

# REGIONAL VISION, GOALS AND POLICIES

## Regional Vision

The mission of the RVRC shall be to create, promote, and foster the orderly growth and economic prosperity for our region.

The vision of the RVRC is a region where current and future generations succeed at home, at work, and in their communities.

Core Values:

- Accountability • Collaboration • Community • Innovation • Diversity •
- Integrity • Good Stewardship •

## Regional Goals and Policies

### Natural and Cultural Resources

#### *Goal*

The RVRC will not only promote the protection of natural resources within the Region by encouraging sustainable development practices, but will also work to educate local governments and citizens on the importance of protecting natural resources within individual communities, and the Region as a whole.

#### *Regional Policies*

- Educate local governments to ensure soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution control measures and practices conform to the minimum requirements outlined by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Service.
- Promote adopt-a-stream activities on all streams not meeting water quality standards.
- Support and promote funding for the study and protection of the region's surface and groundwater resources.
- Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Celebrate the region's agricultural heritage by continuing economic assistance efforts to rejuvenate agricultural industries within the region.
- Work with the federal, state, regional, county and city agencies to conserve and enhance our valuable water resources as an economic, recreational and natural asset.

## Land Use

### *Goal*

The RVRC will employ both proven and modern planning techniques to encourage and facilitate sustainable development practices, compact development, strong traditional and alternative transportation options, housing choices for all citizens, green space protection/development, et al. These different elements will in turn work together to foster sustainable and healthy communities.

### *Regional Policies*

- Promote the development, adoption and implementation of land use regulations that will result in a fiscally responsible quality living environment.
- Develop design guidelines and make available to local merchants, builders, etc.
- Provide alternative transportation in new development and retrofit for alternative transportation in developed areas.
- Update zoning ordinances to allow mixed uses and higher density development where appropriate.
- Encourage and create innovative design practices that preserve open space.
- The River Valley Regional Commission will work to preserve the region's cultural and historic resources and use these assets to develop and sustain the tourism industry.
- Work with local Land Banks to get properties cleared and back on the tax roll.

## Housing and Neighborhood Development

### *Goal*

The RVRC will promote development of sustainable neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing choices, parks, green space, schools, and retail opportunities interconnected with a well-developed traditional and alternative transportation infrastructure.

### *Regional Policies*

- Educate residents on home ownership. Also create, adopt, and regularly update an affordable housing strategy that examines the tools and mechanisms to facilitate affordable housing. The strategy should be developed in partnership with local citizens and developers, and should be implemented and monitored.
- Promote a higher density and range of housing choices and a variety of dwelling types in all neighborhoods that have appropriate infrastructure.
- Develop in areas already served by municipal or county utilities and streets.
- Change zoning ordinances to accommodate loft living and mother-in-law suites.

- Work with counties and cities in the region to implement residential code enforcement including health and safety standards for manufactured homes.
- Tax manufactured housing as real property where appropriate.
- Utilize federal, state and non-profit rehabilitation loan and grant assistance programs for maintenance assistance, home equity conversion mortgage programs, shared housing programs and smaller affordable low and moderate income housing units to meet housing challenges.
- Work with state agencies, federal agencies, and local governments to help preserve existing housing stock and promote the development of quality affordable housing in the region by seeking local, state and federal funding.
- Develop a regional code enforcement and building inspection program.

## **Community Facilities and Services**

### ***Goal***

The RVRC will work to ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the region to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life for all the region's residents.

### ***Regional Policies***

- Conduct infrastructure and facility expansions assessment to support future demands.
- Keep Hazard Mitigation Plans current to help ensure continued protection of public health and safety.
- Use existing facility systems to direct growth to appropriate areas.
- Utilize state, federal, and local funding sources to fund infrastructure projects, (e.g. water, sewer, gas, streets, parks) for city and county governments.
- Work with local telecommunication provider to identify telecommunication needs and enhance the level of telecommunication services within the Region.
- Pursue Broadband access throughout the region.

## Transportation

### **Goal**

By encouraging proper maintenance and efficient expansion of existing transportation infrastructure and development of alternative transportation options, the RVRC will promote a varied and versatile transportation system within communities and the region.

### **Regional Policies**

- Concentrate activities where possible. Encourage pedestrian and transit travel by creating 'nodes' of high density, mixed development that are linked by convenient transit service. Retain strong downtowns and CBD's by concentrating commercial activities in these areas.
- Encourage shared parking.
- Create a network of well-connected lots, blocks streets and paths. Keep streets narrow and use traffic calming measures to minimize vehicle speeds.
- Participate in and support the regional transit system.
- Identify potential transportation programs to meet public transportation needs.
- Work with local governments, state agencies and federal agencies to implement TIA and other programs to improve the transportation network in the region.
- Assist local government's efforts with RC staff support, including GIS support, to receive state and federal funding to provide and maintain transportation and facility infrastructure capable of meeting community needs.
- Promote initiatives aimed at the development and implementation of alternative transportation options as a means of increasing connectivity, walkability, bike-ability, and health.
- Provide alternative transportation in new development and retrofit transportation infrastructure in existing developed areas.
- Assist local governments to improve existing rail lines in the region to allow for freight and passenger trains.
- Pursue high-speed rail linkage between Columbus and Atlanta.

## Economic Development

### *Goal*

Develop the People Resources of the Region. Sustain and Improve the Land Assets of the Region.

### *Regional Policies*

- Provide quality, genuine places and experiences for visitors.
- Assist the Workforce of the region gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for regional jobs in the 21st Century.
- Support the Recruitment, Retention and Expansion of Businesses in the region.
- Assist the region in sustaining and improving Quality of Life.
- Foster Community Leadership.
- Support Agriculture.
- Improve Infrastructure.
- Support Main Street and Downtown Improvements.
- Improve Housing Stock.
- Maintain environmental integrity in the region.
- Market the Revolving Loan Fund programs throughout the region.

## Workforce Development

### *Goal*

The Middle Flint Workforce Development area will provide educational and training opportunities to eligible individuals to increase knowledge and skill levels that can lead to personal self-sufficiency and meeting the needs of business and employers. Collaborate with the businesses and employers to identify their needs and coordinate with area community resources (Technical Colleges, Universities, Colleges, etc...) To align educational, programs of study, and training services to meet those needs. By increasing educational and skills levels, the area seeks to attract new business and industry into the local area to provide more available job opportunities.

### *Regional Policies*

- Improve educational and skill levels to provide more job opportunities.
- Provide array of services that is valuable to customers and employers to meet their needs.
- Collaborate with partners, economic development agencies, employers, community resources to develop a workforce system that is responsive to employers and individuals.
- Promote awareness of educational opportunities and occupational skilled trades, demand and growth job sectors to prepare individuals for employment. Utilizing labor market information and data as a tool to make informed decisions.

- Provide work based learning opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment and limited work experience to improve skill levels.

## Education

### *Goal*

By fostering programs and initiatives that aim to increase educational opportunities within the region, the RVRC will promote increased educational attainment among citizens of the region, which will lead to a stronger workforce, greater economic development opportunities, and opportunities to attract new citizens to the region, resulting in more sustainable and healthy communities.

### *Regional Policies*

- Work with local and school officials, colleges, chambers of commerce, etc. to develop programs/activities to elevate the region's educational attainment to a level comparable with the State of Georgia.
- Participate with agencies to develop workforce-training activities.

## Health and Human Services

### *Goal*

The AAA ADRC – Aging and Disability Resource Connection will collaborate with community organizations to create and sustain a livable community that promotes health and well-being for older adults and disabled. This will be achieved through information, education, and accessibility to services and resources.

### *Regional Policies*

- Be consumer oriented in answering the needs and questions to our community and respect the self-worth of all people.
- Have the forethought to be proactive in the evolving future of change.
- Keep the database updated and accurate in providing the best screening and assessments possible.
- Respond to the changing needs of our community and advocate in their behalf.
- Actively pursue new partnerships and continue to establish trust and commitment from those in existence.
- Promote the use of prevention benefits in securing a healthy future and in ensuring everyone has the opportunity to “Age in Place.”
- Strive for excellence.

- The River Valley AAA continually stays abreast of the core values of the Division of Aging Services and the Administration on Aging. These values are incorporated into our principles providing the roadmap as we strive to live and age well.

## **Regional Cooperation**

### ***Goal***

The RVRC will foster cooperation between neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations, identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer, or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues.

### ***Regional Policies***

- Update Service Delivery Strategies to help ensure the efficient delivery of services.
- Share information between local governments to enhance efficiency.
- Train local government officials through opportunities offered by the Carl Vinson Institute, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, Georgia Planning Association, Georgia Association of Zoning Administrators or others to enhance their leadership abilities.