

CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

REGIONAL ASSESSMENT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN REGIONAL AGENDA



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CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

Regional Assessment

Section 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Regional Plan Overview

The CSRA Regional Plan 2035 (hereinafter ‘the Plan’) is the long-range plan for the management of the region’s projected growth by local governments and the CSRA Regional Commission. The Plan’s horizon is twenty years but will be updated in ten years to address changing regional conditions. The process is divided into three distinct parts, per the *Regional Planning Requirements* established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA):

- Regional Assessment: Identification and analysis of existing conditions using available data
- Stakeholder Involvement Program: Strategy for public participation in the development of the Regional Agenda
- Regional Agenda: Regional vision and implementation program

The resulting analysis will assess the state of the region’s socioeconomic, land use, and environmental opportunities and threats. The CSRA’s vision and goals, together with an appraisal of the region, will set the strategic direction for the regional agenda. The regional agenda establishes program priorities for implementation.

This document contains the Regional Assessment and the Stakeholder Involvement Program, which will set the stage for the development of the Regional Agenda.

1.2 Regional Assessment Overview

This Regional Assessment includes a thorough analysis of issues and opportunities backed by extensive data gathering and analysis. It contains a map of Projected Development Patterns and an assessment of Areas Requiring Special Attention, which includes a range of categories, such as areas where rapid development is occurring or where infill or redevelopment is desirable. Finally, it includes an assessment of the region’s development patterns in light of the state’s Quality Community Objectives.

1.3 Stakeholder Involvement Program

This program outlines the process for participation by stakeholders in the creation of the Regional Agenda. It identifies stakeholders, outlines participation techniques and includes a schedule for the completion of the Regional Agenda.

1.4 Regional Agenda

The Regional Agenda is the culmination of the planning process. It will include a vision of the CSRA’s future, along with an implementation program for how to get there.

1.5 How to Use This Plan

The CSRA Regional Plan is intended to serve as a reference and implementation point for potential users. A number of companion planning documents should be used in conjunction with the Regional Plan. These include:

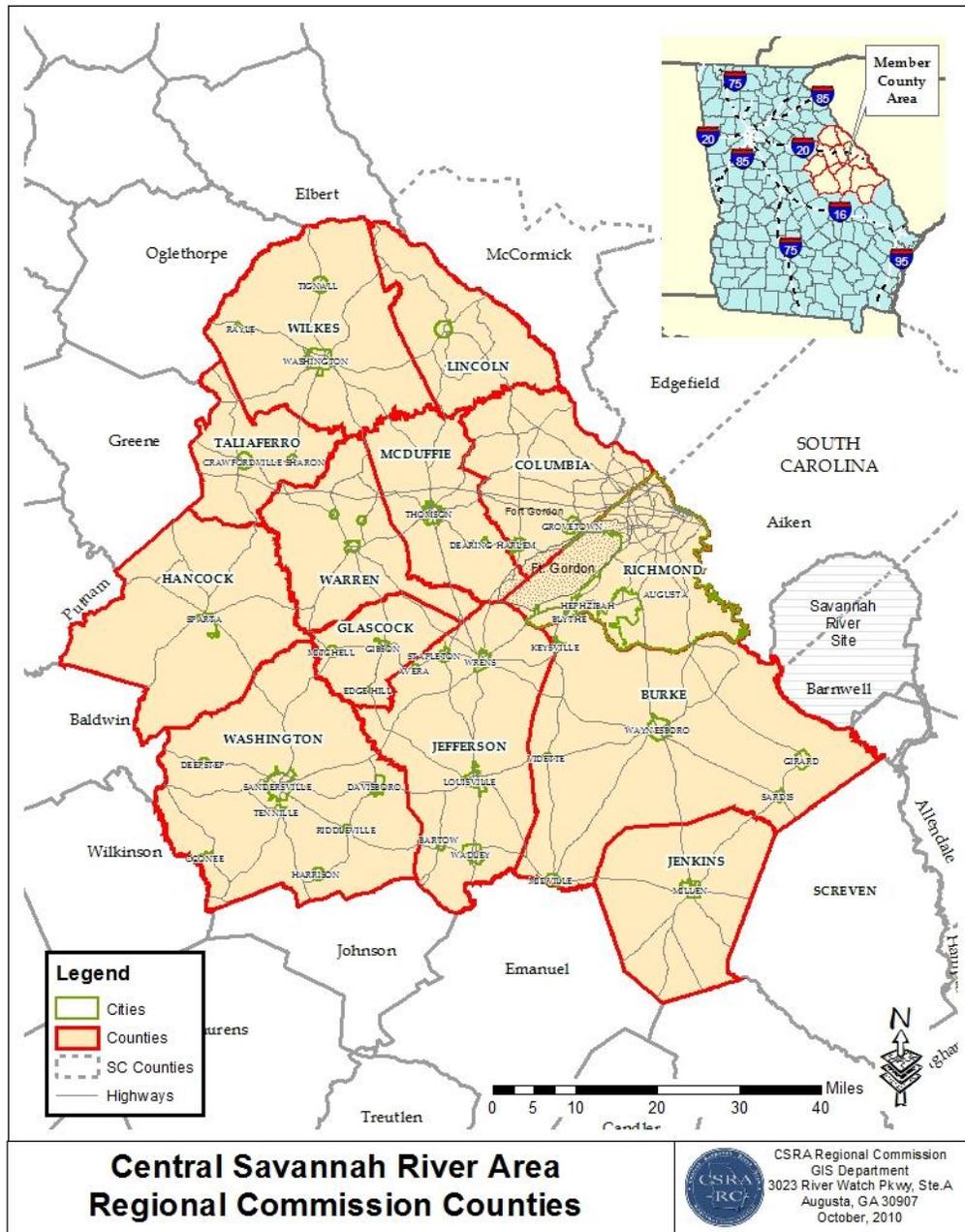
- CSRA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Augusta Area Diversification Initiative
- Fort Gordon Joint Land Use Study
- CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan
- County and City Comprehensive Plans

- Statewide Plans

1.6 The Central Savannah River Area

The Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) encompasses an area nearly 6,500 square miles — the largest political region in the state. Located in the east-central Georgia, along the Savannah River, the CSRA includes 13 counties: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes (Figure 1). The largest city in the CSRA is Augusta – the economic core of the region.

Figure 1: CSRA Location Map



1.6 About the CSRA Regional Commission

The CSRA Regional Commission (CSRA RC) serves thirteen counties and 41 municipalities in east-central Georgia, providing services in the areas of planning and land-use development, grant writing and administration, economic development, historic preservation, and geographic information systems development and implementation to member jurisdictions.

Additionally, the CSRA RC serves as the state-designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the region. In this capacity, the CSRA RC works with local providers to ensure that services for the elderly are provided and monitored. By utilizing pass-through funds from state and federal sources, the Commission's AAA serves as a gateway for programs and resources aimed at helping senior citizens improve the quality of their lives during their retirement years.

The CSRA RC is also the parent company of the CSRA Business Lending. CSRA Business Lending makes loans to small and start-up businesses for the purposes of creating jobs and economic development opportunities within its service area.

Section 2: POTENTIAL REGIONAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2. Potential Issues and Opportunities

This section provides an objective, professional analysis (not based on public or stakeholder input) of the region. This section, presented in divisions relating to classical planning analysis areas such as housing and transportation, presents a preliminary catalog of potential focal points to be examined during the development of Plan.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) publishes a list of typical issues and opportunities as part of the *State Planning Goals and Objectives*. This list, in addition to an evaluation for the region's consistency with the DCA's *Quality Community Objectives*, was used as the starting point for developing the Potential Issues and Opportunities list (please refer to the Appendix of this document for an assessment of the region based on these objectives). Further issues and opportunities were identified as part of a thorough analysis of regional datasets and regional development patterns. The issues and opportunities compiled in this Regional Assessment are preliminary in nature; they will be reexamined and a final list will be assembled as part of the Regional Agenda planning process.

2.1 Population

The population growth illustrated in historical trends is expected to continue over the twenty-year period. However, this growth is not uniform across the CSRA.

- By 2035, the 13-county region's population is projected at 575,304, an increase of approximately 26.5 percent over the 2010 population and 67.4 percent from 1980. This increase will have implications for housing, jobs, transportation, land use, environmental resources, and infrastructure.
- While the urbanized area (Augusta-Richmond and Columbia Counties) has enjoyed population growth, the rural areas continue to lag. Eight of eleven rural counties lost population since the last census. What little population growth is occurring in rural areas is further away from incorporated municipalities, where infrastructure is already established. Should this trend continue, county governments will have to pay more to extend and maintain public services in these areas.
- Household incomes continue to lag the state average. Most concerning, nearly a third of CSRA households are at income levels near or below the poverty line.
- The CSRA is aging rapidly. The proportion of residents 45 years and older has increased 10 percent since 1990, while the proportion of residents under 29 years declined by 8 percent. Needs associated with an aging population (affordable housing, transportation, and medical services) are anticipated to increase over the next twenty years.

Detailed data on population can be found on pages 21 through 25.

2.2 Housing

State Planning Housing Goal: *To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.*

The CSRA's housing stock is both a strength and weakness for residents.

- The region's housing stock contains a good balance of owner and rental units (55 percent and 30 percent respectively).
- Housing stocks are plentiful in the urbanized area but inadequate in rural counties. Although the official vacancy rate stands at 15 percent, over a third of vacant units are unavailable for purchase or rent. Another 17.2 percent of the region's housing is valued at less than \$50,000, an indicator of poor housing conditions.
- Median (\$99,937) and average (\$127,997) housing values are among the lowest in the state and nation. Low housing costs are a major reason for the CSRA's low cost of living, and a major strength for new residents and business attraction.
- While affordable housing values are a benefit for the region, sprawl threatens county budgets by requiring public services further away from established municipalities. Sprawl also makes it more likely that transportation costs will increase for residents as they have to commute farther to work.

Detailed data on housing can be found on pages 25 through 27.

2.3 Economic Development

State Planning Economic Development Goal: *To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population.*

The CSRA region's economy is diverse, and communities typically make concerted efforts to attract new business. However, coordinated economic development planning and promotion could be strengthened, both on a region-wide scale and between proximately-located communities.

- The CSRA RC serves as the region's Economic Development District in coordination with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), and encourages cooperation between local government officials, community-based organizations, and the private sector. Per EDA requirements, the CSRA RC developed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in 2011.
- The CSRA's job base has shifted significantly in the last two decades. The service sector now accounts for 60 percent of all CSRA jobs, an increase of 20 percent since 1990. The goods-producing sector has declined from 35 percent in 1990 to less than 15 percent of employment today.

- The region's jobs balance is heavily slanted towards the urbanized area. Augusta-Richmond and Columbia Counties account for 78 percent of the CSRA's 233,147 jobs. The urbanized area also accounted for over 90 percent of job growth since 1990. Seven of 11 rural CSRA counties have fewer jobs today than they did in 1990. This corresponds to trends in population, which saw eight of those counties lose residents since 2000.
- Unemployment levels in the CSRA's rural counties have been chronic during the last decade. All rural counties have unemployment rates above the state average (9.7 percent). Three counties (Hancock, Jenkins, and Warren) have unemployment rates of 17 percent or higher. All rural counties meet the criteria of Economically Distressed Areas, according to the federal Public Works and Economic Development Act. The rapid increase in rural unemployment was caused by the closure of major manufacturing employers, which had sustained local economies.
- The CSRA lags behind the state in educational performance, raising concerns about workforce readiness in the new service economy. CSRA scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Georgia High School Graduations Tests, and End-of-Course Assessments all fall below the state average.

Detailed data on economic development can be found on pages 27 through 50.

2.4 Land Use

State Planning Land Use and Transportation Goal: *To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the state in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.*

The CSRA is a primarily rural region, with an urban core in the Augusta-Richmond County and Columbia County area. Approximately 88 percent of the region's land area is rural.

- The vast majority of the region's housing and commercial growth has occurred in the urbanized area. This corresponds to population trends, which saw the two urban counties gain 35,509 residents since 2000, while the 11 rural counties saw a net gain of only 433 people. Even that figure masks population decline in much of the area. In fact, eight counties - Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes - combined to lose 2,550 residents since 2000.
- The growth effect that has occurred in the last three decades (development away from established municipalities) resulted in sprawl beyond cities and city centers.
- While cities and downtown areas still have the largest densities, this is quickly eroding as residents locate into unincorporated areas. Revitalization efforts are critical in stemming city population decline.
- If the trend of growth in unincorporated areas continues, this will result in the region's county governments incurring additional costs of providing public infrastructure (such as water & sewer lines, parks, libraries, etc.) further away from established population centers.

Detailed data on land use can be found on pages 50 through 52.

2.5 Transportation and Community Facilities

State Planning Community Facilities and Services Goal: *To ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the state to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of Georgia's residents.*

The region's physical infrastructure is extensive and diverse, featuring state and federal highways, hospitals, facilities to manage solid waste and wastewater, and other resources. Most community facilities are locally operated and maintained.

- The CSRA has a small network of interstates and four-lane U.S. highways that provide east-west and north-south access to regional and national markets. Interstates 20 and 520, as well as U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 link the CSRA's major cities to each other as well as to the state's major cities, such as Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah (Figure 25). However, the highway system does not fully meet needs throughout the region. Combined, the interstates and U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 serve only portions of the CSRA, leaving large areas in the northern and southern part of the region without adequate highway infrastructure.
- While the transportation system serves automobiles relatively well, it is less friendly to other users. Many streets are designed only with vehicle traffic in mind, making them unsafe or unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. Moreover, development patterns in many cases continue to separate uses and rely on arterial roads to make connections. These two factors limit mobility for many residents and contribute to inactivity and growing obesity levels for children and adults in the region.
- The region's two primary rail freight carriers: Norfolk Southern and CSX Rail Service carry among the lowest volumes of rail freight in the state. Only Augusta-Richmond and Warren Counties have direct connections to major rail freight hubs in Atlanta and Macon.
- Augusta Regional Airport provides regularly-scheduled commercial flights. The airport currently has 21 daily departures and 22 daily arrivals to three major hubs (Atlanta, Charlotte and Dallas) from three carriers (Delta, U.S. Air and American). In calendar year 2010, the annual passenger volume at the Augusta airport was 246,587, compared to 198,489 (24.2 percent increase) in 2009. Between 2005 and 2010, Augusta Regional's growth rate was 57.9 percent, making it one of the fastest growing small commercial services airports in the nation. Air freight information is unavailable.
- Fixed-route public transit in the CSRA is limited to Augusta-Richmond County. Augusta Public Transit operates nine routes from Monday through Saturday, with daily ridership averaging approximately 3,000. The rest of the CSRA is served with demand-response service.
- Most areas of the CSRA outside of the urbanized parts of Columbia and Augusta-Richmond Counties lag in both choice and quality of broadband service. Most of these areas are not served by any land broadband service provider, making slower satellite internet service the only option. The CSRA RC considers broadband the region's top infrastructure priority and has been aggressively pursuing state and federal funding to remedy this deficiency by extending broadband infrastructure to areas of the region that currently lack it.

- Local community facilities such as parks, water and sewage services, public water, libraries, and medical facilities, are mostly located within incorporated municipalities. Access to some public facilities, however, remains a concern as rural county populations are widely dispersed.

Detailed data on transportation and community facilities can be found on pages 52 through 58.

2.6 Natural and Environmental Resources

State Planning Natural and Cultural Resources Goal: To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.

The CSRA contains a wealth of natural and environmental resources that provide the region with numerous social, economic, and environmental benefits. However, these same resources are in need of protection if they are to continue providing these benefits.

- Timber resources account for 2.3 million acres in the CSRA, and are a major driver of the region's forest products industry.
- Kaolin, a type of clay, is the major mineral extracted in the region, providing substantial employment in Jefferson and Washington counties. This sector is under pressure from South American kaolin, which is now being exported around the world.
- Farmland accounts for 22.1 percent of the CSRA's land mass, and sustains approximately 5 percent of the region's employment. The number of farms in the region today is less than half the number of farms in operation in 1982, highlighting a trend towards large, industrial-scale farming.
- The CSRA contains a number of protected watershed areas in Lincoln, Wilkes, McDuffie, Warren, Burke, and Augusta-Richmond counties. The region's watersheds will need to be monitored to ensure future development does not render them vulnerable.
- The region's river basins and major lakes ensure adequate water supplies. However, continued growth of the urbanized area and out-of-region impacts over the next twenty years will place pressure on these supplies, as well as pollution threats from growth.
- The CSRA has a rich history and counts no less than 184 properties and districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including National Historic Landmarks, State Historic Parks and Sites. Most of these resources, however, lack preservation plans.

Detailed data on natural and environmental resources can be found on page 58 through 73.

2.7 Intergovernmental Coordination

State Planning Intergovernmental Coordination Goal: To ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with state and regional plans and programs.

The CSRA RC, founded in 1962, offers member governments avenues to coordinate planning, economic development, workforce development, and aging services. Other instances of intergovernmental coordination takes place between municipalities within a given county, between counties, from region to region, and with state and federal government agencies.

- The CSRA RC Area Agency on Aging provides consolidated services for seniors (including transportation) for the CSRA.
- The CSRA RC serves as the Economic Development District for the region.
- The CSRA RC serves as the coordinating mechanism for CSRA Unified Development Council (UDC). The UDC is a project-oriented volunteer organization comprised of economic, industrial, and regional development organizations, as well as service and educational institutions representing the entire CSRA. The UDC serves as the marketing arm for the CSRA.
- The CSRA RC serves as the coordinating mechanism for CSRA Unified Development Authority (UDA). The UDA promotes the economic development of the CSRA and encourages cooperation among economic development organizations within the member counties.
- The CSRA RC reviews and comments on applications for federal and state grant, loan, and permit assistance submitted by local governments and other applicants within the region. This is known as the Georgia Intergovernmental Consultation Process (Executive Order 12372), and is intended to offer comment on a proposed project's consistency with local and regional comprehensive plans.
- The CSRA RC develops and maintains the CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan and the CSRA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Section 3: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

3. Regional Development Patterns

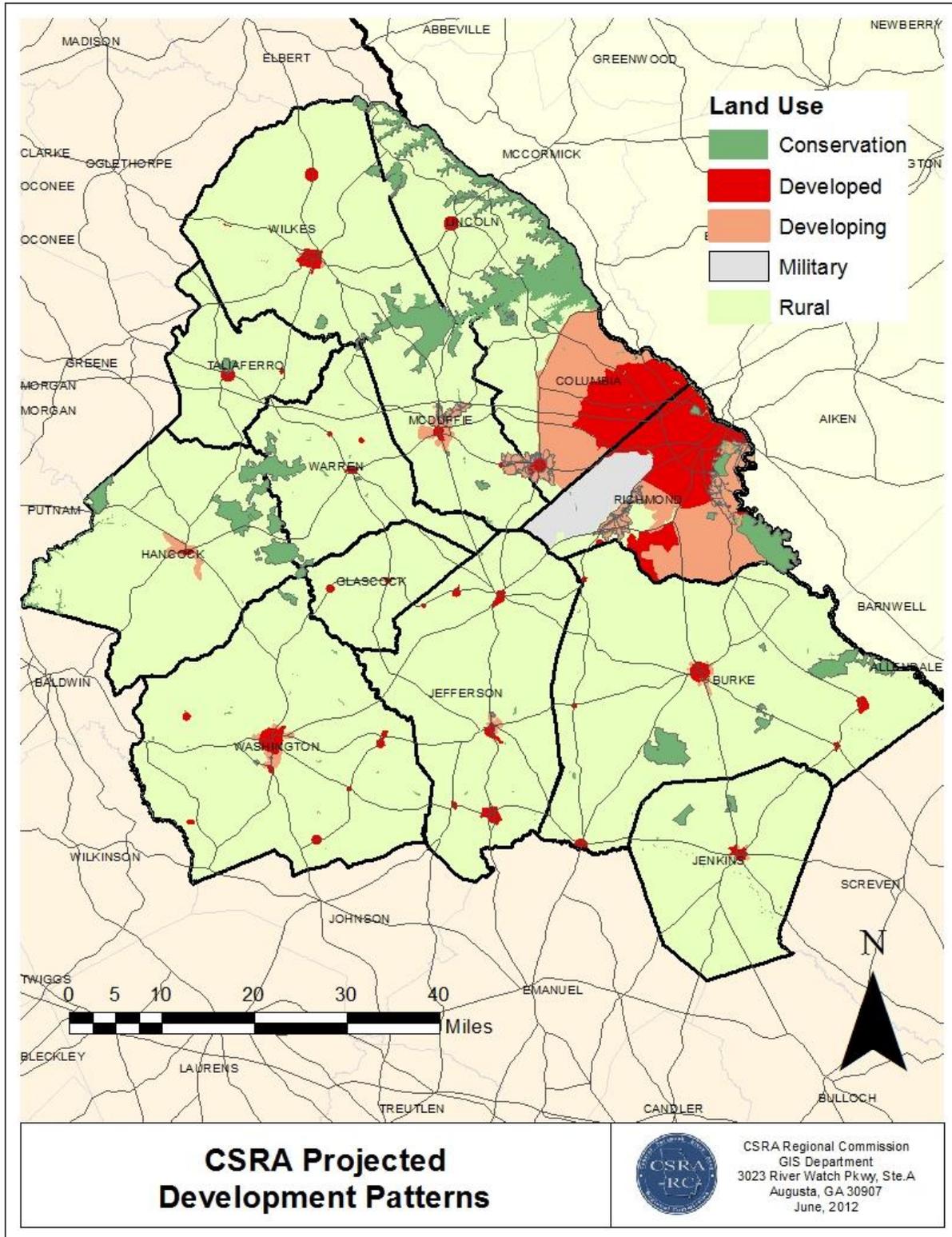
The type of development that occurs in a region has implications on transportation, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, and infrastructure. This section examines projected future development patterns in the CSRA, and discusses areas that will require special attention as the regional planning process unfolds. Analyzing development patterns allows for a broader review than simply looking at land use. It provides insights into relationships between different sectors of a community or region, and helps show intended (or current) scenarios more plainly than land use analysis. Further analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention is used to discover potential conflicts between desired future development patterns and identified natural and cultural resources, as well as opportunities for quality growth.

3.1 Projected Development Patterns

Using the Regionally Important Resources Map as a starting point, the CSRA RC compiled datasets of desired future development patterns, assigned land classification (categories such as residential, commercial, conservation, etc.) to one of five broader classifications of development types mentioned below, and combined them into one regional land map (Figure 2). The Projected Development Patterns map utilizes the following five classifications of development types:

- Conservation: protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas
- Rural: not expected to become urbanized or require urban services
- Developing: likely will become urbanized and require provision of new urban services
- Developed: built-up areas in which urban service provision already exists
- Military: a special designation for Fort Gordon.

Figure 2: Projected Development Patterns



3.2 Analysis

In analyzing the PDP map, it becomes clear that the CSRA values retaining its agricultural heritage, exhibited by the vast majority of the region's land mass designated as rural. Additionally, several communities anticipate, and are planning for residential, commercial, and industrial growth. This is not surprising, given the region's population will increase by 120,403 through 2035; physical development is certain to accompany the projected growth. The following areas have been identified where the majority of growth is anticipated:

- Columbia County will continue the rapid population growth it has seen since the 1980s through the next 20 years. Land uses will change as more residential and commercial development will occur in growth areas identified in the Columbia County Growth Management Plan.
- Augusta-Richmond County will continue to grow at a moderate pace in the southern part of the county where land is still available. Virtually all of Augusta's growth has occurred in this area in the last two decades. Based on national trends toward more urban living, at least among certain demographic groups (singles, couples without children, seniors), more infill development in established or redeveloping neighborhoods might be seen during this time.
- McDuffie County will grow at a moderate pace as development from the urbanized area continues westward. With low land prices, strategic location along I-20, available infrastructure, and development pressures in Columbia County, McDuffie County is poised to see continued growth just north of Thomson over the next twenty years.
- Burke County will grow at a moderate pace over the next twenty years. Job growth (particularly from Plant Vogtle) and development expanding south from Augusta-Richmond County will ensure that the growth the county has seen in the last two decades will continue.
- Areas around Fort Gordon. The pressures of urban growth will continue to challenge the facility and its activities in coming decades, as residential land uses increasingly occupy land in the nearby area.

The region's more rural counties – Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes – are not expected to see significant growth during the coming decades. These counties have seen population either decline in recent years or stay relatively flat, and future growth is likely to be limited.

The areas designated as conservation include lakes, rivers, floodplains and other water resources; Wildlife Management Areas; and other state and federal lands. There currently is no reason to expect that resources will be available to significantly expand these areas in the future.

The PDP map does not show all of the green infrastructure areas shown on the Regionally Important Resources Map. Specifically, wetlands and groundwater recharge areas, which cover very large swaths of the region, were not included in the conservation designation. These areas are regulated in a number of ways, regardless of whether specific areas might be subject to rural or urban growth in the future, and including them in this map would have decreased its legibility.

3.3 Areas Requiring Special Attention

As a region evolves over time, different places within it find often themselves facing new challenges. In many cases, these issues require particular attention during the long-range planning process. This

section is focused on identifying and describing the region's Areas Requiring Special Attention. These areas were selected through a process that involved analyzing the Regionally Important Resource and Projected Development Patterns maps; discussions with CSRA board members; and evaluations of local comprehensive plans.

Within the CSRA, areas in the following categories were identified:

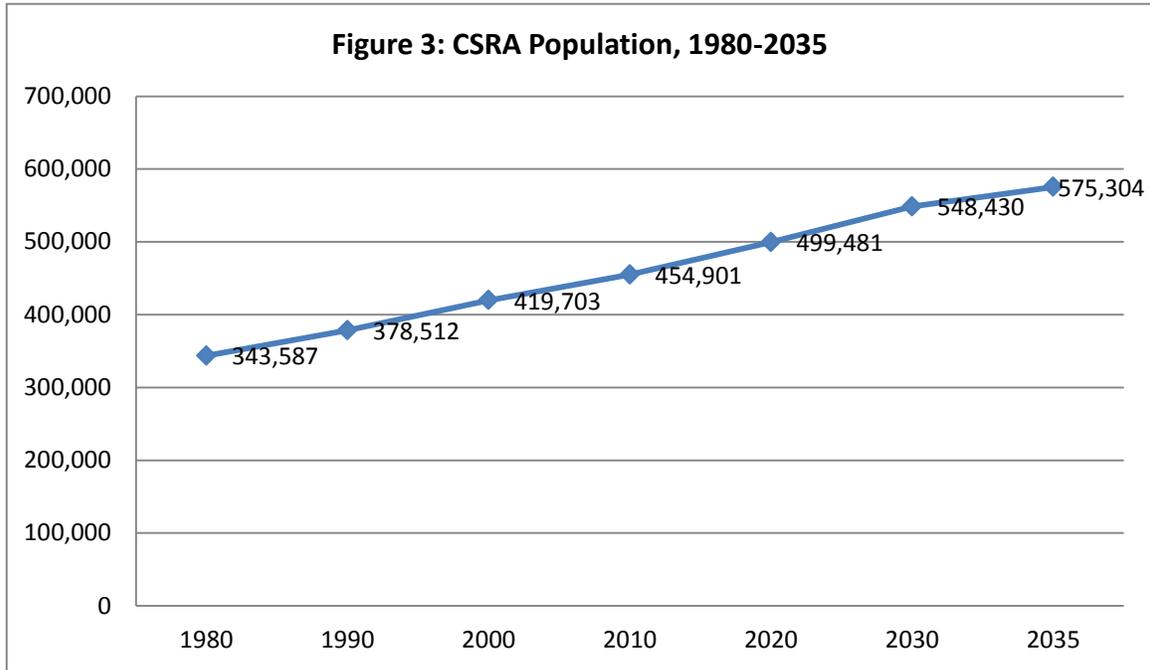
- Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map. These include:
 - Water and other resources, including rivers, lakes, wetlands, floodplains and other ecologically sensitive areas;
 - Federal and state lands;
 - Wildlife Management Areas;
 - Military land (Fort Gordon);
 - Cultural and government resources (historic districts, courthouses, historic sites).
- Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development. These include:
 - Water resources, particularly in the fast-growing suburban portions of the urbanized portions of the region surrounding Augusta;
 - Lakefront areas in Columbia, Hancock and Lincoln counties;
 - Areas where kaolin, a type of clay that is a significant area export, is mined;
 - Traditional downtowns, neighborhoods and historic districts that are still experiencing a lack of new investment due partially to new development on the urban fringe.
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur, especially where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation. These include:
 - Areas on the urbanizing fringe surrounding Augusta. These areas are characterized by automobile-oriented development that is straining road capacities due to the lack of other travel options. In many cases, these areas are without the natural gathering places that characterize traditional patterns of development, places such as parks, squares or walkable commercial areas.
 - The area along U.S. 78 north of Thomson;
 - The area in Columbia and McDuffie counties stretching from Grovetown to Harlem to Dearing;
 - Areas where public infrastructure is unevenly provided, spurring development but also creating future liabilities.
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors). These include:
 - Numerous commercial corridors in the urbanized area, such as Washington Road, Gordon Highway and Wrightsboro Road;
 - Parts of commercial corridors extending out of smaller cities and towns in the region;
 - Portions of many downtown areas in both larger cities and smaller towns;
 - Residential neighborhoods in Augusta and smaller towns that have seen disinvestment in recent decades.
- Areas with significant infill opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated. These include:

- Significant portions of Augusta-Richmond County where disinvestment has occurred and the infrastructure and traditional street grid are well-positioned to support substantial amounts of development;
- Older suburban areas around the urban core that are beginning to see disinvestment. These areas are candidates for suburban “retrofits” that can better connect them with surrounding neighborhoods, make them more accessible to pedestrians, create more of a sense of place, and provide a community amenity for residents.
- Numerous vacant industrial properties scattered throughout the region.
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels of the region as a whole. These include:
 - Hancock, Jenkins and Warren counties, where unemployment is at or over 17 percent in each county (compared to 12 percent for the region);
 - Jefferson and Wilkes counties, which have each seen negative job growth of more than 18 percent since 1990;
 - Portions of Augusta-Richmond county where significant disinvestment has occurred;
 - At least portions of all the region’s 11 rural counties.

Section 4: Supporting Data

4.1 POPULATION

The CSRA has enjoyed steady population growth since 1980. Anchored by the Augusta metropolitan area (Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties), new residents have been attracted by jobs - initially in the manufacturing sector but recently in the growing services sector - and the low cost of living. The region's population currently stands at 454,901, an increase of 32.4 percent from 1980 (Figure 3). Through 2035, the CSRA's population is projected to increase to 575,304.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Projections by CSRA RC

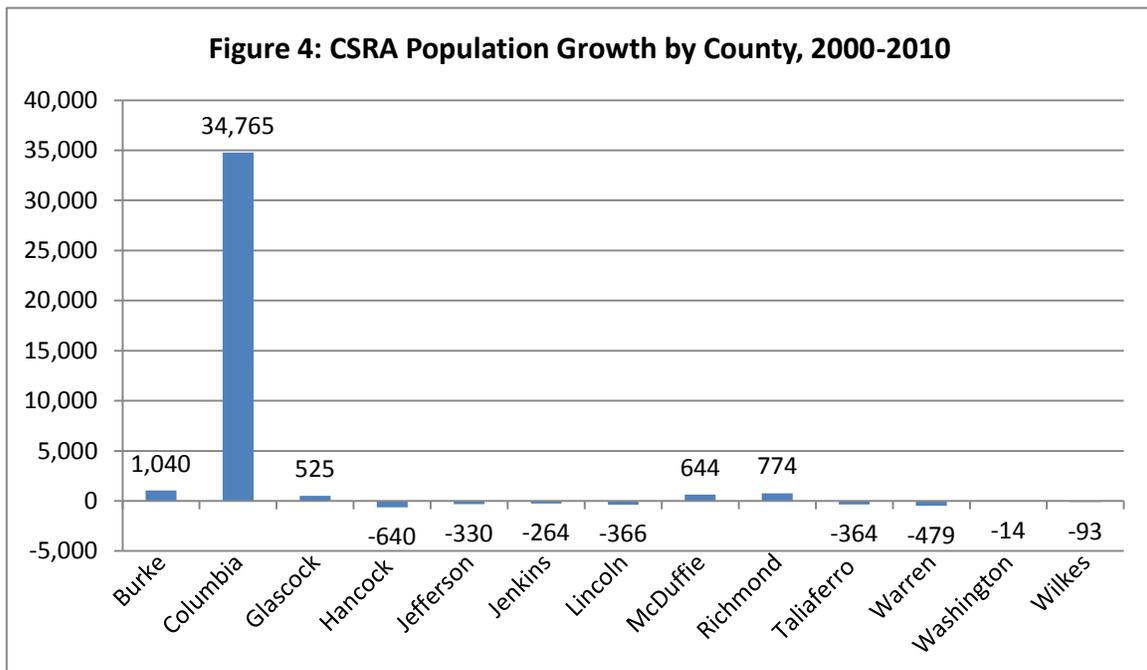
Population growth, however, has not been evenly distributed throughout the region. Virtually all the CSRA's population growth in the last decade has come from Columbia County, which accounted for 98.7 percent of the region's population growth since 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, eight of eleven rural CSRA counties posted population losses (Table 1, Figure 4). In aggregate, CSRA rural counties lost 341 residents during that time, with Hancock (-640), Warren (-479), and Lincoln (-366) accounting for most of the population loss.

Population loss in rural counties has been occurring since the 1980s. Six of 13 CSRA counties have lost population since 1980. Warren County had the highest rate of population loss (-12.6 percent), followed closely by Taliaferro County (-10.8 percent) and Jefferson County (-10.5 percent). The region's highest growth rate occurred in Columbia County, with its population close to tripling since 1980. Augusta-Richmond County, the most populous county in the CSRA, has kept adding to its population, albeit at a slower rate than the regional average. Overall, the region's population growth rate (28.3 percent) lags significantly behind the state average (79.9 percent).

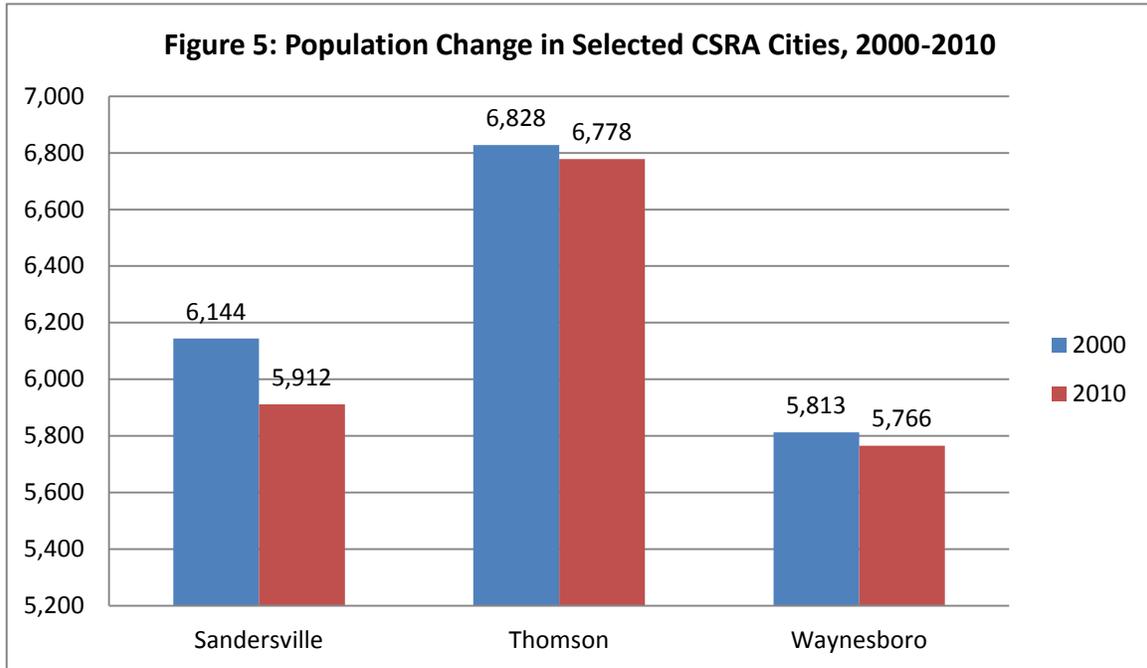
Table 1: CSRA Population by County, 1980-2010

	1980	1990	2000	2010	1980-2010 change	1980-2010 percent change
Burke County	19,349	20,579	22,276	23,316	3,967	20.5
Columbia County	40,118	66,031	89,288	124,053	83,935	209.2
Glascock County	2,382	2,357	2,557	3,082	700	29.4
Hancock County	9,466	8,908	10,069	9,429	-37	-0.4
Jefferson County	18,403	17,408	17,260	16,930	-1,473	-8
Jenkins County	8,841	8,247	8,604	8,340	-5,01	-5.7
Lincoln County	6,716	7,442	8,362	7,996	1,280	19.1
McDuffie County	18,546	20,119	21,231	21,875	3,329	17.9
Richmond County	181,629	189,719	199,775	200,549	18,920	10.4
Taliaferro County	2,032	1,915	2,081	1,717	-315	-15.5
Warren County	6,583	6,078	6,313	5,834	-749	-11.4
Washington County	18,842	19,112	21,201	21,187	2,345	12.4
Wilkes County	10,951	10,597	10,686	10,593	-358	-3.3
CSRA	343,857	378,512	419,703	454,901	111,044	32.4
Georgia	5,463,105	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,687,653	4,224,548	77.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census



Much of the CSRA’s rural population loss has come from incorporated municipalities. The population of the CSRA’s cities (outside the urban area) was 48,767 in 2000. By 2010, these cities’ population declined to 47,787. This population loss is seen even in the CSRA’s largest cities, including those adjacent to the urban area. The cities of Sandersville, Thomson, and Waynesboro have all lost population since the last census (Figure 5).



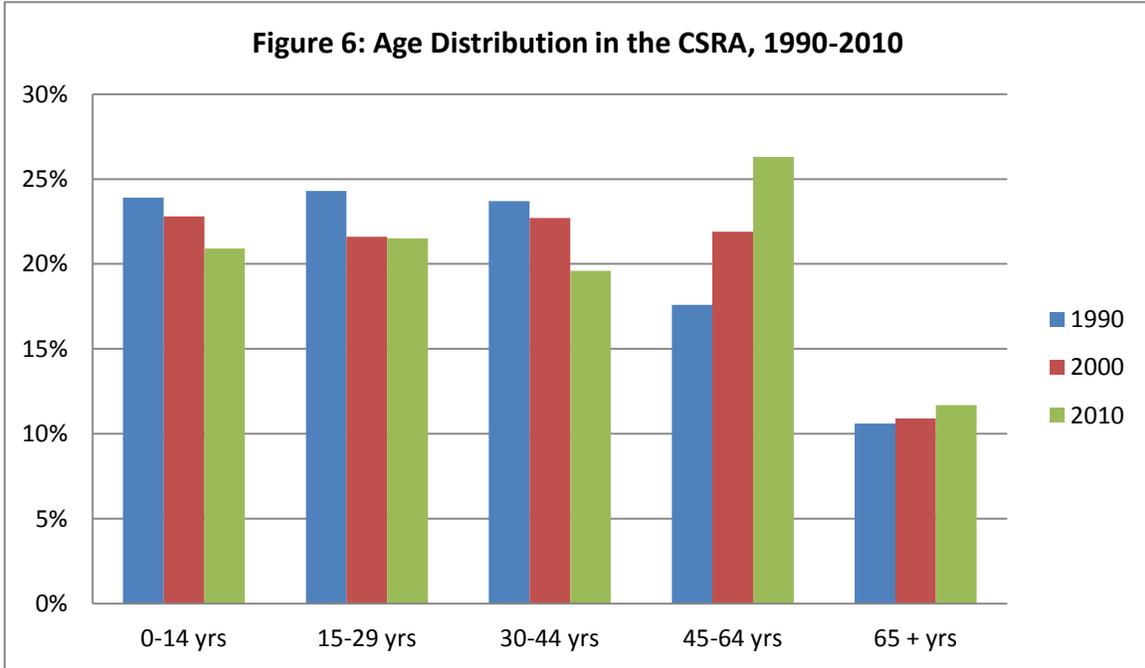
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The decline in the CSRA’s rural population coincides with the loss of employment in those same counties. As discussed further in the economic development section of this plan, many CSRA rural counties suffer from chronic unemployment, triggered by the closure of several large manufacturers in the last decade.

What little growth has occurred in rural CSRA counties has been in unincorporated areas. Should this trend persist, those counties will incur increasing infrastructure costs related to residential and commercial development (such as water and sewer lines, county roads, etc.). Most of the CSRA’s infrastructure is in incorporated cities. The more residents move out into the unincorporated areas, the higher those costs will be.

4.1.1 Age Distribution

The CSRA contains a diverse age distribution but one that has changed substantially in the past two decades. The proportion of residents older than 45 has increased nearly 10 percent since 1990 while residents in lower age groups have declined at a similar rate (Figure 6). In addition to natural increases in population, Augusta area chambers of commerce have heavily promoted the region to retirees.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

4.1.2 Race and Ethnicity

The CSRA’s race and ethnicity composition has not changed in the last decade. Approximately 95 percent of the CSRA’s residents are black or white, a proportion that has remained virtually constant since the 2000 census.

	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent*	Number	Percent
White Alone	228,961	54.6	238,127	52.3
Black Alone	173,703	41.4	190,044	41.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	1,097	0.3	1,361	0.3
Asian Alone	6,283	1.5	8,618	1.9
Pacific Islander Alone	359	0.1	646	0.1
Other Race Alone	3,432	0.8	5,940	1.3
Two or More Races	5,799	1.4	10,165	2.2
Hispanic Origin (any race)	9,567	2.3	17,452	3.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 2000, 2010. * Does not add to 100 percent because residents of Hispanic origin also included in other categories

4.1.3 Household Income

CSRA household income has not changed dramatically since 2000. There has been a decline in the percentage of households earning less than \$25,000, going from 35.8 percent in 2000 to 32.8 percent in 2010. The region also saw an increase in the portion of households earning more than \$75,000, rising from 16.2 percent in 2000 to 22.6 percent in 2010 (Table 3). That nearly one-third of CSRA households earn less than \$25,000 is worrisome, as these income brackets are at or below the poverty line.

Table 3: CSRA Household Income, 2000-2010 (not adjusted for inflation)				
	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
< \$15,000	32,673	21.4	32,338	18.8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	22,010	14.4	24,167	14.0
\$25,000 - \$34,999	20,786	13.6	21,304	12.4
\$35,000 - \$49,999	25,665	16.8	25,564	14.9
\$50,000 - \$74,999	27,160	17.7	30,019	17.4
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12,646	8.3	17,435	10.1
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7,909	5.2	13,777	8.0
\$150,000+	4,180	2.7	7,678	4.5
Total	153,029	100	172,312	100

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC

4.2 HOUSING

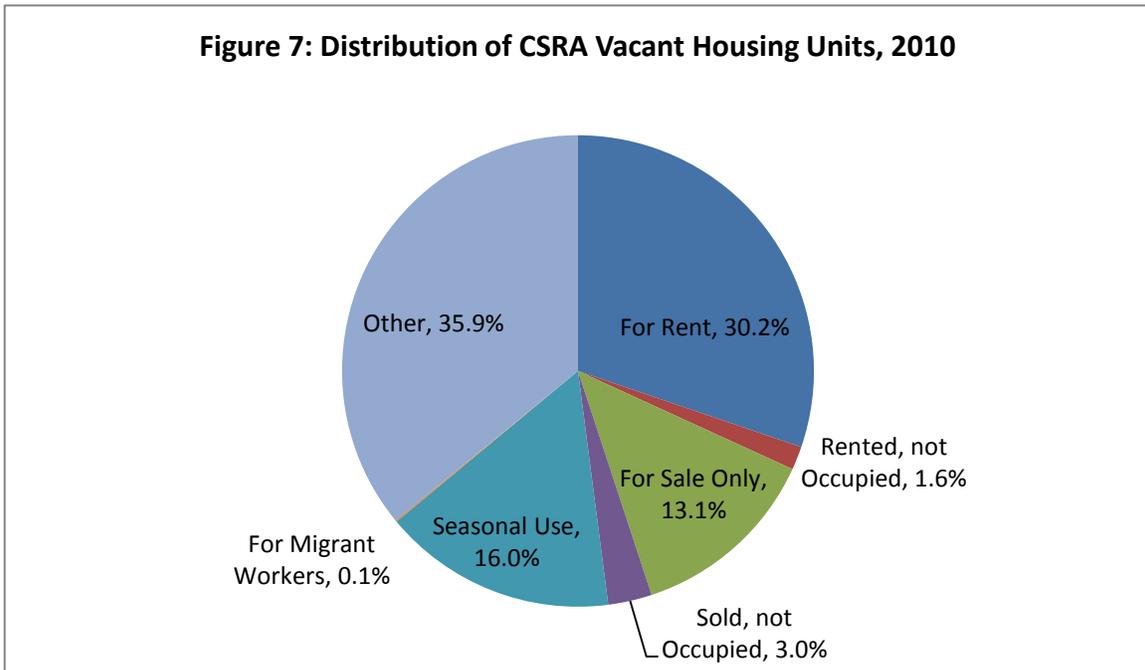
The CSRA's housing stock includes a good balance of owned and rental units. Approximately 30 percent of housing units are rental units and 55 percent are owner units, a healthy balance that addresses different housing needs (Table 4). The region's vacancy rate is 15 percent, a figure that has increased by 42 percent since 2000, when it stood at 10.6 percent.

Table 4: CSRA Household Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure, 2000-2010				
	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	189,176	100	213,733	100
Occupied	169,175	89.4	181,712	85.0
Owner	111,444	58.9	119,139	55.7
Renter	57,731	30.5	62,573	29.3
Vacant	20,001	10.6	32,021	15.0

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC

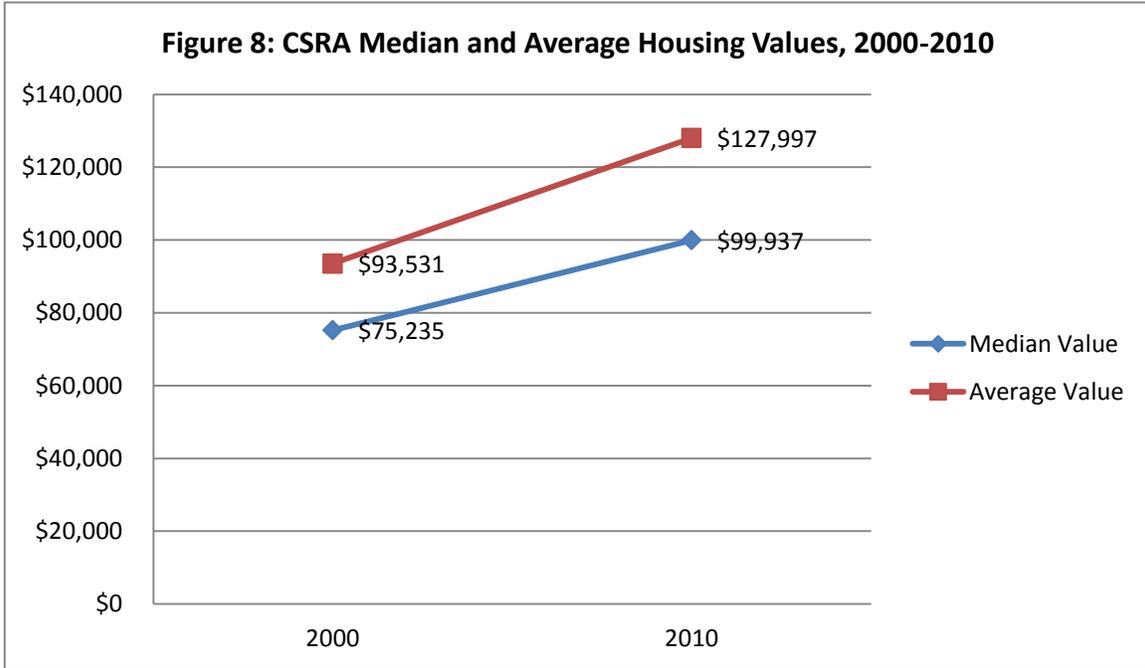
Although the vacancy rate is relatively high at 15 percent, the region’s housing stock is not adequate. Close to 36 percent of vacant units are unavailable for purchase or rent (Figure 7), cutting the effective vacancy rate by over a third. Furthermore, a significant portion of the region’s housing is substandard. Over 42,713 units or 35.8 percent in the region are worth less than \$80,000, and 17.2 percent are valued at less than \$50,000. The value of a home is good indicator of housing condition, and housing values in these ranges point to an inadequate supply of quality housing. The CSRA has a need for more housing options for those who are retired, elderly, and in poverty. The demand for affordable housing is rising in the region.

Figure 7: Distribution of CSRA Vacant Housing Units, 2010

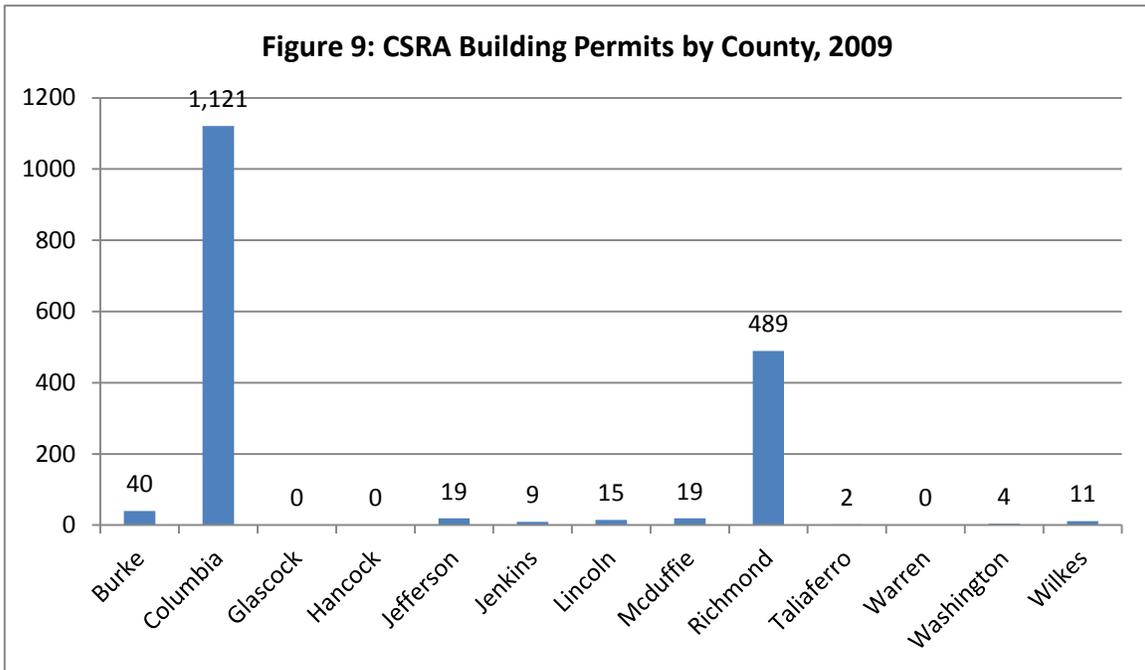


Source: ESRI Business Analyst

CSRA median and average housing values have increased substantially in the past decade. Fueled by new housing construction in the urban area, the average and median value of housing in the region has increased by approximately 35 percent (Figure 8). Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties accounted for over 95 percent of all CSRA building permits in 2009 (Figure 9). The low number of building permits in the rural CSRA is another indication of housing need in those counties.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst



Source: Georgia County Guide

4.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The CSRA region includes a diverse economy that spans both urban and rural counties. The region contains economic clusters that range from highly concentrated medical industries at the core of the Augusta area to an industrial/manufacturing beltway that extends throughout the rural counties of Central Georgia.

The last three decades were a period of sustained economic growth throughout the CSRA. Economic and employment growth emerged from the addition of new service-providing firms and expansion of existing industries. While the region’s competitive strengths and location of new industries have supported the growth of the 1980s, 1990s and the early part of the 2000s, growth has slowed and even declined in some counties during the past decade. The manufacturing sector has been especially hard hit, with a number of major plant shutdowns in the region.

The data presented in this section captures the changing trends of the CSRA economy. Primary data includes the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Georgia Department of Labor. Due to the different methods used by these agencies in counting employment data, some discrepancies in employment characteristics may occur.

4.3.1 Occupational Profile

The occupational profile of the CSRA reflects the work performed by the region’s residents, whether they work in the CSRA or another region.

Occupational profiles for CSRA residents are presented in Table 5. The workforce is well diversified with Management/Professional occupations (36.6 percent) accounting for the highest share of employment, followed by Sales, Office & Administrative Support (22.2 percent) and Service Workers (19 percent). This reflects strong employment orientation in service and government sectors. The smallest shares of occupations are found in Farming, Fishing & Forestry (0.6 percent) and Construction, Extraction & Maintenance (5.5 percent), reflecting the decline of agricultural and natural resource-based industries.

	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management/Professional/Financial	52,996	30.9	67,591	36.6
Services	27,402	16	35,087	19
Sales, Office & Admin Support	40,585	23.7	40,997	22.2
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	1,173	0.7	1,108	0.6
Construction/Extraction/Maintenance	18,236	10.6	10,157	5.5
Production/Transportation/Material Moving	30,870	18	29,732	16.1
Total	171,262	100	184,672	100

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC

Industry employment trends reflect the region’s occupational profile. Services (51.5 percent) account for the highest share of employment among CSRA residents (Table 6). Other important sectors include Retail Trade (11.2 percent) and Manufacturing (9.1 percent).

Table 6: CSRA Residents Employment by Industry

	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	3,372	2	3,509	1.9
Construction	11,668	6.8	11,265	6.1
Manufacturing	26,711	15.6	16,805	9.1
Wholesale Trade	4,719	2.8	4,247	2.3
Retail Trade	20,108	11.7	20,683	11.2
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	10,774	6.3	10,711	5.8
Information	3,624	2.1	2,955	1.6
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	7,352	4.3	8,495	4.6
Services	73,027	42.6	95,106	51.5
Public Administration	9,907	5.8	10,896	5.9
Total	171,262	100	184,672	100

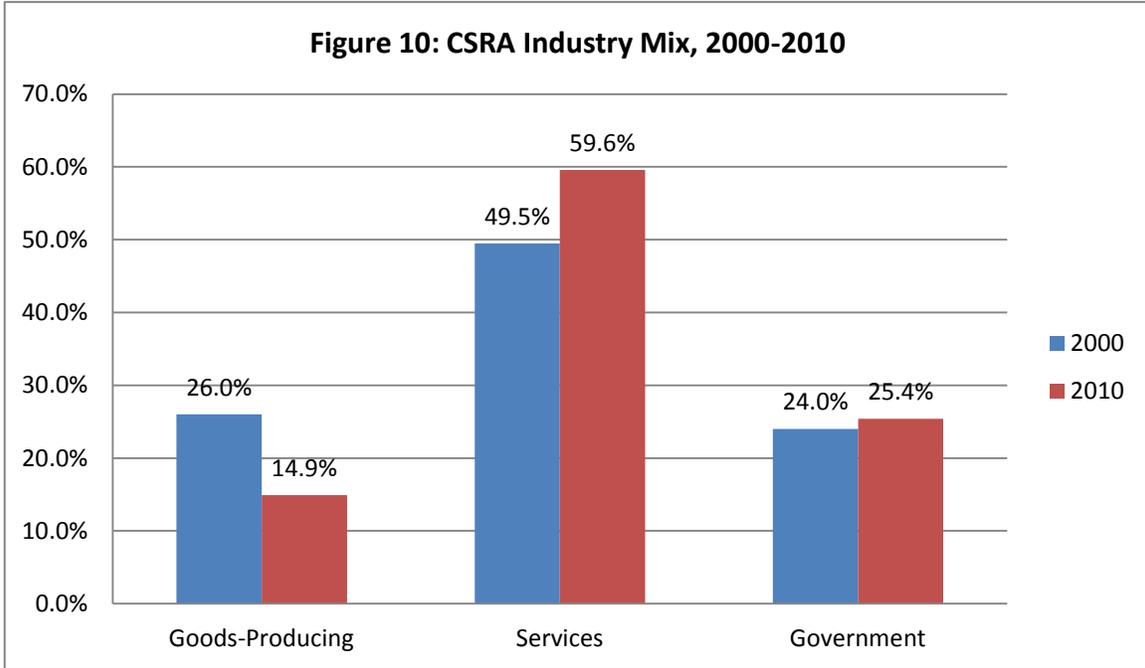
Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census; ESRI Business Analyst; Calculations by CSRA RC

4.3.2 Sector and Industry Trends

Sector and industry trends reflect jobs within the CSRA region, including out-of-region residents. The CSRA’s employment base is largely a mix of small businesses across a variety of sectors. There are 17,097 businesses in the region, employing 233,147 people. The majority of businesses employ ten or fewer people. The small business sector of the economy is supplemented by major employers such as manufacturers, education institutions, and government agencies.



A majority of jobs in the region are in service-producing industries, which have increased by over 10 percent since 2000 (Figure 10). Approximately 60 percent of the CSRA’s jobs are in this sector, followed by government (25.4 percent) and goods producing (14.9 percent). These data highlight the shift from manufacturing to service industries that has occurred in the past twenty years.



Source: Georgia Department of Labor Local Area Profile

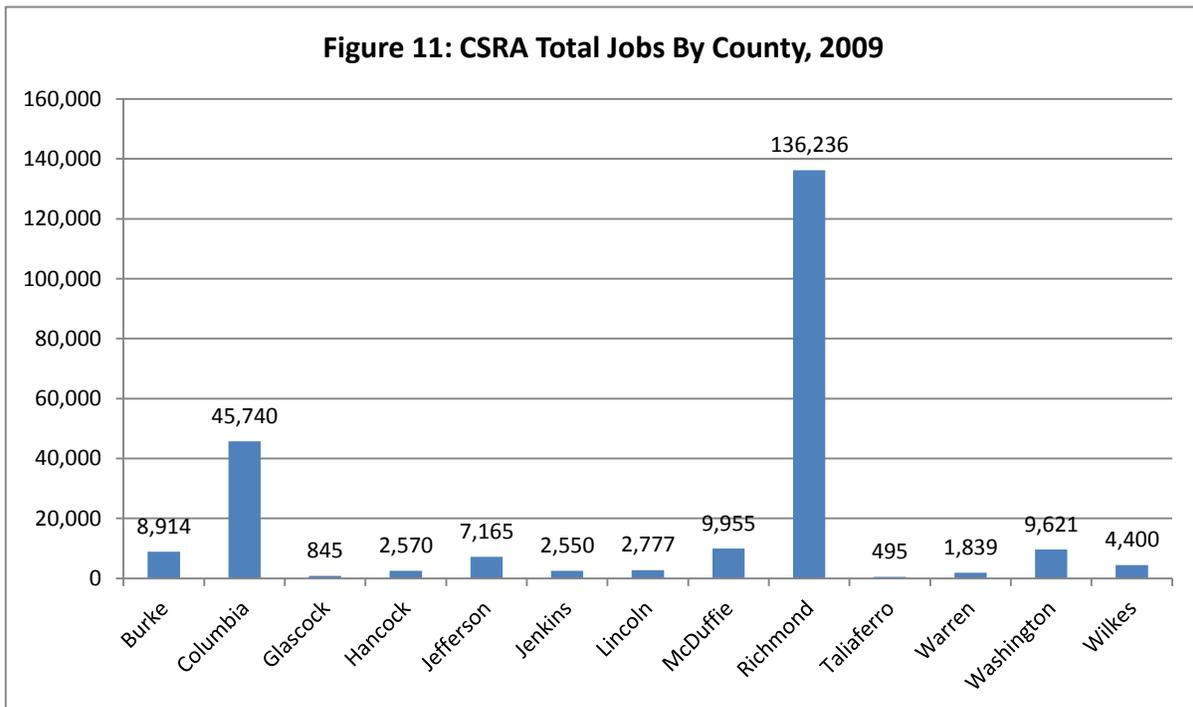
Table 7 presents a detailed breakdown of employment sectors in the CSRA. Services (37.4 percent) and Government and Government Enterprises (23.5 percent) account for the highest share of employment. Other important job concentrations include Retail Trade (10.1 percent) and Finance, Insurance & Real Estate (5.8 percent).

	1990		2000		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Farm	4,674	2.3	4,305	1.9	3,567	1.5
Agriculture, Forest & Fishing	1,313	0.7	2,061	0.9	2,694	1.2
Mining	2,331	1.2	2,472	1.1	1,075	0.5
Construction	13,722	6.9	13,279	5.9	12,606	5.4
Manufacturing	29,780	14.9	27,673	12.4	16,322	7
Trans. & Utilities	7,063	3.5	9,615	4.3	12,943	5.6
Wholesale Trade	6,334	3.2	5,413	2.4	4,777	2
Retail Trade	32,461	16.3	38,001	17	23,614	10.1
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	9,029	4.5	10,190	4.6	13,443	5.8
Services	43,891	22	57,868	25.9	87,251	37.4
Government and Govt. Enterprises	48,757	24.5	52,631	23.5	54,855	23.5
Total	199,355	100	223,508	100	233,147	100

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Economic Analysis, CA 25 and CA 25N; GA DOL; Calculations by CSRA RC

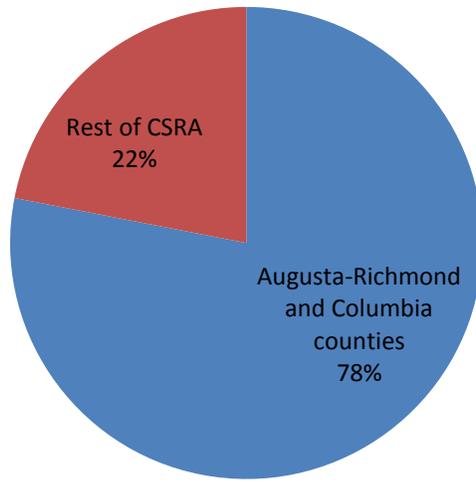
Between 1990 and 2009, the number of jobs in the CSRA increased from 199,355 to 233,147, or 17 percent. Major shifts have occurred both in the total number of jobs within sectors and their relative value to the economic base. Sectors such as Manufacturing, Farm, and Retail Trade have declined in both total and proportional terms while Services and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate have increased since 1990. Some sectors, such as Government and Government Enterprises, have remained stable in employment levels.

The majority of the CSRA's jobs are in the urbanized area. Together, Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties account for over 78 percent of jobs within the region (Figures 11, 12).



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA 25N)

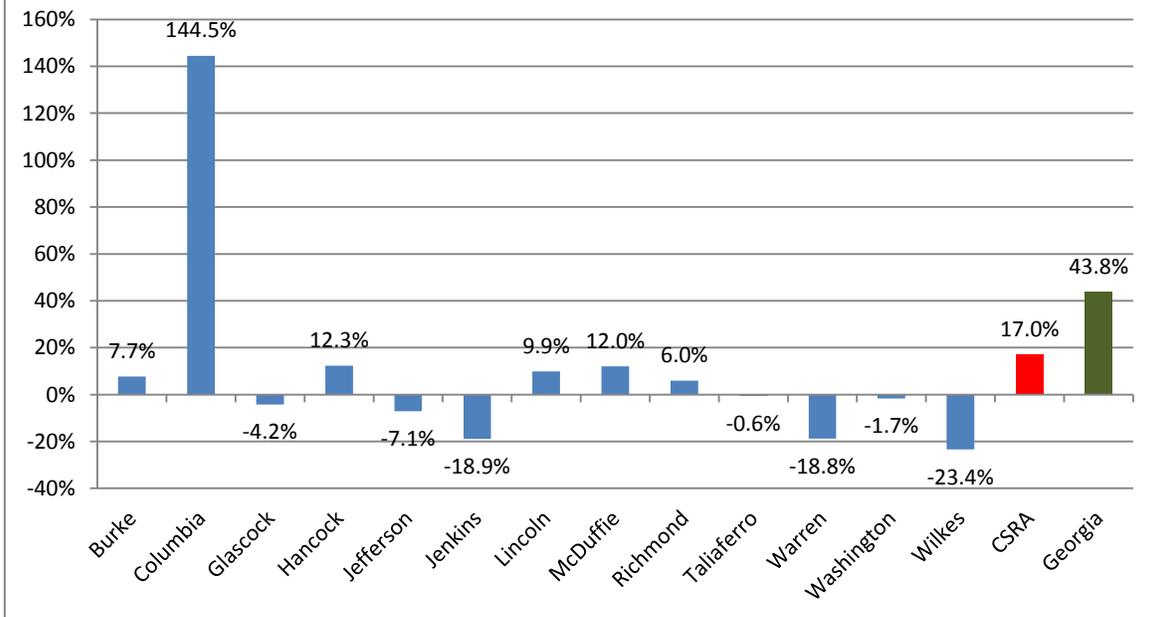
Figure 12: CSRA Urban and Rural Jobs Balance, 2009



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (CA 25N); Calculations by CSRA RC

Job growth rates for all counties except Columbia County fall significantly below the state average (Figure 13). Seven of thirteen CSRA counties had fewer jobs in 2009 than in 1990, the result of a declining manufacturing sector that these counties dependent on for most of their economic activity. In contrast, 34,687 jobs were created in the urban area during that same period.

Figure 13: CSRA Job Growth By County, 1990-2009



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA-25 and CA-25N; Calculations by CSRA RC

4.3.3 Regionally Significant Industries

Location quotients are analytical tools used to determine which industries are concentrated in a region by comparing each industry's share of employment to the same measure for the nation as a whole. The CSRA's location quotient for a particular industry (i.e. manufacturing) is the ratio of the manufacturing share of total employment in the region to the manufacturing share of total employment in the United States. If the ratio is greater than 1, the industry is of more importance in the region than the U.S. as a whole and is, therefore, likely to be an exporting industry.

Table 8 presents location quotients for the CSRA and the nation. The CSRA's primary export sectors are manufacturing, hospitality, construction and education and health services, all with location quotients at or above 1.1. The relatively low location quotients for information (0.8) and finance (0.7) suggest the region has not achieved its full employment potential in these sectors.

	CSRA		United States		Location Quotient
	Jobs	Percent	Jobs	Percent	
Natural Resources & Mining	1,917	1.6 percent	1,783,558	1.7 percent	0.9
Construction	7,142	6.0 percent	5,948,837	5.6 percent	1.1
Manufacturing	15,569	13.0 percent	11,810,371	11 percent	1.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	27,080	22.6 percent	24,651,647	23 percent	1.0
Information	2,337	2.0 percent	2,807,721	2.6 percent	0.8
Financial Activities	5,635	4.7 percent	7,589,821	7.1 percent	0.7
Professional & Business Services	15,750	13.2 percent	16,488,835	15.4 percent	0.9
Education & Health Services	22,852	19.1 percent	18,321,635	17.1 percent	1.1
Leisure & Hospitality	16,891	14.1 percent	13,001,028	12.1 percent	1.2
Other Services	3,974	3.3 percent	4,369,780	4.1 percent	0.8
Unclassified	124	0.1 percent	173,872	0.2 percent	0.5
Total	119,749	100 percent	106,947,104	100 percent	1

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Location Quotient Calculator (Based on 2009 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages); Omits jobs classified as non-disclosed.

4.3.4 Major Regional Employers

Military Sector

The U.S Department of Defense is a major employer in the CSRA. Occupying approximately 55,600 acres in four counties, Fort Gordon is the largest communications training facility in the

Armed Forces and is the focal point for the development of tactical communications and information systems.

Fort Gordon is the Augusta area’s largest employer and drives the regional economy. According to the *Economic Impact of Fort Gordon on Columbia and Richmond Counties, Georgia* (2003) study commissioned by the Alliance for Fort Gordon, Fort Gordon accounts for over 18,000 civilian and military jobs and generates \$1.2 billion dollars in economic activity and tax revenue annually. The facility provides direct and indirect employment to 27.7 percent of working individuals in Augusta-Richmond County and 14 percent in Columbia County.

Health Care

The health industry employs more than 25,000 medical professionals in the CSRA. The region has seven major medical facilities: Georgia Health Sciences University, University Hospital, Veteran’s Administration Hospital, Dwight D. Eisenhower Hospital, Gracewood State Hospital, Doctor’s Hospital, and Trinity Hospital. Georgia Health Sciences University, formerly called Medical College of Georgia, consistently ranks among the nation’s top 25 medical schools and has received national recognition for its work in the field of telemedicine, where it is considered a pioneer. Dwight D. Eisenhower Hospital and Veteran’s Administration Hospital are exclusively for military personnel.

Energy Sector

The Savannah River Site (SRS), a U.S. Department of Energy facility, is the largest energy sector employer in the region, with over 10,000 employees. Although located in South Carolina, it is a major employer for CSRA residents. The facility’s functions include producing Tritium, a radioactive hydrogen gas used to enhance the explosive yield of nuclear warheads, and cleanup activities related to old nuclear weapons. SRS is home to the nation’s only operating radiochemical separations facility.

4.3.5 Income and Wages

Incomes throughout the CSRA have historically been lower than the state average. With the exception of Columbia County, average CSRA per capita income is approximately 20 percent below the state average (Table 9). However, income levels in eleven of thirteen CSRA counties have increased at a faster rate than the state average in the past two decades. Most CSRA counties have seen income rates more than double since 1990.

Table 9: Per Capita Personal Income for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009 (not adjusted for inflation)				
	1990	2000	2009	1990-2000 percent change
Burke County	\$11,888	\$17,739	\$25,666	115.9
Columbia County	\$19,571	\$30,532	\$41,943	114.3
Glascock County	\$13,455	\$20,035	\$24,230	80.1
Hancock County	\$10,808	\$13,796	\$21,208	96.2
Jefferson County	\$12,153	\$18,694	\$25,429	109.2

Table 9: Per Capita Personal Income for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009 (not adjusted for inflation)				
Jenkins County	\$11,411	\$18,042	\$23,332	104.5
Lincoln County	\$13,131	\$19,738	\$27,980	113.1
McDuffie County	\$14,178	\$22,797	\$31,499	122.2
Richmond County	\$16,827	\$22,437	\$29,907	77.7
Taliaferro County	\$12,342	\$16,030	\$26,037	111.0
Warren County	\$11,286	\$17,972	\$26,107	131.3
Washington County	\$14,750	\$20,821	\$28,745	94.9
Wilkes County	\$14,687	\$20,863	\$28,142	91.6
CSRA Average	\$13,576	\$19,961	\$27,709	104.1
Georgia Average	\$17,563	\$28,531	\$34,129	94.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA 1-3; Calculations by CSRA RC

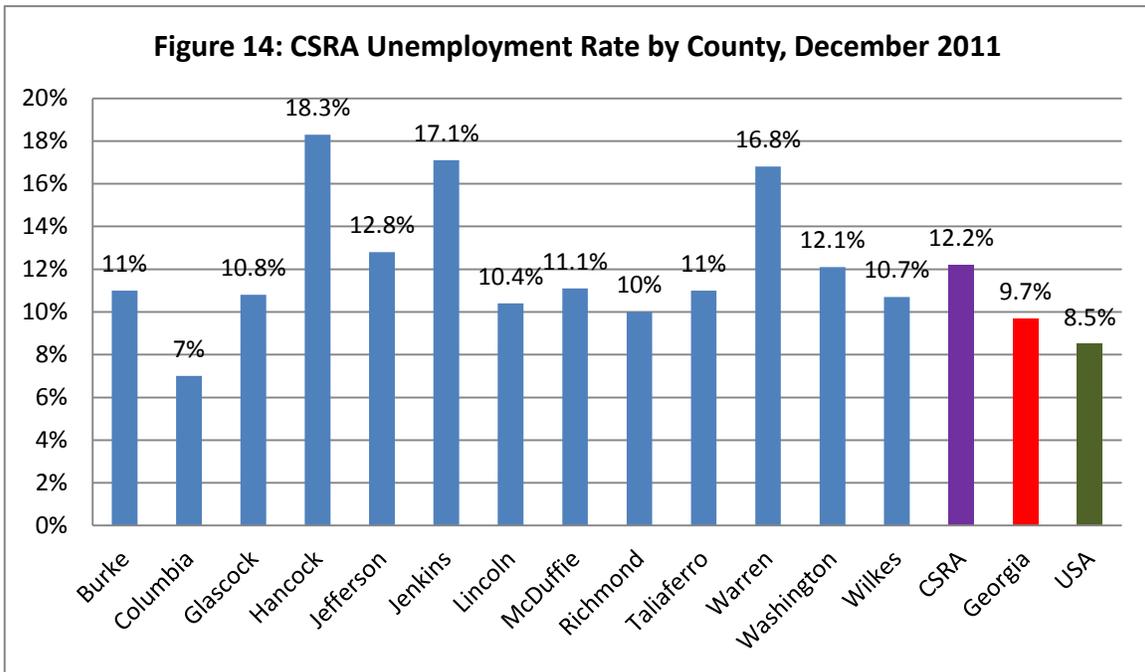
Wages constitute the largest component of income. At \$30,706, the average wage per job in the CSRA is well below the state average of \$43,961 (Table 10). Since 1990, the average wage per job statewide has increase faster (100.7 percent) than in the CSRA (95.7 percent). In the region, wages are highest in Augusta-Richmond County (\$41,285) and lowest in Glascock County (\$23,233).

Table 10: Average Wage per Job for Selected Jurisdictions, 1990-2009				
	1990	2000	2009	1990-2009 percent change
Burke County	\$20,211	\$28,679	\$40,483	100.3
Columbia County	\$17,051	\$24,889	\$34,010	99.5
Glascock County	\$14,813	\$24,207	\$23,233	56.8
Hancock County	\$13,231	\$20,427	\$27,708	109.4
Jefferson County	\$15,643	\$25,046	\$32,503	107.8
Jenkins County	\$13,311	\$20,764	\$27,256	104.8
Lincoln County	\$13,208	\$20,775	\$27,583	108.8
McDuffie County	\$15,530	\$23,774	\$31,118	100.4
Richmond County	\$20,766	\$29,180	\$41,285	98.8
Taliaferro County	\$11,221	\$17,252	\$24,217	115.8
Warren County	\$13,653	\$25,428	\$28,662	109.9
Washington County	\$19,730	\$29,617	\$32,708	65.8
Wilkes County	\$15,564	\$22,629	\$28,411	82.5
CSRA Average	\$15,687	\$24,051	\$30,706	95.7
Georgia Average	\$21,899	\$34,318	\$43,961	100.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, CA 34; Calculations by CSRA RC

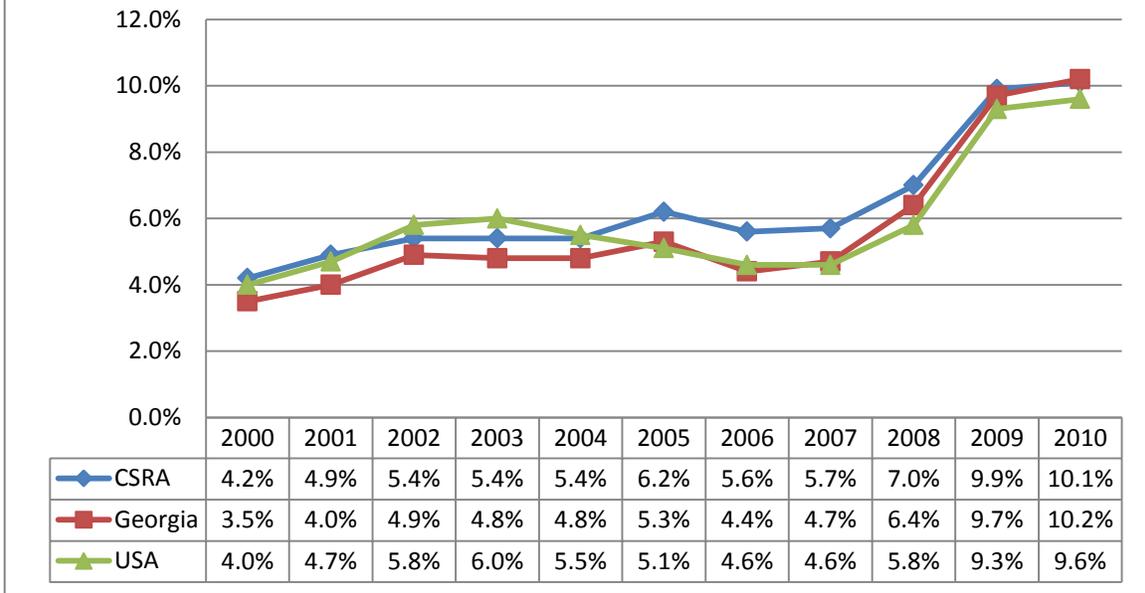
4.3.6 Labor Force Estimates

As of December 2011, the CSRA’s unemployment rate is 12.2 percent, significantly higher than the state and national averages (Figure 14). The CSRA’s unemployment rate has traditionally been slightly above the state and national averages (Figure 15). However, for the past four years, the region’s rural counties experienced spikes in the overall unemployment far surpassing those found elsewhere in the state and nation.



Sources: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Department of Labor

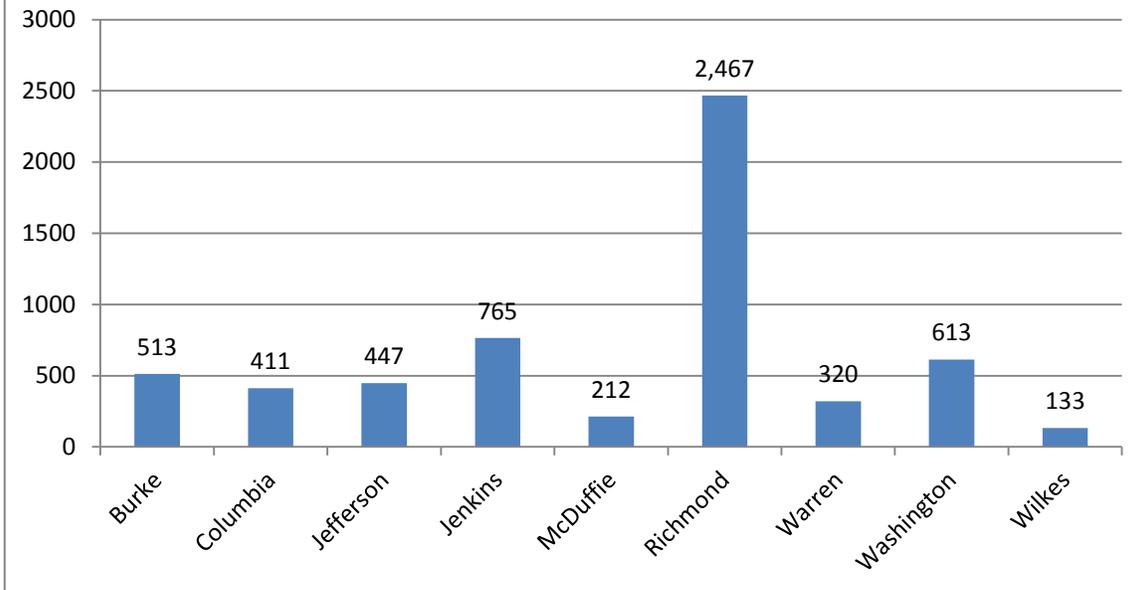
Figure 15: Unemployment Rate for Selected Jurisdictions, 2000-2010



Sources: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S Department of Labor

Since 2005, 5,175 job losses were reported to the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) for listing in the Business Layoff & Closure listing directory (Figure 16). It is important to note that these represent only major employers which are required to report closures by federal labor law requirements. It does not include employers that are not required to report closures (smaller employers), or jobs impacted directly and indirectly by major employer closures, such as suppliers.

Figure 16: Major Job Losses in the CSRA, 2005-2011



Source: GDOL Business Layoff & Closure Listing http://www.dol.state.ga.us/em/layoff_closure_listing.htm

Hancock, Jenkins and Warren counties have been particularly hard hit with plant closures, reflected in unemployment rates that are double the state and national averages. The unemployment problem

in the rural CSRA has persisted since 2007 and has now become chronic. All of the CSRA's rural counties are Economically Distressed Areas according to the criteria contained in the Public Works and Economic Development Act. For this reason, job retention and creation is the top regional priority in the CSRA.

4.3.7 Projected Regional Job Growth

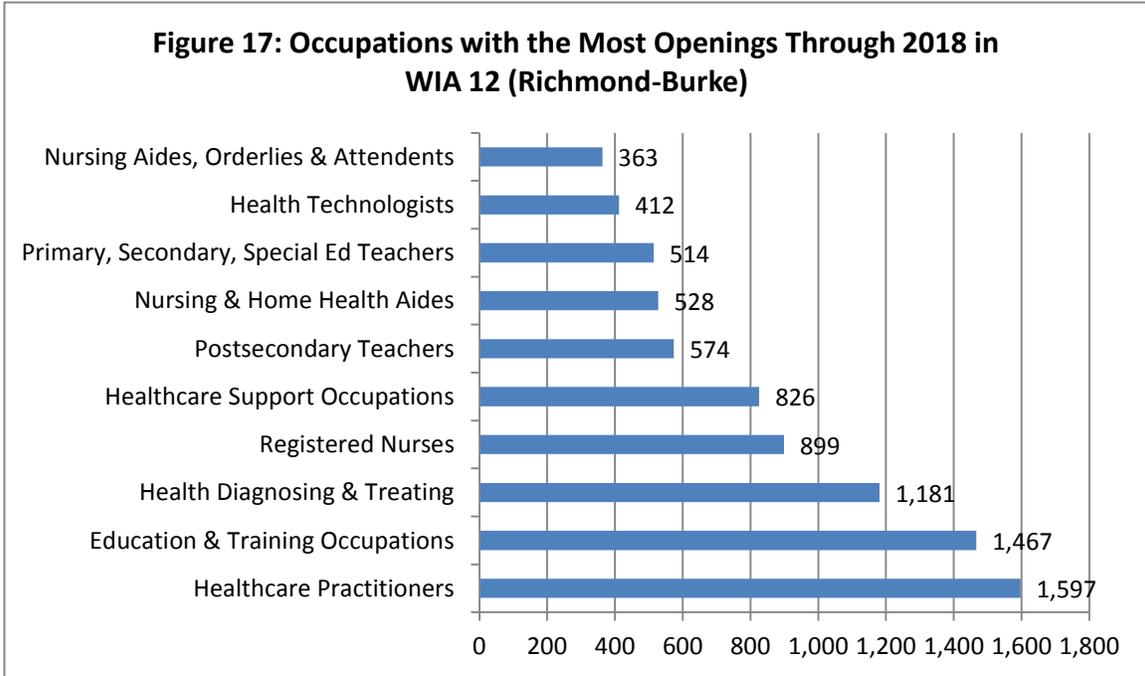
The CSRA economy was built on traditional industries such as manufacturing, which remains a critical sector. Changes in the regional economy have made growth industries such as health care, social services as well as finance and information technology, the areas in which job creation will occur. These industries will play an increasing role in the region's employment picture over the next decade.

The following projected job projections are based on the *Georgia Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018*. The analysis is at the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) as defined by the Georgia Department of Labor. WIA #12 includes Richmond and Burke counties. WIA #13 encompasses 12 counties in east central Georgia: Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes. For analysis purposes, the two WIAs must be examined separately because WIA #13 includes Screven County, which is not part of the CSRA.

The Georgia Department of Labor projects approximately 20,000 new jobs in the region through 2018.

WIA Area #12 – Richmond & Burke Counties

Given national trends as well as Augusta's status as a major regional health care center, health-related occupations dominate the list of job sectors with the highest projected gains (Figure 17).



Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018

Top industry growth is detailed in Table 11. The Health Care & Social Assistance and Educational Services sectors will account for the vast majority of industry growth rates. Combined, these two sectors will contribute 5,571 new jobs through 2018.

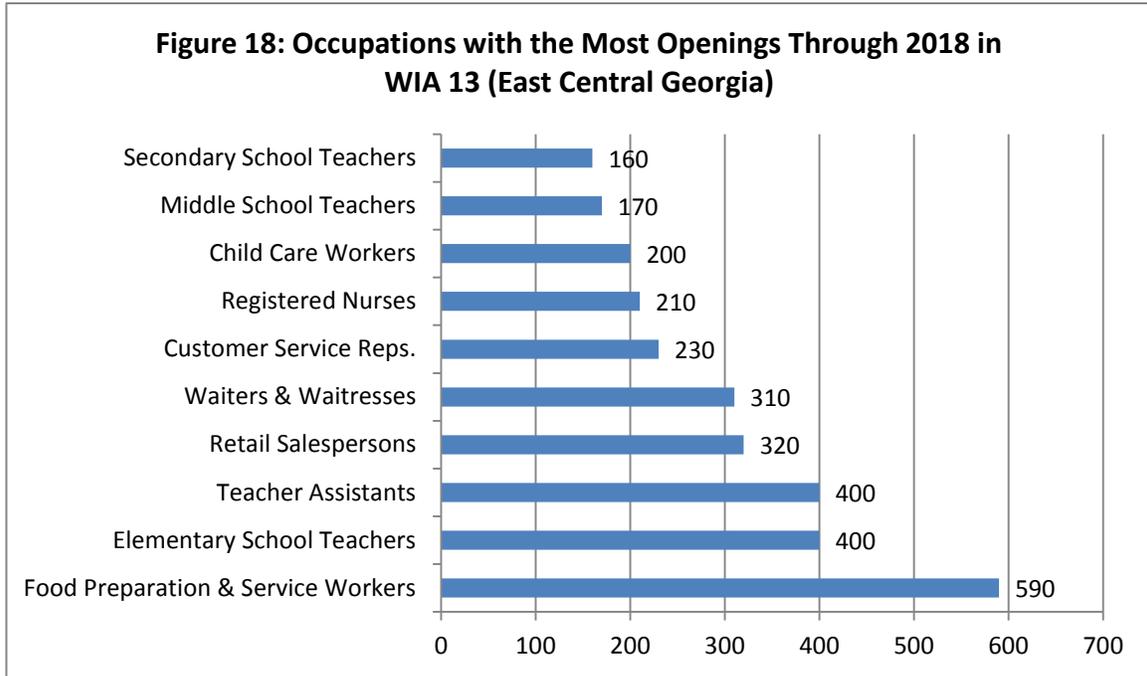
Table 11: Top Industry Growth Sectors through 2018 in WIA 12 Richmond-Burke

	2008 Estimated Employment	2018 Project Employment	Total 2008-2018 Employment Change	2008-2018 percent Change
Health Care & Social Assistance	18,515	21,805	3,290	17.8
Educational Services	13,780	16,061	2,281	16.6
Transportation & Warehousing	2,648	3,223	575	21.7
Professional & Technical Services	3,921	4,474	553	14.1
Utilities	1,149	1,342	193	16.8
Other Services (Except Government)	4,538	4,727	189	4.2
Local Government	3,501	3,549	48	1.4
Management of Companies/Enterprises	252	269	17	6.7
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1,133	1,142	9	0.8

Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018

WIA Area #13 – East Central Georgia

The fastest growing occupations in WIA #13 are diverse and associated with various industry sectors (Figure 18). Most of these occupations will require formal education beyond high school and pay above-average wages.



Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018

Total employment in WIA Area #13 is expected to grow from approximately 74,000 jobs to more than 83,000 by the year 2018, which equates to almost 1,000 new jobs added each year. The top ten industries in this area with the highest job growth are listed in Table 12. Similar to WIA #12, the Educational Services and Health Care & Social Assistance sectors will lead growth sectors, accounting for almost half the projected job growth through 2018.

Table 12: Top Industry Growth Sectors through 2018 in WIA 13 East-Central Georgia

	2008 Estimated Employment	2018 Project Employment	Total 2008- 2018 Employment Change	2008-2018 percent Change
Educational Services	8,214	10,479	2,265	27.6 percent
Health Care & Social Assistance	6,061	7,819	1,758	29 percent
Accommodation & Food Services	5,145	6,439	1,294	25.2 percent
Professional & Technical Services	1,770	2,316	546	30.8 percent
Other Services (Except Government)	2,778	3,233	455	16.4 percent
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	627	986	359	57.3 percent
Retail Trade	8,357	8,683	326	3.9 percent
Government	6,193	6,493	300	4.8 percent
Transportation & Warehousing	1,610	1,896	286	17.8 percent
Waste Management & Admin. Support	3,185	3,422	237	7.4 percent

Source: Georgia Department of Labor Area Workforce Trends: Projections to 2018

4.3.8 Development Agencies

Table 13 identifies various development organizations that support economic development initiatives in the CSRA.

All play different but complementary roles in recruiting and sustaining jobs in the region. County Chambers of Commerce promote the region to visitors and are responsible for non-industrial business recruitment, while Development Authorities focus on industrial recruitment. Downtown Development Authorities focus on recruiting and sustaining downtown businesses. Regional economic development organizations, such as the CSRA Unified Development Authority and the CSRA Unified Development Council, serve to promote the economic development of the CSRA, and encourage cooperation among economic development organizations.

Table 13: CSRA Economic Development Organizations

	Number of Employees	Mission/Purpose	Services Offered
Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce	5	Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Burke County Chamber of Commerce	2	Promoting the health and general well-being of Burke County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.

Table 13: CSRA Economic Development Organizations

	Number of Employees	Mission/Purpose	Services Offered
Burke County Development Authority	1	Promoting the health and general well-being of Burke County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau	1	To recruit and support business location in Columbia County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Columbia County Development Authority	2	To encourage new and expanding economic growth in the County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Development Authority of Richmond County	3	Attract new business to the Augusta-Richmond County area	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Development Authority of Washington County	1	Leading the economic development for the county	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Forward McDuffie	3	Attract new business to McDuffie County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce	1	Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Jefferson County Development Authority	2	Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Jenkins County Chamber of Commerce	1	To recruit and support business location in Jenkins County	Data and information, existing business promotion.
Jenkins County Development Authority	1	To recruit and support business location in Jenkins County	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Lincoln County Development Authority	1	Promote economic development in our county, to create jobs and enhance the quality of life for citizens	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Lincolnton-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce	1	Supporting and strengthening local businesses, and facilitating the location of new businesses	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Millen Downtown Development Authority	1	Promoting downtown Millen for investments and business location	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Warren County Chamber of Commerce	1	To play an active profitable role in the community	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Warren County Development Authority	1	To assist existing industries, and prospective companies with expansion or site location.	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Washington County Chamber of Commerce	1	To provide the leadership necessary for the growth and development of all East Central Georgia	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Washington Downtown Development Authority	1	Promote downtown Washington for investment	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Washington Economic Development Authority	1	Promote the City of Washington for business location	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Washington Urban Redevelopment Authority	1	Revitalize needed parts of the City of Washington	Data and information services, grants, project management.

	Number of Employees	Mission/Purpose	Services Offered
Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce	1	Promoting Washington-Wilkes County for investments and business location	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
Washington-Wilkes Payroll Development Authority	1	Promoting Washington-Wilkes County for investments and business location	Data and information services, recruiting, property tours.
CSRA Business Lending	3	To assist CSRA small business through partnerships with area banks	Loan processing, bank and Small Business Center referrals
CSRA Regional Commission	5	To provide planning, management and information services to members in a professional, ethical, cost effective and efficient manner; and to serve as a forum for addressing local government and its citizens' needs.	Data and information, project planning, grant writing.

The large number of economic development organizations reflects the region’s emphasis on creating and sustaining jobs. Gradual losses in traditional manufacturing industries and a declining population base have resulted in concern about the CSRA’s economic future, particularly in the rural areas.

4.3.9 Economic Development Programs and Tools

In Georgia, the direct actions that local governments can take to encourage economic development have historically been less limited than in other states. In the past two decades, several important tools have been made available to local communities to help encourage development and attract or retain jobs. These include:

- Community redevelopment financing (similar to tax increment financing)
- Tax abatement
- Community empowerment zone designation
- Community renewal programs
- Tax deferrals and exemptions for certain business investments
- Industrial revenue bonds

Table 14 inventories local, state and federal development tools.

Incentive	Provider	Explanation
Revenue Bonds	Local	Financing instruments issued through development authorities. Both taxable and tax-exempt revenue bond financing is available at competitive, below-prime interest rates. RBs provide financing for land, building and equipment acquisition for new and expanding manufacturing plants.

Table 14: CSRA Economic Development Incentives		
Incentive	Provider	Explanation
SPLOST Funds	Local	The development authorities also have SPLOST funds available for short-term loans.
CSRA Revolving Loan Fund	Local	CSRA Revolving Loan Fund – An internal revolving loan fund of CSRA Business Lending. Loans up to \$150,000 are available for most purposes.
OneGeorgia Edge Fund	State	Special financial assistance is provided to eligible applicants for locating economic development projects. Response to applications is quick due to the sensitive nature of projects and their tight timeframes. Eligible applicants include city/county governments, development authorities or other public entities.
OneGeorgia Equity Fund	State	The purpose of this fund is to provide a program of financial assistance that includes grants or loans and any other form of financial assistance to provide for infrastructure, services, facilities and improvements.
Georgia's Business Expansion and Support Act Job Tax Credit	State	Tax liability for any one-year may be reduced by a maximum of 100 percent. Eligible businesses include those involved in manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, processing, tourism and research and development. This credit may be carried forward up to ten years. For Augusta, a \$2,500 tax credit is available for the creation of 10 jobs
Georgia's Business Expansion and Support Act Investment Tax Credit	State	Available to manufacturers or telecommunications companies having a presence in Georgia for at least 5 years. The company must spend at least \$50,000 on an expansion project.
Optional Investment Credit	State	Larger credits can, depending on location, offset up to 90 percent of a manufacturer's increased income tax liability following a major expansion. These larger investment tax credits can be carried forward for 10 years but may not be taken in conjunction with the job or investment tax credits. For Augusta, a minimum investment of \$10 million results in an 8 percent tax credit.
Retraining Tax Credit	State	Firms providing retraining for employees may receive a tax credit of 25 percent of their costs, up to \$500 per participant, to a maximum of 50 percent of state income tax liability.
Corporate Headquarters Tax Credit	State	Companies establishing or relocating their headquarters to Georgia may be eligible for a tax credit if the headquarters is defined as the principal central administrative offices of a company. New jobs created at the new headquarters must be full-time and must pay above the average wage.
Ports Job Tax Credit	State	Companies that increase traffic shipped through Georgia ports by 10 percent or more in a year may be eligible for larger job tax credits. The amount of the bonus tax credit for qualifying firms is \$1,250 per job. Applicants must also be eligible for job tax credits under the B.E.S.T. legislation.
Research and Development Tax Credit	State	A tax credit is allowed for expenses of research conducted within Georgia for any business or headquarters of any such business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism and research and development industries.

Table 14: CSRA Economic Development Incentives		
Incentive	Provider	Explanation
Sales Tax Exemptions	State	In certain circumstances, sales tax exemptions are available for manufacturing machinery, raw materials, purchase for resale, machinery purchased new and used directly in the manufacturing process, pollution control equipment, machinery components, computer equipment, primary material handling and electricity.
Small Company Business Growth Tax Credit	State	A tax credit is granted for any business or headquarters of any such business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, and research & development industries having a state net taxable income which is 20 percent or more above that of the preceding year if its net taxable income in each of the two preceding years was also 20 percent or more.
SBA Loans	Federal	SBA 504 can be used for fixed assets, such as land, buildings, machinery and fixtures. SBA 7(a) and Low-Doc can be used for most purposes, including inventory, working capital, vehicles and business acquisitions. CSRA Business Lending administers the SBA 504 program. A bank is the lender on the 7(a) and Low-Doc programs, with the SBA guaranteeing the loans

Sources: OneGeorgia Authority; Georgia Business Expansion and Support Act; SBA Loan Program; CSRA Business Lending

The CSRA’s county development authorities have formal business incentive programs and evaluate each request for assistance on a case-by-case basis. Incentives decisions are made by the respective development authorities and local governments based on the availability of resources, and the cost-benefit of providing the incentives.

OneGeorgia Authority

CSRA counties have historically participated in a variety of state and federal programs and services designed to foster and promote economic growth. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) industrial access funding, and the Governor’s Discretionary Fund (GDF) have all been used to support local economic development initiatives.

State government also provides assistance through discretionary grants and loans to local governments under the OneGeorgia program for industrial infrastructure and other economic development support programs. During the last several years, infrastructure improvements for economic development have accelerated. Since 2002, OneGeorgia grants have been awarded to 62 CSRA projects totaling \$30,069,933 (Table 15).

Table 15: Awarded CSRA OneGeorgia Funds by County				
Recipient	Number of Awards	Awards Amount	Award Type	Major Projects
Burke County	4	\$3,020,000	BRIDGE, EDGE	Acquisition and rehabilitation of former Kwikset facility

Table 15: Awarded CSRA OneGeorgia Funds by County				
Recipient	Number of Awards	Awards Amount	Award Type	Major Projects
Columbia County	2	\$227,968	BRIDGE, EDGE	Road improvements to support John Deere plant
Glascocock County	2	\$750,000	EQUITY	Land acquisition to develop the county's first industrial park
Hancock County	4	\$2,915,000	EQUITY, EDGE	Construction of a 67,000 s.f. facility
Jefferson County	4	\$1,539,954	EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE	Land acquisition and water infrastructure
Jenkins County	6	\$2,848,650	EQUITY, BRIDGE	Airport improvements, land acquisition, infrastructure improvements
Lincoln County	6	\$2,155,005	EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE	Building acquisition, sewer line extension
McDuffie County	6	\$2,362,000	EQUITY, BRIDGE	Airport improvements, rail spur, industrial park development
Richmond County	10	\$7,875,725	EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE	Facility construction, equipment acquisition
Taliaferro County	1	\$292,000	EQUITY	Water and sewer design study
Warren County	6	\$2,308,979	EQUITY, BRIDGE	Water and rail infrastructure improvements, land acquisition
Washington County	7	\$2,499,794	EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE	Airport improvements, site preparation, infrastructure improvements
Wilkes County	4	\$1,274,858	EQUITY, EDGE, BRIDGE	Land acquisition, building rehabilitation
Total	62	\$30,069,933		
<i>Source: OneGeorgia Authority, Project Database http://www.onegeorgia.org/awards-map/all-awards</i>				

- The EDGE Fund provides financial assistance to eligible applicants that are being considered as a relocation or expansion site and are competing with another state for location of a project.
- The Equity Fund provides a program of financial assistance that includes grants and loans to finance activities that will assist in the recruitment and retention of employment opportunities in areas of greater need.
- BRIDGE provides grants and loans for publicly owned infrastructure.

4.3.10 Education and Training Opportunities

Four-Year Colleges and Technical Schools

Although many educational institutions have broad missions that include meeting the needs of a wide range of individuals and employers, it is primarily regional two- and four- year institutions that are best able to focus on and respond to regional economies. Technical colleges in particular have done an excellent job of responding to the needs of small and mid-sized businesses, and have demonstrated they can successfully juggle a variety of missions.

Table 16 presents an inventory of area technical and comprehensive four-year colleges. Technical colleges graduate thousands of CSRA students annually in over 100 diploma and certificate programs that include a wide variety of technical skills.

Four-year colleges and universities are important for businesses needing highly-skilled workers as they provide advanced educational opportunities for CSRA residents. They also serve as major employers, generating significant economic impacts. There are two major colleges in the CSRA (Augusta State University and Medical College of Georgia), and a major comprehensive university (Georgia Southern University) in nearby Statesboro.

Table 16: Area Technical and Comprehensive Colleges		
School	Enrolled Students	Program Areas
Augusta State University	7,061	Undergraduate degree, some graduate degree
Augusta Technical College	5,028	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
East Georgia College	2,754	Liberal arts
Jefferson County Campus (Satellite of Sandersville Technical College)	**	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
Georgia Southern University	19,086	Comprehensive undergraduate, graduate & professional
McDuffie Campus (Satellite of Augusta Technical College)	**	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
Medical College of Georgia	2,515	Medicine, health sciences, doctoral
Ogeechee Technical College	1,921	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
Paine College		Undergraduate degree
Sandersville Technical College	776	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
Swainsboro Technical College	664	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields

University of Phoenix (Augusta Campus)	N/A	Undergraduate professional programs
Waynesboro/Burke County Campus (Satellite of Augusta Technical College)	**	Certificates and diplomas in technical fields
<i>Source: Collegeboard.com; ** included in flagship college numbers; N/A: Not Available</i>		

Quick Start Program

The award-winning Quick Start program, administered by state technical colleges, offers companies screening of potential workers as well as specific training at no cost to the employer. This program benefits new and existing businesses. Quick Start covers two areas: manufacturing and service training. The manufacturing training covers company orientation, core skills, job-specific skills, productivity enhancement, employee involvement, and human resource development. The service training covers company orientation, customer service, interaction skills, product information training, job procedures, and professional development.

Job Training Partnership

CSRA counties participate in the Job Training Partnership, a federally-funded program established to prepare youth and adults facing employment barriers by providing job training and other services that will result in increased employment and earnings. The program trains or retrains workers to find better jobs, and offers employers reduced training costs, wage subsidies, screening and tax credits.

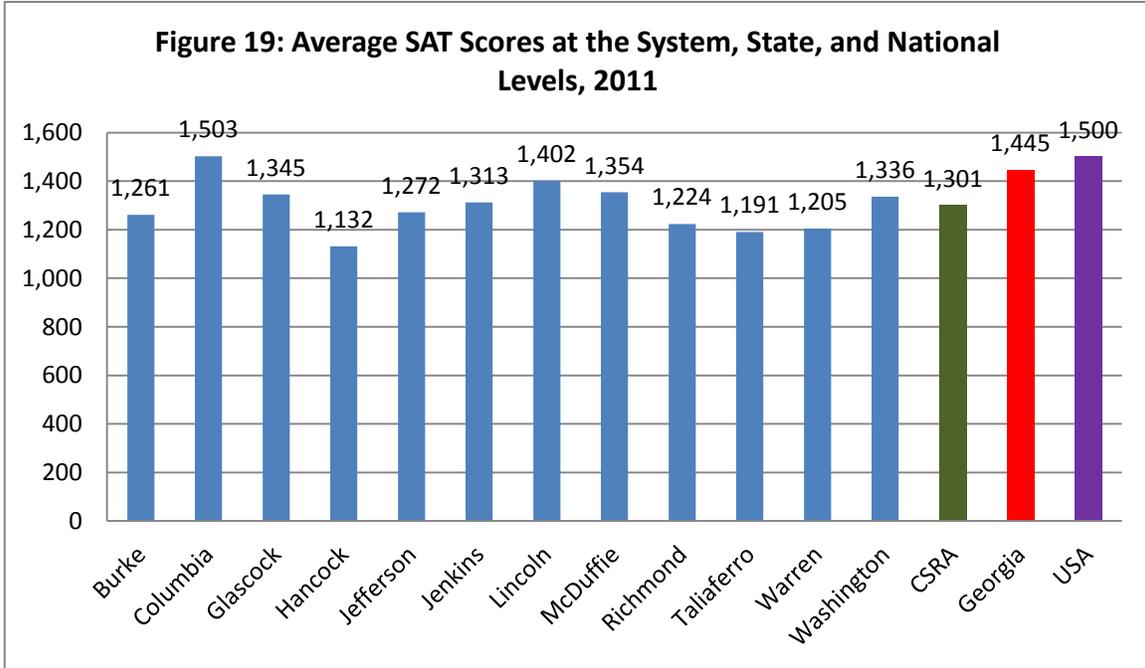
4.3.11 High School Performance

Public school systems are critical in providing the education and skill foundation for future employees and business leaders. The quality of public schools is also a significant consideration to business leaders deciding where to locate their companies.

The CSRA counts nearly two dozen high schools that enroll thousands of students. How these schools perform on state and national standardized tests helps to measure readiness for higher education and employment opportunities.

Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores

The SAT is among the widest used college admissions tests. SAT scores throughout the CSRA fall well below the state and national averages. The latest scores for the region as a whole (1,301) are 11.7 percent below the state average and 16 percent below the national average (Figure 19). Columbia County is the only county in the CSRA with SAT scores above the state and national averages. Low test scores have been particularly concerning to industrial recruiters, who indicate that a skilled workforce is usually at the top of business location decisions.



Sources: Georgia Department of Education; Collgeboard.com

All students seeking a Georgia high school diploma must pass the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) in four content areas as well as the Georgia High School Writing Assessment. These assessments ensure that students qualifying for a diploma have mastered essential core academic content and skills.

Averaged results of GHSGT test scores point to CSRA students at approximately the state average across all categories (Table 17).

	Languages Arts, & Reading	Math	Science	Social Science	Percent Passing All Tests
Burke	91 percent	90 percent	91 percent	81 percent	76.8 percent
Columbia	95 percent	95 percent	97 percent	90 percent	88.1 percent
Glascock	88 percent	94 percent	90 percent	81 percent	82.4 percent
Hancock	96 percent	96 percent	94 percent	93 percent	89.9 percent
Jefferson	79 percent	68 percent	87 percent	61 percent	52 percent
Jenkins	87 percent	65 percent	90 percent	67 percent	56.1 percent
Lincoln	87 percent	86 percent	93 percent	74 percent	71.8 percent
McDuffie	89 percent	89 percent	93 percent	83 percent	76.6 percent

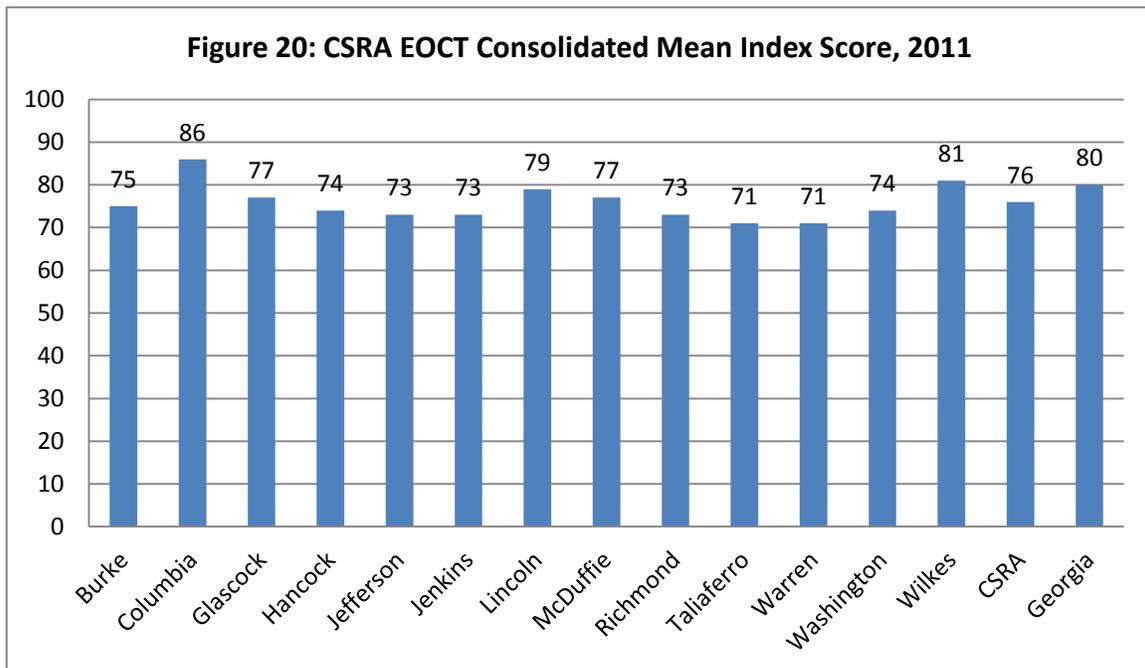
Richmond	85 percent	70 percent	86 percent	70 percent	59.4 percent
Taliaferro	64 percent	-	100 percent	45 percent	-
Warren	83 percent	80 percent	95 percent	73 percent	55 percent
Washington	86 percent	87 percent	91 percent	71 percent	66.8 percent
Wilkes	91 percent	94 percent	93 percent	85 percent	85.7 percent
CSRA Average	86 percent	84 percent	92 percent	75 percent	72 percent
State Average	91 percent	84 percent	93 percent	80 percent	73.7 percent

Source: Georgia Department of Education (2011), Georgia High School Graduation Tests

Georgia End-of-Course Assessments (EOCT)

End-of-course assessments are given to students in grades nine through twelve for core subjects in math, social studies, science, and English language arts. The assessments provide diagnostic information to help students identify strengths and areas of need in learning, therefore improving performance in all high school courses.

The consolidated index of test scores (which examines specific subjects in literature and composition, biology, economics, math, physical sciences and history) shows CSRA schools falling just slightly below the state average (Figure 20).



Source: Georgia Department of Education (2011), End-of-Year Course Tests

4.4 LAND USE

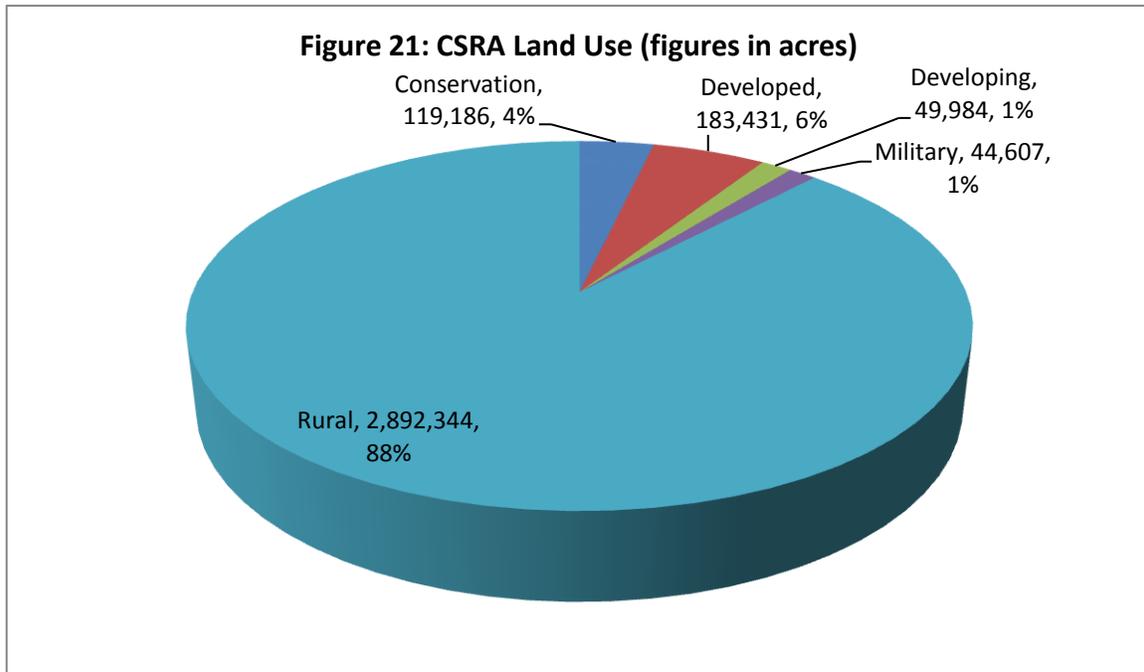
From the early trading post along the Savannah River to the growing cotton and kaolin industry and the expanding medical and science research center, changes in population and economic development have led to changing land use patterns in the CSRA.

In the 1700s, Augusta became a river settlement and busy trading post along the Savannah River, and was a focal point for the rapidly expanding land and river commerce in the then new world. Following the Revolutionary War, Augusta boomed in the tobacco economy, then cotton, and by 1820 was the terminus for riverboats, barges, wagon trains and traders connecting the interior with the sea. During the antebellum years, land use in the CSRA consisted of large plantation fields, concentrated housing, and centralized control and management. A tenancy system evolved and resulted in new spatial arrangement of land holdings. It is at this point that settlement began in what we today refer to as the rural CSRA counties.

The events that had the greatest impact on the redistribution of regional settlement were the location of major highways and railroads. The region's socioeconomic and settlement characteristics show that the cities and towns that have experienced a significant population increase in the CSRA are located along rail mainlines and major regional highways. Improvements in the region's transportation system initially established certain cities and towns as centers for agriculture, product marketing and shipping, and thus enhanced their growth.

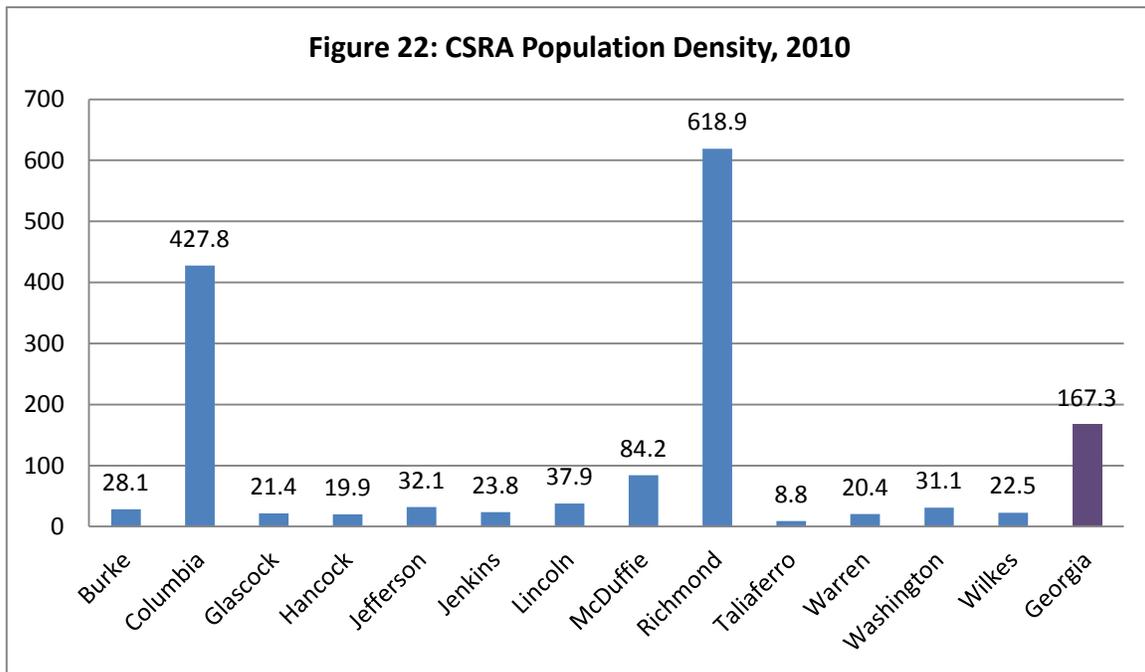
The growth effect that has occurred in the last two decades resulted in sprawl beyond cities and city centers. While cities and downtown areas still have the largest densities, this is quickly eroding as residents locate into unincorporated areas. The immediate risk of this development pattern is that the region's counties will bear higher infrastructure costs and the inability to keep up with demand for public services. Longer-term, many cities may lose their viability if population loss continues.

The CSRA has historically been largely a rural region. With the exception of Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties, rural land uses dominate the CSRA's landscape. The CSRA Regional Plan (2005) notes that approximately 88 percent of the CSRA's land uses are rural (Figure 21).



Source: CSRA Regional Plan (2005)

The primarily rural land uses of the CSRA are also evident when examining the region’s population density. Statewide, there are 141.4 people per square mile. Among the CSRA counties, only Columbia and Richmond exceed the state average (Figure 22).



Source: U.S Bureau of the Census; Calculations by CSRA RC

4.4.1 Projected Growth Areas

- Columbia County will continue the rapid population growth it has enjoyed since the 1980s through the next 20 years. Land uses will change as more residential and commercial development will occur in growth areas identified in the Columbia County Growth Management Plan.
- Augusta-Richmond County will continue to grow at a moderate pace in the southern part of the county where land is still available. Virtually all of Augusta's growth has occurred in this area in the last two decades.
- McDuffie County will grow at a moderate pace as development from the urbanized area continues westward. With low land prices, strategic location along I-20, available infrastructure, and development pressures in Columbia County, McDuffie County is poised to see continued growth just north of Thomson over the next twenty years.
- Burke County will grow at a moderate pace over the next twenty years. Job growth (particularly from the Plant Vogtle nuclear power facility) and development expanding south from Augusta-Richmond County will ensure that the moderate growth the county has enjoyed in the last two decades will continue.

4.5 TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

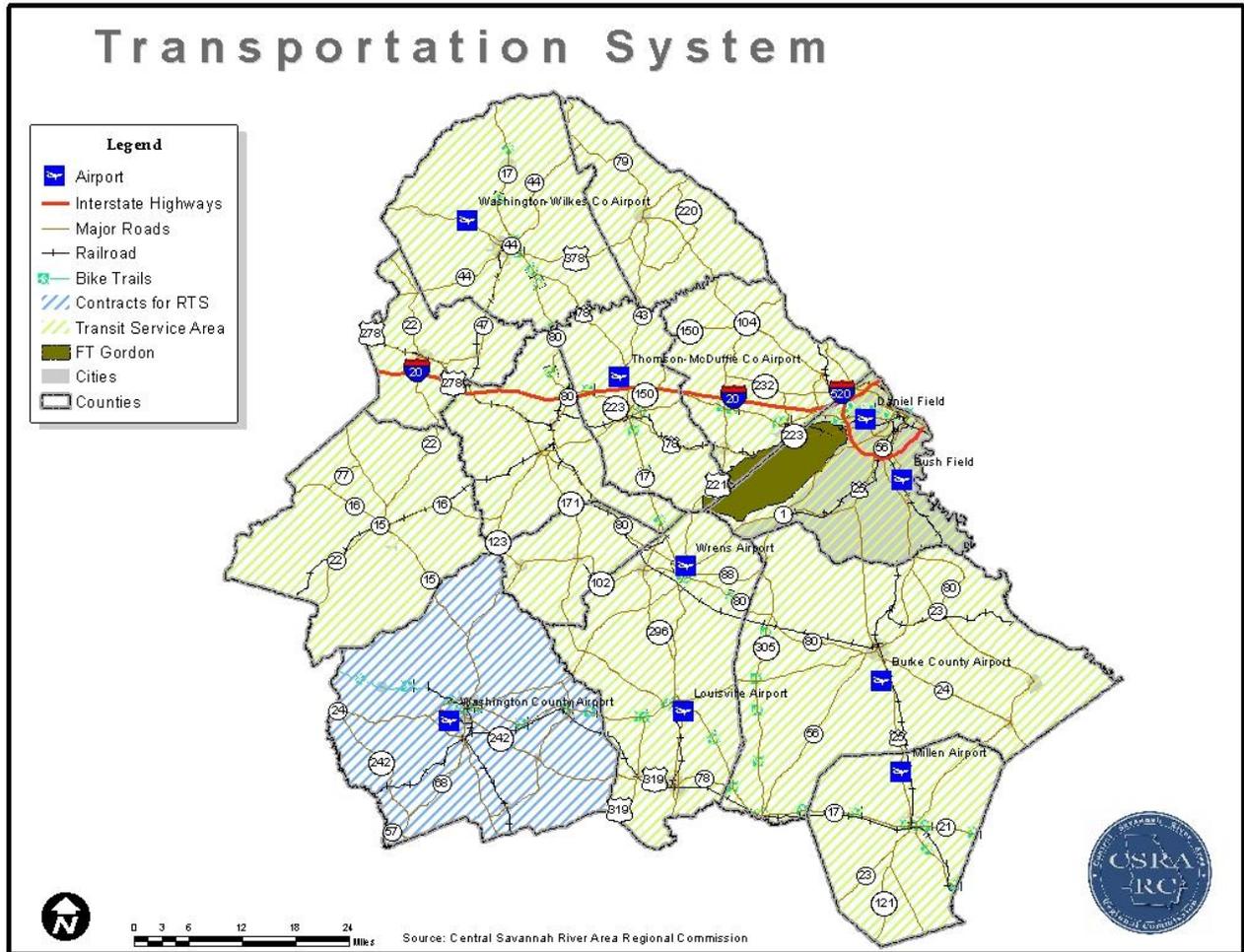
Community facilities in the region are primarily locally maintained and operated. Most CSRA counties provide annual expenditures for services such as fire and police protection, road maintenance, and library facilities. Most operate solid waste management systems of varying capacity and service. Other necessary services such as water and sewer are provided primarily by metropolitan counties, while the smaller, sparsely populated counties in the region are either provided for by their incorporated cities, use private means such as wells or septic systems, or contract for services with private companies.

Zoning, building inspection and regulations are services that are not widely provided in the region outside the urbanized area. Smaller, sparsely population counties cannot support planning, zoning and code enforcement services because of financial, administrative and managerial restrictions.

4.5.1 Transportation

The CSRA has a small network of interstates and four-lane U.S. highways that provide east-west and north-south access to regional and national markets. Interstates 20 and 520, as well as U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 link the CSRA's major cities to each other as well as to the state's major cities, such as Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah (Figure 23). However, the highway system does not meet traveler and freight mobility needs throughout the region. The interstates and U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 cover only a part of the CSRA, leaving entire areas in the northern and southern part of the region without adequate highway infrastructure.

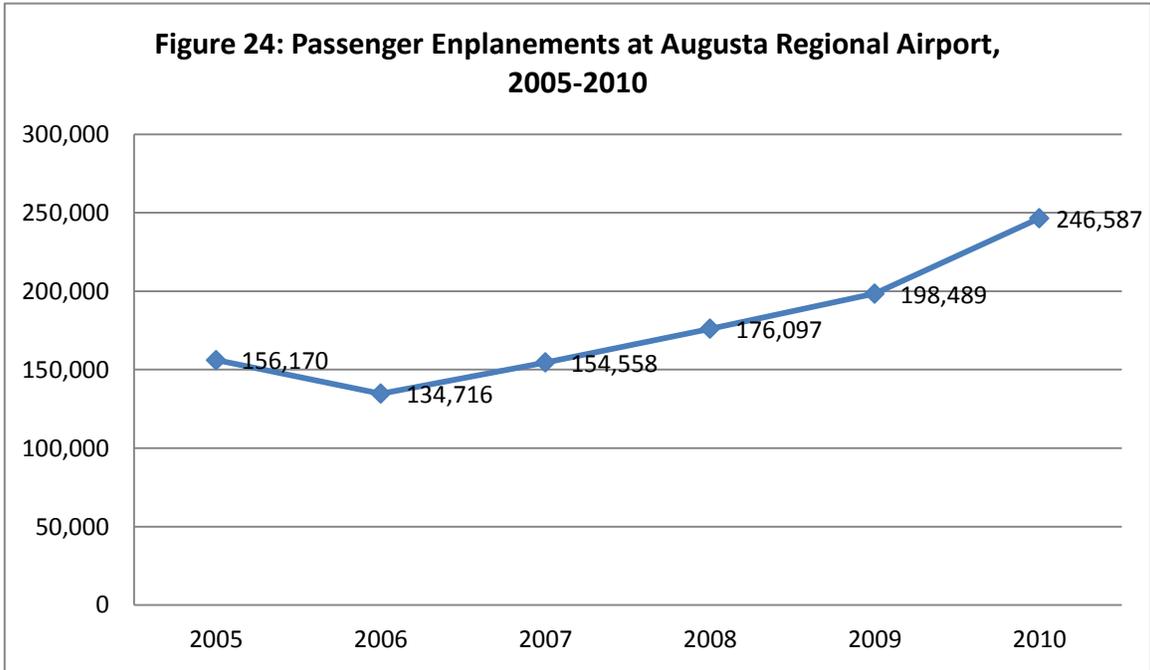
Figure 23: CSRA Transportation Network



The CSRA has two primary rail freight carriers: Norfolk Southern and CSX Rail Service. Rail lines in the region carry among the lowest volumes of rail freight in the state, according to the Georgia Rail Plan (2009). Only Augusta-Richmond and Warren counties have direct connections to major rail freight hubs in Atlanta and Macon.

There are eleven airports that service the CSRA but only Augusta Regional Airport provides regularly-scheduled commercial flights. The airport currently has 21 daily departures and 22 daily arrivals to three major hubs (Atlanta, Charlotte and Dallas) from two carriers (Delta and US Airways). In 2010, the annual passenger volume at the Augusta airport was 246,587, compared to 198,489 (24.2 percent increase) in 2009 (Figure 24). Between 2005 and 2010, Augusta Regional's growth rate was 57.9 percent, making it one of the fastest growing small commercial services airports in the nation. Nationally, passenger enplanements during that period actually declined by 3.2 percent. As a small airport, the Federal Aviation Administration does not collect air freight data for the Augusta Regional Airport.

Source: Federal Aviation Administration



Fixed-route public transit in the CSRA is limited to Augusta-Richmond County. Augusta Public Transit operates nine routes from Monday through Saturday, with daily ridership averaging approximately 3,000. The rest of the CSRA is served with demand-response service, paid for by state and federal agencies that provide transportation benefits, such as Medicare and Medicaid.

The CSRA developed a bicycle and pedestrian plan in 2005. The plan aimed to designate a regional bicycle network as well as recommend actions to improve pedestrian facilities, particularly in downtown areas.

<http://www.csrardc.org/docs/planning/Transportation/CSRABikeandPedPlan.pdf>

CSRA cities and counties have been very active in implementing numerous bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Most of the region's Transportation Enhancements projects have been focused on these transportation modes, both to improve facilities and as part of wider downtown revitalization, and for recreation efforts. Over \$7.3 million has been invested in these projects within in the past three years alone (Table 19).

Table 19: CSRA Transportation Enhancements Awards	
Project	Amount
FY 2011	
Augusta Entryway & Corridor Master Design, Augusta-Richmond County	\$200,000
Eucler Creek Trail Connector, City of Grovetown	\$250,000
Thomson-McDuffie Downtown Walkway Revitalization, Phase III, City of Thomson	\$275,000

Euchee Creek Greenway Phase I, Columbia County	\$250,000
Lincolnton TE Phase III, City of Lincolnton	\$250,000
Hancock County Depot Welcome Center, Hancock County	\$525,040
Warren Depot - Trailhead Convenience Center & Streetscape, Phase III, Warren County	\$316,463
Tennille Freight Depot Rehabilitation and Streetscape Phase II, City of Tennille	\$500,000
Millen Downtown Streetscape/Green Space Preservation Phase II, City of Millen	\$1,000,000
Downtown Sparta Streetscape Phase II, City of Sparta	\$500,000
FY 2008-2009	
Euchee Creek Trail 3, City of Grovetown	\$500,000
Thomson Depot Community Center, City of Thomson	\$400,000
Augusta State University History Walk Phase IV, Augusta State University	\$600,000
City of Tignall Improvements, City of Tignall	\$80,000
City of Waynesboro Greenway Project--Phase III, City of Waynesboro	\$300,000
Historic Sparta Downtown Streetscape, City of Sparta	\$300,000
Wadley Downtown Streetscape, City of Wadley	\$283,320
Louisville Streetscape Enhancements, Phase II, City of Louisville	\$283,320
James Brown Boulevard Streetscape, Augusta DDA/Main Street	\$200,000
Sandersville Streetscape Improvements, City of Sandersville	\$300,000
Total	\$7,313,143
<i>Source: Georgia Department of Transportation</i>	

4.5.2 Telecommunications

Explosive growth in wireless and fiber-optic communication has provided many urban areas in Georgia with excellent broadband infrastructure. In many larger cities of the state, there are multiple providers who compete by offering lower prices and faster broadband speeds. However, not all the regions of the state have benefited from fiber-optic growth. Most areas of the CSRA outside of the urbanized parts of Columbia and Augusta-Richmond counties lag in both choice and quality of service. Most of these areas are not served by any land broadband service provider, making slower satellite internet service the only option. The CSRA RC considers broadband the region’s top infrastructure priority and has been aggressively pursuing state and federal funding to remedy this deficiency by extending broadband infrastructure to areas of the region that currently lack it.

In today’s high-tech economy, telecommunications infrastructure is as vital to business development decisions as water, sewer and transportation systems. Telecommunications is critical in attracting and cultivating new employers as well as keeping existing businesses competitive. From small

businesses to large manufacturers, telecommunications is a critical element in operating efficiency and access to the global marketplace.

4.5.3 Solid Waste

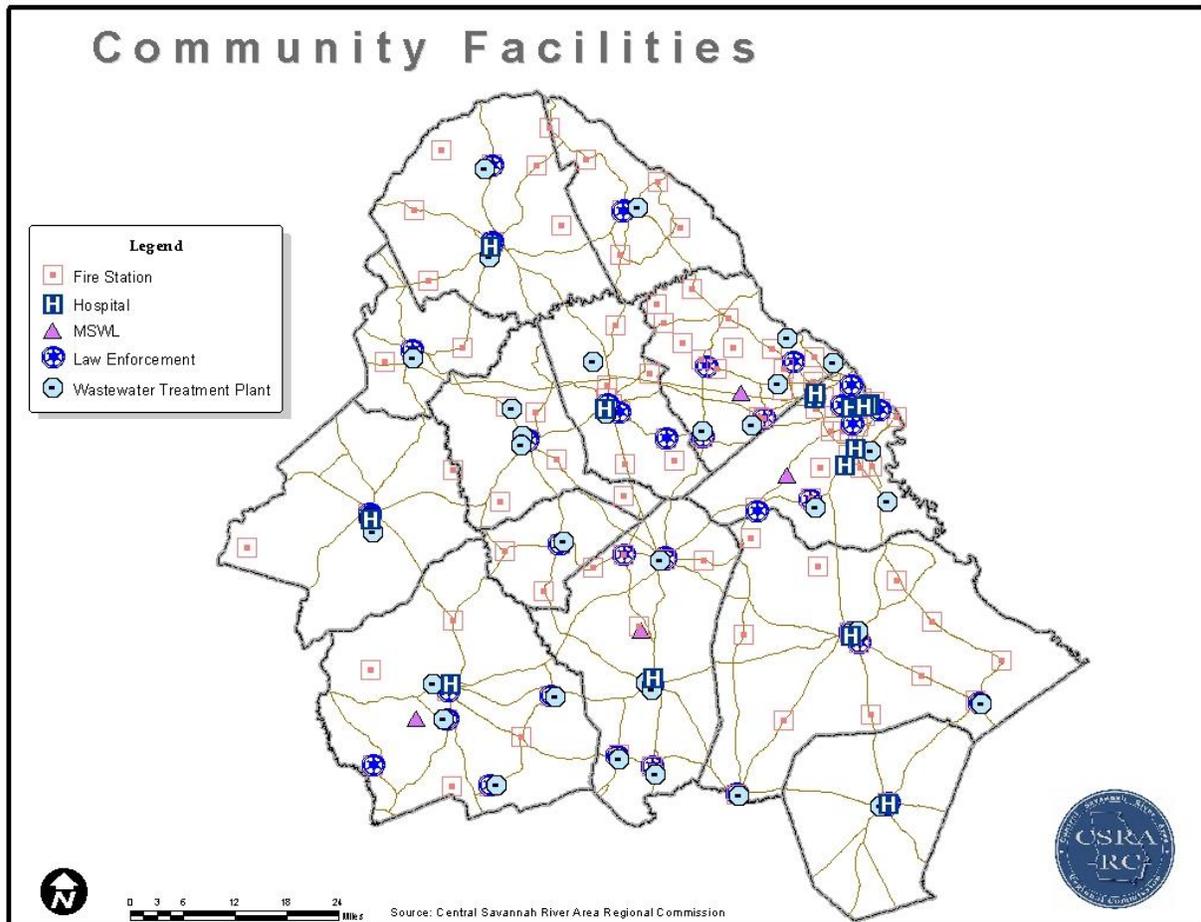
Five counties within the CSRA (McDuffie, Wilkes, Burke, Lincoln and Augusta-Richmond) provide for both collection and disposal of solid waste in landfills and transfer stations. The other counties either provide dumpster sites for residents or collection through contracts with private haulers, who themselves dispose of the waste, usually in one of the nearby counties.

4.5.5 Fire and Police Protection

There are 864 full-time and volunteer firefighters in the CSRA. Despite having over 40 fire stations spread throughout the region (Figure 25), and one of the highest firefighter per capita rates in the state, most CSRA counties had high fire insurance ratings, indicating a need for additional funding for equipment or human resources.

The various municipal police departments and sheriff's offices in the CSRA counted 603 police officers, the vast majority in Augusta-Richmond and Columbia counties. Crime rates throughout the CSRA are approximately similar to those found in other regions of the state.

Figure 25: CSRA Community Facilities



4.5.6 Libraries

The CSRA has six different library systems serving the region, counting a total of 35 libraries (Table 20).

Table 20: CSRA Regional Library System		
Library System	CSRA Counties Served	Number of Libraries
Bartram Trail	McDuffie, Taliaferro, Wilkes	3
East Central Georgia	Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Lincoln, Richmond, Warren	15
Jefferson County	Jefferson	3
Oconee	Washington	4
Screven-Jenkins	Jenkins	2
Uncle Remus	Hancock	8
Total		35

4.5.7 Hospitals

The Augusta area is renowned for its concentration of medical facilities. Its hospital bed per capita rate is among the highest in the nation, led by the area’s major hospitals: Georgia Health Sciences Medical Center (formerly MCGHealth Medical Center), Doctor’s Hospital, and University Hospital (Table 21).

Table 21: CSRA Hospitals		
Hospital	County	Number of Hospital Beds
Burke Medical Center	Burke	40
Jefferson Hospital	Jefferson	37
Jenkins County Hospital	Jenkins	15
McDuffie Regional Medical Center	McDuffie	25
Georgia Health Sciences Medical Center	Augusta-Richmond	478
Doctors Hospital of Augusta	Augusta-Richmond	264
University Hospital	Augusta-Richmond	495
Trinity Hospital of Augusta	Augusta-Richmond	121
Washington County Regional Medical Center	Washington	116
Wills Memorial Hospital	Wilkes	25
Total		1,616

4.6 NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

4.6.1 Land Area and Soils

The CSRA includes three major land area types, the Southern Piedmont-Mountain Province, the Carolina and Georgia Sandhills and the Southern Coastal Plain. Through a variety of natural processes, each of these areas have differing mineral composition, structure, texture, drainage, and fertility and construction constraints.

- The Southern Piedmont is characterized by steep to gently rolling thin, well drained red soils with sandy loam surface layers over sandy clay to clay sub-soils. Much of the original topsoil has been eroded by past agricultural abuses, leaving red clay sub-soils exposed in some areas. Soybeans and forages are grown in remaining topsoil. Small grains and pastures are better adapted where topsoil is gone. Suitability for building foundations is fair to good; septic tank suitability is fair to poor.
- The Carolina and Georgia Sand Hills, consists of a belt of gently sloping to steep, well drained and sandy soils originally derived from marine sands, loams, and clays deposited on the crystalline and metamorphic bedrock of adjacent uplands. Soils in this region are generally infertile and dry. The land area is largely covered with sparse forest of scrub oak and pines. This area offers poor to good suitability for residences and industry. The sand hills comprise a rather narrow strip less than 10 miles wide with very irregular boundaries.
- Southern Coastal Plain is characterized by gently sloping, well-drained sandy loam to sandy soils over friable sandy clay loam to clay sub-soils that are sticky when wet. When fertilized and limed soils produce high yields of corn, peanuts, tobacco, small grains and soybeans. This province provides a fair to good suitability for residential and industrial foundations.

The soil and land characteristics of an area play a significant role in dictating the type and amount of development that can occur. As the amount and intensity of development increase in the future, continued consideration of the constraints and suitability of the land must be carefully weighed and considered before development can proceed. For instance, it is important for counties with areas that are poorly suited for industrial and residential development to steer development to suitable areas, or require necessary alterations to render the land more suitable for development. The costs associated with such options are major factors in development decisions.

A soil inventory for each CSRA jurisdiction has been included in local comprehensive plans. The Soil Conservation Service has developed a soil rating system which indicates the overall suitability of land for development based on the following limiting factors: flooding, steep slopes, depth to bedrock, high water table, excessive shrink-swell capacity of the soil and poor percolation. A soil with a rating of slight indicates that there are few or no limitations for development. A rating of moderate indicates that some planning and engineering are needed to overcome limitations. A severe rating indicates that engineering practices and a large capital investment are needed to overcome soil limitations. Before development can occur, a local jurisdiction can check these maps and soil ratings to ensure the land is suitable or to determine what steps will be taken to make the land suitable for the pending development.

The quality and quantity of the various soil resources in the CSRA is an issue deserving of regional attention. Three contributing factors to soil erosion are steepness of slope, rainfall intensity and duration, as well as the construction methods used in development. Excessive erosion can be avoided if these factors are taken into consideration in both the design and construction phases of

development. Control mechanisms such as retention/detention ponds, vegetative cover, and sediment fencing can greatly reduce the amount of erosion if utilized properly throughout the development process. Each county and city has addressed soil protection from erosion and degradation in their local comprehensive plans. At a minimum, local jurisdictions should consult the soil maps and tables in these plans to assess general site suitability before either proceeding with public projects or allowing private development projects in a given area.

In addition, many jurisdictions throughout the region have adopted Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinances as prescribed by the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1989, and are thereby certified by the State Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to issue permits for land disturbing activities.

4.6.2 Timber Resources

Timber is a very important resource in the CSRA, whose 2.3 million timber land acres account for 12 percent of Georgia's total timberland acreage. Timber is the most extensive natural resource in the region with 67.7 percent of all CSRA land acres classified as timberland (Table 22).

Types of pine plantations include longleaf slash, slash, loblolly, shortleaf and oak. The largest increases have occurred in areas of planted loblolly pine stands. The loblolly-shortleaf is the dominant species of timber grown in the CSRA Region.

	Forestland (thousands of Acres)	Forestland, percent of land use
Burke County	333.6	64.3
Columbia County	107.7	57.4
Glascock County	76.7	76.2
Hancock County	267.2	90.7
Jefferson County	251.8	70.8
Jenkins County	150.4	66.3
Lincoln County	109.4	78.8
McDuffie County	123.5	73.6
Richmond County	135.5	58.5
Taliaferro County	118.4	90.9
Warren County	161.9	89.0
Washington County	313.9	71.6
Wilkes County	238.6	78.6
CSRA	2,388.6	74.4

Source: Georgia County Guide

Forest production in Georgia is a multibillion dollar industry, comprised of processors, loggers, and secondary manufacturers. Georgia is the largest timber producing state in the Southeast and ranks third nationally behind Oregon and Washington State in the output of timber for lumber and plywood production. Georgia's production of pulpwood is second only to Alabama. The CSRA is home to a number of primary wood using industries, mostly sawmills.

Timberland is in abundant supply and an economic asset throughout the CSRA region. Regional cooperation could result in promoting the entire CSRA as a target location for timber and related businesses.

4.6.3 Mineral Resources

The CSRA contains a wealth of mineral resources. Kaolin, a type of clay, is the most extensively mined mineral in the region, followed by structural clays and stone crushed granite (Table 23). These minerals appear in most CSRA counties, with strong concentrations in Jefferson and Washington counties.

Table 23: CSRA Minerals by County, 2008	
	Type of Minerals
Burke County	Fill Material
Columbia County	Structural Clays, Fill Materials, Crushed Granite, Construction Sand, Crushed Granite
Glascock County	Kaolin
Hancock County	Kaolin, Crushed Granite, Crushed Granite
Jefferson County	Fuller's Earth, Kaolin
Jenkins County	Not Available
Lincoln County	Gold, Dimension Granite (stone)
McDuffie County	Kaolin, Fill Material, Construction Sand
Richmond County	Kaolin, Structural Clays
Taliaferro County	Not Available
Warren County	Kaolin
Washington County	Kaolin
Wilkes County	Feldspar, Gold
<i>Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources Mining Directory</i>	

- Kaolin** - a white, slightly plastic, nearly pure commercial clay composed of the mineral kaolinite. The world's richest high-grade kaolin reserves lie in a 10-25 miles wide band along the Fall Line from Macon to Augusta. Occurring in discontinuous deposits varying from 6 to 50 feet in thickness, the kaolin is mined by giant drag like machines. The biggest use of kaolin is papermaking, paints, plastics and rubber, and base for white porcelain ware. Kaolin is also used as filler in pesticide carriers, adhesives, seed coating, fabrics, food, ink, leather, and pharmaceuticals.

- **Structural Clays** - These clays are mined in Augusta-Richmond and Columbia County. They are used for brick, tile, sewer pipe, and road materials. Nonstructural clay may be refined for highly specialized uses such as papermaking. Some of the northern CSRA counties have structural clay deposits but are not being mined at this time.
- **Feldspar** - Mined in Wilkes County, it is an aluminum silicate group with various amounts of potash, soda and lime. It is ground and used in glass, pottery, enamels, glazes, scouring powders and soaps.
- **Fuller's Earth** - Mined in Jefferson County and is used for cat litter, oil and grease absorbent, insecticide carrier, drilling mud, pesticides, paints, soap and medicines.
- **Gemstones/Gold** - This mineral is located in two major belts in crystalline rock form. Deposits are found in Columbia, Lincoln, McDuffie and Wilkes County. Uses include jewelry and electrical uses. Phosphate deposits are found in the Southern portions of Jenkins County. The uses include fertilizer, baking powder, water softeners, pharmaceutical, ceramics and animal food supplements. Granite is found in Columbia, Glascock, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes County. The uses include dimension stone for building, monuments, curbing, paving blocks, crushed stones for concrete aggregate, road material, and chicken grit.

Georgia’s industrial minerals industry is dominated by kaolin, which accounts for more than half of total mineral production value. Nearly all of the kaolin is mined in the Georgia Kaolin District. Despite its abundance in the region, kaolin faces increasing competition in many foreign markets. South American kaolin now appears in Europe and is even imported into the United States.

4.6.4 Agricultural Resources

The CSRA has an abundant supply of agricultural resources in the form of cropland and pastures. In recent years, the number of farms and croplands has declined, mirroring a national trend of farm consolidation and larger-scale operations. Prime farmland is available land that is best suited for producing food and fiber. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply necessary to produce sustained yields of crops. Prime agricultural lands are primarily located in the southern part of the region, with Burke, Jefferson and Washington counties having the largest farm land acreage in the CSRA (Table 24).

Table 24: CSRA Farmland by County, 2009 (note that figures also include some land classified as timberland)		
	Land Use in Farms (in Acres)	Land in Farms, percent of Land Use
Burke County	191,790	36.2
Columbia County	18,836	10.2
Glascock County	21,233	23.1
Hancock County	38,022	12.6

Jefferson County	108,932	32.3
Jenkins County	84,730	38.1
Lincoln County	27,612	20.5
McDuffie County	36,109	21.9
Richmond County	12,519	6.0
Taliaferro County	14,096	11.3
Warren County	37,196	20.4
Washington County	110,164	25.4
Wilkes County	89,785	29.9
CSRA	791,024	22.1
<i>Source: Georgia County Guide</i>		

The total number of farms in the CSRA has decreased since the 1980s. Today, there are less than half the 3,400 farms in operation in 1982. For the region as a whole, acreage devoted to farmland has decreased 30 percent since 1982. The type of farming operation has also changed in the last three decades. While crop production has declined, the production of bushels or bales has increased. The major farm commodities produced in the CSRA include: beef cattle and calves, milk cows, hogs, sheep, corn for grain or seed, cotton, soybeans, pecans, and peaches.

Although farmland is presently abundant, the irreversible conversion of prime agricultural lands throughout the CSRA could prove problematic in the future. There are few incentives for owners to retain prime agricultural farmland and agricultural users cannot compete on strictly an economic basis with urban development. Nonetheless, public policies such as taxing practices and land use planning can be adopted and utilized to provide needed incentives as deemed appropriate. Zoning ordinances that offer incentives, such as density bonuses to the developer if they preserve certain parts of the land for open space or agriculture, can be promoted and adopted. The CSRA needs to assess the rate at which prime farmlands are being irreversibly converted in the region. Policies should be encouraged to preserve prime farmland, and ensure that any land converted is not irreversibly converted preventing future agricultural use as required.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

This section provides inventories of environmentally sensitive areas. For complete inventories, including all Regionally Important Resources, please refer to the CSRA Regionally Important Resources Plan –

http://www.dca.ga.gov/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/Regional_percent20Plans/Adopted_percent20Regional_percent20Plans/CSRA/2011-10_CSRA_RIR_Plan_ADOPTED.pdf

4.6.5 Aquifer Recharge Areas

The amount and quality of groundwater is a function primarily of geology. Water resources vary within the CSRA because of the differing soil types and aquifers within the region. There are three major aquifers underlying the CSRA region, the Crystalline Rock aquifer in the North above the fall

line; the Cretaceous aquifer system in the Center of the region; and the Floridian aquifer system in the southern CSRA.

- The Cretaceous Aquifer is a system of sand and gravel.
- The Floridian aquifer is made of confined limestone, dolostone and calcareous sand. It supplies approximately 50 percent of the state's groundwater.
- The Coastal Plain is underlain by five aquifers, including the Principal artisan aquifer, which may be the world's largest, covering a third of Georgia, most of Florida and parts of Alabama and South Carolina.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has mapped all groundwater recharge areas in the State which are vulnerable to pollution from surface and near surface activities. The largest continuous area of aquifer recharge is found in Augusta-Richmond, Glascock, Jefferson, Washington, and northern Burke counties. There are also significant pockets of recharge areas in the rest of the counties.

Each city and county that has a DNR designated significant recharge area within its boundaries is required to enforce, at the minimum, the DNR's guidelines to ensure that development in significant recharge areas will minimize groundwater pollution. Guidelines include limitations on the amount of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots and building pads. The sub-surface integrity of aquifer recharge areas should also be maintained by avoiding development that may contaminate water supply (e.g. landfills).

Regional cooperation for the protection of aquifer recharge areas could involve an effort headed by the CSRA RC to consider the cumulative environmental effects of septic tank systems being used in close proximity to one another. While local health departments are responsible for governing septic tank installation and locations, regional cooperation could include developing inventories and assessing existing systems and their effects on the aquifer systems. Regional guidelines could be established to ensure appropriate development densities on lots served by septic tanks and within aquifer recharge areas. Clean and safe water sources are issues deserving of regional attention.

4.6.6 Water Supply Watershed

Water supply watersheds are defined by DNR as the areas of land upstream of a publicly owned drinking water intake. Many different factors determine the volume of water in a stream or other body of water, including precipitation, land cover, slope, soil type and capacity and speed of absorption into the soil. Any water not absorbed by the soil, detained on the surface by lakes or ponds, or used by vegetation, runs off as overflow or surface runoff. Water that is later released by the soil adds to this overflow to produce total runoff. As runoff flows to areas of lower elevation, it collects in drainage areas, the boundaries of which form watersheds.

The removal of vegetation and the introduction of paving for roads, parking lots, etc. increase the total runoff on a site which in turn increases erosion, flooding, and sedimentation of water sources. To protect drinking water supplies downstream, DNR has established buffer requirements and impervious surface limitations to be applied to certain watersheds. For watersheds with an area in excess of 100 square miles, all perennial streams within seven miles of a public water supply intake have a required 100-foot buffer on each side beyond which no development can occur (150 feet for impervious surfaces and septic tank drain fields).

For watersheds with less than 100 square miles and including a reservoir, DNR recommends:

- A 150-foot buffer around the reservoir;
- A 100-foot buffer on each side of perennial streams within a 7-mile radius from the reservoir boundary;
- A 50-foot buffer on each side of the perennial streams outside the 7-mile radius;
- A 150-foot setback on each side of the perennial stream within a 7-mile radius of the reservoir boundary;
- A 75-foot setback on each side of the perennial stream outside the 7-mile radius;
- Impervious surfaces may not cover more than 25 percent of the total land area in the watershed.

Protected Watershed Areas are located in Lincoln, Wilkes, McDuffie, Warren, Burke, and Augusta-Richmond Counties. All of these communities have addressed water supply watershed protection in their local plans and, where necessary, have adopted regulations and encouraged health department permitting, to protect these resources.

The next 20 years is likely to bring additional development and change to the region, potentially rendering CSRA water supply watersheds vulnerable to pollution. A proactive approach to groundwater protection is necessary because it is much less expensive to protect a pristine groundwater source than to restore a contaminated source. A regional inventory of watershed protection and enforcement of such guidelines would help the region ensure the future availability of quality water supply from these sources. A regional effort could be induced to ensure that local regulations are consistent with those of surrounding jurisdictions who have an effect on the same water supply watershed, those areas lacking adequate protection would be notified and assisted in making any additional regulation conform to their community. An additional regional effort may include having the CSRA RC provide technical assistance for areas that may need resources in areas such as enforcement, application of regulations, or public awareness.

4.6.7 River Basins and Major Lakes

The main rivers in the CSRA region include the Savannah, the Little, the Ogeechee and the Ochoopee Rivers with a combined shoreline of 1,140 miles. The northern CSRA, which falls in the Southern Piedmont landform, contains the Clarks Hill Dam and Reservoir with a surface area of 78,500 acres. The Clarks Hill Dam creates a great multipurpose storage reservoir for flood control and hydroelectric power and in conjunction with the Sevens Creek Dam below it has almost complete control over the flow to provide a relatively uniform flow for navigation in the Coastal Plain below Augusta. Virtually all of the flow from the area above Clarks Hill Dam is used for hydroelectric power. Other downstream uses include navigation and irrigation.

The northern border of the Georgia/Carolina Sand Hills region is commonly the head of navigation for large rivers and the site of water power dams. The flow of larger streams is relatively uniform with high yields due to groundwater inflow. Larger streams are sluggish, flowing in deep, meandering, low-banked, tree-choked channels. River water is used for steam power plants and some manufacturing, but artisan wells supply most towns and many industries in this region. The cretaceous aquifer underlying the Fall Line for a distance of 30-60 miles consists mostly of sand and gravel.

Relatively few natural lakes are found in the Coastal plain, created by the dissolution of underlying limestone formations. The state has, however, some 27 major constructed reservoirs, covering approximately 325,000 acres. In the Southern Coastal Plain, river water is used for steam power plants and for wastewater disposal. Most cities and industries obtain water supplies from artisan

wells. Some of the largest water users take water from rivers. There are a few reservoir and low head water power sites.

River corridors (rivers and the immediate shore land environment – sometimes referred to as the “riparian zone”) are areas of critical environmental significance. They provide a number of benefits, including drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, flood storage capacity, and assimilative capacity for wastewater discharges – the river or stream’s ability to dilute wastewater to a point where it is no longer a threat to human health.

DNR has identified those rivers in the state which should be protected. By definition, river corridors are strips of land that flank major rivers in Georgia. Such rivers include the Savannah, Ogeechee, Ochopee and Oconee Rivers. Communities along these rivers are required to adopt River Corridor Protection Plans as part of the comprehensive planning process. Columbia, Richmond, Wilkes, Burke, Jenkins, and Hancock Counties have all addressed river protection in their comprehensive plans either through amendments or through the original process.

The CSRA region has an abundance of water resources. Water has seldom been a limiting factor in the development of the region’s economy. However, the population of the urbanized area is growing and becoming more dispersed, placing an increased burden on water supplies. An increase in the region’s economic base suggests that an adequate supply of usable water cannot be taken for granted. In addition, threats from outside the region – including demand for water supplies and the effects of pollution – may place additional pressures on the region’s water resources. Competition for available water is already widespread, and a regional approach to ensuring future water availability is needed.

Regional Water Needs

Drinking water in the CSRA is plentiful and found in surface and ground sources. Surface water availability is abundant, other than during periods of drought. The only constraint to surface water availability is the extent of systems’ transmission lines. In eastern Georgia, Clarks Hill (Thurmond) Reservoir, Lake Sinclair, Usry Pond, Brier Creek, Ford Creek, and the Savannah River all supply water to municipal governments for domestic use. There are 10 community drinking water systems using surface water as a source. Combined, they serve approximately 167,000 people. The table on the following page provides information on community drinking water systems using a surface water source.

Future availability of groundwater is more difficult to predict. Throughout the CSRA, there are 60 community drinking water systems (approximately 85 percent of all community systems) using groundwater as a source and serving nearly 130,000 people. Groundwater levels fluctuate extensively; predictions as to available quantities of groundwater are difficult due to variations in recharge and discharge. Recharge varies in response to precipitation and surface-water infiltration into an aquifer.

There are three major aquifers in the Southeast United States that are used for drinking water in the CSRA region:

- Floridian aquifer system and Cretaceous aquifer system. Counties served include Jenkins, most of Burke, the southern two-thirds of Jefferson, and southeast Washington.
- Cretaceous aquifer system. This is the major source of water in east-central Georgia. The Cretaceous aquifer supplies water for kaolin mining and processing. Well depths range from 30 feet to 750 feet. Common yields range from 50 to 1,200 gallons per minute. Counties

served include Washington, Glascock, the upper portion of Jefferson, Richmond, the northwestern tip of Burke, and a small piece of McDuffie.

- Crystalline-rock aquifers. These aquifers are not laterally extensive. Depths range from 40 feet to 600 feet. Common yields range from up to 25 gallons per minute. Counties served include Hancock, Warren, Taliaferro, Wilkes, Lincoln, McDuffie, and Columbia counties.

Due to the uncertain supplies of groundwater and the relative predictability of surface water, local governments should use surface water resources when available. Although groundwater sources are less predictable, it is unlikely that an aquifer as a drinking water source would become exhausted during the planning period. Measures to protect an aquifer's quantity and quality of water as mentioned previously can be implemented now. Consolidation of groundwater systems to make them more efficient is another option. A long-range (50-year) plan for a regional water system using only surface water may be appropriate if depths to groundwater show significant declines over the planning period.

4.6.8 Wetlands

Preservation of wetlands is vital because of the many important functions they serve. These functions include water purification, water storage and the creation of fish, animal and plant habitats. Wetlands are an invaluable resource both ecologically and economically. They are among the world's most biologically productive ecosystems and serve as crucial habitats for wildlife. Wetlands can help maintain water quality or improve degraded water by performing functions similar to a wastewater treatment plant, filtering sediment, toxic substances and nutrients. Wetland vegetation filters and retains sediments which otherwise enter lakes, streams and reservoirs often necessitating costly maintenance dredging activities. Wetlands are also important to flood protection, as they act as water storage areas, significantly reducing peak flows downstream, and the meandering nature of wetlands combined with abundant vegetation reduce flood velocities.

Wetlands are found in every county within the CSRA, with Burke County containing the most with 110,000 acres. The loss of wetlands has become of increasing concern as the public becomes more informed about the values and functions of wetlands. In 1991, the US Fish and Wildlife Service developed the National Wetlands Inventory to adequately assess the amount of and losses of wetlands.

The wetlands permitting program under Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act ("Clean Water Act") is enforced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Activities or developments planned for wetland areas require a thorough environmental and public interest review. Although federal laws govern wetland protection, local governments should encourage conservation of wetlands through wetland protection ordinances or land development regulations, or land trust purchases. Small, local projects may be having a cumulative, negative impact on wetland acreage, thereby decreasing the total acreage or otherwise damaging the resource. A regional inventory and assessment of wetland loss should be considered. The CSRA RC can play a role in wetlands public awareness programs and propose ways to balance wetland conservation and land development.

4.6.9 Historic Resources

The CSRA has one of the richest histories in Georgia. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the nation's list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. Individual historic properties and historic districts are listed in the National Register at the local, state and national level of significance. The following is an inventory by county of CSRA properties listed in the NRHP:

Burke County

- Burke County Courthouse (1980)
- Sapp Plantation (1980)
- Jones, John James, House (1980)
- Hopeful Baptist Church (1993)
- Waynesboro Commercial Historic District (1993)
- Haven Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church (1996)
- McCanaan Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery (2001)
- Waynesboro Historic District (2009)

Columbia County

- Stallings Island, archaeological (1966)
- Kiokee Baptist Church (1978)
- Woodville, state (1979)
- Columbia County Courthouse (1980)

Glascok County

- Glascok County Courthouse (1980)

Hancock County

- Shivers-Simpson House (Rock Mill) (1970)
- Glen Mary Plantation (1974)
- Sparta Historic District (1974)
- Camilla-Zack Community Center District (Mayfield) (1974)
- Linton Historic District (1975)
- Cheely-Coleman House (Jewell) (1976)
- Shoulderbone Mounds (1976)
- Rockby (1978)
- Pearson, Stephen Edward, House (1978)
- Jewell Historic District (1979)
- Jackson, John S., Plantation House (1984)
- Pearson--Boyer Plantation (1993)
- Hurt--Rives Plantation (1996)
- Sparta Cemetery (2001)

Jefferson County

- Old Market (1978)
- Jefferson County Courthouse (1980)
- Cunningham-Coleman House (1984)
- Louisville Commercial Historic District (1994)
- Bartow Historic District (2009)

Jenkins County

- Birdsville Plantation (1971)

- Camp Lawton(Magnolia Springs State Park) (1978)
- Jenkins County Courthouse (1980)
- Carswell Grove Baptist Church and Cemetery (1996)

- Downtown Millen Historic District (1996)
- Millen High School (2002)

Lincoln County

- Chennault House (1976)
- Matthews House (1976)
- Lincoln County Courthouse (1980)
- Lincolnnton Presbyterian Church and Cemetery (1982)
- Lamar-Blanchard House (1982)
-

- Amity School (1993)
- Double Branches Historic District (1993)
- Lincolnnton Historic District (1993)
- Woodlawn Historic District (1993)
- Simmons--Cullars House (1999)

McDuffie County

- Old Rock House (1970)
- Usry House (1974)
- Thomas Carr District (1975)
- Hickory Hill (Thomas E. Watson House), (1979)
- Bowdre-Rees-Knox House (1979)
- Sweetwater Inn (1985)
- Thomson Commercial Historic District (1989)

- McNeill House (1992)
- Hardaway, James L., House (1993)
- Pine Top Farm (1996)
- Wrightsboro Historic District (1998)
- Hayes Line Historic District (2000)
- Hillman--Bowden House (2002)
- Boneville Historic District (2002)
- Hillman--Bowden House (2002)

Richmond County

- Harris-Pearson-Walker House (1969)
- Augusta Canal Industrial District (1971)
- Benet, Stephen Vincent, House (1971)
- College Hill (1971)
- First Baptist Church of Augusta (1972)
- Old Medical College Building (1972)
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church (1972)
- Academy of Richmond County, state (1973)
- Brahe House (1973)
- Gertrude Herbert Art Institute (1973)
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1973)
- FitzSimons-Hampton House (1976)
- Meadow Garden (1976)
- Augusta Cotton Exchange Building (1978)
- Old Richmond County Courthouse (1978)
- Fruitlands (1979)
- Gould-Weed House (1979)
- Lamar Building (1979)
- Reid-Jones-Carpenter House (1979)

- Wilson, Woodrow, Boyhood Home (1979)
- Broad Street Historic District (1980)
- Greene Street Historic District (1980)
- Pinched Gut Historic District (1980)
- Summerville Historic District (1980)
- Springfield Baptist Church (1982)
- Laney-Walker North Historic District (1985)
- Engine Company Number One (1988)
- Seclusaval and Windsor Spring (1988)
- Harrisburg--West End Historic District (1990)
- Darling, Joseph, House (1991)
- Tubman High School (1994)
- Bethlehem Historic District (1996)
- Lamar, Joseph Rucker, Boyhood Home (1996)
- Shiloh Orphanage (1996)
- Church of the Most Holy Trinity (1997)
- First Presbyterian Church of Augusta (1997)
- Liberty Methodist Church (1997)

- Sands Hill Historic District (1997)
- United States Post Office and Courthouse (2000)
- Academy of Richmond County--1926 Campus (2004)
- Augusta Downtown Historic District (2004)
- Bath Presbyterian Church and Cemetery (2004)
- Cauley-Wheeler Memorial Building (2008)

Taliaferro County

- Liberty Hall (1970)
- Colonsay Plantation (1974)
- Taliaferro County Courthouse (1980)
- Stephens, A. H., Memorial State Park (1995)
- Chapman--Steed House (2002)
- Crawfordville Historic District (2006)
- Locust Grove Cemetery (2006)

Warren County

- Jewell Historic District (1979)
- Roberts-McGregor House (1979)
- Warren County Courthouse (1980)
- Warrenton Downtown Historic District (2002)
- Warrenton Gymnasium—Auditorium (2002)

Washington County

- Francis Plantation (1975)
- Washington County Courthouse (1980)
- Church-Smith-Harris Street Historic District (1987)
- City Cemetery (1987)
- Elder, Thomas Jefferson, High and Industrial School (1981)
- North Harris Street Historic District (1989)
- Holt Brothers Banking Company Building (1994)
- Johnson, James E., House (1994)
- Kelley, James, House (1994)
- Madden, Charles, House (1994)
- Smith, Thomas W., House (1994)
- Tennille Banking Company Building (1994)
- Tennille Baptist Church (1994)
- Washington Manufacturing Company (1994)
- Wrightsville and Tennille Railroad Company Building (1994)
- Warthen Historic District (1997)
- Tennille Woman's Clubhouse (1998)
- Sandersville Commercial and Industrial District (2002)
- Forest Grove (2005)

14. Wilkes County

- Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum (1970)
- Campbell-Jordan House (1971)
- Arnold-Callaway Plantation (1972)
- Cedars, The (1972)
- Gilbert-Alexander House (1972)
- East Robert Toombs Historic District (1972)
- Holly Court (1972)
- Mary Willis Library (1972)
- Peacewood (1972)
- Poplar Corner (1972)
- Toombs, Robert, House (1972)
- Tupper-Barnett House (1972)
- Washington Presbyterian Church (1972)

- Water--Liberty Street District (1972)
- North Washington District (1973)
- West Robert Toombs District (1973)
- Old Jail (1974)
- Kettle Creek Battlefield (1975)
- Anderson House (1976)
- Pharr-Callaway-Sethness House (1976)
- Willis-Sale-Stennett House (1976)
- Gilmer, Thomas M., House (1977)
- Daniel, James and Cunningham, House (1980)
- Wilkes County Courthouse (1980)
- Fitzpatrick Hotel (1982)
- Washington Commercial Historic District (1986)
- Gartrell Family House (2002)
- Smith, Robert Shand, House (2002)
- Washington Historic District (2004)

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks are recognized as the nation's most important historic and cultural resources. They are buildings, historic districts, structures, sites, and objects that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. They are monitored for condition by the National Park Service. The following CSRA historic resources are National Historic Landmarks:

- Stallings Island, Columbia County (1961)
- College Hill (Augusta), Richmond County (1971)
- Stephen Benet House, Richmond County (1971)
- Robert Toombs House (Washington), Wilkes County (1973)
- Tupper-Barnett House (Washington), Wilkes County (1973)
- Thomas E. Watson House (Thomson), McDuffie County (1976)
- Augusta Canal and Industrial District, Columbia and Richmond Counties (1977)
- Meadow Garden/George Walton House (Augusta), Richmond County (1981)
- Liberty Hall, Taliaferro County (1983)
- Old Medical College Building (Augusta), Richmond County (1996)
- Woodrow Wilson Boyhood Home (2008)

State Historic Parks and Recreation Areas

- Elijah Clark State Park, Lincoln County
- A.H. Stephens State Park, Taliaferro County
- Hamburg State Park, Glascock County
- Magnolia Springs State Park (Camp Lawton), Jenkins County

State Operated Historic Sites

- Liberty Hall, home of Alexander H. Stephens, Taliaferro County
- Robert Toombs House, Wilkes County

Given the sheer number of historic resources in the CSRA, the region's officials continue to make great strides in identifying and preserving these resources. The CSRA RC plays a significant role in securing funding, providing research, and completing the appropriate forms to ensure that these resources are maintained, preserved or simply listed in the National Register. However, not every resource can be maintained continuously and perpetuated as a historic structure. For example, every eligible courthouse in the region is listed on the National Register, but not every courthouse has a preservation plan. The lack of preservation plans subjects these landmarks to "quick fix" additions. This is one example of a larger issue taking place in the region. A community may have a historic district, but if an opportunity arises for new development, there are few plans in place to

encourage compatible uses near these historic areas. Deterioration of historic housing stocks is another issue that has become important to many local governments as they see many historic resources as eyesores. Rehabilitation of as many historic resources as possible is important, as they are a component of the infrastructure of a city's character and historic integrity.

Some Transportation Enhancements funding has been used to preserve a number of historic depots in the region (Bartow, Warrenton, and Tennille), breathing new life into structures that have been in continuous use for over 100 years.

Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government program extends the federal and state preservation partnership to the local level. It enhances the local government role in preservation by strengthening a community's preservation program and its link with DNR/Historic Preservation Division. A historic preservation ordinance designates a target area called a "locally designated district" for governing external change of appearance within the district for protection of historic resources. Lincolnnton, McDuffie County, Washington, Harlem, and Wrens all are participating in the CLG program, beginning with the process of designating historic districts for resource protection. This program will assist with protection of all kinds of resources within designated districts by local governments. Design guidelines can be created to assist citizens and governments with the design review process of historic resources.

Downtown Revitalization

Historic resources are an integral component of downtown revitalization. Downtown revitalization is a region-wide due to concern over aging downtowns, out-migration, and vacancies. Most historic commercial building stock was constructed from 1900-1940 and facade rehabilitation is deemed a high priority. Historic downtown storefronts have undergone great indignities through the years with aluminum or synthetic siding covering brick facing, inappropriate signage, window change outs, door removal, and awnings of wrong scale or design. There are several low-cost or free programs which can assist in enhancing downtowns.

- The Georgia Downtown Design Team is a team of volunteer architects who visit towns to examine downtown buildings and provide recommendations for their rehabilitation. The University of Georgia's School of the Environment (historic preservation graduate school class) conducts survey and preservation analyses. The school offers a design charrette – a participatory design process – that cities participate in. The full color report shows facade transformations utilizing preservation design standards.
- The Main Street program is for downtowns with population over 5,000. It requires a three-year funding commitment to employ a director, but is an excellent way to access technical expertise in the organization, promotion, economic restructuring, and design of historic downtowns.
- The Better Home Town program focuses on cities with a population less than 5,000. The program develops local vision and leadership while actively facilitating the economic development of downtown using the National Main Street Center's "Four-point Approach": Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring and Promotion.
- The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation offers technical visioning and design assistance.

CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

Stakeholder Involvement Program

1. Overview

The Stakeholder Involvement Program (SIP) is one of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requirements for Regional Plans, along with the Regional Assessment and the Regional Agenda. The SIP's purpose is to ensure that the Plan's Regional Agenda accurately reflects regional values and desires by soliciting participation from a broad group of stakeholders.

Communities within the 13-county, 41-city CSRA region range from large urban centers to small rural cities and towns. The presence of Fort Gordon also contributes to the CSRA's distinct character. Due to the regional nature of the Plan and the diverse needs of the communities which make up the region, it is essential that a variety of outreach efforts are utilized to engage broad-based participation from policymakers, advocacy organizations, citizens, and other stakeholders.

The SIP consists of three sections: Identification of Stakeholders, Participation Techniques and Plan Development Schedule. The Identification of Stakeholders component provides a list of stakeholders who should participate in the development of the Regional Agenda. The Participation Techniques section outlines the approaches that are intended to be used during the process of developing the Regional Agenda. Finally, the Plan Development Schedule serves as a project outline that assigns anticipated dates to each of the major Regional Agenda tasks.

2. Identification of Stakeholders

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (CSRA RC) has identified the following parties as essential stakeholders whose input is critical in the regional planning process. Stakeholders represent a variety of disciplines and affiliations, and will be asked to help guide the development of the Regional Agenda as key elements are addressed. Stakeholders are identified based on their role as regional decision-makers, their ability to affect or be affected by the Plan, and/or their potential to serve as resources during the planning process. Stakeholders will likely have unique roles and may be asked to participate in different ways. Following is an initial list of organizations from which stakeholder participation may be solicited:

Regional Agencies & Organizations

- Augusta Regional Transportation Study
- CSRA Area Agency on Aging
- CSRA Economic Opportunity Authority, Inc.
- CSRA Regional Commission Board of Directors
- CSRA Unified Development Authority
- CSRA Unified Development Council
- Fort Gordon Joint Land Use Committee
- Senior Citizens Council of Greater Augusta and the CSRA

State & Local Partners

- CSRA's 13 County and 41 Municipal Governments
- Development Authorities, Downtown Development Authorities, and Chambers of Commerce
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Georgia Department of Education
- Georgia Department of Transportation

- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- Georgia Forestry Commission
- Head Start Programs
- Housing Authorities
- Main Street and Better Hometown Programs

3. Participation Techniques

This section describes various approaches that may be used during the development of the Regional Agenda. Some are intended to disseminate information to stakeholders, while others will generate stakeholder input to be used in developing Plan elements. As the Regional Agenda process evolves, techniques may be added, abandoned, or modified to achieve optimal participation.

Steering Committee

The Executive Committee of the CSRA Regional Commission's Board of Directors will serve as the Steering Committee for the Plan.

Technical Advisory Group

The staff of the CSRA RC's Planning Department will provide assistance to the Steering Committee, serving as a Technical Advisory Group.

Informational Displays

The CSRA RC will develop information materials for public meetings. Topics may include general planning information, data and maps from the Regional Assessment, details on the planning process, and opportunities for input and comment.

Public Meeting(s)

A public meeting (possibly more) will be held to present important information related to the Regional Agenda to stakeholders and the general public. CSRA RC staff will be on hand to review Plan elements and receive input from attendees. The public meeting(s) may take the form of an Open House. Casual in format, this type of event provides a forum for informal discussion and exchange of ideas. Information presented at the Open House may include maps, informational fliers, the draft Regional Assessment, and printed survey forms. Meetings may take different forms depending on various factors, such as whether they are held in the metropolitan area or a rural area.

Public Hearing

As mandated by the State Planning Requirements, a public hearing will be held at the end of the planning process to present stakeholders and the general public with the final draft Regional Agenda prior to the document's transmittal to DCA for review and comment.

Stakeholder Meetings

Meetings with stakeholders will be conducted to gather input on the Regional Agenda, including a focus on performance standards. CSRA RC staff will meet with stakeholders to identify major community issues and discuss opportunities and specific action items for inclusion in the Regional Agenda. The intent is for staff to proactively solicit information and opinions by traveling to each county and meeting with stakeholders on a county-by-county basis. Meetings can include both local government representatives as well as other stakeholders. Some meetings could take place based on topic (i.e. transportation or economic development) rather than geography. Meetings can be scheduled to include plan implementation assessment meetings when applicable (in counties where these assessments will be performed during the coming months).

Stakeholder meetings will include visioning sessions aimed at determining the general direction of the Regional Agenda. Based on background information contained in the Regional Assessment, visioning sessions will be focused on answering the core questions of the Plan: “Where do we want to be?” and “How do we get there?” In addition to a general vision for the region over the course of the planning horizon, these meetings will assist in formulating specific goals and objectives.

Interactive Website

The CSRA RC’s website (csrardc.org) will serve as the online information conduit of the Regional Plan. The site will serve as a clearinghouse for public and stakeholder involvement activities and meetings (meeting schedules, announcements, etc.), regional data, and will also offer opportunities for stakeholder input. In addition, an online survey may be made available to the general public and/or targeted stakeholders.

Media Strategies

CSRA RC staff will work with press outlets to disseminate critical news items. Staff may develop press releases at certain milestones and will publicize public meeting notices periodically throughout the planning process.

Email Blasts

The CSRA RC maintains a broad database of regional email addresses, including local government elected officials and staff, state and federal agency personnel, non-governmental organization representatives, and others. This method will be used to communicate with stakeholders.

4. Plan Development Schedule

The schedule envisions beginning the process of Regional Agenda Development in August. Initial phases will include developing a regional vision, including a vision statement, development map and a defining narrative. The development of shared regional issues and opportunities will take place toward the end of the year, while work on the implementation program will take place during the first few months of 2013.

Ultimately, this document envisions transmitting the Regional Agenda to DCA in spring 2013, with adoption following by mid-2013.

	June 2012	July 2012	Aug 2012	Sep 2012	Oct 2012	Nov 2012	Dec 2012	Jan 2013	Feb 2013	Mar 2013	Apr 2013	May 2013	June 2013
Procedural - Regional Assessment & Involvement Program													
Transmit to DCA													
DCA Review													
Regional Agenda Development													
Implement Participation Techniques													
<i>Regional Vision</i>													
Vision Statement													
Regional Development Map													
Define Narrative													
<i>Regional Issues & Opportunities</i>													
<i>Implementation Program</i>													
Guiding Principles													
Performance Standards													
Strategies													
Regional Work Program													
<i>Evaluation & Monitoring</i>													
<i>Document Development</i>													
Procedural (Agenda)													
Regional Hearing													
Transmit to DCA													
DCA Review of Agenda													
Adopt Agenda and Notify DCA													

CSRA REGIONAL PLAN 2035

Regional Agenda

Introduction

The Regional Agenda is the culmination of the process of creating the CSRA Regional Plan 2035. It follows the adoption of the Regional Assessment – a data-driven snapshot of the region today – and the Stakeholder Involvement Program, which outlined methods for community participation in the planning process. The Regional Agenda sets out a vision for the future of the CSRA region and, through a detailed implementation program, the means for realizing that vision. The Agenda – and particularly the ways in which it intersects with local governments – is the product of extensive input and dialogue. It aims to be a useful part of the ongoing conversation about the future of the region for years to come.

Using This Document

The Regional Agenda is divided into four primary parts.

- The **Regional Vision** looks at the future of the region. It includes maps that project where development should take place and the forms it takes in different parts of the region.
- The **Regional Issues and Opportunities** section examines areas in which needs exist, as well as strengths that can be built on for the future. Every item in this section is tied to an implementation recommendation in the following section.
- The **Implementation Program** includes concrete steps and methods aimed at realizing the vision and addressing the regional issues and opportunities.
- Finally, the **Evaluation and Monitoring** section includes the method in which the Regional Commission and CSRA local governments will work in partnership to gauge progress toward realizing the vision.

Plan Development

The creation of the Regional Agenda began with the completion of the Regional Assessment in August 2012. With that foundation in place, CSRA planning staff began an extensive process of engaging local communities in developing the Agenda. The process included identifying stakeholders in each of the 13 member counties and inviting them to forums that were held on a county-by-county basis to solicit input on the plan. Additional public forums were held to gather input on a regional basis. The Regional Commission website served as a clearinghouse for plan documents and other information, and the Regional Commission board's executive committee served as the steering committee for the planning process.

1. Regional Vision

1.1 Vision Statement

The vision of the Central Savannah River Area is to remain a place that reflects the best of what the United States has to offer – a place where residents innovate and create and where commerce thrives; a place where residents are healthy and active because their surroundings encourage physical fitness; and, fundamentally, a place full of natural and man-made beauty, where residents take pride in and draw sustenance from their everyday surroundings.

More specifically, the CSRA in the year 2035 will offer:

- A vibrant economy that takes advantage of the abilities of all its residents;
- Healthy and active residents;
- Abundant and easily-accessible green space;
- Well-protected and managed natural and cultural resources;
- Neighborhoods that encourage interaction and allow many trips to be made on foot or bicycle;
- Communities and neighborhoods that include a mix of uses;
- Improved air and water quality;
- Strong educational facilities and rich supplies of human capital;
- A vibrant arts and cultural presence in communities of all sizes;
- Communities that work for residents of all ages – from the youngest to the oldest;
- A better range of housing choices, with more housing types offered and more affordable options available; and
- A strong culture of cooperative planning and government decision-making.

1.2 Regional Development Maps

The maps on the following pages represent an important part of the Regional Vision. The maps were compiled by examining current trends and existing local regulations. They also incorporated the Regionally Important Resource Map for the region, adopted as part of the Regionally Important Resources plan by the CSRA Regional Commission in 2011.

The first map, the Regional Development Map (page 6), illustrates desired future land use patterns for the 20-year planning period. The patterns are arranged into five broad categories:

- Developed: Areas exhibiting urban type development patterns and where urban services (water, sewer, etc.) are already being provided at the time of plan preparation;
- Developing: Areas that will likely become urbanized and require provision of new urban services (water, sewer, etc.) during the planning period.
- Rural: Areas not expected to become urbanized or require provision of urban services during the planning period;
- Conservation: Areas to be preserved in order to protect important resources or environmentally sensitive areas of the region. These areas correspond to the CSRA's Regionally Important Resource plan, adopted by the CSRA Regional Commission board in 2011. The conservation designation on this map is intended as a guide for local governments in targeting land for conservation actions, which could range from continuing existing protections for groundwater or other natural resources to outright purchase.
- Military: Fort Gordon.

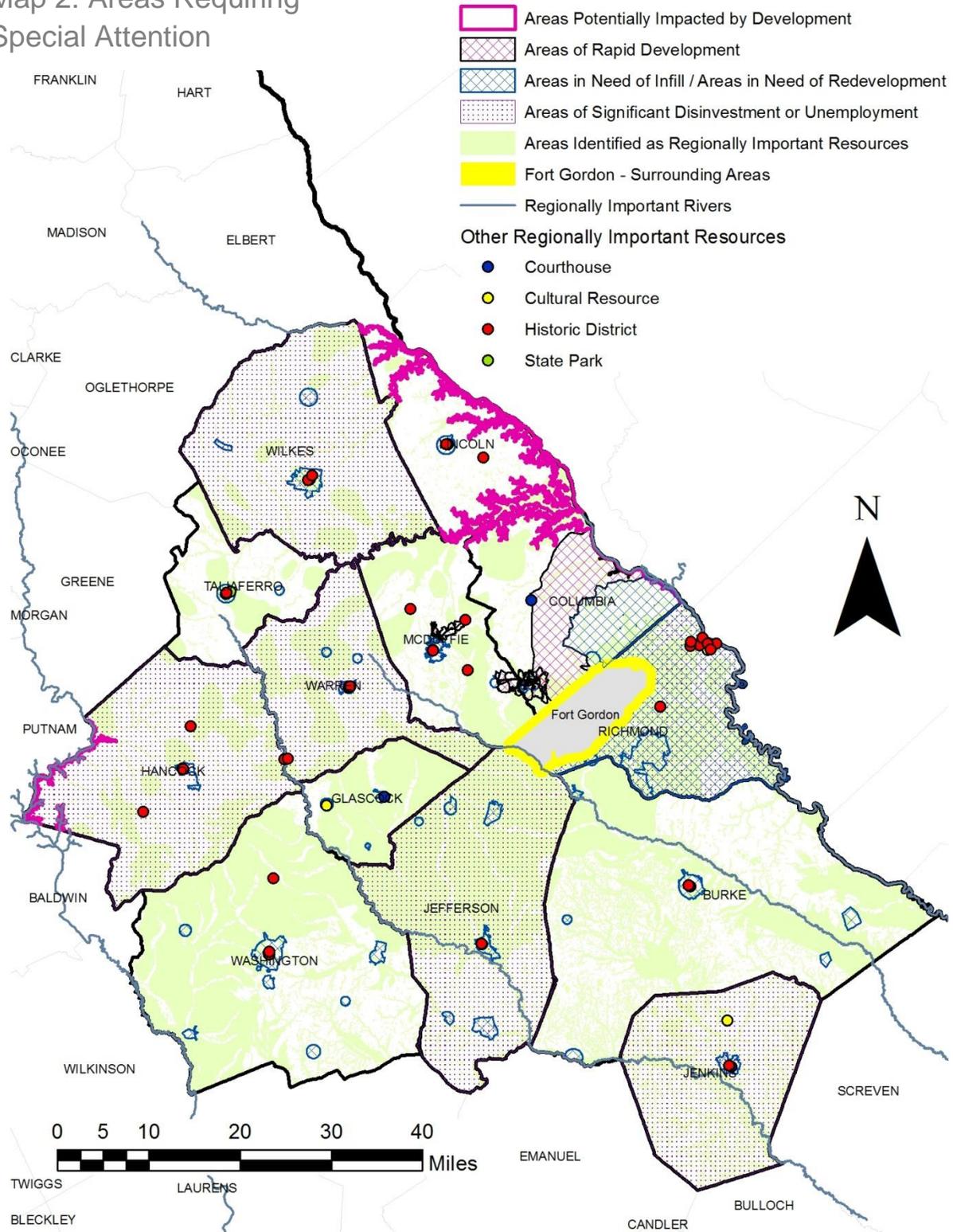
The second map, the Areas Requiring Special Attention map (page 7), indicates the location of areas in need of more specific strategies and approaches. The identification of these areas followed a more thorough analysis of projected development patterns in the region. The categories include those suggested by the Department of Community Affairs as means of identifying areas in need of attention.

Several categories are indicated on the map:

- Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole;
- Fort Gordon;
- Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map.

Note: Some of the categories overlap on the map.

Map 2: Areas Requiring Special Attention



1.3 Defining Narrative

The following pages include a critical aspect of interpreting the Future Development Maps – a “defining narrative” that spells out specific recommended strategies for each individual Area Requiring Special Attention.

Separate narratives are included for the major categories indicated on the map:

- Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development; other natural resources identified as Regionally Important Resources.
- Areas of rapid development.
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness.
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities.
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole.
- Fort Gordon.
- Other Regionally Important Resources.

This narrative includes the following information for each of these areas:

- A written description and images to illustrate what types, forms, styles, and patterns of development are to be encouraged in the area.
- A listing of specific types of land uses recommended for the area.
- Listing of recommended Quality Community Objectives – broad principles pertaining to land use, housing, transportation, resource management and other areas – recommended for the area.
- Identification of recommended implementation measures to achieve the desired development patterns for the area, including planning, infrastructure development, regulation and other actions. These are meant as a menu of possibilities, not an all-inclusive list.

Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development; other natural resources identified as Regionally Important Resources

Description

These areas include:

- Water resources, particularly in the fast-growing suburban portions of the urbanized portions of the region surrounding Augusta;
- Lakefront areas in Columbia, Hancock and Lincoln counties;
- Areas where kaolin, a type of clay that is a significant area export, is mined;
- Areas where timbering or other economically significant activities take place;
- Historic and cultural sites in rural areas;
- Areas along rivers and in groundwater recharge areas.



Environmentally sensitive areas can be set aside as public parks.



Clustering development can preserve natural features.

Recommended Development Patterns

- Clustering development to preserve open space within the development site.
- Using significant site features (view corridors, water features, farmland, wetlands, etc.) as amenities for the development.

Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development; other natural resources identified as Regionally Important Resources

- Preservation of environmentally sensitive areas by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to natural features of the site, including topography and views.
- Using infrastructure availability to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources.

Appropriate Land Uses

The specific types of land uses are less important than the manner in which individual sites are developed. However, these areas generally are more suited to very low-density or clustered housing development, recreational facilities, agricultural use or wildlife management areas.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Open Space Preservation
 - Environmental Protection
- (Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- Mapping
Comprehensive mapping of the community’s environmentally sensitive areas in order to create strategy for protection and preservation.

Program

- Conservation Easements
A mechanism for protection of natural resources or open space that involves donation of private property development rights in exchange for income tax, property or estate tax benefits.
- Land Acquisition
“Fee simple” purchase of land in order to permanently protect natural resources, open space or farmland.
- Low Impact Development (LID)
Using various land planning and design practices and technologies to conserve and protect natural resource systems and reduce infrastructure costs.
- Scenic Byway Nomination
Nominating and designating certain roads for recognition and preservation of their unique or significant intrinsic scenic, natural, archeological, historic or cultural qualities.

Regulation

- Water Resource Management
Managing and protecting water supply, watersheds and coastal areas; providing safe drinking water and wastewater treatment services.
- Agricultural Buffers (DCA Model Code 4-3)
Requiring new non-agricultural development adjacent to designated agricultural land to provide an agricultural buffer to minimize future potential conflicts between them.

Areas where significant natural or cultural resources are likely to be impacted by development; other natural resources identified as Regionally Important Resources

- **Agricultural Land Use Regulations (DCA Model Code 4-1)**
Encouraging preservation of agricultural operations and reducing conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.
- **Agricultural Zoning**
Establishing zoning districts with very large minimum lot size requirements appropriate for agricultural uses in order to protect farmland and rural character and limit development of urban uses.
- **Conservation Subdivision Ordinance**
Residential or mixed use developments with a significant portion of site set aside as undivided, protected open space while dwelling units or other uses are clustered on remaining portion of site.
- **Environmental Planning Criteria**
Establish local protection for such as water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and certain protected mountains and rivers in accordance with Georgia DNR Rules.
- **Environmental Regulations (DCA Model Code 2-1)**
DCA Model Code module, consistent with the Georgia Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.
- **Riparian Buffers**
Requiring strips of land along banks of streams and rivers to be preserved to protect water quality.
- **Stormwater Management Ordinance**
Mitigating the impact of urban development on watersheds, aquatic habitat, stream flow and geometry, and water quality.

Areas of rapid development

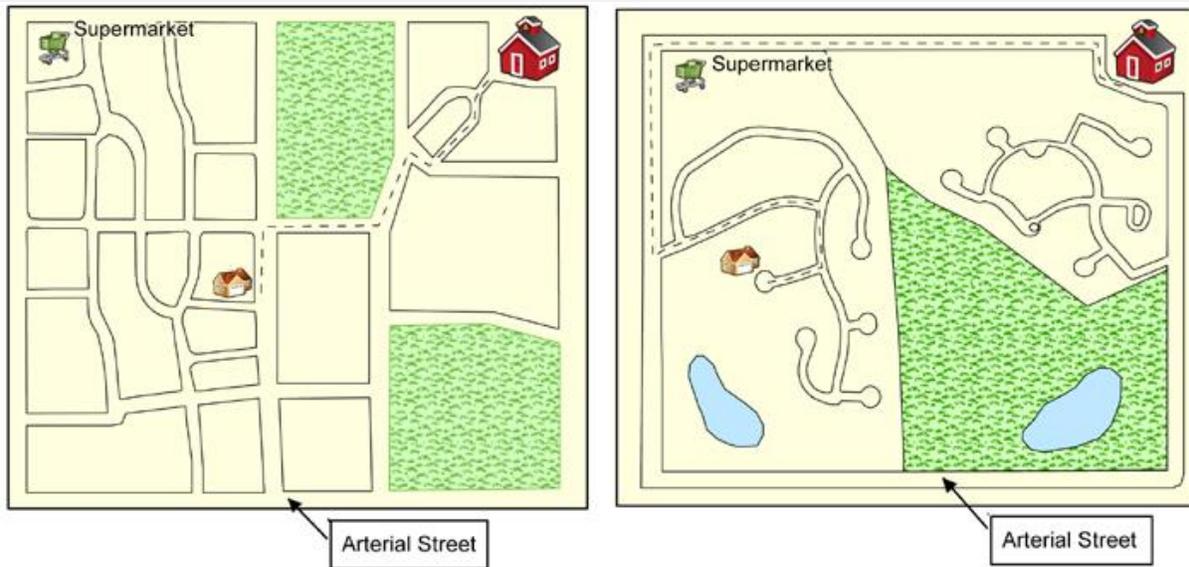
Description

These areas include:

- Areas on the urbanizing fringe surrounding Augusta. These areas are characterized by automobile-oriented development that is straining road capacities due to the lack of other travel options. In many cases, these areas are without the natural gathering places that characterize traditional patterns of development, places such as parks, squares or walkable commercial areas.
- The area along U.S. 78 north of Thomson;
- The area in Columbia and McDuffie counties stretching from Grovetown to Harlem to Dearing;
- Areas where public infrastructure is unevenly provided, spurring development but also creating future liabilities.



New development can take the form of traditional town centers.



A street network with more connectivity, such as the one on the left, can create shorter trips (graphic from Lehigh Valley Planning Commission).

Areas of rapid development

Recommended Development Patterns

- Homes, shops, small businesses, and institutions grouped together in villages or attractive mixed use centers that serve adjacent neighborhoods. Centers are very pedestrian friendly, and include pleasant community gathering spaces. Residences bring round-the-clock activity to the area.
- Use of village centers in new developments that accommodate residents' commercial and service needs.
- Commercial structures (shopping, warehouses, offices, etc.) located near street front, with parking in rear of buildings, making community more attractive and more pedestrian-friendly.
- Street layouts that match those in older parts of community and connect to the existing street network at many points.
- Developments that have easy access to nearby transit, shopping, schools and other areas where residents travel daily.
- Commercial and other areas where the appearance of signs is managed.
- Traffic calming measures such as narrower streets and raised pedestrian crossings.
- New residential development that matches the mix of housing types and styles of older, closer-in neighborhoods of the community.
- New developments that contain a mix of residential, commercial uses and community facilities at small enough scale and proximity to encourage walking between destinations.
- Location of parking at rear or side of buildings to minimize visibility from the street.
- Reduced parking requirements for commercial and residential developments, particularly when nearby parking alternatives or public transit is available.
- Community schools developed at smaller scale and located in neighborhoods where students can walk to class.

Appropriate Land Uses

All land uses should be allowed in these areas. The critical consideration is that residential and commercial activities should not be separated from each other. New areas should not be developed with only one land use, but instead should include a mix of uses in a more traditional pattern of development.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Sense of Place
- Open Space Preservation
- Transportation Alternatives
- Growth Preparedness
- Housing Opportunities
- Regional Identity

(Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Areas of rapid development

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- **Analyze Financial Impacts of Growth**
Using the financial and fiscal impacts of development patterns on the local economy and on local budgets to help determine types of development patterns desired and needed.
- **Assessing Impact of Annexation**
Annexation provides a method to assure the orderly provision of urban services to densely populated or developed areas located on the fringe of a municipality.
- **Smart Growth Audit**
Reviewing growth policies and implementation measures to identify impediments to achieving livable, mixed-use, walkable communities with open space and urban amenities

Program

- **Compact Development**
Refers to the practice of developing land in a compact way rather than a sprawling fashion, and configuring buildings on a block or neighborhood scale that makes efficient use of land and resources.
- **Streamlined Development Permitting**
Revising the local development review process to make it easier to obtain necessary approvals, particularly for innovative quality growth types of development. Revisions may include removing or combining unnecessary approval steps or publishing a step-by-step guide to the review process.

Regulation

- **Form-Based Codes (DCA Model Code 5-6)**
Land use codes that focus more on the form of development rather than on restricting particular uses.
- **Maximum Block Length, Width and/or Perimeter**
Maximum distances for block length, width and/or perimeter, to keep the scale of development small and allow for short distances walkable by pedestrians.
- **Maximum Setback Requirement**
Requiring the distance between the right-of-way and buildings to be at a maximum distance rather than a minimum distance. Setting maximums forces development to come closer to the street for walkability, traffic calming, higher density and a more traditional urban feel.
- **Mixed Use Zoning**
Zoning that allows different types of uses (such as housing, shopping, and offices) to locate within the same district, provided these uses are reasonably related and compatible.

Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)

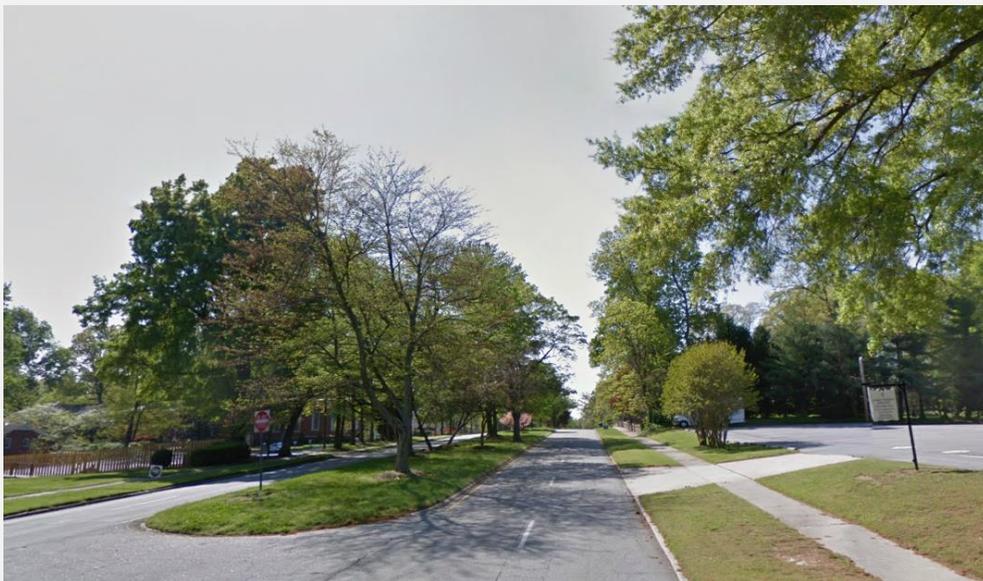
Description

These areas include:

- Numerous commercial corridors in the urbanized area, such as Washington Road, Gordon Highway and Wrightsboro Road;
- Parts of commercial corridors extending out of smaller cities and towns in the region;
- Portions of many downtown areas in both larger cities and smaller towns;
- Residential neighborhoods in Augusta and smaller towns that have seen disinvestment in recent decades.



Some commercial areas offer the potential for redevelopment.



Landscaped medians can improve the appearance and pedestrian-friendliness of multilane roads.

Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)



New "big box" stores can be designed to better resemble traditional patterns of development.

Recommended Development Patterns

- Revitalization of existing neighborhood commercial centers to capture more market activity and serve as community focal points.
- Redevelopment of older strip commercial centers in lieu of new construction further down the strip.
- Improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers.
- Commercial structures (shopping, warehouses, offices, etc.) located near street front, with parking in rear of buildings, making community more attractive and more pedestrian-friendly.
- Addition of neighborhood commercial centers on appropriate infill sites to serve surrounding neighborhood.
- Accommodation of big box retail in a way that complements surrounding uses, such as breaking up the facade to look like a collection of smaller stores.
- Infill development on vacant sites closer in to the center of the community. These sites, with existing infrastructure in place, are used for new development, matching character of surrounding neighborhood in lieu of more development on greenfield sites.
- Landscaped raised medians separating traffic lanes.
- New housing opportunities that are created out of former, underused commercial, warehouse, or industrial spaces.
- Residential development with healthy mix of uses (corner groceries, barber shops, drugstores) within easy walking distance of residences.
- Addition of new uses to single-use sites (e.g. restaurants and shopping added to office parks).
- New developments that contain a mix of residential, commercial uses and community facilities at small

Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)

enough scale and proximity to encourage walking between destinations.

- Location of parking at rear or side of buildings to minimize visibility from the street.
- On-street parking.
- Reduced parking requirements for commercial and residential developments, particularly when nearby parking alternatives or public transit is available.
- Use of landscaped tree islands and medians to break up large expanses of paved parking.
- Parking lots that incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements.
- Retrofitting existing residential communities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and connectivity with nearby commercial areas.
- Grayfield redevelopment that converts vacant or under-utilized commercial strips to mixed-use assets.

Appropriate Land Uses

Currently, many of these corridors include only commercial uses. A broader range of uses should be allowed or encouraged, including residential uses.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Sense of Place
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Transportation Alternatives

(Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- Corridor Study
Identifying and planning for improvement needs along a strip commercial corridor. The study typically involves key stakeholders (property owners, businesses, neighborhood leaders, service providers) to achieve consensus on improvements to be made along the corridor.

Program

- Strategies for Reuse of Grayfields
Re-using sites such as abandoned shopping centers for transit-oriented, mixed-use development. Urban Redevelopment/Downtown Development (DCA Model Code 5-5)
Using Georgia’s legal redevelopment tools to revitalize central business districts.
- Access Control Measures
Providing reasonable access to developments, while preserving the safe flow of traffic on an arterial or major collector, often a strip mall environment. Techniques like managing where and how approaches or signals are allowed, use of medians, creation of turn lanes, and supportive local ordinances improve the driving atmosphere. In some cases they also make movement easier and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)

- **Bikeway Plan**
Providing connectivity to residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, rails-to-trails, community facilities, and neighborhood-related retail centers and ensuring that bicycling is a convenient, safe, and practical means of transportation throughout the community.
- **Right-of-Way Improvements**
Any type of public improvement made in a roadway's "right-of-way," which is the strip of land that includes the road itself and the narrow band of publicly owned property on either side of the road where sidewalks, curbing, and utility lines are typically located.
- **Sidewalk and Pedestrian Network Design**
An effective sidewalk and pedestrian network creates healthy neighborhoods and commercial areas. Proper design provides for more pedestrian-friendly street environments, affords appropriate access for bicyclists, and facilitates implementation of the community's multi-modal transportation element of its comprehensive plan.
- **Community Visioning**
Defining a community's hopes and aspirations through intensive participation at public meetings.

Regulation

- **Targeted Corridor Redevelopment**
Using public incentives or urban redevelopment powers to encourage revitalization of problem properties, such as declining shopping centers or abandoned "big box" stores, along a commercial strip corridor.
- **Flexible Parking Standards**
Revising land development regulations to remove rigid parking requirements that typically result in an oversupply of unnecessary parking spaces. Revisions may include reducing the number of required parking spaces, or allowing shared parking between adjacent facilities.
- **Flexible Street Design Standards**
Revising street design requirements in local development regulations to adjust streets to the scale of the neighborhood and types of traffic they serve. Revisions may include reducing required street widths, requiring bicycle lanes, or adding on-street parking.

Areas with significant infill development opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated

Description

These areas include:

- Significant portions of Augusta-Richmond County where disinvestment has occurred and the infrastructure and traditional street grid are well-positioned to support substantial amounts of development;
- Older suburban areas around the urban core that are beginning to see disinvestment. These areas are candidates for suburban “retrofits” that can better connect them with surrounding neighborhoods, make them more accessible to pedestrians, create more of a sense of place, and provide a community amenity for residents;
- Numerous vacant industrial properties scattered throughout the region;
- Brownfield or grayfield sites.



Aging strip commercial centers offer possibilities for infill development.



Former industrial properties can be reused for other purposes.

Areas with significant infill development opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated



Infill development can take a number of forms and can significantly enhance an area's appearance and activity.

Recommended Development Patterns

- Addition of neighborhood commercial centers on appropriate infill sites to serve surrounding neighborhood.
- New industry or other major employers located close in to town, making jobs accessible to all residents by way of transit, walking, or bicycling.
- Infill development on vacant sites closer in to the center of the community. These sites, with existing infrastructure in place, are used for new development, matching character of surrounding neighborhood in lieu of more development on greenfield sites.
- Brownfield redevelopment that converts formerly industrial/ commercial sites to mixed-use developments.
- **Grayfield** redevelopment that converts vacant or under-utilized commercial strips to mixed-use assets.
- Reuse of existing vacant or underutilized structures (e.g. commercial centers, office spaces, warehouses) to accommodate new community facilities.

Appropriate Land Uses

Land uses to be allowed include residential development of varying densities and types and neighborhood-scaled commercial development. Industrial development is also desirable where appropriate.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Infill Development
- Housing Opportunities
- Traditional Neighborhoods

(Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Areas with significant infill development opportunities, including scattered vacant sites, large abandoned structures, or sites that may be environmentally contaminated

Implementation Measures

Program

- **Brownfield Site Remediation**
Clean-up of contaminated properties, which may involve removal, containment or on-site treatment. Remediation can be started by private property owners or by local governments.
- **Infill Development Program**
A comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development in particular areas of the community, while also regulating this development to assure the quality of life in affected neighborhoods. An effective program will include a) development incentives, improvements to public facilities and services, and streamlined regulations to encourage infill development; b) guidelines for appropriate design, density and location of new infill projects.
- **Land Value Taxation**
A property tax system based on the site-only value of the land, not taking into account improvements (buildings, etc.) on the land. This encourages efficient use of land, particularly in urban areas, and leads to infill and rehabilitation in existing neighborhoods. Land value taxation is similar to a split-rate property tax (see that recommendation).
- **Streamlined Development Permitting**
Revising the local development review process to make it easier to obtain necessary approvals, particularly for innovative quality growth types of development. Revisions may include removing or combining unnecessary approval steps or publishing a step-by-step guide to the review process.
- **Community Visioning**
Defining a community's hopes and aspirations through intensive participation at public meetings.
- **Design Charette**
An intensive, multi-disciplinary, interactive and creative workshop process that enables discussion and teamwork among stakeholders (including architects, community groups, developers, and neighbors) in the development of ordinances or the design of particular projects.

Regulation

- **Tax Allocation Districts**
Establishing a redevelopment district (area with vacant commercial or residential properties, blighted conditions, and/or need for environmental remediation) to provide public financing for redevelopment activities through the pledge of future incremental increase in property taxes generated by the resulting new development.
- **Enterprise Zones**
Offers incentives such as tax exemptions or fee abatements to private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate underdeveloped or declining areas.
- **Targeted Corridor Redevelopment**
Using incentives or urban redevelopment powers to encourage revitalization of problem properties, such as declining shopping centers or abandoned "big box" stores, along a commercial strip corridor.

Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole

Description

These areas include:

- Hancock, Jenkins and Warren counties, where unemployment is several percent higher than the regional as a whole;
- Jefferson and Wilkes counties, which have each seen negative job growth of more than 18 percent since 1990;
- Portions of Augusta-Richmond county where significant disinvestment has occurred;
- At least portions of all the region's 11 rural counties.



Streetscape projects can help generate new investment.



Former industrial sites can be converted into office spaces.

Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole

Recommended Development Patterns

- Addition of neighborhood commercial centers on appropriate infill sites to serve surrounding neighborhood.
- Improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers.
- Infill development on vacant sites closer in to the center of the community. These sites, with existing infrastructure in place, are used for new development, matching character of surrounding neighborhood in lieu of more development on greenfield sites.
- New employment centers located close in to town, making jobs accessible to all residents by way of transit, walking, or bicycling.
- Brownfield redevelopment focused on creating new employment opportunities.

Appropriate Land Uses

All land uses should be allowed in these areas, but a particular emphasis should be placed on land uses that generate substantial employment opportunities. In some currently industrial areas, residential uses should not be allowed, to prevent incompatible uses from making an area less appealing for new industrial or similar investment – including medical facilities, light manufacturing and warehouse/distribution facilities.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Employment Options
- Educational Opportunities

(Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- **Choosing Businesses to Recruit and Support**
Process for identifying businesses that best suit the community. This requires gaining knowledge about local assets and capabilities, as well as the desires of the community.
- **Evaluating Business Formation in Your Community**
Analysis of rate and causes of growth/decline in local businesses.
- **Identifying Workforce Training Resources**
Finding training opportunities to match the need of the local workforce. These may be from formal educational programs, private providers, specialized workforce training (such as from a department of labor), or other sources.
- **Surveying the Local Workforce**
Gathering information on the composition, worker satisfaction, commuting patterns, etc., of the local labor force.

Program

- **Agricultural Marketing**
Assisting local farmers in selling their products. This can include agri-tourism, farmers' markets, and similar activities.
- **Brownfield Site Remediation**

Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the region as a whole

Clean-up of contaminated properties, which may involve removal, containment or on-site treatment. Remediation can be started by private property owners or by local governments.

- Existing Industry Program
Addressing needs and problems of existing businesses to improve local environment for business retention and expansion.
- Matching Labor Needs with Workforce Availability
Recruiting new businesses by identifying and marketing existing labor force qualifications.

Fort Gordon

Description

These areas include:

- Fort Gordon and surrounding areas



Residential development in the areas near the facility should be avoided.

Recommended Development Patterns

- Development patterns that protect the facility from incompatible land uses.
- Patterns that preserve open space by clustering development on land farther away from the base.

Appropriate Land Uses

Typically, residential uses should be discouraged or disallowed in this area. Retail commercial uses should also be discouraged.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Regional Cooperation
 - Regional Solutions
- (Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- Identify Areas of Planning Coordination
Local governments should strive to maintain consistency, regarding goals, objectives, plans and programs, with other local governments, agencies and authorities:
 - Comprehensive plans of adjacent or potentially affected local governments
 - Annexation, municipal incorporation, and joint service delivery areas
 - Applicable portions of plans of school boards and other public entities related to the siting of new facilities that may require local government service support and affect land use patterns

Fort Gordon

Program

- Establish Processes for Joint Decision-Making About Facilities and Infrastructure
Create and maintain processes for joint decision-making, and strategies for collaborative planning, about facilities and infrastructure:
 - location and extension of public facilities (with the entities responsible for provision and maintenance of the public facilities)
 - siting of facilities with county-wide significance, such as water supply reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, etc.

Regulation

- Land development regulations
Restrictions on incompatible uses within the fort's buffer zone.

Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map not previously addressed

Description

These areas include:

- Cultural and government resources (historic districts, courthouses, historic sites).



Streetscape improvements can add to the appearance and function of these areas.



Courthouse restoration projects can improve the appearance of historic landmarks while also ensuring downtowns remain vital.

Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map not previously addressed

Recommended Development Patterns

- Traditional downtown areas maintained as the focal point of the community. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.
- Improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers.
- Traffic calming measures, such as narrower street widths, raised pedestrian crossings, or rough pavement materials.
- Location of parking at rear or side of buildings to minimize visibility from the street.
- Reduced parking requirements for commercial and residential developments, particularly when nearby parking alternatives or public transit is available.

Appropriate Land Uses

All land uses should be allowed in these areas. The critical consideration is that residential and commercial activities should not be separated from each other.

Recommended Quality Community Objectives

- Sense of Place
- Heritage Preservation
- Regional Identity

(Full definitions of Quality Community Objectives are available in Appendix A)

Implementation Measures

Inventory

- Walkability Audit
An assessment based on commonly used measurements such as connected street networks, high densities of intersections, few dead-ends, short block lengths, and mixed land uses in close proximity to each other.

Program

- Certified Local Government Program: Preservation through Local Planning
Georgia Historic Preservation Division program offering certification to local governments that protect historic resources with a historic preservation ordinance and preservation commission. Certification carries eligibility for federal historic preservation grant funds, opportunities for technical assistance, and improved communication and coordination among local, state, and federal preservation activities.
- Main Street Program
Main Street is a self-help community development program designed to improve a downtown's quality of life. The program includes a small-cities program called the Better Hometown Program, which focuses on cities with a population less than 5,000 and the "Classic" Main Street Program, which focuses on cities with a population between 5,000 and 50,000.
- Georgia Register of Historic Places Nomination
State's official listing of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. Designation offers eligibility for incentives for preservation and rehabilitation.
- National Register of Historic Places Nomination

Areas identified on the Regionally Important Resources map not previously addressed

National official list of cultural resources considered worthy of preservation, including districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Designation offers eligibility for preservation benefits and incentives, such as federal tax benefits and federal funding when available.

- **Adaptive Use**
The conversion of a building for new uses, often from a non-housing use to a housing use. For example, a warehouse converted to apartments, a gas station converted to a hair salon, a school building converted to condominiums, etc.
- **Downtown Specific Plans (DCA Model Code 5-1)**
A study and specific plan for downtown core areas that protect and enhance their unique character.
- **Land Value Taxation**
A property tax system based on the site-only value of the land, not taking into account improvements (buildings, etc.) on the land. This encourages efficient use of land, particularly in urban areas, and leads to infill and rehabilitation in existing neighborhoods. Land value taxation is similar to a split-rate property tax (see that recommendation).
- **Sidewalk and Pedestrian Network Design**
An effective sidewalk and pedestrian network creates healthy neighborhoods and commercial areas. Proper design provides for more pedestrian-friendly street environments, affords appropriate access for bicyclists, and facilitates implementation of the community's multi-modal transportation element of its comprehensive plan.

Regulation

- **Historic Preservation (DCA Model Code 5-4)**
DCA Model Code module for protecting places, districts, sites, buildings and structures having historic or cultural or aesthetic value.
- **Historic Preservation Ordinance**
Georgia Historic Preservation Division's model ordinance requiring protection of locally designated historic properties and districts.
- **Historic Resources Design Standards**
Georgia Historic Preservation Divisions' model design standards for infill and material changes to historic properties or districts to maintain historic integrity and significance.
- **Form-Based Codes (DCA Model Code 5-6)**
Builds on the idea that physical form is a community's most intrinsic and enduring characteristic, and encourages a certain physical outcome—the form of a community, block, or building—so that planners, citizens and developers can move from a shared physical vision to a built reality. Form-based codes are different from conventional codes based on use, process, performance or statistics, none of which envision or require any particular physical outcome.
- **Minimum Building Frontage**
Land use regulation designed to ensure that the development has a street “presence.” Areas with buildings that frame the street are inviting to pedestrians. Building frontage is especially important in older urban areas and traditional neighborhoods.

2. Issues and Opportunities

The development of the Regional Assessment portion of the CSRA Regional Plan 2035 included the generation of a list of Issues and Opportunities for the CSRA region. Since then, that list has been revised according to additional input and consideration. These Issues and Opportunities were used to shape the succeeding elements of the plan, including the Performance Standards and Regional Work Program, found in sections 3 and 4 of this document. In recognition of the different needs and resources of urban and rural areas, this list contains generally applicable issues and opportunities but also includes additional issues and opportunities particularly relevant to rural or to urban areas. This is done simply as means of organizing the list, not as a fundamental distinction between the different types of issues and opportunities.

The following are the final issues and opportunities for the CSRA Regional Plan 2035:

(Note: the issues and opportunities are coded by topic – for example, the first Population issue is coded P1. This is so issues and opportunities addressed in the Implementation section of this document can be easily identified).

Central Savannah River Area – ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
TOPIC: Population/Demographics	
P1.	Issue: The area’s population is projected to grow 27 percent by 2035, to a total of 575,000, creating demand for new housing and potentially contributing to additional sprawl and added cost for local governments.
P2.	Issue: Population growth is not evenly distributed. Augusta and Columbia County have seen population growth, while eight of the 11 rural counties have lost population.
P3.	Issue: Much of the population growth in all areas is taking place away from existing infrastructure, creating additional short- and long-term costs for local governments.
P4.	Issue: Household incomes lag the state average.
P5.	Issue: The CSRA is aging rapidly. The proportion of residents 45 years and older has increased 10 percent since 1990, while the proportion of residents under 29 years declined by 8 percent.
P6.	Opportunity: Demand for housing creates the opportunity to reinvest in existing residential neighborhoods and to create new places that offer a high quality of life while conserving resources and reducing financial pressure on local governments.
P7.	Opportunity: Maximize the value of new development by designing it in a way that minimizes long-term infrastructure costs.
P8.	Opportunity: Lower labor costs create the opportunity to attract new industries – if workforce training is adequate.
P9.	Opportunity: The demand for medical and other services for the elderly will grow. Future seniors also likely will look for an environment that allows them to stay active, creating demand for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods.
TOPIC: Population/Demographics - Rural Issues and Opportunities	
P10.	Issue: Of the development that is occurring, much is not occurring within city boundaries. In many cases, infrastructure and services to support development are lacking or are created at high cost.
P11.	Issue: Relatively little diversity in housing stock.
P12.	Opportunity: Rural counties and towns can leverage their unique attributes to attract or retain residents and investment. A focus can be placed on improving existing neighborhoods and infrastructure.
TOPIC: Population/Demographics - Urban Issues and Opportunities	
P13.	Issue: In some areas, population growth threatens to outpace the ability to provide services.
P14.	Opportunity: In some areas, redevelopable land creates the opportunity to locate housing closer to places to work and shop.
TOPIC: Housing	
H1.	Issue: Housing is generally affordable, but a significant amount of housing in the region is of poor quality.
H2.	Issue: Current housing stock does not meet changing demographics and consumer preferences, both of which are leading to demand for smaller units.
H3.	Issue: While housing itself is affordable, much of it is located far from workplaces. When considering the combined costs of housing and transportation, the housing burden for residents is higher.

Central Savannah River Area – ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
H4.	Opportunity: Certain types of housing stock, such as mobile homes, can be replaced with higher-quality housing over time. Using traditional community designs with smaller lots means the cost of new housing need not be burdensome.
H5.	Opportunity: Transportation costs (both for government and individuals) can be taken into account when planning land development. Future development can include more of a focus on mixing residential uses with retail and office uses. Infill development can be encouraged.
TOPIC: Housing – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
H6.	Issue: In many areas, a large percentage of housing is in the form of mobile homes, which provide an affordable alternative but which tend to deteriorate relatively quickly. Many are abandoned or in poor condition.
H7.	Opportunity: Job growth in some areas, such as around Plant Vogtle in Burke County, is generating demand for new housing.
TOPIC: Housing - Urban Issues and Opportunities	
H8.	Issue: Some neighborhoods are struggling with disinvestment. Vacant and dilapidated housing is a problem.
H9.	Opportunity: A growing preference toward urban living among some age groups creates additional demand for traditional neighborhoods.
TOPIC: Economic Development	
E1.	Issue: the CSRA's job base is shifting. The service sector now accounts for 60 percent of all CSRA jobs, an increase of 20 percent since 1990.
E2.	Issue: Many jobs are low-wage.
E3.	Opportunity: The medical sector is a major employer in the region and is likely to continue to grow in the future. Opportunities may exist to build on the current medical sector in new ways and places.
E4.	Opportunity: The region's low cost of living and low wages offer the opportunity to attract new industries.
Topic: Economic Development - Rural Issues and Opportunities	
E5.	Issue: Employment trends are uneven, with the urbanized area adding jobs while many rural counties continue to lose jobs. The issue is not Georgia-specific, as agricultural consolidation and mechanization have been draining jobs away from rural counties for decades, but it presents a problem for rural counties.
E6.	Issue: Options for dining, shopping and other services are limited in some parts of region.
E7.	Issue: Many downtowns in rural counties need revitalization.
E8.	Opportunity: Rural areas may lack some infrastructure but may possess other strengths not found in urban areas.
E9.	Opportunity: Many industrial parks have additional space available for development.
Topic: Economic Development - Urban Issues and Opportunities	
E10.	Issue: The employment base needs to be diversified.
E11.	Issue: Some goods and services are not easily accessible in some neighborhoods.
Topic: Land Use	
L1.	Issue: Growth in recent decades has taken the form of sprawl well beyond city and town centers. As transportation costs increase, the need to more closely align residences and workplaces becomes more pressing.
L2.	Issue: Suburban growth continues to encroach on Fort Gordon, potentially hindering the facility's mission in the future.
L3.	Issue: The location of schools, parks and other facilities often is made without regard to whether the surrounding area is ideal for the development the facilities will encourage.
L4.	Opportunity: Many local governments are allowing or encouraging a greater mix of uses in new development. Relatively low land costs creates the opportunity for infill development in urban areas.
Topic: Land Use – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
L5.	Issue: There is a growing conflict in many areas between traditional agricultural uses and suburban residential uses.
Topic: Land Use – Urban Issues and Opportunities	
L6.	Issue: Changing demographics and consumer preferences (especially among younger residents) is creating relatively less demand for low-density suburban living and greater demand for more urban living.
L7.	Issue: Land use patterns in many cases continue to separate uses. The inability to walk to destinations is contributing to a lack of activity and growing obesity levels.
L8.	Opportunity: Existing neighborhoods can be made more attractive through targeted investments, while infill development can provide additional housing opportunities.
Topic: Transportation	
T1.	Issue: Interstates 20 and 520, as well as U.S. 1 and U.S. 25 link the CSRA's major cities to each other as well as to the state's major cities, such as Atlanta, Macon, and Savannah. However, the road system does not fully meet needs throughout the region, with some areas not served by highways.
T2.	Issue: While the transportation system serves automobiles relatively well, it is less friendly to other users. Many streets are designed only with vehicle traffic in mind, making them unsafe or unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists.

Central Savannah River Area – ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
T3.	Issue: Development patterns in many cases continue to separate uses and rely on arterial roads to make connections. These two factors limit mobility for many residents and contribute to inactivity and growing obesity levels for children and adults in the region.
T4.	Opportunity: Some economic activity is less dependent on highway access. Focusing on other attributes not present in other areas could help improve competitiveness.
T5.	Opportunity: As roads are repaved or other improvements are made, the opportunity exists to create new or improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.
Topic: Transportation – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
T6.	Issue: Lack of sidewalks along some main roads and commercial corridors.
T7.	Issue: Lack of a transit system with predictable service.
Topic: Transportation – Urban Issues and Opportunities	
T8.	Issue: There is a lack of street connectivity in many suburban areas.
T9.	Issue: The presence of sidewalks is spotty in many suburban areas.
T10.	Issue: Transit system lacks frequency and a complete network of destinations.
T11.	Opportunity: Growing interest in bicycling creates support for creating networks of trails and lanes and can create a “safety in numbers” effect that will encourage more cycling.
Topic: Community Facilities	
F1.	Issue: Most areas of the CSRA outside of the urbanized parts of Columbia and Augusta-Richmond Counties lag in both choice and quality of broadband service. Most of these areas are not served by any land broadband service provider, making slower satellite internet service the only option.
F2.	Issue: Many neighborhoods do not have easy access to parks and playgrounds. Many facilities are built at a large scale and in remote areas rather than as neighborhood facilities.
F3.	Issue: Many playgrounds contain outdated equipment and designs.
F4.	Issue: A focus on expansion rather than rehabilitation of infrastructure has led to a growing financial burden and increasing maintenance issues for many communities.
F5.	Issue: The siting and design of new schools adds to demands on the transportation system by placing them in areas accessible only by cars, generating more trips and adding to trip length.
F6.	Opportunity: The CSRA RC considers broadband the region’s top infrastructure priority and has been aggressively pursuing state and federal funding to remedy this deficiency by extending broadband infrastructure to areas of the region that currently lack it.
F7.	Opportunity: Efforts can be made to improve the walkability of schools and surrounding areas. Increasing consumer demand for urban neighborhoods can play a role in the location of school facilities.
Topic: Community Facilities – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
F8.	Issue: In some areas, multiple water and sewer providers do not achieve efficiencies of scale. Smaller providers face financial difficulties.
F9.	Issue: Development is limited in some areas due to the condition of sewer infrastructure.
F10.	Issue: Recreational opportunities are limited in some areas.
F11.	Opportunity: Land already held publicly could be used for more recreational activities.
Topic: Community Facilities – Urban Issues and Opportunities	
F12.	Issue: Stormwater drainage is a problem in some areas.
F13.	Issue: Some playgrounds need to be modernized.
F14.	Opportunity: Recycling programs can diminish the need for waste disposal.
Topic: Natural and Cultural Resources	
R1.	Issue: Many historic buildings are in poor condition and in danger of being lost.
R2.	Issue: Suburban development continues to occupy prime farmland.
R3.	Issue: Development around watersheds in several counties has the potential to affect water quality.
R4.	Issue: The CSRA has a rich history and counts no less than 184 properties and districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including National Historic Landmarks, State Historic Parks and Sites. Most of these resources, however, lack preservation plans.
R5.	Opportunity: Farmland and forests continue to dominate the landscape. Timber is a major industry in the area, and farmland makes up 22 percent of the area’s land mass.
R6.	Opportunity: The region’s aquifers, rivers and lakes provide abundant water resources. Monitoring efforts and watershed protection measures can protect those resources for future generations.
R7.	Opportunity: Growing interest in historic neighborhoods and places is generating new resources for preserving historic buildings. Agencies, including the Regional Commission, are able to create preservation plans and provide other

Central Savannah River Area – ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
	assistance in protecting these resources.
Topic: Natural and Cultural Resources – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
R8.	Issue: In many cases, no distinction is made between areas that should remain rural and other areas.
R9.	Opportunity: Abundant wetlands and floodplain areas offers the opportunity for green space preservation in new developments.
R10.	Opportunity: Agricultural history contributes to identity.
Topic: Natural and Cultural Resources – Urban Issues and Opportunities	
R11.	Issue: The fabric of many historic neighborhoods is rapidly being lost.
R12.	Opportunity: A growing interest in preservation and in urban living may create additional opportunities to revitalize historic neighborhoods.
Topic: Intergovernmental Coordination	
I1.	Issue: Coordination between different local governments with respect to land use is not always present.
I2.	Issue: Economic development is often best viewed and pursued at a regional scale, but that sometimes is not the case in reality.
I3.	Opportunity: The Regional Commission provides regional planning services and an avenue for governments to address conflicting visions.
I4.	Opportunity: The CSRA RC provides a means for greater coordination. It serves as the Economic Development District for the region and serves as the coordinating mechanism for the CSRA Unified Development Council and Unified Development Authority, which provide marketing, development coordination and other services for the region.
I5.	Opportunity: There may be additional opportunities to consolidate government services.
Topic: Intergovernmental Coordination – Urban Issues and Opportunities	
I6.	Issue: Rural areas may not share the same needs and goals of more urbanized areas.
Topic: Intergovernmental Coordination – Rural Issues and Opportunities	
I7.	Issue: Urban areas may not share the same needs and goals of more rural areas.
I8.	Opportunity: Previous consolidation has set a potential example for future service consolidation.

3. Implementation Program

Having established a Regional Vision and identified Regional Issues and Opportunities, the focus of this document now turns to making the vision a reality and addressing these issues. This section deals with the implementation of the CSRA Regional Plan 2035.

3.1 Guiding Principles

The following list of “guiding principles” are policy recommendations intended to provide ongoing guidance and direction to regional leaders for making decisions consistent with achieving the CSRA’s Regional Vision or addressing Regional Issues and Opportunities.

The policies contained here can be applied in determining, for example, whether land use decisions or investments in new or upgraded public facilities would be consistent with the CSRA Regional Plan 2035. They are intended as general recommendations and may not always apply in every case. They are divided into categories for clarity, but many decisions may involve considerations that cut across multiple categories.

Housing

- We ensure that a range of housing options is available in local communities.
- Our community is striving to eliminate substandard housing.
- We plan for future housing needs, taking into account future infrastructure and transportation costs for governments and residents.
- We work to ensure that housing has access to recreational facilities.

Economic Development

- Our development efforts involve a focus on both attracting new industry and retaining existing industry.
- We collaborate with other economic development groups and entities.
- We support workforce development programs.
- Our strategy to attract new development includes leveraging existing assets.

Land Use

- We ensure that land use decisions are made hand-in-hand with transportation decisions.
- Our community promotes growth in areas with existing infrastructure investments.
- We ensure that development decisions are made with an understanding of current and future real estate and demographic trends.
- We promote development that enhances communities.
- We ensure that a mix of uses is possible, that residences are not always separated from workplaces, shops and recreational and educational facilities.
- We take care to ensure that new development does not overburden existing infrastructure.
- We commonly take opportunities to strengthen existing neighborhoods where possible.

Transportation

- We ensure that transportation decisions are made hand-in-hand with land use decisions.
- We focus on making targeted transportation investments that will capture value on a long-term basis.
- We work toward connectivity in the road network where possible.
- Our community ensures that transportation plans and investments include options in addition to driving.
- Our transportation plans and investments include multiple modes of transportation.

Community Facilities

- Our community makes maintenance of existing infrastructure is a priority.
- We consider long-term costs when expanding infrastructure.
- Our community maximizes infrastructure investments by promoting infill development where possible.
- We use infrastructure developments to create desired development patterns.
- We encourage the location of schools near existing neighborhoods.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- We ensure that new public investments – such as water or transportation infrastructure projects – enhance or maintain rather than diminish natural resources.
- We consider natural and cultural resources are considered when making land use or other planning decisions.
- Our community promotes and creates access to natural and cultural resources when possible.
- We encourage development styles that incorporate or augment natural resources.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Our community plans with neighboring jurisdictions.
- We share services and facilities with neighboring communities where possible.
- We work regionally on economic development and planning projects.

3.2 Performance Standards

In order to help realize the Regional Vision set out in this document, local governments will be assessed on progress toward implementing a set of performance standards – measurable steps that can be taken by counties and municipalities in the region.

The performance standards include two levels of achievement – Minimum and Excellence. Both include measurable goals and incentives created by the state. The minimum standard is aimed at ensuring a basic, predictable level of capabilities and standards across the region. As required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, all local governments in the region are expected to attain the minimum standard within three years of adoption of the regional plan, or risk losing Qualified Local Government status.

The excellence standard, by contrast, is envisioned as including desirable, rather than essential, activities and includes a menu of best practices drawn from across Georgia. Governments attaining the Excellence Standard will be recognized by the CSRA Regional Commission and will become eligible for the Regional Steward Incentives Package, a yet-to-be-defined incentive package envisioned by the Department of Community Affairs.

In an age of limited resources, local governments are finding new ways to provide services in a more efficient fashion. This document recognizes and encourages this trend by allowing for flexibility in how the standards are met. Many local governments share planning and service responsibilities. In situations where governments meet a requirement while jointly providing services through a mutual agreement such as a Service Delivery Strategy, joint planning document, Memorandum of Understanding or similar arrangement, all governments in the arrangement receive credit for meeting the requirement. Likewise, if another governmental agency or other organization performs a task that fulfills a standard in that community, then the local government can receive credit.

Both sets of standards were arrived at after significant consultation with local governments throughout the region. The aim was to create standards that reflect the resources, relevant issues and capabilities of local governments in the CSRA region.

Minimum Standards

The minimum standards are considered to be essential activities needed to obtain consistency with the CSRA Regional Plan 2035. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of local capabilities across the region.

The Regional Commission and DCA can provide technical and training assistance to local governments to help them achieve the standard.

Recognizing the differing resources of area local governments, the CSRA Regional Plan 2035 creates three tiers of local governments: Suburban/Urbanized, Rural/Smaller City, and Rural/Smaller City – population under 2,500.

Rural/Smaller City Communities

- Burke County
- McDuffie County
- Washington County
- Jefferson County
- Wilkes County
- Hancock County
- Jenkins County
- Lincoln County
- Warren County
- Glascock County
- Grovetown
- Thomson
- Sandersville
- Waynesboro
- Washington
- Hephzibah
- Millen
- Harlem

Rural/Smaller City – Population Under 2,500 Communities

- Taliaferro County
- Louisville
- Wrens
- Wadley
- Davisboro
- Warrenton
- Lincolnnton
- Tennille
- Sparta
- Sardis
- Blythe
- Gibson
- Dearing
- Crawfordville
- Harrison
- Stapleton
- Keysville
- Bartow
- Midville
- Oconee
- Avera
- Norwood
- Mitchell
- Rayle
- Girard
- Sharon
- Camak
- Deepstep
- Vidette
- Riddleville
- Edge Hill

Suburban/Urbanized Communities

- Augusta/Richmond County
- Columbia County

Rural/Smaller City and Rural/Smaller City – Population Under 2,500 Standards

The following are the Minimum requirements for governments in the categories of Rural/Smaller City and Rural/Smaller City – population under 2,500. Each requirement is worth one point. In order to meet the standard, a Rural/Smaller City government needs 75 percent of all possible points (some of the standards do not apply to all governments). Governments in the Rural-Smaller City – population under 2,500 categories need 60 percent of the possible points.

Rural/Smaller City and Rural/Smaller City – population under 2,500 governments that have achieved any Suburban/Urbanized government standards or Excellence standards may also count them as one point each toward meeting the Minimum requirements.

The standards are grouped into general topics for the purposes of clarity in intent, but in scoring they will be considered as a whole.

Rural/Smaller City Standards	
Intergovernmental cooperation	
1.	We develop local comprehensive plans jointly with all other local governments within the county (i.e. cities and county).
2.	We develop local solid waste management plans jointly with other local government entities within the county.
3.	Our local government has a memorandum of understanding or similar with Fort Gordon (if applicable) that promotes communication and coordination of land use decisions.
4.	We hold occasional joint meetings of the planning commission and elected officials.
5.	We have intergovernmental agreements for emergency response and assistance. Counties bordering South Carolina have mutual aid agreements with agencies in that state.
Training/capabilities	
6.	Our staff or elected officials participate in DCA's Community Planning Institute or in training hosted by the CSRA Regional Commission on various topics (each training session attended, regardless of the number attending, counts as one point).
7.	Our newly elected officials are certified by the UGA Carl Vinson Institute.
8.	Our city or county clerk has undergone training at the University of Georgia's (UGA) Carl Vinson Institute or similar.
9.	Our Development Authority board members (if applicable) receive appropriate development authority training.
Comprehensive/other planning	
10.	We identify locally designated historic districts and National Register historic districts (if applicable) in the local comprehensive plan.
11.	The economic development portion of the local comprehensive plan includes strategies for retention, expansion and creation of businesses.
12.	We address more than one kind of transportation activity (such as roads, sidewalks, rail, and so on) in the transportation policies of the local comprehensive plan.
13.	We address investment in the upkeep and expansion of public infrastructure in the community facilities and services component and/or policies of the local comprehensive plan.
14.	We actively participate in preparation and maintenance of updates to Service Delivery Strategies, and have written agreements for the services that are on file and available for public review.
15.	Our comprehensive plan identifies Regionally Important Resources in the jurisdiction and depicts them as Areas Requiring Special Attention, Conservation Areas, or similar on the Future Development Map in the local comprehensive plan.
16.	Our community has an approved hazard mitigation plan.
17.	Our comprehensive plan meets state standards.
18.	We periodically review zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure that they fit with desired development patterns (setbacks, density maximums/minimums, mixed uses), if applicable.
19.	We maintain and update a solid waste management plan.
Open/accessible government	
20.	We comply with Georgia's open records act and open meetings law.
21.	We comply with Georgia's Zoning Procedures Law (if applicable).
22.	Our ordinances and resolutions that have the effect of law are contained in one document.
23.	Our local government can be reached via email, and we have the ability to send and receive attachments.
Basic land use/code standards (if applicable)	
24.	Our land use regulations allow for a range of housing options (single-family detached, townhouses, duplexes, apartments, etc.), if applicable.
25.	We allow mixed uses (such as allowing residential and commercial together in the same district).
26.	We have a public nuisance ordinance to control nuisances such as loud noises, stagnant water, abandoned vehicles, the accumulation of junk, excessively tall weeds and grass, etc.
27.	We have some form of land development regulations (subdivisions, mobile homes, signs, telecommunications towers, environmental protection ordinances).

Suburban/Urbanized Standards

The following are additional standards for Suburban/Urbanized governments. Each standard is worth one point. In order to meet the minimum requirement, a Suburban/Urbanized government

must have 75 percent of possible Rural/Smaller City points and 75 percent of possible Suburban/Urbanized points, calculated separately.

Suburban/Urbanized Standards	
Intergovernmental cooperation	
1.	We hold occasional joint planning sessions with our school board in relation to future facility needs and the desired location of any new facilities.
Comprehensive/other planning	
2.	We have prepared a redevelopment plan or in-depth planning study for downtown or a similar special district.
3.	We preserve and enhance rural character by discouraging development in areas that have been deemed unsuitable or an area requiring special attention.
4.	We have a bicycle/pedestrian plan (can be done jointly with other agencies).
5.	We target development of water and sewer facilities to encourage growth in appropriate areas and discourage it in inappropriate ones.
6.	We maintain a current inventory of available sites and buildings suitable for development.
7.	We have adopted and implemented a stormwater management plan and/or ordinance.
Open/accessible government	
8.	Our ordinances are available online, such as with Municode.
Zoning/implementation	
9.	Our zoning ordinance allows small lot sizes (1/4 acre or smaller) for single-family houses.
10.	We require road connectivity between adjacent subdivisions and between parking lots where appropriate.
11.	We have a process/checklist for reviewing the function/stripping of streets when repaving occurs so that changes (such as adding on-street parking, changing lane width or adding bicycle lanes) can occur at that time.
12.	We require development of pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and walking paths.

Excellence Standards

Excellence Standards include activities that go beyond the Minimum Standards and are considered to be desirable activities for local governments. To achieve the Excellence Standard, a Rural/Smaller City government must achieve at least 25 percent of the standards in each category. A Suburban/Urbanized government must meet 40 percent of the standards in each category.

Governments attaining the Excellence Standard will be recognized by the CSRA Regional Commission and will become eligible for the Regional Steward Incentives Package envisioned by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

The Excellence Standard includes seven categories of standards: Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Intergovernmental Coordination/Governmental Capabilities. The standards in each category can be found on the following pages.

Housing

Excellence Standards - Housing	
1.	We provide quality affordable housing options (range of size, cost, density) to make it possible so that those who work in the community can also live there.
2.	We encourage efforts to stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.
3.	We conduct periodic housing assessments to determine existing conditions and current and future needs.
4.	Our community has a written housing plan or strategy.
5.	We have conducted a housing needs survey during the last decade.
6.	Our community has a written plan or policy for the demolition of unsafe or abandoned properties.
7.	We have a streamlined review process, or other incentives are provided, for developments that include affordable housing.
8.	We participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program.
9.	Our community has a housing strategy that distributes affordable housing throughout the jurisdiction, and we encourage mixed-income housing to attempt to ensure that developments contain some affordable housing.
10.	Our key staff or elected officials attend housing training on a recurring basis.
11.	We have Included an inclusionary provision in the zoning ordinance that requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low and moderate income households.
12.	We have and enforce a dilapidated and boarded building ordinance.

Economic Development

Excellence Standards – Economic Development	
1.	We maintain on our website a mapped property inventory of development possibilities and areas supported for redevelopment.
2.	Our community upgrades and develops infrastructure (water, sewer, natural gas, broadband, etc.) and leverages it as an economic development tool.
3.	We collaborate regionally to promote tourism.
4.	We have a defined industry recruitment strategy.
5.	We have an existing business retention plan or program.
6.	Our community coordinates with neighboring communities in promoting economic development initiatives (e.g. Joint

Excellence Standards – Economic Development	
	Development Authorities).
7.	We support downtown efforts (i.e. Downtown Development Authority, Better Hometown, Main Street, etc.)
8.	Our streets use wayfinding signage for tourism, shopping districts, downtown, etc.
9.	We have a how-to guide for starting a local business.
10.	We maintain a website with business information.
11.	We conduct a Business Retention and Expansion Process (BREP) Survey, or an Existing Industry Program (EIP) Survey and update it at least every five years.
12.	We have prepared an Urban Redevelopment Plan and created subsequent enterprise and opportunity zones.
13.	Our community participates in the Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) under the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.
14.	At least one of our staff members or elected officials has attended training offered by the Georgia Academy for Economic Development within the past five years.
15.	We maintain a written inventory of sites available for commercial and manufacturing.
16.	We have conducted a Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis to identify industry sectors best suited to a local community's available workforce, and what training might be required to attract potential employers.
17.	Our community participates in multi-county economic development efforts.

Land Use

Excellence Standards – Land Use	
1.	We periodically formally review our permitting process to assess whether it should be streamlined.
2.	Our zoning code allows accessory dwelling units or other accessory uses by right in at least some zoning districts.
3.	We have held in the last five years a targeted planning process or design charette for an Area Requiring Special Attention, a corridor or a neighborhood to improve aesthetics or function, to create investment opportunities, or for another purpose.
4.	Our land development regulations require street trees where appropriate within new development.
5.	We periodically perform formal review of and make updates to zoning and other land development regulations (including text and map as appropriate) to match comprehensive plan and other planning efforts.
6.	We require or provide incentives for provision of sidewalks and/or multi-purpose paths for new developments.
7.	Our development rules include design overlay ordinances for important gateways, corridors, and city center areas.
8.	We have community appearance ordinances (litter control, sign ordinance, dilapidated properties, landscaping, design control, etc.).
9.	We require or provide incentives for new developments to include open/green space (cluster development, conservation subdivisions).
10.	We have an impact fee ordinance in accordance with state law.
11.	Our development standards provide incentives for low-impact design, follow green growth guidelines or include other quality growth approaches.
12.	We have a zoning ordinance.
13.	Our zoning ordinance allows planned unit developments (PUDs), traditional neighborhood districts or similar districts that require site plan approval.
14.	Our zoning ordinance incentivizes the reuse of closed, decommissioned or obsolete (grayfields and/or brownfield) uses.
15.	Our zoning ordinance requires that new infill development is compatible with its neighborhood and maintains the harmony and character of existing areas.
16.	We have subdivision regulations.
17.	We have a process or procedure to allow construction on existing substandard lots.
18.	Our code enforcement officer is certified.
19.	We have a community education group that provides annual training in zoning, planning or community issues.
20.	We require new construction to be at least three feet above FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) designated floodplains.
21.	We have a legal sign ordinance.
22.	We have a GIS that is available to the public.

Excellence Standards – Land Use	
23.	We participate in Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System (CRS) program to reduce flood losses, to facilitate accurate insurance ratings and to promote the awareness of flood insurance.
24.	We have a form-based zoning district targeted to downtowns or other special districts.
25.	We have a unified development ordinance (all ordinances related to development are in one document)
26.	Members of our planning commission and other land development boards and commissions undergo training on a recurring basis.

Transportation

Excellence Standards – Transportation	
1.	Our parking standards have been rewritten to include lower minimum parking requirements, place parking behind buildings and address other parking-related issues.
2.	Our subdivision regulations require connection of pedestrian facilities to existing infrastructure where applicable.
3.	We make continuing efforts to improve sidewalks.
4.	We perform regular maintenance of streets and sidewalks.
5.	Our local transportation improvements are consistent with all existing bicycle and pedestrian plans.
6.	We employ access management techniques for public roads.
7.	We have a local transit assessment or transit development plan.
8.	We participate in regional transportation-related forums.
9.	We use traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians.
10.	We have a pedestrian master plan at the local or regional level.
11.	We have a bike plan at the local or regional level.
12.	We are a Safe Routes to School partner.
13.	We encourage the development of bicycling facilities such as bike racks and designated bike lanes.
14.	We have a designated path for joggers, bicyclists and/or pedestrians that serves a valuable purpose as a recreational or fitness use or as a transportation alternative.
15.	Shared parking is allowed in our commercial areas.
16.	Our street design standards are context-sensitive.
17.	We have a plan for a multi-use trail network.
18.	We have an airport overlay district.

Community Facilities

Excellence Standards – Community Facilities	
1.	We work with neighboring jurisdictions throughout the region to provide broadband access
2.	We have local land development ordinances and standards that: Discourage individual lot septic systems in developments that exceed a density threshold of one dwelling unit per acre. Require connections to a public or community water / wastewater system(s) when available or nearby. Prohibit the installation of new septic systems within 100 feet of any river and within 50 feet of any state water body.
3.	We have an inspection, maintenance, and monitoring program for private septic systems.
4.	We have a water quality monitoring program.
5.	We have a stormwater management plan and/or ordinance.
6.	We have and maintain a capital improvements plan or similar document.
7.	We have a community-wide recreation plan.
8.	We have a written maintenance and replacement plan for infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, etc.)
9.	There is a searchable up-to-date inventory of private wells and septic systems in our jurisdiction.

Excellence Standards – Community Facilities	
10.	We have a formal policy of making maintenance of existing infrastructure a priority before extending new infrastructure into additional areas.
11.	Our community has built a model playground site (which meets ADA accessibility standards).
12.	We have incentives for solar power and other sustainable technologies.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Excellence Standards – Natural and Cultural Resources	
1.	Our zoning code includes an agricultural district to allow for preservation of farmland in identified areas.
2.	Our zoning code includes a conservation or open space district to allow for the preservation of park land, greenways, and environmentally sensitive areas.
3.	We maintain a comprehensive inventory of cultural, archaeological, and historic resources.
4.	We have guidelines that encourage or require developers to protect open space, natural resources, and wildlife habitat.
5.	We have a historic preservation ordinance under the Georgia Historic Preservation Act and have an active historic preservation commission.
6.	We have a water conservation ordinance.
7.	We participate in a stream cleanup program such as Adopt-A-Stream or Rivers Alive.
8.	We have a litter prevention ordinance.
9.	We have a recycling program.
10.	We have a tree protection ordinance that requires review of clearing, grading and other land disturbance activities.
11.	Our waste disposal fees are on a “pay per throw” (unit-based or variable rate structure) basis so households are charged according to the amount of waste disposed.
12.	We require agricultural buffers where non-agricultural land abuts agricultural land.
13.	We have an environmental resource inventory that maps the community's environmentally sensitive areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, significant stands of old growth trees, etc. in order to make rational decisions about areas best suited to set aside as open space.
14.	Our community is a Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliate.
15.	We offer or contract to provide curbside collection of solid waste.
16.	We have a collection center for solid waste and recyclables.
17.	We have administrative procedures to enforce the state minimum standard building codes (Building, Residential, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Electric and Energy Conservation).
18.	We maintain compliance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.

Intergovernmental Coordination/Governmental Capabilities

Excellence Standards – Intergovernmental Coordination/Governmental Capabilities	
1.	We plan and services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions.
2.	We work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions on developing solutions for shared regional issues (such as growth management, natural resource protection, transportation, air quality, etc.).
3.	We have joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions.
4.	We provide input and feedback, as applicable, during the review process of Developments of Regional Impact.
5.	We plan with local governments outside our county.
6.	We meet with surrounding local governments at least annually.
7.	We have a joint countywide planning commission.
8.	We coordinate with neighboring communities in promoting economic development initiatives (e.g. Joint Development Authorities).

Excellence Standards – Intergovernmental Coordination/Governmental Capabilities	
9.	Our clerk has received certification from University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute.
10.	We have a unified development code (all ordinances relating to development are in one place), to help streamline the development process.

3.3 Strategies and Regional Work Program

This section identifies and describes activities the CSRA Regional Commission plans to perform during the next five years in order to implement the CSRA Regional Plan 2035. It also includes recommended activities that actors other than the Regional Commission may take to implement the regional plan.

The activities listed are separated into the following categories:

- **Planning and Coordination.** Activities performed by the Regional Commission to assist local governments and other regional actors to act consistently with the regional plan. Actions include outreach, education, and technical assistance such as more detailed sub-area planning, new or revised local development regulations, incentives, public investments and infrastructure improvements.
- **Review.** Activities by other actors in the region that require review and comment by the Regional Commission. The findings from the review are advisory in nature.

The following information is included for each listed activity:

- Brief description of the activity;
- Desired timeframe for undertaking the activity;
- Responsible party for implementing the activity;
- Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity;
- Funding source(s), if applicable; and
- Issues and Opportunities addressed.

Planning and Coordination

Economic Development					
ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES
1. Assist and train local economic developers and community leaders in marketing, dealing with prospects, forming incentive packages, and strategic planning.	2013-2018	RC, Local, GADEcD	N/A	N/A	P2, P4, P5, E3, E4, E10, R10
2. Cooperate with state agencies in marketing efforts.	2013-2018	RC, Local, GADEcD	N/A	N/A	P9, E4, E8, I2
3. Support major regional projects such as the Warren County Regional Industrial Park.	2013-2018	RC, Local, GADEcD	\$2,000	RC, Local	P2, P4, E1, E2, E5, E9, I2
4. Promote economic development tax incentives through the creation of enterprise and opportunity zones.	2013-2018	RC, local, Ga DCA	N/A	RC, Local	E1, E10, E11

Economic Development

5. Support activities that develop water/sewer and transportation infrastructure.	2013-2018	UDC, RC, GADEcD	\$5,000	RC, UDC, GADOT	E5
6. Foster and support economic growth through regional cooperation opportunities to share infrastructure (both conventional and technological) development across county boundaries.	2013-2018	RC, UDC, GADEcD	N/A	RC, Local	E5, I4, I5, I8
7. Support activities that encourage the development of infrastructure with the intent of attracting "Green" industries (i.e. Alternative fuels, environmentally sustainable manufacturing, etc.)	2013-2018	RC, UDC, GADEcD	N/A	RC, Local	E2, E10, R5
8. Support and encourage downtown tourism and business attraction	2013-2018	RC, GADEcD	N/A	RC, Local, DCA	E5, E6, E7
9. Assist in developing and promoting Main Street, Better Hometown, and similar programs.	2013-2018	RC, GADEcD	N/A	RC, Local, DCA	E5, E6, E7, T4
10. Assist in developing and implementing downtown master plans, urban redevelopment plans, revitalization area strategies and similar documents in eligible downtowns where requested.	2013-2018	RC,DCA, GADEcD	\$15,000 - \$50,000 per plan	RC, Local, DCA	E9, E10, E11, R1

Rural Industry / Resource Management

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Create a diversification plan or series of strategies that promote the development of other economic activities.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC	\$20,000	Cities/ Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC, GADEcD	P2, E5
2. Maximize alternative uses for kaolin resources.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC	Staff time	Cities/ Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC, GADEcD	E5
3. Support initiatives that enable the diversification	2013-2018	Cities/Counties,	Staff time	Cities/ Counties,	E5, L5, R5

Rural Industry / Resource Management

of the silviculture/wood products industries.		Chambers, Development Authorities, RC		Chambers, Development Authorities, RC, GADEcD	
4. Work to build on the potential for biomass energy as an export.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC	Staff time	Cities/Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC, GADEcD	E5, R5
5. Balance between resource extraction and resource/land conservation.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC	Staff time	Cities/Counties, Chambers, Development Authorities, RC, GADEcD	L5, R3, R5, R6
6. Participate or lead local planning, grant writing, or program administration related to local tourism.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Chambers, CVBs, Historic Preservation Boards, RC	\$5,000-\$30,000	Local, DCA, DNR, private foundations.	P2, E5

Housing

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES
1. Coordinate with state and local agencies to develop housing action plans.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, RC	\$8,000	DCA, Local, GHFA	P12, H1, H6, H8
2. Partner with developers to encourage housing development.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, RC	Staff time	Local Incentives	H1, H7
3. Encourage housing development along existing corridors.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, RC	Staff time	Local Incentives, DCA, HUD	H2, H3, H7, H9
4. Assist communities with housing related projects such as Community Home Investment Program; GICH and CDBG Housing Rehab projects.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, RC	\$20,000	DCA, Local, Federal	H1, H6, H8, R1, R12
5 Prepare development codes that encourage affordable and mixed income housing developments subject to preferred community design.	2013-2018	Cities, Counties, RC	\$30,000	RC, Local, DCA	H1, H3
6. Coordinate with local governments, state, and regional agencies to develop strategic housing plans for the region.	2013-2018	EC/EZ, RC, Local	\$5,000 / update	Local, DCA, HUD, USDA	I1, I3

Community Facilities

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Develop infrastructure plans that identify needs and priorities.	2013-2018	RC, Local, UDC	\$15,000-\$25,000	Local, DCA, USDA, GEFA	P13, F1, R2, F3, F8, F9, F12, F13
2. Seek funding for facilities and infrastructure improvements	2013-2018	RC, Local, UDC	\$25,000-\$50,000	Local, DCA, USDA, GEFA, NTIA	T9, F1, F2, F3, F6, F8, F9, F0, F11, F12
3. Support and encourage regional infrastructure sharing between counties, such as water system, and broadband connections.	2013-2018	RC, Local, UDC, GADEcD	\$25,000-\$50,000	Local, DCA, USDA, GEFA, NTIA	F4, I4
4. Assist with the establishment of local and regional recycling programs.	2013-2018	RC, Local,	\$15,000	Local, DCA, GEFA, private, EPD	F14
5. Identify brownfields and encourage their redevelopment.	2013-2018	RC, Local, UDC	\$10,000	Local, DCA, EPD, EPA	L4, L8

Land Use

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Develop regulations to encourage appropriate development.	2013-2018	RC, Local	\$8,000 - \$50,000	Local, DCA	P8, H3, H4, L1, L3, L7, R2, R3
2. Locate new development along existing infrastructure corridors.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties	Staff time	Local incentives, Private developers	P3, P8, P10, P11, H3, H5, L1, L7
3. Encourage preservation of green space and natural resource areas.	2013-2018	RC, Local, EPD	\$5,000	RC, Local, DCA, EPD, DNR	P1, H5, L5, R2, R6, R8, R9
4. Encourage growth in already developed areas.	2013-2018	RC, Local	Staff time	Local incentives, Private developers	P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P14, H2, H4, H5, H9, L1, L4, L6
5. Hold design workshops to identify redevelopment strategies for street, district or neighborhood improvements.	2013-2018	RC, Local	\$10,000	Local, DCA	L4, L6, L7, L8, T2, T6, T11

Areas Facing Intense Development Pressures

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Develop growth management plans for	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, RC	\$25,000	Local, UDC, DCA,	L3, L8, R8

areas facing development pressures.				GADEcD	
2. Coordinate with abutting local governments to promote regional planning.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, RC, UDC,	\$10,000	Local, DCA	R8, L1, L2, L5

Areas That Can Sustain Higher Densities

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Encourage renovation of existing buildings for adaptive reuse.	2013-2018	Local, RC	\$10,000	Local, DCA, USDA, HUD, Private funds	L8, H1, H2, H3, H4
2. Encourage commercial development in downtowns.	2013-2018	Local, Chambers, Development Authorities, UDC, RC	\$10,000	Local, Chambers, Development Authorities, Private, DCA	E8, E9, L4

Fort Gordon

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Implement recommendations contained in the Joint Land Use Study.	2013-2018	Adjacent counties and cities, Fort Gordon, Planning & Zoning Officials, RC	\$10,000	Local, Federal grants	L2, I1
2. Convene the adjacent communities and officials from Fort Gordon on a semi-annual basis to address potential concerns related to encroachment.	2013-2018	Adjacent counties and cities, Fort Gordon, Planning & Zoning Officials, RC	Staff time	Local, RC	L2, I1
3. Utilize appropriate land use regulation tools to prevent encroachment.	2013-2018	Adjacent counties and cities, Fort Gordon, Planning & Zoning Officials, RC	\$15,000	Local, Federal grants	L2

Potential Water Cooperation

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Develop strategic connection plans.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, RC, UDC	\$10,000	Local, GEFA, Rural Water	I1, I3

2. Encourage legislative creation of a CSRA Water Commission.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, RC	Staff time	RC	R6, I1, I3
3. Foster continued cooperation between local governments and the Corps of Engineers.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Corps of Engineers, RC	\$1,000	Local	I3, I4
4. Protect Clarks Hill Lake and the Savannah River for the continued recreational, economic, and other benefits to the region.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Corps of Engineers, RC	Staff time	Local, RC, DCA, Federal grants	R6
5. Protect all water basins within the region from contamination and manage use of the water resources.	2013-2018	Cities/Counties, Corps of Engineers, RC	Staff time	Local, RC, DCA, Federal grants	R6

Transportation

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Support the implementation of TIA-10 through advisory committee oversight.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	DOT	I1, I3, I4, T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11
2. Continue participation in GDOT's annual STIP process	2013-2018	Local government RC	Staff time	DOT	I1, I3, I4, T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11
3. Modify land development regulations on a case-by-case basis to allow for context sensitive (complete street) thoroughfare design.	2013-2018	Local government, RC	\$20,000	Local government	T2

Performance Standards

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Engage in programs or activities to assist local governments in meeting the performance standards.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA	Multiple
2. Hold meetings to assess local governments' progress toward meeting standards.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA	Multiple
3. Assist local governments with technical planning assistance for identified needs.	2013-2018	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	R4, R7, R11
4. Assist local	2013-2018	RC, DCA,	Staff time	RC, DCA,	P2, P7, E5, E7

governments to ensure timely and economical implementation of identified issues.		Various other state agencies		Various other state agencies	
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Review

Regional Commission Review

ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY	COST ESTIMATE	FUND SOURCE	ISSUES/ OPPORTUNITIES
1. Review and comment on long-range transportation plans for consistency with the Regional Plan.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T8, T9, T11
2. Review Developments of Regional Impact in close proximity to resources identified in the Regionally Important Resources (RIR) Plan with respect to RIR recommendations.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	I1, I6, I7
3. Review all Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), including those submitted by neighboring Regional Commissions.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	I1
4. Review statewide plans and programs for local and regional application.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	T1, T7, T10, I6, I7
5. When requested, review local land use plans to identify potential land use conflicts and provide technical assistance in resolving the issues of incompatible uses or zoning districts.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	I3, I6, I7
6. When requested, review local ordinances for consistency with plans, other ordinances, and community goals.	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA, Various other state agencies	I3, I6, I7
7. Monitor the progress of local governments toward implementing the Regional Plan	2013-2018	RC	Staff time	RC, DCA	T3, F5, F7

4. Evaluation and Monitoring

This chapter deals with the CSRA Regional Commission's responsibilities in monitoring and evaluating progress toward plan implementation and working with local governments in their efforts to meet the plan's performance standards. The regional commission views this activity as a partnership with a two-way flow of ideas and information. While the Regional Commission will monitor and assist local governments in their efforts, it also will receive feedback from local governments and use that feedback to improve and modify the plan.

This effort includes a range of specific actions. These actions fall into three main categories, as follows:

Local Government Assessment

The Regional Commission will conduct periodic Quality Growth Effectiveness assessments of each local government in the region. These assessments will review progress toward meeting performance standards and in implementing other portions of the CSRA Regional Plan 2035.

These assessments will begin with an initial consultation, to take place during the year following adoption of the Regional Agenda. During this initial meeting, the Regional Commission will explain the Regional Plan and encourage local governments to:

- Coordinate decisions with the guiding principles found in the Agenda;
- Coordinate identification of local character areas in local comprehensive plans with the Regional Development Map for the region;
- Take steps toward meeting performance standards;
- Identify character areas into local planning documents.

This initial meeting also will include an assessment of progress toward the performance standards. Local governments will be asked to perform a self-review before the meeting, and the Regional Commission will discuss any steps needed to be taken to attain the Minimum or Excellence standard.

The Regional Commission will schedule a second meeting with local governments that do not meet the Minimum standard at the time of the initial meeting. This meeting will take place no later than a year before the deadline for Qualified Local Government status.

A series of final meetings will take place during at the time of the deadline, to inform communities of their status and to learn of any changes since previous meetings.

Survey of Regional Leaders

The Regional Commission will conduct occasional surveys of regional leaders as to whether the strategies identified in the plan are being implemented.

Assessment of Plan Implementation and Impact

As part of the Report of Accomplishments included with each annual update of the Regional Work Program, the Regional Commission will survey changes and developments in the region to determine whether the plan is being effectively implemented and if it is having the desired impact on regional development patterns. Based on the results of this survey, the Regional Commission will identify impediments to implementation and possible solutions or needed amendments of the regional plan.

Additional Steps to Promote the Plan

The Regional Commission will consult with other important regional stakeholders (such as developers, chambers of commerce, environmental protection groups) to explain the contents of the Regional Agenda and to encourage them to coordinate their activities to achieve the desired development patterns for the region.

The Regional Commission will consult with staff of the Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority and other appropriate state agencies to encourage them to coordinate their activities with the Regional Agenda.

Appendix A: Quality Community Objectives

Appendix A

This section provides greater detail and explanation on each of the recommended Quality Community Objectives referred to in the Regional Vision.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community to permit community residents to improve their job-skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

GROWTH PREPAREDNESS

Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.

REGIONAL IDENTITY

Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

SENSE OF PLACE

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

Appendix B: Analysis of Quality Community Objectives

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs publishes a local assessment form to be used in analyzing consistency with its Quality Community Objectives (QCO); this assessment is also designated for use in regional analyses for consistency with QCOs. The following summary provides a general, regionalized assessment of the QCOs.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment*

Development Patterns			
Traditional Neighborhoods			
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most zoning regulations in the area separate land uses.
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	No specific provisions for this type of development.
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Lacking in most communities.
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	No specific programs within the region.
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Maintenance of facilities varies.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Variable.
Infill Development			
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Several areas working on assessment and cleanup.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Contained in several comprehensive plans.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Few areas with zoning allow lots of this size.
Sense of Place			
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Depends on where they landed.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most CSRA communities are active in preservation.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Aesthetic controls are more substantial in metro areas.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Consistently found in development regulations.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment*

5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Infrequent examples within the region.
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Farmland preservation efforts do not exist in the CSRA.

Transportation Alternatives

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Fixed-route service exists only in the city of Augusta.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Requirements are minimal in most communities.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Some local bike-ped plans exist. Little implementation.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Some local land use ordinances include shared parking.

Regional Identity

Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.

2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most CSRA communities participate in the partnership.
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Many CSRA communities try to leverage their heritage.
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.

Resource Conservation

Heritage Preservation

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A handful of communities have done this.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment*

Open Space Preservation			
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	The CSRA Land Trust does operate in the metro area.
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Augusta metro communities work with CSRA Land Trust.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A few areas have conservation subdivision provisions.
Environmental Protection			
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Within CSRA communities' comprehensive plans.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies. Many communities lack staff resources.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies. Many communities lack staff resources.
Social and Economic Development			
Growth Preparedness			
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.

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Local Assessment*

8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies. Depends on community size and resources.
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

Appropriate Businesses

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Annual plan by the CSRC RC.
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Monitored by the region's UDA/UDC.
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Varies.

Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Continual participation in state programs.
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.

4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Principally in the Augusta metropolitan area.
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Housing Choices

A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies, but condition of housing stock is a concern.
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Limited options available.
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

Educational Opportunities			
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	We participate in state programs such as Quick Start.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies. Access is relative to means.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies. Availability primarily in the Augusta metro area.
Governmental Relations			
Regional Solutions			
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ARTS MPO air quality task force.
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ARTS MPO air quality task force.
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies by topic.
Regional Cooperation			
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Varies.
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	County municipal cooperation is generally strong.