

Carlos Tobar

By Catherine Dean

A transplant to the deep south from California, the newly hired manager for Baldwin County, Carlos Francisco Tobar, along with his wife Rebekah and their children, have embraced small town living with ease.

“My wife loves small, close-knit communities where everyone connects personally to each other,” says Tobar. “That environment is supportive of family life in so many ways.”

A native of San Francisco, Tobar moved his family from the west coast to Jacksonville, Florida, in 2009, to begin work as the city’s director of mass transit. He subsequently moved into county administrator positions for Jeff Davis and Grady counties in Georgia.

It was on a family trip to the north Georgia mountains, that first exposed the Tobars to the beauty of the Antebellum Capitol. “We could not believe how breath-taking downtown Milledgeville was,” he observes. “We wanted to know more about this lovely town.”

Tobar commutes to Milledgeville each day from his current home in Cairo. His wife is a preschool teacher at Pine Level Baptist Church (PLBC) where the family attends worship. The couple has four children: Solomon, 21; Emily, 19; Noah, 15; and Miqueas, 14.

“We have fallen in love with Georgians,” says Tobar. “The people of this state have been warm, welcoming, and supportive of us. We are enjoying making the south our home.”

Raised Catholic by his parents, Salomon and Elvira, Tobar had never been exposed to an evangelical congregation until he was invited to attend a Baptist church in Sacramento.

“I was originally invited so I could get introduced to a couple of single young women,” he laughs as he admits his initial intentions. “I instead met another young lady who would become my wife. We would end up taking over the church’s youth ministry together for the next three years.”

Tobar was not only immediately drawn to his wife Rebekah, but also the new style of worship that contrasted with his Catholic upbringing. “I had never heard the gospel preached with such passion before,” he added.

He stresses that faith is center of his family life and church is the foundation that never shifts- despite moving to new towns and states for his career. He and Rebekah continue their ministry by serving as 5th grade Sunday school teachers at PLBC.

He has volunteered his time to several charities throughout his life, including the Salvation Army, the Boys and Girls Club of America, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. He is a current member of the Kiwanis Club of Cairo.

Tobar takes pride in his extensive public works history which includes experience in city mass transit, development and construction of public facilities and infrastructure, and county

administration and management. He has received many professional accolades for his efforts including local, state, and national awards.

“I enjoy solving issues and helping communities live up their potential,” he says.

He was attracted to the position in Baldwin County because it proposed new and exciting challenges. He said, “I believed the commissioners wanted to move this county forward and I could assist in that journey.”

Although he admits the county does have challenges that other communities may not, including the blight of dilapidated properties, he assures the problems will be solved with the dedication of all county officials working together.

“I truly believe the commissioners want to make our community attractive for its residents as well as industry and tourism,” he adds. “And I plan to do my best to make this happen.”