

## (6) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

### (I) Performance Standards

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission has established two levels of achievement standards to provide benchmarks for local governments with which to assess their consistency with the Regional Plan and their progress towards implementing their local comprehensive plans and addressing their needs and opportunities.

In coordination with the bi-annual assessment meeting, a review will be performed with each local government to determine the progress towards attaining the Minimum and Excellence Standards.

Should a local government or community not achieve their minimum standards, the Southern Georgia Regional Commission will be able to assist the community to address any deficiencies and effect achievement of the standards.

#### Minimum Standards

Minimum Standards are essential activities local governments must undertake for consistency with the Regional Plan. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of local requirements across the Region.

Minimum Standards encompass specific ordinances, programs, or requirements that may be implemented by local governments to realize the Regional Vision and address the Regional Needs and Opportunities.

Evaluated by SGRC via checklist: yes/no

#### **Minimum Standards to be achieved by All Governments in the Region.**

1. All elected City and County Officials must obtain minimum certification by Regional Commission through UGA Carl Vinson Institute or an equivalent Certification Program.
2. All County and City Clerks obtain certification through UGA Carl Vinson Institute or equivalent Certification Program.
3. All Planning Commission Board members must attend planning commission training within one year of appointment.
4. Update and adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan as required by State guidelines.
5. Develop, update, maintain and implement zoning standards or land development regulations.
6. Develop, update, maintain and implement at a minimum the International Building Code including applicable administrative procedures, and put a program in place that a certified Building Inspector does all inspections.

7. Participate in comprehensive planning efforts including the development of Community Work Programs and the maintenance of the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS).
8. Update the local Community Work Program as necessary for successful implementation of community goals.
9. Participate in trainings, conferences, and workshops to maintain knowledge
10. Maintain QLG by submitting all required reports, certifications, and other updates as needed by DCA.

## Excellence Standards

The following Excellent Standards were chosen as part of the regional planning process as recommended activities for local governments to undertake for consistency with the Regional Plan. The intent is to lay out a menu of recommended best practices for local governments to select for implementation. The activities listed below were chosen as Excellence Standards because they are considered the actions most likely to bring out the strengths of the Region while at the same time addressing the Region's most significant needs (see the Priority Needs and Opportunities listed in Section 5) and achieving the overall goals of the Regional Plan.

For a local government to pursue Excellence Performance Standards, all Minimum Performance Standards must be achieved.

**Two or more** elements from any of five categories must be implemented for a government to be awarded the Standards of Excellence designation by the Regional Commission.

### **1. Economic Development Standards of Excellence**

1. Become a Camera-Ready Community.
2. Maintain a current inventory of sites and structures suitable for development or redevelopment.
3. Develop a detailed industry recruitment plan including the process for creating a qualified workforce to serve the current and future regional industries.
4. Develop a detailed business/industry retention plan.
5. Be a member and participate in multi-jurisdictional ED initiatives.
6. Incorporate economic recovery actions into local Emergency Recovery or Hazard Mitigation Plans.
7. Develop and implement a Marketing Plan for Economic Development.
8. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: a rebranding strategy, a private/public partnership, participate in the Main Street program.

### **2. Natural and Cultural Resources Standards of Excellence**

1. Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of natural, cultural, and historic resources.
2. Participate in the Georgia Department of Economic Development Tourism Product Development Resource Team Program (TPDRT).
3. Develop and adopt ordinances to require protection of open space, natural resources, and habitat.
4. Adopt and implement a historic preservation ordinance.

5. Implement a Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Program.
6. Adopt and implement a landscaping/tree ordinance.
7. Adopt and implement a Community Awareness Program regarding stream pollution through drains.
8. Support the efforts of local riverkeeper and conservation-minded organizations including GA Soil & Water Conservation Commission, Suwannee-Satilla Water Council, and Georgia River Network.
9. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: addition of electric vehicle charging stations to City/County property, community solar program, etc.

### **3. Community Facilities and Services Standards of Excellence**

1. Encourage the provision of broadband to ensure a connected community.
2. Provide educational information to property owners on the value of connecting to a public or community water/wastewater system when available or nearby.
3. Provide incentives for installation and construction of underground utilities.
4. Prohibit the installation of new septic systems within 100 feet of any river and 50 feet of any state water body.
5. Develop policies and guidelines for a water quality monitoring program including a storm water management plan and ordinance.
6. Develop and maintain a community-wide recreation plan.
7. Develop and implement a Recycling Program.
8. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: private/public broadband expansion partnership, develop an intergovernmental authority for the provision of services (such as library, parks, water/sewer, etc.).

### **4. Housing Standards of Excellence**

1. Develop a housing program for Veterans.
2. Develop and implement incentives to provide quality housing for various income levels
3. Develop and implement incentives to stimulate infill housing in existing neighborhoods.
4. Participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH).
5. Establish recognition programs such as “Home of the Month” or “Yard of the Month” in partnership with local civic groups.
6. Participate in private/public partnerships such as Habitat for Humanity
7. Establish a land bank.
8. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: developing a financial fitness for residents program, hosting a transitional housing program in partnership with local non-profits, operating a hoarding task force, etc.

### **5. Land Use and Transportation Standards of Excellence**

#### *Land use*

1. Develop an Urban Redevelopment Plan and allow for mixed-use development in land use regulations.

2. Actively participate in the National Flood Insurance Program by adopting and enforcing a flood management ordinance.
3. Develop and implement design guidelines for essential gateways, corridors and city center areas.
4. Develop, adopt, and implement community appearance ordinances.
5. Provide incentives for new developments to include open/green space, sidewalks/trails, and storm water management friendly design.
6. Provide incentives for developments to pursue “green” site planning or LEED certification.
7. Obtain Plan First and/or Tree City and/or Water First and/or Beautiful City or similar designation.
8. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: adopt ordinances to address new land uses such as cryptocurrency/data mining, solar farms, agrihoods, etc.

#### *Transportation*

1. Actively coordinate road construction and utility construction and relocation.
2. Adopt a local Right-of-Way Protection Plan.
3. Adopt land development regulations to build street connectivity.
4. Develop a local bicycle & pedestrian plan.
5. Implement local road improvements consistent with an existing transportation plan.
6. Provide incentives for private roads to be paved and constructed per local road standards and provide for maintenance through homeowner’s associations.
7. Prepare a local alternative transportation plan.
8. Actively participate in regional initiatives such as TIA (Transportation Investment Act).
9. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: car free days, ciclovias/open streets (either a permanent or temporary closing of certain streets to automobiles for cyclists and pedestrians), build a pedestrian bridge, etc.

### **6. Intergovernmental Coordination Standards of Excellence**

1. Share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions.
2. Provide input and feedback during the review process of Developments of Regional Impact.
3. Upgrade all electronic communication capabilities for effective electronic communication between all local governments and furnish appropriate training in the use.
4. Attend at least 80% of all SGRC Board Council meetings.
5. Incorporate an innovative practice not identified above which could include but is not limited to: participate in state, federal, and regional initiatives and partnerships, develop a shared initiative with either local or regional government partners, etc.

### **7. Education Standards of Excellence**

1. Appoint a Board of Education member to the Planning Commission.
2. Participate in quarterly meetings with the Board of Education and local governments.
3. Develop and implement Active Recreation After-School Programs.
4. Develop and implement incentives to increase graduation rates.
5. Develop and implement a Youth Leadership Program and/or Youth Board.

6. Demonstrate active coordination through meetings and communication between the Board of Education and local government in school facilities planning and location including the provision of services.
7. Become a Partner in the Safe Routes to School Program.
8. Support the efforts of local technical colleges in providing certification programs, GED courses and apprenticeships with local employers, leadership and on-the-job training, etc.

#### **8. Senior Services and Aging Standards of Excellence**

1. Provide coordination with and between health transportation providers.
2. Provide a "meals on wheels" program with advocacy efforts.
3. Provide activities programs geared towards senior citizens including the development of specific programs and plans, including the AARP Age-Friendly Network process.
4. Utilize assistive technologies.
5. Pursue housing voucher availability for South Georgia.
6. Include senior-friendly housing construction in the local land development regulations to promote lifelong/livable communities.
7. Local law enforcement participates in Certified At-Risk Crime Tactics Specialist (CACTS) training and encourages local banks and healthcare professionals to become aware of abuse, exploitation, and neglect of senior citizens.
8. Promote Dementia Friends Georgia communities by becoming and supporting educational efforts in the community.