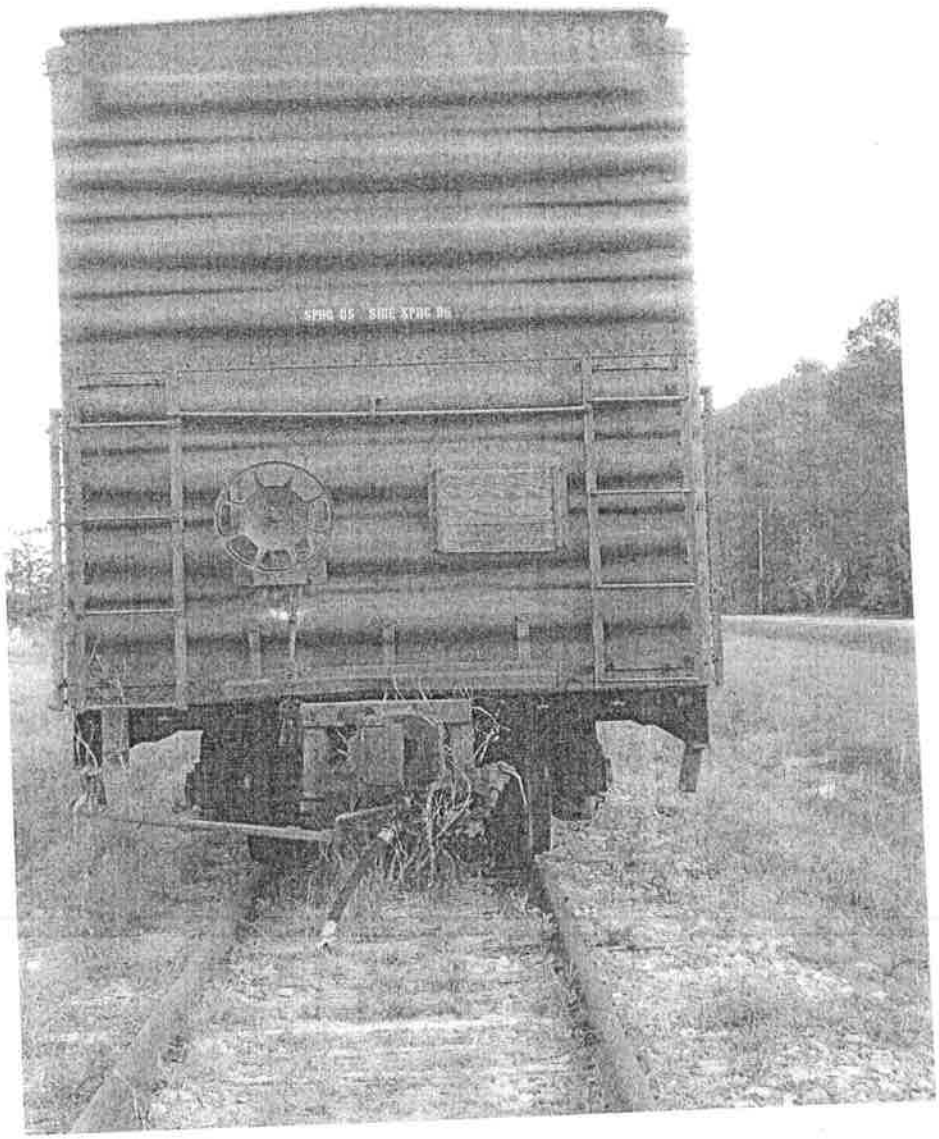
2018 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update
Atkinson County
The City of Pearson & City of Willacoochee



Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee

Adopted January 18, 2018

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Atkinson County Board of Commissioners
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Lace Futch Chairman

Commissioner Jimmy Roberts
Commissioner Charlton Gillis
Commissioner Travis Ursrey
County Attorney Jerome Adams
Finance Officer/HR Director Nina Lott
Commissioner Gloria Farrell
Commissioner Danny Spikes
Road Supervisor David Coffey
EMA Director Mark Ausley
County Clerk Darquita Williams

November 9, 2017

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 W Savannah Avenue
Valdosta Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Nina Y Lott at 912-422-3391 or by email; n.lott@atkinson-ga.org .

Sincerely,

Lace Futch
Chairman, Atkinson County Commission

Enclosures

The City of Pearson
STAY A MINUTE OR A LIFE TIME

City of Pearson
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Pearson, Georgia 31642
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Bettye D. Williams, Mayor Nell Ford, City Clerk

November 14, 2017

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 W Savannah Avenue
Valdosta Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

City of Pearson has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Nell Ford at 912-422-3397 or by email; cityclerk@cityofpearson.com .

Sincerely,

Bettye D. Williams

Bettye D. Williams
Mayor, City of Pearson

Enclosures

City of Willacoochee

Samuel Newson, *Mayor*
Peggy McClelland, *City Clerk*
Regina Jordan, *Water Clerk*

"Where good People Count"
33 Fleetwood Avenue
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Glynn Bailey, *Mayor Protem*
Verneil Hall, *Council*
Calesha Lott, *Council*
George Myers, *Council*
DC Willis SR, *Council*

November 15, 2017

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 W Savannah Avenue
Valdosta Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

City of Willacoochee has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Peggy McClelland at 912-534-5152 or by email; pegme1@willacoochee.com .

Sincerely,

Samuel Newson
Mayor, City of Willacoochee
Samuel Newson
Enclosures

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

1. Introduction

The 2018 Atkinson County – Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2018 Atkinson County – Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update consists of the following elements:

- Community Goals
- Needs and Opportunities
- Community Work Program
- Land Use Element
  (As a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)
- Economic Development Element
  (as a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category)

2. Community Involvement

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

a) The Steering Committee was identified in coordination with the Atkinson County Board of Commissioners; as well as elected officials or their appointees from the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee.

b) An initial Stakeholder Group was identified including City and County elected and appointed officials, city and county staff, law enforcement, local businesses and industries including the Health Care Sector, Board of Education, Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Authority, and the general public.

c) Participation techniques were identified. Techniques included meetings/workshops, extensive email correspondence, website publication of meeting notices and draft documents, and use of social media.

d) A minimum of three, but as many as needed, publicly notified informal workshops are held in a central location in the local communities in addition to the two required public hearings.

This series of public workshops is scheduled to review, discuss, and revise as necessary the existing current comprehensive Goals, Issues and Opportunities, and Policies in the first workshop; the Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program in the second workshop; and the land use element and economic development element in the third workshop. After each workshop, the suggested revisions and input are incorporated into the next iteration of the workbook using notes from the workshops. The new workbook draft is then distributed by email to all stakeholders and published as a draft on the various local government websites and or Facebook accounts for

review and comment prior to the next workshop. This is done for each of the workshops. The final draft of the workbook and draft comprehensive plan update is then distributed again with sufficient review time prior to the transmittal public hearing where the community has a final opportunity to discuss any additional changes with the elected officials prior to the transmittal of the updated draft comprehensive plan.

e) Other, separate meetings if needed are held with the individual communities to develop the Report of Accomplishments for the individual communities and to develop the next five-year Community Work Program, again for each individual community.

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on June15, 2017, at the City of Pearson Civic Center in Pearson, Georgia. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway, explaining the purpose of the update, and encouraging residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

3. Identification of Stakeholders

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, elected officials, and residents. Copies of every meeting's sign-up sheets are included in this plan in the Appendix.

4. Identification of Participation Techniques

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:

- Three Public Hearings:
  - Kick-off
  - Transmittal
  - Adoption
- Three Workshops:
  - Goals, issues, and opportunities
  - Report of Accomplishments & Community Work Program
  - Economic Development and Land Use
- Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders (notices of meetings, e-mail requests for comments, distribution of revised drafts and final documents)
- County and City Websites
- Dissemination of Information in the newspaper (public notices, advertisements)
- County, Cities Facebook accounts

5. Conduct Participation Program

A foundational principle utilized in all of the planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from and coordination with multiple and diverse interest groups. In order to ensure the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update, all participants were included in the stakeholder group. Outreach to the public, local governments, chambers of commerce, economic development authorities, and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, Facebook postings, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and city and county commission meetings.

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

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

The third workshop was utilized to update the Economic Development Element and the Land Use Element and Maps as desired by the local governments.

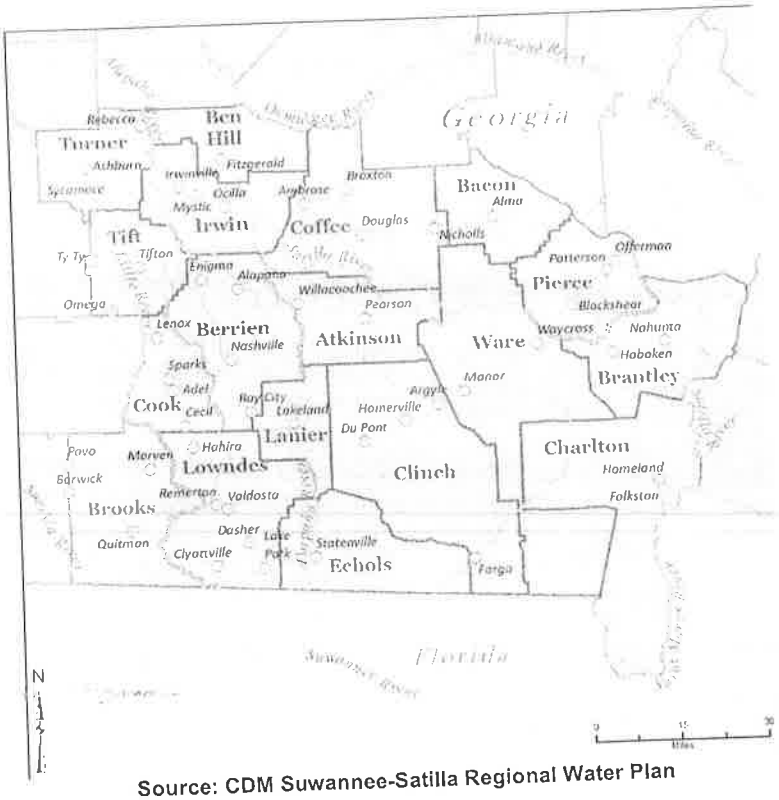
6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

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

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee lie within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was updated 2016-2017.

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



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).

2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.

3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.

4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.

5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.

7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.

8. Protect, maintain, and where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.

9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.

10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater to improve water quality and quantity.

11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource service to all citizens in the region.

13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition, the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond:

The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

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

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Water conservation
3. Data Collection and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (1 in 10 years 7-day low flow condition)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

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

1. Point Sources:
- Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity
- Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry

2. Non-Point Sources:
- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage storm water ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for Best Management Practices Programs by local and state programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:
- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; Identify opportunities to leverage funds and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

Longer Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands
- Evaluate incentive-based programs to manage, increase, and restore wastewater and stormwater returns
- Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
- Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

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

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

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction.

Some uses may be grandfathered, such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utilities placements, special forestry, or agricultural services.

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

II. PLAN ELEMENTS

1. Community Goals and Vision

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee; to generate local buy-in to the plan; and to ensure that the plan is implemented. The Goals as listed below were developed in the 2010 Partial Update through several community workshops. The goals are listed by category and are not listed in order of priority. These Goals were reviewed and updated individually during the first workshop of this 2017 Comprehensive Plan update.

Vision

Ten years from now, Atkinson County will continue to have a small-town atmosphere that is characterized by welcoming communities and a sense of individual belonging. The community's rich agricultural and forestry heritage will be preserved through the preservation of prominent landmarks and sites will be of importance to all citizens. Partnerships among the County and the cities will have been expanded to promote improvement to the quality of life in the community.

Goal 1: **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES** – To protect unique cultural character and sense of place, including historic and unique community events and preserve the unique natural resources of Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee including soils, rivers and lakes.

Goal 2: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** – To create and maintain a long-term sustainable and diverse economic base.

Goal 3: **HOUSING** – To encourage access to appropriate and affordable housing options for all residents in all income levels.

Goal 4: **LAND USE** – To protect and enhance the value of existing development, areas; promote development and redevelopment; create and enhance stable neighborhoods; and maintain accessible open space for future land use opportunities.

Goal 5: **COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES** – To develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.

Goal 6: **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION** – To enhance and maintain communication between each jurisdiction and surrounding counties in an effort to better serve the residents of Atkinson County.

2. Issues and Opportunities

The initial Needs and Opportunities were developed and identified in the 2010 Update for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee. For this comprehensive plan update, the issues and opportunities were reviewed in the first of three workshops. Each of the previously identified issues and opportunities was reviewed and discussed by the participants, and then either deleted, amended, or retained as deemed applicable to Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee. This was done utilizing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis with stakeholders and residents, analysis of statistical data and information, and review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities.

Resource Conservation - Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources

Issues:

A. Currently the Courthouse is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

B. Neither the City of Willacoochee nor the County have a Historic Preservation Ordinance, and there is a need to prioritize our historical preservation and the functionality of such buildings as the Malone Hotel which has fallen into disrepair.

C. The Minnie Corbitt house (donated to City of Pearson by family) was built in 1873 needs renovation before utilizing it.

Opportunities:

A. Plans are in next three years to build a new Courthouse that is ADA (Americans with Disabilities) accessible.

B. The Minnie Corbitt house once renovated will become a museum housing memorabilia such as photos and artifacts of the history of Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee and its residents.

C. There is a need to get people involved in improvement projects so that they will feel like they are a part of the process, and will thus have pride of ownership in the project. These types of improvement projects must include local initiative and support.

D. The County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee could collectively purchase and renovate the Malone Hotel which would serve as a focal point for the area and serving as an asset bringing tax dollars into the area through several uses.

E. We would like to provide more protection of historic resources

Resource Conservation - Natural Resources

Issues:

A. Lack of public boat ramps at both the Alapaha and Satilla Rivers.

B. There are no recreational facilities along the Alapaha and the Satilla Rivers.

Opportunities:

A. The Alapaha River can be a big asset to the community by putting in a boat ramp on the north side of the City of Willacoochee allowing for closer access to the river.

B. Seek participation in the Governor's "Go Fish" initiative along the Satilla and Alapaha Rivers.

C. Unused railroad tracks from City of Willacoochee to City of Pearson can be used for Rails to Trails.

D. The Alapaha and Satilla Rivers could support a canoe and kayak rental business.

Economic Development

Issues:

A. The lack of parking in the downtown Pearson impedes business development and the downtown buildings need to be renovated.

B. A county-wide Chamber of Commerce is needed to provide for leadership in implementing new businesses and retaining current ones.

C. A new Development Authority needs to be established.

D. The Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee need more businesses downtown that will draw people into the area, such as antique stores to retain tax dollars in the community as much as possible.

E. We need to promote revitalization of our downtown.

Opportunities:

A. Some of the older empty houses in both Cities could be converted into Bed & Breakfast facilities, and similar businesses which can draw people into the area adding to the tax base and utilizing housing stock.

B. The City of Pearson has the "Goat Festival and the City of Willacoochee has the "Old Fashion Day" annual festival that draws people to the city each year and brings outside dollars to the community.

C. The County and Cities are a designated Tier 1 community, which will benefit from an Opportunity zone and/or Enterprise zone designation.

D. The cities and the county have worked to lower their ISO ratings via the development of new Fire Departments lowering the property tax burden and will continue to lower even more.

E. There are several trucking companies in the community that offer employment and help to lower unemployment rates and enabling workers to live and work in their county/city residence.

F. There is a large Hispanic population in the county – the highest in the state. A large portion of the workforce is comprised of Hispanics, which adds new cultural identity to the County and new businesses that add to the tax base.

G. There is a large amount of agricultural production in the county.

H. Develop and promote tourism opportunities in our community.

I. Develop a strategy for appropriate economic development of our community.

Development Patterns - Housing

Issues:

A. We need more regulations for mobile homes, so that they will be developed more attractively but not prohibitions against them.

B. The City of Willacoochee needs more low- to- mod and middle-income housing as more industries are locating and jobs are fast exceeding housing.

C. We need to manage manufactured homes or mobile home parks in certain neighborhoods.

Opportunities:

A. There are six A (6) public housing developments within the City of Pearson and four (4) in the City of Willacoochee. Those developments meet the community's need for public housing.

B. We would like to increase the mix of housing (by size, type, and price range) in certain neighborhoods.

C. Promote development of housing with convenient access to major employers.

Development Patterns - Land Use

Issues:

A. The Atkinson County has no zoning in place.

B. The City of Willacoochee has no zoning in place.

C. We need to promote development of vacant sites and abandoned structures in our community.

D. We need to preserve our rural scenery.

E. City of Pearson needs to update their zoning/land use.

Opportunities:

A. The County needs to work with SGRC to implement Land Development Code Regulations.

B. The City of Willacoochee needs to work with SGRC to implement Land Development Code Regulations

C. The City of Pearson will work with SGRC to update their Land Development Code Regulations.

Community Facilities and Services

Issues:

A. The County jail is located within the courthouse and is too small.

B. Each of the cities and county only has a volunteer fire department.

C. Need to provide more community gathering spaces

D. Improve our public facility capacity in order to attract new development.

E. Improve community services for underserved neighborhoods using Community Block Grants

F. There are approximately 250 miles of dirt roads in the County and 5 miles of dirt roads in Pearson. Most people, though, do not want to pave all the roads.

Opportunities

A. The Civic Center can seat 425 people and contains a pa system. It can be used for youth sports activities, including basketball, volleyball, etc., or just about any event.

B. A new jail is being built using 2001-2005 SPLOST.

C. There is a new park in City of Willacoochee being utilized on West Street called McCranie Park.

D. We would like to reduce the cost of providing public services/facilities.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues

A. We need more intergovernmental coordination with all jurisdictions in order to better obtain grants from state and federal agencies.

B. Need to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions on shared needs.

Opportunities

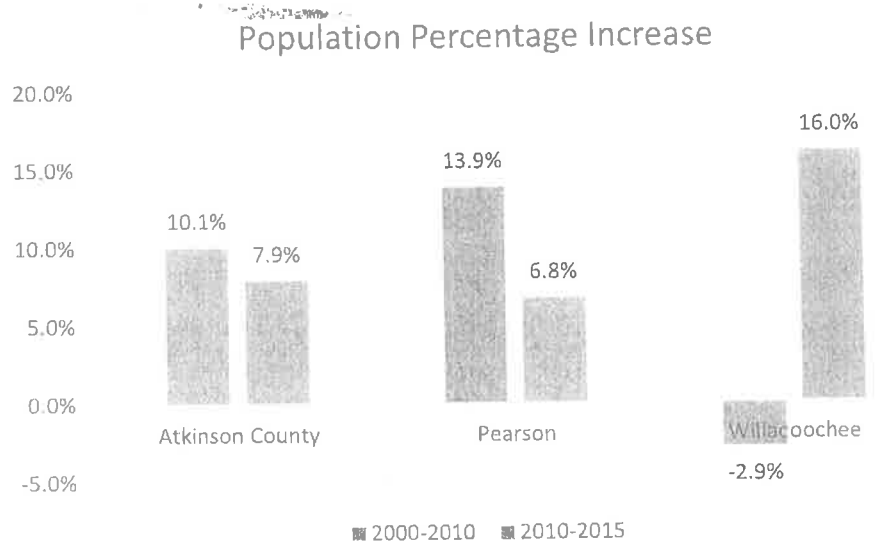
A. The Atkinson County community has experienced a trend of increased communication among local government agencies and governing bodies. This trend should continue as increased communication and collaboration between the various jurisdictions, school systems, and authorities would improve future planning efforts and increase effectiveness of individual efforts.

B. Continued collaboration should occur between the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee and the South Georgia Regional Commission.

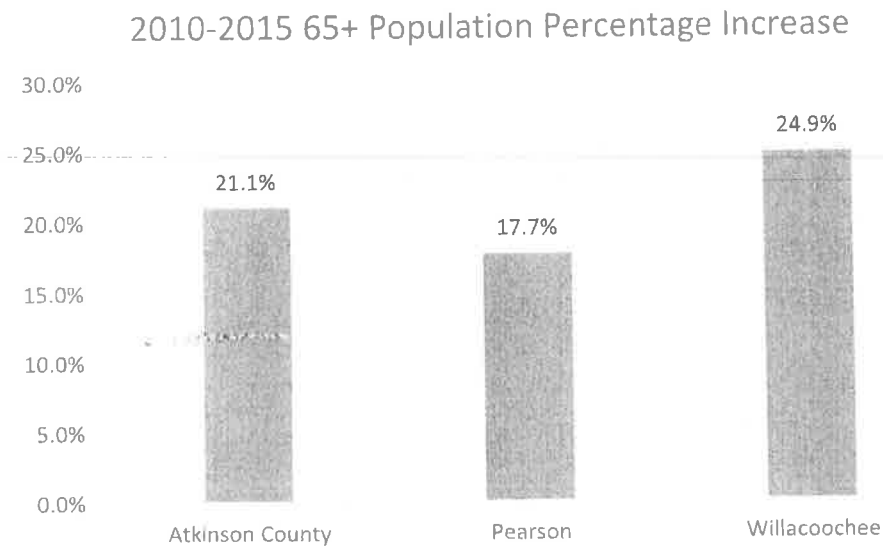
C. The cities and county should consider consolidation of emergency services.

D. There is one fire chief for all of the volunteer fire departments, which provides centralized leadership.

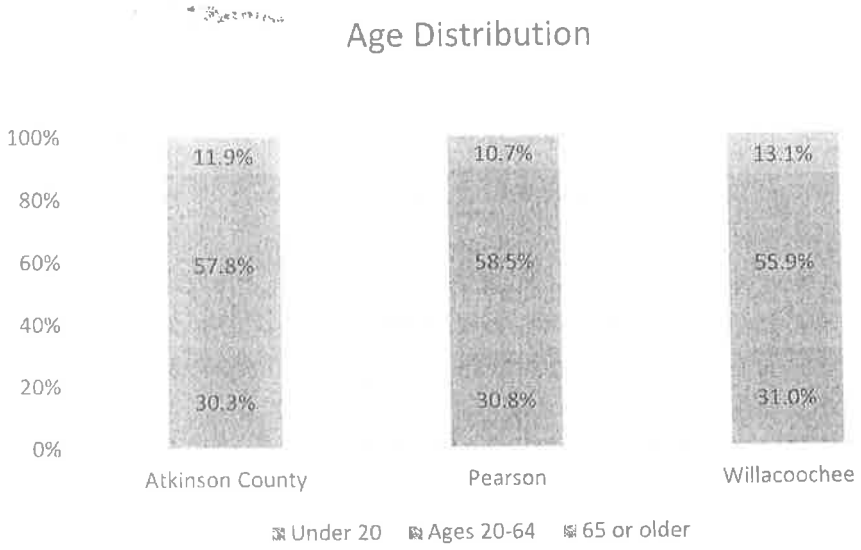
3. Analysis of Data and Information



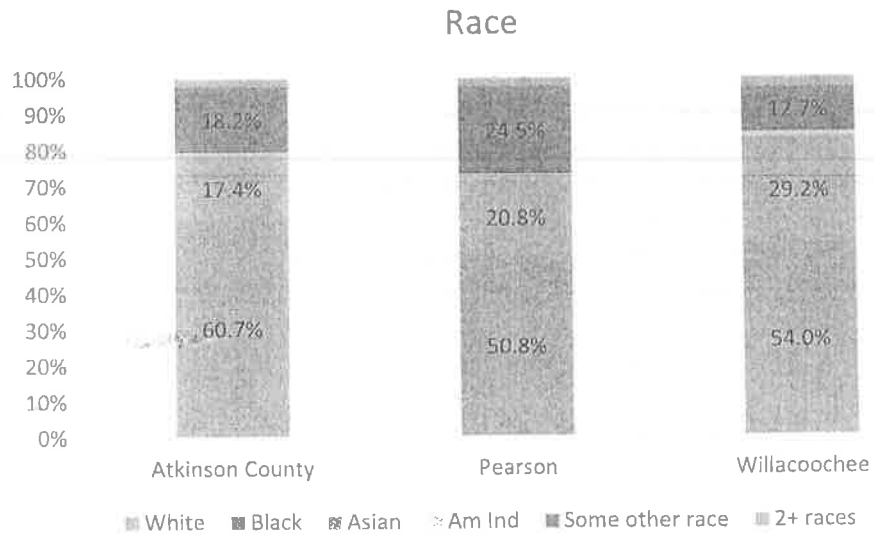
The 2015 population of Atkinson County (the most recent figure currently available) is estimated at 9,039, a 7.9% increase since 2010. The 2015 population of Pearson is estimated at 2,260, a 6.8% increase since 2010. The 2015 population of Willacoochee is 1,614, a 16.0% increase since 2010. The County and the City of Pearson gained population from 2000 to 2010 (10.1% for Atkinson County, 13.9% for the City of Pearson), while the City of Willacoochee's population decreased by 2.9%.



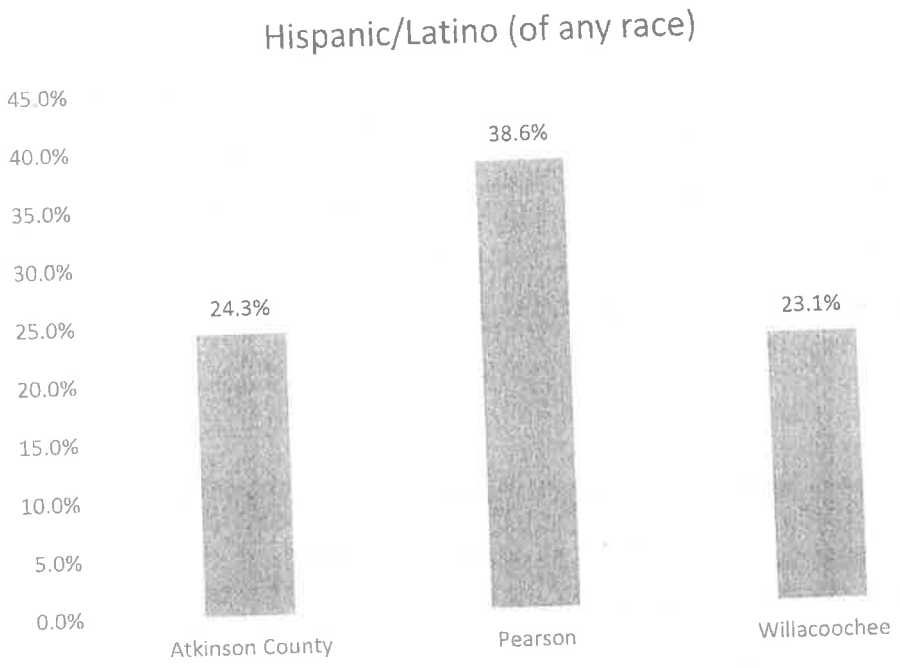
Since 2010, the percentage of the population aged 65 and older has increased substantially in Atkinson County (21.1%), the City of Pearson (17.7%), and the City of Willacoochee (24.9%).



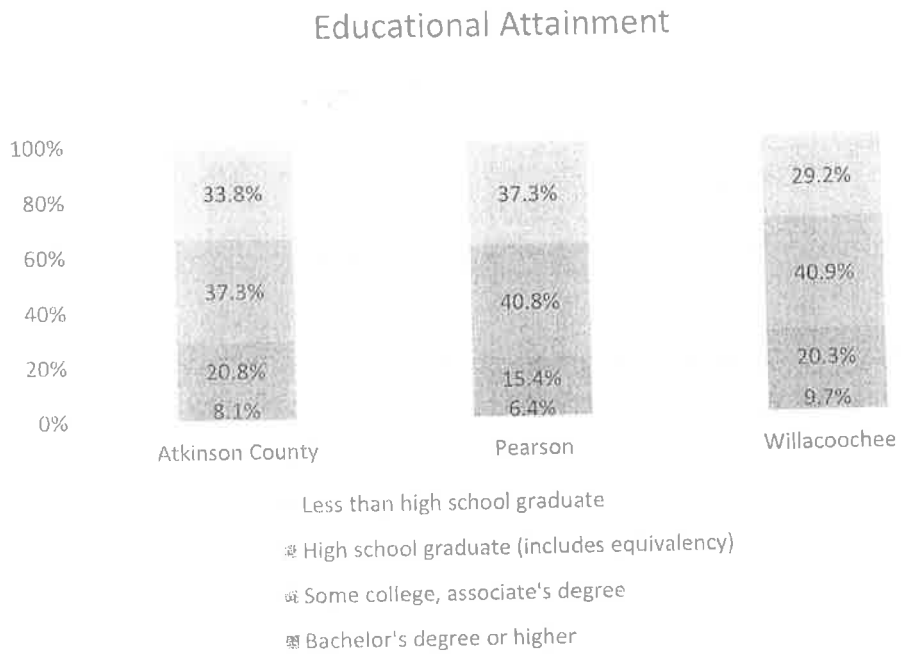
According to 2015 estimates, the age distribution in Atkinson County is 11.9% over 65, 57.8% ages 20-64, and 30.3% under 20. In the City of Pearson, the age distribution is 10.7% over 65, 58.5% ages 20-64, and 30.8% under 20. In the City of Willacoochee, the age distribution is 13.1% over 65, 55.9% ages 20-64, and 31.0% under 20. Atkinson County's population is 49.4% female and 50.6% male, the City of Pearson's population is 49.5% female and 50.5% male, and the City of Willacoochee's population is 50.8% female and 49.2% male.



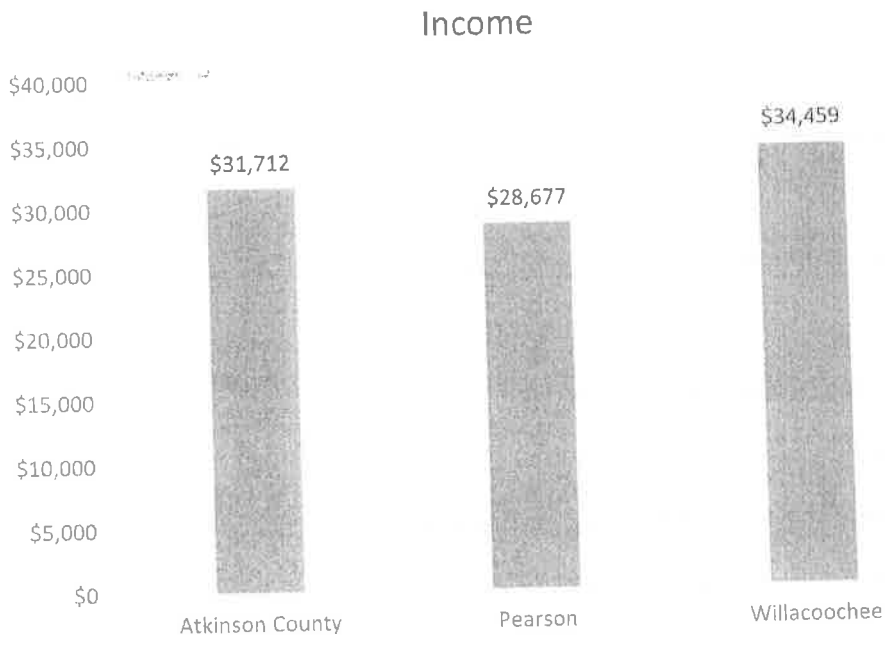
The population of Atkinson County is 60.7% White/Caucasian, 17.4% Black/African American, 18.2% some other race, 2.2% two or more races, 0.7% Asian, and 0.7% Native American. The City of Pearson's population is 50.8% White/Caucasian, 20.8% Black/African American, 24.5% some other race, 2.3% two or more races, 1.2% Asian, and 0.5% Native American. The City of Willacoochee's population is 54.0% White/Caucasian, 29.2% Black/African American, 12.7% some other race, 2.7% two or more races, 0.4% Asian, and 1.1% Native American.



Atkinson County's population is 24.3% Hispanic/Latino (of any race), the City of Pearson's population is 38.6% Hispanic/Latino, and the City of Willacoochee's population is 23.1% Hispanic/Latino.



Among persons aged 25 or older, in Atkinson County, 33.8% have no high school diploma, 37.3% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 20.8% have an associate's degree or some college, and 8.1% have a bachelor's or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Pearson, 37.3% have no high school diploma, 40.8% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 15.4% have an associate's degree or some college, and 6.4% have a bachelor's or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Willacoochee, 29.2% have no high school diploma, 40.9% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 20.3% have an associate's degree or some college, and 9.7% have a bachelor's or higher degree.



The median household income in Atkinson County is $31,712, the median household income in the City of Pearson is $28,677, and the median household income in the City of Willacoochee is $34,459.

An estimated 28.7% of Atkinson County's population, 31.4% of the City of Pearson's population, and 44.2% of the City of Willacoochee's population live below the federal poverty level. In Atkinson County, 38.3% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level, in the City of Pearson 40.1% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level, and in the City of Willacoochee 66.5% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level.

Atkinson County's estimated unemployment rate is 7.3%, the City of Pearson's unemployment rate is 8.7%, and the City of Willacoochee's unemployment rate is 7.5%. Among adults aged 16 and older, the rate of labor force participation is 59.2% in Atkinson County, 60.6% in the City of Pearson, and 56.6% in the City of Willacoochee.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov)

4. Consideration of DCA Quality Community Objectives

DCA Quality Community Objectives and Best Practices:

1. Economic Prosperity
Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson, And Willacoochee:

- Research and create a source book to identify technical and financial assistance available for local businesses from regional, state and federal sources and make it available to local businesses.
- Track business needs of existing businesses to help with business retention.
- Tailor training programs to provide workforce skills needed by local businesses.

2. Resource Management
Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee:

- Create an inventory of environmentally sensitive areas such as groundwater recharge areas, river corridors and wetlands, as a first step to create a local strategy for minimizing negative impacts on water quality and quantity.

3. Efficient Land Use
Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee:

- Create a historic preservation overlay zone to ensure the preservation of historic properties.
- Create some regulatory tools like a zoning code to encourage owners to maintain property or utilize vacant or unused properties and structures.
- Consider adopting a rehabilitation code in addition to a new construction code to help keep costs down thereby encouraging rehabilitation of properties.

4. Local Preparedness
Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee:

- Ensure consistency of Atkinson County's and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee's, ordinances with the adopted comprehensive plan.
- Pursue CDBG grants to implement needed infrastructure projects.
- Continue implementation of a Service Delivery Strategy.

5. Sense of Place

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee:

- Adopt manufactured home regulations to ensure compatibility of manufactured homes with surrounding single-family residences and to regulate appearance, layout and location of manufactured homes.

6. Regional Cooperation

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee:

- Meet regularly with SGRC staff to discuss local priorities and projects and explore opportunities for assistance and coordination with regional efforts.

7. Housing Options

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson, And Willacoochee:

- Consider creating an ordinance to allow cottage zoning to allow very small single-family homes to fill the need for affordable housing, utilize vacant properties and keep cost down for construction and so eliminate the need for manufactured homes.
- Provide education on home loan assistance to foster rehabilitation and revitalization.

8. Transportation Options

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson, And Willacoochee:

- Create a continuous, well maintained sidewalk network, especially around schools.
- Ensure safe, adequate and well-designed facilities for bicyclists.

9. Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson, And Willacoochee:

- Ensure that all schools and libraries have adequate and efficient access to the internet to provide sufficient opportunities for on-line education and certification opportunities.

10. Community Health

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

Best Practices recommended for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson, And Willacoochee:

- Develop a comprehensive listing of health services and assistance resources for local citizens.
- Coordinate with SWGRC or SGRC to participate in the GDOT 5311 program to provide public transportation to the next available public health facility.

5. Goals, Issues and Policies

Cultural Resources

Goal 1: To protect unique cultural character and sense of place, including historic and unique community events.

Currently the Courthouse is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards

Policy 1.1: New courthouse being planned for in next three years

Neither the City of Willacoochee nor the County have a Historic Preservation Ordinance and there is a need to prioritize our historical preservation and the functionality of such buildings as the Malone Hotel which has fallen into disrepair.

- **Policy 1.2:** Encourage the development of a historical preservation ordinance for Atkinson County and the City of Willacoochee.
- **Policy 1.3:** Consider identifying sites that could qualify for historical significance.
- **Policy 1.4:** Promote public involvement opportunities to engage more citizens in the historical renovation projects.

The Minnie Corbitt house was built in 1873 and needs renovation before utilizing it.

- **Policy 1.5:** Apply for grants to renovate the Minnie Corbitt house to become a museum which can house important history of the county and cities.

Natural Resources

Goal 1: **Preserve the unique natural resources of Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee, including soils, rivers, and lakes.**

Lack of the boat ramps at both the Alapaha and Satilla Rivers.

- **Policy 1.6**: Work with Langdale owners to gain an easement onto their property to utilize the Alapaha River as an asset to the community by putting in a boat ramp on the north side of the City of Willacoochee allowing for closer access to the river.

There are no recreational facilities along the Alapaha and the Satilla Rivers.

- **Policy 1.7**: Seek participation in the Governor's "Go Fish" initiative along the Alapaha and Satilla Rivers.
- **Policy 1.8:** Research opportunities to develop and utilize check dams on the Alapaha and Satilla Rivers.

- **Policy 1.9:** Continue to promote the development of regulations through coordination with the state to protect wetlands.

Economic Development

Goal 2: **Create and maintain a long-term sustainable and diverse economic base.**

The lack of parking in the downtown of Pearson impedes business development, and the downtown buildings need to be renovated.

- **Policy 2.1:** We will consider developing a downtown parking plan.

A County-wide Chamber of Commerce is needed to provide for leadership in implementing new businesses and retaining current ones.

- **Policy 2.2:** Consider recruiting a director for the reactivation of a county-wide Chamber of Commerce.

A new Development Authority needs to be established.

- **Policy 2.3** Develop a new board to reestablish the Development Authority.

The Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee need more businesses downtown that will draw people into the area, such as antique stores to retain tax dollars in the community as much as possible.

- **Policy 2.4:** Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee officials will pursue a Georgia Main Street designation.
- **Policy 2.5:** Encourage infill development, especially in the downtown area with special attention to antique stores.

We need to promote revitalization of our downtown.

- **Policy 2.6:** Support/encourage Hispanic business opportunities.
- **Policy 2.7:** We will support programs for retention, expansion and creation of businesses that are a good fit for our community's economy in terms of job skill requirements and linkages to existing businesses.
- **Policy 2.8:** We will target declining, vacant or underutilized sites or buildings in preference to new economic development.

Housing

Goal 3: **To encourage access to appropriate and affordable housing options for all residents in all income levels**

We need more regulations for mobile homes, so that they will be developed more attractively, but not prohibitions against them.

- **Policy 3.1:** Consider gathering research on regulations for mobile homes/manufactured homes so that they can function as viable options for affordable housing.

- **Policy 3.2:** We will encourage development of housing opportunities that enable residents to live close to their places of employment.

- **Policy 3.3:** We will eliminate substandard or dilapidated housing in our community.

The City of Willacoochee needs more low- to- mod and middle-income housing as more industries are locating and jobs are fast exceeding housing.

- **Policy 3.4:** We will seek to balance the supply of housing and employment in our community and consider their location in relation to each other.

- **Policy 3.5:** We will accommodate our diverse population by encouraging compatible mixture of housing types, densities and costs in each neighborhood.

- **Policy 3.6:** We will increase opportunities for low-to-moderate income families to move into affordable owner-occupied housing.

We need to manage manufactured homes or mobile home parks in certain neighborhoods.

- **Policy 3.7:** Consider amending mobile home park development regulations in an effort to decrease their negative impacts.

Land Use

Goal 4: **Protect and enhance the value of existing development areas; promote development and redevelopment within urbanized areas; create and enhance stable neighborhoods; maintain accessible open space for future land use opportunities.**

Atkinson County has no zoning in place.

- **Policy 4.1:** We will work with SGRC to implement Land Development Code Regulations.

City of Willacoochee has no zoning in place.

- **Policy 4.2:** We will work with SGRC to implement Land Development Code Regulations.

City of Pearson needs to update their zoning/land use.

- **Policy 4.3:** We will work with SGRC to update Land Development Code Regulations.

We need to promote development of vacant sites and abandoned structures in our community.

- **Policy 4.4:** We will work to redevelop and enhance existing commercial and industrial areas within our community in preference to new development.

- **Policy 4.5:** Our community will use land efficiently to avoid the costs and problems associated with urban sprawl.

We need to preserve our rural scenery.

- **Policy 4.6:** We will preserve the rural character of our community and provide the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of the community.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal 5: Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.

The county jail is located within the courthouse and is too small.

- **Policy 5.1:** A new jail will be constructed using 2001-2005 SPLOST.

Each of the cities and the county only has a volunteer fire department.

- **Policy 5.2: Continue to** seek ways to lower the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating.

Need to provide more community gathering spaces.

- **Policy 5.3:** Identify potential funding sources for the development of recreational facilities.
- **Policy 5.4:** We are committed to providing pleasant, accessible public gathering places and parks throughout the community.

Improve our public facility capacity in order to attract new development.

- **Policy 5.5:** The use of existing facilities and services should be maximized.
- **Policy 5.6:** Our community will use planned infrastructure expansion to support development in areas identified as suitable for such development.

Improve community services for underserved neighborhoods using Community Block Grants

- **Policy 5.7:** We will ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of service for the community's residents.

There are approximately 250 miles of dirt roads in the County and 5 miles of dirt roads in Pearson. Most people, though, do not want to pave all the roads.

- **Policy 5.8:** We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community.
- **Policy 5.9:** Our new and reconstructed roadways will be designed to accommodate multiple functions, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes as well as local vehicular circulation.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Goal 6: Enhance and maintain communication between each jurisdiction and surrounding counties in an effort to better serve the residents of Atkinson County.

Need more intergovernmental coordination with all jurisdictions in order to better obtain grants from state and federal agencies.

- **Policy 6.1:** Consider having a quarterly intergovernmental meeting between the County and City.
- **Policy 6.2:** We will pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions.

Need to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions on shared needs.

- **Policy 6.3:** We will seek opportunities to share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial.

6. Community Work Program

Report Of Accomplishments: Atkinson County
(5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update 2012)

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
PLANNING									
Develop a county zoning ordinance	$2500 County and SGRC	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Postpone for study until 2020/2021
Update the County website on a quarterly schedule	staff time County and Cities		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
In coordination with the School Board and the City of Pearson develop and implement a strategic plan for the old high school property	staff time County and cities	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete lack of coordination between SB and County
Recruit a director for the reactivation of the county wide Chamber of Commerce	staff time County and Cities	General Fund	x	x					Ongoing will combine with development of county wide Chamber
HISTORIC RESOURCES									
Adopt Historic Preservation Ordinance for Atkinson County	$5,000 County and Cities	General Fund	x	x	x				Delete lack of participation and interest
Establish a countywide Historic Preservation Board for Atkinson County	staff time County and Cities	Varies	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete lack of participation and interest
Initiate a public education program on county historical resources and utilize to attract tourists to the area	staff time County and Cities	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete lack of participation and interest
NATURAL RESOURCES									
None									

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
HOUSING									
stablish a housing rehabilitation program for ilapidated areas throughout the County utilizing CHIP rants, CDBG, Opportunity Zones, etc.	$350,000/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing except not using CHIP
Revitalize single family housing that can be used for ffordable housing	$5,000/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Encourage the availability of credit counseling vailable for all potential home buyers	$25,000/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Enhance code enforcement efforts to make sure egulations are not being violated	Staff time/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Attract tourism with an Antique Shop City theme.	TBD/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete will be under City of Pearson ED
Support industrial parks already in the county	Staff time/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete no support required
Develop county wide tourism plan	$2,000/County, Region 11Dept of Tourism and Trade		x	x	x	x	x	x	Postpone until year 2022
Promote and develop county wide Chamber of Commerce	Staff time/County		x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing combining recruiting Director for Chamber
Develop ordinance for business and outdoor advertisement (billboards) as part of revised land development regulations	$2,000/County, County Attorney		x	x	x	x	x		Delete not an issue that needs to be addressed
LAND USE									
Facilitate GIS Training county-wide	$5000/SGRC annually	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments so that the ISO number can decrease		General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Completed currently but will be ongoing for future reduction in ISO rating

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
Build an After Hours Clinic		General Fund, Private, CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete lack of interest and funding
Renovate County Courthouse		General Fund, CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Develop and maintain county street-map including cities that will make planning and code enforcement efforts easier		General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Design and build new jail		EDA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Pave Morning Dew Circle		LMIG	x	x					Complete
Pave Heritage Hills Subdivision		LMIG	x	x					Delete not high priority
Construct Old Columbus Road Project including water and sewer		LMIG	x	x					Paving complete County does not offer water and sewer
Construct sidewalk to High School with lighting from hardware store to past High School		General Fund, Grant	x	x					Delete distance to far to new High School

City Of Pearson Report of Accomplishments FY 2012 – 2017

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
PLANNING									
Update the Pearson website on a quarterly schedule	$500/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop a downtown parking plan	$2,500/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete no interest and lack of space
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments to reduce ISO rating	TBD/Cities, County	n/a	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete and ongoing for future reduction in ISO rating
Recruit a director for the reactivation of the county wide Chamber of Commerce	staff time County and Cities	General Fund	x	x	x	x			Ongoing
HISTORIC RESOURCES									
None									
NATURAL RESOURCES									
None									
HOUSING									
Develop a program for the rehabilitation of housing in the City of Pearson	$350,000/City of Pearson	CHIP, CDBG, USDA, DCA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Continue to enhance the Industrial Park so that it can attract more industry	$500,000/City of Pearson	General Fund, CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Use abandoned railroad area for more commercial development	TBD/City of Pearson	General Fund,	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete Railroad owns property

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
Establish ad utilize a downtown revitalization program	$500,000/City of Pearson	DCA Downtown RLF, EDA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Obtain a Georgia Main Street designation	$1,500/City of Pearson	General Fund,	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Develop plans for expansion of the existing industrial park	$2,500/ Pearson Industrial Authority, City	General Fund, CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing will combine with enhancing Industrial Park
Develop a strategic plan that will make Pearson a candidate or the location Federal Prison System	$2,000/City of Pearson	GED, DCA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Reconstruct old city hall 1- New roof 2- Air conditioning/heating unit 3- Develop offices for rent 4- Maintain and renovate for Fire Department training	$60,000/City of Pearson	General Fund,	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
LAND USE									
None									
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
Update the sidewalk connectivity plan (include in master plan) and match up the sidewalk with the high school	$10,000/City of Pearson	General Fund, T grant	x	x	x	x	x	x	Completed plan but will delete match up with high school
Enhance attractiveness of crossroads that connect to interstate	TBD/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete interstate connection is to distant
Put waste baskets and lighting in the center of town to make the area more safe and clean	$5,000/City of Pearson	General Fund, T grant	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing with TE grant
Hire an additional police officer	$50,000/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x				Complete
Construct and design a new route 441 red light to Dollar Store	$TBD/City of Pearson	TBD	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete not feasible
Continue and maintain youth programs	Staff time/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop plans for a new park on West Street	$1,000/City of Pearson	General Fund	x	x	x				Complete
Redevelopment of downtown areas. 1- Develop Better Hometown grant 2- Plan ornamental	$75,000/City of Pearson	General Fund, T grant	x	x	x				Ongoing

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
streetlight project 3- Purchase ornamental garbage cans and benches 4- Purchase street flags 5- Develop tree-planting project 6- Refinish sidewalks in downtown area									
Repave/surface streets as prioritized by need	$120,000/City of Pearson	LMIG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Pave city streets as prioritized by need	$200,000/City of Pearson	LMIG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Refurbish the water tower	$500,000/City of Pearson	CDBG		x					Completed
Complete and distribute a new city-county tri-fold street map	$2500/City of Pearson, SGRC	General Fund	x						Completed

City Of Willacoochee Report of Accomplishments FY 2012 – 2017

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
PLANNING									
None									
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments to reduce ISO rating	TBD/Cities, County	n/a	x	x	x	x	x	x	Complete and ongoing for future reduction in ISO rating
Complete and distribute a new city-county tri-fold street map	$2,500/City of Willacoochee, SGRC	General Fund	x	x	x	x			Ongoing
HISTORIC RESOURCES									
Inventory Survey of West End Cemetery	$10,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund	x	x	x				Ongoing
Rehabilitate and reopen McCranie Turpentine Still	$300,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund	x	x	x				Delete not economically feasible and possible EPD problems
Renovate Willacoochee old electric building	$500,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund, CDBG	x	x	x				Delete building does not exist
NATURAL RESOURCES									
Pine Tree Preservation Ordinance	$2,500/City, County, SGRC	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete no interest
HOUSING									
Rehabilitate existing and provide additional housing stock for all income levels	$350,000/City of Willacoochee	CHIP, CDBG, USDA, DCA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Maintain and improve Industrial Park	$500,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund, CDBG, EDA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
LAND USE									
None									
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									

PROJECTS	Estimated Cost / Resp.	Funding	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	Report of Accomplishments
Develop a city irrigation system to improve landscaping on government property.	$50,000/City /County	General Fund EDA	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Buy the old train depot with TEA Grant funding.	$50,000/City /SGRC	CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete do not have
Improve main street with TEA Grant funding.	$25,000/City /SGRC	TA Grant	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
4 lane County road 135 from Douglas to Willacoochee	TBD/City/County	GDOT	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete not a GDOT project
Keep police car fleet up to date	$50,000/City/SGRC	Cops Grants	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Hire one (1) full time fireman	$25,000yearly/City	Fire Grant	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete consolidated with county
Build a low income medical clinic that is served by volunteer doctors	$75,000/City/County	CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Delete not economical feasible
Provide improvements to local streets, water lines and sewer lines	$100,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop city-wide CDBG applications for housing rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements	$500,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund, CDBG	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to expand beautification efforts around town and at city entrances	$50,000/City of Willacoochee	General Fund	x	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

6. Community Work Program

Atkinson County 5-Year Community Work Program Update
(2018 - 2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
PLANNING								
Update the County website on a quarterly schedule	$500	County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Develop a master resource guide	$1,500	County Staff	General Fund			X	X	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Develop county wide tourism plan	$2,500	County/Region 11 Department of Tourism and Trade	General Fund					X
Work with City of Pearson and City of Willacoochee to form a county-wide Chamber of Commerce and find an appropriate Chairman for Chamber	Staff Time	County and Cities	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Develop a new board to reestablish the Industrial Authority	Staff Time	County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
HOUSING								
Establish a housing rehabilitation program for dilapidated areas throughout the County utilizing CHIP grants, CDBG, Opportunity Zones, etc.	$2,500	County, SGRC	General Fund			X	X	X
Revitalize single family housing that can be used for affordable housing	$7,500	County	CHIP, CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
Encourage the availability of credit counseling available for all potential home buyers	$25,000	County	General Fund USDA	X	X	X	X	X
Enhance code enforcement efforts to make sure regulations are not being violated	Staff Time	County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
NATURAL RESOURCES								

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Continue to promote the development of regulations through coordination with the state to protect wetlands	$1,500/Staff Time	County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Preserve and protect the ecological value and diversity of natural resources in Atkinson County	Staff Time	County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
LAND USE								
Facilitate GIS Training county-wide	$750 annual	County/SGRC	General Fund			X	X	X
Develop a county zoning ordinance	$500	County/SGRC	General Fund			X	X	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES								
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments so that the ISO number can decrease	$25,000	County/Cities	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Design and build new jail	$35,000	County	EDA	X	X	X		
Widen and resurface Cogdell road from Clinch County line to Union Hill Church Road	$1,322,905.40	County/GDOT	TSPLOST		X	X	X	
Widen and resurface Springhead Road from SR64 to Live Oak Church Road	$675,870.50	County/GDOT	TSPLOST		X	X	X	
Widen and resurface Springhead Road from 3.565 miles south of Willacoochee City limits to Willacoochee City limits	$746.277.18	County/GDOT	TSPLOST		X	X	X	
Widen and resurface Springhead Road from Live Oak Church Road to 4.356 miles south of Willacoochee city limits	$466,277.18	County/GDOT	TSPLOST		X	X	X	
Upgrade fire equipment as needed	$15,000	County	Fire Grants, General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Purchase new police cars every two years	$25,000 Each	County	General Fund	X		X		X
Implement a training plan for Sheriff/Fire/EMS	Staff Time	County	General Fund		X	X	X	
Evaluate financing methods for new infrastructure	Staff Time	County	General Fund		X	X	X	

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Build new courthouse using old courthouse for an annex.	$350,000	County	CDBG Grant	X	X	X		
Continue to apply for CDBG grants to enhance infrastructure, road and street projects, redevelopment as needed.	$5,000	County/SGRC	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
Create and/or participate in a leadership program for residents, community leaders, and government officials	$1,500	County/Cities	General Fund	X	X	X		
Plan a retreat for City, County and BOE members to discuss and implement major improvements countywide.	Staff Time	County/Cities/BOE	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES								
Work to save Old Malone Hotel which is 100 years old the one historical site that can be used as a great landmark for the County and Cities	Staff Time	County/Cities	General Fund/Grants	X	X	X	X	X
Participate in the identification and documentation of historic resources in the County	Staff Time	County	General Fund		X	X	X	

City of Pearson 5-Year Community Work Program Update
(2018 – 2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
PLANNING								
Update the Pearson website on a quarterly schedule	$1,500 annual	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Continue to enhance the Industrial Park so that it can attract more industry and develop plans for expansion of the existing industrial park	$500,000/enhance $2,500/expansion	City of Pearson	General Fund, CDBG, EDA			X	X	X
Establish and utilize a downtown revitalization program and board	$500,000	City of Pearson	DCA sown town RLF, EDA	X	X	X	X	X
Develop a strategic plan to make Pearson a candidate for the location of a Federal Prison System	$2,000	City of Pearson	GED, DCA			X	X	X
Promote retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Establish and Enterprise or Opportunity Zone to encourage redevelopment and infill	$5,000	City of Pearson/SGRC	General Fund				X	X
Work with County and City of Willacoochee to form a county-wide Chamber of Commerce and find an appropriate Chairman for Chamber	Staff Time	Cities and County	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Identify procedures to encourage successful small businesses to expand and reinvest in community.	$1,500	City of Pearson	General Fund		X	X		
HOUSING								
Develop a program for the rehabilitation of housing in the City of Pearson	$350,000	City of Pearson	CDBG, DCA USDA		X	X	X	X
Rehab/construct better housing for all income levels to ensure that all who work in the community live in decent housing.	$500,000	City of Pearson	CDBG, CHIP USDA, EDA	X	X	X	X	X
Encourage and foster the provision of housing for low and moderate-income families	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Operate the State of Georgia weatherization program	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund, Grants	X	X	X	X	X
Participate in GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing)	Staff Time/$2,500	City of Pearson/SGRC	General Fund		X	X	X	
Establish a redevelopment strategy for identifying declining areas in City	$7,500	City of Pearson/SGRC	General Fund			X	X	
NATURAL RESOURCES								
Protect and maintain the quality and quantity of wetlands	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Preserve and protect the ecological value and diversity of natural resources in City of Pearson	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Develop a plan to preserve/market resources for eco-toursim	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Monitor protect and maintain the quality and quantity of the City of Pearson water	$2,500 annual	City of Pearson/EPA	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
LAND USE								
Work with SGRC to update zoning/ Land Development Code Regulations.	$5,000	City of Pearson/SGRC	General Fund				X	X
Make vacant store improvements and alleviate blighted property	$300,000	City of Pearson	CDBG, USDA, DCA, CHIP	X	X	X	X	X
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES								
Put waste baskets and lighting in the center of town to make the area safer and cleaner	$7,500	City of Pearson	CDBG. General Fund, TGRANT			X	X	X
Continue and maintain youth programs	$5,000	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Redevelopment of downtown areas. 1- Develop Better Hometown grant 2- Plan ornamental streetlight project 3- Purchase ornamental garbage cans and benches 4- Purchase street flags 5- Develop tree-planting project 6- Refinish sidewalks in downtown area	$75,000	City of Pearson	CDBG, General Fund, TGRANT				X	X
Repave/surface streets as prioritized by need	$120,000	City of Pearson	LMIG	X	X	X	X	X

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Pave city streets as prioritized by need	$200,000	City of Pearson	LMIG	X	X	X	X	X
New fire department building	$500,000	City of Pearson	General Fund. Fire Grants			X	X	X
Renovate the Civic and sports complex	$700,000	City of Pearson	General Funds, CDBG				X	X
Implement a training plan for Sheriff/Fire/EMS	$15,000	City of Pearson	General Funds		X	X	X	X
Upgrade and/or purchase a new police car every 2 years	$25,000 each	City of Pearson	General Fund, Grants	X		X		X
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments to reduce ISO rating	Staff Time	County/City	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Plan a retreat for City, County and BOE members to discuss and implement major improvements countywide.	Staff Time	County, Cities, BOE	General Fund			X	X	X
Create a leadership program for residents, community leaders, and government officials	$1,500	County, Cities	General Fund			X	X	X
Define roles and partnerships between City and County for citizens	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
CULTURAL/HISTORIC RESOURCES								
Identify locations for more parks and open space locations within the city	Staff Time	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Participate in the identification and documentation of historic resources in the City of Pearson	$3,000	City of Pearson	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Work to save Old Malone Hotel which is 100 years old the one historical site that can be used as a great landmark for the City	$350,000	Pearson, Willacoochee. Atkinson County	General Fund, Grants, RLF	X	X	X	X	X

City of Willacoochee 5-Year Community Work Program Update
(2018 - 2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
PLANNING								
Complete and distribute a new updated city-county tri-fold street map	$2,500	City of Willacoochee, SGRC	General Fund	X	X	X		
Update the City of Willacoochee website on a quarterly schedule	$1,500 annual	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Maintain and improve Industrial Park	$500,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, EDA, CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
Water tank maintenance	$500,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, EDA, CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
Work with County and City of Pearson to form a county-wide Chamber of Commerce and find an appropriate Chairman for Chamber	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Construct a Civic Center	$750,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, EDA, CDBG				X	X
Establish an Enterprise or Opportunity Zone to encourage redevelopment and infill	$5,000	City of Willacoochee SGRC	General Fund			X	X	X
Identify procedures to encourage successful small businesses to expand and reinvest in community.	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
HOUSING								
Rehabilitate existing and provide additional housing stock for all income levels	$500,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, EDA, CDBG, CHIP			X	X	X
Participate in GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing)	Staff Time/$2,5000	City of Willacoochee SGRC	General Fund			X	X	X
Establish a redevelopment strategy for identifying declining areas in City	$7,500	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Develop a program for the rehabilitation of housing in the City of Willacoochee	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund CDBG, EDA, CHIP	X	X	X	X	X
Operate the State of Georgia weatherization program	Staff time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
NATURAL RESOURCES								
Gain access to land to establish a boat ramp on the north side of the City of Willacoochee allowing for closer access to the river.	$75,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, DNR	X	X	X	X	X
Research opportunities to develop and utilize check dams on the Alapaha River	$10,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, DNR			X	X	X
LAND USE								
Bypass from highway 82 to Springhead Road to industrial park	$750,000	City of Willacoochee	SPLOST			X	X	X
Work with SGRC to incorporate zoning/ Land Development Code Regulations.	$5,000	City of Willacoochee SGRC	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES								
Develop a city irrigation system to improve landscaping on government property.	$50,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, EDA	X	X	X	X	X
Improve main street with TEA Grant funding	$25,000	City of Willacoochee	TGrant			X	X	X
Keep police car fleet up to date	$50,000	City of Willacoochee	COPS Grant	X		X		X
Provide improvements to local streets, water lines and sewer lines with CDBG grants	$500,000	City of Willacoochee SGRC	General Fund, CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
Develop city-wide CDBG applications for housing rehabilitation and infrastructure improvements	$500,000	City of Willacoochee SGRC	General Fund, CDBG	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to expand beautification efforts around town and at city entrances	$50,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Repave/surface streets as prioritized by need	$250,000	City of Willacoochee	LMIG	X	X	X	X	X
Pave city streets as prioritized by need	$350,000	City of Willacoochee	LMIG	X	X	X	X	X
Update tennis courts, netting, stripping, concrete repair	$50,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, Grants			X	X	X

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
Upgrade Recreation Department ball fields	$75,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, Grants			X	X	X
Implement First Responder through Fire Department	$5,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, Grants		X	X	X	
Construct a helicopter pad for emergency landings	$150,000	City of Willacoochee	General Fund, Grants				X	X
Implement Drug Prevention Program	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund			X	X	X
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
Continue with consolidation of Fire Departments to reduce ISO rating	$10,000	County/Cities	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Create a leadership program for residents, community leaders, and government officials	$1,500	County/Cities	General Fund			X	X	X
Plan a retreat for City, County and BOE members to discuss and implement major improvements countywide.	Staff Time	County/Cities, BOE	General Fund			X	X	X
CULTURA/HISTORICAL RESOURCES								
Participate in the identification and documentation of historic resources in the City of Willacoochee	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Development a historical preservation ordinance the City of Willacoochee	Staff Time	City of Willacoochee	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Inventory Survey of West End Cemetery	$5,000	Willacoochee, SGRC	General Fund	X	X	X	X	X

7. Land Use Element

• Parks / Recreation / Conservation – Land used for both active and passive recreation. Includes County parks as well as permanently protected greenspace.

• Industrial – Land used for warehousing, manufacturing, transportation, utilities, plants, factories, wholesale trade facilities, solid waste facilities, etc.

• Public / Institutional – Local, state, and federal buildings and worship facilities. Includes municipal buildings, schools, police and fire stations, and churches.

• Residential – Land or parcels used for permanent living conditions. This includes single-family houses, multi-family houses, duplex, town houses, modular homes, apartments, etc.

• Transportation / Communication / Utilities – Land used by transportation (roads, railroads), communication or utility facilities; such as airports, cell towers, sewer plants, water towers, water treatment facilities, etc.

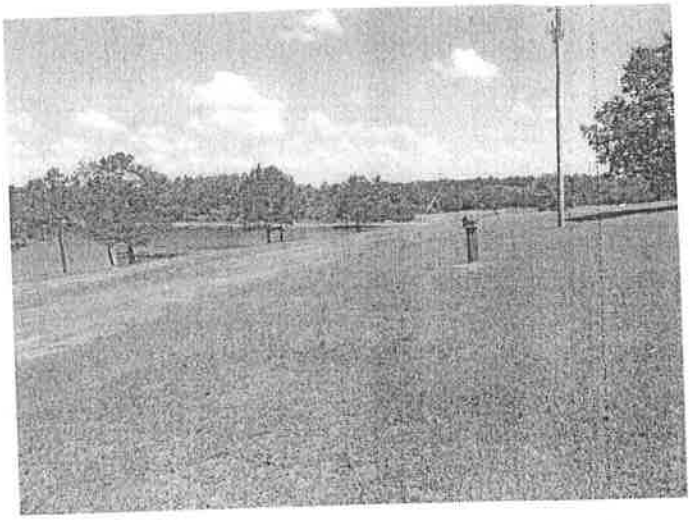
• Undeveloped / Other – Includes all vacant and undeveloped land that does not fit the definition of the other land use classification.

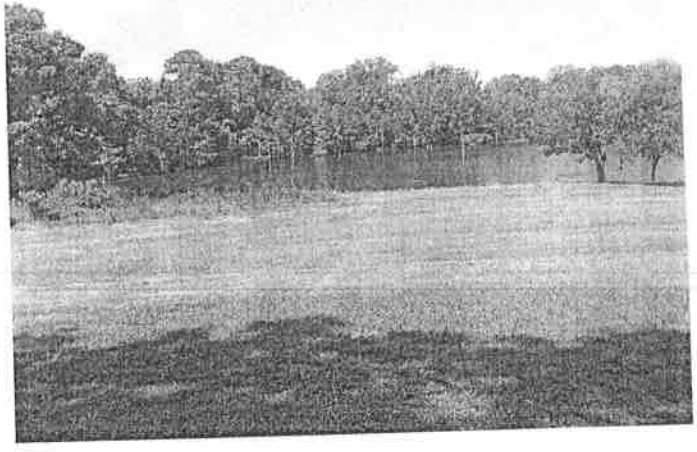
The primary land uses in the County are agriculture, and residential. Collectively, these land uses account for roughly 76% of the total land area in the County. It should be noted that the agriculture category contains a number of instances where residential structures are located on the same parcel as an active agricultural use. The table below shows the current distribution of land uses

LAND USE	PERCENTAGE%
RESIDENTIAL	29.73
AGRICULTURAL	45.90
COMMERCIAL	7.59
INDUSTRIAL	12.14
PUBLIC UTILITY	4.64

AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY

These are areas intended for detached single –family residential uses and prime agriculture areas that maintain a rural character. This category is land dedicated to farming which includes fields, lots, pastures,farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock, production etc.,agricultural or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

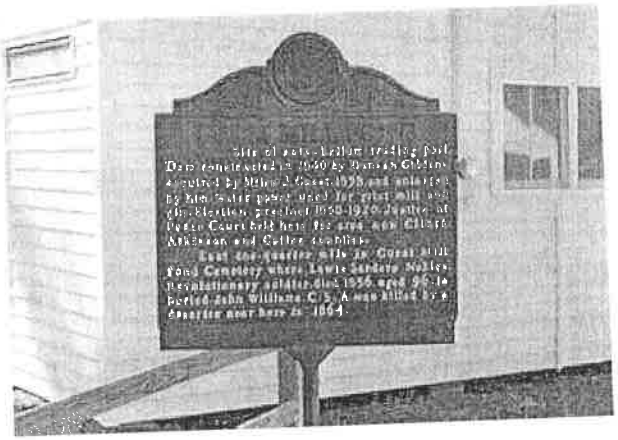


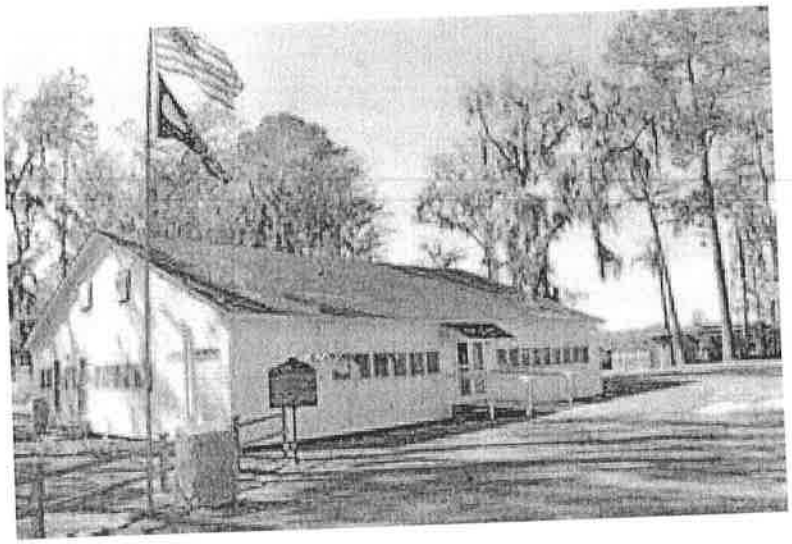


Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Agricultural/Forestry

CONSERVATION

This category is for land dedicated to active or passive trvtrsyionsl ues which can be either publicly or privately owned. These areas may include playgrounds, public parks,nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forest, golf courses, or recreation centers.

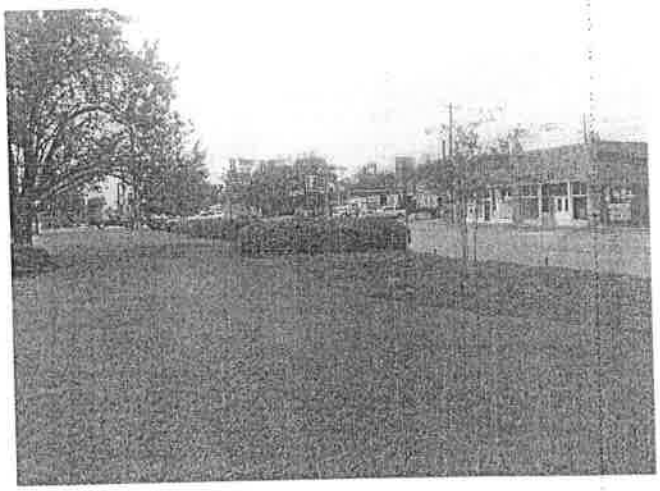




Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Conservation

COMMERCIAL

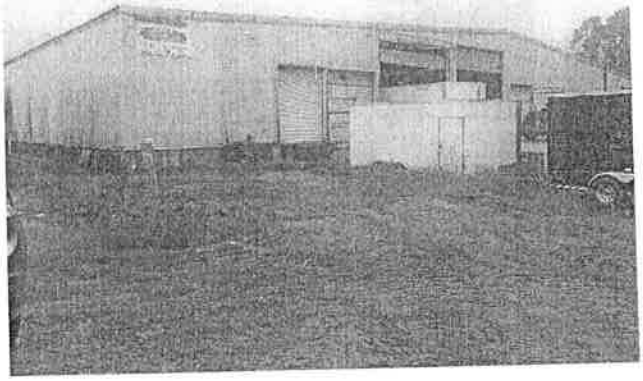
These areas include both older and newer commercial uses and nodes within Atkinson County and the cities of Pearson and Willacoochee. Pearson and Willacoochee both have commercial areas running parallel to US 82. Pearson has additional development stretching from US 441 to the Coffee County line



Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Commercial

INDUSTRIAL

The land in this category is dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or similar uses.



Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Industrial

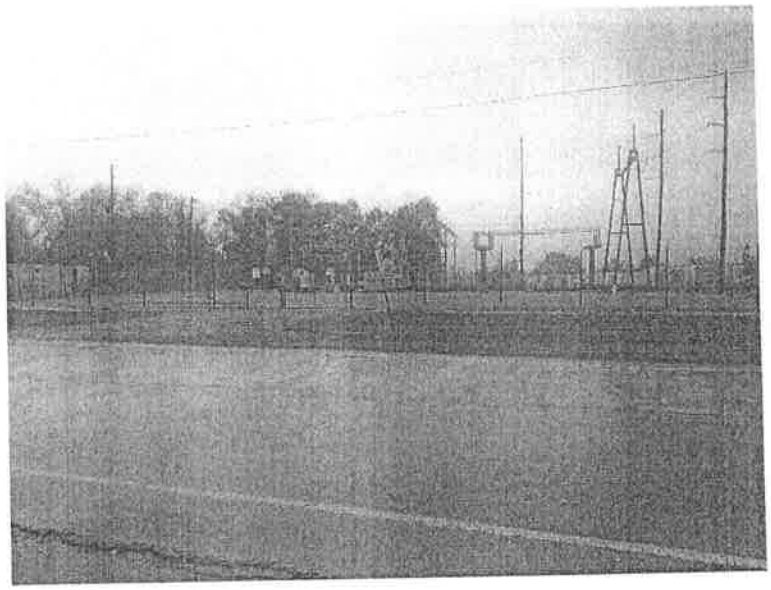
RESIDENTIAL

Development in this category is predominantly residential ranging from single-family densities to multi-family densities. Uses also allowed within this district include public and private schools. Churches and other uses as allowed in the zoning districts permitted under this land use.

Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Residential

TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES

Includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations airports port facilities or other similar uses.



Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Transportation/Communication/Utilities

PUBLIC /INSTITUTIONAL

This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals etc. Do not include facilities that are publicly owned but would be classified more accurately in another land use category. For example, include publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities in the park/recreation/conservation category; include landfills in industrial category; and include general office buildings containing government offices in the commercial category.

Allowable zoning districts in this category are: Public/Institutional

8. Economic Development Element

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

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

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

The Southern Georgia CEDS gives an overview of the region briefly describing geography, population, economy, labor and workforce development and use, education, transportation access, environment, and regional resources. It reviews the state of the Regional Economy and provides a list of achievable Goals and Objectives for the region, a Plan of Action to ensure success, and Performance Measures used to evaluate the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's successful development and implementation of the 2018-2022 CEDS. Implementation of the goals identified in this plan is significant to the economic future of the SGRC District.

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

Included below are goals and objectives from the CEDS which are aligned with the current economic development goals of Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee

Goal:
Develop a well trained professional, technical and skilled workforce capable of accommodating new industry.

Objective:
Improve educational attainment by reducing high school drop-out rates

Objective:
Market Workforce Development Programs that enable youth and adults to pursue higher education opportunities

Goal:
Ensure public facilities are adequate to accommodate existing and future growth.

Objective:
Strive to provide *industrial parks/properties with all necessary infrastructure and transportation links, to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.*

Objective:
Assess *availability of speculatively built buildings and other buildings.*

Objective:
Provide *availability of adequate financing and/or financial incentives to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.*

Goal:
Facilitate vibrant, attractive communities

Objective:
Rehabilitate dilapidated housing throughout the region

Objective:
Encourage local governments to participate in CHIP, CDBG, and USDA housing programs.

Objective:
Work with local governments to develop ordinances for manufactured home usage and placement.

Goal:
Revitalize downtowns throughout the region.

Objective:
Collaborate to develop county-wide historic preservation plans.

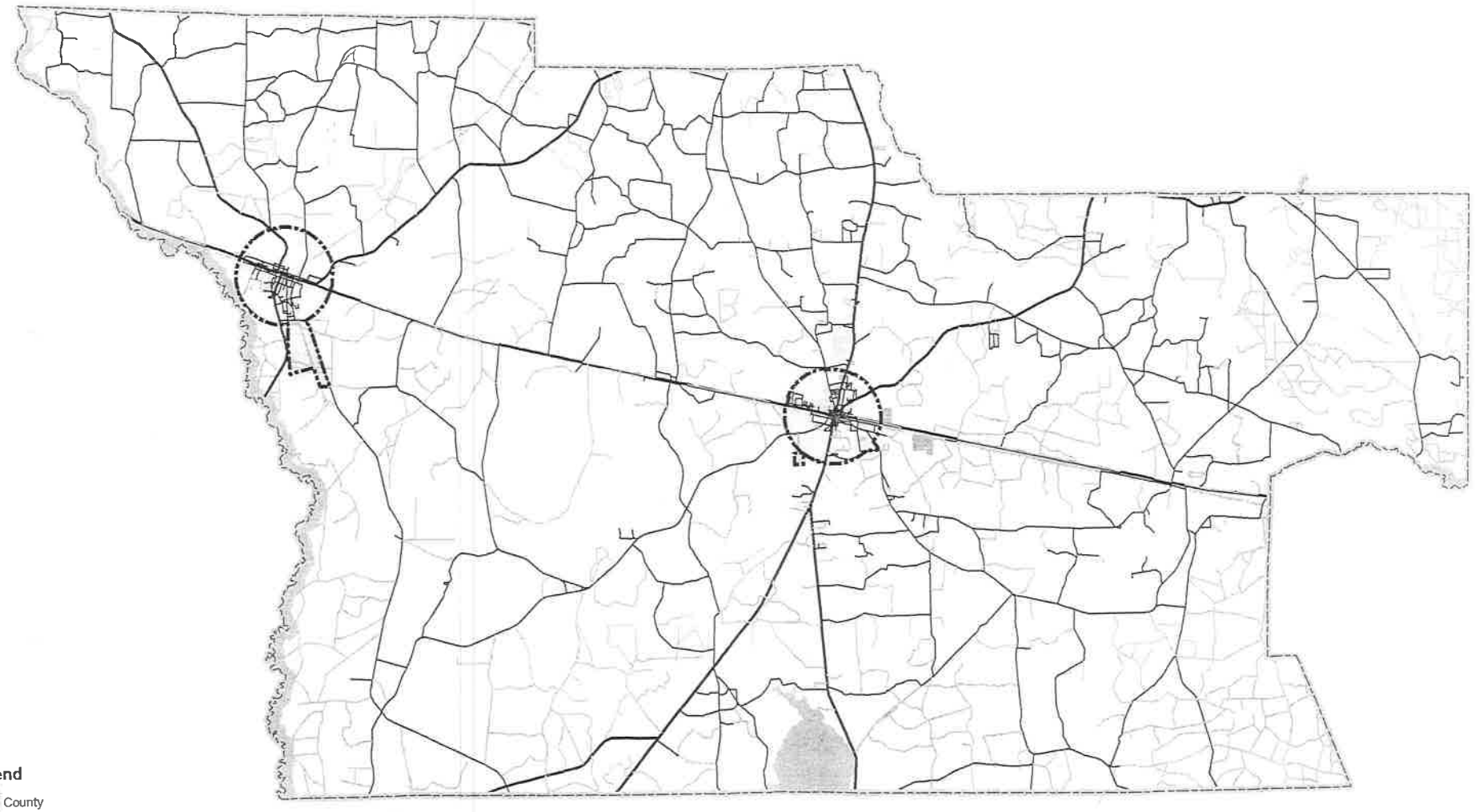
Goal:
Raise awareness about the importance of local planning in ensuring connections between transportation, housing, services, and job centers to create healthier, safer communities.

Objective:
Facilitate collaboration and communication among partners for investments in housing and public service..

Objective:
Continue to utilize Southern Georgia Regional Commission services for transportation, housing, and land use planning.

Future Land Use Maps

Atkinson County Future Land Use

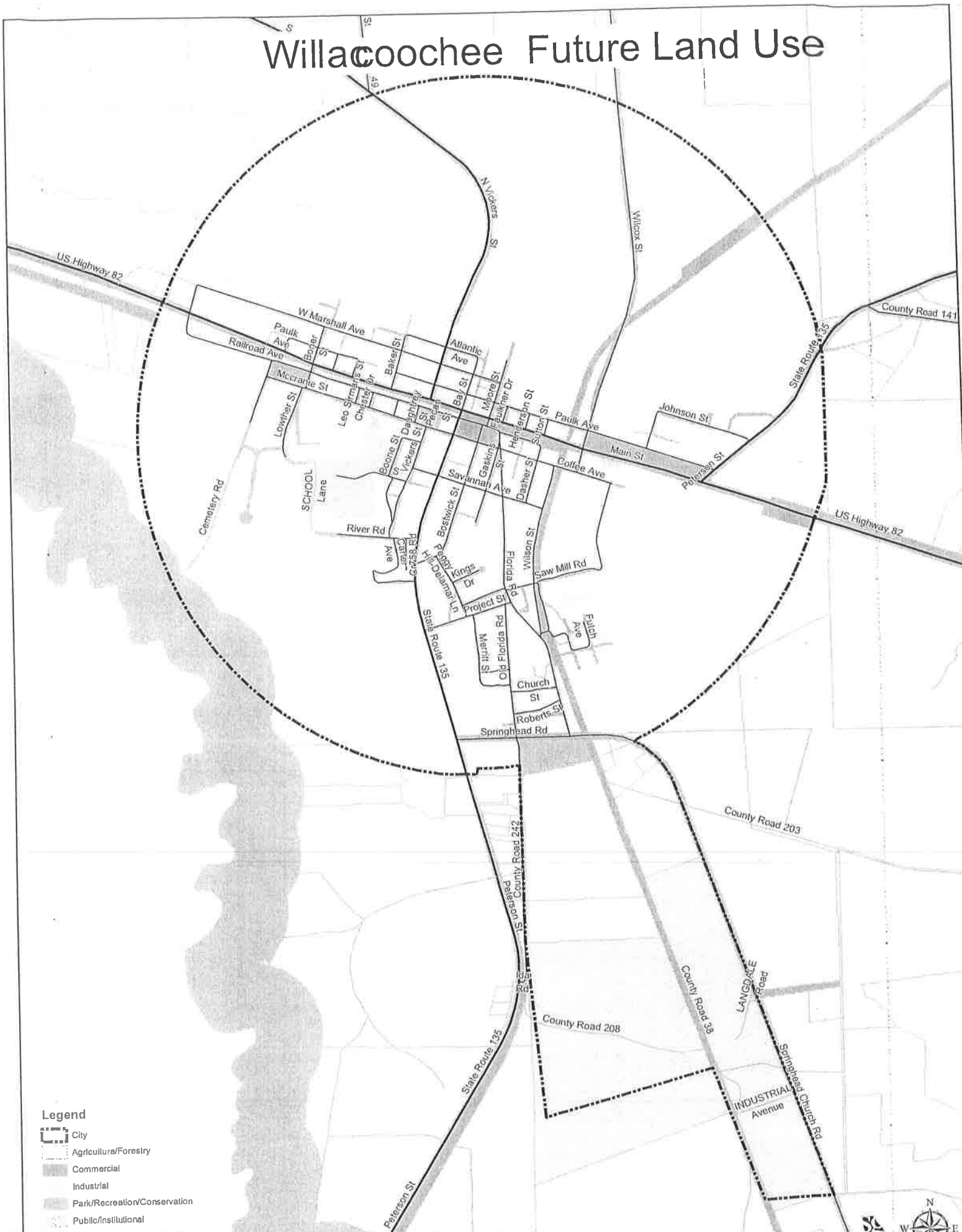


gend
- County
- City

nd Use
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Pearson Future Land Use

Willacoochee Future Land Use



Appendices

Appendix A:
Advertisements and Sign-in Sheets

Appendix B:
Adoption Resolutions

Kick-Off Joint Public Hearing
For Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee
Comprehensive Plan Update
June 15, 2017, 6:00pm

Name	Organization	Email	Telephone
Barbara D. Williams	City of Pearson	Mayor@cityofpearson.com	912-422-3397
Peggy McClelland	City of Willacoochee	Peggy.Le willacoochee.com	912 534-5152
[illegible]	City of Pearson	N/A	912-534-2151
Nina Lott	ATK. BOC	n.lott@atkinson-ga.org	912-422-3391
Alandra Holmes	ATK. BOE	cholmes@atkinson.k12.ga.us	912-422-3267
[illegible]			912 389-0590
Jamie McKinnon	Planner	Jammckinnon@hotmail.com	

1st Workshop Issues/Opportunities/Goals/Policies
For Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee
Comprehensive Plan Update
July 20, 2017, 6:00pm

Name	Organization	Email	Telephone
[illegible] McClelland	Willacoochee	[illegible]@willacoochee.com	912 534-5152
[illegible]			912 389-0590
Robbie D. Stone	DWAFS Atkinson Fire	r.stone@atkinson-ga.org	912-422-4558
Bettye Jo Williams	City	bettyejo@bellsouth.net	912-422-3397
Tony Wilkins	City	randal3061@yahoo.com	912-327-1092
Thomas Pearson	"		
Malcolm Jones	City	Mormoney2001@yahoo.com	912-309-3356
Tina Lott	County	t.lott@atkinson-ga.org	422-3391
Melissa Howard	County	bussy91947@yahoo.com	912-776-[illegible]

2nd Workshop

For Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee

Comprehensive Plan Update

August 24, 2017, 6:00pm

ame	Organization	Email	Telephone
Peggy McClelland	Willacoochee	peggme1@willacoocheecom	912 534 5152
Mark Ausley	Atkinson EMA	atkemaa@atkinsonga.org	912-422-7166
Rickey Thomas	Mayor Pro Tem	ThomasRickey66@gmail.com	912-510 0980
Donna Pearson	Willacoochee		912 383-2879
Glynn Bailey	willacoochee	Glynn Bailey@mchsi.com	912 422 4044
Bettye D. Williams	Pearson		912-422-3397
Jane McKinnon	Pearson	janmckinnon@hotmail.com	

3rd Workshop

For Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee

Comprehensive Plan Update

September 21, 2017, 6:00pm

Name	Organization	Email	Telephone
Peggy McClelland	Willacoochee	Pegme1@willacoochee.com	912 534 5152
Samuel Newsom	"	"	"
Buddy Willis	Willacoochee	"	"
Nina Lott	Atk. Co. BOC	n.lott@atkinson-ga.org	422-3391
Debra Jarrell	Atk. Co. Comm.	[illegible]	~~912~~ 381-3716
Glynn Bayley	willacoochee	Glynn Bayley@mchsi.com	912-422-4044
Colleen Stone	Atkinson		

SIGN IN SHEET

MEETING: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: November 9, 2017 5:30 PM

NAME: Peggy McClelland

NAME: Bettye A. Williams

NAME: Darquita Williams

NAME: Nell Ford

NAME: Ruby Newcomb

NAME: [illegible]

NAME: [illegible]

NAME: Gloria Ford

NAME: [illegible]

NAME: Charlie Sills

NAME: [illegible]

NAME: Pam Cox

NAME: [illegible]

NAME: Nina Lott

SBA offers working capi
businesses following disa

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced today that federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations located in Georgia as a result of the drought that began on May 9, 2017

This disaster declaration includes the following counties: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Camden, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Glynn, Irwin, Lanier, Long, Lowndes, McIntosh, Mitchell, Pierce, Tattnall, Thomas, Tift, Ware, Wayne and Worth in Georgia.

"When the Secretary of Agriculture issues a disaster declaration help farmers recover fr damages and losses crops, the Small Busine Administration issu declaration to eligi entities affected by same disaster," s Frank Skaggs, director SBA's Field Operatio Center East in Atlanta

Under this declarati the SBA's Econom Injury Disaster Lo program is available eligible farm-related a nonfarm-related entit that suffered financ losses as a direct resu of this disaster. With t exception of aquacultu enterprises, SBA cann provide disaster loans agricultural produce farmers, or rancher Nurseries are eligi to apply for econom injury disaster loans losses caused by droug conditions.

Coastal Pines Technical
Program receives regio

Recently Amanda Morris, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Tommy Peagler, Forestry/ Timber Harvesting Program Instructor, traveled to Charleston, South Carolina to attend the National Forest Resources Association (FRA) Conference and Awards Ceremony. The Forest Resources Association represents the interests of nearly 500 organizations and businesses in the forest products industry. Its members range from loggers, mills, equipment manufacturers, and local forestry associations to large corporations. The association advocates

policies that create job sustain forest resource and meet the needs the wood fiber supp chain through priva enterprise.

The Timber Harvestin Program at Coastal Pin Technical College is special interest to th organization since provides opportunities f students to enter the fie of work directly related forest resources.

During the pilot pha of the Timber Harvestin Program, Coastal Pin Officials correspond with FRA Appalachia & Southwide Regio Manager, Rick Meye Shortly thereafter, M Meyer invited Vi

Want to stay up-to-date on all of the news going on in and around your community?

If so, you need a subscription to the

Atkinson County Citizen

Give us a call at: 912-422-3824 or email us at atcocitizen@mchsi.com for more info!

Kick-Off - Joint Public Hearing For Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update

A public hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 15 at the City of Pearson Civic Center located on the 786 East Austin Ave. to announce the beginning of the 2018 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan, announce opportunities for public participation, in development of the plan, and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Atkinson County Commissions Office at 912-422-3391. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Services at 1-800-255-0135. All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Janice McKinnon at (912) 422-3391.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to review and transmit the Joint 2018 Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and t he Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 9t h, 2017 at the Atkinson County Commissio Meeting Room} 86 Main Street South} Pearson Georgia 31642.Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning process. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the County Commission office and at the City Hall of each city and for dow load at the website of each. Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact Atkinson County at (912) 422-3391. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135. For more information} please contact Nina YLott, Financial Office r Atkinson County at (912) 422-3391.

KICK-OFF JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing to kick off the planning process for updating the joint Comprehensive Plan for Atkinson County and the Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee was held Thursday June 15 at 6:00pm in the City of Pearson Civic Center.

Those in attendance are as follows:

- Bettye Williams, Mayor City of Pearson
- Peggy McClelland, Clerk City of Willacoochee
- George Myers, City of Willacoochee Council member
- Nina Lott, Atkinson County Financial Clerk
- Calandra Holmes, Atkinson County Board of Education
- James P. Gore, Local Citizen

Three public workshops were scheduled to review, discuss and revise as necessary the existing current comprehensive items as follows:

1st Workshop	Goals, Issues and Opportunities and Policies	July 20th, City of Pearson Civic Center @ 6:00pm
2nd Workshop	Report of Accomplishments and Community Work Program	August 17th, City of Pearson Civic Center @ 6:00pm
3rd Workshop	Land Use element and Economic Development element	September 21th, City of Pearson Civic Center @ 6:00pm

*(Separate meetings if needed can be held with individual communities to develop the Report of accomplishments for each and to develop the next five-year Community Work Program for each individual community)

After each workshop, the suggested revisions/input are incorporated into the next iteration of the workbook using notes from the workshops then a new workbook draft is then distributed by email to all stakeholders and published as a draft on the various local government websites and/or Facebook accounts for review and comment prior to the next workshop. This process will be repeated for each workshop.

Public participation is needed and desired for the planning process and everyone is invited to come out for either one or all workshops. Hope to see you there.

Atkinson County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 518 86 South Main St. Pearson, Ga. 31642
912-422-3391 Fax 912-422-3429
Lace Futch Chairman

Commissioner Jimmy Roberts
Commissioner Charlton Gillis
Commissioner Travis Ursrey
County Attorney Jerome Adams
Finance Officer/HR Director Nina Lott
Commissioner Gloria Farrell
Commissioner Danny Spikes
Road Supervisor David Coffey
EMA Director Mark Ausley
County Clerk Darquita Williams

ATKINSON COUNTY

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2018 JOINT ATKINSON COUNTY
AND CITIES OF PEARSON AND WILLACOOCHEE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Pearson has completed the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Pearson does hereby adopt the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 18th day of January, 2018

Lace Futch
Chairman

ATTEST: Darquita Williams
County Clerk

CITY OF PEARSON

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2018 JOINT ATKINSON COUNTY
AND CITIES OF PEARSON AND WILLACOOCHEE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Pearson has completed the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Pearson does hereby adopt the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 18th day of January, 2018

Robert Johnson, Mayor
City of Pearson

ATTEST: Nell Ford, City Clerk

CITY OF WILLACOOCHEE

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2018 JOINT ATKINSON COUNTY
AND CITIES OF PEARSON AND WILLACOOCHEE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Willacoochee has completed the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Willacoochee does hereby adopt the 2018 Joint Atkinson County and Cities of Pearson and Willacoochee Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 18 day of January, 2018

Samuel Newson

Samuel Newson, Mayor
City of Willacoochee

Peggy McClelland

ATTEST: Peggy McClelland, City Clerk