

# 2022 Bacon County Comprehensive Plan Update

For Bacon County and the City of Alma



DRAFT

Prepared for:  
Bacon County  
City of Alma

A special acknowledgment to the Stakeholders, Steering Committee, and SGRC Staff members who dedicated their time and hard work to this project. They ensured that the plan would become workable and guide the city, county, and citizens.

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## **I. Chapter 11**

### **0-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning**

#### **1. Introduction**

The 2022 Bacon County Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Rules Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2022 Bacon County/City of Alma Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

- ❖ Community Goals
- ❖ Needs and Opportunities
- ❖ Community Work Program
- ❖ Land Use Element  
(As a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)
- ❖ Broadband Services Element
- ❖ Economic Development

#### **2. Community Involvement**

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

- a) Stakeholders were identified. These included the local governments, businesses, industries, law enforcement, the consolidated Alma-Bacon Fire Department, the Bacon County Emergency Management Agency, the Board of Education, the Bacon County Hospital, the Bacon County Development Authority, and the general public.
- b) Participation techniques were identified. Methods included a kick-off public information meeting, printed general information in local newspapers, and the Southern Georgia Regional Commissions and local government websites. A steering committee was formed to oversee and participate in planned development, including representatives from the mentioned stakeholders.



- c) A participation program was conducted. Identified stakeholders were invited and attended, yielding specific input in plan content. The steering committee held regular meetings to provide information and feedback.

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on November 16, 2021, at the Bacon County Courthouse. The purpose of the meeting was to make any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review were now underway, explain the purpose of the update, and encourage residents and other stakeholders to participate in the plan update actively.

### **3. Identification of Stakeholders**

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

### **4. Identification of Participation Techniques**

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:

Public Hearings

Workshops

Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders

Special Webpage on the SGRC website as well as the local government websites

### **5. 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 Bacon 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, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and other group meetings. Public comment opportunities were provided at public hearings and city and county commission meetings.

In addition to the two required public hearings, SGRC held four workshops to discuss several plan elements. Copies of the sign-in sheets are provided in the Appendix and public hearing notices. The first workshop, held on January 25, 2022, developed the goals and reviewed the community vision, Needs, and Opportunities. The method used to establish the Needs and Opportunities was as follows: Through open discussion, a consensus was reached as to what the new community goals should be and what changes and updates should be made to the existing Vision, Needs, and Opportunities from the prior Comprehensive Plan, and notes were taken by SGRC staff during the workshop were used to update these sections of the plan document. The Community Policies and Report of Accomplishments were developed in the second workshop on February 22, 2022, and the revised Community Work Program draft. The participants

developed the Community Work Program to include specific action items and projects feasible for the individual communities to implement, should funding be available. The City of Alma met with their departments to finalize the Work Program, and Bacon County met in a Work Session to complete their Work Program. The third workshop, held on March 22, 2022, was utilized to update the Land Use Element and Maps. On May 24, 2022, a final workshop was held for the Steering Committee and Stakeholders to review the Comprehensive Plan Update draft before transmittal.

(Photos from workshops)















## 6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

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

### Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Planning Council (Suwannee-Satilla Council) was established in February 2009 as part of this statewide process. In 2016-2017 the Suwannee-Satilla Council updated the Regional Water Plan. 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 on the map below).

Bacon County is within the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan area, adopted in 2009 and amended in June 2017.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

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

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agroforestry).
2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.
3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.
4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs while protecting environmental resources.
5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies and to optimize water and wastewater infrastructure.
6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.
8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.
9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater to improve water quality and quantity.
11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource services to all citizens in the region.
13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

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

The short-term management practices are presented in the charts below:

<b>Short-Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0 – 10 Years)</b>
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 gaps (forecast methodology assumptions and Resource Assessment modeling)
Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns
Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns
Point Sources: – Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity – Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry
Non-point Sources: – Data collection to confirm the 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/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices
Non-point Source Existing Impairments: – Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on the source of pollutant and length of impairment; Identify opportunities to leverage funds and implement non-point source Best Management Practices
<b>Longer-Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:</b>
Improve infiltration and management of wetlands
Evaluate incentive-based programs to manage, increase, and restore wastewater and stormwater returns
Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

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

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

The criteria require that local governments 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 before adopting a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, specific utility placements, unique forestry, or agricultural services.

The environmental guidelines also define criteria for delineating small and large water supply watersheds and protecting groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and river corridors. These criteria shall be incorporated into this comprehensive plan and

addressed in more detail through local ordinances and land development code regulations.

### SGRC Environmental Suggestions

The following are environmental suggestions for Bacon County from the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Environmental Department:

#### Regional Water Quality Assessment Project

- Awarded to SGRC in January 2020

#### Background Information

Of the region's 1,500 miles of waterways, 1,178 do not support their designated use (Georgia Environmental Protection Division, 2018). Problems with nonpoint source pollution have been ongoing. They are addressed in the Georgia Water Plan, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Nonpoint Source Pollution Plan, the Suwannee Satilla Regional Water Plan, the SGRC Regional Plan, and the Comprehensive Plans for all 18 counties within the region. Furthermore, as identified in their Comprehensive Plans, many counties in the area are seeking to utilize waterways for recreation and economic growth. To this end, water quality and health are important stakeholders.

Regional organizations seeking to address the nonpoint source FC pollution within impaired waterbodies will benefit from understanding what and where the significant contributing sources are. Specific data will be helpful when considering BMP types, locations, and interested parties when requesting funding, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the EPD's 319(h) grants.

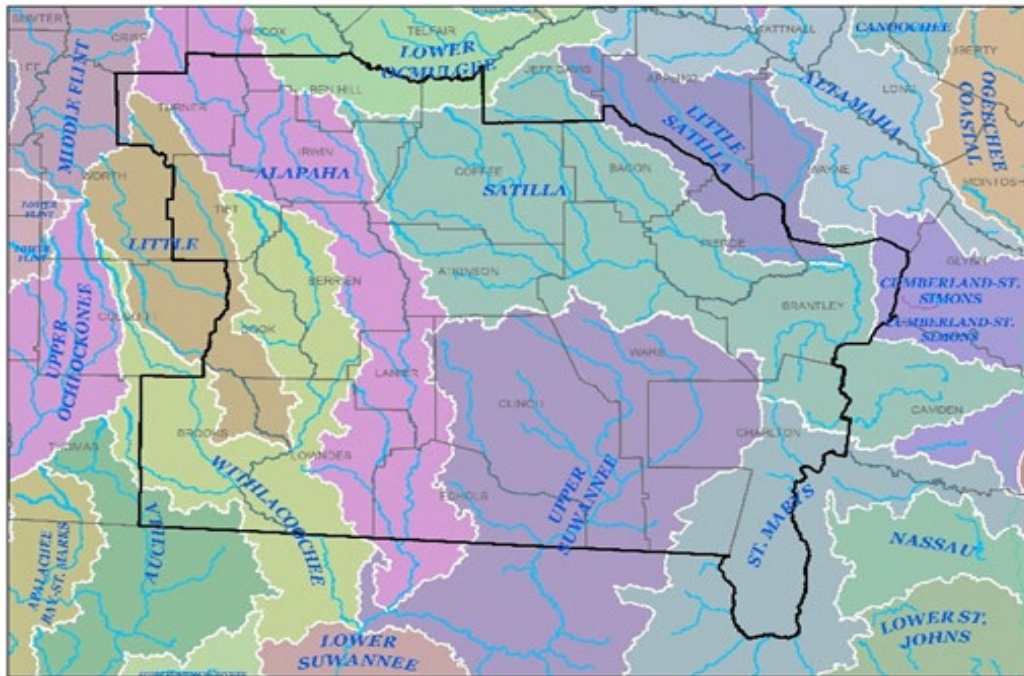
#### Project Goals

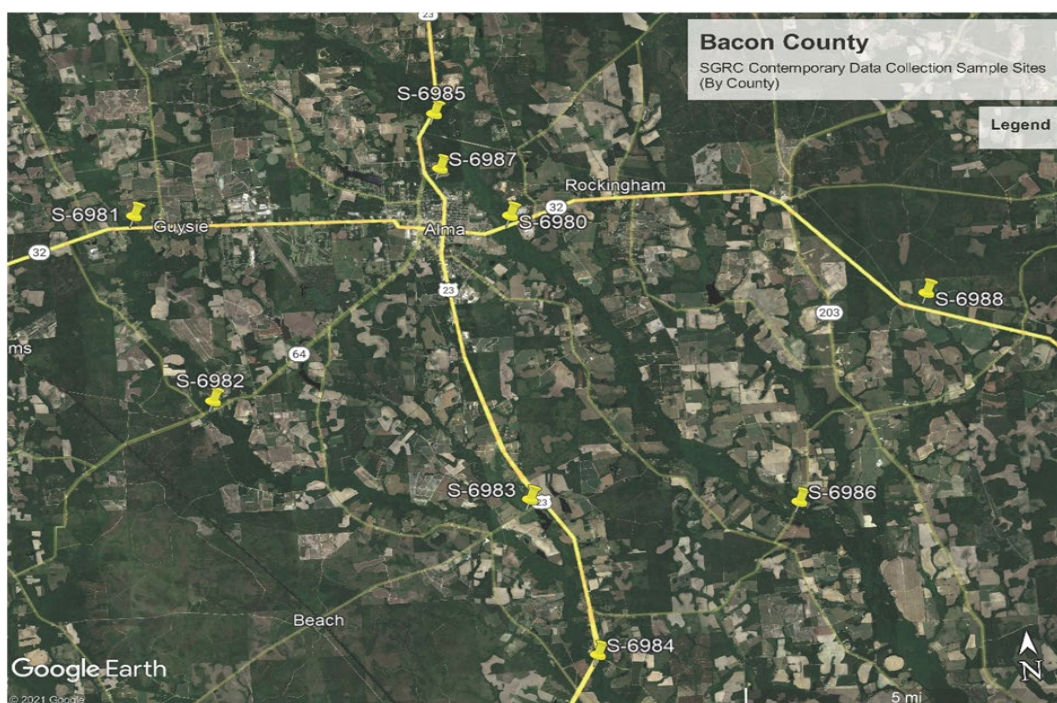
- The long-term goal of this project is to improve regional water quality, funding efficiency, and best management practice (BMP) efficacy.
- This project involves a comprehensive review of the region's fecal coliform (FC) impaired waterbodies using data analysis, water quality sampling, Steering Committee input and oversight, Citizen Scientist involvement, and public education and engagement.
- Regional outreach and education will include Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) training events for chemical and bacterial protocols. Nonpoint source pollution workshops will be held in communities near FC impaired waterbodies to help inform residents of the changes they can make to improve water quality.
- The resulting product will list significant nonpoint sources of FC pollution in each impaired water body. The project will provide prioritized areas for BMP implementation, recommended BMP types, and homeowners/landowners/business owners interested in future BMP funding opportunities. The Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) will develop



a publicly available, user-friendly Geographic Information Systems (GIS) web map showing the 303(d) listed waters from the 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 reports.

### Supporting Maps and Charts Regional Watershed Map



**Regional Impaired Streams Map****Bacon County Monitoring Locations/ Map**

Site Number	Site Name	GPS Coordinates	Suggested Order of Completion
6980	Hurricane Creek at Hwy 32 near Alma, GA	31.539017, -82.446209	
6981	Little Hurricane Creek at SR 32 near Alma, GA	31.54491, -82.54472	
6982	Little Hurricane Creek at County Road 343 near Alma, GA	31.495556, -82.528056	
6983	Big Branch at Beach Rd. near Alma, GA	31.46495, -82.44721	
6984	Little Hurricane Creek at Hwy 1 near Waycross, GA	31.423477, -82.432838	
6985	Hurricane Creek - U.S. Highway 1 Near Alma	31.566667, -82.463889	
6986	Hurricane Creek at County Road 331 near Alma, GA	31.460000, -82.376667	
6987	Bear Creek (NHD labels as Bear Branch) nr N Pierce St nr Alma, GA	31.55239, -82.46355	
6988	Briar Creek nr SR 32 nr Mershon, GA	31.512225, -82.338764	

#### Suggested Projects:

- Complete Natural Resources Inventory of Bacon County and the City of Alma (Reference: [Regionally Important Resources Plan](#))
- Update Solid Waste Management Plan

#### Additional Regional Information:

- Seven Rivers RC&D is accepting applications for their Rural Decentralized Water Systems Project; for more information, visit: <https://www.sevenriversrcd.org/household-water-wells>
- 2019 EPD Triennial Review Updates:
  - o Bacterial reporting has now been changed in units of fecal coliforms to *E. coli*.
  - o NPDES/ MS4/ Other state bacterial reporting permits will be amended to reflect these changes as they come up for renewal.
  - o The Satilla River is now designated as a recreational river, which makes the allowable bacterial loadings of the river smaller than in previous years when the designation was for fishing.
  - o Additional information can be found on EPD's Watershed Protection Branch Website.

### **Water Resource Districts**

Water resource districts are being added to the Updated Alma Zoning Ordinance to establish minimum development standards and criteria, which will afford reasonable protection of environmentally sensitive natural resources found throughout the county.

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## II. Plan Elements

### 1. Community Vision, History, and Goals



The Community Goals Element aims to lay out a road map for Bacon County and Alma's future, generate local buy-in, and ensure the plan is implemented. Communities are encouraged to amend and update the goals as necessary.

#### Vision



*Alma/Bacon County has been and will continue to be an excellent place to raise a family, maintain and preserve its laid-back rural lifestyle, pursue consolidation of City and County government services to improve quality and efficiency, increase the tax base, keep property taxes low, become nationally known for blueberry production and marketing, provide quality educational and recreational opportunities, promote a proactive growth plan, and work with local law enforcement and neighborhood associations to create safe, family-friendly neighborhoods.*





## History



Agriculture is a vital part of the economy in Bacon County. Known as the Blueberry Capital of Georgia, it is located on a major commercial thoroughfare, with access to rail transport (Class 1 rail freight system in Waycross, GA), and three major seaports in (Savannah, GA, Brunswick, GA, and Jacksonville, FL, which are within an hour and a half away driving distance.

Bacon is a 285-square-mile county located in southeast Georgia, created by the Act of Legislation on July 27, 1914, from portions of

Appling, Pierce, and Ware. The county was named for Augustus Octavius Bacon, a U.S. senator who served four terms. The Bacon County courthouse, constructed in 1919, still serves residents of Bacon County. It was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.



Alma was incorporated in 1906 and was designated as the county seat in 1914 when Bacon County was formed. Alma is Georgia's blueberry capital and hosts a Blueberry Festival each year. The city is located along U. S. Routes 1 and 23. The town has a total area of 6.2 square miles, of which 5.5 square miles is land and 0.69 square miles is water.

## GOALS

### 1. Economic Development

We will undertake proactive growth and marketing efforts, focusing on our greatest strengths, such as blueberry production, to increase business development and jobs in the community.

### 2. Cultural Resources

We will protect Alma/Bacon County's unique cultural character and sense of place, including historical sites and special community events.

### 3. Natural Resources

We will preserve the unique natural resources of Alma and Bacon County, including soils, rivers, and lakes.

### 4. Community Facilities and Services

We will efficiently provide high-quality infrastructure, improve community services with a particular focus on youth development, and continue to choose a primary healthcare system.

### 5. Housing

We will provide a range of housing options to all residents, including active living for senior citizens and affordable housing for low/moderate-income residents. We will work to eliminate blight and promote infill development.

### 6. Land Use

We will guide or direct land development patterns through the planning process.

### 7. Transportation

We will provide a safe, efficient transportation system with various options to meet all residents' needs and improve connectivity to the state transportation system.

### 8. Intergovernmental Coordination

We will continue to improve existing intergovernmental cooperative efforts and collaborate with other communities throughout the region for a full range of governmental services.

### 9. Broadband

Provide digital broadband and communications to meet the current and future needs of residents, businesses, and industry with Bacon County and the City of Alma.

## 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 of the Needs and opportunities identified in 2018. Bacon County Comprehensive Plan. The following needs are addressed by related policies in the “Community Policies” section.

### 1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Needs

- Support Bacon County, the City of Alma, the Development Authority, and other stakeholders to continue with a proactive Growth and Marketing Plan.
- Support for increasing average wages in the community is still needed.
- Continue to support workforce development in matching the local workforce to the available jobs.
- Support continued improvements for the educational system, including addressing high dropout rates.
- Education on “soft skills” is needed.
- Need to increase the tax base of the County and City.
- There is a need to train young adults in high school for area employment and make them aware of local employment.

#### Opportunities

1. The County and City have an inventory of vacant sites and buildings available for redevelopment and/ or infill development.
2. Build on an established reputation for being the Blueberry Capital of Georgia and push to become nationally known for blueberry production and marketing.
3. Capitalize on amenities that make Alma/Bacon County attractive as a retirement destination.
4. The Inn at Blueberry Plantation offers a unique sense of place, with 27 rooms, a 75-person capacity conference center, and a 75-person seating capacity restaurant.
5. Bacon County and Alma offer a good quality of life, a low crime rate, excellent climate, and proximity to all amenities.
6. Increased opportunities for youth are offered by the elementary and middle school graduation coach and after-school tutoring.
7. Create a Youth Entrepreneurship program to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.
8. Educate the local industrial community about opportunities for reimbursement of employee training costs.
9. The auditorium at the Welcome Center could be a venue for after-school programs and activities. Continue to seek funding.
10. Raise awareness of the potential of on-the-job training for new businesses coming into the community; emphasize that our workforce is ready to be trained.
11. Pursue retail development.

12. The airport has expanded and continues to grow, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.

13. Support the continued improvement of the Career Ready Program in the schools.

## 2. CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Needs

- Need to conduct a historical resource survey to identify historical assets located in the City of Alma and Bacon County
- Historic buildings, such as the Welcome Center, Old Alma Hotel, etc., need to be renovated.
- Provide the next generation with strong leadership to work with Historic Preservation.
- There is a need to keep the Historical Society open to the public more than one day a week.

### Opportunities

1. Seek out funding to help with a historic resource survey.
2. Search for grants to assist with renovations of historical buildings.
3. The Historical Society is a resource for preserving historical documents, photos, etc.
4. Encourage local volunteer groups to help with staffing needs for the Historical Society.
5. Research grants that are available to help with the needs of the Historical Society.

## 3. NATURAL RESOURCES

### Needs

- There is a need for a comprehensive natural resources inventory.
- There is a need for more green space and parkland in our community.
- There is a need for a community greenspace plan and the protection of existing development.
- River corridors, wetlands, and flood plains need to be protected against intrusion.
- Littering and illegal dumping are detrimental to our community's natural resources.
- There is a need to develop a community garden run by a non-profit organization.

### Opportunities

1. Our community will explore developing a greenspace plan.
2. Future development of a passive-use tourism and recreation lake project.
3. There is a program at the old Weigh Station where residents can take their trash.
4. Alma has a Scrape Tire Amnesty Program where the residents can take their auto tires.

5. There is a weekend drop-off center for old appliances.
6. Alma collects household goods, sofas, etc., monthly.

#### **4. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES**

##### Needs

- The County and City need to continue to analyze the impact of proposed development projects on public facilities, including but not limited to parks and recreation, schools, roads, water, and sewer.
- Coastal Pines Technical College has been expanded with upgraded facilities but needs marketing and recruiting to attract more students.

##### Opportunities

1. The hospital has continually improved and is currently keeping its technology and marketing to keep up with changing times and the challenges rural hospitals face.
2. Police, educational, and fire service will meet current needs and expand to meet future development and industrial markets.
3. The airport has expanded and continues to grow, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.
4. The capacity and capability of water and sewer for future growth are continually improving.
5. Assemble a GRAD-certified site with the possibility of a spec building; identify an inventory of smaller sites that could be available for new and expanded business.
6. There is a need for a secondary education program for medical students.
7. There is a need for a behavioral health center outside the local hospital.
8. The Downtown Development Authority has been reactivated.

#### **5. HOUSING**

##### Needs

- We need a variety of housing options to be available.
- The City of Alma needs to support and invest in the maintenance of public housing.
- There is a shortage of good quality housing for rent or sale.
- The city needs to enforce building codes for existing residential homes to ensure the maintenance of properties.
- There is a need for an assessment of low to moderate-income housing.
- There is a need for a guide for all community programs available.

##### Opportunities

1. There is a market for more multifamily housing units in our community, which is currently being addressed.
2. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily and single-family usage, which is currently being addressed.
3. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.
4. County and City will/should promote middle- to upper-income housing.



5. 7-Rivers RC & D has loans to replace wells for low-income families.
6. USDA has a septic tank repairs/replacement loan program.
7. Georgia Environmental 319 grant is available for urban and agricultural developments.
8. Work with the SGRC for available programs for the community.

## 6. LAND USE

### Needs

- Need to support development standards within the city and county.
- Alma still has commercially zoned area vacancies and needs to attract more private investment.
- Zoning Ordinance and Development Standards need to be updated continually.

### Opportunities

1. We have understandable guidelines for new development.
2. Our downtown area is attractive and thriving and offers the opportunity to develop more growth in available properties. +
3. Use the 4-lanings of US-1 and GA-32 to guide commercial and residential growth (mainly commercial) and to develop a sense of place, allowing visitors to know when they have arrived.
4. Availability of land for development at a reasonable price.
5. Work with the SGRC to update Zoning Ordinance and Development Standards.

## 7. TRANSPORTATION

### Needs

- Continue to support additional resources, such as TIA (T-SPLOST 2018), to improve roads and bridges and pave dirt roads.
- The County and City need to resurface and maintain roads and streets properly.
- The City of Alma needs additional resources to maintain and repair existing sidewalks and provide new sidewalks.

### Opportunities

1. Opportunities will be provided by the 4-lanings of (in order of priority): GA-32 west to Douglas; GA-32 east to Brunswick; and US-23 north to Hazlehurst. GA-32 west to Douglas currently has an improved passing lane.
2. The airport has expanded and continues to grow, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.

## 8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

### Needs

- Continue to support the annual City/County Retreat.
- Continue to support the Alma-Bacon Development Authority and the SGRDA Development Authority initiatives.
- The Service Delivery Strategy should be updated as required or as circumstances change.
- Continue to support the Development Authority's compatibility with the water towers for future needs.
- Services and information should be shared with other public entities within the community.

### Opportunities

1. We monitor demographic data to make plans for the future.
2. A Capital Improvements Program could guide current and future growth.
3. Consolidation of City and County governmental services could improve efficiency and effectiveness.
4. Possible new Service Agreement for a joint water project for a new water tower.

## 9. BROADBAND

### Needs

- Provide digital broadband and communications to meet the current and future needs of residents, businesses, and industry within Bacon County and the City of Alma.
- More affordable, accessible, consistent, and higher-speed broadband access with additional bandwidth is required throughout Bacon County and the City of Alma to serve residential, commercial, and industrial users.

### Opportunities

1. Better broadband services will improve the future for all citizens and the business community.
2. Public/private partnerships could be developed to provide comprehensive broadband coverage that is consistent, reliable, and equitable.
3. Broadband infrastructure may be included during road project development to increase project efficiencies and outcomes.

### **3. Analysis of Data and Information**

#### **Population**

The 2020 population of Bacon County is 11,140, an increase of 0.50% since 2010. The City of Alma's 2020 population is 3,439, a slight decrease of -0.17% since 2010. However, the population aged 65 and older decreased by 1.8% in the City of Alma and decreased by 2.7% in Bacon County from 2010 to 2020.

#### **Population by Age**

According to 2020 Census estimates, the age distribution in Bacon County is 15.6% for 65 and over, 56.9% are 20-64, and 27.6% are under 20. In the City of Alma, the age distribution is 9.2% for 65 and over, 61.9% for ages 20-64, and 29.0% are under 20. Bacon County's population is 50.8% female and 49.1% male, and the City of Alma's population is 48.56% female and 51.4% male.

#### **Population by Race**

The population of Bacon County is 76.7% White/Caucasian, 16.3% Black/African American, 4.6% of some other race, 1.5% of two or more races, 0.6% Asian, and 0.2% Native American. The City of Alma's population is 56.8% White/Caucasian, 36.3% Black/African American, 3.7% of some other race, 2.2% of two or more races, 0.8% Asian, and 0.2% Native American.

Bacon County's population is 7.9% Hispanic/Latino of any race, and the City of Alma's population is 7.1% Hispanic/Latino.

#### **Education**

Among persons aged 25 or older in Bacon County, 17.9% have no high school diploma, 42.4% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 29.2% have an associate's degree or some college, and 10.5% have a bachelor's or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Alma, 25.2% have no high school diploma, 39.6% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 26.2% have an associate's degree or some college, and 9.0% have a bachelor's or higher degree.

#### **Income**

The 2020 median household income in Bacon County was \$36,692, and the median household income in the City of Alma is \$30,383. An estimated 26.1% of Bacon County's population and 31.0% of the City of Alma's population live below the federal poverty level. In Bacon County, 31.0% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level, and in the City of Alma, 34.7% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level. Bacon County's estimated unemployment rate is 4.5%, and the City of Alma's unemployment rate is 9.3%. Among adults aged 16 and older, the labor force participation rate is 49.8% in Bacon County and 37.9% in Alma.

## **Housing**

According to the 2020 Census, there was an estimated 4,807 housing units in Bacon County, with 4,251 occupied and 556 vacant. There were an estimated 1,445 housing units in Alma, with 1,266 occupied and 179 vacant.

According to the 2020 Census, an estimated 30.4% of homes in Bacon County were valued at less than \$50,000, 26.4% were valued between \$50,000-\$99,999, 14.8% were valued at \$100,000 to \$149,999, 12.8% were valued at \$150,000 - \$199,999, 10.7% were valued at \$200,000 to \$299,999, 3.4% were valued at \$300,000 - \$499,999, and 1.5% were valued at \$500,000 to \$999,999.

In Alma, an estimated 26.0% of the housing units were valued at less than \$50,000, 38.5% estimated value was \$50,000 to \$99,999, 4.2% were estimated at a value of \$100,000 - \$149,999, 13.2% were valued at \$150,000 - \$199,999, 9.5% were valued at \$200,000 to \$299,999, and 8.6% were valued at \$300,000 to \$499,999.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))

## **4. Broadband**

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 broadband services planning, deployment, incentives, and other purposes. It also requires comprehensive plans to promote broadband services. Bacon County and the City of Alma recognize the importance of broadband expansion to residents' economic development and quality of life.



Broadband services enable residents to access many vital services such as healthcare, economic opportunity, and education. Expansion of rural broadband and improvement in the provision 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 students in web literacy and digital skills training isn't easy without adequate broadband speed and connectivity. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of home broadband availability and quality for students, and many workers who studied worked remotely.

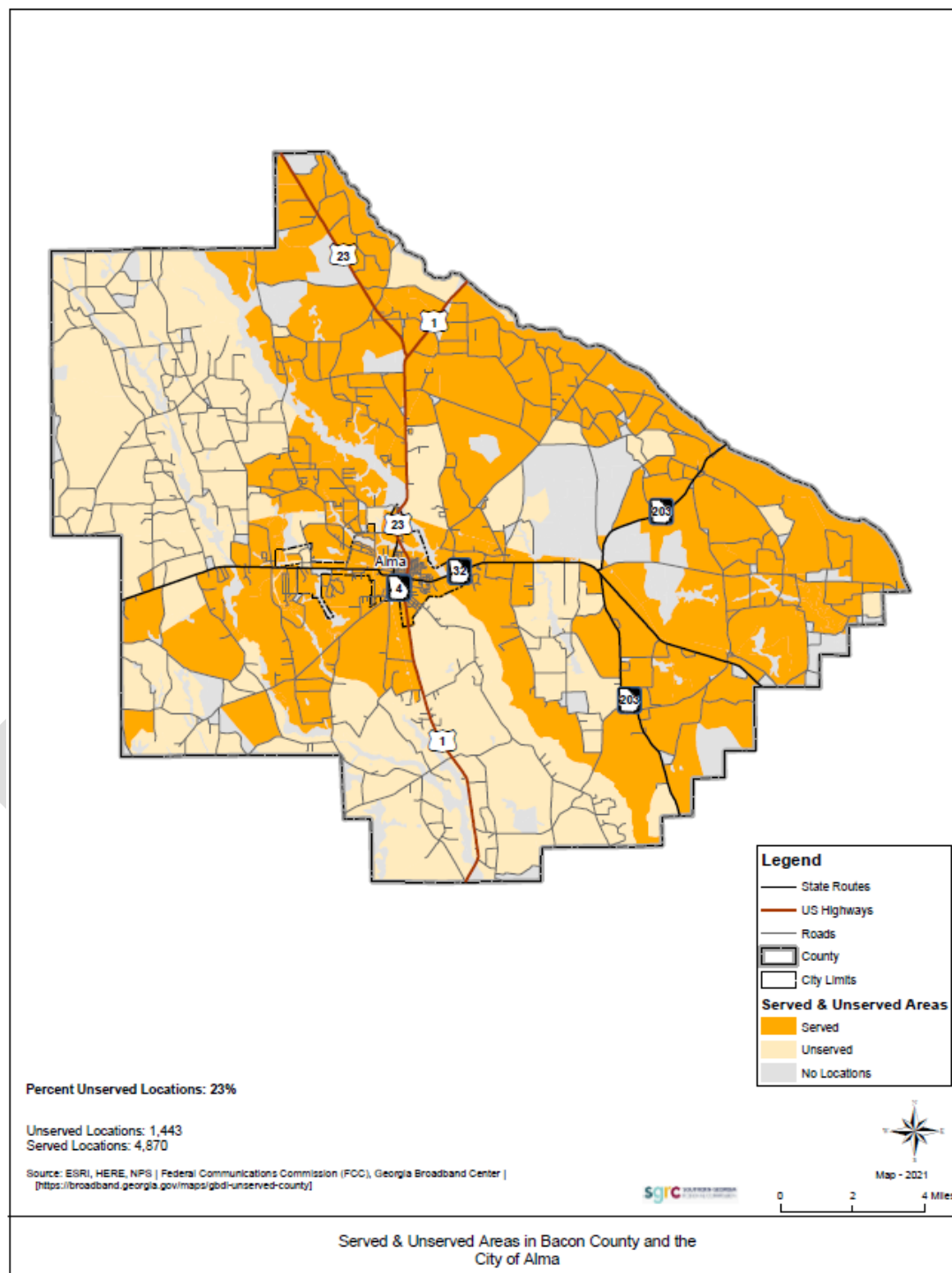
The latest data shown in Map 1 below identifies 23% of Bacon County locations as unserved. This analysis is based on a broadband availability map in June 2020 and most recently updated in June 2021. The new map utilizes more granular data than the previously used Federal Communications Commission (FCC) map. 80.9% of



households in Bacon County have a computer, compared to 90.3% of households statewide. Broadband internet subscriptions in the County are held by 66.4% of households, compared to 82.7% within the state.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))

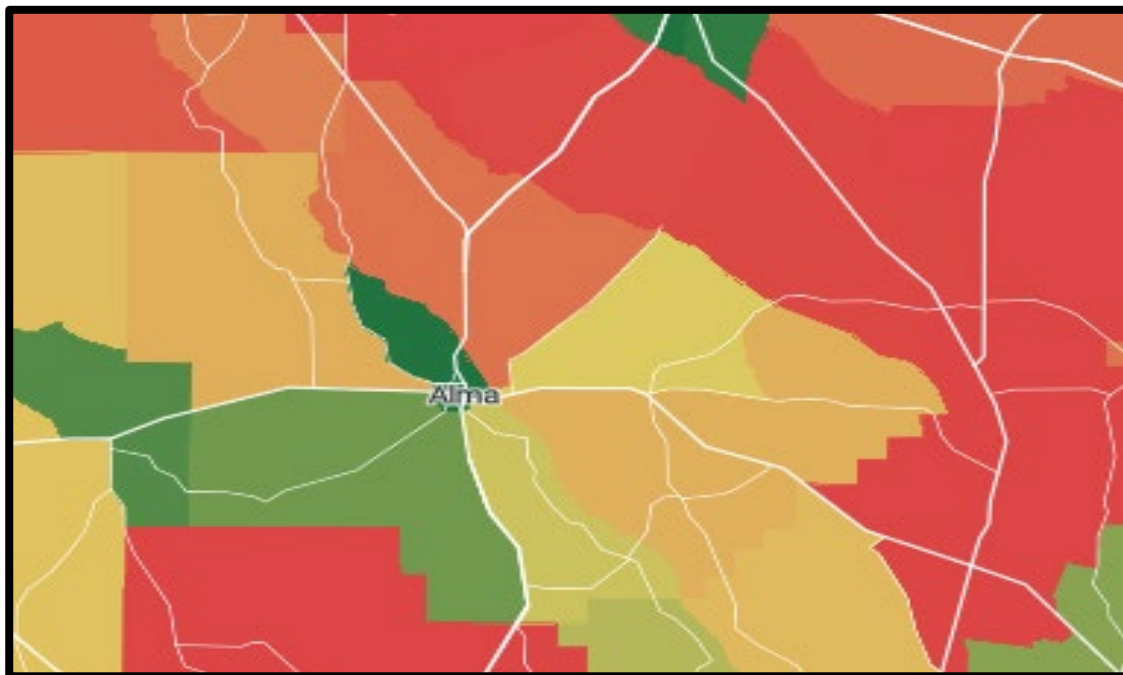
**Map 1: Served & Unserved Areas in Bacon County and the City of Alma**



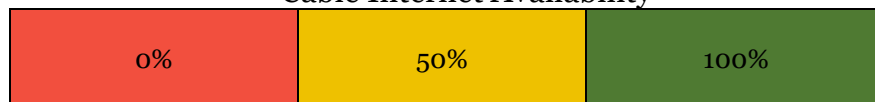
Sources: Esri, HERE, NPS | Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Georgia Broadband Center  
| Georgia Broadband Center | <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/gbdi-unserved-county>

County statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 megabits per second down and three megabits per second up. The broadband service is available to more than 80% of locations (residential and business) in a census block. Populated census blocks that did not meet this definition are delineated in Map 1 (above) as 'Unserved.'

Cable internet is available in 64.16% of Bacon County. The average Bacon County home can get up to 125 Mbps on their cable internet plan. The fastest cable download speed in the county is 1,000 Mbps, which less than 1% of residents can get. Some homes and apartments do not have access to these speeds. For example, 62.32% of homes can only purchase plans up to 100 Mbps on the slower end. See the internet provider details below for their speed and coverage in Bacon County. Cable internet speeds tend to be faster in the southeast parts of Bacon County and slower in the county's central areas.



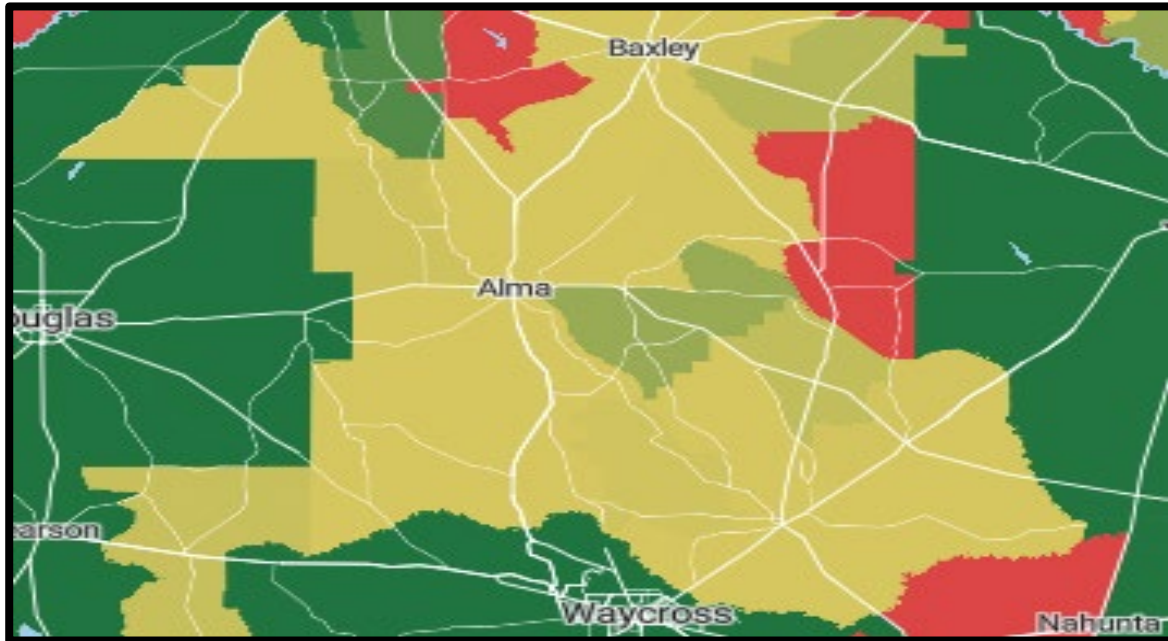
Cable Internet Availability



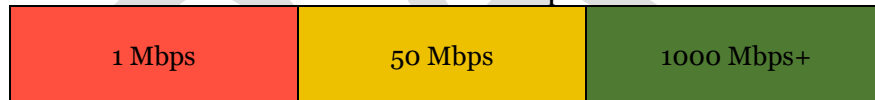
The fastest internet available may vary based on the location in Bacon County, where one lives. In general, DSL competes most often with cable in the county.

- Fiber is the fastest internet type for 14.28% of Bacon County homes.
- Cable is fastest for 64.16% of the county.

- DSL is the fastest, at 20.98%.
- Fixed wireless is fastest for less than 1%.
- Satellite internet may be the only option for less than 1% of Bacon County homes.



Cable Internet Speed



## 5. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has crafted a series of objectives dealing with various needs concerning local governments. The objectives listed below are only recommendations but provide local governments with a tool to assess their needs and opportunities and develop their implementation activities. Many local governments use them as a tool in their planning efforts. These objectives can also result in consistent planning projects and goals, translating into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents.

Quality Community Objective	Notes on consistency with Comprehensive Plan for Bacon County and the City of Alma
<p><b>1. Economic Prosperity</b> Encourage the development or expansion of businesses and industries 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 area's resources, and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet a diverse local workforce's needs.</p>	<p>Community activities, including economic development efforts, are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Downtown Program</b> – Actively support and participate in programs that promote healthy business downtown, such as Downtown Development Authorities, Better Hometown, and Main Street.</li> <li>• <b>Workforce Training</b> - Provide access to training opportunities for the local workforce. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, specialized programs from the Department of Labor, and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. Such training resources are especially critical in this era of technology and rapid change.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Resource Management</b> Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive community areas. 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.</p>	<p>Land use elements, goals, and policies related to natural resources are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Green Space Plan</b> - Develop, adopt, and implement a green space plan that connects permanently protected green space throughout the community. Setting aside the greenspace can be done through direct purchase by the local government, purchasing the development rights to the land only, or working with local land trusts to focus their efforts on acquiring conservation easement in the areas identified in the local greenspace plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Efficient Land Use</b> Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the community's periphery. Achieve this by encouraging the development or redevelopment of sites closer to the community's traditional core, designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed, carefully planning the expansion of public infrastructure, or maintaining open space for agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.</p>	<p>The land use elements and infrastructure-related goals and policies of this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adaptive Reuse</b> - Create incentives such as tax breaks, code changes, or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures to new uses.</li> </ul>



<p><b>4. Local Preparedness</b> Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the 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 addressing 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 consistent with this objective and leadership and staff capability.</p>	<p>This plan's projects, policies, and local ordinances are consistent with this objective. The community also has a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan consistent with this objective and leadership and staff capability. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capital Improvement Program</b> - Develop an infrastructure investment plan that spells out what public services and infrastructure your community will provide, where, and when so that your community grows rationally and organized. This should accompany the comprehensive plan and indicate where the community desires new development. A capital improvement program brings predictability to the location and extent of future public facility expansions so that residents and developers can plan their investments accordingly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Sense of Place</b> Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. The qualities may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as the 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 standard features of the community, or protecting scenic and natural elements that are important to define the community's character.</p>	<p>This plan's projects, policies, and local ordinances are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Historic Preservation Program</b> - Begin by identifying and mapping the visual, cultural, and historical assets your community most values, and then adopt a local historic preservation/protection ordinance to protect and enhance the places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and works of art identified in the inventory of assets. This ordinance should be adopted under the auspices of the Georgia Historic Preservation Act, which establishes a local Historic Preservation Commission to provide oversight on the administration of the local ordinance and provide guidance on aesthetic changes to historic structures within locally designated districts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Regional Cooperation</b> Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. Achieve this by actively participating in regional organizations identifying joint projects that will increase efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer and developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protecting shared natural resources, developing the transportation network, or creating 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"> <li>• <b>Regional Economic Development Efforts</b> - Join and participate in joint development authorities or other regional economic development organizations to work together to market regional assets to potential industries, coordinate recruitment efforts, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Housing Options</b> 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</p>	<p>This plan's projects, policies, and local ordinances are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Georgia Initiative for Community Housing</b> - Participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing program. This program helps communities establish an effective local program and strategy for providing affordable housing in the community.</li> <li>• <b>Land Bank</b> - Establish a local land bank empowered to acquire and assemble available</li> </ul>

<p>coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure the availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.</p>	<p>properties in community areas needing redevelopment, then offer these properties to private developers as sites for a new development of affordable or infill housing. Land banking is a proven strategy for effectively revitalizing declining community areas.</p>
<p><b>8. Transportation Options</b> Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. Achieve by fostering transportation alternatives by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit, employing calming traffic measures throughout the community, requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments, or coordinating transportation and land-use decision-making within the community.</p>	<p>Transportation goals, policies, and projects are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete Streets</b> - Adopt a "Complete Streets" philosophy in designing and building local streets that specify that "users" of a street include pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation passengers of all ages and abilities and trucks and buses, and automobiles. This approach should be applied to new and retrofit projects and involves sidewalks, street trees, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Educational Opportunities</b> Make educational and training opportunities 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, develop vocational education programs, or coordinate with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.</p>	<p>This plan's goals, policies, and projects are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work Ready Program</b> - Participate in the Georgia Work Ready program, which helps citizens build their work skills, certify their preparedness for particular jobs, and match workers with employers looking for specific skills.</li> <li>• <b>Educational Resource Center</b> - Develop and maintain a listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available educational and training opportunities in your community. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Publicize its availability and make a list available at government facilities and on the web.</li> <li>• <b>Childhood Development Programs</b> - Access the services of state and federal organizations and programs that help children achieve literacy, complete school, and be prepared to work. These include Head Start, Communities in Schools, and AmeriCorps' Great Future Kids.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Community Health</b> 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 disadvantaged residents' basic needs, including the disabled, and instituting programs to improve public safety. Promote programs that foster better health and fitness by providing all residents with the opportunity to improve their life circumstances and fully participate in the community.</p>	<p>This plan's goals, policies, and projects are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Health Resource Center</b> - Develop and maintain a comprehensive listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access general local community health and social welfare assistance resources such as Department Family and Children Services, Peachcare, Family Connections, County Health Departments., Schools, Public Hospitals, etc.</li> </ul>

## 6. Community Policies

The following policies, organized according to the community's needs, 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 provide a framework for developing the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Needs and Opportunities through specific projects, for which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.



### 1. Economic Development

**Goal 1:** We will undertake proactive growth and marketing efforts, focusing on our greatest strengths, such as blueberry production, to increase business development and jobs in the community.

Need 1.1: Support Bacon County, the City of Alma, the Development Authority, and other stakeholders to continue with a proactive Growth and Marketing Plan.

- **Policy 1.1.1: Programs for retention, expansion, and creating businesses that enhance our economic well-being should be supported.**

Need 1.2: Support for increasing average wages in the community is still needed.

- **Policy 1.2.1: Economic development and redevelopment should be encouraged.**

Need 1.3: Continue to support workforce development in matching the local workforce to the available jobs.

- **Policy 1.3.1: Efforts should be made to educate the local industrial community about opportunities for reimbursement for employee training costs.**
- **Policy 1.3.2: Efforts should be made to raise awareness of the potential of on-the-job training for employers coming into the community and emphasize that the local workforce is ready to be trained.**

Need 1.4: Support continued improvements for the educational system, including addressing high dropout rates.

- **Policy 1.4.1: A Youth Entrepreneurship program should be created to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.**

Need 1.5: Education on “soft skills” is needed.

- **Policy 1.5.1: Increased opportunities should be offered for youth through the elementary and middle school graduation coach and after-school.**

Need 1.6: Need to increase the tax base of the County and City.

- **Policy 1.6.1: New development should be accommodated while enhancing existing local assets.**
- **Policy 1.6.2: Retail development should be pursued.**
- **Policy 1.6.3: The activities of the Bacon County Development Authority, Downtown Development Authority, Tri-County Development Authority, and Chamber of Commerce should continue to be supported by the local governments.**
- **Policy 1.6.4: Alma/Bacon County should continue to be promoted as a retirement community**
- **Policy 1.6.5: Economic development should continue to be fostered by applying for grants such as EIP, CDBG, OneGeorgia, etc., when available.**
- **Policy 1.6.6: Each character area Niche marketing should be promoted using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.**

Need 1.7: Continue to improve the education system, including addressing the high drop-out rates.

- **Policy 1.7.1: Continue to work with the local schools to promote improving programs for student retention.**

Need 1.8: There is a need to train young adults in high school for area employment and make them aware of local employment.

- **Policy 1.7.2: Encourage local schools to prepare students for local employment.**



## 2. Cultural Resources

**Goal 2:** We will protect Alma/Bacon County's unique cultural character and sense of place, including historical sites and special community events.



Need 2.1: Need to conduct a historical resource survey to identify historical assets located in the City of Alma and Bacon County

- **Policy 2.1.1: The historical resource inventory should be created and periodically updated and maintained.**

Need 2.2: Historic buildings, such as the Welcome Center, Old Alma Hotel, etc., need to be renovated.

- **Policy 2.2.1: Preservation of publicly owned historical buildings should be encouraged, depending on funding availability.**
- **Policy 2.2.2: Private owners should be encouraged to take advantage of tax incentives and other funding opportunities to preserve and/or renovate historic buildings.**

Need 2.3: Provide the next generation with strong leadership to work with Historic Preservation.

- **Policy 2.3.1: Encourage local schools and universities to educate young adults in Historic Preservation.**

Need 2.4: There is a need to keep the Historical Society open to the public more than one day a week.

- **Policy 2.4.1: Search for available funding, i.e., grants, to operate the Historical Society.**
- **Policy 2.4.2: Encourage volunteer groups to help with staffing.**

### 3. Natural Resources

**Goal 3:** We will preserve the unique natural resources of Alma and Bacon County, including soil, rivers, and lakes.



Need 3.1: There is a need for a comprehensive natural resources inventory.

- **Policy 3.1.1: The natural resources inventory should be created and periodically updated and maintained.**

Need 3.2: There is a need for more green space and parkland in our community.

- **Policy 3.2.1: All new developments should encourage the connection, maintenance, and enhancement of green space.**

Need 3.3: There is a need for a community greenspace plan and protection of existing development.

- **Policy 3.3.1: The development of a greenspace plan should be explored.**

Need 3.4: River corridors, wetlands, and flood plains must be protected against intrusion.

- **Policy 3.4.1: Plans and policies that promote the conservation of river corridors, wetlands, and flood plains and/or prevent the development of these sensitive areas should be encouraged.**

Need 3.5: Littering and illegal dumping are detrimental to our community's natural resources.

- **Policy 3.5.1: Enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives should be supported.**

Need 3.6: There is a need to develop a community garden to be run by a non-profit organization.

- **Policy 3.6.1: Pursue properties and non-profit organizations to manage a community garden.**

#### 4. Community Facilities and Services

**Goal 4:** We will efficiently provide high-quality infrastructure, improve community services with a particular focus on youth development, and continue to choose a primary healthcare system.



Need 4.1: The County and City need to analyze the impact of proposed development projects on public facilities, including but not limited to parks and recreation, schools, roads, water, and sewer.

- **Policy 4.1.1: The use of existing facilities and services should be maximized.**
- **Policy 4.1.2: Efficient use should be made of existing infrastructure and future investments and expenditures for capital improvements and long-term operation and maintenance costs.**
- **Policy 4.1.3: Investments should be made in parks and open spaces to encourage private reinvestment in urban centers.**
- **Policy 4.1.4: Planned infrastructure should be used to support areas suitable for development.**
- **Policy 4.1.5: Existing (i.e., already paid for) infrastructure investments should be protected by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and compact development.**
- **Policy 4.1.6: When a development is proposed, a study should be conducted to analyze the impact on public facilities.**

Need 4.2: Coastal Pines Technical College has been expanded with upgraded facilities but still needs marketing and recruiting to attract more students.

- **Policy 4.2.1: Marketing and recruiting to attract more students should be encouraged.**

## 5. Housing

**Goal 5:** We will provide a range of housing options to all residents, including active living for senior citizens and affordable housing for low/moderate-income residents. We will work to eliminate blight and promote infill development.



(Area Housing Cost)

Need 5.1: We need a variety of housing options to be available.

- **Policy 5.1.1: Development should provide for various residential types and densities.**

Need 5.2: The City of Alma needs to support and invest in the maintenance of public housing.

- **Policy 5.2.1: There should be a continual emphasis on enforcing the Property Maintenance Code and the existing Buildings Code to address substandard and dilapidated housing in our community.**

Need 5.3: There is a shortage of good quality housing for rent or sale.

- **Policy 5.3.1: Our diverse population should be accommodated by encouraging a harmonious mixture of housing types and uses.**
- **Policy 5.3.2: Affordable housing opportunities should be created to ensure that all those who work in the community have a viable choice or option to live there.**

Need 5.4: The city needs to enforce building codes for existing residential homes to ensure the maintenance of properties.

- **Policy 5.4.1: Continue to enforce building codes for existing residential homes to ensure the maintenance of properties.**

Need 5.5: There is a need to assess low to moderate-income housing.

- **Policy 5.5.1: A housing assessment is needed for the community.**

Need 5.6: There is a need for a guide for all community housing programs available.

- **Policy 5.6.1: The EDA Department with the SGRC could assist with this.**



## 6. Land Use

**Goal 6:** We will guide or direct land development patterns through the planning process.



Need 6.1: Need to support development standards within the city and county.

- **Policy 6.1.1: Recreation, greenspace, and conservation areas should become integral to our community's land use.**
- **Policy 6.1.2: Land development patterns are guided and directed through the planning process.**
- **Policy 6.1.3: Meaningful and predictable standards and guidelines should be established for the use and development of land for the content of more detailed land development and use regulations.**
- **Policy 6.1.4: The community's rural character should be preserved, along with the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.5: Opportunities should be supported for residential and non-residential in-fill development that positively influences the character of existing neighborhoods.**
- **Policy 6.1.6: The use of landscaping, lighting, signage, underground utilities, and building design should be encouraged to add value to our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.7: Our regulations should contribute to, not detract from, our community's character and sense of security.**
- **Policy 6.1.8: Our gateways and corridors should create a "Sense of place" for our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.9: Land planning and development concepts that may be new to our area, but have been successful in other places, should be explored.**

Need 6.2: Alma still has commercially zoned area vacancies and needs to attract more private investment.

- **Policy 6.2.1: Downtown Development Authority needs to be reestablished to encourage development within the newly established district.**
- **Policy 6.2.2: The use of the Revolving Loan Fund should be encouraged to support commercial developments.**

Need 6.3: Zoning Ordinance and Development Standards need to be updated continually.

- **Policy 6.3.1: Continue to update the Zoning Ordinance and other standards as needed.**

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## 7. Transportation

**Goal 7:** We will provide a safe, efficient transportation system with various options to meet all residents' needs and improve connectivity to the state transportation system.



Need 7.1: Continue to support additional resources, such as TIA (T-SPLOST 2018), to improve roads and bridges and pave dirt roads.

- **Policy 7.1.1: TSPLOST, SPLOST, and other funding resources should be pursued, and the public should be educated about their benefits.**
- **Policy 7.1.2: Participate and plan to move forward with the next round of TIA2 Projects.**

Need 7.2: The County and City need to properly resurface and maintain roads and streets.

- **Policy 7.2.1: Roads, streets, and bridges should be maintained to a proper standard.**

Need 7.3: The City of Alma needs additional resources to maintain and repair existing sidewalks and provide new sidewalks.

- **Policy 7.3.1: Transportation corridors that support multiple modes of transportation and enhance the community's aesthetics should be encouraged.**
- **Policy 7.3.2: Vehicular traffic should not harm the residential nature of our neighborhoods.**
- **Policy 7.3.3: Transportation facilities, corridors, and sites should be protected and enhanced to ensure they can fulfill their identified functions.**
- **Policy 7.3.4: Walking, biking, carpooling, and sustainable transportation choices should be encouraged.**

## 8. Intergovernmental Coordination

**Goal 8:** We will continue to improve existing intergovernmental cooperative efforts and collaborate with other communities throughout the region for a full range of governmental services.



Need 8.1: Continue to support the annual City/County Retreat.

**Policy 8.1.1: Coordination mechanisms should be established with adjacent local governments to provide for the exchange of information.**

Need 8.2: Continue to support the Development Authority and the SGRDA Development Authority initiatives.

- **Policy 8.2.1: Continue to meet with the Development Authority and the SGRDA Development Authority to support their success in attracting new industries within the city, county, and 4-County Region.**

Need 8.3: The Service Delivery Strategy should be updated as required or as circumstances change.

- **Policy 8.3.2 Continue to update Service Delivery Strategy for needs within the community.**

Need 8.4: Continue to support the Development Authority's compatibility with the water towers for future needs.

- **Policy 8.4.1: Consider a Service Agreement for a joint water project for a new tower.**

Need 8.5: Services and information should be shared with other public entities within the community.

- **Policy 8.5.1: Continue to update websites and disperse information to the public.**



## 9. Broadband

**Goal 9:** Provide digital broadband and communications to meet the current and future needs of residents, businesses, and industry with Bacon County and the City of Alma.



Need 9.1: Provide digital broadband and communications to meet the current and future needs of residents, businesses, and industry within Bacon County and the City of Alma.

- **Policy 9.1.1: More robust broadband services may enable more significant opportunities for citizens and businesses.**

Need 9.2: More affordable, accessible, consistent, and higher-speed broadband access with additional bandwidth is required throughout Bacon County and the City of Alma to serve residential, commercial, and industrial users.

- **Policy 9.1.2: Public/Private Partnerships could be developed to provide consistent, reliable, equitable, comprehensive broadband coverage**

## 7. Community Work Program 2018-2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Continue to improve Downtown Alma	\$500,000	City of Alma, GDOT	Town of Alma, grants, GDOT	Postponed until the next 5-year plan Change wording to read: Complete streetscape project on West 12 <sup>th</sup> Street (between Church Street and Pierce Street, to help improve the downtown area)	x	x	x	x	x
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to market the area to expand the business base for economic development purposes	\$10,000	Development Authority	Local, Private	Underway  1. Recruited La Regina Atlantica Tomato processing plant with a built-out of 200 employees 2. Recruited Project Wrap plastic molding company with a built-out of 200 employees 3. Recruited Beach Timer light pole company with 100 employees or more built-out.	x	x	x	x	x
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to pursue academic excellence and workforce development (including ESL programs) for economic development purposes	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, Board of Education, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local	Underway  Authorities continue to pursue programs as needed for the workforce.	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Develop programs and scholarships for “soft skills” training, family living, and other life skills to prepare students for success in the workforce	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, BO Board of Education E, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local,	Underway  Working with local schools to prepare the workforce	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to upgrade industrial park infrastructure.	\$2 million	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, USDA, other grants/loans	Underway  The Industrial Park is continually upgrading infrastructure as needed.  Reword to: Continue to upgrade industrial park infrastructure to support new and expanding industries to foster job creation and private investment	x	x	x	x	x
Create a Youth Empowerment program (including drug prevention) and facility to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.	\$500,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Private	Completed/Underway  The program is in place, and they have acquired 10 acres through donations and planning to construct a new facility.  Change wording to continue supporting the Youth Empowerment program (including drug prevention) and construction of a facility to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.	x	x	x		

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Incorporate a Proactive Growth Plan for the City and County.	\$10,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma, nonprofits	Federal, State, Local, Private	Underway Hotel/Motel Tax is assigned for marketing funds	x	x			
Continue education efforts with the National Exchange Club.	Staff time	Board of Education, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Private	Not accomplished/canceled County and City are not involved with this program anymore.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Continue to improve the Downtown Theatre.	\$50,000	City of Alma	City of Alma, Fox Institute, other grants/loans	Completed	x	x			
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Incorporate landscaping guidelines to create a unified and pleasing visual environment for the Bacon County Hospital.	\$10,000	Bacon County Hospital	Local	Completed A Garden and Gazebo have been installed in the parking lot area.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to advertise, teach and encourage best management practices	\$25,000	County Extension Agent	UGA, DCA, Local	Underway This practice happens annually.	x	x	x	x	x



PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
Continue with efforts to provide adequate infrastructure for industrial and residential development	\$1 million	Development Authority Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Private CDBG	Underway  Refurbished all city wells, upgraded and replaced lift stations with \$1,6 from GEFA	x	x	x	x	x
Improve wastewater treatment capacity	\$6 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants CDBG	Underway  Filed for a permit to upgrade in 2022	x	x	x		
Continue to support the construction of a 300-acre fishing lake for economic development purposes.	\$8 million	Development Authority, Bacon County, DNR	DNR, Local	Underway  Seeking funding thru UGA Carl Vincent Institute for a study.	x	x	x		
Acquire land (10 – 14 acres) and construct a youth community center within Bacon County or the City of Alma (including gym, outdoor pool, track, baseball field, etc.).	\$5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway  Combined with the item below			x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Continue operating, improving, and expanding recreation programs, services, and facilities associated with the countywide recreation department	\$1,180,000	Bacon County	DCA, SPLOST, Local	Underway  Engineered designs for four more softballs and two soccer fields have been completed. The county purchased the old high school gym for the Recreation Dept. A walking trail is being used at the recreation facility. Currently leasing old high school football field.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to integrate parents, teachers, principals, and the business community into school curriculum planning and activities	\$10,000	Board of Education	GA DOE, Local	Not accomplished/canceled  The Bacon County School Board has this in their plan.	x	x	x	x	x
Upgrade systems, extend hours of operation, expand programming, upgrade/grow jobs, and purchase computers at Bacon County Library.	\$50,000	Regional Library System, County Library, Board of Education	Local, Grants, SPLOST	Postponed until the next 5-year plan  Currently, there is a lack of funding. These items depend on the SPLOST Funding and the Regional Library.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to collect and dispose of yard waste regularly.	\$100,000	City of Alma	Local	Underway  Yard waste is continually addressed.	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Continue to contract with a private company to collect the residential solid waste regularly and to collect and/or operate drop-off centers for "brown goods" and "white goods" (furniture, mattresses, appliances, etc.).	\$500,000 per year	City of Alma, Bacon County	Local	Underway  This is done annually.	x	x	x	x	x
Create Master Fire Plan.	\$40,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Local, Grants	Postponed until the next 5-year plan  Funding was not available.	x				
Upgrade fire department vehicles, breathing gear, turnout gear, and other firefighting equipment as needed.	\$90,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants SPLOST	Underway  Inventoried 226 fire hydrants in the City, completed GPS locations for digital maps, and upgraded vehicles and turnout gear.	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Provide training for the fire department, and build an additional fire station.	\$1 million	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway Fire Station is 90% completed.		x	x	x	
Identify potential gaps in fire services and lower the ISO rating.	Staff time	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway The above training has lowered the ISO Rating in the City to a Class 4. The County's ISO Rating will decrease once the new building is completed.		x	x	x	
Purchase police cars when needed.	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants USDA Grant	Underway Police cars are purchased as needed.	x		x		x
Construct a new airport terminal.	\$900,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	Postponed until the next 5-year plan Currently developing a design plan with State and Federal agencies.	x	x	x		
Expand the cemetery	\$250,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway A preliminary plan for expansion is in the process	x	x	x		
Improve the nursing home.	\$2.5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway \$500,000 has been appropriated in SPLOST 2018 to assist with this project.	x	x	x		



PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Renovate the auditorium at the old school	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	Postponed until the next 5-year plan Seeking funding	x	x	x		
Upgrade/replace 4 sewer lift stations	\$1,525,500	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund	Postponed until the next 5-year plan				x	x
Rehabilitate the Old Town Sewer	\$750,000/ Phase 1	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund	Postponed until the next 5-year plan				x	x
Extend water/sewer along the Hwy 32 Bypass area	\$250,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund, One Georgia Fund	Postponed until the next 5-year plan Water/sewer improvements are allocated when funding is available.				x	x
Complete a downtown streetscape	\$250,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, SPLOST, TIA, General Fund	Underway The City is currently pursuing funding for this project.				x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Complete a downtown streetscape	\$250,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, SPLOST, TIA, General Fund	Underway  The City is currently pursuing funding for this project.				x	x
Complete a major street pavement improvement program	\$200,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, SPLOST, TIA, General Fund	Underway  Projects are being listed h the availability of funding through grants, and TSPLOST.				x	x
Develop data and applications for GIS to streamline information sharing and employee tasks	\$5,000	City of Alma	Grants, General Fund	Postponed until the next 5-year plan  Pursuing grants to help with costs associated with this project.				x	x
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Continue to explore and support methods for renters of public housing and other properties to purchase their units through affordable housing programs.	\$500,000 (FHA, DCA, CDBG, USDA, local, private)	Alma Housing Authority	Federal, State, Local, Private	Underway  Partnering with Teresa Estates to purchase 40 acres to construct new homes. Also seeking other funding.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>LAND USE</b>									
(No projects identified)									

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>									
Support the four-laning of SR 32 from I-75 to I-95	Staff time	GDOT, Bacon County, City of Alma	GDOT, Local TSPLOST	Underway  GDOT has built additional lanes in areas for passing between Douglas and Alma.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to pave, resurface, and repair roads, bridges, and sidewalks within the City and County.	\$6,500,000	Bacon County, City of Alma, GDOT	Federal, State, Local Grants	Underway  This project is on an as-needed basis with funding as available.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
Analyze the financial impact of new growth in the community, and evaluate various financing methods for creating new infrastructure.	\$10,000	Federal, State, Local Grants	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Underway  Researching for additional grants for funding.	x	x			
<b>BROADBAND (Work Program Amended on 10/13/20, to include the Broadband Element))</b>									
Pursue "Broadband Ready Community" status.	Staff Time	Bacon County	General Fund	Underway  Working with the SGRC in developing an ordinance.				x	x
Review local ordinances and amend them as needed to eliminate barriers to broadband deployment and encourage more excellent broadband coverage.	Staff Time	City of Alma, Bacon County	General Fund	Underway  Amendments are made as needed.				x	x

**8. Community Work Program (2023 - 2027)**

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
<b>1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Complete streetscape project on West 12 <sup>th</sup> Street (between Church Street to Pierce Street, to help improve the downtown area	\$500,000	City of Alma, GDOT	City of Alma, grants, GDOT	1	x	x	x		
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to market the area to expand the business base for economic development purposes	\$10,000	Development Authority	Local, Private	1	x	x	x		
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to pursue academic excellence and workforce development (including ESL programs) for economic development purposes	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, Board of Education, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local	1		x	x	x	
Develop programs and scholarships for "soft skills" training, family living, and other life skills to prepare students for success in the workforce	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, BO Board of Education E, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local	1	x	x	x		
Continue to upgrade industrial park infrastructure to support new and expanding industries to foster job creation and private investment	\$2 Million	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, USDA, other grants/loans	1	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Youth Empowerment program (including drug prevention) and the construction of a facility to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option	\$500,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Grants, Local, Private	1	x	x	x	x	
Incorporate a Proactive Growth Plan for the City and County	\$10,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma, nonprofits	Federal, State, Local, Private	1	x	x			



PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
<b>2. CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Seek funding to prepare a historical resource survey for existing buildings	\$5,000	City of Alma	General Fund Grants	2	x	x	x		
Seek funding for rehabilitation of historic buildings, such as the Welcome Center, Old Alma Hotel	\$1,000,000	City of Alma	General Fund Grants	2			x	x	x
<b>3. NATURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Continue to advertise, teach and encourage best management practices	\$25,000	County Extension Agent	UGA, DCA, Local	3	x	x	x	x	x
<b>4. COMMUNITY FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
Continue with efforts to provide adequate infrastructure for industrial and residential development	\$1 million	Development Authority Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Private CDBG	4	x	x	x	x	x
Improve wastewater treatment capacity	\$6 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants CDBG	4	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the construction of a 300-acre fishing lake for economic development purposes	\$8 million	Development Authority, Bacon County, DNR	DNR, Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
Acquire land (10 – 14 acres) and construct a youth community center within Bacon County or the City of Alma (including gym, outdoor pool, track, baseball field, etc.).	\$5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
Continue operating, improving, and expanding recreation programs, services, and facilities associated with the countywide recreation department	\$1,180,000	Bacon County	DCA, SPLOST, Local	4	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
Continue to integrate parents, teachers, principals, and the business community into school curriculum planning and activities	\$10,000	Board of Education	GA DOE, Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
Upgrade systems, extend hours of operation, expand programming, upgrade/grow jobs, and purchase computers at Bacon County Library	\$50,000	Regional Library System, County Library, Board of Education	Local, Grants, SPLOST	4	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to collect and dispose of yard waste weekly and regularly	\$100,000	City of Alma	Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to contract with a private company to collect the residential solid waste regularly and to collect and/or operate drop-off centers for "brown goods" and "white goods" (furniture, mattresses, appliances, etc.) weekly	\$500,000 per year	City of Alma, Bacon County	Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
Create Master Fire Plan	\$40,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Local, Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
Upgrade fire department vehicles, breathing gear, turnout gear, and other firefighting equipment as needed.	\$90,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants, USDA Loans, SPLOST	4	x	x	x	x	x
Provide training for the fire department, and build an additional fire station	\$1 million	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
Identify potential gaps in fire services and lower the ISO rating	Staff time	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
Purchase police cars when needed	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants USDA Grant	4	x	x	x	x	x
Construct a new airport terminal	\$900,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	4, 7	x	x	x	x	x
Expand the cemetery	\$250,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
Improve the nursing home	\$2.5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	4, 5	x	x	x	x	x
Renovate the auditorium at the old school	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
Upgrade/replace 4 sewer lift stations	\$1,525,500	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund	4	x	x	x	x	x
Rehabilitate the Old Town Sewer	\$750,000/ Phase 1	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund	4	x	x	x	x	x
Extend water/sewer along the Hwy 32 Bypass area	\$250,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund, One Georgia Fund	1, 4	x	x	x	x	x
Complete a downtown streetscape	\$250,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, General Fund, One Georgia Fund	1, 4	x	x	x	x	x
Complete a major street pavement improvement program	\$200,000	City of Alma	Grants, CDBG, GEFA, SPLOST, TIA, General Fund	1, 4	x	x	x	x	x
Develop data and applications for GIS to streamline information sharing and employee tasks	\$5,000	City of Alma	Grants, General Fund	4	x	x	x	x	x
<b>5. HOUSING</b>									
Continue to explore and support methods for renters of public housing and other properties to purchase their units through affordable housing programs	\$1,000,000	Alma Housing Authority	FHA, DCA, CDBG, USDA, Local, Private	5	x	x	x	x	x
Address neighborhood revitalization of substandard and dilapidated housing	\$1,000,000	Alma Housing Authority	Grants, CDBG	5	x	x	x	x	x
<b>6. LAND USE</b>									
Continue to update the existing Zoning Ordinance	\$12,000	City of Alma SGRC	General Fund	6	x				
<b>7. TRANSPORTATION</b>									
Support the four-laning of SR 32 from I-75 to I-95	Staff time	GDOT, Bacon County, City of Alma	GDOT, Local TSPLOST	7	x	x	x		

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
Continue to pave, resurface, and repair roads, bridges, and sidewalks within the City and County	\$6,500,000	Bacon County, City of Alma, GDOT	Federal, State, CDBG, Local	7	x	x	x	x	x
Continue with a grant to dispose of vehicle tires	City Staff	City of Alma	Grant	7	x	x	x	x	x
Develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	\$7,000 - \$10,000	Bacon County, City of Alma, GDOT, SGRC	SS4A State Grant (Safe Streets & Roads for All)	7	x	x	x		
Implement the Safe Streets and Roads for All Program once the Action Plan is developed	Staff Time	Bacon County, City of Alma	SS4A State Grant (Safe Streets & Roads for All)	7			x	x	x
Adopt a Complete Streets Policy that incorporates improved bicycle and pedestrian safety measures	Staff Time \$500/ each community	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC	General Funds/Transportation Grants	7	x	x	x		
Revise ordinances to include the following: 1) Integration of pedestrian/bicycle considerations and requirements 2) The Georgia Streetscapes and Pedestrian Design Guide 3) The Georgia Manual on Regulations for Driveway Encroachment Guide 4) Include various requirements of the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Guides for improved bicycle and pedestrian safety design	Staff Time \$2000/ each community	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC	General Funds/Transportation Grants	7	x	x	x		
Apply for Walk Friendly Community Status and the Age-Friendly Community Status	\$12,000/ each community	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC	General Funds/Transportation Grants	7	x	x			

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
Complete a sidewalk gap analysis and development a plan to fund sidewalk construction to fill gaps	\$2,000-\$5000/ each community	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC	General Funds/Transportation Grants	7		x	x		
Complete Road Safety Audits along key corridors/intersections as needed, based on crash data analysis and other metrics	\$2000	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC, GDOT	General Funds Road Safety Audits (RSA) Grants, GDOT	7		x	x	x	
Administer the Georgia Pedestrian Safety Attitudes and Behaviors Survey	\$1000/County	Bacon County, City of Alma	General Funds/Transportation Grants	7			x	x	
Encourage police/sheriff patrol officers to participate in the GDOT Pedestrian Safety Task Team	\$750/annually	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC, GDOT	General Funds	7	x	x	x	x	x
Send elected officials, planning and other staff, and police/sheriff patrol officers to regional training for pedestrian and bicycle safety, education, and enforcement	\$1,000 (less if virtual)	Bacon County, City of Alma	General Funds	7	x	x			
Develop a local Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Safety Action Plan	\$7500-\$10000/ each community	Bacon County, City of Alma, SGRC	General Funds, Grants	7			x	x	
<b>8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
Analyze the financial impact of new growth in the community, and evaluate various financing methods for creating new infrastructure	\$10,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local Grants	8	x	x	x	x	x
<b>9. BROADBAND</b>									
Adopt a Broadband Ordinance	Staff Time	Bacon County	General Fund	9	x	x			
Pursue "Broadband Ready Community" status	Staff Time	City of Alma Bacon County	General Fund	9	x	x	x		
Review local ordinances and amend them as needed to eliminate barriers to broadband deployment and encourage more excellent broadband coverage	Staff Time	City of Alma Bacon County	General Fund	9	x	x	x	x	x



## 9. Economic Development Element

The 2018-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), as developed by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission 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 Bacon County and the City of Alma.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's (SGRC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was designed to bring together the public and private sectors to create an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The SGRC CEDS analyses the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, a regional plan of action, and investment priorities and funding sources.

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

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. It provides a list of achievable Goals and Objectives for the region, a Plan of Action to ensure success, and Performance Measures used to evaluate the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's successful development and implementation of the 2018-2022 CEDS. Implementation of the goals identified in this plan is significant to the economic future of the SGRC District.

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

Included below are goals and objectives from the CEDS, which are aligned with the current economic development goals of Bacon County and the City of Alma:

**Goal 1: Promote economic development strategies that encourage entrepreneurship, support existing industries, attract new employers, and stimulate tourism.**

**Objectives:**

Promote regional collaboration for even stronger networks between 18 counties.

**Strategies:**

- Strengthen and expand existing entrepreneurial support networks in rural areas.
- Strengthen communication between education and job creators through educator/job creator luncheons, advisory councils, annual education summit, and other Economic Development professional facilitation.
- Promote business and entrepreneur learning opportunities.
- Focus on ways to encourage and facilitate regional tourism.

**Goal 2:** Protect, expand, and enhance critical infrastructure and connectivity for existing and future community growth.

**Objectives:**

Improve broadband access in rural communities.

**Strategies:**

- Develop small cells in communities without reliable broadband access.
- Provide incentives for broadband.

**Goal 3:** Facilitate the growth and development of an educated, skilled, prepared workforce by utilizing available programs and resources.

**Objectives:**

Develop a well-trained professional, technical, and skilled workforce capable of accommodating new industries and maintaining existing industries.

**Strategies:**

- Improve educational attainment by reducing high school dropout rates.
- Support educational institutions to provide learning/skill development opportunities.
- Market workforce development programs that enable youth and adults to pursue higher education opportunities.
- Recognize societal issues impacting the workforce and partner with programs seeking to address them, i.e., Communities in Schools, Monitor Enrichment, Head Start, Youth Build, volunteer programs, etc.
- Emphasize community literacy to become a Certified Literate Community.

Launch workforce initiatives to align training and educational opportunities to target industries for critical, in-demand occupations.

**Strategies:**

- Facilitate the incorporation of applied economics, soft skills, and work ethics in the middle and high school classrooms to prepare students with job-ready knowledge.
- Work with employers to incentivize educational achievement both at hiring and throughout employment.
- Develop strategies to get non-completers and unemployed citizens to school to receive training for the workforce of this community

Improve efforts to prepare workers for available jobs.

**Strategies:**

- Support educational institutions to provide learning/skill development opportunities.
- Work closely with business and industry to ensure that the system is not only producing workers to meet their immediate needs but adjusting in the anticipation of future needs and technological changes.

**Goal 4: Create an inviting sense of place through rural renewal and other strategies to retain the population and attract new members to our community.**

**Objectives:**

Revitalize downtowns throughout the region.

**Strategies:**

- Collaborate to develop county-wide historic preservation plans.
- Promote downtown areas for tourism and recreation.
- Increase code enforcement in communities surrounding downtown areas.

Facilitate vibrant, attractive communities. Strategies:

- Rehabilitate dilapidated housing throughout the region.
- Encourage local governments to participate in CHIP, CDBG, and USDA housing programs.

Develop strategies for creating and sustaining a diverse population.

**Strategies:**

- Seek additional funding streams to address senior population program sustainability.
- Market unique aspects of communities to attract a younger population.

**See Appendix #4- Economic Development Element**

1. Incentives & Taxes

2. Bacon County Labor Workforce
3. Educational Services
4. 2022 Farm Gate Values for Bacon County
5. 2022 Job Tax Credit Rankings
6. 2022 Job Tax Credits Tiers

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## 10. Land Use Element

### **Character Areas**

In keeping with State Minimum Planning Standards, every part of Bacon County and the City of Alma 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 in general, 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. (Please note the associated picture for each location represents the current state of the specific area and should not be construed to necessarily represent the desired state, although, for some descriptions, this may be the case.) 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. The listing of **Permitted Zonings** guides the type of land uses encouraged within each Character Area. 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, which ultimately promotes 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.



### **Agriculture/Forestry Character Area**

This Character Area consists of rural agricultural land devoted to forestry, farming, and other agricultural activities, along with associated residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational land uses at an intensity level appropriate for an agricultural area. Blueberry farming is an essential component of the Bacon County economy. It is a priority for the community to maintain, expand, and improve production and marketing, bringing it closer to the national stage.



#### ***Vision***

*Bacon County will capitalize on its local and state recognition as the Blueberry Capital of Georgia, becoming nationally known as a leading blueberry producer and marketer.*

#### ***Permitted Zonings***

- Agricultural  
(Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.)

#### ***Development Strategy***

Use sizeable minimum lot size requirements to limit development density and protect farmland and rural character. Development should preserve scenic views and be encouraged near rural communities and other developed lands. Steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources. Enlist significant farmland as an amenity that shapes the identity and character of development.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The annual Blueberry Festival promotes tourism opportunities. Connect to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.

##### ***Resource Management***

- Identify key natural resources and take steps to protect them.

***Implementation Measures***

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote methods of permanently protecting farmland, such as conservation easements.</li><li>• Reduce and preempt conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creation of trails and/or greenways</li></ul>

### **Bacon County Airport Character Area**

Bacon County Airport consists of a 5,000-foot radio-controlled lighted runway, open 24 hours daily. The Airport provides aircraft maintenance and has 100 LL gas and Jet-A fuel. Approximately 16 aircraft are based at the airport, and 10-12 flights of both transit and business occur daily.

The Airport is adjacent to the Blueberry Plantation, which provides high-quality amenities for visitors traveling by air to Bacon County and the City of Alma.



#### ***Permitted Zonings***

- Public/Institutional (City of Alma)

#### ***Development Strategy***

Encourage the airport's expansion to foster economic development and redevelopment while providing guidelines to minimize adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.



#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Local Preparedness***

- Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve.

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- Encourage developing or expanding businesses and industries suitable for the community.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalize on the proximity of the airport to Blueberry Plantation</li> </ul>
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.</li> </ul>



## **Bacon County Hospital Character Area**



### **Statement from Bacon County Hospital and Health System**

We are very proud of the excellent healthcare that has been delivered by the Bacon County Hospital and Health System day after day and year after year. We look forward to caring for the community and being a part of economic growth in the future.

The financially successful Health System is comprised of the Bacon County Hospital and Health System (25-bed Acute Care Hospital), Twin Oaks Convalescent Center (88 beds) long-term care facility, and ABC Child Development Center serves children ranging from six weeks to twelve years of age, Bacon County Community Care Center, and the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Center, which helps those to function with a quality of life. The System has been Joint Commission accredited since 1995.

In 2005, the citizens of Bacon County voted to pass a SPLOST referendum that included \$1 million for expanding and modernizing the current facility. The 2005 SPLOST vote marked the second time county tax dollars were received in the hospital's history (the first was the 2001 SPLOST vote). On June 17, 2008, a ground-breaking ceremony began the long-awaited dream of a three-phase project starting with a new Second Story Patient Care Area. Construction began in July of 2008 on our healthcare system, which would enhance patient care and comfort.

Phase one of the new story consisted of 25 beds with all private patient rooms; a 4-bed postpartum unit, 13 patient rooms, four critical care ICU rooms, and four step-down

rooms. The second floor also includes a 4-bed nursery, an in-patient waiting area, and an ICU waiting area. This phase was completed in May of 2009.

Phase two began the renovations to accommodate and update Diagnostic Imaging and included renovations to the Laboratory Department and the 14-bed observation unit. In February of 2008, Diagnostic Imaging went to Digital Mammography. The hospital opened up an MRI unit with 64-slice Toshiba technology in July 2009 and a Nuclear Medicine unit in October 2009. Upon receiving a grant of \$985,000.00, we upgraded our CT to 160-slice Toshiba technology in February 2011, making our radiology department rated among the most advanced in the state. The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Phases one & two completions was held on May 19, 2009.

Phase three of the construction project included two new state-of-the-art surgical suites, an Ambulatory Surgery entrance and waiting room, two digital ENDO suites, and a 4-bed Post Anesthesia Care Unit. The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for completing Phase III was held on March 12, 2010. Our CT is now 320 slice, and our MRI is now 1.5 Tesla, the widest bore on the market.

On January 17th of, 2013, Bacon County Hospital broke ground for a building/expansion program for the nursing home. The project included 28 private rooms and baths for our residents. Each room is large, sunny, beautifully furnished, and equipped with a lovely private bathroom. The Rehabilitation Department was expanded for patients receiving short- and long-term rehabilitation services. The new expansion also included a special hospice room for the end-of-life Needs that accommodates the resident and their family, new nurse's stations throughout the facility, and a beautiful chapel for worship and praise services.

### ***Permitted Zonings***

- Public/Institutional (City of Alma)

### ***Development Strategy***

Locate medical facilities and doctor's offices in the hospital's central location.

### ***Quality Community Objectives***

#### ***Transportation Options***

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.

#### ***Economic Prosperity***

- Encourage recruitment of medical facilities and jobs.
- Our community has jobs for skilled labor and unskilled labor. Our community has professional and managerial positions.

#### ***Educational Opportunities***

- Our community has higher education opportunities and is close to communities with further options. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so our children may live and work here if they choose.



**Implementation Measures**

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find training opportunities to match the needs of the local workforce.</li></ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage infill development in abandoned housing surrounding the hospital. Vacant buildings can be adaptively reused to accommodate additional medical facilities.</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow.</li><li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along major transportation corridors.</li><li>• Implement traffic calming measures where necessary.</li></ul>
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.</li></ul>

## **Blueberry Plantation Character Area**



The Blueberry Plantation is a multifaceted character area that includes an 18-Hole Golf Course, a rapidly growing residential area, and the Blueberry Plantation Inn. The golf course was designed by Larry Hinson and opened in 1993. The course was built on wetlands with natural water hazards that come into play on forty percent of the holes.

The greens are moderately elevated and very firm. Local and area tournaments are played here. The Inn at Blueberry Plantation features hotel rooms, a conference center, and a restaurant. This Character Area is also adjacent to Bacon County Airport. The Blueberry Plantation provides high-quality amenities for visitors traveling by air to Bacon County and the City of Alma.



### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Institutional

### ***Development Strategy***

Construct well-organized pedestrian/bicycle and walking trails linking residential areas to the Inn, golf course, and airport. Plant trees throughout the community to enhance appearances and provide shade for pedestrians and bicyclists. Provide a generous amount of open space. Building design and landscaping should be sensitive to the site's natural features, including topography and views.

### ***Quality Community Objectives***

#### ***Sense of Place***

- The Blueberry Plantation area can serve as a focal point of Alma and Bacon County, providing a venue for people to gather for socializing and entertainment.
- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating the pedestrian activity.

#### ***Transportation Options***

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

***Open Space Preservation***

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide connectivity to residential neighborhoods ensuring that bicycling is a convenient, safe, and practical means of transportation.</li></ul>
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze the financial impact of new subdivision growth in the county.</li></ul>

### **Central Business District Character Area**

This character area consists of the traditional Downtown area of the City of Alma, including attractions such as the Bacon Theater, which is now under extensive renovation.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Residential



#### ***Development Strategy***

Continue renovation and rehabilitation of historic buildings. Encourage a mix of local businesses that will appeal to visitors while also providing needed amenities to residents. Continue developing a pedestrian-friendly environment with landscaping, shade trees, and crosswalks. Consider mixed-use development that may include some residential uses in the future.



### ***Quality Community Objectives***

#### ***Sense of Place***

- Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as the 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 define the community's character.

**Implementation Measures**

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.</li><li>• Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.</li></ul>
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perform a historic resource survey within the community.</li></ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage infill development.</li><li>• Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.</li></ul>



### **Commercial/Industrial Character Area**



These areas are intended to provide an environment suitable for light manufacturing, wholesale, warehousing, and highway-oriented commercial business activities.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Commercial
- Industrial

#### ***Development Strategy***

Provide guidelines and infrastructure to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of these areas to ensure business success while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have developed a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.</li> <li>• Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow.</li> <li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.</li> </ul>

### **Existing Traditional Neighborhood Character Area**



This area consists of established residential areas within the City of Alma and some areas in Bacon County. Land use is primarily single-family residential, with some multi-family, and may include limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks. Overall, homes are in good condition with moderate homeownership rates, and some houses need repair.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

#### ***Development Strategy***

Encourage revitalization and infill development of vacant lots. Continue to develop the sidewalk network to improve conditions for pedestrians. Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, or well-designed small-scale commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Transportation Options***

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

##### ***Sense of Place***

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating the pedestrian activity.

*Open Space Preservation*

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

**Implementation Measures**

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.</li></ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.</li></ul>

### **Developing Traditional Neighborhood Character Area**



This area consists of residential areas on the northwest side of the City of Alma with high homeownership rates and well-maintained housing. Land use is primarily single-family residential, with limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

#### ***Development Strategy***

Continue to encourage homeownership and reasonable maintenance of properties. Encourage the development of parks, community centers, and limited commercial hubs as neighborhood focal points that offer competitive amenities to residents, making Alma/Bacon County a desirable place to live. Use tools such as traffic calming to provide a pedestrian-friendly environment. Continue to expand the sidewalk network and provide bicycle/pedestrian connections. Capitalize on natural features such as Lake Lure to continue creating an appealing community with many recreational opportunities.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Transportation Options***

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

##### ***Sense of Place***

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating the pedestrian activity.

##### ***Open Space Preservation***

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.</li></ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.</li></ul>

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## **Historic Bacon County Primary School Character Area**

The historic Bacon County Primary School serves as a multi-purpose community center. The Welcome Center, the Senior Center, and the Development Authority are currently housed there.



### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Public/Institutional

### ***Development Strategy***

Activity centers connected with community greenspace/trails system. Infill development or vacant or under-utilized sites.

### ***Quality Community Objectives***

#### ***Efficient Land Use***

- Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development

#### ***Sense of Place***

- We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect those areas.
- We have an active historical society.

#### ***Transportation Options***

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.



### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform a historic resource survey within the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage infill development</li> <li>• Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow</li> <li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along the corridor.</li> </ul>

### **Future Infill Development Character Area**



Several sites around Alma offer the potential for infill development. The Brasswell-Deen site offers acreage for a potential community center, neighborhood store, etc.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Public/Institutional
- Commercial
- Residential

#### ***Development Strategy***

Focus development toward areas within the City of Alma that are vacant and/or underused. Encourage appropriate new infill development to provide amenities for the surrounding neighborhood or the community. Connect activity centers to community greenspaces and future trail systems.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Efficient Land Use***

- Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings for redevelopment and/or infill development.
- Alma-Bacon County has population projections for the next 20 years when making infrastructure decisions.

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The Alma-Bacon County Chamber and Development Authority has considered the community's strengths, assets, and weaknesses and created a business development strategy.

**Implementation Measures**

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.</li><li>• Promote niche marketing using locally grown or produced products.</li></ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage infill development.</li><li>• Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow.</li><li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along major corridors.</li></ul>
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.</li></ul>

### **Mixed Commercial Character Area**



This area is on the west side of the City of Alma, centered along Georgia Highway 32. Although highway-oriented commercial land uses are predominant, some residences and light industrial, agricultural, and forestry uses are also dominant. Most lots are large, and there is generally adequate buffering between uses.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Agricultural

#### ***Development Strategy***

Provide guidelines and infrastructure to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of these areas to ensure business success while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment. Continue to ensure adequate buffering between uses. Endeavor to strike a balance between encouraging economic development and preserving agricultural land and open space.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have developed a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

**Implementation Measures**

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.</li><li>• Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow.</li><li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.</li></ul>



### **Open Space/Recreation Character Area**

This area consists of undeveloped land reserved for conservation and/or recreation and recreational facilities such as the Alma-Bacon County Recreational Complex and open space areas such as cemeteries.



#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Public/Institutional

#### ***Development Strategy***

Provide connectivity to other passive and active recreation areas. Encourage the development of trails. The natural, rural character should be maintained by not allowing new development and promoting conservation easements.



#### ***Quality Community Objectives*** ***Community Health***

- Ensure that all community residents have access to high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities.

#### ***Resource Management***

- Identify key natural resources and take steps to protect them.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote methods of permanently protecting open space, such as conservation easements.</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of trails and/or greenways</li> </ul>

### **Residential Redevelopment Character Area**



This area has most of its original housing stock in place but has comparatively low rates of homeownership and some vacant and/or poorly maintained housing. This area presents an opportunity for revitalization and redevelopment. Land use is primarily single- and multi-family residential, with limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

#### ***Development Strategy***

Focus on infill development of vacant lots and revitalization/redevelopment of deteriorating properties while preserving the neighborhood character. Continue to provide a range of housing options such that all residents can find an affordable place to live. Continue to build out the sidewalk network to facilitate pedestrian traffic. Encourage the development and regular maintenance of neighborhood parks and other amenities that provide recreational opportunities to the community.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Transportation Options***

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

##### ***Sense of Place***

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating the pedestrian activity.

##### ***Open Space Preservation***

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.</li><li>• Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.</li></ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.</li></ul>

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### **US-1/GA 32-Character Area**



US Highway 1 and State Highway 32 intersect Bacon County, going north-to-south and east-to-west, respectively. Development along these central transportation corridors will contribute to the local economy by drawing in business from residents and people traveling through the community.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public/Institutional</li> <li>• Commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial</li> <li>• Residential</li> </ul>
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#### ***Development Strategy***

Encourage appropriate commercial development. Through aesthetics, amenities, and street design, create a community where travelers will want to stop and explore rather than drive through. Create a pedestrian-friendly environment by minimizing curb cuts, providing sidewalks and crosswalks, planting street trees and other landscaping, and connecting adjacent neighborhoods and other areas.

#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Sense of Place***

- The City of Alma has zoning, and the Downtown area is the community's chief focal point.

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The Bacon County Chamber and Development Authority has considered the community's strengths, assets, and weaknesses and created a business development plan.

##### ***Transportation Options***

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.</li><li>• Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.</li></ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage infill development.</li><li>• Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.</li></ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze the impact of additional traffic flow.</li><li>• Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.</li></ul>
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.</li></ul>



### **Valene Bennett Bacon County Industrial Park Character Area**

The location and availability of land in the Valene Bennett Bacon County Industrial Park offer the county a chance to recruit diverse industries. These industries will provide jobs to local citizens and stimulate the local economy.



#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- Industrial

#### ***Development Strategy***

Smaller parking lots that incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features. Infill development on vacant or under-utilized sites. New development on the edge of the urbanized area minimizes undesirable impacts on surrounding rural/agricultural uses.



#### ***Quality Community Objectives***

##### ***Economic Prosperity***

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have developed a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES</b>
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively use the Service Delivery Strategy.</li> <li>• Evaluate various financing methods for new infrastructure.</li> <li>• Gain community acceptance of quality growth by keeping citizens informed and involved in public processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure consistency between the Service Delivery Strategy and the Comprehensive Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate Bacon Leadership Classes.</li> <li>• Conduct public meetings and workshops to identify needed workforce training resources.</li> </ul>

### **WilderNest Subdivision Character Area**

WilderNest Subdivision is a residential area of rural character offering a variety of housing choices. Most of WilderNest falls within the City of Alma, with a small acreage located in the unincorporated County.

#### ***Permitted Zonings (City of Alma)***

- R-1A (residential)

#### ***Development Strategy***

Clustering of development should be encouraged to preserve open space. Development should be steered away from natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources. Design residential subdivisions for adequate emergency vehicle access, including at least two entrances/exits to the subdivision. Provide pedestrian connectivity at the ends of cul-de-sacs.



#### ***Quality Community Objectives*** ***Transportation Options***

- Bicycle routes and path connectivity should be available to encourage car transportation alternatives.

#### ***Sense of Place***

- New development should be encouraged to protect the scenic and natural features important to define the community's character.

#### ***Resource Management***

- Preserve the development area's natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation to maintain the community's character.

#### ***Implementation Measures***

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the financial impact of new subdivision growth in the county.</li> </ul>

# Appendix

- #1 Sign-In Sheets**
- #2 Public Hearing Notices**
- #3 Data Analysis Charts**
- #4 Economic Development Charts**
- #5 Land Use Maps**
- #6 Transmittal Letters**
- #7 Adoption Resolutions**



# Appendix #1 – Sign-In Sheets

1<sup>st</sup> Workshop 1-25-2022

## PARTNERS SIGN-IN SHEET FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING

NAME	AGENCY/TITLE	E-MAIL ADDRESS	INITIALS
BATTEN, ANDY	BACON CO SHERIFF OFFICE/ SHERIFF	abatten@baconcounty.org	
BEACH, TYLER	BACON CO FIRE & EMS/ COMPLIANCE OFFICER	tbeach@baconcounty.org	
BENNETT, SHANE	BACOC CO SCHOOL/PUBLIC SAFETY DIR	shane.bennett@bcrailers.com	SB
BRINSON, ANDRE	CITY OF ALMA POLICE DEPT/ CHIEF	andre.brinson@cityofalmaga.gov	AB
CRACE, AL	CITY OF ALMA/ CITY MANAGER	al.crace@cityofalmaga.gov	AC
EDGAR, SAM	CITY OF ALMA/ ATTORNEY	skedgar@atc.cc	
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1-25-2022

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2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop 2-22-2022

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3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop 3-22-2022

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**4<sup>th</sup> Workshop 5-24-2022**

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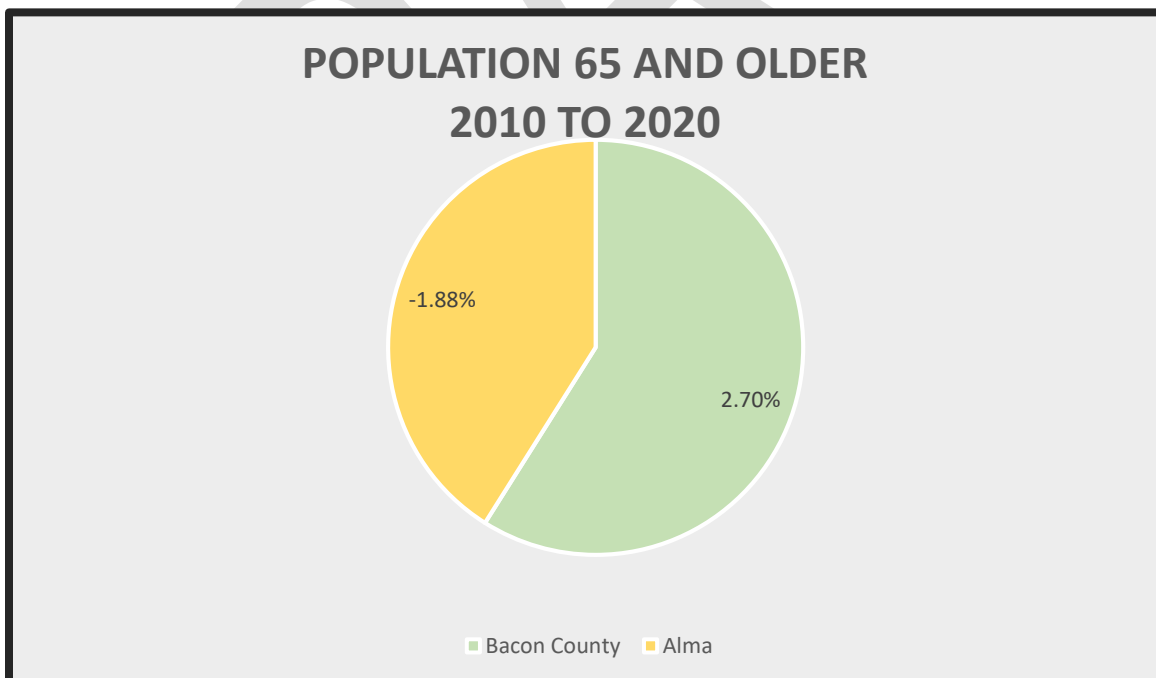
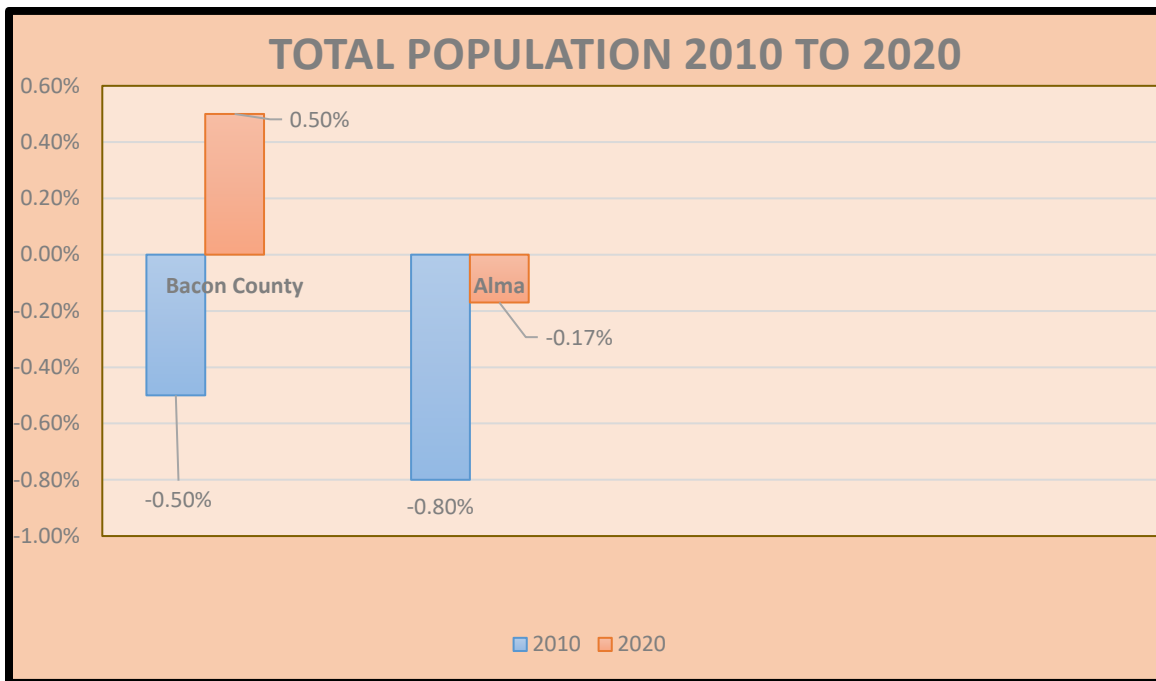
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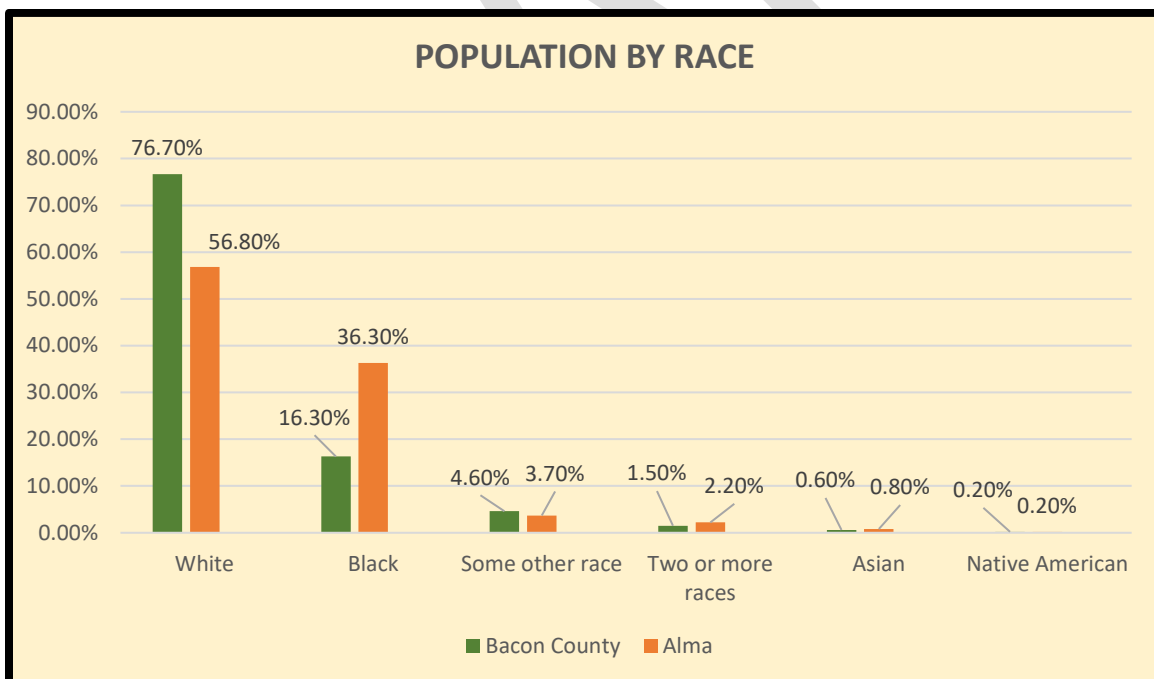
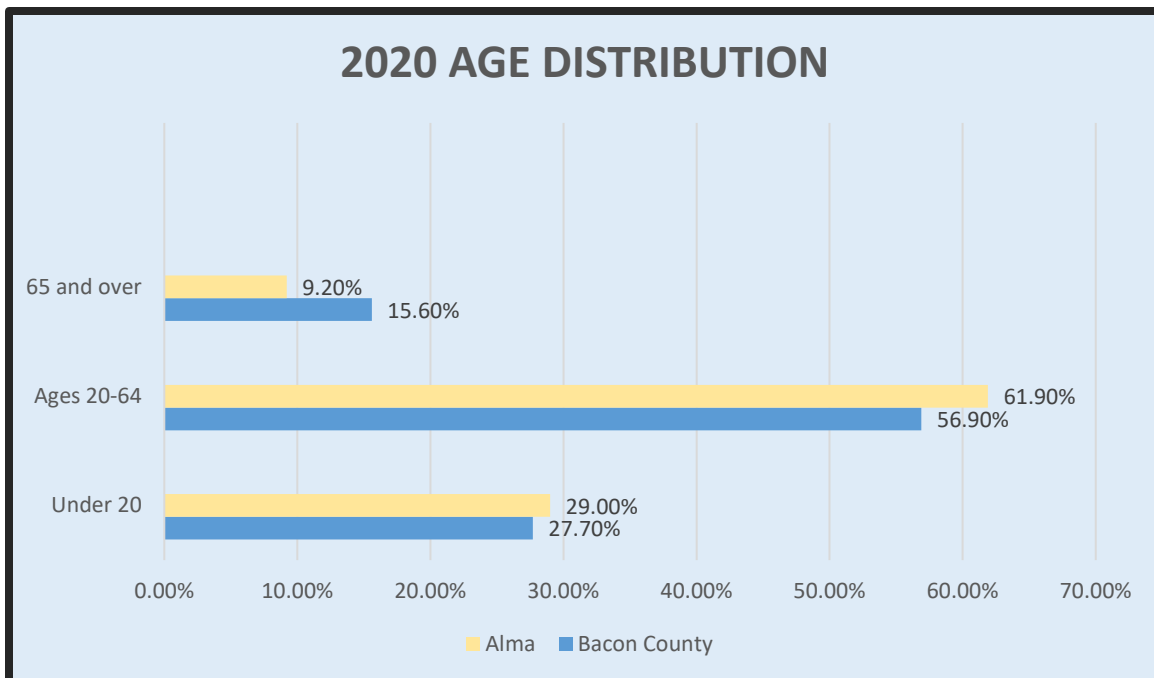


## Transmittal Public Hearing Notice

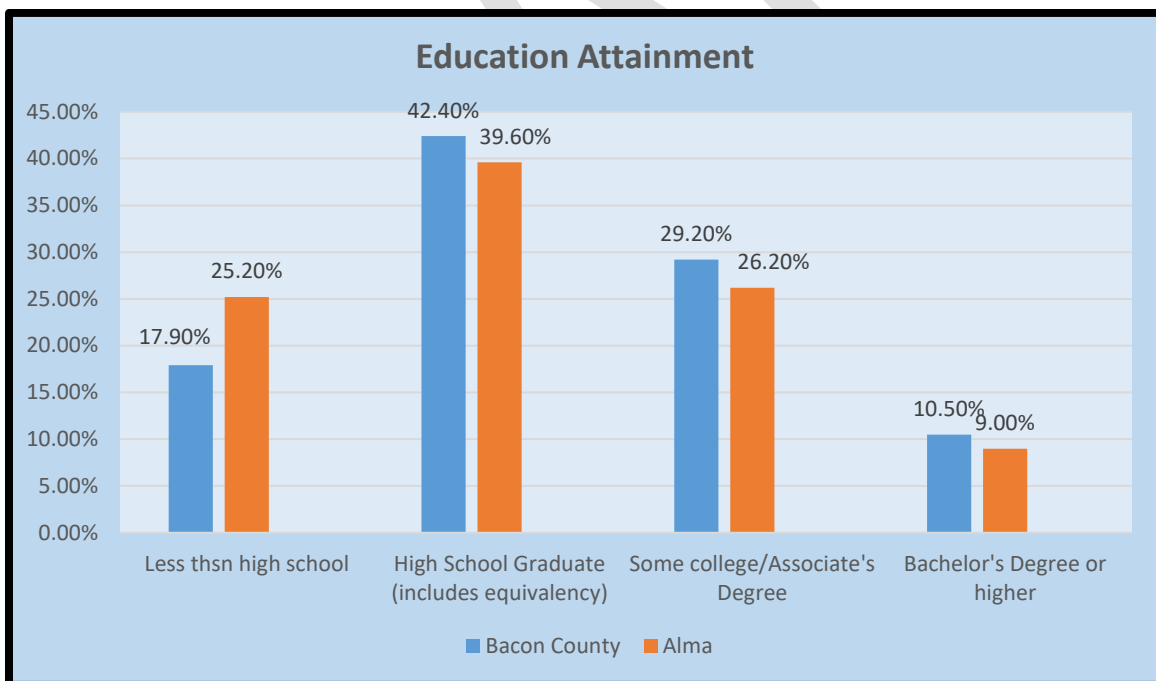
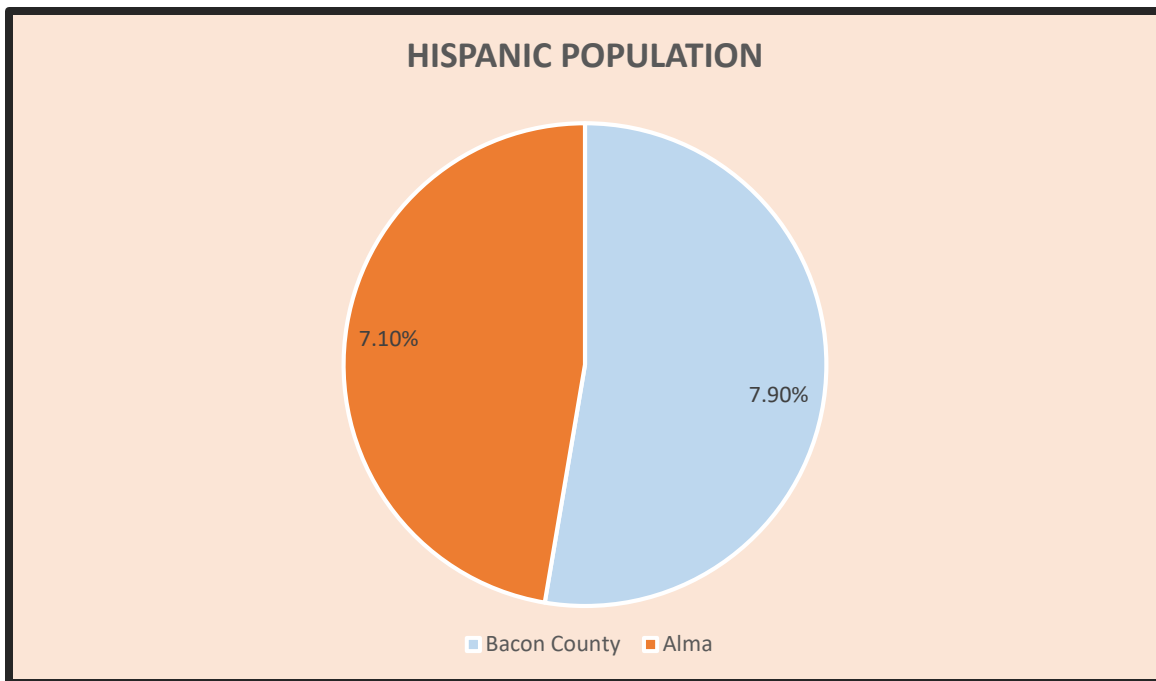
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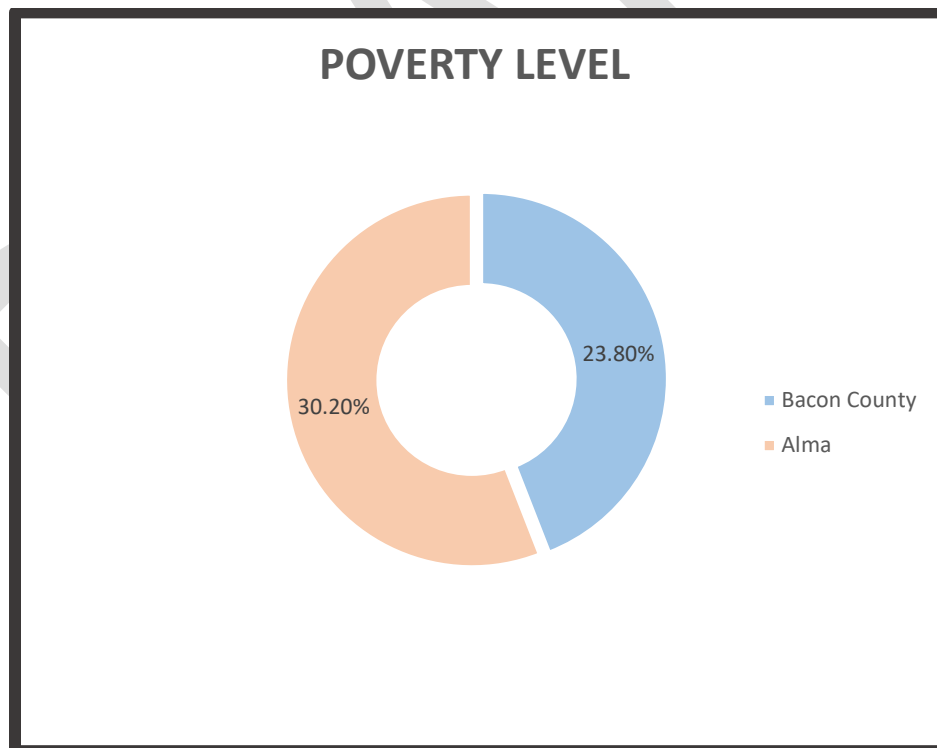
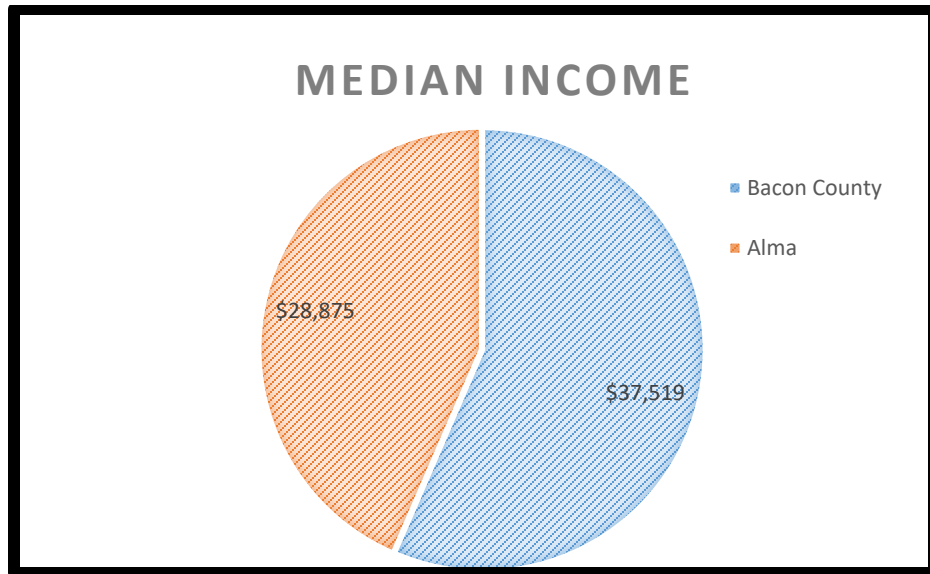
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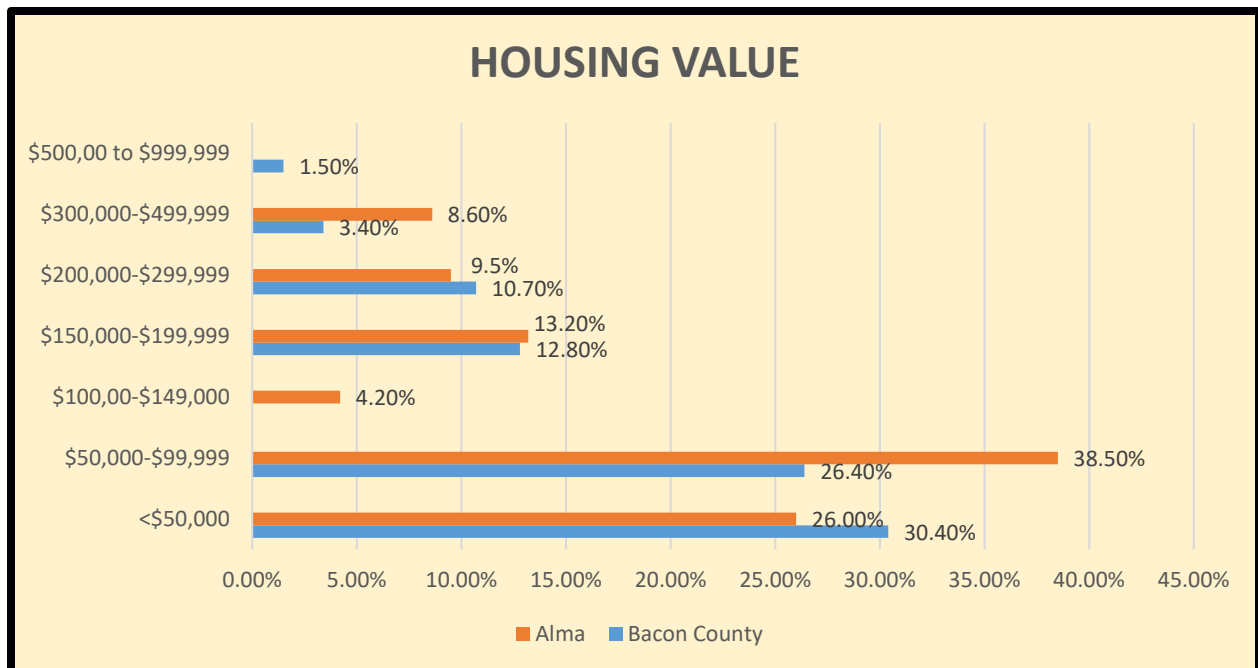












## #4 – Economic Development Charts

### 1. Incentives & Taxes

#### Incentives & Taxes

**Bacon County, Georgia** offers an aggressive package of incentives for potential relocating and expanding businesses to encourage investment and job creation. The Bacon County Development Authority is eager to help your business grow. Possible incentives may include:

- Available land at low cost
- Local tax assistance and tax abatement schedules through the Bacon County Development Authority
- Industrial Revenue Bond Financing (IRB) available through the Bacon County Development Authority
- One Georgia Grants
- For at least 15 net new jobs created, \$1,750 Job Tax Credit per new job each year for five years (Unused job tax credits can be carried forward for up to 10 years.) Bacon County is a Tier 3 community.
- 100% Freeport Exemption for work in process, raw materials and finished goods destined to be shipped out of state
- Quick Start training for employees at no cost
- Infrastructure improvements
- Strong local banking institutions for assistance in financing
- Competitive utility rates and high-speed, large bandwidth Internet services (available in 95% of Bacon County), including fiber connections at 100 Mb and 1000 Mb

## 2. Bacon County Labor Workforce

The county is fortunate to have access to an expanded labor pool from the neighboring counties of Appling, Coffee, Jeff Davis, Pierce and Ware, that collectively form our labor-shed area. This six-county labor shed area translates into a labor pool of 63,000 workers for industries that locate in Bacon County.

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployed Rate	Avg. Weekly Wage
<b>Bacon County</b>	5,057	4,864	193	3.8%	\$694
<b>6-County Draw Area</b> (20-30 minute commute)	63,219	60,542	2,677	4.2%	\$699
<b>18-County Draw Area</b> (30-50 minute commute)	137,449	131,066	6,383	4.7%	\$677
<b>Georgia</b>	5,107,656	4,906,411	201,245	3.9%	\$1,030

Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Labor Profiles, 2019



### 3. Educational Services

#### Education & Training

The **Bacon County School System** is the first step in a child's future success in Alma and Bacon County, Georgia. Our K-12 schools consistently rank high in state and national ratings. The Bacon County School System is committed to academic success for every child and the development of good character in all, with intense concentration on school completion and graduation.

Businesses searching for an area where prospective employees can gain valuable skills at nearby higher educational facilities will find plenty of options less than two hours from Bacon County. Among these options are:

- **Coastal Pines Technical College**– Alma (also campuses in Waycross, Baxley, Jesup, Hazlehurst, Camden County and the Golden Isles)
- **South Georgia State College**– Douglas & Waycross (24 miles)
- **Wiregrass Georgia Technical College**– Douglas & Pearson (24 miles)
- **Brewton-Parker College**– Mount Vernon (45 miles)
- **Southeastern Technical College**– Vidalia (51 miles)
- **Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College** – Tifton (63 miles)
- **Valdosta State University** – Valdosta (70 miles)
- **College of Coastal Georgia**– Brunswick (75 miles)
- **Georgia Southern University** – Statesboro (75 miles)
- **East Georgia State College** – Swainsboro (75 miles)

Many students in the Bacon County School System take advantage of the state's **Move On When Ready** program. This program enables high school students to earn dual high school and college credits through Coastal Pines Technical College at no cost to the students or their families, thus removing obstacles and encouraging students to pursue higher education. The program has 27 guaranteed courses that will transfer into any of the state colleges in Georgia. In a recent year, 14.4% of Bacon County high school students were enrolled in the program.

## 4. 2020 Farm Gate Values for Bacon County

### 2020 Bacon County GA

#### Ornamental Horticulture

Commodity	Volume	Un Yield	Yield Units	Multiplier	Price	Price Units	Value(\$)
Container f	3 Acres		1 Acres/Acre	1	53171 \$/Acre		154195.9
Field Nurse	30 Acres		1 Acres/Acre	1	25000 \$/Acre		750000

#### Fruit & Nuts

Commodity	Volume	Un Yield	Yield Units	Price	Price Units	Value(\$)
Blueberries	3568 Acres		5000 Pounds/Ac	2.25 \$/Pound		40140000
Blueberries	3394 Acres		4000 Pounds/Ac	2.25 \$/Pound		30546000
Other Pom	1 Total Sold		1 Total Sold/	20000 \$/Total Sol		20000
Pecans Pec	328 Acres		900 Pounds/Ac	1.27 \$/Pound		374904
Blackberrie	30 Acres		5500 Pounds/Ac	2.9 \$/Pound		478500
Citrus Citru	14 Acres		10000 Pounds/Ac	1 \$/Pound		140000

#### Forestry Related

Commodity	Volume	Un Yield	Yield Units	Multiplier	Price	Price Units	Value(\$)
Other Wild	10 Acres		1 Acres/Acre	1	150 \$/Acre		1500
Pine Straw	200 Acres		1 Acres/Acre	1	140 \$/Acre		28000
Timber Nor	1 Total Sold		1 Total Sold/	1	9253655 \$/Total Sol		9253655

#### Agritourism

Commodity	Volume	Un Yield	Yield Units	Price	Price Units	Value(\$)
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#### Poultry & Eggs

Commodity	# Houses	Volume	Volume Un Yield	Multiplier	Yield Units	# Batches	Price
Flight Quai	1	500 Birds		1	1 Birds/Bird	1	5
Breeder Pu	1	1 Total Sold		1	1 Total Sold/	1	115447.4
Layers - Ha	1	1 Total Sold		1	1 Total Sold/	1	2584686
Layers - Tal	1	1 Total Sold		1	1 Total Sold/	1	4505854
Broiler - Gr	1	1 Total Sold		1	1 Total Sold/	1	13700702
Meat Quail	1	1000 Birds		1	1 Birds/Bird	1	5

#### Livestock & Aquaculture

Commodity	# Houses	Volume	Volume Un Yield	Yield Units	Multiplier	Price	Price Units
Beef Cows	1	1150 Head		450 Pounds/He	0.83	1.36 \$/Pound	
Beef Stock	1	3680 Head		350 Pounds/He	1	1.4 \$/Pound	
Dairy Nort	1	1000 Head		14000 Pounds/He	1	0.18 \$/Pound	
Goats	1	500 Nanny Goats		1 Head/Nanr	1.25	128.38 \$/Head	
Horses - Bc	1	75 Horses		1 Horses/Hoi	1	3500 \$/Horse	
Honeybees	1	3854 Colonies		55 Pounds/Co	1	2.2 \$/Pound	
Honeybees	1	8600 Colonies		1 Colonies/C	1	125 \$/Colony	

#### Row & Forage Crops

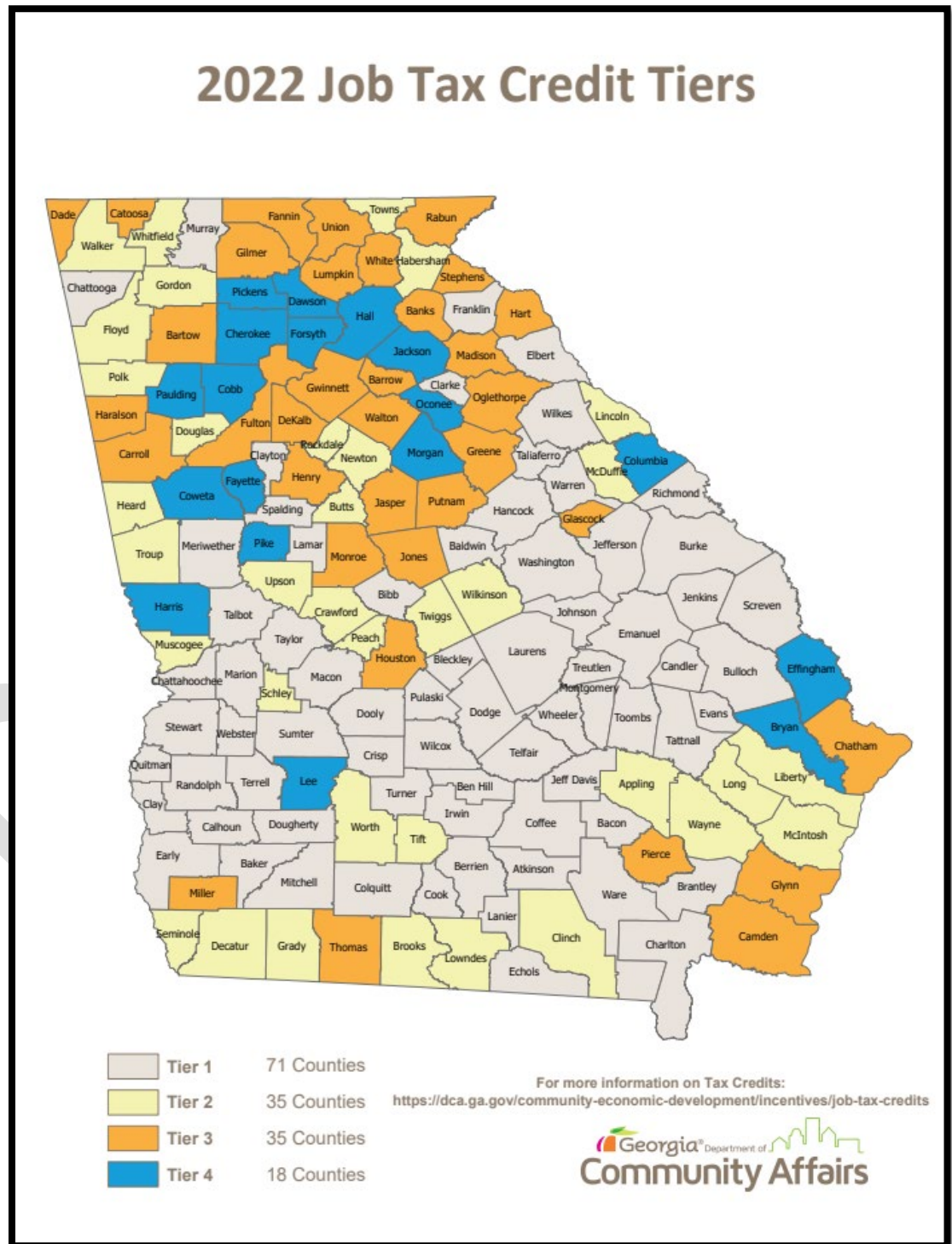
Commodity	Volume	Un Yield	Yield Units	Price	Price Units	Value(\$)
Corn Corn	3431 Acres		180 Bushels/Ac	4.3 \$/Bushel		2655594

## 5. 2022 Job Tax Credit Rankings

### Job Tax Credit Rankings 2022

<i>Tier 1</i>					
1. Telfair	13. Randolph	25. Warren	37. Taliaferro	49. Bleckley	61. Candler
2. Wheeler	14. Wilcox	26. Emanuel	38. Murray	50. Tattnall	62. Franklin
3. Clay	15. Turner	27. Marion	39. Irwin	51. Burke	63. Pulaski
4. Jenkins	16. Dougherty	28. Quitman	40. Toombs	52. Evans	64. Cook
5. Ben Hill	17. Clayton	29. Dodge	41. Mitchell	53. Atkinson	65. Elbert
6. Crisp	18. Chattooga	30. Meriwether	42. Ware	54. Washington	66. Spalding
7. Stewart	19. Baldwin	31. Clarke	43. Johnson	55. Early	67. Wilkes
8. Treutlen	20. Bulloch	32. Berrien	44. Jeff Davis	56. Bibb	68. Colquitt
9. Taylor	21. Calhoun	33. Terrell	45. Montgomery	57. Talbot	69. Echols
10. Macon	22. Jefferson	34. Lanier	46. Brantley	58. Bacon	70. Lamar
11. Dooly	23. Screven	35. Webster	47. Charlton	59. Richmond	71. Baker
12. Hancock	24. Sumter	36. Chattahoochee	48. Laurens	60. Coffee	

## 6. 2022 Job Tax Credit Tiers

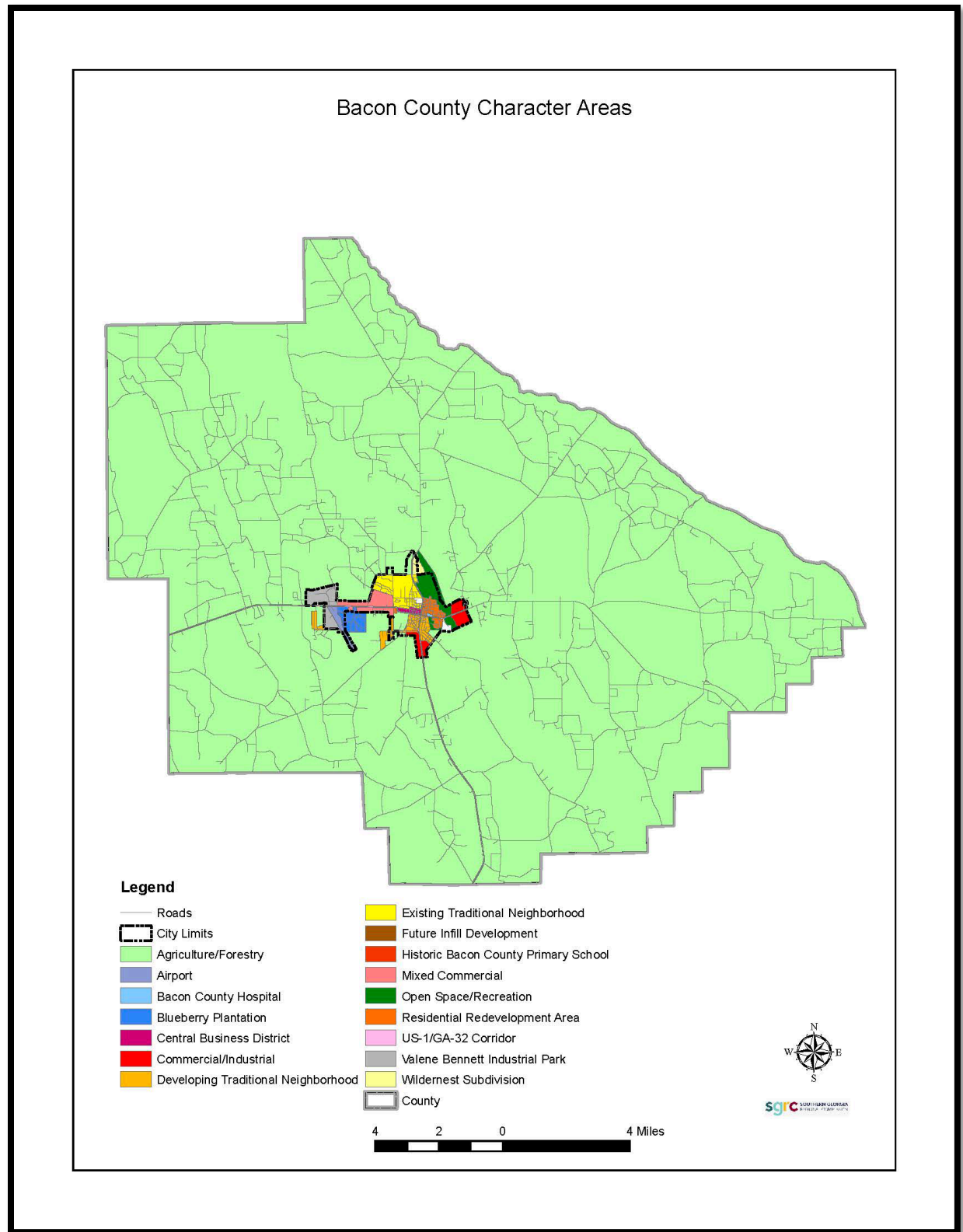


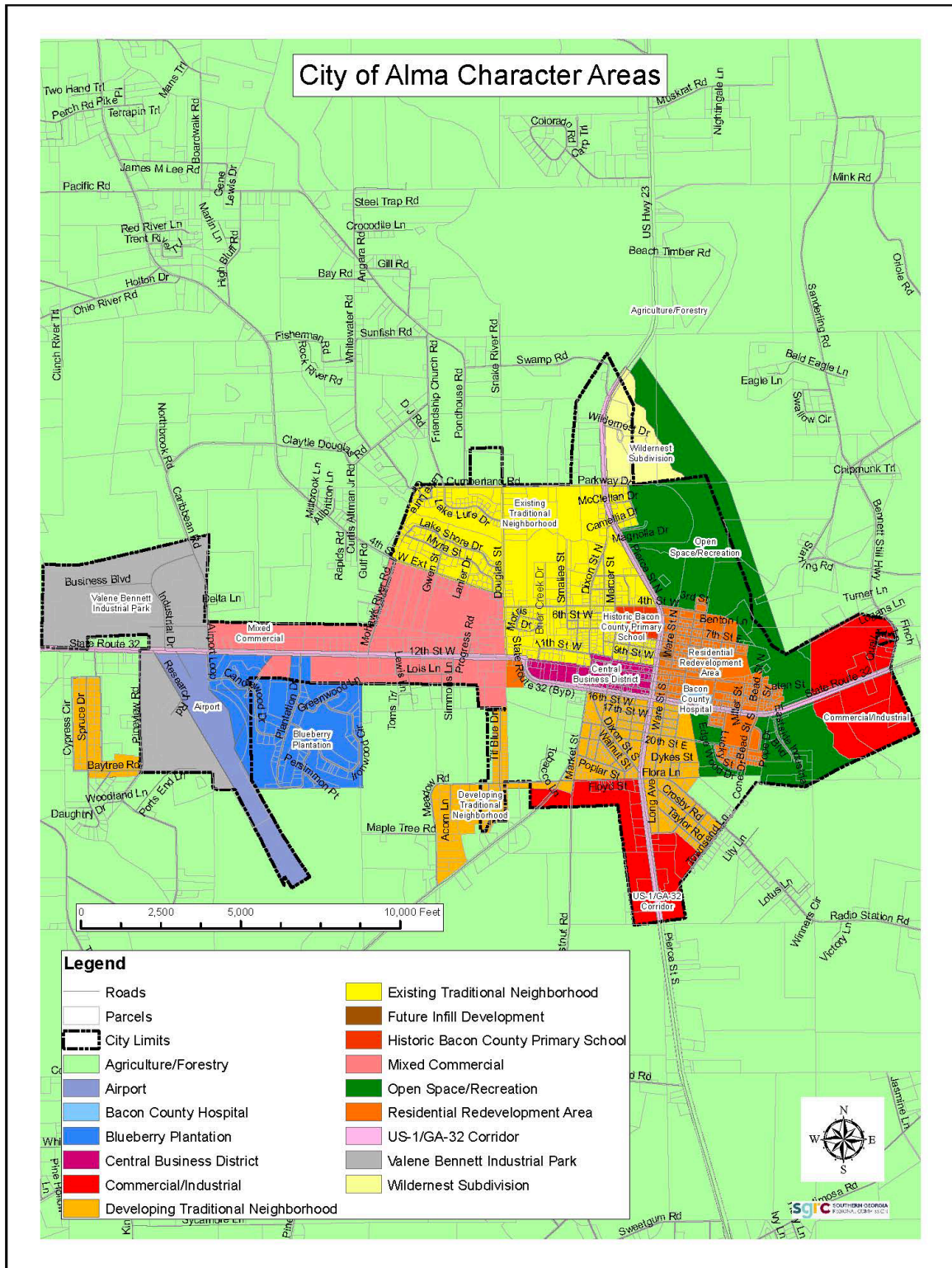
## **#5 - Land Use Maps**

(following on pages 117 & 118)

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## #6 – Transmittal Letters

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## #7 – Adoption Resolutions

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