

## COVER SHEET FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING SUBMITTALS

Name(s) of Submitting Government(s): **Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald**

RC: **SGRC**

Submittal Type: **Comp Plan Update**

Preparer: ☒ RC ☐ Local Government ☐ Consultant: Specify

Cover Letter Date: **11/12/15**

Date Submittal Initially Received by RC: **11/12/15**

Explain Unusual Time-lags or Other Anomalies, when present:

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*Inaccurate/incomplete information, above, and nonconformity with the standards articulated, below, are reportable as performance errors under the terms of the annual DCA/RC contract and may lead to adverse audit findings.*

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- **ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY USING THE DEPARTMENT'S SHAREPOINT SITE.**
- **COMBINE ALL INDIVIDUAL IMAGES, DOCUMENTS AND SPREADSHEETS INTO ONE SINGLE, SEARCHABLE PDF (INCLUDING COVER LETTERS, APPENDICES, ETC.), PUT THIS COMPLETED FORM AS THE FIRST PAGE OF THE PDF AND THEN UPLOAD IT.**
- **REVISED SUBMITTALS MUST INCLUDE THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT, NOT ONLY THE REVISED PORTION.**
- **EMAILED OR HARDCOPY MATERIALS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- **ALL SUBMITTALS MUST BE CHanneled THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE REGIONAL COMMISSION.**

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BEN HILL COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2016-01

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
2016 JOINT BEN HILL COUNTY  
AND CITY OF FITZGERALD  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN


**WHEREAS**, Ben Hill County has completed the 2016 Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan;

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

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that Ben Hill County does hereby adopt the 2016 Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016.

  
Philip C. Jay, III, Chairman  
Ben Hill County Commission

  
ATTEST: Donna R. Prather, County Clerk




**CITY OF FITZGERALD**  
R16-001  
**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT**  
**2016 JOINT BEN HILL COUNTY**  
**AND CITY OF FITZGERALD**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Fitzgerald has completed the 2016 Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan;

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

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the City of Fitzgerald does hereby adopt the 2016 Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Massee, Mayor  
City of Fitzgerald

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTEST: Cristina Evans, City Clerk





# *Board of Commissioners*

## *Ben Hill County Georgia*

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Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750-2866  
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Philip C. Jay III, Chairman  
O.D. Netter Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Scott Downing, Commissioner  
Bennie Calloway, Commissioner  
Daniel Cowan, Commissioner

Frank E. Feild, County Manager  
Donna R. Prather, County Clerk  
Tim Kegebein, Road Superintendent  
Toni Sawyer, County Attorney

November 13, 2015

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

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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

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

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Frank Feild, Ben Hill County Manager, at (229) 426-5100 or [ffeild@benhillcounty.com](mailto:ffeild@benhillcounty.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Philip C. Jay, III", is written over a horizontal line.

Philip C. Jay, III  
Chairman

**MARK H. MASSEE**  
Mayor

## City of Fitzgerald

City Hall  
302 East Central Avenue  
Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750

November 12, 2015

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

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

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

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If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Cristina Evans, Fitzgerald City Clerk, at (229) 426-5050 or [fitzcityclerk@mchsi.com](mailto:fitzcityclerk@mchsi.com).

Very truly yours,



Mark Massee, Mayor  
City of Fitzgerald

# 2016 Ben Hill County And City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update



January 19, 2016

Prepared for:  
Ben Hill County  
City of Fitzgerald

By:



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Chapter 110-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.....	10 -
1. Introduction .....	10 -
2. Community Involvement .....	10 -
3. Identification of Stakeholders.....	10 -
4. Identification of Participation Techniques .....	10 -
5. Conduct Participation Program.....	10 -
6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria .....	11 -
Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan .....	11 -
Chapter 391-3-16, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria .....	13 -
II. Plan Elements .....	14 -
1. Community Goals .....	14 -
2. Issues and Opportunities .....	14 -
3. Analysis of Data and Information .....	18 -
Ben Hill County.....	18 -
City of Fitzgerald.....	20 -
4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives .....	22 -
5. Community Policies .....	26 -
6. Community Work Program .....	31 -
Ben Hill County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments .....	31 -
Fitzgerald 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments .....	33 -
Ben Hill County 5-Year Community Work Program Update .....	37 -
Fitzgerald 5-Year Community Work Program Update.....	41 -
7. Economic Development Element .....	42 -
Vision Statement .....	42 -
Section 1: Fitzgerald/ Ben Hill County Economic Development Historical Narrative .....	42 -
Section 2: Community Economic Development Goals.....	42 -
Section 3: Community Economic Development Issues and Opportunities .....	42 -
Section 4: Community Economic Development Policies.....	45 -
Section 5: Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Community Economic Development 5-Year Work Program .....	46 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 1: MAPS.....	48 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 2: Labor Force Demographics (Baseline 2015) .....	53 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 3: Site Inventory and Infrastructure Baseline 2015 ..	54 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 4: Industrial Jobs by Employer Baseline 2015.....	62 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 5: Tourism Inventory Baseline 2015 .....	66 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 6: Economic Development Agencies .....	66 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 7: Cooperative Workforce Educational Program Baseline 2015.....	66 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 8: Ben Hill County Farm Gate Values.....	67 -
Economic Development Element Appendix 9: Tier 1 Indicators Baseline 2015 .....	68 -
8. Land Use Element .....	69 -
Agriculture Character Area .....	69 -
Commercial Character Area .....	70 -
Downtown Commercial Core Character Area .....	71 -
Historic Residential Character Area .....	72 -
Industrial Character Area .....	73 -
Public/Institutional Character Area .....	74 -
Residential Character Area .....	75 -
Rural Residential Character Area.....	76 -
Rural Village Character Area.....	77 -
Suburban Neighborhood Character Area.....	78 -
Zoning Districts.....	79 -
III. Maps.....	81 -
Comprehensive Plan Appendix.....	87 -

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

### **1. Introduction**

The 2016 Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2016 Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals

2. Needs and Opportunities

3. Community Work Program

4. Economic Development Element

(as a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category)

Although a separate economic development element is included in this Comprehensive Plan, any economic development goals, policies, needs, opportunities, and objectives pertaining to Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald have also been integrated directly into their parallel components in this Comprehensive Plan.

5. Land Use Element

(as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

### **2. Community Involvement**

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

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on June 11, 2015 at the Ben Hill County offices. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway; to explain the purpose of the update; and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

### **3. Identification of Stakeholders**

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, elected officials, and residents. A complete list of all the stakeholders is included in this plan in the Appendix.

### **4. Identification of Participation Techniques**

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:

Public Hearings

Workshops

Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders

Special Webpage on SGRC website as well as County and City's websites

Dissemination of information in the newspaper

Fliers

### **5. Conduct Participation Program**

A foundational principle utilized by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in all of its planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from, and coordination with, multiple and diverse interest



groups. Due to the relatively small population of the County and City of Fitzgerald, the entire stakeholder group was utilized as the steering committee, ensuring the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update. Outreach to the public, local governments and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, Facebook postings, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and at other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and at city and county commission meetings.

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

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

The third workshop was utilized to update the Land Use Element and Maps as desired by the local governments. In addition to the three Comprehensive Plan workshops, three separate public workshops were held to develop the Economic Development Element.

## **6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria**

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

### **Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan**

Ben Hill County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in September 2011.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

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

#### Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).
2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.
3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.
4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.
5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and to optimize water and wastewater infrastructure.
6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.
8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.
9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater so as to improve water quality and quantity.
11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource services to all citizens in the region.
13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

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

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

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Conserve water
3. Collect data and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps



4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (the period of lowest stream flow during a seven-day interval that is expected to occur once every 10 years)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

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

##### 1. Point Sources:

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

##### 2. Non-Point Sources:

- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for local and state Best Management Practices programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

##### 3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:

- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; identify opportunities to leverage funds, and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## II. Plan Elements

### 1. Community Goals

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for the future of Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald; to generate local buy-in to the plan; and to ensure that the plan is implemented. Communities are encouraged to amend and update the goals as necessary.

<u>Goal 1:</u> (Population)	Ensure that overall community growth and development benefits all segments of the population.
<u>Goal 2:</u> (Economic Development)	Improve the Ben Hill County economy by developing and enhancing new and existing strengths that will draw new business, expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy, and help Ben Hill County compete in the regional economy.
<u>Goal 3:</u> (Housing)	Provide opportunities for homeownership and housing resources for all residents of Ben Hill County through public/private partnerships.
<u>Goal 4:</u> (Natural Resources)	Conserve and protect the functions and values of the natural resources of Ben Hill County for future generations' appropriate use and enjoyment.
<u>Goal 5:</u> (Cultural Resources)	Protect, preserve, and promote the historic and cultural resources of Ben Hill County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, and tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.
<u>Goal 6:</u> (Development Patterns – Land Use)	Ensure the highest quality living environment possible through a mixture of compatible land uses and character areas reflecting the needs and desires of the local residents and their vision for Ben Hill County.
<u>Goal 7:</u> (Community Facilities & Services)	Ensure that needed community facilities such as water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, EMS, and hospitals/healthcare are provided in an effective, environmentally sound, safe, and economic system, consistent with present demand and future growth.
<u>Goal 8:</u> (Intergovernmental Coordination)	Establish effective coordination measures among all pertinent public and quasi-public entities to best maintain Greater Ben Hill County's quality of life and resources.

### 2. Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities listed in this section were developed through discussions with stakeholders and residents; from the experiences of stakeholders and residents; through analysis of statistical data and information; and through review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities identified in the Greater Ben Hill County 2031 Comprehensive Plan. Each of the following issues and opportunities is addressed by corresponding policies in the "Community Policies" section.

#### Population

##### Issues

- The county is not retaining its young people.
- Lack of a retiree marketing plan to attract a compatible number of retirees to the area.

##### Opportunities

- Enhance the community's quality of life to attract and retain young professionals.
- Create a retirement marketing strategy.

## **Economic Development**

### Issues

- The perception of upward mobility is lacking.
- Lack of a strategy to attract and retain higher-wage jobs.
- Growth and development have slowed considerably due to the global economy.
- The unemployment rate continues to exceed the state average.
- Lack of a retail attraction and retention strategy to increase commercial activity.

### Opportunities

- Develop a public education partnership for workforce development and higher education.
- Reevaluate Millennium Technology Pointe Park marketing plan.
- Enhance and expand existing industry clusters.
- Enhance the community's quality of life to further economic development.
- Focus on value added agriculture and forestry products.
- Promote development-ready sites.
- Create seamless coordination between all economic development organizations.
- Promote the airport as an asset for the community, bringing visitors and facilitating the movement of goods.
- A public transportation system could be an asset to the community, allowing people to access jobs and other destinations without a personal vehicle.
- The potential for food processing water treatment plants should be investigated as a way to bring more jobs and optimize resource use.
- The hospital needs to be promoted as a first choice health care provider.
- Comprehensive continuing education and training opportunities and programs need to be increased significantly for the existing workforce in conjunction with the business/industry sector.

## **Development Patterns - Housing**

### Issues

- Blighted residential properties continue to exist.
- The zoning ordinance needs regular assessment that ensures adequate housing for the community's needs.

### Opportunities

- Continue the removal of blighted old homes under the Redevelopment Plan.
- Create a retirement marketing strategy.

## **Resource Conservation - Natural Resources**

### Issues

- The agricultural and natural resources in the county are not sufficiently marketed.
- The dwindling tree canopy in the City of Fitzgerald needs to be addressed.

### Opportunities

- Ben Hill County has a good supply of ground/drinking water

## **Resource Conservation - Cultural Resources**

### Issues

- Maintenance and rehabilitation of historical and cultural resources is needed.
- Lack of a comprehensive Tourism Master Plan featuring historic preservation.
- Lack of a comprehensive local (historic/cultural/natural) resource guide.

### Opportunities

- Capitalize on history, arts, and private attractions with a Tourism Master Plan, including but not limited to:
  - The Arts Council

- The Grand Theatre and Fox Historic Theatre Group
- The Grand Theatre Barton Organ Society
- The Carnegie Center
- The Chicken Festival, Pig Pickin' Festival, Blues Festival, Harmony Jubilee, and St. Patrick's Day Air Show
- The Grand Homecoming
- Bryant Theological Seminary
- The Blue & Gray Museum
- The Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails program
- Archaeological research is being conducted on a campsite of Hernando de Soto along the Altamaha River; this may yield discoveries that bring visitors to the area.
- Evergreen Cemetery, Fitzgerald Cemetery, Westwood Cemetery, and Kiokee Cemetery
- The Ocmulgee River
- Paulk Park
- The two wildlife preserves, Horse Creek and Mobley Bluff

### **Development Patterns - Land Use**

#### Issues

- The county's small size requires development to concentrate on quality of land use rather than quantity in order to create higher land values and grow the tax base.
- A plan to reduce incompatible uses is needed.

#### Opportunities

- The City and County should collaborate to plan for future utilities as needed.
- Maintain the rural quality of life.
- Annually reassess the zoning code to ensure it meets the communities' needs.

### **Community Facilities and Services**

#### Issues

- Water and sewer line expansions are needed in the county to serve existing and new developments.
- SR 107 needs to be four-laned as the main access to I-75 to reduce congestion.
- The area lacks recreation opportunities for young people, especially teenagers.
- The railroad line is at capacity, causing freight bottlenecks and traffic backups at railroad crossings.
- A comprehensive community-wide transportation plan addressing all modes of transportation is needed.

#### Opportunities

- Ben Hill County has a large water capacity, allowing for future development.
- Ben Hill County has water and sewer lines in place for future development.
- Promote the community's high-quality education system.
- The county has a state-of-the-art senior citizens' center, making the community an attractive area for retirement.
- The railroad spur connections are good for the area, stimulating the economy and allowing for the movement of goods.
- Opportunities for an inland port should be investigated; this would stimulate the economy.
- Freight connections to the Ports of Brunswick and Savannah should be investigated in order to increase the community's role in freight movement.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

#### Issues

- The city, county, and school system need to look for opportunities to partner.
- Opportunities for consolidation/unification of services should be considered in order to increase efficiency and lower costs to residents.

#### Opportunities

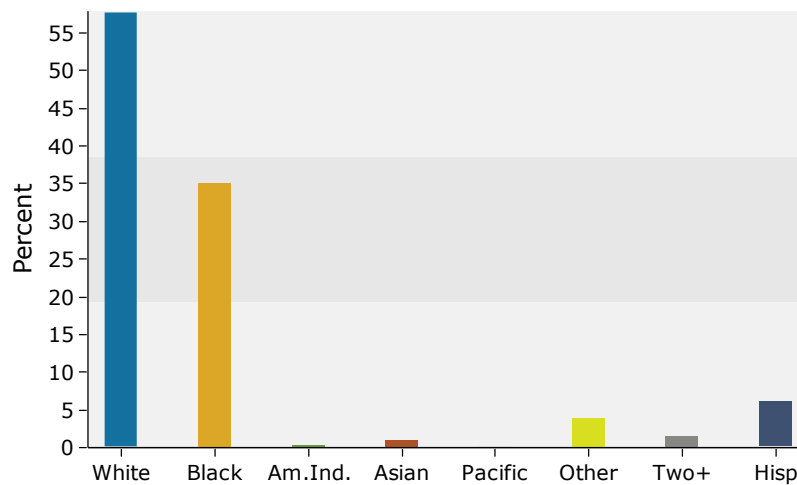
- Collaboration with surrounding counties with regard to essential/emergency services through interlocal agreements.
- Establish regional partnerships for mutual and emergency services, training, and education.
- Land bank can provide services to surrounding counties and cities.
- Continue to study functional consolidation of services.

### 3. Analysis of Data and Information

#### Ben Hill County

The 2014 population of Ben Hill County is 17,685. The estimated increase for 2019 is 0.02%, indicating barely any change in population. There are 6,836 households and 4,731 families, with an average of 2.54 people per household. 57.9 percent of the population is White and 35.0 percent is Black; other races make up 7 percent of the population. 6.2 percent is of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (regardless of race).

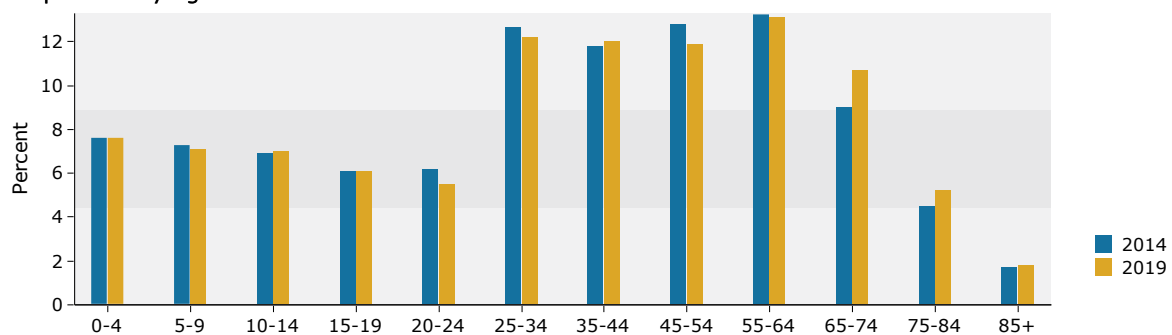
2014 Population by Race



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

27.9 percent of the county's population is 19 or younger, 56.8 percent is between 20 and 64, and 15.2 percent is 65 or older. By 2019, the proportion of seniors (65+) in Ben Hil County is expected to increase slightly (to 17.7 percent), and only very slight changes are expected in other age groups. The median age in Ben Hill County is 37.1.

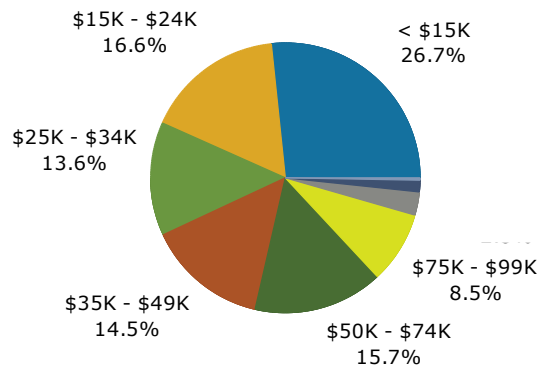
Population by Age



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

The median household income in Ben Hill County is \$29,206, the average household income is \$39,036, and the per capita income is \$15,148. According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, 29.2 percent of households have income below the poverty level.

## 2014 Household Income



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

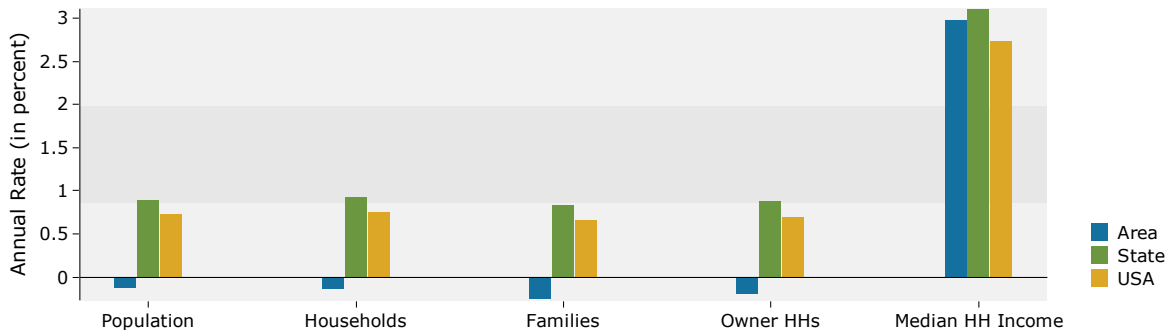
According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, among people age 25 or older in Ben Hill County, 10.4 percent have a bachelor's or higher degree; 6.8 percent have an associate's degree; 65 percent have a high school diploma or GED but no higher degree; and 24.5 percent have no high school diploma or GED.

Among workers age 16+ in Ben Hill County, 18.2 percent have a commute that takes 30 minutes or more each way; 58.7 percent take between 10 and 29 minutes to get to work; and 23.2 percent have a commute lasting less than 10 minutes. 78.6 percent of workers drive alone to work, 15.2 percent carpool, and 2.1 percent walk or bike. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the labor force in Ben Hill County averaged 6,392 people in 2013, and the unemployment rate was 11.1 percent.

There are 8,026 housing units in Ben Hill County. 50.5 percent of housing units are owner-occupied, 34.6 percent are rentals, and 14.8 percent are vacant. Among the owner-occupied housing units, 70.1 percent are valued at less than \$100,000, 24.9 percent are valued at between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and 4.9 percent are valued at more than \$200,000. The median value is \$72,818 and the average value is \$91,704.

By 2019, Ben Hill County is projected to see almost no change in the total population and in the number of households, families, and owner-occupied households. By contrast, a slight increase in these metrics is projected for the State of Georgia and for the nation as a whole. Median household income is expected to increase at a slightly higher rate than the levels predicted for Georgia and for the nation.

### Trends 2014-2019

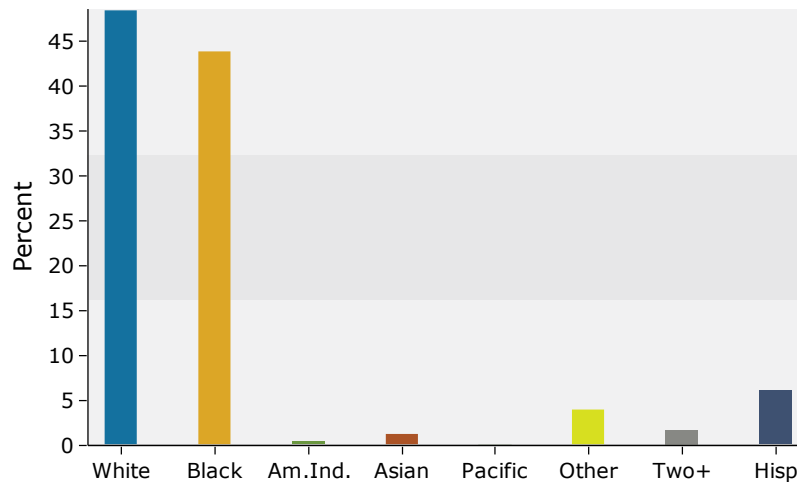


Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

## **City of Fitzgerald**

The 2014 population of Fitzgerald is 8,986. The estimated change for 2019 is -0.14%. There are 3,520 households and 2,317 families, with an average of 2.49 people per household. 48.6 percent of the population is White and 43.9 percent is Black; other races make up 7.5 percent of the population. 6.1 percent is of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (regardless of race).

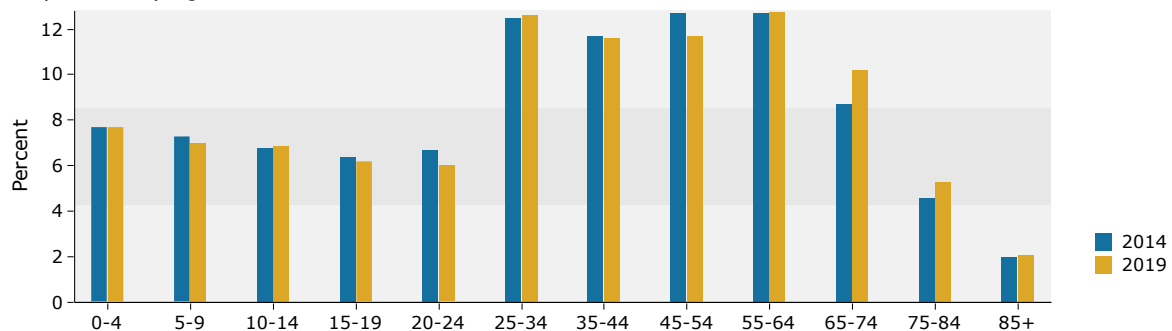
**2014 Population by Race**



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

28.2 percent of the city's population is 19 or younger, 56.3 percent is between 20 and 64, and 15.3 percent is 65 or older. By 2019, the proportion of seniors (65+) in Fitzgerald is expected to increase slightly (to 17.6 percent), and other age groups are expected to change only by small amounts. The median age in Fitzgerald is 37.2.

**Population by Age**

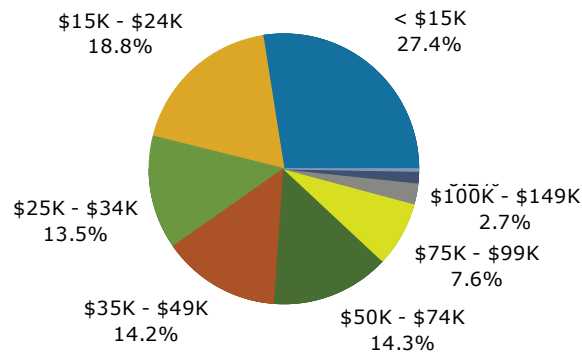


Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

The median household income in Fitzgerald is \$27,274, the average household income is \$37,089, and the per capita income is \$14,528. According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, 36.6 percent of households have income below the poverty level.



## 2014 Household Income



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

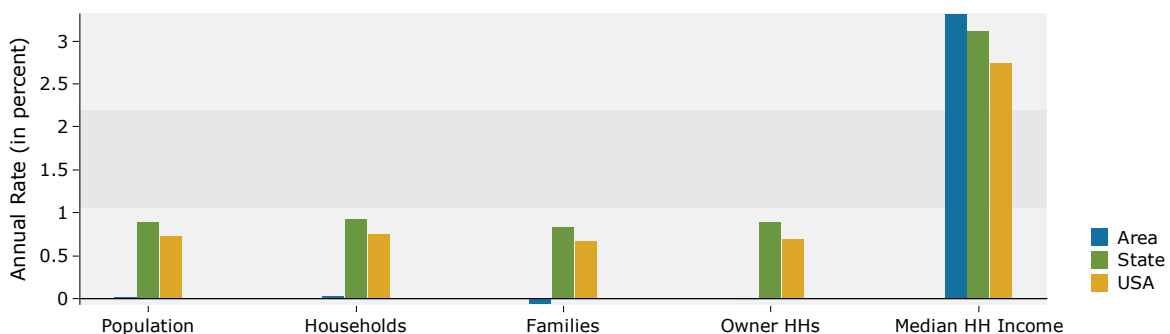
According to 2008-2012 Census estimates, among people age 25 or older in Fitzgerald, 11.8 percent have a bachelor's or higher degree; 5.7 percent have an associate's degree; 58.1 percent have a high school diploma or GED but no higher degree; and 24.4 percent have no high school diploma or GED.

Among workers age 16+ in Fitzgerald, 19.1 percent have a commute that takes 30 minutes or more each way; 53.8 percent take between 10 and 29 minutes to get to work; and 27 percent have a commute lasting less than 10 minutes. 79 percent of workers drive alone to work, 14.2 percent carpool, and 3.7 percent walk or bike.

There are 4,121 housing units in Fitzgerald. 43.9 percent of housing units are owner-occupied, 41.5 percent are rentals, and 14.6 percent are vacant. Among the owner-occupied housing units, 71.4 percent are valued at less than \$100,000, 22.8 percent are valued at between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and 5.9 percent are valued at more than \$200,000. The median value is \$74,028 and the average value is \$98,190.

By 2019, Fitzgerald is projected to see very little change in the total population and in the number of households, families, and owner-occupied households. By contrast, a slight increase in these metrics is projected for the State of Georgia and for the nation as a whole. Median household income is expected to increase at a slightly higher rate than the levels predicted for Georgia and for the nation.

### Trends 2014-2019



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2014 and 2019.

#### 4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has crafted a series of objectives dealing with a broad range of issues that concern local governments. The objectives, which are listed below, are only recommendations, but provide local governments with a tool to guide them in the assessment of their needs and opportunities and in the development of their implementation activities. If they are used as such a tool by many of the local governments in their planning efforts, these objectives also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals, which may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents.

##### 1. Economic Prosperity

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Access Georgia Assistance Programs:** Participate in Georgia programs aimed at furthering local economic development efforts, including: Georgia Competitiveness Initiative, Competitive Assessment (EDGE), Georgia Work Ready, Entrepreneur Friendly Community program, Quick Start.
- **Business Incubator:** Develop a business incubator to give local entrepreneurs a useful location to support a fledgling business.
- **Economic Development Strategy:** Develop a collaborative, public/private local economic development strategy by involving stakeholders such as local business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authority. Enlist stakeholder input to reveal what training or expertise exists within the community workforce, what types of businesses or industries need to be developed, and what constraints exist on business growth within the community.

##### 2. Resource Management

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Green Space Plan:** Develop, adopt, and implement a green space plan that provides for connectivity of permanently protected green space throughout the community. Setting aside the greenspace can be done through direct purchase by the local government, purchase of the development rights to the land only, or by working with local land trusts to focus their efforts to acquire conservation easement in the areas identified in the local greenspace plan.

##### 3. Efficient Land Use

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Adaptive Reuse:** Create incentives such as tax breaks, code changes or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures so that they can be put to new uses.
- **Brownfield Redevelopment:** To encourage redevelopment and reuse of abandoned brownfields (old industrial properties) in your community, develop a program that includes any of the following elements: 1) Inventory all of the brownfields in your community. 2) Have each brownfield site assessed to determine the likely cost of cleaning up or containing any residual on-site contaminants. 3) Offer financial incentives (or at least information of financial assistance available from other

sources) for remediation and redevelopment of these sites, since the clean-up and/or containment of brownfields is often very expensive.

#### 4. Local Preparedness

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Capital Improvement Program:** Develop an infrastructure investment plan that clearly spells out what public services and infrastructure your community will provide where, and when, so that your community grows in a rational and organized manner. This should accompany the comprehensive plan and indicate to developers and citizens where the community desires new development to be located. A capital improvement program brings predictability to the location and extent of future public facility expansions, so that residents and developers can plan their investments accordingly.
- **All-Hazards Strategy:** Adopt an all-hazards strategy for disaster preparedness and response. Being prepared for All-hazards includes not only natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes, but also technical disasters such as fires or supply chain failure and human based disasters like hostage situations or pandemics.
- **Alternatives to Conventional Zoning (DCA Model Code):** Pick from this menu of typical development regulation components to personalize and enact ordinances that specifically fit your community's needs. The DCA Alternatives to Conventional Zoning provides a full range of ordinance options from animal control, to street/sidewalk standards, to land use guidance system.

#### 5. Sense of Place

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Form-Based Codes:** Adopt form-based codes for land development throughout the jurisdiction. Form-based codes rely on the principle that design is more important than land use. Rather than regulate by zoning (use) districts, form-based codes regulate development by the scale, siting (e.g., setback) and architectural characteristics of the buildings allowed on each lot. Form-based codes rely on a "regulating plan" which consists of a map that sets forth geographic divisions of the community and the desired development conditions and building characteristics for each district.
- **Code Enforcement:** Utilize code enforcement as a tool to require property owners to properly maintain their residential units and thereby prevent neighborhood blight and foreclosed properties.

#### 6. Regional Cooperation

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Regional Economic Development Efforts:** Join and participate in joint development authorities or other regional economic development organizations to work together to market regional assets to potential industry, coordinate recruitment efforts, etc..
- **Regional Roundtables:** Hold and actively participate in regular regional meetings for local government staff and elected officials to discuss issues and opportunities of regional significance. This could include such topics as new development opportunities, joint projects for shared cost savings, coordinating resource protection policies.

## 7. Housing Options

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

### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Home Loan Assistance:** Provide education and access to existing home loan assistance programs that offer low-interest loans, or make contributions to down payments, to help local families realize their ambition of homeownership. Neighborhoods in a state of poverty, decline or stagnation are often held back by a lack of credit availability, so such programs can foster revitalization as well as making housing more affordable in the community.
- **Housing for the Elderly:** Start an Aging in Place or Lifelong Community Initiative to educate about appropriate adaptations to ensure that housing remains appropriate as residents age. Provide incentives for development of housing specifically targeted for the elderly (assisted living, senior living, "mature" living, etc.). Evaluate local ordinances to ensure that this type of housing is allowed in appropriate areas of your community, particularly those that feature good walkability for exercise, shopping and social visits.
- **Land Bank:** Establish a local land bank empowered to acquire and assemble available properties in areas of the community in need of redevelopment, then offer these properties to private developers as sites for new development of affordable or infill housing. Land banking is a proven strategy for effective revitalization of declining areas of the community.

## 8. Transportation Options

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

### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Flexible Street Design Standards:** Revise street design requirements in local development regulations to tailor streets to the scale of the neighborhood and types of traffic they serve. Revisions may include reducing required street widths, requiring bicycle lanes, or adding on-street parking.
- **Public Transportation:** Coordinate small scale on-demand county-wide public transportation by using the DOT 5311 or similar van-pool program. Public transportation can be provided at low cost in smaller communities, it need not be limited to the larger cities.

## 9. Educational Opportunities

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

### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Work Ready Program:** Participate in the Georgia Work Ready program, which helps citizens build their work skills, certify their preparedness for particular types of jobs, and match workers with employers looking for their particular skills.
- **Educational Resource Center:** Develop and maintain a listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available educational and training opportunities in your community. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Publicize its availability and make list available at government facilities, and on the web.

- **Experience Works Program:** Help older workers gain employment by partnering with Experience Works, a national community-based organization that helps older adults find good jobs in their communities.

#### **10. Community Health**

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

##### Best Practices for Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald

- **Community Health Resource Center:** Develop and maintain a comprehensive listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available local community health and social welfare assistance resources such as Department Family and Children Services, PeachCare, Family Connections, County Health Departments., Schools, Public Hospitals, etc.

## **5. Community Policies**

The following policies, numbered to align with the Community Goals, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide a qualitative guidance to address the Issues and Opportunities identified in this Plan, and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Issues and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

### **Goal 1 (Population):**

**Ensure that overall community growth and development benefits all segments of the population.**

#### **Population Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** The county is not retaining its young people.

**Policy 1.1:** Coordinate with local businesses and agencies to identify ways to attract and retain more young workforce age population to the area.

**Policy 1.2:** Pursue upgrading existing recreational and entertainment opportunities and services, and provide additional facilities and services such as parks, fields, daycare services, etc.

**Policy 1.3:** Encourage safe neighborhood designs and active police and neighborhood patrols and watches.

**Policy 1.4:** Encourage marketing the county and the city as safe places to live, work and play.

**Policy 1.5:** Work with the Education Summit members and foundations to identify ways to improve local education.

- **ISSUE:** Lack of a retiree marketing plan to attract a compatible number of retirees to the area.

**Policy 1.6:** Partner with the Area Agency on Aging, the hospital, and the Chamber of Commerce to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy.

### **Goal 2 (Economic Development):**

**Improve the Ben Hill County economy by developing and enhancing new and existing strengths that will draw new business, expand existing businesses, diversify the local economy, and help Ben Hill County compete in the regional economy.**

#### **Economic Development Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** The perception of upward mobility is lacking.

**Policy 2.1:** Develop a public education partnership for workforce development and higher education.

- **ISSUE:** Lack of a strategy to attract and retain higher-wage jobs.

**Policy 2.2:** Encourage the enhancement and expansion of existing industry clusters.

**Policy 2.3:** Focus action items on value-added agriculture and forestry products.

**Policy 2.4:** The potential for food processing water treatment plants should be investigated as a way to bring more jobs and optimize resource use.

- **ISSUE:** Growth and development have slowed considerably due to the global economy.

**Policy 2.5:** Coordinate with all local economic development organizations to identify new target industries that will help diversify the local economy, and work together to recruit those businesses to the area.

**Policy 2.6:** Encourage the formation of public/private partnerships between the City, the County, local businesses, and the School Board for the creation of new businesses in the area and the retention of existing businesses.

**Policy 2.7:** Develop target marketing strategies for Millennium Technology Pointe and other industrial areas within the county.

**Policy 2.8:** Elevate quality of life as an essential economic development issue and tool.

- **ISSUE:** The unemployment rate continues to exceed the state average.

**Policy 2.1:** Develop a public education partnership for workforce development and higher education.

**Policy 2.2:** Enhance and expand existing industry clusters.

**Policy 2.9:** Promote development-ready sites.

**Policy 2.10:** Implement and continuously refine the comprehensive strategic economic development plan.

- **ISSUE:** We need a retail attraction and retention strategy to increase commercial activity.

**Policy 2.9:** Promote development-ready sites.

**Policy 2.11:** Develop retail attraction and retention strategies.

**Policy 2.12:** Develop an online marketing campaign and update the county and city websites.

- **ISSUE:** The hospital needs to be promoted as a first choice health care provider.

**Policy 2.13:** Coordinate public and private resources to promote the use of the Dorminy Medical Center as the provider of first choice.

- **ISSUE:** Comprehensive continuing education and training opportunities and programs need to be increased significantly for the existing workforce in conjunction with the business/industry sector.

**Policy 2.1:** Develop a public education partnership for workforce development and higher education.

### **Goal 3 (Housing):**

**Provide opportunities for homeownership and housing resources for all residents of Ben Hill County through public/private partnerships.**

### **Housing Issues & Policies**

- **ISSUE:** Blighted residential properties continue to exist.

**Policy 3.1:** Continue to participate in community redevelopment and code enforcement programs.

- **ISSUE:** The zoning ordinance needs regular assessment that ensures adequate housing for the community's needs.

**Policy 3.2:** Conduct a regular assessment of the zoning ordinance.



**Goal 4 (Natural Resources):**

**Conserve and protect the functions and values of the natural resources of Greater Ben Hill County for future generations' appropriate use and enjoyment.**

**Natural Resources Issues & Policies**

- **ISSUE:** The agricultural and natural resources in the county are not sufficiently marketed
  - Policy 4.1:** Develop a page on the county website to highlight the agricultural lands and products, and the natural resources of the county.
  - Policy 4.2:** Develop a comprehensive Natural and Cultural Resources Guide describing the recreational opportunities within Ben Hill County, and distribute the guide throughout the region.
- **ISSUE:** The dwindling tree canopy in the City of Fitzgerald needs to be addressed.
  - Policy 4.3:** Investigate the requirements for the development of a Green Space Master Plan for the City of Fitzgerald.
  - Policy 4.4:** Re-evaluate a local Tree Canopy Preservation Ordinance for the City of Fitzgerald.
  - Policy 4.5:** Encourage a tree planting program for common space areas throughout the city.

**Goal 5 (Cultural Resources):**

**Protect, preserve and promote the historic and cultural resources of Ben Hill County through such measures as regulations, adaptive reuse, and tourism and education programs focused on historic preservation.**

**Cultural Resources Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** Maintenance and rehabilitation of historical and cultural resources is needed.
  - Policy 5.1:** Continue to seek grant and loan opportunities for rehabilitation projects.
  - Policy 5.2:** Consider placing major rehabilitation projects in the next SPLOST.
  - Policy 5.3:** Partner with local churches and the private sector for minor rehabilitation and upkeep projects.
- **ISSUE:** We need a comprehensive Tourism Master Plan featuring historic preservation.
  - Policy 5.4:** Develop a comprehensive Tourism Master Plan featuring historic preservation.
- **ISSUE:** We need a local historic/cultural/natural resource guide.
  - Policy 4.2:** Develop a comprehensive Natural and Cultural Resources Guide describing the recreational opportunities within Ben Hill County, and distribute the guide throughout the region.
  - Policy 5.5:** Help identify and encourage private rehabilitation through awards or recognition programs for rehabilitation and maintenance projects.
  - Policy 5.6:** Evaluate how the county may fund and develop a countywide historic resources inventory.



**Goal 6 (Development Patterns – Land Use):**

**Ensure the highest quality living environment possible through a mixture of compatible land uses and character areas reflecting the needs and desires of the local residents and their vision for Ben Hill County.**

**Development Patterns – Land Use Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** The county's small size requires development to concentrate on quality of land use rather than quantity in order to create higher land values and grow the tax base.

**Policy 6.1:** Allow higher density and intensity in appropriate areas with adequate services.

**Policy 6.2:** Identify and map areas suitable for various types of land development.

- **ISSUE:** A plan to reduce incompatible uses is needed.

**Policy 6.3:** Amend the land development regulations, including the zoning ordinance, to require buffers and transitional zones between incompatible uses.

**Policy 6.4:** Encourage the protection of existing farmland.

**Policy 6.5:** Research grant and funding sources to develop a property purchase program to avoid major negative impacts from adjacent developments and uses.

**Policy 6.6:** Ensure adequate education and notification is provided to uses adjacent or close to high intensity development.

**Goal 7 (Community Facilities & Services):**

**Ensure that needed community facilities such as water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, EMS, and hospitals/healthcare are provided in an effective, environmentally sound, safe, and economic system, consistent with present demand and future growth.**

**Community Facilities & Services Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** Water and sewer line expansions are needed in the county to serve existing and new developments.

**Policy 7.1:** Identify and prioritize all water and sewer infrastructure needs.

**Policy 7.2:** Pursue development of a comprehensive community-wide transportation plan.

**Policy 7.3:** Continue to research all state and federal grant opportunities, including the Georgia Fund Loan Program, the Clean Water Revolving Loan fund and the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan fund for infrastructure funding opportunities.

- **ISSUE:** SR 107 needs to be four-laned as the main access to I-75, to reduce congestion.

**Policy 7.2:** Pursue development of a comprehensive community-wide transportation plan.

**Policy 7.4:** Continue emphasizing the need to four lane SR 107 to the Georgia Department of Transportation, and seek opportunities to meet with state officials.

**Policy 7.5:** Encourage the provision of interconnectivity, shared access and pedestrian connections along all roads.

- **ISSUE:** The area lacks recreation opportunities for young people, especially teenagers.

**Policy 7.6:** Seek ways to combine parks and recreation projects with other public services and facilities projects.

- **ISSUE:** The railroad line is at capacity, causing freight bottlenecks and traffic backups at railroad crossings.

**Policy 7.2:** Pursue development of a comprehensive community-wide transportation plan.

- **ISSUE:** A comprehensive community-wide transportation plan addressing all modes of transportation is needed.

**Policy 7.2:** Pursue development of a comprehensive community-wide transportation plan.

**Goal 8 (Intergovernmental Coordination):**

**Establish effective coordination measures among all pertinent public and quasi-public entities to best maintain Greater Ben Hill County's quality of life and resources.**

**Intergovernmental Coordination Issues and Policies**

- **ISSUE:** The city, county, and school system need to look for opportunities to partner.

**Policy 8.1:** Establish regional partnerships for mutual and emergency services, training, and education.

- **ISSUE:** Opportunities for consolidation/unification of services should be considered in order to increase efficiency and lower costs to residents.

**Policy 8.2:** Explore the potential for functional consolidation.

## 6. Community Work Program

### Ben Hill County 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments

(2011 - 2015)

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>						
Support the preservation/reuse of historic schools identified in the Regional Historic Schools Initiative/Multiple Property Register Nomination	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>						
Continue to support the Joint City/County Economic Development director position	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support JDA in development of Millennium Technology Pointe	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to coordinate with the Georgia Wiregrass Technical College on joint Economic Development projects.	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Development Authority/Joint Economic Development Authority	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.			x	x	
Prepare and maintain an inventory of incentives, business programs, housing stock and available sites to accommodate new businesses and business expansions, and provide the list on the county website.	Postponed due to lack of funds Projected completion 2020		x			
Develop a guidebook for development that describes the local development process and provides useful information to potential new businesses regarding zoning, site plan approval, permitting and potential incentives.	Postponed due to lack of funds Projected completion 2020		x			
<b>HOUSING</b>						
Continue to foster and support the rehabilitation/reconstruction of affordable housing	Complete.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>LAND USE</b>						
Continue to coordinate zoning ordinance administration and enforcement with the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Planning Advisory Commission	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Update the County's Zoning Ordinance	Complete.	x				

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>						
<b>Transportation:</b>						
Repave County Roads using \$2.0 million of SPLOST funds	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 319 through Ben Hill County	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote 4 laning SR 129 to Ocilla	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 107 to Interstate 75	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation:</b>						
Upgrades to existing parks and recreation facilities	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Develop a multi-purpose sports facility at Paulk Park	Postponed due to lack of funds Projected completion 2020	x	x	x		
<b>Miscellaneous:</b>						
Airport Improvements: Runway extension and Expand Apron; Install MALS-F & PAPI's systems	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>						
Prepare grant/loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, LDF, etc.) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Annually re-evaluate the Ben Hill County Short Term Work Program	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Participate in all amendments/mediation to the 2025 Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue exploration of functional cooperation with Fitzgerald	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x

# **Fitzgerald 5-Year Short-Term Work Program Update Report Of Accomplishments**

(2011 - 2015)

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>						
Support the preservation/reuse of historic schools identified in the Regional Historic Schools Initiative/Multiple Property Register Nomination	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Develop Downtown Master Plan	Postponed due to lack of funds Projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Pursue redevelopment of the Aldine Hotel	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue support of DDA, HPC	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>						
Continue to promote the Façade Rehab Program to attract and maintain Downtown businesses	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the Joint City/County Economic Development director position	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support JDA in development of Millennium Technology Pointe	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Expand tourism initiative through additional regional cooperation, Grand Theater and Conference Center, fire museum, new museums, scheduled events, and recruitment of complementary Downtown businesses	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to coordinate with the Wiregrass Georgia Technical College on joint economic development projects.	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Apply for expanded water pumping permit	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Seek local electrical generating capacity through traditional generation, alternative generation and/or gas turbine	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Continue to support the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Development Authority/Joint Economic Development Authority	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue acquisition, rehabilitation, sale, and leasing of Downtown buildings for redevelopment purposes	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>HOUSING</b>						
Continue to use HOME, USDA, DCA, NSP, LIHTC and other available Programs	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to clear derelict property and reestablish housing in the City's redevelopment area.	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to refine code enforcement efforts regarding rental housing properties.	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>LAND USE</b>						
Continue to coordinate zoning ordinance administration/enforcement with the Fitzgerald Ben Hill County Planning Advisory Commission	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to review Subdivision & Zoning Ordinances for Opportunities to promote Smart Growth and remove barriers to affordable housing	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>						
<b>Miscellaneous:</b>		x	x	x	x	x
Jaycee Stadium improvements	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Engage the Regional Board regarding the State Transportation Plan	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Renovate A, B & A Depot for preservation and flexible space generation.	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Review existing services for better productivity, pro-activity and fee based operation where possible	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Airport Improvements: Runway extension and Expand Apron; Install MALS-F & PAPI's systems	Ongoing. Primary responsible party is now the County so project is carried over into County work program.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Parks and Recreation:</b>		x	x	x	x	x
Upgrades to existing parks and recreation facilities	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Transportation:</b>	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 319 through Ben Hill County	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote 4 laning SR 129 to Ocilla	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Promote the widening of SR 107 to Interstate 75	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Resurface approximately 25 miles of city streets; Associated transportation improvements: sidewalks, parking, and storm drainage right-of-way.	Ongoing; projected completion 2020	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to study and implement downtown parking solutions.	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Wastewater System:</b>	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Engage with the Regional Water Board	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Coordinate with Fitzgerald Water, Light and Bond regarding sewer system for annexations	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>						

PROJECTS	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15
Prepare grant/loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, LDF, etc.) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Annually re-evaluate the Fitzgerald Short Term Work Program	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Participate in all amendments/mediation to the 2025 Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Comprehensive Plan	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x
Continue exploration of functional cooperation with Ben Hill County	Complete. Item is continued as part of daily operations and not as a special project.	x	x	x	x	x



### Ben Hill County 5-Year Community Work Program Update

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Complete renovation of Federal Building and integrate into Grand/Carnegie Complex	\$400,000	County, City	Grants, general fund, SPLOST	2, 5	*	*	*	*	*
Develop a Master Resources Guide	\$50,000	County, City, Development Authority of Ben Hill County, Convention & Visitor's Bureau, Family Connections	Grants, general fund	2, 4, 5	*	*			
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Prepare and maintain an inventory of incentives, business programs, housing stock and available sites to accommodate new businesses and business expansions, and provide the list on the county website.	Staff time	Chamber of Commerce, Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Development Authority	City and County Joint Service Funds	2	*	*			
Develop a guidebook for development that describes the local development process and provides useful information to potential new businesses regarding zoning, site plan approval, permitting and potential incentives.	Staff time	Chamber of Commerce, Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Development Authority	City and County Joint Service Funds	2	*	*			
Approve and implement the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan through the coordinated efforts of all economic development organizations	Staff time	Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Development Authority, other economic development organizations	City and County Joint Service Funds	2	*	*	*	*	*
Develop a Senior/Retiree Marketing Strategy	Staff time	Convention & Visitor's Bureau	General fund	1, 2, 3, 6	*	*			
Develop a Comprehensive Tourism Master Plan to incorporate under the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan	Staff time	Convention & Visitor's Bureau	General fund	2, 4, 5	*	*			

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<b>HOUSING</b>									
Construct The Village at Ben Hill Phase 1	\$9 million	County	Low Income Housing Tax Credit, private funding	1	*	*			
Construct The Village at Ben Hill Phase 2	\$9 million	County	Low Income Housing Tax Credit, private funding	1			*	*	
<b>LAND USE</b>									
None listed									
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>									
Repair and resurface 82.1 miles of roads	\$8.2 million	County	General fund, LMIG, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	7	*	*	*	*	*
Replace Bethlehem Church Road Bridge	\$2 million	County	General fund, LMIG, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	7		*			
Replace Tulip Road Bridge	\$700,000	County	General fund, LMIG, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	7			*		
Complete renovations to Monitor gym, auditorium, and classroom building at Recreation Services complex	\$200,000	County, City	City, County, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	6, 7	*	*			
Implement airport improvements as listed in 5-year CIP for 2016-2020	\$4.66 million	Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Airport Commission	Federal, State, and Local	2, 7	*	*	*	*	*

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Complete Peachtree Corridor Industrial Transportation Project	\$8 million	County, City	General funds, grants, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), loans, contributions	2, 7	*	*	*	*	*
Develop Comprehensive Mobility Plan	\$40,000	County, City	General fund	1, 2, 6, 7	*	*			
Complete façade maintenance on Grand Theater	\$75,000	County, City	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	5		*	*	*	*
Construct covers for existing outdoor performances spaces (downtown and Paulk Park)	\$50,000	County, City	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	6			*	*	
Complete Grand Theater ADA improvements, phase 2	\$20,000	County, City	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	5		*	*		
Construct a multi-use recreational facility, offices, gymnasium, and/or swimming pool	\$1.5 million	County, City	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval)	6			*	*	*
Construct Merrimac Rd. sidewalks from Merrimac Village Apts. to Central Ave	\$250,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7		*	*		
Construct Dewey McGlamry Road (SR90) sidewalks from Jack Allen Rd to Sultana Ave	\$150,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7		*	*		
Construct Benjamin H Hill Drive SE sidewalks and/or culvert extension & pedestrian bridge from SR90 to Walmart (with pedestrian signals)	\$250,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7			*	*	

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Construct Sultana Drive (SR90) sidewalks from Jefferson St. to Merrimac Dr.	\$300,000	County	General fund, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), GDOT	1, 7			*	*	
Recruit 2 physicians per year to Dorminy Medical Center	\$20,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7		*		*	
Renovate emergency room at Dorminy Medical Center	\$300,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7		*			
Implement Hospital Cosmetic Upgrades at Dorminy Medical Center	\$75,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7	*	*	*	*	
Replace front of Massee Building at Dorminy Medical Center	\$50,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7	*				
Upgrade Medical Equipment and Computers at Dorminy Medical Center	\$300,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7	*	*	*	*	*
Replace Hospital Elevator sat Dorminy Medical Center	\$80,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7		*			
Replace 3 Chillers at Dorminy Medical Center	\$600,000	DMC	DMC	2, 7	*		*		
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
Research opportunities for inter-governmental agreements with surrounding counties to better facilitate emergency services	Staff time	County, City	General funds	8	*	*	*	*	*

**Fitzgerald 5-Year Community Work Program Update**

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>									
Develop Downtown Master Plan	Staff time	City	General fund	1, 2, 5, 6, 8	*	*			
Re-evaluate existing tree ordinance and develop a replanting strategy	Staff time	City	General fund	2, 4, 6	*	*			
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
None listed									
<b>HOUSING</b>									
None listed									
<b>LAND USE</b>									
None listed									
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>									
Complete Jaycee Stadium improvements	\$900,000	City, Board of Education	SPLOST, ELOST	6	*	*	*	*	*
Renovate A, B & A Depot for preservation and flexible space.	\$625,000	City	SPLOST, Federal funds	5		*	*	*	*
Resurface approximately 15 miles of city streets; associated transportation improvements; sidewalks, parking, and storm drainage right-of-way.	\$1.5 million	City	General fund, SPLOST, LMIG	7	*	*	*	*	*
Review and implement improvements to ADA compliance plan by adding facilities annually.	\$25,000	City	General fund	1, 7	*	*	*	*	*
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION</b>									
None listed									

## **7. Economic Development Element**

### **Vision Statement**

**To effectively incorporate the abilities of Ben Hill County and Fitzgerald Economic Development Agencies, natural resources, educational opportunities, existing industrial base, and the community spirit of Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County to produce a healthier economy and greater quality of life for the residents of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County.**

### **Section 1: Fitzgerald/ Ben Hill County Economic Development Historical Narrative**

Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County, by virtue of their unique founding as a Union veteran's colony in the deep South, have always had an innate sense of citizen investment in the economic well-being of the community. The 2700 families that moved there from throughout all existing states were investors in the Colony Company, which secured 100,000 acres for the new city. The original settlers realized the **value of education, infrastructure, and jobs** as the building blocks of a successful community. To this day, the principle **of citizens actively investing in the community** remains a hallmark of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill. Lacking unique natural resources and a four-lane highway, Fitzgerald must find in its people the creativity and leadership to thrive while so many rural communities are floundering.

### **Section 2: Community Economic Development Goals**

1. To increase economic opportunity and upward mobility for the citizens of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County;
2. To continue to develop and enhance existing assets, resources, and strengths to create economic opportunity and a healthier economy;
3. To integrate disparate local economic development organizations into a common mission and capitalize upon their existing strengths, expertise, and individuality;
4. To foster a quality of life for all citizens conducive to attracting and increasing economic opportunity;
5. To leverage efforts community-wide by coordinating and collaborating across agency lines;
6. To foster continuous improvement in the educational preparation of the workforce through creative and cooperative efforts;
7. To commit sufficient local resources to ensure the physical infrastructure exists to foster job growth;
8. To create and maintain open communications between existing business, local government, and education to enable swift response to changes in the economic climate;
9. To position the community for notice by outside economic development organizations through professional marketing, deal handling, and follow-through;
10. To continuously train and educate agencies and local government officials in best practices and creativity in pursuit of economic opportunity.

### **Section 3: Community Economic Development Issues and Opportunities**

#### **A. Education and Workforce Development**

##### **Issues**

- a. Only 77% of population holds high School Diploma
- b. Graduation rate exceeds region and state rates at 74.2%
- c. Ben Hill County CCRPI is 74.6 which exceeds region and state rates; high school CCRPI is 59.4%
- d. Employability soft skills lacking in workforce (attendance, attitude, timeliness, dress)
- e. Programmable logic control maintenance skills lacking

- f. Communication of needs from job creators, economic development authority, and educators as well as communication of training provided by educators

#### **Opportunities**

- a. Strengthen communication between education and job creators through educator/job creator luncheons, advisory councils, annual education summit, and other Economic Development professional facilitation
- b. Recognize societal issues impacting workforce and partner with programs seeking to address them, i.e. Communities In Schools, Monitor Enrichment, Head Start, Youth Build, volunteer programs, etc.
- c. Develop a strategy to open communications with drop outs in the 21-36 year age range and incentivize them to return for a GED
- d. Emphasize community literacy with the goal of becoming a Certified Literate Community
- e. Work with employers to incentivize educational achievement both at hiring and thereafter
- f. Develop strategies to get non-completers and unemployed citizens to school to receive training for the workforce of this community
- g. Help by Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) in promoting existing training, mentoring, job shadow, and other such opportunities

### **B. Quality of Life**

#### **Issues**

- a. Stability of local healthcare
- b. Sense of public safety and security
- c. Arts and entertainment opportunities
- d. Available youth activities
- e. Retail opportunities
- f. Community cleanliness and beautification
- g. Available senior activities
- h. Choices in lodging and dining

#### **Opportunities**

- a. Partner with local healthcare to promote local as "First Choice"
- b. Partner with local law enforcement to promote citizen education, awareness, and participation in safety oriented programs
- c. Partner with the Arts Council, Tourism Bureau, DLS, and others to develop a one stop activity guide/web site for locals and prospects to learn what there is to do
- d. Develop a citizens committee to assess the available activities for adolescents and propose ways to promote what exists and fill in the gaps
- e. Seek ways to build consumer confidence by removing symbols of derelict commercial property (buildings, signs, etc.)
- f. Assess retail, dining, and lodging gaps in the local economy and work with state EDOs to develop contacts to approach them
- g. Work with the Chamber, Colony Business Association and others to promote support of local retail
- h. Critically review local ordinances that may inhibit desired retail
- i. Work with the Chamber, etc. to expand community clean- up efforts and educate the community on the importance of first impressions

- j. Develop a senior citizens committee to assess the available activities for seniors and propose ways to promote what exists and fill in the gaps
- k. Examine our job creation efforts to insure we are focused on “living wage” jobs that do not perpetuate the cycle of persistent poverty
- l. Create a comprehensive resource directory available to locals and prospects to educate them as to what exists
- m. Refine and implement program to combine operation of Grand Theatre, Carnegie building, and Federal Building into a single campus

### **C. Economic Development Focus**

#### **Issues**

- a. Coordination between all existing EDOs
- b. Lack of input from industrial stakeholders
- c. Disparity in funding of EDOs relative to roles they can fulfill
- d. Lack of focus in targeting growth
- e. Lack of infrastructure plan to support economic growth
- f. Lack of transportation plan to support economic growth
- g. Utility coordination with existing customers
- h. Coordinated small business and entrepreneurial support
- i. Lack of a strategic tourism plan
- j. Lack of a retiree marketing strategy
- k. Need for local industry support facilities (food grade warehouse)
- l. Lack of plan to accommodate, compliment, and capitalize on Port of Savannah expansion

#### **Opportunities**

- a. Appoint the Fitzgerald & Ben Hill Development Authority (FBHDA) Director as Economic Development Coordinator for Ben Hill County tasked with fostering communication, collaboration, and leveraging of resources among all local EDOs
- b. Develop an Industrial Advisory spokesman or committee of industrial stakeholders to consult with local EDOs during discussions affecting their community
- c. Identify potential and crucial roles of each EDO and apportion funding relative to the needs of a coordinated economic development strategy
- d. Identify infrastructure needs for economic development that can only be performed by local government and insure funds are allocated to these needs as a priority
- e. Develop a strategy to focus on expansion of local industry, developing agricultural and timber value added products, expanding and supporting existing industry clusters, & tourism
- f. Focus our efforts on industries of up to 50 jobs at start up and seek to grow them
- g. Develop an infrastructure and amenity plan to make available sites more marketable
- h. Seek marketing rights to available buildings
- i. Create an economic development transportation plan as a subset of the community mobility plan
- j. Work with Fitzgerald Utilities to create a response team to address industry and job creator issues as well as a sustainability plan for our local utility in the face of the growing options for private power generation
- k. Support the tourism bureau in developing a strategic tourism marketing plan



- l. Determine who best to lead the formation of a retiree marketing strategy and support them in it
- m. Assess the needs and support potential for support facilities and if it exists aggressively pitch it to the greater development community and local financiers
- n. Determine if our community can capitalize (and not suffer) from the Port of Savannah expansion and move aggressively on the conclusions

#### **Section 4: Community Economic Development Policies**

1. The Fitzgerald & Ben Hill Development Authority will be jointly funded by the City of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County
2. The FBHDA will establish a three (3) person industrial advisory council. The council will have no voting rights but will meet with the Authority as needed to provide expertise about industrial development. Members of the council will be elected from local entrepreneurs, by nomination and majority vote of the Authority's Board of Directors
3. The FBHDA will have a director that is coordinator of all economic development activities in Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County which will include those of:
  - a. Fitzgerald & Ben Hill Development Authority
  - b. Ben Hill County Development Authority
  - c. Ben Hill & Irwin Joint Development Authority
  - d. Tourism Department
  - e. Fitzgerald – Ben Hill Arts Council
  - f. Fitzgerald Ben Hill Chamber of Commerce
  - g. Other activities conducted by the City of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County
4. The director of the FBHDA will coordinate with each of these arms of economic development through the appropriate agency head for each agency
5. Each arm of economic development will maintain their own autonomy and boards. However, the director will be aware and understand all of their activities and projects. The director will coordinate these activities through the most appropriate body or bodies.
6. The Economic Development (EDD) Director of FBHDA will be aware of various funding sources of each agency and work to leverage these funds
7. ED Director will work with private sector investment vehicles to leverage their capacity with public monies
8. ED Director will coordinate Economic Development SPLOST efforts to insure funding is available
9. Business Retention and Expansion
  - a. Work with existing business and industry to assist in expansions
  - b. Work in conjunction with existing business and industry to develop a recruitment target list of supporting vendors to help competitive edge of existing business and industry
  - c. Insure that existing business and industry are treated as well or better than prospects (industry appreciation and acknowledgment)
10. Small Business and Entrepreneurial Development plan to be developed that will serve as a road map for small business expansions and start-ups. As part of the plan, a network of advisors will be maintained to assist in decision making
11. EDD of FBHDA will coordinate with business, industry, school system, and community volunteers to establish a workforce development programs ranging from elementary school age to adulthood.

**Section 5: Joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Community Economic Development 5-Year Work Program**

PROJECTS	EST. COST	RESP. PARTY	FUND SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<b>SUB-PLAN DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Create a Workforce Development Plan	Staff time	FBHDA, BHCS, and Wiregrass Tech	Individual entity funds	2,6	*	*			
Create a Business Retention & Expansion (Target) Plan	Staff time	County, City	General fund	2,8	*	*			
Create a Small Business & Entrepreneurial Plan	Staff time	County, City	General fund	1,2	*	*	*		
Create a Mobility Plan	\$40,000	County, City	General fund	7	*	*	*	*	*
Create a Real Estate Development & Re-use Plan	Staff time	County, City	General fund	2,7	*				
Create a Marketing & Attraction Plan	Staff time	County, City	General fund		*	*			
Create a Tourism Master Plan	Staff time	Convention & Visitors Bureau	General fund	2,3	*	*	*	*	*
Create a Downtown Master Plan	Staff time	City, DDA	General fund	2,3	*	*	*	*	*
Create Tiered Incentive Guidelines	Staff time	County, City	General fund	8,9,10	*	*			
Conduct Reassessment of Millennium Technology Pointe	\$20,000	JDA, GA Tech	JDA Members	2,9	*	*			
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT</b>									
Complete construction of the Peachtree Industrial Corridor	\$8 million	County, City	General funds, grants, SPLOST (pending SPLOST approval), loans, contributions	2,7	*	*	*	*	*
Implement Airport Improvements per the 5-year CIP for 2016-2020	\$4.66 million	Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Airport Commission	Federal, State, and Local	2,7	*	*	*	*	*
Develop Anderson Church Industrial Sites	\$2 million	FBHDA	General funds, grants, contributions	2,7			*	*	*
<b>BUILDINGS</b>									
Construct a Food Grade Warehouse	\$3-5 million	FBHDA, Private	Private	2,7,8	*	*			
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL</b>									
Create Economic Development Staff Committee	Staff time	All EDOs	General fund	3,10	*				
Create Industrial Advisory Group	Staff time	FBHDA	General fund	8,10	*				
Create Benchmark Reporting Tool	Staff time	FBHDA	General fund	10	*				

PROJECTS	EST. COST	RESP. PARTY	FUND SOURCE	GOAL	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<b>EDUCATIONAL</b>									
Combine Headstart and Pre-K	\$6 million	BHCSS	ELOST	1, 7			*		
Extended to a 3-year Headstart	Staff time	BHCSS	Early learning Grant funding	1, 7				*	
Seek transportation grant to increase MOWR students	Staff time	BHCSS, Wiregrass	Grant	1, 7		*	*	*	*
Work force development initiatives to continue (as listed as Appendix G)	Staff time	BHCSS, Wiregrass	Individual entity funding	1, 7	*	*	*	*	*

## **Economic Development Element Appendix 1: MAPS**

1. Industrial Parks and Existing Industries
2. Historic Districts
3. Tourism Resources (*to be determined under tourism plan*)
4. Agricultural and Timber Lands

## Colony City Industrial Park

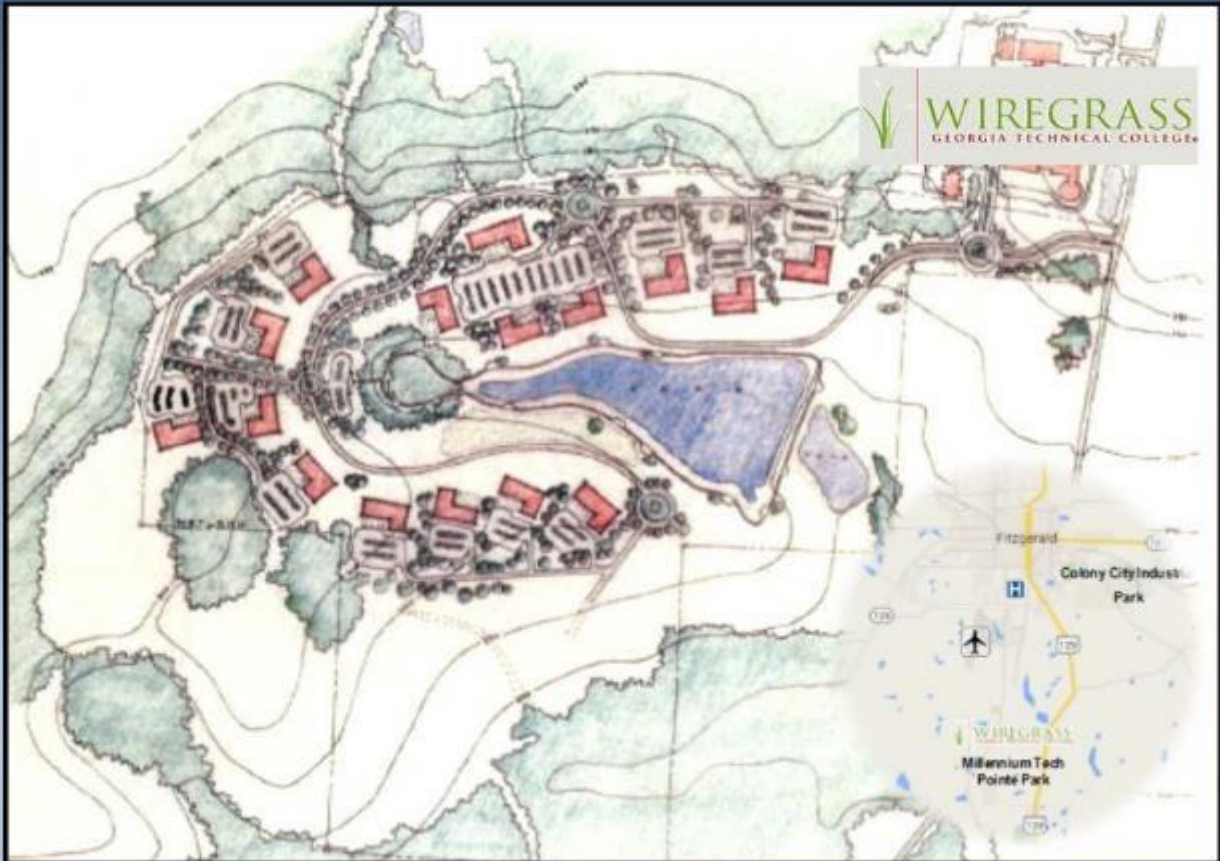


Home to most of Fitzgerald's leading industries, Colony City Industrial Park encompasses approximately 1425 acres and is the nucleus for Fitzgerald's industry growth and expansion. The park contains a balanced mixture of users that support the forest, peanut, metal fabrication, cargo trailer, and transportation industry. Complete with all needed infrastructure, direct access to several state highways, and rail service from CSX, the park offers users tracts ranging from 1 to 165 acres, or simply put, we can cater to the users' goals and priorities.





## Millennium Technology Pointe



- 214 acre technology park adjoining Wiregrass Technical College
- Conceptual design allows for 17 sites designed specifically for office/light industrial use, yet offers flexibility to meet the users goals and priorities
- Utilities in place (fiber, electric, water, & waste management), wetlands delineated
- Direct access to multiple state routes
- Location provides convenient travel for regional workforce

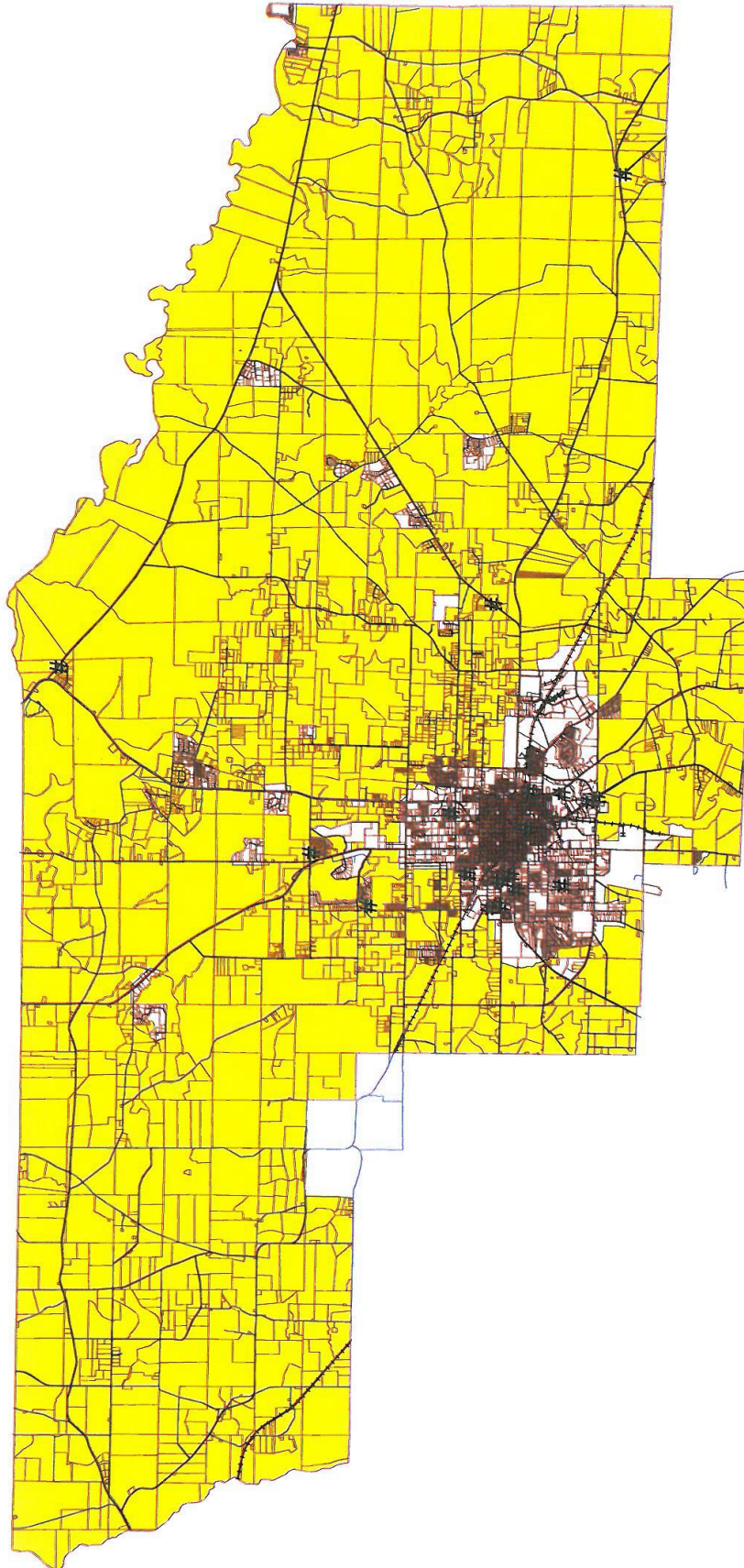








General Farming shown in Yellow





## **Economic Development Element Appendix 2: Labor Force Demographics (Baseline 2015)**

<b>Labor Force and Wage Information</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Ben Hill County Labor Force	6,039
Nine County Labor Draw Area	71,547
Unemployment Sept 2015	8.6%
<b>Community Data</b>	
Ben Hill County Population	17,780
Ben Hill County 2014 Graduation Rate	83.5%
Median Annual Household Income	\$28,547
Average Weekly Manufacturing Wage for Ben Hill County	\$729.00
Wood Product Avg Weekly Wage	\$798.00
Fabricated Metal Product Average Weekly Wage	\$811.00

(Source: Georgia Department of Labor)

**Economic Development Element Appendix 3: Site  
Inventory and Infrastructure Baseline 2015**

## Colony City Industrial Park

## Available Parcels



### Massee Tract

- 148 ac portion of Colony City Industrial Park (divisible)
- Utilities in place (12" water line, 10" sewer line, electric, natural gas)
- 5000' Hwy 107 frontage



### Ross Tract

- 163 ac interior portion of Colony City Industrial Park (divisible)
- Utilities in place (12" water line, 10" sewer line, electric, natural gas)
- 5000' Hwy 107 frontage



### Oriole Tract

- 23 ac fronting County Rd. 117 (1,650 ft long x 500' deep)
- Utilities in place (12" water line, 10" sewer line, electric, natural gas)
- Very convenient to By-Pass and Hwy 129



### Prescott Tract

- 48 ac adjacent to Polar Beverages with interior access
- Utilities in place (12" water line, 10" sewer line, electric, natural gas)
- 



## Dephi Tract - 160 acres +/-



### Delphi Tract

- 160 ac +/- fronting Perry House Rd (dividable)
- Former industrial site, graded with all utilities in place
- Rail spur
- Adjacent to Fitzgerald Municipal Airport (5,000 ft lighted air strip)





144 Benjamin Hill Dr.



**Building Specifications**

- 49,500 SF manufacturing facility
- 6,000 SF shop
- 4,000 SF office
- 10.5 acres with security fencing
- 16' eave height
- Located on Fitzgerald By-pass just off Hwy 129



## 139 Benjamin Hill Dr.



### Building Specifications

- 83,100 SF manufacturing/distribution
- 16.6 acres
- 18 to 23' ceiling height
- 8 dock high doors
- Compressed air, fire protection
- Simple access to Hwy 129 and Fitzgerald By-pass



## 130 Colony Drive



### Building Specifications

- 40,000 SF + manufacturing (multiple bldgs)
- 47.81 acres
- 20' ceiling height
- Rail spur
- Weigh station
- Security fenced with updated security system
- Simple access to Hwy 129 and Fitzgerald By-pass





## 218 Seaboard Rd.



### Building Specifications

- 40,300 SF light manufacturing
- 7.95 acres
- 16' ceiling height
- 2 dock high doors; drive in door
- Rail siding
- Heavy power
- Located in Colony City Industrial Park





## 116 Stuart Way



### Building Specifications

- 16,500 SF light manufacturing (to be fully renovated in 2015)
- 4.75 acres
- 1 dock high door
- Simple access to Hwy 129 and Fitzgerald By-pass



**Economic Development Element Appendix 4: Industrial Jobs by Employer Baseline 2015**

***Manufacturing, Construction & Related Industries/Employers  
Provided by the - Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Co. Chamber of Commerce  
(229) 423-9357 800-225-7899 [www.fitzgeraldchamber.org](http://www.fitzgeraldchamber.org)***

Agri-Products, Inc.  
Hardy Maloch  
182 Peachtree RD.  
423-2367 FAX: 423-2371  
Premium pine equine animal  
bedding shavings  
Employees: 30  
[www.suncoastbedding.com](http://www.suncoastbedding.com)

Alvin Wynn Electric Co.  
David/Ed Wynn  
P.O. Box 1002  
138 Colony Drive  
423-5495 FAX: 423-4268  
Electric Motor & Engines  
Employees: 12

American Blanching  
Jack Warden  
P.O. Box 1028  
155 Rip Wiley RD.  
423-4098 FAX: 423-3842  
Peanut Butter Paste  
Employees: 450  
[www.americanblanching.com](http://www.americanblanching.com)

Astro Products  
Duane Mobley  
P.O. Box 964  
340 Benjamin H. Hill DR.  
423-5409 FAX: 423-6058  
Cleaning Chemicals/Equipment  
Employees: 7  
[www.astroproductsinc.com](http://www.astroproductsinc.com)

Arising Industries Johnnie Batten  
200 Ed Ward RD.  
409-0872  
Cargo Trailers  
Employers: 70  
[www.arisingindustries.com](http://www.arisingindustries.com)

Ben Hill Co. School System  
Nancy Whidden  
509 W. Palm ST  
409-5500 FAX: 409-5513  
Education  
Employees: 450  
[www.ben-hill.k12.ga.us](http://www.ben-hill.k12.ga.us)

The Cabinet Warehouse  
John William Mooney  
229 Benjamin Hill Drive 426-7514 FAX:  
229-426-7642  
Employees: 9  
cabinets, countertops, hardware, and led  
lighting

Choice Wood, Inc.  
Allen Conger, Jr.  
209 Glenn Bass RD.  
424-0091  
Mixed Hardwood Slithers & Kick Outs  
Employees: 30

Cleghorn & Sons Home Builders  
Matt Cleghorn  
708 S. Sherman ST.  
423-9573 FAX: 424-0993  
Employees: 5

Colonial Iron Works  
Tad Schirack  
2363 Ironwood RD.  
Abbeville, GA 31001  
Welding, real estate signs, grills  
Employees: 2

Covered Wagon Trailers  
142 Benjamin Hill Drive  
423-4044 FAX: 423-4052  
Cargo Trailers  
Employees: 75  
[www.coveredwagontrailers.com](http://www.coveredwagontrailers.com)

Custom Profiles Incorporated  
Henry Sheffield-Founder  
C. Scott Sheffield - President  
P.O. Box 279  
256 Benjamin H. Hill DR.  
423-2929 FAX: 423-3724  
Plastic Extrusions  
Employees: 28  
[www.customprofiles.com](http://www.customprofiles.com)

CSX Transportation  
196 Shop RD.  
423-2054  
Industrial transportation  
Employees: 232

Dalan Trucking Inc.  
David & Lanora Conger  
200 Ocilla Hwy.  
423-4546 FAX: 424-9097  
Employees: 19

Dorminy Medical Center  
Stacy Mims  
200 Perry House RD.  
424-7100 FAX: 424-7281  
Health Care  
Employees: 289

Eaton Corporation  
Aeroquip Industrial Plastic  
Tommy Ellington-Plant Manager  
381 Benjamin H. Hill DR.  
423-9376 FAX: 423-7245  
Plastic Extrusions  
Employees: 17  
Parent Company: Cleveland, Ohio  
[www.eaton.com](http://www.eaton.com)

E & F Electric, Inc  
Allen Etheridge – Owner  
115 Etheridge RD  
423-9373  
Employees: 2  
Electric/Wiring

Elixir Industries  
Meredith Carver-Div. Mgr.  
243 Washington Ave.  
423-4311 FAX: 423-6722  
Custom Fabrication  
Employees: 45  
Parent Company: Gardena, California  
[www.elixirind.com](http://www.elixirind.com)

EnviroLog  
Ross McRoy-President  
200 Ocilla Hwy  
P.O. Box 190  
423-7233 FAX: 423-7232  
866-34-ENVIRO  
Firelog Products  
Employees: 35  
[www.enviro-log.net](http://www.enviro-log.net)

Fitzgerald Utilities  
Jeff Lewis  
P.O. Box 667  
426-5400  
Utilities  
Employees: 85  
[www.fitzutilities.com](http://www.fitzutilities.com)

Gilman Building Products  
Jerone Nails  
173 Peachtree RD.  
P.O. Box 310  
423-8761 FAX: 423-3083  
Southern Yellow Pine Lumber  
Pine Wood Chips  
Pine Bark/Sawdust & Shavings  
Employees: 145  
Parent Company: Yulee, Florida

Irwin EMC  
Randy Crenshaw  
915 West 4<sup>th</sup> ST.  
P.O. Box 125  
Ocilla, GA 31774  
468-7415  
Utilities  
Employees: 49  
[www.irwinemc.com](http://www.irwinemc.com)

Kampco Services of Georgia  
Jamie Benson  
257 Rip Wiley RD.  
424-0298 FAX: 423-9063  
Steel Fabrications/Trailer Component  
Parts/Trailer Fenders  
Employees: 11  
[www.kampco.com](http://www.kampco.com)

L.E. Harper Construction  
Louis Harper  
315 Bethlehem CH. RD  
423-5840 FAX: 423-5840  
Construction/Rental  
Employees: 10

Lippert Components  
Jason Gray  
160 Oriole Rd.  
423-7884 FAX: 423-8490  
Frames and fabricated parts for RV's Mobile  
Homes/Cargo Trailers  
Employees: 45  
[www.lippertcomponents.com](http://www.lippertcomponents.com)

Look Trailers  
Johnny Streat  
122 Glenn Bass RD.  
423-0056 FAX: 423-0039  
Cargo Trailers  
Employees: 106  
[www.looktrailers.com](http://www.looktrailers.com)

Mana Nutrition  
Loris Jarvis  
189 Seaboard RD.  
423-8700  
Nutrition/Food  
Employees: 30  
[www.mananutrition.org](http://www.mananutrition.org)

Modern Dispersions South, Inc  
Marton Kozma  
302 Ed Ward RD.  
P.O. Box 787  
423-9141 FAX: 423-1015  
Mfg. Plastic Pigment  
Employees: 200  
[www.moderndispersions.com](http://www.moderndispersions.com)

Polar Beverages Southern Bottling  
Christopher Maros - GM  
P.O. Box 1448  
255 Jacksonville Hwy  
1-800-872-5675 FAX: 424-9039  
Carbonated/Still Beverages  
Employees: 110  
Parent Company: Worcester, Mass  
[www.polarbev.com](http://www.polarbev.com)

Protein Plus, LLC  
Darrell Donald  
129 Kings Borough RD.  
P.O. Box 100  
229-423-5528 FAX: 229-423-5530  
Employees: 23  
[www.proteinplusflour.com](http://www.proteinplusflour.com)

Rainbow Irrigation  
Billy Mann-President  
Terry Mann-VP & Sales  
P.O. Box 70  
One Rainbow DR.  
423-4341 FAX: 423-4645  
Irrigation Systems/Pumps/Valves-Pipe  
Fittings/Aluminum Pipe  
Employees: 30  
[www.rainbowirrigation.com](http://www.rainbowirrigation.com)

Scruggs Concrete Company  
Eric Spells  
131 Appomaddox RD.  
423-9504 FAX: 424-0221  
229-805-7333  
Ready-Mix Concrete-Masonry  
Employees: 1

Shapiro Metals  
Denny Lewis  
151 Glenn Bass RD.  
426-0091 FAX: 426-0092  
Metal Recycling  
Employees: 16  
[www.shapirometals.com](http://www.shapirometals.com)

Shaw Industries M1  
Dwight Brown-Plant Mgr.  
139 Benjamin H. Hill DR. E  
409-5275 FAX: 423-2107  
Textile: Yarn Manufacturing  
Employees: 229  
[www.shawfloors.com](http://www.shawfloors.com)

Southern Eagle Distributing LLC  
Reggie Turner  
243 Ocilla Hwy.  
P.O. Box 876  
423-4679  
Fax: 423-8699  
Employees: 30  
Beer and Ale Merchant Wholesalers

Southern Timber Products  
Dan Alexander  
115 Dewey McGlamry RD.  
P.O. Box 1385  
423-3195 FAX: 423-4976  
Timber Cutting  
Employees: 14

Southern Veneer Products  
Kendall Adams  
278 Frank RD.  
424-0294 FAX: 424-0424  
Pine Veneer/Plywood  
Employees: 165

T & T Machine Shop  
Tony Lanier  
444 Evergreen RD.  
423-9665 FAX: 424-9719  
General Industrial Machinery  
Textile Machinery  
Specialty Machinery  
Employees: 9

VLS Recovery Service  
Tim Yeakley – Plant Mgr.  
188 Rip Wiley RD.  
P.O. Box 540  
229-796-0082 FAX: 423-1016  
Railcar Cleaning Service  
Employees: 31  
[www.vlsrs.com](http://www.vlsrs.com)

GBW Railcar Services  
Eric Monahan  
P.O. Box 598  
222 Rip Wiley RD.  
423-5651 FAX: 423-4591  
Railcar Repair  
Employees: 110  
[www.watcocompanies.com](http://www.watcocompanies.com)

Wiregrass Technical College  
April McDuffie  
667 Perry House RD  
468-2000 FAX: 468-5550  
Education  
Employees: 75  
[www.wiregrass.edu](http://www.wiregrass.edu)

Windstream  
Steve Pair  
P.O. Box 969  
152 Benjamin H. Hill Dr. Ext.  
423-9321 FAX: 423-2936  
Communications  
Employees: 20

Walker Printing Company  
David Chaney  
203 East Pine Street  
P.O.Box 720  
423-4327 FAX: 423-1200  
Printing  
Employees: 8

### **Economic Development Element Appendix 5: Tourism Inventory Baseline 2015**

*(see strategic tourism plan when complete)*

### **Economic Development Element Appendix 6: Economic Development Agencies**

- The Development Authority of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County
- The Development Authority of Ben Hill County
- The Fitzgerald Downtown Development Authority
- The Ben Hill Irwin Joint Development Authority
- The Fitzgerald Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- The Fitzgerald Ben Hill Chamber of Commerce
- The Fitzgerald Ben Hill Arts Council

### **Economic Development Element Appendix 7: Cooperative Workforce Educational Program Baseline 2015**

Collaborative Programs between Ben Hill County Schools and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College

- Move on When Ready (early college, dual-enrollment, joint enrollment, ACCEL courses, and so forth)
- Certified Manufacturing Specialist at FHS taught by Wiregrass
- Work ethics curriculum training at Wiregrass and CTAE courses at FHS
- Wiregrass hosts Get Wired! for middle and high school students to participate in hands-on activities in technical programs

Ben Hill County Schools offers the following career development opportunities:

- FHS implemented the CANES (Courteous, Accountable, Noble, Engage, Self-Motivated) program in all classes to strengthen soft skills
- BHCSS continues to implement strong career development initiatives from P-12. Ben Hill Middle School has career connections curriculum courses; FHS has career, technical, and AG education career pathways
- BHCSS offers job shadowing, field trips, guest speakers in all grades
- FHS offers work-based learning and youth apprenticeship
- BHCSS implements career awareness lessons in elementary with a career portfolio completed by 5<sup>th</sup> grade; career plans, assessments, and inventories are developed in middle school; 8<sup>th</sup> graders complete a graduation plan
- FHS has end of pathway assessments and recognized industry credentials/certifications
- All FHS students complete a career pathway
- Graduation rate exceeds region and state rates at 74.2%
- Ben Hill County CCRPI is 74.6 which exceeds region and state rates; high school CCRPI is 59.4%
- BHCSS has a strong, new initiative focusing on promoting early learning for more students prior to entering Kindergarten.

Wiregrass Georgia Technical College offers:

- Associate degrees, diplomas, and/or technical certificate of credit programs including allied health, automotive, business administrative technology, business management, computer information systems, cosmetology, criminal justice, early childhood care and education, industrial systems technology, practical nursing, telecommunications, and welding
- Adult education including adult literacy and GED preparation and testing
- Continuing education and contract training courses for business and industries

**Economic Development Element Appendix 8: Ben Hill County Farm Gate Values**

Cotton	12,333 acres	\$10,359,720
Broiler Chicken Integrator	24 houses/23,000 Birds	\$9,538,560
Peanuts	5,300 acres	\$6,625,000
Watermelon	358 acres	\$5,155,200
Timber		\$4,787,019
Corn	2,897 acres	\$3,624,147
Pecans	2,100 acres	\$2,856,000
Pine Straw	23,000 acres	\$2,300,000
Greenhouse	128,000 square feet	\$1,920,000
Horses Raised	750 horses	\$1,778,250
Beef Cows	3,100 head	\$1,447,313
Horses Board, Train, Breed	400 horses	\$1,400,000
Cucumber	36 acres	\$1,350,000
Broiler Chicken Grower	24 houses/23,000 Birds	\$1,144,627
Beef Stockers	2,400 head	\$1,116,000

**USDA Emerging Markets**

Goats	1 house/1600 Nanny Goats	\$240,000
Olives	None	
Miscanthus Grass	None	

## **Economic Development Element Appendix 9: Tier 1 Indicators Baseline 2015**

1. Highest Unemployment Rate;
2. Lowest Per Capita Income;
3. Highest Percentage of Residents Whose Incomes Are Below the Poverty Level.

### **Job Tax Credit Rankings 2015**

#### **Tier 1**

1. Hancock	13. Stewart	25. Baldwin	37. Screven	49. Echols	61. Cook
2. Telfair	14 Crisp	26. Coffee	38. Mitchell	50. Seminole	62. Early
3. Atkinson	15. Emanuel	27. Washington	39. Dougherty	51. Ware	63. Marion
4. Jefferson	16. Taliaferro	28. Treutlen	40. Murray	52. Laurens	64. Clayton
<b>5 Ben Hill</b>	17. Sumter	29. Decatur	41. Peach	53. Colquitt	65. Turner
6. Macon	18. Jeff Davis	30. Johnson	42. Irwin	54. Wayne	66. Rabun
7. Wilcox	19. Clay	31. Glascock	43. Toombs	55. Baker	67. Elbert
8. Calhoun	20. Wilkes	32. Tattnall	44. Randolph	56. Upson	68. Spalding
9. Dooly	21. Warren	33. Terrell	45. Brantley	57. Bleckley	69. Grady
10. Burke	22. Twiggs	34. Montgomery	46. Chattooga	58. Heard	70. Hart
11. Taylor	23. Wheeler	35. Berrien	47. Dodge	59. Candler	71. Lincoln
12. Jenkins	24. Quitman	36. Bulloch	48. Clinch	60. Talbot	



## 8. Land Use Element

### Character Areas

#### Agriculture Character Area



#### **Description**

The Agriculture character area designation in Greater Ben Hill County is intended for those areas outside of the urban area which are associated with agricultural farm operations and related activities, forestry, natural resource conservation, groundwater recharge areas, and very low-density residential development accessory to agricultural or farm operations of varying sizes. Many of these agriculturally utilized lands are under the 10-year conservation designation through the Tax Assessor, and therefore will not be available for development for those years.

#### **Predominant Land Uses**

Agriculture and related activities, forestry, conservation, groundwater recharge areas, and very low-density residential development.

#### **Vision for the Future**

Preserve farming and conservation options as a viable and important part of Ben Hill County industry by maintaining very low density residential development primarily accessory to farm operations and right-to-farm principles. Use of conservation easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas should be encouraged. Roadways in these areas should be widened only when required to meet public safety standards.

#### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 1: Economic Prosperity

Objective 2: Resource Management

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Commercial Character Area**



### **Description**

The Commercial character area consists mainly of larger-scale commercial uses, which are less compatible with residential areas due to the size of their lots and buildings, location on major roadways, and heavy traffic volumes created by the regional draw of the businesses.

### **Predominant Land Uses**

These areas include a wide variety of both established and newer commercial uses.

### **Vision for the Future**

Encourage and maintain higher-intensity commercial areas that are less compatible with residential areas due to their high traffic volumes and automobile-oriented character. Promote a greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve industry employees) to reduce on-site automobile reliance/use.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 1: Economic Prosperity

Objective 4: Local Preparedness

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Downtown Commercial Core Character Area**



### **Description**

This is the area within the City of Fitzgerald where public, institutional, and commercial development originally occurred, due to its location along major transportation corridors and at a major intersection. The Downtown Fitzgerald area is located along US Highways 129 and 319 at the intersection of GA Highway 107 and GA Highway 90. As the original site of city development, this area contains most of the county's major cultural and historic buildings and sites, and therefore requires special attention to ensure its preservation.

### **Predominant Land Uses**

City services, entertainment, commercial recreation, traditional Main Street businesses, mixed-use buildings, business support services, urban neighborhoods, and traditional older, stable neighborhoods.

### **Vision for the Future**

Preserve, restore, and reuse historic buildings. Improve the environment for private investment and development. Expand green and civic spaces. Mix land uses and control building typology. Implement a balance of transportation options and design.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 1: Economic Prosperity

Objective 3: Efficient Land Use

Objective 5: Sense of Place

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

### **Historic Residential Character Area**



#### **Description**

Located within the historic city 16-by-16-block square, this area is composed of predominantly older residential structures dating back to the 1930s and beyond. The houses, buildings, and properties of these areas are often of historic and of architectural significance, and are located on small lots laid out in a grid pattern.

#### **Predominant Land Uses**

Residential, with some smaller schools and churches mixed in, as well as some very limited neighborhood commercial.

#### **Vision for the Future**

Protect existing historic structures through the use of incentives and requirements for review and approval of modifications. Promote the preservation of deteriorating historic structures through rehabilitation programs. Ensure neighboring uses do not diminish the historic character of the area through setback and buffering requirements for new development.

#### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 5: Sense of Place

Objective 7: Housing Options

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Industrial Character Area**



### **Description**

This area consists of predominantly industrial uses, with some public/institutional and agricultural mixed in. Of special note is the location of the historic Evergreen Cemetery at Evergreen and Ben Hill Drive within this character area. Overall, the area serves as the City's primary industrial lands. The Ocilla Highway, Frank Road, Evergreen Road, and the old railroad lines run through the area.

### **Predominant Land Uses**

Agricultural Industries, Construction Services, Manufacturing, Millwork, Motor Freight Transportation and Warehousing, Wholesale Trades, and other similar uses.

### **Vision for the Future**

Encourage development, redevelopment and infill within the area to ensure it continues to be a vital part of the local economy. Continue to provide adequate infrastructure and public services to the area to help local businesses succeed while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment. Protect and preserve the historic Evergreen Cemetery.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 1: Economic Prosperity

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Public/Institutional Character Area**



### **Description**

This area consists of certain state, federal, or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, and other similar uses. Examples of other institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, and other similar uses.

### **Predominant Land Uses**

Government facilities (City, County, state, federal), schools and other educational facilities, places of worship, health care facilities, and other similar uses.

### **Vision for the Future**

Preserve, restore, and reuse historic buildings. Implement a balance of transportation options and design. Encourage development of essential facilities in locations where they can be conveniently accessed. Encourage development of new public/institutional uses at a scale that is compatible with surrounding uses.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 6: Regional Cooperation

Objective 9: Educational Opportunities

Objective 10: Community Health

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*



## **Residential Character Area**



### **Description**

These areas are located within the City of Fitzgerald, with small- to medium-size residential lots in a more suburban setting. They typically include single-family residential, and the density ranges from low to medium with predominantly single-family homes and very few commercial uses.

### **Predominant Land Use**

The predominant use is residential, with some mix of smaller schools and churches and some very limited neighborhood commercial.

### **Vision for the Future**

The focus for these areas is to reinforce the stability of the neighborhoods by encouraging higher rates of homeownership and maintenance or upgrading of existing structures.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 3: Efficient Land Use

Objective 4: Local Preparedness

Objective 5: Sense of Place

Objective 7: Housing Options

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

### **Rural Residential Character Area**



#### **Description**

These are areas of rural land that are likely to face development pressure for large-lot, low-density residential subdivision. Such developments typically consist of large residential lot subdivisions and open space. The majority of the Rural Residential areas can be found on the outer periphery of the City of Fitzgerald, along major collector roads leading into the city. The density ranges from low to medium, with mostly single family homes and very few commercial uses mixed in.

#### **Predominant Land Use**

The predominant uses are agricultural and large-lot single family residential.

#### **Vision for the Future**

Provide connecting green space and recreational areas in order to maintain the low-density rural character of the area, with an emphasis on rural residential rather than agricultural activities. Include conservation subdivision planning.

#### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 7: Housing Options

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*



## **Rural Village Character Area**



### **Description**

The “rural villages” in Ben Hill County are small and mostly historic communities that have developed in the unincorporated county away from Fitzgerald. These are compactly developed areas with varied lot sizes that generally share a historical background, are formed around a natural or cultural feature, or grew around an old intersection. Each community has been given a name (usually of historic origins) and labeled on the associated map. The areas are:

- Player Cemetery
- Queensland
- Bethlehem
- Lulaville
- Brahman
- Bowen's Mill
- Blackshear
- Plantation
- Dickson Mill
- Westwood
- Cotton Mill

### **Predominant Land Use**

The predominant uses are agricultural and single family residential.

### **Vision for the Future**

Promote the continued existence of these historic communities with good communication, coordination, and active protection and guidance. Encourage the development of small, local businesses that will meet the needs of the communities so that the residents will not have to make long, frequent vehicular trips. Ensure adequate enforcement of existing codes to prevent the decline of any of these “villages.”

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 3: Efficient Land Use

Objective 4: Local Preparedness

Objective 5: Sense of Place

Objective 7: Housing Options

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Suburban Neighborhood Character Area**



### **Description**

These areas are predominantly smaller-lot residential areas outside the historic city, mainly in unincorporated Ben Hill County, with newer and denser development than in the surrounding agricultural areas and older residential communities. These areas are characterized by traditional subdivision development on lots ranging from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet. There is not much pedestrian activity and most commercial development is automobile-oriented and centered around grocery stores. Typical Suburban Neighborhood areas are located at the north, northeast, and southwest edges of the City of Fitzgerald.

### **Predominant Land Use**

The predominant land use is low- to medium-density residential with scattered strip commercial development and civic or institutional uses such as convenience stores, waste collection sites, and churches.

### **Vision for the Future**

The suburban neighborhood areas should be encouraged to develop at lower densities as master-planned developments, with an emphasis on connectivity and walkability. In addition, care should be taken to control growth and ensure that any development will occur concurrent with the provision of necessary infrastructure and to ensure equitable distribution of project-created infrastructure cost to the new developments. The areas should provide for interconnectivity between subdivisions and encourage alternate modes of transportation. These areas should also provide for open space within and outside of subdivisions in order to provide additional green space, as well as passive and active recreation areas that will serve the residents.

### **Quality Community Objectives**

Objective 2: Resource Management

Objective 3: Efficient Land Use

Objective 4: Local Preparedness

Objective 7: Housing Options

Objective 8: Transportation Options

*For descriptions of objectives, see Section 4.*

## **Zoning Districts**

**G-F General Farming:** The purpose of this district is to permit agricultural uses, to encourage the maintenance of the rural countryside, to preserve forests and other undeveloped lands away from areas of population growth, and to allow residents to retain their traditional ways of life. The preferred land use in the district is agricultural, either active in the form of crops, or passive in the form of forest management or pasture lands. The G-F district should be utilized as a land use designation where a more intensive use of the land is unlikely to occur in the near future. The requirements of the district are designed to encourage the maintenance of a rural character until more intensive development is feasible.

**R-R Rural Residential:** The purpose of this district shall be to allow for residential development on lots of less than three acres in appropriate areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan in unincorporated Ben Hill County. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 800 square feet.

**R-1 Single Family Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of one acre (43,560 square feet), said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of these uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 1,500 square feet.

**R-1A Single Family Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of one acre (43,560 square feet), said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of these uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. With Health Department approval, such districts may use individual water supply and sewerage disposal systems. Minimum gross floor area per dwelling unit in this district shall be a minimum of 1,200 square feet.

**R-22 Single-Family Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of twenty-two thousand (22,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water service.

**R-9 Single-Family Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide single-family residential areas with minimum lot sizes of nine thousand (9,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

**R-6 Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide residential areas with a minimum lot size of six thousand (6,000) square feet, said areas being protected from uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for the district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

**M-R Multiple Residential:** The purpose of this district is to provide orderly development of higher density residential areas for one (1), two (2), three (3) and multi-family dwellings, with minimum lot sizes of six thousand (6,000) square feet, said areas being protected from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. Consideration for designation for this district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

**R-6-M Residential:** The purpose of this district is to create an area that, in addition to conventional housing, allows manufactured homes as a matter of right in a conventional subdivision. Lots in this district

must have a minimum of 6,000 square feet. These districts shall be protected from the encroachment of incompatible uses which are detrimental to a sound residential environment. Consideration for designation for this district requires a minimum of public water and public sewer service.

**M-H-P Manufactured Housing Park:** The purpose of this district is to provide for the development of property that is suitably located and planned for manufactured housing park use. Property developed in this district is to remain in single ownership for rental or leasing purposes only. Manufactured housing parks shall be developed only in strict accordance with the Manufacturing Housing Park provisions of this ordinance.

**P Professional:** The purpose of this district shall be to create an area in which residential, professional, educational, and institutional uses can be compatibly mixed while maintaining a healthful living environment for the residents of the district and at the same time preventing the development of blight and slum conditions. The minimum lot size in this district shall be six thousand (6,000) square feet.

**C-C Community Commercial:** The purpose of this district is to provide for and protect areas that can accommodate a variety of sales and services that are commonly needed by the Ben Hill County citizens.

**G-B General Business:** The purpose of this district shall be to provide for and encourage the proper grouping and development of uses which include a wide variety of sales and services that will best accommodate the needs of the county and the traveling public in order to reduce highway traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and blight along the public streets and highways of the county.

**WLI Wholesale-Light Industrial:** The purpose of this district shall be to provide and protect areas for those wholesale and light industrial uses which do not create excessive noise, odor, smoke, dust, and which do not possess other objectionable characteristics which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods, or to the other uses permitted in the district.

**H-I Heavy Industrial:** The purpose of this district shall be to provide and protect areas for those industrial uses which cannot comply with the regulations of the WLI District.

### III. Maps

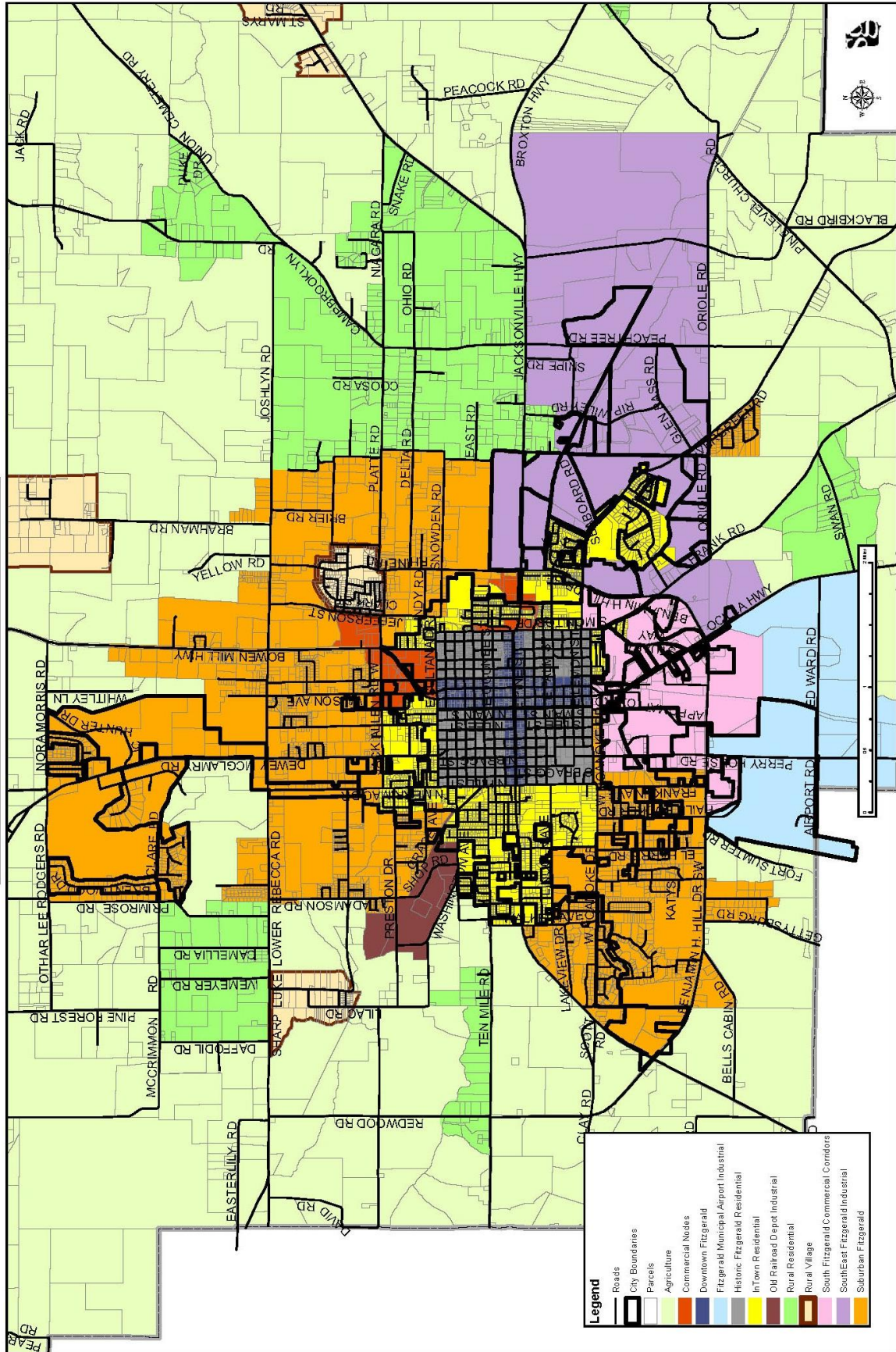


### Ben Hill County Character Areas

**Legend**

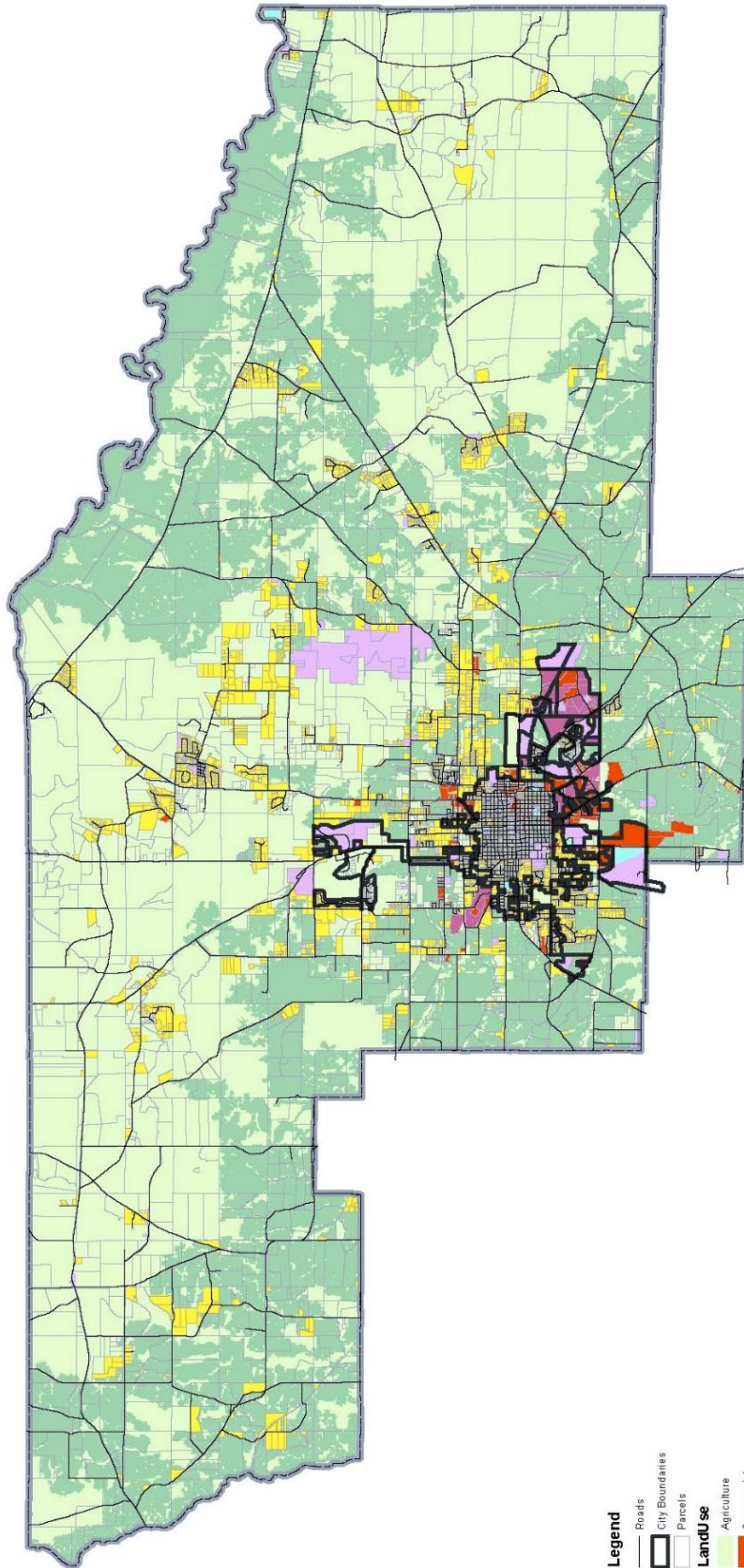
- Roads
- City Boundaries
- Parcels
- Agriculture
- Commercial Nodes
- Downtown Fitzgerald
- Fitzgerald Municipal Airport Industrial
- Historic Fitzgerald Residential
- InTown Residential
- Old Railroad Depot Industrial
- PUG Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Rural Village
- South Fitzgerald Commercial Corridors
- SouthEast Fitzgerald Industrial
- Suburban Fitzgerald

# City of Fitzgerald Character Areas

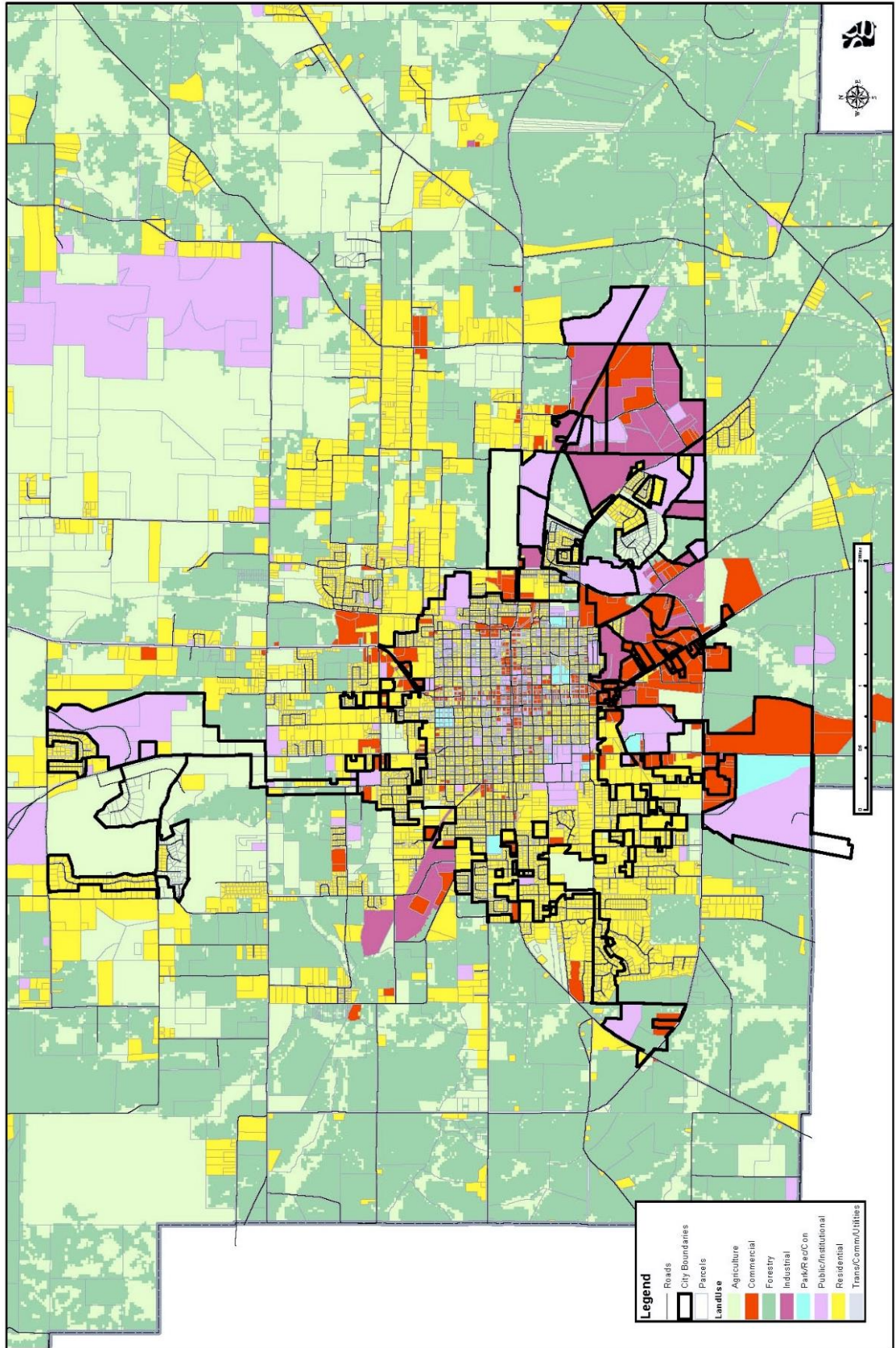




# Ben Hill County Existing Land Use



# City of Fitzgerald Existing Land Use





# **Comprehensive Plan Appendix**

## **Sign-In Sheets Public Hearing Notices**





### Purvis presented with Kiwanis' Heinz Award

Fitzgerald Kiwanis Club member Lamar Purvis received top honors presented with the Henry C. Heinz Award Wednesday by Kiwanis Lt. Gov. Timothy Overington. Looking on are his daughter, Valerie Ann, left, and wife, Tammy. A Kiwanian since 1988, Purvis has served as treasurer for many years and also served on the board of directors. The Henry C. Heinz Endowment was created to honor Georgia Kiwanians who have exhibited outstanding dedication and commitment to Kiwanis. A donation of \$1,000 is made to the Georgia District Foundation and the interest is used to serve the youth of Georgia through scholarships and other financial supports.

### Driver's ed classes free at Wiregrass through December

For a limited time, driver's ed Monday-Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Sessions will be free. Download the registration form at Wiregrass.edu.

### Kick Off - Joint Public Hearing For Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update

A public kick-off meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2015 at the Courthouse Annex Commissioner's Meeting Room, 324 E. Pine St., Fitzgerald, GA 31750. The purpose of this meeting is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan, announce opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Ben Hill County Commission Office at 229-426-5100. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the Public Hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Ariel Godwin, SGRC Planner, at (229) 333-5277.

## Public notices

### Joint Public Hearing For Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update

A public meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2015 in the City Council Meeting Room on the 2nd floor of City Hall, 302 East Central Avenue, Fitzgerald, GA 31750. The purpose of this meeting is to receive and discuss input from the public and community organizations to update the 5-Year Work Plan in the Community Comprehensive Plan.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the City of Fitzgerald at 229-426-5060. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the Public Hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Ariel Godwin, SGRC Planner, at (229) 333-5277.

## Joint Public Workshop On Economic Development For Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update

A public workshop will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 3rd, 2015 in the "The Garden Room at the Grand" (Grand Theater Conference Room), 119 South Main Street, Fitzgerald, GA 31750. The purpose of this meeting is to receive and discuss input from the public and community organizations concerning Economic Development to update the 5-Year Work Plan in the Community Comprehensive Plan.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the City of Fitzgerald at 229-426-5060. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the Public Workshop.

information and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the Security Deed. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 9-13-172.1, which allows for certain procedures regarding the rescission of judicial and nonjudicial sales in the State of Georgia, the Deed Under Power and other foreclosure documents may not be provided until final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan as provided in the preceding paragraph.

CENLAR FSB

As Attorney-in-Fact for  
KATHRYN W. LOTT

Phelan Hallinan Diamond & Jones,  
PLLC, 11675 Great Oaks Way,  
Suite 375, Alpharetta, GA 30022  
Telephone: 770-393-4300  
Fax: 770-393-4310, PH # 25758

This law firm is acting as a debt collector. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

(10/7,14,21,28)

### NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER

Georgia, Ben Hill County  
THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.  
Under and by virtue of the Power of Sale contained in a Security Deed given by Rebekah S Sumner and Dedria H Smith to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Allied Home Mortgage Capital Corporation, its successors and assigns, dated September 9, 2010, recorded in Deed Book 760, Page 31, Ben Hill County, Georgia Records, as last transferred to Lakeview Loan Serv-

Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750.

The sale will be conducted subject (1) to confirmation that the sale is not prohibited under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and (2) to final confirmation and audit of the status of the loan with the holder of the security deed. Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC as

Attorney in Fact for Rebekah S Sumner and Dedria H Smith  
McCalla Raymer, LLC  
1544 Old Alabama Road  
Roswell, Georgia 30076  
(10/7,14,21,28)

Call 426-5078

Perry House Road beside Lakeview  
Hours: 12-4:30 p.m. Tues-Fri  
[www.herald-leader.net](http://www.herald-leader.net)  
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[www.herald-leader.net](http://www.herald-leader.net)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to review and transmit the joint Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2015 in the City Council Meeting Room on the 2nd floor of City Hall, 302 East Central Avenue, Fitzgerald, GA 31750. Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning effort. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the Ben Hill County Commission office, the City of Fitzgerald, and for download at the SGRC website: .

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the City of Fitzgerald at 229-426-5060. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

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

HERALD - LEADER  
FITZGERALD, BEN HILL COUNTY  
OCTOBER 28, 2015 PAGE 5-B



Southern Georgia Regional Commission Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comp Plan Update Kick-off Meeting Date: 6/11/15			
Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Courtney Whitman	County	229-457-7391	cwhitman@benhillcounty.com
Jean Macellin	Sales	229-415-1578	
Jim Casper	CRA	229-423-9252	
Walt Gordon	STATE FORM BUSINESS OWNER	229-423-3448	walt.gordon.got3@stateform.com
Todd Damato	Fitz Ford	229-423-8767	todd@fitzgeraldford.com
Steve Taylor	Southern Therapy	229-423-5048	stevetaylor@windstream.net
Steve Fair	WINDSTREAM	229-424-2012	STEPHEN.FAIR@WINDSTREAM.COM
Eric Stone	CRA	423-9252	WCS-cpas@mchs.com
Vanessa Detton	DNC	423-5600	vdetton@mchs.com
Opel Walters	WCSC	423-9252	
John Crowley	Community Bank	423-4210	john55m@windstream.net
Jack Paulk	" "	423-4221	jackandrispud@yahoo.com

Southern Georgia Regional Commission Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comp Plan Update Kick-off Meeting Date: 6/11/15			
Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Cam Jordan	CITY	423-5063	CAMJORDAN@MCHSR.COM
John William Mowen	CHAMBER	706-340-3874	JOHNWMOWEN@GMAIL.COM

PLEASE PRINT NAME

RON PAULK  
 Jean Paulk  
 Walt Gordon  
 Todd Damato  
 Wyndall Walters  
 Courtney Whitman

<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
William Brown	* WB49 dwd -
Dwain Parrish	
Pensoy Saminsky	
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Gary Smith	
Jeff Sault	
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JERRY P. HARPER	* jharper@hcbi.net

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Ken Mills	
Gudrun Mills	
Ken Adams	Kendelladams65@gmail.com
Brandy Elrod	brandynelrod@gmail.com
Jon Burkovic	grandtheatre@mehsi.com

signed twice



Economic Development Workshop, 7/30/2015

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
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Latonya Shelton	★ teigha_email@gmail.com
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Constance Manley	manleyc@thejessamunplace.org
Alex Tillman	tillman@windstream.net
Courtney Whitman	cwhitman@benhillcounty.com
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signed twice JERRY P. HARPER	★ jharper@hebi.net
signed twice Gerald Thompson	Thompson 31750, Updoo.com
★ Gerald Clouse	★ David Walker Printing Company
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Juan "Edgar" Medellin	Southeastwood Sides@hotmail.com
Jason Davis	★ j.davis140@gmail.com
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Lisa Stone	stonele@ben-hill.k12.ga.us
Gail Stokes	stokesg@ben-hill.k12.ga.us
Jim PARROT	STANDARD Supply Co.
STEVEN McIntyre	g.steve.mcintyre@gmail.com
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Debra Weil	dweil@plantersfirst.com
Wyndall Walters	wyndall@fitzgeraldford.com


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Al Johnson	southgeorgia Realtor@gmail.com
Tommy Roberts Jr.	
Carl McDonald	* c.mcdonald@ppmh.org
Delene B. Clark	
Zach Wilson	
JANESSA MELTON	j.melton@mchsi.com
José Serrano	* serrano73@yahoo.com
Nicci Jordan	Nicci.jordan91@yahoo.com

## Land Use Public Hearing

### Sign In

9/10/2015

#### Name

Sandra Wilcox  
 Brad King  
 Jirco Nino  
 Alex T. Hman  
 Courtney Whitman  
 Gwen Slack  
 Juanita Goodman  
 Dorothy Nawro  
 Tawana Brooks  
 Tropece Rose  
 Cam Vrasan  
 FRANK FEILD  


#### E-mail

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 courtman@benhillcountry.com  
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 brooks+@thejessamineplace.org  
 trose1984@yahoo.com  
 CamVrasan@meht.com C, T, V  
 FFEILD@BENHILLCOUNTY.COM  
 philipj...@adl.com  
 ✓

Workshop, 9/10/2015



PURPOSE.

(12/9,16,23,30)

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Georgia, Ben Hill County  
Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in that certain deed to secure debt (hereinafter referred to as the "Security Deed") from Patricia A. Holland (hereinafter referred to as "Debtor") to JAMS, L.L.P., dated August 27, 2002, recorded in Deed Book 510, pages 57-58, Deed Records of Ben Hill County, Georgia (the "Security Deed"), and for the purpose of paying the indebtedness secured thereby, which is now due and payable, together with the costs of sale, the Secured Creditor will sell on the first Tuesday in January, 2016, at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash before the courthouse door in Ben Hill County, Georgia, within the legal hours of sale, the following described property, to wit:

All of Lot Number 16 in Triangle Subdivision in the City of Fitzgerald, in Land Lot Number 302 in the Fourth Land District of Ben Hill County, Georgia, as shown by plat of said subdivision dated February 22, 1964, and recorded March 12, 1964, in Plat Book 4, page 231 (now Plat Slide Number 490) in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of Ben Hill County, Georgia, and which said plat is hereby made a part hereof by reference thereto.

The street address of said property is **128 Pierce Circle, Fitzgerald, GA 31750.**

The said property will be sold subject to (a) any and all taxes and assessments levied or assessed prior to the current year, (b) ad valorem taxes for the current year, (c) all liens, encumbrances, and other matters of record, if any, that are superior to or have priority over the security deed being foreclosed, and (d) final confirmation that at the time of the sale being advertised herein there was no automatic stay in effect with respect to the above described property due to the filing of a petition for relief under any chapter of the United States Bankruptcy Code with respect to a person having an interest in the above described property.

Notice is hereby given that under the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 9-13-172.1, the Secured Creditor may under certain circumstances rescind the sale being advertised herein, within 30 days after the sale but before the foreclosure deed or deed under power has been delivered to the purchaser at such sale. Unless the sale is rescinded as hereinabove provided, a conveyance will be executed to the purchaser at such sale as authorized under the power of sale contained

## Joint Work Session

Please be advised that the City of Fitzgerald Mayor and City Council and the Ben Hill County Commission Chairman and County Commissioners and County Manager along with Joint Service Department Managers will meet on Wednesday, December 9, 2015 for a Joint Service Budget Work Session.

The Work Session will be held at the Grand Conference Center and will begin at 2:00 p.m.

The HERALD-LEADER  
Fitzgerald, GA  
Dec. 9, 2015  
Page 5-B

## Notice of Public Hearing

A public hearing will be held by the Fitzgerald City Council at the Council Chambers at City Hall, 302 East Central Avenue, Fitzgerald, GA 31750, on the 14th day of December, 2015, at 6:00 p.m., to give consideration to application number 0107 by Lyon Investment Co., Inc., for an amendment of the Zoning Ordinance for the City of Fitzgerald. It is desired and requested that the following property be annexed and rezoned from G-B county to G-B city.

The property is owned by Lyon Investment Co., Inc. The address of the property is 203 Ocilla Hwy., Fitzgerald, GA 31750. The legal description of the property is 13 6 7 1&2, and the land is measuring approximately 355.84 feet by 175.40 feet, 1.18 acres. The application is available for public inspection at the zoning administrator office located at 115 N. Grant St., Fitzgerald, GA 31750 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. excluding holidays.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to adopt the Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update will be held on Tuesday, January 5, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Ben Hill County Commission Meeting Room, 324 East Pine Street, Fitzgerald, GA 31750. Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning effort. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the Ben Hill County Commission office, at the City of Fitzgerald and their respective websites, and for download at the SGRC website: [www.sgrc.us](http://www.sgrc.us).

For more information, contact the Ben Hill County Commission at (229) 426-5100, or the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-5277.



## *Board of Commissioners*

### *Ben Hill County Georgia*

402-A East Pine Street  
Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750-2866  
Telephone (229) 426-5100 Telefax (229) 426-5630

Philip C. Jay III, Chairman  
O.D. Netter Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Bennie Calloway, Commissioner  
Daniel Cowan, Commissioner  
John Mooney, Commissioner

[www.benhillcounty.com](http://www.benhillcounty.com)

Frank E. Feild, County Manager  
Donna R. Prather, County Clerk  
Tim Kegebein, Road Superintendent  
Toni Sawyer, County Attorney

R16-001

January 6, 2016

#### **Amendment to 2016 Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update**

At its Regular Meeting on January 5, 2016, the Ben Hill County Board of Commissioners adopted the Draft 2016 Ben Hill County and City of Fitzgerald Comprehensive Plan Update. The Commission stipulated the following recommendations, which were received during the Public Hearing, be included as an incomplete attachment to this Update. The Commission further directed these recommendations be reviewed by the citizens committees and staff that prepared the original Update, and then included in the Comprehensive Plan.

- Ben Hill County/Fitzgerald needs more diversity among school teachers and administrators, police, and City and County employees.
- More economic development efforts need to be focused on African-American-owned businesses.

Frank E. Feild  
County Manager

*Frank E. Feild*  
*Christina Evans*