

**GEORGIA COMMUNITY GREENSPACE PROGRAM**  
**Guidance on Preparing and Submitting**  
**Community Greenspace Programs**  
August 19, 2002  
**INTRODUCTION**

The Georgia Community Greenspace Program was created in 2000 by statute (O.C.G.A. §36-22-1 *et seq.*). The statute's intent is to provide a flexible framework within which populous and rapidly growing cities and counties in this state can develop a program of community greenspace preservation. Participation in the program is entirely voluntary.

Any Georgia county is eligible to submit a greenspace program for approval in a given fiscal year if such county:

- (1) Has a population of not less than 60,000 pursuant to the most recent United States decennial census (currently the 2000 census); or
- (2) Has experienced average population growth of at least 800 persons per year since the most recent United States decennial census (2000) .

The attached map identifies counties that are eligible to participate during the current fiscal year. Any municipality that lies within an eligible county is itself eligible to participate if its host county participates and if the municipality cooperates in preparing and implementing the county's greenspace program.

**COMMUNITY GREENSPACE PROGRAM DOCUMENT: BASIC CONCEPT**

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has prepared this guidance paper to help eligible counties and municipalities develop approvable community greenspace programs and qualify for grant assistance through the state's greenspace program. A community greenspace program document contains (1) the county's plan for giving permanent protection to 20 percent of the county's geographic area as connected and open greenspace, including the detailed plan for any municipality that is requesting a separate grant award, and (2) a feasible implementation strategy for achieving these goals within 50 years.

To receive program approval and grant assistance, the county board of commissioners must formally adopt the program and must agree to make the county's comprehensive plan consistent with its greenspace program. If a municipality is requesting a separate grant award, the governing body of the municipality must also formally adopt the municipal elements of the program and must agree to make the municipality's comprehensive plan consistent with its greenspace program. The statute and the program rules (Rules of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Chapter 391-1-4) specify other requirements that the programs must meet to receive approval. These requirements are addressed in this guidance paper.

Cities within eligible counties may choose to participate in the greenspace program either by cooperating informally with the county in developing and administering the county's plan, or by asking to be a separate grant recipient. If a city chooses to receive a separate grant, that "grantee municipality" must fully articulate the vision of the greenspace program within the city, including identifying the means by which the city intends to accomplish its greenspace goal. The county must incorporate any municipal

program elements into a consolidated program document, rather than simply appending municipal submittals to the county's document.

The program document should clearly and briefly explain why the county and any grantee municipality want to develop a community greenspace program, how the grantees will establish and administer the program, and what results will be achieved, stating a timeframe for meeting their protection goals. It should, as simply as possible, tell the following story:

- Why the county wants to give permanent protection to 20 percent of its jurisdiction as connected and open greenspace
- How grantee municipalities will contribute to the county's 20% goal
- What the grantee's vision is: what types of land it wants to protect, how much of each type it intends to protect, which goals of the greenspace program each type advances, and when it intends to meet its goal of protecting 20% of the jurisdiction
- What policies, rules and regulations the grantee currently has that will (1) set aside land temporarily until the grantee can permanently protect it as greenspace, and (2) permanently protect land as greenspace
- What legal and structural barriers, if any, will hinder the grantee from achieving its goal of greenspace protection within the timeframe
- What actions the grantee will take within the next ten years to remove or mitigate these barriers, so it can achieve its greenspace protection goal
- What role any participating municipalities that are not grantees will play in giving permanent protection to greenspace within the county

The most effective approved program submittals begin with the counties' own clear and detailed visions for greenspace protection. The vision of each grantee municipality must also be clearly articulated. The narrative remains focused on the essentials of the story, without giving extra details. In several cases, the complete narratives have been only 15 pages long, excluding appendices. A brief narrative that follows the template format will be easier for local staff to prepare and for state staff to compare with the statutory and regulatory requirements—thus speeding approval and grant issuance. The guidance paper describes various approaches used in effective submittals.

The following material includes three kinds of guidance:

- An outline, or template, for the program submittal document
- Examples of narrative, which are intended to help the county's writers understand the level of detail that is needed for program approval
- Endnotes which give additional information

The state program officers are also available to advise county and city staff, or to review and comment on draft materials, before the county makes its formal submittal to the Georgia Greenspace Commission. One of the following individuals will have the lead responsibility for supporting your county's program:

Ms. Connie Gilliam: [connie\\_gilliam@dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:connie_gilliam@dnr.state.ga.us)  
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**COMMUNITY GREENSPACE PROGRAM SUBMITTAL—  
TEMPLATE FOR FY-03 SUBMITTALS<sup>1</sup>**

- 1. Executive Summary** (a quick overview, in a maximum of one page. It is suggested that you write this section last.)
  - a. State why the county and any grantee municipalities want to participate (draw on paragraph 2.a)
  - b. Identify the municipalities that will participate informally, allowing the county to administer their portion of the grant funds (draw on paragraph 4.c) and those grantee municipalities that will establish separate trust funds (draw on paragraph 8.a)
  - c. State the county's total acreage, the greenspace acreage goal (20% or more) and the timeframe in which the county expects to achieve the goal (draw on paragraph 3.a); the primary types of land which are to be protected to meet the goal (draw on paragraphs 3.b and 3.c); and the total amount of land within the county which currently qualifies as permanently protected greenspace (draw on the table in paragraph 5.c)
  - d. Identify the primary tools which the county and any grantee municipalities will use to give permanent protection to greenspace (draw on paragraph 5.e)
  - e. Identify the major legal and structural barriers which face the county and any grantee municipalities in implementing the greenspace program (draw on paragraphs 6.a and 6.b); and the major actions which the local governments will take to remedy these barriers (draw on the table in paragraph 7.c)

## 2. Introduction

- a. Discuss, in less than half a page, why the county and any grantee municipalities want to participate in the Georgia Community Greenspace Program. This discussion should answer the question, "What community goals and objectives will the greenspace program advance within the county and specifically within the cities electing to establish separate trust funds?"
- b. Identify the department or office the county has assigned to administer the program, the one person who has lead management responsibility, and other necessary information, as follows:
  - Full name and title of the chief point of contact
  - Name of department or office
  - Mailing address
  - Street address (if different from the mailing address)
  - City, state, 9-digit zip code
  - Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx
  - Facsimile: xxx-xxx-xxxx
  - E-mail address (if applicable):
  - The FEI number for the county
- c. Identify each municipality that lies wholly or partly within the county and has elected to participate in a cooperative greenspace program with the county as a separate grantee by establishing a separate trust fund<sup>2</sup> For each grantee municipality, provide the chief point of contact for grant administration, as follows:
  - Full name and title of the chief point of contact
  - Name of department or office
  - Mailing address
  - Street address (if different from the mailing address)
  - City, state, 9-digit zip code
  - Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx
  - Facsimile: xxx-xxx-xxxx
  - E-mail address (if applicable):
  - The FEI number for each municipality that wishes to establish a separate community greenspace trust fund

Identify each municipality that lies wholly or partly within the county but that has elected not to establish a separate greenspace program trust fund.

### 3. County Description

#### a. Physical Characteristics

- i. Describe, in one page or less, the county's existing base of natural, historic, and recreational resources, including rivers and streams, general topography, and the characteristics of vegetation in the jurisdiction. Describe the aspects of your community that make your area special and wonderful, and that you want to preserve for future generations. These are the resources that will supply most of the county's greenspace.
- ii. Describe, in one page or less, existing patterns of land use, mentioning areas that are in urban, suburban, transportation, agricultural, forestry and conservation and recreational uses. These land uses offer both opportunities and constraints to establishing permanently protected greenspace.
- iii. For each grantee municipality within the county, describe the natural, historic and recreational resources in the municipality. Describe the aspects of the municipality that serve a greenspace goal and that you want to preserve or create for future generations

#### b. Rapid-growth Areas

- i. Identify the areas within the county and any grantee municipalities that are experiencing rapid growth
- ii. Describe the types of land-use changes that are occurring within these areas

- c. Population: for the county, and for each grantee municipality in alphabetical order, provide population figures in table format like the following example:

**Population of County and Grantee Municipalities<sup>3</sup>**

Jurisdiction ( <i>examples</i> )	2000 Census (or later estimate)	% of County (2000 Census or later estimate)
County (plus cities not participating)	xxx,xxx	xx.x%
City A	xx,xxx	x.x%
City B	xxx,xxx	xx.x%
City C	xx,xxx	x.x%
Totals	x,xxx,xxx	100.0%

- d. Future Land-use Plan<sup>4</sup>: describe, in one page or less, the general pattern of land uses which appear on the county's and each grantee city's current future land-use plan. Include in Appendix E of the county's submittal a copy of the current future land-use plan map for the county and for each grantee city.

**4. Statement of Vision and Goals**

- a. Begin the section with the following statement, to document that the county’s program meets the requirement of OCGA Section 36-22-6 (1): “Through the actions described in this program submittal, \_\_\_\_\_ County (and, if applicable: and the municipalities of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_) commit(s) to promote the permanent protection of \_\_\_\_\_ acres of greenspace, which constitutes \_\_\_ percent of the geographic area of the county.”<sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ County proposes to achieve this goal by \_\_\_\_ (year).

In contributing to the county’s 20% goal, the municipalities of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ will permanently protect \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ acres within their jurisdiction, respectively. (This city information is only required for cities establishing a separate trust fund.)

- b. Show calculation of the county’s minimum greenspace goal as follows<sup>6</sup>:

**Calculation of County’s Greenspace Goal**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Total county acreage	
Less military bases	
Less the part of the surface of each lake larger than 500 acres	
Less area of coastal marshlands	
Less area of coastal waters	
Equals base acreage for greenspace goal calculation	
Base acreage times 20% equals the county’s minimum goal	

- c. In narrative and map form<sup>7</sup>, show on the map proposed areas for greenspace protection and describe the county’s vision for its community greenspace program for lands that it wishes to permanently protect over the next \_\_\_ years. Include in the discussion the vision of each grantee municipality for greenspace to be permanently protected in the municipalities. The narrative discussion should describe:
  - i. The types of land the county intends to protect, inclusive of all grantee municipalities (examples appear in the table below),
  - ii. The amount of each type that will be protected by the county and all grantee municipalities,
  - iii. The greenspace goal(s) which each land type will advance, and
  - iv. The primary tools that will be used to protect these lands.

Also summarize the narrative in table format like the following **example** being sure to correlate the information that pertains to the county's program as described above:

**Lands to Receive Permanent Protection<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Land Type (examples)</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Statutory Goals (examples)</b>	<b>Tools for Protection (examples)</b>
Flood plain (100-year)	xx,xxx	A, B, C, D, I	Fee-simple acquisition, conservation easement, permanent restrictive covenant
Other river buffer lands or upland habitat areas	x,xxx	F, G, H, I	Fee-simple acquisition, conservation easement
Stream access points	xxx	H	Fee-simple acquisition
Non-riparian wetlands	x,xxx	C	Conservation easement
Groundwater recharge areas	x,xxx	A	Conservation easement
Corridors for pedestrian trails or wildlife movement	x,xxx	E, H, I	Fee-simple acquisition, conservation easement
Scenic vistas	xxx	F	Conservation easement
Steep slopes	xxx	A, D	Conservation easement
Erodible soils	xxx	A, D	Conservation easement
Lands suitable for passive-use parks	x,xxx	B, F, H, I	Fee-simple acquisition by federal, state, and local agencies; permanent restrictive covenant
Historic resources	xxx	F, G	Fee-simple acquisition, conservation easement
Agricultural lands	xx,xxx	A, F, G	Conservation easement
Commercial forest lands	xx,xxx	A, B, C, G, H	Conservation easement
Totals	xx,xxx		

This section that describes in narrative, map and table format is the heart of the Community Greenspace Program and should clearly describe the vision the County, and the cities requesting Greenspace grants, have for the community. The rest of the document builds upon this information.

## 5. Existing Tools<sup>9</sup>

In this section, the county should describe the existing tools for permanently protecting greenspace, and any existing local land-use ordinances, regulations, and policies that will enable the county and grantee municipalities to protect greenspace temporarily until they can give such lands permanent protection. (Please discuss the need for any proposed tools for permanent or temporary protection not here, but in Chapter 6: Barriers to Achieving the Goal for Greenspace Protection. Please describe those proposed tools and how they will be used to give greenspace permanent protection not here but in Chapter 7: Ten-Year Strategy to Remove or Mitigate Legal and Structural Barriers.)

- a. The following lists (5.a.i. and 5.a.ii) identify various tools that a local government may be currently using to give greenspace permanent protection (for example, negotiated acquisition of conservation easements). Identify all land-use tools that each jurisdiction is currently using and explain how each jurisdiction will use those tools to give land permanent protection as greenspace.

After discussing all tools that give permanent protection, explain how each jurisdiction will use tools that temporarily protect lands described in the greenspace goal (4.c). For example, agricultural zoning limits development on property in this zoning class, but it does not prevent rezoning of the land for increased development. However, a local government could give permanent protection to lands zoned for agriculture by obtaining conservation easements while the lands are still zoned for agriculture.

In this section of the submittal, the county should show how it and the grantee municipalities will use the tools they currently have available to advance their greenspace protection goals. Please do not discuss tools that do not protect land as greenspace. For example, it would not be useful to discuss a tree protection ordinance that requires permits for the removal of urban trees but that does not give temporary or permanent protection to the land on which the trees are growing.

If one or more municipalities are also participating independently, summarize strategies in table format using the example at the end of subparagraph a below.

- i. Tools that are currently being used to protect greenspace permanently:
  1. Negotiated acquisition of fee title, using monies from the Georgia Community Greenspace Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, or Wetland Mitigation Program funds
  2. Negotiated acquisition of a conservation easement
  3. Acquisition of a conservation easement by action of local development ordinance

4. Conveyance to a land trust of a conservation easement on local governmental or private property
  5. Placement on the local governmental or private property and recordation of a permanent restrictive covenant that benefits the public
  6. Conveyance of a restrictive covenant in favor of a federal governmental entity
- ii. Tools that are currently being used to protect greenspace temporarily, until the local government can provide permanent protection using one of the methods identified above. Lands protected with these temporary measures cannot be included in permanently protected greenspace totals but document interim steps the community is taking to move toward permanent legal protection.
1. Obtaining other funds for the acquisition of greenspace, to supplement state greenspace grant funds (summarize here; give full details in the Funds chapter)
  2. Negotiated acquisition of fee title, using monies other than funds from the Georgia Greenspace Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, or Wetland Mitigation Program
  3. Zoning
  4. Subdivision and development ordinances
  5. Amendment of the local government's (county's and city's) comprehensive plan, to assure that the comprehensive plan is consistent with the local government's greenspace program. At this point in the discussion, the county must either state,
 

“\_\_\_\_\_ County and the cities of (if applicable) will amend its comprehensive plan not later than (month) (year), to make said plan(s) consistent with the county's (if applicable include each city) community greenspace program,”

or state,

“\_\_\_\_\_ County's comprehensive plan, adopted (month) (year), incorporates the county's community greenspace program and is consistent with said program.”

Incorporate a comparable statement for each participating municipality that is establishing a separate trust fund.

Strategies for using existing local land-use tools with permanent protection tools

Jurisdiction	Permanent Tool	Temporary Tool	Strategy for Acquisition/Protection
County			
City A			
City B			

- b. State the county’s commitment to use the tools, using the following language, to comply with the requirement in Rule 391-1-4-.10(b)(6):  
 “\_\_\_\_\_ County hereby commits to use the existing tools described in this community greenspace program to give permanent protection to greenspace within its jurisdictional boundaries, to the best of its ability.” If one or more participating municipalities are establishing separate trust funds and wish to receive separate grants, the commitment should take the following form: “\_\_\_\_\_ County and the cities of (names of cities) hereby commit to use the existing tools described in this community greenspace program to give permanent protection to greenspace within their respective jurisdictional boundaries, to the best of their abilities.”
- c. Identify, in table format like the following example, greenspace that is already permanently protected, by ownership, facility name, and acreage:

**Permanently Protected Greenspace<sup>10</sup>**

Facility Name (examples)	Ownership (examples)	Acreage	Public Access
ABC Nat'l Monument	National Park Service	x,xxx	Yes
DEF State Park	State	x,xxx	Yes
GHI County Park (L&WCF)	County	xxx	Yes
MNO City Park (L&WCF)	City	xxx	Yes
Scenic easement	JKL Land Trust	xx	No
Totals		x,xxx	

- d. Identify, in table format like the following example, greenspace that is publicly owned and is not yet, but is scheduled to be, permanently protected as greenspace. Such land may be state-owned greenspace managed by the Department of Natural Resources and not yet dedicated as a Heritage Preserve, or local governmental greenspace that was acquired with funds that do not require permanent protection.<sup>11</sup>

**Publicly Owned Greenspace to Receive Permanent Protection**

Facility Name (examples)	Ownership	Acreage	Protection Method	Date to Achieve Protection	Public Access
DEF State Park (part)	State	x,xxx			Yes
MNO County Park	County	xxx			Yes
PQR scenic easement	City of _____	xxx			No
STU City Park	City of _____	xx			Yes
Totals		x,xxx			

- e. Subparagraph c above inventories lands that are already permanently protected. Subparagraph d above inventories lands that are owned by local governments that will receive permanent protection through permanent conservation easements or covenants. In subparagraph e, identify, in table format like the example on the next page, the acreage of lands in private ownership that the local governments wish to protect by using one of the permanent-protection methods. The Protection Method(s) column should reflect the permanent protection tool that will replace the temporary safeguards, if any, that now limit development on the land. The Estimated Acreage column should reflect only that portion

of the land type over which the local government optimistically expects to obtain permanent legal protection.

**Unprotected Land Types to Receive Permanent Protection**

<b>Land Type (examples)</b>	<b>Estimated Acreage</b>	<b>Protection Method(s) (examples)</b>	<b>Jurisdiction and Date to Achieve</b>
100-year flood plain	x,xxx	Negotiated easement, development ordinance	County (Date) City of (Date)
Flood plain (>100-year)	x,xxx	Fee-simple acquisition, negotiated easement	County (Date) City of (Date)
Other river buffer lands or upland habitat areas	x,xxx	Restrictive covenant	County (Date) City of (Date)
Stream access points	Xxx	Fee-simple acquisition	County (Date) City of (Date)
Non-riparian wetlands	Xxx	Negotiated easement	County (Date) City of (Date)
Groundwater recharge areas	x,xxx	Negotiated easement, development ordinance	County (Date) City of (Date)
Corridors for pedestrian trails or wildlife movement	x,xxx	Fee-simple acquisition, negotiated easement	County (Date) City of (Date)
Scenic vistas	x,xxx	Negotiated easement	County (Date) City of (Date)
Steep slopes	Xxx	Negotiated easement, development ordinance	County (Date) City of (Date)
Erodible soils	Xxx	Negotiated easement, development ordinance	County (Date) City of (Date)
Lands suitable for passive-use parks	x,xxx	Fee-simple acquisition	County (Date) City of (Date)
Historic resources	x,xxx	Fee-simple acquisition, negotiated easement	County (Date) City of (Date)
Agricultural lands	x,xxx	Negotiated easement, transfer of development rights	County (Date) City of (Date)
Commercial forest lands	x,xxx	Negotiated easement, transfer of development rights	County (Date) City of (Date)
Total	xx,xxx		

- f. Summarize, in table format like the following example, current protection acreage and methods:<sup>12</sup>

**Summary of Greenspace Protection**

<b>Current Ownership</b>	<b>Type of Long-term Protection</b>			<b>Row Totals</b>	
	<b>Existing Permanent</b>	<b>Currently Designated for Permanent</b>	<b>Proposed for Permanent</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>% of County</b>
Federal	xx,xxx		x,xxx	xx,xxx	x.x
State	xx,xxx		x,xxx	xx,xxx	x.x
Local	x,xxx	x,xxx	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	x.x
Private	xxx		xx,xxx	xx,xxx	x.x
Totals	xx,xxx		xx,xxx	xx,xxx	>20

## 6. Barriers to Achieving the Goal for Greenspace Protection<sup>13</sup>

Most communities find that, after identifying the specifics of this ambitious goal of protecting 20% of their land area and reviewing their current resources of funds and tools, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the 20% goal in an acceptable time frame unless the community takes some additional steps.

In this section, describe the obstacles that your community is likely to encounter as you begin to implement this plan to protect 20% or more of your land area. You may feel you need additional tools to supplement the tools you just discussed in section 5. You may feel the public is misinformed or uninformed about the program. The community may need an outreach or education program to overcome this barrier. You may feel your only obstacle is the limited amount of funds available. A strategy to overcome that barrier may be to search for additional funds or aggressively to seek donations.

Based on the description in Section 5 of the tools that each local government is currently using, identify the tools that the county and grantee municipalities must have to achieve its goal, and the legal and structural barriers that may hinder establishing these tools.

### a. Legal barriers

- i. Identify legal barriers to achieving the greenspace protection goal that hinder **most or all** of the participating jurisdictions, and briefly describe how they hinder its achievement. Examples include:
  1. Shortcomings in zoning or land-use ordinances
  2. Inadequate authority in state statutes (For example, additional state incentives for private donation of greenspace property are needed. A state income tax credit such as that provided in North Carolina would be helpful.)
- ii. Identify legal barriers to achieving the greenspace protection goal that hinder just **one or a few** of the participating jurisdictions, and briefly describe how they hinder its achievement. Examples include:
  1. Shortcomings in zoning or land-use ordinances
  2. Inadequate authority in state statutes (For example, Georgia's transferable development rights statute is cumbersome and needs to be amended to be more useful. This improved tool would be used by the County, but is not a priority of our grantee municipalities.)

b. Structural barriers

- i. Identify structural barriers to achieving the greenspace protection goal that hinder **most or all** of the participating jurisdictions, and briefly describe how they hinder its achievement. Examples include:
  1. Inadequate funds for land acquisition
  2. Inadequate staff support
  3. Inadequate funding for operations, maintenance, and security
  4. Low level of public or official support
  5. Inadequate local knowledge of preservation tools, such as conservation easements or sources of grant funds
  
- ii. Identify structural barriers to achieving the greenspace protection goal that hinder just **one or a few** of the participating jurisdictions, and briefly describe how they hinder its achievement. Examples include:
  1. Inadequate funds for land acquisition
  2. Inadequate staff support
  3. Inadequate funding for operations, maintenance, and security
  4. Low level of public or official support
  5. Inadequate local knowledge of preservation tools, such as conservation easements or sources of grant funds

## 7. Ten-year Strategy to Remove or Mitigate Legal and Structural Barriers<sup>14</sup>

- a. Legal barriers: In this section describe those activities on which your community is committed to take action. In future years' reports, your progress on these stated activities will be used to determine your continued eligibility to receive future grants.
  - i. Describe strategies that **most or all (identify those communities that will be using this method)** of the participating jurisdictions will use to remove or mitigate the barriers identified in Section 6. For example:
    - 1. Provide for environmental overlay zones within the existing zoning ordinance
    - 2. Consult with local legislators to amend Georgia's transferable development rights statute to make it practical to use
  - ii. Describe methods and strategies that **just one or few (identify those communities that will be using this method)** of the participating jurisdictions will use to remove or mitigate the barriers identified in Section 6. For example: Amend subdivision regulations to specify the protection of steep slopes, wetlands, or flood plains and to encourage setting aside recreational greenspace in neighborhoods
- b. Structural barriers: In this section describe those activities on which your community is committed to take action. In future years' reports, your progress on these stated activities will be used to determine your continued eligibility to receive future grants.
  - i. Describe methods and strategies that **most or all (identify those communities that will be using this method)** of the participating jurisdictions will use to remove or mitigate the barriers identified in Section 6. For example:
    - 1. Market the local greenspace program to constituents and promote an additional special-purpose local option sales tax to acquire funds for land acquisition
    - 2. Establish a program to educate private landowners, tax assessors, and developers on the county's greenspace program and incentives for preserving lands for the program

- ii. Describe methods and strategies that **just one or few (identify those communities that will be using this method)** of the participating jurisdictions will use to remove or mitigate the barriers identified in Section 6. For example:
  - 1. Establish a community volunteer program to assist the county with maintenance and security of greenspace lands
  - 2. Obtain services of outside consultants for short periods of time to assist staff with critical areas of planning and implementation of the program
- c. Summarize, in table format like the following example, the above discussion of barriers, strategies, and dates by which the strategies will be implemented:

**Barriers, Strategies and Timeline for Accomplishment**

<b>Barrier</b> <i>(examples)</i>	<b>Strategy to Remove Barrier</b> <i>(examples)</i>	<b>Jurisdiction and Date to Implement</b>
1. Existing zoning ordinance does not allow for performance-based subdivision design	1.a. Amend ordinance to provide for environmental overlay zones	1.a. County (Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date)
	1.b. Amend ordinance to allow conservation subdivisions as an alternative to prescriptive zoning	1.b. County (Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date)
2. Funds available from the Georgia Green-space Program are inadequate by themselves to acquire enough land to meet the county's acquisition goal	2.a. Place SPLOST referendum before the voters to raise additional local funds for acquisition and trail improvements	2.a. County (Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date)
	2.b. Identify federal and private sources of grant funds for land acquisition and access improvements	2.b. County (Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date)
	2.c. Identify opportunities for gifts of fee-simple title or conservation easements, and approach the landowners to seek the gifts	2.c. County (Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date) City of _____(Date)
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

**8. Funding**

- a. Describe the allocation of greenspace grant funds among the county and any participating municipalities that wish to establish separate community greenspace trust funds. If no municipalities will establish separate trust funds, simply state, “No municipality within \_\_\_\_ County has elected to establish a separate greenspace trust fund. \_\_\_\_ County will receive the entire greenspace grant award for FY-03).” However, if one or more municipalities will participate and establish separate greenspace trust funds, please include the following statement and table: “(Number of municipalities within \_\_\_\_ County have elected to participate in a cooperative program with the County and to establish independent greenspace trust funds for FY-03. The following table identifies the grantee jurisdictions and the percentages of the county’s greenspace grant allocation which each will receive.”

**FY-03 Grant Award Shares for Participating Jurisdictions**

Jurisdiction	2000 Census or Most Recent Official Estimate of Population	% of County By Population
County (plus cities without separate trust funds)	xxx,xxx	xx.x%
City A	x,xxx	x.x%
City B	xxx,xxx	xx.x%
City C (only that portion lying in ____ County)	xx,xxx	x.x%
Totals	x,xxx,xxx	100.0%

- b. Describe sources and uses of funds to acquire property interests
  - i. Based on the information previously described in Sections 3 through 7, describe the costs associated with land acquisition for the county’s program, including the costs for all participating municipalities. The discussion should clearly identify the amount of acreage that the participating local governments expect to purchase in fee simple, purchase as easements, receive as gifts, and preserve through the action of local ordinances and regulations. Provide an estimate of land values to project the market value of land for the county’s program.

Summarize the discussion using the following format:

**Estimated Total Costs to Acquire Property Interests**

	Dollars
Fee-simple purchases	xxx,xxx,xxx
Easement purchases	xx,xxx,xxx
Acquisition services (appraisals, surveys, title work, closing and attorneys’ fees for donated lands as well as those acquired by purchase)	x,xxx,xxx
Total estimated cost to protect lands totaling the program goal	xxx,xxx,xxx

- ii. Identify the sources of funds that the county and its participating municipalities will seek and use to implement the entire acquisition program as previously described. Also identify all fund sources

that each jurisdiction has already applied for or approved for funding. This discussion should include actual fund amounts and/or projected fund amounts. Use the following general format to summarize the discussion:

**Estimated Total Sources of Funds**

	<b>Dollars</b>
State greenspace funds	xx,xxx,xxx
Other state grant funds:	
Governor’s discretionary grant fund	xx,xxx
Other sources (identify individually)	x,xxx,xxx
Local governmental funds:	
General revenues	x,xxx,xxx
SPLOST	xx,xxx,xxx
Impact fees	x,xxx,xxx
Storm-water utility fees	xxx,xxx
Other sources (identify individually)	x,xxx,xxx
Federal grant funds	
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (flood protection funds)	xx,xxx
Land and Water Conservation Fund (recreation funds)	xx,xxx
TEA-21 (transportation enhancement funds)	xxx,xxx
CDBG Block Grants (community enhancement funds)	
Private gifts of funds (identify individually)	
ABC Foundation	x,xxx,xxx
DEF Corporation	xxx,xxx
GHI (individual)	x,xxx
Private gifts of land value	x,xxx,xxx
<b>Total estimated sources to protect lands totaling the program goal</b>	<b>xxx,xxx,xxx</b>

- c. Identify the sources of funding that will support the planning that is needed to develop and operate the county’s greenspace program, using the general table format set forth in paragraph 8.b.ii above. This discussion should include both internal and external staff support, and other monetary sources local governments expect to receive. (Note that Greenspace Trust Funds cannot be used for this purpose.)
- d. Identify the sources of funding to make any proposed improvements to greenspace properties, using the general table format set forth in paragraph 8.b.ii above. (Note that Greenspace Trust Funds cannot be used for this purpose.)
- e. Identify the sources of funding to carry out the stewardship activities that will be necessary to protect the greenspace property and its users, using the general table format set forth in paragraph 8.b.ii above. Discuss funding for operations, maintenance, and security. (Note that Greenspace Trust Funds cannot be used for this purpose.)

## 9. Summary of Implementation Strategy and Schedule

- a. Include the following statement at the beginning of this section, and fill in the blanks as appropriate to the county: “ (Name of) County expects to achieve its goal of greenspace protection in (year) .”
- b. Summarize, in table format like the following example, the acreage expected to be under permanent protection when the county attains its goal of 20% permanently protected greenspace (refer to Section 5.f):

### Summary of Greenspace Protection Upon Attaining the Goal

Ownership	Acreage	% of County
Federal	xx,xxx	x.x
State	xx,xxx	x.x
Local	xx,xxx	x.x
Private	xx,xxx	x.x
Totals	xx,xxx	xx.x

- c. Describe, in table format like the following example, what lands already owned by the local government(s) are receiving or will receive permanent protection (refer to Section 5.c):

### Permanent Protection of Lands Currently Owned by Local Governments

Tool for Protection <i>(examples)</i>	Acreage	Year to Provide Protection
Grants under contractual arrangements for permanent protection:		
Georgia Greenspace Program	x,xxx	200x
Hazard Mitigation Program	x,xxx	200x
Land and Water Conservation Fund	x,xxx	200x
Wetlands Mitigation Program	x,xxx	200x
Placement of permanent conservation easements	xx,xxx	200x-201x
Use of permanent restrictive covenant with public benefit (OCGA §44-5-60)	x,xxx	200x
Use of restrictive covenant in favor of a federal governmental entity	x,xxx	200x
Other tools (identify individually)		201x
Total	xx,xxx	

- d. Describe, in table format like the following example, local governmental strategy for acquiring new lands (refer to Section 5.e):

**Acquisition of New Lands by Local Governments**

<b>Tool for Protection</b> ( <i>examples</i> )	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Year to Provide Protection</b>
Fee-simple acquisition		
Purchase	xx,xxx	200x-20xx
Donation	xx,xxx	200x-20xx
Conservation easement		
Purchase	xx,xxx	200x-20xx
Donation	xx,xxx	200x-20xx
Acquisition by action of development ordinance	xx,xxx	200x-20xx
Other tools (identify individually)	xx,xxx	20xx
Total	xx,xxx	

- e. Identify, in table format like the following example, the local development regulations and performance-based zoning measures that the county and any participating municipalities propose to use (refer to Sections 5.a. and 7.c.):

**Use of Zoning and Development Ordinances for Greenspace Protection**

<b>Tool for Protection</b> ( <i>examples</i> )	<b>Year to Implement</b>
Incorporating the community greenspace program into the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan	200x
Adopting amendments to enable performance-based zoning, such as conservation zoning, to supplement prescriptive zoning	200x
Providing for environmental overly zones within the existing zoning ordinance	200x
Establishing a transferable development rights program	200x
Amending subdivision regulations to specify the protection of steep slopes, wetlands, or flood plains and to encourage setting aside recreational greenspace in neighborhoods	200x
Providing for linkages of greenspace	200x
Other tools (identify individually)	201x
Total	

## APPENDICES TO THE COUNTY'S SUBMITTAL

- A. Letter of Intent** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(a)). This item contains the following materials:
- a. a copy of the county's letter that notifies the Georgia Greenspace Commission of its intent to prepare a community greenspace program;
  - b. a list of interested individuals and designated organizational representatives who have been invited to attend the public meeting; and
  - c. a copy of the public notice issued concerning the required public meeting.
- B. Summary of Public Meeting** (Rule 391-1-4-.10). This item contains a summary of the remarks made by public officials and by interested participants, either orally or in writing, at the public meeting(s) that the county has held.
- C. Resolution(s)** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(d)(2)). This item contains an original, executed and certified copy of the resolution(s) adopted by the county and by each grantee municipality that will establish an independent trust fund. Each resolution must take the general form shown in the attached templates—one for counties and the other for municipalities.
- D. Letters from Non-participating Municipalities** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(b)(16)). This item contains a letter from each non-participating municipality that is located wholly or in part within the county, briefly stating its reasons for choosing not to participate in the county's community greenspace program, or documentation that the county has requested such a letter and has not received a reply.
- E. Current Future Land-use Plans** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(b)(6)). This item contains the most recent future land-use map of the county and each participating municipality (municipalities in alphabetical order). Each map should:
- a. Show the entire jurisdiction legibly, so the reviewer can easily identify at least the following land use types: agriculture, silviculture, residential, institutional/commercial, industrial, transportation, and recreation/open space;
  - b. Include a legend which clearly identifies the land types presented on the plan;
  - c. Be printed on a single sheet not smaller than 11x17 inches and not larger than 24x36 inches, and
  - d. Be folded to a finished size of 8½x11 inches.
- F. Greenspace Program Vision Map** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(b)(9)). This item is a map of the county, at the same scale and on the same size of paper as the county's future land-use map. The vision map depicts the lands or areas that will be given permanent protection as greenspace, in relation to the other types of land use that the county expects will exist when the program has achieved its goal.

**G. Summaries of County and Municipal Policies, Rules and Regulations Used to Protect Greenspace** (Rule 391-1-4-.10(b)(6)). This item contains brief summaries of the pertinent parts of any county or municipal ordinance that the county's greenspace program will use to give temporary or permanent protection to land for greenspace purposes. The county should include here enough information about the policy and regulatory tools that the state reviewer can clearly determine how each tool will help the county attain its goal for greenspace protection. This item needs to reflect a clear understanding of the distinction between temporary protection (such as current zoning regulations limiting development of a parcel which does not meet the standards for inclusion of the parcel as greenspace) and permanent protection (such as an ordinance requiring a developer to record a conservation easement permanently restricting development of a portion of the land which would meet the standard for inclusion of the encumbered parcel as greenspace). Please omit the discussion of regulations that do not result in the permanent or temporary protection of land as greenspace; examples include incentives for increasing tree canopy or the protection of existing trees. Such tools are valuable to communities, but they do not protect land as greenspace.

## EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE NARRATIVE

### 1. Executive Summary

#### Example # 1

- a. The mission of the Columbia County Greenspace Program is to maintain a proper balance between people and their environment by conserving the abundant precious natural resources of the County for future generations and to enhance the quality of life for all residents.
- b. The County's program includes all eligible municipalities within Columbia County, the Cities of Grovetown and Harlem, which are participating cooperatively in the program. The County will administer the program and the funds.
- c. The County's goal is to preserve 37,251 acres of land as permanently protected greenspace, of which 11,096 acres is already in permanent protection, and will protect an additional 26,155 acres. The program will ultimately preserve lands as a system of greenways and open space that interconnect recreation, living and working areas throughout the County. Lands will be protected to preserve scenic corridors and sensitive natural resources, including the wetland areas of the Savannah River and Kiokee and Euchee Creek basins. Columbia County has targeted five areas for future greenspace acquisition. These include:
  1. The Savannah River Conservation Area and Greenway
  2. The floodplains associated with Kiokee, Little Kiokee, Euchee, Betty's Branch, Jones, and Reed Creek
  3. Remaining vacant parcels in Martinez-Evans to provide small-scale pocket parks and passive open space
  4. Designate the northwest part of the County as a conservation area to protect important groundwater recharge area
  5. Wetlands that border Heggie's Rock, a historical natural resource of granite outcroppings that are protected by the Nature Conservancy; and Burke Mountain, a longleaf pine-short leaf pine/little bluestem serpentine woodland community.
- d. To preserve lands, the County will utilize conservation easements, acquire land in fee simple, and enter into no-net-loss contractual arrangements. It will also enforce its existing land-use ordinances, policies, and regulations, and it will amend certain of these ordinances to make them more effective at protecting greenspace, as described on page 8 of the submittal.
- e. While in concept there are no regulatory barriers in place that would limit the County's ability to achieve the goals of the greenspace program, in practice the County needs to adopt even more control mechanisms to support the policies outlined in the comprehensive plan. Enforcement of the zoning ordinance alone cannot achieve the goals of the comprehensive plan and the greenspace plan. Thus, the County's planning department must vigorously encourage the County Commission to formally discuss and act on the proposed new development regulations and implementation programs outlined on page 8 of this submittal.

## 1. Executive Summary

### Example #2

- a. The citizens of Floyd County realize that in order to maintain the high quality of life and the natural amenities that are enjoyed here, there must be a plan in place to protect natural areas and guide growth in sustainable, environmentally friendly ways. Due to our location between Atlanta, Chattanooga, and Birmingham, Floyd County is preparing for the potential of unprecedented growth. A strong Community Greenspace Program will help to alleviate many of the potential problems associated with this kind of rapid growth.
- b. Floyd County's two municipalities, the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring, are participating in a cooperative program with the County, whereby the County will administer the program and the funds.
- c. The County will permanently protect 65,583 acres as greenspace, of which 7,252 acres is already in permanent protection, as its 20 percent goal. Three major areas have been identified as priorities for greenspace preservation. These include riparian corridors (especially water supply recharge areas), areas connecting trails and existing greenspace, and agricultural lands. Specifically, the County will work to permanently protect 12,000 acres of natural areas of Berry College property, 3000 acres owned by Oglethorpe Power associated with Rocky Mountain Recreation Area, and 9,000 acres of forestry easements of Temple-Inland's land holdings.
- d. Floyd County will rely on several tools to achieve its 20 percent goal. Much of the riparian corridors are still in good condition and to protect them the County will use greenspace grant funds with other funds to purchase land in fee-simple, purchase easements, pursue donated conservation easements, and explore overlay zones both for agricultural areas and for environmentally sensitive areas.
- e. The major legal and structural barriers facing Floyd County are the lack of incentives for developers to set aside greenspace, insufficient funds, and weak regulations for the agricultural-residential zone and reluctance of the agricultural community to compromise property rights. The County will pursue the following initiatives to circumvent these barriers:
  1. holding educational workshops and programs for the agricultural and development communities,
  2. revising the Unified Land Development Code and developing a new zone for agricultural areas, and
  3. raising additional funds through other federal and state grants and local initiatives, such as SPLOST and "round-up" program.

## 2. Introduction

### Example #1: Augusta-Richmond County

- a. Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia, has been known as the Garden City because of the beauty of its public open spaces and private yards and gardens. As the community has grown, however, land development has reduced the amount of open space within the urban area. With this growth have come shopping centers and subdivisions where there were once woods and fields, and outside the central city very few new areas have been created as permanent open space.

The establishment of the Georgia Greenspace Program was extremely timely, as the disappearance of greenspace from the County has emerged as an issue as part of the new interest in Growth Management. It is now widely recognized that measures must be taken for the community to start to reverse the urban sprawl that has characterized the development of the past 40 years. The preservation of open space is clearly one of those measures. There is broad support for the preservation of greenspace, as evidenced by the input received at a public meeting held on September 4, 2000.

The County's Greenspace Program provides a plan for creating new greenspace within the currently developed area and preserving substantial greenspace during the course of future development.

- b. This first Community Greenspace Program was developed by the Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission. The county's point of contact for its Greenspace Program will be:

Mr. George A. Patty, Executive Director  
Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission  
525 Telfair Street  
Augusta GA 30901  
Phone: 706-821-1796  
Fax: 706-821-1806  
E-mail: [pd9004@co.richmond.ga.us](mailto:pd9004@co.richmond.ga.us)  
FEI: 58-2204274

- c. Not Applicable.
- d. All greenspace grant funds will be utilized by Augusta-Richmond County consolidated government. Neither of the other two cities, Blythe and Hephzibah, wishes to participate in the greenspace program. Appendix E contains a copy of the letter that each of these cities received from Augusta-Richmond County advising them of the program and a letter from Hephzibah indicating that they were not interested. They felt that it was a small amount of money compared to the perceived administrative burden. Similar information was provided verbally by the Mayor of Blythe.

## 2. Introduction

### Example #2: Fulton County

- a. Fulton County is dedicated to the incorporation of permanently protected greenspace in its long-term vision for Unincorporated Fulton County. The County views a successful comprehensive greenspace program as one that addresses the need for locally accessible greenspace and that protects water quality but provides for more than just passive recreation uses. The Fulton County Community Greenspace Program seeks to create a comprehensive program that addresses the greenspace needs of all the county's citizens, regardless of whether they live in a rural area or in a developed area, and also provides for local and accessible green spaces that contain a variety of uses.
- b. The Fulton County Community Greenspace Program is the result of the coordination of 11 individual programs: all 10 municipalities within Fulton County are participating cooperatively with the Fulton County Community Greenspace Program. The contact person for the Program is:

Ms. Michelle Hartmann  
Senior Planner  
Department of Environment and Community Development  
Fulton County  
141 Pryor Street  
Suite 5001  
Atlanta GA 30303  
Phone: 404-730-8056  
Fax: 404-730-8112  
E-mail: [mhartmann@fultonecd.org](mailto:mhartmann@fultonecd.org)  
FEI: 58-6001729

- c. The 10 municipalities that are participating in Fulton County's program include the cities of Alpharetta, Atlanta, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Mountain Park, Palmetto, Roswell, and Union City. The point of contact for each municipality is as follows:

City of Alpharetta  
John Doe  
ABC Street  
Suite D  
Alpharetta, GA 30xxx  
Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx  
Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx  
e-mail: xxxxxxx  
FEI: xx-xxxxxxx

### 3. County Description

#### Example #1: Columbus-Muscogee County

##### a. Physical Characteristics

Muscogee County is an energetic and thriving community of 187,960 people. The county serves as the regional leader for West Central Georgia and East Central Alabama. It is the region's major retail center and metropolitan area. Muscogee County prides itself on a strong cultural and historic community which sets unprecedented examples that our neighbors can follow.

i. *(Refer to guideline template for exact instructions for organizing this section).*

Columbus is located along the line that separates the Piedmont from the Coastal Plain. The Chattahoochee River, one of the principal rivers in the State of Georgia, is the largest surface water resource in the Columbus area. The Chattahoochee River serves as the river corridor within the limits of the City of Columbus. Columbus has established a 100-foot protected buffer between the top of the bank and the edge of river. Bull Creek, Flat Rock Creek, and Heiferhorn Creek drain into the northern portion of Columbus. Bull Creek continues to flow through the southern part of Columbus and into the Chattahoochee River.

The Columbus Riverwalk presents a close-up view of the Chattahoochee River and the western bank. The major focal point of this Alternative Transportation System is the Riverwalk area in Uptown Columbus. Future phases along the riverbank will see the development of natural walking trails, fishing, and rest stations. The Riverwalk will ultimately extend from the Municipal Marina at Lake Oliver to Fort Benning.

The establishment of Columbus on the east bank of the Chattahoochee River, at the downstream end of several major river tributaries, immediately put the City at risk from flooding. Current flood-plain management uses the 100-year flood event as the primary base for regulatory activities. Muscogee County has an estimated 429 acres of flood-plain areas. Throughout Columbus, wetlands occur at the confluence of Bull Creek and the Chattahoochee River. From this point, wetlands occur throughout portions of southwest Columbus. Wetlands predominate along Bull Creek, in the central section of Columbus. From this point, wetlands follow Bull Creek in a northeast direction.

Columbus has 50 parks that provide the citizens of Columbus with a broad and comprehensive selection of recreational programs and leisure activities. Of these 50 parks, 4 are regional parks, 9 are district parks, 30 are neighborhood parks, and 7 are mini-parks. Some of the amenities in the parks include natural areas such as lakes, ponds, streams, green belts, open spaces, marinas, hiking trails, and picnic facilities.

Prime agriculture and forestry lands within Muscogee County have seen a steady decline over the past few decades. The northernmost section and

the “panhandle” section of Muscogee County capture the remaining agriculture and forestland within the county. The Columbus Consolidated Government will attempt to permanently protect these limited and irreplaceable natural resources.

The Columbus Historic District is one of two districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This historic district offers a mixed neighborhood of homes, small shops, service companies, and professional offices. This district covers most of the southwest quadrant of the original city of Columbus. It is noteworthy for its broad, tree-lined streets, diversity of nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture and its historic house museums. Several additional areas in Columbus are eligible for listing as historic districts in the National Register.

ii. *(Refer to guideline template for exact instructions for organizing this section).*

Columbus experienced unparalleled growth during the two decades following World War II. Growth that once was centralized near the river and downtown area soon spilled across the county. Subdivisions were developed, roads were improved, and with them came new retail and industrial areas. Today, Muscogee County’s total acreage is 140,496 acres. From that total, the county may deduct 1,354 acres of open water and 48,477 acres that make up Fort Benning, leaving a base acreage for greenspace purposes of 90,665. Twenty percent of the base greenspace acreage is 18,133 acres.

b. Rapid-growth Areas

*(Refer to guideline template for exact instructions for organizing this section)*

Growth is currently occurring in the northern section of the county (Planning Districts 2 and 3) and the southeastern and southwestern parts of the county (Planning Districts 11 and 12). These areas are feeling the pressure of new subdivisions, shopping complexes, restaurants, road projects and proposed schools. The northern area, which was considered rural no more than ten years ago, has now become a desired location to live and shop. According to 1993 future land-use maps, most of north Columbus was to remain low-density residential, rural residential, and agricultural. The 1998 land-use map (Map 1.1) shows an increase in residential sites, commercial sites, and industrial sites.

The southeastern section of the county has also seen substantial residential and industrial growth in the last decade. The area has been impacted by new subdivisions off St. Mary’s Road and Steam Mill Road. Today, most of the area along St. Mary’s Road is low-density residential. The increase in population for that area has helped to expand growth in the East Columbus Industrial Park, increase development value along Schatulga Road, and expand Forrest Road to four lanes.

The county’s southwestern area has seen growth due to the development of the Oxbow Meadows Environmental Center, the Columbus Water Works South Plant, the Oxbow Meadows Golf Course, and the Riverwalk. This area was once the city’s landfill; today it is a very popular activity area for Columbus

residents. These properties hold tremendous opportunities for growth, including a new city marina, expansion of Oxbow Meadows Golf Course, relocation of the National Infantry Museum, expansion of the facilities at Oxbow Meadows Environmental Center, construction of a new hotel/convention center, and construction of a river research facility. Our plan is to intertwine greenspace protection into these new plans for the area. The 1998 future land-use map identifies, in green, the areas that would be affected by new growth and greenspace protection.

Other parts of Muscogee County, such as the central and south-central areas, are completely built out. Betterment of these developed areas has included the creation of Enterprise Zones, Neighborhood Revitalization Projects, and new Historic Districts, and the strengthening of rezoning requirements. Due to its size, Muscogee County will need to strategically balance development and preservation in order to comply with the Georgia Greenspace Program goals. It is our goal to see that smart growth takes precedence.

- c. The following table(s) provides the calculations for the County and each participating municipality in alphabetical order.

**Population of Muscogee County and Participating Municipalities<sup>15</sup>**

Jurisdiction	1999 Estimate	2000 Census	% of County (2000 Census)
Columbus-Muscogee County (plus cities not participating)		186,291	100.0%
No municipality participating separately		---	0.0%
Totals	182,058	186,291	100.0%

**Population of Muscogee County and Participating Municipalities<sup>16</sup>**

Jurisdiction	1999 Estimate	2000 Census	% of County (2000 Census)
Columbus-Muscogee County (plus cities not participating)		186,291	100.0%
No municipality participating separately		---	0.0%
Totals	182,058	186,291	100.0%

- d. Provide a narrative description of the general pattern of land uses which appear on the county's and each participating city's current future land-use plan(s) and Include as Appendix E a copy of the current future land-use plan map(s) for each jurisdiction.

### 3. County Description

#### Example #2: Whitfield County

##### a. Physical Characteristics

- i. Whitfield County, with a total area of 185,625 acres (base acreage for greenspace identification), lies in northwest Georgia, bounded on the north by the state of Tennessee, on the west by Catoosa and Walker Counties, on the south by Gordon County, and on the east by the Conasauga River and Sugar Creek, which separate Whitfield from Murray County. The County divides into two districts of the Ridge and Valley Province of the Appalachian Highlands, the Armuchee Ridge District in the west, and the Great Valley District in the east. The Armuchee Ridge District consists of a series of prominent, narrow ridges that rise abruptly above the floor of the Great Valley. These ridges reach elevations as much as 1,800 feet above sea level. The Great Valley District tends to be broad and open, with a few scattered ridges and hills, and elevations ranging from 700 to 800 feet above sea level.
- ii. Though the County is developing fast, some 45% of the land remains undeveloped, and about 24% is in timber or agricultural use. Approximately 14% of the land is in residential use, 2.5% in industrial use, and 1% commercially developed. Dalton, the county seat, is a rapidly growing industrial center, attracting many new residents who come to work in carpet and related industries. Whitfield County's other incorporated cities are Tunnel Hill, Cohutta, and Varnell.

##### b. Rapid-growth Areas

- i.-ii. Although residential development is highly scattered throughout the county, the most rapidly growing areas are north of Dalton, roughly along State Route 71 (Cleveland Highway), which runs north and south near the western edge of the Great Valley. Residential subdivisions are developing to the east and west of that corridor. The most intense concentration is between Dalton and Beaverdale Road. Cleveland Highway is also attracting considerable commercial development along its entire length. New commercial and residential uses are displacing agriculture and wooded land.

The County's primary industrial land uses are located in the south-central part of the county, extending from the City of Dalton southward to the Georgia Highway 3 interchange with I-75.

c. The following table provides population calculations for the County and municipalities

**Population of Whitfield County and Participating Municipalities<sup>17</sup>**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>1999 Estimate</b>	<b>2000 Census</b>	<b>% of County (2000 Census)</b>
Whitfield County (plus cities of Cohutta and Tunnel Hill, not participating)		54,122	64.8%
City of Dalton		27,912	33.4%
City of Varnell		1,491	1.8%
Totals	83,220	83,525	100.0%

d. Provide a description of the general pattern of land uses which appear on the county's and each participating city's current and future land-use plan, and include as Appendix E a copy of the current future land-use plan map(s) for the county and for each participating city.

#### 4. Statement of Vision and Goals

##### Example #1: Bulloch County

- a. Through the actions described in this program submittal, Bulloch County and the City of Statesboro commit to promote the permanent protection of 88,628 acres of greenspace, which constitutes 20 percent of the geographic area of the county.
- b. Bulloch County is the largest county in land area included in the greenspace program. The County currently has no land under state or federal ownership. It also has only a small amount of land currently under permanent protection. Much of the County's land area is rural in nature and composed of farmland, forested areas and wetlands. While local elected officials and community leaders recognize the importance of protecting greenspace, in the past there has been no plan or sense of urgency to bring areas under permanent protection. **The goal of the City/County greenspace plan is to ensure that the quality of life and rural nature of the County is preserved for years to come by permanently protecting at least 20% of our land area.** This can be accomplished through planned growth and planned preservation. This plan will provide community leaders and staff with the guidance necessary to successfully meet our Greenspace goals. City and County officials understand the monumental task they face (protecting 20% of the county's land area is 88,628 acres) and are prepared to work diligently toward that goal.

##### Calculation of County's Greenspace Goal

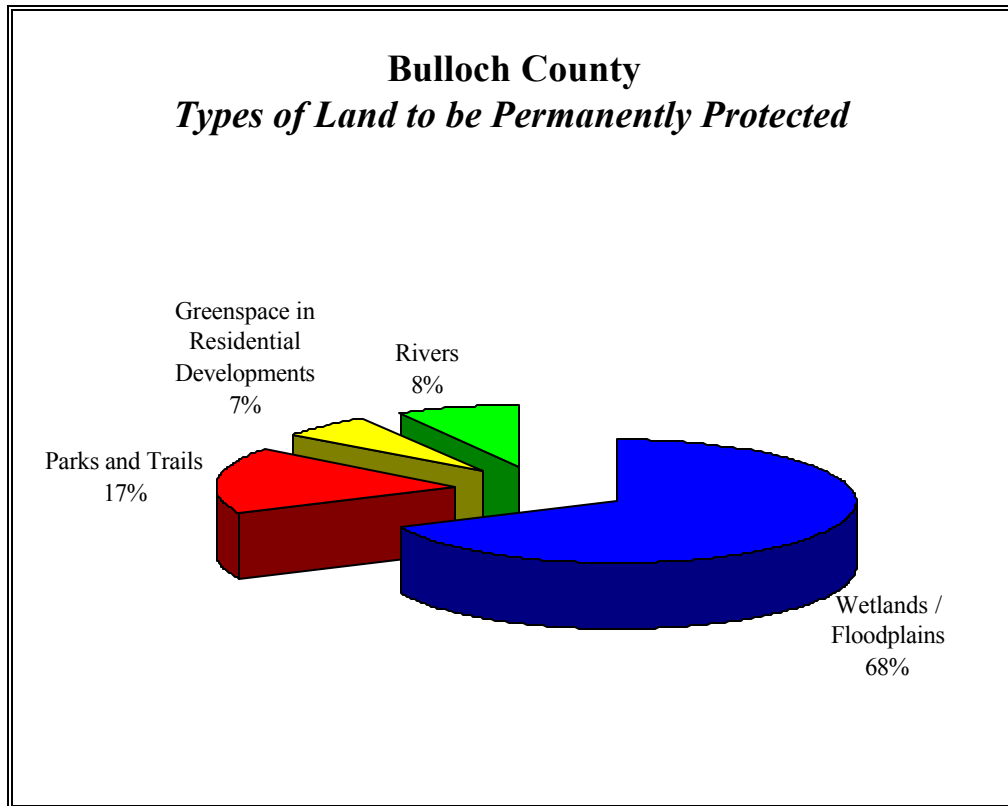
Factor	Acres
Total county acreage	443,137
Less military bases	0
Less the part of the surface of each lake larger than 500 acres	0
Less area of coastal marshlands	0
Less area of coastal waters	0
Equals base acreage for greenspace goal calculation	443,137
Base acreage times 20% equals the county's minimum goal	88,628

- c. The County will meet its greenspace goal by taking the action steps described below.
  - i. The County proposes to protect a variety of land types, including rivers (with buffers), wetlands / floodplains, forestry, open spaces and parks. The table on page \_\_\_ outlines land types and acreage the County proposes for permanent protection.

Due to the relatively low topography, both the City and County maintain ditches as a way of providing flood control from runoff during heavy rains. Many of these have easements to allow for maintenance and upkeep. It might be possible to obtain conservation easements on these properties to allow for permanent protection and possible public access. In some areas, these may serve as connectors and become an integral part of a trail/bike

path system. All future easements should be developed in a manner of making them eligible for inclusion in the greenspace program. A variety of methods to permanently protect greenspace throughout the County will in Section 3.c.iii.

ii. The amount of acreage for each land type that the County is targeting for permanent protection is describe in the pie chart below.



iii. According to the Bulloch County Comprehensive Plan, 12-15% of Bulloch County's land area is considered wetlands/floodplains. Wetlands are important for a number of reasons, including their environmental, wildlife and aesthetic and recreational values. They play key roles in natural water filtration, flood control, water table maintenance and local climate moderation. Wetlands provide habitat for fish and wildlife, as well as protective cover, nesting sites, food and refuges. They are also an integral part of the food chain, both on land and in estuaries. Wetlands offer diverse passive recreation opportunities, such as fishing, hunting, wildlife observation and photography, walking and others. Although the significance of wetlands is recognized, they continue to disappear at an alarming rate primarily due to drainage, filling, vegetation removal, incompatible development and other of man's activities.

In Bulloch County, most of these wetland areas are associated with the Ogeechee River and major creeks, streams and drainage areas. The County recognizes the importance of these areas to the State's overall goal

of protecting and improving water quality. Thus, the City and County have identified these areas as their highest priority for permanent protection. Preservation of these areas is critical to maintaining clean waterways and safe habitat for wildlife. The County will take the necessary steps to restrict development and preserve these essential corridors by strengthening their subdivision regulations to protect wetlands and floodplains. These areas could be set aside for recreational uses as part of a subdivision ordinance that requires developers to reserve twenty percent of a development as permanently protected greenspace. County staff will also encourage private landowners to relinquish development rights to these sensitive areas by granting conservation easements.

During the public meeting on the greenspace plan, citizens expressed the need for publicly accessible passive recreation areas and greenways/bike paths. While our community has excellent recreation facilities to serve active recreation needs, citizens felt that a high priority should be placed on acquiring land for picnicking, walking and enjoying nature. Citizens felt it was important to have both smaller passive parks in the “urban downtown” area and larger land areas out in the County. Citizens also favored having greenways and bike paths to move between these areas and to also connect with schools, neighborhoods, commercial districts and the university. Passive recreation needs were also a high priority in the recently adopted Recreation Master Plan.

The plan calls for acquisition of passive recreation spaces and the development of greenways/bike paths. One of the key recommendations in the plan is the development of a greenway/bike path plan for Bulloch County. This would help guide the acquisition of corridors needed to connect open spaces. It is also important to protect land within future developments in order to make greenspace more accessible to local citizens. The County has identified these land types as the second highest priority for permanent protection. Most of these areas will require fee-simple acquisition. Some areas might be acquired by gift to the local governments or parks foundation.

Over 50 percent of Bulloch County's land area (218,951 acres) is considered forested land. While forestry plays an important economic role in the County, it also defines the rural nature of our County. Fortunately, the County still boasts large tracts of heavily forested uncut timber. Many of these areas cover wetlands, floodplains and river/drainage corridors. Two types of easements might be considered for preserving these areas for inclusion in the greenspace program. County staff will encourage landowners to consider conservation easements that would prohibit any development and the cutting of forested properties. These easements might be most beneficial in protecting river/wetland corridors. Other types of easements, which eliminate development rights and still allow the harvesting of timber, may be most desirable for providing protection for other areas.

- iv. The chart and text below describes the tools that the County will use to permanently protect the land types that have been designated for our program.

***Land Type and Acreage Proposed for Permanent Protection***

<b>Priority Group</b>	<b>Area Name</b>	<b>Acreage to Meet Goal</b>	<b>Method of Protection</b>
<b>I</b> Rivers	Ogeechee River	1,000	Conservation Easement;
	Mill Creek	1,200	
	Upper Black Creek	1,100	
	Lower Black Creek	800	
	Luke Branch	400	
	Ash Branch	400	
	Lotts Creek	1,600	
	Little Lots Creek	800	
	Wetlands / Floodplains	Countywide	
<b>II</b> Forestry, Open Space, Parks	Greenspace in Future Residential Developments	5,728	Conservation Easement
	Parks and Trails	15,000	Conservation Easement & Fee Simple Purchase by County
	<b>Total Additional Acreage Needed to Meet Goal</b>	<b>88,028<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Combination of above methods</b>

The above table was excerpted from Bulloch County’s FY-01 application. Refer to table template in Section 3 of guidelines of this document for FY-02.

- City and County staff will work with private landowners and developers to obtain permanent protection for lands that may or may not be accessible to citizens for public use.
- The County will also acquire additional lands for passive park areas and trail systems that will provide linkages between schools, parks, neighborhoods, and commercial districts.

<sup>1</sup> Calculation based on (Greenspace Program goal of 88,628 acres) – (600 acres presently protected) = 88,028 acres needed to meet goal).

- The County will identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas, unique natural areas, historic resources, and other important land areas.
- Develop a partnership with the school system in which County staff or their designee goes into the school system and provides educational programs for students.
- Encourage citizen commitment to help carry out the plan by developing an advisory committee made up of citizens both young and old. Let this group define short-term priorities and communicate with land owners regarding the long term benefits of the program to themselves and the community. Identify citizen advocates of the program and solicit their advice and counsel when facing citizens unwilling to participate.
- Develop an extensive public relations and education campaign. Educate county staff on how to carry out the plan objectives by using the tools available. Educate them on how to promote the plan in the community by understanding the long-term goals and benefits. Communicate regularly with the media advising them on the plan goals and our progress toward reaching those goals. Develop education programs for local civic groups and clubs.
- Work with the Coastal RDC to provide training/educational sessions for local elected officials on the benefits of preservation of greenspace and specific methods for accomplishing our County goal.
- Encourage developers to set aside twenty percent of future developments for greenspace.

#### 4. Statement of Vision and Goals

##### Example #2: Jackson County

a. Through the actions described in this program submittal, Jackson County commits to promote the permanent protection of 43,793 acres of greenspace, which constitutes 20 percent of the geographic area of the county, as calculated below:

b. Calculation of Jackson County's Greenspace Goal

Factor	Acres
Total county acreage	218,963
Less military bases	0
Less the part of the surface of each lake larger than 500 acres	0
Less area of coastal marshlands	0
Less area of coastal waters	0
Equals base acreage for greenspace goal calculation	218,963
Base acreage times 20% equals the county's minimum goal	43,793

- c. It is the goal of Jackson County and the municipalities of Arcade, Braselton, Commerce, and Jefferson to facilitate the permanent protection of at least 20%, approximately 44,000 acres, or more, of the land base of the county.
- i. Priorities for permanent protection include lands that preserve and enhance water quality including floodplains, buffers adjacent to streams and rivers, and wetlands; agricultural land and scenic rural vistas; existing parks and new parks providing passive recreational opportunities including a major new park in the western portion of the county; properties adjacent to existing parks and public areas for expansion purposes; and paths providing pedestrian and bicycle linkages between greenspace and other public facilities and activity centers.
  - ii. The County and each its participating municipalities will permanently protect \_\_\_ acres of stream buffers, \_\_\_ acres of agricultural land, \_\_\_ acres of scenic rural vistas, \_\_\_ acres of existing parks, \_\_\_ acres for new parks, \_\_\_ acres of adjacent to existing parks and public areas, and \_\_\_ acres pedestrian and bicycle paths.
  - iii. The permanent protection of lands designated for our program will advance our greenspace goals as discussed above in Section 3.c.i.
  - iv. Permanent protection will be assured through the recruitment of conservation easements, both donated and purchased; the acquisition of land in fee simple; and the permanent dedication via conservation easement or contractual agreement of existing publicly owned lands. Land acquired in fee simple will be permanently protected via conservation easements or agreements with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources requiring no net loss of comparable greenspace. Zoning restrictions, such as floodplain regulations, agricultural preservation districts, large lot zoning, and incentives for conservation subdivisions, and possibly transferable development rights, will be employed to encourage the use of conservation easements.

Zoning restrictions secure the short-term protection of greenspace by limiting development. This provides time for the county and land trust partners to assure permanent protection through the purchase of land in fee simple, the purchase of development rights and the recruitment of conservation easements.

The following table (*use format in guideline template*) summarizes the tools as discussed above that we will use for our community greenspace program.

#### 4. Statement of Vision and Goals

##### Example #3: Lee County

- a. Through the actions described in this program submittal, Lee County commits to promote the permanent protection of 45,542 acres of greenspace, which constitutes 20 percent of the geographic area of the county, as calculated below:

b. Calculation of Lee County's Greenspace Goal

Factor	Acres
Total county acreage	227,712
Less military bases	0
Less the part of the surface of each lake larger than 500 acres	0
Less area of coastal marshlands	0
Less area of coastal waters	0
Equals base acreage for greenspace goal calculation	227,712
Base acreage times 20% equals the county's minimum goal	45,542

- c. The Lee County Planning Department has identified land that it desires to permanently protect as open space. The attached map includes the county owned property that is already protected, county owned property that is currently not protected and other areas of the county that are targeted for protection.
- i. The vision of the county is to protect wet areas (including flood plain, watersheds, creeks and rivers), large plantations, prime agricultural areas, and residential open land. The Proposed Conservation Areas Map shows the types of land proposed for protection and their general locations. The County has proposed more than 20% of the county for protection so that the goal of 20% protection can be fully met.

A total of 109 acres are already in permanent protection as wetlands mitigation sites. Another 586 acres in public ownership will be given permanent protection when the County has identified suitable protection tools.

Wet areas are a resource that needs to be protected. Lee County hopes to protect flood plain areas along the Muckalee and Kinchafoonee creeks and the Flint River. The county has also targeted drainage corridors in five watersheds that exist in the county. Acquisition of fee-simple title and conservation easements are possible tools to protect wetlands and riparian areas.

The County contains many large plantations owned by private individuals, and staff wants to work with these landowners to permanently protect these lands. Plantations are a part of the culture of South Georgia and must be protected from development. Conservation easements are suitable tools for this purpose.

The northern portion of Lee County is composed of primarily agricultural land, which helps define the rural character of the area. Lee County hopes to preserve most of the approximately 66,000 acres currently held in 10-year conservation easements by transferring them to permanent conservation easements.

The County has already begun preserving lands in residential areas by passing an ordinance requiring 20% of all new residential areas to be kept in permanent open space. It expects to protect 8,200 acres through the use of these tools.

- ii. Lee County will permanently protect \_\_\_\_ acres of flood plain, \_\_\_\_ acres within designated areas of watersheds, creeks and rivers, \_\_\_\_ acres of private plantations, \_\_\_\_ acres of prime agricultural areas, and \_\_\_\_ acres of residential open land.
- iii. By permanently protecting the above describe land will advance our greenspace goals for *(describe how protecting acreage for each category will advance goal(s) of county's community greenspace program. For example: Protecting the designated acreage within private plantations would advance our greenspace goal for protecting natural habitats and transportation corridors for wildlife).*
- iv. The following table *(use format in guideline template)* summarizes the primary tools that the County will use to protect these lands.

#### 4. Statement of Vision and Goals

##### Example # 4: Floyd County

- a. Insert required statement in Section 3.a. of the template outline.
- b. Insert table to show calculation of greenspace goal.
- c. It is the desire of Floyd County Community Greenspace Program to protect areas of land that meet the following criteria (percentages reflect the amount of Greenspace Program funds to be allotted to each category):
  - Protects water and riparian areas (40%)
  - Connects existing trails and greenspace (30%)
  - Protects agricultural/farming areas for their scenic and cultural value (30%)

##### Water, Riparian Areas, and Greenspace Connectivity

The Greenspace Program will focus primarily on protecting riparian areas (Appendix D, Map 9) and water supply recharge areas (Maps 10 and 15). Almost 70% of the money available to the program will be devoted to this aspect, since most of the trails and existing greenspace are located along the riparian corridors. The efforts to create and connect corridors along the waterways in Floyd County will be continued to that end. These greenway corridors benefit not only the ecological health of the region, but also contribute greatly to the quality of life for the citizenry of Floyd County and its municipalities. Some development activities are limited by ordinance in these areas, but the amount of impervious surface allowed is not regulated. It is, therefore, very desirable to protect these areas through purchase and/or easement. The area already has a good start: 100 feet on each side of the riverbanks is protected by ordinance, Rome has over 7 miles of pedestrian trails along the rivers (Map 11), the RiverCare 2000 program purchased some environmentally sensitive areas. Now we will continue to fill in the gaps between publicly owned areas as properties become available.

Where appropriate we will link existing trails which will allow residents to be more intimately involved with the natural areas, while also allowing us to leverage transportation funds available for bike and pedestrian modes of transportation. We will also tie in our efforts with other regional projects, like the Pinhoti-Appalachian Trail greenway, for example, which will ultimately link Floyd County with trails running from Key West, Florida, through Alabama, over to Georgia and up the Appalachian Trail to Maine and Canada.

##### Agricultural Areas

Much of the character of this region is preserved by the outlying agricultural areas, which allow the county to maintain its rural feel. The land that is currently in agricultural use has very little protection and is beginning to be developed for a variety of non-agricultural purposes at an increasing rate. A major part of the Greenspace Program in Floyd County will be to provide incentives for farmers

to keep their land in agriculture in perpetuity. This will be accomplished through the purchase of development rights or the acceptance of agricultural easements for farmland. The remaining 30% of the Greenspace Program funds will be spent on agricultural protection.

Floyd County will work to achieve its community greenspace goal by a combination of methods, including fee-simple purchase, purchase of development rights, acceptance of donated property and/or easements, stronger development regulations, and by creating environmental and agricultural overlay zones.

- iv. Insert table to show land type, acres for each land type, statutory goals that will be advanced, and tools for protection for each land type.

## 5. Existing Tools

### Example #1: Floyd County

- a. In order to meet Floyd County's 20 percent goal, a total of 65,583 acres of land must be protected. The land area that is already under protection amounts to 7,252 acres, leaving 58,331 in need of protective status.
- i. The County will use the following tools to protect greenspace permanently.

Source of Land	Method of Acquisition	Acreage
Current Greenspace	NA	7,252
Berry College	Donation (easement)	12,000
Temple-Inland	Donation (easement)	9,000
Oglethorpe Power (Rocky Mountain)	Donation (easement)	3,000
Unified Land Development Code	Ordinance	2,500
Developers	Donation (land and/or easement)	5,000
Fee-simple Purchase	Purchase with Greenspace Program Funds	8,000
Easement Purchase	Purchase with Greenspace Program Funds	10,000
Easement Donation (Agricultural)	Donation (easement)	8,831
<b>Total</b>		<b>65,583</b>

- ii. Floyd County will protect greenspace temporarily, until such time we can provide permanent protection through the acquisition of fee or lesser title. The tools the County will use are as follows:
1. Enactment a new Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) for the City of Rome and Floyd County. Adoption of the ULDC is anticipated for January 2001. The new ULDC will require developers to leave buffers between different land uses. In the hopes of using these buffers as meaningful greenspace, the Planning Department is actively working to encourage developers to look at the spirit of this ordinance rather than just the letter of the law.
  2. An education program regarding the benefits of conservation subdivisions will be presented in 2001 to developers, real estate professionals, and local lenders. The Planning Department and the Building Inspection Department have already held other related educational workshops with this community, which have been well attended.
  3. The Planning Department is also looking at other ways to encourage conservation subdivisions by allowing for increased density with common greenspace reserved.

4. Section 6.19 of the new ULDC proposed for adoption requires that there be no land-disturbing activities within 100 feet of rivers, 40 feet of tributaries, and 25 feet of all other waters. In addition it sets a 50-foot setback as a greenway on trout streams within Floyd County, allowing no land disturbing activities within it. This helps to provide corridors for wildlife along the waterways, protects water quality, and helps maintain the natural beauty of the area.
5. The new ULDC also addresses building in the 100-year flood plain in a more meaningful manner, in that it requires an engineering plan that certifies that any fill within the flood plain will not increase the water levels by more than 250 cubic feet. While this ordinance does not create greenspace, it should slow some of the more destructive development within the 100-year flood plain, and may create an incentive for developers to donate property in the flood plain to the Greenspace Program instead of meeting the regulatory hurdles to develop the property.
6. Similarly, tree conservation is addressed in §6.18 of the our new Code. This section sets up “Tree Conservation Zones” for all non-residential developments. The code, as written, mainly addresses saving individual trees, but could easily be adapted to benefit the Greenspace Program. Undisturbed areas permanently set aside in conservation easements could be weighted more heavily for this purpose, or the requirement could be waived if twenty-percent of the development area were donated to the Greenspace Program. The Greenspace Committee will look closely at this section to determine how modifying it slightly would enhance the Program. The Greenspace Committee will make its recommendation to the Planning Commission in 2001.
7. Floyd County will amend its comprehensive plan not later than (month) (year), to make said plan consistent with the county’s community greenspace program.

- b. Floyd County hereby commits to use the existing tools described in this community greenspace program to give permanent protection within its jurisdictional boundaries, to the best of our ability.
- c. The following table provides an accounting of existing land that is already permanently protected: *(Format table and use guidance as shown in Section 5.c. of guideline template).*
- d. The following table identifies greenspace that is publicly owned and is not yet, but is scheduled to be, permanently protected as greenspace: *(Format table and use guidance as shown in Section 5.d. of guideline template.)*
- e. The following table identifies all types of privately owned land that are not yet but are designated for permanent protection. *(Format table and use guidance as shown in Section 5.e. of guideline template.)*
- f. The following table *(use format in guideline template)* summarizes the current protected acreage and methods by which it is protected.

## 5. Existing Tools

### Example #2: Jackson County

- a. The following lists existing local land-use ordinances, policies, and regulations that Jackson County will use to permanently protect greenspace or temporarily protect greenspace until the County can provide permanent protection:
  - i. Tools that will protect greenspace permanently:
    1. **Acquisition of Land.** Jackson County will acquire land, using funds from the Georgia Community Greenspace Program. It will also grant conservation easements over certain county-owned parklands to a local land trust. Both methods will give the subject land permanent protection.
    2. **Planning flexibility.** The Jackson County Planning and Development staff has a policy of working flexibly with developers to preserve greenspace. An example is the site approval of Cane Creek Conservation Subdivision, which, if built, will result in the permanent protection by negotiated conservation easement of more than 340 acres of farmland and creek frontage and the development of 200 units in a village design along a scenic corridor in the southeastern portion of the county.
    3. **Conservation subdivisions.** Jackson County recognizes the benefits of conservation subdivisions, which feature significant areas of preserved greenspace with homes developed away from sensitive resources. This greenspace can provide recreation for homeowners, it can serve as wildlife habitat, and if located adjacent to water bodies, it can protect water quality by providing natural storm-water storage and filtering pollutants. Experience in the metropolitan Atlanta area shows that these lots often sell at higher prices than conventional lots. In many cases, infrastructure development and maintenance costs are decreased as a result of clustering as well. The development of conservation subdivisions featuring interlinking greenspace that is protected by conservation easements will help the county achieve its greenspace goal.
    4. **Provision of Sewerage.** Jackson County has recently purchased a sewage treatment plant and is now providing sewerage services to its citizens. One opportunity associated with this sewer expansion policy is the ability of the county to site pedestrian trails along new, permanent sewer easements.
    5. **Road Construction.** Several new roads are under construction. This provides an opportunity for the county and cities to permanently protect scenic corridors via conservation easements before development occurs and to provide alternate transportation

facilities such as bicycle lanes and paths within the conservation easements along these corridors.

ii. **Tools That Will Be Used to Protect Greenspace Temporarily**

1. **Agricultural zoning.** Jackson County, Commerce and Jefferson currently have agricultural zoning in place, which keeps farmland in large lots. This zoning provides a sound basis for the development of agricultural preserve districts that could be designated as sending areas in a transferable development rights program.
2. **Floodplain regulation.** The City of Jefferson prohibits the construction of habitable structures on floodplains, preserving that critical environmental feature until permanent conservation easements are secured. Jackson County and the other municipalities within the county will extend similar protection to floodplains. This protection will delay the alteration of floodplains until the County and the City can give selected floodplain areas permanent protection by fee-simple acquisition using greenspace funds or by conservation easements.
3. **Conservation easements.** Conservation easements are agreements whereby a property owner voluntarily agrees to give up certain development rights in order to preserve greenspace or otherwise protect the conservation values of his property. Many Jackson County citizens have enrolled their property in 10-year easements under the Conservation Use Act (85,811 acres or 39% of the land base), but none have taken advantage of the income- and estate-tax savings that result from placing this land in a permanent conservation easement.

The conservation easement is enforceable by the easement holder, which can be a private nonprofit tax-exempt organization called a land trust, or by a government entity, or both. At least four land trusts—the Oconee Rivers Land Trust, the Athens Land Trust, the Broad River Watershed Association and Ducks Unlimited—are active in the region, so the county will not establish another one.

The most cost-effective use of county funds is assigning a staff member of the Jackson County Planning and Development Department the task of working with these land trusts to recruit conservation easements in areas identified in the Community Greenspace plan. This will include a campaign to educate landowners and professionals who advise these landowners, such as attorneys, accountants, and tax appraisers, about the potential for using conservation easements to permanently protect greenspace and the existence of land trusts to hold the easements. Easements recruited by the county will be enforceable by the county as well as the recipient land trust.

4. **Purchase of development rights.** In those situations where a landowner is unwilling to donate a conservation easement, it might be appropriate for the county or another entity to purchase the easement, also known as a development right, on a critical tract of greenspace instead.
5. **Provision of sewerage.** Providing sewerage will help the County manage growth, since one of the most effective tools for protecting greenspace is keeping infrastructure out of sensitive natural areas and providing adequate infrastructure in areas that are more suitable for development. Delaying the development of sensitive areas will give the County more time to protect selected sites permanently by acquiring them with greenspace funds or by negotiating conservation easements on them.
6. Jackson County will amend its comprehensive plan not later than (month) (year) to make said plan consistent with the county's community greenspace program.
7. The participating cities of (list cities) will amend their comprehensive plans to make said plans consistent with the county's community greenspace program as follows:

The City of \_\_\_\_\_ will amend its comprehensive plan (month) (year). Continue listings.

*(If county has already amended and adopted its comprehensive plan that is consistent with the county's community greenspace program, so state and give month and year such plan was adopted).*

- b. Jackson County and the Cities of (*name cities that are establishing separate trust funds*) hereby commit to use the existing tools described in this community greenspace program to give permanent protection to greenspace within their respective jurisdictional boundaries, to the best of our abilities.
- c. The following table (*use format in the guideline template*) identifies greenspace in all jurisdictions that is already permanently protected:
- d. The following table (*use format in the guideline template*) identifies unprotected publicly owned greenspace in all jurisdictions that is designated for permanent protection:
- e. The following table (*use format in the guideline template*) Identifies privately owned land that qualify as greenspace and that is designated for permanent protection:
- f. The following table (*use format in guideline template*) summarizes acreage that is already protected and the methods by which it is protected:

## 5. Existing Tools

### Example #3: Lee County

- a. *(Refer to guideline template for organization of this section and the type of ordinances, policies and regulations that are to be described).*

Lee County will use several existing methods to give greenspace permanent protection:

- Acquiring new land with funds from the Georgia Community Greenspace Program, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, and federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
- Permanently protecting lands that are currently owned by the local government, by granting conservation easements to a suitable land trust (yet to be identified), or by placing permanent conservation covenants that benefit the public

Lee County will use several existing methods to give temporary protection to privately owned greenspace until it can acquire fee-simple title, acquire a conservation easement, or encourage the landowners to place on the property permanent conservation covenants that benefit the public:

- Local development regulations
- The county zoning ordinance, which has recently been amended to include the two sections described below:

#### **SECTION 70-94 LAND CONSERVATION**

The land set aside through this ordinance is protected through fee simple ownership, by Lee County or a permanent conservation easement to the County. This ordinance refers to a major subdivision, which is defined as development that involves the construction of any new street, publicly developed drainage-ways or the extension of public utilities. If a developer wishes to vary from the ordinance requirements, he/she will have to follow the County's standard variance procedures. Lee County staff feels that this will have a minimal impact on the amount of land that is protected because of the county's variance standards and the Board of Commissioners' commitment to greenspace protection.

Lee County staff has estimated that 80%, or 29,156.1 acres, of residentially zoned land in the County will become major subdivisions. This estimation is based on the current Future Land Use Map (please refer to Attachment B.) Approximately 7,289 acres of major subdivision land will be set aside for permanent greenspace protection through this ordinance. The remaining 7,289 acres that are zoned for residential use should be developed as minor subdivisions, which will set aside approximately 730 acres for open space protection. The county staff estimates that 40%, or 14,394 acres, of land that is zoned for residential use will be developed on well and septic tanks. The

total land protected through this ordinance will be 8,018 acres, or 17.3% of Lee County's total greenspace protection requirement.

- i. In order to protect open green space and to help keep the cost of development of a residential subdivision down, this chapter establishes density neutral development requirements by establishing the total number of units a specified amount of developable land will yield. This total yield must not include un-developable areas such as wetlands, storm water management ponds, etc. In order to do this, where the property is to be developed as a major subdivision, the following process must be followed:
  1. Delineate all un-buildable lands such as wetlands, steep slopes, creeks, rivers, lakes, storm water retention areas, etc.
  2. Then, out of the remaining buildable land, determine the number of dwelling units desired, provided that the maximum density allowed by this chapter is not exceeded.
  3. Once #2 is done, where the property is to be developed as a major subdivision, unless otherwise specified, a minimum of 25% of the remaining developable land shall be preserved. Where the property is in an R-1 or R-3 zoning district and is to be developed with wells and septic tanks, a minimum of 10% of the developable land shall be preserved. Preservation under this section shall be accomplished by doing the following. Delineate any potential conservation areas such as significant tree stands, fields, historic or cultural items, etc. These areas are to be preserved as a common area for the residents of the subdivision. A legal entity such as the original owner, a homeowner's association, or trust for maintenance and care must be provided to the county and filed with the subdivision files.
  4. Once potential conservation areas noted in #3 are delineated, the next step is to locate potential house sites on the remaining land. When potential house sites are located, streets should be aligned with the houses. Trails, separate from public roads, may also be used to connect the house sites to allow neighborhood connectivity. This ordinance provides for land to be protected in areas where the County has called for residential development. Land that is dedicated to the land conservation requirement cannot be used for any structures and must be kept in open space.

## **SECTION 70-92 RECREATION AREAS**

Every new residential subdivision, or new phase to an existing residential subdivision, shall have land, as herein described, dedicated to and accepted by the County to be used as parks,

public open space, or recreation areas. All new single-family detached major subdivisions, and minor subdivisions of sixteen (16) or more lots shall have at least one recreation area, as herein described, for each fifty (50) acres to be developed. Duplex subdivisions shall have at least one recreation area for each twenty-five (25) acres to be developed. Single-family attached, townhouse, and apartment developments shall have at least one recreation area for every ten (10) acres to be developed. Where there are future phases to subdivisions existing prior to the adoption of this chapter, the land area requirement shall not be interpreted to be retroactive so that it counts previously developed land, or land that has previously been given preliminary approval.

In developments that are to be developed in phases, this area shall be dedicated and accepted in conjunction with construction of the first phase of each section of the development containing the number of acres indicated above. For example, where a 200 acre tract is to be developed in eight 25 acre phases for a single-family detached development, phase 1 shall include the first recreation area, phase 3 shall include the second, and so forth.

For each development required to dedicate recreation land, six percent (6%) of the gross land area shall be provided for the recreational use, but in no case shall the area required exceed six (6) acres. Not over sixty (60) percent of the area reserved for recreation may be within the 100-year floodplain. Water surface area shall not count for more than fifteen percent (15%) of the total land area requirement.

1. All such dedicated land shall have at least a 30 foot wide access to a public road located within the development the recreation land is to serve.
2. The land so provided shall be contiguous and of suitable shape and condition for construction of a playground and a picnic shelter. Suitable condition shall mean that initial clearing, grading and stabilization is completed prior to dedication and acceptance in accordance with all applicable local and state standards.
3. If the developer constructs at least a playground and a picnic shelter or other acceptable recreation facilities as approved by the Lee County Recreation Department the total set-aside area required by this ordinance can be reduced to the amount actually required for the construction and maintenance of the facilities, but not less than 50% of the gross recreational set-aside requirements outlined herein.
4. If the developer wishes, the recreation area may be included in the common area required in this chapter.

Lee County may lease or sell land reserved for public parks to a qualified Property Owners Association with a deed restriction that the land be used exclusively for open space or public recreational purposes in perpetuity. The organization of a qualified Property Owners Association and its adequate financing for the discharge of its responsibilities shall be assumed through acceptable private deed covenants running with the land or other such documents as approved by the Board of Commissioners of Lee County. If the property owners association ceases to exist or stops maintaining the recreation site it shall revert to the ownership of the county.

The County defines acceptable recreation area uses as trails, boat ramps, small playgrounds and picnic facilities. This ordinance is designed to set aside useable land in developed areas that will add to the quality of life of residents. Lee County staff has estimated that the recreation areas ordinance will set aside approximately 0.4%, or 180 acres, of the County's total greenspace protection requirement. This estimate is based on a 100-acre average size residential development.

These two regulations alone will accomplish the goal of preserving open space within the county. It is, however, difficult to predict the exact amount for the purposes of this program. These are new methods that the county will continue to use and will eventually propose to the cities once they have been in effect in the county long enough to work out all complications.

## 6. Barriers to Achieving the Goal for Greenspace Protection

### Example #1: Floyd County

#### a. Legal barriers

- i. Outright purchase of 65,583 acres of land in Floyd County would cost \$200-300 million, making this avenue impractical as the sole method of protection. Fortunately there are other methods that could be used to achieve the 20 percent goal, but contain some barriers, which are described below.
  1. In general, the agricultural community is reluctant to release any rights to their property. While the City of Rome has had a system of zoning in place since the 1940's, the unincorporated county has only recently (December 1998) implemented zoning and many residents are wary of relinquishing any further property rights to any governmental entity. While this will not be an issue where property is purchased in fee simple, it will present a difficulty in gaining easements to properties. This may be significant, since we will be relying heavily on the use of easements as a cost-effective way to protect land from commercial and residential development.
  2. Currently there are no regulations (other than buffers between conflicting land uses and setbacks on rivers) that require or significantly encourage the development of conservation subdivisions with meaningful greenspace set aside. The Rome-Floyd County Planning Department and the Planning Commission are going to address this issue in 2001 and will look at incentives to encourage the preservation of greenspace in new subdivisions. We hope that local developers will be receptive to the idea of conservation subdivisions and plan to offer several workshops and seminars for developers and realtors on the benefits to the developer, homebuyer, and community. This may help with local developers, but with growth from Atlanta we are beginning to have some developments from firms based outside of the Floyd County. These firms may be less flexible in their site plans and less willing to set aside meaningful greenspace. To help address this, stronger regulations will also be considered for recommendation by the Planning Department.

#### b. Structural barriers

- i. Another potential barrier is money. Many potential avenues of fund-raising for this program are politically unfeasible at this time. Dissatisfaction with recent real estate property value assessments has lead to strong public sentiments against any type of tax increase. The mere mention of a SPLOST result in public condemnation of the office or individual associated with the effort, and the county commission has expressed that it will not be proposing any new SPLOST packages in the near future. Some potential solutions for raising funds are discussed in Section 8 **“Sources and Use of Funds.”** **6.Barriers to Achieving the Goal for Greenspace Protection**

## **Example #2: Generic Example**

### **a. Legal barriers**

- i. The County and the City have similar barriers that would impede both jurisdictions from achieving our community greenspace goals, which are described below:
  - 1. The existing ordinances and subdivision regulations in both the City and County do not provide developers with options or incentives to develop their land in an environmentally sensitive manner.
  - 2. Neither of the subdivision ordinances currently requires developers to set aside a percentage of a development for open space/recreation use.
  - 3. No mechanism to self-designate existing county/city owned land as permanently protected.

### **b. Structural barriers**

- i. In addition to the legal barriers described above, the County and the City have identified similar structural barriers that would cause an impediment to both jurisdictions from achieving our community greenspace goals, which include the following:
  - 1. Getting the public to recognize the importance of preserving open space will be the first barrier to overcome. With over 50 percent of the County in forested areas or farmlands, this will be a challenge.
  - 2. New ordinances with lower density requirements could force contractors to increase housing cost.
  - 3. Acquisition of properties through fee-simple title could also become difficult. Landowners unwilling to sell critical tracts of land could inflate property values making them too expensive to purchase.

## 7 Ten-year Strategy to Remove or Mitigate Legal and Structural Barriers

### Example #1: Floyd County

#### a. Legal barriers

i. The County has developed the following strategies to remove and/or mitigate the barriers identified in the previous section (Section 6).

1. The County is planning a program to present to the agricultural community as a whole that will demonstrate the potential financial benefits of permanent conservation easements. This program will be developed in conjunction with the Chattowah Open Land Trust. The first step will be to conduct an “Easement Workshop” with the Floyd County Tax Assessors office, local real estate attorneys and accountants. This workshop is scheduled for February 1, 2001.

Once this foundation is in place we can create a general program for the agricultural community and also be available for individual property owners to talk with to determine their exact situation and how participating in this program will affect them. Our goal is to get one or more individuals to donate an easement on their property in the first year of the Greenspace Program so that others can see how it affects that individual. Over time, this will lead to greater participation.

2. The Rome-Floyd County Planning Department will also look at ways to make the Agricultural-Residential (A-R) zone more effective as a method to protect agricultural land. Presently A-R is the only agricultural zone, but it allows many other uses and does little to encourage the protection of agriculture or large tracts of land. This issue will be addressed in 2001, with the possible creation of an agricultural preservation overlay zone to be developed in conjunction with the Greenspace Program.

#### b. Structural barriers

i. *(Include narrative discussion here on strategies that will be put in place to remove or mitigate the barriers described in Section 7).*

c. The following table *(use table format in guideline template in Section 7).*

## 7. Ten-year Strategy to Remove or Mitigate Legal and Structural Barriers

### Example #2: Generic Example

#### a. Legal barriers

- i. Both the County and City will pursue similar ordinances and regulations to overcome the barriers described in the previous section, by successfully implementing the following actions:
  1. Modify the existing subdivision regulations in the County and enact regulations in the City, which promote the protection of floodplains and wetlands and that sets aside a percentage of the total developed land for open space preservation.
  2. The County and the City will revise our Comprehensive Land Use Plans to make them consistent with the County's community greenspace program, revisions will also include recommendations for new or revised ordinances to advance our program.
  3. Encourage the State legislature to enact legislation that will allow local governments to adopt a locally administered program as an allowable means of permanent protection

#### b. Structural barriers

- i. The County and City will develop similar programs and work together to make local public officials and citizens more aware of the importance of preserving greenspace and convince them of the long-term benefits of protecting and preserving open space far out weigh the costs. These initiatives will include the following actions:
  1. Communicate regularly with the media giving them updates on the program and our progress toward reaching our community greenspace goals
  2. Develop educational programs for local civic groups and clubs.
  3. Work with the regional RDC to provide training/educational sessions for local elected officials on the benefits of preservation of greenspace and specific methods for accomplishing our goal.
  4. Develop a partnership with the school system in which County staff or their designee will provide educational programs for students.
  5. Through development of an extensive public relations and education campaign, educate county staff on how to carry out the plan objectives by using the tools available for the program, and on how to promote the plan to the community.
  6. Establish an advisory committee made up of local citizens to define short-term priorities and communicate with landowners on the long-term benefits of the program to the community and landowners as well.

7. Establish a Parks Foundation with responsibilities to educate citizens on the tax benefits associated with donating conservation easements or title.
8. To leverage greenspace grant funds both governments will seek funding from private foundations and individuals, federal and state grants, and local funds.
9. Both governments will work to acquire conservation easements on privately owned land.

- c. A timeline for implementing the above strategies for barriers describe in Section 6 is presented in the following table:

<b>Barriers, Strategies and Timeline for Accomplishment</b>		
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Strategy to Remove Barrier</b>	<b>Jurisdiction and Date to Implement</b>
<u>6.a.1 &amp;2.</u> Existing ordinances and regulations don't provide options or incentives for development in an environmentally sensitive manner, or set-asides for preservation of open space.	<u>7.a.1.</u> The County will modify and the City will enact regulations that promote floodplain and wetland protection, and set-aside percentages for open space preservation.	<u>7.a.1</u> County.....9/03 City.....10/01
	<u>7.a.2.</u> County and City will revise Land Use Plans with recommendations for new or revised ordinances and regulations for protection and preservation of lands.	<u>7.a.2.</u> County.....4/03 City of _____10/05
<u>6.a.3.</u> No mechanism to self-designate county/city land for permanent protection.	<u>7.a.3.</u> Encourage the legislature to enact legislation for that allow permanent protection at local level	<u>7.a.3.</u> County.....01/02 City.....01/02
<u>6.b.1.</u> Getting local recognition of the need to permanent protect greenspace in a county with 50% of its land area in forestry and agriculture.	<u>7.b.1-7.b.5</u> 1. Continuing media campaign to keep them abreast of program's progress. 2. Develop educational programs for civic groups and clubs. 3. Provide training and educational programs for elected officials. 4. Develop educational program for school system.	<u>7.b.1-7.b.5</u> County.....6/01 City.....06/01
<u>6.b.2</u> Perception of alternative development would cause an increase in housing.	<u>7.b.6.</u> Establish local advisory committee to promote program to landowners. <u>7.b.7</u> Establish a Parks Foundation with responsibilities to educate the public on the tax benefits of donating land through conservation easements or title.	<u>7.b.6.</u> County.....06/01 City.....06/01 <u>7.b.7</u> County.....06/01 City.....06/01
<u>6.b.3.</u> Inflated property values because of landowners unwilling to sale.	<u>7.b.8</u> Leverage greenspace funds with federal and other state funds, and local funds. <u>7.b.9</u> Seek conservation easements on private lands.	<u>7.b.8</u> County.....01/02 City.....01/02 <u>7.b.9</u> County.....01/02 City.....01/02

### Example #3: Generic Example

#### a. Legal barriers

- i. As discussed in Section 6, inadequate zoning ordinances may prevent the County and the Cities of X, Y, and Z from achieving the County's greenspace goal. The County and the Cities of X, Y, and Z are taking similar action to address this issue as follows:
  1. Each participating jurisdiction will reconcile its Plan to show acreage and land types targeted for permanent protection as proposed in the County's community greenspace program.
  2. Comprehensive Plan updates for each jurisdiction will include enhanced provisions for development guidelines, which will be used as a guide to create new and/or revised zoning ordinances and regulations.
  3. Each participating jurisdiction will pursue the following ordinances and regulations to alleviate legal barriers that may impede the County's greenspace goal:
    - a. Revise single-family residential zoning to require that the current requirements for set-asides of open space within a residential development meet the definition of greenspace as defined by the Georgia Greenspace Program administrative rules.
    - b. Develop new ordinances for conservation subdivisions that will require a set aside of 10-20 percent of land as permanently protected greenspace within such a development. The County ordinance will require a 20% set-aside, with the Cities of X, Y, and Z requiring 10, 15, and 10 percents, respectively.
- ii. Additional ordinances and regulations that will be used only by the County and the City of Z are described below:
  1. The County will create an agricultural overlay zone to assist in the preservation of farmland as described in Section 3, Statement of Vision and Goals.
  2. The County will revise its zoning ordinance to establish an agricultural zone that limits other uses.
  3. The City of Z will develop a Conservation Design Development District that will be an overlay zone that will preserve significant tracts of open space while allowing gross development densities similar to that of the conventional subdivisions in the city. The primary goals of this district are to preserve and protect significant natural and cultural resources while providing reasonable opportunities for growth and development.

b. Structural barriers

i. Structural barriers that the County and its participating municipalities are facing were described in Section 6. To remove or mitigate for these barriers, the County and the Cities of X, Y, and Z are taking similar action to secure additional funds, seek land donations, and develop conservation easement programs as follows:

1. Each participating jurisdictions will work together to establish a conservation easement program in conjunction with \_\_\_\_\_ Land Trust that will be designed to educate elected officials, developers, and the real estate community, on the County's community greenspace program goals. The program's emphasis will focus on:

- a. The benefits of permanently protecting community greenspace through conservation subdivisions and other urban preservation methods.
- b. Promotion of the program to local landowners on the benefits preserving land through conservation easements.
- c. Work with each jurisdiction's tax assessor's office on establishing a community greenspace tax policy to use as an incentive for landowners to donate land.

2. Each participating jurisdiction will seek local funding through a SPLOST referendum specifically to support our community greenspace program.

ii. Measures that only the County will use to remove or mitigate barriers are described below:

1. Develop an educational program targeted specifically for the agricultural community to promote the concept of conservation easements.
2. Conduct a series of workshops for the benefit of the County tax assessor's office, local real estate attorneys and accountants.

c. The barriers and strategies to remove or mitigate for them are summarized in the table below with a timeline for implementation.

<b>Barriers, Strategies and Timeline for Accomplishment</b>		
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Strategy to Remove Barrier</b>	<b>Jurisdiction and Date to Implement</b>
<u>6.a.i.1. –6.a.i.2</u> Comprehensive Plans scheduled for updates 2006-2010 and have insufficient policies to establish new or revised ordinances and regulations.	<u>7.a.i.1. – 7.a.i. 2.</u> Advance schedule to update Comprehensive Plans to reconcile them with community greenspace programs, and to enhance the policies for development of new or revised ordinances and regulations	<u>7.a.i.1. – 7.a.i..2.</u> County.....8/03 City of X.....5/04 City of Y.....8/04 City of Z.....9/04
<u>6.a.i.3</u> Open space set-aside under current zoning ordinances do not meet the state’s definition for greenspace	<u>7.a.i.3.a.</u> Revise zoning ordinances to require current set-asides for open space within residential developments meet the state’s definition for greenspace.	<u>7.a.i.3.a.</u> County.....2/02 City of X.....9/01 City of Y.....3/02 City of Z.....5/02
<u>6.a.i.4.</u> Development regulations don’t allow for conservation subdivisions	<u>7.a.i.3.b.</u> Develop new ordinances for conservation subdivisions that require set-asides of 10-20% of land for permanent protection.	<u>7.a.i.3.b.</u> County.....10/02 City of X.....5/03 City of Y.....2/03 City of Z.....8/03
<u>6.a.ii.1</u> Inadequate zoning for rural areas of the county.	<u>7.a.ii.1.</u> The County will create an agricultural overlay zone.	<u>7.a.ii.1</u> County (only).....10/03
	<u>7.a.ii.2.</u> The County will revise its zoning ordinance to establish an agricultural zone that limits other uses.	<u>7.a.ii.2.</u> County (only).....10/03
<u>6.a.ii.2</u> Existing zoning ordinances don’t allow for designation of conservation areas.	<u>7.a.ii.3.</u> The City of Z will develop a Conservation Design Development District t - an overlay zone that will preserve significant tracts of open space.	City of Z (only).....8/03
<u>6.b.i.1</u> Reluctance of elected officials and private landowners supporting the program.	<u>7.b.i.1.</u> Establish educational program with _____ Land Trust to promote the county’s greenspace program and the benefits of conservation easements.	All jurisdictions.....5/02
<u>6.b.i.2</u> Insufficient funds to fully support the program.	<u>7.b.i.2.</u> Seek local funding through a SPLOST referendum specifically to support our community greenspace programs, and seek additional federal and grants.	All jurisdictions.....11/04

<b>Barriers, Strategies and Timeline for Accomplishment</b>		
<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Strategy to Remove Barrier</b>	<b>Jurisdiction and Date to Implement</b>
<u>6.b.ii.1</u> Rising land prices and taxes in rural areas may force some landowners to sell desirable land that is targeted for the greenspace program.	<u>7.b.ii.1</u> Develop an educational program targeted specifically for the agricultural community to promote the concept of conservation easements.	County (only).....5/02
<u>6.b.ii.2.</u> Lack of interest and knowledge about tax benefits of preserving lands in conservation easements.	<u>7.b.ii.2</u> Conduct a series of workshops for the benefit of the County tax assessor's office, local real estate attorneys, developers, and accountants.	County (only).....8/02

## 8. Funding (Generic Example)

- a. Two of the municipalities within \_\_\_\_\_ County have elected to participate in a cooperative program with the County and to establish independent greenspace trust funds. The table presented below identifies the participating jurisdictions and the percentage of the county's greenspace grant allocation which each will receive.

### FY-02 Grant Award Shares for Participating Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	2000 Census	% of County 2000 Census
County (plus cities without separate trust funds)	47,631	54.1%
City A	9,347	10.6%
City B	31,086	35.3%
Totals	88,064	100%

- b. This section describes the costs associated with the acquisition of community greenspace and the fund sources that will be sought to acquire lands for our community greenspace program.
- i. The following discussion and table provide an estimate of our combined total costs to acquire the property interests to meet the County's greenspace goal as described in this program submittal:

Excluding the existing permanently protected acreage within the county, we need to preserve an additional 35,000 acres to achieve \_\_\_\_\_ County's community greenspace goal. As described previously, a large portion of \_\_\_\_\_ County's community greenspace will be acquired using enhanced ordinances and regulatory tools to set aside open space within residential and commercial developments and environmentally sensitive lands. We expect to achieve at least 65% (22,750 acres) of our currently unprotected greenspace by using such tools.

Lands proposed for protection using enhanced ordinances and regulatory measures will be permanently protected through conservation easements and/or restrictive covenants that run in perpetuity with the land. At least 17,062.5 acres (75%) of these lands will be environmentally sensitive areas, with the remaining 5,687.5 acres (25%) contained within residential and commercial developments.

As discussed in section \_\_\_\_, we expect to preserve at least another 5,250 acres (15% of currently unprotected lands) through donated conservation easements on desirable agricultural and other environmentally sensitive lands in the more rural areas of the county, and another 3,500 acres (10%) through the purchase of development rights. The remaining 3,500 acres (10%) would be obtained through fee-simple acquisitions, making a total of 7,000 acres that would be purchased.

Currently, the average market value of urban upland areas is about \$25,000 per acre. We expect land values to increase incrementally at least \$1,000 per year over the next 30 years. At the current rate of growth, we would need to use a combination of tools to protect land in targeted upland areas. Using a combination of ordinances, development regulations, and fee-simple acquisitions, we expect to permanently protect 9,187.5 acres of urban uplands over the course of our program, with fee-simple purchases making up 3,500 acres.

Based on a 15-year window to permanently protect the proposed 9,187.5 acres, the annual average cost per acre would be about \$32,000. Protecting on average about 379 acres per year of those lands that would be set aside through local ordinances and development regulations (5,687.5 acres), the total estimated value would be about \$181,996,995. We hope to complete our fee-simple acquisitions of upland areas over a 10-year period. By purchasing on average 350 acres per year at an annual average cost of about \$29,500 per acre, it will cost us about \$103,250,000 to complete this task.

The average market value for desirable agricultural lands that are under the pressure of development is currently about \$10,000 per acre. These lands are expected to increase incrementally about \$1,000 per acre per year. Of the 8,750 acres of agricultural lands that are targeted for our program, we expect to purchase the development rights on 3,500 acres and seek donated conservation easements for the remaining 5,250 acres.

We hope to purchase the development rights on choice agricultural lands that are on the perimeter of urban areas of the county. By using purchase of development rights in conjunction with zoning ordinances that are designed to curtail residential development in areas zoned for agricultural use, we hope to complete our purchases over the next 20 years. The average annual acreage purchased over this time period would be about 175 acres per year, with an average cost of about \$19,500 per acre. We expect the total cost of these lands at the end of this 20-year period would be about \$68,250,000.

We will work to obtain conservation easements on the remaining 5,250 acres in the more rural areas of the county. The current land values in these areas of the county are about \$5,000 per acre. As development continues over the next 30 years, land values are expected to increase on average about \$500 per year, and the average annual cost would be about \$12,250 per acre. Anticipating that we would protect on average 175 acres per year over the next 30 years, we would leverage our cost of acquisition about \$64,312,500.

As discussed previously, we hope to permanently protect 17,062.5 acres of environmentally sensitive lands. Although ordinances and regulations do not offer permanent protection, such tools will allow us to temporarily preserve these lands until measures are put in place to permanently protect them. Lands in this category are currently valued at about \$1000 per acre and would not be expected to increase appreciably in value because of regulatory and development restrictions on them.

We do not intend to purchase environmentally sensitive lands outright but expect that developers and private landowners will work with the county and/or land trust organizations to permanently protect them. Permanently protecting this 17,062.5 acres would leverage our costs of acquisition about \$17,062,500

Our costs for acquisition services will vary depending upon acreage of parcels, whether land is in urban or in the more outlying areas, and whether the landowner or developer pays for surveys and other acquisition costs. The costs for surveys tend to be higher in urban areas and are usually the largest portion of the costs of acquisition.

Lands proposed for fee-simple purchase would also include pro rata property taxes, which would vary depending upon the time of year of closing. Based on the information previously presented, we expect costs of acquisition for fee-simple purchases would be about 20% of the total price of land. Costs of acquisition for lands that would be donated or placed in conservation easements would tend to be about 5%-10% of value of the land.

At this time we estimate that our total combined costs of acquisition for fee-simple purchase would be about \$34,300,000. The total combined costs of acquisition for land preserved through ordinances and regulations would be about \$995,297 and conservation easement title would be about \$6,431,250.

- ii. The following table provides a summary of our total combined estimated costs to implement our entire program as described above:

**Estimated Total Land Value and Costs to Acquire Property Interests**

	<b>Dollars</b>
Fee-simple acquisition 20%	171,500,000
Privately held or gifts of land value 65%	199,059,495
Easement title donated land value 15%	64,312,500
Acquisition services (appraisals, surveys, title work and insurance, closing costs, prorated taxes, and attorney’s fees – 7-10% of value of title acquired)	40,,000,000
Total estimated cost to protect lands totaling the program goal	\$474,871,995

The following discussion and table describe the sources of funds that the participating jurisdictions will seek to implement the combined acquisitions of community greenspace as described in this program submittal:

In addition to the State’s greenspace funds, \_\_\_\_\_ County and its participating municipalities will seek funds from the organizations listed in the table presented below and will continue to identify fund sources that may become available in the future. Previously, we had applied for grants that were available through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, TEA-21 Enhancement Funds, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The requirements for using these funds are comparable to the purposes of the community greenspace program and will be used to complement our greenspace grant.

Other fund sources that we have identified and are preparing to apply for include grants available through the Land Conservation Fund, Clean Water Act Section 319, Farmland Protection Program, Urban & Community Forestry Grant, Community Development Block Grant, Recreational Assistance Fund, Georgia Recreational Trails Program, and the Governor's Discretionary Fund.

The County has committed to raising additional funds through a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax and developing a voluntary program for citizens to make donations by rounding their monthly utility bills to the nearest dollar. Each participating local government has committed to include funding for the program in its annual budget, and each will seek land donations as another means to leverage the funds for the community program.

The County and its participating municipalities will continue to monitor databases and literature to find other federal, state, and private sources that would be applicable to our community greenspace funds. Applicable and available fund sources will be applied for annually or as specified by the agency or organization supplying the funds.

Other than those funds that have already been approved, the fund sources presented in the table below are potential funds that have been identified and that may be available over the next 30 years. Calculations for state greenspace grant funds are based on an average increase of 5% every four years over the 30 year time period. The dollar figures for the other funds listed are based on the average grant awarded by these agencies and organizations. The actual grant award could exceed or be less than the average amount.

Federal and state grants may not be available on an annual basis; therefore, the figures in the table that follows show fixed amounts, with the participating jurisdictions receiving on average about three to five grants over a 30-year period.

### Estimated Total Sources of Funds for Acquisition

	<b>Dollars</b>
State greenspace funds	43,532,263
Other state grant funds:	
Application In Process	
Governor's discretionary fund	70,000
Recreational Trails Program	30,000
Recreational Assistance Fund	30,000
Urban & Community Forestry Grant	500,000
Local governmental funds:	
General revenues	3,000,000
SPLOST	75,000,000
Impact fees (evaluating for future funding)	
Storm-water utility fees (evaluating for future funding)	
"Round-up"	5,000,000
Federal grant funds	
Approved Grants	
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (flood protection funds)	5,000,000
North American Wetlands Conservation Act	1,500,000
TEA-21 (transportation enhancement funds)	2,000,000
Application In Process	
Land and Water Conservation Fund (recreation funds)	1,000,000
Clean Water Act Section 319	2,000,000
Farmland Protection Program	2,000,000
CDBG Block Grants (community enhancement funds)	10,000,000
Private gifts of funds (identify individually)	
ABC Foundation	1,000,000
DEF Foundation	1,000,000
GHJ Foundation	500,000
ABC Family	250,000
DEF Family	500,000
Privately held and/or gifts of land value	263,371,995
Total estimated sources to acquire lands for the program goal	<b>417,284,258</b>

Based on our current estimates, we will have a budget shortfall for land acquisitions of about \$68,318,988 toward achieving our community greenspace goal. The participating jurisdictions believe that we will be able to overcome this deficit over the next 30 years by continuing to seek other funds and implementing the local funding sources that are currently being evaluated by our governing bodies.

c. This section describes the combined funding that the participating jurisdictions will use to support the planning that would be needed to develop and operate the county's community greenspace program. Staff from each participating jurisdiction's \_\_\_\_\_ Department will be the principal parties involved with planning the county's program. Staff salaries and other associated cost will be financed through each respective jurisdiction's general budget over the next 20 years. The estimated costs for staff and other administrative costs over the next 20 years will average approximately \_\_\_\_\_ per year.

A voluntary Greenspace Advisory Board will supplement county and municipal staff by providing planning assistance. The Advisory Board will prioritize and make recommendations for property acquisitions, and provide support for promoting our conservation easement program. The structure and duties of the Advisory Board are discussed further in Section \_\_\_\_.

- d. As discussed previously in Section 3, Statement of Vision and Goals, the participating jurisdictions have proposed to expand 5 parks that lie within the Cities of A and B and develop 4 regional parks within the county, and continue development of our greenway and trail system. These properties will be developed using funds from our proposed SPLOST, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, TEA-21 Grants, Recreational Trails Program, Community Development Block Grant, Local Development Fund, and local governments' recreation budget.

The estimated total cost for development of parks and our trail and greenway system is projected to be \$20,000,000 over the next 30 years. The fund amounts shown in the table below are based on the assumption that these or similar sources would be available for the 30-year period. The participating jurisdictions will continue to research funding availability and will pursue additional fund sources, as they become available.

The costs presented in the following table include the combined costs and fund sources for the participating jurisdictions for planned facilities on community greenspace properties:

**Estimated Total Sources of Funds Needed for Improvements**

	<b>Dollars</b>
Local governments:	
Recreation general budget	500,000
SPLOST	12,200,000
State funds:	
Local Development Fund	750,000
Recreational Trails Program	500,000
Federal Grants:	
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program	1,050,000
TEA-21 Grant	3,000,000
Community Development Block Grant	2,000,000
<b>Total estimated fund sources for improvements to properties</b>	<b>20,000,000</b>

- e. Upon achieving our community greenspace goal, the participating counties will have combined total of 35,000 acres of community greenspace that will have to be maintained, secured, and operated to some degree. As discussed previously in Section 8.b.i., we expect that 90% of our community greenspace will be held in conservation easements or restrictive covenants in the deed that would disallow development or limit it to passive recreation. These properties will include land that will be set aside within residential and commercial developments, environmental sensitive lands, donated agricultural conservation easements, and agricultural lands with development rights purchased.

These lands would be monitored to ensure that title agreements and deed restrictions are not being violated. We will conduct monitoring and other stewardship activities in a cooperative effort with the \_\_\_\_\_ Land Trust and a citizen greenspace volunteer group. An annual fee of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for monitoring conservation easements will be paid to the \_\_\_\_\_ Land Trust from our conservation fund.

The remaining 10% of our proposed community greenspace would be acquired by purchase. This acreage includes 3,500 acres of urban upland areas that will be developed into parks or park expansions for passive recreation. These properties would be maintained and operated by county or municipal staff. Developed facilities would be monitored for security for the most part by local police departments and in certain areas by contracted security. We are also looking at ways to establish neighborhood watch groups to monitor greenways and trails in areas that may be more isolated.

The costs associated with park maintenance will be paid through local governments' general budgets, and supplemented with assistance from volunteers from environmental and conservation organizations, and interested local citizens.

The following table presents the combined funding that the participating jurisdictions expect will be needed during the next 30 years to carry out the stewardship activities, inclusive of operations, maintenance, and security, as described above:

**Estimated Total Sources of Funds Needed for Stewardship**

	<b>Dollars</b>
Monitoring conservation easements	6,000,000
Maintenance of park and greenway/trail system	10,000,000
Operations of parks	20,000,000
Security of parks and greenway/trail system	3,900,000
Total	<b>40,000,000</b>

## 9. Summary of Implementation Strategy and Schedule (Walker County)

Walker County expects to achieve its goal of greenspace protection in 2032.

### b. Summary of Greenspace Protection Upon Attaining the Goal

Ownership	Acreage	% of County
Federal	20,112	7.0
State	18,442	6.4
Walker County RR and SR Easmt.	232	0.7
County or Land Trust	14,988	5.9
City of Chickamauga	49	
Private, Lula Lake Land Trust	3,600	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>57,423</b>	<b>20%</b>

i. Walker County at the present time is allowing property owners to deed conservation easements to the County with permanent restrictive covenants, or to put land into private land trusts of their choosing, with documentation presented to the County. This may be amended as we go through the planned development training.

### a. Permanent Protection of Lands Currently Owned by Local Governments

Tool for Protection	Acreage	Year to Provide Protection
Permanent Restrictive Covenant	232	2003

### d. Acquisition of New Lands by Local Governments

Tool for Protection	Acreage	Year to Provide Protection
Conservation Easement		2002-2032
Purchase		
Donation	6438	
Acquisition by development ordinance	1691	
Fee simple acquisition; negotiated easements		
Purchase	4204	2002-2032
Donation		
DNR purchases	1,327	2002-2032
Land Trust Expansion	1,327	2002-2032
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,987</b>	

**e. Use of Zoning and Development Ordinances for Greenspace Protection**

<b>Tool for Protection</b>	<b>Year to Implement</b>
Incorporating the community greenspace program into the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan	2004
Modify existing subdivision regulations to set aside 20% greenspace	2003
Adopt requirements that there be and-disturbing activities within 40 feet of tributaries, and 25 feet of all other waters. Set a 50-foot setback as greenway on trout streams, allowing no land-disturbing activities within it.	2003

i. Walker County has been in the process of establishing environmentally protective policies since 2000. The administration and staff remains committed to this effort, and will continue to draft new ordinances and amendments to its present regulations as we receive training and obtain guidance from professionals with proven results. Our expected date for a complete set of protective ordinances and policies is February 2003. Although the required date for providing an updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan is 2006, we expect to have it finished in 2004.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Please use the following style for the report:

- Use Arial Regular font, 11 point, single-spaced.
- Set margins for one inch, on all four sides of the page.
- Double-space between paragraphs, and begin the first line at the left-hand margin.
- Number all pages consecutively, at the lower right-hand corner of the page.
- Use the chapter and section structure that appears in the template, and begin each chapter at the top of a new page

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Natural Resources will issue and administer separate grants to the participating county and municipalities, but the county must submit one consolidated community greenspace program for itself and all participating municipalities as described in this guidance document.

<sup>3</sup> Year 2000 county census figures are available on the worldwide web at address:

[www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t4/tab01.xls](http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t4/tab01.xls)

Year 2000 census figures for incorporated places of 100,000 or more are located at address:

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As of this writing, census figures were not yet available for county portions of these municipalities or for municipalities smaller than 100,000 people.

County population estimates for 2001 are located at address:

<http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/counties/tables/CO-EST2001-07/CO-EST2001-07-13.php>

City population estimates for 1999 are located at address:

[www.census.gov/population/estimates/metro-city/plrank.txt](http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/metro-city/plrank.txt)

Please include, for any municipalities that lie partly within the county, only the population that the U.S. Census Bureau indicates lies within the county.

<sup>4</sup> To the degree that these future land-use plans differ from the greenspace program vision described in Chapter 3, paragraph c, of the submittal and shown in the greenspace vision map in Appendix F, the county and participating cities will have to amend their future land-use plans so they are consistent with the greenspace program vision. The discussion at Chapter 4, paragraph d, should end with a brief discussion of the changes the county and cities will need to make.

<sup>5</sup> The percentage figure in this statement must be at least 20 percent of the county's base acreage, as calculated in paragraph 3.b of the report.

<sup>6</sup> See Attachment \_\_: "County Acreage Data." The county may use the acreage figures shown in this report, or may use other figures if the county can document that they are more accurate.

<sup>7</sup> This map should be Appendix F to the county's submittal. It should show the county and municipal boundaries and all rivers, streams, lakes, and roads. It should also show the location and boundaries of (1) existing permanently protected greenspace, (2) greenspace which is temporarily protected by public ownership and planned to receive permanent protection, and (3) the locations of land types which are in private ownership and planned to be acquired or otherwise given permanent protection. For example, if the county expects to protect half the 100-year floodplain with fee-simple acquisition or conservation easements but does not know exactly which properties it will be able to protect, the map should show all 100-year floodplain, and the narrative and table should indicate that half of the floodplain is proposed for protection. Or if the county proposes to acquire development rights to one-quarter of the highly erodible lands within its jurisdiction but does not know which properties will be available, the map should show all highly erodible areas, and the narrative and table should indicate that 25% of these areas are proposed for protection.

<sup>8</sup> The list of land types includes some commonly chosen types but is not all-inclusive.

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In the column entitled “Greenspace Goals,” please insert the following letters as appropriate to identify the most important goal or goals which each land type will be used to support:

- A. Water quality protection for rivers, streams, and lakes;
- B. Flood protection;
- C. Wetlands protection;
- D. Reduction of erosion through protection of steep slopes, areas with erodible soils, and stream banks;
- E. Protection of riparian buffers and other areas that serve as natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species;
- F. Scenic protection;
- G. Provision of recreation in the form of boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, running, jogging, biking, walking, skating, birding, riding horses, observing or photographic nature, picnicking, playing non-organized sports, or engaging in free play; and
- H. Connection of existing or planned areas contributing to the goals set out in this paragraph.

(Rules of the Georgia Greenspace Program, Rule 391-1-4-.02(j))

<sup>9</sup> Please include here a general discussion of greenspace protection tools which all jurisdictions have in common—for example, development ordinances—followed by individual discussions of tools which are unique to a jurisdiction; the discussion should be brief, and a copy of the pertinent portions of any ordinances should be attached in Appendix H.

<sup>10</sup> See attached table of federal and state lands that the county may count as permanently protected greenspace.

<sup>11</sup> See attached list of state lands that are not yet dedicated as Heritage Preserves.

<sup>12</sup> Column total in “% of County” must be at least 20.0.

<sup>13</sup> This chapter should present a general discussion of legal and structural barriers which all jurisdictions have in common—for example, ordinances which do not allow performance-based ordinances or which do not allow the local governments to require greenspace set-asides during the development process—followed by brief individual discussions of barriers which are unique to a jurisdiction.

<sup>14</sup> This chapter should present a general discussion of which strategies all jurisdictions expect to use—for example, amendment of development ordinances to allow the local government to require that greenspace be set aside as properties are developed—followed by brief individual discussions of strategies which are unique to any jurisdiction. Consider each of these listed strategies as an example; do not include the ones your program will not use. The list is not intended to be exhaustive. You should feel free to describe here other tools and strategies that your program will use.

<sup>15</sup> Year 2000 county census figures are available on the worldwide web at address:

[www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t4/tab01.xls](http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t4/tab01.xls)

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