist in facilitating implementation of the Plan, clarifying questions regarding the intent of the Regional Water Plan recommendations, and refining and updating existing information as well as executing future planning efforts. More information regarding the region and its water resource needs, challenges, and solutions is provided below.

Overview of Water Resources and Use in the Suwannee-Satilla Region

Surface Water

Major surface water features in the region include the Alapaha, Satilla, St. Marys, Suwannee, and Withlacoochee Rivers. The Alapaha and Withlacoochee Rivers are major tributaries to the Suwannee River, which flows through Florida into the Gulf of Mexico downstream of these confluences. The headwaters of the Suwannee River are in the Okefenokee Swamp. The Satilla



River flows to the southeast and discharges to the Atlantic Ocean between Cumberland and Jekyll Islands. This water body is a blackwater stream consisting of tannins and other natural leachates, which cause the river to have a darkly stained appearance and have unique physical and chemical characteristics and dissolved oxygen dynamics. Over half (59%) of the St. Marys River tributary area lies in Georgia and the remainder is in Florida. The St. Marys River is also a blackwater stream. However, the St. Marys River flows north and east, forming the border between southeast Georgia and northeast Florida and discharges into the Atlantic Ocean.

As shown in Figure ES-2, in 2015 surface water provided 19% of the water supply within the region (USGS, 2019). Based on water use trends and forecast information through 2060, the majority of the agricultural and industrial surface water use in the region is projected to come from the Suwannee River basin (72%) and Satilla River basin (27%). This information is based on the assumption that future use will follow current practices and trends.

Groundwater

As shown in Figure ES-2, groundwater provided 81% of the region's water supply needs in 2015. Based on 2020 groundwater withdrawal data, approximately 99% of groundwater in the region is supplied from the Floridan aquifer, which is one of the most productive groundwater aquifers in the United States.

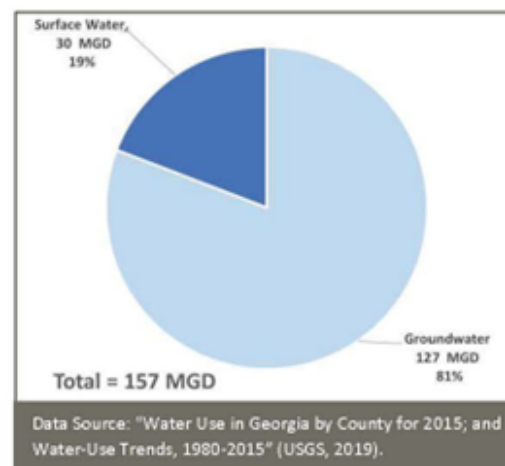


Figure ES-2 2015 Water Supply by Source

Water and Wastewater Needs in the Suwannee-Satilla Region – A Closer Look

Figure ES-3 presents 2015 surface water and groundwater use by sector in the Suwannee-Satilla Region. All surface water withdrawals in the region are for the agricultural sector. Of the 127 MGD of groundwater withdrawn in 2015, 52% was used to supply agricultural, 37% municipal users and 11% industrial users.

Wastewater treatment types representing current conditions in the region are shown in Figure ES-4. According to the Suwannee-Satilla Wastewater Forecast developed for the Regional Water Plan (CDM Smith, 2022), 51% of treated wastewater in the region is disposed of as a municipal/industrial point source discharge or to a land application system (25%). The remaining wastewater is treated by on-site sewage treatment (septic) systems (24%).

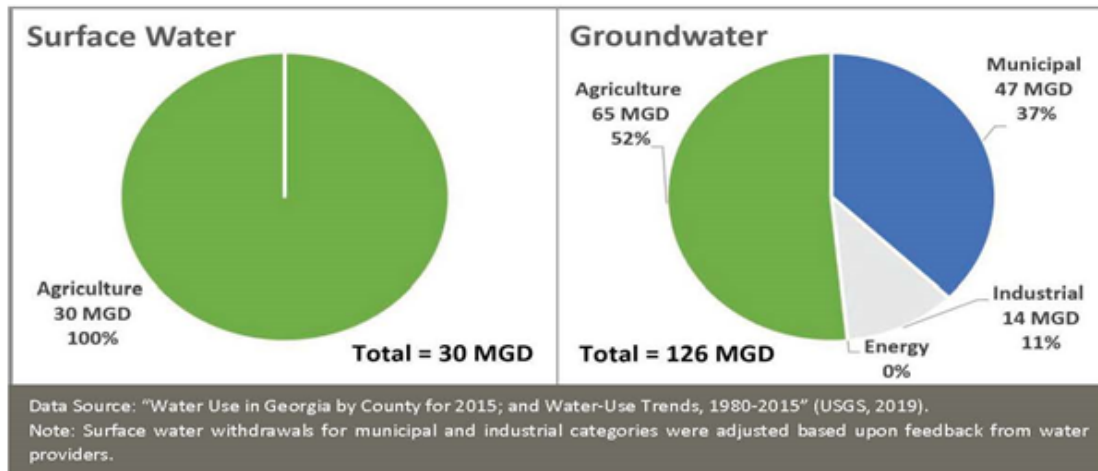


Figure ES-3 2015 Water Use by Category

Suwannee-Satilla Forecasted Water Resource Needs from the Year 2020 to 2060

Municipal water and wastewater forecasts are closely tied to population projections for the counties within the Suwannee-Satilla Region. The population projections were developed by the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and are shown in Figure ES-5. Industrial, energy, and agricultural water and wastewater forecasts were estimated separately from population projections. Overall, the region's water supply needs are expected to grow by 23% (74 MGD) in demand from 2020 through 2060. Wastewater return flows are expected to grow by 5% (3 MGD) from 2020 through 2060.

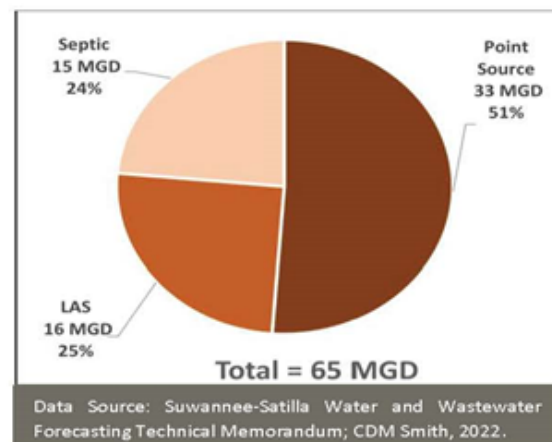


Figure ES-4 2020 Patterns of Wastewater Discharge and Return Flows

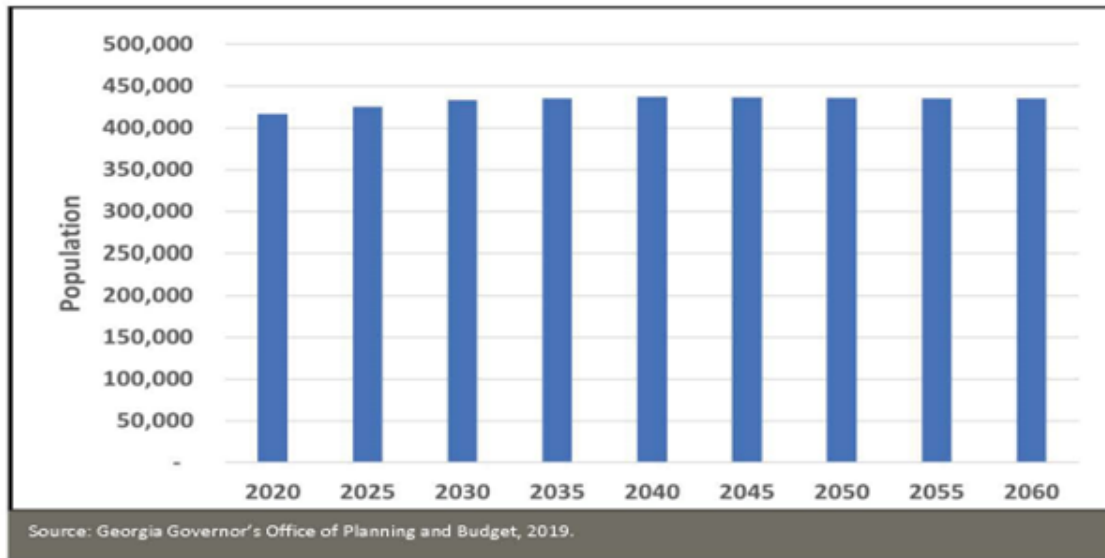


Figure ES-5 Suwannee-Satilla Region Population Projections (2020-2060)

Comparison of Available Resource Capacity to Future Water Resource Needs

Groundwater Availability

Groundwater is projected to meet about 79% of the region's water supply needs. Groundwater from the Floridan aquifer is a vital resource for the Suwannee-Satilla Region. Overall, the results from the Groundwater Availability Resource Assessment (EPD, March 2010) indicate that the sustainable yield for the modeled portions of the regional aquifer(s) is greater than the forecasted demands. Therefore, at this time no groundwater resource shortfalls are expected to occur in the Suwannee-Satilla Region over the planning horizon. However, localized issues such as excessive drawdown or reduction in baseflow to streams could arise in areas where there is a high well density and/or high volumes of groundwater withdrawal.

Surface Water Availability

Surface water is an important resource used to meet current and future needs of the Suwannee-Satilla Region, especially in the agricultural sector. There are many surface water model nodes located in and around the Suwannee-Satilla Region. The modeling tools currently used to assess surface water availability are described in Section 3. From the updated Surface Water Availability Resource Assessment (EPD, 2023b), the basic conclusions of the current and future conditions modeling show that some potential surface water challenges (i.e., times when there may be insufficient water to meet off-stream demands and also meet the targets for support of instream uses) do exist in the region.



An important update to this plan was the conversion of surface water modeling to a more detailed simulation platform (BEAM), which includes all water users (withdrawals and discharges) as specific nodes instead of aggregating their impacts into downstream nodes as was done in previous rounds of planning. It should be noted that due to the utilization of BEAM in resource assessment modeling, some of the previous approaches in expressing potential issues at the planning nodes have become obsolete. The resource issues identified previously are now replaced by these new resource assessment results (higher level of site-specific detail). Table ES-1 summarizes potential surface water challenges by 2060. Many of the challenges involve streamflows that are insufficient to adequately assimilate wastewater discharges. Others involve shortfalls relative to withdrawal needs.

Table ES-1 Summary of Modeled 2060 Potential Surface Water Challenges

BEAM Model Node	% of Total Days with Projected Challenge by 2060	Total Volume of Shortage	Corresponding 7Q10 Flow (Reference, used to determine ability to assimilate wastewater)	Change in Duration of Challenge from Current Condition
2188 (Town of Alapaha (Alapaha WPCP))	17.9%	4,543 MG	1.4 cfs (0.90 MGD)	729 (2.5%)
2198 (City of Fitzgerald (C.A. Newcomer))	2.8%	172 MG	0.25 cfs (0.16 MGD)	520 (1.7%)
2248 (City of Lakeland (Lakeland WPCP))	0.6%	84.2 MG	2.0 cfs (1.29 MGD)	26 (0.1%)
2568 (City of Nashville (Nashville WPCP))	20.7%	3,558 MG	0.01 cfs (0.006 MGD)	4,577 (15.7%)
2578 (City of Tifton (New River WPCP))	9.6%	490 MG	0.06 cfs (0.04 MGD)	-1,749 (-6.0%)
2598 (City of Sparks (Sparks WPCP))	2.5%	14.6 MG	0.02 cfs (0.01 MGD)	-6,992 (-23.9%)
2628 (Ray City (Ray City WPCP))	7.8%	410 MG	0.26 cfs (0.17 MGD)	152 (0.5%)
2868 (City of Valdosta (Withlacoochee WPCP))	2.8%	1,076 MG	4.3 cfs (2.78 MGD)	756 (2.6%)
3158 (City of Alma (Alma WPCP))	11.5%	1763 MG	1.77 cfs (1.14 MGD)	-87 (-0.3%)
3188 (Milliken & Company (Alma Plant))	2.5%	222 MG	0.55 cfs (0.36 MGD)	246 (0.9%)
3258 (City of Douglas (Southeast WPCP))	12.9%	11,033 MG	0.04 cfs (0.03 MGD)	286 (1.0%)
3298 (City of Pearson (Pearson WPCP))	0.4%	7.8 MG	0.29 cfs (0.19 MGD)	-15 (-0.1%)
3418 (City of Waycross (Waycross WPCP))	14.3%	34,233 MG	14.2 cfs (9.18 MGD)	746 (2.6%)
3528 (City of Patterson (Patterson WPCP))	0.6%	13.6 MG	0.21 cfs (0.14 MGD)	1 (0.0%)



BEAM Model Node	% of Total Days with Projected Challenge by 2060	Total Volume of Shortage	Corresponding 7Q10 Flow (Reference, used to determine ability to assimilate wastewater)	Change in Duration of Challenge from Current Condition
4238 (City of Folkston (Folkston WPCP (Pond)))	0.7%	12.3 MG	0.15 cfs (0.10 MGD)	0 (0.0%)
4248 (City of Folkston (Folkston WPCP Wetlands))	0.6%	136 MG	1.83 cfs (1.18 MGD)	18 (0.0%)
Source: Surface Water Availability Resource Assessment, 2023b, EPD. Note: Surface Water Availability modeling simulation period is from 1939 to 2018.				

Assessment of Water Quality Conditions

One measure of the capacity of surface water to maintain its health and the health of the aquatic species living therein is the amount of residual dissolved oxygen in the water. As part of the Water Quality (Assimilative Capacity) Resource Assessment (EPD, 2017 and 2023a), modeling of dissolved oxygen concentrations was performed for each surface water reach in the region that has upstream wastewater discharges to the reach. The modeling estimates the ability of the surface water to assimilate the amount of waste being discharged without creating adverse conditions (also referred to as assimilative capacity). Each modeled river segment was classified as exceeding dissolved oxygen capacity, meeting dissolved oxygen capacity, or having available dissolved oxygen capacity. The assimilative capacity assessment for dissolved oxygen at baseline and/or permitted conditions is presented in Section 3 and Section 5, and Section 6 (Management Practices) outlines the recommendations that have been made to address these impairments in the future. Assimilative capacity assessments indicate the potential need for improved wastewater treatment in some facilities within the Suwannee, Satilla, St. Marys, and Ochlockonee River Basins.

Under Section 303d of the federal Clean Water Act, a total maximum daily load (TMDL) must be developed for waters that do not meet their designated uses. A TMDL represents the maximum pollutant loading that a water body can assimilate and continue meeting its designated use (i.e., not exceeding State water quality standards). A water body is deemed to be impaired if it does not meet the applicable criteria for a particular pollutant; consequently, TMDLs are required to be established for these waters to reduce the concentrations of the exceeding parameters in order to comply with State water quality standards.

For the Suwannee-Satilla Region, there are 118 impaired stream reaches (total impaired length of 1,279 miles) and 3 impaired lakes (total impaired area of 3,181 acres).



All impaired lakes in the region are impaired for trophic-weighted residual mercury in fish tissue. TMDLs have been completed for 95 of the impaired stream reaches. A full list of impaired waters can be found on the EPD website (epd.georgia.gov/georgia-305b303d-list-documents). This list is updated every 2 years by EPD; the above information is based upon the approved 2022 list.

Identifying Water Management Practices to Address Water Resource Challenges and Future Needs

The comparison of the Resource Assessments and forecasted demands identified the region's likely resource shortfalls or potential challenges and demonstrated the necessity for region and resource specific water management practices. In selecting the actions needed (i.e., water management practices), the Suwannee-Satilla Council considered practices identified in existing plans, the Region's Vision and Goals, and coordinated with local governments and water providers as well as neighboring Councils that share these water resources.

The Suwannee-Satilla Council developed a management practice strategy based on the best data and modeling results available. The Council recognizes that as data are refined and modeling results improve—including water and wastewater projections and Resource Assessments—the resulting future needs and challenges may change. Therefore, the Council has prioritized short-term management practices to address challenges with the understanding that more complex management practices may be required in the future. These short-term management practices are presented in Table ES-2 and Table ES-3.

Summary of Resource Assessment Results

Management Practices should be developed and implemented to address water resource shortfalls as determined by the three Resource Assessments.

Groundwater: Overall, results indicate that the sustainable yield for the modeled portions of the regional aquifer(s) is greater than the forecasted demands, but site-specific challenges could arise without careful planning.

Surface Water Quantity: Refined modeling suggests that there are numerous challenges with the ability of surface water to provide sufficient flow for wastewater assimilation or withdrawals throughout the region.

*Surface Water Quality: Throughout the region, 1,279 miles of stream reaches are impaired, principally for trophic-weighted residual mercury in fish tissue, *E. coli*, and dissolved oxygen.*

**Table ES-2 Short-Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0 – 10 Years)**

Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
Water conservation
Data collection and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water challenges (forecast methodology assumptions and Resource Assessment modeling)
Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to challenges/low flow concerns
Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water challenges/low flow concerns
Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use (for agricultural irrigation) to address challenges/low flow concerns
Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address challenges/low flow concerns
Education to reduce shallow aquifer groundwater use where it impacts surface water in areas with challenges/low flow concerns

Table ES-3 Short-Term Water Quality Management Practices (0 – 10 Years)

Point Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 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
Non-point Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning Ensure funding and support for Best Management Practices programs by local and state programs, including urban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices
Non-point Source Existing Impairments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

Members of the Suwannee-Satilla Council have invested significant time and expertise into the planning process and wish to capitalize on the expertise gained by the Council prior to the end of their third term as Council members.

The Suwannee-Satilla Council believes the Regional Water Plan should be reviewed in defined increments in the future such as every 5 years to evaluate how the implemented management practices are performing toward addressing challenges and meeting forecasted needs and what additional measures might be required. This is the second of such updates. If the selected management practices have not sufficiently addressed the challenges identified by the Resource Assessments, then additional management practices should be selected and implemented. Over time, the selected management practices will address identified challenges and meet future uses. Addressing surface water challenges will require that management practices also be implemented by adjacent water planning councils that share resources with the Suwannee-Satilla Council.



Implementing Water Management Practices

The Suwannee-Satilla Council supports the concept of regional water resource planning with a focus on planning Councils composed of local governments, water users, water providers, industry, business and affected stakeholders. Local representatives are typically most familiar with local water resource issues and needs. The State has a vital role providing technical support, guidance, and funding to support locally focused water resource planning.

Implementation of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan will be primarily by various water users and wastewater utilities in the region. The most cost-effective and more readily implemented management practices will be prioritized for short-term implementation via an incremental and adaptive approach as shown in Figure ES-6. If resource needs are not met and/or challenges are not addressed, then more complex management practices will be pursued. Future planning efforts should confirm current assumptions and make necessary revisions and/or improvements to the conclusions reached during this round of planning.



Figure ES-6 Implementation of Management Practices

Cost Considerations

Planning level cost estimates were prepared for the various categories of management practices. A detailed summary of costs can be found in Section 7 of the Regional Water Plan. In general, addressing surface water needs in the region from both a water supply and a water quality perspective are expected to present the largest challenges and have the most fiscal impact. For the Regional Water Plan to be most effective, wastewater utilities and agricultural water users will need planning and implementation support to help them meet current and future needs. It is anticipated that several different funding sources and options will be used to secure funding for the various management practices outlined in the Regional Water Plan, and adequate funding will be a critical component of the successful implementation of the state-wide water planning effort.



Water conservation remains a cost-effective means to address future water supply needs and could be applied region-wide, especially in areas of limited future surface water withdrawals. Wastewater treatment will likely also require funding sources, both to upgrade plants and to address aging infrastructure.

Implementation Considerations and Benchmarks – Helping Ensure Progress toward Meeting Future Needs

Effective implementation of the Regional Water Plan will require the availability of sufficient funding in the form of loans, and in some cases, possibly grants. In addition, many of the proposed management practices require ongoing coordination with affected stakeholders/water users and collaboration to help ensure successful solutions are identified and implemented. Finally, in many cases monitoring progress toward addressing future needs will require improved data and information on the current actions and management practices that are already in place.

To assess progress toward meeting regional needs, the Suwannee-Satilla Council identified several benchmarks, which can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Regional Water Plan. The benchmarks are shown in Section 8 of the Regional Water Plan and include both the activities to be accomplished and the measurement tools that can be used to assess progress.

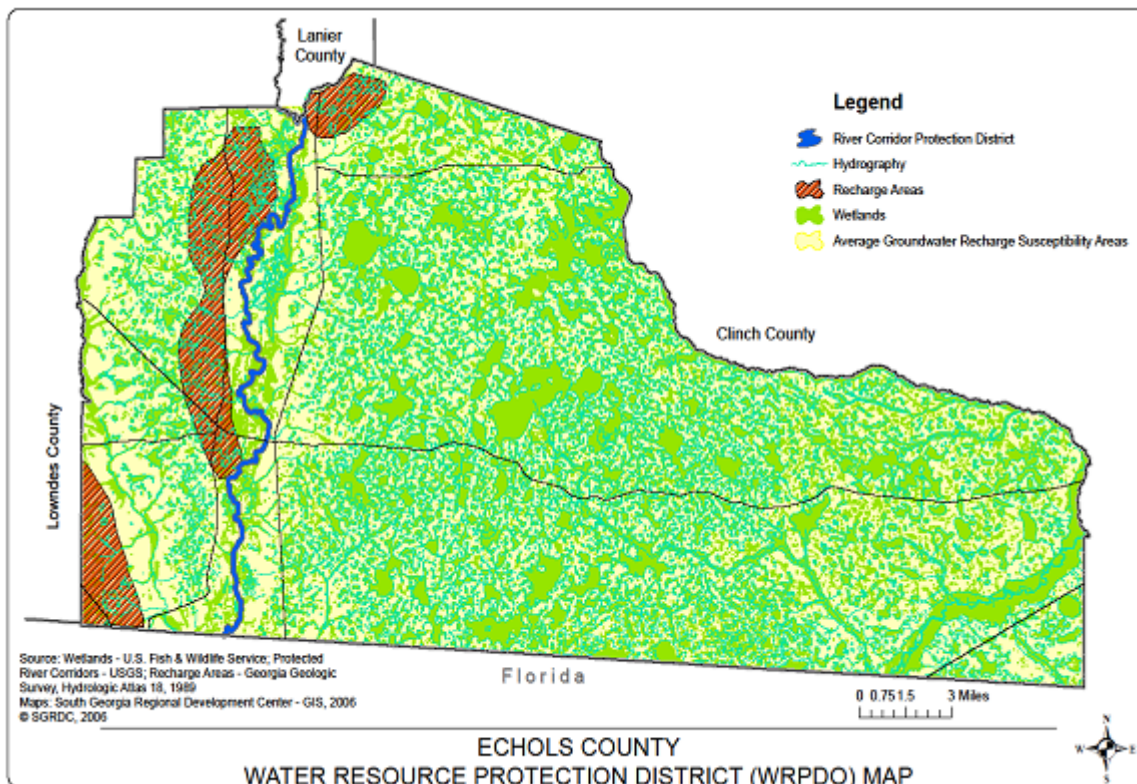
The Suwannee-Satilla Council supports the concept of regional water planning led by local representatives. The Council members wish to express their gratitude to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House for their nomination to the Suwannee-Satilla Council. The Regional Water Plan provides a recommended path forward to help achieve social, economic, and environmental prosperity for the region. The Council members are grateful for the opportunity to serve the region and State. The Suwannee-Satilla Council members wish to remain involved in facilitating attainment of the Regional Water Plan benchmarks and making necessary revisions to the Plan.

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 Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR) 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 GDNR, certain utility 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.



Plan Elements

1. Community Goals

Community Motto:

“Creating a livable, lovable community, one step at a time, by encouraging the protection of the County’s natural heritage.”

Vision Statement

Preserving our heritage and building our future where economic success and environmental preservation work together to create a vibrant and sustainable Echols County for generations to come.

Our vision for Echols County is rooted in preserving our unique small-town character and the natural beauty that defines us. We are committed to fostering a relaxed atmosphere where the pace of life remains tranquil, while simultaneously developing a diverse economic base that ensures the long-term prosperity of our community.

The value of our land provides profound agricultural & ecological significance to not just our communities but to the wider region and state. We honor this responsibility while strategically building a future that secures economic opportunity for generations to come achieved through better land management practices, new policies, and community partnership improvements. This includes leveraging our natural resources responsibly – our forests, rivers, farms, hunting grounds, and fishing waters – while maintaining their pristine condition for all to enjoy by adopting sustainable practices and innovative investments in capital and infrastructure.

We recognize that a vibrant future requires a diversified economy. We are actively working to attract and support businesses that complement our existing infrastructure and enhance the quality of life for our residents, all while upholding our commitment to preserving our trees, rivers, farms, and hunting and fishing opportunities. The goal is not rapid, disruptive change, but deliberate, incremental progress that ensures our quality of life remains a priority for all of our citizens.

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for Echols County’s future, 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: **Natural Resources.** Establish and maintain the conservation and protection measures for natural areas, where those areas would be endangered by development. These areas include, but are not limited to, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected river corridors, forested hardwood areas, and areas where Georgia and Federally Endangered species and habitat exist.

- Goal 2:** **Cultural Resources.** Protect, preserve, and promote the historic and cultural resources of Echols County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, and tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.
- Goal 3:** **Economic Development.** Improve the Echols County economy by developing and enhancing new and existing strengths that will draw new business, expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy, and help Echols County compete in the regional economy.
- Goal 4:** **Housing.** Ensure that all residents within Greater Echols County have access to quality and affordable housing.
- Goal 5:** **Transportation.** Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that addresses the future needs of Echols County for the movement of people while taking into consideration the social, economic, energy, and environmental effects of that transportation system.
- Goal 6:** **Land Use.** Protect and enhance the value of existing development areas; promote development and redevelopment within urbanized areas; create and improve stable neighborhoods, and maintain accessible open space for future land use opportunities.
- Goal 7:** **Community Facilities and Services.** Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.
- Goal 8:** **Broadband.** To encourage coordination of planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, neighboring communities, and state and regional planning agencies.

2. Needs and Opportunities

The Needs 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 thorough review and revision as applicable to the Needs and Opportunities identified in the Echols County current. Each of the following Needs and opportunities is addressed by corresponding policies in the “Community Policies” section.

Development Patterns

Natural Resources

Needs

- Continue to enforce regulations for taxes on timber, which results in lost revenue for the County because there is no way to confirm the removal of timber. The cost-profit ratio for enforcement doesn’t make it feasible to enforce taxation.
- Protection of the wetlands is a concern because natural filters are removed, which

endangers the water quality in Echols County. No enforcement ability impacts groundwater recharge areas.

- No enforcement of Part V Environmental Ordinances. (Mandated by DCA to ensure local governments have adopted regulations consistent with the Rules for Environmental Criteria, River Corridors Act)

Opportunities

- The Pine Tree industry thrives in Echols County and creates employment and tax value by replenishing the trees.
- The Alapaha River flows north to south on the west side of the County and has one boat ramp. Continue to promote the Alapaha River and its uses. This information needs to be placed in the State Tourism Brochure as one of the cleanest rivers to attract visitors.
- The Suwannee River, Grand Bay Creek, Alapahoochee River, and Toms Creek could be utilized a lot for recreational and tourist uses.
- There is a large hunting area in the eastern portion of the County and private hunting camps like Wolf Bay, Cowhouse, and May Day, which attracts a lot of visitors from Florida.

Cultural Resources

Needs

- A new building of a courthouse and sheriff's office is needed. This is a public health need as the current building bathrooms lack capacity, which causes malfunctioning when serving large crowds. The existing courthouse and sheriff's office have exceeded renovations.
- There are not enough properties listed and recognized as historical, so many are lost, and not preserved.
- There is a library, but it needs financial support to expand services and operational hours to continue to serve the community.

Opportunities

- Funding can come from various sources to help build a new courthouse and sheriff's facilities. These need to be thoroughly explored
- The Historical Society is active and can provide valuable resources, through knowledge and information about buildings and land.
- Identify historic unique places and events to encourage visitors and tourism.
- Library can create increasing community engagement, explore funding opportunities, and adapt to the changing needs of the library users. Promote library services, offering diverse programs, and seek support from organizations and individuals

Economic Development

Needs

- There are not enough restaurants in the County, which causes loss of income and sales tax because residents and visitors leave the community to eat.
- Lack of grocery stores prohibits access to fresh foods. This has created a food desert for the entire county.

- There is a lack of retail in the county; as a result, residents drive to Valdosta or Lake Park for shopping. We need to attract more businesses to the area.
- Commercial sales taxes are lost to Lowndes County due to lack of businesses in Echols County.
- Need to install signs for the Alapaha River Water Trail. (This has actually recently been met)
- Upgrade water system to get rid of asbestos piping.

Opportunities

- The tree stock throughout the County is worth well over 100 million dollars, and the Pine Tree industry is thriving; this can be utilized to create more business opportunities for the County such as fuel pellet industry and potential sawmills.
- The school system is a significant employer for the County. The school is also a State recognized school for the highest APR could be used as an attraction for new residents and businesses
- The County is a prime location for a centralized processing center (Hub) for recycling that could service the counties surrounding Echols.
- Continue to update the County website to raise awareness and promote the county.
- Promote the boat landing at the Alapaha River.
- There are nature trails, fishing, and kayaking that can be developed for tourism.
- There are a lot of Flatwoods for hunting.
- Apply for funding for water system upgrade. Look for other opportunities to expand services.
- Create and promote services that bring fresh food into the county through the Feeding Echols
- Create community events that bring in food trucks and other food services into the county.

Housing

Needs

- The quality of housing stock has been degraded due to a few illegal /non-permitted mobile homes parks that have created blighted areas.
- There is no public assisted housing in the County, and there is a lack of affordable stick-built housing such as apartments or condos for the elderly and the low-to-moderate income.
- Building Codes need to be adhered to as a safety concern – houses are not maintained.
- Need developers to come and build a new subdivision for more affordable housing

Opportunities

- Echols County has become a “bedroom community” for Lowndes County, which will contribute to the local tax base.
- Develop an incentive program to keep properties maintained and sound.

Transportation

Needs

- There are too many dirt roads, and non-porous paving is too costly for the County. Need more paved roads.
- More sidewalks for the area, especially around the school
- Need transportation for those that are less mobile, such as senior citizens
- Lack of jobs in the community causes long commute times

Opportunities

- Work closely with Georgia DOT in developing plans for paving dirt roads in high-density areas. Seek grants, such as CDBG and LMIG, for funding. Also, consider SPLOST and TSPLOST.
- Seek funding for sidewalks, walking paths, and bicycle paths, such as CDBG Grant, SPLOST, and TSPLOST.
- Participate in the SGRC Transit Program

Land Use

Needs

- There is no zoning but Echols County does have a Subdivision Ordinance, created on 5/23/2006.
- The lack of multi-family apartments and condos has resulted in the creation of dilapidated manufactured/ mobile home parks, due to lack of code.
- Plenty of land for development, but farmers do not want to sell their property.
- Need more land dedicated to public access to share in the natural beauty of Echols County by creating walking trails.
- Adopt the most up to date International Residential Building Code

Opportunities

- Adopting a zoning ordinance.
- Continue to enforce codes for dilapidated buildings.
- Promote the sale of unused farmlands.
- Continue to build public-private relationship to help dedicate public lands for preservation and future enjoyment

Needs

- There is a need for more recreational opportunities for the youth.
- The volunteer fire services need funding for updated equipment, and volunteers are needed.
- There is a need for a public sewer system in the community.

Opportunities

- The public boat ramp located on the Alapaha River is valuable and could be better used as an asset to the community. The new school site makes the previous site available for other public uses.
- Research ways to get people to volunteer and be trained as firefighters.
- The school system attracts some newcomers to the area.

Community Facilities

Needs

- The water supply is too low and the water is pumped through old infrastructure (terracotta pipes), which generates the need for a new water system.
- There is a need for more recreational opportunities for the youth.
- There are no sewer lines.
- More financial support for the library and staff to continue to provide community services.

Opportunities

- The public boat ramp located on the Alapaha River is valuable and could be used better as an asset to the community.
- Create a public/private partnership between the Water Authority and the County Commission to address water issues and research the feasibility of adding a sewer system.
- Research funding services for libraries and increase public funding.

Broadband Services

Needs

- More affordable, accessible, consistent, and higher-speed broadband access is needed throughout all of Echols County.
- More broadband providers to provide competition and better pricing.
- Many areas are still underserved especially in the flatlands.

Opportunities

- Better broadband services will improve the future for all citizens and businesses.
- Encourage partnership of providers to allow better broadband services.
- Public/Private Partnerships could be developed to provide comprehensive broadband coverage that is consistent, reliable, and equitable.
- Develop a broadband action plan for the development of broadband services in the “underserved” areas of the county

3. Analysis of Data and Information

Echols County

Population Statistics

Reviewing the Population data, it shows the 2022 of Echols County is 3,707. The population has decreased by -0.08 percent since the 2017 census. Echols is in the top 10 counties with the smallest population and trends continue to show a decrease. There are 1,209 households, 68% of the population is White, and .04% are Black. Hispanic/Latino origin is 29% of the total population.

In Echols County, 7.2% are under the age of five years old, 13% are age ten to nineteen years, 20-29 years of age is 17%, 30-39 is 11%, 40-49 is 11%, 50-59 is 15%, 60-69 is 7%. With the median age is 34.7 in Echols County, the median age in Georgia is higher at 37.9.

Economy

Notable economic driver for Echols County are agriculture, forestry, construction, retail trade and manufacturing. Per the Department of Labor – Area Labor Profile for Echols County, some of the top employers are in the agriculture or forestry industry. These are listed below:

Coggins Farm Supply Georgia, LLC Corbett Brothers Farms, LLC Corbett Electrical Construction, Inc. Grimmway Enterprises, Inc. KMA Employee Leasing, Inc. Long Branch Land & Timber, LLC Lowndes Timber, Inc. Reigning Champs Football, LLC Sandlin Forest Products, LLC Tycor Farms, LLC

Echols County's economy has historically been based on agriculture and forestry, with over 90% of the county's land being pine forest. Other industries, like construction, employs 324 people, retail employs 278, and manufacturing employs 254 people.

- A. Economic Wages and Employment
 - a. Economic Wages and Employment

The 2022 American Community Survey indicates that the median household income for Echols County is \$ 61,187, representing a 35.5% increase from the previous year's figure of \$45,151. This is still lower than that of the state, which is \$71,355. On the other hand, Echols County per capita income is only \$24,751, which is much lower compared by the state at \$56,589. Compared to the state, a large population is living below the poverty level in the county. 15% of the population lives below the poverty line, which is higher than the national average of 12.5%. The largest demographic of impoverished people in Echols County are



females aged 25-34. The most common racial group living below the poverty line in Echols County is Hispanic, followed by White and Other.

Table 1.5 shows the county's economic statistics compared to the state average, and Table 1.6 shows its employment statistics compared to the state average.

Table 1.5- Echols County Economic Statics, 2022

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Unemployment Rate (%)	% of Persons below Poverty Level	% Without Health Insurance
Echols County	\$61,184	\$24,751	2.5%	15%	24.9%
State of Georgia	\$71,355	\$57,290	3.3%	12.7%	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022

Table 1.6- Echols County Employment by Industry, 2022

Industry	Echols County (%)	Georgia (%)
Agriculture, Forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	13.3%	1.1%
Construction	17%	6.06%
Manufacturing	13.4%	10.6%
Wholesale Trade	4.05%	2.8%
Retail Trade	14.6%	11.7%
Transportation & Warehousing	3.05%	6.4%
Finance & Insurance	0.947%	6.2%
Educational Services	8.36%	20.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	5.68%	7.9%
Accommodation & Food Services	3.63%	8.3%
Public Administration	3.73%	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022

The largest industry sectors in the county in 2022 were Construction, Retail Trade and Agriculture, Forestry, fishing, hunting & mining, comprising 17%, 14.6% and 13.3%, respectively.

Housing

Table 1.7 provides details on housing characteristics for the county as well as a comparison to the State of Georgia and Table 1.8 provides further detail for Echols County.

The American Community Survey estimates that there are 1,546 housing units in Echols County, of which 79.4 percent are occupied. In comparison to the state, occupancy rates are lower in Echols County. Renter-occupied units comprise less than 23.7% of the housing stock in Echols County. A high percentage of renters is an indicator of higher pre- and post-disaster vulnerability as renters often do not have the financial resources of homeowners, are more transient, are less likely to have information about or access to recovery aid following a disaster, and are more likely to require temporary shelter following a disaster (Cutter, et al. 2003). Higher homeownership rates in some jurisdictions, such as Echols County, where owner-occupied housing rates are above 60%, may indicate that more residents in these areas can implement certain types of mitigation in their homes.



Mobile homes make up almost 57 percent of the housing stock. Mobile home units can be more vulnerable to certain hazards, such as tornadoes and windstorms, especially if they are not properly secured with tie-downs. Of the total occupied housing units in Echols County, approximately 1.1 percent of householders have no vehicle available, which could cause difficulty during an evacuation, especially considering the lack of alternative transit options available in the county.

The majority of the County’s housing stock—83 percent—was built between 1970 and 2009. Age can indicate a structure's potential vulnerability to certain hazards. Echols County first entered the National Flood Insurance Program in 2009. Therefore, based on the housing age estimates, the majority of the housing in the County was built without floodplain development restrictions were required and are vulnerable to damage from floods.

Table 1.7— Echols County, Housing Characteristic

Jurisdiction	Housing Units (2010)	Housing Units (2022)	Housing Units Change (2010-2022)	Occupied Units, % (2022)	Owner-Occupied Units, % (2022)	Renter-Occupied Units, % (2022)	Median Home Value (2022)
Echols County	1567	1546	-1.3%	79.4%	76.3%	23.7%	114,900
State of Georgia	4,088,801	4,283,477	4.8%	87.5%	63.1%	36.9%	\$245,900

Table 1.8— Echols County, Housing Characteristics, 2022

Jurisdiction	Average Household Size	Housing with no Vehicles Available	Housing Units that are mobile homes
Echols County	3.02	1.1%	56.3%
State of Georgia	2.71	6.0%	9.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022

Social Vulnerability

Non- English Speaking Population

Over 19% of the county population speaks a language other than English. Of that population, only 3.9% speak English less than “very well”. The most prominent language spoken other than English is Spanish, with 18.6% of the non-English speaking population speaking Spanish.

Special Needs Population

According to the American Community Survey, an estimated 10 percent, approximately 317, of Echols County’s population identify as having some form of disability including hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and or independent living difficulties. The lack of public transportation options available in the County outside of services could pose significant issues for special needs populations during an emergency or disaster.

Homeless Population

The homeless population in Echols County and across the state is monitored and supported by the Department of Community Affairs, which conducts a “Point in Time” (PIT) count every other January to estimate the number of homeless individuals in counties throughout Georgia through the “Continuum of Care” (CoC) reports. There are 9 CoC districts in Georgia that report on homelessness in their designated areas. The seven most urbanized counties have individual CoCs, while the remaining 152 counties are counted in the “Balance of State Continuum of Care”, (GA-501) which target the relatively less urbanized, more rural counties. The combined results from these reports help to predict the rate of homeless across the state. These efforts support the requirements by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for each state to collect and maintain data on their homeless populations.

As of 2022, the HUD reports for the Continuum of Care (CoC) indicated that Georgia had an estimated 10,689 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given day. During this Balance of the State (PIT) county, Echols County only had 4 individuals were found to be homeless and unsheltered. A relatively low number consistent with the largely rural environment of the county and the absence of major cities.

In 2022, the HUD reports for the Continuum of Care (CoC) indicated that Georgia had an estimated 10,689 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given day. During the Point-in-Time (PIT) count for the Balance of the State, only 4 individuals were found to be homeless and unsheltered in Echols County. This relatively low number is consistent with the predominantly rural environment of the county and the absence of major cities.

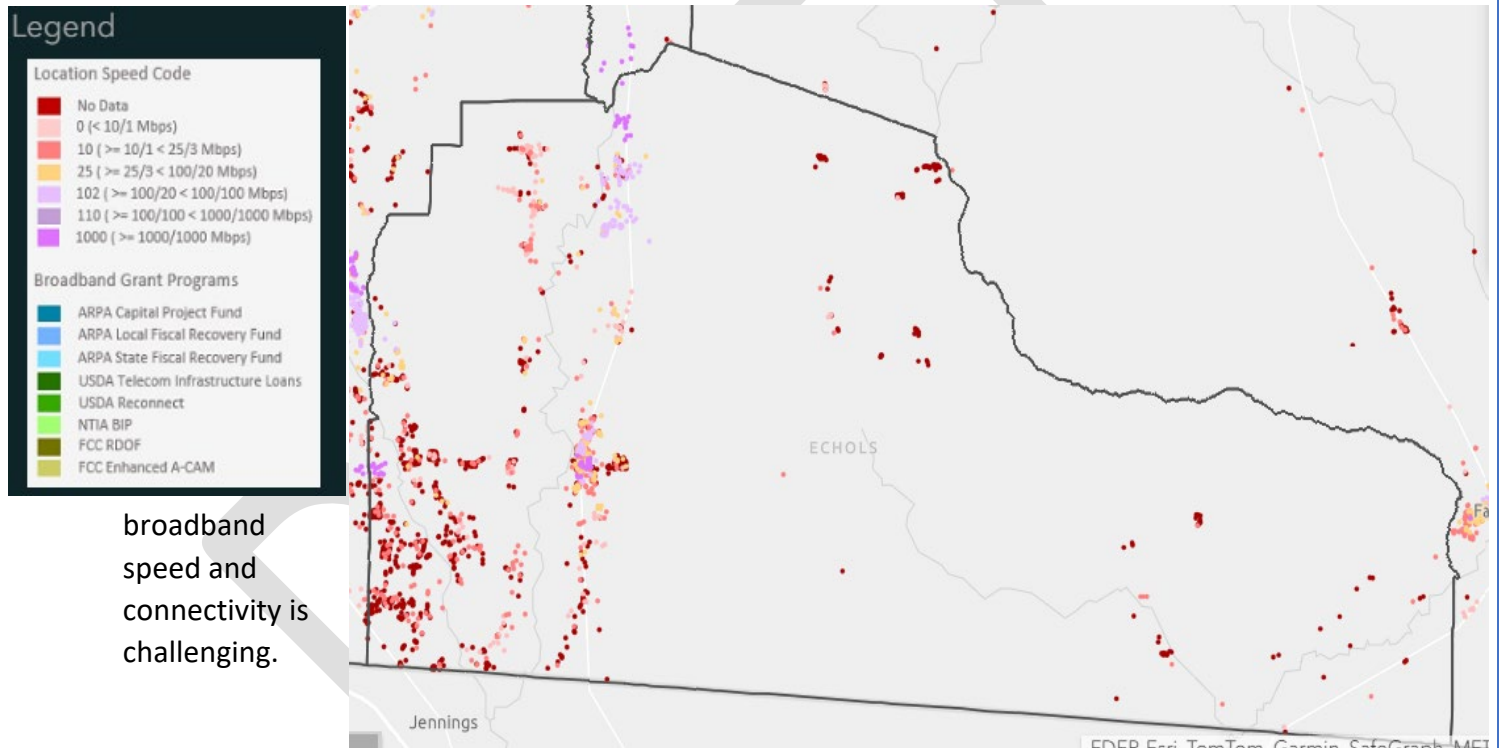
Inmates

The Echols County Sheriff’s Office indicates that there are no inmates in Echols County because there is no jail in Echols County. All individuals arrested by Echols County Sheriff’s Office are transported to the Lowndes County Jail and housed in their facilities.

4. Broadband Element

In recognition of the importance of broadband infrastructure to the vitality of communities, the Georgia legislature passed the Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act (SB 402) in 2018. The Act provides planning, deployment, incentives, and other purposes for broadband services. It also requires comprehensive plans to promote the deployment of broadband services. Echols County recognize the importance of broadband expansion by including this Element in their Comprehensive Plan.

Broadband services enable residents to access vital services such as healthcare, economic opportunity, and education. Expansion of rural broadband and improvement in the position of broadband services can address concerns of resident out-migration. Effective and efficient broadband enables internet-based businesses to succeed in the global economy. Educating upcoming generations of students in web literacy and digital skills training with adequate



broadband speed and connectivity is challenging.

County statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 megabits per second down and 3 megabits per second up, and where the broadband service is available to at least ONE consumer (residential and business) in a census block. Populated census blocks that did not meet this definition are delineated in Map 1 (above) as 'Unserved'. It has been noted by

residents of Echols County that there are people living in areas on the map above in the “Unserved” areas also identified as having “No Locations.” Households with a Broadband Internet Subscription is 68.1% per the US Census Bureau.

Fiber infrastructure is very expensive due to the rural nature, propensity for wetlands, and vastness of the County. Non-fiber solutions to broadband infrastructure are sought by County leaders especially as new technologies develop.

Echols County recognize there are many barriers for private broadband services providers to effectively roll-out necessary broadband infrastructure in rural areas of the State. County leaders recognize the importance of broadband quality for industry retention and recruitment within this small, rural community. Community leaders continuously seek improvement in the quality of life for the rural residents of Echols County. Industry relocation and business creation are dependent on the necessary infrastructure being in place. The lack of high-quality broadband infrastructure is a major impediment to not only recruitment but also for the expansion of established local industry. The Broadband Ready Community and Site designation has been established to incentivize private investment in the provision of rural broadband services. Echols County plan to apply for these designations and signal to the State and to private Internet Service Providers their prioritization of rural broadband improvement and expansion in the community.

Broadband Action Steps

Activity	Estimated Cost	Responsible Party	Funding Source	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30
Enhance the communication network for the county, including establishment of a Wireless Network Center	\$500,000	Echols County, private broadband companies	General funds; Broadband grants/funds	X	X	X	X	X
Increase broadband coverage in underserved areas	Staff	Echols County, private broadband companies	General Funds; Broadband grants/funds	X	X	X	X	X
Established broadband (including hot spots) and participate in regional efforts in cooperation with GTA	\$500,000	Echols County, private broadband companies	General Funds; Broadband grants/funds	X	X	X	X	X

5. Consideration of DCA Quality Community 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 the development of their implementation activities. If local governments use objectives in their planning efforts, it will also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals. The use of these tools may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents. This section contains an analysis of the consistency of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns with the Quality Community Objectives, and recommends related best practices as provided by DCA.

Quality Community Objective	Notes on Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for Echols County
1. Economic Prosperity Encourage the 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.	Community activities, including economic development efforts, are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business incubator • Corridor study • Downtown program
2. Resource Management Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. Achieve this 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.	Land use element and goals and policies related to natural resources are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation easements • Pervious paving • Riparian buffers • Water resource protection
3. Efficient Land Use Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. Achieve this 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 the expansion of public infrastructure, or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.	The land use elements and infrastructure-related goals and policies of this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive reuse • Brownfield redevelopment • Infill development program • Preserve agriculture land use • Urban redevelopment plan
4. Local Preparedness Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the	Projects and policies in this plan and local ordinances, are consistent with this objective. The community also

<p>type of future the community seeks to achieve. Requirements might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth, ordinances, and regulations to manage growth as desired. Leadership and staff would be capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response with this objective. The community also has a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that is consistent with this objective and capable leadership and staff.</p>	<p>has a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that is consistent with this objective and capable leadership and staff. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-hazards strategy • Comprehensive planning • Professional development-planning staff • Subdivision development standards
<p>5. Sense of Place Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. The qualities 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 elements that are important to defining the community's character.</p>	<p>Projects and policies in this plan and local ordinances are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code enforcement • Design Guidelines
<p>6. Regional Cooperation Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. Achieve this 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.</p>	<p>There is a high level of cooperation and collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional roundtable • Shared service agreements
<p>7. Housing Options Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. Achieve this by encouraging the 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 the availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.</p>	<p>Projects and policies in this plan and local ordinances are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia Initiative for Community Housing • Housing for the disadvantage • Housing for the elderly • Mixed-Income Housing
<p>8. Transportation Options Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. Achieve by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking,</p>	<p>Transportation goals, policies, and projects are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete streets • Sidewalk/trail network

<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving street connectivity • Safe Routes to School
<p>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. Achieve this by expanding and enhancing local educational institutions or programs. Provide access to other institutions in the region. Institute 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.</p>	<p>Goals, policies, and projects in this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Internet access • Transportation to educational facilities
<p>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 excellent work opportunities. Achieve this by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled, instituting programs to improve public safety. Promote programs that foster better health and fitness by providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community entirely.</p>	<p>Goals, policies, and projects in this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation to services

Community Policies

The following policies, numbered to align with the Community Goals, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide qualitative guidance to address the Needs 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 Needs and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

Development Patterns

Natural Resource

Goal: 1: Establish and maintain the conservation and protection measures for natural areas, where those areas would be endangered by development. These areas include, but are not limited to, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected river corridors, forested hardwood areas, and areas where Georgia and Federally Endangered species and habitat exist.

Needs & Policies

Need: There is limited enforcement of regulations for taxes on timber, which results in lost revenue for the county because there is no way to check or prove. The cost-profit ratio for enforcement doesn't make it feasible to enforce taxation.

Policy 1.1: Consider the pursuit of Federal and State grant opportunities with the assistance of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission to fund the hiring of additional staff to monitor the timber industry.

Need: Protection of the wetlands is a concern because the natural filter are removed, and endanger the water quality in Echols County. No enforcement impacts ground-water recharge areas.

Need: No enforcement of Part V Environmental Ordinances.

Policy 1.2: Consider the creation of land development regulations that will promote Conservation Subdivisions and Best Management Practices for business developments to prevent development from polluting or exhausting the natural replenishment cycles of the water bodies throughout the County.

Need: Need to promote the use of the Alapaha River.

Policy 1.3: Encourage more people to use the Alapaha River Water Trail, paddle excursions, and events.

Policy 1.4: Encourage keeping the Alapaha River clean.

Cultural Resources

Goal 2: Protect, preserve, and promote the historic and cultural resources of Echols County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, and tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.

Needs & Policies

Need: *There are not enough properties listed and recognized as historical, so many are lost and not preserved.*

Policy 2.1 Support creating an inventory of National Register eligible sites with County staff and members of the Historical Society.

Need: *A new courthouse needs to be built that will house the BOCC offices, Commissioner's meeting room, and Sheriff's Office.*

Policy 2.2: Encourage the use of SPLOST and grants, for construction of a new courthouse, commissioners meeting room, and Sheriff's Office.

Need: Expand Library Services to meet the needs as the community changes

Policy 2.3: Encourage the use of government funding to provide support for library services

Economic Development

Goal 3: Improve the Echols County economy by developing and enhancing new and existing strengths that will draw new business, expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy, and help Echols County compete in the regional economy.

Needs & Policies

Need: *There are not enough restaurants in the County, which cause loss of income and sales tax because residents and or visitors leave the County to eat.*

Policy 3.1: Private sector economic investments should be encouraged and fostered through the availability of financial and technical assistance.

Policy 3.2: Support production of locally grown produce and the establishment of a community food market

Need: *Commercial sales taxes are lost to Lowndes County due to the lack of businesses in Echols County.*

Policy 3.2: Consider the establishment of a small Chamber of Commerce that can attract businesses to Echols County.

Policy 3.3: Encourage coordination between potential developers, the County Commission, and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission to utilize specific programs and financing mechanisms that will create local businesses, and in result expand the County's commercial tax base.

Housing

Goal 4: Ensure that all residents within Greater Echols County have access to quality and affordable housing.

Needs & Policies

Need: The quality of housing stock has been degraded due to a few illegal/non-permitted mobile homes parks that have created blighted areas.

Policy 4.1: The County is encouraged to adopt and enforce land development regulations that can revitalize blighted areas throughout the County.

Need: There is no public assisted housing in the County, and there is a lack of affordable stick-built housing such as apartments or condos for the elderly and low-to-moderate income.

Policy 4.2: Consider utilizing Federal and State programs that offer low-interest loans and tax reduction incentives for the development of affordable housing, including both single and multiple family developments.

Need: Subdivisions are near capacity, so another subdivision is necessary.

Policy 4.3: Continue to improve the water services, fire protection, sheriff's department enforcement, and recreational activities, to make Echols County more attractive to residents from outside of the County.

Need: Building Codes need to be kept up as a safety issue. Houses are not maintained to code.

Policy 4.4: Encourage compliance with applicable state building codes.

Transportation

Goal 5: Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that addresses the future needs of Echols County for the movement of people while taking into consideration the social, economic, energy, and environmental effects of that transportation system.

Needs & Policies

Need: The transit system for the elderly needs to be improved for quicker loading and unloading of its passengers.

Policy 5.1: Continue the use of the transit system for the medically needed and senior citizens. Encourage safe and quick loading and unloading.

Policy 5.2: Participate in a Public Transit System for all citizens. The following three options are available: 1) Single County Public Transit System operated by the county, 2) Single County Public Transit System operated by a third party, or 3) Regional Public Transit System for the SGRC 18 counties. GDOT has approached the SGRC to consider administering and managing the Regional Transit System.

Land Use

Goal 6: Protect and enhance the value of existing development areas; promote development and redevelopment within urbanized areas; create and improve stable neighborhoods, and maintain accessible open space for future land use opportunities.

Needs & Policies

Need: *There are no zoning or subdivision regulations or an active Planning Commission.*

Policy 6.1: Consider re-establishing a Planning Commission that can coordinate with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission for the creation of Land Development regulations.

Need: *The lack of multi-family land uses has resulted in the creation of dilapidated manufactured/ mobile home parks, because of no enforcement and no places to move.*

Policy 6.2: Identify areas throughout the County that can support the development of multi-family land use and consider designating these areas specifically for medium and high-density residential land uses on a future land use map.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal 7: Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.

Needs & Policies

Need: *The water supply is too low and is pumped through old infrastructure (terracotta pipes), which increases the need for a new water system.*

Policy 7.1: Continue to work with the private water company to improve the water supply and infrastructure.

Need: *Echols County has no sewer lines.*

Policy 7.3: Consider the establishment of a committee to research the feasibility of providing county-owned sewer services for Statenville.

Need: *There are too many dirt roads, and non-porous paving is too costly for the County.*

Policy 7.4: Encourage the pursuit of road improvement funds that are available through federal and state programs.

Need: *The volunteer fire services need funding for updated equipment.*

Policy 7.5: Research grants to fund the purchase of new equipment.

Need: *Continue to encourage more people to volunteer for fire station on J. Culpepper Rd, which has resulted in crewless stations.*

Policy 7.6: Continue to provide necessary fire protection services through the County.

Policy 7.7: Encourage the County to pursue FEMA Grants with the assistance of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission to improve the services provided by the Volunteer Fire Department.

Need: *The County needs additional resources, such as a passage of the SPLOST, to construct and new courthouse and sheriff's office.*

Policy 7.8: SPLOST and other funding should be pursued. Educate the public about the benefits of SPLOST.

Broadband

Goal 8: **To encourage coordination of planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, neighboring communities, and state and regional planning agencies.**

Need: *More affordable, accessible, consistent, and higher-speed broadband access is necessary throughout all of Echols County.*

Policy 8.1: **Services.** Better broadband services will improve the future for all citizens and the business community.

Policy 8.2: **Technology Infrastructure.** Community-wide technology infrastructure should be considered a primary community facility and, as such, should be adequately planned for and implemented.

Policy 8.3: **Agriculture Services.** Investigate opportunities to improve broadband to meet precision agricultural needs.

Policy 8.4: **Public/Private Partnership.** Pursue development of public/private partnerships to provide comprehensive broadband coverage that is consistent, reliable, and equitable.

7. Community Work Program

Echols County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update

Report of Accomplishments (2020-2025)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
NATURAL RESOURCES										
Educate the Public and private organizations on methods for preserving parks and recreation areas	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x		Underway
Use Comprehensive Land use plan to ensure mapping of lands to be permanently protected for preserving parks and recreation areas	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x		Completed
Use existing subdivision regulations to promote conservation of floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x		Underway
Continue to enforce regulations for taxes on timber to bring in more revenue	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
Create land Development regulations to enforce Part V Environmental Ordinance for River corridors protection	Staff	BOCC/SGRC/EPD	General Funds/ Grants	1	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
Seek funding to Leverage available greenspace grant funds	\$2,000,000	BOCC	General Funds, GA DOT TAP, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA, Private Foundations, Individual Assistance	1	x	x	x	x		Cancelled due to no funding available
Identify and pursue funding to acquire properties in flood-prone areas	\$400,000	BOCC	OHS-GEMA, FEMA	1	x	x	x	x		Completed

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Prepare and adopt a land development regulations, which assists in implementing the Echols County Comprehensive Plan, revitalizes blighted areas, and regulates subdivisions and mobile home parks.	\$8,000	BOCC/SGRC	General Funds	3, 4, 5	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
CULTURAL RESOURCES										
Seek members For the Echols County Historical Society to help with the development of the museum of local history	\$500	BOCC	General Fund	1	x	x	x			Underway
Survey to list historic buildings and places	\$2500	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund/ Grants	2	x	x	x			Underway
Continue to use the historical resource inventory to preserve properties and to encourage visitors	\$1,500/y	BOCC	General Fund	1	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT										
Create an Industrial Development Authority to serve as the public catalyst for economic development	\$2,500	BOCC	General Fund	3	x	x				Underway
Identify available land to purchase for a public industrial park	\$1,000	BOCC /SGRC	General Fund	3	x	x	x			Underway
Develop a public industrial park with infrastructure (roads, water, sanitary sewer broadband, etc.)	\$500,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	EIP, One Georgia and USDA Grants	3	x	x	x	x		Underway
Recruit new industries to place in the industrial park, and further develop and expand existing industries through financial incentives and designation of industrial park as an Opportunity Zone	\$5,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund	3	x	x	x	x	x	Underway

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Continue to pursue all applicable grants, loans, and technical assistance that will help enhance the community and foster economic development, including CDBG grants and LMIG	\$5,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund	3	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
Develop a strategy to attract more restaurant and businesses	Staff Time	BOCC/Chamber of Commerce	General Fund	3	x	x	x			Underway
HOUSING										
Develop a list of potential grants and funding sources for financing a housing rehabilitation program	\$100	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x	x			Underway
Establish a housing rehabilitation program for neglected areas throughout the County	\$2,500	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x	x	x		Underway
Revitalize single- family housing that can be used for affordable housing through available grants and housing programs	\$500,000	BOCC	CHIP, CDBG, Enterprise Zone	4	x	x	x	x	x	Underway
TRANSPORTATION										
Rebuild SR-135 bridge over the Alapahoochee River (known locally as the Little River")	\$1.5 million	BOCC/GDOT	TSPLOST, GDOT		x	x				Underway
Repair J. Frank Culpepper Rd. bridge over the Alapahoochee River/1.0 miles (known locally as the "Little River")	\$78,943	BOCC/GDOT	General Funds/CDBG/TSPLOST, GDOT			x	x			Completed
Improve road signage at crossroads and install "Dead End" or "No Outlet" tags on road signs	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA Road Dept.	General Funds TSPLOST	3	x					Underway
Pave and maintain May Day Road/1.566 miles (Grading, drainage, base and surfacing)	\$801,291	BOCC	LMIG, TSPLOST, General Fund	1	x	x	x			Completed

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Pave and maintain Carrol Road	\$232,017	BOCC	LMIG, TSPLOST, General Fund	1				x	x	Completed
Pave and maintain Kinsey Rd. (Grading, drainage, base and surfacing)	\$858,567	BOCC	CDBG, TSPLOST, Grants/ General Fund	1	x					Ongoing
Pave and maintain John Hampton Rd. (Grading, drainage, base and surfacing)	\$310,273	BOCC	TSPLOST/General Fund	1	x					Completed
Install sidewalks to improve safety for citizens	\$200,000	BOCC	TSPLOST/General Fund	1		x	x	x		Completed
Participate in a public transit system	\$30,000-\$50,000 annually	BOCC	TSPLOST/Grants/General Fund	1	x	x	x	x		Completed
Prepare preliminary engineering plans and cost estimates for a sanitary sewer collection/treatment system for the Statenville area, County School, and possible new industrial park	\$1,000,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund, CDBG	6	x	x	x			Underway
LAND USE										
Re-instate the Echols County Planning Commission to implement the Comprehensive Plan	\$2,500/YR	BOCC	General Fund	5	x	x	x			Completed
Prepare and adopt land development regulations, which assists in implementing the Echols County Comprehensive Plan revitalizes blighted areas, and regulates subdivisions and mobile home parks	\$5,000	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	4	x	x	x			Underway
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES										

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Upgrade sheriff communication devices on as need basis, such as radios, cameras and computers	\$15,000-\$20,000	BOCC	JAG Grants, General Fund	1	x	x	x	x	x	Completed
Purchase for volunteer fire services (Air packs, fire service training, communication devices) on an as- needed basis	\$497,000	BOCC/SGRC	AFG Grant	4	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Construct a new courthouse, which will also house the Sheriff's Dept., the BOCC, and all other county offices	\$5,000,000	BOCC	General Fund/ TSPLOST	1			x	x	x	Underway
Prepare preliminary engineering plans and cost estimates for a sanitary sewer collection/treatment system for the Statenville area, County School, and possible new industrial park	\$1,000,000	County/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund, CDBG	4	x	x	x			Underway
Improve Road Department Shop and purchase new equipment 1 dump truck	\$500,000	BOCC	General Fund/GEFA TSPLOST	1	x	x	x	x		Underway
Apply to the AFG for equipment	\$215,000	BOCC/SGRC	AFG Grant	6	x	x	x			Ongoing
Create a committee to research the feasibility of providing sewer services through the County for Statenville	\$3,000	BOCC	General Fund	5	x	x	x			Underway
Purchase early warning system horn for hazardous weather, to be placed in Statenville, and other outlying communities	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS- GEMA/FEMA	6	x	x	x	x		Underway

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Review data on storm events to determine where repetitive flooding occurs as a result of inadequate drainage infrastructure and identify & pursue grant funds to upgrade deficient drainage systems	\$500,000	BOCC/ EMA/ SGRC	DOHS- GEMA/FEMA , GA DCA CDBG	5	x	x	x	x		Underway
Implement the “Community Emergency Response Team” (CERT) program	\$5,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds	5	x	x	x			Underway
Purchase and install mobile and fixed generators (including transfer switches) for all designated evacuation and emergency shelters, community water systems, and critical facilities, and wherever else they are needed	\$100,000 per generator	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, FEMA, GEMA, grants	5	x	x	x	x		Underway
Trim tree lines around roads, homes, utilities, and businesses	\$100,000.00	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, GA Power, Oglethorpe EMC, Slash Pine EMC	6	x	x	x	x		Underway
Seek funding to retrofit public buildings to reinforce windows, roofs, and doors for hazardous weather	\$500,000.00	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS- GEMA/FEMA	6	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Initiate an inspection program at critical facilities to identify construction weaknesses subject to high wind damage	\$10,000.00	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS- GEMA/FEMA	5	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Train all firefighters to FF1 & FF2 standards and ensure that emergency vehicle drivers are trained properly	\$4,000	BPCC/EMA/Fire Dept.	General Funds, DOHS- GEMA/FEMA , AFG	5	x	x	x	x		Ongoing

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
Purchase latest NFPA compliant PPE turnout gear sets and SCBAs for firefighters	\$100,000	BOCC/EMA/Fire Dept.	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x		Completed
Purchase a new fire truck and rehabilitate old trucks, as needed	\$50,000	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Create a minimum of 30 feet of defensible fire space around all governmental structures	\$35 per acre	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS-FEMA/GEMA, USFS	6	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Purchase wildland hand tools & lightweight PPE gear for all fire stations and firefighters and investigate the need for additional tankers and overhead refill tanks (at rural stations)	\$50,000	BOCC/EMA/Fire Dept.	General Funds, DHS FEMA/GEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Purchase automatic warning devices for hazardous weather for every outdoor recreation facility and every school outdoor recreation facility	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA	1	x	x	x	x		Ongoing
Develop a comprehensive study that will allow community leaders to understand when public and domestic underground water systems' water levels are threatened	\$10,000	Statenville Water Authority/SGRC	General Funds	5	x	x	x	x		Canceled due to budget
Research and review ways the community can improve its fire protection, and implement those measures	Staff time	BOCC	General Funds	6	x	x	x			Ongoing

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2	Accomplishments
					0	0	0	0	0	
					2	2	2	2	2	
					1	2	3	4	5	
BROADBAND										
Research ways to enhance the communication network for the county, including establishing a Wireless Network Center	Staff	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x			Ongoing
Establish broadband coverage for the county (including hot spots) and participate in Regional efforts in cooperation with GTA	\$500,000	Echols County	General Funds, SPLOST, Grants	1	x	x	x	x		Ongoing

Echols County 5-Year Community Work Program Update (2025-2030)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
					2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
					6	7	8	9	0
NATURAL RESOURCES									
Educate the Public and private organizations on methods for preserving parks and recreation areas	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x	
Promote the Suwannee River and a Boat Ramp	Staff Time	BOCC/Suwannee Riverkeeper	General Funds/GA DNR	1	X	X	X	X	X
Work with private organizations to keep the river passable	Staff Time	BOCC/Suwannee Riverkeeper	General Funds/GA DNR	1	X	X	X	X	X
Use existing subdivision regulations to promote conservation of floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x	
Continue to enforce regulations for taxes on timber to bring in more revenue	Staff Time	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x	x	x
Create Land Development regulations to enforce Part V Environmental Ordinance for River corridors protection	Staff	BOCC/SGRC/EPD	General Funds/Grants	1	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare and adopt a land development regulation, which assists in implementing the Echols County Comprehensive Plan, revitalizes blighted areas, and regulates subdivisions and mobile home parks.	\$8,000	BOCC/SGRC	General Funds	3, 4, 5	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Seek members For the Echols County Historical Society to help with the development of the museum of local history	\$500	BOCC	General Fund	1	x	x	x	X	X
Survey to list historic buildings and places	\$2500	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund/ Grants	2	x	x	x		
Continue to use the historical resource inventory to preserve properties and to encourage visitors	\$1,500/y	BOCC	General Fund	1	x	x	x	x	x
Expand library services to purchase new materials, upgrade technology and development programs to provide for the community	\$10,000	BOCC/BOE/SGRL	General Fund/Private Funding/BOE/SGRL	2	X	X	X	X	X
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Purse a USDA Rural Business Development Grant for a feasibility study for an Industrial Park	Staff Time	BOCC/USDA/SGRC	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Identify available land to purchase for a public industrial park	\$1,000	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	3	x	x	x		
Develop a public industrial park with infrastructure (roads, water, sanitary sewer broadband, etc.)	\$500,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	EIP, One Georgia and USDA Grants	3	x	x	x	x	
Recruit new industries to place in the industrial park, and further develop and expand existing industries through financial incentives and designation of industrial park as an Opportunity Zone	\$5,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund	3	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Continue to pursue all applicable grants, loans, and technical assistance that will help enhance the community and foster economic development, including CDBG grants and LMIG	\$5,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund	3	x	x	x	x	x
Create an Industrial Development Authority to serve as the public catalyst for economic development	\$2,500	BOCC	General Fund	3	x	x	X	X	X
Update and distribution an Echols County Resource Directory	\$1,000	Echols Family Connection/BOCC	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Annual food access review with Echols Family Connection organization	Staff Time	Echols Family Connection/BOCC/other community organizations	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Work with SGRC Transit to provide transportation for food access events in Echols County	Staff Time	Echols BOCC/Senior Center/ SGRC	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Food distribution monthly at the Community Pavilion	Staff Time	BOCC	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Work with Second Harvest Food Bank to supplement Market Days	Staff Time	Echols Family Connection/BOCC	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Establish various community gardens and pursue grant funding for creation and enhancement of local public garden and gardening education.	Staff Time	BOCC/Echols Family Connection/ County Extension	General Fund/private funding	3	X	X	X	X	X
Develop a strategy to attract more restaurant and businesses	Staff Time	BOCC/Chamber of Commerce	General Fund	3	x	x	x		

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2
					0	0	0	0	0
					2	2	2	2	3
					6	7	8	9	0
Develop a Community Beautification Project Program to discourage littering and illegal dumping. Organize community clean ups; plant trees and landscape projects by volunteer groups	\$1000	BOCC/Private NGO/BOE	General Fund	3	X	X	X	X	X
Survey all the available land to give to developers interested in development in Echols County and properties that need redevelopment.	Staff Time	BOCC	General Fund	3	x	x	x	x	
HOUSING									
Develop a list of potential grants and funding sources for financing a housing rehabilitation program	\$100	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x	x		
Establish a housing rehabilitation program for neglected areas throughout the County	\$2,500	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x	x	x	
Revitalize single- family housing that can be used for affordable housing through available grants and housing programs	\$500,000	BOCC	CHIP, CDBG, Enterprise Zone	4	x	x	x	x	x
TRANSPORTATION									
Rebuild SR-135 bridge over the Alapahoochee River (known locally as the Little River")	\$1.5 million	BOCC/GDOT	TSPLOST, GDOT	5	x	x			
Resurfacing of J-Frank Culpepper Road beginning at SR 135 for approximately 3.23 mi to Bethel Church Road	\$1,527,000	BOCC/GDOT	General Funds/CDBG/TSPLOST/TIA GDOT	5	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Improve road signage at crossroads and install "Dead End" or "No Outlet" tags on road signs	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA Road Dept.	General Funds TSPLOST	3	x	X	X	x	
Resurfacing of Bethel Church Road beginning at US 41 for approximately 3.51 mi to J-Frank Culpepper Road.	\$1,215,000	BOCC	LMIG, TSPLOST/TIA General Fund	1	x	x	x	X	x
Pave and maintain Kinsey Rd. (Grading, drainage, base and surfacing)	\$858,567	BOCC	CDBG, TSPLOST, Grants/ General Fund	1	x	X	X	X	X
Resurfacing of Sardis Church Road beginning at SR 94 for approximately 3.81 mi to SR 367.	\$800,000	BOCC	TSPLOST/ GDOT/TIA	1	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to Install sidewalks to improve safety for citizens	\$200,000	BOCC	TSPLOST/General Fund	1	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to participate in a public transit system	\$30,000-\$50,000 annually	BOCC	TSPLOST/Grants/General Fund	1	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare preliminary engineering plans and cost estimates for a sanitary sewer collection/treatment system for the Statenville area, County School, and possible new industrial park	\$1,000,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund, CDBG	6	x	x	x	x	x
Resurfacing of Howell Road beginning at Lowndes County Line for approximately 6.01 mi to US 129	\$2,000,000	BOCC/GDOT	TSPLOST/Grants/General Fund/ LMIG/ CBDG	1	X	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2
					0	0	0	0	0
					2	2	2	2	3
					6	7	8	9	0
Fielding Road Grading, Drainage, Base & Pavement	\$352,271.00	BOCC/GDOT	TSPLOST/ Grants/ General Fund/ LMIG/CBDG	1	X	X	X	X	x
Prepare preliminary engineering plans and cost estimates for a sanitary sewer collection/treatment system for the Statenville area, County School, and possible new industrial park	\$1,000,000	BOCC/Industrial Dev. Authority	General Fund, CDBG	6	X	X	X	X	X
LAND USE									
Prepare and adopt land development regulations, which assists in implementing the Echols County Comprehensive Plan revitalizes blighted areas, and regulates subdivisions and mobile home parks	\$5,000	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	4	x	x	x		
Adopt a solar farm ordinance	Staff Time	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	4	X	X	X	X	X
Adopt International property and residential maintenance code	Staff Time	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	4	X	X	X	X	X
Create a group of community members to implement the Comprehensive Plan and address local issues in a unified manner	Staff Time	BOCC/BOH/Forestry/DOE	General Fund	4	X	X	X	X	X
Adopt Animal Control Code	Staff Time	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x			
Update Municode Ordinances	Staff Time	BOCC	General Fund	4	x	x	x	x	x
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2
					0	0	0	0	0
					2	2	2	2	3
					6	7	8	9	0
Purchase for volunteer fire services (Air packs, fire service training, communication devices) on an as- needed basis	\$497,000	BOCC/SGRC	AFG Grant	4	x	x	x	x	x
Construct a new courthouse, which will also house the Sheriff's Dept., the BOCC, and all other county offices	\$5,000,000	BOCC	General Fund/ TSPLOST	1	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare preliminary engineering plans and cost estimates for a sanitary sewer collection/treatment system for the Statenville area, County School, and possible new industrial park	\$1,000,000	County/Indus trial Dev. Authority	General Fund, CDBG	4	x	x	x		
Improve Road Department Shop and purchase new equipment 1 dump truck	\$500,000	BOCC	General Fund/GEFA TSPLOST	1	x	x	x	x	
Apply to the AFG for equipment	\$215,000	BOCC/SGRC	AFG Grant	6	x	x	x		
Create a committee to research the feasibility of providing sewer services through the County for Statenville	\$3,000	BOCC	General Fund	5	x	x	x		
Purchase early warning system horn for hazardous weather, to be placed in Statenville, and other outlying communities	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS- GEMA/FEMA	6	x	x	x	x	
Review data on storm events to determine where repetitive flooding occurs as a result of inadequate drainage infrastructure and identify & pursue grant funds to upgrade deficient drainage systems	\$500,000	BOCC/ EMA/ SGRC	DOHS- GEMA/FEMA , GA DCA CDBG	5	x	x	x	x	
Implement the "Community Emergency Response Team" (CERT) program	\$5,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds	5	x	x	x		

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2
					0	0	0	0	0
					2	2	2	2	3
					6	7	8	9	0
Purchase and install mobile and fixed generators (including transfer switches) for all designated evacuation and emergency shelters, community water systems, and critical facilities, and wherever else they are needed	\$100,000 per generator	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, FEMA, GEMA, grants	5	x	x	x	x	
Create and adopt a Sidewalk and Recreational Trail Plan feasibility plan	\$1000	BOCC/SGRC	General Fund	5	X	X	X	X	x
Hire a Code Enforcement Officer to maintain property & housing standards and physical appearance	\$30,000	BOCC	General Fund	4	X	X	X	X	x
Trim tree lines around roads, homes, utilities, and businesses	\$100,000.00	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, GA Power, EMC	6	x	x	x	x	
Seek funding to retrofit public buildings to reinforce windows, roofs, and doors for hazardous weather	\$500,000.00	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA	6	x	x	x	x	
Initiate an inspection program at critical facilities to identify construction weaknesses subject to high wind damage	\$10,000.00	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA	5	x	x	x	x	
Train all firefighters to FF1 & FF2 standards and ensure that emergency vehicle drivers are trained properly	\$4,000	BPCC/EMA/Fire Dept.	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x	
Purchase a new fire truck and rehabilitate old trucks, as needed	\$50,000	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x	
Purchase a brush truck	\$100,000	BOCC	General Funds	5	X	X	X	X	

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	2	2	2	2	2
					0	0	0	0	0
					2	2	2	2	3
					6	7	8	9	0
Create a minimum of 30 feet of defensible fire space around all governmental structures	\$35 per acre	BOCC	General Funds, DOHS-FEMA/GEMA, USFS	6	x	x	x	x	
Purchase wildland hand tools & lightweight PPE gear for all fire stations and firefighters and investigate the need for additional tankers and overhead refill tanks (at rural stations)	\$50,000	BOCC/EMA/Fire Dept.	General Funds, DHS FEMA/GEMA, AFG	5	x	x	x	x	
Purchase automatic warning devices for hazardous weather for every outdoor recreation facility and every school outdoor recreation facility	\$25,000	BOCC/EMA	General Funds, DOHS-GEMA/FEMA	1	x	x	x	x	
Research and review ways the community can improve its fire protection, and implement those measures	Staff time	BOCC	General Funds	6	x	x	x		
BROADBAND									
Research ways to enhance the communication network for the county, including establishing a Wireless Network Center	Staff	BOCC	General Funds	1	x	x	x		
Establish broadband coverage for the county (including hot spots) and participate in Regional efforts in cooperation with GTA	\$500,000	Echols County	General Funds, SPLOST, Grants	1	x	x	x	x	

8. Land Use Element

In keeping with State Minimum Planning Standards, every part of Echols County was delineated into specific Character Areas. Character areas are intended to serve as guidance for future land use and land development. Each character area narrative was developed based on stakeholder input, existing land uses, anticipated development, planned infrastructure improvements and expansions, and guidance found in the State Planning Recommendations. As with the Plan, these character area descriptions and goals should not be considered final. As the community understands the role and value of character areas, their descriptions should be fine-tuned. Additionally, specific character area depictions may need adjusting as the community grows.

Each Character Area narrative has a unique Description stating either the existing or desired qualities for that area. The stated Development Strategy should serve as a guide for all development and redevelopment in the Character Area. Adherence to these development strategies will ensure consistent and complementary growth, promoting a greater sense of place and improved quality of life. Echols County does not have a zoning ordinance so no zoning recommendations were included in each Character Area description. While many differences between uses can be masked through site design and development standards, specific uses are incompatible with surrounding uses and should not be permitted.

As the State requires, the Quality Community Objectives demonstrate the unique ideals established for each Character Area. While there is certainly a value to regional planning, planning on the neighborhood (or character area) level allows for the more effective implementation of specific objectives, ultimately promoting an improved quality of life. The Implementation Measures are the specific activities or programs within each character area. While the suggested list of measures may or may not currently exist in Bacon County and the City of Alma, their implementation in appropriate areas would help achieve the established objectives and overall development strategy for each Character Area. These measures should be considered joint efforts between the local government, development community, and citizens.

- Agricultural – Land or parcels used for majority agricultural purposes. This land use includes single-family homes, manufacturing homes, and prime agriculture areas that maintain a rural character.
- Commercial – Land or parcels used for commercial uses. This land use includes single-family homes, multi-family houses, duplexes, town- houses, modular homes, apartments, etc
- Public Institutional – Local, state, and federal buildings and worship facilities. Includes municipal buildings, schools, police and fire stations, and churches
- Residential – Land or parcels used for permanent living conditions. This land use includes single-family homes, multi-family houses, duplexes, town- houses, modular homes, apartments, etc

Agriculture Character Area

DESCRIPTION:

Lands in open or cultivated state or sparsely settled, including woodlands, farmlands and pastures.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

The rural character should be maintained by supporting existing farming and agricultural operations. The regulation of new development to protect farmland and open space with large lot sizes should be employed. Roadways should be widened only when absolutely necessary. Roadway alterations should be carefully designed to minimize visual impact. These areas should be promoted for passive-use tourism and recreational destinations.

PREFERRED LAND USES:

Agriculture and Forestry, parks and recreation, conservation. It is further recommended that a regional trail network be explored in this area that could be connected to a county-wide or regional network.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- Resource Management
- Efficient Land Use
- Local Preparedness
- Sense of Place

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES:

Conservation Easements: An arrangement where private landowners donate the development rights of their property to a qualified conservation organization or government agency in exchange for tax savings. This protects the property from development and ensures that it remains as open space or farmland.

Agricultural Buffers: To minimize future potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses and to protect public health, safety, and general welfare, all new non-agricultural development adjacent to designated agricultural land should provide an agricultural buffer.

Landscaping and Buffer Requirements and Guidelines: Require planting areas to mask unattractive land uses or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses, increase aesthetic values, and protect water and quality of rivers and streams. Communities should consider adopting a tree protection ordinance in addition to landscaping and buffer regulations.

Tree Protection Ordinance: Require preservation of a significant portion of the trees on a new development site, particularly the larger, more mature specimens. As a supplement to tree

protection measures, a community may choose to adopt specimen or “heritage” tree protections, which protect individual trees considered important because of unique characteristics.

Water Resource Management: Managing and protecting water supply and watersheds; providing safe drinking water and wastewater treatment services.

Storm Water Management: Mitigating the impact of development on watersheds, aquatic habitat, stream flow and geometry, and water quality.

Greenway Corridors: Can be created utilizing public land, privately donated land, and existing river and stream corridors. While these corridors may begin at a local level, there is tremendous opportunity to create and protect regional greenway corridors.

Commercial Activity Character Area

DESCRIPTION:

These areas include both older, historic and newer commercial/service uses which may or may not be adjacent to the Statenville Unincorporated Area.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

Encourage and maintain higher-intensity commercial areas that are not compatible with residential areas due to their high automobile orientation, and promote a greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve industry employees) to reduce automobile reliance/use on site.

PREFERRED LAND USES:

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

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- Economic Prosperity
- Resource Management
- Efficient Land Use
- Local Preparedness
- Sense of Place
- Transportation Options
- Community Health

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES:

Creating more On-street Parking: Identifying and taking advantage of opportunities to add on-street parking in areas where additional parking is most needed. This may include changing

parallel parking to angle parking, converting underused medians, loading areas, turn lanes, or traffic lanes for parking, or narrowing wide sidewalks to add parking.

Creative Design for Higher Density: Encouraging the design of higher density developments to blend with the surrounding neighborhood, perhaps by masking the high-density aspects of the development through landscaping or architectural details. For example, multi-family housing can be designed to appear as a single-family residence from the street, or heavy landscaping can be used to hide parts of the development.

Design Standards or Guidelines: Community design standards or guidelines can ensure that the physical appearance of new development (or improvements to existing properties) is compatible with the desired character of a community, is built to a high standard, and has a pleasant appearance. Overlay Districts can work in tandem with local zoning ordinances as a vehicle to implement design standards or guidelines.

Flexible Parking Standards: Revising land development regulations to remove rigid parking requirements that typically result in an oversupply of unnecessary parking spaces. Revisions may include reducing the number of required parking spaces, or allowing shared parking between adjacent facilities. Flexible parking standards enable developers to be more efficient and innovative in providing parking and reduce the amount of land consumed by parking lots.

Flexible Street Design Standards: Revising street design requirements in local development regulations to tailor streets to the scale of the neighborhood and types of traffic they serve. Revisions may include reducing required street widths, requiring bicycle lanes, or adding on-street parking. Narrower streets slow down traffic, making the surrounding area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly and reduces the amount of land consumed by streets.

Infill Development Program: A comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development in particular areas of the community, while also regulating this development to ensure protection of quality of life in affected neighborhoods. An effective program will include both: a) development incentives, improvements to public facilities and services, and streamlined regulations to encourage infill development; b) guidelines for appropriate design, density and location of new infill projects.

Landscaping and Buffer Requirements and Guidelines: Require planting areas to mask unattractive land uses or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses, increase aesthetic values, and protect water and quality of rivers and streams. Communities should consider adopting a tree protection ordinance in addition to landscaping and buffer regulations.

Right-of-way Improvements: Right-of-way improvements are any type of public improvement made in a roadway's "right-of-way," which is the strip of land that includes the road itself and the narrow band of publicly owned property on either side of the road where sidewalks, curbing, and utility lines are typically located.

Sign Regulations: One way to have a positive impact on the aesthetic appearance of a community is through the implementation of a sign ordinance which controls the location, size and appearance of signage attached to buildings and on free-standing poles. Language should be incorporated into a Zoning Ordinance for the regulation of all exterior signs, including lighted and electronic signboards. If zoning is not already in place such as in Echols County, a sign ordinance could still be adopted and added to the city's municipal codes.

Tree Protection Ordinance: Require preservation of a significant portion of the trees on a new development site, particularly the larger, more mature specimens. As a supplement to tree protection measures, a community may choose to adopt specimen or "heritage" tree protections, which protect individual trees considered important because of unique characteristics.

Utility Relocation: Relocating overhead utilities out of view either below ground or at the rear of lots. This is intended to improve the appearance of strip commercial corridors that typically include tangles of overhead power and telephone lines stretching across and along the roadways.

Traffic Calming: Physical improvements designed to decrease traffic speed and increase the pedestrian-friendliness of roadways. Typical traffic-calming improvements include raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians.

Design for Walkable Communities: In an effort to promote active living, developers and planners should work together to ensure new development is designed in such a way as to encourage walking and biking. This includes such methods as interconnecting neighborhoods and commercial developments, providing sidewalks and bike lines, and situating buildings to promote pedestrian friendliness.

Public Institutional Character Area

DESCRIPTION:

Concentration of public or private large-scale institutional uses such as hospitals, schools, colleges, and universities. These areas may be characterized by high degrees of access by vehicular traffic, large amounts of on-site parking, and low degrees of internal open space, high floor-area-ratios, and large tracts of land, campuses, or unified development.

PREDOMINANT LAND USES:

Public health facilities, schools, and institutions of higher learning.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

Uses supporting the area's primary institution should be supported and clustered around such institution when feasible. Institutionally compatible architecture should be encouraged over "franchise" or "corporate" architecture. Design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between the institution and supporting uses. Direct connections to nearby networks of greenspace or trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists should be provided.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- Educational Opportunities
- Community Health

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES:

Design Standards or Guidelines: Community design standards or guidelines can ensure that the physical appearance of new development (or improvements to existing properties) is compatible with the desired character of a community, is built to a high standard, and has a pleasant appearance. Overlay Districts can work in tandem with local zoning ordinances as a vehicle to implement design standards or guidelines.

Landscaping and Buffer Requirements and Guidelines: Require planting areas to mask unattractive land uses or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses, increase aesthetic values, and protect water and quality of rivers and streams. Communities should consider adopting a tree protection ordinance in addition to landscaping and buffer regulations.

Design for Walkable Communities: In an effort to promote active living, developers and planners should work together to ensure new development is designed in such a way as to encourage walking and biking. This includes such methods as interconnecting neighborhoods and commercial developments, providing sidewalks and bike lines, and situating buildings to promote pedestrian friendliness.

Bicycle Facility Standards (DCA Model Code 2-6) - Ensuring safe, adequate and well-designed facilities are provided for bicyclists, including pavement markings, signage, and intersection crossings.

Residential Character Area

DESCRIPTION:

Areas with predominantly residential character ranging from traditional historic single-family style homes to duplex or apartment buildings which may or may not be adjacent to Downtown/Town Centers, infill on small lots, historic residential areas and subdivisions.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

The focus should be on reinforcing stability by encouraging more home ownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided.

PREFERRED LAND USES:

The dominant land use in this area is residential. A mix of uses, including neighborhood commercial and office would be suitable as well. It is recommended that all communities identify a central point that can act as a gathering point for the immediate community.

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES:

- Economic Prosperity
- Resource Management
- Efficient Land Use
- Sense of Place

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES:

Promote Infill Housing: develop incentive and rewards programs to rehabilitate and utilize vacant or abandoned properties. Encourage re-use of non-used buildings and compatible infill construction where appropriate.

Promote Clean Up and Improved Maintenance of Existing Properties and Buildings: work with Brooks Co. Code Enforcement and the cities of Barwick, Pavo, Moven and Quitman to encourage clean up. Develop incentive and rewards program to foster voluntary participation in rehabilitation projects.

Creating a Network of Continuous Sidewalks: this will encourage pedestrian active transportation and provide connectivity to neighborhood activity centers. It will also increase the safety of neighborhoods while providing a more complete and finished appearance to neighborhood areas.

Local Historic District Ordinance: Adopting a local historic preservation ordinance, appointing a historic preservation commission and designating historic resources is one of the best ways for a

community to protect the historic character of its buildings, neighborhoods, and landmarks from inappropriate alterations, incompatible new construction as well as demolition. The Georgia Historic Preservation Division offers a model historic preservation ordinance and a guide for designation.

Historic Preservation Design Guidelines: Design guidelines are a good accompaniment to a local historic preservation ordinance. They evaluate the appropriateness of building design features, properties, and landscapes to create an architecturally and physically cohesive area of specified character.

Sign Regulations: One way to have a positive impact on the aesthetic appearance of a community is through the implementation of a sign ordinance which controls the location, size and appearance of signage attached to buildings and on free-standing poles. Language should be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance for the regulation of all exterior signs, including lighted and electronic signboards. If zoning is not already in place a sign ordinance could still be adopted and added to the city's municipal codes.

Tree Protection Ordinance: A tree ordinance defines how to manage and care for public or privately-owned trees and is meant to help build a healthy and sustainable community forest.

Land Use Percentages:

Land Use	Percentage %
Agriculture	74.01
Commercial	0.59
Public Institution	0.95
Residential	24.46

9. Economic Development Element

The 2022-2026 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 Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks.

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 CEDS contains an analysis of 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, the CEDS plays a critical role in adapting to global economic conditions by fully utilizing the region's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunities for its residents by attracting job-creating private investment. The 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. The CEDS 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 the 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 strategy's successful development and implementation.

Policies, needs, opportunities, and projects drawn from the current comprehensive plans for each jurisdiction in the 18-county SGRC region were used extensively to develop the EDA Investment Priorities, CEDS Strategic Focus Areas, Goals and respective Action Plans. Furthermore, the CEDS was also used to provide guidance for developing the goals, opportunities, policies, and projects in this local Comprehensive Plan.

Goals, needs and opportunities, policies, and community work program projects related to economic development can be found in the "Economic Development" subsections of the relevant sections of this Comprehensive Plan (goals in Section 1, needs and opportunities in Section 2, policies in Section 6, and work program projects in Section 7).

Furthermore, included below are strategic focus areas, goals, and action plans from the regional CEDS that are strongly aligned with the current economic development goals of Echols County.

Strategic Focus Area # 1**State of the Regional Economy**

- ❖ Promote economic development strategies that encourage entrepreneurship, support existing industries, attract new employers, and stimulate tourism.

Goals	Action Plan
Create regional groups to take ownership of existing, underdeveloped industrial parks to build out infrastructure for industry	Identify existing industrial parks that could be considered regional Identify a funding source for infrastructure and ongoing maintenance Establish community collaboration or MOU for revenue sharing
Implement programs to foster entrepreneurship growth	Teach the value of entrepreneurship at the elementary level Development of entrepreneurial strategies for identifying assets in the community Connect with community network
Recruit and encourage agribusiness	Identify commodities for agribusiness Develop product infrastructure for food processing Partner with agriculture community
Infrastructure assessment	Analyze infrastructure age, capacity, and availability
Adequate staffing industries	Seek out resources to assist employers in filling positions
Land availability for new growth	Identify 3 to 5 regional megasites

Strategic Focus Area # 2**Transportation, Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Broadband**

- ❖ Protect, expand, and enhance critical infrastructure and connectivity for existing and future community growth.

Goals	Action Plan
Expand natural gas service	Pursue funding to improve existing infrastructure
Develop more family event venues	Work with GDECD tourism to develop regional strategy for local community venues to attract tourism dollars
Pass T-SPLOST (TIA-2)	Submit regionally significant transportation projects
EV Stations	Expand the network of charging stations in the region

Create better connectivity between I-75 and I-95	Widen corridors that have a positive regional impact
Provide broadband to all unserved and underserved people throughout the region	Pursue funding to increase broadband availability

Strategic Focus # 3 Education and Workforce Development

- ❖ Facilitate the growth and development of an educated, skilled, prepared workforce by utilizing available programs and resources.

Goals	Action Plan
Start Career Education earlier in school system	Recruit high school graduates for jobs with local industries Educate middle school students about the importance of careers in their home community
Strong official partnership between school system, technical college, & industries to address skills currently in demand and for future needs	Identify responsible agency for facilitating and holding accountable the partnership Incentivize industry participation
Increase labor force participation rate	Better skills training
Improve the quality of the workforce	Target skills training to meet business and industry needs
Increase accessibility to high-demand technical curriculum and programs	Expand high-demand career education on high school and technical school campuses

Strategic Focus # 4 Population and Housing

- ❖ Create an inviting sense of place through rural renewal and other strategies in order to retain population and to attract new members to our community.

Goals	Action Plan
Regional Housing Studies and cooperation	Determine where the commuters are traveling from and whether or not there is a demand
Regional recruitment	Better marketing of regional assets and amenities Pool resources between the communities
Increase housing stock	Pursue funding for housing rehabilitation, reconstruction, and demolition in declining neighborhoods Strengthen code enforcement Develop incentives for construction of workforce housing

Change mindset concerning multifamily affordable housing	Analyze infrastructure age, capacity, and availability
Limited Access to affordable workforce housing	Seek out resources to assist employers in filling positions

DRAFT

APPENDIX

- I. Sign-In Sheets
- II. Map of Echols County
- III. Public Hearing Notices
- IV. Transmittal Letters
- V. Adoption Resolutions



SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED

SIGN IN SHEET

Comprehensive Plan Kick-Off Meeting

COUNTY: Echols

DATE: Dec. 5, 2024

TIME: 6:30 pm

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arayon	SGRC	Planner	
Amy Martin	SGRC	Transportation	
Angi Corbett			
Kang Cousa	ECSD	Sheriff	
Krista Coleman	—		
Shana Grace Carter	ECBOC	Clerk	
Alan Levesque	Echols County	EMA Director	alevesque@ecboc.org
Al Lott	Echols Commission	Commissioner	



SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED

SIGN IN SHEET

Comprehensive Plan Kick-Off Meeting

COUNTY: Echols

DATE: _____

TIME: 6:30 pm

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
<i>Bobby Walker</i>	<i>Echols Comm.</i>	<i>Comm.</i>	<i>walkerbobby34@gmail.com</i>
<i>Kenneth Petty</i>	<i>Echols Commission</i>	<i>Commissioner</i>	<i>kpetty kennethpetty@tcloud.com</i>
<i>Tracey Green</i>	<i>Linder Turf & Tractor</i>	<i>Sales</i>	<i>toogreenfarms@gmail.com</i>
<i>Kevin Tomlinson</i>	<i>Echols Co. Water Authority</i>	<i>Chairman</i>	<i>kevin.tomlinson@att.net</i>

SIGN IN SHEET
Comprehensive Plan Transmittal Hearing
COUNTY/CITIES: Echols
DATE: 6/3/2025
TIME: 11 am



NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arzayus	SGRC	Planner	aarzayus@sgrc.us
Karen Blain	Echols Family Connection	Coordinator	echolsfc@gmail.com
Bobbi Bohman-Rodgers	Echols Co. Commission	Commissioner	bbohmanrodgers@echolscountyboe.com
John S. Quarterman	Swansee Parkkeeper	Swansee Parkkeeper	johnsquarterman@gmail.com
Alan Levesque	Echols County BOE	County Manager	alevesque@echolscountyboe.com
Shona Carter	Echols BOE	County Clerk	echococ@echols.com

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arzayus	SGRC	Planner	aarzayus@sgrc.us
✓ Vince Hamm	Echols County Schools	Superintendent	vince.hamm@echols.k12.ga.us
✓ Nora Rogers	Echols Superior Court	Clerk	nora.rogers@gsecca.org
✓ Chelsea Tomlinson	Citizen		tomlinson.chelsea@gmail.com
✓ Kevin Tomlinson	Echols Water Authority	Chairman	kevintomlinson@att.net
✓ Bobbi Pohlman-Rodgers	ECHOLS CO COMMISSION	Commissioner	juviemom@bellsouth.net
✓ Anthony Everette	Citizen ??		swsg@bellsouth.net
✓ Bobb Walker	Comm.	Comm.	walkerbobbys34@gmail.com

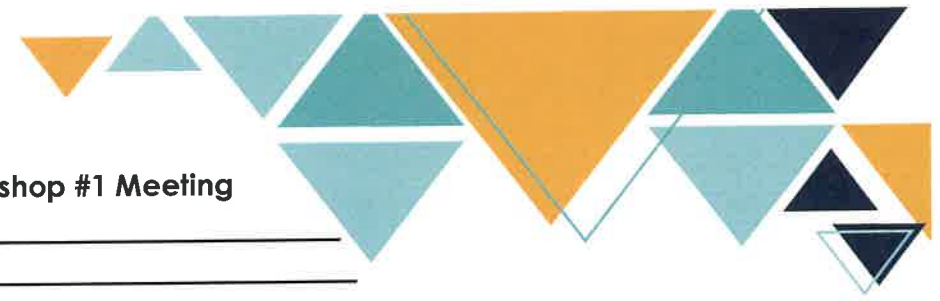
SIGN IN SHEET
Comprehensive Plan Workshop #1 Meeting
COUNTY/CITIES: Echols
DATE: 1/21/2025
TIME: 6 pm

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arzayus	SGRC	Planner	aarzayus@sgrc.us
✓ Laura Levesque	Citizen		laura.l.levesque@gmail.com
✓ Alan Levesque	Echols County	County Manager	alevesque@echolscountyga.com
✓ Jimmy Bennett	Fire Dept	Chief	echolsfiredept@bellsouth.net
✓ Justin Stalco	Echols County	Commissioner	jstanco@stalco.com
✓ Kenneth Petty	Echols	Commissioner	kennethpetty@icloud.com
✓ Karen Black	Family Connection Coordinator	Coordinator	echolsfc@gmail.com
Jimmy Tucker	Echols		Tucker Jimmy 945 @gmail



SIGN IN SHEET
Comprehensive Plan Workshop #1 Meeting
COUNTY/CITIES: Echols
DATE: 1/21/2025
TIME: 6 pm

REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED



NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arzayus	SGRC	Planner	aarzayus@sgrc.us
Leigh Ann Combass	Echols Co. Health Dept	County Nurse Manager	Leigh.Combass@dph.ga.gov
✓ Sandra Giddens	Volunteer		Giddens Sandra 361 John
James Horton	SGRC	Staff	jhorton@sgrc.us



SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED

SIGN IN SHEET

Comprehensive Plan Workshop #2 Meeting

COUNTY/CITIES: Echols

DATE: 2/25/2025

TIME: 2 pm

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Vince Hamm	Echols County Schools	Superintendent	Vince.hamm@echols.k12.ga.us
Kenneth Petty	Echols Commission	Chairman	Kennepetty@icloud.com
Delilah Arnold	Echols Co Senior Center	Site Manager	darnold@echolcountygga.com
Peggy Pittman	Echols Co Senior Center	Van Driver	
Alexandra Aragues	SGRC	Planner	
Alan Levesque	Echols Commission	County manager	aleresque@echolscountysoe.com
Karen Black	Echols Family Connection	Coordinator	echolafc@gmail.com
John S. Quisenberry	Snowman Mike Rice		wwalswatershed@gmail.com



SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED

SIGN IN SHEET

Comprehensive Plan Workshop #3 Meeting

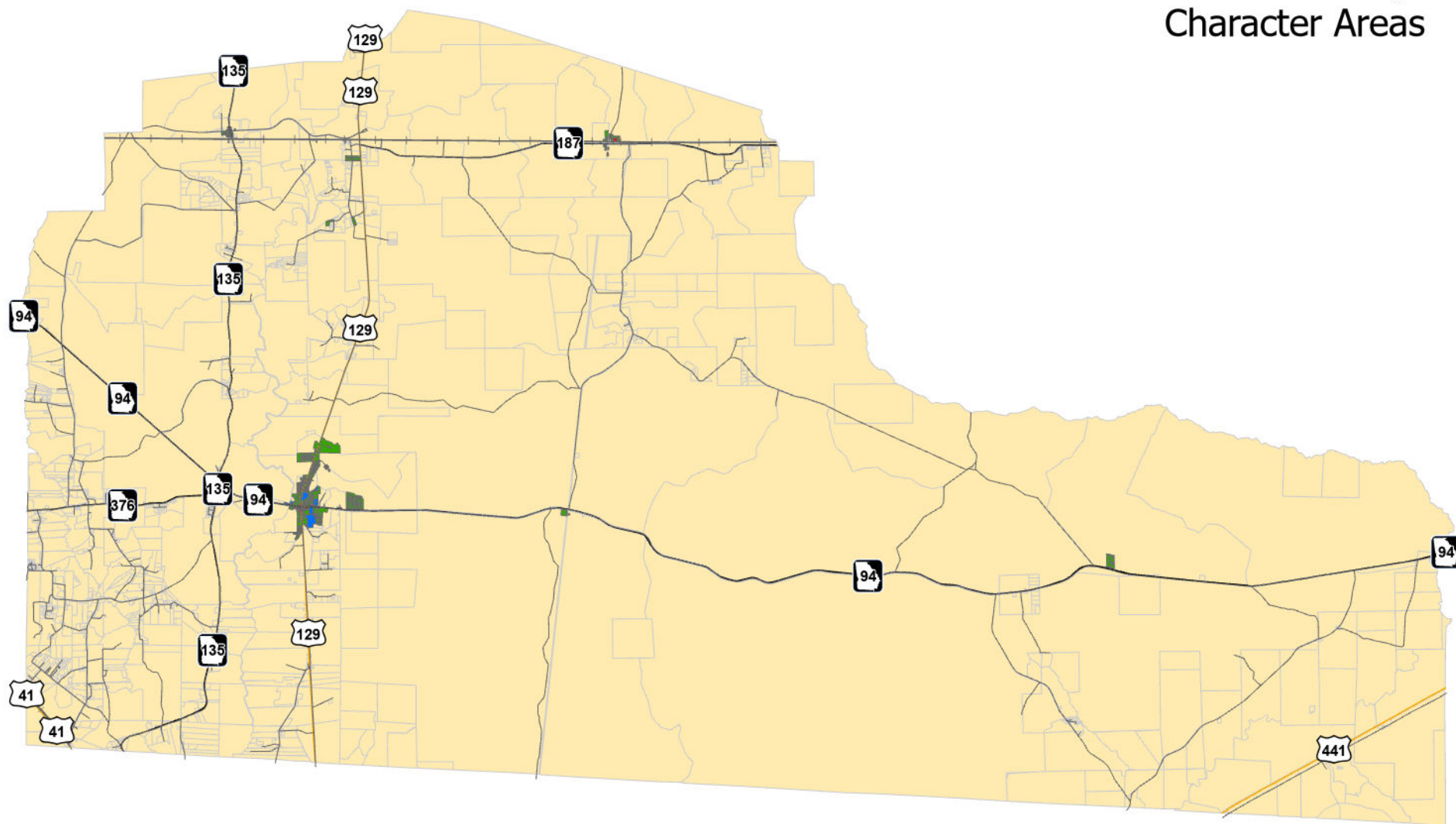
COUNTY/CITIES: Echols

DATE: 3/25/2025

TIME: 6 pm

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TITLE	EMAIL
Alexandra Arzayus	SGRC Planner	Planner	
Aleen Leveson	Echols BOC	County Manager	
Bobbi Pohlman-Rodgers	ECHOLS BOC	COUNTY COMMISSIONER	
Betty Walker	Echols BOC	C.C.	

Echols County Character Areas



Legend

- Roads
- Railroads
- Major Roads**
- State Routes
- US Highways

Character Areas

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Public Institution
- Residential





The Valdosta Daily Times
The Moultrie Observer

THOMASVILLE
TIMES-ENTERPRISE
The Tifton Gazette

AFFIDAVIT

I, Laurie Gay, Publisher, do hereby certify that the Legal Advertisement(s) for

was/were published in _____

on _____

Subscribed and sworn to me, in the County of Lowndes in the State of Georgia on this

_____ day of _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer L. Jones', written over a horizontal line.

Notary Public Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurie Gay', written over a horizontal line.

Publisher



Court Petitions

2024, seeking forfeiture of the above-described property due to its being subject to forfeiture to the State of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 16-13-49 and 9-16-6 in that the defendant property was directly or indirectly used or intended for use to facilitate a violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30 – possession of marijuana and/or THC; and/or the defendant property was proceeds of a violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30 – distribution of marijuana and/or THC; and/or the defendant property was found in close proximity to marijuana and/or THC possessed in violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30; and/or the defendant property was found in close proximity to other property subject to forfeiture pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 16-13-49 and 9-16-12.

On July 23, 2024, Deputies with the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office seized the Defendant in Rem property at mile marker 13 southbound on Georgia 401 (Interstate 75), Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia. The complaint in this action alleges you may have an interest in said property. You are hereby commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court and serve upon Michelle T. Harrison, Assistant District Attorney, Southern Judicial Circuit, Post Office Box 99, Valdosta, Georgia 31603-0099, an answer to the complaint within thirty (30) days of the date of final publication of this notice, that is to say within thirty (30) days of the second publication date of November 8, 2024. If you fail to do so, judgment pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 9-16-12 shall be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. If you have been personally or notoriously served with the Complaint and Summons, the foregoing does not apply and you should respond within the time specified in the Summons.

This the 24th day of October, 2024.

/s/ Kelly Jenkins
Dep. Clerk, Superior Court,
Lowndes County, Georgia

834755
11/01/08/2024

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF
LOWNDES COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

CIVIL ACTION NO. 2024CV1126

STATE OF GEORGIA,
Plaintiff,

vs

NINE HUNDRED EIGHTY-TWO DOLLARS (\$982.00) IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY;
Defendant in rem,

RE PROPERTY OF
TIMBERTON DENSON
Purported Owner(s)/
Interest Holders

NOTICE OF PROCEEDINGS

TO: ALL PERSONS HAVING AN INTEREST IN SAID PROPERTY WHO ARE NOT OTHERWISE NOTIFIED OF THE FOREGOING PROCEEDING

You are hereby notified that the above-styled action has been filed in the named Court on the 18th day of June, 2024, seeking forfeiture of the above-described property due to its being subject to forfeiture to the State of Georgia pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 16-13-49 and 9-16-6 in that the defendant property was directly or indirectly used or intended for use to facilitate a violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30 – possession of cocaine and/or an illegal substance structurally derived from 2-aminopropan-1-one by substitution at the 1-position with either phenyl, naphthyl, or thiophene ring systems; and/or the defendant property was proceeds of a violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30 – distribution of cocaine and/or an illegal substance structurally derived from 2-aminopropan-1-one by substitution at the 1-position with either phenyl, naphthyl, or thiophene ring systems possessed in violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30; and/or the defendant property was found in close proximity to cocaine and/or an illegal substance structurally derived from 2-aminopropan-1-one by substitution at the 1-position with either phenyl, naphthyl, or thiophene ring systems possessed in violation of O.C.G.A. § 16-13-30; and/or the defendant property was found in close proximity to other property subject to forfeiture pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 16-13-49 and 9-16-12.

On April 21, 2024, Deputies with the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office seized the Defendant in Rem property at 200 E. Central Avenue, Valdosta, Georgia 31601. The complaint in this action alleges you may have an interest in said property. You are hereby commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court and serve upon Michelle T. Harrison, Assistant District Attorney, Southern Judicial Circuit, Post Office Box 99, Valdosta, Georgia 31603-0099, an answer to the complaint within thirty (30) days of the date of final publication of this notice, that is to say within thirty (30) days of the second publication date of November 8, 2024. If you fail to do so, judgment pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 9-16-12 shall be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. If you have been personally or notoriously served with the Complaint and Summons, the foregoing does not apply and you should respond within the time specified in the Summons.

This the 23rd day of October, 2024.

/s/ Stacy Barrett
Dep. Clerk, Superior Court,
Lowndes County, Georgia

834746
11/01/08/2024

Rohan Rupani, Esq.
Associate Attorney
Wright Law Group, PLLC
P.O. Box 54697
Atlanta, GA 30308
Direct: (470) 870-1780
Email: rrupani@replevin.com

STATE COURT OF
LOWNDES COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

NOTICE OF SERVICE
BY PUBLICATION

Civil Action No. 2024SCV0393

DIVERSITAS HOLDINGS LLC,

Court Petitions

Plaintiff,

V.
DONTRAY D. ANDERSON,
Defendant.

TO: Dontray D. Anderson
(Defendant)
Last Known Addresses:
911 Lakeside Drive,
Valdosta, GA 31602

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that on April 30, 2024, Diversitas Holdings LLC, Plaintiff in the above captioned action, filed suit against Dontray D. Anderson for breach of contract and additional related claims. Service by publication is hereby perfected on Dontray D. Anderson pursuant to applicable Georgia law and O.C.G.A. § 9-11-4(f)(1) et seq, and that by reason of an order for service by publication signed by the Honorable Ellen S. Golden, Judge of said Court, on the 19th day of September, 2024 and filed of record on the 23rd day of September, 2024, you are hereby given notice that you are commanded and required to file with the Clerk of said Court an Answer to the Complaint in writing within sixty (60) days from September 19, 2024 in accordance with the Georgia Civil Practice Act.

Any responsive pleadings shall also be served on Plaintiff by mailing a copy to Rohan Rupani, Wright Law Group, PLLC, P.O. Box 54697, Atlanta, GA 30308. Any failure to answer within the prescribed time period required by law may result in a default judgment against the above-named party Defendant as to both liability and damages. WITNESS, the Honorable Ellen S. Golden, Judge of said Court.

/s/ Stacy Barrett Dep. Clerk
BETH GREENE
Clerk of State Court,
Lowndes County

833013
11/01/08,15,22/2024

Estate Notices

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF
LOWNDES COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

ESTATE NO. 2024-ES-0228

IN RE: ESTATE OF
BARBARA E. METTIS,
DECEASED

CLAIMS AGAINST OR
IN FAVOR OF ESTATE

Notice: All creditors of the Estate of Barbara E. Mettis., decedent, late of Lowndes County, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

10/9/2024

David F. Sandbach, Jr.
Attorney for Estate
1003 North Patterson Street
Valdosta, GA 31601

831785
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF
LOWNDES COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

ESTATE NO. 2024ES0275

IN RE: ESTATE OF
LARRY CLYDE WILSON
DECEASED

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

GEORGIA,
LOWNDES COUNTY.

Notice is hereby given by SARA WILSON REECE that she has been duly qualified as Executor of the Estate of LARRY CLYDE WILSON, deceased.

All creditors of LARRY CLYDE WILSON, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law or lose priority as to their claim.

All persons indebted to said Estate are required to make immediate payment to the Executor.

This 14th day of October, 2024.

SARA WILSON REECE
c/o WILLIAM C. NIJEM, JR.
LANGDALE VALLOTTON, LLP
P.O. Box 1547
Valdosta, GA 31603-1547

831889
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All creditors of the Estate of William Anthony Branham, of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned Administrator's according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to them.

Margo Branham
2480 Copeland Road
Valdosta, GA 31601

SHERWOOD & SHERWOOD,
P. C.
H. Burke Sherwood, Sr.
Attorney at Law
502 N. Ashley Street
P.O. Box 1285
Valdosta, Georgia 31603-1285
(229) 219-9952

831807
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS
OF LINDA RUTH LOKEY

All creditors of the Estate of Linda Ruth Lokey late of Lowndes County, Georgia, now deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned Administrator of the Estate of said deceased, according to law, and all persons indebted to said Estate are hereby required to make immediate payment to the undersigned Administrator.

This 22nd day of October, 2024.

Caneisa L. Butler,
Administrator
Estate of Linda Ruth Lokey
5062 Hammock Trail
Lake Park, GA 31636

833240
10/25;11/01/08,15/2024

Estate Notices

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

All creditors of the Estate of Mary Noe Rogers, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law; and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment.

This 15th day of October, 2024.

Krista Rogers Brazeale,
Executor of the
Estate of Mary Noe Rogers
110 Fairway Drive
Valdosta, Georgia 31605

or

MOORE, CLARKE, DuVALL &
RODGERS, P.C.
3300 Fulwood Road
Tifton, Georgia 31794
(229) 382-0037

831944

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

All creditors of the Estate of GLENN G. TUCKER, of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned Personal Representative according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment thereof.

Elizabeth Jeanne Woodward
Prince
5545 Old U.S. 41 South
Lake Park, GA 31636

J. MICHAEL DOVER
Attorney at Law
Post Office Box 729
Valdosta, Georgia 31603-0729
(229) 242-0314
State Bar No. 227600

833143
10/25;11/01/08,15/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

All creditors of the Estate of JAMES IRVING TRAYNOR, of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned Personal Representative according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment thereof.

Henrietta Grace Traynor
3842 Little John Circle
Valdosta, GA 31601

J. MICHAEL DOVER
Attorney at Law
Post Office Box 729
Valdosta, Georgia 31603-0729
(229) 242-0314
State Bar No. 227600

833141
10/25;11/01/08,15/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS
OF
CLANDER ROBERTS

All creditors of the Estate of Clander Roberts, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, now deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned Executor of the estate of said deceased, according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are hereby required to make immediate payment to the Executor.

This 17th day of October 2024

Eleanor Roberts Gibson,
Executor
4135 Corinth Church Road
Lake Park, Georgia 31636

Wade H. Coleman
Coleman Talley LLP
109 South Ashley Street
Valdosta, GA 31601

833147
10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS OF
THE ESTATE OF
ALFRED E. PITZING,
DECEASED

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF LOWNDES

All creditors of the Estate of Alfred E. Pitzing, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

Dated: This 10th day of October, 2024.

Lonnie Jack Pitzing,
Executor
of the Estate of
c/o Wm. Al Turner, Jr.
P. O. Box 819
Valdosta, GA 31603-0819

831802
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS OF
THE ESTATE OF
ANSEL NORMAN COX,
DECEASED

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF LOWNDES

All creditors of the Estate of Ansel Norman Cox, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

Dated: This 22nd day of October, 2024.

Rebecca M. Parnell,
Administrator
of the Estate of
ANSEL NORMAN COX

c/o Wm. Al Turner, Jr.
P.O. Box 819
Valdosta, GA 31603-0819

833243
10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

Estate Notices

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS OF THE ESTATE OF GERALDINE J. BACKUS

GEORGIA, LOWNDES COUNTY

All creditors of the Estate of Geraldine J. Backus, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the Executor stated below according to law, and all persons indebted to said Estate are required to make immediate payment to said Executor.

Donna Lee Huber
Executor
c/o H. Pearce Scott
H. PEARCE SCOTT, P.C.
2912-B North Oak Street
Valdosta, Georgia 31602

834742
11/01,08,15,22/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS OF
THE ESTATE OF
SARAH E. SHAW,
DECEASED

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF LOWNDES

All creditors of the Estate of Sarah E. Shaw, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

Dated: This 15th day of October, 2024.

Ben Harrison,
Executor
of the Estate of
Sarah E. Shaw

c/o Wm. Al Turner, Jr.
P. O. Box 819
Valdosta, GA 31603-0819

831946
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS OF
WALTER GAGE EARL
COLEMAN

All creditors of the Estate of Walter Gage Earl Coleman, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, now deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned Administrator of the estate of said deceased, according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are hereby required to make immediate payment to the Administrator.

Kendall Nicole Coleman,
Administrator
C/O John E. Dalton, Jr.
109 South Ashley Street
Valdosta, GA 31601

John Dalton, Jr.
Coleman Talley LLP
109 South Ashley Street
Valdosta, GA 31601

831939
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF NAOMI C. HOWARD,
DECEASED

All creditors of the Estate of Naomi C. Howard, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 7th day of October, 2024.

David D. Howard
Executor
Estate of
Naomi C. Howard
c/o L. Andrew Smith
Attorney for the Estate
106 E. Force St.
Valdosta, GA 31601
Telephone: (229) 247-1387

831955
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF LAVELLE WISENBAKER,
DECEASED

All creditors of the Estate of Lavelle Wisenbaker, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 7th day of October, 2024.

Gregory Smith Wisenbaker
Executor
Estate of
Lavelle Wisenbaker
c/o L. Andrew Smith
Attorney for the Estate
106 E. Force St.
Valdosta, GA 31601
Telephone: (229) 247-1387

831959
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA,
LOWNDES COUNTY

IN RE: ESTATE OF
FAYE RUNELLE RADFORD,
deceased

All creditors of the estate of Faye Runelle Radford of Lowndes County, deceased, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 16 day of July, 2019

Name: Faith Michele Kolb
Street Address: 138 Val Del Road
City,State & Zip
Hahira, GA 31632

834876
11/01,08,15,22/2024

Estate Notices

NOTICE TO DEBTORS AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: ESTATE OF MAUREEN MATURI,
DECEASED

All creditors of the Estate of Maureen Maturi, deceased, late of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 7th day of October, 2024.

Janine M. Pendleton
Executrix
Estate of
Maureen Maturi
c/o L. Andrew Smith
Attorney for the Estate
106 E. Force St.
Valdosta, GA 31601
Telephone: (229) 247-1387

831967
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
LOWNDES COUNTY

IN RE: ESTATE OF RACHEL EVELYN COOPER

All creditors of the estate of RACHEL EVELYN COOPER, deceased, late of Lowndes County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 15th day of October, 2024.

Deborah Cooper Clay
Deborah Cooper Clay,
Executrix
of the Estate of
Rachel Evelyn Cooper,
deceased

James F. Council, Jr.
Attorney for Executrix
PO Box 1201
Valdosta, GA 31603
229-242-5362

831949
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF LOWNDES

IN RE: ESTATE OF LARRY EUGENE RICHARDSON, SR.

All creditors of the Estate of Larry Eugene Richardson, Sr. late of Lowndes County, Georgia, deceased, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 15th day of October, 2024.

Larry Eugene Richardson, Jr.,
Administrator
3194 Lower Boston Rd.
Thomasville, GA 31757

ATTORNEY:
William Long Whitesell, L.L.C.
2209 North Toombs Street
Valdosta, Ga 31602

833002
10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
LOWNDES COUNTY

IN RE: ESTATE OF DORIS LEE DAVIS

All creditors of the estate of DORIS LEE DAVIS, deceased, late of Lowndes County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 21st day of October, 2024.

Linda Gail Dotson
Linda Gail Dotson,
Executrix
of the Estate of
Doris Lee Davis, deceased

James F. Council, Jr.
Attorney for Executrix
PO Box 1201
Valdosta, GA 31603
229-242-5362

833156
10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
LOWNDES COUNTY

IN RE: ESTATE OF GREGORY MURRAY

All creditors of the estate of GREGORY MURRAY, deceased, late of Lowndes County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 9th day of October, 2024.

Elizabeth J. Murray
Elizabeth J. Murray,
Executrix
of the Estate of
Gregory Murray, deceased

James F. Council, Jr.
Attorney for Executrix
PO Box 1201
Valdosta, GA 31603
229-242-5362

831796
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

STATE OF GEORGIA
LOWNDES COUNTY

IN RE: ESTATE OF DAVID GARRISON

All creditors of the estate of DAVID GARRISON, deceased, late of Lowndes County, are hereby notified to render their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

This 24th day of October, 2024.

/s/Linda Garrison
Linda Garrison,

Estate Notices

Administratrix
of the Estate of
David Garrison, deceased

James F. Council, Jr.
Attorney for Administratrix
PO Box 1201
Valdosta, GA 31603
229-242-5362

834765
11/01,08,15,22/2024

NOTICE TO DEBTORS
AND CREDITORS

The Estate of JAMES DAVID TUGGLE, Deceased

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF LOWNDES

All creditors of the Estate of James David Tuggle, deceased, of Lowndes County, Georgia, are hereby notified to render in their demands to the undersigned according to law, and all persons indebted to said estate are required to make immediate payment to me.

Dated: October 15, 2024

Beth Ann Rountree,
Executrix
of the Estate of
James David Tuggle
c/o John D. Holt
PO Box 1571
Valdosta, GA 31603

831906
10/18,25;11/01/08/2024

Incorporations

NOTICE OF INCORPORATION

Notice is given that Articles of Incorporation which will incorporate THE TABLE AT TWIN LAKES, INC. have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code. The initial registered office of the Corporation is located at 4410 Willow Wood Gate, Valdosta, Georgia, 31602; Lowndes County, Georgia, and its initial registered agent at such address is ROBERT S. BURNS.

DOVER MILLER KARRAS
LANGDALE & BRANTLEY, P.C.
P. O. Box 729
Valdosta, GA 31603-0729
Attorneys for Incorporator

834942
11/01,08/2024

NOTICE OF INCORPORATION

Notice is hereby given that articles of incorporation which incorporate RASZEWSKI, PC, a Georgia Professional Corporation, have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Business Corporation Code, O.C.G.A. § 14-2-201.1(a). The initial registered office of the corporation is located at 3350 Country Club Road, #321, Valdosta, Georgia 31605, and its initial registered agent at such address is JESSE A. RASZEWSKI.

833010
10/25;11/01/2024

NOTICE OF MERGER

Notice is given that a certificate of merger (the "Certificate of Merger") effecting a merger by and between Lowndes Bancshares, Inc., a Georgia corporation, and FMB Bancshares, Inc, a Georgia corporation, have been delivered to the Secretary of State for filing in accordance with the Georgia Business Corporation Code. The name of the surviving corporation is Lowndes Bancshares, Inc., a corporation incorporated in the State of Georgia. The registered office of Lowndes Bancshares, Inc. is located at 3462 N. Valdosta Road, Valdosta, GA 31603 and its registered agent at such address is John W. Langdale, Jr.

833162
10/25;11/01/2024

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

Notice is given that the business operated at 2806 Cameron Lane; Valdosta, Georgia 31601, in the tradename of WILLIAMS BROTHERS CARS AND TRUCKS is owned and carried on by WBCT, LLC, a Georgia limited liability company, with its principal office at 3851 Kinderlou Forest; Valdosta, Georgia 31601; and the statement relating thereto required by O.C.G.A. Section 10-1-490, has been filed with the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia.

WBCT, LLC,
a Georgia limited liability
company

By:/s/ Fleming Williams
Fleming Williams,
Member/Manager

834741
11/01,08/2024

The undersigned hereby certify that they are conducting a business at 1826 Clay Rd. in the City of Valdosta, County of Lowndes, State of Georgia under the name of Wakefield BioChar, and that the nature of the business is the production and sales of an organic-based, carbon rich material known as BioChar, and that said business is composed of the following partnership: Wakefield Agricultural Carbon LLC, 1826 Clay Rd., Valdosta, GA 13185.

833164
10/25;11/01/2024

Public Notices

Kick-Off for Comprehensive Plan Comprehensive Plan Update
For Echols County Echols County
Commissioners Chambers
110 GA Highway 94 E, Suite 1,
Statenville, GA 31648

A public hearing will be held at 6:30 PM on Thursday, December 5, 2024, in the Echols County Courthouse located at 110 GA Highway 94 E, Suite 1, Statenville, Georgia, to announce the beginning of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update for Echols County. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan, announce opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs re-

Public Notices

lating to disability access or foreign language should contact the County Clerk's Office at the Echols County Commission Office at (229) 559-6538. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service at 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact the Echols County Clerk at (229) 559-6538, or Alexandra Arzayus at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-5277 or email: aarzayus@sgrc.us

835434
11/01/2024

Public Hearing

Application for Alcohol License

Dominic Joseph Socco of Uncle Carlo's Gelato, located at 1024 Lakes Blvd., Lake Park, Georgia, is applying for a license for the sale of beer and wine for consumption on premise. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, during their regular meeting on November 12, 2024, will hold a public hearing regarding this application. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be held in the Commission Chambers, Lowndes County Judicial/Administrative Complex – 2nd Floor, 327 North Ashley Street, Valdosta, Georgia.

834874

Public Hearing

Application for Alcohol License

Tony Taylor of Taylor Entertainment of GA, LLC, DBA Twin Lakes Club & Grill, located at 1068 Lakes Blvd., Lake Park, Georgia, is applying for a license for the sale of beer, wine and liquor for consumption on premise. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, during their regular meeting on November 12, 2024, will hold a public hearing regarding this application. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be held in the Commission Chambers, Lowndes County Judicial/Administrative Complex – 2nd Floor, 327 North Ashley Street, Valdosta, Georgia.

834875
11/01,08/2024

Various VLMPO Transportation Plans Amendments

Notice of a Public Review Period

In accordance with requirements set forth in 23 CFR 450 and other laws and regulations; the Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization (VLMPO) is amending its FY2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program, Vision2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the VLMPO Public Participation Plan for the Valdosta Metropolitan Planning Area which includes all of Lowndes County and portions of Berrien, Brooks and Lanier Counties.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is updating its process for how amendments and administrative modifications are being processed. The documents aforementioned are being amended to reflect the language of those updates.

These documents are available for public review and comment from October 28, 2024 to December 11, 2024 at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission, 1937 Carlton Adams Drive, Valdosta, GA 31601; on the SGRC website (www.sgrc.us); and at all local government offices and libraries.

Si usted necesita la ayuda de un traductor del idioma español, por favor comuníquese con la SGRC al teléfono 229-333-5277, cuando menos 1 semana antes de la junta.

For more information, please contact Amy Martin, Transportation Director at amartin@sgrc.us or Torrence Weaver, Planner, at tweaver@sgrc.us or via phone at 229-333-5277.

835108
11/01/2024

Sales/Foreclosures

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE OF RIGHT OF REDEMPTION STATE OF GEORGIA/ COUNTY OF LOWNDES

TO: 1) Alvin Green Jr., 2) Unknown Heirs and Assigns of Alvin Green Jr./Estate Alvin Green Jr., 3) Estate Alvin Green Jr., 4) Lowndes County Tax Commissioner, 5) all Tenants/Residents/ Occupants, and 6) All Persons Known or Unknown who may claim 3180 Triple Lake Dr. a/k/a 3180 Triple Lake Rd., Lake Park, Georgia

TAKE NOTICE THAT:

The right to redeem 3180 Triple Lake Dr. a/k/a 3180 Triple Lake Rd., Lake Park, Georgia, (Tax Parcel 0190 004), as follows, to wit:

All and only that parcel of land designated as Tax Parcel 0190 004, lying and being in Land Lot 159 of the 11th Land District, Lowndes County, Georgia, containing 1.0 acre, more or less, being part of Lot 7, Triple Lake Subdivision, Phase One, shown in Plat Record Book 35, Page 99, described in Deed Book 6092, Page 179, the description contained therein being incorporated herein by this reference, known as 3180 Triple Lake Road.

Will expire and be forever foreclosed and barred on and after the 3rd day of January, 2025, or 30 days from service of notice.

The tax deed to which this notice relates is dated the 6th day of September, 2022, and is recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, in Deed Book 6949 Page 236.

The property may be redeemed at any time before the 3rd day of January, 2025, or 30 days from service of notice, by payment of the redemption price as fixed

Sales/Foreclosures

and provided by law to the undersigned at the following address: David A. Basil, LLC, 301 Bradley Street, Suite B-7, Carrollton, Georgia, 30117.

Please be governed accordingly.

833149
10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

NOTICE OF SALE

GEORGIA, LOWNDES COUNTY.

WHEREAS, heretofore on December 14, 2023 FALKY HOLDINGS, INC., a Florida corporation, did execute to THE FIRST BANK a certain security deed to the following land:

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lots 71 and 114, Land District 1, Lowndes County, Georgia, containing 5.10 acres and being more particularly identified as Tract "C" on that plat of survey for Longhorns LTD, LLC, by Rodney Gene Tenery, Jr., Georgia Registered Surveyor No. 3015, with a plat date of September 21, 2021, and recorded September 22, 2022, in Plat Book 000PCC, Page 01076, Lowndes County Land Records. Referral to said plat of survey being made to incorporate same herein by reference thereto.

The above described property is known as Touchton Road, Tract C, 5.10 Acres, Land Lot 71 and 114, Land District 11 Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia 31602 and Parcel # 0168 030.

NOTE: THE SUBJECT PROPERTY DOES NOT HAVE A MAILING ADDRESS.

WHEREAS, said Deed to Secure Debt secures a Commercial Promissory Note from Falky Holdings, Inc. to Sunshine Community Bank nka The First Bank dated August 17, 2017 in the amount of FOUR MILLION TWO HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$4,240,000.00) and all other indebtedness then owing or thereafter arising between the parties, all shown on a Deed to Secure Debt dated December 14, 2023 and recorded December 15, 2023 in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia in Deed Book 7035, Pages 340-344.

WHEREAS, The First Bank is the holder of the note and security deed; and

WHEREAS, payments under the note have become in default, and a default exists under the Note and under the Security Deed. All notices required in the loan documents have been given. The default has not been cured; and the undersigned has elected that the entire debt, principal and interest, become due at once as provided in the note and security deed, and the undersigned has elected to proceed with non-judicial foreclosure under its security deed.

NOW, THEREFORE, according to the original terms of said security deed and pursuant to the power of sale contained therein and the laws in such cases made and provided, the undersigned will expose for sale to the highest and best bidder for cash the above described property, after proper advertisement, on the first Tuesday in November, 2024 being November 5, 2024, during the legal hours of sale at the Lowndes County Courthouse located at 327 N. Ashley Street in Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia.

Said property will be sold subject to taxes for the year 2024 and any prior unpaid taxes, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants and matters of record superior to the security deeds first set out above.

The proceeds from said sale will be used, first to the payment of said note, principal, interest and expenses and attorney's fees for which proper notice is given, and the balance, if any, delivered as provided in said security deeds.

The First Bank is the secured creditor. The person with full authority to negotiate and modify the terms of the security deed is Scott W. Gaby. The address of The First Bank is 2626 Mahan Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32308, and the telephone number is 850-942-2626.

This law firm is acting as a debt collector for The First Bank. Any information obtained by us will be used for the purpose of collecting the debt described herein.

This 3rd day of October, 2024

The First Bank, as attorney-in-fact for Falky Holdings, Inc., under power of sale in said security deed.

John Turner Holt
Alexander & Vann, LLP
411 Gordon Ave.
Thomasville, GA 31792
229-226-2565

830422

10/11,18,25;11/01/2024

NOTICE OF SALE

GEORGIA, LOWNDES COUNTY.

By virtue of a power of sale contained in that certain Deed to Secure Debt from TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZING to COLONY BANK SUCCESSOR BY CORPORATE NAME CHANGE TO COLONY BANK QUITMAN ("COLONY"), dated November 29, 2004, and recorded in Deed Book 3020, Page 171, et seq., Lowndes County Deed Records, as modified by that certain Modification of Deed to Secure Debt, dated October 24, 2013, and recorded in Deed Book 5424, Page 237, et seq., aforesaid records, said Deed to Secure Debt having originally been given to secure that certain Promissory Note in the original principal amount of ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-ONE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$131,000.00) of even date therewith, as well as all extensions, renewals and modifications thereof, together with any and all other indebtedness, of any type or description, then or thereafter owing by TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZ-

Sales/Foreclosures

ING to COLONY BANK, there will be sold by the undersigned, at public outcry, to the highest bidder for cash, before the courthouse door at Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in November, 2024, the following described property:

All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in Land Lot 15 of the 11th Land District of Lowndes County, Georgia, in the Town of Remerton, and being more particularly described as follows: As a point of reference only, begin at the intersection of the east margin of Green Street and the north margin of Gordon Street at an iron pin; and from said point proceed South 44 degrees 42 minutes 30 seconds East a distance of 277.15 feet to a rebar; thence continue South 44 degrees 42 minutes 30 seconds East a distance of 30.96 feet to a rebar and the Point of Beginning; thence North 54 degrees 17 minutes 34 seconds East a distance of 156.12 feet to a rebar; thence South 44 degrees 42 minutes 30 seconds East a distance of 31.01 feet to a point; thence North 74 degrees 33 minutes 37 seconds East a distance of 106.41 feet to a rebar; thence South 44 degrees 56 minutes 32 seconds West a distance of 247.02 feet to a rebar located on the east margin of Gordon Street; thence North 44 degrees 42 minutes 30 seconds West a distance of 108.99 feet to a rebar and the Point of Beginning. Said property constitutes 0.3969 acres and is known as 1742 West Gordon Street (formerly 1204 West Gordon), Remerton, Georgia, and is depicted on a Plat of Survey prepared by Folsom Surveying, recorded May 24, 1996, in Plat Cabinet A at Page 82, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, to which Plat reference is hereby made for all purposes in aid of description.

THE STREET ADDRESS OF THE ABOVE-DESCRIBED PROPERTY IS **1742 WEST GORDON STREET, VALDOSTA, LOWNDES COUNTY, GEORGIA.** TO THE BEST OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF OF COLONY BANK.

The indebtedness secured by the aforementioned Deed to Secure Debt has been and is hereby declared immediately due and payable in full because of the failure of TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZING to maintain payments upon said indebtedness owing to the COLONY BANK, in accordance with its terms. Said indebtedness remaining in default; this sale shall be made for the purpose of paying such indebtedness, as well as all expenses of this sale, including attorneys' fees.

The above-described property will be sold as the property of TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZING, and will be sold subject to the following items which may affect the title to said property: all zoning and subdivision ordinances and/or regulations; matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or an inspection of the property; all real property ad valorem taxes or assessments, which may constitute liens upon said property; all liens which, under applicable law, would take priority over the Deed to Secure Debt described above; and all easements, restrictions, rights-of-way, security deeds or other encumbrances of record which have priority over the referenced Deed to Secure Debt.

To the best of the knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party presently in possession of said property is TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZING, and/or a tenant or tenants.

Please be further advised that the entity which has full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the Note, Deed to Secure Debt, and related documents, is:

COLONY BANK
P.O. Box 989
Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750
Tel: (229) 426-6000, Ext. 3301
ATTN: Jeffery Alton

Please note, however, that such entity or individual is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of such loan.

THIS LAW FIRM IS ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

COLONY BANK SUCCESSOR BY CORPORATE NAME CHANGE TO COLONY BANK QUITMAN, as Attorney-in-Fact for TERESA F. MCDANIEL a/k/a TERESA FRENCH PITZING MOORE, CLARKE, DuVALL & RODGERS, P.C.

By: D. BRADLEY FOLSOM
D. BRADLEY FOLSOM
Attorneys for COLONY BANK
Post Office Box 4540
Valdosta, Georgia 31604-4540
(229) 245-7823

830434

10/11,18,25;11/01/2024

NOTICE OF SALE

GEORGIA, LOWNDES COUNTY.

By virtue of a power of sale contained in that certain Security Deed from GARAMIAH SWEARINGEN to RENASANT BANK, dated January 31, 2023, and recorded in Deed Book 6971, Pages 230, et seq., Lowndes County Deed Records, said Security Deed having originally been given to secure that certain Note in the original principal amount of ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-THREE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$133,000.00), as well as all extensions, renewals and modifications thereof, together with any and all other indebtedness, then or thereafter owing by Garamiah Swearingen to RENASANT BANK, there will be sold by the undersigned, at public outcry, to the highest bidder for cash, before the courthouse door at Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in November, 2024, the following described property:

All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in the City

Sales/Foreclosures

of Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia, and known and designated as Lot No. 6 in Block "B" of Whispering Pines Subdivision as depicted upon a map or plat of survey thereof appearing of record in Plat Record Book "A" at Page 126 in the Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, to which map or plat and the record whereof reference is hereby made for all purposes of description; upon which lot has been constructed a residence known as **1711 Toni Terrace, Valdosta, Georgia.**

The indebtedness secured by the aforementioned Security Deed has been and is hereby declared immediately due and payable in full because of the failure of Garamiah Swearingen to maintain payments upon said indebtedness, owing to the RENASANT BANK, in accordance with its terms. Said indebtedness remaining in default; this sale shall be made for the purpose of paying such indebtedness, as well as all expenses of this sale, including attorneys' fees.

The above-described property will be sold as the property of Garamiah Swearingen and will be sold subject to the following items which may affect the title to said property: all zoning and subdivision ordinances and/or regulations; matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or an inspection of the property; all real property ad valorem taxes or assessments, which may constitute liens upon said property; all liens which, under applicable law, would take priority over the Security Deed described above; and all easements, restrictions, rights-of-way, security deeds or other encumbrances of record which have priority over the referenced Security Deed.

To the best of the knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party presently in possession of said property is Garamiah Swearingen and/or a tenant or tenants.

Please be further advised that the entity which has full authority to negotiate, amend and modify all terms of the Note, Security Deed, and related documents, is:

Renasant Bank
151 Reinhardt College Pkwy
Canton, GA 30114
678-454-2423
ATTN: Clark Blackwell

Please note, however, that such entity or individual is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of such loan.

THIS LAW FIRM IS ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Renasant, as Attorney-in-Fact for Garamiah Swearingen MOORE, CLARKE, DuVALL & RODGERS, P.C.

By: D. BRADLEY FOLSOM
D. BRADLEY FOLSOM
Attorneys for RENASANT BANK
Post Office Box 4540
Valdosta, Georgia 31604-4540
(229) 245-7823

830431

10/11,18,25;11/01/2024

NOTICE TO FORECLOSE RIGHT TO REDEEM

Doris Virginia Anderson 520 S. Fry Street Valdosta, GA 31601

TAKE NOTICE THAT;

THE RIGHT TO REDEEM THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY, to wit:

All and only that parcel of land designated as Tax Parcel 0120B 336, lying and being in the City of Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia, described in Deed Book 234, Page 198, the description contained therein being incorporated herein by this reference.

WILL EXPIRE AND BE FOREVER FORECLOSED AND BARRED ON AND AFTER THE 11TH DAY OF November, 2024

The tax deed to which this notice relates is dated the 1ST day of August, 2023, and is recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, in Deed Book 7024 at Page 542.

The property may be redeemed at any time before the 11th day of November, 2024 by payment of the redemption price as fixed and provided by law to the undersigned at the following address:

c/o David F. Sandbach, Jr.
1003 North Patterson Street,
Valdosta, GA 31601

Please be governed accordingly.

David F. Sandbach, Jr.,
as Attorney/Agent
For Tamika LaFaye Gardner

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

GEORGIA, LOWNDES COUNTY

Under and by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by Sara T Harris A/K/A Sara T Waters to CITIFINANCIAL SERVICES, INC., dated December 11, 2001, recorded in Deed Book 2138, Page 270, Lowndes County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to Limosa, LLC by assignment recorded in Deed Book 6982, Page 671, Lowndes County, Georgia Records, conveying the after-described property to secure a Note in the original principal amount of FORTY-SIX THOUSAND FIFTY-FIVE AND 69/100 DOLLARS (\$46,055.69); with interest thereon as set forth therein, there will be sold at public outcry before the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door of Lowndes County, Georgia, or at such place as may be lawfully designated as an alternative, within the legal hours of sale on the first Tuesday in November, 2024, the following described property: SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF

The debt secured by said Security Deed has been and is hereby declared due by the borrower, and among other possible events of default, failure to pay the indebtedness as and when due and in the manner provided in the Note and Security

Sales/Foreclosures

ty Deed. The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the same and all expenses of this sale, as provided in the Security Deed and by law, including attorney's fees (notice pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 13-1-11 having been given).

Said property will be sold subject to any outstanding ad valorem taxes (including taxes which are a lien, but not yet due and payable), the right of redemption of any taxing authority, any matters which might be disclosed by an accurate survey and inspection of the property, any assessments, liens, encumbrances, zoning ordinances, restrictions, covenants, and any matters of record including, but not limited to, those superior to the Security Deed first set out above. Said property will be sold on an "as-is" basis without any representation, warranty or recourse against the above-named or the undersigned.

Limosa, LLC is the holder of the Security Deed to the property in accordance with OCGA § 44-14-162.2.

The entity that has full authority to negotiate, amend, and modify all terms of the mortgage with the debtor is: Land Home Financial Services, Inc., 3611 South Harbor Blvd. Suite 100, Santa Ana, CA 92704, 877-557-9042. Note, however, that such entity is not required by law to negotiate, amend or modify the terms of the loan.

To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the party in possession of the property is Sara T Harris A/K/A Sara T Waters or a tenant or tenants and said property is more commonly known as **1325 Wesley Lane, Valdosta, Georgia 31601.** Should a conflict arise between the property address and the legal description the legal description will control.

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed.

Limosa, LLC

as Attorney in Fact for
Sara T Harris A/K/A
Sara T Waters

McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC
1544 Old Alabama Road
Roswell, GA 30076
www.foreclosurehotline.net

EXHIBIT "A"

ALL THAT TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE, LYING AND BEING IN THE CITY OF VALDOSTA, LOWNDRS COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND BEING LOT 32, BLOCK A OF WOODGATE SUBDIVISION, SECTION 4, ACCORDING TO MAP OR PLAT OF SURVEY THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT RECORD BOOK B, PAGES 79-80, IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT OF LOWNDES COUNTY, GEORGIA, TO WHICH PLAT AND THE RECORD THEREOF REFERENCE IS HEREBY MADE FOR ALL PURPOSES OF DESCRIPTION SAID PROPERTY HAS LOCATED THEREOF A RESIDENCE DWELLING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS 1325 WESLEY LANE.

BY FEE SIMPLE DEED FROM WOODGATE INDUSTRIES, INC. AS SET FORTH IN DEED BOOK 207, PAGE 483 DATED 11/21/1972, AND RECORDED 11/24/1972, LOWNDES COUNTY RECORDS, STATE OF GEORGIA

MR/kam 11/5/24
Our file no. 24-15485GA - FT17

830397

10/11,18,25;11/01/2024

NOTICE TO FORECLOSE RIGHT TO REDEEM

Ivey Tucker 711 S. Lee Street Valdosta, Georgia 31601

TAKE NOTICE THAT: THE RIGHT TO REDEEM THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY, to wit:

All and only that parcel of land designated as Tax Parcel 0120D 317, lying and being in the City of Valdosta, Lowndes County, Georgia, described in Deed Book 175, Page 224, the description contained therein being incorporated herein by this reference.

WILL EXPIRE AND BE FOREVER FORECLOSED AND BARRED ON AND AFTER THE 11th DAY OF November, 2024

The tax deed to which this notice relates is dated the 1ST day of August, 2023, and is recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, in Deed Book 7024 at Page 550.

The property may be redeemed at any time before the 11th day of November, 2024 by payment of the redemption price as fixed and provided by law to the undersigned at the following address: c/o David F. Sandbach, Jr. 1003 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31601

Please be governed accordingly.

David F. Sandbach, Jr.,
as Attorney/Agent
For Lesia A. James

833047

10/25;11/01,08,15/2024

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

STATE OF GEORGIA LOWNDES COUNTY

By virtue of a power of sale contained in a certain security deed from Carnita B Dryer to United States of America, acting through the Farmers Home Administration, United States Department of Agriculture and recorded in Deed Book 1318, Page 240, Lowndes County, Georgia records given to secure a note in the original amount of \$58,280.00 with interest on the unpaid balance until paid, the following described proper will be sold at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash on November 5, 2024 (being the first Tuesday of said month unless said date falls on a Federal Holiday, in which case being the

Sales/Foreclosures

in November, 2024, to wit:

November 05, 2024, the following described property: All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in Land Lot 95 of the 12th Land District of Lowndes County, Georgia, and being more particularly described as Lot 6, Block A, Honey Bee Heights Subdivision according to that certain map or plat of survey of said subdivision recorded in Plat Record Book H, Page 194, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Lowndes County, Georgia, to which survey is hereby referred in aid of description.

The above described property is known as 936 West Stanfill Street, Hahira, Georgia. Being real property commonly known as **936 West Stanfill Street, Hahira, GA 31632.**

The debt secured by the above-referenced security deed has been declared due because of the default in the payment of said debt per the terms of the note and other possible defaults by the borrower or the successor thereto.

The debt remaining in default, this sale will be made for the purpose of paying the debt and all expenses of this sale including attorney's fees (notice of intent to collect attorney's fees having been given). Said sale will be made subject to the following items which may affect the title to said property: All restrictive covenants, easements and rights-of-way appearing of record, if any; all zoning ordinances; matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or by an inspection of the property; all outstanding or unpaid bills and assessments for street improvements, curbing, garbage, water, sewage and public utilities which may be liens upon said property; and any outstanding taxes, assessments and other liens superior to the security deed being foreclosed hereby.

To the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the above-described property is in the possession of the borrower and/or other persons with the consent and acquiescence of the borrower. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 44-14-162.2, the name, address and telephone number of the person or entity who shall have full authority to negotiate, amend, or modify all terms of the above-described mortgage is as follows: Dawsons Management/c/o USDA 3775 Venture Drive Duluth, GA 30096 770-962-4981 The foregoing notwithstanding, nothing in O.C.G.A. § 44-14-162.2 shall be construed to require United States of America, acting through the Farmers Home Administration, United States Department of Agriculture to negotiate, amend, or modify the terms of the Security Deed described herein. United States of America, acting through the Farmers Home Administration, United States Department of Agriculture as Attorney in Fact for Carnita B Dryer Attorney Contact: Miller, George & Suggs, PLLC 3000 Langford Road, Building 100 Peachtree Corners, GA 30071 Phone: 404-793-1447 Fax: 404-738-1558 24GA414-0188

THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Order Number 106485.

830374

10/11/2024, 10/18/2024, 10/25/2024, 11/01/2024,

NOTICE TO FORECLOSE RIGHT TO REDEEM

Jessie Washington 801 Lake Park Road Valdosta, GA 31602

TAKE NOTICE THAT;

THE RIGHT TO REDEEM THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY,

The Valdosta Daily Times

THOMASVILLE
TIMES-ENTERPRISE

The Milledgeville Observer

The Tifton Gazette

AFFIDAVIT

I, Laurie Gay, Publisher, do hereby certify that the legal Advertisement(s) for
Hearing June 3, 2025

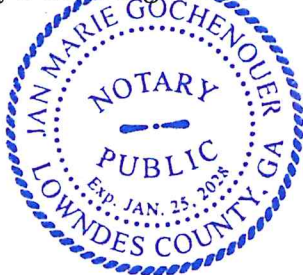
was/were published in The Valdosta Daily Times

on 5/17/2025

Subscribed and sworn to me, in the County of Lowndes in the State of Georgia on this

22 day of May 2025

Jan Marie Gochenouer
Notary Public Signature



Laurie Gay
Publisher

CLASSIFIEDS

12A

Saturday, May 17, 2025

valdostadailytimes.com

General Help Wanted

Transit Program Assistant

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) is seeking a Transit Program Assistant to enhance rural transit services under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 program. This full-time role is responsible for maintaining accurate records, assisting with grant documentation, supporting data entry and reporting functions, and ensuring smooth day-to-day administrative operations in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements.

High school diploma or GED and 1-2 years of experience in clerical or administrative support roles, preferably in a government setting, is required; additional education or certification in office administration or related fields is preferred. Must possess a valid driver's license.
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Public Notices

Transmittal Hearing for Comprehensive Plan 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update For Echols County Board of Commissioners 110 General Deloach Rd Statenville, GA 31648

A public hearing will be held at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, June 3rd, 2025, in the Echols County Board of Commissioners Building, located at 110 General Deloach Rd, Statenville, GA 31648 to announce the transmittal of 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update for Echols County. The purpose of the public hearing is to inform the community about the planning process and provide an opportunity to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan Update.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact the Echols County Manager at (229) 559-6538, or Alexandra Arzayus at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-5277 or email: aarzayus@sgrc.us

907415
05/17/2025

Invitation To Bid Notice



Purchasing Department
P.O. Box 1125
216 E. Central Avenue
Second Floor
Valdosta, Ga. 31601

Bid# 18-25
For: Compensation Study
Release Date: May 14, 2025
Proposal Due Date: June 26, 2025
Due Time: 10:00 A.M. EST

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WWW.VALDOSTACITY.COM/ FINANCE/PURCHASING
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CELEBRITY CIPHER by Luis Campos

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"X LHCCOF VNPXA X'P ... V JZYL BG CN
VYN AHZBROCN XYNXSXNBVO, RBA VA
AMC GVPC AXPC ... XA'G LHCC!"
- AS MZGA JHVXK LCHKBGZY

Previous Solution: "Denying the lines on our faces makes a comment about age and wisdom I don't care to make." — Debra Winger

TODAY'S CLUE: *8 9 10 11 12*

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ECHOLS COUNTY

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT the Update of the Echols County Comprehensive Plan


WHEREAS, the Echols County Board of Commissioners have completed the Update of the Echols County Comprehensive Plan.

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on June 3, 2025.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Echols County Board of Commissioners does hereby transmit the Update of the Echols County Comprehensive Plan to the South Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

Approved this 5th day of June, 2025


Chairman, Echols County Commission


ATTEST: Alan Levesque, County Manager

Kenneth Petty, Chairman
(229) 561-0930

Bobbi Pohlman-Rodgers, Vice-Chair
(229) 300-8998

Stanley Corbett, Commissioner
(229) 560-3026



Justin Staten, Commissioner
(229) 415-2942

Bobby Walker, Commissioner
(229) 300-0821

William Holland, County Attorney
(229) 242-7562

CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

110 General De Loach St., PO Box 190
Statenville, GA. 31648
(229) 559-6538/Fax (229) 559-6158
Email: ecboc@yahoo.com
www.echolscountyga.com

3 June, 2025

Echols County Commissioners
110 General DeLoach Street
Statenville, GA 31648

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission
1937 Carlton Adams Drive
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Echols County has completed an update of its Comprehensive Plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in the development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included in our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Alan Levesque, County Manager, at (229) 559-6538 or alevesque@echolscountyga.com.

Sincerely,

County Chairman Of Echols County, GA