Best Practices: Achieving Quality Community Objectives

Community Health

Community Health Resource Center	Develop and maintain a comprehensive listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available local community health and social welfare assistance resources such as Department Family and Children Services, Peachcare, Family Connections, County Health Departments., Schools, Public Hospitals, etc.
Transportation to Services	Provide public transportation options to local community health facilities. If public transportation isn't available in your area, consider instituting a DOT 5311 on-demand transit system or contact your regional commission about their RHST program.

Economic Prosperity

Assistance Source Book	Create a source book identifying technical and financial assistance available to local businesses from regional, state and federal agencies and organizations. Make this resource readily available to local businesses and economic developers on the web, at the local chamber of commerce, libraries etc.
Economic Development Strategy	Develop a collaborative, public/private local economic development strategy by involving stakeholders such as local business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authority. Enlist stakeholder input to reveal what training or expertise exists within the community workforce, what types of businesses or industries need to be developed, and what constraints exist on business growth within the community.
Labor Force Analysis	Identify the industry sectors best suited to the local workforce by assessing the experience and skills of a local workforce (through survey or similar methods), and comparing to the local industrial skills needs. Where gaps exist between local skills and industry needs, work with local workforce training providers to tailor training to fill these gaps.
Targeted Industry Analysis	Strategically choose which types of business to recruit and support using relevant community characteristics to determine which will be the best fit for local job needs, workforce skills, or to complement existing businesses. Also consider recent growth rates, for various industries, in the region, the state, and the U.S.

Business Incubator	Develop a business incubator to give local entrepreneurs a useful location to support a fledgling business.
Capital Availability for Business Formation	Establish a local program for gap financing, or a resource center for other sources of financing for startups or expanding local businesses.
Community Improvement District (CID)	Form a community improvement district (CID) to enhance the business development potential of a particular section of your community, such as a declining strip mall or older warehouse district. A CID can levy a small tax on businesses within the district to finance a range of needed facilities and services to enhance the attractiveness of the area.
Evaluating Business Formation in Your Community	Evaluate business formation in your community in order to identify trends that may be instructive for planning future economic development efforts. This requires analyzing the rate and causes of growth or decline in local businesses, including identifying new business formation resulting from a relocations or startups in the community.
Existing Industry Program (EIP)	Establish an Existing Industry Program (EIP) (also referred to as a BREP - business retention and expansion program) focuses on supporting the businesses that already exist in a community. It also more broadly seeks to create the conditions that will encourage local business improvement, growth and competitiveness.
Tracking Business Needs	Conduct periodic formal surveys, or use more informal means to track and remain attentive to the needs of existing businesses, as these otherwise tend to be overlooked while local economic developers search for new companies to attract. Develop strategies for addressing their issues, such as future infrastructure needs, workforce skills, etc. This is frequently done in conjunction with a business retention and expansion program (BREP) or an Existing Industry Program (EIP).
Analyzing Existing Industry in the Local Economy	Analyze the composition of the local economy to help understand how dependent the community is on one or two industries, how well industries are performing, what the average wages are in each industry, how well the local economy compares to national or regional averages, and what gaps in the industry mix could be filled to enhance the local economy. Techniques used to analyze existing industry structure include cluster analysis, location quotients, and shift-share analysis.
Access Georgia Assistance Programs	Participate in Georgia programs aimed at furthering local economic development efforts, including: Georgia Competitiveness Initiative, Competitive Assessment (EDGE), Georgia Work Ready, Entrepreneur Friendly Community program, Quick Start.

Communication Strategy	Identify your message and promote your community for economic development through available media outlets. Use social media sites as a no cost means to increase your community's exposure to new visitors and businesses.
Downtown Program	Actively support and participate in programs that promote healthy business downtown such as Downtown Development Authorities, Better Hometown, and MainStreet.
Job Center	Create a job center featuring free job listings for local business and free resources for the job seeker such as access to job boards, resume workshops, etc.
Opportunity Zone	Write an Urban Redevelopment Plan and apply for opportunity zone designation to take advantage of tax incentives available to businesses locating within the zone.
Professional Development	Enhance knowledge and skills of economic development staff by ensuring they participate in trainings or information sharing events such as the Georgia Academy for Economic Development, Georgia Economic Developers Association (GEDA) events, etc.
Tourism Strategy	Plan a tourism initiative and marketing campaign based on your community's existing heritage and cultural resources. The strategy might also entail employing well-designed logo and tourist-oriented directional signage systems, to help tourists find the services they need. Heritage and Cultural tourism are big business in Georgia.
Workforce Training	Provide access to training opportunities for the local workforce. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Such training resources are especially critical in this era of technology and rapid change.

Education Options

Public Internet Access	Ensure that your community provides public access to internet connected computers at locations such as libraries. This provides students access to online courses and training, such as Georgia's E-Core or the variety of online degree and certification opportunities available from the University System of Georgia.
Childhood Development Programs	Access the services of state and federal organizations and programs that helps children achieve literacy, complete school, and be prepared to work. These include Head Start, Communities in Schools and Americorps' Great Future Kids.

Educational Resource Center	Develop and maintain a listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available educational and training opportunities in your community. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Publicize its availability and make list available at government facilities, and on the web.
Experience Works Program	Help older workers gain employment by partnering with Experience Works, a national community-based organization that helps older adults find good jobs in their communities.
Transportation to Educational Facilities	Provide easily accessible transportation options such as regular van shuttles to training centers, libraries, and local community and technical colleges, both in town and in neighboring communities. If public transportation isn't available in your area, consider instituting a DOT 5311 on-demand transit system or contact your regional commission about their RHST program.
Work Ready Program	Participate in the Georgia Work Ready program, which helps citizens build their work skills, certify their preparedness for particular types of jobs, and match workers with employers looking for their particular skills.

Efficient Land Use

Adaptive Reuse	Create incentives such as tax breaks, code changes or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures so that they can be put to new uses.
Preserve Agriculture Land Use	Help contain sprawl development by preserving agricultural lands in your community. This may be accomplished through any combination of the following: 1) Establish an agriculture zoning districts with very large minimum lot size requirements (at least 20 acres). 2) Require an agricultural buffer for all new non-agricultural development adjacent to designated agricultural land. This will minimize future potential conflicts between ag and non-ag land uses. 3) Employ a waiver program that requires, at the time any land use permit, building permit, or occupancy permit is applied for on non-agricultural land abutting or within 1,000 feet of agricultural land, that the applicant would sign a waiver indicating that he understands that agricultural land exists near the subject property and an agricultural operation is ongoing adjacent to his existing or proposed use. 4) Develop a program to assist local farmers in selling their

	products or otherwise profiting from their farms. These include agri-tourism, farmers' markets, farm festivals, and related activities.
Strategic Public Infrastructure Policy	Plan carefully for location and timing of new public facilities, or coordinate with other public agencies that build facilities in the community, to help ensure that these facilities contribute to achieving the community's desired development patterns, and provide for a gradual expansion of developed areas contiguous to areas that have already developed. Such a strategy will eliminate the need for expensive extensions of facilities to serve "leap-frog" developments. One effective strategy is to delineate an urban service area where the local government will provide urban services, such as water supply or sewage treatment, in the future. This will encourage higher density infill development within the urban service area, while helping to maintain the rural character of areas lying outside the urban service boundary. This urban service area may be expanded gradually over time if the community's population continues to expand. Another element of an effective infrastructure strategy is a "Fix It First" policy that gives top priority to repair and reinvestment in existing infrastructure (roads, bridges, water, sewer, power, etc.) by fixing and maintaining what already exists. Such a strategy can help communities avoid subsidizing sprawl.
Cluster Development	For specified areas of the community, adopt regulations that require a significant portion of a site to be set aside as undivided, permanently protected open space, while the buildings (houses, shops, etc.) are clustered at higher density on the remainder of the property.
Cluster Septic Systems	Amend or adopt ordinances allowing cluster septic systems for multiple units to be placed in one large area, avoiding the need for a separate absorption field for each house. Cluster systems are often used for subdivisions of up to 100 houses, and allow lot sizes to be significantly reduced.
Creative Design for Higher Density	Provide design options for higher density development that blends well with the surrounding neighborhood, perhaps by masking the high-density aspects of the development through landscaping or architectural details. For example, multi-family housing can be designed to appear as a single family residence from the street, or heavy landscaping can by used to hide parts of the development.

Flexible Parking Standards	Revise land development regulations to remove rigid parking requirements to reduce the number of unnecessary spaces in the community. This may include reducing the number of required parking spaces, or allowing shared parking between adjacent facilities.
Greyfield Redevelopment	Provide assistance and incentives for redevelopment of greyfield areas. A greyfield is a declining or abandoned shopping mall or strip, and has the advantage that infrastructure is already in place and lacks the environmental cleanup issues of a brownfield. Ideally these areas can be converted into walkable, higher density, mixed-use developments.
Infill Development Program	Develop a comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development in particular areas of the community, while also regulating this development to ensure protection of quality of life in affected neighborhoods. This strategy should include a) development incentives, improvements to public facilities and services, and streamlined regulations to encourage infill development; b) guidelines for appropriate design, density and location of new infill projects.
Land Assembly for Redevelopment	Institute a program to purchase key land parcels and offer these for private redevelopment. This can encourage revitalization of declining areas of the community by reduce the cost and difficulty for developers to assemble these sites.
Minimum Density Zoning	Adopt an ordinance that specifies the minimum allowable development density in appropriate districts that can easily accomodate higher densities, such as downtown, neighborhoods near commercial or employment centers, etc. This minimum density is generally stated in units per acre or minimum floor area ratios, an contrasts with the normal density maximums found in most traditional zoning districts.
Planned Unit Developments	Revise land development regulations to encourage developers to propose planned, mixed-use developments for sites they choose in the community. Developer's plans are approved only if they meet specified community standards
Rehabilitation Codes	Adopt building codes with standards appropriate to the renovation of older buildings. Typical building codes were written with new construction in mind, and strict application of these codes to older buildings will significantly increase renovation costs. Rehabilitation codes help keep costs down, thereby encouraging rehabilitation of older properties

Tax Allocation District (TAD)	Implement a tax increment financing program by establishing a tax allocation district (TAD). With TAD, the local government usually issues bonds to pay for improvements such as infrastructure to make the district more attractive for new development. The added tax revenues that result for new development in the district are used to pay off the bonds.
Adequate Public Facilities Standards	Control the timing and location of new development by coordinating development permits with the availability of public facilities to serve the development. New developments are not permitted unless the public facilities needed to serve the project are already in place or can be provided by the developer.
Brownfield Redevelopment	To encourage redevelopment and reuse of abandoned brownfields (old industrial properties) in your community, develop a program that includes any of the following elements: 1) Inventory all of the brownfields in your community. 2) Have each brownfield site assessed to determine the likely cost of cleaning up or containing any residual on-site contaminants. 3) Offer financial incentives (or at least information of financial assistance available from other sources) for remediation and redevelopment of these sites, since the clean-up and/or containment of brownfields is often very expensive.
Mixed Use Zoning	Ensure your zoning or land development regulations allow for a mix of uses in appropriate areas of the community. In contrast to traditional zoning techniques, mixed-use zoning allows different types of uses (such as housing, commercial and office) to locate within the same area, provided the uses are reasonably compatible. This creates a more diverse and dynamic community setting, makes it easier for people to carry out some daily activities by walking, and typically results in more compact development patterns, thereby reducing infrastructure costs to the local government.
Urban Redevelopment Plan	Establish an urban redevelopment plan (and appoint an authority to implement this plan) for areas with high concentrations of underutilized buildings and infrastructure.

Housing Options

Accessory Housing Units	Allow, by ordinance, the inclusion of accessory housing units such as in-law suites or carriage houses in residentially zoned areas of the community. Encouraging accessory housing units is

	one means to bring affordable housing into all neighborhoods of the community.
Cottage Zoning	Create an ordinance to allow very small single-family houses ("cottages") of 600-1,000 square feet in appropriate districts of the community. A cottage takes up a lot about half the size of a conventional new house, and its impact, in terms of traffic, stormwater, etc., is also about half. Cottages fill a need for affordable housing, especially for empty-nesters, retirees, young couples, or any 1-2 person household.
Home Loan Assistance	Provide education and access to existing home loan assistance programs that offer low-interest loans, or make contributions to down payments, to help local families realize their ambition of homeownership. Neighborhoods in a state of poverty, decline or stagnation are often held back by a lack of credit availability, so such programs can foster revitalization as well as making housing more affordable in the community.
Housing for the Disadvantaged	Implement a program or access state and federal resources for housing special needs populations with the community. This includes the homeless, the disabled, abused spouses, people with HIV/AIDS, recovering alcoholics or drug addicts, and other disadvantaged groups.
Housing for the Elderly	Start an Aging in Place or Lifelong Community Initiative to educate about appropriate adaptations to ensure that housing remains appropriate as residents age. Provide incentives for development of housing specifically targeted for the elderly (assisted living, senior living, "mature" living, etc.). Evaluate local ordinances to ensure that this type of housing is allowed in appropriate areas of your community, particularly those that feature good walkability for exercise, shopping and social visits.
Inclusionary Zoning	Review local zoning codes to identify and eliminate any barriers that limit development of affordable housing, such as minimum housing size requirements, maximum density requirements, or limitations on multi-family residential development. Inclusionary zoning may go as far as requiring inclusion of some percentage of affordable housing units in each new residential development.
Mixed-Income Housing	Adopt zoning requirements that specifically allow for a range of housing sizes and types (multi-family, attached, single family) in particular neighborhoods. This will permit people of a range of incomes and backgrounds to find suitable housing choices in these areas.

Workforce Housing	Analyze local commuting patterns and housing costs versus wages to determine if more affordable housing options are needed in the community to house the local workforce. If a need for workforce housing is identified, enlist the local economic development community to support efforts to create more affordable housing units in the community, by employing other strategies identified herein.
Community Housing Partnership	Establish a nonprofit association that works to create more affordable housing in the community by employing innovative financial tools, often in collaboration with other institutions, stakeholders and government agencies.
Code Enforcement	Utilize code enforcement as a tool to require property owners to properly maintain their residential units and thereby prevent neighborhood blight and foreclosed properties.
Density Districts	Identify and establish, by ordinance, districts of your community where higher density housing is appropriate and permitted, such as downtown and walkable neighborhoods near commercial districts.
Georgia Initiative for Community Housing	Participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing program. This program helps communities establish an effective local program and strategy for providing affordable housing in the community.
Land Bank	Establish a local land bank empowered to acquire and assemble available properties in areas of the community in need of redevelopment, then offer these properties to private developers as sites for new development of affordable or infill housing. Land banking is a proven strategy for effective revitalization of declining areas of the community.
Rental Assistance	Access federal HUD Section 8 funding to offer a scattered site Rental Assistance program that provides for a mix of incomes in many residential areas. This helps avoid concentrating lower income or disadvantaged individuals in particular residential complexes or neighborhoods.

Local Preparedness

Evaluate Ordinances for Consistency	Update your local land use ordinances so that they are consistent with the goals and intent of the comprehensive plan. This will help insure that the ordinances are used as a tool for implementing the comprehensive plan.

Streamlined Development Permitting	Arrange for the different local agencies that give development permissions and approvals to coordinate their activities through a unified, easy to understand system. Easing the development process is a valuable incentive to entice development into a community. This may include removing or combining unnecessary approval steps or publishing a step-by-step guide to the review process.
Subdivision Development Standards	Establish minimum design requirements, standards, and specifications for overall layout and improvements within new subdivisions. Improvements include sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and street lighting.
Alternatives to Conventional Zoning (DCA Model Code)	Pick from this menu of typical development regulation components to personalize and enact ordinances that specifically fit your community's needs. The DCA Alternatives to Conventional Zoning provides a full range of ordinance options from animal control, to street/sidewalk standards, to land use guidance system.
Development Performance Standards	Establish minimum criteria for assessing whether a particular project is appropriate for a certain area in terms of its impact upon, and compatibility with, surrounding land uses. For example, performance standards might seek to reduce traffic impacts instead of restricting the type of land use for a particular site. (This is sometimes known as "performance zoning.")
Grants for Financing Infrastructure Improvements	There are many federal and state grants available to local governments that need help in funding public infrastructure projects. Such projects may include water, sewer, roads, broadband, power, solid waste, and various other infrastructural elements.
Impact Fees	Enact a local program to charge impact fees, which are one-time fees charged to new developments, and are meant to cover part of the cost of providing the public facilities that support these developments. Such facilities include infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads, and services such as police, EMS, libraries and parks. If properly applied, impact fees can encourage infill development while discouraging scattered leap-frog development.
Land Use Guidance (Point) System	Implement a simple rating system, usually using "points" to score proposed projects, as a land use management tool. This system is attractive to communities that desire some level of control of local land use, but do not want standard zoning regulations.

Public Nuisance Ordinances	Adopt and enforce regulations to protect neighboring residents and property owners by controlling nuisances such as, loud noises, stagnant water, abandoned vehicles, accumulation of junk, and tall weeds and grass.
Smart Growth Audit	Undertake a comprehensive study to identify local development requirements that should be changed to enable smart growth development. This involves a comparison of a community's existing development regulations with commonly recognized best practices for smart growth.
Capital Improvement Program	Develop an infrastructure investment plan that clearly spells out what public services and infrastructure your community will provide where, and when, so that your community grows in a rational and organized manner. This should accompany the comprehensive plan and indicate to developers and citizens where the community desires new development to be located. A capital improvement program brings predictability to the location and extent of future public facility expansions, so that residents and developers can plan their investments accordingly.
All-Hazards Strategy	Adopt an all-hazards strategy for disaster preparedness and response. Being prepared for All-hazards includes not only natural disasters such as floods and tornadoes, but also technical disasters such as fires or supply chain failure and human based disasters like hostage situations or pandemics.
Comprehensive Planning	Develop a comprehensive plan that truly represents what your community wants to achieve. To be truly representative of the community, this plan must be prepared with substantial participation by community residents. To ensure that the plan helps your community achieve its goals, develop mechanisms or procedures which ensure that decisions made by local leadership are consistent with your comprehensive plan.
Plan Champion	Appoint a plan champion, or plan watchdog, whose role is to monitor and report regularly on how the community is doing with implementing the comprehensive plan.
Professional Development	Ensure that your planning and code enforcement staff are adequately trained by sending your local government employees to training and professional development opportunities such as GAZA, GPA, ACCG and GMA events.
Shared Service Agreements	Adopt and implement agreements for inter-governmental sharing of administrative resources such as planning, land use regulation, building inspection, and code enforcement.

Circuit Rider Services	Work with your neighboring jurisdictions and your Regional Commission or other service providers to establish a circuit rider program to provide shared, part-time assistance for administering such functions as planning and enforcing land-use regulations.

Regional Cooperation

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

Resource Management

Environmental Planning Criteria	Adopt and enforce the Part V Environmental ordinances as part of an overall environmental planning process. These Part V ordinances provide protection for wetlands, steep slopes, groundwater recharge areas, river corridors and water supply watersheds.
Heat Mitigation	Implement a comprehensive strategy for reducing heat in developed areas by implementing strategies such as encouraging cool roofing materials, porous pavements, planting sunshade trees, and preservation of green space.
Septic System Regulation	If provision of public wastewater service is not feasible, minimize the environmental impact of septic systems by limiting development in areas where soil characteristics, high groundwater levels, or other factors will not support septic operation, mandating minimum specifications for proper siting and installation of septic systems, establishing minimum requirements for monitoring and maintenance of existing septic systems.

Stormwater Management	Develop and implement a local stormwater management plan that includes: 1) Incentives for low impact development (LID) which uses innovative site design techniques to collect and drain or evaporate stormwater runoff onsite, rather than routing it into a typical stormwater collection system. LID techniques include bioretention, permeable pavers, tree box filters, rain barrels, disconnected downspouts, narrower streets, infiltration swales, rooftop gardens, bioretention cells and rain gardens. 2) Requirements that impervious surfaces not exceed a certain maximum percentage of total lot size, in particular sections of the community, particularly those that drain most directly into water supply streams or reservoirs.
Alternative Wastewater Technologies	Provide public wastewater service to the community through alternative technologies. Alternative sewer systems, such as small-diameter gravity, pressure and vacuum, can reduce capital costs by 25-50%. Alternative treatment methods, including sand filters, land treatment, lagoons and constructed wetlands, may also save money. These natural treatment technologies take up more space than mechanical treatment technologies (i.e., traditional wastewater treatment plants).
Environmental Impact Review	Utilize an environmental checklist to assess the environmental consequences when reviewing proposed development.
Environmental Resource Inventory	Conduct a comprehensive mapping of the community's environmentally sensitive areas (such as floodplains or steep slopes) in order to make rational decisions about areas best suited for set-aside as open space. This should be the first step in crafting a local strategy for open space preservation.
Green Buildings	Adopt Green Building standards and establish an active inspection program for residential and commercial construction projects to enforce Georgia's energy codes and standards. Offer incentives, such as streamlined development review or reduced permit fees, for new buildings acheiving LEED, ENERGY STAR, or EarthCraft certifications.
Hillside & Ridgeline Protection	Adopt guidelines for construction on hillsides and slopes that include limitations on new development that would disrupt scenic vistas and requirements that new development be designed to avoid hillside erosion, increased runoff, potential for landslides, excessive tree removal, etc.

Pervious Paving	Encourage the use of pervious paving materials throughout the community, including on sidewalks, parking lots and minor streets. Their use decreases the amount of stormwater runoff and therefore the amount of pollution of streams resulting from runoff.
Riparian Buffers	Adopt a riparian buffer ordinance, with a minimum buffer of 25', to protect the banks of streams and rivers from development. These buffers help protect water quality by slowing and filtering stormwater runoff as it flows toward the stream.
Conservation Easements	Encourage owners of key properties (such as those in environmentally sensitive areas, included in the local greenspace plan, or designated for agricultural use in the comprehensive plan) to utilize conservation easements or sale of development rights to preserve their land from future development. Conservation easements allow private landowners to donate the development rights of their property to a qualified conservation organization or government agency, in exchange for tax savings. Sale of development rights is an arrangement whereby private landowners sell the development rights of their property to a qualified conservation organization or government agency. In both cases above, giving up the development rights permanently protects a property from development and thereby ensures that it remains as green space or farmland.
Green Space Plan	Develop, adopt, and implement a green space plan that provides for connectivity of permanently protected green space throughout the community. Setting aside the greenspace can be done through direct purchase by the local government, purchase of the development rights to the land only, or by working with local land trusts to focus their efforts to acquire conservation easement in the areas identified in the local greenspace plan.
Tree Protection	Adopt a tree ordinance that requires preservation of a significant portion of the trees on a new development site, particularly the larger, more mature specimens.
Green Government Practices	Set a good example by adopting green practices for your local government operations, such as use of Energy Star rated equipment and appliances, use of recycled paper products, instituting a lights out / power down policy when offices are not in use, installing LED lamps in traffic lights, etc.

Recycling Program	Offer a curbside recycling program for community residents. This should include collection of traditional recyclables, such as paper, glass, aluminum. Your community may also want to add organics and yard debris collection for creating compost that can be made available to the public. You may also hold regular events in the community to collect non-traditional recycling materials such as ink cartridges, batteries, compact florescent lights and electronics, for recycling.
Water Resource Protection	Adopt water resource management policies such as requiring use of WaterSense certified high efficiency toilets and faucets in all new buildings, use of greywater for irrigation, use of drought tolerant landscaping.
WaterFirst	Work with DCA to become a WaterFirst Community. This program helps communities establish an effective local program and strategy for protecting and appropriately managing water resources in the community.

Sense of Place

Aesthetic Overlay	Enact special measures to preserve and enhance physical attractiveness of particular districts of the community, particularly gateway corridors or similar areas important to the image of the community. These special measures may include signage controls, special landscaping requirements, building design guidelines, or screening requirements for obtrusive uses like cell towers, utilities, and energy generating infrastructure. These special requirements are typically adopted as an overlay district, a mapped area where additional regulations apply as a supplement to existing zoning and subdivision regulations.
Building Siting Requirements	Amend local regulations to establish maximum setback and minimum building frontage requirements in commercial districts where more walkability, traffic calming, and a more traditional "downtown-like" feel are desired. A maximum setback requirement sets the allowable distance between the right-of-way and the front of the buildings at a maximum distance rather than a minimum distance, as is typical for most subdivision regulations. This results in development being located closer to the street, which encourages walkability, traffic calming, higher density and a more traditional urban feel. Mandating a minimum building frontage requires that a building stretch further across its lot , resulting in a more continuous line of side-by-side buildings along the street. This is the typical development pattern in a traditional downtown area, so the result is a walkable district with more urban feel.

Historic Preservation Program	Begin by Identifying and mapping the visual, cultural, and historical assets your community most values Then adopt a local historic preservation/protection ordinance to protect and enhance the places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and works of art identified in the inventory of assets. This ordinance should be adopted under the auspices of Georgia Historic Preservation Act, which establishes a local Historic Preservation Commission to provide oversight on administration of the local ordinance and provide guidance on aesthetic changes to historic structures within locally designated districts.
Landscaping Ordinance	Adopt a landscaping ordinance that establishes consistent standards for: 1) providing plant materials in new developments, 2) breaking up parking lots and other large paved areas with plantings, and 3) requiring planted areas to mask unattractive land uses (such as parking lots, dumpsters) or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses. Landscaping requirements will substantially improve the aesthetic appearance of the community.
Locate Schools in Existing Neighborhoods	Work with the local school board on locating new schools or reusing existing schools in existing residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood schools are important to the fabric of the neighborhood, allowing children to walk to school and enabling the school facility to serve as a neighborhood gathering place, used for other neighborhood functions and recreation.
Small Area Plans	Involve neighborhood residents and stakeholder in developing detailed plans for future development of particular areas of the community, especially for declining areas of the community or areas likely to experience significant development pressure. These small area plans should indicate exactly how the area should be developed (down to the location, size, and use of particular buildings), and identify public improvements such as parks, recreational facilities, and sidewalks to be provided by the local government to foster implementation of the plan.
Traditional Neighborhood Development Standards	Amend your local development regulations to permit traditional neighborhood development (TND) in your community. TND's typically include small lot single-family homes, multi-family residences, and neighborhood commercial developments, all within easy walking distance of one another. Your local regulations may either require all new developments to incorporate TND principles, require adherence to TND principles only in certain districts of the community, or you may allow TNDs upon request by the developer, as an option under your Planned Unit Development requirements.

Corridor Study	Conduct a Corridor study to identify and plan for improvement needs along a strip commercial corridor. The study typically involves key stakeholders (property owners, businesses, neighborhood leaders, service providers) to achieve consensus on improvements to be made along the corridor.
Design Guidelines	Develop design guidelines for specific areas of the community that establish aesthetic and development standards for all properties. These guidelines are intended to achieve an architecturally and physically cohesive character for the area, through setting standards for the appropriateness and impact of new buildings or rehab of existing buildings. Illustrations of desired building characteristics are perhaps the best way to communicate design guidelines to citizens and developers. Communities that want their design guidelines to be more than just advisory in nature may choose to establish a design review board to implement the design guidelines. This board will review architecture, aesthetics, and site characteristics of proposed projects to achieve compatibility with the design guidelines.
Development Regulations for Highway Interchange Areas	Create special regulations for highway interchange areas to ensure that these are built out or improved in an attractive manner. Highway interchanges are very important, as they are the entryway into your community and therefore create a first impression for visitors to the community.
Downtown Planning	Create a small-area or master plan for the central business district that establishes what is currently there that should be preserved, what should be added to improve the downtown area, and how it will be implemented. Ideally, this plan should come with illustrations and renderings of what the desired final buildout will look like.
Flexible Subdivision Regulations	Revise subdivision regulations to enable development of more innovative types of subdivisions that better match the character of the community and physical constraints of the development site. Revisions may include adjusting specific physical development standards or encouraging greater use of discretionary site plan review for new subdivisions. There is probably no other regulation more important than subdivision regulations, because the resulting designs and patterns of land subdivision establish the geography and geometry of the community and in turn influence the entire character of the city or county.

Form-Based Codes	Adopt form-based codes for land development throughout the jurisdiction. Form-based codes rely on the principle that design is more important than land use. Rather than regulate by zoning (use) districts, form-based codes regulate development by the scale, siting (e.g., setback) and architectural characteristics of the buildings allowed on each lot. Form-based codes rely on a "regulating plan" which consists of a map that sets forth geographic divisions of the community and the desired development conditions and building characteristics for each district.
Manufactured Home Compatibility Standards	Adopt a manufactured housing ordinance or program that: 1) Ensures the compatibility of manufactured homes with adjacent single-family residences. 2) Regulates the appearance, layout, and location of manufactured home parks, recreational vehicle and travel trailer parks, and campgrounds. 3) Requires installation of manufactured homes in accordance with the applicable federal and manufacturer's standards.
Right-of-Way Improvements	Undertake public improvements in the right-of-way to enhance the physical appearance and walkability of selected districts of your community. Right-of-way improvements are any type of public improvement made in a roadway's "right-of-way," which is the strip of land that includes the road itself and the narrow band of publicly owned property on either side of the road where sidewalks, curbing, and utility lines are typically located. These improvements may include adding or upgrading sidewalks, planting trees or other landscaping, adding street furniture, such as benches and attractive trash receptacles, or working with the local utility companies to relocate overhead utility lines either below ground or at the rear of lots.
Scenic Byway Designation	Designate scenic segments of local rural highways for special protection measures under the federal Scenic Byway program. Under this program, the community chooses the protection measures that are appropriate for the byway, and these may include litter control, sign regulations, design guidelines, land use controls or similar measures intended to maintain the attractiveness and rural character of the roadway. The protection measures are spelled out in a corridor management plan that must be approved by the State Department of Transportation.

Design Charrette	Hold a community-wide, or small area specific, design charrette as a way to enable discussion between stakeholders (including architects, community groups, developers, and neighbors) about development of new ordinance provisions, agreeing on design guidelines, or in designing particular projects.
Sign Ordinance	Enact a sign ordinance that regulates the size, height, placement, materials and design of signs throughout the community or in selected districts of the community. Sign regulation is important, because excessive or inappropriate signage can seriously detract from the aesthetic appeal of the community and create a bad first impression for visitors to the community. On the other hand, requiring compatible and consistent signage can be very effective in promoting the community's identity, history and culture.

Transportation Options

Transportation Demand Management	Reward local developers or employers who utilize Transportation Demand Management techniques such as offereing carpooling and vanpooling, transit pass subsidies, alternative work schedules, and telecommuting. One common incentive is to allowed the developer/employer to build fewer parking spaces if TDM practices are employed.
Flexible Street Design Standards	Revise street design requirements in local development regulations to tailor streets to the scale of the neighborhood and types of traffic they serve. Revisions may include reducing required street widths, requiring bicycle lanes, or adding on-street parking.
Improving Street Connectivity	Promote connectivity in local road systems in order to reduce the traffic load on collector and arterial streets and improve the walkability in your community. Typical approaches to improving connectivity include requiring subdivisions and office parks to have multiple ingress and egress points, disallowing cul-de-sacs and other closed street networks, encouraging use of interconnected grid street network designs, and establishing maximum block length standards.
Safe Routes to School	Participate in the Georgia Safe Route to School program. The program works with elementary and middle schools to create opportunities for children to safely walk and bicycle to school.
Traffic Calming	Employ physical improvements designed to decrease traffic speed and increase the pedestrian-friendliness of roadways. Typical traffic-calming improvements include raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians.

Traffic Impact Studies	Require each major new development project in your community to provide a study that projects the transportation demands of the development proposals and thereby allows the local government to plan in advance for reduction of adverse impacts on the transportation system.
Transportation Enhancement Program	Apply to the Transportation Enhancement Program of GDOT to acquire grant funds to enhance facilities in your community to support alternative transportation. These facilities may include sidewalks, bike trails, rail depot renovations, and streetscape improvements.
Bicycle Facilities	Ensure safe, adequate and well-designed facilities are provided for bicyclists, including pavement markings, signage, and intersection crossings.
Complete Streets	Adopt a "Complete Streets" philosophy in designing and building local streets that specifies that "users" of a street includes pedestrians, bicyclists and public transportation passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles. This approach should be applied to both new and retrofit projects, and involves use of sidewalks, street trees, etc.
Maximize Use of On-Street Parking	Identify and take advantage of opportunities to add on-street parking in areas where additional parking is most needed. This may include changing parallel parking to angle parking, converting underused medians, loading areas, turn lanes, or traffic lanes for parking, or narrowing wide sidewalks to add parking. Also adopt measures that encourage frequent turnover of the high-demand on-street parking spaces in busy commercial districts. This may include enforcing strict parking time limits or installing parking meters.
Sidewalk/Trail Network	Promote physical activity in your community by creating or improving sidewalks and trails that connect to important destinations such as schools, public facilities, employment centers, parks, recreation areas.
Transportation Plan	Adopt a transportation strategic plan that sets priorities for local transportation investment including sidewalks, van or bus transit, etc. This plan should accompany and support the goals of the comprehensive plan.
Sidewalk/Trail Network	Promote physical activity in your community by creating or improving sidewalks and trails that connect to important destinations such as schools, public facilities, employment centers, parks, recreation areas.

Transportation Plan	Adopt a transportation strategic plan that sets priorities for local transportation investment including sidewalks, van or bus transit, etc. This plan should accompany and support the goals of the comprehensive plan.
Promote Alternative Transportation Modes	Hold frequent special events, such as a "No Car Day," or "Walk to School Day" or "Share the Ride Day" to demonstrate the benefits of using alternatives to the single occupant automobile to get around in your community. Support these events by providing maps of public transportation services, bike routes, walking trails, information on commute alternatives, etc. Set a good example by offering incentives for local government employees to use alternatives to driving alone or driving at peak times such as carpool, vanpool, public transportation, bike and pedestrian commuters, compressed workweeks, telecommuting and/or flexible work hours.
Public Transportation	Coordinate small scale on-demand county-wide public transportation by using the DOT 5311 or similar van-pool program. Public transportation can be provided at low cost in smaller communities, it need not be limited to the larger cities.
Access Control Measures	Employ access control measures to provide reasonable access to developments, while preserving the safe flow of traffic on an arterial or major collector, often in a strip mall environment. Techniques like managing where and how approaches or signals are allowed, use of medians and creation of turn lanes improve the driving atmosphere while also making movement easier and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.