

## NOTICE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON REVIEW OF ELIGIBLE AREA MAPS FOR USDA RURAL HOUSING PROGRAMS

USDA Rural Development has received and reviewed comments on areas being reviewed for continued eligibility under the USDA Rural Housing programs. During the review, all comments were considered.

Below is a summary of the comments received for the rural area review in the state of Georgia.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

### **Georgia**

Regarding areas that were considered for ineligibility (data suggested changing from rural to non-rural) in the following locations:

Perry, Pooler and Richmond Hill - The study included city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent. These areas may meet the criteria for grandfathering as “rural in character”. Rural Development received one comment, it stated “The Perry area is rural in nature and provides an area for rural development in Houston County. Without USDA housing in the Perry area, many young people would not be able to afford to buy their own house.”

Villa Rica - The city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent, were studied. Rural Development received one comment, it stated “Please, do not remove Villa Rica from Eligible Areas under the USDA program.”

Additional areas were under review in Savannah, Dalton, Hinesville, Statesboro, Warner Robins, Winder, Covington, Cusseta and Brunswick, Georgia. No further public comments were received.

Based on the review of the areas within the state of Georgia using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and rural area guidance located in Handbook [HB-1-3550, Chapter 5](#), the results of rural eligibility designation for all areas under consideration in Georgia are listed below. (Areas proposed to change are indicated):

Areas that have been annexed by ineligible cities/towns and became ineligible in the following locations, the rural eligibility designation is proposed to change in these areas:

**Savannah** – There are two small areas annexed since the last review. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of the review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will become ineligible for Rural Development housing programs.

**Dalton** – There are areas annexed near the Dalton Municipal Airport since the last review. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of the review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will become ineligible for Rural Development housing programs.

**Hinesville** - The areas annexed since the last review (Cypress Cove, Governors Quarters, Liberty Park areas) and minor mapping corrections were studied. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of the review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will become ineligible for Rural Development housing programs.

The following areas were being considered for new eligibility (proposed to change from non-rural to rural), the rural eligibility designation is proposed to change in these areas:

**Covington** - This town was studied to determine if the criteria for grandfathering as rural again was met. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, it was determined that the criteria for grandfathering was met and the town is again considered rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

**Brunswick** - A study was conducted to see if the Blythe Island area may be delineated as rural again. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, this area is considered rural and now eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

**Cusseta** - This town was studied to determine if the criteria for grandfathering as rural again was met. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, it was determined that the criteria for grandfathering was met and the town is again considered rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

Areas that were considered for ineligibility (data suggested changing from rural to non-rural) in the following locations:

Perry, Pooler and Richmond Hill - The study included city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent. These areas may meet the criteria for grandfathering as “rural in character”. Rural Development received one comment, it stated “The Perry area is rural in nature and provides an area for rural development in Houston County. Without USDA housing in the Perry area, many young people would not be able to afford to buy their own house.” As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will remain rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

Statesboro - The study included city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent, (The Agency studied to determine if the non-commuter student population may be deducted from total population in order to keep the area eligible). Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will remain rural and eligible for the Rural Development housing programs.

Villa Rica - The city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent, were studied. Rural Development received one comment, it stated “Please, Do not remove Villa Rica from Eligible Areas under the USDA program.” As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will remain rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

Warner Robins - The general area is already ineligible. Recent growth between Houston Lake Rd and Moody Rd was studied to determine if that area should be ineligible. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area of recent growth will remain rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

Winder - The city limits and densely settled areas immediately adjacent were studied. Rural Development received zero comments regarding the proposed change in eligibility. As a result of our review of the area using the 2015 American Community Survey data, comments received, and Rural in Character (RIC) analysis which included factors such as economic vitality, and population fluctuations, the area studied will remain rural and eligible for Rural Development housing programs.

Areas that will now be considered as no longer being rural or rural in character (and therefore ineligible), as well as areas that will now be considered as rural again (and therefore eligible) can be viewed at <https://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do> by clicking on either "Single Family Housing Guaranteed", "Single Family Housing Direct" or Multi-Family Housing" and then selecting "Proposed Ineligible Areas" tab.

The proposed changes will become effective on June 4, 2018. For details, or questions about specific changes, please contact Ed Peace, Georgia Rural Development Single Family Housing Program Director, by phone at 706-552-2593 or by email at [Ed.Peace@ga.usda.gov](mailto:Ed.Peace@ga.usda.gov).

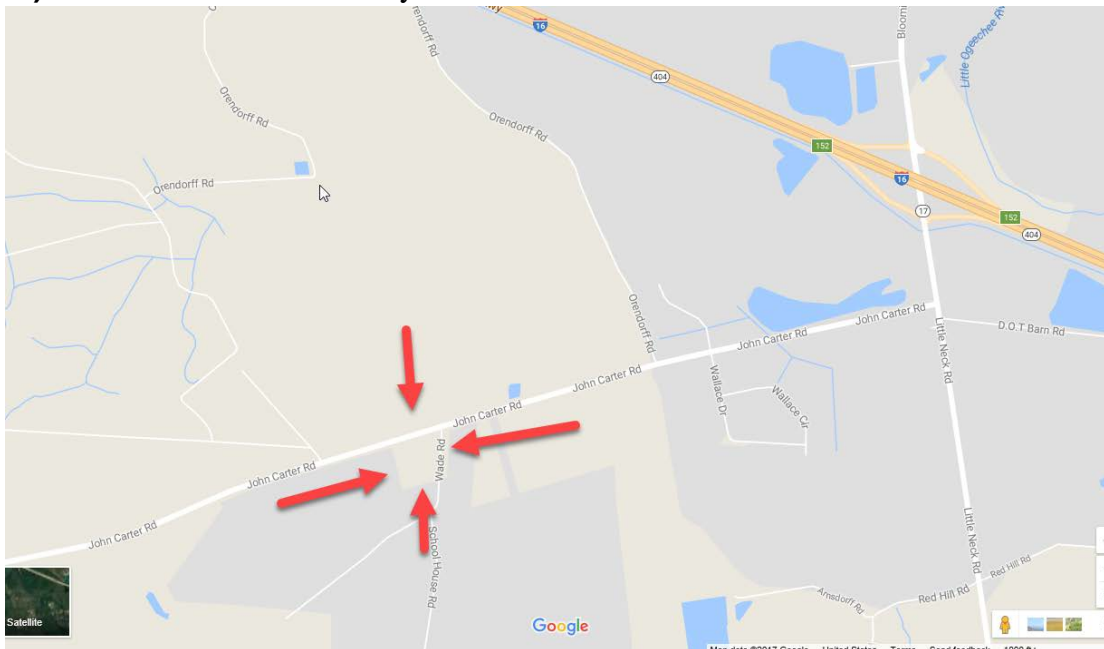
Athens, Georgia March 16, 2018

**1) Savannah, Georgia:** Two small areas were annexed by the City of Savannah since the last review was conducted by USDA Rural Development (RD) – To comply with Congressional law, this changed the following areas to ineligible for USDA RD housing programs.

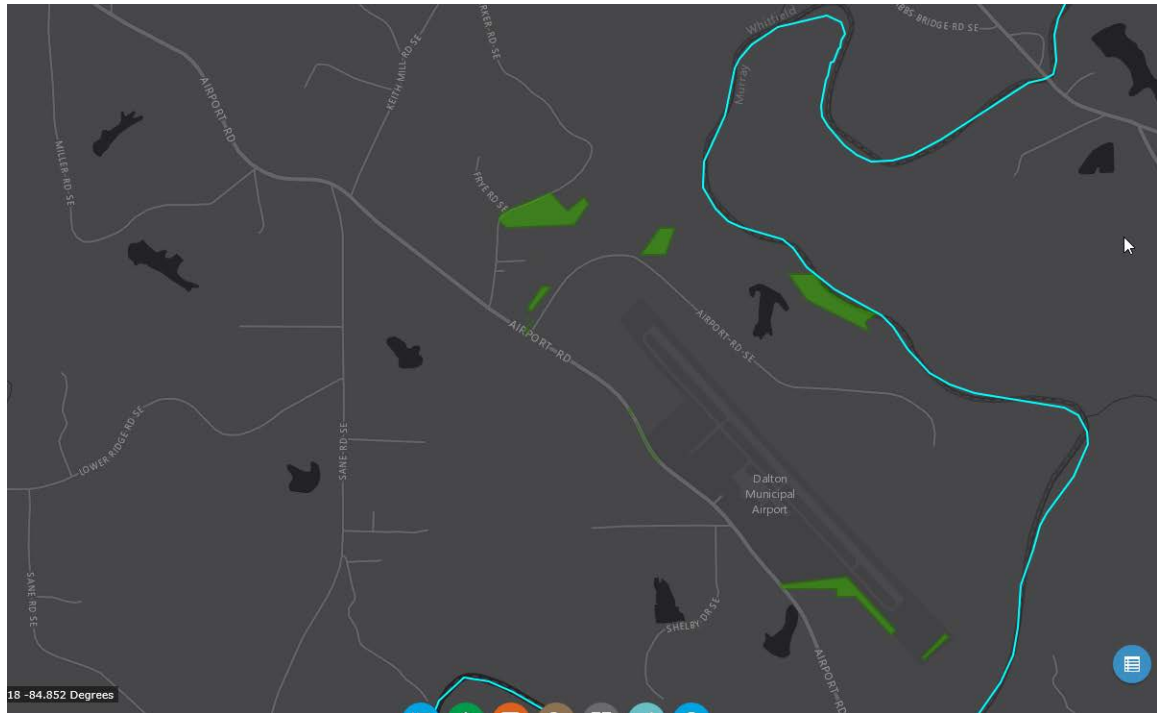
**a.)** The first area is south of Hwy 204 (Fort Argyle Rd), West of the intersection with I-95. Pointed out by the arrows below:



**b.)** The second area annexed by Savannah is south of John Carter Rd.

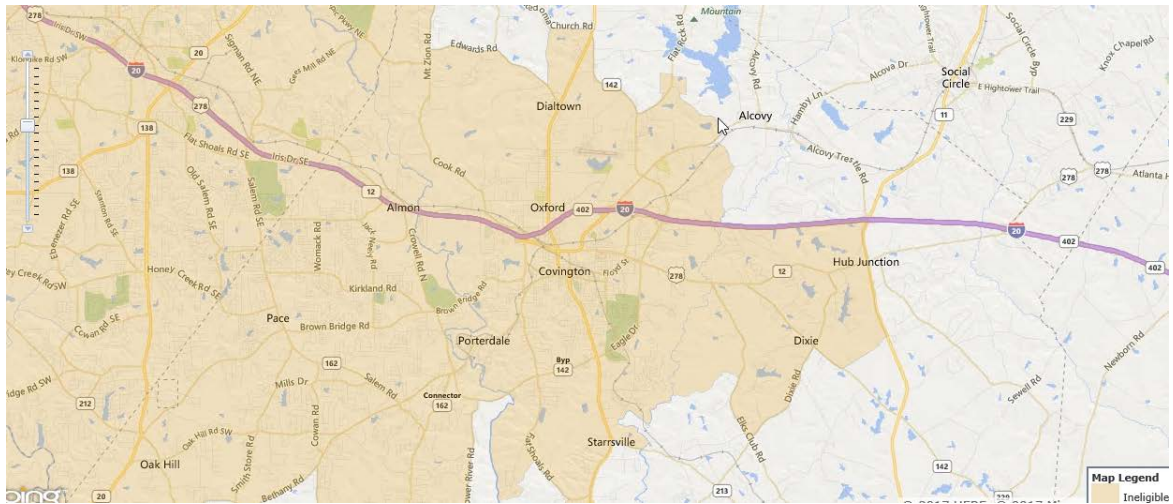


- 2) **Dalton, Georgia:** Several small areas were annexed by the City of Dalton since the last conducted by USDA-RD. This changed the following areas to ineligible for USDA RD housing programs (the green areas below):



- 
- A map showing the locations of Liberty Park, Governors Quarters, and Cypress Cove. Liberty Park is highlighted in green and labeled 'Liberty Park'. Governors Quarters is highlighted in green and labeled 'Governors Quarters'. Cypress Cove is highlighted in green and labeled 'Cypress Cove'. The map also shows other locations like Hinesville, Allenhurst, and Walthourville. Water bodies like Little Back Creek, Gumbranch, Little Back Creek, Mill Creek, and Back Creek are labeled. A scale bar at the bottom left indicates 0 to 100 feet. A north arrow is at the bottom right.

- 4) **Covington, Georgia:** This town met the criteria for grandfathering as rural and eligible for single family housing programs again. The previously ineligible areas are shaded below.





- 5) **Brunswick, Georgia:** A study concluded that the Colonels Island and the Blythe Island area along the Turtle River will be delineated as rural and eligible for single family housing programs again (see arrows below). The previously ineligible areas are shaded below.

