

SWOT Summary

Strengths	Weaknesses
Lowndes County and the Cities have a strong culture and sense of community. Respondents highlight the growing downtowns, active NGOs, and community unity during crises like Idalia and Helene. Not only that, citizens praise the infrastructure, environment, public safety, and other institutions. According to survey respondents, broadband access in some rural areas is strong as well as some schools in municipalities. <i>It is worth noting that while some respondents labelled cultural resources, for example, as a strength, others consider it a weakness in some respects.</i>	Despite all the great things about all six communities, natural resource investment and infrastructure is poor. Citizens note poor water quality, lack of greenspace, and limited renewable energy options. Moreover, economic development, housing, land use, intergovernmental coordination, and broadband are major areas in need of improvement according to respondents. People feel there are no middle-skilled or high-skilled job opportunities, housing is unaffordable, and multi-modal transportation is lacking. To add, outdated zoning limits the legality of things citizens want, such as ADUs, greenspace, mixed use districts, while government silos result in reduplication of services. <i>It is worth noting that while some respondents labelled cultural resources, for example, as a weakness, others consider it a strength in some respects.</i>
Opportunities	Threats
There are many things that can be done to address the weaknesses. For example, citizens suggested that water treatment, rivers, and trails be improved, and called for an expansion of renewable energy and recycling. Other opportunities, based on the SWOT Survey include: • Historic preservation • More events, more third spaces • Grants for small business development • Downtown revitalization	The rising cost of living, flooding and natural disasters, drugs, and politics serve as the most vicious threats to Lowndes County and the Cities. These threats manifest in the loss of recent graduates, widespread homelessness, and the overreliance on exploitative industries for development and growth.