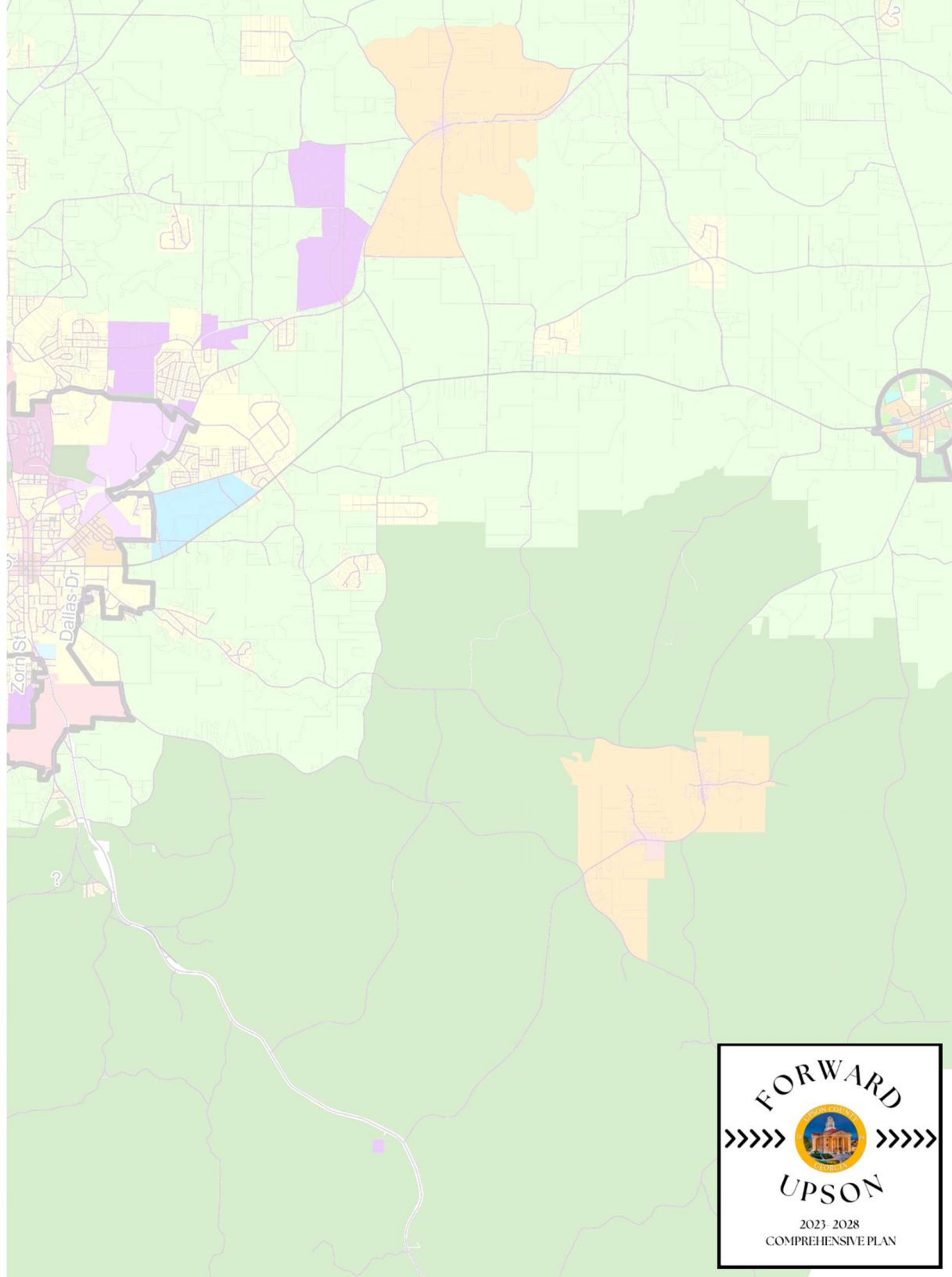


# Upson County, the City of Thomaston and the City of Yatesville

## JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2023 Update

*To Be Adopted July 2023*



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## 1

## CHAPTER ONE. Executive Summary

The Upson County Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that presents the community's vision and primary goals for achieving long-range growth and development in the county.

This executive summary presents a summary of Plan Highlights and Putting the Plan into Action discussion. The first section, **Plan Highlights**, provides a brief overview of the Community Vision, including key goals organized by Vision Theme. **Putting the Plan into Action** summarizes the steps and players involved in comprehensive plan implementation.

### Plan Highlights

Recognizing that Upson County may continue to have slow population growth, this plan is intended to balance opportunities for economic development with the desire to maintain existing rural and small-town ambiance and historical integrity. This plan also acknowledges the need to plan in more specific detail for community revitalization/redevelopment, open space protection and connectivity. Likely future planning efforts will address recreation, greenways, improvement and expansion of water and sewer facilities, and coordination between the cities and the county.

The Community Vision, as described by detailed strategies in Chapter 3 and the Future Development Guide in Chapter 4, is summarized below as primary goals organized by three Vision Themes: *Development Patterns*, *Resource Conservation*, and *Social and Economic Development*. These themes are intended to organize and represent citizens' ideas and concerns related to the topics of economic development, public facilities, community and housing revitalization, land use, natural resources, and historic resources.

#### *Development Patterns (DP) Goal*

- DP Goal 1:** Maintain small-town character and cultural identity while supporting growth.
- DP Goal 2:** Ensure that the internet infrastructure needs of current and future populations remains served by safe, efficient, and cost-effective systems. Broadband services are critical infrastructure on similar level of importance as other necessary utilities.
- DP Goal 3:** Continue to enhance downtown Thomaston and support local businesses.
- DP Goal 4:** Minimize land use conflicts with agricultural activity.
- DP Goal 5:** Continue to improve code enforcement and development standards.

#### *Resource Conservation (RC) Goals*

- RC Goal 1:** Expand recreational opportunities.
- RC Goal 2:** Protect water resources and improve water quality.
- RC Goal 3:** Protect natural resources and prime farmland.

#### *Social and Economic Development (SED) Goals*

- SED Goal 1:** Expand industries, businesses, and job opportunities.
- SED Goal 2:** Provide and maintain sustainable water and sewer utilities.
- SED Goal 3:** Expand social services.
- SED Goal 4:** Improve intergovernmental coordination.
- SED Goal 5:** Expand housing options.

#### *Mobility (M) Goals*

- M Goal 1:** Enhance mobility through multi-modal transportation system improvements.

## Putting the Plan into Action

Adopting a comprehensive plan may seem like the end of the process, but it actually represents the beginning of a new phase: *implementation*. Implementing the plan requires an understanding of the plan recommendations and tools available for putting the plan into action. In short, the plan is a tool that provides a policy basis for:

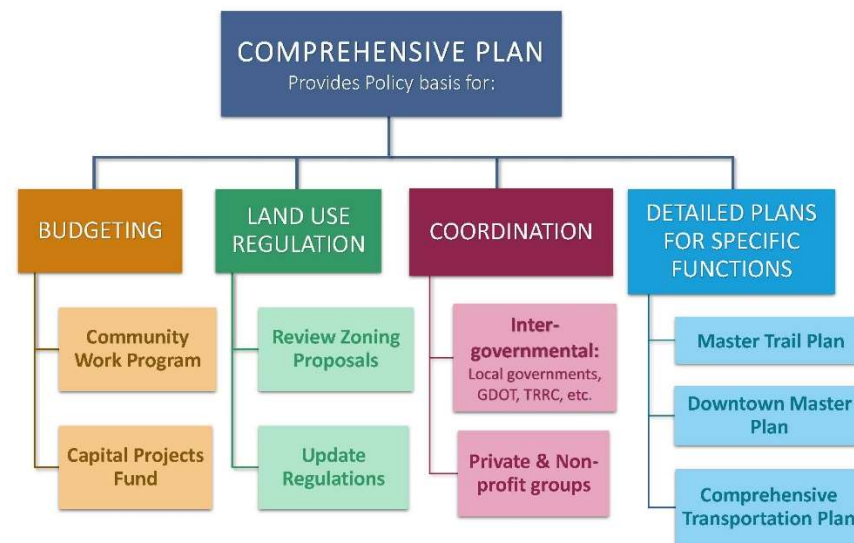
- Budgeting
- Local land use regulations
- Coordination among local governments, state and federal agencies, utilities, regional agencies, the school board, and community organizations
- Detailed plans for specific local government functions
- Promotion and economic development

### Budgeting

The Implementation Program (see Chapter 5) outlines the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision for future development and for implementing the Future Development Guide. A five-year Community Work Program (CWP) prioritizes the recommended strategies and assigns responsible parties to each. As presented, it provides elected officials and staff with a prioritized “to-do” list in the form of a policy guide.

### Land Use Regulation

The policy basis for land use regulation occurs in two specific ways. First, the Future Development Guide provides a tool for evaluating rezoning requests. Second, local zoning and subdivision regulations sometimes require amendments based on the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.



### Future Development Map

The Future Development Guide (see Chapter 4) consists of the countywide Future Development Map and character area policy. The Future Development Map assigns a unique character area to each parcel within the County and municipal limits. The character area policy describes, with text and illustrations, the vision for growth and development for each character area shown on the map. The Future Development Map is used to guide future development decisions; proposed zoning change requests are reviewed for consistency with the character area policy associated with the Future Development Map.

### Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

Evaluation and adoption of changes to regulations that address land use and development is a common follow-up action after adoption of a comprehensive plan. The purpose of any zoning updates and/or subdivision regulations is to ensure that local regulatory tools support the implementation of the Future Development Map and the guiding vision and goals in this plan.

## Intergovernmental Coordination

The policy basis for coordination occurs in two major components. First, county departments should coordinate departmental plans with the Comprehensive Plan. Second, coordination should occur between city governments within the county and with other entities, whether at the local (public or private), regional, or state level.

### *Service Delivery*

In the future, the comprehensive plan should inform review of service delivery strategies to ensure that they support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes ensuring that future facilities are planned to meet the service demand promoted by the plan. For example, future planning to provide infrastructure that supports targeted employment growth should be consistent with areas shown on the Future Development Map (and described in the Future Development Guide). The County currently participates in Service Delivery Strategies with the City of Thomaston, City of Yatesville, Thomaston-Upson County Airport Authority, Thomaston-Upson County Industrial Development Authority, Hospital Authority of Upson County, Upson County Emergency Management Agency, Thomaston-Upson County Library Board, Upson County Health Department and Thomaston-Upson County Chamber of Commerce.

### *Coordination*

This plan provides the opportunity for the Upson County local governments and other entities to view future needs from a common policy playbook. For example, private developers, utility providers, and economic development agencies can each recognize that the community has designated specific areas for future growth and specific areas for rural preservation. As a result, these entities should be able to work together to ensure that their projects and policies support the Community Vision. In addition, coordination among Upson County, Thomaston, Yatesville, other local governments and with other local (public and private) entities can facilitate implementation of community goals.

## Detailed Plans for Special Functions

Functional plans address specific government services such as parks, recreation, and economic development. These individual plans can address issues and concerns raised by stakeholders during the public planning process in greater detail than a comprehensive plan. This Comprehensive Plan recommends the development and implementation of several stand-alone plans that will ultimately be coordinated with and supplemental to the Comprehensive Plan.

**Various Park Plans:** Thomaston is planning to develop separate plans for several existing parks to guide various planned and desired enhancements over the next several years. From additional sports fields and recreation amenities to upgrades to existing structures to planning future connections to the Greatest Generation Park, these plans will unify current and future projects for each of the parks.

**Code Enforcement:** Upson County and Thomaston have noted ongoing efforts to increase code enforcement throughout the county due to maintenance concerns with existing properties in both commercial and residential areas. The code enforcement staff enforce ordinances, respond to maintenance concerns, and uphold property maintenance standards.

## 2

## CHAPTER TWO. Introduction

Upson County is projected to experience slow growth over the next 20 years. This comprehensive plan update process has engaged citizens to create a community vision for future development that is foundational to Upson County's Comprehensive Plan.

### Purpose

The Upson County Comprehensive Plan represents the growth and development policy for Upson County, Thomaston, and Yatesville, as expressed by a Future Development Map and supporting goals and implementation strategies. This plan also serves the purpose of meeting the intent and requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. Preparation of a plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining status as a Qualified Local Government (QLG).

### Scope

This plan addresses economic development, housing, natural and historic resources, land use and development patterns, and community revitalization. Three Vision Themes are used (see Chapter 3) for the purpose of expressing community goals and implementing strategies. They are addressed as individual components in the Existing Conditions Summary (see Appendix B), which provides a summary of existing local conditions and trends that served as a basis for the identification of community needs and opportunities.

A description of current conditions and issues is also provided in Appendix B-1. It is important to note that the topic of transportation is

primarily addressed in the Three Rivers Regional Commission Transportation Plan (2019), which is incorporated by reference.

### Why We Plan

Comprehensive planning is an important management tool for promoting a strong, healthy community. A comprehensive plan is a significant policy document that guides the physical development of a community; it can be used to promote orderly and rational development, physical attractiveness and economic viability while preserving important natural and historic resources.

The comprehensive plan allows the community to become more certain about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met. The plan helps the county invest its money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, parks, and other facilities to maintain and improve residents' quality of life as well as economic development prospects.

The Upson County Comprehensive Plan represents these and additional ideas discussed during the public participation process. It lists needs and opportunities, supporting goals and strategies, desired development patterns and land uses, and a five-year prioritized work program (Community Work Program) to implement the plan.

### Community Participation and Plan Development

Creating a functional comprehensive plan begins with defining a common vision for the future development of the community. A community vision is the overall image of what the community wants to be and how it wants to look at some point in the future. It is the starting point for creating a plan and actions to implement the plan. A successful visioning process requires meaningful participation from a wide range of community stakeholders.





### Visioning Process

The visioning process, or citizen participation process, for this plan update included multiple layers of participation from residents and stakeholders. Several focus groups, open house meetings, stakeholder meetings, and an online survey provided opportunities for input, as described in this section.

#### *Kick-Off Meeting*

The countywide Kick-Off Meeting took place in October 2022 at a Board of Commissioners meeting. The planning process, schedule, and future public involvement opportunities were presented to the public, who were invited to provide comment.

#### *Focus Groups*

Participants provided their input on the future of Upson County at focus group workshops that were held throughout the fall and winter of 2022-2023. Public input was received via prioritization exercises, facilitated

discussion, and one-on-one conversations with the planning team. Visioning Workshop Focus Group participants prioritized and contributed to a list of community assets, issues, and dreams that were compiled from responses to a community survey. Participants also provided input during a mapping exercise intended to generate discussion about desired community character (e.g., appropriate land uses, amount of open space, transportation, etc.), including which areas of the county are likely to support change or should remain relatively unchanged.



#### *Future Land Use Stakeholder Meeting*

A Future Land Use Stakeholder Meeting was held May 5<sup>th</sup>. County and City stakeholders participated in a small group map exercise and conversed with the planning team to develop scenarios for preferred land use types and intensities across the county.

#### *Open House*

The public was invited to comment on draft recommendations of the plan at a countywide Open House held May 18, 2023, at the Upson/Thomaston Senior Center. Specifically, goals, strategies, and character areas associated with the Future Development Map were



displayed for review and comment. Additionally, a graphic representation of the existing conditions assessment and public input summary was provided. The meeting format allowed participants to drop-in at their convenience and stay as little or as long as they desired. Participants spoke individually with planning team members and filled out comment forms to present questions or concerns.



#### *Community Survey*

A forty-five question online community survey was developed and promoted throughout the community as another forum for providing public input. It was open from October 2022 through December of 2022, and hard copies were provided, as necessary. In addition to being advertised on the County website, the surveys were also distributed at the public meetings held during the visioning process, and other local events. In total, approximately 606 responses were received.

#### *Flyers, E-Mail Blasts and Virtual Meeting Platform*

Throughout the planning process, flyers were distributed both in person and electronically to announce and promote public meetings. An email distribution list was continually updated and was used to publicize public involvement opportunities. Additionally, public meetings and workshops were advertised on the county's website and promoted by local media. As a convenience, draft plan materials were made available for review using a virtual public meeting platform.

## Chapter Summaries

The sequence of chapters in this plan is structured to follow the planning process, which can be thought of as answering the questions, "Where do

we want to be in 20 years?", followed by "How do we get there?" The plan is organized into the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: Executive Summary
- Chapter 2: Introduction
- Chapter 3: Community Vision
- Chapter 4: Future Development Guide
- Chapter 5: Implementation Program
- Appendices

The chapters that follow this introductory chapter are summarized below.

### Chapter 3: Community Vision

The Community Vision chapter describes the community's vision for growth and development for the next 20 years. This vision, which was developed with an extensive public visioning process, is defined by Vision Themes.

The Vision Themes organize primary needs and opportunities and corresponding goals and strategies under the following headings: Development Patterns, Resource Conservation, and Social and Economic Development. The listed strategies under each topic are used to create the Implementation Program chapter.

### Chapter 4: Future Development Guide

The Future Development Guide defines the community's desired development patterns and guides future decision-making related to the physical development of the community. It is comprised of a Future Development Map and supporting character area policy.

This chapter presents the recommended character areas for Upson County. Character area policy text describes the intent, general characteristics, application, primary land uses, and design principles for each character area, including discussion of the unique quality worth preserving or areas that have been identified with the potential to develop into something new or different.

## Chapter 5: Implementation Guide

The Implementation Program identifies specific actions necessary to achieve the community's vision. This chapter incorporates the strategies presented within the Community Vision and Future Development Guide chapters into a plan of action. The Implementation Program includes ordinances, programs, community improvements or investments, additional plans or studies, administrative systems, and financing arrangements or other initiatives to be put in place to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

The Community Work Program prioritizes strategic implementation actions over the next five years and assigns responsible parties, identifies potential funding sources, and provides a timeline for completion of each. Chapter 5 also details the specifics of maintaining the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with state requirements.

## Appendices

The appendices supplement the information presented in Chapters 1-5 of the Comprehensive Plan as described below:

- Appendix A – Report of Accomplishments
- Appendix B – Public Participation
- Appendix C – Future Development Maps
- Appendix D – Existing Conditions Summary

## CHAPTER THREE. Community Vision:

Upton County, Thomaston, and Yatesville have unique needs and opportunities related to development patterns and projected future growth. The Community Vision chapter uses a series of Vision Themes to describe a shared ‘community vision’ – what the community envisions for its future – in terms of identified needs and opportunities that are addressed by recommended goals and strategies.

### Vision Themes

The Vision Themes organize primary needs and opportunities identified during the planning process as needing to be addressed, followed by goals and strategies that, in turn, address these needs and opportunities. Vision Themes represent the ideas and concerns of participants in the planning process and narrow the big picture vision to specific strategies that aim to make the Community Vision a reality. Recommended strategies are presented in the Implementation Program chapter as specific action items to be undertaken by the local governments and supporting agencies.

The themes are:

- **Development Patterns**
- **Resource Conservation**
- **Social and Economic Development**
- **Mobility**

These themes generally address the planning topics of land use and transportation (Development Patterns), natural and historic resources (Resource Conservation), and economic development, housing, and community revitalization (Social and Economic Development).

### Development Patterns (DP)

#### *Primary Needs and Opportunities*

#### **Maintain small-town character**

As Upton County grows, there will be pressures for development and redevelopment. Throughout the Visioning Process, participants expressed the need to preserve existing character. Stakeholders identified a need for strategic growth, including nurturing local and small businesses, preserving historic sites, improving quality of housing in some neighborhoods, and creating more housing stock in strategic locations. Regarding businesses, stakeholders identified that buildings on the Thomaston square are being under-utilized. Additionally, there is a need for retail and shops that reflect citizen needs, wants, and character.

Desired development patterns include encouraging the location of higher density and intensity developments in concentrated areas to avoid strip development. This can be achieved through nodal development within city limits along with specific sites designated for residential development within the county. Infill development and redevelopment should be encouraged in older, existing neighborhoods and areas of the community where opportunity exists that is compatible with the character of the surrounding area. Stakeholders recognize that Upton County is located within easy driving distance to metro Atlanta and provides a more affordable place to live with access nearby amenities. As such, planning should build upon the benefits of Upton County’s regional location. Future development planning should encourage retirement communities, walkable areas, and greenspaces as development aligns with desired character and future needs.

#### **Preserve open space and agricultural land**

During the visioning process, the community highlighted natural resource assets, also identifying the need to focus on preservation of natural resources. Spewell Bluff Park was frequently discussed as an environmental asset and a recreation area to preserve. Stakeholders identified strong agricultural programs and resources, which can be a



foundation for growth in the agricultural economy that also preserves natural resources.

### **Minimize land use conflicts with agricultural uses**

Land use conflicts with pre-existing agricultural uses is a concern for both growing residential areas and from a preservation of agricultural land perspective. In areas with growing demand for residential neighborhoods adjacent to active agriculture, there are concerns with farming and livestock restrictions due to neighborhood complaints. Additionally, stakeholders stated concerns with restrictions on some agricultural uses within city limits. Agricultural lands and uses should be preserved in large portions of the county and aligned with animal ordinances, particularly adjacent or within the cities. Agricultural areas should be protected from dense residential development the right to farm must be preserved in agriculture areas. Additionally, stakeholders noted that local regulations may be discouraging investment in agriculture; ways to further support agricultural investment in the county should be evaluated agricultural contributes significantly to community character and potential job creation.

### **Enhanced design standards for all development**

The quality of new residential development has been an issue of concern. This concern is tied to code enforcement issues with existing residential areas. Also, residents have tended to associate multi-family housing developments with low-quality, low-income housing, which exhibits a skewed view of the potential of multi-family developments that could be properly developed in Thomaston. With the construction quality of such developments voiced by citizens as a concern, the current development standards for multi-family developments should be reviewed to ensure high quality standards are applied to new structures. These standards, as well as commonly approved conditions of zoning relating to design, should be evaluated to determine which provisions should be integrated into other zoning regulations to ensure higher quality and consistent design standards are applied countywide.

Construction and site design standards should also be enhanced for commercial and industrial developments, especially where located

adjacent to residential areas. All buffer and screening requirements should be enforced and maintained to ensure beneficial development.

### **Improvements in Infrastructure**

Stakeholder feedback highlights the need for improvements in infrastructure, including transportation options, roads and bridges, utility infrastructure, and fire protection. The need for infrastructure improvements in older areas was specifically identified. Utility expansion should continue to be studied to determine best alignment with expected future development. Additionally, there are noted issues with the road system with regard to log trucking. Traffic study and routing improvements are needed to promote safety and quality of life, particularly in downtown Thomaston.

### **Broadband Service**

In June 2019, the OneGeorgia Authority established the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative (GBDI). As part of that Initiative, a fund was established to provide a program of financial assistance that includes grants, loans and other forms of assistance to finance activities that lead to installation or expansion of facilities and equipment which provide broadband services in unserved areas. Broadband services are defined by the State of Georgia as wired or wireless terrestrial service that consists of the capability to transmit at a rate of not less than 25 megabits per second in the downstream direction and at least three (3) megabits per second in the upstream direction to end users and in combination with such service provides access to the internet or computer processing, information storage or protocol conversion.

The GBDI fund can be tapped by applying for funding. Eligible applicants, such as counties and cities, partner with a service provider. There are 110 possible points to be scored when applying for the GBDI funding. Eight of those points can be gotten by the governmental partner in the application holding the Broadband Ready Community designation. That designation can be achieved by 1) a county or municipality having a Comprehensive Plan that includes a broadband element to ensure that a community adopts a strategy that demonstrates the promotion of

broadband and 2) a county or municipality adopting the broadband model ordinance or its equivalent that signals that the government has taken steps to reduce obstacles to broadband infrastructure development.

Upson County (Ordinance No. 272 adopted March 9, 2021) and the City of Thomaston have adopted their broadband ordinances.

The Upson County portion of the statewide Georgia Broadband Availability Map shows that a large portion of the central portion of Upson County has broadband available, but the eastern and western areas are unserved. Upson County will pursue filling these gaps.

Source: DCA 2022 Georgia Broadband Availability Map

### Code Enforcement and Development Standards

In connection with a lack of affordable housing, stakeholders also noted concerns with the condition of some existing housing and neighborhoods. There were many comments regarding blighted areas that need revitalization well as concerns with landlords not being held to property and maintenance standards. Additionally, there are some citizen concerns with the conditions of some commercial properties.

### Georgia Broadband Availability Map

#### Legend

##### Census Block Status

- Served
- Unserved
- No Locations

##### Unserved Locations

- Unserved at publication

##### Post Publication Impacts

- Impacted Blocks

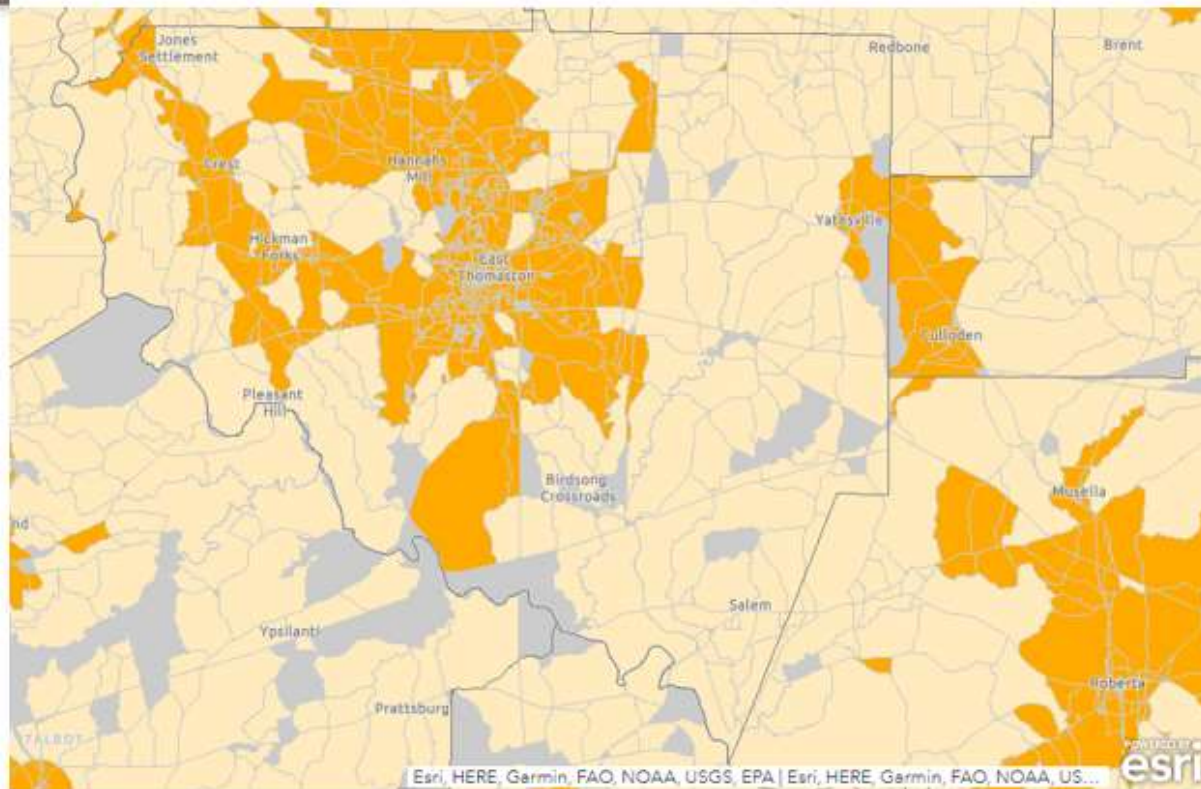
##### Broadband Programs

- USDA Reconnect (Approved)
- FCC RDOF (Terrestrial)
- ARPA Grant Projects
- NTIA BIP (Approved)
- Capital Project Fund (Round 1)

#### Description

The map portrays broadband statistics for the State of Georgia. Statistics are available by census block, county and legislative boundary.

The Impacted Blocks indicate where the served status of addresses/locations have been impacted by data made available after map publication.



## Goals and Strategies

### **DP Goal 1: Maintain small-town character and cultural identity while supporting growth.**

*DP Strategy 1.1:* Use the Future Development Guide as a basis for decisions about new development and redevelopment, while planning for expansion and growth.

*DP Strategy 1.2:* *Support historical architectural and building standards, historic preservation programs, investments, and historic guidelines that increase value to the community and maintain small-town character.*

### **DP Goal 2: Ensure that the internet infrastructure needs of current and future populations remains served by safe, efficient, and cost-effective systems. Broadband services are critical infrastructure on similar level of importance as other necessary utilities.**

*DP Strategy 2.1:* Improve broadband infrastructure where possible and needed for growth.

*DP Strategy 2.2:* Encourage service providers to offer service to rural residents when installing or upgrading fiber or other broadband technology that utilizes public right of way.

*DP Strategy 2.3:* Ensure that broadband infrastructure will be in place to ensure equitable access to broadband services, including fostering an affordable rate for residents and businesses.

### **DP Goal 3: Continue to enhance downtown Thomaston and support local businesses.**

*DP Strategy 3.1:* Implement, expand, and update the Thomaston downtown master plan as needed in the future.

*DP Strategy 3.2:* Encourage local small business through communications and advertising, small business days, and by promoting downtown Thomaston locations.

### **DP Goal 4: Minimize land use conflicts with agricultural activity.**

*DP Strategy 4.1:* Identify locations of frequent land use conflicts between neighborhoods and adjacent agricultural land.

*DP Strategy 4.2:* Maintain residential use at very low-density levels in the vicinity of agricultural uses.

*DP Strategy 4.3:* Evaluate animal ordinances and update or revise as needed.

### **DP Goal 5: Continue to improve code enforcement and development standards.**

*DP Strategy 5.1:* Enforce current codes for property and building maintenance in order to reduce blight concerns.

*DP Strategy 5.2:* Enhance and enforce corridor appearance standards.

## Resource Conservation (RC)

### *Primary Needs and Opportunities*

#### **Encourage and Develop more Recreation Opportunities**

Stakeholders discussed a need for more park and recreation options, including more recreational activities for children and youth. Current parks and recreation facilities should be evaluated with respect to expected areas of growth and need based on the location of neighborhoods. Additionally, stakeholders support promoting recreational tourism in Upson County to build upon its recreational resources. Sprewell Bluff Park was specifically highlighted as a recreational asset, and the County has plans to implement expansion and

maintenance projects at Sprewell Bluff Park. Greatest Generation Park is another park that will continue to be expanded and improved upon based on demand for services at this park.

### **Protect Upson County's existing natural resources**

In alignment with expanding recreational opportunities, focus should also be applied to protecting open spaces and natural resources, especially with regards to prime farmland, water resources, and significant natural resources areas. It is important to maintain open space in agriculture and forestry areas. Prime farmlands should be preserved for farming purposes to the extent possible. Additionally, Upson could permanently protect some areas of the county from development through purchasing and designating land as parks, trails, or recreation spaces. Environmentally sensitive areas should specifically be evaluated and protected from future development. Current ordinances should be reviewed to ensure open space and active agriculture preservation opportunities are maximized.

### **Evaluate agritourism potential**

Stakeholders expressed an interest in and belief that agritourism could be a successful tourism opportunity for Upson County. Building upon Upson County's location near metro Atlanta and Macon, agritourism could be a good fit for the county's agricultural assets and supportive of local businesses. The 2018 Georgia Department of Economic Development's Tourism Product Development Resource Team Report can be references as a strategy basis.

### **Goals and Strategies**

#### **RC Goal 1: Expand recreational opportunities.**

*RC Strategy 1.1:* Evaluate where new recreational facilities are needed and expand recreational activities for all ages.

*RC Strategy 1.2:* Acquire new land for parks in unincorporated Upson County.

*RC Strategy 1.3:* Support existing parks, park enhancements, maintenance, and trail development.

#### **RC Goal 2: Protect water resources and Upson County water quality.**

*RC Strategy 2.1:* Coordinate with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) on future actions that may be necessary to remain in compliance with the Water Resource Management Plan.

#### **RC Goal 3: Protect natural resources and prime farmland.**

*RC Strategy 3.1:* Preserve and protect critical natural resources, including open space and prime farmland.

### **Social and Economic Development (SED)**

#### *Primary Needs and Opportunities*

#### **Employment, job opportunities, and expanded business diversity**

Stakeholders identified a need for increased employment opportunities including more jobs in industrial and technology-based industries. There is a strong desire for better, higher paying jobs and economic growth, including promoting industry and bringing jobs to the county. New businesses should be encouraged to come to the Upson County with appropriate incentives. Additionally, local and small businesses would benefit from support, including marketing efforts and local government initiatives. For example, the County could encourage support for small businesses and promote "shop small" events.

In connection with the perceived need for quality jobs, specific technical training programs could be developed for the high schools and technical schools in Upson County. Employee retention was also mentioned as a weakness. Stakeholders emphasized the need to catch up with technology to aid with labor force retention and encourage technology learning for students and adults. The school systems need more technical courses and job training programs.



A frequently cited need voiced during the public participation process was the shortage of local retail and dining options, both in downtown Thomaston and in other parts of the county. In addition, residents and business owners noted the limited availability of higher paying job opportunities and the need to expand opportunities for new industry and businesses to locate in the county. Moreover, residents and business owners expressed the need to mitigate parking issues and provide additional parking areas in downtown Thomaston. The parking issues may just be in the downtown square area of Thomaston, but the city should evaluate parking improvement options.

Future Development activity centers should build upon existing foundations that can be strategically developed to support a variety of employment opportunities. This includes industrial development areas as well as the medical park area. Industrial development is expected to continue in the area directly adjacent to the existing industrial park located to the northeast of Thomaston. Future medical-related uses should be encouraged to locate in the Medical Park area, including offices, rehabilitation centers, and even senior or assisted living facilities. Additionally, commercial development should be located along specific corridors and at strategic intersection locations. Commercial development can capitalize on commuter traffic by providing access to services and goods along major routes throughout the county.

### **Social Services**

Stakeholders highlighted a need for a variety of social services that would benefit Upson County. Improving education is a common theme, including community education, better schools, and preparing students for employment. Along with general improvements to the quality of schools, stakeholders discussed a need for additional school programs, recreational activities for kids and adults, and transportation for senior citizens. Activities in general are currently lacking; promoting entertainment, including more affordable and accessible evening recreation and cultural activities for youth and adults, would benefit the community.

Many stakeholders expressed concerns about crime and public safety challenges in the community and schools. There are also concerns about drug use. More substance abuse and mental health services are needed within Upson County.

### **Improve Intergovernmental Coordination**

Stakeholders identified a need for better communication amongst governmental entities as well as improved communication to the public. Citizens request improved communication across many subject areas. From improved communication and information sharing with residents, social media can be better utilized to share information with the community. Stakeholders also mentioned a need for a community outreach or citizen engagement program for increased transparency and information sharing. There is also a need for additional school board collaboration with County and city government, as well as ways to share school related information with the community.

Coordination among local, regional, state, and federal agencies increases efficiency and encourages partnerships that can benefit the economy. The Industrial Development authority should coordinate to promote new opportunities and attract industry to the area. Comments from the community survey and public workshops noted the need for enhanced direct coordination.

Coordination among local governments and regional and state agencies (including Upson County School District, GDOT, Norfolk Southern) is encouraged in order to efficiently address the social and economic needs of Upson County and surrounding area. In addition, the Industrial Development authorities should work together to develop initiatives to attract new businesses and promote new business opportunities.

### **Increase Housing Options**

Many stakeholders emphasized the need for housing options affordable to the local workforce, including diverse housing types and opportunities for young people to afford homes in the county. Supporting a range of housing options in terms of dwelling type, size, and density, meets local

market needs and accommodates a diverse population, from single family detached homes to multifamily apartment developments. While single family residential dwellings are expected to remain the predominant housing type, incorporating multifamily developments (duplexes/triplexes/quadplexes, townhomes, apartments) can increase the effectiveness of mixed-use neighborhoods. Higher density development should be appropriately located in Thomaston, where density already exists, and where the existing character and infrastructure supports such development. Tiny homes and smaller, affordable housing types should be evaluated to determine if these housing types could be compatible in specific areas as affordable housing options. Stakeholders support expanding single-family housing options along with multi-family options in Thomaston and indicate there is a need for more high-quality apartments with amenities in Thomaston.

Additionally, there is a need for more housing for seniors, especially in connection to transportation options for senior citizens. Stakeholders noted an influx of senior citizens into Upson County, which corresponds to the noted increase in the older age groups in the county.

### **Maintain high quality services for residents**

During the Visioning Process, dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of the water and sewer network infrastructure were repeatedly cited as an urgent issue. Insufficient infrastructure can be detrimental to water quality and can limit ability to expand and attract new industry. Additional funding sources should be pursued to address needed infrastructure improvements in strategic locations.

A lack of water and sewer utility access was often mentioned by stakeholders as a limiting factor for new businesses and residences. Upson County and Thomaston should collaboratively evaluate where expansion of water and sewer services will be possible, sustainable and effective.

### **Goals and Strategies**

#### **SED Goal 1: Expand industries, businesses, and job opportunities.**

- SED Strategy 1.1:* Support small businesses, including “shop small” events.
- SED Strategy 1.2:* Create technical training programs to prepare the workforce and students for technical and technology jobs.
- SED Strategy 1.3:* Evaluate to determine desirable industries, retail, and commercial business to pursue.
- SED Strategy 1.4:* Support the expansion and sustainable development of the Thomaston Upson County airport.

#### **SED Goal 2: Provide and maintain sustainable water and sewer utilities.**

- SED Strategy 2.1:* Evaluate and strategically expand water and sewer services in a sustainable manner and to provide for new businesses and residences in strategic locations.

#### **SED Goal 3: Expand social services.**

- SED Strategy 3.1:* Expand recreational activity options for children and adults.
- SED Strategy 3.2:* Provide additional entertainment options in connection with city related events and cultural activities.
- SED Strategy 3.3:* Address crime and drug use concerns.
- SED Strategy 3.4:* Expand mental health services.

#### **SED Goal 4: Improve intergovernmental coordination.**

- SED Strategy 4.1:* Identify ways to improve communication amongst governmental entities as well as improve communication and updates to the public.

**SED Goal 5: Expand housing options.**

- SED Strategy 5.1:* Evaluate ways to increase affordable housing options, including how codes can be revised to support a range of housing options, housing types and density, including mixed-use, accessory dwelling units, and smaller home sizes.
- SED Strategy 5.2:* Establish policies and ordinances to address smaller than typical residential structures.
- SED Strategy 5.3:* Expand multi-family housing options within areas served by sewer infrastructure and compatible with higher density development.
- SED Strategy 5.4:* Support increased housing and services for seniors according to demand
- SED Strategy 5.5:* Evaluated and implement redevelopment housing according to historic preservation guidelines.

**Mobility (M)***Primary Needs and Opportunities***Improvements in Transportation Infrastructure**

Stakeholder feedback highlights the need for improvements in infrastructure, including transportation options, roads, and bridges. Stakeholders noted that transportation options for seniors in connection to access to medical care and shopping are lacking and would benefit from expansion. Thomaston residents highlighted a need for evaluating pedestrian and bicycle safety and service improvements. The need for infrastructure improvements in older areas was specifically identified. Additionally, there are noted issues with the road system with regard to log trucking and general trucking impacts that would benefit from a traffic study and routing improvements.

**Goals and Strategies****M Goal 1: Enhance mobility through multi-modal transportation system improvements.**

- M Strategy 1.1:* Provide additional transportation options for senior citizens in connection with medical care and shopping needs.
- M Strategy 1.2:* Evaluate transportation system concerns related to log trucking and general trucking impacts to determine if routing improvements are needed.
- M Strategy 1.3:* Identify roadways and bridges in need of improvements and prioritize improvements.
- M Strategy 1.4:* Assess and implement pedestrian safety improvements, bicycle infrastructure needs, and other needed micromobility studies.

## 4 CHAPTER FOUR. Future Development Guide

A key component of the Comprehensive Plan is the Future Development Guide, including the Future Development Map, which depicts unique character areas that describe the types of development and land use desired for particular areas. In addition to the goals and strategies presented in Chapter 3, this guide explains and helps illustrate the community vision for growth and development in Upson County.

The Future Development Guide includes three sections:

- Future Development Map
- Character Area-Based Planning Description & Narrative
- Character Area Policy Description & Narrative

### Future Development Map

The Future Development Map is used to identify the geographic location of character areas. The character areas are described in detail later in this Future Development Guide. The Future Development Map is intended to guide decision making related to the physical location of development and the most appropriate scale and intensity of development in different locations.

The map recommends land uses and development patterns for a 20-year planning horizon, and it is important that it is regularly reviewed to determine if amendments are needed based on changing market and demographic trends or local goals. At a minimum, the plan is required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to be updated every five years.

### Relationship of Future Development Map to Zoning Regulations

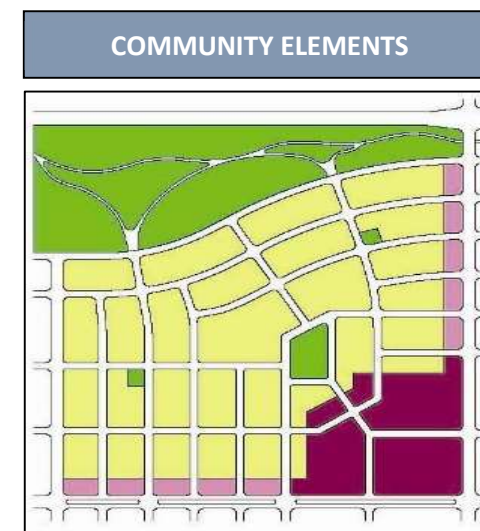
Zoning in Upson County and Thomaston consists of a zoning map that assigns a zoning classification district to every property. Yatesville does not currently have zoning within the City's limits. A zoning ordinance describes these classifications, including their allowable land uses and requirements for how buildings, parking, landscaping, signs and other site features may be placed on a parcel.

The zoning maps and zoning ordinances provide properties in Upson County and Thomaston with certain rights to development, while the Comprehensive Plan's Future Development Map serves as a *policy guide* to the future development of property. The Future Development Map and Character Area Policy should be used as a guide for future rezoning decisions undertaken by the city.

### Character Area-Based Planning


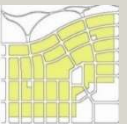


Character area-based planning focuses on the way an area looks and how it functions. Tailored strategies are applied to each area, with the goal of enhancing the existing character and function or promoting a desired new character for the future.

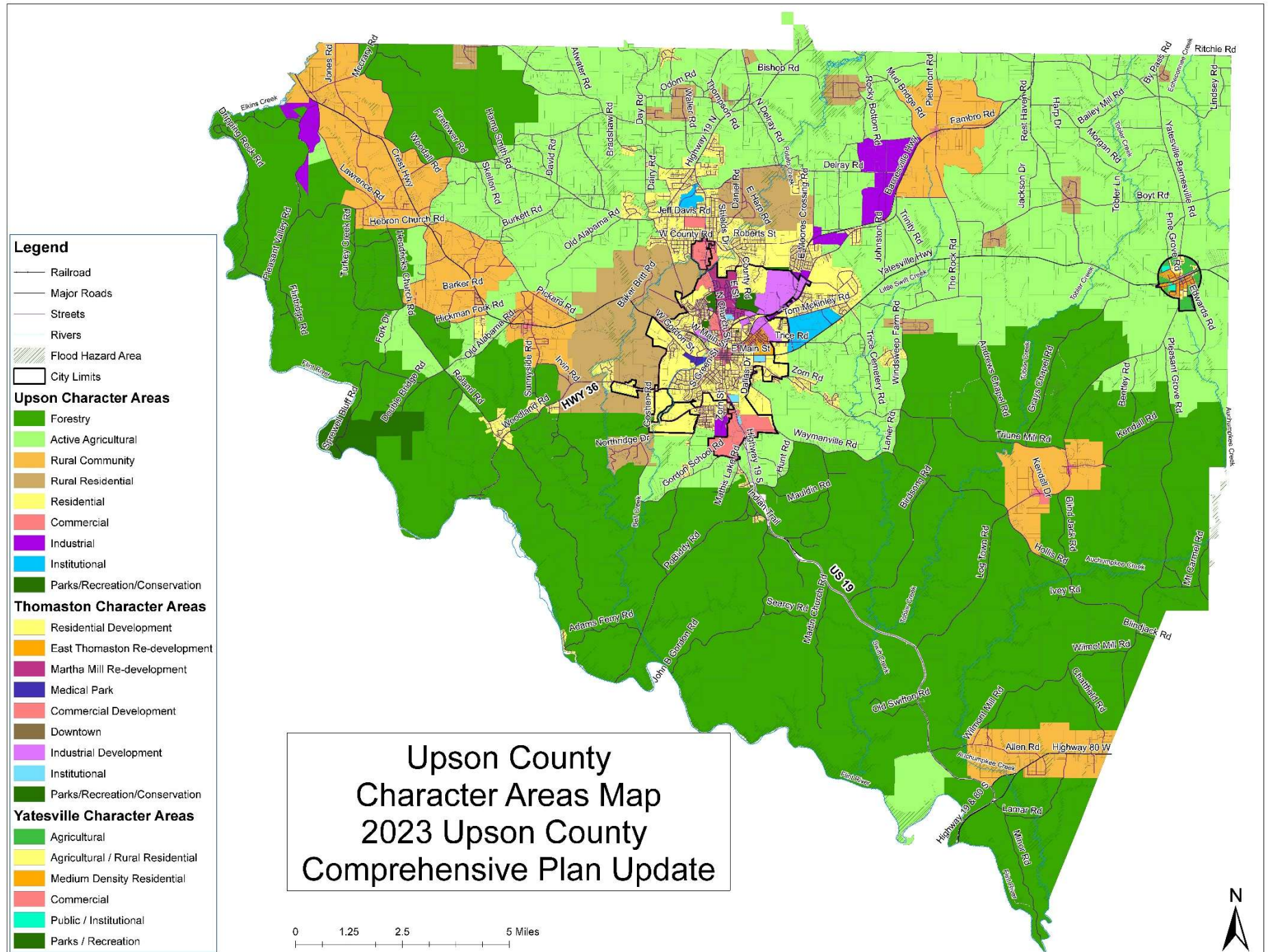
Character areas are organized by community elements. These elements represent the four basic types of development – the primary 'building blocks' of a





community – and include open space, neighborhoods, centers and corridors. The table below summarizes general characteristics of each element. These elements are part of specific character areas as related to open space, residential areas, commercial centers, and activity corridors. The character areas are further described in this chapter.

COMMUNITY ELEMENTS		
COMMUNITY ELEMENT & DIAGRAM	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION	CHARACTER AREA
<b>OPEN SPACE</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Parks, golf courses, floodplain, wetlands, greenspace (public or privately owned)</li> <li>– Intended to be maintained in a natural state or for passive recreation uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Parks/Recreation/ Conservation</li> <li>– Park Recreation (Yatesville)</li> </ul>
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Existing neighborhoods</li> <li>– Areas suitable for new housing development/infill development</li> <li>– Located near open spaces, centers/nodes, and corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Residential</li> <li>– Rural Community</li> <li>– Residential Development (Thomaston)</li> </ul>
<b>CENTER</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provides residents access to a variety of retail and civic uses/space</li> <li>– May be larger commercial (local retail / service uses) centers, single-use employment centers (e.g. business or industrial park), or mixed-use centers that include a variety of commercial, residential and/or employment elements</li> <li>– Includes smaller neighborhood commercial uses in rural and suburban areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Downtown (Thomaston)</li> <li>– Martha Mill Re-Development</li> <li>– East Thomaston Re-Development</li> <li>– Industrial</li> <li>– Medical Park</li> <li>– Commercial (Yatesville)</li> <li>– Public Institutional (Yatesville)</li> </ul>
<b>CORRIDOR</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Often links activity centers and neighborhoods</li> <li>– Primary transportation corridors or concentrations of specific land use / development type</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Commercial Gateway Corridor</li> </ul>



## Character Area Policy

Character areas shown on the Future Development Map are described on the following pages. Each page presents a ‘character area policy’ that represents and describes the character area in terms of the desired development pattern and supporting implementation strategies.

Each character area policy presented in the narrative incorporates the following components:

- **Intent** describes the policy intent of each character area, specifically to *preserve, maintain, enhance* and/or *create* a desired character.
- **General Characteristics** provides a general overview of desired development pattern in terms of characteristics that are more specifically addressed in the Design Principles.
- **Application** provides a general description of areas where the character areas can be found or appropriately applied based on characteristics of the land and infrastructure.
- **Primary Future Land Uses** lists appropriate land uses that support the desired mix and/or type of land uses in a character area.
- **Design Principles** describes the form, function and character of physical elements of the character area. This includes density/intensity, greenspace, transportation and infrastructure (public utilities).
- **Strategies** are the implementation measures needed to achieve the desired development patterns for the character area. They reference strategies identified in the Community Vision.

## ACTIVE AGRICULTURE

### Intent

Establish, preserve, promote, maintain, and enhance areas for commercial agricultural, farming, livestock, and related land uses consistent with maintaining the land resources of the county reserved for these purposes and providing minimal public services in rural areas. Residences of a low-density nature which are incidental to these activities are also allowable. A key purpose of Active Agriculture is to protect and preserve prime farmlands for continued agricultural uses. Land should not be converted from Active Agriculture to other uses unless there is no other land available to accommodate nonagricultural uses.

### General Characteristics

Large portions of the land area within Upson County are designated as agriculture with active agriculture and rural land. Residential development is sparse. Subdivision of land for residential lots requiring public services such as paved roads, water, and sewer is discouraged.

### Application

This area of Upson County has experienced nearby residential growth and will likely be affected by future residential growth. Preservation of rural character and the protection of the viewsheds along roadways will be important in addition to protection and continuation of active agricultural activities. Land conservation techniques should be promoted in association with future low density residential development. Natural resources should be preserved, and passive recreational opportunities should be created. Small solar development may be considered if not in conflict with prime farmland.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Active agricultural land
- Very low-density residential

### Implementation Strategies:

- Promotion of the use of land conservation techniques such as conservation subdivisions to preserve rural character and greenspace where development occurs
- Support passive parks development and passive recreational activity
- Support local farmers, agritourism, and maintain productive agricultural land uses
- Protect the environment and water supply watersheds by utilizing best practices for land disturbance and farming activity

### Appropriate Zoning:

- A-R (Agricultural-Residential)
- Zoning provisions to protect active agriculture and promote agritourism
- Scenic corridor preservation standards

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Rural: Agricultural and agritourism uses
- Residential: Very low-density

### Green Space

- Natural landscape
- Maintain agricultural land use
- Public and private

### Transportation/Connectivity

- Standard vehicular access
- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails

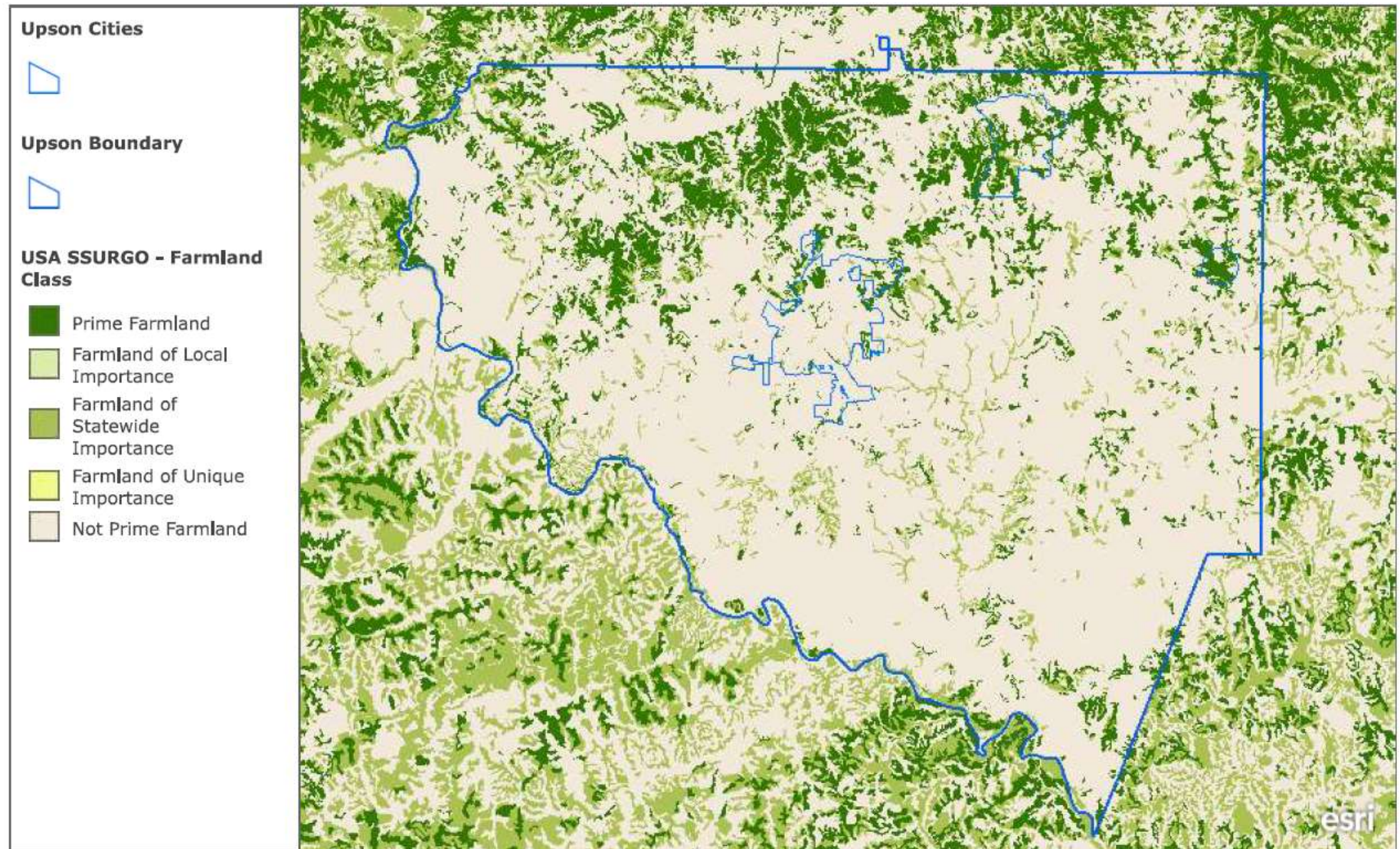
### Infrastructure

- Greenways/Trails
- Roadways
- Expansion of water and sewer service is not anticipated

### Illustrative Photos





**Prime Farmland Soils Map**

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS | Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA | Source: USDA NRCS, Esri

## FORESTRY

### Intent

Establish and preserve areas for forestry and timber cultivation and related uses consistent with maintaining the land resources of the county reserved for these purposes. Residential use of a low-density nature incidental to these activities is also allowable.

### General Characteristics

Large portions of the land area within Upson County are designated for forestry. Residential development is sparse, and the area contains managed timberland and permanent forest.

### Application

These areas of Upson County will likely be the least affected by future residential growth. Preservation of rural character and protection of the viewsheds along roadways will be important. Land conservation techniques should be promoted if residential development occurs in the future, with particular attention paid to establishing substantial buffers between residential use and managed forests. Natural resources and parks should be protected.

#### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Forested lands of managed timber
- Low-density residential

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Support local forestry and maintain productive forestry land uses
- Promote the use of conservation subdivisions to preserve rural character and greenspace
- Support passive recreational activity and protect parks from impacts of development and forestry activities
- Protect the environment and water supply watersheds by utilizing best practices for land disturbance and forestry
- Natural vegetative riparian buffers should be maintained between river and stream corridors and any development.

#### Appropriate Zoning:

- A-R (Agricultural-Residential)
- Zoning provisions for conservation and buffering with residential development
- Scenic corridor preservation standards

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Rural: Forestry and recreational uses
- Residential: Low-density

### Green Space

- Natural landscape and forest viewsheds
- Anticipate forestry management (timber harvesting and replanting)
- Public and private recreation use

### Transportation/Connectivity

- Standard vehicular access
- Anticipate and plan for logging truck routes

### Infrastructure

- Greenways/Trails
- Roadways
- Expansion of water and sewer service is not anticipated

### Illustrative Photos





## INDUSTRIAL

### Intent

Enhance and create concentrated industrial areas served by infrastructure that are strategically located to minimize disruption of normal traffic flow and community impacts.

### General Characteristics

Upson County's industrial areas are located mainly in the northern part of the county with some industrial sites within and south of Thomaston. Preservation and expansion of existing industrial land use should be planned in a manner that respects adjacent land uses and existing development patterns (including building placement, lighting, site features, streetscape, etc.). When feasible, campus-style industrial developments are encouraged, with an emphasis on job creation, sustainability, high quality construction and design and inter-connectivity.

### Application

Upson County and Thomaston promote increased industrial recruitment that could include additional manufacturing, processing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities. Current and potential truck routes should be considered when locating industrial uses. Expansion of industrial parks served by infrastructure provides better access for commercial traffic and minimizes impacts on neighborhoods. Where appropriate, develop frontage or access roads to provide truck access into industrial areas to reduce the impacts of truck traffic on prominent corridors in the county.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for light industrial and industrial according to the Upson County and Thomaston zoning ordinances.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Maintain sewer capacity and connectivity
- Expand sewer capacity where possible
- Adequate roadways and access
- Buffer and landscape requirements
- Collaboration with the Thomaston-Upson IDA
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas from impacts of industrial uses
- Promote Brownfield site remediation and redevelopment

### Appropriate Zoning:

- M-2

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Moderate to high density
- Intense industrial activity, traffic, and infrastructure

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Vegetative buffers/ screening to minimize impacts on adjacent uses, especially residential neighborhoods

### *Transportation*

- Truck access and heavy-duty road infrastructure with access to major transportation corridors and arterials
- Airport runway and supporting facilities

### *Infrastructure*

- Potential to be large users of public water and sewer
- Stormwater management systems designed to protect water quality
- Heavy duty roads

### *Illustrative Photos*



## PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

### Intent

Within Upson County and Thomaston are pockets of land used for parks, recreation and conservation. Many of these areas contain amenities such as ballfields, playgrounds, picnic areas, and greenspace.

### General Characteristics

Parks/recreation/conservation areas must be preserved to protect the environment, watersheds, and wildlife as well as enhance quality of life.

### Application

Land designated for parks and recreational usage and conservation.

#### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Undeveloped areas in their natural state; wetlands
- Passive parks (including environmentally constrained areas like floodplains and wetlands)
- Active parks, golf courses, and similar
- Greenways and trails

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Land preservation
- Limit new development
- Conservation easements
- Viewshed preservation
- Open space preservation
- Greenspace acquisition
- Promote passive recreation opportunities
- Buffer requirements
- Utilize Land and Water Conservation Fund for park development
- Partner with the Trust for Public Land for land acquisition and protection

#### Appropriate Zoning:

- A-R
- Applicable to various zoning districts

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Natural landscape with limited recreation-related buildings to provide community access
- Building placement and exterior materials should blend with surrounding landscape
- Minimize impervious surfaces

### *Green Space*

- Natural landscape
- Maintain and create connections between natural features
- Public and private

### *Transportation*

- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails
- Limited vehicular access

### *Infrastructure*

- Greenways/Trails
- Park facilities

### *Illustrative Photos*





## RESIDENTIAL

<b>Intent</b>	Preserve established neighborhoods and foster quality new development that respects the prevailing single-family character with traditional building materials and site design.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	The greatest potential for developing residential in Upson County will be within and near Thomaston where developable land has proximity to highway corridors. New residential development should match the design and quality of existing housing and reflect traditional neighborhood design principles. Conservation subdivisions are also considered appropriate when designed in compatible manner and to conserve open space and rural character.
<b>Application</b>	Areas suitable for residential development surround existing neighborhoods and are an extension of existing community fabric. Typically, residential development is located with proximity to major corridors, commercial development, and community services (schools, parks, etc.) that serve the surrounding area. When residential is adjacent to areas used for agriculture, forestry, industrial or commercial, buffering is often necessary.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land uses permitted in this character area include single-family residential, neighborhood commercial.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Promote traditional neighborhood design standards.
- Promote connectivity between developments.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- R-1, R-2, R-4, R-5, P-R

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Low to medium density (up to X units/acre with sewer, X units/acre with septic) for single family development); higher densities permitted in accordance with zoning regulations

### Green Space

- Neighborhood landscaping in built areas; informal landscaping in passive use areas
- Neighborhood and community parks; Maintain and create connections between natural features (trails); pedestrian connections to greenways/trails
- Adequate screening/buffer between residential and adjacent uses

### Transportation

- Dispersed road network; compact design
- Alleys for rear access to urban residential areas
- Road safety improvements

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer access
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible
- Pedestrian infrastructure/connectivity

### Illustrative Photos



## RURAL RESIDENTIAL

### Intent

Preserve established neighborhoods and foster quality new development that respects the prevailing single-family character with traditional building materials and site design.

### General Characteristics

The greatest potential for developing residential in Upson County will be within and near Thomaston where developable land has proximity to highway corridors. New residential development in the rural residential area should be large lot, single-family residential development. Conservation subdivisions are also considered appropriate when designed in compatible manner and to conserve open space and rural character.

### Application

Areas suitable for residential development surround existing neighborhoods and are an extension of existing community fabric. Typically, rural residential development is located with proximity to major corridors, commercial development, and community services (schools, parks, etc.) that serve the surrounding area. When residential is adjacent to areas used for agriculture, forestry, industrial or commercial, buffering is often necessary.

#### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land uses permitted in this character area include single-family residential.

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Promote traditional neighborhood design standards.
- Promote connectivity between developments.

#### Appropriate Zoning:

- R-1, R-2, P-R

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Low density (up to X units/acre with sewer, X units/acre with septic) for single family development);

### Green Space

- Neighborhood landscaping in built areas; informal landscaping in passive use areas
- Neighborhood and community parks; Maintain and create connections between natural features (trails); pedestrian connections to greenways/trails
- Adequate screening/buffer between residential and adjacent uses

### Transportation

- Dispersed road network; compact design
- Road safety improvements

### Infrastructure

- Septic and well services, potentially public water and sewer services where applicable
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible
- Pedestrian infrastructure/connectivity

### Illustrative Photos



## RURAL COMMUNITY

<b>Intent</b>	Create nodes in areas where potential for future development exists by establishing development patterns focused around existing residential development.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	Small crossroad communities exist throughout Upson County. Each community acts as a rural village, which maintain distinct character. Many of these communities still contain local landmarks such as churches, old stores, schools, and historic homes. Rural communities in Upson County include Crest, Thurston, Sunnyside, Salem, Logtown, and the once incorporated town of The Rock.
<b>Application</b>	The unique sense of place within each rural community should be respected. Preservation of remaining historic structures should be prioritized. Creating a historic district or overlay district for priority areas should be considered.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land uses allowed within each rural village include residential, neighborhood commercial, public/institutional and agriculture.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Promote historic preservation through local overlay districts or listing on the National Register of Historic Places for eligible areas.
- Support neighborhood commercial designed to respects and compliment historic architecture and development patterns.
- Promote scenic corridor viewshed preservation.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- R-1, R-4, R-5

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Generally low to moderate density with concentrated neighborhood commercial development oriented around intersection/community crossroads; Lower in more rural areas

### Green Space

- Neighborhood landscaping within built areas
- Adequate screening between residential and non-residential uses

### Transportation

- Internal vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle connectivity (Residential Areas)
- Road network should provide connectivity to surrounding area

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer access not anticipated
- Continuous sidewalks and linkages between neighborhoods and nearby parks, schools, and neighborhood amenities

### Illustrative Photos



## COMMERCIAL

**Intent:** *Enhance and create* concentrated commercial uses that serve the entire community.

**General Description:** Upson has commercial development in areas that has developed mainly along major highways that run through the county. Currently businesses include retail stores and chain restaurants along with other small businesses. Most of this development occurred between the 1980's and the present. Development occurred in linear fashion along corridor sections.

**Local Application:** Upson recommends improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers; and shared parking arrangements that reduce overall parking needs.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Community Improvement District (CID) - Self-taxing entity formed by property owners, businesses, institutions and/or citizens, within a specific geographic area. A CID can be formed to provide additional services, to make the area safer and more attractive, or for various other purposes;
- Enterprise Zones- Offers incentives such as tax exemptions or fee abatements to private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate underdeveloped or declining areas

### Appropriate Zoning:

- C-2, C-3

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Higher Cluster developments around major intersections; avoid strip, disjointed development
- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### Transportation

- Access management elements (inter-parcel connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer
- Pedestrian infrastructure within and between developments, as appropriate
- Pedestrian connection to nearby neighborhoods, if applicable

### Illustrative Photos



## INSTITUTIONAL

<b>Intent</b>	Provide appropriately located and well-designed community-serving facilities.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	Land in Upson County containing government owned buildings and property is classified as public institutional.
<b>Application</b>	Upson recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for government use of properties.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Greenspace acquisition
- Open space protection

### Appropriate Zoning:

- O-1
- Applicable to various zoning districts

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Moderate to high intensity

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### *Transportation*

- Access management elements (interparcel connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### *Infrastructure*

- Public water and access to sewer
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible

### *Illustrative Photos*





## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (CITY OF THOMASTON)

<b>Intent</b>	Preserve established neighborhoods and create quality infill development that respects the prevailing single-family character and traditional building materials and site design.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	The Residential Development character area contains, on a small scale, suburban style residential development as well as historic homes. The area has the potential for increased subdivision style residential and homes that complement adjacent historic homes where appropriate.
<b>Application</b>	New residential development should match the design and quality of existing housing and reflect traditional neighborhood design principles. Conservation subdivisions would also be considered to conserve open space.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land uses allowed within this character area include single family residential.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Promote the use of traditional neighborhood design principles.
- Promote the use of conservation subdivisions.
- Support connectivity between developments.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- ES, R-1, R-2, C-TH

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Low to moderate density (1 – 6 du/ac, higher density permitted for single-family attached housing.)

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Adequate screening/buffer between residential and non-residential uses
- Pedestrian connections to greenways and trails

### *Transportation*

- Road network should provide connectivity to surrounding area
- Accommodations for pedestrians and bicycles

### *Infrastructure*

- Public water and sewer access (when supported by growth patterns)
- Pedestrian amenities/sidewalks/bike racks

### *Illustrative Photos*



## COMMERICAL GATEWAY CORRIDOR (CITY OF THOMASTON)

### Intent

*Enhance and maintain* well-functioning, attractive corridors that serve local needs, facilitate traffic flow, and facilitate access to goods and services to serve residents and commuters. Create employment opportunities where a location benefits from available infrastructure.

### General Characteristics

Thomaston has commercial areas mainly along one major highway that runs through the city. There is a variety of businesses, mostly small scale but also some larger commercial strip mall developments.

### Application

Thomaston recommends improvement in street appearances and amenities of commercial businesses. The Downtown Master Plan provides specific guidance.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service, and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a storefront or office building.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Master Plan implementation – The Thomaston Downtown Master Plan includes urban design and development concepts to be implemented in specific areas.
- Community Improvement District (CID) - Self-taxing entity formed by property owners, businesses, institutions and/or citizens, within a specific geographic area. A CID can be formed to provide additional services, to make the area safer and more attractive, or for various other purposes.
- Enterprise Zones - Offers incentives such as tax exemptions or fee abatements to private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate underdeveloped or declining areas.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- C-1, C-2, M-R, Thomaston Gateway North Overlay

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Varies depending on location

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Neighborhood and community parks; maintain and create connections between natural features (trails)
- Corridor landscaping standards

### Transportation

- Wide streets with on-street parking
- Dispersed road network
- Alleys for rear access

### Infrastructure

- Public water and access to sewer
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible

### Illustrative Photos



## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (CITY OF THOMASTON)

<b>Intent</b>	Enhance and create concentrated industrial areas served by infrastructure and located in a way that minimizes disruption of normal traffic flow.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	Thomaston's industrial development areas are located in the northern parts of the city. The Thomaston Industrial Park is a proven site for business. The tenants include the Southern Company, Solutions Pest & Lawn, Criterion Technologies, and Chief Manufacturing. The Central Georgia Business and Technology Park is a 240-acre park that features the entire utility infrastructure an industry would need. The Technology Park was recently named "Guaranteed Ready for Accelerated Development" (GRAD) by the Georgia Allies and has a master plan that prospects may use when planning the construction of their operation.
<b>Application</b>	Thomaston recommends increased industrial recruitment, which could include additional manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for light industrial and industrial according to the Thomaston zoning ordinance.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Maintain sewer access
- Expand sewer where possible
- Adequate roadways and access
- Buffer and landscape requirements
- Collaboration with the Thomaston-Upson IDA
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas from industrial uses
- Brownfield site remediation

### Appropriate Zoning:

- M-1, M-2

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Vegetative buffers/screening to minimize impacts on adjacent uses, especially residential

### Transportation

- Truck access and heavy-duty road infrastructure with access to major transportation corridors and arterials

### Infrastructure

- Potential to be large users of public water and sewer
- Heavy duty roads

### Illustrative Photos





## INSTITUTIONAL (CITY OF THOMASTON)

- Intent** [ Provide appropriately located and well-designed community-serving facilities.
- General Characteristics** [ Land in the city limits of Thomaston containing government owned buildings and property is classified as public institutional.
- Application** [ Thomaston recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for government use of properties.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Greenspace acquisition
- Open space protection

### Appropriate Zoning:

- DT, C-1, P-1

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Moderate to high intensity

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### *Transportation*

- Access management elements (interparcel connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### *Infrastructure*

- Public water and access to sewer
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible

### *Illustrative Photos*



## PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION (CITY OF THOMASTON)

### Intent

Within Thomaston are pockets of land used for parks, recreation and conservation. Many of these areas contain amenities such as ballfields, playgrounds, picnic areas, and greenspace.

### General Characteristics

Parks/recreation/conservation areas must be preserved to protect the environment, watersheds, and wildlife as well as enhance quality of life.

### Application

Land designated for parks and recreational usage and conservation.

#### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Undeveloped areas in their natural state; wetlands
- Passive parks (including environmentally constrained areas like floodplains and wetlands)
- Active parks, golf courses, and similar
- Greenways and trails

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Land preservation
- Limit new development
- Conservation easements
- Viewshed preservation
- Open space preservation
- Greenspace acquisition
- Promote passive recreation opportunities
- Buffer requirements
- Utilize Land and Water Conservation Fund for park development
- Partner with the Trust for Public Land for land acquisition and protection

#### Appropriate Zoning:

- R-1
- Applicable to various zoning districts

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Natural landscape with limited recreation-related buildings to provide community access
- Building placement and exterior materials should blend with surrounding landscape
- Minimize impervious surfaces

### *Green Space*

- Natural landscape
- Maintain and create connections between natural features
- Public and private

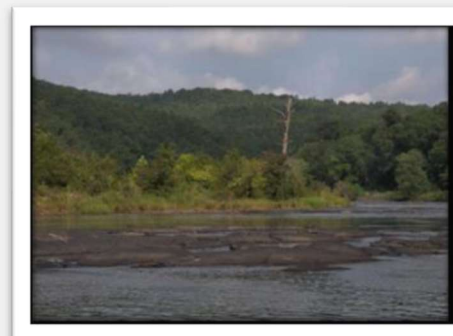
### *Transportation*

- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails
- Limited vehicular access

### *Infrastructure*

- Greenways/Trails
- Park facilities

### *Illustrative Photos*



## DOWNTOWN (CITY OF THOMASTON)

**Intent:** *Preserve traditional development patterns and architectural styles and create and maintain a vibrant, mixed use community focal point.*

**General Description:** The City of Thomaston has a historic downtown square in the heart of the city. Within the center of the square sits the historic courthouse. Surrounding the courthouse are quaint shops and cafes with landscaping and greenspace areas.

**Local Application:** Thomaston recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Historical commercial uses as well as public uses

### Implementation Strategies

- Thomaston Downtown Master Plan implementation
- Greenspace
- Open space protection
- Downtown development

### Appropriate Zoning:

- DT, C-TH, M-R, C-1, C-2, P-1

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high density/intensity in terms of all development
- Multi-story developments encouraged (must be compatible with surrounding aesthetic; Consider height limitations to maintain human-scale)

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks, greenspace, trails

### Transportation

- Compact design, street grid network, complete streets
- High vehicular and pedestrian connectivity

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer
- Streetscapes with pedestrian amenities
- Rear or underground utilities, when feasible

### Illustrative Photos



## COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CITY OF THOMASTON)

**Intent:** *Enhance and create* concentrated commercial uses that serve the entire community.

**General Description:** Thomaston has a commercial development area that has developed mainly along one major highway that runs through the. Currently businesses include retail stores and chain restaurants along with other small businesses. Most of this development occurred between the 1980's and the present. Development occurred in linear fashion along corridor sections.

**Local Application:** Thomaston recommends improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers; and shared parking arrangements that reduce overall parking needs.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Implement the Thomaston Downtown Master Plan
- Community Improvement District (CID) - Self-taxing entity formed by property owners, businesses, institutions and/or citizens, within a specific geographic area. A CID can be formed to provide additional services, to make the area safer and more attractive, or for various other purposes;
- Enterprise Zones- Offers incentives such as tax exemptions or fee abatements to private businesses to reinvest and rehabilitate underdeveloped or declining areas

### Appropriate Zoning:

- C-1, C-2

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Higher Cluster developments around major intersections; avoid strip, disjointed development
- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### Transportation

- Access management elements (inter-parcel connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer
- Pedestrian infrastructure within and between developments, as appropriate
- Pedestrian connection to nearby neighborhoods, if applicable

### Illustrative Photos



## MARTHA MILL RE-DEVELOPMENT (CITY OF THOMASTON)

**Intent:** Complement the redevelopment area by establishing a development pattern characterized by a network of streets and paths suitable for both vehicles and pedestrians.

**General Description:** The city of Thomaston has a historic area in the northeast part of the city known as the Martha Mill Re-development area. This area was once home to the Martha Mill textile factory, built in the 1920's. It is known as the Silvertown area of Thomaston. It was annexed into the city in 1958.

**Local Application:** Thomaston recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community with mixed uses while preserving greenspace where feasible.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Residential and commercial and possible mixed-use is recommended for this area.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Greenspace
- Open space protection
- Historic preservation
- Explore mixed use type developments

### Appropriate Zoning:

- R-1, R-2, C-TH, C-1, C-2, M-R

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Higher density/intensity in general, including higher density residential in Mixed Use areas and higher intensity uses in Commercial areas

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Open space (civic space)
- Adequate buffers/screening between adjacent different land uses where appropriate/necessary

### *Transportation*

- High internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity

### *Infrastructure*

- Public water and sewer
- Sidewalks, crosswalks

### *Illustrative Photos*





## EAST THOMASTON RE-DEVELOPMENT (CITY OF THOMASTON)

**Intent:** Complement redevelopment area through establishing a development pattern characterized by a network of streets and paths suitable for both vehicles and pedestrians.

**General Description:** The City of Thomaston has a historic area in the eastern part of the city. It is known as the East Thomaston Re-development area. This area was once home to the Thomaston Mill, which was built in 1899 and produced textiles. This area was annexed into the city in 1970.

**Local Application:** Thomaston recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

**Primary Future Land Uses:**

- Residential use is recommended for this area.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- Greenspace
- Open space protection
- Historic preservation

**Appropriate Zoning:**

- R-1, R-2, C-1, C-TH, M-R

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

***Density/Intensity***

- Higher density/intensity in general, including higher density residential in mixed-use areas and higher intensity uses in commercial areas

***Green Space***

- Formal landscaping with built areas
- Open space (civic space)
- Adequate buffers/screening between adjacent different land uses where appropriate/necessary

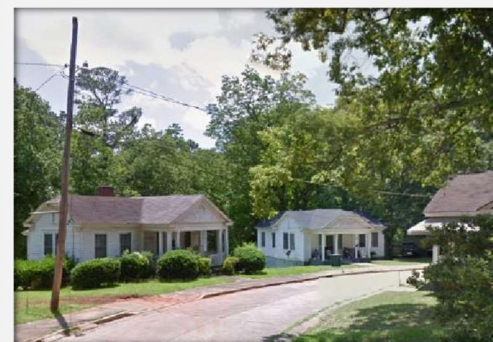
***Transportation***

- High internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity
- Access management

***Infrastructure***

- Public water and sewer
- Sidewalks, crosswalks

***Illustrative Photos***



## MEDICAL PARK (CITY OF THOMASTON)

**Intent** Create concentrated medical and office uses that support existing and new medical facilities. This district is also designated for medical and institutional uses such as hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics.

**General Characteristics** The medical park area in the city of Thomaston contains many physician and health care offices as well as the Upson Regional Medical Center.

**Application** Thomaston recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Office and medical uses are recommended for this area.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Greenspace
- Open space protection

### Appropriate Zoning:

- P-1

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Moderate to high density/intensity in terms of all development

### *Green Space*

- Formal landscaping with built areas;
- Informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### *Transportation*

- Pedestrian connectivity between facilities
- Road network should provide high connectivity throughout surrounding area

### *Infrastructure*

- Public water and sewer

### *Illustrative Photos*



## COMMERCIAL (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

<b>Intent</b>	<b>General Characteristics</b>	<i>Enhance and create concentrated commercial uses that serve the entire community.</i>
		Yatesville has a commercial area that is mainly along one major highway that runs through the city. Currently the most thriving business is a small grocery store along with other small businesses.
<b>Application</b>		Yatesville recommends improvement of street appearance and amenities of commercial businesses.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a storefront or office building.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Limited land use regulations to guide development

### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Cluster developments around major intersections; avoid strip, disjointed development
- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### Transportation

- Access management elements (interspace connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### Infrastructure

- Public water and sewer (?)
- Pedestrian infrastructure within and between developments, as appropriate
- Pedestrian connection to nearby neighborhoods, if applicable

### Illustrative Photos



## PARKS AND RECREATION (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

**Intent** [ Protect environmentally sensitive areas and open space for conservation and passive recreation purposes. Prevent degradation to natural resources in areas that have developed or have the potential to develop.

**General Characteristics** [ Within the city of Yatesville, there exists small pockets of land containing parks and recreation. These areas contain amenities such as playground, picnic areas, and greenspace.

**Application** [ Yatesville recommends continued conservation of these areas to protect the environment, watershed, and wildlife.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for parks and recreational usage.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Land preservation
- Limit new development
- Conservation easements
- View shed preservation
- Open space preservation
- Greenspace acquisition
- Promote passive recreation opportunities
- Buffer requirements
- Utilize Land and Water Conservation Fund for park development
- Partner with the Trust for Public Land for land acquisition and protection

### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### *Density/Intensity*

- Natural landscape with limited recreation-related buildings to provide access to community
- Building placement and exterior materials should blend with surrounding landscape
- Minimize impervious surfaces

### *Green Space*

- Natural landscape
- Maintain and create connections between natural features
- Public and private

### *Transportation*

- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails
- Limited vehicular access

### *Infrastructure*

- Greenways/Trails
- Generally, not applicable

### *Illustrative Photos*





## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONAL (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

### Intent

Provide appropriately located and well-designed community-serving facilities.

### General Characteristics

Land inside the city of Yatesville containing government owned buildings and property is classified as public institutional.

### Application

Yatesville recommends maintaining and developing these properties to remain aesthetically attractive in the community.

#### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for government use of properties.

#### Implementation Strategies:

- Greenspace acquisition
- Open space protection

#### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Public parks and greenspace

### Transportation

- Access management elements (interparcel connectivity; minimized driveway/curb cuts from main corridor)

### Infrastructure

- Public water and access to sewer
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible

### Illustrative Photos



## AGRICULTURAL / RURAL RESIDENTIAL (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

<b>Intent</b>	Preserve established neighborhoods and foster quality new development that respects the prevailing single-family character with traditional building materials and site design.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	The greatest potential for developing residential in Upson County will be within and near Thomaston where developable land has proximity to highway corridors. New residential development in the rural residential area should be large lot, single-family residential development. Conservation subdivisions are also considered appropriate when designed in compatible manner and to conserve open space and rural character.
<b>Application</b>	Areas suitable for residential development surround existing neighborhoods and are an extension of existing community fabric. Typically, rural residential development is located with proximity to major corridors, commercial development, and community services (schools, parks, etc.) that serve the surrounding area. When residential is adjacent to areas used for agriculture, forestry, industrial or commercial, buffering is often necessary.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land uses permitted in this character area include single-family residential.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Promote traditional neighborhood design standards.
- Promote connectivity between developments.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Low density (up to X units/acre with sewer, X units/acre with septic) for single family development);

### Green Space

- Neighborhood landscaping in built areas; informal landscaping in passive use areas
- Neighborhood and community parks; Maintain and create connections between natural features (trails); pedestrian connections to greenways/trails
- Adequate screening/buffer between residential and adjacent uses

### Transportation

- Dispersed road network; compact design
- Road safety improvements

### Infrastructure

- Septic and well services, potentially public water and sewer services where applicable
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible
- Pedestrian infrastructure/connectivity

### Illustrative Photos



## MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

<b>Intent</b>	<i>Complement city area through establishing a development pattern characterized by a network of streets and paths suitable for both vehicles and pedestrians.</i>
<b>General Characteristics</b>	Yatesville's residential area is one of the largest components of the city. Most homes were built prior to 2010.
<b>Application</b>	Yatesville recommends a distribution of affordably priced homes throughout the town and new residential development that matches the mix of housing types and styles or older, closer-in neighborhoods or the community.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- Land designated for single-family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities according to the Franklin zoning ordinance.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Housing for Low to Moderate-Income Households and Special Needs Populations - Affordable housing to meet the needs of persons with disabilities; quality, affordable rental units for large families (rental units with 3 or 4 bedrooms); affordable rental housing to serve the elderly population; or new single-family units for moderate-income, first-time homebuyers.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Moderate to high intensity

### Green Space

- Formal landscaping with built areas; informal landscaping with passive use areas
- Neighborhood and community parks; Maintain and create connections between natural features (trails)
- All residential areas within a short walk to green space and trails

### Transportation

- Wide streets with on-street parking
- Dispersed road network
- Alleys for rear access to residential areas
- Road safety improvements

### Infrastructure

- Public water and access to sewer
- Underground utilities preferred, when feasible
- Pedestrian infrastructure/connectivity

### Illustrative Photos



## AGRICULTURAL (CITY OF YATESVILLE)

<b>Intent</b>	Establish and preserve areas for farming, agriculture, livestock, timber cultivation, and related uses consistent with maintaining the land resources of the county reserved for these purposes. Residences of a low-density nature which are incidental to these activities are also allowable.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	This area represents most of the city's land and is actively farmed for vegetables and livestock. Most of the agriculture/timber character area is along major highways running through the city.
<b>Application</b>	Yatesville recommends large minimum lot size requirements to limit development density and protect farmland, timberland and rural character and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas by setting them aside as public parks or trails.

### Primary Future Land Uses:

- This character area is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

### Implementation Strategies:

- Land Development Regulations to provide basic guidance.

### Appropriate Zoning:

- The City of Yatesville does not have zoning districts, so there is no recommended appropriate zoning for this character area.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### Density/Intensity

- Low-density residential
- Agricultural and timber uses

### Green Space

- Natural landscape
- Maintain agricultural land use
- Public and private

### Transportation

- Standard vehicular access
- Pedestrian connectivity with greenways and trails

### Infrastructure

- Greenways/trails
- Roadways

### Illustrative Photos



## 5

## CHAPTER FIVE. Implementation Guide

The Implementation Program identifies the specific measures to implement the Upson County Joint Comprehensive Plan. The Implementation Program includes the following elements:

- 2024 – 2028 Community Work Program
- Description of Specific Actions
- Supplemental Plans
- Plan Maintenance

### Community Work Program

The Community Work Program (CWP) table identifies specific implementation actions the county and other entities intend to take during the first five-year timeframe of the planning period. This includes ordinances, programs, plans and studies, community improvements or investments, or other programs/initiatives to be put in place to implement this plan. For each action the CWP outlines the following information:

- Type of action/strategy and brief description
- Timeframe for undertaking the activity (2023/2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028)
- Estimated cost
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Funding source



## Upson County Community Work Program 2023 – 2028.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
1.	Hannah's Mill Road Bridge	X	X	X	X		TBD	County Manager and Engineer	GDOT
2.	Broadband Deployment Project	X	X	X	X	X	\$8.6 M - Ongoing Annual Cost	County Manager	Grants
3.	Civic Center Projects - Roof Repair, Phase II Athletic Field Upgrades, Phase III Renovations	X	X	X	X		\$6.3 M	County	Capital Improvements Program
4.	County Website Overhaul	X					N/A	County Manager, Community Engagement Coordinator	N/A
5.	Judicial Facility Construction	X	X				\$22 M	County Manager	CIP
6.	Government Complex Redesign and Renovation	X	X				TBD (pending final design)	County Manager	

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
7.	Library ADA Renovations	X						Facilities Director	
8.	Land Use Ordinances Updates/Amendments	X	X	X			TBD	County Planner	General Fund
9.	Blighted Property Demolition	X	X	X	X		\$250,000	County Planner / Code Enforcement	General Fund
10.	Develop GIS feasibility study and GIS-based map to show Zoning Districts, Utility Lines including Water Lines, County Roads, and Rights-of-Way	X					TBD	County Planner, IT, Utilities Department	SPLOST
11.	Airport CIP Projects - Purchase Jet Refueler, Taxiway Lighting, and Pavement Overlay for Driveway and Parking	X	X	X	X	X	\$358,000	Airport	Airport, FAA, SPLOST, Grants
12.	Expand and promote the Central Georgia Business and Technology Park	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	Thomaston-Upson County Industrial Development Authority	Grants
13.	County Jail and Sherriff Office Energy Retrofits	X	X	X	X		TBD	County and Sherriff	County funds and grants

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
14.	Road Resurfacing Phase I	X	X	X			\$3.3 M	County	CIP, SPLOST, TSPLOST, Grants
15.	Sprewell Bluff Park - Trails, Camping, Rest Station, Maintenance Facility, Land Improvements, and Building Improvements	X	X	X			\$4.8 M	County	SPLOST, Grants, CIP
16.	New Thurston Well	X	X				\$884,000	County	Grants, CIP
17.	Dripping Rock Road Bridge Replacement	X	X	X			\$783,000	County	Grants, CIP
18.	Rocky Creek Road Culvert Replacement	X	X				\$142,000	County	CIP, SPLOST, Grants
19.	New 911 Emergency Calling System	X	X				\$598,000	County, Sherriff	CIP
20.	Water Department Building Improvements and Infrastructure Improvements	X	X	X			\$896,000	County	SPLOST, CIP

## City of Thomaston Community Work Program 2023 – 2028.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
1.	Pedestrian Safety Improvements	X	X	X			\$1.5 M	City, County, GDOT	Grants and SPLOST
2.	Wayfinding Signage	X	X	X	X		\$50,000	City, Main Street	Main Street, Grant
3.	Hightower & Gordon Multi-Use Building	X	X				\$1.1 M	City, Main Street	Bond
4.	Façade Improvement Program	X	X	X	X		\$250,000	HDC, DDA	General Fund
5.	Improve Back-of-Building Spaces for Events and Business use, including the Thomaston Courtyard	X	X				\$600,000	City, Main Street	Bond
6.	Reuse of Thomaston Fire Department	X	X	X			\$750,000	DDA	SPLOST

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
7.	Comprehensive City-County space use analysis and plan	X	X				\$100,000	DDA	Special Taxing District
8.	System Development Change Ordinance Study and Implementation	X					\$30,000	City	General Fund
9.	Water Sewer Rate Study	X					\$15,000	City	General Fund
10.	Design and Construct New Police Department	X	X	X			\$4 M	City	Bond
11.	Recodification of Ordinances	X	X				\$150,000	City	General Fund
12.	Update Historic Resources Survey	X					\$5,000	HPC	General Fund
13.	Design Guidelines Update (Historic District)	X	X				\$25,000	HPC	General Fund



#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
14.	Urban Redevelopment Plan	X					\$30,000	City, Regional Commission	General Fund
15.	URP Area Housing Rehabilitation and Infill	X	X	X	X		TBD	City, GICH, Private	General Fund
16.	Brownfield Remediation in URP area	X	X	X	X		\$10 M	City, EPA	EPA Congressional Earmark
17.	Develop EV Charging Station at Parks	X	X				\$75,000	City, Private Partner	Enterprise Funds, Grants
18.	Low Speed Vehicle Program Development & Implementation	X					\$200,000	City, GDOT	TSPLOST, City
19.	Archway Community Designation	X					\$0/ N/A	City, County, Private	N/A
20.	Pedestrian Bridge Connecting to Greatest Generation Park	X	X	X	X		\$4 M	City, GDOT	TSPLOST, Congressional Earmark

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
21.	Develop and implement Parks and Recreation Master Plan						TBD	City	General Fund, City

## City of Yatesville Community Work Program 2023 – 2028.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Cost Estimate	Responsible Party	Funding Source
		2023/ 2024	2025	2026	2027	2028			
1.	Install handicap accessible playground equipment	X	X				\$125,000	City	General Fund, SPLOST
2.	Add one well to the water system	X	X	X	X	X	\$125,000	City	SPLOST, Grant
3.	Replace old water meters and water lines	X	X	X	X	X	\$250,000	City	SPLOST, Water Fund
4.	Upgrade ballpark lights, bleachers, and fields	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	City	General Fund

## Supplemental Plans

Supplemental plans are planning documents that address in detail a specific topic or issue of importance to the community and that have applicable project recommendations for Upson County. These plans support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan by addressing identified goals and strategies in Chapters 3 and 4, and their recommendations should be used by the county to identify and prioritize projects in conjunction with the CWP. The supplemental plans listed below are incorporated into the plan by reference:

- Lamar, Pike, Upson Transportation Plan - 2003
- Upson County Stormwater Management Program
- Thomaston Downtown Master Plan

## Long-Term Projects

Upson County and Thomaston intend to address the following projects to support strategies from Chapter 3 beyond the five-year timeframe of the CWP. While it is feasible for the county and city to begin implementing some of these Plans, most will need to continue past the CWP's short term time frame.

- **Thomaston Downtown Master Plan**
- **Various Park Master Plans**

## Plan Maintenance

Upson County's Building and Zoning department is responsible for maintaining Upson County's Comprehensive Plan to accurately reflect current community conditions and the community's vision and priorities for the future. Specific requirements for amendments and updates are described in the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Chapter 110-12-1 "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning."

## Annual Review

County staff should provide a status of the plan implementation to the City Council on an annual basis, at the least. Specifically, the Community Work Program should be reviewed to identify the current status of the implementation measures and an informal progress report will be prepared. If the county chooses, the annual review process can be used to undertake a formal annual update (see below).

## Plan Amendments

According to the DCA rules, the local government determines when a plan amendment is necessary to address changing circumstances that may have detracted from the usefulness of the plan as a guide to local decision-making.

## Updates to the Comprehensive Plan

At a minimum, a plan update must be completed every five years, in accordance with the Local Comprehensive Plan Recertification Schedule maintained by DCA. An annual update option is provided for communities wanting to update their plan on a more frequent basis. The annual update requires submittal of a new fifth year for the CWP and any changes needed for the other years of the CWP, and if needed, changes can be made to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. For communities collecting impact fees, an annual update of the CWP is required.



## Appendix A. Report of Accomplishments

The Report of Accomplishments (ROA) provides a status of each work item identified in the prior Community Work Program (previously referred to as the Short-Term Work Program) for Upson County (for the years 2018-2023), as indicated in the table on the following pages.

## Report of Accomplishments. – Upson County

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Develop GIS-Based Map to show Zoning Districts, Utility Lines, County Roads and Rights-of-Way			X		Feasibility Study was conducted. Project implementation was postponed due to cost.
Study updating building ordinances		X			Zoning ordinance has been updated/amended; County uses ICC 2018 code; may still make some procedural changes
Upgrade 911 Phone System and study need for additional upgrade	X				Completed
Construct sewer collection lines to provide services to the Northside area, west of US Hwy 19				X	Entered a revised SDS agreement with the City of Thomaston. No capacity is available without annexation.
Install water system mains to interconnect Lincoln Park	X				Completed
Develop a groundwater potable water source at Lincoln Park				X	Thurston Well project was prioritized.
Review and analyze County water system				X	Not a Board priority. Noted new well project.
Perform remapping of County water system		X			Intent to make part of broader GIS initiative
Review County Permit Fee Structure	X				Completed
Study potential implementation of Special Taxing Districts for Sewer and Water Service				X	Not a priority.
Complete second phase of widening US 19 North from County Road to Atwater Road	X				GDOT completed project.

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Conduct an inventory and evaluate the natural and historical resources in the area and develop ways to promote them to tourists	X				Completed
Purchase bus for Senior Center	X				Completed
VOIP Phone System for IT	X				Completed
Purchase 2 trucks for IT	X				Completed
Purchase 2 network servers IT	X				Completed
Install Network Firewall	X				Completed
Purchase Tax Commissioner Software	X				Completed
Network Server installation	X				Completed
20 KW Generator	X				Completed
Upgrade and expand the airport		X			Incremental projects completed with more underway
Purchase trucks and equipment for road department	X				Completed
Purchase and install softball lighting				X	Property reverted back to the Upson County Board of Education
Purchase and install Civic Center bleachers	X				Completed
Civic Center racquetball floor	X				Completed

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Purchase and install baseball lights F#13 and F#2			X		Baseball lights to be included in the new Upson County parks master plan.
Maintenance building extension recreation	X				Completed
Resurface and restripe Civic Center parking lot (ADA)	X				Completed
Repair/replace fences at James Dawkins football complex	X				Completed
Renovate softball press box and concession stand	X				Completed
Repair and replaces fences on CC F#1,2,3, & 13	X				Completed
Community playgrounds	X				Completed
Replace 15 tables and 50-100 chairs for CC	X				Completed
Outdoor batting cages				X	Baseball lights to be included in the new Upson County parks master plan.
Replace one lawn mower	X				Completed
Replace staff car	X				Completed
Replace tractor	X				Completed
Replace sign for Civic Center	X				Completed
Purchase generator for Civic Center	X				Completed

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Achieve Broadband Ready Community status in pursuit of funding sources to provide for maximum extension of coverage of broadband resources to benefit the needs of the community.	X				Completed



## Report of Accomplishments. – City of Thomaston

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Undertake Park Improvements	X				Greatest Generation Park, Lakeside Park, and Dog Park improvements completed totaling \$1 million total for all parks.
Replace Sidewalks in Silvertown West Village		X			Contractor in progress for ADA compliant replacements.
Milling and paving of city streets		X			\$2.4 million spent annually on milling and paving
Complete transfer sewer pipe from Bell Creek to Town Branch	X				Completed
Holloway Drainage Project	X				Completed
Weaver Park Drainage Project	X				Completed
Develop Electric Portion of GIS Mapping System	X				City's engineering firm is continuously updating GIS databases. electric utilities included?
Paving Various City Streets		X			\$2.4 million spent annually on milling and paving
Industrial Park Liftstation Upgrade	X				Completed
Avenue N Sewer Project	X				Completed
Wastewater rehab-various	X				\$15 million spent on new clarifier, main upgrades, Avenue North sewer, and bar screens

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Create & Implement Main Street Program	X				Main street program is established, implementation of annual Main Street Work Plan is ongoing.
Backwash Tank Water Plant		X			In design
Hickory Bend Streambank Restabilization	X				Completed
Replace Roof Police Department	X				Completed
Remodel Armory Building	X				Completed
Purchase Ladder Truck	X				Completed
Design/Build Fire Department	X				New Fire Station #1 constructed on North Church Street and commissioned in 2022. Total cost was \$2.8 million.
Replace Flooring City Hall	X				Completed
Implement FOG Program	X				Completed
Replace 40 cal Glocks with 9MM Glocks	X				Completed
Develop and Implement Stormwater Utility			X		Study completed but decision to not adopt ordinance and implement at this time.
Replace Various City Vehicles and Service Vehicles	X				Completed
Install Lights GGP Tennis Courts	X				Completed
Explore City Dog Park	X				New dog park opened in 2022 at 225 O Street.

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Maintain State Route Corridors through downtown	X				Downtown Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan document recommendation to maintain state route corridors through downtown.
Continue code enforcement efforts	X				Code enforcement is an established staff role with annual funding.
Work with Arts Council to bring events to GGMP	X				Arts Council maintains consistent events schedule including annual Art and Soul Fest at Greatest Generation Park
Continue to maintain Urban Forest	X				Urban forest recommendations addressed in downtown master plan
Update Service Delivery Strategy with County Government	X				SDS updated in 2020
Implement Service Delivery Strategy with County	X				SDS updated in 2020

## Report of Accomplishments. – City of Yatesville

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	STATUS				COMMENTS
	Completed	Underway	Postponed	Dropped	
Develop soccer fields for recreation				X	Dropped due to a lack of interest
Add an additional playground with handicap access		X			Postponed due to funding, carried over to 2023-2028 Work Plan
Install sidewalks on the Barnesville side of the city				X	Dropped due to a lack of funding
Add one well to the water system		X			Postponed due to funding, carried over to 2023-2028 Work Plan
Replace old water meters with new ones		X			Postponed due to funding, carried over to 2023-2028 Work Plan

## Appendix B. Public Participation

This appendix provides information on the public participation process conducted for the Upson County Joint Comprehensive Plan update, as indicated on the following pages.



## First Public Meeting

**UPSON COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEARING  
2023 UPDATE OF THE JOINT  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
“FORWARD UPSON”**

**Tuesday, October 11, 2022 – 6:00pm  
106. E. Lee Street,  
Government Center – Room 140**

Upson County and the Cities of Thomaston and Yatesville are initiating the process to begin a full update of their joint comprehensive plan as required by the State of Georgia. The purposes of the public hearing are to brief the community on the process to be used to update the joint plan, explain opportunities for public participation in development of the plan update and to obtain input on the proposed planning process. The update is due for completion by June 30, 2023. Public questions and input are invited.

## Focus Groups



## SIGN IN SHEET

Thomaston 2022 Comp Plan Focus Group 11/16/2022

Name	Phone	Address	Comments
Marsha White	706-741-9210	3531 Crest Hwy	
MADISON BUSHE	706-974-3448	110 W MAIN ST	
Bonnie Riggins	706-975-3265	14 Florence St. Vatesville, GA	
Jeff Janders	706-925-2581	510 Sanctuary Dr Thomaston	
Kay Hightower	706-656-3426	555 Peachblatt Rd. Thomaston, GA	
Jane Burdette	404-557-5628	417 3RD AVE SW Thomaston 30286	
Colman Dumas	(479) 392-5614	Thomaston Ga 30286	
Angie McGee	706-648-1887	404 Kings Ave Thomaston, GA 30286	
Tameshia Weaver	770-648-1222	213 North Church Street, Suite 4 Thomaston, GA 30286	
Catherine Barty	706-647-5466	P.O. Drawer 671 Thomaston, GA 30286	



## SIGN IN SHEET

Thomaston 2022 Comp Plan Focus Group 11/16/2022

Name	Phone	Address	Comments
STEVE SHORT	706-647-3422	PO Box 106 Thomaston	
KYLE Fletcher	706 741 2216	305 Cedarwood Lane Thom.	
Shane Phillips	706-656-7900	38 Baker Britt Rd Thomaston	
Elizabeth Huckaby	404-290-1208	6060 Day Rd Thomaston	
Sarah Williams	678-844-1991	1291 GA Hwy 109 Mansville, GA 30256	

\* List of those invited: Can't make it Will be there

## 2023 -2028 Comprehensive Plan Focus Group

- ✓ Kay Hightower - GGMP Committee Chair
- ✓ Jane Burdette - Historic Preservation Commission Chair
- ✓ Ronnie Riggins - Mayor pro Tem of Vatesville
- ✓ Wanda Dozier
- ✓ Larry Derico
- ✓ Kyle Fletcher - Industrial Development Authority Director
- ✓ Ashton Fallin
- ✓ Luke Haney
- ✓ Greg Smith
- ✓ Jeff Sanders - Director of Fire Department Museum
- ✓ Steve Short - Zoning Commission Chair
- ✓ Tameshia Weaver - Local Business owner (car hops)
- ✓ Jennifer Greathouse Rogers
- ✓ Susan Hill
- ✓ Kyle McGee
- ✓ Coleman Dumas - Local Pastor and Business owner
- ✓ Lisa Salter
- ✓ Shane Adams - Phillips - Local Broker at Century 21
- ✓ Catherine Baity - Local Attorney
- ✓ Elizabeth Huckaby - Local Business owner & Downtown Development Authority member
- ✓ Sarah Williams - Park Coordinator for Sprewell Bluff Park
- ✓ Doug Currier - Director of Building and Zoning for Upson County
- ✓ Deneane Jones
- ✓ Madison Ruttinger - President of the Thomaston-Upson County Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Angie McGill - Downtown Development Authority member
- ✓ Jason Tinsley
- ✓ Russell Thompson - City of Thomaston City Manager
- ✓ Taylor Smith - Economic Development Coordinator for City of Thomaston
- ✓ John Baxter
- ✓ Brad Harrell
- ✓ Marsha White - Upson County Resident and City Staff
- ✓ Jan Knight

## 2023 UPDATE

UPSON COUNTY FOCUS GROUP MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET		
Project:	Comprehensive Plan Update	Meeting Date: 3/1/2023
Place/Room:	Focus Group	
Name	Phone	E-Mail
Anne Massengale	278-588-8935	gaja.peach@yahoo.com
Christopher Biggs	706-661-8833	biggs7751@charter.net
Johnny Danson	706-475-9972	jdhammer74@icloud.com
Cathy Ashberry	229-343-8125	raindance50@gmail.com
Wendy Gould	(502) 544-4419	wgould112@yahoo.com
Judy Greene	770-715-2272	georgiaacres@cshw.com
Geddi Dean	706-975-0598	geddi dean000@hotmail.com
Dominic Terry	706-741-8020	tdominic8575@gmail.com

Page 1 of 2 Real Estate / Land Development



## Open House



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**public**  
**OPEN HOUSE**

 **May 18, 2023**  
**from 3PM - 7PM** 

**THOMASTON-UPSON SENIOR CENTER**  
**302 S BETHEL ST. THOMASTON, GA 30286**

The purpose of this open house is to summarize the feedback from our past focus groups. The direction of the Comprehensive Plan will be explained, and this will allow the public another chance to provide feedback!

UPSON COUNTY OPEN HOUSE SIGN-IN SHEET		
Project:	Joint Comprehensive Plan Update	Meeting Date: 5/18/2023
Place/Room:	Thomaston-Upson Senior Center	
Name	Phone	E-Mail
Vernon Allen	706 601 0614	ralph@upsoncountyga.org
Paul Jarrell	770-254-2506	pjarrell@earthlink.net
Joe Bailey	770-225-3958	
Montoya's	706-975-5661	remontoya77@gmail.com
Doug Curran	706/677-1257	dcurran@upsoncountyga.org
Amber Ruttinger	706-41-8460	aruttinger@upsoncountyga.org
Hailey Patain	706-647-8989	hpatain@uga.edu
Colby Spillers		
Cherie Spillers	706-647-7012	cspillers@upsoncountyga.org

UPSON COUNTY OPEN HOUSE SIGN-IN SHEET		
Project:	Joint Comprehensive Plan Update	Meeting Date: 5/18/2023
Place/Room:	Thomaston-Upson Senior Center	
Name	Phone	E-Mail
Oasis Nichols		
Taylor Smith		
JD Stallings		
Charles McKeen		
Glenn McCary	913 248 3891	
Erin McCary	913 240 5892	
Alfred Satter	404-985-5572	County CFO
Amelia C. Releford	706 741 2350	ARELEFORD@upsoncountyga.org
Robert Haney	706-741-1771	rhaney@upsoncountyga.org
Bern Releford	706-647-6259	preleford@upsoncountyga.org
Kelly King	706/647-6259	kking@upsoncountyga.org
Sarah Williams	706-544-1931	swilliams@upsoncountyga.org
Jason Tinsley	609 514 1749	
Key Hightower	706-656-3426	hightowers@windstream.net
Jessica Jones	706-647-1102	jjones@upsoncountyga.org
Paul Hightower	706-656-4008	hightower@gmail.com
Russell Rogers	706 506 1731	rtrogers2@tjoffthomastown.com
Shaka Johnson		
JAMES A. MELTON	706 641 7652	JMELTON@upsoncountyga.org

## Second Public Meeting

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
FOR****2023-2043 JOINT UPSON  
COUNTY AND CITIES  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
UPDATE**

Upson County and the Cities of Thomaston and Yatesville are completing the process to update the Joint Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan is prepared according to the rules for local comprehensive planning issued by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The purpose of the public hearing is to inform the public that the draft plan is available for review and will be submitted for formal review by the Department of Community Affairs and the Three Rivers Regional Commission. Those interested in commenting on the plan are encouraged to attend the meeting. Comments will also be received during the 30-day review period. The plan will be available on the county website.

For questions regarding the comprehensive plan update, contact Upson County Building and Zoning Department at 706-647-1297. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Upson County Building and Zoning Department at 706/647-1297. Public hearings are intended to be attended in person. Timely written comments may be submitted to the Building and Zoning Department on these cases. Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission public hearings are livestreamed on YouTube on the Upson County Board of Commissioners' channel.

23UB5-38  
May 24, 2023

**CITY OF THOMASTON  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
PUBLIC HEARING  
CITY-COUNTY MEETING ROOM  
THOMASTON-UPSON GOVERNMENT COMPLEX  
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The City of Thomaston will hold a public hearing to answer any questions and address concerns from the public regarding the Joint Comprehensive Plan which includes Upson County, The City of Yatesville, and the City of Thomaston.

A comprehensive plan sets forth a vision and goals for a city's future, and provides the overall foundation for land use regulations, community work plans, and more in the city. A comprehensive plan assists with the application of grants as well as reinforces the City Zoning Ordinance and the City Master Plan.

The Mayor and City Council will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. during the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting. This public hearing will be held in the city-county meeting room (on the main-floor) of the Thomaston-Upson Government Complex.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please call 706-647-4242 ext. 4.

*BEACON 5/31/23*

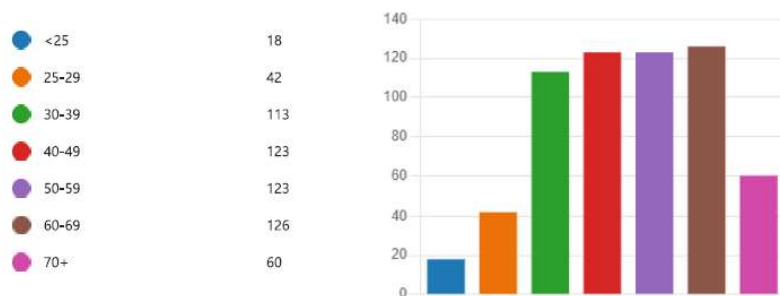


## Stakeholders

- Specific Groups Targeted for Outreach
  - The City of Thomaston
  - The City of Yatesville
  - Unincorporated Upson County
  - Agricultural Professionals and Community
  - Real Estate Professionals
- Plan Steering Committee
  - County and Municipal Staff
    - Jason Tinsley – Upson County Manager
    - Doug Currier - Director of Building and Zoning
    - Russell Thompson – Thomaston City Manager
    - Oasis Nichols – City of Thomaston City Clerk / Zoning Administrator
    - Taylor Smith – Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator
    - Ashley Riggins – City of Yatesville City Clerk
  - Upson County Planning Commission
  - Municipal Representatives
    - John David Stallings (Mayor of Thomaston)
    - Ronnie Riggins (Mayor Pro Tem of Yatesville)

## Community Survey

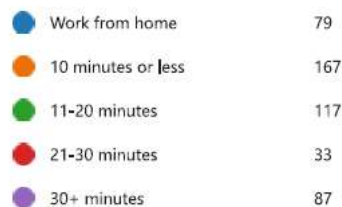
3. What category best describes your age?



5. Do you work in Upson County?



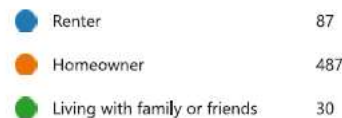
6. If you are employed, how much time does it take you to commute to work?



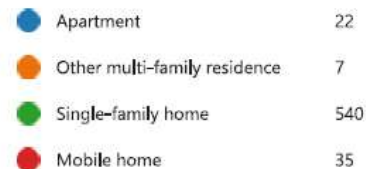
7. If you are employed, how do you typically get to work?



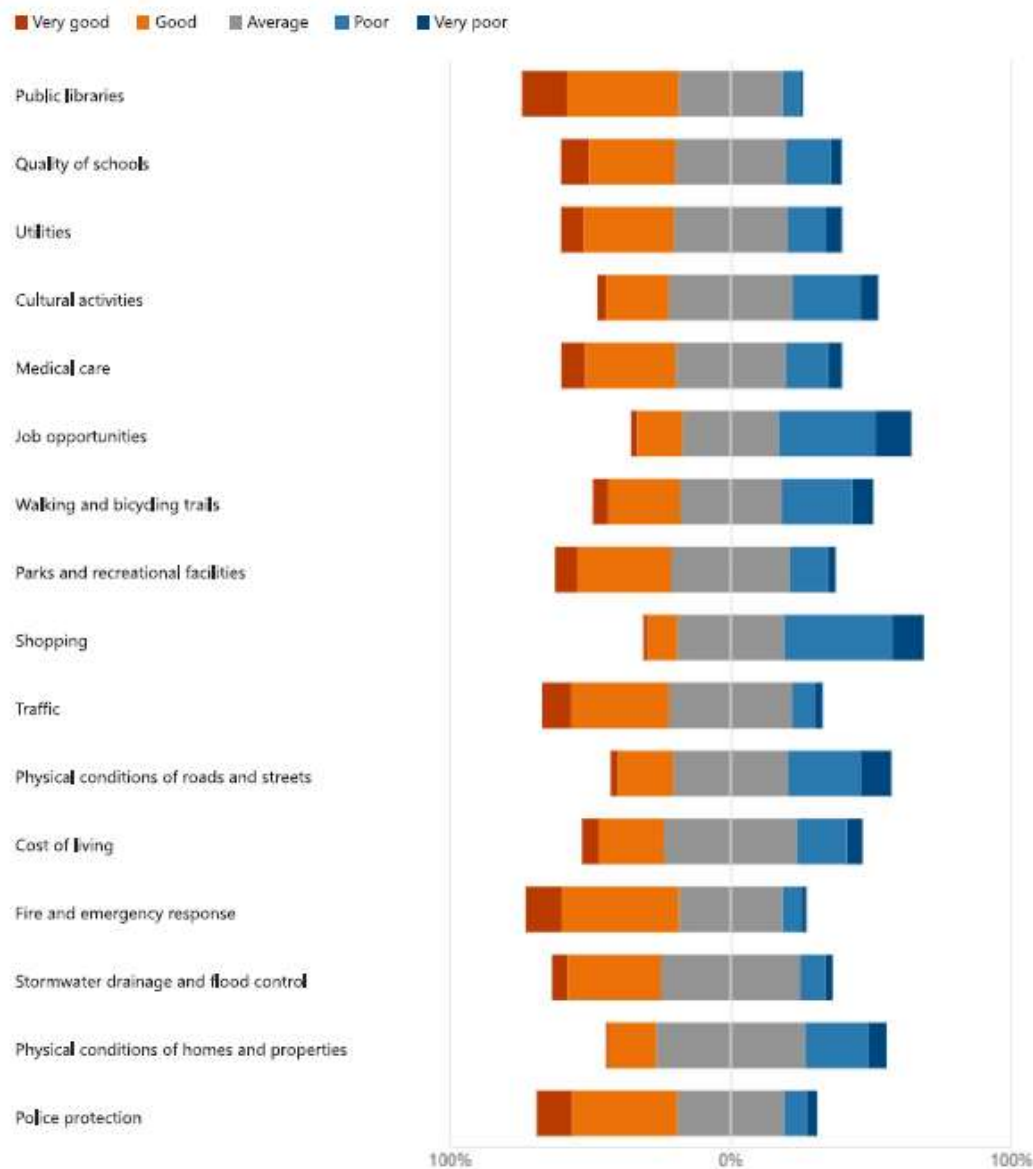
10. Which of the following best describes your housing status?



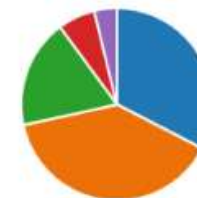
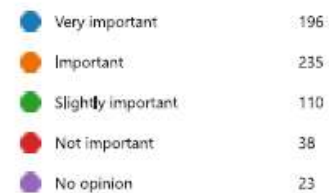
11. What type of residence do you live in?



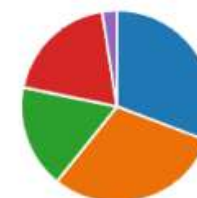
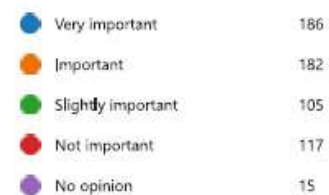
## 13. How would you rate the following quality of life factors in your area?



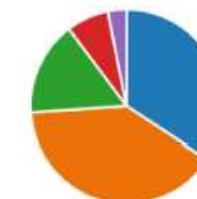
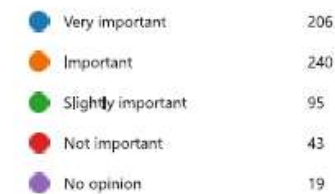
## 14. Promoting small town/hometown character through the built environment in Upson County



## 15. Increasing housing options and types of housing in Upson County

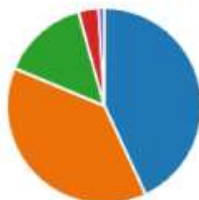


## 18. Diversifying the local economy in Upson County



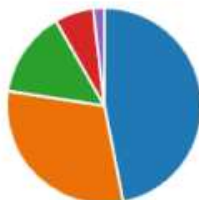
## 26. Protecting open space and natural resources in Upson County

Very important	260
Important	231
Slightly important	87
Not important	20
No opinion	6



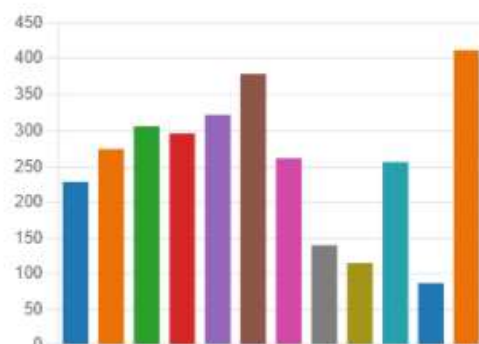
## 27. Preserving historic structures and sites in Upson County

Very important	283
Important	184
Slightly important	86
Not important	39
No opinion	11



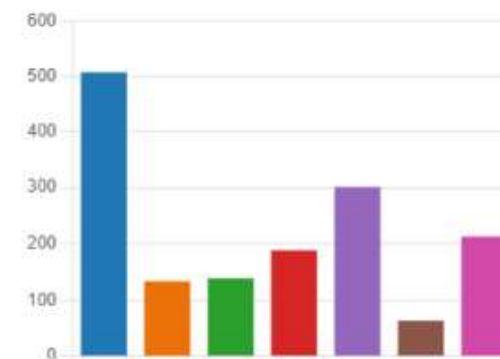
## 33. Growth in the county should focus on which of the following? (Select all that apply.)

Affordable housing	229
Agricultural production	275
Industrial development	307
Parks, open space, natural resou...	297
Recreation	323
Education	378
Manufacturing	262
Tourism	140
Transportation systems	115
Retail development	257
Service sector	87
Employment	411



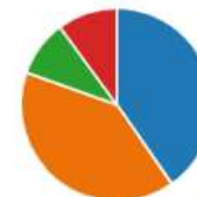
## 29. Which housing types are important in new housing development in the County? (Select all that apply.)

Single-family	507
Duplexes/triplexes/fourplexes	135
Condominiums	140
Townhouses	187
Retirement and assisted living h...	301
Mobile homes	64
Affordable housing	212



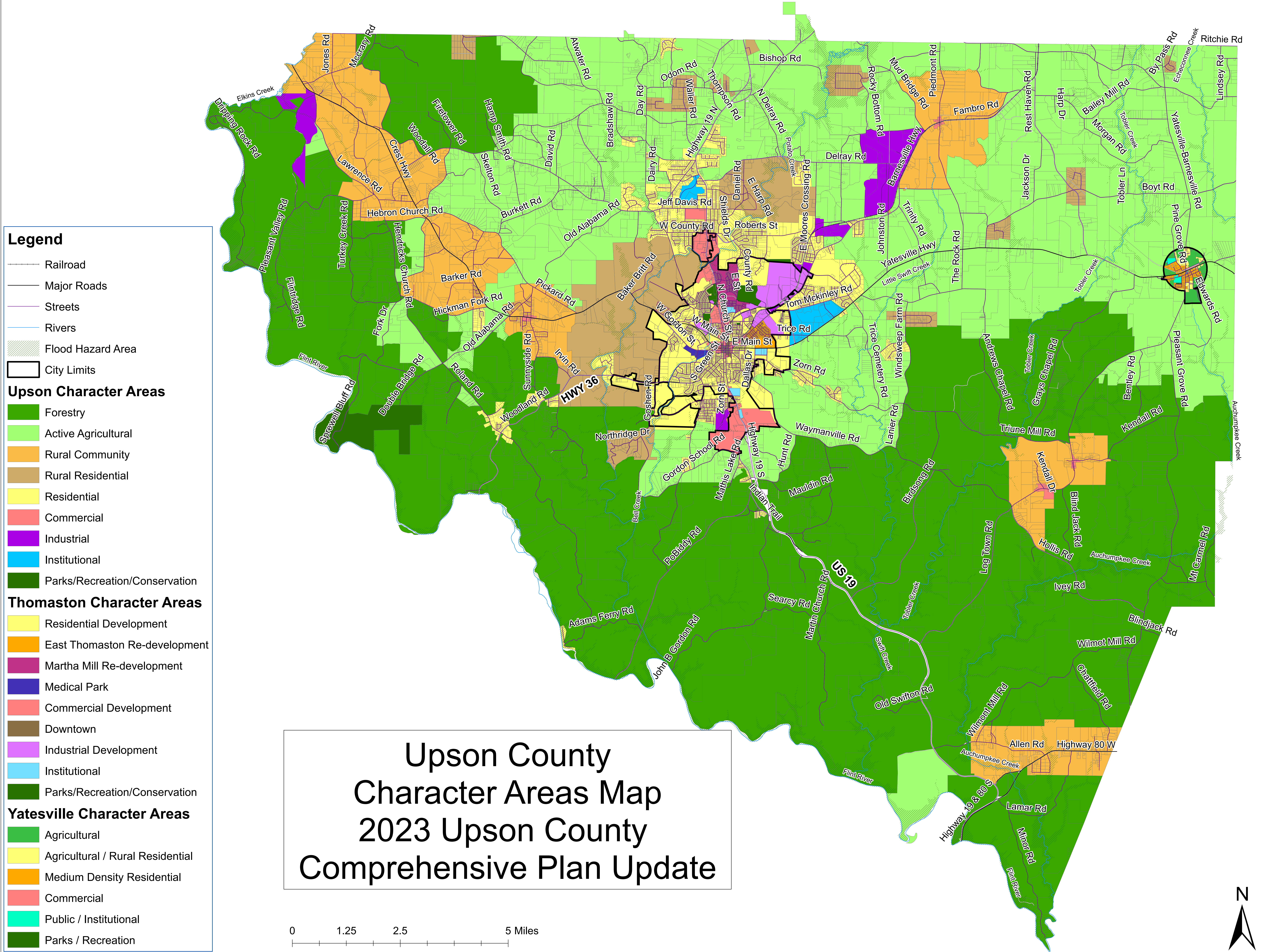
## 36. Do you think that Agricultural land should be protected in Upson County?

Yes, with strong policies/measur...	243
Yes, but not with strong policies...	242
No, not necessary	57
Don't know	61



## Appendix C. Future Development Maps







# City of Thomaston Character Areas Map 2023 Upson County Comprehensive Plan Update

**Legend**

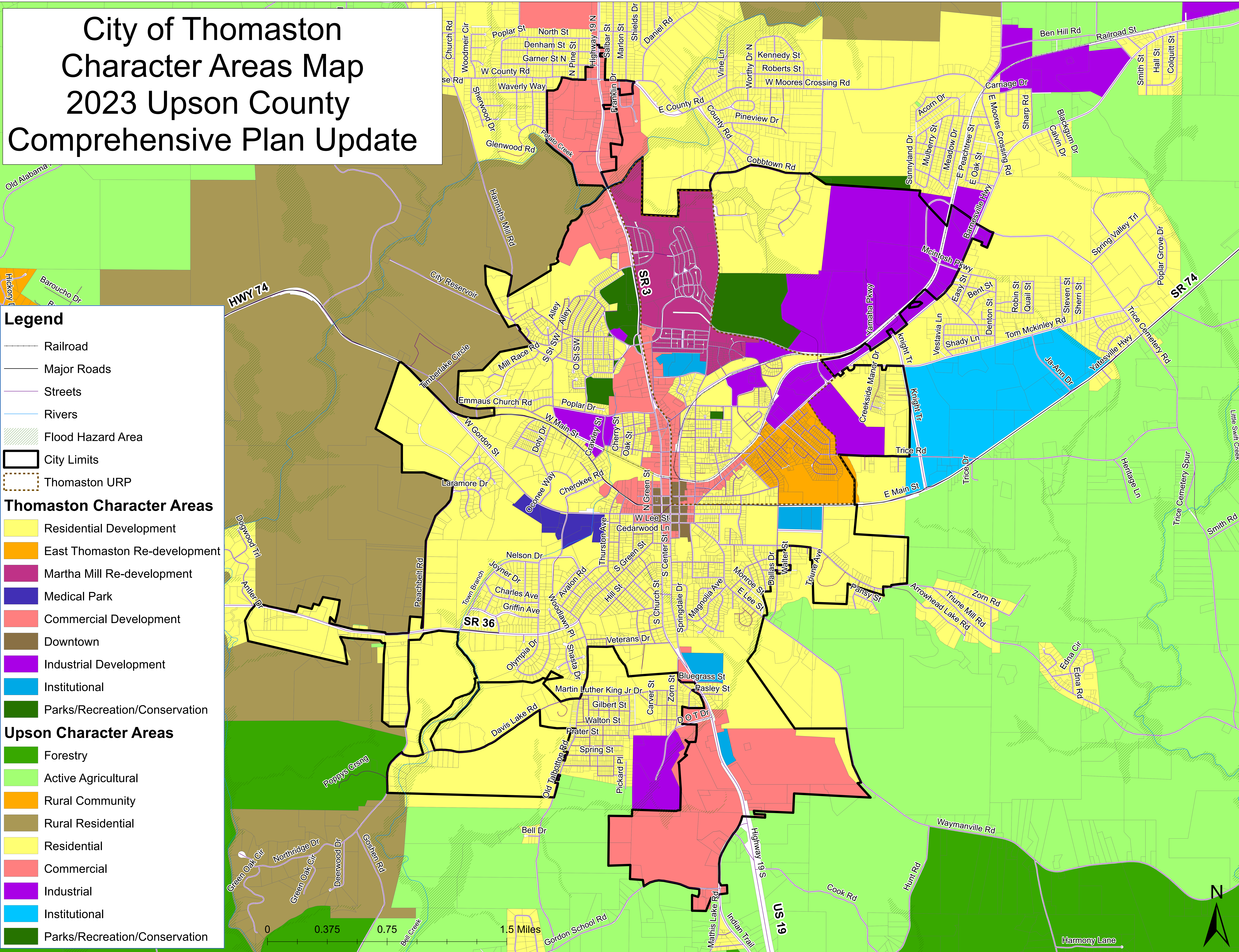
- Railroad
- Major Roads
- Streets
- Rivers
- Flood Hazard Area
- City Limits
- Thomaston URP

**Thomaston Character Areas**

- Residential Development
- East Thomaston Re-development
- Martha Mill Re-development
- Medical Park
- Commercial Development
- Downtown
- Industrial Development
- Institutional
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation

**Upson Character Areas**

- Forestry
- Active Agricultural
- Rural Community
- Rural Residential
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation





# City of Yatesville Character Areas Map 2023 Upson County Comprehensive Plan Update

**Legend**

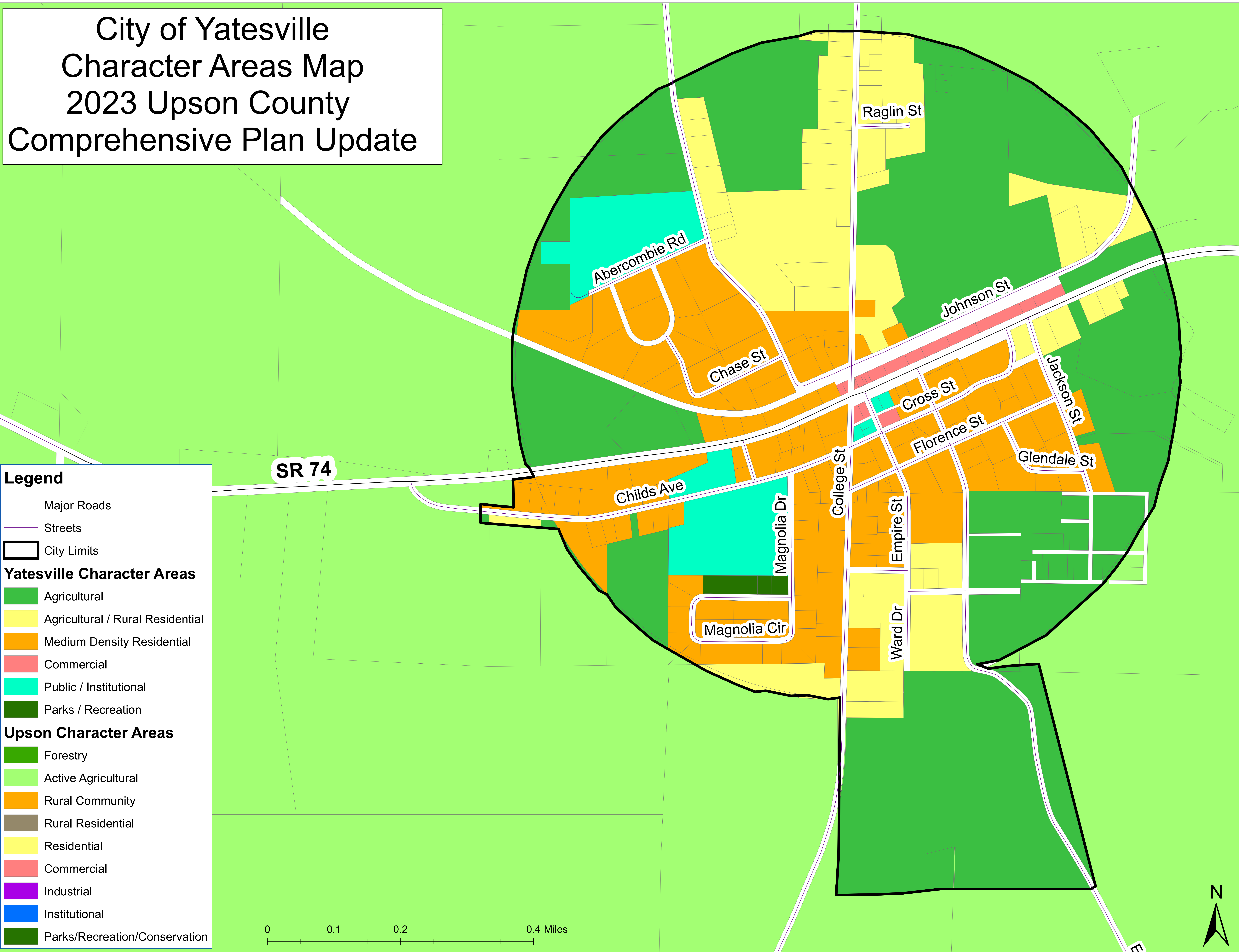
- Major Roads
- Streets
- City Limits

**Yatesville Character Areas**

- Agricultural
- Agricultural / Rural Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Public / Institutional
- Parks / Recreation

**Upson Character Areas**

- Forestry
- Active Agricultural
- Rural Community
- Rural Residential
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation



## Appendix D. Existing Conditions Summary

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## Introduction

This Existing Conditions Summary presents an inventory and evaluation of existing local conditions that were used, in conjunction with input from the public participation process, to identify needs and opportunities in the Upson County Comprehensive Plan. This summary is organized into the following sections:

- Socioeconomic Data Summary
- Population
- Housing
- Employment
- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Cultural/Historic Resources
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Appendix D-1: Detailed Socioeconomic Characteristics



## Socioeconomic Data Summary

Upson County's convenient location near GA Highway 19 and Highway 75 just over 70 miles outside Metro Atlanta, lend the county to high potential for accommodating economic growth while upholding the integrity of the county's culture and small-town and rural area ambiance for residents. This outlook indicates a potential pattern of growth in the future, which makes it imperative that the county prepare for anticipated growth.

Changes in the population and socioeconomic characteristics will have tremendous impacts on the social, economic, and physical environment of Upson County. As population increases, the county must ensure that its existing facilities and services can accommodate additional demand. Different segments of the population will have different needs based on age, income, and other factors, which inevitably shape the demand for housing, services, and infrastructure.

This section summarizes the socioeconomic characteristics of Upson County. In addition, a more detailed assessment including tables and charts is provided in Appendix D-1.

### Population

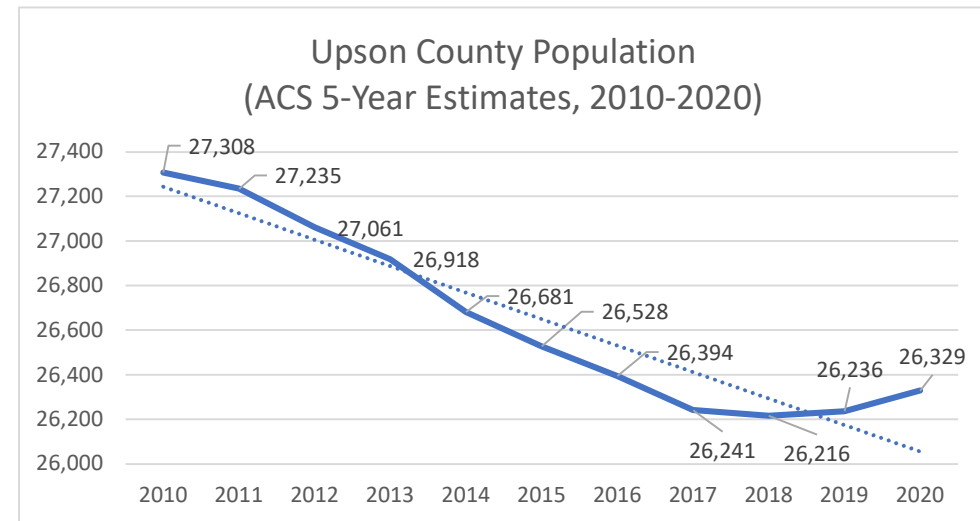
Population information is provided by the American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates) for 2010 through 2020. That information is then used to make projections through 2050. Additionally, population estimates can be calculated using a combination of various statistical calculation methods and other factors such as economic forecasts and future land use and zoning regulations, which are further described in Appendix D-1.

#### Patterns and Forecasts

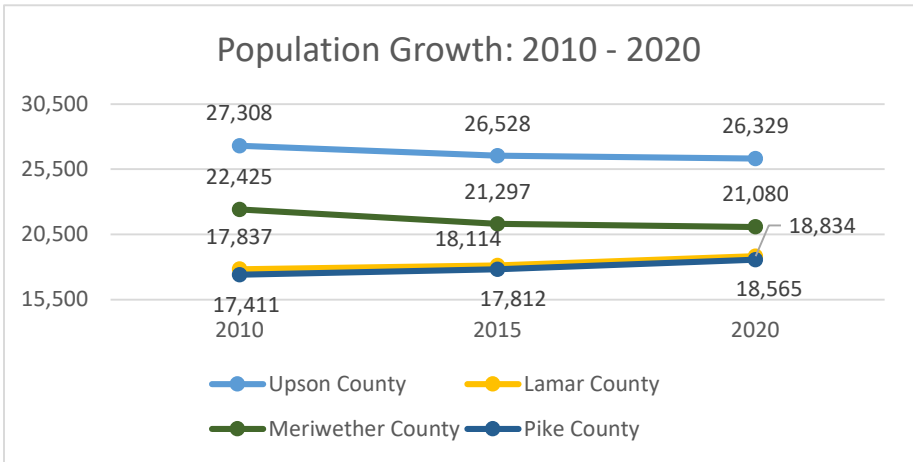
Between 2010 and 2020, the county's population decreased from an estimated 27,308 residents to 26,329, a growth decrease of roughly 3.59 percent. Nearby Lamar, Meriwether, and Pike Counties serve as points of comparison of the surrounding counties. By comparing based on

population size, it is possible to identify trends and determine if they are unique to Upson County or if they are representative of a larger, regional trend. Lamar and Pike counties did see growth, while Meriwether County also had a decrease in population from 2010 to 2020. Meriwether County underwent a 6.00 percent decrease in population, while Lamar and Pike Counties saw 5.59% and 6.63% percent growth, respectively.

#### Upson County Population: 2010 – 2020

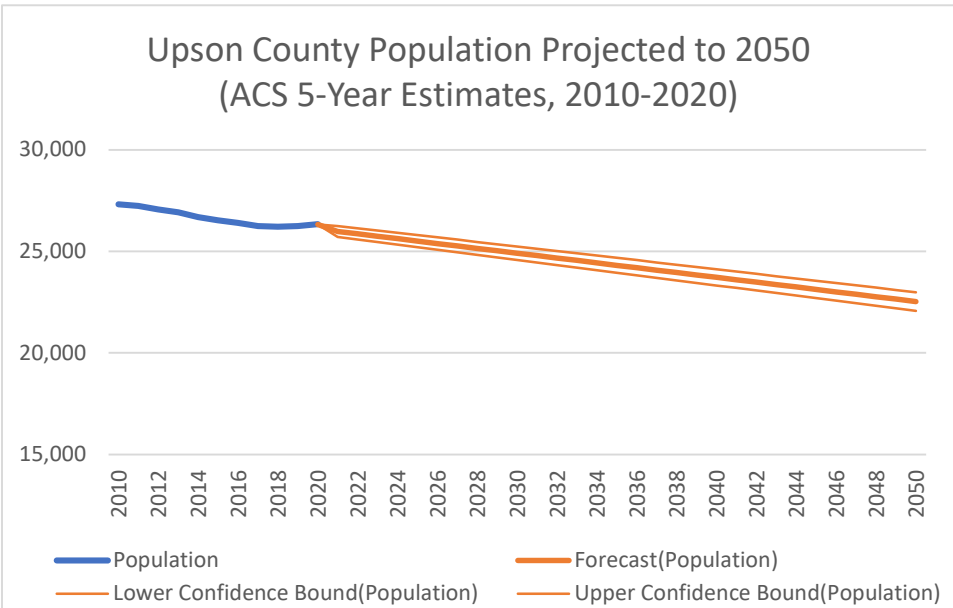


### Upson and Comparison County Populations: 2010 – 2020



Looking to 2050, Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget population projections indicate that the county’s population could reach around 23,000 residents, experiencing a continuous decreasing rate between 2020 and 2050. Alternatively, if the population follows the slight increase between 2019 and 2020, then the 2050 population would be around 27,500. This slight increase in population over time is more consistent with regional patterns that the population decrease in Upson seen between 2010 and 2018.

### Upson Population Projection: 2010 – 2050

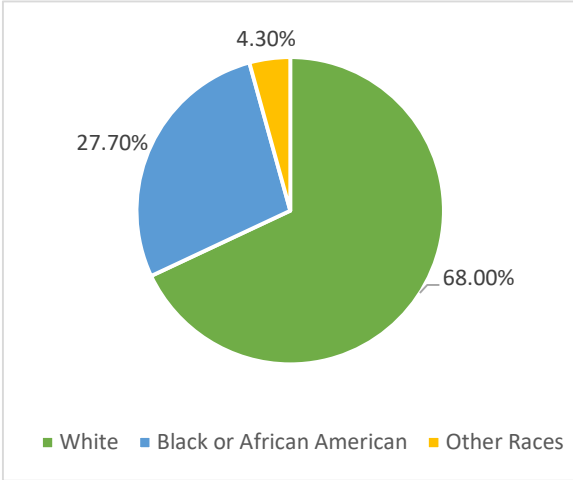


### Ethnic Diversity

In 2010, Upson County was largely comprised of white residents (69.80%), with a smaller population of African American residents (27.90% residents)- the remaining 2.30% of the population identified as either Asian or another race.

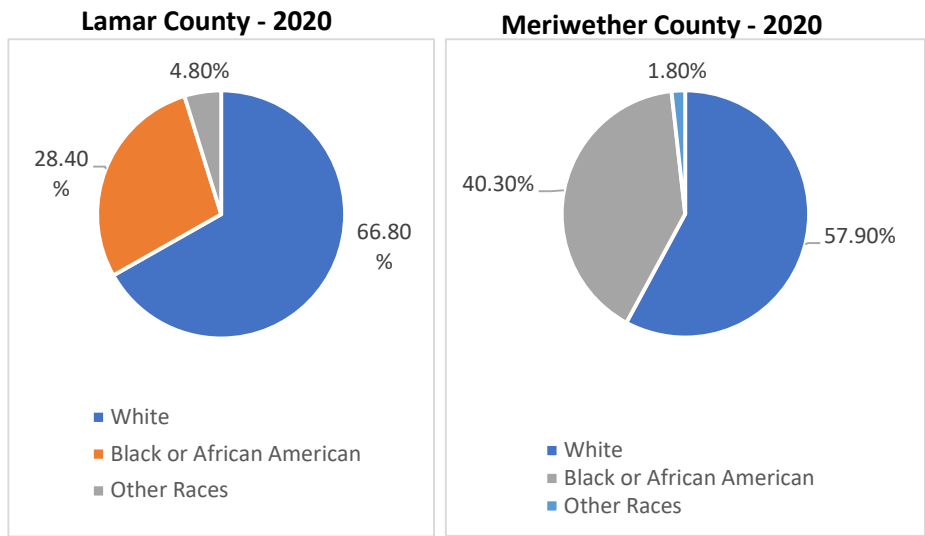
Since that time, the Census Bureau estimates that there has been a slight increase in the number of residents who identify as African American and Asian or another.

### Upson County - 2020



In comparison, Lamar and Meriwether have similar diversity as in Upson County. It is important to note that Meriwether has a significantly smaller minority population, at 13.10%.

Families



The Census Bureau defines a household as the person or persons occupying a dwelling unit. A “family household” consists of two or more related individuals, while a “nonfamily household” consists of only one individual or several individuals that live together but are not related.

In 2020, Upson County had a higher percentage of family households (57.4%) than nonfamily households (42.6%), which was lower than the percentage of family households in 2010 (69.9%).

At 67.80% owner-occupied housing units, home ownership was fractionally more prevalent in 2020, as opposed to 65.20% in 2010 in Upson.

Housing

In contrast to the county’s population decrease between 2010 and 2020, the number of housing units increased during this time by approximately 99 housing units over the time frame. Since 2010, Upson County has not undergone a substantial increase in the number of housing units, increasing 0.81% from 12,188 units to 12,287 units in 2020. In juxtaposition to that growth, there was a decrease in owner-occupied units and an increase in renter-occupied units from 2010 to 2020.

Housing Entities

Upson County does not have a Housing Authority organization to provide affordable housing to very low, low, and moderate-income persons. The County is also not involved in an entity with a larger jurisdiction that administers CDBG grant allocations. Residents and developers can apply for any applicable state and federal programs that are available.

The Economy

Many businesses were hit hard by the Great Recession but continue to recover and strengthen. A key strategy in Upson County’s economic development continues to be the expansion of existing businesses and industry throughout the county. The education and social services industry is a vital part of Upson County’s industry mix along with manufacturing and retail trade industry.

Regional Ties

The commuting patterns of workers who live in Upson County and those who come into the county to work provide a clear picture of the extent to which Upson County is economically intertwined other nearby cities and counties. Additionally, the county’s convenient accessibility to the Atlanta area and its location near Georgia Highway 19 and Highway 75 make it attractive for both businesses and residents.

According to the most recent American Communities Survey (2020), of the employed residents that lived in Upson County, the largest group of 34.70% have a 10-to-19-minute commute followed by 20.70% that have a less than 10-minute commute.

### Economic Base

In the direct aftermath of the Great Recession, educational services, and health care and social assistance was a leading industry throughout the region, employing the highest number of workers in Upson County, Lamar County, and Pike County. At the end of the decade, it is still the highest employer of workers in the study area. This industry employs almost a quarter (25.80%) of workers in Upson County as of 2020. The second largest industry in Upson County is Manufacturing, employing 19.70% of the population, down from 20.30% of the population in 2010.

Since 2010, the agriculture industry decreased by 0.8%, the manufacturing industry decreased by 0.6%, wholesale trade decreased by 1.0%, arts and entertainment decreased by 2.0%, and public administration decreased by 0.1%. Alternatively, Educational Services increased by 6.6%, finance and insurance increased by 1.5%, professional services remained the same, and other services increased by 0.2%.

### Economic Development Organizations

**Thomaston Upson Chamber of Commerce:** The Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1946 and is the leading advocate for the Upson County area. With more than 300 members, the Chamber firmly believes that thriving businesses build a thriving community. To best support the success of Upson County and the overall growth of our economy, the Chamber strives daily to advance its mission of uniting our members and the community by promoting strategic economic growth, enhancing the quality of life and creating a positive business climate for Upson County.

**Thomaston-Upson Industrial Development Agency (TUCIDA):** The TUCIDA works with the Upson Chamber of Commerce to support industrial development in the county.

## Natural Resources

### Environmental Planning Criteria

In order to protect the state's natural resources and environment, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16). These minimum standards and procedures, also known as Part V Criteria, are required under the Georgia Planning Act to be used by local communities in the development of comprehensive plans. In addition, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-2-1) require local governments to review the Part V Criteria to determine if there is need to adapt development regulations to address protection of the following natural resources:

- Water Supply Watersheds
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Wetlands
- Protected Rivers
- Protected Mountains

The Compliance with State Environmental Planning Criteria table in this section indicates whether these natural resources are present in Upson County and, if so, associated protection efforts. See also the Natural Resources Map in this section.

Compliance with State Environmental Planning Criteria			
Resource	Definition <sup>1</sup>	Location	Local Protection
Water Supply Watershed	The area of land upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water intake.	Upper Flint Watershed	Watershed Protection Ordinance: <b>Yes</b>
			Typical provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced stream buffer requirements and limitations on impervious surface within 7-mile radius of public water intakes;</li> <li>Uses associated with sanitary landfills or hazardous waste are prohibited</li> </ul>
Groundwater Recharge Area	Any portion of the earth's surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer.	As delineated by DNR in Hydrological Atlas 18 (1989 Edition), Upson County contains groundwater recharge areas of low susceptibility to pollution. These areas are limited to the northwest corner of the county.	Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance: No
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special requirements for uses associated with on-site hazardous materials;</li> <li>Septic tank regulations, including minimum lot size requirements</li> <li>Permanent storm water infiltration basins are prohibited in areas of high pollution susceptibility</li> </ul>
Wetland	Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.	Wetlands are located throughout the county, typically along streams and waterbodies, as delineated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory.	Wetlands Protection Ordinance: No
			Typical provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses associated with hazardous waste are prohibited;</li> <li>Local development permit is required for regulated activity</li> </ul>
Protected River	Any perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second as determined by appropriate U.S. Geological Survey Documents.	Upson does not contain any protected rivers.	Not applicable.
Protected Mountain	All land area 2,200 feet or more above mean sea level, that has a slope of 25% or greater for at least 500 feet horizontally, and shall include the crests, summits, and ridge tops which lie at elevations higher than any such area.	Upson does not contain any protected mountains.	Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Source: DNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16)

## Regional Water Plan

DCA's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning require local governments to review the Regional Water Plan when preparing a comprehensive plan to determine whether additional or modified regulations/actions are needed.

The Upper Flint Regional Water Plan coordinates regional resource management planning efforts for Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Meriwether, Pike, Schley, Spalding, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, Upson, and Webster counties. An update to the Water Resource Management Plan was adopted by the District in June 2017. This updated Plan highlights the interrelationships between approaches to water, wastewater, and watershed management, and is guided by the following policy goals:

- Protect Water Quality and Public Water Supplies
- Support Conservation and/or Demand Management
- Support Economic Growth and Development
- Equitably Distribute Benefits and Costs
- Promote Public Education and Awareness
- Facilitate Implementation
- Improve Resiliency

### Water quality protection measures

The county's ordinances state minimum requirements for erosion, sedimentation, and pollution control per requirements of the Georgia Water Quality Control Act.

## Floodplains

In addition to the natural features identified in the Environmental Planning Criteria table, floodplains are also found throughout the county. A floodplain is any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source. Floodplains serve three major purposes: 1) natural

water storage and conveyance, 2) water quality maintenance, and 3) groundwater recharge. Unsuitable development can prevent floodplains from serving their purpose. For example, any fill material placed in the floodplain eliminates essential water storage capacity, causing water elevation to rise, resulting in the flooding of previously dry land. The 100-year floodplain is an area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

A community's floodplain management activities, including having effective ordinances in place, can make it eligible to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS program is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Depending on the level of participation, flood insurance premium rates for policyholders can be reduced up to 45%.

## Greenspace

The counties' Recreation Department is responsible for parks within the county. Park amenities include ball fields, picnic shelters, playgrounds, walking paths, trails, and a pool.

The existing inventory of parks and greenspace throughout the city include:

- Sprewell Bluff Park
- Weaver Park
- Lakeside Park
- Greatest Generation Park
- Silvertown Ball Park
- Thomaston Dog Park

Throughout the county, there remain areas suitable for park development as well as parks throughout the county that can be expanded in both area and services.



## Historic & Cultural Resources

### National Register of Historic Resources

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the official list of the nation's historic and archaeological resources worthy of protection. A program of the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service, the National Register is intended to identify, evaluate, and protect historic places. As an honorary designation, National Register status places no obligations or restrictions on private owners. However, in order to take advantage of incentive-based preservation programs such as the 20% Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, rehabilitation projects must retain a property's historic character by following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The National Register includes seven historic resources in Upson County: Wauchope Creek Covered Bridge, Sydney Barron House, W.A. Harp House, John and Effie McDaniel House, Rose Hill Mill and House, Silvertown Historic District, and the Upson County Courthouse.

### Historical Markers

Historical markers educate citizens and visitors about the people and events that shaped Georgia's past and present. The Georgia Historical Society has managed the state markers program since 1998. Prior to that time markers were placed by the Georgia Historical Commission. Additionally, local historical societies may also erect markers.

Currently, Upson County has 10 markers that cover the first post office, unknown Confederate dead, the Auchumpkee Creek Bridge, the first cannon ball fired in the Civil War, the Pettigrew-White-Stamps House, and the Trice Cemetery.



*Upson County Courthouse, Source: Georgia Dept. of Archives and History*

Historical Markers in Upson County	
Marker Name	Location
Auchumpkee Creek Covered Bridge	Allen Rd south of Thomaston
Circa 1830 Pettigrew-White-Stamps House	US 19 South at Andrews Drive in south Thomaston
Confederate Dead	East side of Greenwood Cemetery, Thomaston
Efauamathlaw Reserve	US 19 in Thomaston
Trice Cemetery	Trice Cemetery Rd & Trice Rd (199) S of Ga 74 SE of Thomaston
Unknown Confederate Dead	Confederate Cemetery 1 mile south of The Rock
Upson County	Courthouse in Thomaston
Upson County Electric Membership Corp. Thomaston, Georgia	At Upson EMC, Ga 74 in southeast Thomaston

Sources: Georgia Historical Society

## Historic Sites

Georgia's Natural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources GIS (GNAHRGIS) is a Web-based registry that catalogs information about the natural, archaeological, and historic resources of Georgia. In this context, "historic resources" includes buildings, structures, historic sites, landscapes, and districts included in the Historic Preservation Division's Historic Resources Survey or listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The information was compiled by the Historic Preservation of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in conjunction with the Georgia Archaeological Site File at the University of Georgia.

GNAHRGIS identifies over 83 points of natural, archeological, and historic points of interest in Upson County. A substantial number of these points of interest are churches, homes, and cemeteries.

## Historic Preservation Resources / Tools

### Certified Local Government Program

The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a federal program administered at the state level by HPD. Any city, town, or county that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance and enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission, is eligible to become a CLG.

The benefits of becoming a CLG include eligibility for federal historic preservation grant funds, the opportunity to review local nominations for the National Register prior to consideration by the Georgia National Register Review Board, opportunities for technical assistance, and improved communication and coordination among local, state, and federal preservation activities.

None of the municipalities in Upson County are CLGs, and Upson County itself is not a CLG. No information is available if there are any historic preservation ordinances or local preservation commissions in any of the local governments.

## Community Facilities

Community facilities include public facilities and services available to Upson County residents. Factors such as public safety, sufficient public infrastructure and access to quality education, healthcare, cultural activities, and recreation determine a community's ability to attract and retain residential, commercial, and industrial development. As such, the economic vitality of a community is closely tied to the availability and quality of services provided to its citizens.

As Upson County continues to grow, the level of service provided by community facilities will need to be able to accommodate additional

capacity. Increased demand for additional facilities and services will strain the county's existing resources and ability to provide sufficient capacity. In addition, shifting demographics create intensified needs for specific types of needs and amenities. For instance, seniors will demand increased medical services, passive recreational opportunities, and public transportation.

When planning for the maintenance and expansion of community facilities, regional coordination is an important component. Strategic coordination between Upson County and the municipalities associated with it will remain important in future endeavors to expand community facilities and infrastructure.

The following section provide an overview of Upson County's existing community facilities while highlighting potential improvement.

## Water, Sewer, and Wastewater Facilities

Issues facing the city's water and sewer infrastructure that were identified in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan remain pertinent today. Aging infrastructure and population growth threaten the capacity of the county's systems. While various maintenance and expansion plans for water and sewer lines and facilities are underway, it is recommended that the county consider developing an equitable and affordable plan to fund continued maintenance and expansion of its infrastructure to support future growth in the county's utility service areas.

### *Water Supply & Treatment Facilities*

Upson County operates in own water distribution system, with the primary source of water being two groundwater wells pumping from a crystalline rock aquifer. The wells are located on Highway 74 West. The Lincoln Park area also has its own water distribution system, with the primary source of water being drawn from Potato Creek.

Lack of centralized water systems in unincorporated areas of Upson County continues to be a constraint for future development. As the

County grows, it is imperative the city and county coordinate to ensure future capacity demands can be met.

### *Wastewater Treatment*

The City of Thomaston's Water and Wastewater Departments are operated and maintained by ESG Operations, Inc. ESG oversees operations of two wastewater treatment plans. Where public sewer is not yet available, septic tanks may be permitted if they conform to requirements of the code and approved by the county.

The population of Upson County and demand for sewer service is growing, which is beginning to strain the county's aging infrastructure. Coordinating growth with plant expansion to meet increased need for sewer service is an important and urgent issue.

### *Solid Waste Management*

Upson County contracts with a private provider, GFL Environmental, for residential solid waste and bulk pick-up. The provider transfers waste to the Thomaston Transfer Station for final disposal.

### *Stormwater Management*

Due to the requirements to implement stormwater management activities and apparent need for additional financing for such activities, it is recommended that Upson County consider development of a Stormwater Utility to provide a separate source of funding for stormwater management. Implementation of a Stormwater Utility would allocate the cost of stormwater management to all contributors. Typically, a Stormwater Utility assesses a user fee to developed properties based on the amount of impervious surface contained on their parcel. The amount of impervious surface on a parcel is directly correlated to the amount of stormwater runoff that is contributed to the county's MS4 (stormwater discharge from municipal storm sewer systems) and the cost to the county to provide stormwater services to that parcel. The cost of providing stormwater services to all developed parcels in the city are developed as part of the cost of service analysis performed in support of the Stormwater Utility. Revenues from a

Stormwater Utility are then used to fund programs and BMPs related to drainage system operations and maintenance, regulatory compliance, capital improvements, and program administration.

## Public Safety Facilities

Upson County operates its own Sheriff's office and fire services. Ambulance service is provided by Amer iPro EMS.

**Upson County Sheriff's Office:** The Upson County Sheriff's Office is located in Thomaston on Aviation Drive.

**Upson County Fire Rescue:** Upson County has six volunteer fire departments. These six fire stations are equipped with one pumped truck and one tanker truck. Most of these departments have multiple trucks which enables them to respond and to handle fires on and off the county water system. These departments also provide medical services to the citizens of Upson County by being First Responder Certified. The departments are also able to provide vehicle extraction in the event of automobile accidents. The volunteer fire departments are located in Lincoln Park, Northside, Rock Hill, Salem, Thurston, and Yatesville. Thomaston has its own fire department made up of 19 employees making up three 24-hour shifts. They have two fire engines, one multi-purpose ladder truck, one rescue squad, and one pickup truck. The city's department has a mutual aid agreement with the county volunteer departments. If either needs help and the other has the resources free, they will assist each other as needed.

**Georgia State Patrol:** Upson falls under the jurisdiction of Georgia State Patrol Post 26, which is assigned to Crawford, Pike, Taylor, and Upson Counties.

## Medical Facilities

**Upson County Health Department:** The Upson County Health Department provides Health Services to residents of Upson County and offers many different health programs (PDF) to citizens of the county.

**Hospitals:** Upson Regional Medical Center and Upson Family Medical Center Southside and Northside provide medical services to the county.

## Educational Facilities

Unlike roads, sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water, recreation and mass transit, which are the responsibility of local governments, the School Board, by constitutional mandate, is responsible for managing and providing educational facilities to meet the needs of current and future students for the associated school district. The local governments, therefore, do not have control of the funding sources or the allocation of funds for new or renovated schools, which may add student capacity.

Current population trends indicate Upson County is home to a smaller amount of younger population with 22.6% under the age of 18. With expected population maintenance, maintaining appropriate level of service for educational facilities will be important.

Thomaston - Upson School System. Consolidated in 1990, has 1 primary school, 1 elementary school, middle school, and 1 high school, 1 Pre-K, and 1 Alternative School for a total of 6 schools in the district.

In addition to the public-school district, there are two private schools in the county- Upson Christian Academy and Overcomer's Academy, both located in Thomaston.

### High School

Upson-Lee High School is located in Thomaston, Georgia. Upson-Lee High School serves approximately 1200 students in grades 9-12 with a diverse and challenging selection of academic and elective courses, Advanced Placement and honors programs, sixteen CTAE (Career, Technical and Agriculture Education) pathways, Navy JROTC, and dual enrollment with Gordon State College and Southern Crescent Technical College. The school offers eighteen varsity sports along with academic teams and clubs.

### *Middle School*

Upson County is served by one middle school, which is located in Thomaston, Georgia. Upson-Lee Middle School serves approximately 950 students in grades 6-8.

### *Elementary Schools*

Upson County is served by one elementary school that is located in Thomaston, Georgia. Upson-Lee Elementary School serves scholars in grades 3-5 in a grade center environment.

### *Private Schools*

Upson County contains two private schools, Overcomers' Academy and Upson Christian Academy. Both schools provide educational services for children in preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Recreational Facilities

Upson County's Recreation Department manages active and passive parks throughout the county, which provide a variety of amenities, including ball fields, picnic shelters, playgrounds, walking paths, trails, and a pool.

- **Sprewell Bluff Park, Weaver Park, Lakeside Park, Greatest Generation Park, Silvertown Ball Park, Thomaston Dog Park**

In addition to existing parks, Thomaston intends to implement plans to develop additional parks and park services. Throughout Thomaston, there remain areas suitable for park or open space designation, especially smaller, neighborhood and "pocket" park development. Such areas are found in existing residential areas, as well as throughout downtown.

## Other Community Facilities

**County Seat:** The County Seat can be found in Thomaston. Several departments integral to the function of the county can be found here.

**Upson County Clerk of Courts:** Located at 116 W Main Street in Thomaston, the Superior Court can be found here, as well as several processes related to them.

**Upson County Government Complex:** The office of Public Buildings is located at 305 S Hightower Street in Thomaston. The office of Public Buildings houses several county departments including the Animal Shelter, Archives, Civic Center, Counseling Center, Courthouse, Emergency Management, Government Complex, Health Department, Library, and Roads Department.

**Library:** The Pine Mountain Regional Library System serves Meriwether, Talbot, Taylor and Upson Counties. There are library branches located in Thomaston and Yatesville.

**Thomaston-Upson Senior Center:** The Thomaston - Upson Senior Center is located in the former R.E. Lee Military building and Dining Hall in Thomaston, Georgia. Activities that are available at the center include arts and crafts, billiards, bingo, bridge, and exercise classes.



## Intergovernmental Coordination

Intergovernmental coordination seeks to formulate improved coordination processes among local governments, and with local, regional, state, and federal agencies that make direct or indirect decisions influencing land use decisions in Upson County. The establishment, maintenance and utilization of channels of communication between governmental bodies, for information exchange and problem resolution is basic to the planning process. This element will establish the necessary relationships and provide principles and guidelines for use in effectively coordinating between the county and cities within the county, and other entities with which the city shares common boundaries and/or common planning interests.

## Adjacent Local Governments

Upson County includes the cities of Thomaston and Yatesville. Service agreements between the cities and county governments allow for coordination provision of services to city and county residents.

## Independent Agencies, Boards, Authorities

### Development Authorities

**The Thomaston-Upson Development Authority (TUCIDA):** Upson County through the Thomaston-Upson Industrial Development Agency are dedicated to growing the County economy by attracting talent, promoting new business investment, retaining expanding existing industry to stimulate job growth, and improving the quality of life in Upson County. Its role is to coordinate the operations of economic development programs and services for business and industry in Upson County. TUCIDA is the business one-stop shop for technical assistance, government approvals, statistical data to support site selection, business incentives, relocation and expansion in Upson County.

### School Boards

**Thomaston-Upson Board of Education:** The Board of Education is the governing body of the Thomaston-Upson School System. The board's primary role is the legislation of school system policies, which are executed under the direction of the school superintendent. The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education (T-U BOE) consists of seven members who are elected by the public.

### Regional and State Agencies

**Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC):** TRRC is a ten-county regional planning organization created and managed under Georgia law by its member local governments in West Central Georgia. The TRRC develops, promotes, and provides comprehensive planning and development services and technical assistance for its member communities. The commission mainly works with local governments in areas including aging services, workforce development, transportation, and local/regional planning.

**Upper Flint Water Planning District:** The District establishes strategies for water supply and conservation, watershed and wastewater management for its 13 counties and municipalities located partially or fully within these counties. The District is responsible for developing comprehensive regional and watershed-specific water resource management plans to be implemented by local governments.

**Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT):** GDOT maintains and improves State and Federal highways in Upson County and provides financial assistance for local road improvements.

**Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA):** DCA has several management responsibilities for the state's coordinated planning program and reviews plans for compliance with the state's adopted minimum planning standards. It also provides a variety of technical assistance and grant funding to counties and cities.

**Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR):** DNR is available to provide assistance and guidance to municipalities in a number of



important areas including water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation and historic preservation. It is the mission of the DNR to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and utilize sound environmental practices. The department has nine divisions working to accomplish this mission: Environmental Protection Division (EPD), the Coastal Resources Division, Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, Wildlife Resources Division, Water Conservation Program, and the Program Support Division.

## **Service Delivery Strategy (SDS)**

In 1997, the state passed the Service Delivery Strategy Act (HB489). This law mandates the cooperation of local governments with regard to service delivery issues. The act required each county to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), which can be renegotiated every ten years.

The SDS includes an identification of services provided by various entities, assignment of responsibility for provision of services and the location of service areas, a description of funding sources, and an identification of contracts, ordinances, and other measures necessary to implement the SDS.

Upson County has entered into service agreements with the City of Thomaston, City of Yatesville, Thomaston-Upson County Airport Authority, Thomaston-Upson County Industrial Development Authority, Hospital Authority of Upson County, Upson County Emergency Management Agency, Thomaston-Upson County Library Board, Upson County Health Department, and Thomaston-Upson County Chamber of Commerce, to ensure proper provision of public services to its residents. Georgia's Department of Community Affairs indicates that Upson County's SDS was last updated in 2020.

## Transportation

Multi-modal transportation networks are essential for efficient movement of people, commodities, goods and services within and through cities, counties, and even regions. This element provides an overview of Upson County's existing transportation network and introduces opportunities for improvement to the overall system.

In addition to the information provided in this section, the Three Rivers Regional Commission provides a regional transportation plan and program for the Butts, Carroll, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spaulding, and Upson area. These plans are incorporated by reference.

### Roads and Highways

Transportation networks provide access to goods and services through multiple transit modes. They also provide important connections between emergency and public safety facilities and residences and businesses. This section describes Upson County's road network in terms of the Functional Classification of the roadways.

#### *Road Network Hierarchy*

Roadways are grouped into functional classifications according to the character of traffic they are intended to support. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) guidelines were consulted to develop the descriptions presented in this section. GDOT maintains jurisdiction of the interstate and state highways while the county, or individual municipalities, maintain local streets.

**Interstate:** Provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control.

**Arterials:** Provides the next highest level of service mobility so that traffic can move from one place to another quickly and safely. Arterials can be further classified as principal or minor arterials.

**Collectors:** Provides lower level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials. Collectors can be further classified as major or minor collectors.

**Local Roads:** Consists of roads not defined as arterials or collectors. Primarily provides access to homes, businesses, and other property, with minimal "through" movement.

#### *Existing Road Network*

Upson County is located along Highways 19 and 74, which provide connections between the county, Macon, and further away, the Atlanta metro area. As a highway, these roadways provide the highest level of service in the county, in terms of distance and speed.

Predominant arterials in Upson County includes Highway 36 and Highway 74. Highway 36 connects the western portion of the county to the Thomaston area. Highway 74 runs mainly east to west and connects the central portion of the county including Sunset Village, Thomaston, and Yatesville. The central portion of the county contains much of the commercial area and traffic. Commercial developments are located along the corridors around Thomaston, and there is anticipated future commercial and residential growth in this area.

The Future Development Map presented in Chapter Four of this Plan designates the majority of SR 19 within the city's planning area as a "Commercial Corridor," which implies that access management tools and coordinated land use and transportation planning practices should be implemented as the corridor and surrounding area develop.

For the most part, local roads include neighborhood roads, or roads connecting collectors to private property.

### *Alternative Modes of Transportation*

Enhancing connectivity and walkability in Thomaston and other areas remains an objective for Upson County as steady growth continues.

### *Pedestrian facilities & Sidewalks*

In order to provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access between residential areas and downtown and other community centers, the county should prioritize the implementation of sidewalks, trails, and safer crosswalks and railroad crossings.

The county should conduct a full inventory and analysis of conditions in downtown Thomaston and other main pedestrian areas, noting the availability of pedestrian infrastructure and crosswalks, open spaces, land use, and available parking in an effort to enhance connectivity, walkability, infill development and parking solutions. When feasible and where applicable, sidewalk and bike path projects could be implemented during road improvements for efficiency.

### *Parking*

Input received throughout the public involvement process indicated an overall opinion that available parking downtown in Thomaston was insufficient to meet community needs in the downtown area. The existing parking facilities located downtown could be used more effectively with some improvements to better serve businesses and residents. Providing better linkages between parking areas and downtown is also paramount in their success, as well as saving the city money on costly infrastructure.

### *Public Transportation*

With regard to public transit, Upson County currently does not have a public transportation network. As the county grows and demands change, the county should reevaluate the need for a public transit service to sufficiently accommodate the needs of its community.

## **Railroads, Trucking, and Airports**

### *Railroads*

An active rail line traverses the to the northeast of Thomaston and continues northeast out of the county.

### *Truck Routes*

Upson County contains designated truck and freight network routes, which include Highway 19 and 74. There are two routes running mainly north and south and east and west through the county. Upson County should coordinate with GDOT to evaluate alternative truck route options in areas considering bypass routes, to minimize the impact of freight traffic routed through cities within the county.

### *Airports*

The Thomaston-Upson County Airport was opened in 1994 and currently provides 6,350 feet of runway, an ILS approach and AWOS. There are 101 based aircraft, including five business operations, 100 T-hangars and seven corporate hangars, three of which are brand new. The joint city and county industrial development authority has successfully recruited several major businesses to whom airport access was at the top of their list of needs.

## **Transportation and Land Use**

Upson County's transportation network should support planned development patterns to maximize the capacity of the existing and planned transportation network. Management of the type and location of future growth could support the reduction of traffic congestion and yield a higher quality of life. In addition, providing inter-parcel access and alternative access facilities between developments enhances mobility and alleviates traffic congestion.

Major transportation routes such as Highways 19, 34, and 74 have attracted a mix of commercial and residential development adjacent to their corridors, which will likely serve as a catalyst for future growth in the surrounding areas. Strategic corridor design will ensure future compatibility with new development.

## Moving Forward

### *Thomaston Downtown Master Plan*

The initial goal of the Downtown Master Plan was to direct future decision making as it relates to the orderly growth, revitalization, and sustainable development of the downtown. Additionally, the Plan will provide a framework for the development of future public policy pertaining to development, redevelopment, infrastructure improvement and expansion, streetscaping, and provision of community services.



## Appendix D-1.

### Detailed Socioeconomic Characteristics

#### People

Identifying socioeconomic trends in a community's population overtime enables a community to more efficiently accommodate projected service and facility demands, as they relate to the population.

Table 1 presents data that is taken from the American Community Survey, conducted by the Census Bureau on an annual basis. The numbers for 2010 and 2020 vary somewhat from the 2010 and 2020 Census figures because the ACS is based on a sample survey rather than full counts of the total population. The data is useful, however, when viewing changes on a comparable basis over time. In addition, it should be noted although the ACS produces population estimates, the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (PEP) produces the official estimates of the population for the nation, states, counties, cities, and towns. In the table below, all the information is based on ACS data.

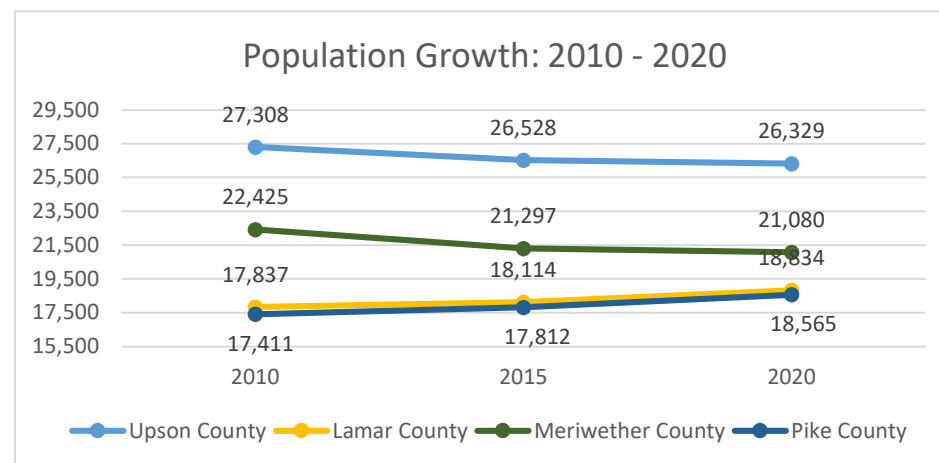
During the 2010s, Upson County experienced a steady decrease in population with a slight increase from 2018 to 2020. It finished off the decade with almost 1,000 less residents in 2020 than in 2010. In comparison with nearby counties, it was third out of four in terms of growth as the percent change from 2010 to 2020 for Upson was -3.59%. Pike and Lamar Counties had population growth, while Meriwether County had a population decrease, losing about 1,400 residents during the decade.

**Table 1: Population Growth 2010 – 2020**

	2010	2015	2020	Percent Change: 2010-2015	Percent Change: 2015-2020
<b>Upson County</b>	27,308	26,528	26,329	-2.86%	-0.75%
<b>Lamar County</b>	17,837	18,114	18,834	1.55%	3.97%
<b>Meriwether County</b>	22,425	21,297	21,080	-5.03%	-1.02%
<b>Pike County</b>	17,411	17,812	18,565	2.30%	4.23%

*Source: American Community Surveys for 2010, 2015 & 2020*

**Figure 1: Regional Population Growth 2010-2020**



*Source: American Community Surveys, 2010 & 2020*

Since 2010, the overall regional has experienced slight population decreases. The growth and decrease rates were greater at the beginning of the decade, most likely due to the lingering effects of the Great Recession, but the four counties saw small upticks in growth or slower decreases between 2015 and 2020.

# Age and Sex

Identifying demographic indicators, such as age distribution patterns within a community, provides insight into potential needs and demands for that population.

**Table 2: Population by Age & Sex**

Population by Age & Sex	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
<b>Age</b>						
Total Population	27,308	26,329	17,837	18,834	22,425	21,080
Under 5 Years	6.4%	6.3%	6.1%	5.7%	6.5%	5.9%
5 to 9 Years	5.3%	4.9%	7.0%	4.6%	6.4%	4.2%
10 to 14 Years	8.1%	7.2%	5.0%	6.5%	7.6%	7.5%
15 to 17 Years	4.6%	4.2%	4.0%	4.1%	4.3%	3.7%
18 to 24 Years	8.6%	7.8%	13.4%	13.5%	8.6%	8.1%
25 to 34 Years	11.5%	12.4%	11.2%	12.1%	11.5%	11.8%
35 to 44 Years	13.0%	12.2%	13.6%	9.3%	12.3%	10.9%
45 to 54 Years	15.1%	12.7%	14.2%	14.0%	14.7%	12.5%
55 to 64 Years	12.4%	14.2%	12.5%	12.6%	13.1%	15.0%
65 to 74 Years	8.5%	10.6%	7.9%	11.2%	8.7%	11.9%
75 to 84 Years	4.8%	5.4%	4.0%	4.9%	5.0%	6.0%
85 Years and Older	1.8%	2.4%	1.2%	1.5%	1.3%	2.5%
<b>Median Age</b>						
	40.3	42.2	37.7	38.1	41.0	42.7
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	48.2%	47.7%	48.7%	49.4%	47.2%	48.3%
Female	51.8%	52.3%	51.3%	50.7%	52.8%	51.7%

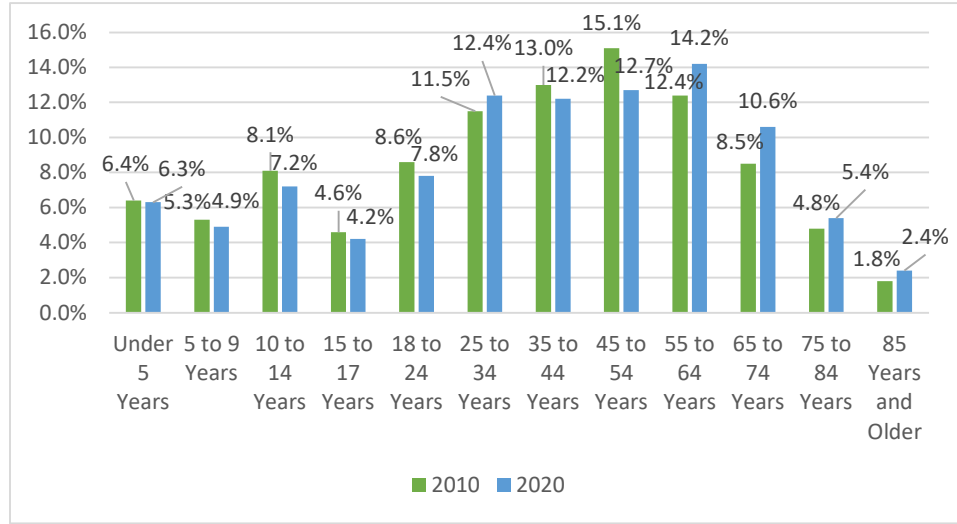
Source: American Community Surveys, 2010 & 2020

Upson County is home to a growing population of older and elderly residents. In 2010, 15.1% of the population was over the age of 65. In 2020, 15.8% of the population was over the age of 65. In Upson, all age groups 24 years or younger and the 35 to 54 age groups experienced a

decrease in population, while adults (25-34) and all age groups 55 and older experienced increases in population. Upson County is still a younger region, with a median age of 42.2 years old. Additionally, Upson and Meriwether Counties have comparable median ages, while the median age in Lamar County is slightly lower at 38.1.

The decrease in the youth and middle age groups are not concerning. The decreases are nominal, with the youth group going from 24.4% of the population in 2010 to 22.6% in 2020, while the middle age group went from 28.1% to 24.9% over the same time period.

**Figure 2. Upson Population by Age Distribution: 2010 & 2020**



Source: American Community Surveys, 2010 & 2020

Lamar County similarly experienced growth in its older and elderly population, going from 25.6% to 30.2% between 2010 and 2020. The middle age population also increased by 0.1%. The age groups under 17 underwent minor decreases in the same time period except for the 5 to 9 age group.

Morgan County demonstrated similar trends to the other two counties in terms of growth within the older and elderly population. This group

experienced a notable jump in size, going from 28.1% to 35.4% from 2010 to 2020. This pattern is indicative of a community aging in place. Every other age group decreased in size over the course of the decade, with the exception of a small increase in the 18 to 24 age group.

Female residents continue to comprise over half the population in Upson, Lamar, and Meriwether Counties. This is consistent with statewide trends of a higher female population.

### Ethnicity

The 2010 American Community Survey demonstrates that Upson County had a large white population, at 69.80%, while African American residents made up 27.90% of the total population. Other races, including, Native Americans, Asians, Native Hawaiians, people of two or more races and all others, made up the remaining percentage of the population at 2.30%. Since then, the white population and African American percentage of the overall population has decreased slightly, while other races have increased slightly.

**Table 3: Population by Race and Ethnicity**

POPULATION: RACE & ETHNICITY	Upson County				Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	2010		2020		2010	2020	2010	2020
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
<b>Total:</b>	27,308	100.00%	26,329	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<i>White alone</i>	19,057	69.80%	17,905	68.00%	66.40%	66.80%	58.20%	57.90%
<i>Black or African American alone</i>	7,617	27.90%	7,285	27.70%	30.90%	28.40%	40.80%	40.30%
<i>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</i>	90	0.30%	164	0.60%	0.20%	0.00%	0.20%	0.10%
<i>Asian alone</i>	162	0.60%	105	0.40%	0.50%	0.60%	0.00%	0.30%
<i>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</i>	0	0.00%	201	0.80%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Some other race alone</i>	189	0.70%	275	1.00%	1.00%	0.60%	0.20%	0.70%
<i>Two or more races</i>	193	0.70%	394	1.50%	1.00%	3.60%	0.60%	0.70%

Source: American Community Surveys, 2010 & 2020

Additionally, the majority of Lamar County in 2010 identified as white (66.40%) while 30.90% of the population was African American. Other races, as described above, made up the remaining percentage of the population. The 2020 American Community Survey indicated that there were minimal changes in race distribution in Lamar County.

Meriwether County had a slightly more diverse racial make-up than the two other counties, with 58.20% of the population being white in 2010, while 40.80% of the county was African American. In 2020, the white and African American populations in the county had decreased slightly, while the remaining percentage of other races increased over the course of the decade.

### Population Trends

Upson County's population has decreased steadily between 2010 and 2018, with a slight increase in population from 2018 to 2020. There has been a 0.43% population growth between 2018 and 2020.

The ACS estimates indicate that compared to Lamar and Meriwether counties, Upson County has decreased population at a similar rate to Meriwether County and decreased at a greater rate than Lamar County. Lamar and Pike Counties have experience slight population increases

from 2010 to 2020. From 2010 to 2020 Upson County has a population decrease at a rate of -3.59% compared to 5.59% in Lamar County and -6.0% in Meriwether County.

The latest Census data suggests that the age dynamics in Upson County have changed slightly since 2010. The school-age population (under 18

years old) has decreased by 1.8% over the ten-year period. Meanwhile, the number of residents 65 and older has increased by 3.3%. This is indicative of a slight increase in the average age in the county.

Also of interest is the change in population among ethnic groups in the county. Upson County had a predominantly White population in 2010 and saw a slight decrease in the White population in 2020 (1.80%). There has been an increase in other races including increases in the American Indian and Biracial populations. The Black population decreased by 0.2% over the study time period. However, the make-up of Upson County’s population with regard to age, race, and sex, remains fairly similar to the composition of the 2010 population.

### Population Projections

Population forecasts provide insight into what a community might look like twenty or so years down the road. Such projections can address how and where a community will grow through following a comprehensive plan and implementing development regulations and short-term strategic work plans. Population projections are produced by a variety of agencies and can also be calculated through several statistical methods.

**Table 4: Population Projections**

<b>METHOD 1: Annual Growth Trend Extrapolation Model</b>						
	Average annual growth rate	Average Annual Increase (People/Year)	2020	2030	2040	2050
LOW	-4.0%	-11	26,329	26,223	26,118	26,013
	(2010 – 2020)					
MEDIUM	-1.0%	-3	26,329	26,302	26,275	26,248
	(2015 – 2020)					
HIGH	0.43%	1	26,329	26,340	26,351	26,362
	(2018 – 2020)					
<b>METHOD 2: Georgia Planning &amp; Budget Projections Model</b>						
			2020	2030	2040	2050
PROJECTION			26,329	27,361	27,697	27,459

Source: American Community Surveys, 2020, Georgia Department of Planning & Budget

Looking to 2050, population projections following the increase in population from 2018 to 2020 indicate that the county’s population could reach around 27,500 residents, experiencing a slow growth rate of 0.04% between 2020 and 2050. Alternatively, some models predict a lower population in the range of 23,000 residents if the overall decreasing trend continues. Lamar and Pike Counties are projected to increase in population.

Population calculations can be achieved through various statistical calculation methodologies. In addition to statistical calculations, other factors contributing to growth patterns were considered when developing population projections for Upson County, including regional growth projections, development potential in and around the county, the housing market, and economic conditions.

### Method 1: Annual Growth Trend Extrapolation Model

Method 1 presented in Table 4 depicts projections based on annual growth trends since over the past several decades. The average annual growth rate was extrapolated for three different time periods, which represented low, medium, and high projections.

The “high” projection encompasses growth patterns between 2017 and 2020 and predicts a population of 26,353 by the year 2050. The county has seen a population decrease from 2010 to 2018 with a slight increase in population from 2018 to 2020 of 113 people. The high projection in Method 1 is the most likely scenario of Method 1 if recent population trends continue.

The “low” projection extrapolates the average annual growth rate between 2010 and 2020, a rate of -4.0%. This includes



the overall population decline from 2010 to 2018. The low projections from Method 1 indicate a 2050 population of 26,013. Being that the current population is around 26,329 people, these projections over the next couple of decades seems low if the county's decline trend from 2010 to 2018 is reversed.

#### Method 2: Georgia Planning & Budget Projections Model

The second method used to evaluate 2050 population projections for Upson County is including the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget projections. These projections are prepared using census data combined with information on migration and age data to create state and county level projections. The Upson County projections based on the state's model are listed in Table 4.

#### Comprehensive Plan Population Projection

Comparing the two methods and the intent of the county and the cities with intent to grow, Method 2 at a minimum seems most appropriate for the population projection. The state's population projections fall above the Method 1 projections and seems most realistic if the county continues to grow. Based on Method 2, the 20-year forecast is a population of 27,697.

**Table 5: Population Interpolation based on Method 2**

Method 2: Interpolation based on Georgia Planning & Budget Projections Model			
	2023	2033	2043
Population Projection	26,850	27,513	27,626

Source: Georgia Department of Planning & Budget

## Families

This section utilizes the most recent American Community Survey data to evaluate the composition of families in Upson County. The Census Bureau refers to families as "households", with a "family household" consisting

of two or more related individuals, and a "nonfamily household" consisting of only one individual or several individuals that live together but are not related. The term "family" is used more generally to refer to all types of households.

In 2010, Upson County had 10,502 households, with 69.90% (7,341) considered traditional family households, and 18.90% (1,982) classified as non-family households. Lamar and Meriwether Counties had a similar percentage of family households at 70.60% and 69.50%, respectively.

The 2020 ACS found that Upson County had a lower percentage of traditional family households, with 57.40% of the population identifying as a traditional family. Overall, the number of traditional family households decreased in the county and in Lamar and Meriwether counties.

**Table 6: Household Type: 2010 - 2020**

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>2010</b>						
Total households	10,502	100.00%	6,377	100.00%	8,453	100.00%
Family households*	7,341	69.90%	4,502	70.60%	5,877	69.50%
Male householder	4,838	46.10%	3,177	49.80%	3,934	46.50%
Female householder	521	5.00%	307	4.80%	219	3.70%
Nonfamily households**	1,982	18.90%	1,018	16.00%	786	13.20%
Male householder	3,161	30.10%	1,875	29.40%	1,064	17.90%
Female householder	1531	14.60%	774	12.10%	515	8.70%
<b>2020</b>						
Total Households	10,399	100.00%	6,658	100.00%	8,255	
Family Households*	5,968	57.40%	3,730	56.00%	5,618	68.10%
Married-couple family	4,092	39.40%	2,989	44.90%	3,188	38.60%
Male Householder	479	4.60%	146	2.20%	484	5.90%
Female Householder	1,397	13.40%	595	8.90%	1,946	23.60%
Nonfamily Households**	4,431	42.60%	2,928	44.00%	2,637	31.90%

\*A family household has at least one member of the household related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

\*\* A nonfamily household consists of people living alone and households which do not have any members related to the householder

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2020 American Community Survey

Since 2010, the average household size in Upson County has gotten smaller, while Meriwether County's has increased slightly, and Lamar County's has decreased slightly. In 2020, Upson County's average household size increased to 2.6 persons per household. This number is similar to that of Lamar County (2.52) and Morgan County's average size of 2.58.

**Table 7: Household Size: 2010 – 2020**

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>2010</b>						
Total households	10,502	100.00%	6,377	100.00%	8,453	100.00%
1-person household	2,665	25.40%	1,566	24.60%	2,145	25.40%
2-person household	4,040	38.50%	2,389	37.50%	3,195	37.80%
3-person household	1,567	14.90%	941	14.80%	1,225	14.50%
4-or-more-person household	2,230	23.70%	1,481	23.20%	1,888	22.40%
<b>2020</b>						
Total households	10,399	100.00%	6,658	100.00%	8,255	100.00%
1-person household	4,000	38.50%	2,583	38.80%	2,461	29.80%
2-person household	2,927	28.20%	1,892	28.40%	2,630	31.90%
3-person household	1,615	15.50%	1,070	16.10%	1,380	16.70%
4-or-more-person household	1,857	20.90%	1,113	16.80%	1,113	16.80%
<b>Average Household Size</b>	2.6	(x)	2.5	(x)	2.6	(x)
<b>Change 2010 - 2020</b>						
Total households	-103		281		-198	
1-person household	1,335	13%	1,017	14.20%	316	4%
2-person household	-1,113	-10%	-497	-9.10%	-565	-6%
3-person household	48	1%	129	1.30%	155	2%
4-or-more-person household	-373	-3%	-368	-6.40%	-775	-6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2020 American Community Survey

Overall, the counties have similar percentage distribution in terms of household size, though there have been some notable shifts since 2010. The number of households with 4 people or more decreased in Upson County, at 20.90%. Households in Upson of 3 persons have increased slightly in 2020 to account for 15.50% of the households. Two-person households decreased dramatically to 28.20%. One person households make up 38.50% of the county.

All of the subject counties saw an increase in one-person households. All of the subject counties saw decreases in four or more person households and increases in three-person households. While the size of households has decreased slightly in Upson, this reflects the slight decrease in the young adult population.

### Tenure Status of Families

Overall, Upson County did not see much change between the number of residents who own their home compared to those who rent a home between 2010 and 2020. Since 2010, the number of owner-occupied households has slightly decreased, while the number of renter-occupied households has slightly increased.

Meriwether County demonstrate similar patterns, with the number of owner-occupied units decreasing while the number of renter-occupied units increased. Lamar County demonstrated an inverse pattern to the other two counties. Overall, owner households remain the predominant style of tenure across the comparison region, with approximately 2/3 of households in owner-occupied units.

### Homes

Between the 2010 and 2020 Censuses, Upson County experienced a 3.68% increase in the number of housing units, which grew from 1,549 units in 2010, to 1,606

units in 2020. Over the past decade, the amount of vacant housing has decreased by 25.4%, going from 181 units in 2010 to 135 units in 2020.

Approximately two thirds of units in Upson County are owner-occupied. However, there was a slight decrease in the number of owner-occupied units in the county, going from 69.8% to 65.2% over the last ten years. In comparison, Lamar County is the only one of the three to experience an increase in the number of owner-occupied units, going from 66.6% to 71.8% occupancy, while Meriwether County underwent a nominal decline in accordance with Upson County.

In conjunction with this decline in owner-occupancy in Upson and Meriwether Counties, the number of renter-occupied units increased by 4.60% and 6.40% respectively. Of note, in Upson 17.8% of residents pay more than 30% of their income on rent and 21.8% of residents spend more than 50% of their income on rent. The median rent in Upson County is \$628 leading to affordability concerns for residents.

**Table 8: Change in Housing Occupancy: 2010-2020**

	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>2010</b>						
Total Households	10,502	100%	6,377	100%	8,453	100%
Owner Households	7,334	69.80%	4,244	66.60%	6,125	72.50%
Renter Households	3,168	30.20%	2,133	33.50%	2,328	27.50%
<b>2020</b>						
Total Households	10,399	100%	6,658	100%	8,255	100%
Owner Households	6,779	65.20%	4,779	71.80%	5,455	66.10%
Renter Households	3,620	34.80%	1,879	28.20%	2,800	33.90%
<b>Change 2010 - 2020</b>						
Total Households	-103		281		-198	
Owner Households	-555	-4.60%	535	5.20%	-670	-6.40%
Renter Households	452	4.60%	-254	-5.30%	472	6.40%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2020 American Community Survey

## The Housing Supply

This section examines the availability of vacant homes as an indicator of potential population absorption. Housing that is considered “available” is limited to vacant housing units that were for sale or rent. In 2020, the percentage of vacant housing units in Upson County was 8.41%, down from 11.7% in 2010.

**Table 9: Total Housing Units by Occupancy: 2000 – 2020**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Communities Surveys for 2010 and 2020

HOUSING UNITS	Upson County	
	Number	Percent
<b>2010</b>		
Total Housing Units	1,549	100.0%
Occupied Housing Units	1,368	88.3%
Vacant Housing Units	181	11.7%
<b>2020</b>		
Total Housing Units	1,606	100.0%
Occupied Housing Units	1,471	91.6%
Vacant Housing Units	135	8.41%

Since 2010, the number of vacant units decreased by 25.4%, with 135 total vacant units listed. In addition, there was a 3.68% increase in the number of total housing units. Most available homes in Upson County fall into the “other vacant” category, which includes housing units that are under repair, not in the market, or dilapidated.

## Housing Types

The primary housing types in Upson County are detached, single family homes, which comprise over 70% of the housing supply. The rest of the housing stock is comprised of single-unit attached homes, mobile homes, apartments, and 2-4-unit developments.

## Housing Value

At \$87,200, Upson County's median household value reflects a challenge for high-quality supply of housing. Meriwether County's median household value is slightly higher than Upson (\$98,000), while Jackson County has the highest of the three (\$134,500), comparatively.

## Housing Trends

Compared to 2010, there was a slight increase in the number of housing units present in 2020 for Upson County. These findings are consistent with slow population growth patterns in that ten-year period.

**Table 10: Housing Values in Upson County: 2020**

HOUSE VALUE	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Owner-occupied units</i>	6,715	100%	4,424	100%	5,470	100%
Less than \$20,000	298	4.4%	124	2.8%	525	9.6%
\$20,000 to \$49,999	886	13.2%	252	5.7%	640	11.7%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2,651	39.5%	992	22.4%	1,631	29.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,350	20.1%	1,123	25.4%	1,187	21.7%
\$150,000 to \$299,999	1,267	18.9%	1,461	33.0%	1,076	19.7%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	187	2.8%	422	9.5%	297	5.4%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	62	0.9%	48	1.1%	50	0.9%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	13	0.2%	2	0.1%	64	1.2%
<b>Median Value (dollars)</b>	<b>\$87,200</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>\$134,500</b>	<b>(X)</b>	<b>\$98,000</b>	<b>(X)</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Communities Surveys for 2020

During this time period, the percentage of owner-occupied households in Upson County experienced a decrease (4.60%). In addition, the number of vacant housing units decreased by over 25.4 percent between 2010 and 2020. Overall, trends over the past ten years point to a somewhat healthy housing market in Upson County, with about large percentage of occupied housing units (91.6%) and homeownership (65.2%). Of note, the housing supply likely needs more market rate housing to increase the homeownership rate.

**Table 11: Number of Units in Structure**

Source: Census Bureau 2020 American Communities Survey

Total Housing Units	12,153
1-unit, detached (Single Family)	70.6%
1-unit, attached (Townhome)	0.7%
2 units	3.2%
3 or 4 units	3.3%
5 to 49 units	3.4%
50-or-more-units (Apartments)	0.1%
Mobile home	18.7%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%



Workers

The people who work in Upson County, and the businesses and institutions that employ them are the backbone of the county’s economic place.

Commuting Patterns

The Census Bureau produces statistics for commuting flows on national, state and county levels. Data related to commuting patterns can be accessed in the American Community Survey and the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES).

For Upson County, slightly under a third of the working age population (34.7%) has a commute length between 10 and 19 minutes, while almost a quarter of the population (20.7%) has a commute of less than 10 minutes. Upson County has shorter overall commute times than Lamar and Meriwether Counties. Upson also has a smaller relative population that works from home compared to Lamar and Meriwether County.

The American Community Survey also provides insight into commuter patterns for workers, including place of work. Of the estimated 6,249 employed workers living in Upson County in 2020, the majority (66.7%) commuted to work outside of the county in which they resided, while about 33.3% lived and worked in their county of residence.

Both data products indicated that compared to Upson County, Lamar County and Meriwether County have much higher percentage of residents who live in the county and work outside of their county of residence (83.0% and 84.1%, respectively).

Table 12: 2020 Employment Status

EMPLOYMENT	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Working Age Population*	21,276	100.00%	15,519	100.00%	17,121	100.00%
In labor force**	11,378	53.50%	7,896	50.90%	8,766	51.20%
Civilian labor force	0	0.00%	75	0.50%	2	0.00%
Employed	11,378	53.50%	7,821	50.40%	8,764	51.20%
Unemployed	10,885	51.20%	7,190	46.30%	8,273	48.30%
Armed Forces	493	2.30%	631	4.10%	491	2.90%
Not in labor force***	9,898	46.50%	7,623	49.10%	8,355	48.80%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

\*Working Age Population refers to citizens age 16 years and over

\*\*Labor Force: All non-institutionalized civilians who are either employed or unemployed

\*\*\*Not in labor force: Includes, but not limited to students, institutionalized people, housewives, retired workers

Table 13: Commuter Patterns – Place of Work

COMMUTER PATTERNS	Upson County	Lamar County	Meriwether County
Worked in county of residence	33.3%	17.0%	15.9%
Worked outside county of residence	66.7%	83.0%	84.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

## Employment by Industry

Employment data is particularly pertinent to understanding the economic base of an area. It is important to note that the Census data is based on employed persons, not necessarily on jobs alone. Thus, a person working multiple jobs is counted only once by the Census. As noted, the jobs exclude sole proprietors and businesses that have no employees.

The numbers on the following tables are taken from the American Community Surveys (ACS) for 2010 and 2020, which are prepared by the Census Bureau but are estimates extrapolated from partial survey data, not actual counts.

Workers over 16 years of age are considered to be either “in labor forces” or “not in labor force.” According to the Census, the labor force includes employed and unemployed members of the civilian labor force as well as members of the Armed Forces. The “not in labor force” group constitutes working age citizens which consists mainly of students, home caretakers, retired workers, seasonal workers not currently working, institutionalized people (jail, mental institution), and those in a nursing home.

**Table 14: Travel Time to Work**

Travel Time to Work	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Working Age Population*	10,751	100.00%	7,141	100.00%	8,161	100.00%
Did Not Work at Home	10,641	99.00%	6,957	97.40%	8,015	98.20%
Less than 10 minutes	2,222	20.70%	1,019	14.30%	900	11.00%
10 to 19 minutes	3,733	34.70%	1,551	21.70%	1,170	14.30%
20 to 29 minutes	1,495	13.90%	1,359	19.00%	981	12.00%
30 to 39 minutes	1,514	14.10%	1,002	14.00%	1,753	21.50%
40 to 59 minutes	883	8.20%	616	8.60%	1,947	23.90%
60 to 89 minutes	517	4.80%	1,028	14.40%	834	10.20%
90 or more minutes	277	2.60%	382	5.40%	430	5.30%
Worked at home	110	1.00%	184	2.60%	146	1.80%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020 American Community Survey

Educational services, and health care and social assistance was a leading industry throughout the region, employing the highest number of workers in Upson County and Lamar County. At the end of the decade, it is still the highest employer of workers in the study area. Despite a marginal decrease in the percentage of workers it employs, this industry still employs over a quarter (25.8%) of workers in Upson County as of 2020. The second largest industry in Upson County is Manufacturing, employing 19.7% of the population, down from 20.3% of the population in 2010.

The fastest growing industry in Upson County is Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance, rising from 19.2% in 2010 to 25.8% in 2020. Some industries experienced a decline, while Wholesale Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities, Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing were the other growing industries.

## Employment by Occupation

Table 16 displays data related to occupation and takes a different view of employment in Upson County, focusing on the occupations of people that live in the county, as opposed to all employees that work for companies in the county regardless of where they live. Also, unlike the figures for employment by industry in Table 15, the following tables include all working residents, including government employees and sole proprietors.

As noted previously, 2010 was a point in time at the severest depths of the Great Recession, while in 2020, the economy had recovered. Each county experienced an increase in the number of employed residents, with Upson going from 10,885 workers to 10,893 workers in 2020.

**Table 15: Employment by Industry: 2010 - 2020**

INDUSTRY	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Civilian employed population 16 years and over (labor force)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1.40%	0.60%	1.90%	0.40%	2.40%	2.00%
Construction	9.40%	6.70%	7.20%	6.20%	8.40%	10.80%
Manufacturing	20.30%	19.70%	15.20%	17.70%	19.50%	25.20%
Wholesale trade	2%	3%	4.10%	3.20%	3.10%	2.70%
Retail trade	12.40%	8.70%	14.90%	15.20%	11.90%	7.60%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.40%	6.60%	8.20%	5.60%	6.60%	8.20%
Information	1.70%	1.30%	2.20%	1.80%	1.30%	1.00%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4.00%	5.50%	3.70%	6.70%	4.30%	3.60%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5.30%	5.30%	4.10%	5.30%	7.10%	2.50%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	19.20%	25.80%	21.80%	18.40%	19.60%	22.10%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	7.40%	5.40%	7.20%	5.60%	5.60%	5.70%
Other services, except public administration	4.90%	5.10%	4%	6%	6.00%	4.40%
Public administration	6.90%	6.80%	5.20%	8.20%	4.20%	4.20%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2010 and 2020

Table 16 demonstrates a clear picture of what occupations were able to recover from the difficult economic times at the beginning of the decade, as well as showing if any occupations suffered any losses.

Upson County's top three job categories in 2010 were 1) Professional and Related Occupations; 2) Production Occupations; and 3) Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations. By 2020, Professional and Related Occupations remained the top job category with Office and Administrative Support Occupations and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations taking the second and third places in Upson County. While the job market has diversified, Professional and Related Occupations lead, employing 20.4% of the county. Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations had a sizeable decrease, going from 9.40 percent to 6.70 percent over the course of the decade. Retail Trade also had a sizeable decrease from 12.4% to 8.70% over the ten-year time period. Similar to Upson County, Manufacturing, and Education Services remain to be a steady employer for the working populations of Lamar and Meriwether.

**Table 16: Employment by Occupation: 2000 – 2020***Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2010 & 2020*

OCCUPATION	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>2010</b>						
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	10,893	100.00%	7,576	100.00%	9,022	100.00%
Management, Business, and Financial Operations Occupations	749	6.90%	598	7.90%	896	9.90%
Professional and Related Occupations	1652	15.20%	1301	17.20%	986	10.90%
Healthcare Support Occupations	250	2.30%	142	1.90%	176	2.00%
Protective Service Occupations	401	4%	116	1.50%	87	1.00%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	600	5.50%	448	5.90%	392	4.30%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	658	6.00%	186	2.50%	540	6.00%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	294	2.70%	264	3.50%	169	1.90%
Sales and Related Occupations	1050	9.60%	839	11.10%	820	9.10%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	1372	12.60%	1138	15.00%	1276	14.10%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	82	0.80%	83	1.10%	171	1.90%
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations	1392	12.80%	787	10.40%	1137	12.60%
Production Occupations	1442	13.20%	854	11%	1395	15.50%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	951	8.70%	820	10.80%	977	10.80%
<b>2020</b>						
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	10,885	100.00%	7,190	100.00%	8,273	100.00%
Management, Business, and Financial Operations Occupations	998	9.20%	721	10.00%	1036	12.50%
Professional and Related Occupations	2222	20.40%	1215	16.90%	1125	13.60%
Healthcare Support Occupations	443	4.10%	157	2.20%	325	3.90%
Protective Service Occupations	322	3%	231	3.20%	162	2.00%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	461	4.20%	340	4.70%	311	3.80%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	505	4.60%	182	2.50%	338	4.10%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	214	2.00%	409	5.70%	224	2.70%
Sales and Related Occupations	754	6.90%	885	12.30%	474	5.70%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	1414	13.00%	1062	14.80%	855	10.30%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	67	0.60%	20	0.30%	46	0.60%
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations	1017	9.30%	645	9.00%	1120	13.50%
Production Occupations	1151	10.60%	446	6%	1084	13.10%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1317	12.10%	877	12.20%	1173	14.20%



## Income

Median earnings for Upson, Lamar, and Meriwether residents in various occupations are shown in Table 17. Of the three counties, Upson has the lowest median household income at \$39,221, while Jackson has the highest, at \$50,088. Lamar County saw the largest increase in median household income between 2010 and 2020, going from \$37,536 to \$50,088. The median household income increased in all three counties but by differing growth rates.

*Note: 2010 and 2020 median earnings are shown in then-current 2010 and 2020 dollars, respectively.*

Over the course of the decade, Upson County's median household income increased by \$4,712 to \$39,221. This is a slow growth rate considering the duration of 10 years and comparable growth in adjacent counties. During this period, all income ranges over \$100,000 in Upson County saw decreases in the percentage of households while the income ranges from \$15,000 to \$39,999 saw increases in the percentage of households.

**Table 17: Median Household Income**

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Upson County		Lamar County		Meriwether County	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Total Households	10,502	10,399	6,377	6,658	8,453	8,255
Less than \$10,000	1182	1481	691	599	643	1016
\$10,000 to \$14,999	951	425	603	352	878	579
\$15,000 to \$19,999	728	659	381	342	473	645
\$20,000 to \$24,999	835	824	409	315	868	452
\$25,000 to \$29,999	841	717	506	396	439	322
\$30,000 to \$34,999	791	616	399	270	633	477
\$35,000 to \$39,999	599	547	440	297	508	595
\$40,000 to \$44,999	484	578	467	181	374	374
\$45,000 to \$49,999	571	372	380	573	380	249
\$50,000 to \$59,999	905	674	387	640	731	794
\$60,000 to \$74,999	854	1055	523	681	1071	805
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1100	959	600	829	744	943
\$100,000 to \$124,999	344	574	390	411	379	409
\$125,000 to \$149,999	176	567	35	298	130	288
\$150,000 to \$199,999	114	199	96	312	138	105
\$200,000 or more	27	152	70	162	64	202
<b>Median household income</b>	<b>\$34,509</b>	<b>\$39,221</b>	<b>\$37,536</b>	<b>\$50,088</b>	<b>\$37,845</b>	<b>\$40,769</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2010 and 2020