



November 12, 2008

# COASTAL GEORGIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AGENDA

*Coastal Georgia*  
Regional Development Center



# Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CCPAC) MEMBER LIST

Jean Bacon  
Development Authority of Bryan  
County  
Pembroke, GA

Commissioner Mike Beatty  
GA DCA  
Advisory Committee Chairman

Paul Brockington  
Brockington Cultural Resources  
Consulting  
Savannah, GA

Honorable Jimmy Burnsed  
Chair, Bryan County  
Commission  
Richmond Hill, GA

Gretchen Corbin  
GA Department of Economic  
Development

Roland L. Daniel  
Roland Daniel Properties, Inc.  
St. Simons Island, GA

William G. Foster, Jr.  
Thomas & Hutton Engineering  
Co.  
Savannah, GA

Harvey J. Gilbert  
Gilbert Realty Company LLC  
Savannah, GA

James B. Gilbert, Jr.  
Sea Island Co.

William H. Gross  
W.H. Gross Construction  
Kingsland, GA

Joe Hopkins  
President, Toledo Manufacturing  
Company  
Folkston, GA  
DCA Board Chairman

Christi Lambert  
Southeast GA Conservation  
Director  
The Nature Conservancy  
Darien, GA

Oney H. Hudson  
DCA Board Member

William Lattimore, Jr.  
The Lattimore Company  
Savannah, GA

Hector Lopez  
Lopez Construction, Inc.  
Thunderbolt, GA

Vernon D. Martin, AICP  
Executive Director  
Coastal RDC  
Brunswick, GA

Patricia McIntosh, AICP  
Coastal Director  
The Georgia Conservancy  
Savannah, GA

John McIver  
Chair, Liberty County  
Commission  
Hinesville, GA

Paul Michael  
TPA Realty Services, LLC

Randal E. Morris  
Brunswick, GA

Howard J. Morrison, Jr.  
Savannah, GA

Walter W. Parker  
Tybee Island, GA

Lynn M. Pitts  
SEDA  
Savannah, GA

Glenn Durrence  
District Engineer  
Georgia Department of  
Transportation  
Jesup, GA

Thomas J. Ratcliffe, Jr.  
Mayor, City of Hinesville  
Hinesville, GA

Bob Scanlon  
City of Savannah  
Savannah, GA

Letty Shearer  
AASU Director of Econ & Com.  
Development  
Savannah, GA

James "JC" Shipman  
Midway, GA

Susan Shipman  
Georgia Department of Natural  
Resources  
Brunswick, GA

James E. Stein  
St. Marys, GA

Stuart A. Stevens, Ph.D  
Woodbine, GA

Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP  
Metropolitan Planning  
Commission  
Savannah, GA

Bryan Thompson  
President, Blueprint Brunswick  
Brunswick, GA

Bill P. Tipton  
Brunswick-Golden Isles CVB  
Brunswick, GA

John Albert Wallace  
GA Shrimp Association  
Darien, GA



---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface..... 1

Executive Summary ..... 4

Why Plan for Coastal Georgia? ..... 11

Vision ..... 16

Regional Issues ..... 18

    Overview: Regional Issues..... 19

    Infrastructure: Water & Wastewater ..... 22

    Infrastructure: Stormwater..... 26

    Infrastructure: Transportation..... 29

    Intrinsic Resources: Cultural & Historic ..... 32

    Intrinsic Resources: Natural ..... 36

    Regional Growth Management ..... 41

    Economic Development: Business & Industry ..... 46

    Economic Development: Tourism ..... 50

Implementation Program..... 53

    Regional Work Program ..... 55

    Incentives and Remedial Actions ..... 59

    Guidance for Developments of Regional Impact in the Region..... 61

Evaluation & Monitoring ..... 63

APPENDIX ..... 66

    Background..... 67

    Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes..... 70

    Performance Standards ..... 72

    Suggested Process for Expanding Coastal Comprehensive Plan

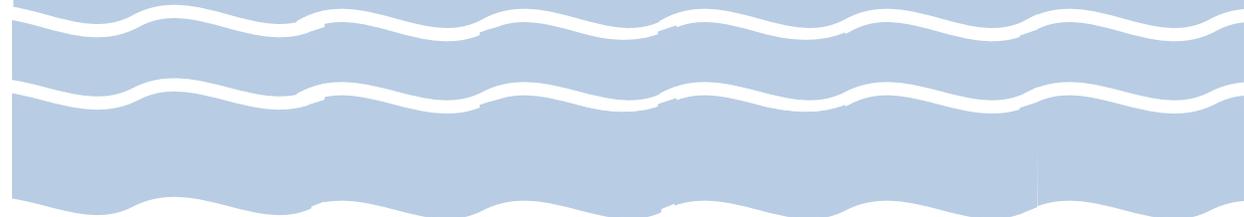
        To Encompass a Larger Region ..... 83

Glossary, List of Acronyms, List of References ..... 84



---

# PREFACE





---

## Preface

### **Home Rule for Inclusion in the Coastal Georgia Comprehensive Plan Agenda**

Items found in this document are efforts to encourage local officials, stakeholders, and developers to work together in a common effort to protect the coastal region. Nothing within the Coastal Comprehensive Plan should be construed as an effort to dilute the powers and duties of local elected officials. The Georgia Constitution specially references the issue of Home Rule for both counties and cities. (See references below)

It is the intent of the plan to be in compliance with the Home Rule provision of the State Constitution.

As found in the Georgia Constitution under Article IX, Section II, the issue of Home Rule for counties and municipalities is specifically addressed.

Paragraph I states “The governing authority of each county shall have legislative power to adopt clearly reasonable ordinances, resolutions, or regulations relating to its property, affairs, and local government for which no provision has been made by general law and which is not inconsistent with this Constitution or any local law applicable thereto.”

Paragraph II *Home rule for municipalities* states “The General Assembly may provide by law for the self-government of municipalities and to that end is expressly given the authority to delegate its power so that matters pertaining to municipalities may be dealt with without the necessity of action by the General Assembly.”

Paragraph IV *Planning and Zoning* states “The governing authority of each county and of each municipality may adopt plans and may exercise the power of zoning. This authorization shall not prohibit the General Assembly from enacting general laws establishing procedures for the exercise of such power.”

Implementation of the Georgia Coastal Comprehensive Plan is voluntary. It is up to the counties and cities of the region to determine if they in fact want to come into compliance with this plan. The plan is an effort to ensure that the coastal region will have sustainable, quality growth now and in the future.



---

## **Regional Development Centers to Become Regional Commissions**

The Georgia General Assembly passed the much talked about House Bill 1216 during the last legislative session. The intent of this legislation is to enhance and strengthen the Regional Development Centers. Governor Sonny Perdue signed the bill into law on May 6, 2008.

HB 1216 aligns new Regional Commission boundaries with the state's current service delivery region boundaries. In addition, the legislation creates a new board structure for all Regional Commissions; lays the groundwork for increased state funding to Regional Commissions; expands the regional planning role, and provides for additional accountability and oversight.

Based on the new legislation, Georgia's Regional Development Centers (RDCs) will officially become Regional Commissions (RCs) on July 1, 2009. At that time, a realignment of RDCs will take place. Although the boundaries for the new Coastal Regional Commission will remain the same as the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center's (CGRDC) boundaries, four of the original 16 RDCs will be reassigned—reducing the number of regional organizations from 16 RDCs to 12 RCs.

Due to this significant change in service delivery, an amendment was added to HB 1216, which called for standing Regional Development Centers' Boards of Directors to ratify the regional boundaries established in the bill. The CGRDC Board of Directors adopted a resolution ratifying HB 1216 at their May meeting.

In order to plan for the restructuring of the Board and to outline a work program for the new commission, CGRDC Chairman Dan Coty appointed a Restructuring Committee to tackle this imposing task. Comprised of elected officials, current CGRDC board members, and private sector representatives from throughout the 10- county region, the Restructuring Committee is charged with developing a Board structure for the new Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) that will be reflective of the "represented interests" of our coastal region.

Due to this Legislative change, Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (CGRDC) hereafter in this document will be referred to as the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC).



---

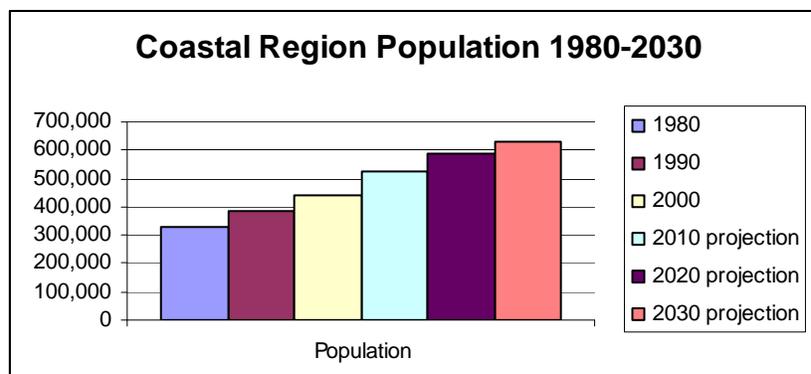
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Executive Summary

## Background

Coastal Georgia is undeniably a special place. It is also the second fastest growing region in the State. Its abundant and valuable resources continue to attract new residents and tourists to the region, and provide support and sustenance to those who call it home. Because of its extraordinary assets, the coastal counties must be treated with special care for these, and myriad other, reasons including:

- A population projected to increase by 20% between 2000 and 2010, with the accompanying increase in development-related impervious surface coverage and its associated effects on coastal habitats;



Source: *Georgia Coast 2030: Population Projections for the 10-County Coastal Region* (Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at the Georgia Institute of Technology, 2006)

- A fragile natural environment that is vulnerable to the negative effects of development and over-use; and,
- The ports of Savannah and Brunswick, which are currently in expansion mode;
- Three military installations--Fort Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield, and Kings Bay Submarine Base, with their combined \$3 billion economic impact on Coastal Georgia, and their continued growth;
- The economic significance that is tied to the coast's natural environment, historical significance and cultural assets: the thriving tourist industry, the resorts prevalent along the coast and the large second home industry which has developed;
- The storm protection offered by the barrier islands and marshes; the natural filtering properties of coastal wetlands and the vulnerability of the fishing and shellfish industries to upstream activities.

In recognition of these assets and their interrelationship, Governor Perdue signed an Executive Order on February 11, 2005, which called for the development of a plan to move the region forward while simultaneously protecting its assets. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was charged with taking the lead in developing the Coastal Comprehensive Plan



---

(hereafter referred to as “the Plan”). The development of the Plan was to be done in consultation with regional stakeholders and a broad-based advisory group.

DCA appointed a 35-member Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CCPAC) in August 2005. The CCPAC was composed of 30 residents of the six coastal counties plus representatives of four State agencies: the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Natural Resources-Coastal Resources Division, the Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Transportation. The Advisory Committee evaluated the current forces affecting the coast, looked at the options available for effectively dealing with these forces, decided on the preferred alternatives, and developed the Plan to address these issues now and into the future.

The resulting Plan is expected to yield numerous benefits for coastal governments and residents, including:

- Maintaining the coast’s attractiveness for future development while preserving natural and cultural resources
- Increased value of properties located near green space and greenways
- Eligibility for new grant programs as incentives for local plan implementation
- Public health benefits resulting from better development patterns
- Protection of local natural resources and open space to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of the region
- Predictability of development regulations, and a better climate for business
- More efficient coordination of State investments in the region
- Net cost savings for local governments, due to more efficient use of land and infrastructure
- Enhanced built and natural environments that will attract new residents and visitors
- Implementation of best practices for development
- Greater opportunity for coordinated public and private investment in infrastructure
- Lower infrastructure costs to governments from improved stormwater techniques
- Enhanced support for historic preservation and cultural activities
- Enhanced support for economic development initiatives that ensure the vitality of the region’s three military installations, the two ports and other major industries.

## **The Plan**

The Plan has the following components:

A Vision for Coastal Georgia was developed by the CCPAC in January 2006. It states: *The vision of Coastal Georgia is to be a unique and cohesive region based upon innovation and excellence in all we do to preserve, nurture, enhance and develop our abundant human, natural, historic, cultural and economic resources.* It is this vision statement which serves as the overarching guidance for the entire document, and which those implementing the Plan should strive to attain.



---

The Regional Assessment is the data and fact section which presents a picture of the Coast as it is currently and includes preliminary issues and opportunities derived from the comprehensive plans of the region's governments, current development patterns in the region and data including population (existing and projected), economic drivers for the region and other such statistics necessary to make informed decisions regarding the region's future.

The Stakeholder Involvement Program lays out the process to be used to involve the public in the Regional Agenda preparation process. It is intended to ensure that as many constituencies as possible have input into the Plan. Broad-based participation in developing the Regional Agenda helps to ensure local buy-in for its implementation.

The Regional Agenda is the heart of the Plan. It includes the following sections:

1. **Regional Issues** - overarching regional issues were identified by the CCPAC, and serve as the framework for the Guiding Principles, Performance Standards and Implementation Strategies. Four primary issue categories were established:
  - a. **Infrastructure**, including Water and Wastewater, Stormwater, and Transportation. The availability and accessibility of public infrastructure is a pivotal factor affecting the location of new development. Extensions of and/or improvements to water, wastewater treatment facilities and transportation will be used to guide and entice future development to locate in areas that both: (1) promote efficient delivery of public services, and (2) guide growth away from sensitive (e.g. valuable and vulnerable) natural, historic and cultural areas. Growth will be directed primarily to those areas with adequate infrastructure to make use of the previous investment in infrastructure and to shape our development patterns in a rational manner. Transportation and land use coordination are also a priority.
  - b. **Intrinsic Resources**, including Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources. Coastal Georgia contains some of the highest biodiversity and most significant heritage assets in the State, which are important elements of education, tourism development, economic development, health, and quality of life. Protecting, restoring, and managing natural, historic and cultural resources will be a priority in coastal comprehensive planning. This includes placing a high priority on maintenance and enhancement of access to our public rivers, coastal waters, beaches, and the protection of historic areas and resources.
  - c. **Economic Development**, including Business and Industry, and Tourism. The vision is that economic development will be successful through integrated land use, water resource management, transportation, and infrastructure decisions which protect and promote our coastal resources. The goal is that the entire region shares in jobs and investments that are



created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiatives, while protecting the Coast's valuable assets for tourism.

- d. **Regional Growth Management.** The character of our communities will be enhanced and preserved through regional growth management strategies that encourage sustainable development and redevelopment and follow "quality growth" principles where our coastal environment is respected, protected and enhanced. Sustainable communities will be promoted through uniform application of regional quality growth management principles and standards where each local government will adopt its own land use and development criteria that meet or exceed the regional minimum standards.
2. **Guiding Principles** – these principles provide direction to all "players" regarding the CCPAC's preferences for the future of the coast. Guiding Principles are provided for managing development in the region. These are necessary to evaluate local plans, make appropriate and feasible development decisions, and guide the issuance of State/federal permits consistent with the Plan.
3. **Performance Standards** – these standards recognize the pivotal role local governments, the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC), and others will play in implementing the recommendations contained in the Plan. They establish applicable minimal and exceptional levels of performance. Incentives are identified for local governments and other entities that are performing exceptionally well at implementing this Plan.
4. **Implementation Strategy**- this section identifies specific initiatives that will be undertaken (and the entities responsible for initiating these actions) to bring this Plan to fruition.

### **Making the Plan a Reality**

In order for the vision for the future of the Georgia Coast to become a reality, the Plan focuses on incentives and rewards, integrates local, State or federal planning efforts, and establishes achievement thresholds. Many of these thresholds are based on best management practices (BMPs) for sustaining the integrity of the many natural resources of the coastal counties. The Plan establishes the standards by which local governments may manage their growth, with help and coordination from the CRC.

The Plan provides for tiers of achievement for local governments, developers, and State or federal agencies operating on the Coast. These tiers include a Minimum Ranking and an Excellence Ranking, and are set up in the Plan to augment existing and future development activities (see graphic on page 10). A local government may reach the One (1) Point Performance Standard by showing evidence of a consistent record of adopting and enforcing



---

appropriate land use regulations that encourage infill development over sprawl, and include a system for monitoring septic systems within its jurisdiction. The Two (2) Point Performance Standard may be achieved by adoption and enforcement of Smart Growth ordinances, enforcement of “green” development guidelines including low-impact development standards, and/or a program to purchase or otherwise set aside lands too environmentally or historically sensitive to undergo development.

On achieving the Excellence Standard, a jurisdiction is designated a “Regional Steward” and provided recognition for its accomplishments. Regional Stewards become eligible for certain rewards including proposed grant programs from DCA and expedited review of plans and permits for developers seeking to undertake large-scale developments within the six coastal counties.

The CRC will provide oversight and guidance as the Plan is implemented region-wide. It will facilitate critical activities of implementation, provide a heightened role in review of Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), and monitor the attainment of the achievement thresholds previously mentioned. The CRC will provide a high level of technical assistance to all local governments within the region toward achievement of the Performance Standards. The CRC will also function in a coordination role with other State and federal agencies, and will be charged with the evaluation and monitoring of all entities involved in the Plan to ensure sustainable development throughout the region.

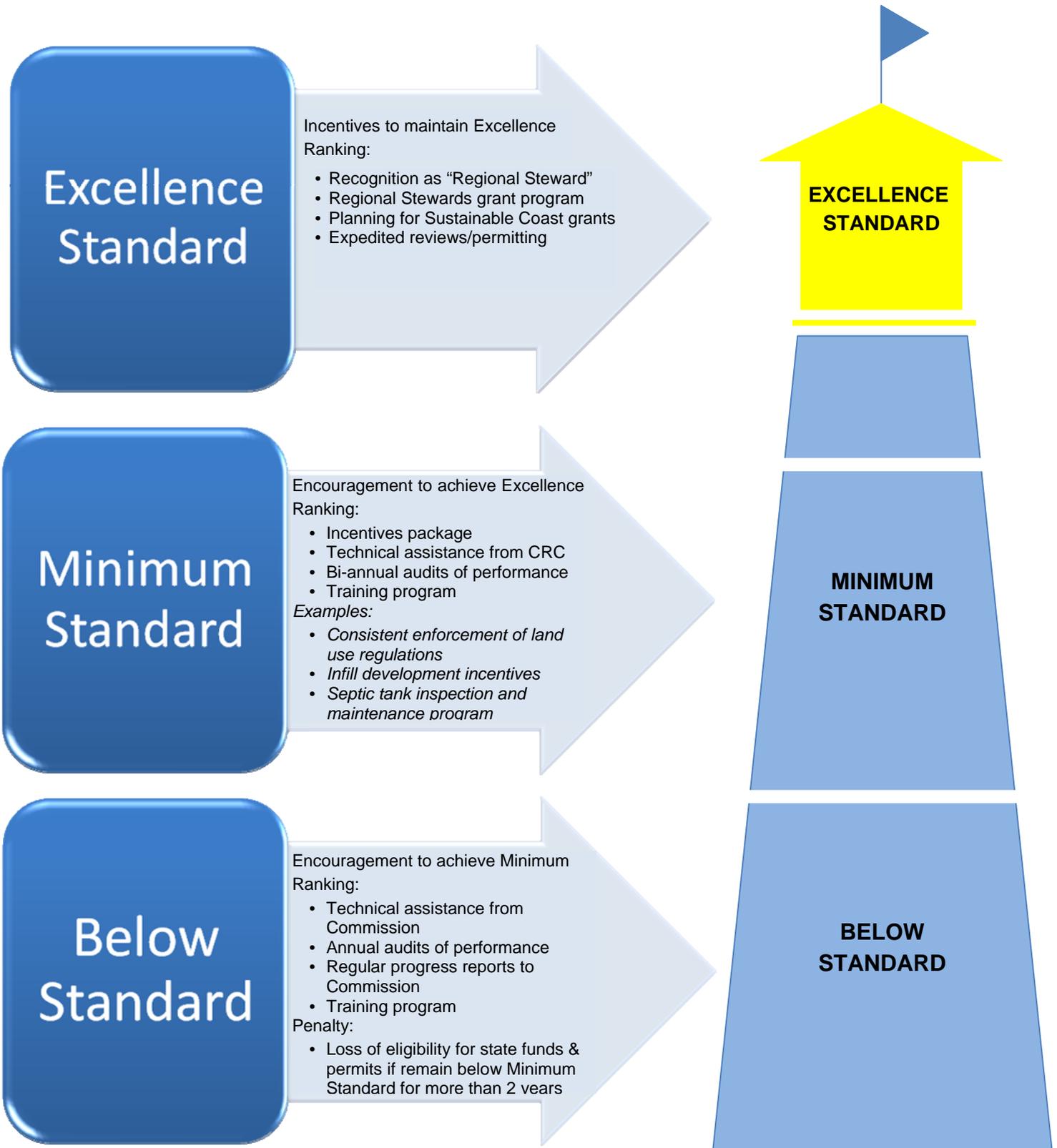
## **Conclusion**

It is hoped that, by providing appropriate tools to residents, governments, developers and State or federal agencies, the Plan will make a difference in the way the coastal communities move into the immediate future, setting the stage for long-range “quality” growth and development. By being innovative yet practical, flexible rather than rigid, and putting the users first, the Plan focuses on the diverse needs of these communities. The Plan establishes an understanding of and appreciation for the rapidly changing coastal environment, identifies and analyzes existing opportunities and potential threats, and establishes a foundation from which progress can be made and measured.

Coastal Georgia will continue to experience population growth because of its innate natural resources and the lifestyles they engender. This Plan is intended to help residents of the coast maintain the quality of life they enjoy, and that attracts visitors and new residents alike to “come, coast awhile.”

## **Performance Standards**

The Plan will establish two achievement thresholds (for local governments, developers, State and federal agencies), and encourage attainment with associated incentives and technical assistance.





---

## WHY PLAN FOR COASTAL GEORGIA?

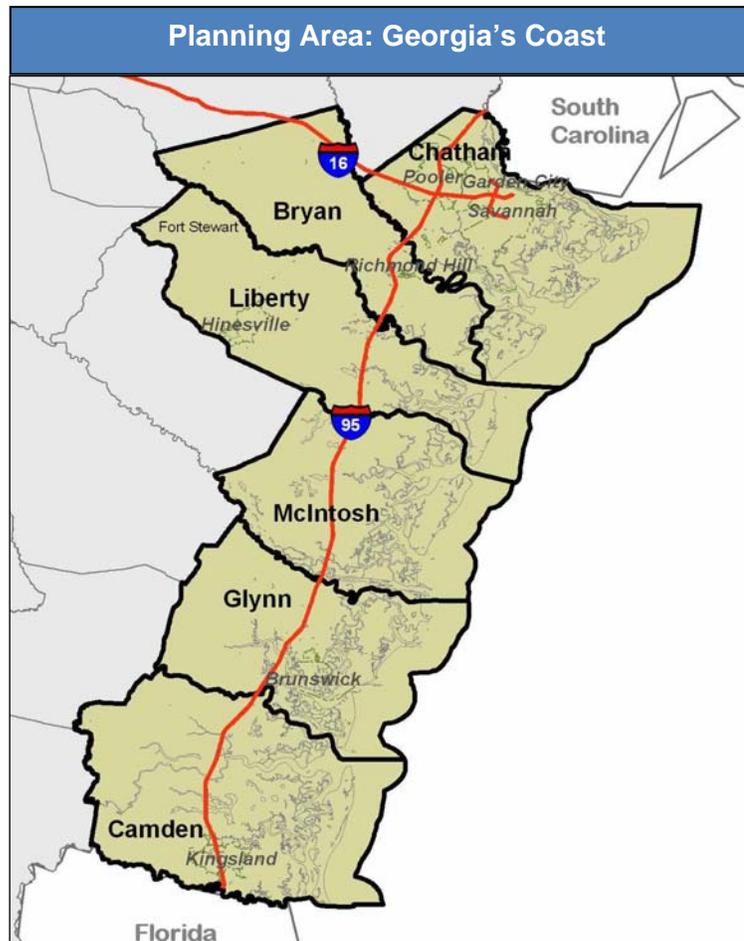


## Why Plan for Coastal Georgia?

The Georgia Coast is one of the fastest-growing parts of the State, but it is also a region rich in history and culture that contains many treasured resources. The Coastal Region's growth has certainly been impressive; it is regarded as the second-fastest growing part of the State (after the Atlanta metropolitan area). The region's population grew by 34% from 1980 to 2000, from 327,159 to 439,389. Some of the counties that had previously been rather sparsely populated achieved growth rates that were quite astonishing. Bryan County, for instance, had a population of 10,175 residents in 1980, and by 2000 the figure had reached 23,417, a gain of 130%. But the most explosive increase was for Camden County, the southernmost of the group, whose population numbered 13,371 in 1980 and had risen to 43,664 by 2000—a staggering rise of 227%. The exception to the trend was McIntosh County, which has had only modest growth and thus remains lightly populated. Based on the experience of the similar counties, however, McIntosh County may be due for a sharp rise in numbers soon.

The more heavily populated counties, in contrast, have had much slower growth. Chatham County, location of the City of Savannah, is the most populous county, and its population only rose by 15% from 1980 to 2000—the slowest growth rate of the counties. Glynn County, location of the City of Brunswick, is second in population

after Chatham, and its growth rate of 23% over the 20 year period was the second-slowest growth rate. Clearly the phenomenon of “sprawl”—a term which is unscientific yet quite descriptive—has been taking place in the region, as areas that are less expensive, or that offer more space and other amenities, grab the lion's share of growth, especially residential and commercial growth. This type of development poses significant problems for the environment and for traffic. It also leads to a diminishing sense of place, as distinctive communities with character, personality and “small-town” feel are engulfed in a sea of parking lots, strip malls, big box stores and generic subdivisions.





---

The coast's rise in population stems from several factors. The area's climate and natural beauty attract many new residents, including retirees. The "small-town" atmosphere that much of the coast still possesses is also appealing; crime is rare and traffic is moderate (though quickly getting worse). Savannah functions as an important urban center for the region, as does Jacksonville (just 20 miles south of Camden County) in nearby Florida. I-95 runs through all six counties, and it is a valuable economic engine that should not be overlooked. The region's large military installations--Fort Stewart, which encompasses portions of Bryan, Liberty and three inland counties, Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, and the Kings Bay Submarine Base in Camden County--have also been vital to the local economies. Tourism is important to much of the area, especially Savannah and the islands. As globalization continues and international trade booms, the ports of Savannah and Brunswick continue to flourish.

All this growth imposes a heavy burden on the environment. The natural areas of the Coastal Region include sensitive shoreline areas and wetlands. Septic tanks, widely used in more rural parts of the coast, are often unsuitable due to the soil conditions. Large timber companies are gradually selling off large tracts of land for development, which leads to an increase in non-point source water pollution. There is constant pressure to develop the barrier islands, although most of them are fairly safe in the short-term as they are government-owned. The dredging operations of the Savannah and Brunswick ports, and the widespread construction of private and community docks and marinas, all have a negative effect on the shoreline. Saltwater intrusion in the Floridan Aquifer is another concern; the region may need new strategies to ensure a plentiful water supply.

The region's growth has also put pressure on the housing market, with the result that some longtime residents are gradually moving further inland from the coast to find more affordable housing, often in areas that lack public water and wastewater treatment infrastructure. Mobile homes are also an issue in rural areas. Middle-class "bedroom communities" are springing up in previously rural areas; this has taken place in parts of Bryan County, especially in and around Richmond Hill, with many of the residents working in Chatham County. Real estate on the islands is, not surprisingly, expensive. Coastal development faces the risk of storm damage, the effects of which are magnified by shrinking marsh buffers.

The transportation links of the ports and I-95 have been critical to the region's economic growth, and will remain so. (There are also important rail systems, both for freight and Amtrak, that run in the coastal counties and slightly inland.) The military bases also provide well-paying jobs, but their impact may fluctuate significantly due to national and international factors. Therefore several local governments, in Liberty County especially, have sought to diversify their economies, reducing their dependence on the military presence. Tourism is important as well; however, most jobs in the tourist industry tend to be low-paying and lack traditional fringe benefits. Manufacturing is clearly on the decline, as in so many other parts of the United States.



---

Balancing various competing interests, in the face of this growth, has become a significant challenge, and the problem is compounded by the lack of a truly regional vision for the area.

In light of the issues presented above, on February 11, 2005, Governor Sonny Perdue signed an Executive Order directing DCA to complete a Coastal Comprehensive Master Development Plan by September 2007.

The Executive Order established the following priorities:

-  Create a fully integrated multi-agency Comprehensive Plan for sustainable economic development for Coastal Georgia without compromising the region's natural appeal;
-  Build on the Department of Natural Resources' existing Coastal Management Program;
-  Where appropriate, consider and incorporate the various regional, county and city comprehensive plans of the region;
-  Identify a course of action to resolve the often competing interests of tourism, economic development, housing, transportation, environmental management; and,
-  Seek the knowledge, counsel and assistance of both private and public entities in Coastal Georgia in developing the Plan.

The resulting Plan is presented in the following pages. It was intended to balance various interests that often appear to be in conflict, such as economic development versus the environment, new subdivisions versus affordable housing, and longtime residents versus newcomers. The Plan tries to find a more holistic and regional approach to problems. As the region becomes increasingly developed, local governments (and other local institutions or organizations) need to cooperate with each other, crafting regional solutions to the larger problems that they all face. These problems, because of their broad scope and regional nature, cannot be solved by local governments or institutions acting entirely on their own; coordination and cooperation are needed.

This Plan focuses on certain issues that are particularly urgent:

- Conservation of natural resources--including the barrier islands, marshlands, forested areas, wildlife, habitats, coastal waterways, the Floridan aquifer, and greenspace in general--is perhaps the most important. This conservation, aside from being worthy in its own right, provides many ancillary benefits: improving public health, promoting tourism, ensuring future water supplies, and creating a general sense of well-being.
- Transportation Infrastructure, including more east-west transportation corridors, better public transit, and the continued expansion of the ports.



- 
- “Quality growth” (also known as “smart growth”) has been emphasized as a possible solution; it is clear that the current development pattern of “sprawl” causes traffic congestion, restricts affordable housing, harms the environment, fails to provide parks and greenspace, and uses up excessive amounts of land.

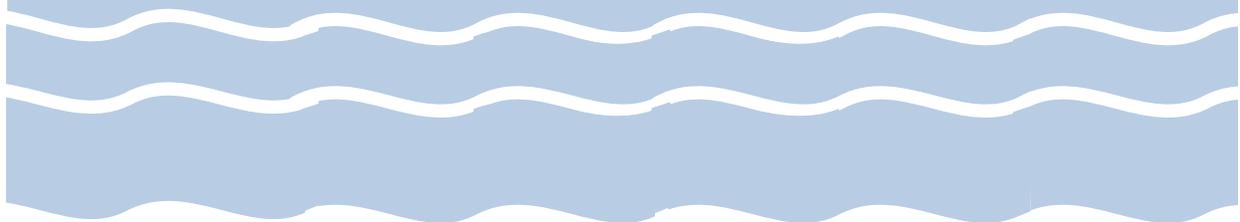
Stakeholders from the Coastal region have been very involved in developing the Plan; incorporating local knowledge is always critical to a successful planning process. Techniques used to publicize the process and elicit input from stakeholders include public meetings, visual preference surveys, emails, websites, and press releases.

The final Plan consists of several sections, but this Regional Agenda is the most important. The Regional Agenda contains the overall vision, guiding principles, implementation strategies, performance standards and evaluation and monitoring components. The creation of the Agenda has involved broad-based participation. That will help ensure that the Plan will be implemented, because many in the region were involved in its development and therefore should be committed to seeing it through.



---

# VISION





The vision of Coastal Georgia is to be a unique and cohesive region based upon innovation and excellence in all we do to preserve, nurture, enhance and develop our abundant human, natural, historic, cultural and economic resources.

Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee members envision a Coastal Georgia in the year 2026 that includes:

- Preservation of and restoration of natural and cultural resources;
- Quality growth-mixed use developments;
- Walk-able communities, clustered development that utilizes infrastructure wisely;
- Transportation alternatives;
- Abundant green-space and greenways;
- Healthy, happy families and communities;
- Diverse population;
- Quality education systems; healthy diversified economy;
- Building upon port and federal government facilities; and
- Coordinated planning and cooperation among local, regional, & state agencies.

## REGIONAL ISSUES

-  Overview: Regional Issues
-  Infrastructure: Water & Wastewater
-  Infrastructure: Stormwater
-  Infrastructure: Transportation
-  Intrinsic Resources: Cultural and Historic
-  Intrinsic Resources: Natural
-  Regional Growth Management
-  Economic Development: Business & Industry
-  Economic Development: Tourism

## OVERVIEW: REGIONAL ISSUES

### Introduction

The issues of Infrastructure (Water & Wastewater; Stormwater; Transportation), Intrinsic Resources (Natural Resources; Cultural & Historic Resources), Regional Growth Management, and Economic Development (Business & Industry; Tourism) have been determined to be of regional importance and therefore require a unified management approach. The approach for each issue is identified on the following pages using the format outlined here.

### Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles identify those overarching values which are to be utilized and evaluated for all decisions within the region. The Guiding Principles form the foundation for implementing the shared regional vision.

### Strategies

This section includes strategies, policies, and action items consistent with the Guiding Principles for each regional issue. These items should be considered by all organizations in the Coastal Region, including the CRC, State and federal agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and other coastal stakeholders. Specific tasks identified as part of the strategies may be conducted by various parties. Responsible parties for each task will be identified through development of the CRC Work Program.

### Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) Responsibilities

The CRC, in collaboration with local governments, State and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and others, is responsible for leading the implementation of the Plan. While some actions may require only review, others are of such importance to the region as to require CRC approval. The functions of the CRC fall primarily in one of four tasks as outlined next.



### Planning and Coordination

These actions are performed by the CRC to assist local governments and to act as a liaison between local governments to promote a regional perspective. Actions identified in this section also include outreach, education, and technical assistance.

### Review

After performing a review as required by the Plan, the CRC shall issue a Report of Findings to the appropriate local government(s). This report is advisory in nature, although local governments are expected to seriously consider the CRC's findings, comments, and recommendations. If the local government action is not consistent with the CRC's recommendations, then the local government shall report to the CRC why their decision was not consistent with the CRC recommendation.

### Approve

The CRC shall review local comprehensive plans for consistency with the Plan. Actions proposed by private or semi-public entities (i.e., development authorities, etc.) shall not be granted any permits by local governments until plans are approved by the CRC where required.

### Monitor

The CRC shall periodically monitor activities in order to assess cumulative impacts that may affect the overall well-being of the region. Specific monitoring activities include:

- Audits of activities for each local government within the region. Details of this audit process are located in the appendix.
- Audits of activities by State and federal agencies for consistency with the Plan.
- Evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the Plan.

## **Performance Standards**

This Plan establishes two achievement thresholds (a One (1) Point Performance Standard and a Two (2) Point Performance Standard) with associated incentives and technical assistance to encourage attainment of these thresholds. These standards should be considered by all organizations in the Coastal Region, including the CRC, State and federal agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, developers and other coastal stakeholders. However, the standards are of particular importance to local governments, as they may lose Qualified Local Government status if they do not attain the Minimum Ranking within two years, and they may be eligible for special incentives for attaining the Excellence Ranking. The One (1) Point Performance Standard should be viewed as the equivalent of a prerequisite, in that all local governments are expected to implement all of the best practices identified for this threshold. The Two (2) Point Performance Standard is more flexible. Although implementation of all the best practices



identified for this threshold is certainly encouraged, local governments and other actors may select from this list those they will implement. The CRC has established a point system where implementation of each best practice builds toward a threshold score required to achieve the Excellence Standard. See the Incentives and Remedial Actions section for more detail.

These standards are intended to provide guidance to the CRC in developing final performance standards to implement the Plan. The CRC's final standards should match the intent of the standards included herein.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER & WASTEWATER

### Guiding Principles

Infrastructure, including potable water and waste water systems, can be used as a tool to manage growth, protect our environment and influence our development patterns. Our vision is that Coastal Georgia will have regional resources and adequate funding allocated to the institutions that will provide adequate infrastructure in-advance of development.

We will encourage growth to occur in and near those areas with adequate infrastructure and use the investment in infrastructure to shape our development patterns. We encourage the State to enable the creation of regional agencies to address transportation, water supply and conservation and the protection of natural areas consistent with this goal.

### Strategies

1. Allow and encourage coordination among adjacent jurisdictions in provision and oversight of water and wastewater treatment services and facilities.
2. Create regional water and wastewater authorities to implement the CRC master plan to coordinate service delivery on a regional scale.
3. Recognize the value of past and current investments in public water and wastewater infrastructure: maximize the use of existing facilities first, but where new facilities are necessary to support development require the use of green building strategies to minimize water demand.
4. Promote the use of a standardized protocol to forecast water needs to meet reasonable future water needs throughout region.
5. Recognize existing and emerging plans and initiatives.
6. Promote adherence to the Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan to coordinate management of coastal water resources.
7. Promote development practices that minimize the withdrawal of water from wells and maximize reuse of treated waste water.



8. Promote use of purple pipe and grey water techniques and use of surface water in addition to groundwater where appropriate.
9. Encourage water conservation through accepted conservation techniques and pricing to minimize water use.
10. Promote water conservation through use of a tiered rate system.
11. Ensure that wastewater discharge permitting considers impacts on natural resources.
12. Promote the use of the best available technology, dependent on soil type, for wastewater treatment.
13. Phase out the use of conventional septic on properties within 100 feet of marshes, rivers, and State water bodies.
14. Develop a septic system and well inspection program.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Develop a regional water and wastewater master plan to identify infrastructure placement and replacement/upgrades to existing infrastructure.
- Integrate the coastal water plan (when completed) and the Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan (EPD) in order to be consistent with the forthcoming Statewide Water Plan.
- Develop a regional Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for implementation of water and wastewater master plan.
- Develop standards and protocols to be applied to septic systems.
- Develop and implement a periodic septic tank monitoring and inspection program to ensure proper maintenance.

### Review

- Review and comment on water and wastewater facility expansions (public and private) not identified in the regional water and wastewater master plan in order to support the investment of public infrastructure expenditures.
- Review and comment on pending EPD water and wastewater permit applications concurrent with EPD's review process.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Monitor other federal and State agency plans and activities for consistency with the Plan.

## Performance Standards

To achieve minimum ranking requirements for Water & Wastewater Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of seven (7) points. To achieve excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of twelve (12) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

- Local government land development/redevelopment ordinances and standards must include and be consistent with the following standards:
1. Discourage the use of individual lot septic systems for developments that exceed a one dwelling unit per acre density threshold.
  2. Require connections to public or community water and wastewater systems when it is available or nearby.
  3. Require the use of best available technology for individual or community wastewater treatment systems when public wastewater treatment is unavailable.
  4. Allow community water and wastewater treatment systems only when public systems are unavailable or cannot meet the needs of the development.
  5. Prohibit installation of new septic systems within 100 feet of any marsh or river and within 50 feet of any other State water body.
  6. Require all new public and community wastewater treatment systems to treat all wastewater to EPD re-use standards, and design approved distribution systems to utilize re-use water.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Conduct and keep current an inventory of private wells and septic systems.
2. Develop and implement a community well inspection and monitoring and water quality monitoring program.
3. Require an analysis of the impacts of new community wells on the service delivery plan and strategy adopted as a part of the county-wide joint comprehensive plan. Evaluate the cumulative impact of community systems on public infrastructure investments.
4. Require local governments adopt ordinances requiring a local maintenance and operation bond for all community water and wastewater treatment systems.
5. Develop an inspection, maintenance and monitoring program for private septic systems.
6. Adopt a groundwater recharge ordinance that addresses DNR's environmental criteria.

---

7. Adopt a rate structure to promote water conservation.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: STORMWATER

### Guiding Principles

Infrastructure, including stormwater management, can be used as a tool to manage growth, protect our environment and influence our development patterns. A suite of strategies should be considered for stormwater management, both structural and non-structural. Our vision is that Coastal Georgia will have regional resources and adequate funding allocated to the institutions that will provide adequate infrastructure in advance of development.

We will encourage growth to occur in and near those areas with adequate infrastructure and use the investment in infrastructure to shape our development patterns. We encourage the State to enable the creation of regional agencies to address transportation, water supply and conservation and protection of natural areas consistent with this goal.

### Strategies

1. Encourage development practices and sitings that do not significantly impact wetlands and habitat areas or allow for the preservation and conservation of wetlands and habitat areas through appropriate land use practices.
2. Promote the use of coast-specific quality growth principles and programs, such as the Green Growth Guidelines, Earthcraft Coastal Communities and the Coastal Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, to guide site planning and development.
3. Minimize effective impervious coverage wherever possible.
4. Develop stormwater programs across the region.
5. Pursue State-level funding for regional water quality monitoring activities due to the statewide importance of coastal waters and estuaries.
6. Develop a stormwater utility program.



---

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Develop a regional stormwater management master plan, to be incorporated into the Regionally Important Resources plan.
- Provide training and education regarding the Coastal Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.
- Coordinate and enhance regional water quality monitoring activities.

### Review

- Review and comment on stormwater management plans and ordinances.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Monitor overall impervious area within each coastal watershed.
- Monitor local government activities for compliance with Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.
- Coordinate and enhance regional water quality monitoring activities.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Stormwater Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of eight (8) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

The community's local land development ordinances and standards must include and be consistent with the following standards:

1. Require the use of the standards and techniques in the latest adopted Coastal Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.
2. Require the use of the Stormwater Quality Site Development Review Tool, which is a companion to the Georgia Stormwater Manual, or similar tool to review proposed development plans.
3. Allow low impact development techniques to minimize the quantity and improve the quality of runoff.
4. Require that new developments consider and accommodate upstream stormwater runoff, and do not negatively impact downstream areas.
5. Adopt a stormwater ordinance that limits discharge to pre-developed conditions for appropriate types and intensities of storms.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Develop an inspection and maintenance program for public and private stormwater management systems.
2. Adopt stormwater ordinances, above and beyond the minimum standards, appropriate to our coastal environment.
3. Adopt standards or ordinances that provide incentives for developments that utilize low impact design, follow green growth guidelines, or follow other quality growth approaches.
4. Adopt standards or ordinances that require developments to minimize the effective impervious area.
5. Implement a stormwater utility.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION

### Guiding Principles

Infrastructure, including transportation, can be used as a tool to manage growth, protect our environment and influence our development patterns. Our vision is that Coastal Georgia will have regional resources and adequate funding allocated to the institutions that will provide adequate infrastructure in advance of development.

Transportation and land use coordination will be a priority, utilizing a proactive, rather than reactive, approach. We will direct growth to those areas with adequate infrastructure and use the investment in infrastructure to shape our development patterns. We encourage the State to enable the creation of regional agencies to address transportation, water supply and conservation and protection of natural areas consistent with this goal.

### Strategies

1. Provide the forum and the support to coordinate regional multi-modal transportation, including rail, airports, and public transportation, planning and development.
2. Promote the establishment of regional transportation compact(s) to provide a forum for local governments and MPOs to communicate and discuss transportation issues and decisions in the six-county Coastal Region. These compacts do not replace the existing federal and State processes mandated in law, but provide a forum to communicate issues, ideas and discussions.
3. Promote coordination among agencies and jurisdictions in development of region-wide multi-modal transportation network, including transit, where applicable.
4. Encourage the coordination of transportation network improvements and land use planning.
5. Develop (as subset of the multi-modal plan), a plan for a limited access/controlled access transportation system and determine where new access to support sustainable growth should be located.
6. Promote coordinated public infrastructure and school location planning with land use



planning.

- Identify alternative funding sources for multi-modal transportation improvements.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Coordinate with GDOT, MPOs, and local governments to develop a regional access/limited controlled thoroughfare plan identifying significant regional facilities.
- Coordinate transportation network improvements, land use planning, stormwater management, etc.
- Provide rural transportation planning assistance.
- Facilitate a discussion of alternative financing mechanisms to support transportation planning and improvements.
- Coordinate the development of the Coastal Georgia Greenway system and scenic byways.

### Review

- Review long-range transportation plans for consistency with the Plan.

### Monitor

- Monitor all major transportation projects in the region.
- Monitor transportation/land use coordination.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Transportation Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

### Performance Standard = 1point

1. Require a comprehensive impact assessment for all developments that meet or exceed identified thresholds based on professionally identified sources, as established by ordinance of local governments.
2. Require mitigation of significant transportation impacts from developments.
3. Require the use of appropriate access management techniques for public roads and provide incentives for access management techniques for private roads.
4. The transportation component and/or policies of the local comprehensive plan should strive to provide for multiuse corridors and address multi-modal transportation needs (including roadway, air, seaport, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and intracoastal) in coordination with existing plans. The comprehensive plan and policies should be consistent with the local and State transportation plans.
5. Require identifying “build-out” corridor needs and a way to protect them from development encroachment.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Require or provide incentives for provision of sidewalks and/or multipurpose paths for new developments.
2. Provide sidewalks and/or multipurpose paths whenever the transportation network is constructed / reconstructed.
3. Require or provide incentives for context sensitive design practices in road layouts for new development and redevelopment.
4. Require or provide incentives for transportation connections between developments.
5. Encourage or provide incentives for transit-oriented development in areas currently served or with the potential to be served by transit in the future.
6. Make local transportation improvements consistent with all existing bicycle and pedestrian plans.
7. Adopt and implement an ordinance requiring dedicated funding to properly classify, inventory, and maintain public roads to maintain public capacity to support new growth.
8. Implementation of the Coastal GA Greenway.

## INTRINSIC RESOURCES: CULTURAL & HISTORIC

### Guiding Principles

Coastal Georgia contains some of the most significant heritage assets in the State, which are important elements of education, tourism development, economic development, health, and quality of life.

We will protect, restore, enhance, and manage these resources for the benefit of our citizens, our visitors, and future generations.

### Strategies

1. Identify and establish greenspace and other protection areas that have high density of cultural and/or historic resources.
2. Encourage local governments to examine proposed development areas prior to development approval and require mitigation to significant resources.
3. Encourage development practices and sitings that do not significantly impact sensitive cultural and historical areas.
4. Maintain viewsheds of significant cultural and historic assets.
5. Maintain a range of landscapes and environments that provide diversity of habitats, species, resources and opportunities for recreation, commerce, community enjoyment and cultural practices.
6. Designate culturally and/or historically significant resource management areas for potential acquisition and/or protection.
7. Identify cultural and historic resources which have been, or may be potentially, impacted by development and identify mitigation strategies, which may include studying and recording, enhancement of other resources or resource education.
8. Develop a comprehensive inventory and management plan of historic properties and archaeological sites, to identify priority areas for acquisition and/or protection using

various existing record sources, sound science, modern predictive modeling, field surveys, and other accepted techniques.

9. Develop a management plan for cultural and historic resources, which would include appropriate enhancement of these resources for recreation, public education, and tourist attractions.
10. Educate residents and visitors regarding the statewide importance of this region's cultural and historic resources.
11. Encourage utilization and cooperation of museums, universities, foundations, non-government organizations, professional associations, and private firms to advise and monitor management.
12. Promote the establishment of partnerships for the development and utilization of incentives to restore, remediate or reuse cultural resources as appropriate.
13. Compile the traditional lore and knowledge of local people and integrate their understandings and practices into planning and development.
14. Encourage coordination among agencies and jurisdictions in developing and funding heritage conservation land uses and ensuring public access to publicly held and supported conservation areas.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Coordinate management plans between various federal, State, and local governments and NGOs and private landholders.
- Incorporate regionally important historic and cultural resources into the Regionally Important Resources plan.

### Review

- Review all developments that have potential for impacting significant historic or cultural sites identified in the Regionally Important Resources plan. Minimization and mitigation of impacts for significant resources should be undertaken if preservation is not feasible.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Monitor historic preservation ordinances for consistency with the Georgia Historic Preservation Act.

- Monitor the demolition/loss of historic and cultural resources.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Cultural & Historic Resources, one must obtain a total of four (4) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

Have a Comprehensive Plan that provides for:

1. Development of a comprehensive inventory of cultural, archaeological and historic resources, as well as important cultural and historical viewsheds (as defined by each local government).
2. Development of a process to evaluate cultural and historic resources identified in the Regionally Important Resources plan during the land development process.
3. Adoption and implementation of an ordinance to require identification and evaluation of cultural and historic resources prior to development.
4. Identification of cultural and historic resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Include these in the Regionally Important Resources plan.

### Performance Standard =2 points

1. A historic preservation ordinance under the Georgia Historic Preservation Act that establishes a Historic Preservation Commission and a process for designating local historic districts and properties.
2. Restrict incompatible features from encroaching upon important cultural and historical viewsheds identified in the local comprehensive plan.
3. Integrate Cultural and Historic Resource plans and treatment with heritage tourism plans.
4. Integrate Cultural and Historic-Resource plans and treatment with educational plans for students and citizens.
5. Develop a comprehensive inventory of traditional ways of life and artistic crafts and skills.
6. Integrate Cultural and Historic Resources plans and treatment with housing plans.
7. Require mitigation/minimization measures for all cultural, archaeological, and historic resources damaged during the land development process.
8. Provide incentives for listing as a local historic district or property.

9. Incorporate the appropriate treatment of historic resources into the local disaster plan.
10. Establish a process for preservation of historically and culturally significant properties for preservation.
11. Become a Certified Local Government by the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD) and the National Park Service.

## INTRINSIC RESOURCES: NATURAL

### Guiding Principles

Coastal Georgia contains some of the highest biodiversity and natural productivity and most significant habitats in the State, which are important elements of education, tourism development, economic development, health, and quality of life. Protecting, restoring, and managing natural and cultural resources will be a priority in coastal comprehensive planning. Coastal Georgia will be promoted for our globally important resources and our successful efforts to protect and sustain them.

We will protect, restore, enhance, and manage these resources for the benefit of residents, visitors, and future generations, which include placing a high priority on maintenance and enhancement of access to our public rivers, coastal waters, and beaches. A system of managed areas will conserve ecosystem functions and values, sustain clean water and flow, clean air and provide benefits to people and wildlife.

### Strategies

1. Identify natural resources which have been, or may be potentially, impacted by development and identify mitigation strategies, which may include protection or enhancement of other resources or of resource education.
2. Develop a comprehensive inventory and management plan of resources, including rare species and habitat locations, to identify priority areas for acquisition and/or protection using various existing record sources, sound science, modern predictive modeling, field surveys, and other accepted techniques.
3. Continue the traditional use of land and water (such as forestry, fishing, etc.) as feasible, provided that any significant impacts on resources can be prevented or effectively mitigated.
4. Protect and enhance Coastal Georgia's water resources, including surface water, groundwater, and wetlands.
5. Protect and enhance water quality, quantity and flow regimes.



6. Commit to investing in the protection of natural resources before any restoration and/or remediation is needed.
7. Encourage the restoration and protection of wetlands to provide flooding, storm and habitat protection.
8. Maintain viewsheds of significant natural resources.
9. Enhance access to natural resources for recreation, public education, and tourist attractions as appropriate within the protection mission.
10. Encourage utilization of universities, foundations, and non-government organizations to advise, monitor, and enhance management.
11. Promote the establishment of partnerships and funding mechanisms for the development and utilization of incentives to restore, rehabilitate, protect or reuse natural resources as appropriate.
12. Encourage development practices and sitings that do not significantly impact environmentally sensitive areas.
13. Promote [low impact] design practices that protect natural resources.
14. Promote to local governments a program of monitoring installation and impacts of individual and community docks along the coast.
15. Promote the monitoring of cumulative impacts of waterfront development along the coast.
16. Maintain a range of landscapes and environments that provide diversity of habitats, species, resources and opportunities for recreation, commerce, community enjoyment and cultural practices.
17. Encourage the development and use of a method to place a value on ecosystem services.
18. Promote the identification of innovative funding sources and development of ecosystem services markets (e.g. carbon, storm buffers, traditional land and water uses).
19. Require watershed-based management to protect water resources that includes multi-county and state coordination.
20. As tools become available, incorporate climate change impacts, including sea level rise into land management and protection plans.
21. Promote the Adopt-a-Wetland program in areas that can be used as reference sites and that are within projected development areas.
22. Encourage coordination among agencies and jurisdictions in developing and funding conservation land uses and ensuring public access to publicly held and supported conservation areas.



23. Enhance coordination and integration between the Plan and the Georgia Coastal Management Program of DNR-CRD.
24. Enhance education of residents and visitors regarding the statewide importance of this region's natural resources and ecosystem services.
25. Develop a public education program to promote conservation of coastal resources. Elements should include awareness of clean marinas program, responsible boating practices, responsible fishing practices, sea turtle awareness, anti-littering campaign, etc.
26. Consider the recommendations of the DNR Docks and Marinas Committee.
27. Consider the recommendations of the DNR Marsh Hammocks Stakeholders Dialogue.
28. Work to abate non-native invasive species.
29. Consider recommendations of the DNR Marsh Hammocks Collaborative Dialogue.
30. Partner with state, federal, non-governmental organizations and local governments to provide local knowledge and guidance on critical natural areas, land conservation efforts, and land use practices within each jurisdiction. Provide assistance in all outreach efforts forthcoming from this initiative.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Develop a regional inventory and management plan of natural resources which will be incorporated into the Regionally Important Resources plan.
- Coordinate management plans between various federal, State, and local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private landowners.
- Coordinate with the Georgia Forestry Commission to ensure that silviculture operations are utilizing Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Develop a regional plan for public access to waterways.

### Review

- Review and comment on all developments adjacent to the marsh and/or beaches for habitat impacts to sea turtles, marine life, etc.
- Review and comment on all developments which contain a site identified in the Regionally Important Resources plan. Minimization and mitigation of impacts can be undertaken if preservation is not feasible.
- Review and comment on development of marsh hammocks.

## Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Natural Resources, one must obtain a total of three (3) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

1. Develop a comprehensive assessment and resource management plan which includes an inventory of significant natural resources and viewsheds (as defined by each local government) in the jurisdiction. This inventory should assess resource significance, with Regionally Important Resources ranked as most significant; the inventory should also include significant resources not in the Regionally Important Resources plan.
2. Develop an ordinance consistent with the resource management plan to require examination of tracts prior to development; this examination would identify and evaluate impact to significant natural resources (including habitats) and viewsheds.
3. Provide all developers a statement of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Coastal Development.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Implement a program for public and private acquisition and conservation easements in natural resource areas of special significance.
2. Adopt and implement a tree ordinance (with appropriate consideration of silviculture).
3. Provide incentives for shared docks for all new residential development.
4. Adopt local ordinances above and beyond established DNR regulations.
5. Protect any previously undisturbed marsh hammocks as identified in the natural resource plan.
6. Require or provide incentives for use of best management practices for any timber, agriculture, and/or extractive activities.
7. Require, or provide incentives for, new development to conserve and protect as open space at least 30 percent of each development, through cluster or similar development approaches. (Assign points related to the type and amount of conservation area and protection of open space).
8. Require or provide incentives for new

developments/redevelopments to pursue certification for “green” site planning, construction, and post-construction practices.

9. Require the design of all new structures bordering marshes to minimize their visual presence as viewed from the marsh.
10. Require or provide incentives for maintenance or restoration of at minimum a 50 foot natural vegetative buffer on all properties bordering coastal marshlands.
11. Provide a plan for public access to water.

## REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

### Guiding Principles

We will enhance and preserve the character of our communities through regional growth management strategies that encourage sustainable development and redevelopment and follow “quality growth” principles where our coastal environment is respected, protected and enhanced.

We will promote sustainable communities through uniform application of regional quality growth management principles and standards where each local government will adopt its own land use and development standards that meet or exceed the regional minimum standards.

### Strategies

1. Encourage development that supports and enhances the desired character of each of the region’s cities and towns.
2. Avoid establishment of new land uses which may be incompatible with existing adjacent land uses.
3. Protect our vital military installations from land use changes that jeopardize their mission through implementation of the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS).
4. Promote growth in those areas that can be efficiently served by infrastructure, such as water, wastewater and transportation.
5. Encourage infill development as an alternative to expansion.
6. Focus new development in compact nodes that can be served by municipal or community infrastructure providers.
7. Maintain and enhance the scenic character of our rural highways and county roads.
8. Encourage clustered developments, particularly in areas that are suitable and proposed for development, that maximize open spaces, protect natural, cultural and historic

resources, preserve wildlife habitat, and include green, low impact development strategies.

9. Encourage local governments to allow green, low impact developments as an alternative to rigid development standards and develop incentives encouraging their use.
10. Limit development in sensitive areas located near marshes and waterways, to low impact development that maintains our coastal character, while recognizing and protecting the sensitive environment.
11. Strongly encourage that new developments have minimal impacts on vital wetlands, coastal hammocks, marshes, and waterways.
12. Require environmentally sound water use and waste water policies and require reuse standards for waste water treatment for large developments.
13. Discourage lot-by-lot water and waste water treatment systems for multiple lot developments.
14. Promote green building techniques to maximize energy efficiency and water conservation and minimize post construction impacts on the environment.
15. Encourage the development of a "transfer of development rights" (TDR) program.
16. Develop and adopt appropriate thresholds for developments of regional impact (DRI) for the Coastal Region to ensure that each proposed development is held to the same uniform requirements for approval.
17. Encourage development and compliance with minimum uniform land use and development standards for all local governments to adopt in the six coastal counties.
18. Encourage coordination among agencies and jurisdictions in land use planning, regulation, review and permitting.
19. Promote affordable housing options.
20. Conduct region-wide training and continuing education program (e.g., on Context Sensitive and Sustainable Design and Coordinated Land Use Practices) for local government and relevant agency staff, as well as design professionals.
21. Encourage the placement of new schools near existing and new community centers.
22. Partner with state, federal, non-governmental organizations and local governments to provide local knowledge and guidance on critical natural areas, land conservation efforts, and land use practices within each jurisdiction. Provide assistance in all outreach efforts forthcoming from this initiative.



## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Provide outreach, training, and technical assistance.
- Coordinate with and assist local governments to establish future development map (FDM) boundaries consistent with the Plan.
- Investigate potential for establishment of Transfer of Development Rights programs.
- Coordinate with and assist local governments to establish development impact fees.
- Establish performance standards which can be used by local governments in evaluating site plans.
- Establish Minimum Quality Growth Standards to be incorporated into local government regulations.
- Coordinate with local governments on the siting of public facilities, including schools.
- Coordinate with local governments on DRI review, including CRC participation in mandatory conferences prior to DRI review.

### Review

- Review and comment on relevant State and federal permits, concurrent with the review process, within the region.
- Review plans for developments adjacent to the marsh and/or State waters, concurrent with the local government review process.
- Review all DRIs meeting coastal thresholds.

### Approve

- Review and approve local government comprehensive plans for consistency with the Plan.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Conduct annual reviews of local government rezonings, subdivision approvals, DRIs, and ordinance changes.
- Monitor local governments for enforcement of their ordinances.
- Monitor local building codes for compliance with State building codes.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Regional Growth Management, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

Local government comprehensive plans must include and be consistent with the following standards:

1. Be developed jointly with all of the other local governments within the limits of the county (deadline to be established).
2. Define the growth boundaries of each local government that include and define the types and limits of all service delivery, per Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) regulations.
3. Define the character areas within each local government growth boundaries on a FDM consistent with the following:
  - *Developed*: Areas that have already transitioned to an urbanized or dense rural pattern.
  - *Developing*: Areas that are currently undeveloped or sparsely developed, but that are likely to become developed over the next 20 years. Generally these areas should be contained within a defined growth boundary.
  - *Rural or Low Density*: Areas generally outside of a defined growth boundary. This includes areas where the community desires to preserve and protect the rural character, as well as provide areas for very low density developments or all forms of agriculture.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Adopt and implement an ordinance that requires a fiscal impact analysis on public costs and revenues for large scale developments.
2. Adopt and implement an ordinance that requires an environmental impact analysis for large scale developments.
3. Adopt and implement an impact fee ordinance in accordance with State law.
4. Include density bonuses and other incentives in ordinances that direct developments to those areas that can be efficiently served by existing or new infrastructure.
5. Adopt and implement architectural and design overlay ordinances for important gateways, corridors, and center city areas.
6. Adopt ordinances that allow clustering of development that protects valuable open space, natural resources, and wildlife habitat.
7. Adopt ordinances that encourage developers to permanently protect valuable resources or habitat areas.
8. Adopt ordinances that allow for innovative development while protecting the sense of place as well as natural and cultural resources.
9. Develop and implement a program that

- *Conservation:* Areas that are designated to be protected from new development, such as environmentally sensitive areas, historic districts, or important cultural areas.
4. Be reviewed annually and updated if needed by a defined reporting date to be established by the CRC.
  5. In developing its FDM, local governments must identify potential impacts and include a summary of efforts to coordinate development(s) planned for areas bordering other counties. Coordinate with adjacent counties when growth boundaries are adjacent to another county or extend into the adjacent county's jurisdiction—with CRC coordination (potentially through DRI review).

encourages use of recommended BMPs (includes incentives) in all new developments/redevelopment (see <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/coastal/BMP/default.htm>).

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

### Guiding Principles

Economic development is closely tied to our coastal resources, both through the port-related activities of our coastal waterways and the natural, historic, and cultural resources. Our vision is that economic development will be successful through integrated land use, water resource management, transportation, and infrastructure decisions which protect and promote our coastal resources.

Our goal is that the entire region shares in jobs and investments that are created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiatives.

### Strategies

1. Promote distribution of business and industry across the region consistent with natural, cultural and historic resource strategies in the Plan.
2. Research and investigate ways to share costs and benefits across jurisdictional lines.
3. Conduct an assessment of assets and needs across the region, understanding the variations of differences in communities.
4. Develop a regional economic development land use plan to identify appropriate sites for manufacturing, distribution, etc., while recognizing and respecting the differences between communities.
5. Recognizing the importance of the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA), create a distribution centers master plan to identify locations within the region best suited for distribution based on the existing or programmed transportation network.
6. Coordinate with the GPA to identify their needs and identify mechanisms for the economic development industry to strengthen the GPA in the fields of logistics, distribution, and workforce development.
7. Coordinate federal, State and local economic development funding programs and initiatives that affect the coast.



8. Coordinate business and industry needs with the educational entities, including K-12 and higher education, to provide the appropriate workforce skills.
9. Promote and encourage coordination between economic development agencies and educational institutions to provide appropriate workforce training.
10. Create an education task force to work with local school systems, universities and technical schools to identify mechanisms for increased student performance.
11. Protect and maintain the strong regional military presence to assure economic stability and to provide a high-quality workforce.
12. Recognize and support traditional industries undergoing changes to serve emerging markets (i.e., maintain silvaculture to support biofuels production).
13. Promote businesses which will support the continuation of natural resource-based industries, such as silvaculture, agriculture, fisheries, etc. in order to reduce the conversion of these lands into developed areas.
14. Work with local governments, Downtown Development Authorities, State agencies, etc. to create incentives for downtown revitalization, job creation, and location of business and offices within downtown areas.
15. Promote and support the traditional coastal industries through coordination among federal, State and local tourism and economic development initiatives and funding opportunities.
16. Incorporate current and future needs for housing, infrastructure and natural resource protection into economic development initiatives.
17. Support balanced recruitment of jobs; recruit clean, high-tech growth industries (Knowledge Based Businesses).
18. Recruit industries which are not major water-consumers.
19. Encourage international economic development.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Ensure that the Plan and local government comprehensive plans include a locational identification of appropriate sites for various economic development strategies, recognizing the strengths of each community.
- Recognizing importance of the regional port infrastructure and military presence, support a target industry master plan to identify and coordinate locations best suited for various businesses and industries based on the existing and planned infrastructure network.

### Review

- Review economic development plans created by local or regional development authorities for consistency with the target industry master plan.
- Review and comment regarding the location of facilities not identified in the target industry master plan.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Monitor the support structure for economic development.

## **Performance Standards**

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Business & Industry, one must obtain a total of six (6) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

### Performance Standard = 1 point

Develop an Economic Development plan at the county level that provides:

1. A written inventory of the strategic assets--educational, natural, healthcare, military, types of businesses, etc.--which are important to the local economy.
2. Strategies based on inventory lists.
3. Strategies to develop and market assets.
4. A current inventory of available sites and buildings suitable for the development of manufacturing, distribution, office and other businesses, including, if any, film locations, etc., that do not fit into the norm.
5. Coordination among appropriate local agencies for economic development.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Continue participation in the Department of Economic Development (DEcD) Entrepreneur Friendly Community Initiative.
2. Implement a local economic development/strategic business plan. Consider all options: tourism, film, small business, manufacturing, etc.
3. Develop a specific plan for marketing local strategic businesses. Share the plan with the DEcD and other economic development partners so they know what the community is seeking.
4. Provide linkage among cultural tourism/artisans and small businesses.
5. Encourage new local businesses that are unique to the coast.
6. Collaborate between agencies and coordinate city and county plans.



6. Support for downtown efforts.

7. Coordinate and integrate on a regional basis.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: TOURISM

### Guiding Principles

Economic development is closely tied to our coastal resources, both through the port-related activities of our coastal waterways and the natural, historic, and cultural resources which drive the tourism industry. Our vision is that economic development will be successful through integrated land use, water resource management, transportation, and infrastructure decisions which protect and promote our coastal resources.

Our goal is that the entire region shares in jobs and investment that are created through the integrated balance of sustainable economic development initiatives.

### Strategies

1. Work with the DEcD to promote balanced, cooperative and coordinated cultural and resource-based tourism inherent to the Coastal Region.
2. Work with DEcD on product development: to promote and protect the coast as a whole, such as Georgia Wild Shrimp, etc.
3. Work with Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliates and other agencies as appropriate on regional anti-litter campaigns.
4. Coordinate federal, State and local tourism and economic development funding and initiatives.
5. Promote and develop incentives to enhance and grow regional cultural tourism.
6. Promote and develop incentives to enhance and grow regional eco-tourism.
7. Develop and promote a regional tourism and marketing strategy.
8. Promote Southern Passages (US 17) as a scenic route and encourage designation as a National Heritage Corridor.
9. Create a corridor management plan along I-95.



10. Promote consistent signage at all interstate interchanges.
11. Balance recreational uses of coastal resources with appropriate protection of the environment on which our economy and quality of life depends.
12. Enhance access to natural, historic, and cultural core areas for recreation, public education, and tourist attractions as appropriate within the protection mission. Promote these areas for heritage tourism.
13. Encourage local governments to actively pursue elimination of junkyards and other eyesores, especially along major thoroughfares and gateways.
14. Coordinate the development of the Coastal Georgia Greenway system and scenic byways.

## **Coastal Regional Commission Responsibilities**

### Planning and Coordination

- Assist in developing tourism-based activities consistent with the Plan.
- Promote natural resource awareness programs to tourists.

### Monitor

- Monitor local government consistency with the Plan as part of the audit process.
- Monitor regional tourism statistics and impacts.
- Monitor public access to water and public access strategies.
- Monitor conditions (access, beach erosion, public health advisories, etc.) of the main public beaches.

## Performance Standards

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Tourism, one must obtain a total of three (3) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of eight (8) points.

### Performance Standard =1 point

Local governments with a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) shall develop a tourism promotion plan for the community, as appropriate, and/or a Tourism product Development Plan that provides:

1. Inventory of the natural, historic, cultural and recreational resource areas that are important for local tourism as well as identify sites for tourism operations.
2. Strategies to enhance the above resources for tourism use as appropriate.
3. Coordinate among appropriate local agencies for product development and enhancement.

### Performance Standard = 2 points

1. Adopt and implement a sign control ordinance and a way-finding (directional signs) system to attractions/events.
2. Adopt and implement community appearance ordinances (for landscaping, litter control, design control, cleanup of dilapidated properties, corridor management, etc.).
3. Develop a list of the types of businesses that are suitable for locating near and supporting natural and cultural tourism resources and then develop a program that supports those sorts of businesses.
4. Monitor public access to the water and other important tourism resources, and implement strategies for enhancing public access while protecting the resources.
5. Incorporate tourism product development and tourism promotion ideas into local businesses to develop products that give communities unique items/mementoes from their area.
6. Include regional assets in local/smaller tourism promotional materials to attract more visitors to smaller sites. Cross-sell the region.
7. Monitor return on investment for tourism programs.
8. Implementation of the Coastal GA Greenway.

# IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

-  Regional Work Program
-  Incentives and Remedial Actions
-  Guidance for Developments of Regional Impact in the Region



---

## Implementation Program

The Implementation Program is the overall strategy for achieving the Regional Vision and for addressing each of the Regional Issues. It identifies specific measures to be undertaken by the regional leaders to implement the Plan and provides guidance to developers, local governments, and other public agencies for helping achieve the Regional Vision. The Implementation Program includes the following components:

### **Regional Work Program**

This program identifies specific implementation actions of the CRC. It includes a list of actions identified into three priorities: 1) essential to implement, 2) essential if funding permits, and 3) less-critical actions.

### **Incentives and Remedial Actions**

The tools the CRC will use to implement the Plan, focusing on a coordinative, incentive-based approach, involving local governments and other actors in the region.

### **Guidance for Developments of Regional Impact in the Region**

This section includes recommended enhancements to the Developments of Regional Impact program that will apply in the Coastal Region.



## Regional Work Program

<b>Task</b>
<i>Essential – Initiate as Soon as Possible</i>
1. Expand the Plan to incorporate inland counties.
2. Develop the Regionally Important Resources plan (a regional inventory and management plan of natural, cultural, & historic resources), coordinating with previous or ongoing resource identification and mapping work by other actors in the region such as the Georgia Land Conservation Initiative.
3. Develop a regional water and wastewater master plan to identify infrastructure placement and replacement/upgrades to existing infrastructure.
4. Develop regional Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for implementation of water and wastewater master plan.
5. Develop a regional stormwater management master plan, to be incorporated into the Regionally Important Resources plan.
6. Integrate the coastal water plan (when completed) and the Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan (EPD), to be consistent with the forthcoming Statewide Water Plan.
7. Establish performance standards which can be used by local governments in evaluating development decisions.
8. Establish Minimum Quality Growth Standards to be incorporated into local government regulations.
9. Develop standards and protocols to be applied to septic systems.
10. Audit local governments, federal and State agencies, and developers for consistency with the Plan and achievement/maintenance of performance standards, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ annual reviews of local government rezonings, subdivision approvals, DRIs, and ordinance changes</li> <li>▪ review local governments for enforcement of their ordinances</li> </ul>
11. DRI review, including coordination with local governments on review and CRC participation in mandatory pre-application conferences.
12. Approve local government comprehensive plans for consistency with the Plan, including guidance in establishing FDM boundaries consistent with the Plan.
13. Review and comment on key activities in the region, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Water and wastewater facility expansions (public and private) not identified in the regional water and wastewater master plan in order to support the investment of public infrastructure expenditures.</li> <li>▪ Pending EPD water and wastewater permit applications concurrent with EPD's review process.</li> <li>▪ Stormwater management plans and ordinances.</li> <li>▪ Transportation plans, for consistency with regional plan and adjacent jurisdictions.</li> </ul>



- All developments which contain a site identified in, or may have impact on resources identified in, the Regionally Important Resources Plan.
- Development of marsh hammocks.
- Relevant State and federal permits, concurrent with the review process, within the region.
- Developments adjacent to the marsh and/or State waters, concurrent with the local government review process.

14. Provide outreach, training, and technical assistance.

15. Enhanced coordination/integration between coastal plan and local government disaster plans. "Disaster resilience"



<b>Task</b>
<i>Essential – Initiate as Funding Permits</i>
1. Develop a regional access/limited control thoroughfare plan identifying significant regional facilities.
2. Provide local assistance on an as needed/requested basis to all member governments in planning, land use, transportation or other core functions.
3. Work with the MPOs to coordinate transportation network improvements with land use planning throughout the region.
4. Monitor all major transportation projects in the region.
5. Facilitate a discussion of alternative financing mechanisms to support transportation planning and improvements.
6. Provide rural transportation planning assistance to those counties not in an MPO.
7. Coordinate with local groups already promoting the development of the Coastal Georgia Greenway system and scenic byways.
8. Recognizing importance of the regional port infrastructure and military presence, support a target industry master plan to identify and coordinate locations best suited for various businesses and industries based on the existing and planned infrastructure network.
9. Review economic development plans created by local or regional development authorities for consistency with the target industry master plan.
10. Review and comment regarding the location of facilities not identified in the target industry master plan.
11. Coordinate conservation management plans between various federal, State, and local governments and NGOs and private landholders.
12. Develop a regional plan for public access to waterways.



<b>Task</b>
<i>Less-Critical- Initiate if Not Already Handled by Other Actors in the Region</i>
1. Coordinate with local governments on the siting of public facilities, including schools.
2. Ensure that the Plan and local government comprehensive plan include a location identification of appropriate sites for various economic development strategies, recognizing the strengths of each community.
3. Assist in developing tourism-based activities consistent with the Plan.
4. Promote natural resource awareness programs to tourists.
5. Develop and implement a periodic septic tank monitoring and inspection program to ensure proper maintenance.
6. Coordinate and enhance regional water quality monitoring activities.
7. Provide training and education regarding the coastal supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.
8. Coordinate with the Georgia Forestry Commission to ensure that silviculture operations are utilizing Best Management Practices (BMPs).
9. Monitor overall impervious area within each coastal watershed.
10. Monitor transportation/land use coordination.
11. Monitor the support structure for economic development.
12. Monitor regional tourism statistics and impacts.
13. Monitor public access to water and public access strategies.
14. Monitor conditions (access, beach erosion, public health advisories, etc.) of three main public beaches (Tybee, St. Simons, and Jekyll).
15. Review local building codes for compliance with State building codes.
16. Monitor local government activities for compliance with Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.
17. Coordinate with and assist local governments to establish development impact fees.
18. Investigate potential for establishment of Transfer of Development Rights programs.



---

## Incentives and Remedial Actions

It is intended that the CRC will implement this Plan through a coordinative, incentive-based approach that involves working with local governments and other partners in the region to encourage them to adopt recommended best practices and to gradually bring their activities and decisions into greater consistency with the vision and guiding principles of this Plan.

The tools the Commission will use for this coordinative, incentive-based approach are:

1. The performance standards, listed in the Regional Issues section of this Plan, and repeated in the Appendix. These standards establish two achievement thresholds a One (1) Point Performance Standard or a Two (2) Point Performance Standard. These Standards should be considered by all organizations in the Coastal Region, including the CRC, State and federal agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations, developers and other coastal stakeholders. The One (1) Point Standard should be viewed as the equivalent of a prerequisite, in that all local governments and other partners in the region are expected to implement all of the identified practices for this threshold. The Two (2) Points Standard is more flexible. Although implementation of all practices identified for this threshold is certainly encouraged, local governments and other partners may select from this list those practices they will implement.
2. The incentives and remedial actions are identified in the table on the following page. The remedial actions may be employed by the CRC whenever a local government or other partners fall below the Minimum ranking, while the incentives are available only to those who achieve the Excellence ranking.

The CRC will use a streamlined assessment process to periodically evaluate whether a particular local government, agency, or developer has attained either Minimum ranking or an Excellence ranking. The CRC may then employ the appropriate remedial actions or technical assistance to encourage attainment of these thresholds.



# Incentives and Remedial Actions

	INCENTIVES (If meet or exceed for Excellence Ranking)	REMEDIAL ACTIONS (If fall below Minimum Ranking)
For Local Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Exclusive access to Regional Stewards grant program administered by DCA.</li> <li>☆ Planning for a Sustainable Coastal (PSC) grant program for small area planning in critical areas defined by the CRC.</li> <li>☆ Preferential access or bonus points for State grant and loan programs.</li> <li>☆ Preferred location for new State facilities.</li> <li>☆ Expedited State permitting and approvals.</li> <li>☆ Recognition as Regional Steward at CRC's bi-annual Awards Dinner.</li> </ul>	<p>0-2 YEARS—During the first two years of falling below Minimum Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Intensive technical assistance provided by CRC staff (developing new ordinances, upgrading enforcement processes and staffing, etc.)</li> <li>✗ Semi-annual report of progress submitted to CRC's Council.</li> <li>✗ Annual Quality Growth Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> <li>✗ CRC training program on <i>How to Act Consistently with the Regional Plan</i>.</li> </ul> <p>2-3 YEARS—More than two years of falling below Minimum Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ CRC reviews all local development decisions.</li> <li>✗ Loss of Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.</li> </ul>
For Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Expedited review of DRIs.</li> <li>☆ Recognition as Regional Steward (and presentation of award at CRC's bi-annual Awards Dinner).</li> <li>☆ Recognition for individual development projects as Regional Developments of Excellence.</li> <li>☆ To qualify for above, must earn a grade of "A" or better on bi-annual Quality Growth Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> <li>✗ CRC training program on <i>How to Act Consistently with the Regional Plan</i>.</li> <li>✗ Listing on CRC's <i>Developers Not Certified for Acting Consistently with the Regional Plan</i> register.</li> <li>✗ Triggered by earning a grade lower than "C" on bi-annual Quality Growth Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> </ul>
For State and Federal Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Recognition as Regional Steward (and presentation of award at CRC's bi-annual Awards Dinner).</li> <li>☆ To qualify for above, must earn a grade of "A" or better on bi-annual Quality Growth Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> <li>✗ CRC staff meet with key agency staff at least annually to encourage greater consistency with Plan.</li> <li>✗ CRC training program on <i>How to Act Consistently with the Regional Plan</i>.</li> <li>✗ Listing on CRC's <i>Agencies Not Certified for Acting Consistently with the Regional Plan</i> register.</li> <li>✗ Above triggered by earning a grade lower than "C" on bi-annual Quality Growth Effectiveness Audit by CRC staff.</li> </ul>



---

## Guidance for Developments of Regional Impact

It is recommended that the Council of the CRC adopt the following additional provisions for the review and processing of Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) within the Coastal Region.

### *Predictability:*

1. CRC to set specific regional performance criteria for DRIs, based on environmental or cultural resource protection, economic development, road and utility infrastructure needs, service levels, capacity, etc. These will be published and shared with developers throughout the region, so they will know in advance how their developments will be evaluated, and hopefully will design projects accordingly to minimize delays and issues in the review process.
2. CRC to conduct pre-review meetings with developers proposing a project that would qualify as a DRI (and affected local government, where appropriate) to explain review process, information requirements, and deadlines. This will save time and avoid misunderstandings during the actual DRI review process.

### *Coordination:*

3. CRC to enter into agreements with local governments in the region to “dovetail” the local review process with DRI review. This will minimize duplication of review efforts and reduce timing overlaps in the local and regional review processes, thereby shortening overall time required for development approvals.
4. CRC to require local governments to have an affirmative vote of a “Super-Majority” (3/4 of members) of the City Council or County Commission in order to approve a DRI project that received a negative review finding from the CRC.

### *Capacity:*

5. CRC must have adequate staff to conduct substantive reviews of DRI projects. If local governments and others are going to rely on the accuracy and completeness of CRC’s DRI findings, staff expertise will need to be adequate for this critical function.

### *Special Projects:*

6. CRC may establish additional regional performance criteria, and factor these into the review process and its findings, for:
  - a) “Mega-projects” – exceptionally large projects, such as planned communities or Infrastructure Development Districts (IDD) that far exceed the applicable DRI thresholds (thresholds to be established by the CRC).
  - b) Projects located in special environmental, cultural and historic “impact areas” as defined in the Regionally Important Resource plan to be prepared by the CRC.



---

*Incentives:*

7. Establish a "Development of Excellence" recognition award program for outstanding developments selected by the CRC during the DRI review process.
8. Have an expedited (less than 45-days) review option for projects identified in the pre-review meeting as either:
  - a) Of critical economic importance to the region (thresholds/criteria for this to be established by the CRC in consultation with DEcD)
  - b) Already reflecting desired characteristic for new developments in the region (per regional performance criteria discussed above)
  - c) Exceptionally well prepared, with most required information for the DRI review already available.

*Follow-thru:*

9. CRC to work with local governments in the region to establish use of development agreements between the local government and the developer that require mitigation measures or project changes identified in the DRI review finding.
10. CRC to work with developers in the region to provide periodic and final Evaluation and Appraisal Report for their DRI projects.
11. CRC to monitor outcome of DRI projects (were projects modified in response to review findings? Which developers have best track record for complying with DRI recommendations? etc.) and use this information to identify needed changes in the regional DRI process.



---

## EVALUATION AND MONITORING



---

## Evaluation and Monitoring

In order to ensure that the Plan is accomplishing the desired results, the CRC shall periodically monitor critical activities in the region. Specific monitoring activities will include:

- Annual Quality Growth Effectiveness audits of each local government in the region, to determine if they are achieving prescribed performance standards.
- Monitor local government activities for compliance with the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria.
- Monitor local government rezonings, subdivision approvals, DRIs, and ordinance changes for consistency with the Plan.
- Monitor local government effectiveness at enforcing their land use regulations.
- Review local building codes for consistency with the State building code.
- Monitor developers and the projects built in the region to determine if they are employing recommended Best Management Practices.
- Monitor federal and State agencies plans and activities for consistency with the Plan.
- Monitor change in overall impervious area within each Coastal watershed.
- Monitor the effectiveness of water quality monitoring activities throughout the region.
- Monitor all major transportation projects in the region.
- Monitor transportation and land use coordination throughout the region.
- Monitor the support structure for economic development in the region.
- Monitor regional tourism statistics and impacts.
- Monitor changes in public access to water resources in the region and the overall effectiveness of the public access strategies employed in the region.
- Monitor conditions (access, beach erosion, public health advisories, etc.) of the major public beaches in the region.



- 
- Monitor historic preservation ordinances for consistency with the State Historic Preservation Act.
  - Monitor the demolition/loss of historic and cultural resources.

Where these monitoring activities uncover deficiencies or failures to accomplish outcomes anticipated in the Plan, it is expected that the CRC take appropriate action to modify the Plan or employ appropriate remedial actions or incentives to encourage affected parties to improve their performance.

## APPENDIX

-  Background
-  Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes
-  Performance Standards
-  Suggested Process for Expanding Coastal Comprehensive Plan to Encompass a Larger Region
-  Glossary, List of Acronyms, List of References

## Background

The Governor's Executive Order, signed in February 2005, called for a comprehensive plan for coastal Georgia. This was the result of recommendations from the Commission for a New Georgia (CNG).

The CNG is a non-profit corporation led by CEOs and senior executives from all parts of Georgia and was established in 2003 by Governor Sonny Perdue. Their mission is to bring breakthrough thinking and a fresh perspective to ways State government can better manage its assets and services and map its strategic future.

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, the following facts were determined regarding the coast of Georgia:

- The Coastal Region of Georgia is the second fastest growing region in the State. This region has abundant and valuable natural resources that continue to attract new residents and tourists to the region.
- The tourism and outdoor recreation business industries in the Coastal Georgia region are major economic generators providing in excess of 40,000 jobs within the Coastal Region.
- The natural resources of the Coastal Region are vulnerable to degradation and depletion from new development if they are not wisely managed.
- The current Coastal Management Program prepared by DNR-CRD primarily provides a regulatory framework for guiding development in the Coastal Georgia region but does not include sufficient input from affected industries, State agencies or other stakeholders.
- There is a need to build upon the Coastal Management Program and to broaden its scope to create a fully integrated multi-agency Comprehensive Plan for sustainable economic development without compromising the natural appeal that attracts coastal visitors.
- A healthy coastal area ensures a lively and sustainable coastal tourism industry and economy and also provides a high quality of life for coastal residents.



The project was launched in August 2005 by DCA. The DCA appointed a broad-based advisory committee. This committee is known as the Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CCPAC). It included 35 members consisting of:

- Stakeholders from Georgia's six coastal counties – Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Glynn, Liberty and McIntosh.
- Four State agencies represented on the committee: DCA, DEcD, DNR, and DOT.
- DCA Commissioner Beatty served as chair.



The CCPAC's objectives included:

- Define broad vision for the Coast
- Identify most important issues and opportunities facing the Coastal Region
- Learn from experiences of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
- Learn about Coastal Sound Science Initiative
- Provide direction on specific plan components and implementation options



## Components of the Coastal Comprehensive Plan

### *Regional Assessment:*

The purpose of the *Regional Assessment* is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the Plan is built. Preparation of the *Regional Assessment* is largely a staff or professional function of collecting and analyzing data and information about the region and presenting the results in a concise, easily understood format, such as an executive summary, for consideration by the public and decision-makers involved in subsequent development of the *Regional Agenda*.

### *Stakeholder Involvement Program:*

The purpose of the *Stakeholder Involvement Program* is to ensure that the Plan reflects the full range of regional values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the Plan.

### *Regional Agenda:*

The Agenda contains the overall vision, guiding principles, implementation strategies, performance standards and the evaluation and monitoring components. This broad-based participation in developing the *Regional Agenda* will also help ensure that it will be implemented,



---

because many in the region are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.

### **The Planning Process**

During the early part of the planning process, several tasks were identified as critical to the planning process. The tasks identified included:

#### *Task 1: Stakeholder Involvement*

Stakeholder and public involvement is a critical element in the comprehensive planning process. This task will ensure the full range of community values and desires are reflected throughout the process and will include a diverse spectrum of stakeholders. This task will be based on the tools recommended by DCA and the Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CCPAC). The Stakeholder Involvement Program provides detailed components regarding outreach activities conducted throughout the planning process. To find out more about the public's involvement in the development of this Plan, see the Stakeholder Involvement Program.

#### *Task 2: Alternative Development Scenarios*

The baseline conditions throughout the region were established and provided the foundation for the development of the future alternative development scenarios. Three future scenarios for the six-county Coastal Region were developed based on: the projection of existing conditions; the projection of growth based on existing local regulations and ordinances; quality growth principles as defined by DCA in conjunction with the project team. To find out more about this, see the Assessment portion of the Plan.

#### *Task 3: Assessment of Local Government Regulations*

Regulations and ordinances from each of the local governments were reviewed and analyzed. A smart growth audit was developed in coordination with DCA through the completion of a survey by local governments. To find out more about the results of this audit, see the Assessment portion of the Plan.



---

## Anticipated Benefits and Outcomes

- More orderly and rational development patterns, so that the region remains physically attractive while preserving important natural and historic resources.
- Better climate for business, due to predictability of development requirements and assurance that quality of life will be maintained. Quality of life is a big location decision factor for business. Research shows that perceived decline in quality of life leads to lower retention of skilled workers.
- Increased ability to attract tourists, new residents, and to retain a good workforce, as the region remains an attractive, vibrant, economically and environmentally healthy place to visit, and to live.
- Reduced opposition to development from slow-growth advocates, due to assurance that regional quality of life will be maintained and critical natural and historic resources will be protected.
- Support for local officials for implementing best practices, without intruding on home rule.
- More respected and effective regional planning organization.
- Greater opportunity for the region to invest its money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, water and wastewater, schools, parks, and other facilities needed to sustain growth and the high quality of life. This Plan will provide greater certainty of:
  - Where development will occur
  - What it will be like
  - When it will happen
  - How the costs of development will be met
- Net cost savings to local governments from more efficient use of land. Studies show that sprawling development costs government in terms of provision of public services like water and wastewater, emergency services, and transportation. Research by the Real Estate Research Corporation shows that compact growth can be as much as 70 percent cheaper than dispersed growth patterns.
- New cost savings to developers due to predictability of development regulations region-wide.
- Improved communication and information sharing among regional stakeholders, including local government officials, which should generate opportunities for cooperative efforts, avoiding duplication, and shared projects.



- More likelihood of achieving the social and economic development that regional stakeholders want, such as:
  - More affordable housing
  - Appropriate businesses attracted to the region
  - Improved educational opportunities
  - Wider range of employment options for regional workforce
  - Regional cooperation and shared solutions
  - Protecting important local resources and open space
  - Creating and maintaining a sense of place
- Reduced costs and effects of environmental degradation. For example, implementing the best practices called for in the Plan will lead to less stormwater runoff into streams to pollute State waters and less traffic congestion to pollute the air.
- Public Health Benefits. Research by EPA and also underway now at the Centers for Disease Control and at Boston University's School of Public Health is expected to demonstrate that better development patterns improve health of community residents (e.g., reduced obesity, heart disease, diabetes).
- Recognition for Georgia and the Governor. The Plan is likely to win national recognition due to:
  - Its innovative new approach to balancing economic development with environmental protection.
  - Unique involvement of broad spectrum of regional stakeholders (business community working with local governments, etc.) in developing the Plan.
  - Using incentives rather than regulations to get the job done.
- THE ALTERNATIVE - Negative consequences that are likely to continue in the absence of a Plan:
  - Sprawling development
  - Incompatible land uses adjacent to each other
  - No sense of place
  - Deteriorating quality of life
  - Disconnected development patterns
  - Local governments struggling to keep up with development in providing public services and infrastructure
  - Traffic congestion
  - Damage to environmental and natural resources
  - Permanent loss of history, information and identity through the irreplaceable loss of historic and cultural resources.



# Performance Standards

Infrastructure: Water & Wastewater	
<p>To achieve minimum ranking requirements for Water &amp; Wastewater Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of seven (7) points. To achieve excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of twelve (12) points.</p>	
Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<p>Local government land development/redevelopment ordinances and standards must include and be consistent with the following standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discourage the use of individual lot septic systems for developments that exceed a one dwelling unit per acre density threshold.</li> <li>2. Require connections to public or community water and wastewater treatment systems when it is available or nearby.</li> <li>3. Require the use of best available technology for individual or community wastewater treatment systems when public wastewater treatment is unavailable.</li> <li>4. Allow community water and wastewater treatment systems only when public systems are unavailable or cannot meet the needs of the development.</li> <li>5. Prohibit installation of new septic systems within 100 feet of any marsh or river and within 50 feet of any other State water body.</li> <li>6. Require all new public and community wastewater treatment systems to treat all wastewater to EPD re-use standards, and design approved distribution systems to utilize re-use water.</li> <li>7. Adopt a rate structure to promote water conservation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct and keep current an inventory of private wells and septic systems.</li> <li>2. Develop and implement a community well inspection and monitoring and water quality monitoring program.</li> <li>3. Require an analysis of the impacts of new community wells on the service delivery plan and strategy adopted as a part of the county-wide joint comprehensive plan. Evaluate the cumulative impact of community systems on public infrastructure investments.</li> <li>4. Require local governments adopt ordinances requiring a local maintenance and operation bond for all community water and wastewater treatment systems.</li> <li>5. Develop an inspection, maintenance and monitoring program for private septic systems.</li> <li>6. Adopt a groundwater recharge ordinance that addresses DNR's environmental criteria.</li> </ol>



Infrastructure: Stormwater	
To meet minimum ranking requirements for Stormwater Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of eight (8) points.	
Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<p>The community's local land development ordinances and standards must include and be consistent with the following standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require the use of the standards and techniques in the latest adopted Coastal Supplement to the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.</li> <li>2. Require the use of the Stormwater Quality Site Development Review Tool, which is a companion to the Georgia Stormwater Manual, or similar tool to review proposed development plans.</li> <li>3. Allow low impact development techniques to minimize the quantity and improve the quality of runoff.</li> <li>4. Require that new developments consider and accommodate upstream stormwater runoff, and also consider and do not negatively impact downstream areas.</li> <li>5. Adopt a stormwater ordinance that limits discharge to pre-developed conditions for appropriate types and intensities of storms.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an inspection and maintenance program for public and private stormwater management systems.</li> <li>2. Adopt stormwater ordinances, above and beyond the minimum standards, appropriate to our coastal environment.</li> <li>3. Adopt standards or ordinances that provide incentives for developments that utilize low impact design, follow green growth guidelines, or follow other quality growth approaches.</li> <li>4. Adopt standards or ordinances that require developments to minimize the effective impervious area.</li> <li>5. Implement a stormwater utility.</li> </ol>



Infrastructure: Transportation

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Transportation Infrastructure, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require a comprehensive impact assessment for all developments that meet or exceed identified thresholds based on professionally identified sources, as established by ordinance of local governments.</li> <li>2. Require mitigation of significant transportation impacts from developments.</li> <li>3. Require the use of appropriate access management techniques for public roads and provide incentives for access management techniques for private roads.</li> <li>4. The transportation component and/or policies of the local comprehensive plan should strive to provide for multiuse corridors and address multi-modal transportation needs (including roadway, air, seaport, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and intracoastal) in coordination with existing plans. The comprehensive plan and policies should be consistent with the local and State transportation plans.</li> <li>5. Require identifying “build-out” corridor needs and a way to protect them from development encroachment.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require or provide incentives for provision of sidewalks and/or multipurpose paths for new developments.</li> <li>2. Provide sidewalks and/or multipurpose paths whenever the transportation network is constructed / reconstructed.</li> <li>3. Require or provide incentives for context sensitive design practices in road layouts for new development and redevelopment.</li> <li>4. Require or provide incentives for transportation connections between developments.</li> <li>5. Encourage or provide incentives for transit-oriented development in areas currently served or with the potential to be served by transit in the future.</li> <li>6. Make local transportation improvements consistent with all existing bicycle and pedestrian plans.</li> <li>7. Adopt and implement an ordinance requiring dedicated funding to properly classify, inventory, and maintain public roads to maintain public capacity to support new growth.</li> <li>8. Implementation of the Coastal Georgia Greenway.</li> </ol>



**Intrinsic Resources: Cultural & Historic Resources**

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Cultural & Historic Resources, one must obtain a total of four (4) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<p>Have a Comprehensive Plan that provides for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of a comprehensive inventory of cultural, archaeological and historic resources, as well as important cultural and historical viewsheds (as defined by each local government).</li> <li>2. Development of a process to evaluate cultural and historic resources identified in the Regionally Important Resources plan during the land development process.</li> <li>3. Adoption and implementation of an ordinance to require identification and evaluation of cultural and historic resources prior to development.</li> <li>4. Identification of cultural and historical resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Include these in the Regionally Important Resources plan.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A historic preservation ordinance under the Georgia Historic Preservation Act which establishes a Historic Preservation Commission and a process for designating local historic districts and properties.</li> <li>2. Restrict incompatible features from encroaching upon important cultural and historical viewsheds identified in the local comprehensive plan.</li> <li>3. Integrate Cultural and Historic Resources plans and treatment with heritage tourism plans.</li> <li>4. Integrate Cultural and Historic Resources plans and treatment with educational plans for students and citizens.</li> <li>5. Develop a comprehensive inventory of traditional ways of life and artistic crafts and skills.</li> <li>6. Integrate Cultural and Historic Resources plans and treatment with housing plans.</li> <li>7. Require mitigation/minimization measures for all cultural, archaeological, and historic resources damaged during the land development process.</li> <li>8. Provide incentives for listing as a local historic district or property.</li> <li>9. Incorporate the appropriate treatment of historic resources into the local disaster plan.</li> <li>10. Establish a process for preservation of historically and culturally significant properties</li> </ol>

for preservation.

11. Become a Certified Local Government by the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD) and the National Park Service.



Intrinsic Resources: Natural Resources

To meet minimum ranking requirements for Natural Resources, one must obtain a total of three (3) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.

Performance Standard =1 point	Performance Standard =2 points
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a comprehensive assessment and resource management plan which includes an inventory of significant natural resources and viewsheds (as defined by each local government) in the jurisdiction. This inventory should assess resource significance, with Regionally Important Resources ranked as most significant; the inventory should also include significant resources not in the Regionally Important Resources plan.</li> <li>2. Develop an ordinance consistent with the resource management plan to require examination of tracts prior to development; this examination would identify and evaluate impact to significant natural resources (including habitats) and viewsheds.</li> <li>3. Provide all developers a statement of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Coastal Development.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement a program for public and private acquisition and conservation easements in natural resource areas of special significance.</li> <li>2. Adopt and implement a tree ordinance (with appropriate consideration of silvaculture).</li> <li>3. Provide incentives for shared docks for all new residential development.</li> <li>4. Adopt local ordinances above and beyond established DNR regulations.</li> <li>5. Protect any previously undisturbed marsh hammocks as identified in the natural resource plan.</li> <li>6. Require or provide incentives for use of best management practices for any timber, agriculture, and/or extractive activities.</li> <li>7. Require or provide incentives for new development to conserve and protect as open space at least 30 percent of each development, through cluster or similar development approaches. (Assign points related to the type and amount of conservation area and protection of open space).</li> <li>8. Require or provide incentives for new developments/redevelopments to pursue certification for “green” site planning, construction, and post-construction practices.</li> <li>9. Require the design of all new structures bordering marshes to minimize their visual presence as viewed from the marsh.</li> </ol>

10. Require or provide incentives for maintenance or restoration of at minimum a 50 foot natural vegetative buffer on all properties bordering coastal marshlands.
11. Provide a plan for public access to water.



Regional Growth Management	
<p>To meet minimum ranking requirements for Regional Growth Management, one must obtain a total of five (5) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.</p>	
Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<p>Local government comprehensive plans must include and be consistent with the following standards:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be developed jointly with all of the other local governments within the limits of the county (deadline to be established).</li> <li>2. Define the growth boundaries of each local government that include and define the types and limits of all service delivery, per Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) regulations.</li> <li>3. Define the character areas within each local government growth boundaries on a FDM consistent with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Developed:</i> Areas that have already transitioned to an urbanized or dense rural pattern.</li> <li>• <i>Developing:</i> Areas that are currently undeveloped or sparsely developed, but that are likely to become developed over the next 20 years. Generally these areas should be contained within a defined growth boundary.</li> <li>• <i>Rural or Low Density:</i> Areas generally outside of a defined growth boundary. This includes areas where the community desires to preserve and protect</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt and implement an ordinance that requires a fiscal impact analysis on public costs and revenues for large scale developments.</li> <li>2. Adopt and implement an ordinance that requires an environmental impact analysis for large scale developments.</li> <li>3. Adopt and implement an impact fee ordinance in accordance with State law.</li> <li>4. Include density bonuses and other incentives in ordinances that direct developments to those areas that can be efficiently served by existing or new infrastructure.</li> <li>5. Adopt and implement architectural and design overlay ordinances for important gateways, corridors, and center city areas.</li> <li>6. Adopt ordinances that allow clustering of development that protects valuable open space, natural resources, and wildlife habitat.</li> <li>7. Adopt ordinances that encourage developers to permanently protect valuable resources or habitat areas.</li> <li>8. Adopt ordinances that allow for innovative development while protecting the sense of place as well as natural and cultural resources.</li> <li>9. Develop and implement a program that</li> </ol>

<p>the rural character, as well as provide areas for very low density developments or all forms of agriculture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Conservation:</i> Areas that are designated to be protected from new development, such as environmentally sensitive areas, historic districts, or important cultural areas.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Be reviewed annually and updated if needed by a defined reporting date to be established by the CRC.</li> <li>5. In developing its FDM, local governments must identify potential impacts and include a summary of efforts to coordinate development(s) planned for areas bordering other counties. Coordinate with adjacent counties when growth boundaries are adjacent to another county or extend into the adjacent county's jurisdiction—with CRC coordination (potentially through DRI review).</li> </ol>	<p>encourages use of the recommended BMPs (includes incentives) in all new developments/redevelopment (see <a href="http://www.georgiaplanning.com/coastal/BMP/default.htm">http://www.georgiaplanning.com/coastal/BMP/default.htm</a>).</p>
---	--



Economic Development: Business & Industry	
To meet minimum ranking requirements for Business & Industry, one must obtain a total of six (6) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of ten (10) points.	
Performance Standard = 1 point	Point Standard = 2 points
<p>Develop an Economic Development plan at the county level that provides:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A written inventory of the strategic assets--educational, natural, healthcare, military, types of businesses, etc.--which are important to the local economy.</li> <li>2. Strategies based on inventory lists.</li> <li>3. Strategies to develop and market assets.</li> <li>4. A current inventory of available sites and buildings suitable for the development of manufacturing, distribution, office and other businesses, including, if any, film locations, etc., that do not fit into the norm.</li> <li>5. Coordination among appropriate local agencies for economic development.</li> <li>6. Support for downtown efforts.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue participation in the Department of Economic Development (DEcD) Entrepreneur Friendly Community Initiative.</li> <li>2. Implement a local economic development/strategic business plan. Consider all options: tourism, film, small business, manufacturing, etc.</li> <li>3. Develop a specific plan for marketing local strategic businesses. Share the plan with the DEcD and other economic development partners so they know what the community is seeking.</li> <li>4. Provide linkage among cultural tourism/artisans and small businesses.</li> <li>5. Encourage new local businesses that are unique to the coast</li> <li>6. Collaborate between agencies and coordinate city and county plans.</li> <li>7. Coordinate and integrate on a regional basis.</li> </ol>



Economic Development: Tourism	
To meet minimum ranking requirements for Tourism, one must obtain a total of three (3) points. To meet excellence ranking requirements one must obtain a total of eight (8) points.	
Performance Standard = 1 point	Performance Standard = 2 points
<p>Local governments with a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) shall develop a tourism promotion plan for the community, as appropriate, and/or a Tourism product Development plan that provides:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inventory of the natural, historic, cultural and recreational resource areas that are important for local tourism as well as identify sites for tourism operations.</li> <li>2. Strategies to enhance the above resources for tourism use as appropriate.</li> <li>3. Coordinate among appropriate local agencies for product development and enhancement.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt and implement a sign control ordinance and a way-finding (directional signs) system to attractions/events.</li> <li>2. Adopt and implement community appearance ordinances (for landscaping, litter control, design control, cleanup of dilapidated properties, corridor management, etc.).</li> <li>3. Develop a list of the types of businesses that are suitable for locating near and supporting natural and cultural tourism resources and then develop a program that supports those sorts of businesses.</li> <li>4. Monitor public access to the water and other important tourism resources, and implement strategies for enhancing public access while protecting the resources.</li> <li>5. Incorporate tourism product development and tourism promotion ideas into local businesses to develop products that give communities unique items/mementoes from their area.</li> <li>6. Include regional assets in local/smaller tourism promotional materials to attract more visitors to smaller sites. Cross-sell the region.</li> <li>7. Monitor return on investment for tourism programs.</li> <li>8. Implementation of the Coastal Georgia Greenway.</li> </ol>



---

## Suggested Process for Expanding the Coastal Comprehensive Plan to Cover a Larger Region

The CRC would start out implementing the Plan as currently written for the six coastal counties only.

Once it is decided to expand the Plan to include a larger region:

- 1) The CRC's Board structure (the Council) would be expanded to include representation from areas to be added, using same membership formulas for composition as were used to form the initial Council (i.e., one elected official from each county, etc.).
- 2) This expanded Council would have two parallel responsibilities:
  - a. Ongoing implementation of the initial Plan in the six Coastal Counties.
  - b. Appointment of stakeholder advisory committee from new counties to advise staff as new material is gathered for inclusion in the Plan (similar to CCPAC).
  - c. Revising the existing Plan to encompass the larger region. It is anticipated that this process will not change the basic structure of the Plan, but particular content may be reviewed item-by-item and adjusted as needed to fit the differing development patterns and issues for an expanded region.
- 3) Once expanded Plan is completed and adopted by the Council, the Commission would proceed to implement and maintain this Plan for the larger region.



---

## Glossary

The Coastal Comprehensive Plan contains three components: the Agenda, the Assessment, and the Community Participation Plan. This glossary contains words that are found within all three plan components.

**Access Management:** Involves providing (or managing) access to land development while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed.

**Activity Center:** An area containing a planned or existing cluster of related land use activities, including but not limited to commercial, industrial, and tourist/recreational activities.

**Affordable Housing:** The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development defines “affordable” housing as housing that costs no more than 30% of the average local household income.

**Aquifer:** An underground formation, or group of formations, or part of a formation, that is permeable enough to transmit and store usable quantities of water, and is often used as a source for drinking water.

**Barrier Islands:** A long broad sandy island lying parallel to a shore that is built up by the action of waves, currents, and winds and that protects the shore from the effects of the ocean.

**Bedroom Community:** An urban community that is primarily residential, from which most of the workforce commute out of the community to earn their livelihood. Most commuter towns are suburbs of a nearby metropolis that workers travel to daily, and many suburbs are commuter towns.

**Best Management Practices (BMP):** Refers to the practice considered most effective to achieve a specific desired result for protection of water, air and land and to control the release of toxins.

**Buffer:** Any structure, earthen berm, or vegetated open space used to minimize the adverse impact of on-site activities and uses to surrounding less intense land uses.

**Built Environment:** The urban environment consisting of buildings, roads, fixtures, parks, and all other improvements that form the physical character of a city.

**Certified Local Government (CLG):** The CLG program extends the federal and State preservation partnership to the local level. Any local government that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance, enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission, and



---

has met the appropriate requirements is eligible to become a CLG. The Georgia CLG program is housed at the Center for Community Design & Preservation at the University of Georgia, under a partnership with HPD.

Cities and Counties with Historic Preservation Ordinances (including CLG):

[http://www.gashpo.org/Assets/Documents/HPO\\_List\\_Aug07.pdf](http://www.gashpo.org/Assets/Documents/HPO_List_Aug07.pdf)

CLG page at the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office: [www.gashpo.org](http://www.gashpo.org)

Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions: [www.uga.edu/gapc](http://www.uga.edu/gapc)

CLG page at the National Park Service: [www2.cr.nps.gov/clg](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/clg) and "Working on the Past in Local Historic Districts": [www2.cr.nps.gov/workingonthepast/index.htm](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/workingonthepast/index.htm)

**Character Area:** A planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision. A specific geographic area within the community with:

- A unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown,
- A historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- The potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future
- Development through adequate planning and implementation (such as strip commercial corridors that could be revitalized into a more attractive village development pattern); or
- Unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc) requiring special attention.

**Cluster Development:** A combining or arranging together in general groupings of attached or detached dwelling units and accessory structures in several clusters separated from each other by yards and common use spaces.

**Coastal Marshlands:** (Also 'marshlands') Any marshland intertidal area, mud flat, tidal water bottom, or salt marsh in the State of Georgia within the estuarine area of the State, whether or not the tidewaters reach the littoral areas through natural or artificial watercourses. 'Vegetated marshlands' shall include those areas upon which grow one, but not necessarily all, of the following: salt marsh grass (*Spartina alterniflora*), black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*), saltmeadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), big cordgrass (*Spartina cynosuroides*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), coast dropseed (*Sporobolus virginicus*), bigelow glasswort (*Salicornia bigelovii*), woody glasswort (*Salicornia virginica*), saltwort (*Batis maritima*), sea lavender (*Limonium nashii*), sea oxeye (*Borrichia frutescens*), silverling (*Baccharis halimifolia*), false willow (*Baccharis angustifolia*), and high-tide bush (*Iva frutescens*). The occurrence and extent of salt marsh peat at the undisturbed surface shall be deemed to be conclusive evidence of the extent of a salt marsh or a part thereof (See Coastal Marshland Protection Act, OCGA §12-5-282(3), Definitions).



---

**Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA):** National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides funding for implementation and sets standards (including prevention of non-point source pollution) for states to comply with when they develop a plan to protect their coastal areas.

**Conservation Easement:** Conservation easements are voluntary, legally binding agreements for landowners that limit parcels of land or pieces of property to certain uses. Land under conservation easements remains privately owned and most easements are permanent.

**Conservation Subdivision:** Residential areas where at least half of the area is designated as open or green space.

**Context Sensitive Design:** A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSD is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.

**Cultural Resources or Heritage Assets:** Archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, landscapes, and objects are the fabric of our national heritage. Collectively known as cultural resources (or sometimes heritage assets), they are our tangible links with the past.

**Density:** An objective measurement of the number of people or residential units allowed per unit of land, such as dwelling units per acre.

**Density Bonus:** Allows developers to build in specified areas densities that are higher than normally allowed.

**Development Impact Fees:** In 1990, the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act (DIFA) was enacted into law. Impact fees are one-time fees charged to land developers to help defray the costs of expanding capital facilities to serve new growth. DIFA enables local governments to charge new development for a proportionate share of infrastructure capacity it requires. However, the Act places restrictions on the categories of capital facilities for which new development can be charged. It also establishes rules under which impact fees must be calculated, collected, expended, accounted for and administered.

**Developments of Regional Impact (DRI):** Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) are large-scale developments that are likely to have regional effects beyond the local government jurisdiction in which they are located.

**Earthcraft Communities:** A green building program created in 1999 that serves as a blueprint for healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility bills and protect the environment. EarthCraft



---

House is a partnership between the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association, Southface, government and industry partners ([http://www.southface.org/web/resources&services/publications/journal/sfjv106/sfjv106\\_ech-communities.htm](http://www.southface.org/web/resources&services/publications/journal/sfjv106/sfjv106_ech-communities.htm)).

**Easements:** Interest in land owned by another that entitles its holder to a specific limited use or enjoyment of said land.

**Ecosystem:** The species and natural communities of a specific location interacting with one another and with the physical environment.

**Energy Star products:** The ENERGY STAR® Label is the national symbol for energy efficiency, developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The ENERGY STAR label assists consumers with identifying major household appliances as well as many other consumer products that are more energy efficient than comparable products in the market place.

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):** An assessment of the likely positive and/or negative influence a project may have on the environment. It is the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that decision-makers consider environmental impacts before deciding whether to proceed with new projects.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):** A document that must be filed when the [federal government](#) takes a "major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment." The law requiring this is the [National Environmental Policy Act](#).

**Environmentally Sensitive Areas:** Environmentally sensitive areas include habitats with endangered species, wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, undeveloped barrier islands, steep slopes and wildlife habitat larger than ten acres. (O.C.G.A 48-5-7.4)

**Estuaries:** A water body where salt and fresh water meet resulting in brackish water. These areas usually have associated marshlands and are critical nursery and feeding habitat for a variety of marine species.

**Fauna:** Animal life that is occurring or living naturally in a particular area of environment; native.

**Flora:** Plant life that is occurring or living naturally in a particular area of environment; native.

**Floridan Aquifer:** The Floridan aquifer system is one of the most productive aquifers in the world. This aquifer system underlies an area of about 100,000 square miles in southern

---

Alabama, southeastern Georgia, southern South Carolina, and all of Florida ([fig. 48](#)). The Floridan aquifer system provides water for several large cities, including Savannah and Brunswick in Georgia; and Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Orlando, and St. Petersburg in Florida. In addition, the aquifer system provides water for hundreds of thousands of people in smaller communities and rural areas. Locally, the Floridan is intensively pumped for industrial and irrigation supplies.

**Form-based codes:** A form-based code is a land development regulatory tool that places primary emphasis on the physical form of the built environment with the end goal of producing a specific type of “place” rather than “use.” Form-based codes place a primary emphasis on building type, dimensions, parking location and façade features, and less emphasis on uses. They stress the appearance of the streetscape, or public realm, over long lists of different use types.

**Future Development Map:** A map showing major character areas, prepared during Comprehensive Planning process. Includes Character Areas identified in the Community Assessment, but adjusted to reflect stakeholder perspectives about desired future development patterns. Accompanied by carefully defined visions for each character area.

**Gateway:** Something that serves as an entrance or means of access.

**Georgia Ports Authority (GPA):** Operates terminals in Savannah and Brunswick, and facilitates global trade through strategic U.S. East Coast gateways.

**Green Building:** Environmentally-sensitive design and construction practices which conserve natural resources such as energy, building materials, water, soil and air quality, producing broad economic, community and environmental benefits.

**Green Growth Guidelines:** *Green Growth Guidelines* were developed for the Coastal Management Program of DNR-CRD. The document outlines the environmental, social, and economic benefits from use of low impact development strategies when compared to today’s conventional development approach.

**Green Infrastructure:** A strategically planned and managed network of parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for communities and people.

**Greenfield:** A project planned for an undeveloped area outside the existing urban fabric. See Infill Development.



---

**Greenspace:** Areas left relatively natural and undeveloped in urban and suburban settings.

**Greenway:** A linear open space; a corridor composed of natural or native vegetation. Greenways can be used to create connected networks of open or greenspace that include traditional parks and natural areas.

**Greywater:** Non-industrial wastewater generated from domestic processes such as mechanically washing dishes, laundry and bathing.

**Greyfields:** Abandoned, obsolete, or underutilized and previously-developed properties, such as regional shopping malls and strip retail developments.

**Growth Management:** A term that encompasses a whole range of policies designed to control, guide, or mitigate the effects of growth.

**Groundwater:** Water beneath the surface of the ground, whether or not flowing through known and definite channels.

**Groundwater Recharge Areas:** Any portion of the earth's surface, where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer.

**Habitat:** The living environment of a species, that provides whatever that species needs for its survival, such as nutrients, water and living space.

**Hammocks:** A hammock is a back-barrier island, which is an island (tract of land) located between the landward boundary of the barrier island complexes and the mainland, of elevation higher than the surrounding marshlands, and generally vegetated with trees and shrub-scrub habitat. Hammocks are sensitive environmental communities.

**Heritage Asset:** Heritage assets are plant, property, and equipment (PP&E) that are unique because of their historic or natural significance, cultural, educational or artistic importance, or significant architectural-characteristics. Heritage assets are expected to be preserved indefinitely.

**Historic Area:** An area or building in which historic events occurred, or one which has special value due to architectural or cultural features relating to the heritage of the community. Elements in historic areas have significance that necessitates preservation or conservation.

**Historic Districts:** A historic district in the United States is a group of buildings, properties or sites that have been designated by one of several entities on different levels as historically or architecturally significant. Buildings, structures, objects and sites within a historic district are



---

normally divided into two categories, contributing and non-contributing. Districts greatly vary in size, some having hundreds of structures while others have just a few.

**Historic Preservation:** Includes identification, evaluation, recordation, documentation, curation, acquisition, protection, management, rehabilitation, restoration, stabilization, maintenance, research, interpretation, conservation, and education and training regarding the foregoing activities, or any combination of the foregoing activities.

**Historic Preservation Division (HPD)**

The Historic Preservation Division works in partnership with federal and State agencies, local governments, preservation organizations, community groups and individuals to achieve a greater appreciation and use of historic resources in the context of everyday life. Working at the State level, the Historic Preservation Division helps bring together national, regional and local interests to support community and economic development throughout Georgia. Georgia's preservation program encourages regional and local planning, neighborhood conservation, downtown revitalization, economic development, heritage tourism and archaeological site protection. <http://www.gashpo.org>

**Hydrology:** Is the study of the movement, distribution, and quality of water throughout the Earth, and thus addresses both the hydrologic cycle and water resources. A practitioner of hydrology is a hydrologist, working within the fields of earth or environmental science, physical geography or civil and environmental engineering.

**Infrastructure Development District (IDD):** Special self-taxing districts that would finance the construction and maintenance of infrastructure to support new development projects. Pending passage of Referendum on November 2008 election ballot.

**Impervious Surface:** Any surface through which rainfall cannot pass or be effectively absorbed. (Roads, buildings, paved parking lots, sidewalks and other areas of concrete, asphalt, compacted clay or other similar surfaces.)

**Infill Development:** Development of vacant, "skipped-over" parcels of land in otherwise built areas. The reuse or change of use of a previously developed parcel or the intensification of use or change of use by remodeling or renovation of a structure.

**Infrastructure:** Those man-made structures which serve the common needs of the population, such as: sewage disposal systems; potable water systems; potable water wells serving a system; solid waste disposal sites or retention areas; stormwater systems; utilities; piers; docks; wharves; breakwaters; bulkheads; seawalls; bulwarks; revetments; causeways; marinas; navigation channels; bridges; bikeways; sidewalks; mass transit lines and roadways.

**Infrastructure Development District:** An area designated for new development wherein the developer agrees to provide all infrastructure needed to support the development. The cost of



---

providing this infrastructure is paid with bonds, repayable through special levy on each property owner who eventually resides in the district.

**Low Impact Development (LID):** Is an innovative stormwater management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source using uniformly distributed decentralized micro-scale controls. LID's goal is to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Techniques are based on the premise that stormwater management should not be seen as stormwater disposal. Instead of conveying and managing / treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located at the lot level. These landscape features, known as Integrated Management Practices (IMPs), are the building blocks of LID. Almost all components of the urban environment have the potential to serve as an IMP. This includes not only open space, but also rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and medians. LID is a versatile approach that can be applied equally well to new development, urban retrofits, and redevelopment / revitalization projects.

**Manufactured Home:** A dwelling unit constructed on or after June 15, 1976, in an off-site manufacturing facility for installation or assembly at the building site, with each section bearing a seal certifying that it is built in compliance with the Federal Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standard Act.

**Metropolitan Planning Organization:** A [transportation](#) policy-making organization made up of representatives from local [government](#) and transportation authorities. In 1962, the [United States Congress](#) passed legislation that required the formation of an MPO for any [Urbanized Area](#) (UZA) with a population greater than 50,000. Congress created MPOs in order to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive ("3-C") planning process. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this planning process. Statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes are governed by Federal law (23 USC 134 and 135). As of 2005, there are 385 MPOs in the U.S.

**Mixed-Use Development:** Projects that integrate different land uses such as retail stores, restaurants, residences, civic buildings, offices and parks within a defined area. Mixed use developments by definition have a minimum of 3 separate types of uses included in the development.

**Multi-Modal Transportation:** A transportation system that includes a number of different modes, or means, of transportation. These modes of transportation may be either motorized, (e.g., automobiles, buses, or airplanes) or non-motorized, (e.g., bicycles or walking.)



---

**Natural Environment:** The natural environment, commonly referred to simply as the environment, is a term that comprises all living and non-living things that occur naturally on Earth or some part of it.

**Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO):** A legally constituted organization created by private persons or organizations with no participation or representation of any government.

**Open Space:** Used to describe undeveloped land or land that is used for recreation. Farmland as well as all natural habitats (forests, fields, wetlands etc.) is lumped in this category. Typically, native vegetation has been altered for recreational or agricultural uses.

**Part V Environmental Planning Criteria:** 'Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria' means those standards and procedures with respect to natural resources, the environment, and vital areas of the State established and administered by the Department of Natural Resources pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8, including, but not limited to, criteria for the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, protected mountains and protected river corridors.

**Performance Zoning:** Establishes minimum criteria to be used when assessing whether a particular project is appropriate for a certain area; ensures that the end result adheres to an acceptable level of performance or compatibility. This type of zoning provides flexibility with the well-defined goals and rules found in conventional zoning.

**Permeable paving:** Also called pervious paving or porous pavement, is a term used to describe paving methods for roads, parking lots and walkways that allow the movement of water and air through the paving material. Although some porous paving materials appear nearly indistinguishable from nonporous materials, their environmental effects are qualitatively different. Their effects are important because pavements are two-thirds of the potentially impervious surface cover in urban areas (see [http://water.wikia.com/wiki/Permeable\\_paving](http://water.wikia.com/wiki/Permeable_paving)).

**Public Facilities:** Included but not limited to; facilities for transportation, wastewater treatment, solid waste, drainage, potable water, educational, parks and recreational, and health buildings or systems.

**Public transit:** Public transport, public transportation, public transit or mass transit comprises all transport systems in which the passengers do not travel in their own vehicles. While it is generally taken to include rail and bus services, wider definitions would include scheduled airline services, ferries, taxicab services etc. — any system that transports members of the general public. A further restriction that is sometimes applied is that it should take place in shared vehicles, which would exclude taxis that are not shared-ride taxis.

---

**Purple Pipe:** Reclaimed water is often distributed with a dual piping network that keeps reclaimed water pipes completely separate from potable water pipes. In the United States, reclaimed water is always distributed in lavender (light purple) pipes to distinguish it from potable water. In a basic sense, reclaimed water is treated effluent that is treated to a higher degree (depending on the location), instead of being discharged into a natural body of water, and is used for a broad range of practical purposes such as irrigation.

**Qualified Local Government:** A county or municipality that:

- Adopts and maintains a comprehensive plan in conformity with the local planning requirements;
- Establishes regulations consistent with its comprehensive plan and with the local planning requirements; and
- Does not fail to participate in the DCA's mediation or other means of resolving conflicts in a manner in which, in the judgment of the Department, reflects a good faith effort to resolve any conflict.

**Quality Growth:** Quality growth is an approach to growth management that promotes quality urban development and respects the freedom of Americans to choose where they live, their preferred style of housing and how they travel. Quality Growth favors improving the entire transportation network, rather than focusing resources primarily on a single component. Quality Growth measures include additional road capacity, better traffic signalization and more efficient transit.

**Quality Community Objectives:** Objectives that are recommended by DCA for adoption as guiding principles by communities that wish to return to a more traditional pattern of community growth and development.

- **Traditional Neighborhoods:** Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.
- **Infill Development:** Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.
- **Sense of Place:** Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.
- **Transportation Alternatives:** Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

- **Regional Identity:** Regions should promote and preserve an “identity,” defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.
- **Growth Preparedness:** Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater treatment and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.
- **Appropriate Businesses:** The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.
- **Employment Options:** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.
- **Regional Solutions:** Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.
- **Housing Opportunities:** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.
- **Heritage Preservation:** The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community’s character.
- **Open Space Preservation:** New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.
- **Environmental Protection:** Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.



---

**Regionally Important Resources (RIR):** A natural or historic resource, designated by DCA, that has boundaries extending beyond a single local government's jurisdiction, has value to a broader public constituency and which is vulnerable to the actions and activities of mankind.

**Scenic Byway:** Any designated highway, street, road or route which features certain resources (cultural, natural, archaeological, historical, and recreational) that should be protected or enhanced.

**Septic or Onsite Management Systems:** A sewage management system other than a public or community sewage treatment system serving one or more buildings, mobile homes, recreational vehicles, residences, or other facilities designed or used for human occupancy or congregation. Such term shall include, without limitation, conventional and chamber septic tank systems, privies, and experimental and alternative on-site management systems which are designed to be physically incapable of a surface discharge of effluent (per OCGA §290-5-26-.02(gg), as administered by the DHR-Coastal Health District).

**Septic Tank:** A septic tank, the key component of a septic system, is a small scale sewage treatment system common in areas with no connection to main wastewater treatment pipes provided by either the public or private sector.

**Service Delivery Strategy (SDS):** The intent is to provide a flexible framework for local governments and authorities to agree on service delivery arrangements; minimize any duplication or competition among local governments and authorities providing local services; and provide a method of resolving disputes among service providers regarding service delivery, funding equity and land use.

**Service Sector:** The service sector consists of the "soft" parts of the economy such as insurance, government, tourism, banking, retail, education, and social services.

**Silviculture:** The branch of forestry dealing with the development and care of forests and forest products.

**Southern Passages:** A collaborative effort among South Carolina, Georgia and northern Florida regional planning agencies to beckon interstate travelers to the cultural pleasures, historic treasures and natural beauty along Highway 17 and A1A, and their intersecting roads (See <http://www.southernpassages.com/>).

**Special Districts:** Geographic areas in which fees or taxes are collected to fund investments or services benefiting properties within the district.

**State Planning Recommendations:** The supplemental guidance provided by DCA to assist communities in preparing plans and addressing the local planning requirements. Plan preparers and the community must review these recommendations where referenced in the planning requirements, in order to determine their applicability or helpfulness to the community's plan.



---

**Stormwater Runoff:** The flow of water which results from, and which occurs immediately following, a rainfall event, which is often the carrier of pollutants into local waterways.

**Stormwater Management System:** The engineered features of the property which collect, convey, channel, hold, inhibit, or divert the movement of storm water.

**Stormwater Utility:** A stormwater utility is essentially a special assessment district set up to generate funding specifically for stormwater management. Users within the district pay a stormwater fee, and the revenue thus generated directly supports maintenance and upgrade of existing storm drain systems; development of drainage plans, flood control measures, and water-quality programs; administrative costs; and sometimes construction of major capital improvements.

**Sustainable Design:** The art of designing physical objects to comply with the principles of economic, social, and ecological sustainability.

**Sustainable Development:** Development with the goal of preserving environmental quality, natural resources and livability for present and future generations. Sustainable initiatives work to ensure efficient use of resources.

**Sustainability:** Sustainability is an attempt to provide the best outcomes for the human and natural environments both now and into the indefinite future. Development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It relates to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society, as well as the non-human environment.

**Thoroughfare:** A vehicular way incorporating moving lanes and parking lanes within a right-of-way.

**Traditional Neighborhood Design:** A development pattern that reflects the characteristics of small, older communities of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The focus of the community shifts from the automobile to the pedestrian. Traditional communities are characterized by mixed land uses, grid street patterns, pedestrian circulation, intensively-used open spaces, architectural character, and a sense of community.

**Transfer of Development Rights:** A system that assigns development rights to parcels of land and gives landowners the option of using those rights to develop or to sell their land. TDRs are used to promote conservation and protection of land by giving landowners the right to transfer the development rights of one parcel to another parcel. By selling development rights, a landowner gives up the right to develop his/her property, but the buyer could use the rights to develop another piece of land at a greater intensity than would otherwise be permitted.



---

**Transit Facilities:** Transportation uses by a government or a governmental entity or franchise, which provides facilities such as bus terminals or other related facilities and primarily involve collective or mass transportation of people. Typically, this transportation of persons involves routes from higher density residential areas to the higher density employment or business centers.

**Transportation Network:** A network of roads, streets, pipes, aqueducts, power lines, or nearly any structure which permits either vehicular movement or flow of some commodity.

**Urban Growth Boundary:** A boundary designating specific areas for development over a given period of time (e.g., as protected green space; it ensures that new development makes the most efficient use of available land and encourages more livable urban spaces.)

**Viewshed:** The total area visible from a point or series of points, e.g., along a linear transportation facility. Typically this visible area has scenic or historic value and therefore warrants special protection measures to preserve the viewshed.

**Walkability or Walkable Community:** Areas that are walkable and are safe, comfortable, interesting and accessible. They offer amenities such as wide sidewalks, attractive storefronts that face the sidewalk, shade, shelter and a sense of spatial enclosure provided through landscaping and streetscape elements. These areas are inviting to pedestrians for shopping, recreation and relaxation.

**Wastewater Treatment Facilities:** means structures or systems designed for the treatment of wastewater. This definition does not include septic tanks.

**Watershed:** Watersheds are natural boundaries based on the hydrology of a particular area. They are the land areas that drain to surface water bodies such as lakes and streams. Watershed management seeks to prevent flooding and water pollution, to conserve or restore natural systems and to protect human health through integrated land and water management practices.

**Wayfinding System:** A Wayfinding System incorporates branding, signs, maps and directional devices that tell us where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there.

**Wetlands:** Area having specific hydric soil and water table characteristics supporting or capable of supporting wetlands vegetation.



---

**Wildlife Corridors:** A wildlife corridor is a strip of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities (such as roads, development, or logging). This allows an exchange of individuals between populations, lowering inbreeding within populations and facilitating re-establishment of populations that have been decimated or eliminated due to random events.



## List of Acronyms

CAT	Chatham Area Transit Authority
CCPAC	Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CGRDC	Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center
CRC	Coastal Regional Commission
CQGRD	Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at GA Tech
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
DCA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
DEcD	Georgia Department of Economic Development
DHR	Georgia Department of Human Resources
DNR	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
DOL	Georgia Department of Labor
DOR	Georgia Department of Revenue
DRI	Developments of Regional Impact
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (federal)
EPD	Environmental Protection Division of Georgia DNR
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FLETC	Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
GDA	Georgia Department of Agriculture
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GDNR	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
GEFA	Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority
GEMA	Georgia Emergency Management Agency
GFC	Georgia Forestry Commission
GGG	Green Growth Guidelines
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMA	Georgia Municipal Association
GPA	Georgia Ports Authority
GPSTC	Georgia Public Safety Training Center
GRPA	Georgia Recreation and Park Association
GSA	General Services Administration (federal)
GSP	Georgia State Patrol
GSU	Georgia State University
GSWCC	Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission
GT	Georgia Institute of Technology
GTRI	Georgia Tech Research Institute
GWPCA	Georgia Water and Pollution Control Association
HPD	Historic Preservation Division, DNR



HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)
IED	Industrial Extension Division at Georgia Tech
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
LARP	Local Assistance Road Program (under DOT)
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LULU	Locally unwanted land use
M/O	Maintenance and Operations
NACo	National Association of Counties
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NIMBY	Not in my backyard
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPS	Non-point Source or National Park Service
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NSWMA	National Solid Waste Management Association
OCGA	Official Code of Georgia Annotated
OHS	Governor's Office of Highway Safety
OPB	Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
PZ	Planning and Zoning
QLG	Qualified Local Government
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Federal)
RDC	Regional Development Center
RIR	Regionally Important Resource
TAC	Coastal Plan Technical Advisory Committee
UGA	University of Georgia
USCA	United States Code Annotated
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VO-TECH	Vocational-Technical School
WWW	World-wide Web



---

## List of References

**Coastal Georgia Water and Wastewater Permitting Plan for Managing Salt Water Intrusion.** See

[http://www.gadnr.org/cws/Documents/saltwater\\_management\\_plan\\_june2006.pdf](http://www.gadnr.org/cws/Documents/saltwater_management_plan_june2006.pdf)

**Coastal Health District:** A division of DHR that oversees septic system permitting and installation, and monitors complaints and repairs. Certifies those engaged in construction, repair or pumping of septic systems ([http://www.gachd.org/environmental-health/onsite\\_sewage\\_managementseptic.php](http://www.gachd.org/environmental-health/onsite_sewage_managementseptic.php)).

**Conservation Use Assessment (CUA):** According to the Georgia Conservation Use Act of 1991, real property that is devoted to bona fide conservation uses is assessed at 40% of its current use value. The property must be maintained in a qualifying use for a period of ten years. For a sample application form, see

<http://www.bartowga.org/bctaxa/taxforms/Conservation%20of%20Environmentally%20Sensitive.pdf>. For program information, see <http://www.etax.dor.ga.gov/ptd/cas/cuse/index.aspx> and <http://www.timbertax.org/statetaxes/states/proptax/georgia.asp>

**Coordination:** See *More Effective Permit Coordination, Report on Stakeholder Dialogues from the Permit Coordination Forum*. Compiled by the Southeast Negotiation Network for the Georgia Conservancy (2006), [http://www.rpa.org/pdf/HighlandsTDR-Full\\_FinalOct2006.pdf](http://www.rpa.org/pdf/HighlandsTDR-Full_FinalOct2006.pdf)

**Economics:** CGRDC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2004), may be viewed at [http://www.coastalgeorgiardc.org/docs/CEDS\\_Update\\_Aug\\_2004.pdf](http://www.coastalgeorgiardc.org/docs/CEDS_Update_Aug_2004.pdf)  
Camden County Economic Diversification study, [http://www.cggrd.gatech.edu/PDFs/Camden\\_Infrastructure2005.pdf](http://www.cggrd.gatech.edu/PDFs/Camden_Infrastructure2005.pdf)  
Bryan County Economic Diversification study, [http://www.coastalgeorgiardc.org/docs/Bryan\\_County\\_Final\\_Report\\_Compiled.pdf](http://www.coastalgeorgiardc.org/docs/Bryan_County_Final_Report_Compiled.pdf)

**Education:** The Georgia Department of Education <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/>; Spending per student, [http://app.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fin\\_pack\\_revenue.entry\\_form](http://app.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fin_pack_revenue.entry_form); 2004-05 National Center for Educational Statistics/Common Core of Data (NCES/CCD), <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>

**Endangered Species:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains endangered species information at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>

**Floods:** Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM): For information on digitization project, see <http://www.georgiadfirm.com/default.htm>. Grassroots efforts are underway to prevent further



---

construction in floodplains, see [www.buydryland.org](http://www.buydryland.org). National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): See <http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/index.jsp>

**Forested Coastal Wetlands:** For research on Georgia and S. Carolina, see <http://www.uga.edu/srel/searise.htm>; for Louisiana, see <http://www.lacoast.gov/education/willfulwinds/09valueof.htm>, <http://www.naco.org/CountyNewsTemplate.cfm?template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14710> and <http://nsgd.gso.uri.edu/lsu/lsug96001.pdf>

**Georgia County Guide:** Is a book and online resource filled with detailed county and State-level data related to agriculture, crime, economics, education, government, health, housing, labor, natural resources, occupations, population, public assistance, transportation, and vital statistics (see <http://www.agecon.uga.edu/~countyguide/guideinfo.html>). The County guide online includes the Georgia Statistics System, which provides a county-by-county analyses. Its database comes from the 2007 Georgia County Guide and the 2006 Farm Gate Survey (see <http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu/sasweb/cqi-bin/broker>).

**Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA):** Also known as the Georgia Office of Homeland Security, see <http://www.gema.state.ga.us/>

**Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC):** The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) is a state agency responsible for providing leadership, service, and education in the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources. Commission professionals provide a wide variety of services including fire detection, issuing burn permits, wildfire suppression and prevention services, emergency and incident command system expertise, rural fire department assistance, forest management assistance to landowners and communities, the marketing and utilization of forest resources and nature services, and growing and selling quality tree seedlings for planting. <http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/>

**Higher Education:** Armstrong Atlantic State University, <http://www.armstrong.edu/>; Brunswick Center, <http://www.cgcc.edu/bruncen/home.html>; BBRED, <http://www.livingoak.org/>; Coastal Georgia Community College, <http://www.cgcc.edu/>; CRWPPC, <http://www.h2opolicycenter.org/>; Georgia Southern University, <http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/>; Savannah College of Art and Design, <http://www.scad.edu/>; Savannah State University, <http://www.savstate.edu/>; Savannah Technical College, <http://www.savannahtech.edu/>

**Historic Preservation Advisory Council (HPAC):** HPAC membership includes local government elected officials, local historic societies or other historic preservation organizations, HPD, and private citizens interested in historic preservation. The importance of, and interest in, this Council is reiterated in several of the local comprehensive plans. The purpose of the HPAC, as stated in its by-laws, is to:



- 1) Consider and make recommendations through the Executive Director to the CGRDC on the implementation of “An Historic Preservation Plan for Coastal Georgia.”
- 2) Examine in detail the various policy issues involved in the implementation of the program.
- 3) Consider and make recommendations to the CGRDC on all other preservation matters.
- 4) Consider and make recommendations to the CGRDC on the list of priorities for the historic preservation program.
- 5) Function as the CGRDC Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with authority to guide and make suggestions, review, recommend, and in general advise the RDC on preservation matters in the region.
- 6) Review and comment on preservation project plans proposed for the Coastal Region, and forward these comments to the CGRDC Board of Directors.
- 7) Provide continuing liaison and information services in order to ensure communication of preservation activities to the general public and the appropriate agencies and organizations.

Funded by member communities and HPD, CGRDC’s historic preservation planning services include: conducting quarterly meetings of the HPAC; maintaining an inventory of historic properties in the region; Section 106 (<http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html>) review of development projects; technical assistance to local governments in the preparation of Comprehensive Plans; Historic Property Surveys; nominations to the National Register; Historic Preservation grant or tax incentive applications; and, dissemination of information on historic preservation programs and initiatives

**Housing:** Housing Authority of Savannah – <http://www.savannahpha.com/>

Brunswick Housing Authority – <http://www.brunswickpha.org/>

Housing Authority of Hinesville – no website.

Camden County - Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. See 2<sup>nd</sup> year (2006) progress report at <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/hace/hdrc/gich/communities.html>

**Hurricanes:** See GEMA's 2006 Hurricane plan at

<http://www.gema.state.ga.us/ohsgemaweb.nsf/a29ce156b1dc53e1852571180043368a/88b07c80b7473e7385257111004a9f79?OpenDocument>

Hurricane Strikes Map: See the Weather Channel at

[http://www.weather.com/maps/maptype/severeusnational/hurricanestrikefrequency\\_large.html](http://www.weather.com/maps/maptype/severeusnational/hurricanestrikefrequency_large.html)

**Local Comprehensive Plan:** The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 (O.C.G.A. 50-8-1) gives DCA the authority to establish standards and procedures for appropriate and timely comprehensive planning by all local governments in Georgia. Those standards and procedures are embodied in local planning requirements. In order to maintain qualified local government certification, and thereby remain eligible for several state funding and permitting programs, each local government must prepare, adopt, maintain and implement a comprehensive plan that meets the



---

Local Planning Requirements (Chapter 110-12-1). The following local comprehensive plans were used in the preparation of the Georgia Coastal Comprehensive Plan:

- Bryan County Comprehensive Plan 1991
- City of Pembroke Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Richmond Hill Comprehensive Plan 1993
- Camden County and the Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine Joint Comprehensive Plan 1992
- Chatham County Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Pooler Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Port Wentworth Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Tybee Island Comprehensive Plan 1992
- City of Pembroke Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Vernonburg Comprehensive Plan 1993
- City of Garden City Comprehensive Plan 1993
- Glynn County Comprehensive Plan 1997
- City of Brunswick Comprehensive Plan 1992
- Liberty County and Cities of Allenhurst, Flemington, Gum Branch, Hinesville, Midway, Riceboro and Walthourville Joint Comprehensive Plan (1999)
- McIntosh County and City of Darien Comprehensive Plan (1991)

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED):** The LEED Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. LEED provides a roadmap for measuring and documenting success for every building type and phase of a building lifecycle (<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CategoryID=19>).

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Homes (LEED-Homes):** The rating system promotes the design and construction of high-performance green homes. A green home uses less energy, water and natural resources; creates less waste; and is healthier and more comfortable for the occupants. Benefits of a LEED home include lower energy and water bills; reduced greenhouse gas emissions; and less exposure to mold, mildew and other indoor toxins. The net cost of owning a LEED home is comparable to that of owning a conventional home (released January 2008, <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=147>).

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND):** The Rating System integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into



---

the first national standard for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high standards for environmentally responsible, sustainable, development (pilot program underway, <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=148>).

**Southface:** Promotes sustainable homes, workplaces and communities through education, research, advocacy and technical assistance (<http://www.southface.org/>).



---

This plan was funded in part by a grant from the Coastal Management Program of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

This report was prepared by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under award #NA05NOS4191212 from the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The statements, finds, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of DNR or NOAA.

Plan development assistance provided by Lott + Barber Architects and Reynolds, Smith & Hills, Georgia Conservancy and Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center.

Many thanks to the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation for their assistance throughout this planning process. Facilitation services provided by Pat Merritt, Community Development Manager, Georgia EMC.

Photos Courtesy of the Georgia Department of Economic Development.





