

2021 JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE FOR TURNER COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF ASHBURN, REBECCA, AND SYCAMORE



Prepared by:
Turner County
City of Ashburn
City of Rebecca
City of Sycamore



Photos courtesy of SGRC staff

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

1. Introduction

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan for Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective October 1, 2018.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, this Plan consists of the following elements:

- Community Goals
- Needs and Opportunities
- Community Work Program
- Broadband Services Element
- Economic Development Element (as a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category). Although a separate summarized economic development element is included in this Comprehensive Plan, which by reference adopts the current regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), any economic development goals, policies, needs, opportunities, and objectives pertaining to Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore have also been integrated directly into their parallel components in this Comprehensive Plan.
- Land Use Element (as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law).

2. Community Involvement

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

- a) Stakeholders were identified. These included the local governments' elected officials and staff; local educational institutions (Turner County Board of Education); the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, and other organizations that deal with economic development; law enforcement; local businesses and industries; and the general public.
- b) Participation techniques were identified. Techniques used included public hearings and meetings open to the public with open discussion; printed public information in local newspapers; e-mail correspondence with stakeholders; individual meetings with local government officials; and information on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's website, local government websites, and social media.
- c) A participation program was conducted. This included an initial public hearing to give an overview of the plan update and receive initial public comments; three workshops, open to the public, for the development of the plan update; and a final public hearing to receive any final public comments before transmitting the plan draft to DCA for review. Identified stakeholders were invited to all the meetings and attended, yielding specific input in plan content.
- d) Public participation activities were documented. The documentation of public participation activities is included in the Appendix to this plan, which contains sign-in sheets and published advertisements.

1st Public Hearing – “Kick-Off”

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on July 30, 2020 at the Turner County Agricultural Center in Ashburn. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway; to explain the purpose of the update; and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

First workshop

The first workshop was held on August 21, 2020. The purpose of the workshop was to update the goals, needs, and opportunities in the comprehensive plan. This was done through open discussion, using the goals, needs, and opportunities from the previous comprehensive plan as a starting point. SGRC staff took notes from the discussion, revised the goals, needs, and opportunities based on those notes, and shared the results with stakeholders via e-mail. Additional comments and edits were received via e-mail and were included by SGRC staff as part of the preparation of the draft plan document.

Second workshop

The second workshop was held on September 18, 2020. The purpose of the workshop was to update the policies in the comprehensive plan, develop the Report of Accomplishments, and develop the initial draft of the Community Work Program. This was done through open discussion, using the newly revised goals, needs, and opportunities and the policies from the previous comprehensive plan as a starting point. SGRC staff took notes from the discussion, revised the goals, needs, and opportunities based on those notes, and shared the results with stakeholders via e-mail. Additional comments and edits were received via e-mail and were included by SGRC staff as part of the preparation of the draft plan document.

Third workshop

The third workshop was held on October 16, 2020. The purpose of the workshop was the review the Land Use Element and future land use maps. This was done through open discussion and viewing of the maps

in a setting where all attendees had the opportunity to make notes on the maps for suggested changes to the character areas. Notes from the discussion made by SGRC staff, and notes made on the maps, were then used by SGRC GIS staff to update the character area maps and incorporate the input from the workshop.



Workshop #3

In the interim period between the second and third workshops, SGRC staff met with the local governments to develop a Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program and to address any additional concerns related to the comprehensive plan update.

Final public hearing

A final public hearing was held on December 30, 2020 in order to present the final version of the plan to the community, receive any additional public input, and approve the transmittal of the draft plan to DCA. The plan was transmitted to DCA directly after the public hearing.

3. 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 applicable to their area and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (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

Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore are within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in September 2017.



Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Area Map
Source: Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

<https://waterplanning.georgia.gov/suwannee-satilla-water-planning-region>

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:

- 1) Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural water needs, including all agricultural sectors (this includes the agro-forestry economy of the region).
- 2) Manage groundwater 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 water and wastewater infrastructure.
- 6) Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
- 7) Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long term water

supplies for the region.

- 8) Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.
- 9) Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
- 10) Identify opportunities to manage stormwater to improve water quantity and quality.
- 11) Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
- 12) Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource service to all citizens of the region.
- 13) Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

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

Short Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0-10 Years)

- 1) Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
- 2) Water conservation.
- 3) Data collection and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps (forecast methodology assumptions and Resource Assessment modeling).
- 4) Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns.
- 5) Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply.
- 6) Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns.
- 7) Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns.
- 8) Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow Concerns.

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

- e) Point Sources:
 - a. Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve the treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity.
 - b. Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry
- f) Non-Point Sources:
 - a. Data collection to confirm the source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
 - b. Ensure funding and support for local and state Best Management Practices programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices
- g) Non-point Source Existing Impairments:
 - a. 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

Longer-term (20- to 40-year) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve the 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 the feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

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

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

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction. Some uses may be grandfathered, such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utility placements, special forestry, or agricultural services.

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

II. Plan Elements

1. Goals

The following Community Goals are intended to serve as guiding principles for the future of Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore.

- Goal 1: **Encourage the protection and conservation of our community’s rich historic heritage.**
- Goal 2: **Create and maintain a long-term sustainable and diverse economic base.**
- Goal 3: **Ensure that all residents of Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore have access to quality and affordable housing in stable neighborhoods with sidewalk and street connections.**
- Goal 4: **Establish and maintain conservation and protection of natural areas.**
- Goal 5: **Protect and enhance the value of existing developed areas; promote development and redevelopment within urbanized areas; create and enhance stable neighborhoods; and maintain accessible open space for future land use opportunities.**
- Goal 6: **Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.**
- Goal 7: **Enhance and maintain communication between each jurisdiction and surrounding counties in an effort to better serve the residents of Turner County.**

2. Needs and Opportunities

The Needs and Opportunities listed in this section were developed by stakeholders and residents as part of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update process. The method used to develop the Needs and Opportunities was open discussion among stakeholders during community workshops, during which a consensus was reached regarding what the Needs and Opportunities should be and how they should be updated. Input from stakeholders was gathered by Southern Georgia Regional Commission staff and then organized into this section of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional input sent via e-mail and phone calls was integrated into the draft plan document by SGRC staff, and many successive drafts of the plan were reviewed by the stakeholders and publicized via the SGRC website before the draft was finalized. Each of the Needs is addressed by corresponding policies in the “Policies” section.

1. Cultural Resources

Needs

- 1.1. Dilapidated buildings in the community need to be renovated or demolished (and funding is needed for these purposes).
- 1.2. An inventory of civil war sites and historic properties is needed.
- 1.3. The Crime and Punishment Museum needs repairs.
- 1.4. The Elrod Park building needs interior repairs.
- 1.5. The World’s Largest Peanut monument needs to be restored and put back in operation.

Opportunities

- 1.1. The Crime and Punishment Museum could continue to attract visitors and tourists.
- 1.2. Civil War burial sites in Sycamore have historic significance.
- 1.3. Several other historic sites could be promoted as tourist attractions.
- 1.4. The rural character of the community offers a good quality of life and a family-friendly environment.
- 1.5. The Ashburn Fire Ant Festival, the Independence Day Festival in Rebecca, and other festivals and events can bring visitors to the county.
- 1.6. The City of Ashburn has three nationally registered historic districts: the Shingler Heights Historic District, the Ashburn Heights-Hudson-College Avenue Historic District, and the Ashburn Commercial Historic District.

2. Economic Development

Needs

- 2.1. More development is needed throughout the county and cities to increase the commercial tax base.
- 2.2. More development is needed at the five interchanges along I-75 (exits 75, 78, 80, 82, and 84).
- 2.3. More draw from the interstate is needed in order to create incentives for businesses to locate in the county; for example, more signs on the Interstate advertising Turner County.
- 2.4. Local industry needs diversification in order to weather economic downturns.
- 2.5. Better job opportunities are needed, especially to keep younger generations in the community.
- 2.6. The workforce needs training in order to be better qualified for existing and future jobs.
- 2.7. A unique downtown revitalization is needed for the City of Ashburn that will attract and retain people in the commercial areas and bring more businesses downtown.
- 2.8. A lack of parking in downtown Ashburn may deter businesses from locating there.

Opportunities

- 2.1. The expansion of the Port of Savannah may open up new freight opportunities.
- 2.2. Two major railroads (Norfolk Southern and CSX) pass through the county.
- 2.3. The airport, with its expanded runway, can contribute to the local economy.
- 2.4. Tens of thousands of people pass through the community every day on I-75, offering great opportunities to market the community and draw in visitors.
- 2.5. The Development Authority is active and established, and is in good shape financially.
- 2.6. The new 120-acre industrial park on Route 159 has infrastructure (water, sewer, gas, and electric) and is almost built out but still has a few parcels available. The Development Authority maintains a database of available parcels.
- 2.7. There are approximately 7 lots available for development near Exit 84; a major gas station would help to spur development in that area.
- 2.8. The county is now certified as Work-Ready.
- 2.9. Major highways allow Turner County residents to commute to work in larger cities (such as Tifton, Cordele, Macon, and Albany).
- 2.10. Agriculture-related target industries should be expanded and pursued.
- 2.11. Georgia Grown Trail 41, a popular agritourism corridor, passes through Turner County. Carroll's Sausage, the Turner County Stockyard, and Calhoun Produce are listed in the official directory of Trail 41 Stops.
- 2.12. Archer Daniels Midland employs approximately 125 people and shells more tonnage of peanuts than any other facility in the world.
- 2.13. The area can be an attractive destination for relocation and retirement due to the low cost of living, low taxes, and less strict regulations.
- 2.14. ISO ratings have improved (lowered to 3, 3X, or 5, depending on the area), resulting in lower insurance premiums.
- 2.15. Streetscaping and a new park in downtown Ashburn have increased the area's appeal.
- 2.16. A Dollar General store is now open in Sycamore.
- 2.17. Train viewing platforms and trainspotting tours in the 3 cities could be a way to attract tourism.

- 2.18. The train caboose could be decorated for Christmas and could be converted into a B&B-type tourist accommodation.

3. Housing

Needs

- 3.1. More affordable, good quality housing is needed.
- 3.2. An increase in homeownership is needed. (Per the latest Census data, 48 percent of residents countywide rent their homes).
- 3.3. Many homes need to be either repaired or demolished. The county and cities need more resources to accomplish this.
- 3.4. Qualified applicants for available CHIP funds are needed.
- 3.5. Some out-of-area landlords do not take adequate care of their properties; more local ownership of rental housing is desired.
- 3.6. More high-quality housing is needed for seniors.
- 3.7. The Eureka housing development was a good example of what the community needs; more similar developments would be desirable.

Opportunities

- 3.1. The City of Ashburn has two adopted Urban Redevelopment Plans, which give the city broad powers to address blight.
- 3.2. Compliance officers are continuing to work with property owners to bring rental housing up to livable standards.
- 3.3. Low-interest loans are helping first-time homebuyers.
- 3.4. CHIP funds are available for home renovation.
- 3.5. More housing could be developed in the area near West Williams Ave.

4. Natural Resources

Needs

- 4.1. More natural recreation areas are needed.

Opportunities

- 4.1. There are large agricultural areas within the county that contain plentiful agricultural resources (land and water) and products (cotton, peanuts, vegetables, and poultry).
- 4.2. Additional land could be protected (e.g., by conservation easements).
- 4.3. The Little River Water Trail passes through Turner County, offering opportunities for outdoor recreation such as kayaking.
- 4.4. Grants such as NRCS conservation grants, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Georgia DNR wildlife conservation grants could help to fund more natural recreation areas.

5. Land Use

Needs

- 5.1. Improved measures are needed to address conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses (e.g., crop spraying).

Opportunities

- 5.1. The consolidated Building & Zoning Office provides consistent and reliable application of land use regulations.
- 5.2. The Joint Planning and Zoning Commission is available to provide recommendations on land use decisions.

- 5.3. A review of the minimum lot sizes in the zoning ordinance (some of which are too large) could help to encourage development and redevelopment.
- 5.4. Areas to the south of Sycamore and near the outskirts of Rebecca are potential locations for more industrial development.

6. Community Facilities and Services

Needs

- 6.1. Several roads throughout the county need to be repaved and/or widened.
- 6.2. Some dirt roads need to be paved.
- 6.3. Some areas need more sidewalks, and/or need existing sidewalks repaired.
- 6.4. More recreation opportunities are needed, especially for young people.
- 6.5. Infrastructure in the county and cities, including water, sewer, drainage, roads, sidewalks, and gas service, is aging and needs to be repaired, updated, and upgraded. The water treatment facilities, in particular, need improvements.
- 6.6. Expanded transportation options are needed for those who do not have cars and/or cannot drive.
- 6.7. Expanded, higher speed, and more affordable broadband is needed throughout the county, especially in the rural areas. Service is particularly lacking in areas on the east side of the county.
- 6.8. Broadband is needed on school buses.
- 6.9. The old school in Sycamore needs to be renovated or demolished; funding is needed to accomplish this.
- 6.10. An additional walking trail is needed, and/or the existing walking trail in Ashburn needs to be restored and upgraded with lightning, pavement, benches, trash cans, and other amenities.
- 6.11. Upgraded equipment is needed for public safety, including fire, police, and EMS.

Opportunities

- 6.1. An urgent care clinic is now available, open 7 days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Telemedicine is also a greatly expanded option for medical care.
- 6.2. The Recreation Center on US-41 north of Ashburn offers recreation opportunities for young people.
- 6.3. The Tabernacle Splash Pad in Ashburn offers a recreation opportunity for children in the summer.
- 6.4. The Southern Regional Technical College facility is not only an educational resource, but also a potential venue for youth recreation, concerts, and conventions.
- 6.5. The Turner County High School graduation rate is 93.8% (according to 2018 data from the Georgia Department of Education), much higher than the statewide rate of 81.6%.
- 6.6. The new College and Career Academy will be an excellent partnership between the Board of Education and the community, and will provide new educational opportunities.
- 6.7. Fiber optic cable lines are present in the county and could be used to expand broadband access. Existing fiber lines could be extended to the schools.
- 6.8. County-wide broadband coverage is available from two providers (Southern Linc and Verizon).
- 6.9. A new cell tower recently constructed near the City of Rebecca is providing some improved coverage.
- 6.10. School resource officers are a separate force from the local police and sheriff's office, allowing them to serve the Board of Education's needs more specifically.
- 6.11. The City of Rebecca has 11 miles of walkable streets that are lit at night and good for viewing wildlife.

7. Intergovernmental Coordination

Needs

- 7.1. A repeater tower is needed (and land for the tower site needs to be purchased) for communications between public safety agencies.
- 7.2. The public safety and Road Department radio systems need to be upgraded and interconnected.

Opportunities

- 7.1. The existing good intergovernmental coordination can be continued and improved in order to provide the highest level of services to the community.
- 7.2. The Service Delivery Strategy can be used to coordinate services and avoid service duplication.
- 7.3. The Board of Education's new camera system could be connected to the Sheriff's Office camera system, allowing for better and faster responses to incidents.
- 7.4. A grant has been applied for to upgrade the public safety and Road Department radio systems.

3. Analysis of Data and Information

Turner County (including the cities)

According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, the 2018 estimated population of Turner County (including the cities) is 7,962, a decrease of 16.6% since the 2010 census. The population is 51.7% female and 48.3% male. 24.3% of the population is under age 18, and 18.0% is over age 65. The median age is 38.8. There are 3,023 households and 2.6 persons per household.

54.9% of the population is White, 43.0% Black or African American, 0.8% Asian, 0.2% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.9% some other race, and 0.2% two or more races. Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are 1.6% of the population.

53.4% of the population aged 16 years and older is in the labor force. The median annual household income is \$38,341. 35.3% of people live in households with income below the federal poverty level.

Ashburn

According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, the 2018 estimated population of Ashburn is 3,691, a decrease of 9.5% since the 2010 census. The population is 54.7% female and 45.3% male. 24.4% of the population is under age 18, and 19.6% is over age 65. The median age is 40.8. There are 1,477 households and 2.5 persons per household.

74.3% of the population is Black or African American, 25.7% White. Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are 1.3% of the population.

54.5% of the population aged 16 years and older is in the labor force. The median annual household income is \$37,951. 49.6% of the population live in households with income below the federal poverty level.

Rebecca

According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, the 2018 estimated population of Rebecca is 237, an increase of 26.7% since the 2010 census. The population is 58.2% female and 41.8% male. 26.6% of the population is under age 18, and 13.9% is over age 65. The median age is 30.2. There are 86 households and 2.8 persons per household.

67.1% of the population is White, 2.5% Black or African American, 11.8% Asian, 13.9% from some other race, and 4.6% two or more races. Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are 21.9% of the population.

50.8% of the population aged 16 years and older is in the labor force. The median annual household income is \$30,625. 38.0% of the population live in households with income below the federal poverty level.

Sycamore

According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, the 2018 estimated population of Sycamore is 868, an increase of 73.9% since the 2010 census. The population is 59.8% female and 40.2% male. 25.7% of the population is under age 18, and 6.2% is over age 65. The median age is 32.9. There are 237 households and 3.7 persons per household.

62.6% of the population is White, 29.5% Black or African American, 4.4% Asian, 3.3% some other race, and 0.2% two or more races. Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are 2.2% of the population.

40.2% of the population aged 16 years and older is in the labor force. The median annual household income is \$35,875. 46.4% of the population live in households with income below the federal poverty level.

Data charts visualizing these figures are provided in the Appendix.

4. Broadband Element

Existing Conditions

Due to Turner County's strategic location along the I-75 corridor, the community is in a position to play a vital role in the deployment of broadband across the state. During the past few decades, broadband services have become essential for education, employment, economic development, and overall quality of life. Therefore, broadband should be considered a necessary utility and should be regarded as having equal importance to other necessary utilities.

According to the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, there are 1,657 locations in Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore that are not served by broadband. The percentage unserved is 32%.

Figure 1 below shows the served and unserved areas of the community. County statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, and where the broadband service is available to more than 80% of locations in a census block. Census blocks that did not meet this definition are delineated as "Unserved." The map depicts access to broadband, not subscription to broadband. The source of the map is the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (<https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/gbdi-unserved-county>). Broadband data are provided by the various Internet Service Providers of Georgia. Location data are from commercially available sources.

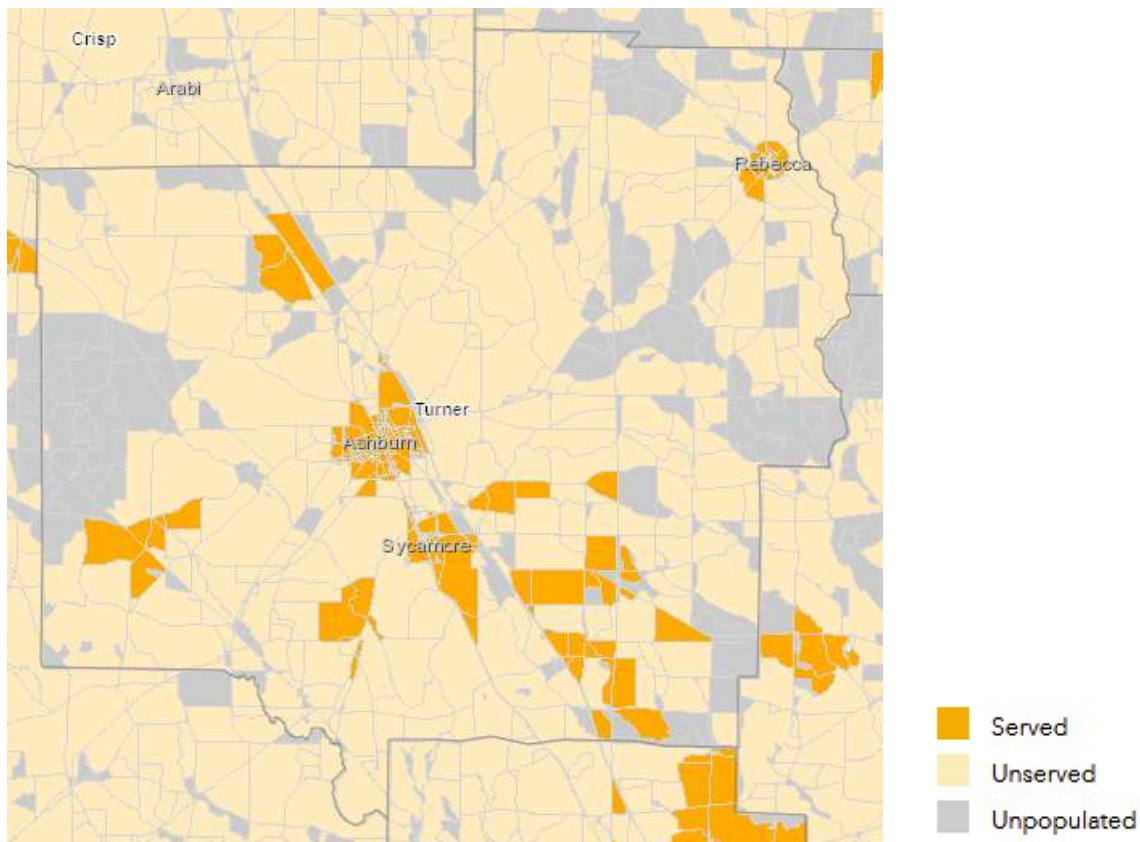
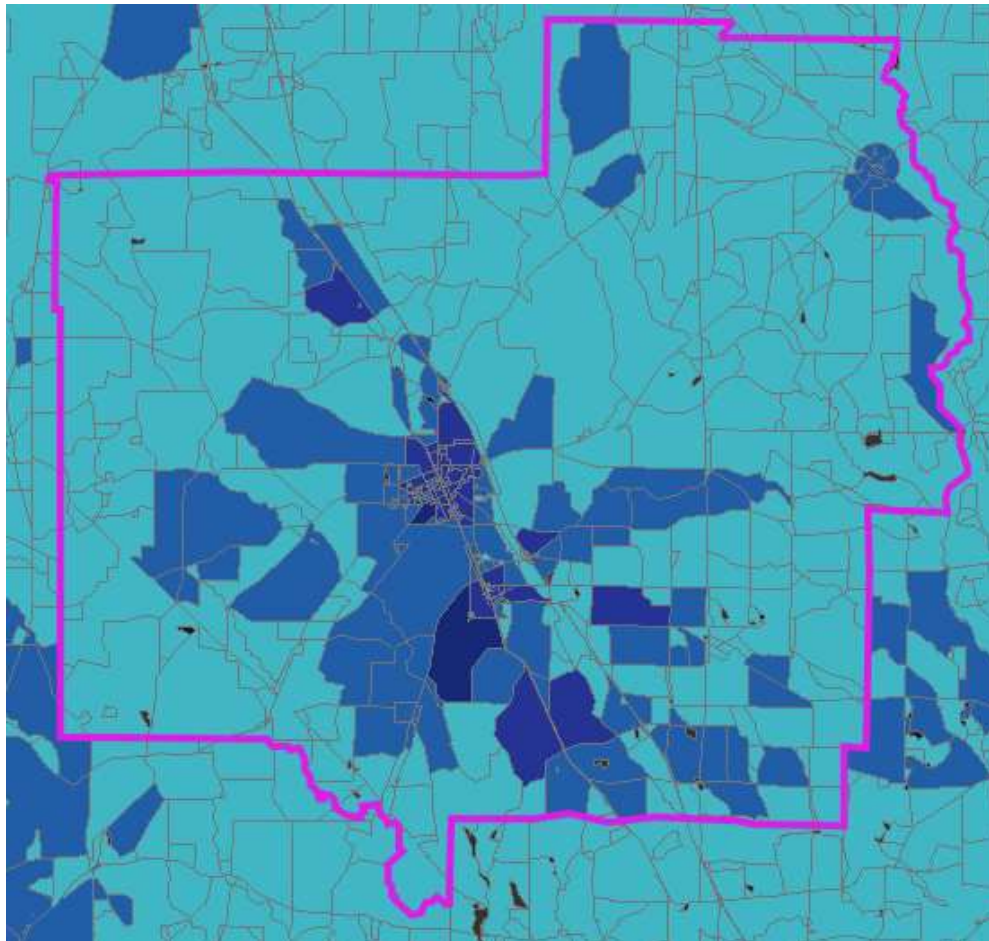


Figure 1. Broadband Served and Unserved Areas of Turner County (source: Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/gbdi-unserved-county>).

Having multiple providers to choose from is beneficial to community residents and businesses because it helps to keep prices competitive and ensures that a range of different options will be available for subscribers. Figure 2 below shows the number of fixed residential broadband providers for all service technologies for which data are available (ADSL, cable, fiber, fixed wireless, and satellite).



Number of Fixed Residential Broadband Providers



Broadband

Technology ADSL, Cable, Fiber, Fixed Wireless, Satellite, Other

Speed ≥ 25/3 Mbps

Date June 2019 (latest public release)

Figure 2. Number of fixed residential broadband providers in Turner County, with details of the cities. (Source: <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/>)

The map shows that there are between 2 and 4 broadband providers covering Turner County. Figure 3 shows the number of providers for individual service types (ADSL, cable, fiber, and satellite). According to the available data, there is no fixed wireless service in Turner County.

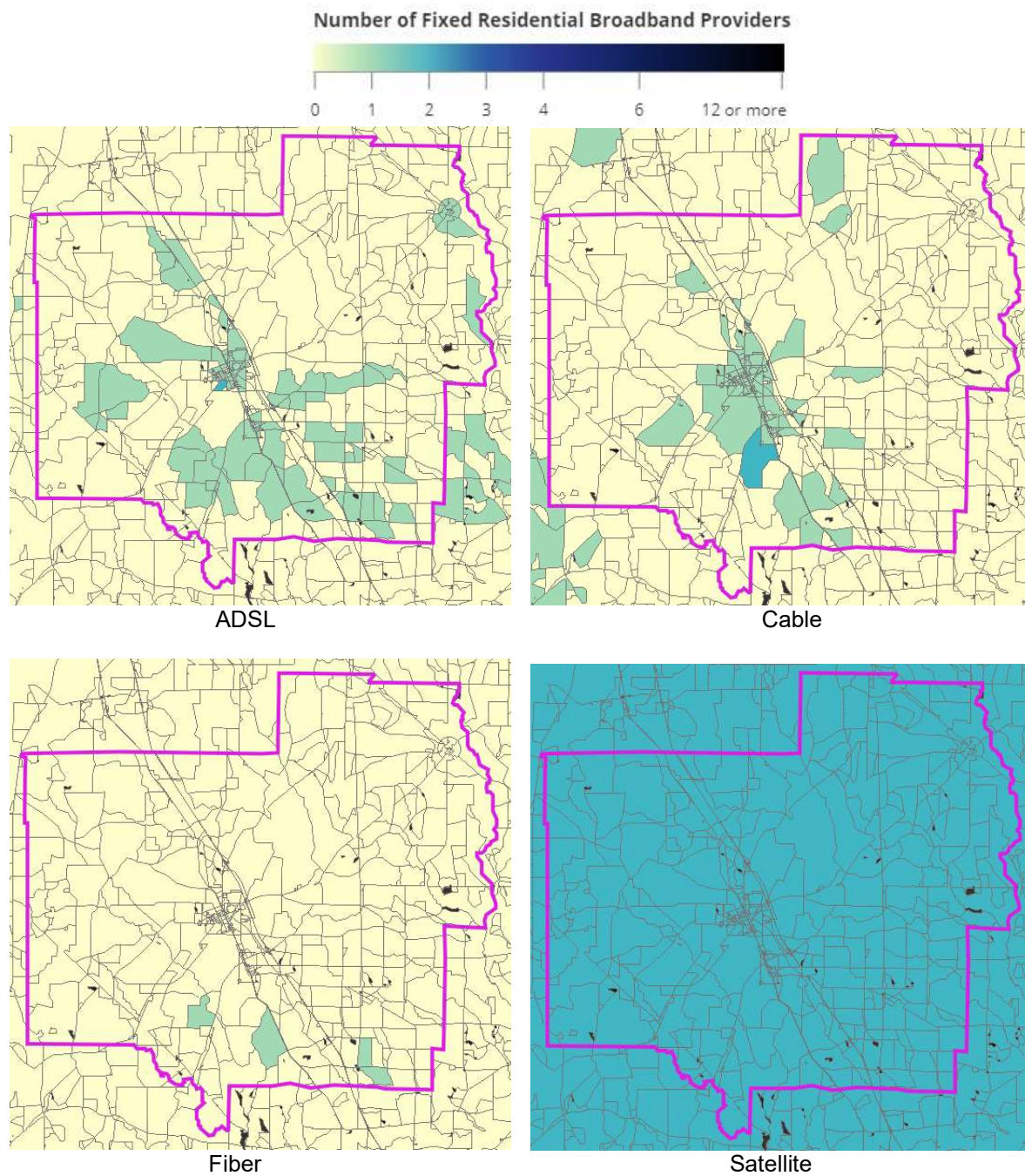


Figure 3. Number of broadband providers of ADSL, cable, fiber, and satellite residential broadband service (Source: <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/>)

Satellite broadband service is available throughout the entire county, but is typically more expensive than cable and ADSL service. Many of the more remote areas of the county have no option other than satellite or 4G for broadband service.

Although residential fiber broadband service is available only in very limited areas of the county, fiber infrastructure exists in the community and there is the potential to use it to expand service.

Broadband Action Plan

A key goal of this Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that public services and facilities, including broadband, are developed and maintained to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth (see Section 1 of this plan, Goal 6). Moreover, this plan lists the following Needs and Opportunities related to broadband in Section 2:

Needs

- 6.7. Expanded, higher speed, and more affordable broadband is needed throughout the county, especially in the rural areas. Service is particularly lacking in areas on the east side of the county.
- 6.8. Broadband is needed on school buses.

Opportunities

- 6.7. Fiber optic cable lines are present in the county and could be used to expand broadband access. Existing fiber lines could be extended to the schools.
- 6.8. County-wide broadband coverage is available from two providers (Southern Linc and Verizon).
- 6.9. A new cell tower recently constructed near the City of Rebecca is providing some improved coverage.

Furthermore, the following community policies in this plan relate to broadband:

- Policy 6.7a: The community will work with broadband providers to encourage expansion of broadband services.
- Policy 6.7b: The possibility of utilizing existing fiber optic cable lines for improved broadband access (including for schools) will be investigated.
- Policy 6.8a: Funding sources to provide broadband on school buses will be identified.

The above needs, opportunities, and policies have been used to inform an action plan for the promotion of the deployment of broadband services into unserved and underserved areas of Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore. The specific action items in the action plan are listed below, and are cross-listed in the Community Work Programs of the appropriate jurisdictions (see Section 7).

Broadband-related Policies

Policy 6.7a: The community will work with broadband providers to encourage expansion of broadband services.

Policy 6.7b: The possibility of utilizing existing fiber optic cable lines for improved broadband access (including for schools) will be investigated.

Policy 6.8a: Funding sources to provide broadband on school buses will be identified.

Policy 7.1a: Land will be acquired and a repeater tower installed.

Policy 7.2a: Upgrades and interconnection of the public safety and Road Department radio systems will be implemented.

Broadband Action Steps

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
Provide broadband access on school buses	\$200,000	Turner County Board of Education	General funds, grants	6.8a	*	*	*	*	*
Purchase land and install a repeater tower for communication between public safety agencies	\$500,000	Turner County	General funds, grants	7.1a	*	*	*	*	*
Work with broadband providers to encourage expansion of broadband services	Staff time	Turner County	General funds	6.7a	*	*	*	*	*

5. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has crafted a series of objectives dealing with a broad range of issues that concern local governments. The objectives, which are listed below, are only recommendations, but provide local governments with a tool to guide them in the assessment of their needs and opportunities and in the development of their implementation activities. If they are used as such a tool by many of the local governments in their planning efforts, these objectives also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals, which may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents. This section contains an analysis of the consistency of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns with the Quality Community Objectives, and recommends related best practices as provided by DCA.

Quality Community Objective	Notes on consistency with Comprehensive Plan for Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
<p>1. Economic Prosperity Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include: job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.</p>	<p>Community activities, including economic development efforts, are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business incubator • Corridor study • Downtown program
<p>2. Resource Management Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.</p>	<p>Land use element and goals and policies related to natural resources are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pervious paving • Riparian buffers • Water resource protection
<p>3. Efficient Land Use Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.</p>	<p>The land use element and infrastructure-related goals and policies of this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive reuse • Brownfield redevelopment • Infill development program • Preserve agriculture land use • Urban redevelopment plan
<p>4. Local Preparedness Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.</p>	<p>Projects and policies in this plan, and local ordinances, are consistent with this objective. The community also has a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan that is consistent with this objective, and capable leadership and staff. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-hazards strategy • Comprehensive planning • Professional development-planning staff

Quality Community Objective	Notes on consistency with Comprehensive Plan for Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
<p>5. Sense of Place Protect and enhance the community’s unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.</p>	<p>Projects and policies in this plan, and local ordinances, are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code enforcement • Design guidelines
<p>6. Regional Cooperation Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.</p>	<p>There is a high level of cooperation and collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional roundtable • Shared service agreements
<p>7. Housing Options Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.</p>	<p>Projects and policies in this plan, and local ordinances, are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia Initiative for Community Housing • Housing for the disadvantaged • Housing for the elderly • Inclusionary zoning • Land bank • Mixed-income housing
<p>8. Transportation Options Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.</p>	<p>Transportation goals, policies, and projects are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete streets • Sidewalk/trail network • Improving street connectivity • Maximize use of on-street parking • Safe Routes to School

Quality Community Objective	Notes on consistency with Comprehensive Plan for Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
<p>9. Educational Opportunities Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.</p>	<p>Goals, policies, and projects in this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public internet access • Transportation to educational facilities • Work ready program
<p>10. Community Health Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.</p>	<p>Goals, policies, and projects in this plan are consistent with this objective. Recommended best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation to services

6. Community Policies

The following policies, organized by the community's needs (see Section 2), were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide guidance to address the Needs and Opportunities identified in this Plan, and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program (see Section 7) then addresses the Needs and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

1. Cultural Resources

Needs	Policies
1.1. Dilapidated buildings in the community need to be renovated or demolished (and funding is needed for these purposes).	<p>Policy 1.1a: Incentives for downtown infill development will be promoted, such as: modified regulations for parking, setbacks, and uses; property tax breaks; and reduced permitting fees.</p> <p>Policy 1.1b: Funding opportunities will be sought for the renovation of buildings, or demolition if necessary.</p> <p>Policy 1.1c: A streetscape and right-of-way improvement plan will be developed that will enhance pedestrian safety and traffic flow.</p> <p>Policy 1.1d: Historic sites in the community will be promoted for tourism, as appropriate.</p>
1.2. An inventory of civil war sites and historic properties is needed.	Policy 1.2a: An inventory of the county's historic properties and sites will be created.
1.3. The Crime and Punishment Museum needs repairs.	Policy 1.3a: A committee will be formed to determine the viability of renovating the Crime and Punishment Museum.
1.4. The Elrod Park building needs interior repairs.	<p>Policy 1.4a: Funding opportunities will be sought for renovating the Elrod Park building.</p> <p>Policy 1.4b: A cooperative effort between the City of Ashburn and Downtown Development Authority will be undertaken to make the Elrod Park building desirable for the Chamber of Commerce.</p>
1.5. The World's Largest Peanut monument needs to be restored and put back in operation.	Policy 1.5a: Efforts will be made to restore the peanut monument.

2. Economic Development

Needs	Policies
<p>2.1. More development is needed throughout the county and cities to increase the commercial tax base.</p>	<p>Policy 2.1a: The county website will be upgraded to include marketing for newly established businesses.</p> <p>Policy 2.1b: Marketing opportunities will be offered to existing and new businesses.</p> <p>Policy 2.1c: The existing list of developable properties in the Industrial Park will be maintained and promoted.</p> <p>Policy 2.1d: The airport, with its extended runway, will be marketed as one of the community's assets.</p>
<p>2.2. More development is needed at the five interchanges along I-75 (exits 75, 78, 80, 82, and 84).</p>	<p>Policy 2.2a: Overlay zoning districts and modified land use regulations for the areas around the I-75 exits will be considered.</p> <p>Policy 2.2b: Vacant parcels available for development near the I-75 exits will be promoted.</p>
<p>2.3. More draw from the interstate is needed in order to create incentives for businesses to locate in the county; for example, more signs on the Interstate advertising Turner County.</p>	<p>Policy 2.3a: Billboards advertising Turner County will be placed along I-75.</p> <p>Policy 2.3b: The community will take advantage of its location along Georgia Grown Trail 41 to promote agritourism.</p> <p>Policy 2.3c: Events such as the Fire Ant Festival will be marketed in order to attract tourists.</p> <p>Policy 2.3d: Railroad-related tourism opportunities, such as trainspotting, will be pursued.</p> <p>Policy 2.3e: Gateways into the community will be constructed in order to welcome visitors and contribute to the community's branding and identity.</p>
<p>2.4. Local industry needs diversification in order to weather economic downturns.</p>	<p>Policy 2.4a: Viable industries that will contribute to the diversification of the local economy will be pursued.</p> <p>Policy 2.4b: The community will endeavor to capitalize on transportation assets and connectivity, including existing rail lines, highways, and proximity to major ports.</p> <p>Policy 2.4c: Agriculture-related target industries will be expanded and pursued.</p>
<p>2.5. Better job opportunities are needed, especially to keep younger generations in the community.</p>	<p>Policy 2.5a: Incentives and marketing will be pursued for new industries and employers that provide better jobs in the community.</p> <p>Policy 2.5b: Expansion of existing industries and employers will be encouraged, with a focus on developing better job opportunities.</p>

Needs	Policies
2.6. The workforce needs training in order to be better qualified for existing and future jobs.	<p>Policy 2.6a: A College & Career Academy will be established in the community.</p> <p>Policy 2.6b: The county's Work Ready status will be promoted and maintained.</p>
2.7. A unique downtown revitalization is needed for the City of Ashburn that will attract and retain people in the commercial areas and bring more businesses downtown.	<p>Policy 2.7a: The Downtown Development Authority will pursue Main Street designation under the Georgia Main Street Program.</p> <p>Policy 2.7b: Viable types of business for Downtown will be identified and pursued.</p> <p>Policy 2.7c: Downtown Ashburn will continue to be promoted as a tourist destination and historic area, and facilities and infrastructure will be upgraded for that purpose.</p>
2.8. A lack of parking in downtown Ashburn may deter businesses from locating there.	Policy 2.8a: A parking study will be conducted, including an inventory of existing spaces and recommendations for parking optimization.

3. Housing

Needs	Policies
3.1. More affordable, good quality housing is needed.	<p>Policy 3.1a: The community will apply for the GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing) Program.</p> <p>Policy 3.1b: The community will endeavor to utilize the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) to fund new housing construction.</p> <p>Policy 3.1c: CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds will be pursued for neighborhood revitalization.</p> <p>Policy 3.1d: Affordable housing programs, such as the HUD Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, will be considered.</p> <p>Policy 3.1e: Efforts will be made to create more affordable, good quality housing throughout the community.</p>
3.2. An increase in homeownership is needed. (Per the latest Census data, 48 percent of residents countywide rent their homes).	<p>Policy 3.2a: The community will continue to utilize the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) to assist homebuyers.</p> <p>Policy 3.2b: Homeownership programs such as the Georgia Dream Homeownership Program, Habitat for Humanity, and USDA Rural Development will be investigated and promoted.</p>

Needs	Policies
3.3. Many homes need to be either repaired or demolished. The county and cities need more resources to accomplish this.	<p>Policy 3.3a. The City of Ashburn Urban Redevelopment Plan will continue to be implemented and updated as necessary.</p> <p>Policy 3.3b. Urban Redevelopment Plans will be considered for other areas as needed.</p> <p>Policy 3.3c. The community will continue to utilize the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) to revitalize blighted areas and rehabilitate existing homes.</p>
3.4. Qualified applicants for available CHIP funds are needed.	Policy 3.4a. Outreach will be conducted to identify and assist qualified applicants for CHIP funds.
3.5. Some out-of-area landlords do not take adequate care of their properties; more local ownership of rental housing is desired.	Policy 3.5a: Code enforcement will be used to encourage maintenance of properties.
3.6. More high-quality housing is needed for seniors.	<p>Policy 3.6a: Programs to assist seniors with home repairs, such as the HUD Very Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants program, will be investigated and promoted.</p> <p>Policy 3.6b: Housing assistance programs for seniors, such as the Housing Assistance Council Rural Senior Housing Initiative, will be investigated and pursued.</p>

4. Natural Resources

Needs	Policies
4.1. More natural recreation areas are needed.	<p>Policy 4.1a: The development of new outdoor recreation areas will be pursued.</p> <p>Policy 4.1b: The Little River Water Trail will be promoted as a resource for recreation.</p>

5. Land Use

Needs	Policies
5.1. Improved measures are needed to address conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses (e.g., crop spraying).	<p>Policy 5.1a: Conflicts between land uses will be prevented through measures such as land use regulations, buffer requirements, and transitional zones between uses.</p> <p>Policy 5.1b: The Greater Turner County Planning Advisory Commission will continue to review proposed land use changes and provide recommendations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>

6. Community Facilities and Services

Needs	Policies
6.1. Several roads throughout the county need to be repaved and/or widened.	<p>Policy 6.1a: The community will continue to pursue funding sources for road improvements, such as GDOT's LMIG (Local Maintenance & Improvement Grants), CDBGs, T-SPLOST, and others.</p> <p>Policy 6.1b: Roads that require widening will be identified and right-of-way acquisition requirements will be determined.</p>
6.2. Some dirt roads need to be paved.	<p>Policy 6.2a: A priority list of dirt roads in need of paving will be developed.</p> <p>Policy 6.2b: Funding sources will be pursued for paving dirt roads, such as LMIG, CDBG, T-SPLOST, and others.</p>
6.3. Some areas need more sidewalks, and/or need existing sidewalks repaired.	<p>Policy 6.3a: A priority list of new sidewalks and sidewalk repairs will be developed.</p> <p>Policy 6.3b: Funding sources will be pursued for constructing and repairing sidewalks, such as LMIG, CDBG, T-SPLOST, TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program), and others.</p>
6.4. More recreation opportunities are needed, especially for young people.	<p>Policy 6.4a: Opportunities for expanding recreation will be investigated.</p> <p>Policy 6.4b: Existing resources for recreation will be promoted and expanded, such as the Turner County Recreation Center, the Tabernacle Splash Pad, and the Southern Regional Technical College facility.</p>
6.5. Infrastructure in the county and cities, including water, sewer, drainage, roads, sidewalks, and gas service, is aging and needs to be repaired, updated, and upgraded. The water treatment facilities, in particular, need improvements.	<p>Policy 6.5a: Infrastructure in need of repairs and upgrades (including water, sewer, drainage, roads, sidewalks, and gas) will be specifically identified, and funding will be pursued, such as CDBG grants.</p> <p>Policy 6.5b: The airport and its facilities will continue to be upgraded in order to spur economic development.</p>
6.6. Expanded transportation options are needed for those who do not have cars and/or cannot drive.	<p>Policy 6.6a: Sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails will be provided where feasible.</p> <p>Policy 6.6b: The Turner County Transit Development Plan will be implemented.</p> <p>Policy 6.6c: Turner Transit will be promoted as a transportation option.</p>

Needs	Policies
6.7. Expanded, higher speed, and more affordable broadband is needed throughout the county, especially in the rural areas. Service is particularly lacking in areas on the east side of the county.	Policy 6.7a: The community will work with broadband providers to encourage expansion of broadband services. Policy 6.7b: The possibility of utilizing existing fiber optic cable lines for improved broadband access (including for schools) will be investigated.
6.8. Broadband is needed on school buses.	Policy 6.8a: Funding sources to provide broadband on school buses will be identified.
6.9. The old school in Sycamore needs to be renovated or demolished; funding is needed to accomplish this.	Policy 6.9a: A solution will be pursued for the demolition of the old school in Sycamore.
6.10. An additional walking trail is needed, and/or the existing walking trail in Ashburn needs to be restored and upgraded with lightning, pavement, benches, trash cans, and other amenities	Policy 6.10a: The existing walking trail will be upgraded, and/or an additional walking trail will be constructed.
6.11. Upgraded equipment is needed for public safety, including fire, police, and EMS.	Policy 6.11a: Equipment for fire, police, and EMS will be purchased and upgraded.

7. Intergovernmental Coordination

Needs	Policies
7.1. A repeater tower is needed (and land for the tower site needs to be purchased) for communications between public safety agencies. 7.2.	Policy 7.1a: Land will be acquired and a repeater tower installed.
7.3. The public safety and Road Department radio systems need to be upgraded and interconnected.	Policy 7.2a: Upgrades and interconnection of the public safety and Road Department radio systems will be implemented.

7.1. Report of Accomplishments (2016-2020 Community Work Program)

Turner County

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Continue to restore the old Turner County Jail	\$65,000	County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*				
Erect signage for the Desoto Trail Encounter and Civil War sites	\$5,000	Historic Committee	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Conduct a marketing program to attract more commercial/ retail business (e.g., grocery stores)	\$250,000	TCDA/County	County/Grants	Complete	*	*	*	*	*
Construct infrastructure for Interstate Exit 82 project	\$500,000	TCDA/County	County/Grants	Complete		*	*		
Implement rehabilitation of downtown area	\$750,000	TCDA/County/DDA	County/Grants	Ongoing, moved to the work programs for the individual cities	*	*	*	*	*
Construct Gateways into the County	\$150,000	TCDA/County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*	*	*	
LAND USE									
Construct new parks and recreational facilities	\$50,000	County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Construct a reservoir in the Deep Creek area	\$500,000	County	County/Grants	Cancelled (no longer desired)				*	*
Install water mains and water meters throughout the County to create a county-wide water system	\$1,000,000	County	County/Grants	Cancelled (no longer desired)	*	*	*		
Renovate the Turner County courthouse	\$250,000	County	County/Grants	Complete	*	*			
Construct a County Meeting/Civic Center	\$500,000	County	County/Grants	Complete			*	*	

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Expand the airport landing strip	\$250,000	County/Airport Authority	County/Airport Authority/Grants	Complete		*	*		
Expand Airport Hangar and Fuel Facility	\$250,000	County/Airport Authority	County/Airport Authority/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY21)		*	*		
Expand/renovate fire station to include living quarters	\$25,000	County	County/Grants	Complete		*	*		
Recruit and hire a full-time fire chief/EMA director and 3 full-time firefighters	Staff time	County	County/Grants	Complete	*	*	*	*	*
Purchase 1 pumper engine	\$250,000	County	County/Grants	Complete			*		
Purchase personal protective equipment for 35 firefighters	\$100,000	County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*	*		
Resurface and repair approximately 20 miles of County roads	\$2,000,000	County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
Building addition for the Sheriff's office building	\$100,000	County	County/Grants	Complete	*	*	*		
Implement a training plan for Sheriff/Fire/Ems personnel	Staff time	County	General fund	Complete	*				
Add small gym to the Recreation center	\$100,000	County	County/Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*		
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
Devise and implement a strategy to pass a second five-year SPLOST	Staff time	County	County	Complete	*				

City of Ashburn

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Ashburn Station Park upgrades (lights, signs, and other facilities)	\$10,000	City of Ashburn	General fund	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*				
Acquire and renovate 3 downtown buildings	\$450,000	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	Grant, DDA funds	Cancelled due to lack of funds		*	*	*	
Renovate Elrod Park building	\$15,000	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	Grant, DDA funds	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*				
Install concrete surface under Weslyn Methodist Tabernacle and campground	\$25,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Renovate Bunkhouse Building interior	\$30,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
HOUSING									
Sell vacant lots for development of new housing	Staff time	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	City and DDA funds	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*		
Renovate 60 homes of senior citizens through the CHIP program	\$1.8 million	City of Ashburn	CHIP	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
LAND USE									
Amend and revise zoning ordinance to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan	Staff time	City of Ashburn	General fund	Complete	*				*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Construct public swimming pool	\$250,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Cancelled due to lack of funds				*	*
Construct sidewalks on Carlos Ave. from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Old Main St.	\$150,000	City of Ashburn	CDBG	Complete	*				
Construct sidewalks and pedestrian park on Washington Ave. and US Highway 41	\$3 million	City of Ashburn, GDOT	LMIG	Complete		*			

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Implement Resurfacing, streetscape improvements, and park on SR-7 and SR-112	\$200,000	City of Ashburn, GDOT	LMIG	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Resurface 0.51 miles of local roads	\$65,000	City of Ashburn	LMIG	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	
Construct lift station on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive	\$1.5 million	City of Ashburn	CDBG	Complete			*		
Conduct water study/water leak survey	\$15,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Repair water tower and pump	\$50,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Upgrade water lines citywide	\$2 million	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	
Implement radio read for city utilities	\$1 million	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)				*	*
Conduct sewer infiltration/inflow studies	\$30,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
Reconstruct sewer lines	\$20 million	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
Acquire 6 to 8 new vehicles and rotate every 2 to 3 years	\$160,000	City of Ashburn	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*				

Town of Rebecca

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Complete renovation of downtown buildings	\$15,000	Town of Rebecca	General fund, grants	Complete	*	*	*		
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Purchase septic tanks for prospective businesses (such as Dollar General)	\$280,000	Town of Rebecca	Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)			*		
Purchase and install Christmas decorations	\$15,000	Town of Rebecca	General fund, grants	Complete	*				
HOUSING									
Renovate 20-25 dilapidated homes	\$625,000	Town of Rebecca	CHIP	Ongoing (14 have been completed; expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Replace 40-year-old water lines	\$1 million	Town of Rebecca	Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
Implement improvements to storm drainage system	\$10,000	Town of Rebecca	General fund, grants, SPLOST	Complete	*	*			
Purchase additional water tank	\$1 million	Town of Rebecca	Grants	Cancelled (no longer needed)		*			
Implement sidewalk improvements citywide and construct new sidewalks where needed	\$500,000	Town of Rebecca	Grants	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*

City of Sycamore

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	STATUS	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Perform demolition and abatement of Sycamore Elementary School	\$500,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)			*		
HOUSING									
Renovate 10 low-income homes	\$300,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
NATURAL RESOURCES									
Plant 12 sycamore trees	\$10,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Complete	*				
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Construct a new basketball court	\$15,000	City of Sycamore	County funds, local businesses, SPLOST	Complete	*				
Construct new City Hall building	\$300,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Complete		*	*	*	
Resurface 4.5 miles of local roads	\$450,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*	*	*
Install bar screen at wastewater treatment facility	\$20,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Install sidewalks on US-41 from the northern boundary of the city to the southern boundary	\$200,000	City of Sycamore	Grant, GDOT	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)			*	*	*
Install pavilion, grills, playground equipment, and 1 shed in Sycamore City Park	\$50,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Demolish the Maintenance/Warehouse Building	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*				
Construct a new Public Works Warehouse Building	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)		*			
Install utilities, drainage, and paving in Crepe Myrtle Trailer Park	\$577,000	City of Sycamore	Grant	Ongoing (expected completion FY25)	*	*	*		

7.2. 2021-2025 Community Work Program

Turner County

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Continue to restore the old Turner County Jail	\$65,000	Turner County	General funds, grants	1.1b	*	*	*	*	*
Erect signage for the Desoto Trail Encounter and Civil War sites	\$5,000	Historic Committee	General funds, grants	1.1d	*	*	*	*	*
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Construct Gateways into the County	\$150,000	Turner County Development Authority	General funds, grants	2.3e	*	*	*	*	*
Promote economic development through programs conducted jointly with the Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce	Staff time	Turner County, Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore	General funds	2.1b	*	*	*	*	*
LAND USE									
Construct new parks and recreational facilities	\$500,000	Turner County	General funds, grants, LWCF	6.4a	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Expand Airport Hangar and Fuel Facility	\$250,000	Turner County/Airport Authority	General funds, grants, Airport Authority	6.5b	*				
Purchase personal protective equipment for 35 firefighters	\$100,000	Turner County	General funds, FEMA	6.11a	*	*	*	*	*
Add small gym to the Recreation center	\$100,000	Turner County	General funds, grants	6.4a, 6.4b	*	*	*	*	*
Provide broadband access on school buses	\$200,000	Turner County Board of Education	General funds, grants	6.8a	*	*	*	*	*
Purchase land and install a repeater tower for communication between public safety agencies	\$500,000	Turner County	General funds, grants	7.1a	*	*	*	*	*

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
Resurface/pave/repair approximately 20 miles of County roads, and improve drainage, including but not limited to the following: 1. Raines Road 2. Mobile Home Park (MLK JR and SR 112) 3. Mobile Home Park (Cannon Road and Joe Lawrence) 4. Freeman Road, 5. Brady Road, 6. Brody Road 7. John Pate Road 8. Lloyd Road 9. Watson Circle 10. Zorn Road 11. Stanford Road (This is a LMIG and CDBG combination as to length) 12. Alberson Road (This is a LMIG and CDBG combination as to length)	\$2,000,000	Turner County	General funds, CDBG, LMIG, other grants	6.1a, 6.2a, 6.2b	*	*	*	*	*
Devise and implement a strategy to pass another five-year SPLOST	Staff time	Turner County	General funds	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Establish a College & Career Academy	Staff time	Turner County Board of Education	General funds, grants	2.6a	*	*	*	*	*
Work with broadband providers to encourage expansion of broadband services	Staff time	Turner County	General funds	6.7a	*	*	*	*	*
Upgrade and interconnect Public Safety and Road Department radio systems	\$200,000	Turner County	General funds	7.3a	*	*	*	*	*

City of Ashburn

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Ashburn Station Park upgrades (lights, signs, and other facilities)	\$10,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	2.7c, 6.4b	*	*	*	*	*
Renovate Elrod Park building	\$15,000	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	General funds, grants, DDA funds	1.4a, 1.4b, 2.7c	*	*	*	*	*
Renovate Crime & Punishment Museum	\$300,000	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	General funds, grants, DDA funds	1.3a	*	*	*	*	*
Restore World's Largest Peanut monument	\$50,000	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	General funds, grants, DDA funds	1.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Install concrete surface under Wesleyan Methodist Tabernacle and campground	\$25,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	6.4b	*	*	*	*	*
Renovate Bunkhouse Building interior	\$30,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	2.7c	*	*	*	*	*
HOUSING									
Sell vacant lots for development of new housing	Staff time	City of Ashburn, Downtown Development Authority	City and DDA funds	3.1e	*	*	*	*	*
Rehabilitate approximately 40 homes of senior citizens through the CHIP and CDBG programs	\$50,000 each	City of Ashburn	CHIP, CDBG, USDA	3.3c	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Implement Resurfacing, streetscape improvements, and park on SR-7 and SR-112; and on other roads as needed, including sidewalk improvements and drainage	\$200,000	City of Ashburn, GDOT	LMIG	6.1a	*	*	*	*	*
Resurface 0.51 miles of local roads	\$65,000	City of Ashburn	LMIG	6.1a	*	*	*	*	*

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
Conduct water study/water leak survey	\$15,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Repair water tower and pump	\$50,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Upgrade water and sewer lines citywide	\$2 million	City of Ashburn	General funds, CDBG, USDA	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Implement radio read for city utilities	\$1 million	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Conduct sewer infiltration/inflow studies	\$30,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Reconstruct sewer lines	\$20 million	City of Ashburn	General funds, CDBG, USDA	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Acquire 6 to 8 new vehicles and rotate every 2 to 3 years	\$160,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, USDA	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Conduct a parking study for Downtown Ashburn	Staff time	City of Ashburn	General funds, grants	2.8a	*	*	*	*	*
Upgrade the existing walking trail and/or construct an additional walking trail	\$200,000	City of Ashburn	General funds, LWCF	6.10a	*	*	*	*	*

Town of Rebecca

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Purchase septic tanks for prospective businesses (such as Dollar General)	\$280,000	Town of Rebecca	General funds, grants	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
HOUSING									
Rehabilitate 20-25 dilapidated homes	\$1,250,000	Town of Rebecca	CHIP, CDBG, USDA	3.3c	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Replace 40-year-old water and sewer lines	\$1 million	Town of Rebecca	General funds, grants, CDBG, USDA	6.5a	*	*	*	*	*
Resurface and repair roads as needed, including drainage	\$500,000	Town of Rebecca	General funds, grants, CDBG, USDA	6.1a	*	*	*	*	*
Implement sidewalk improvements citywide and construct new sidewalks where needed	\$500,000	Town of Rebecca	General funds, grants	6.3a	*	*	*	*	*

City of Sycamore

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	RELATED POLICY	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25
CULTURAL RESOURCES									
Perform demolition and abatement of Sycamore Elementary School	\$500,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants	1.1b, 6.9a			*		
HOUSING									
Rehabilitate 10 low-income homes	\$500,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, CDBG, CHIP	3.3c	*	*	*	*	*
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Resurface 4.5 miles of local roads, including sidewalks and drainage as needed	\$450,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants	6.1a	*	*	*	*	*
Install bar screen at wastewater treatment facility	\$20,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants, USDA	6.5a		*			
Install sidewalks on US-41 from the northern boundary of the city to the southern boundary	\$2,000,000	City of Sycamore	Grant, GDOT, CDBG	6.3b			*	*	*
Install pavilion, grills, playground equipment, and 1 shed in Sycamore City Park	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants, LWCF	6.4a		*			
Demolish the Maintenance/Warehouse Building	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants	1.1b	*				
Construct a new Public Works Warehouse Building	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants, USDA	6.5a		*			
Install utilities, drainage, and paving in Crepe Myrtle Trailer Park	\$577,000	City of Sycamore	CDBG, USDA	6.5a	*				
Purchase property for parking lot for City Court	\$100,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, grants, USDA	6.5a		*	*	*	
Implement citywide sewer system repairs to correct inflow and infiltration problems	\$1,000,000	City of Sycamore	General funds, CDBG, other grants	6.5a		*	*	*	

8. Economic Development Element

The 2018-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), developed by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) under a grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, is hereby incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Plan to serve as the Economic Development Element for Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore.

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

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

The Southern Georgia CEDS gives an overview of the region, briefly describing the geography, population, economy, labor and workforce development and use, education, transportation access, environment, and regional resources. It reviews the state of the regional economy and provides a list of achievable goals and objectives for the region, a plan of action to ensure success, and performance measures used to evaluate the strategy's successful development and implementation.

Policies, needs, opportunities, and projects drawn from the current comprehensive plans for each jurisdiction in the 18-county SGRC region were used extensively to develop the CEDS Goals and Objectives, Vital Projects, Problems, and Opportunities. Conversely, the CEDS was also used to provide guidance for developing the goals, opportunities, policies, and projects in this local Comprehensive Plan.

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

Furthermore, included below are goals, objectives, and strategies from the regional CEDS that are strongly aligned with the current economic development goals of Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore.

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.
- 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 industry and maintaining existing industry.

Strategies:

- Market workforce development programs that enable youth and adults to pursue higher education opportunities.

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 its immediate needs, but making adjustments in anticipation of future needs and technological changes.

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

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.

9. Land Use Element

Turner County is located in south-central Georgia, within the Tifton Uplands of the Atlantic Flatwoods (Southern Coastal Plain), and has a land area of 187,328 acres, or about 292.7 square miles. Most of the land is well-drained and most of the county is well-suited for agriculture. The county's land surface is nearly level to gently sloping and is traversed by numerous shallow rivers and streams which generally flow from northwest to southeast. The physical landscape is fairly homogenous with no outstanding physical features. The most pronounced topography is in the hillier areas of the western fourth of the county. Much of the land is used for agricultural purposes, including commercial timber production.

The table below shows the breakdown of existing land uses within Turner County and the cities.

Land Use	County Acres	County Percent	Ashburn Acres	Ashburn Percent	Rebecca Acres	Rebecca Percent	Sycamore Acres	Sycamore Percent
Agriculture/Forestry	177,442.2	95.80%	1,219.6	39.68%	257.8	51.28%	186.6	29.00%
Commercial	106.4	0.06%	183.6	5.97%	2.0	0.40%	18.6	2.88%
Industrial	422.0	0.23%	100.5	3.27%	18.4	3.65%	65.0	10.10%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	233.2	0.13%	18.4	0.60%	1.4	0.27%	0.0	0.00%
Public/Institutional	134.2	0.07%	157.2	5.11%	6.3	1.24%	22.3	3.47%
Residential	1,827.6	0.99%	984.5	32.03%	153.0	30.43%	231.5	35.97%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	5,051.0	2.73%	410.1	13.34%	64.0	12.72%	119.6	18.58%
Total	185,216.7		3,073.8		502.7		643.6	

The future land use designations in this Land Use Element are intended to serve as guidance for the future development of the community, including guidance for zoning decisions. There are seven categories of future land use:

- Agriculture / Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks / Recreation / Conservation
- Public / Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation / Communication / Utilities

The types of future land use are described in detail, with representative photos, on the following pages.

Agriculture / Forestry



These are areas intended for agricultural and forestry use and for detached single-family residential uses that maintain a rural character. Residential lots should be large (no less than 1 acre), or else homes should be clustered on smaller lots to preserve large tracts of natural areas and open space. Setbacks, residential landscaping, and site design should be employed in order to maintain a rural character, with plentiful open space and wooded areas. The land in Turner County is approximately 95% agriculture and forestry, the bulk of this land being dedicated to fields, lots, pastures, croplands, specialty farms, livestock production, aquaculture, natural tree stands, commercial timber, and pulpwood production.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Agriculture
- Rural Residential

Commercial



This land use is intended for non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, offices, services, and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Commercial

Industrial



Development in this category includes land primarily used for manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing, wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction, landfills, or other similar uses.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Heavy Industrial
- Light Industrial

Parks / Recreation / Conservation



Land under this category is primarily used for active or passive recreational uses. These may be either publicly or privately owned, and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national or state forests, golf courses, recreation centers, or other similar uses.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Agriculture
- Conservation
- Public/Institutional

Public / Institutional



Land under this category primarily includes certain institutional uses, or federal, state, or local government uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc. Facilities which are publicly owned but would be more accurately classified in another land use category are not included in this category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities are placed in the Parks / Recreation / Conservation category, public landfills are placed in the Industrial category, and office buildings containing government offices are placed in the Commercial category.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Public/institutional
- Commercial

Residential



Development in this land use category is predominantly residential, ranging from single-family to duplex and multi-family densities. Uses also allowed within this district include public and private schools, churches, and other uses as permitted within the zoning districts under this land use. Farmhouses and other singular dwelling units that are secondary to other land uses, and share the same parcel of land, are classified with the other land use.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family/Mixed Family

Transportation / Communication / Utilities



Photo: Michael Rivera



Photo: Michael Rivera

This land is primarily used for street rights of way, railroads, public/private utilities, transmission towers, airports, or other similar uses.

Allowable zoning districts in this category:

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Industrial

Appendix

**Data Charts
Sign-In Sheets
Future Land Use Maps
Public Hearing Notices
Transmittal Letters
Adoption Resolutions**

Data Charts

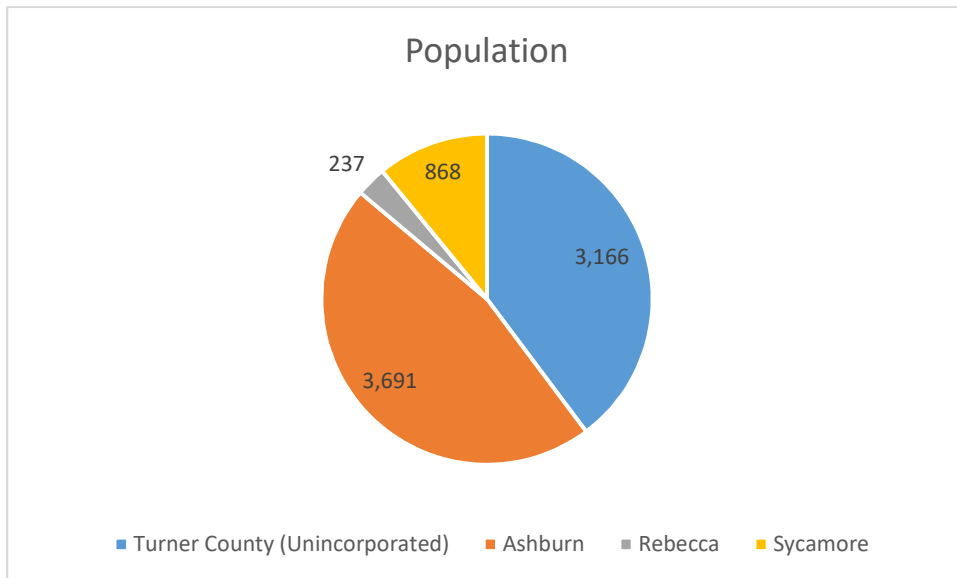


Chart 1. Population

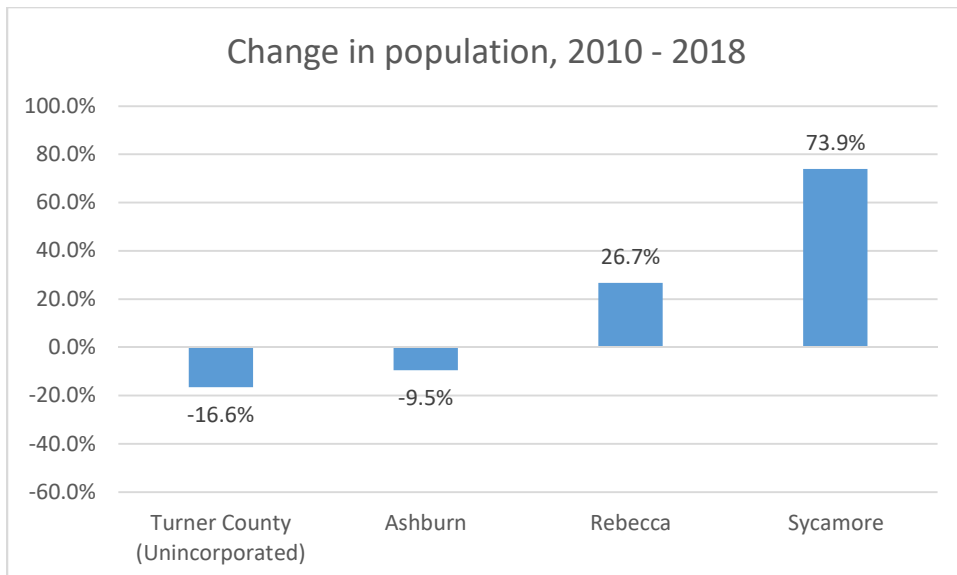


Chart 2. Change in population, 2010–2018

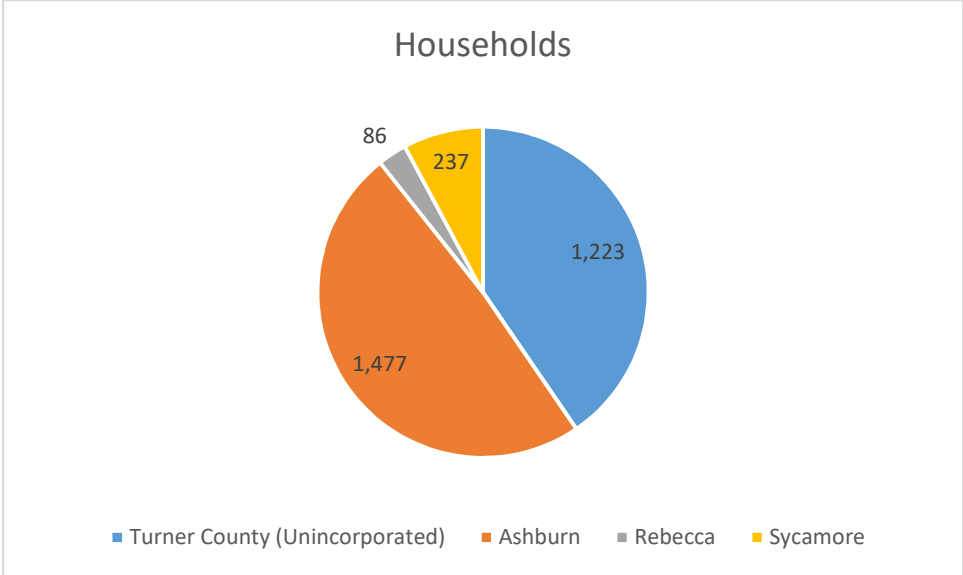


Chart 3. Number of households

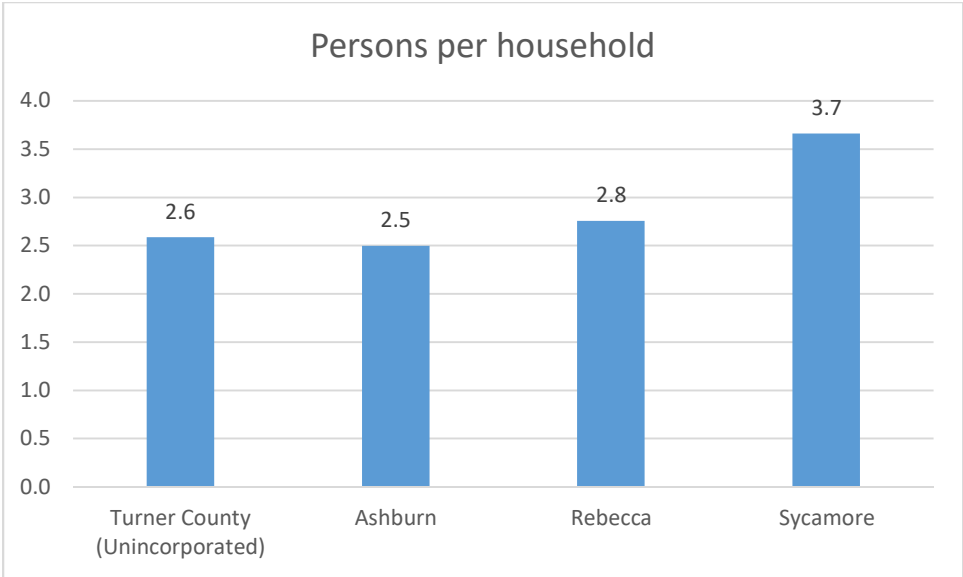


Chart 4. Number of persons per household

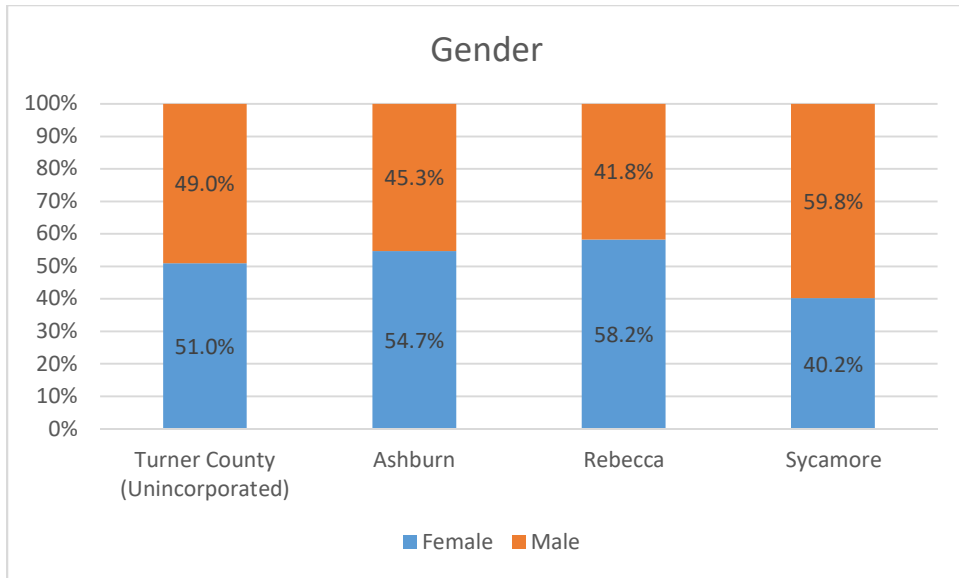


Chart 5. Gender

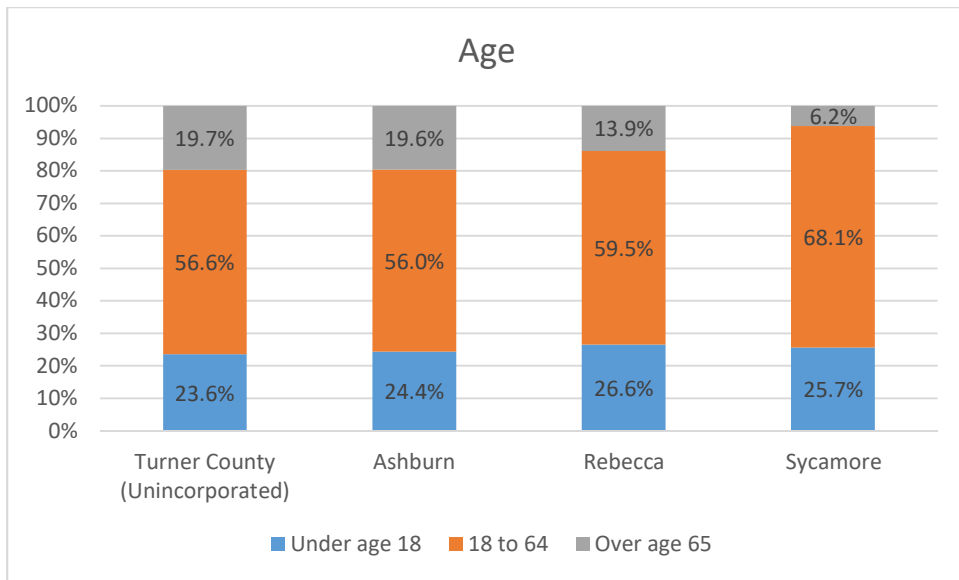


Chart 6. Age distribution

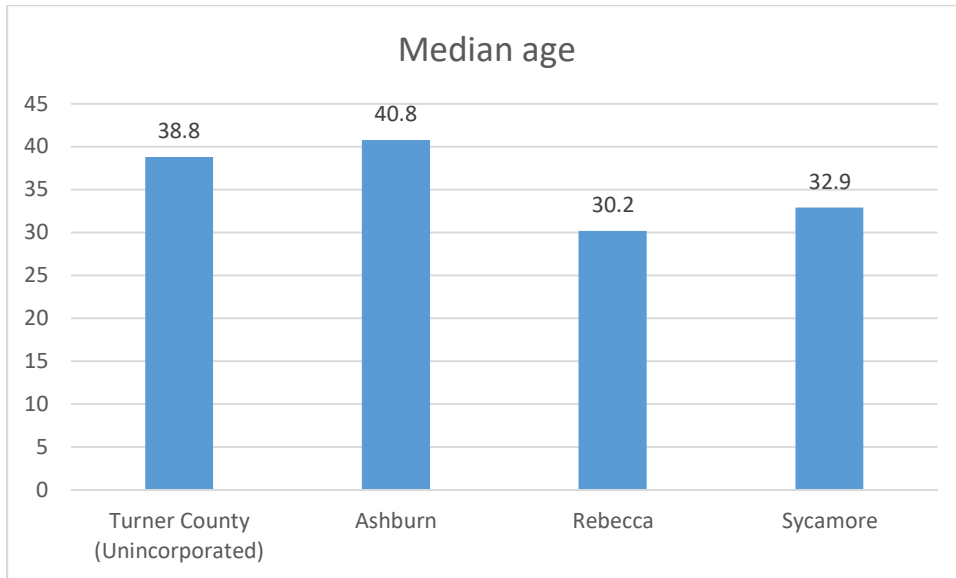


Chart 7. Median age

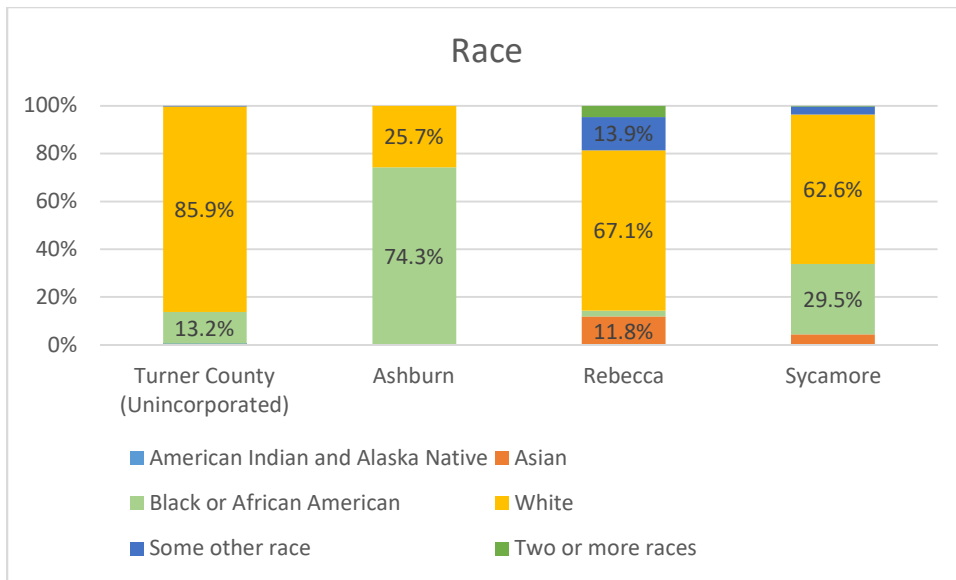


Chart 8. Race

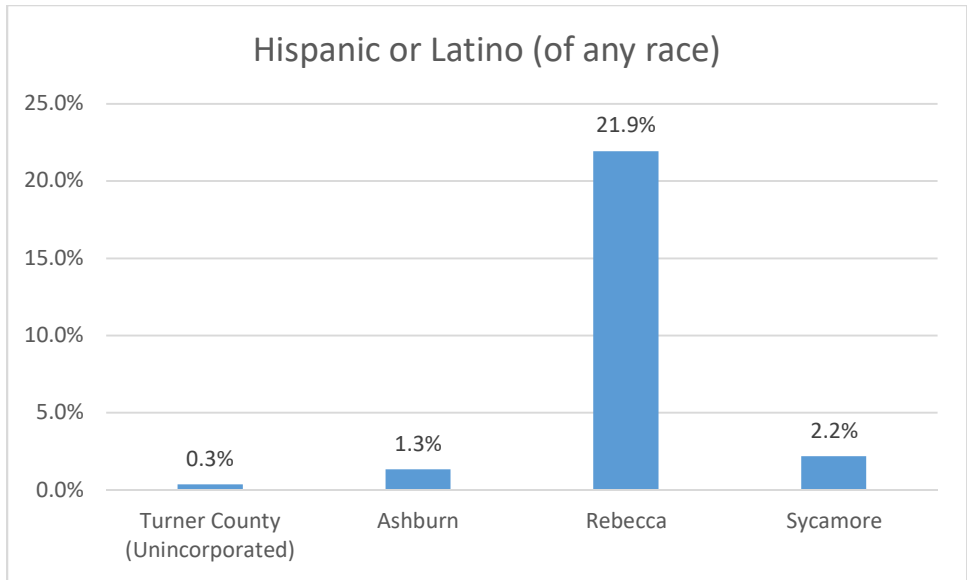


Chart 9. Hispanic/Latino population

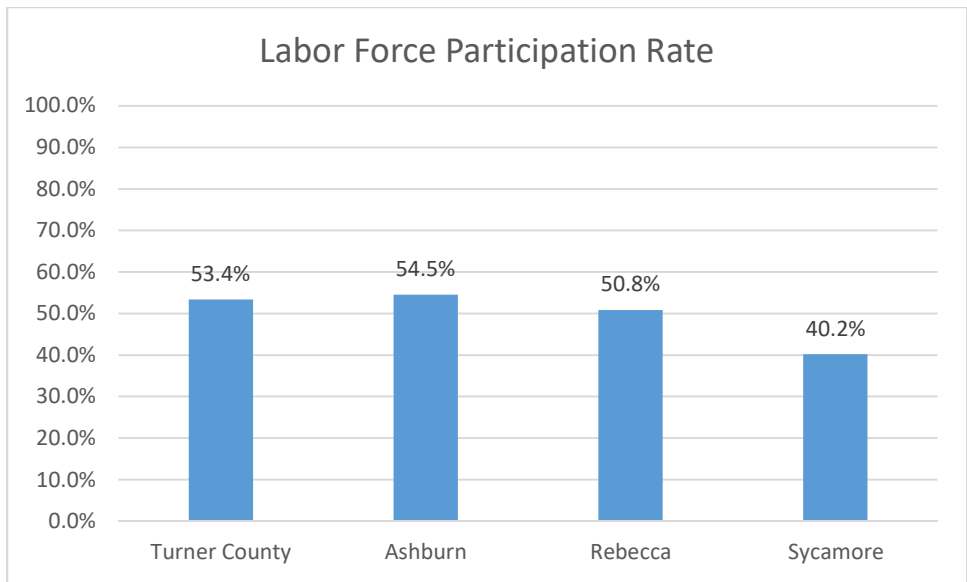


Chart 10. Rate of labor force participation for those age 16 and older

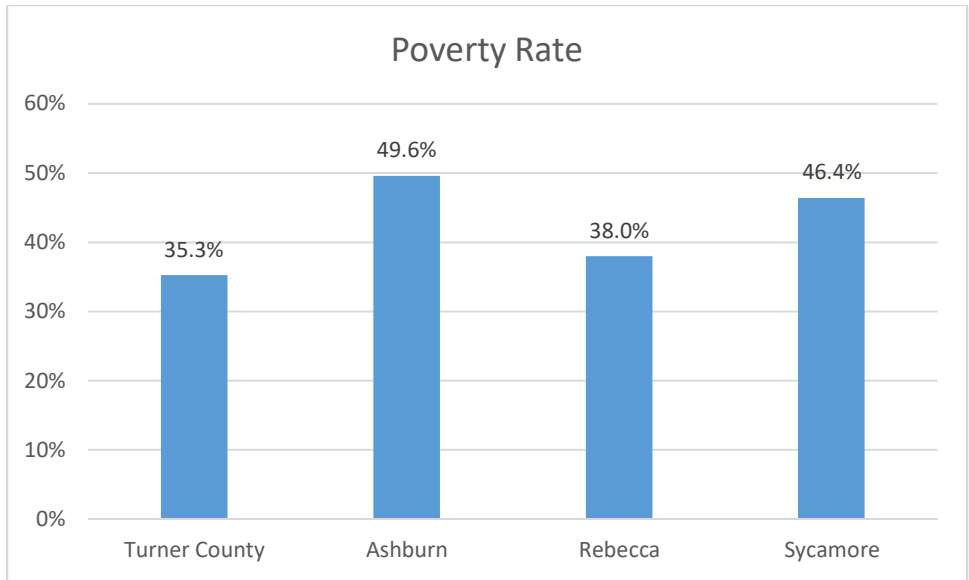


Chart 11. Poverty rate

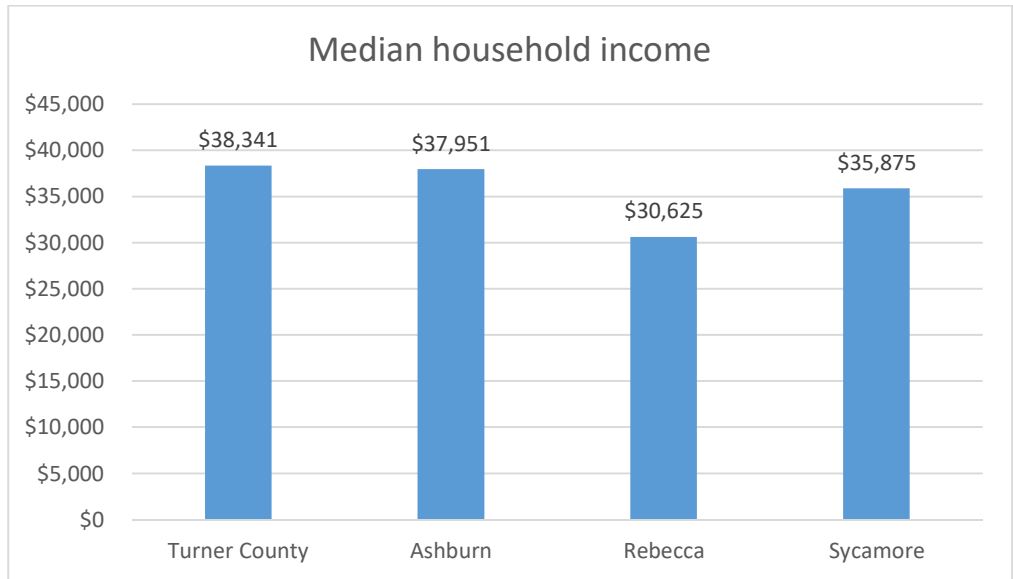


Chart 12. Median household income

**Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
 Comprehensive Plan Update Kick-Off Meeting**

Date: July 30, 2020

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Ariel Goddard	SGRC	Planner	agoddard@sgrc.us
Ashley Miller	Chairwoman	ED	Turner County Chairwoman@gmail.com
Latrice Wilson	TC BOC	County Clerk	latrice.wilson2003@gmail.com
Don Collins	Rebecca City Hall	Mayor	cityofrebecca@windstream.net
Mark Robinson	Turner County Fire	Fire Chief / EMR Paramedic	turnerfire@turnercountyga.com
Joseph D. Jarvis	Turner Co BOC	BOC member	jarvis@turnercountyga.com

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
 Comprehensive Plan Meeting #1 and Plan Implementation Assistance Meeting
 Date: August 21, 2020

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Dory Allen	City of Rebecca	Mayor	DAllen@windstream.net
Ashley Miller	Member	ED	HUMPHREY@turnercountyga.gov
Cory Matthews	TCBOC	Supt.	Cory.Matthews@turner.k12.ga.us
ANDY HESTER	TURNER CO. S.O.	SHERIFF	ANDYHESTER1@YH100.COM
JOE SAXON	TURNER BOC	Quintessence	jsaxon@turnercountyga.gov
Dustin Beatty	Turner P.W.	Road Super.	dbeatty@turnercountyga.gov
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	planner	

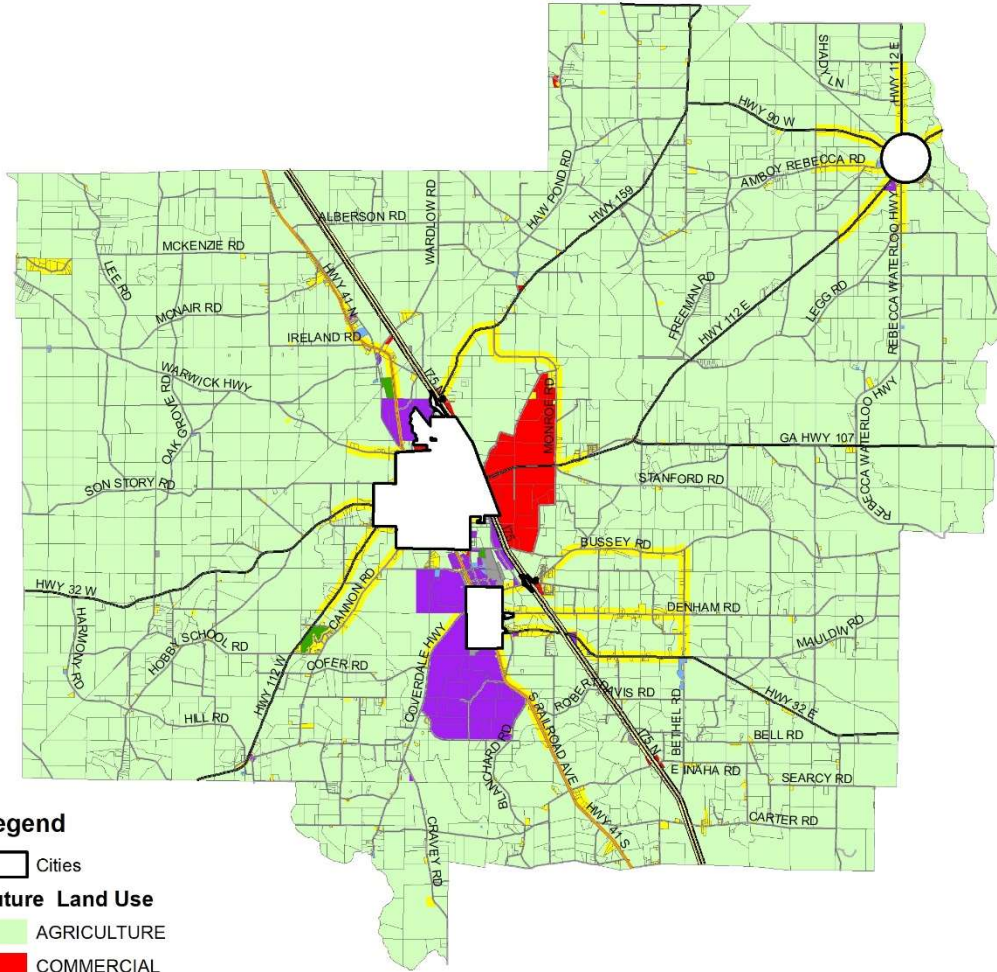
**Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
 Comprehensive Plan Workshop #2
 Date: Sept. 18, 2020**

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Don Collins	Rebecca	Mayor	
And Godwin	SGRC	Planner	
Ashley Miller	Chamber	E.D.	
David D. Saxon	Turner BOC	County Commissioner	
Amanda G. Hill	City of Ashburn	City Clerk	
Brandon Rumpkin	City of Ashburn	Mayor	

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore
 Comprehensive Plan Update Workshop #3
 October 16, 2020

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Mark Robbins	Turner Emp	EMA Dir	turner@turneremp.com
Don Collins	City of Rebecca	Mayor	
Ashley Miller	Chandler	ED	
Brad Calhoun	Turner County	Commissioner	BRAD.CALHOUN@TURNERCOUNTYGA.GOV
Mike Mosher	Turner County	Advisor	turnerzoning@windstream.net
Joe Saxton	Turner POC	County Manager	j.saxton@turnercountyga.com
Justin Beatty	Turner Public Works	Director	jbeatty@turnercountyga.com
Dorothy Thompson	City of Ashburn	Mayor	tydd@windstream.net
Arnel Godwin	SGRC	Planner	

TURNER COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE

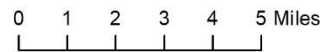


Legend

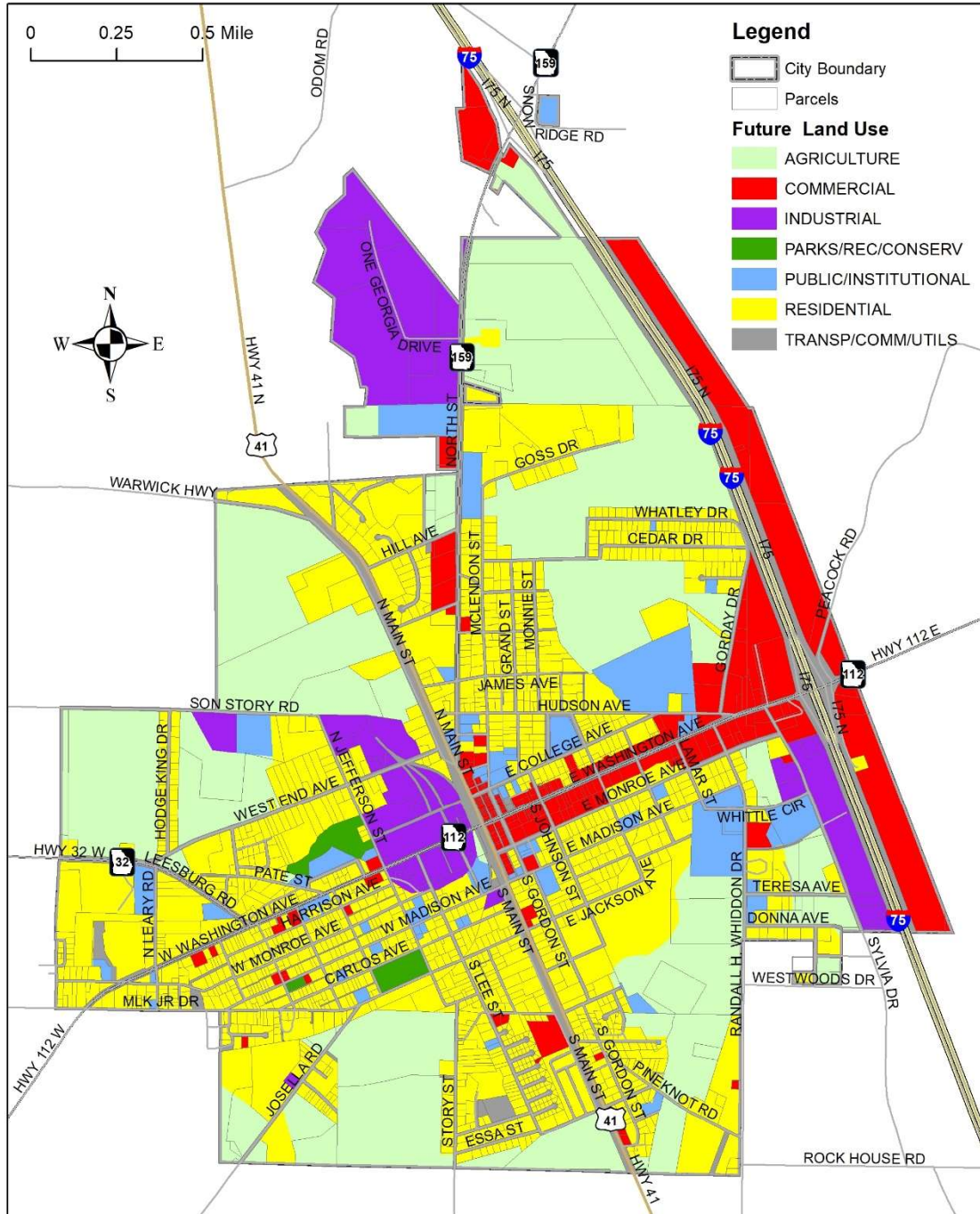
□ Cities

Future Land Use

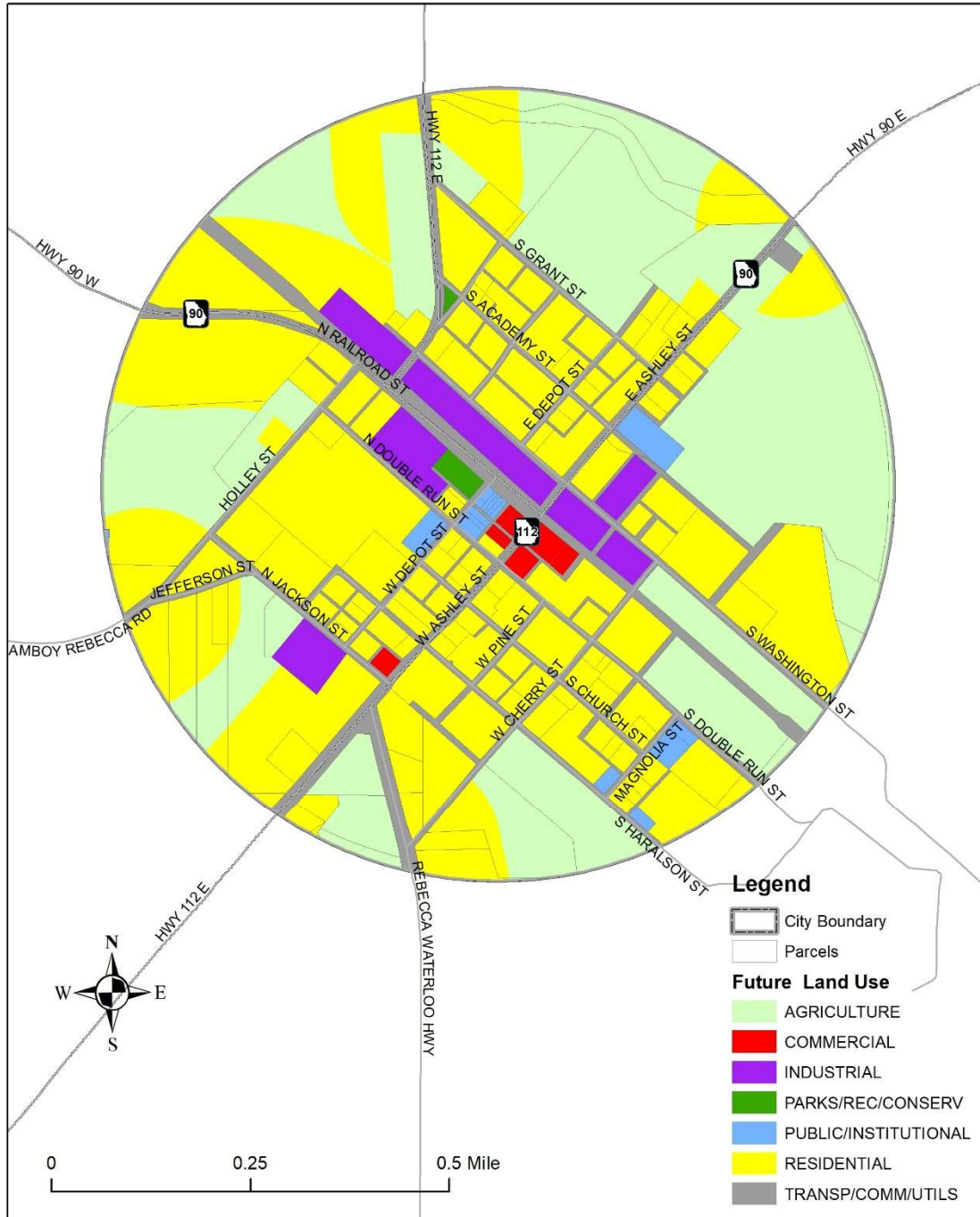
- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES



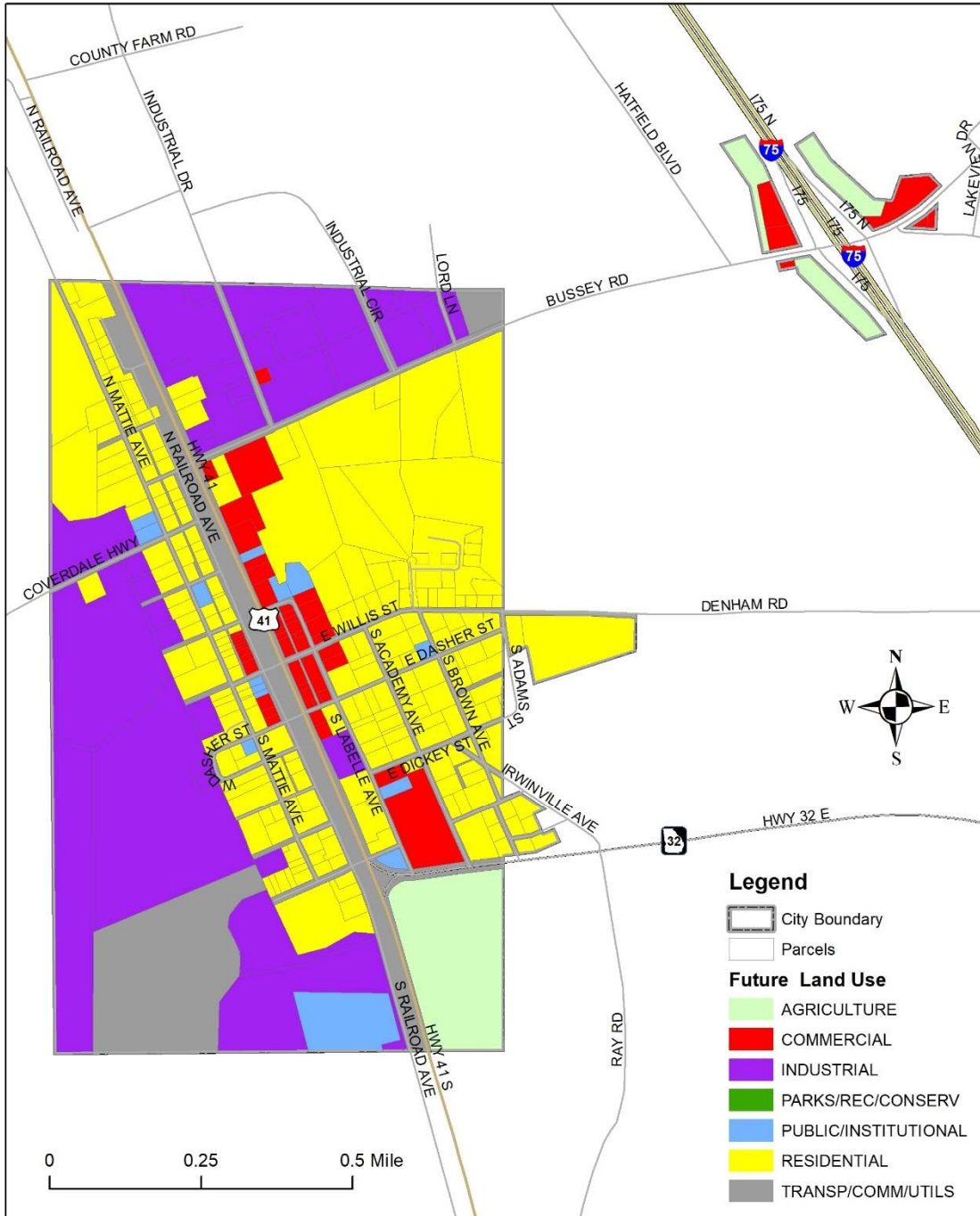
CITY OF ASHBURN FUTURE LAND USE



CITY OF REBECCA FUTURE LAND USE



CITY OF SYCAMORE FUTURE LAND USE



Kick Off – Joint Public Hearing
For Turner County and the Cities of Ashburn,
Rebecca, and Sycamore
Comprehensive Plan Update

A public meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on July 30, 2020 at Turner County Agricultural Center, 222 Rockhouse Road, Ashburn, Georgia 31714 to announce the beginning of the 2021 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Turner County and Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan, announce opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Turner County Commission Office at 229-567-4313.

Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Ariel Godwin at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission, (229) 333-5277.

WITH MANY THANKS



Outgoing County Commissioner Daryl Hall looks over the signed picture of the courthouse. It was given to him last week at a reception. Chairman Nick Denham is also pictured.



Outgoing County Sam McCard looks over the signed picture of the courthouse. It was given to him last week at a reception. County Manager Joe Saxon made the presentation.

Commissioners agree to rotate the chairman post

Starting in January, the chairman post on the County Commission will rotate among the members.

Rotation begins with District 1.

For years the five members voted annually on who should be chairman. Commissioner Joe Burgess said the post

should rotate and has called for that repeatedly over the years. At the same time, he said he is not interested in being the chairman.

"You don't have to serve," said current Chairman Nick Denham.

Mr. Denham also said a freshman commissioner, with the first year in office, should

be exempted from the rotation. He reasoned a new commissioner does "not know enough of what is going on to serve." Incoming commissioner Dana Whiddon, who takes her seat in January, asked if she could speak. Mr. Denham said she could speak during the public comment section of the meeting.

Outgoing Commissioner

Daryl Hall was elected Chairman his first year and served in that post for several years.

"It is not easy. (The delay) will protect a new commissioner. I'm not saying you can't. It takes a tough, tough skin to be the chairman," he said.

Being a County Commission

er is also a thankless job, he noted.

Ms. Whiddon said she liked the idea of a rotating chairman post. She also said deciding to take the post or not as a new commissioner should be up to that person.

"I should be afforded the opportunity to make that

choice," she said.

"I don't see any problem with it... if we come in and do what we are supposed to do around this table. It ain't a big deal," Mr. Burgess said.

Outgoing Commissioner Sam McCard cast the sole no vote to rotate the chairman post.

Buck passed on City Manager

The Ashburn City Council came out of a closed meeting last week and did not make a decision regarding City Manager Tanita Norris.

The City Manager was placed on leave by Mayor Sandra Lumpkin months ago and has remained on leave since

then. She is drawing pay while on leave.

In a called meeting the week before, the Council voted to end her employment contract. Mayor Lumpkin vetoed that decision after Ms. Norris' lawyer raised objections.

The Council held the closed meeting last week, on the advice of City Attorney Tommy Coleman, to discuss the matter.

With no decision made, the matter is kicked forward to the new City Council that takes office in January.

Jermaine Rockwell and Sheldon Smith will join the board in January. Incumbents Howard Jordan and Cebo Bateman lost their bid to hold onto their seats. Corey Jordan held on to his seat.

Tree of Life lighting is Dec. 10

The 35th annual lighting of the Tree of Life, which serves as a symbolic tribute to friends, family and lost loved ones during the holiday season, is going virtual this year. The virtual event will premiere on the Southwest Facebook page on December 10th at 6 pm.

Lights on the tree can be purchased in honor or memory of a special person, with all proceeds benefiting the patients of Hospice of Tift Area and the TRMC Anita Stewart Oncology Center who need extra support.

"It wouldn't be the holiday season without the Tree of Life," said Tressie Mathis, Director of Hospice of Tift Area. "This is the 35th year of this annual event, and even though the pandemic has made things look a little different, we wanted to continue this tradition. We want everyone in the community to let us into their homes by watching this event and support this great cause."

Mathis said that purchasing a light for the Tree of Life in honor or memory of a person is a tax-deductible gift which will help Tift Regional's hospice and cancer patients with special needs.

"Various giving levels are available," she said. "If you

are looking for a holiday gift for family members, friends, co-workers or clients, purchase a light in their honor or in memory of someone close to them. This may be especially relevant this year since lockdowns and social distancing made it harder to acknowledge loved ones' losses by attending memorial or funeral services or bringing food or other gifts. In addition to serving as a great gift for someone close to you, you'll also be benefiting a great cause."

Mathis said the Tree of Life fund assists the hospital's can-

cer or hospice patients who may have difficulty paying bills due to financial constraints or need special comforts while undergoing treatment.

"These are just a few examples of how the Tree of Life helps our patients and their families as they undergo a challenging time," said Mathis.

To contribute to the Tree of Life, visit www.tiftregional.com/TOL. Contributions are being accepted until Dec. 31. Call 229-353-6330 for more information.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to review and transmit the 2021 Comprehensive Plan for Turner County and Cities of Ashburn, Rebecca, and Sycamore to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs for review will be held on **Thursday, December 30th at 10:00 AM at the County Extension Office 222 Rockhouse Road**. The purpose of the public hearing is to inform the public about the plan and the planning process, provide a final opportunity for public input and participation, and respond to any questions or concerns. Copies of the plan are available for public review at the County Commission office and at each city hall, and for download at the SGRC website: www.sgrc.us.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language may contact the Turner County Board of Commissioners at (229) 567-4313. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service at (voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-6277 or e-mail agodwin@sgrc.us.



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www.lillyschoolhouse.com

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Lilly Schoolhouse
P.O. Box 99, Lilly, GA 31051
misskitty@lillyschoolhouse.com

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Turner County Board of Commissioners

Chairman Nick Denham
District 5

Dec. 30, 2020

Comm. Joe Burgess
District 1

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 West Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

Comm. Daryl Hall
District 2

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Comm. Sam McCard
District 3

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

Comm. Brad Calhoun
District 4

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

Joseph Saxon M.P.A.
County Manager

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

Latrice Wilson
County Clerk

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Joe Saxon, County Manager, at (229) 567-4313 or jsaxon@turnercountygeorgia.com.

John Holland Esq.
County Attorney

Sincerely,

P.O. Box 191
Ashburn, Georgia 31714
229-567-4314
www.turnercountygeorgia.com

Nick Denham, Chair
Turner County Board of Commissioners



City of Ashburn

259 EAST WASHINGTON AVENUE
P.O. BOX 766
ASHBURN, GEORGIA 31714

TELEPHONE
(229) 567-3431
FAX
(229) 567-9284

Dec. 17, 2020

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 West Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Amanda Hill, City Clerk, at (229) 567-3431 or amandahill@mchsi.com.

Sincerely,

Sandra Lumpkin, Mayor
City of Ashburn

**City of Rebecca
P O Box 97
Rebecca, Georgia 31783**

December 17, 2020

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 West Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

Re: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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

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

If you have questions concerning our submittal, please contact Mary Wynn, City Clerk at (229) 643-7212 or cityofrebecca@windstream.net.

Sincerely,



Don Collins
Mayor
City of Rebecca

Dec. 30, 2020

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

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

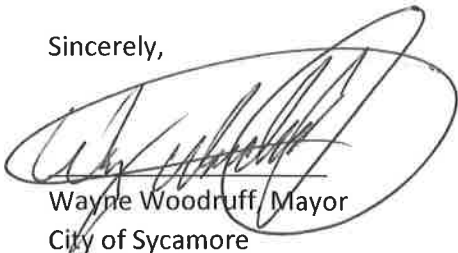
The City of Sycamore has completed an update of its Comprehensive Plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Ashley Topley, City Clerk, at (229) 567-4296 or sycamorecityhall@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,



Wayne Woodruff, Mayor
City of Sycamore