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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Research Team expresses appreciation to the Camden County Planning and Roads departments; the mayors, city managers, Planning and Public Works departments of the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine; the Georgia Coastal Regional Development Center; the Georgia Department of Transportation; and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.
INTRODUCTION

Camden County, Georgia, has experienced continuing population growth in the decades since the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base began operation in 1978. Increasing population has resulted in several spurts of development, mostly residential and commercial. While this development has met the demands of the local residents, businesses, and visitors, it has also created new problems and challenges. As local officials and community leaders consider the County's future, they must identify the community's vision and goals and implement policies, regulations, and practices that collectively help realize and preserve the characteristics that make Camden County a desirable place to live, visit, and do business.

This effort should be shaped by the social, economic, and environmental issues and goals of the County and cities. As reported in the **Summary of Interviews with Community Stakeholders**, many people identified strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in these areas:

- **Social issues** include housing, education, and overall quality-of-life factors. Stakeholders indicated a desire to provide adequate affordable housing and a good education system, preserve the “small town” atmosphere, and meet all citizens’ needs.

- **Economic issues** are focused on diversification, high-quality job growth, improving the tax base, and enhancing the success of local businesses.

- **Environmental issues** address the need to prevent development that would damage the environment and an overarching goal to protect water and air quality.

These issues often overlap; for example, high-quality education is important socially (providing education access and opportunity to all residents) and economically (creating a skilled workforce for businesses), whereas appropriate land development patterns are vital to the County’s environmental (protection of sensitive areas), social (limiting traffic congestion, providing access to services and parks, creating safe neighborhoods), and economic (securing appropriate land for business uses) success.

These three tenets of sustainable quality growth are not without conflict. For example, the expansion of the tourism industry could enhance the tax base and support overall economic growth in Camden County, but it also has a tendency to create relatively low-wage jobs that do not address the County’s desire to improve income equality. To address these types of challenges, the plans and actions related to the future of the County and cities must balance the social, economic, and environmental issues and identify strategies to mitigate negative consequences. This requires collaboration among the jurisdictions, between the departments within each jurisdiction, and with local institutions and nonprofit organizations.
This report provides an assessment of the existing regulations of Camden County and the incorporated cities and the most pressing issues to provide tools and strategies for the future. The report includes three sections:

- **Quality Growth Audit:** This tool is used to assess Camden County’s and Kingsland’s, St. Marys’, and Woodbine’s existing plans and development regulations to identify potential impediments to quality growth and economic development.

- **Critical Issues and Recommendations:** The most pertinent issues unveiled in the audit are discussed in detail, and specific recommendations and action items are provided.

- **Quality Growth Best Practices:** This section provides “best practices” for business parks and redevelopment strategies.

This report is part of the “Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia” series of reports that was completed by Georgia Tech in October 2005. For information on other reports in the series, please contact The Camden Partnership.
SECTION 1 : QUALITY GROWTH AUDIT

The Audit of Barriers to Quality Growth and Economic Development has been structured to assess the plans, regulations, and capital improvement programs of unincorporated Camden County and the incorporated cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine to identify potential obstacles to quality growth and economic development, as well as any inconsistencies among plans and regulations. It is a systematic evaluation of plans, policies, and practices that poses questions about land use, transportation, housing, the natural environment, and other topics.

An audit is a circular process that involves the following steps:

Define quality growth and develop questions that test current practices
For the purpose of this audit, quality growth has been defined using findings from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ Quality Growth Resource Team Report: Camden County, Georgia (2004) and the interviews conducted in summer 2005 by the Georgia Tech team for the Economic Diversification Plan. For Camden County, “quality growth” means:

- maintaining and enhancing a high quality of life,
- providing quality public education,
- promoting economic diversity,
- managing increasing traffic congestion,
- providing a variety of housing options,
- preserving a sense of place,
- protecting the natural environment, and
- fully realizing the value of community resources and investments.

To determine whether the existing plans and regulations help the County and incorporated cities achieve the desired quality growth, 40 questions were drafted to uncover unintended conflicts and outdated policies and practices.

Identify documents to be audited
This audit reviews the following documents:
- A Joint County/City Comprehensive Plan for Camden County and the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine (henceforth referred to as the Comprehensive Plan);
- Capital Improvement Program and Short-term Work Plans for Camden County and the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine;
- Zoning Ordinances for Camden County and the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine (see the Appendix for Zoning Maps for the County and incorporated cities);
- Other development regulations, most notably subdivision regulations, for Camden County and the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine; and
- City of St. Marys Water/Wastewater Master Plan.

Conduct the audit
Each question is linked to one or more of the documents to be audited. The questions are answered in one of three ways: ● indicates that the document being considered does support the quality growth aspect of the question; ○ indicates that the document does not; and ⊗
indicates that the document partially supports the principles of quality growth, but fails in some aspects. The audit also includes remarks regarding each question’s relevance to quality growth.

**Provide recommendations and examples**

**Implement changes to plans, policies, and regulations**
The results of the audit can be used by local policymakers to explore changes in policies, practices, and regulations in accordance with accepted quality growth principles and the vision articulated by the community. The recommended alternatives described in the audit can be used while updating the comprehensive plan and amending existing regulations.

**Begin the process again**
Because the existing conditions, trends, values, and goals of a community change, it is necessary to audit plans and regulations periodically. Audits can be done in conjunction with comprehensive plan updates, as part of a separate visioning effort, or independently.

The following report documents the results of the audit. It is followed by Section 2: *Critical Issues and Recommendations*, which provides an overall assessment of the plans, policies, and regulations and identifies important action items.
**LAND USE**

1. **Question:** Are population and employment projections realistic in terms of regional and state projections?

   **Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan


   **Remarks:** The population and employment projections used in the Comprehensive Plan are consistent with the regional and state projections available in 1992. However, these projections underestimated the growth in population and employment experienced in Camden County, and especially in the incorporated cities.

   **Recommendation(s):** It is noted in the Comprehensive Plan that the presence of the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base can result in significant shifts in population and employment throughout the county. In addition, the changing trends in the logging and wood-products manufacturing industries can also have a considerable impact on population and employment. Given the volatile nature of population trends in the county, an annual reassessment of population projections is necessary to ensure that planning efforts are appropriate for future growth.

2. **Question:** Are housing unit projections based on a housing needs assessment?

   **Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan


   **Remarks:** The Comprehensive Plan does not provide a quantitative analysis of housing needs based on population projections.

   **Recommendation(s):** The Camden County Public Service Authority (PSA) and Camden Partnership are currently conducting a housing study. This study should include an analysis of housing needs based on population projections, as well as the income brackets of the anticipated new residents. The results of this study should be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. **Question:** Is the amount of future residential land use shown on the land use map based on calculations of the number of acres needed for each type of residential land use category and prevailing/planned densities, based on reasonable projections of housing units by type?

   **Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan


   **Remarks:** Because housing needs were not quantified in the Plan, the land use plan cannot establish a spatial link between future housing needs and development patterns.

   **Recommendation(s):** The land use plan should reflect the projections of land needed for residential uses based on a housing needs assessment. Therefore, the results of the ongoing housing study should be used, in conjunction with prevailing and
planned residential densities and desired growth patterns, to designate areas on the future land use map for housing units. The new residential area depicted on the future land use map should not exceed the housing needs assessment by more than 15 percent. A plan that provides excessive residential acreage promotes overconsumption of land and scattered development patterns, which increase the cost of infrastructure and service provision.

### 4. Question:

Does the land use analysis identify in quantitative terms what the potential is for residential infill development (i.e., number of acres and buildout potential in numbers of units), and are there specific policies that promote and encourage it (where appropriate)?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan

**Audit:**
- Camden
- Kingsland
- St. Marys
- Woodbine

**Remarks:**

The Comprehensive Plan states that there are “one or two areas in Kingsland where rehabilitation or redevelopment may be appropriate” and “there are a few empty lots left in the original [St. Marys] downtown area.” Although these statements recognize infill opportunities, the Plan does not provide an inventory in acres and buildout potential for such development. There are also goals and objectives to support infill development, but these statements do not set quantifiable targets and deadlines for residential infill development. By identifying infill development potential, the County and cities can reduce the amount of new acres dedicated to residential uses in the future land use plan.

**Recommendation(s):**

Conduct an inventory of vacant and underdeveloped land in the existing cities and community centers. Identify sites that are suitable for residential development. Assign appropriate densities for these areas and calculate total housing units. The total number of housing units that may be constructed in infill sites should be a component of the total area available for future housing (see question 3). For large vacant and underutilized areas, small area plans should be undertaken to create a long-term strategy for development that supports and enhances existing amenities and the character urban form.

### 5. Question:

Does the plan recognize the need to reclaim and reuse any underutilized or abandoned sites and to clean up and reclaim brownfields for future use?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan

**Audit:**
- Camden
- Kingsland
- St. Marys
- Woodbine

**Remarks:**

The Comprehensive Plan references abandoned industrial sites in Woodbine and suggests the need for environmental studies to assess any contamination, but does not include a map of their locations. Goals and objectives are included in the Plan, which seek to encourage redevelopment of abandoned industrial and commercial properties. The Plan does lack specific strategies for implementation.

**Recommendation(s):**

Inventory and map existing and suspected brownfields, as well as underperforming commercial areas. In conjunction with other stakeholders, develop small area plans for these sites.
### 6. Question:
Do land use regulations establish minimum (not just maximum) residential densities to promote the efficient use of lands designated for higher densities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Zoning ordinance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audit:</strong></td>
<td>Camden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>Residential density refers to the number of dwelling units per acre of land. For zoning purposes, it is often calculated as the net density per acre, which removes streets, drives, and parking areas from the calculations. In Camden County and its cities, the zoning does not set minimum dwelling units per acre. High-density residential areas are supported by significant public investment in schools, roads, and other infrastructure; therefore, lower-density uses in these areas mean that these investments are being underutilized. To protect the community’s investment, zoning regulations should not only establish maximum densities, but minimum densities as well. Camden County and the cities currently do not establish minimum densities for their most dense residential areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>Through the comprehensive planning process, the community should identify areas to concentrate housing density, such as the core residential areas of each of the cities. These areas should be zoned the highest-density residential classification, and the zoning ordinance language for that classification should be amended to include a minimum density.</td>
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</table>

### 7. Question:
Do the plans encourage nodal development by locating retail and service businesses, as well as greater residential densities (between 10 and 15 dwelling units per acre), in existing and emerging centers of the community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audit:</strong></td>
<td>Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>Nodal development designates areas within the community for greater intensity of development and a more diverse mix of land uses. For example, nodes can contain higher-density housing, retail and restaurants, offices, service businesses, and public buildings (courthouses, libraries, schools, etc.). The goal is to create walkable environments where many of the needs of residents and businesses are congregated in one area. Historically, downtowns developed in this pattern. The compact development patterns created by these nodes provides several benefits. First, compact development permits the conservation of land for open-space uses (farming and forestry). Second, it results in reduced infrastructure costs. For example, one study showed that a 12-unit-per-acre project averaged a per-unit capital cost (including streets, utilities, and schools) of $27,500, whereas building at three-units-per-acre costs $42,500 per unit in infrastructure.¹ The Comprehensive Plan encourages the development of commercial areas, particularly retail and service businesses, at major nodes, such as Waverly, White Oak, Spring Bluff, Jerusalem, Burnt Fort, Browntown, the I-95 interchanges, and along U.S. 17.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Recommendation(s):**
The upcoming comprehensive planning process should identify key nodes throughout the incorporated and unincorporated county. Small area plans and overlay districts may be created for these places. Small area plans are similar to the land use component of the Comprehensive Plan, but they include a more “fine-grain” mix of land uses and may call for specific design guidelines. See question 8 for a description of overlay districts.

**8. Question:**
Do the zoning regulations encourage nodal development by locating retail and service businesses, as well as greater residential densities (between 10 and 15 dwelling units per acre), in existing and emerging centers of the community?

**Source Document(s):**
Zoning ordinances

**Audit:**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
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**Remarks:**
The unincorporated county zoning map does not promote nodal development patterns. Instead, higher-density housing and commercial uses are scattered throughout the County, with some commercial uses focusing around interstate interchanges.

According to the zoning maps (see Appendix) from the cities, most development is directed to corridors, like S.R. 40 and U.S. 17; central business districts; and around interstate interchanges. Much of the new development occurring in the County and cities is in the Planned Development (PD) zoning classification. Because the PD classification can include a variety of housing densities and commercial and services uses, it is difficult to identify emerging nodes without reviewing the master plans for each new community.

**Recommendation(s):**
Camden County and the cities should explore the use of overlay districts for the nodes identified in the comprehensive planning process (see question 7). Overlay districts create an additional layer of development controls for the designated area, and can increase density, allow for a mix of uses by right, and establish unique criteria for building setbacks, land coverage, parking, height restrictions, and other building orientation and design elements.

**9. Question:**
Does the land use plan designate areas, where appropriate, for mixed-use development and for future commercial and industrial development?

**Source Document(s):**
Comprehensive Plan

**Audit:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
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**Remarks:**
The Comprehensive Plan designates the U.S. 17/S.R. 40/S.R. 110 triangle for industrial development, “particularly heavy industries.” The Plan also encourages the development of commercial areas, particularly retail and service businesses, at major nodes, such as Waverly, White Oak, Spring Bluff, Jerusalem, Burnt Fort, Browntown, the I-95 interchanges, and along U.S. 17. It also vaguely references places in the cities where commercial and industrial uses should occur. In contrast, the Plan does not reference mixed-use development anywhere in the County.
**Recommendation(s):**

The proper siting of industrial, commercial, and mixed-use development is vital to the County’s long-term economic development and quality of life. Each of these uses has particular spatial needs and requires particular adjacent land use to be successful. In all three examples, the I-95 interchanges offer advantages; therefore, the County and cities must protect and enhance the interchanges. The development and redevelopment of these interchanges is a critical issue for Camden County; therefore, a more detailed description and set of recommendations and action items is found on page 39 of this report.

The location of an industrial/business district is equally important. Although proximity to an I-95 interchange is important, it is only one factor in properly siting industrial/office/warehousing activity. The elements of siting a business park are discussed in more detail in Section 3: Quality Growth Best Practices.

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**10. Question:**

Does the local zoning ordinance provide at least one or more zoning districts that allow mixes of residential and commercial uses in particular in areas of nodal development or community centers?

**Source Document(s):** Zoning Ordinance

**Audit:**

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<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
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The County and the cities each have at least one zoning district that allows a mix of land uses. Most common is the “Planned Development District” or “Planned Unit Development District,” which is intended to give developers of large sites more flexibility and to encourage a greater variety in type, design, and layout of buildings and the conservation of natural amenities. Although these districts allow for a mix of uses, they do not necessarily ensure a “fine-grained” mix of uses, which is the hallmark of quality growth. Instead, these large master-planned projects often create separate retail districts, a business park, and residential neighborhoods.

The jurisdictions also have other zoning classifications that allow for mixed-use development at a smaller scale: for example, the Commercial-Neighborhood District, the Central Business District, and the Office-Apartment District. Such examples begin to achieve the benefits of mixed-use development. Specifically, mixed-use districts:

- Create centers that facilitate activities morning, noon, and night
- Increase opportunities for walking and biking
- Make transit and ride-sharing programs viable
- Enhance the unique sense of place
- Reduce negative environmental impacts by creating alternatives to driving and promoting more compact development patterns.

Although mixed-use development is permitted throughout the county, the regulations for its development lack the flexibility necessary to produce successful mixed-use environments, especially at the smaller scales present in the Central Business and Commercial-Neighborhood Districts. For example, the Camden County Commercial-Neighborhood District requires minimum 100-foot lot widths and 25-foot setbacks. Requirements such as these discourage businesses that need less space for locating in the area.

Successful examples of mixed-use development appear in the central business
### Recommendation(s):

The County and cities should review their existing ordinances pertaining to mixed-use development. Special consideration should be given to the regulatory language that specifies lot widths, setbacks, and coverage; buffer use and widths; building height restrictions; parking requirements; and design. With stakeholder participation (to include property owners, developers, business owners, residents, and bankers), these requirements should be reviewed and amended to encourage appropriate development and redevelopment in these districts.

For more information on mixed-use zoning, visit the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Web site at: http://www.dca.state.ga.us/toolkit/. This site includes links to model ordinances and detailed implementation strategies.

### 11. Question:

Does the land use plan propose a sequential, phased pattern of future development in areas contiguous to developed areas, so that a compact urban or suburban form can be obtained?

### Source Document(s):

Comprehensive Plan

### Audit:

Camden ☐ Kingsland ☐ St. Marys ☐ Woodbine ☐

### Remarks:

Sequential, phased growth implies two things—that new development is contiguous to currently developed areas and that the future development follows the phased provision of public infrastructure and services. Such phasing of development allows the County and cities to provide infrastructure and services in a cost-effective manner, instead of creating leap-frog or scattered development patterns, that require the extension of infrastructure and services through often undeveloped areas.

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for phased and contiguous development patterns. It recommends phasing development, limiting development to areas with existing infrastructure, and coordinating zoning decisions with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, but these recommendations may not always be heeded. For example, a review of recent Development of Regional Impact (DRI) applications shows several applications for potential projects located in incorporated and unincorporated Camden County that would require the extension of water and sewer services up to five miles in length (see the "Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Infrastructure Management Report" for details on DRIs and water and wastewater planning).

### Recommendation(s):

Use the future land use plan and map and/or a phased provision of water and sewer services to guide new development. Require that requests for zoning changes comply with these plans.

### 12. Question:

Is much of the fringe land zoned exclusively agricultural (i.e., a holding category) or with a substantial minimum lot size that discourages single-family housing and preserves large sites for viable agricultural/forestry use?

### Source Document(s):

Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance
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<th>Audit:</th>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
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| Remarks:          | According to the Comprehensive Plan, the purpose of the Agriculture/Forestry/Mining classification is:  
|                   | 1. To retain and conserve the existing farming activities  
|                   | 2. To protect the timber production areas of the county  
|                   | 3. To ensure that any mining or quarry extraction operations do not impact existing residential uses.  
|                   | This position is not reflected in the Camden County zoning regulations, which allow for the subdivision of land in these areas to five acre residential lots. This results in random residential development patterns that make service and infrastructure provision inefficient and encourage owners of agricultural and forestry land to convert their land to residential uses.  

| Recommendation(s): | After calculating future residential needs (see question 3) based on population projections and assigning new residential areas on the map in the Comprehensive Plan, the remaining land classified as Agriculture/Forestry/Mining should remain in this classification. Then, the zoning language should be amended to include a minimum lot size of 25 to 40 acres, which is large enough to function in an agricultural or forestry capacity.  

### ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Question:</th>
<th>Do land use regulations require developers to connect open spaces and greenways to existing destinations and open-space reservations where appropriate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Document(s):</td>
<td>Zoning and subdivision ordinances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden [ ] Kingsland [ ] St. Marys [ ] Woodbine [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>In Camden County and the incorporated cities, developers are not required to connect open spaces and greenways on their sites with existing destinations or adjacent open spaces. The connection of open spaces and public destinations can create a green infrastructure network. This network can provide recreation opportunities and transportation options for residents by weaving together a diverse set of public spaces throughout the community. It also protects and improves the natural environment by linking critical ecosystem functions and habitats. For a thorough description of green infrastructure and recommendations for Camden County, see the <em>Infrastructure Management Report</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>Amend development regulation to connect the open spaces and greenways of new projects to adjacent open spaces and destinations. Build on the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Council’s bicycle/pedestrian plan to include greenway connections that not only provide transportation facilities, but also offer environmental and habitat benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 14. Question: | Are there goals, policies, and procedures in place to protect natural resources (soil erosion, storm-water management, flood protection, wellhead protection, marsh protection, back barrier island standards, and water supply watershed protection)? |
| Source Document(s): | Comprehensive Plan |
| Audit: | Camden [ ] Kingsland [ ] St. Marys [ ] Woodbine [ ] |
| Remarks: | The Comprehensive Plan provides goals and objectives to promote sustainable forestry practices (reforestation); to protect wetlands, river corridors, critical natural habitat, scenic views, and public access to waterfronts by restricting development; and to mitigate stormwater runoff from developments. The Plan also references the relationship between increased water consumption and infiltration of brackish water in Brunswick as a warning for Camden County. Although the Comprehensive Plan makes numerous recommendations regarding the protection and preservation of the natural environment, it does not provide measurable goals and specific thresholds. |
| Recommendation(s): | During the Comprehensive Plan updating process, the County and cities should develop specific recommendations regarding the protection of natural resources. For example, the current plan includes the following objective:  
  - Protect, preserve, and maintain wetlands for environmental reasons as drainage courses and scenic and natural resources. |

**KEY:**  ● = yes  ○ = no  ☐ = partially  NA = not available
This objective is not supported by specific policies. Instead, the County and cities could establish a percentage of the wetlands to be protected. Such a strategy makes it possible to measure future development practices against the community’s goals. Furthermore, the plan should also address goals, policies, and procedures regarding the sensitive back barrier islands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Question:</th>
<th>Are there guidelines for natural buffers between new development and critical lands?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Document(s):</td>
<td>Zoning ordinance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☀️ Kingsland ☐ St. Marys ☐ Woodbine ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The County has implemented a River Corridor Protection (RCP) Overlay District, a Conservation Preservation District, and a Beach and Dune Protection District. These districts protect areas identified as critical or historically/culturally important lands. However, development around smaller wetlands and other critical areas does not face buffer requirements. Most zoning language discusses buffers as a tool to separate different land uses or mask undesirable views. Natural buffers are necessary to maintain the health and natural functions of water bodies and other wildlife habitats. They act as mediators between untouched and developed lands by filtering and mitigating pollution caused by all types of land uses, from residential to industrial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>Include buffer requirements in all zoning districts where wetlands or bodies of water are present. Zoning ordinances should require buffers between any development and wetlands and other sensitive lands. For example, some scientific studies recommend a minimum buffer of 100 feet and as much as 860 feet around wetlands. Following a study of the wetlands in Camden, criteria should be established that set minimum buffers based on existing wetland functions, values, and sensitivity to disturbance; buffer characteristics (e.g., types of vegetation, slope); adjacent land use intensity; and desired buffer functions (e.g., flood mitigation, water quality protection, habitat protection). A formula has been created for the Wekiva River Basin in Florida to determine the minimum buffer between development and wetlands. For more information about this tool, contact the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council’s Wekiva River Basin Commission.</td>
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### 16. Question: Are there guidelines for waterfront development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Zoning ordinance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☐          Kingsland ☐   St. Marys ☐   Woodbine ☐</td>
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</table>
| Remarks:            | The County has a zoning ordinance that addresses, albeit briefly, residential waterfront development. None of the Cities provides guidelines for waterfront development. The primary focus of the County’s existing ordinance is to protect structures in the beach and dune areas of the County from the effects of tides and high-water storm surges and flooding. The County accomplishes this through the use of a Beach and Dune Protection District. The County ordinance also mentions the potential of development to adversely affect the natural functions of beach and dune areas. This ordinance does not apply to waterfront areas that are not included in the overlay district.

Waterfront areas provide four functions:
- Natural – beaches, wetlands, wildlife habitats, sensitive ecosystems, water.
- Public – parks, piers, and waterways that offer public open spaces and waterfront views.
- Working – clustering of water-dependent and maritime uses.
- Redeveloping – vacant and underutilized properties available for potential and beneficial change.

| Recommendation(s): | Categorize waterfront areas into these four functions. Develop a strategy and overlay district for each of these functions. Each overlay district should provide requirements specific to the function of that district. For example, mixed-residential and commercial developments in waterfront districts should be required to provide public open space at the water’s edge and public access and visual connections to these areas from adjoining streets where applicable. Building design, size, and setback requirements should correspond to the County’s vision of waterfront development. |

### 17. Question: Is there a tree protection ordinance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Zoning ordinance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☐         Kingsland ☐  St. Marys ☐  Woodbine ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>Kingsland has a tree protection ordinance, but Camden County and St. Marys and Woodbine do not. A tree protection ordinance preserves mature trees, which are an important part of Camden’s landscape and identity and critical to the formation of green infrastructure (see Infrastructure Management Report). Trees provide needed shade (making more comfortable outdoor environments and, when well-located, reduce the energy cost associated with cooling), prevent soil erosion, help mitigate flooding, improve air quality, provide wildlife habitat, and increase real estate value. Such an ordinance would also end the clear-cutting of sites for new development. Clear-cutting, or removing all trees from a site, drastically increases runoff during construction (creating water quality issues) and long-term soil erosion. This practice also results in a stark contrast between new developments and their natural surroundings, which diminishes the aesthetic quality of the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation(s):
All jurisdictions should adopt a tree protection ordinance that:
- Protects existing trees by setting a caliper (thickness) at which a tree is considered mature, and therefore should not be removed.
- Establishes a petition review process for tree removal requests that allows for public comment.
- Sets replacement standards for trees that must be removed. The standards can designate quantity, type, and size (both caliper and height) of replacement trees.
- Protects trees from unnecessary damage during construction.
- Requires that a tree plan be submitted at the same time as the development plat. The plan should identify trees to be preserved, protection methods for these trees during construction, and new trees to be planted.
- Requires that trees along public streets are pruned in a healthy and aesthetic manner.

Kingsland’s tree protection ordinance also provides guidance on desirable types of trees, which other jurisdictions may find useful. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan should establish a goal of no net loss of trees over time in the area.

18. Question: Do land use regulations prohibit development within, and the filling of, floodplains?
Source Document(s): Zoning ordinance; other development regulations

Audit:

Camden | Kingsland | St. Marys | Woodbine
---|---|---|---
[ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

Remarks:
Camden County has a Flood Hazard District, which establishes permitted uses within these areas. Most of these permitted uses fall under the open-space category, to include such things as parking, open-air equipment storage, and recreational space. Residential building is also permitted in this district, with certain caveats—it must be located in the flood fringe area and be elevated. Kingsland also has a Flood Hazard District, which provides even greater oversight of proposed development within the designated areas. The Cities of St. Marys and Woodbine provide general guidance regarding floodplains, but neither explicitly blocks development from these areas.

It is important to recognize that each new development, both in Camden County and upstream in the larger Satilla River, St. Marys River, and Little Satilla River watersheds, results in changes, often an expansion of the floodplain. Land that is in the flood fringe today may fall within the official floodplain 10 years from now. Furthermore, most development within the existing floodplain itself speeds up the expansion of the floodplain.

Recommendation(s):
The County and incorporated cities should regularly update the floodplain maps. Due to the changing nature of floodplains, Camden should explore the new practice of determining floodplains based on future land use plans, instead of what is currently on the ground. Development regulations should also be amended to block any land use that would alter the boundaries of the floodplain. For example, land uses that add impervious surfaces (e.g., pavement) within the floodplain alter how the floodplain functions.
### HOUSING

#### 19. Question:
Does the housing element of the Comprehensive Plan contain a housing needs assessment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan includes a housing needs assessment, but it does not quantify these needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>The ongoing work on the housing needs task force should be used to determine housing needs and set quantifiable and qualitative goals to be set forth in the new Comprehensive Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 20. Question:
Does the comprehensive plan establish a policy of providing for a wide range of housing types (detached single-family, duplex, manufactured home, apartment, etc.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan has a goal to “promote and encourage residential densities and designs to ensure varied living areas and housing types for residents.” Although this goal provides for a range of housing types, it does not breakdown the total housing needs by types or price ranges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>The update of the Comprehensive Plan should inventory the number of units of each housing type and assess any shortages of particular types. If there is a shortage of duplexes, for example, specific policies and goals (number of units to be added) should be set to achieve the proper mix.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### 21. Question:
Do the use provisions within at least some of the residential zoning districts allow for a wide range of housing types, by right (versus requiring a conditional-use permit)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Zoning ordinance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>All of the jurisdictions within Camden County allow for a variety of housing types within two or more residential zoning districts. This diversity of housing types encourages residents with different lifestyles, incomes, household sizes, and ages to live in proximity to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>Maintain the existing diversity of housing types in the various zoning districts and explore increasing the diversity in single-type residential districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>22. Question:</strong> Are manufactured homes a use permitted outright in at least one residential zoning district?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source Document(s):</strong> Zoning ordinance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audit:</strong> Camden ★ Kingsland ★ St. Marys ★ Woodbine ★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remarks:</strong> Camden County and the Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine have at least one residential zoning district that allows manufactured homes by right.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommendation(s):</strong> Maintain at least one zoning district that outright permits manufactured homes.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

| **23. Question:** Does the local zoning ordinance provide flexibility with regard to house sizes (i.e., do they allow small-sized units versus establishing large minimum floor areas for all dwelling units)? |
| **Source Document(s):** Zoning ordinance |
| **Audit:** Camden ★ Kingsland ★ St. Marys ★ Woodbine ★ |
| **Remarks:** All of the jurisdictions in Camden County have a relatively low minimum house size, ranging from 600 square feet to 900 square feet. By maintaining a relatively low minimum house size, it is possible to construct affordable housing units throughout the county. |
| **Recommendation(s):** Maintain existing minimum housing sizes. |
# JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>24. Question:</th>
<th>Does the comprehensive plan consider the appropriateness of balancing jobs and housing, both qualitatively and quantitatively?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Document(s):</td>
<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden □ Kingsland □ St. Marys □ Woodbine □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan does not include goals or objectives to balance jobs and housing. The goal of jobs-housing balance is to relate the number of jobs to the number of housing units. According to several studies, a desirable range is 1 to 1.5 jobs for every housing unit within a community. Furthermore, the concept of jobs-housing balance includes a qualitative aspect. Not only should there be a relationship between the number of jobs and the number of housing units, but the wages of those jobs should relate to the cost of the housing units. The purpose of a jobs-housing balance goal is to allow people to live and work in the same community, thereby decreasing commuting distances and reducing traffic congestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan update process should include an analysis of housing needs and economic development goals in light of the jobs-housing balance concept, both its quantitative and qualitative elements. The Plan should also set an ideal ratio for the number of jobs to housing units in Camden.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25. Question:</th>
<th>Do planned unit development (PUD) regulations provide for an appropriate mixture of housing and jobs, or do the PUD regulations result in predominantly single-family residential developments with no jobs nearby?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Document(s):</td>
<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden □ Kingsland □ St. Marys □ Woodbine □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan calls for different housing types, open space, walkways, and bicycle paths in PUDs, but it does not address a mix of land uses or job creation goals. Based on examples of PUDs already built or planned for Camden County, it appears that most of these developments are including small amounts of retail and services, but the result is not jobs-housing balance. Instead, this mix of uses is seen primarily as an amenity to the residents. The low number and typically low-wage jobs associated with this type of development do create a desirable jobs-housing balance at the project scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>Working in conjunction with Camden County’s expressed intent to site a large business park, local officials and planners should reassess PUD regulations with the goal of pairing newly created jobs with appropriate housing and services, such as retail, restaurants, schools, libraries, parks, and fire and police stations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TRANSPORTATION

### 26. Question:
Does the Comprehensive Plan include a transportation element that addresses long-range needs for roads, sidewalks, bicycle paths, public transit (where appropriate), freight movement, and water and air travel (where appropriate)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☐ Kingsland ☐ St. Marys ☐ Woodbine ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan focuses on road projects. There are no goals or objectives regarding sidewalks, bicycle paths, or transit. However, summaries of accomplishments and short-term work plans include sidewalk and multi-use path investments on the part of the cities and County.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>A holistic study of transportation planning should be included in the Comprehensive Plan update process currently under way.⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 27. Question:
Does the Comprehensive Plan have goals and objectives to require developers to construct streets that meet appropriate design standards?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☐ Kingsland ☐ St. Marys ☐ Woodbine ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>According to the Comprehensive Plan, the County and each city need to work together to develop consistent development standards for streets and roads, paving, subdivision requirements, and other development regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>The update to the Comprehensive Plan should include greater detail regarding the goals and objectives of the consolidated street design standards. These standards can be based on those of the Georgia Department of Transportation, but should be customized to suit the local needs. Such standards will ensure a consistent quality of streets throughout the county, which will improve maintenance efficiency and provide an equal level of service to all residents and businesses.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 28. Question:
Are sidewalks required within new residential subdivisions and do development regulations require the installation of a sidewalk along existing public streets abutting development, where such a sidewalk does not already exist?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Subdivision regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit:</td>
<td>Camden ☐ Kingsland ☐ St. Marys ☐ Woodbine ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>Kingsland requires sidewalks be constructed in new residential subdivisions, but does not address the issue of connecting them to abutting development. The</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴ Camden County recently commissioned a transportation study, which was completed in 2004. The Georgia Tech team was not able to access a copy of the report for this study.
other jurisdictions do not address this issue.

Sidewalks make walking to nearby destination more safe and pleasant. This can reduce short car trips that increase congestion. Sidewalks are particularly important for children, who sometimes walk to school or to a friend’s house.

**Recommendation(s):**

Review development regulations and amend appropriate ordinances to require appropriately sized sidewalks in residential neighborhoods. Where sidewalk use is less intense, five-foot-wide sidewalks suffice. Areas with schools, libraries, post offices, and other neighborhood amenities require sidewalks of at least 10 feet in width.

Moreover, the jurisdictions should review sidewalk design and construction guidelines to ensure that they meet or exceed the requirements established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Exceeding the ADA requirements not only provides access for people with disabilities, but also assists the elderly and people pushing strollers or moving heavy objects.

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29. **Question:** Do subdivision regulations require the connection of subdivision streets to existing streets and the stubbing of streets to allow connections to future subdivision developments?

**Source Document(s):** Subdivision regulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit</th>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
<th>Woodbine</th>
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</table>

**Remarks:**
The Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine include provisions for the connection of subdivision streets to existing and future streets and have specific requirements for the construction of temporary dead-end streets. Camden County’s development regulations do not require the connection of subdivision streets to existing or future streets.

Connections among independent developments enhance the transportation network by allowing automobile and pedestrian traffic to take a variety of routes. Typical suburban development practices create multiple residential developments with only one or two ingress/egress points along one collector street. As development along this travel-way increases, the level of congestion on the collector increases.

**Recommendation(s):**
The County should adopt regulations to mandate the connection of subdivision streets to existing and future streets. Furthermore, all jurisdictions should explore inter-subdivision connectivity standards to ensure that as new projects are constructed they enhance, not burden, the transportation network. Of special interest are each city’s downtown, where the historic grid pattern of streets could be continued as new development emerges.

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30. **Question:** Does the Comprehensive Plan provide for the phasing in of road paving?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan

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5 For information and design guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act, visit http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm, which is operated by the U.S. Department of Justice.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit:</th>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
<th>Woodbine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The Plan identifies roads for paving in the 1992-2012 time frame, but does not assign priorities or dates for completion. Furthermore, the Camden County Commission identifies road paving projects for each fiscal year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation(s):</td>
<td>The new Comprehensive Plan should not only include a list of road-paving projects, but also set goals for completion. For example, the County may set a target of 80 percent of county roads paved by 2010. The Plan should also identify priorities for road-paving projects, so that those areas most in need of transportation improvements are addressed first.</td>
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</table>
### OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

**31. Question:** Does the Comprehensive Plan provide clear discussions of how water and sewer infrastructure policies are tied to the goals and objectives of the land use plan or transportation plan?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit:</th>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
<th>Woodbine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>The land use section of the Comprehensive Plan says: “Hopefully now, the individual communities can direct growth where they want it to occur and not be led around, sometimes in circles, by ambitious developers.” Although this is the goal, the Plan does not express a clear vision for the future growth of the individual communities.</td>
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**Recommendation(s):** As the Comprehensive Plan is updated, a focused discussion on the community’s vision for its future and how it relates to land use, transportation, and water and wastewater planning should be conducted. The Plan should include clear goals, policies, and procedures, with specific timetables for implementation regarding an integrated vision for land use and infrastructure. To implement the goals developed in the comprehensive planning process, a committee of land use, transportation, and water resources staff from each of the jurisdictions could be created to meet regularly to compare plans and discuss opportunities for collaborations.

**32. Question:** Do water and sewer facility master plans provide for the phasing of future trunk water and sewer extensions into areas designated for development in the short term versus allowing such lines to be extended without restraint anywhere in the community?

**Source Document(s):** Water/Wastewater Management Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit:</th>
<th>Camden</th>
<th>Kingsland</th>
<th>St. Marys</th>
<th>Woodbine</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remarks:</td>
<td>St. Marys is the only municipality in Camden County with a water and wastewater master plan. Camden County is in the process of creating one, but preliminary drafts of this plan were not available. The phasing of future infrastructure in St. Marys is not based on future land use and development plans. The primary drivers in the phasing in of St. Marys water and wastewater infrastructure are regulatory requirements and reliability improvements. Provision of water and wastewater infrastructure will provide the County and the Cities with some control over future growth patterns, phasing, and form as the County grows.</td>
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</table>

**Recommendation(s):** Water and wastewater master plans for the County and the cities (when created) should be tailored not only to ensure that the existing system is maintained and functioning properly, but also to help direct growth to areas that have been designated by future land use plans. This comprehensive level of infrastructure planning will not only aid in controlling future growth patterns, it will also provide a more cost-efficient means of providing water and wastewater services.
## COMMUNITY DESIGN

### 33. Question:
Are there landscaping ordinances for commercial, residential, and industrial developments that establish guidelines for appropriate plant types and forms?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
<th>Zoning ordinance</th>
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<tr>
<th>Remarks:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden County and the Cities of St. Marys and Woodbine do not provide much detail in landscape requirements in their zoning ordinances. Kingsland does have a landscape and tree protection ordinance, which does an excellent job of protecting mature trees and sensitive vegetation, but could go further in setting landscaping standards for parking lots and public rights of way. It is important to differentiate landscaping and buffers. Typically, buffers are intended to create a visual or environmental divide between land uses that are not entirely complimentary. Landscape ordinances do more than block undesirable views; they also aesthetically enhance areas, create shade for pedestrians and parked cars, and provide habitat for native flora and fauna (see the Infrastructure Management Report for more information on developing a green infrastructure network, that can be supported by a landscaping ordinance). A landscaping ordinance can result in the screening of visually undesirable features from public view, protection of the privacy of residents, and promotion of the community as one that cares about its appearance. It can also improve the physical environment of a community through using plants best suited to the climate, improving drainage, and enhancing air quality.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Recommendation(s):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with a team of local landscape architects, planners, wildlife biologists, residents, and business owners, Camden County and the cities should study the creation of a landscape ordinance that sets standards for landscaping of commercial, industrial, and residential areas. The ordinance should also include lists of trees and shrubs that are recommended for the area. The recommended plants should either be native or adapted to the climate and environment of coastal Georgia. The City of Snellville, Georgia, has a comprehensive landscape ordinance that could serve as a model. It is available online at: <a href="http://www.snellville.org/plandev/zoningordinance.aspx">http://www.snellville.org/plandev/zoningordinance.aspx</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 34. Question:
Do regulations require inter-parcel connectivity or allow for shared parking to reduce overall parking requirements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Document(s):</th>
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<tr>
<th>Remarks:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None of the jurisdictions addresses inter-parcel connectivity or allows for shared parking in its development regulations. Inter-parcel connectivity means that all parcels fronting a particular roadway would be connected via a frontage road or a travel way that is delineated from parking areas. This allows for short trips between developments without using the major road, thereby reducing traffic congestion. Shared parking may be applied when adjacent land uses have peak parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### KEY:
- **●** = yes
- **✗** = no
- **☒** = partially
- **NA** = not available
demands at different times or days of the week, making it possible to use the same parking spaces/areas throughout the day. Typical land uses that can be considered for shared parking include offices, restaurants, retail, colleges, churches, movie theaters, and special-event venues. General parking lots and/or on-street parking made available for patrons of nearby businesses/commercial districts is another form of shared parking. Shared-parking arrangements reduce the overall space of parking facilities, thus decreasing impervious surfaces, allowing for more compact development and encouraging people to walk from one business to another.6

**Recommendation(s):**
The County and cities should investigate development regulations that require inter-parcel connectivity and allow for shared parking. This is especially important for the S.R. 40 corridor, Laurel Island Parkway, and the downtowns of the cities.

---

**35. Question:**
Is on-street parking allowed in places where it can be safely provided, such as in downtown areas and pedestrian-retail districts?

**Source Document(s):**
Zoning ordinance

**Audit:**
Camden [ ] Kingsland [ ] St. Marys [ ] Woodbine [ ]

**Remarks:**
On-street parking is not mentioned in any of the zoning districts, but is provided in the downtowns of all three cities.
On-street parking is one form of shared parking. It can serve several businesses and thereby reduce the total number of parking spaces needed. It also benefits pedestrians by creating a buffer between moving automobiles and pedestrians.

**Recommendation(s):**
All jurisdictions should examine expanding on-street parking opportunities, especially in the planned and mixed-use development zoning districts.

---

**36. Question:**
Are there waterfront development goals, policies, and procedures for the cities?

**Source Document(s):**
Comprehensive Plan

**Audit:**
Camden [ ] Kingsland [ ] St. Marys [ ] Woodbine [ ]

**Remarks:**
The Comprehensive Plan supports a "cooperative effort to clean up the St. Marys waterfront and make the area more accessible and attractive to visitors and residents alike." The development of the waterfront in Woodbine is not mentioned in the Plan.
Waterfront development presents a prime opportunity for economic development in St. Marys and Woodbine and throughout the County. However, these areas must be developed in an environmentally and aesthetically sensitive manner. Camden’s waterfronts add to the quality of life found in the County and are a significant attraction for tourists, businesses, and future residents.

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6 Shared parking handbook and sample ordinances have been published by Metro, the elected regional government of the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area, available at: [http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleid=435](http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleid=435)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Source Document(s)</th>
<th>Audit</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>Recommendation(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>37.</strong> Are there design goals for commercial corridors and business/industrial parks?</td>
<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>Camden ○ Kingsland ○ St. Marys ○ Woodbine ○</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan does not provide design goals for the County’s commercial corridors or business/industrial parks.</td>
<td>See Section 3: Quality Growth Best Practices for Business Parks and Redevelopment for recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>38.</strong> Are there management plans for key corridors and interchanges (including Laurel Island Parkway, S.R. 40, U.S. 17, Exit 3)?</td>
<td>Comprehensive Plan or other planning documents</td>
<td>Camden ○ Kingsland ○ St. Marys ○ Woodbine ○</td>
<td>The Comprehensive Plan does not include or reference corridor and interchange management plans. Kingsland has a Colerain Road Overlay District, which was created to &quot;protect the aesthetic and visual character&quot; of the corridor. This district regulates visual-buffer dimensions, tree protection, lighting and signage standards, and other design considerations. The management of key corridors and interchanges in Camden County is of great importance. These areas represent significant public investment in infrastructure and private investment in business, but they are also gateways that define the character (depicted in both the natural and built environment) of the County.</td>
<td>See Section 2: Critical Issues and Recommendations for more information on the management of corridors and interchanges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COORDINATION

### 39. Question:
Does the comprehensive plan recommend intergovernmental agreements where needed to foster cooperation toward attaining mutual goals of community building?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan

**Audit:** Camden & Kingsland & St. Marys & Woodbine

**Remarks:** The Comprehensive Plan makes numerous references to opportunities for collaboration to provide infrastructure and services; the most notable example is the County-wide management of public parks. According to the existing Comprehensive Plan, the Cities of Kingsland and St. Marys have worked together to share water supply infrastructure.

**Recommendation(s):** See the accompanying report titled “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Recommendations for a Strategic Plan,” which provides detailed recommendations on opportunities for greater coordination among the various jurisdictions and departments.

### 40. Question:
Has the community established priorities and an implementation plan to extend a basic level of service to all residents and businesses? Has “basic level of service” been defined?

**Source Document(s):** Comprehensive Plan; funding components

**Audit:** Camden & Kingsland & St. Marys & Woodbine

**Remarks:** One of the implementation strategies in the Comprehensive Plan states: “(e)xtend a basic level of service common to all residents and businesses.” This strategy recognizes that recent public investment has focused on the highest-growth areas, leaving some areas with inadequate service. These efforts have been focused on the provision of local road improvements, recreation facilities, fire stations, and other public facilities.

Due to continued growth in the County, it is still difficult to simultaneously provide a basic level of service to existing and newly developed areas.

**Recommendation(s):** The ongoing Comprehensive Plan update should include a process that inventories underserved areas and provides specific and quantitative goals, objectives, and policies to meet the needs of these areas. Policies should prioritize the adequate provision of infrastructure and services to existing development before any expansion is undertaken. Furthermore, the consideration of proposals for new development should be judged by the feasibility of providing appropriate levels of service to these areas. For example, the extension of water and wastewater infrastructure should be analyzed to ensure that the cost of implementation will be offset by the revenue generated by providing this service to the residents and businesses.
QUALITY GROWTH AUDIT SUMMARY

The following table summarizes the performance of the County and cities in the eight categories.

Figure 1: Quality Growth Audit Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXISTING PLANS AND REGULATIONS</th>
<th>number of questions</th>
<th>possible assessments*</th>
<th>promote quality growth (number of assessments)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>partially support quality growth (number of assessments)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>do not support quality growth (number of assessments)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment and Natural Resources</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs/Housing Balance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Infrastructure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Design</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Possible assessments is simply the number of questions times the number of jurisdictions (Camden County and the Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine). We recognize the overlapping responsibility of jurisdictions in some of these areas.

According to the audit, the plans and development regulations of the County and cities ensure housing that meets quality growth principles and the goals of the community. Conversely, the audit identified significant barriers to quality growth and economic development in four categories: Environment and Natural Resources, Jobs/Housing Balance, Other Infrastructure (primarily water and wastewater service), and Community Design. The review of plans and regulations should focus efforts on these areas.

Although planning and regulations are crucial elements to promote quality growth and development, it is also important to note the other factors that contribute to a community’s success in these efforts, including enforcement; the consistency of plans, regulations, and practices; and the promotion of areas for redevelopment over new development. These issues are addressed in the next section of this report.
SECTION 2 : CRITICAL ISSUES and RECOMMENDATIONS

An overall assessment of the quality growth audit identified four critical issues:

- New development within the County has not reflected the vision, goals, and objectives of the community.
- Water and wastewater infrastructure provision is following instead of directing development.
- Recent development within the County has not balanced residential expansion with economic development. If current trends continue, Camden County may become a bedroom community for Jacksonville.
- Key corridors and interchanges within the County are underperforming.

This section identifies the most critical issues and provides more detailed recommendations and action items to promote quality growth and economic development.

NEW DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY VISION

**ISSUE: New development within the County has not reflected the vision, goals, and objectives of the community.**

Interviews with Camden County stakeholders revealed a desire for more—but managed—growth. Interviewees hoped that the County and cities would become models of economic and residential growth through improvements in governance and education. Put succinctly, the community’s vision is to maintain and enhance the County as a desirable place to live.

On the other hand, almost 16 percent of the stakeholders interviewed indicated that they expected to see a newspaper headline in five to 10 years scolding the County for unmanaged growth. Furthermore, 49 percent of those interviewed thought that the governments were not doing enough to restrict unwanted development and encourage desired development.7

This is a challenging situation—to encourage growth, but also shape and direct it. Many counties and cities throughout the country are in a similar position. Whether they are near a growing metropolitan area or have a unique natural environment (e.g., coastal or mountain), they are experiencing at least moderate growth. More often than not, these governments allow developers and businesses to determine both the quantity and quality of growth in their jurisdictions. For these places, residential and economic growth brings immediate benefits, such as a larger tax base, more jobs, new amenities, and a sense of vitality. The negative effects often take longer to materialize, and when they do they are difficult to remedy. For example, unmanaged growth can result in increased traffic congestion, environmental degradation, insufficient public infrastructure and services, fiscal insolvency, and the loss of community character.

Communities in this position must take a stance to overcome the challenges created by recent growth, as well as mitigate the potential negative consequences of new development. This requires a policy that does not overly regulate growth, which could make new development unfeasible, but effectively

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7 See companion report titled “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Interviews with Community Stakeholders.”
shapes and directs growth to support the community’s vision. Balanced and coordinated plans, policies, regulations, procedures, practices, public investment, and incentives are necessary to achieve the desired outcome. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship among these components and links them to private investment and development. The goal is to establish a development process that makes it easy and efficient for developers to do the “right thing,” ensures equitable and financially feasible delivery of services, preserves the community’s unique sense of place, successfully assimilates new residents and businesses, and supports the long-term health of the community.

Figure 2: Linking Community Vision to Private Investment
GOAL: Camden County should ensure that development regulations, zoning changes, and permitting decisions are consistent with the community’s vision and goals, and concurrent with plans for the infrastructure and educational facility provisions articulated in the planning documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Update existing documents and develop new planning documents.**
  Camden County is just beginning the process of updating the *Joint County/City Comprehensive Plan for Camden County and the cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine*, which was last updated in 1992. The update process is an opportunity to clearly articulate the vision and goals of the community. Making this vision explicit will give the plan the legal authority to help manage growth in the County.

  The Plan should identify problems and goals, and provide them with objectives for action. To help ensure that the Plan is implemented, the objectives, if appropriate, should establish quantifiable targets and general deadlines. Following are examples:

  - Every resident shall live within five miles of a public park by 2020.
  - Ninety percent of county roads shall be paved by 2015.

  Establishing targets and deadlines for most objectives sets priorities and allows for later evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan. The Plan should also assess a cost for implementation and identify an agency or department responsible for the realization of each objective.

  The Comprehensive Plan must include a detailed future land use map. This map should assign appropriate acreage and locations for each land use (see Question 3 of the audit for residential land use planning). Of particular importance is the identification and preservation of greenspace, which is easier to protect before areas experience too much development (see “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Infrastructure Management Report”); business and industrial areas, which have demanding location needs (see Section 3: Quality Growth Best Practices for site requirements for business parks); and institutional spaces, to ensure the equitable distribution of public infrastructure (schools, parks, fire/police stations).

  The Comprehensive Plan update should also be complemented by plans for transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, economic development, housing, and other issues. Many of these plans already exist; others need to be developed. The recommendations above for the Comprehensive Plan also should be applied to development of other plans.

  The Comprehensive Plan should relate to plans for the coast and the state, like the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Plan (http://crd.dnr.state.ga.us/assets/documents/GCMP.pdf) and the Georgia Coastal Comprehensive Plan (http://www.georgiaplanning.com/coastal.htm), the development of this plan is currently being undertaken by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Camden County’s interests are being represented by William H. “Bill” Gross, James E. Stein, and Stuart A. Stevens.

- **Review and amend development regulations, practices, and procedures to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other plans.**
  The quality growth audit identified several inconsistencies between the existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances and subdivision ordinances. For example, the Comprehensive Plan asserts that the purpose of the Agriculture-Residential and Agriculture-Forestry zoning classification is to retain and conserve the existing farming activities and protect the timber production areas, but the zoning ordinances allow for five-acre residential lots in the Agriculture-Forestry districts and one-acre residential lots in the Agriculture-Residential districts (see question 12 of the audit). After
the comprehensive plan has been updated, the zoning and subdivisions of the County and cities should be reviewed and amended to support the Plan’s goals.

Furthermore, site and building permits and zoning variances and change requests should be reviewed based on the visions, goals, and objectives, as well as the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan. The County and cities should create a tool to evaluate proposed development against the goals of the various plans. Such a tool, sometimes called a scorecard, identifies key criteria that a development proposal must meet to be approved. This scorecard needs to be crafted by the community to reflect community goals.8

- **Identify opportunities for public investment and incentives that advance the plans.**  
  For more information, details, and recommendations regarding redevelopment strategies, see Section 3: Quality Growth Best Practices.

- **Establish indicators to measure progress.**  
  Part of the comprehensive plan update process can include the development of a menu of indicators of success. Community indicators are used to measure the status of the quality of life and progress being made toward improving it. Indicators may also address issues of sustainability, health and activity, or benchmarking of government performance. They assess issues from an outcomes-oriented perspective. Examples of indicators include:

  - Public high school graduation rate
  - Public high school dropout rate
  - Net employment growth
  - Conservation and park land
  - Commute times of 25 minutes or less.

  Indicators are intended to hold elected officials and government staff responsible for implementing the community’s plans. For indicators to successfully influence the growth of the County, they should be created through direct citizen involvement and should be tied to public policy and budgetary decision making.9

- **Review regulations, practices, procedures, public investments, and incentives that have proven ineffective.**  
  Use the results of the annual indicator report to identify regulations, practices, investments, and incentives that have failed to improve the community’s performance and amend them as necessary.

- **Begin again.**  
  This process to ensure that growth and development match the vision and goals of the community is a cyclical one. Goals change, problems are resolved and new ones arise, new residents have different needs, and new technology can present different opportunities; therefore, the visioning, planning, regulatory amendments, and evaluation tools need to evolve to suit changing conditions.

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8 Guidance pertaining to the creation of such a tool is available in *Smart Scorecard for Development Projects*, which is available at [http://www.cnu.org/cnu_reports/scorecard_exp.pdf](http://www.cnu.org/cnu_reports/scorecard_exp.pdf).

9 More information about the use of indicators is available from the Jacksonville (Florida) Community Council, Inc., which has had an indicator project since 1985. The 20th anniversary edition of its *Quality of Life Progress Report* was released in 2004. It includes 119 indicators that reflect trends in nine areas: education; economy; natural environment; social well-being and harmony; arts, culture, and recreation; community health; responsive government; transportation; and public safety. Jacksonville Community Council, Inc., [http://www.jcci.org](http://www.jcci.org)
WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: Water and wastewater infrastructure provision is following instead of directing development.

Camden County can expect continued growth and development in the future. This development could very well outpace infrastructure adequacy, especially with respect to water and wastewater service provision. Camden County and its cities need to approach future development with an eye on the cumulative effects of growth on their infrastructure networks. The future planning of the networks should direct the geographical allocation of development as well as the phasing in of it. A priority for all municipalities/agencies involved in wastewater management and water distribution in Camden County should be to have comprehensive water/wastewater infrastructure master plans detailing existing conditions as well as future plans and limitations.

GOAL: Camden County should develop a comprehensive master plan that phases the expansion of water and wastewater infrastructure to support economic development and redevelopment goals.

RECOMMENDATION:
For a complete assessment of and recommendations regarding water and wastewater planning, see the “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Infrastructure Management Report.”

Tools for Directing Development

Urban Services Restrictions in City of Hahira, Lowndes County
By delineating an urban service area (a boundary), the City of Hahira clearly states where they will support new development at what densities. This directs new development to infill and redevelopment areas within the urban service boundary, while maintaining the rural character of areas lying outside the boundary. The urban service area also allows the local government to insure adequate public facilities to new developments. The City of Hahira restricts urban services to its city limits and does not allow development projects to be annexed into the city unless the proposed development cannot be accommodated on vacant areas within the current city limits, and there is adequate public facility capacity available to support the annexation.
More information: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, www.dca.state.ga.us/main/innovations/

Impact Fees
Development impact fees requires developers to contribute land, facilities, or funding to help pay for off-site capital improvements that benefit their project and mitigate impacts to the surrounding area. Their purpose is to offset public costs brought on by the new development, but they can also be used to encourage more desirable and efficient development patterns. For example, impact fees can be reduced or even discarded in areas with adequate public facilities or areas where redevelopment is strongly desired, but levied on developers who choose to site projects in areas currently unserved by infrastructure and services. Note that impact fee law requires the establishment of service levels and areas in the comprehensive plan.
More information: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/impactfees.asp
BALANCE RESIDENTIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE: Recent development within the County has not balanced residential expansion with economic development. If current trends continue, Camden County may need to expand services to meet the needs of its residents.

The absolute level of commercial and industrial development pales in comparison to the level of residential development in Camden County. Residential property accounts for the largest share of Camden County’s tax digest, a share that has been increasing over time. In 1994, residential property accounted for 49.3 percent. By 2004, this share increased to 58.4 percent. During the same period, commercial property’s share shifted slightly to account for a lesser proportion of the digest while industrial property’s share decreased by almost half. This signals a potential trend toward a less balanced tax digest, which could have challenging fiscal implications as the County and cities work to serve the growing demand for public services and infrastructure. For example, a national study of the cost of community services by land use category found that for every $1.00 of revenue generated by residential development, $1.16 is needed to provide public infrastructure and services. Figure 4 shows the revenues and costs of different land uses. The first number shows the dollar amount in revenue and the second number shows the dollar amount in public expenditures for each type of land use.

Figure 4: Comparison of revenues and expenditures ($ of revenue : $ in public expenditures) for three land use categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median of Cost of Community Service Studies nationally</th>
<th>Residential</th>
<th>Commercial/Industrial</th>
<th>Farmland/Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.00 : $1.16</td>
<td>$1.00 : $0.27</td>
<td>$1.00 : $0.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cost of Community Service Study for Cecil County, MD, by the American Farmland Trust, http://www.farmland.org/mid_atlantic/delmarva%20COCs%20Cecil%20County1-12-03.pdf

Another example linking different land uses to specific revenues and costs is available in a 2004 fiscal impacts study that was completed for Hall County, Ga. This study found that for every $1.00 of public expenditures to support residential development the County received only $0.80 in revenue. The conclusion of this and other studies was that in many instances the net fiscal impact of residential development on a community is often negative.10

The growing imbalance between residential development and commercial/industrial/office development also has serious consequences for the natural environment, the growth of high-quality jobs, and residents’ quality of life. In terms of transportation, this type of imbalance raises the prospect of more long-distance commuting. In 1990, approximately 77 percent of people living in Camden who worked outside of the home had a travel time of 24 minutes or less to work, leaving 23 percent with a travel time of 25 or more minutes. As of the 2000 Census, only 69 percent traveled less than 24 minutes to work, and 31 percent traveled more than 25 minutes.11

10 The following resources provide more information about the fiscal implications of land uses:
- The American Farmland Trust: http://www.farmland.org/
- Cost of Community Service Study for Cecil County, MD by the American Farmland Trust is available at: http://www.farmland.org/mid_atlantic/delmarva%20COCs%20Cecil%20County1-12-03.pdf

11 U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census, SF3
It is important to recognize that increasing commute times are a result of not only greater distance commute to employment locations; they are also caused by increased traffic congestion, in both the cities and the suburbs where many commuters live. The increasing traffic congestion in suburban areas is often the result of scattered development patterns and the design of large residential subdivisions that direct all, or at least most, automobile traffic to one collector or arterial street.

The increase in work-related travel time results in more auto-related emissions, with obvious air quality impacts. Furthermore, time for family and personal endeavors is an important component of a quality of life assessment. The more time residents spend driving to and from work, the less time they have for more enjoyable pursuits.

A retirement community may also create an imbalance between jobs and housing, but with different challenges. This cohort typically has a different effect on transportation. Instead of concerns over traffic congestion and commute times, older residents may need transportation alternatives, including public transit and accessible neighborhoods where shopping, services, health care, and amenities are located in walking distance from their homes. Retired residents also increase demand for retail and services, which are commonly associated with low-wage jobs; therefore, growth in this segment may not help the County achieve one of its stated goals: more high-quality jobs.

### Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Development Growth Rates

The county’s available housing units increased by 55.8 percent from 1990 to 2000, at an annual rate of 4.5 percent, and by another 12.9 percent, or annual rate of 4.1 percent, from 2000 to 2004. A net total of 6,073 units were developed in Camden County from 1990 to 2000. From 2000 to 2004, another net total of 2,181 units were added, which is more than one third of the development that occurred during the 1990s. Camden County’s growth in housing stock has exceeded the rate of growth for both the Coastal Georgia and Coastal Florida regions.  

Camden has seen a notable increase in commercial development to accompany the growth in residential development. From 1994 to 2000, residential development increased 39.2 percent, or at an annual rate of 5.7 percent. Commercial development lagged behind somewhat with an increase of 26.7 percent or an annual rate of growth of 4 percent. However, from 2000 to 2004, growth in commercial development (19.3 percent, annual rate of 4.5 percent) outpaced growth in residential development (12.3 percent, annual rate of 3 percent), indicating that commercial development is catching up with the growth in demand.

Industrial development in Camden County has also increased significantly, signaling that the community is experiencing some balance in the growth of jobs to housing. From 1994 to 2000, industrial development increased 32.4 percent, compared to growth in residential development at 39.2 percent. From 2000 to 2004, industrial development increased at a rate eight times that of residential development with an absolute growth rate of 126.7 percent and annual growth rate of 22.7 percent.

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12 Property values rose significantly from 1994 to 2000, and continued to rise in recent years. Total assessed valuation of the community’s privately held properties increased 43.5 percent, or annually by 6.2 percent, from 1994 to 2000 and another 39.5 percent from 2000 to 2004 resulting in an annual growth rate of 11.7 percent. Increase in valuation can be partly attributed to market value reassessments and an increase in property values. The value per unit of residential construction within Camden County almost doubled during just the five-year period of 2000 to 2004, rising from just over $75,000 to nearly $150,000. Camden County’s growth rate (92.1 percent) during this period exceeded that of every county within its Coastal Georgia and Coastal Florida regions. Increase in valuation can also be contributed to increase in development.

13 Based on data from the Georgia Department of Revenue. Improvements is viewed as a proxy for developments.

14 Based on data from the Georgia Department of Revenue. Improvements is viewed as a proxy for developments.
The Georgia Tech team projected Camden County population by age to 2030. The middle-of-the-road projection showed the County reaching 66,000 people by 2030. This represents a 34 percent increase in total population. The characteristics of the future population are also important. Figure 3 shows school age (0 to 19 years of age), work age (20 to 64 years of age), and retirement age (65+) population as a percentage of total population. This graph illustrates an increasing percentage of retirement age and school age population in 2000, 2005, and 2030. This type of information should be used in land use and public service planning.

In either case—bedroom or retirement community—rapid land consumption is a serious issue. Residential uses force the development of open space more so than any other land use. Heavy reliance on residential development results in greater land consumption, with the potential to negatively impact Camden’s sensitive coastal environment and alter the small-town/rural character cherished by the stakeholders interviewed.

Camden County’s residential growth is anticipated to continue due to several plans underway by private developers, especially in the northern portion of the County. The County is situated almost halfway between Brunswick and Jacksonville and will likely receive spillover growth from both areas, as well as from Savannah. Managing this growth is a pressing issue among County stakeholders.
**GOAL:** Evaluate the implications of development patterns on Camden County’s tax base, environment, and ability to maintain a desirable quality of life, and diversify its development efforts and land use planning strategies accordingly.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- **Camden County should consider population projections by age, taking into account the most recent trends, in considering future land use.**
  
  The ongoing comprehensive development planning process should build on the projections developed for this report.

- **Camden County should study short- and long-term fiscal impacts of land uses.**
  
  An assessment of revenues and public expenditures for each type of land use—residential, industrial/commercial, agriculture/forest—can identify the net fiscal impact of land use decisions. This information should be used in future land use planning. Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, the University of Georgia, and others have a number of resources to evaluate the fiscal impact of development.

- **Camden County should conduct land use planning that balances housing and employment and preserves key areas for future economic development.**
  
  The land use plan should reflect the projections of land needed for residential uses based on a housing needs assessment. Therefore, the results of the ongoing housing study should be used, in conjunction with prevailing and planned residential densities and desired growth patterns, to designate areas on the future land use map for housing units. The new residential areas depicted on the future land use map should not exceed the projected housing needs by more than 15 percent, which provides an adequate cushion for housing demand. A plan that provides excessive residential acreage promotes over consumption of land and scattered development patterns, which increases the cost of infrastructure and service provision. Furthermore, land use planning preserve key areas for economic development, recognizing that industrial and commercial land uses have specific location needs that are more difficult to meet than are the needs of residential development.

- **Camden County should proactively plan for future commercial and industrial development in a manner that does not sacrifice the quality of life available in Camden and potentially enhances it.**
  
  Refer to the “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Business Park Site Identification Study” for detailed recommendations.

**CORRIDORS AND INTERCHANGES PERFORMANCE**

**ISSUE:** Key corridors and interchanges within the County are underperforming.

Camden County has several key corridors and interchanges, including State Route (S.R.) 40, the S.R. 40 spur, U.S. Highway 17, Colerain Road, Laurel Island Parkway, and the I-95 interchanges, most notably at Exits 1, 3, 6, and 14. These corridors and interchanges are important workhorses for the County, providing mobility and access for motorists. They also act as gateways to the County and the Cities of Kingsland, St. Mary’s, and Woodbine by establishing the residential, business, and tourism character of the larger community, making them either assets or liabilities for the County and cities.

These corridors and interchanges represent significant public and private investment. Furthermore, they are the location of many important services to residents, businesses, and tourists. At present, several of these areas are underperforming. In many cases they are characterized by oversized parking lots, low-quality buildings, outdated retail design, the absence of landscaping, a predisposition to the
automobile, transient services, undeveloped parcels breaking up the continuity of the commercial corridor, and an overall lack of identity. In other instances, future development has the potential to duplicate these problems along other corridors due to a lack of planning and regulation.

For example, U.S. 17 features the downtowns of Kingsland and Woodbine, as well as several magnificent marshland views. Although these cities have successfully achieved “historic” designation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the downtowns, they have not followed up with appropriate development regulation to protect these resources. Furthermore, the views of the marshlands from U.S. 17 are being threatened by residential development. These views are referenced in the existing Comprehensive Plan, but these “placemaking” viewsheds are not specifically identified and regulations have not been developed to protect them.

Figures 5 through 7 show the historic corridors of Camden County’s cities. Some of the specific characteristics that give these places identity can be replicated to create a cohesive appearance throughout the county. Signage, lighting, historic buildings, uniform building setback, and pedestrian facilities establish each city’s character. By planning for appropriately scaled, but similar features on S.R. 40 and around the interchanges, a more defined sense of place can be established (see Conceptualizing Redevelopment, page 55).
Figure 5: Woodbine, U.S. 17

Figure 6: Kingsland, U.S. 17

Figure 7: St. Marys, Osborne St. (S.R. 40)
Figures 8 and 9 are photographs of development around an interchange and along a major corridor, S.R. 40. The County’s unique sense of place is absent in these photographs. In fact, little attention has been paid to the design or aesthetic appearance of these newer developments. For example, the interchange development shown in Figure 8 has no landscape to provide shade, mask undesirable views, or create a more human scale to the vast stretch of pavement.

Figure 8: I-95, Exit 6 at Laurel Island Parkway

Figure 9: S.R. 40

This broader role of corridors and interchanges requires looking at these areas as a whole picture that includes sidewalks, streetscapes, surrounding land uses, buildings, parking lots, landscaping, views, and natural features. A holistic view necessitates the integration of planning and management for land use, transportation, and urban design through corridor and interchange management plans. The purpose of such plans is to provide the basis for development controls, transportation management, and the design of the private and public realm by:

- Planning for appropriate land uses to suit the locality and correspond to the capacity and mode of the transportation facilities to create a safer and more attractive environment.
- Managing the road space for all transport modes, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and private motorists to improve safety and local accessibility.
- Enhancing the physical design of the public and private realm to create more attractive local spaces and to protect the economic value of the entire corridor.
- Improving the landscape and built environment to reduce negative impacts on the natural environment.
- Resolving existing, potential, and future conflicts between land use and transportation facilities.

Management of these important corridors and interchanges can be incorporated into existing zoning and development regulations, or they may be developed through a specially tailored overlay district. Overlay districts add an additional layer of development controls on the designated area. These controls can:
- Modify typical building setbacks that, along with pedestrian facilities, can create an attractive environment for walking.
- Require inter-parcel connectivity to allow on-site automobile movement and fewer driveways along the corridor, which reduces traffic congestion in the corridor.
- Establish landscaping requirements to mask undesirable views, enhance the aesthetic appeal of the corridor and improve the value of the property, and mandate the use of native and drought-resistant plants to reduce the negative environmental impacts.
- Regulate sign usage to protect the visual quality of the corridor.

These are only a few examples of development regulations that could be established to enhance a corridor. The appropriate regulations for each corridor, and in fact each segment of the corridor, should be determined in a public planning process that identifies the unique vision and goals. For example, the S.R. 40 corridor might be divided into six distinct segments, as illustrated in Figure 10. The segments include:

S1: the western gateway to Kingsland
S2: the historic core of Kingsland
S3: a commercial corridor that terminates in the eastern gateway to Kingsland
S4: a transitional area with residential and commercial uses
S5: the western gateway to St. Marys and the segment of potential redevelopment (the Durango Paper Mill and St. Marys Airport)
S6: the historic core of St. Marys.

The land use intensity, transportation needs, and specific goals and challenges for each of these segments are unique, and therefore call for distinct visions and regulations for each segment.

**Figure 10**

*Gateways & Segments of State Route 40*

- S1: the western gateway to Kingsland
- S2: the historic core of Kingsland
- S3: a commercial corridor that terminates in the eastern gateway to Kingsland
- S4: a transitional area with residential and commercial uses
- S5: the western gateway to St. Marys and the segment of potential redevelopment (the Durango Paper Mill and St. Marys Airport)
- S6: the historic core of St. Marys.
For example, Segment 3, which includes the I-95 interchange, acts as an important entrance to the County and Cities of Kingsland and St. Marys. This area must accommodate a large amount of vehicular traffic, but it must also balance transportation needs with appropriate land uses and high-quality urban design to enhance public perception and community pride in the area.

The corridor created by U.S. 17 raises different challenges and opportunities. Its views of marshlands and the Satilla River and its route through two historic downtown districts create an opportunity to develop 17 as a scenic byway. The National Scenic Byway Program designates select roads based on their archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. The program provides support, marketing, and grant funding for the planning and management of designated byways.

Corridors can be as short as a mile or long enough to pass through several jurisdictions. In Camden County, the corridor planning area may cross state lines into Florida, as could be the case for U.S. 17. If appropriate, a coordinated effort among several jurisdictions may provide the best scenario for planning and management. In these instances, a Memorandum of Understanding may be necessary to develop a management plan for the entire corridor.

GOAL: Camden County should enact corridor and interchange management plans that enhance community identity, provide mobility options, and encourage new development and redevelopment that is consistent with the community’s vision.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Identify high-priority corridors and interchanges.** This should include areas that are already developed and those that have not yet experienced development pressures.

- **Inventory existing conditions of transportation facilities, land uses, natural environment, urban form, and demographic characteristics.** The inventory should not only document the condition of the corridor, but also identify proposed new developments and existing problems (e.g., safety, congestion, appearance).

- **Work with the community and stakeholders to develop a vision and goals for each area.** The public participation process should include an identification of the elements of the corridor or interchange that the public wants to keep and the key elements it wants to change.

- **Compile an integrated corridor management plan that identifies appropriate future land uses, densities, transportation improvements, development regulations, and design guidelines.** This plan should include specific and quantified goals and objectives. It should also assess costs and potential funding for each proposed improvement.

- **Craft Memorandums of Understanding between jurisdictions as necessary.**

- **Adopt development regulations and design guidelines to support vision and goals.** For corridors that are within two separate jurisdictions, it is beneficial to amend and adopt similar, if not identical, regulations and guidelines.

- **Establish a process for evaluating proposed projects based on the vision and goals of the plan.** A project scorecard can be created to assess proposed new development and redevelopment. This tool can be used during the permit application process to ensure that the goals of the plan are achieved.

- **Provide incentives for appropriate redevelopment within the corridors and around the interchanges.** Incentives can take the form of strategic public investment in the target areas or may be development incentives, like density bonuses or fast-track permitting or a reduction of impact fees (see page 34 for an overview of impact fees).
- Identify and seek funding assistance for publicly funded improvements. State and federal funds are available for some corridor management projects. Grassroots funding may be possible through the creation of a Community Improvement District, where property owners within the corridor voluntarily support an additional property tax to improvements within the corridor or around the interchange.

**CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT**

**Case Studies and Resources:**

**Rockdale County, Ga., Overlay District for Salem Road Corridor**
The overlay district was created in 2004 to enhance the quality and compatibility of development in the corridor, to encourage the appropriate redevelopment of underutilized and blighted property, and to create a sense of place that is aesthetically appealing, walkable, and environmentally responsible, among other goals.


**Cooperative Agreements for Corridor Management**
The National Cooperative Highway Research Program has compiled a report on best practices for multi-jurisdictional management of corridors.


**Funding Opportunity**
Funding for corridor management plans is available from National Scenic Byways Program, an effort by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration.

SECTION 3: QUALITY GROWTH BEST PRACTICES

Quality growth principles are intended to create a sustainable and vibrant development pattern and practice that improves the quality of life for all residents and meets the demands of businesses. This section provides principles, important considerations, and best practices for business parks and redevelopment strategies for Camden County. Where appropriate, case studies and funding opportunities are identified.

Business Parks
Business parks house a mix of activities such as warehousing, light manufacturing, research, and office functions. They are the descendents of the industrial parks of the manufacturing-oriented 20th century. This evolution from single-purpose to multi-purpose parks provides an important lesson for new business park development. Put simply, industry trends are always changing. With new technology, global competition, evolving urban form, and other changes, the design and composition of such parks must be flexible.

Flexibility is also a hallmark of quality growth. Quality growth principles are most closely associated with community development, emphasizing residential development patterns and amenities. Although concepts like jobs/housing balance and mixed land use, which have a connection to economic development, are common in quality growth case studies, the development of business parks and their relationship to the larger community are often overlooked.

Concepts like connectivity, a variety of transportation modes, sustainability, sense of place and flexibility are common themes of quality growth efforts. These concepts can also be applied to business parks. This section offers recommendations regarding site selection, park planning and design, architecture, management, and integration with the greater community. It concludes with case studies and opportunities for funding and assistance.

SITE SELECTION
Proper site selection for a business park is necessary for both its economic success and its role in enhancing the entire community. According to the Urban Land Institute, business and industrial park developers are no longer limiting their search to traditional sites—those in or near major cities or adjacent to air- and seaports. Technological and communication advances and business changes have expanded the search to sites well-served by truck and rail transportation networks that also offer employees affordable housing, recreational opportunities, and a high quality of life.

There are several conventional site criteria for a prospective business park. These include:

- Convenient access (to include high-quality state and county roads that allow for undisturbed truck movement) to high-speed transportation infrastructure, including interstates and transit services
- High visibility
- Appropriate utilities
  - High-speed fiber-optic lines and broadband access
  - Wastewater service
  - Power and natural gas
  - Adequate water supply
• For daily use, 500 to 1,500 gallons per acre per day
• For fire protection, 1,000 to 5,000 gallons per minute for a minimum of two to five hours with a minimum residual pressure of 20 pounds per square inch\(^\text{15}\)

• Appropriate soil and slope.

NOTE: If a rail site is needed, contact railroad company immediately. Limitations on the frequency of switching service may make some sites impossible to develop. Furthermore, the site will require an approximately 150-foot-long railroad spur for the business park’s use.\(^\text{16}\)

For a business park to be able to attract the highest caliber of tenants, the location must offer unique opportunities and support the needs of the built and natural environment. Although prospective tenants are focused on return on investment, the people making the decision to locate also seek attractive and functional work environments for themselves and their employees. The best-sited business parks:

• Offer aesthetically attractive surroundings, such as views of water features
• Have access to business and personal services (e.g., business supplies and support, as well as restaurants, day care centers, shops, and recreational facilities)
• Are close to appropriate housing for prospective employees.

Furthermore, a well-sited business park could also help the community achieve goals not associated with economic development. For example, business parks often include a network of pedestrian paths, which could be connected to the community’s larger system of multi-use trails and green infrastructure (see the *Infrastructure Management Report* for a complete description of green infrastructure’s purpose and development). Also, business parks often offer shared amenities for their tenants, such as copy centers, administrative services, day care, and formal and informal meeting spaces. These resources could also be made available to the larger community, both residents and businesses. And finally, the location of the park should reflect the community’s desire to protect the natural environment by selecting a location that does not negatively affect critical natural areas, like wetlands, habitat for threatened species of flora and fauna, mature trees, and other water resources.

When developing future land use plans, jurisdictions should identify areas that meet all of the above criteria for business park development before locating residential uses, whose needs are less complicated.

### SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN

Following are several recommendations for creating quality business parks:

• Locate high-profile tenants along frontages to mask less attractive building types in the interior
• Provide tenants with the ability to grow or expand in the future
• Offer a variety of types and sizes of spaces to attract a diverse set of businesses, from incubator to back office to warehousing to light industrial


• Use roadways to create a sense of place and identity through consistent landscaping, street lighting, and signage

• Minimize interaction between trucks and automobiles and pedestrians

• Explore shared parking for tenants, which may decrease overall parking and provide potential occupants with the option of a smaller, less expensive (and thus more attractive) lot

• Develop a consistent signage and wayfinding plan for the park to create an identity for the entire project to include:
  o Park entry signage
  o Building identification
  o Directory of major occupants
  o Directional signs for vehicular and pedestrian traffic
  o Interior building signs

• Locate amenities on or immediately adjacent to the park, to include formal and informal gathering places, recreational facilities, child care, shopping, restaurants, and hotels, all of which can also be made available to the local community

• Ensure sufficient utility right-of-way for current and future needs

• Design the site for 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week use to ensure security and safety for employees (e.g., do not create dark places; light parking lots and sidewalks; consider guard booths, walls, fencing, and bollards)

• To improve the appearance of the park and protect the environment, develop a unified storm water management system and a wetlands and tree management program.

ROADWAYS “don’t merely provide circulation; they also create an overall sense of place, promote building identity through placement and highly visible frontage, and—when properly planned—make the property flexible enough to support expansion, contraction, or subdivision in the future.”
John Kriken of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill [p. 130]

PARKING
Suggested parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of building space:
• Bulk warehouse, 1-2 spaces
• Manufacturing/assembly, 2-6 spaces
• R&D/high-tech/flex office, 3-5 spaces
• Office, 4 spaces
• Call center, 8 spaces

LANDSCAPING
“Dollar for dollar, landscaping is one of the most economical and effective ways to promote a high-quality image. Landscaping for the common areas, in concert with building architecture, can greatly enhance—or detract from—a site’s marketability. Even large-scale business park projects are subject to curb appeal.” [Business Park and Industrial Development Handbook, ULI, p. 118-9]

ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of business parks should not only reflect the type of business, but also the needs of the people who use the buildings. While many buildings may require loading docks and voluminous warehouses, it is also important to maintain a human scale on the façade and main entrances. This can be achieved with overhangs, vestibules, a canopy of trees, and appropriately sized windows. Furthermore, street facing sides of buildings should be of high quality materials and not corrugated metal sheeting or cinder block.

One of the first principles of sustainable design and green building is that the life of a structure should be considered in its entirety, encompassing the initial planning and design stages, its construction, use throughout its life, and the structure’s eventual demolition. Green buildings must also incorporate natural systems like daylight and fresh air to provide a superior interior environment for its occupants.
and to provide long-term benefits to the surrounding environment. Lastly, materials used in the construction of green buildings—and the energy required to extract or create them—are finite. This must be considered during all aspects of design, construction, and building operation.

Following are some basic sustainable concepts to consider when designing green buildings:

**Building Design**
- A building’s exterior affects daylighting, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC), and energy conservation. Environmentally sensitive features such as thermal insulation, and controlled air filtration should be considered.
- Exterior or interior shading devices work with the building’s exterior to promote natural lighting, minimize heat transfer, and save energy. Light shelves, shields, or reflectors can be used to redirect sunlight into the building’s interior.
- A building’s volume and floorplate should be optimized to the local climate.
- Storm water management is a concern in larger developments such as business parks. Storm water can be recycled and used for landscape irrigation, and storm water impoundment features can be integrated into the landscape, providing an amenity.

**Construction**
- A system for tracking and recording waste and recyclables should be established.
- A zero landfill concept for construction and demolition should be adopted; construction waste should be recycled or salvaged.
- Noise protection and reduction should be provided during construction.
- When using a brownfield site, the existing building should be dismantled rather than demolished so that building materials can be recycled or reused.


**IMPLEMENTATION and MANAGEMENT**

Although Camden County’s Joint Development Authority has assumed the role of owning, master planning, and managing the business park, it will rely on private businesses to develop the individual parcels. To protect the vision and integrity of the park and to ensure it maintains its value, the County should adopt covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CCR). The CCR establishes building design guidelines and can require specialized landscape treatments for different types of streets, the percentage of lot to be landscaped, minimum plant size and tree caliper, parking lot configurations, grading and berming standards, and signage standards. The goal of such measures is to create a unified appearance for the park that establishes an overall appearance of quality and care.
A new vision for the Camden County Business Park

Lighting, pedestrian facilities, signage, and landscaping can drastically change the overall appearance of the existing business park, as evident in a comparison of Figures 11 and 12. By following the best practices discussed earlier, the entire park can be developed in a unified and attractive style.

Figure 11: Camden County Business Park, existing conditions

Figure 12: Conceptualization of Business Park
BUSINESS PARKS: Case Studies and Resources

Crossroads Business Park: Savannah, Georgia
The Crossroads Business Park is an environmentally sensitive industrial park located on land consisting largely of wetlands. The park is owned and managed by the Savannah Economic Development Agency (SEDA) which holds a 404 wetlands development permit for the entire property. This allows approved businesses to locate within the business park without incurring the time and expense associated with acquiring an individual 404 permit. All site plans are reviewed by SEDA, the Architectural Review Board, and the planning commission to ensure that they comply with the business park plan. The SEDA spent several years working with environmental lawyers, engineers, and scientists to develop a plan for the area that reflects environmental economic development concerns. Crossroads has enabled coastal Savannah to attract significant investments for corporate headquarters, warehouse and distribution, and manufacturing options. The business park consists of 1,784 acres, surrounded by a natural buffer of over 7,000 acres. It is zoned as a planned unit development (PUD) with acceptable uses including heavy industrial, office, warehouse/distribution, research, and commercial. Sites in the business park range from four to 160 acres.
More information: http://www.seda.org

LakeView Corporate Park: Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin
Developed by a subsidy of Wisconsin Electric Power Company and opened in July 1988, the 2,300-acre LakeView Corporate Park now sees 95 percent of its net rentable area occupied, mostly by businesses interested in an attractive setting not far from Chicago. Some of its appeal derives from on-site amenities such as a day care facility, a 120-room hotel and conference center, restaurants, and a physical fitness facility. But LakeView’s greatest asset is its physical setting. To make up for the wetlands it had to fill to develop the property, the developer created more than 30 acres of wetlands (1.2 acres for every acre filled) and several acres of floodplain. In addition, the developer donated 425 acres of wetlands and floodplain—18.6 percent of the total land—as well as money required for upkeep to the Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin. State Highway 165, which connects the western and eastern sides of the corporate park, winds through the protected land and past Lake Andrea, allowing workers at LakeView to enjoy attractive natural scenery every time they arrive at work.

Meridian Business Campus: Aurora, Illinois
The 660 acres of Meridian Business Campus were originally envisioned as a traditional industrial park. The developer, CMD, recast it as a multi-use campus with industrial, high-tech, and office tenants. The park now has six lakes, ranging in size from five to 10 acres, with open space around each of these lakes providing tenants with a green view. A trail system, integrated with the lakes, links the campus to nearby residential areas and commuter rail. One of Meridian’s strengths has been flexibility: not only are the buildings themselves flexible—light industrial buildings, for example, feature windows along two or three external walls, allowing them to convert more easily to office use—but the landscaping and design of the park itself allows for smooth transitions between types of use. The integration of the lakes and open space with Meridian Parkway, a well-landscaped east-west thoroughfare, has attracted a greater variety of businesses than was originally anticipated, allowing the campus to see 90 percent of its net rentable area occupied.
BUSINESS PARKS, cont.

Eco-Industrial Parks:
An eco-industrial park (EIP) is a community of manufacturing and service businesses seeking enhanced environmental and economic performance through collaboration in managing environmental and resource issues, including energy, water, and materials. The overall goal of EIPs is to improve the performance of the participating companies while minimizing their environmental impact, therefore providing benefits to private and public stakeholders. Businesses realize benefits such as cost savings, new revenues, increased competitiveness, and decreased regulatory burdens. The surrounding community benefits from a cleaner and healthier environment as well as the increased economic activity in the form of job and business development generated by the park. The local government sees an increase in their tax base and decreases in regulatory enforcement burdens, demand on municipal infrastructure, and costs associated with environmental damage. Finally, decreased pressure on finite natural resources leads to renewal of natural systems.

More Information:  
http://www.smartgrowth.org - Smart Growth Network  
http://www.epa.gov/jtr/topics/liss.htm - EPA Overview of EIP  
http://www2.ucsc.edu/gei/eco-industrial_parks.html

Funding:
Public Works Program
The Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce provides project grants to help distressed communities attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate long-term, private sector jobs. The program has funded water and sewer facilities primarily serving industry and commerce, access roads to industrial parks or sites, port improvements, and business incubator facilities.

More information: http://www.eda.gov/

Sustainable Development Challenge Grants Program
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency started this program to encourage community, business, and government to work cooperatively to develop flexible, locally oriented approaches that link place-based environmental management and quality of life with sustainable development and revitalization.

More information: http://www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/matrix.htm

Business and Industrial Loans and Grants
The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Program provides grants and helps public, private, or cooperative organizations in rural areas obtain loans to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities.

Redevelopment

There are several redevelopment opportunities in Camden County. These include abandoned industrial sites, like the Durango Paper Mill in St. Marys and several former industrial sites in Woodbine, as well as underperforming commercial corridors, like State Route 40. This section explores the benefits, government role, and locations and types of redevelopment appropriate for Camden County.

Benefits

Redevelopment has several benefits:

- **makes use of existing infrastructure investment**
  These abandoned and underperforming sites are often served by transportation, water, and wastewater infrastructure provided and maintained with public dollars. By supporting the redevelopment of these sites, public investment can be better utilized to achieve public goals. Furthermore, the rejuvenation of underperforming sites is often less costly to the public sector than developing greenfields because it capitalizes on existing site improvements.

- **protects undeveloped areas from premature development pressure**
  By making abandoned and underutilized areas available for redevelopment, hundreds of previously unusable acres become prime for development. This can provide sufficient areas to meet existing and future demand for real estate, thereby relieving pressure to convert undeveloped lands to different uses.

- **promotes compact development and mends holes in the “urban fabric”**
  Many of these sites are located adjacent to other land uses. When they are abandoned or when portions of these sites are underutilized, they create gaps in the urban form. These gaps can become uninviting and even unsafe places that create disconnections between different parts of the community. Their redevelopment stitches neighborhoods back together.

- **increases property value for owners and taxing jurisdictions**
  The value of these sites to land owners and the greater public increases through redevelopment. By reactivating or intensifying these sites their increased value is realized in greater rents, resale prices, and property tax revenue, not only for the specific sites, but also for the surrounding area. In addition, such redevelopment can provide less quantifiable benefits to the community by enhancing overall vitality and providing new employment and housing opportunities.

- **rehabilitates contaminated land**
  Former industrial sites have often sustained at least minor environmental damage. The redevelopment of these sites will necessitate the remediation of any contaminants which may have done harm both on and off of the site.

As Camden County continues to experience population growth, it also faces growing demand for housing, services, and shopping venues. This demand creates a natural real estate market for development and also opens up an opportunity for the County and cities to direct growth to areas that have been abandoned or are underutilized.

Government Role in Redevelopment

In some places, demand is so great for redevelopment that governments need not actively promote it. In other instances, private developers need encouragement to pursue the types of redevelopment projects that fulfill community goals. Because public resources are limited, it is important to answer the following question before public incentives for redevelopment are adopted: Would desirable development happen without public incentives and investments? If the answer is “yes,” then public
funds and efforts should be directed to other endeavors. But if the answer is “no,” then a strategic approach to investment and incentives can help the community fulfill its vision.

Because most development in Camden County has been in greenfields, or areas not previously developed, the answer to this question is “no.” Therefore, the following section describes three approaches to government involvement in the promotion of redevelopment.

1 Public ownership and management: Public acquisition is most often undertaken to protect open space, but the practice may also be used to achieve especially difficult goals. In Camden County, public acquisition has been used to develop the business park in Kingsland. The redevelopment of these sites should be facilitated through a master planning process that involves all stakeholders.

2 Incentives: The County and cities should also explore various types of incentives to direct and shape redevelopment. These incentives can take the form of density bonuses, permit fast-tracking for desirable projects, impact fees, zoning ordinance that allow for innovative projects by right, a facade program, site assembly, or possibly a transfer of development rights program.

Public investments can also act as an incentive for redevelopment. Investment can take the form of bricks-and-mortar type projects, including streetscape improvements, road paving, water/wastewater infrastructure, new signage, and schools and other public buildings. Investments can also be made in financing, education, outreach, and marketing programs. See page 54 for details on a few of these incentive strategies.

3 Regulation: The governing jurisdictions could explore upzoning (increasing intensity of land use) of key districts. Allowing for more intense development in select areas can make these sites more profitable for private developers, and thus more desirable.

As redevelopment of an area begins to take hold, a marketing strategy must be developed to promote the area and its new amenities. It is also important to remember that whichever strategy is undertaken it should conform to the vision and goals articulated by the community in the Comprehensive Plan and other plans. To best direct this effort, target redevelopment districts should be identified and mapped during the Comprehensive Plan update. These districts should include areas that have excess public infrastructure and service capacity and that are contiguous to existing development. Focusing growth in these areas makes the public infrastructure and service provision less costly and protects the County’s open spaces and scenic views.
Incentives in detail: transfer of development rights and façade programs

Transfer of Development Rights
A Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program directs development by establishing sending and receiving zones. Sending zones are usually environmentally, culturally, or historically significant land, like forests, historic properties, or farmlands. Receiving areas are places that have existing or planned infrastructure capacity—roads, water and sewer systems, schools—to accommodate new or greater intensity development.

The TDR program allows property owners in sending areas to sell their development rights, but retain ownership of their property. These development rights can be purchased by property owners in receiving zones. The additional development rights allow the receiving zone owners to develop the property at greater density—for example reducing the minimum residential lot size or increasing lot coverage or building heights. An easement is placed on the title of the sending property that permanently restricts development.

In essence, a TDR program allows landowners to receive financial compensation without sacrificing valuable green space, while also creating more compact development and the efficient use of infrastructure and public services. It is important to carefully review the zoning ordinances governing the receiving areas. These ordinances, which regulate development size and density, should be crafted to promote demand for the purchase of development rights from the sending area.

In April 2003, the Georgia Legislature passed an amendment to the TDR legislation (Senate Bill 86) making TDRs available to any county that adopts enabling TDR ordinances. Fulton County, and specifically the Chattahoochee Hill Country, may be one of the first area's eligible for TDR transactions in the southeastern United States. The Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance has provided background information, as well as the Fulton County TDR ordinance, online. 

Façade Programs
The Cities of Kingsland, St. Marys, and Woodbine can identify specific districts and provide grant funding of a certain percentage of total project cost to encourage businesses to undertake façade improvements. These projects can include landscaping, awnings, exterior painting, and any other approved exterior improvement.
Conceptualizing redevelopment in Camden County

Camden County has several distinct types of redevelopment opportunities, including highway corridors and interchanges, historic downtowns, and large abandoned sites. This section locates some of these opportunities and provides some concepts and principles for their development.

Highway Corridors and Interchanges: This category addresses the specific challenges and opportunities of S.R. 40 and Laurel Island Parkway. These areas are the transportation workhorses of the County. They are the location of the majority of commercial development and critical access routes to the County’s cultural, recreational, and educational destinations. Three important elements are keys to the successful redevelopment of these areas:

Effective wayfinding

Wayfinding is the orderly structuring of information required to help people comfortably and successfully access and move about an environment. Signage provides an effective method to communicate wayfinding information to specific audiences. Such signage can be thought of as both a practical necessity and a public relations tool. A wayfinding program can be used to identify, inform, advertise, direct, describe, and explain the environment. Wayfinding signage placed at key decision points (e.g. interchanges, major intersections, bridges) is extremely important to visitors unfamiliar with the area. Done properly, it can create a uniform identity that reinforces the unique sense of place of Camden County (see example of a uniformed signage design in Figure 13). The County and Cities should explore the development of a unified wayfinding signage strategy.

Figure 13: Woodinville, WA signage typology

Wayfinding signage may include gateway signs (which let people know when they are entering a specific area, like a city or historic district), logo signs, directional guide signs, interpretive signs (such signs might describe the historical or cultural significances of a place or landmark), and special feature/name place signs. Signage must be clear, consistent, well-design, high quality, and placed in such a way as not to contribute to the visual clutter of the travelways. It
should also be designed for not only motorists, but also pedestrians and cyclists. Places like the airport, high school, community college, hospital, Crook River State Park, Cumberland Island, the historic districts of the cities, and major corridors, like S.R. 40, U.S. 17, and I-95, should be included in a wayfinding program. This signage may not only provide direction, but also advertise upcoming festivals and other events.

Gateways can be particularly effective in making people aware of the entrance into a different place. For example, S.R. 40 crosses seamlessly from Kingsland to St. Marys making it difficult for travelers to know where they are. The bridge over the Borrell Creek in St. Marys offers an attractive gateway opportunity (see Figure 14). The view of the water can become associated with the city name by adding a simple gateway sign. The placement of a gateway sign in this area can be dramatic, like the Miami Beach sign shown in Figure 15, and may become a source of community pride, like the sign in Figure 16 for Kensington, MD.

Figure 14: Bridge over Borrell Creek in St. Marys

Figure 15: Miami Beach Gateway

Figure 16: Kensington, MD

**Aesthetic appeal**

The landscaping, hardscaping, and architecture around interchanges and throughout corridors can influence the perception of visitors and residents. A well maintained and attractive environment builds community pride and encourages tourists to spend time in the County. Planted medians and roadways flanked with multi-use trails and street trees all create an attractive environment that mitigates the visual clutter caused by various styles and sizes of signs associated with the types of land uses occurring in the corridor (see Figure 17). In fact, Georgia Department of Transportation may install landscaping during a road improvement project if the local government and civic groups take on the responsibility of maintenance (see Figure 18).17

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Design guidelines established for the corridor can also set architectural standards for building materials, fenestration, and onsite landscaping (see Section 2: Critical Issues and Recommendations for strategies for corridor management).

Figure 17: Raised medians, multi-use trails, street trees, and a protected native woodland
Figure 18: Local landscaper provides maintenance services

Accessibility
To address accessibility it is first necessary to understand the difference between mobility and accessibility in transportation. Mobility, in the context of transportation planning, is the potential for movement and the ability to get from one place to another. It can be measured by number of trips or total miles traveled.

Accessibility, on the other hand, is the potential for interaction. This involves an impedance factor and an attractiveness factor. Along S.R. 40 in Camden County, the parallel railroad impedes interaction; therefore accessibility is reduced by its presence. The lack of landscaping along the corridor and vacant lots could negatively influence perceptions of attractiveness. Figure 19 provides an example of a well-groomed corridor that provides adequate pedestrian and transit facilities.

Accessibility also includes the element of choice. Hence greater choice in destinations and modes of travel (bicycling, walking, transit) improves accessibility. In Camden County, this could mean enhancing pedestrian and bicycle networks along the corridors and at the interchanges, as illustrated in Figures 20 and 21. Furthermore, infill strategies to increase the number and type of destinations along key corridors could improve accessibility by giving users more options to choose from.

Figure 19: Accessibility enhanced with vegetation and sidewalks and bus shelters

SOURCE: Context Sensitive Solutions, www.contextsensitivesolutions.org
Below is a conceptualization of how wayfinding, aesthetic improvements, and greater accessibility can be applied to the S.R. 40 corridor.
**Downtowns:** Each of the three incorporated cities of Camden County has a historic downtown. In these areas, redevelopment will mostly take the form of infill development. The historic downtowns have preserved their unique character and have already begun to direct public investments to enhance these districts. Still, more can be done through infill development, streetscape and façade improvements, and marketing (both to fill vacancies and to make residents and visitors aware of the services available in these locations).

Currently, the City of Woodbine has many attractive destinations, including the Courthouse Square, the commercial core of the historic district on U.S. 17, the boardwalk, and the multi-use trail. Separately they are desirable places, but when connected they can become the framework for a unified and accessible collection of assets that make the community an attractive place to live and visit. Enhancements like a wayfinding signage program, consistent streetscape design to link the areas visually, and coordinated marketing materials can create synergy that increases the potential of all the elements. For example, someone who needs to access the county government services in the square may not be familiar with the other offerings of Woodbine. A signage strategy and informational brochures can familiarize them with the recreational facilities and other services in the City.

Figure 24 identifies some of the key destinations in the City of Woodbine and shows where links could be created.

**Figure 24:** Amenities and needed links in Woodbine’s downtown

**Figure 25:** Signage for gateway at U.S. 17 and Route 25
**Abandoned sites:** This category includes the existing airport, which is slated to be replaced, and abandoned industrial sites, most notably the Durango Paper Mill.18

The airport and Durango sites offer great potential for redevelopment. They are already served by adequate transportation and water infrastructure, and their location creates an opportunity for a coordinated redevelopment project that serves as a gateway to St. Marys’ historic district. The Durango site includes several older, attractive buildings that may be appropriate for adaptive reuse as offices, retail, restaurants, or even residential. By preserving these buildings, any new development of the site will maintain an aesthetic relationship to the historic architecture of the area.

The “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Business Growth Opportunities Analysis” recommends efforts directed at the growth of the firms in commercial banking, accounting, tax preparation, payroll services, geophysical services, and management consulting services industries. Firms in these industries may be well suited for these locations; therefore, redevelopment planning should explore providing appropriate spaces for these types of businesses.

Furthermore, the proximity to the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base may be desirable to firms that do business with the base or businesses that meet the needs of military personnel (e.g., stakeholders expressed the need for businesses that are attractive to the relatively young military personnel). Conversely, the type and proximity of development around the base could be of concern to military planners; therefore, development of these sites should be done with the participation of military officials.

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18 See the “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Business Park Site Identification Study” for detailed descriptions of the St. Marys Airport and Durango Paper Mill site.
REDEVELOPMENT

Funding: Brownfields Pilots
The USEPA program funds the development of an inventory of brownfield sites; development of site response and reuse program; coordination of response and reuse group meetings; establishment of community involvement, public participation, environmental justice components of a response plan; development of communication strategies for conveyance of technical information to communities; and investigation of alternative funding strategies.
More information:  http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/matters.htm

Funding: SPLOST
Camden County's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) could be used to fund improvements in corridors and around interchanges.

Funding: Redevelopment Fund
The Redevelopment Fund finances locally initiated public/private partnerships to leverage investments in commercial, downtown, and industrial redevelopment and revitalization projects that wouldn't proceed otherwise. This fund is especially useful for smaller scale projects. This funding can be combined with other Community Development Block Grant programs.
More information:
http://www.dca.state.ga.us/communities/downtowndevelopment/programs/redevfund.asp
APPENDIX : MAPS

Camden County Zoning Map

*GIS data provided by Camden County, 2003
City of Kingsland Zoning Map

*GIS data provided by Camden County, 2003
City of St. Marys Zoning Map

*GIS data provided by Camden County, 2003*
City of Woodbine Zoning Map

*GIS data provided by Camden County, 2003*
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