

LAMAR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE YEARS 2019-2039

INTRODUCTION

STUDY AREA

Lamar County is located in the north-central part of Georgia. Along its boundaries are Butts County to the northeast, Spalding County to the northwest, Pike County to the west, Upson County to the south, and Monroe County to the east. Lamar County was formed in 1921 from the eastern portion of Pike County and the western portion of Monroe County. The county contains approximately 118,758 acres (186 square miles.)

The City of Barnesville, the county seat, lies approximately 55 miles south of Atlanta, 45 miles northwest of Macon, 15 miles south of Griffin, 15 miles west of Forsyth, and 17 miles northeast of Thomaston. Other municipalities in Lamar County are Milner and Aldora.

PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Plan is the basic foundation for local planning and is intended to provide a guide for the development and the controlled growth of the county through the year 2040. This plan follows the Basic Local Planning Requirements of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, effective on March 1, 2014, with revised Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective October 1, 2018.

SCOPE

This Comprehensive Plan is limited to unincorporated Lamar County, but some of the information does pertain to the municipalities and is relevant to the county. This plan contains information from previous studies, government reports, and new research conducted for the plan. The plan is made up of four components: (1) Community Goals, (2) a Community Needs and Opportunities Analysis, (3) a Community Work Program and (4) a Land Use Element.

COMMUNITY GOALS

General Vision Statement

In recognition of some problems identified during the previous Comprehensive Plan (2009) and in fulfillment of commitments made in that report, Lamar County revised the Development (Subdivision) Ordinance and completely rewrote the Zoning Ordinance. One of the major problems identified was that Subdivisions were left in the zoning district of which they were before the division of lots. Since approximately 80 percent of the county was zoned as Agricultural-Residential (AR) we now had some cases of incompatible uses. The zoning ordinance change now requires that all Subdivision Applications be evaluated and the zoning district be changed to the most appropriate residential zoning district. All existing Subdivisions were examined with their Restricted Covenants in mind to determine what the best fitting Residential Zoning District should be. While doing this examination the thought occurred regarding the many individual lots that had been split but were not in Subdivisions. Thus a review of all parcels in the unincorporated areas of Lamar County was undertaken to try to determine the actual uses of the land in the county. Since the definition of Agricultural involves the use of three (3) or more acres, all lots of a smaller size were recommended for rezoning to a Residential zoning with the size of the house being a major factor along with the surrounding properties. After the review of all parcels, over 1900 lots were recommended for rezoning. An article in the local newspaper was printed to explain the rezoning effort and all affected property owners were notified via mail to explain their zoning options. After the owners' comments and some unknown facts were incorporated into the list, approximately 1786 parcels were reassigned to the most appropriate zoning district as the County issued a new Official Zoning Map in December 2017.

With the new Official Zoning Map in hand and the many comments of agreement and disagreement it became obvious that the overwhelming majority of Lamar County citizens liked and wanted to maintain the rural nature of the county. A previous survey of the population showed no desire for and support of a county-wide sewer system that would permit smaller lot sizes. Thus a minimum one acre lot (with public supplied water) and two (2) acre lots (with a well) and septic service will be the normal for the foreseeable future. With this in mind the Vision Statement for Lamar County is Rural and Quiet Country Living with well-separated and designated Industrial and Commercial areas. The preservation of existing farms, environmental sensitive areas, historic buildings, cemeteries, private rural gravesites, and forest land will be encouraged. The designated Character Areas reveal this nature of the County.