



Gwinnett 2040

UNIFIED PLAN

February 2019

POND

GWINNETT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGA

RESOLUTION ENTITLED: Adoption of the Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan

ADOPTION DATE: February 5, 2019

At the regular meeting of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners held in the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, Auditorium, 75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville, Georgia

Name	Present	Vote
Charlotte J. Nash, Chairman	Yes	Yes
Jace Brooks, District 1	Yes	Yes
Ben Ku, District 2	Yes	Yes
Tommy Hunter, District 3	Yes	Yes
Marlene M. Fosque, District 4	Yes	Yes

On motion of Commissioner Hunter, which carried a 5-0 vote, the following Resolution to Adopt the 2040 Unified Plan:

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County 2030 Plan was adopted by the Board of Commissioners on November 19, 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners finds it necessary and appropriate to amend the Comprehensive Plan from time to time as conditions change; and

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners is considering the adoption of the ***Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan***, hereinafter referred to as “the Unified Plan”, to provide a coordinated and comprehensive plan of the long-term goals, objectives, and priorities for Gwinnett County; and

WHEREAS, the Unified Plan supports five goals established by the state of Georgia pursuant to Official Code of Georgia Annotated §50-8-1 et seq, as outlined in the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, *Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning* as follows:

- (a) **Economic Development:** To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with all resources of this state and its various regions, that equitably benefits all sections of the state and all segments of the population.
- (b) **Natural and Historic Resources:** To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and historic resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.
- (c) **Community Facilities:** To ensure that public infrastructure facilities serving local governments, the region and the state have the capacity and are in place when needed to support and attract growth and development and/or maintain and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the state.
- (d) **Housing:** To ensure that all people within the state and its various regions and communities have access to adequate and affordable housing.
- (e) **Land Use:** To ensure that the land resources of the state are allocated for uses required to facilitate the topical areas of economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing as outlined above, and to protect and promote the quality of life of the people of Georgia's communities, regions, and the state; and

WHEREAS, in order for the Unified Plan to remain responsive and relevant to changing conditions, the Rules require an update every ten years to review growth indicators and to provide for the preparation of a report of findings and recommendations for changes to the Unified Plan, and

WHEREAS, the public hearing requirements prescribed by the Unified Plan and state law have been met and exceeded; and

WHEREAS, a report titled *Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan* has been prepared following a duly advertised public hearing before the Municipal - Gwinnett County Planning Commission on October 2, 2018, and the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on October 23, 2018, at which Gwinnett County solicited community input on community needs and issues, as required by the state's Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners find that the proposed *Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan* furthers the purposes of promoting the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the present and future residents of Gwinnett County; and

WHEREAS, the draft *Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan* was previously transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Department of Community Affairs in November 2018 for regional and state review for compliance with the minimum state requirements for Comprehensive Plans and coordination with the Regional Development Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners that having met the public participation and review requirements of the Minimum Standards and Procedures, the *Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan*, dated February 5, 2019, which is on file with the County Clerk and which is incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the *Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan* shall be utilized by the Board of Commissioners, the Municipal – Gwinnett County Planning Commission and all Gwinnett County departments, agencies and officials as a guide in making decisions concerning the growth and development of Gwinnett County.

THIS RESOLUTION IS ADOPTED this 5th day of February, 2019.

GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



By: Charlotte J. Nash
Charlotte J. Nash, Chairman

Date Signed: 02/14/19

ATTEST:

By: Deane Kemp
County Clerk/Deputy County Clerk



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: Melanie F. Wilson
Melanie F. Wilson
Senior Assistant County Attorney

Acknowledgments.

Board of Commissioners

Charlotte Nash, Chairman
Jace Brooks, District 1
Ben Ku, District 2
Tommy Hunter, District 3
Marlene M. Fosque, District 4
Lynnette Howard, District 2 (former)
John Heard, District 4 (former)

Planning Commission

Kim Hartsock, District 1
Earl Mitchell, District 1
Rich Edinger, District 2
Omar Zaman, District 2
Jeff Tullis, District 3
Chuck Warbington, District 3
Brad Crowe, District 4
Clint Dixon, District 4
Larry Still, At Large

Gwinnett County Planning and Development Staff

Nancy Lovingood, County Project Manager
Kathy Holland, Director
Chris Hayward
James Lee
Jerry Oberholtzer
James Pugsley
Melanie Tabb

Gwinnett County Partner Departments Staff

Lewis Cooksey, Transportation
Vince Edwards, Transportation
Eryca Fambro, Housing/CDBG (administered by WFA Consulting)
Blake Hawkins, Community Services
Doug Nurse, Communications
Mark Patterson, Community Services
Tyler Richards, Water Resources
Heather Sawyer, Communications
Joe Sorensen, Communications
Jennifer Suttles, Water Resources
Lisa Willis, Water Resources
Karen Winger, Gwinnett County Transit

Planning Advisory Committee

Joe Allen, Gwinnett Place CID
Marsha Anderson Bomar, Gateway85 Gwinnett CID
Ben Archer, Citizen
Jace Brooks, District 1 Commissioner
Jim Brooks, Evermore CID
Lisa Burleson, Commission Chairman Appointee
Duke Cao, Financial Analyst
Andrew Carnes, Partnership Gwinnett (Economic Development)
Jerry Crain, Citizen
Raymond Cobb III, Lilburn CID
Duncan Corley, Land Developer
Roman Dakare, Gwinnett County Economic Development
Alyssa Davis, Sugarloaf CID
Richard Edinger, Planning Commission District 2

Renita Hamilton Edmondson, Gwinnett County NAACP
Matt Elder, Family Promise of Gwinnett County
Derrick Fisher, Citizen
Bruce Garraway, District 4 Commissioner Appointee
Abigail Harwell, Gwinnett County Planning and Development
Carol Hassell, Georgia Piedmont Land Trust
John Heard, District 4 Commissioner
Thuy Hotle, Citizen
Shane Lanham, Zoning Attorney
Lauren Salas Lambaise, Georgia Power Economic Development
Donald Lee, Gwinnett County Juvenile Court
Alicia McElheney, Gwinnett County Planning and Development

Kevin McOmber, District 1 Commissioner Appointee
Aida Montes, Citizen
Tashieka Moore, Partnership Gwinnett (Economic Development)
Emory Morsberger, Lilburn CID
Srividya "Vidya" Ramanathan, Citizen
Aaron Ruffin, Citizen
Chad Alexander Smith, District 3 Commissioner Appointee
Fazal "Fox" Syed, Citizen
Maurice Thompson II, Citizen
Benny Truong, Attorney
Hilary Wilson, Environmental/Tree Advisor
Robert Jackson Wilson, Citizen
B.E. "Woody" Woodruff, Gwinnett County Board of Education

Consultant Team Staff

Pond

Eric Lusher, Consultant
Project Manager
Lauren Blaszyk, Consultant Deputy
Project Manager
Andrew Babb
Ilana Birbrager
David De Leon
Richard Fangmann
Katherine Frye
Lauren Linnane
Patrick McArdle
Matt Norris
Ron Osterloh
Pat Smeeton
Makenna Yeargain

Kimley-Horn and Associates

Jessica Choi
Adam Dankberg
Ana Eisenman
Cristina Pastore
Andrew Pofahl
Beth Tucker
TSW
David Argo
Julia Brodsky
Allison Bustin
Woody Giles
Sarah McColley
Laura Richter
Ryan Snodgrass
Bill Tunnell
Alex Fite-Wassilak

Bleakly Advisory Group

Jonathan Gelber
Beth Hogan
Sara Patenaude
Candler Vinson

Planners for Environmental Quality

Marla Hill
Bucky Kennedy
Inga Kennedy

Vargas and Amigos

Dan Vargas

Georgia Institute of Technology

Dr. Anna Kim

**And the many who contributed in
parts large and small by participating
in our meetings, surveys, pop-up
events, interviews, and social media**

Table of Contents.

- Chapter 1: Overview 2**
 - Plan Purpose 4
 - How to Use This Document 5
 - Background 6
 - How the Plan Was Put Together 14

- Chapter 2: Research and Trends 54**
 - Our Story 56
 - Who We Are Today 59
 - How We Might Grow 63
 - What We Do 72
 - Our Infrastructure and Community Amenities 80
 - Land Use & Built Environment 90
 - Perceptions 94

- Chapter 3: Our Vision 96**
 - Engaging the Community 98
 - Our Planning Partners 120
 - Our Vision 134
 - Needs & Opportunities 134
 - The Five Themes 137

Chapter 4: Plan Development	186
Plan Development.....	188
Economic Development.....	191
Housing.....	208
Infrastructure & Community Amenities.....	223
Transportation.....	224
Water & Sewer.....	253
Community Services.....	260
Broadband Access.....	264
Land Use.....	266
Chapter 5: Implementation	278
Typology.....	282
Future Development Map.....	290
Activity Centers.....	292
Employment Centers.....	300
Residential Neighborhoods.....	306
Low Intensity Areas.....	316
Our Communities.....	322
Short Term Initiatives.....	358
Appendices	374
Appendix A: Focus Group Transcript	
Appendix B: Community Engagement	
Appendix C: Spheres of Influence Map	
Appendix D: Cost of Services Study	
Appendix E: Report of Accomplishments and Short-Term Work Program	

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1: Overview

Gwinnett County Population and Historic Events	8
Population Density and Diversity (1960-2010).....	16
Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Gwinnett County and Peer Communities	17
Top Countries of Birth for Foreign-Born Residents of Gwinnett County.....	18
Top Counties of Origin Outside of Georgia (1990-2016).....	19
Top Counties of Origin Within Georgia (1990-2016).....	19
Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health	23
Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment	25
Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility	27
Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices	29
Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place	31
Change and Preserve Preferences by Meeting/Event.....	32
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences	33
Urban Scale Preferences by Meeting/Event.....	34
Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences.....	35
Change and Preserve Likelihood Infrastructure Composite	35
Change and Preserve Likelihood Economic Development Composite	36
Change and Preserve Likelihood Land Use & Housing Composite	36
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood.....	37
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences*.....	39
Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences*	39
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood*.....	39
Interface of Urban Scale and Character Areas.....	42
Gwinnett County Future Development Map	43
Activity Centers	45
Employment Centers.....	47
Residential Neighborhoods.....	49
Low Intensity Areas	51

Figures marked with a "*" are repeats of graphics shown previously

Chapter 2: Research & Trends

Gwinnett County Population and Parcels by Decade of Development, with Selected Historic Events (1956-2010).....	56-57
Gwinnett County Racial and Ethnic Composition (2016)	59
Top Countries of Birth for Foreign-Born Residents of Gwinnett County*	60
Top Counties of Origin Outside of Georgia (1990-2016)*.....	60
Top Counties of Origin Within Georgia (1990-2016)*.....	60
Average Annual Population Increase by Decade	61
Historic (1960-2017) and Projected (2018-2040) Population of Gwinnett County	62
Age Cohort of Gwinnett County and USA (2016)	64
Median Age by Block Group (2016).....	65
Annual Income by Households in Gwinnett and Peer Counties (2016)	66
Poverty Rates in Gwinnett and Peer Counties	67
Rates of Housing Cost Burdening by Census Tract.....	68
Esri Urbanization Groups.....	70
Esri Tapestry Urbanity Averages	71
Job Density (2016)	73
Employment Changes by Industry, 1990 to 2017	74
Industries with the Largest Projected Increase in Share of Gwinnett County’s Employment, 2015-2040	75
Historic and Projected Jobs in Gwinnett County.....	75
Change in Jobs from Pre-Recession Peak Year to 2016 by County Region.....	76
Jobs in Gwinnett County by Region (2002-2015).....	77
Gwinnett County Commuting Patterns (2016)	79
Gwinnett County Comprehensive Transportation Plan	81
Countywide Trails Master Plan	81
Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan	81
Gwinnett County Parks and Future Park Sites	84
Percentage of Population with Coverage by Broadband Providers at 25/3 Mbps (Download/Upload).....	88
Number of Broadband Providers at 25/3 Mbps (Download/Upload) Available by Census Block...	89
Land Area by Existing Land Use, Excluding Right of Way (2009)	90
Existing Land Use (2009).....	91

Chapter 3: Our Vision

Community Open House Locations.....	101
Change and Preserve Preferences by Meeting/Event*.....	112
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences*	113
Urban Scale Preferences by Meeting/Event*.....	114
Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences*	115
Gwinnett County and its Municipalities	121
Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health*	139
Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment*	149
Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility*	157
Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices*	167
Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place*	173

Chapter 4: Plan Development

Partnership Gwinnett 3.0 Strategic Framework.....	193
Atlanta to Athens Corridor Area.....	204
Percentage of Households Paying Over 30% of their Income for Housing (2016)	210
Median Home Value (2016) (owner-occupied housing units)	211
Median Monthly Rent (2016) (renter-occupied housing units)	211
Housing Units by Number of Units in Structure (2016).....	213
Housing Units by Decade Built	214
Parcels by Decade Built (2009).....	215
Age Cohort of Gwinnett County and USA (2016)*	216
Percentage of Housing Units that are Owner-Occupied (2016).....	217
Households by Size (2016).....	218
2015 PM Level of Service	229
2040 PM Level of Service - Existing and Committed Scenario.....	229
2040 PM Level of Service - Full CTP Scenario	229
Freight, Rail, and Aviation Infrastructure.....	231
Comprehensive Transportation Plan Short-Range Recommendations	232
Comprehensive Transportation Plan Mid-Range Recommendations.....	232
Comprehensive Transportation Plan Long-Range Recommendations	233
Suitability Attractions Results	237
Suitability Demand Results.....	237
Suitability Character Results.....	237
Suitability Future Results	237
Suitability Aggregate Results	237
Countywide Trails Master Plan Recommendations	239
Signature Trails Recommendations from Countywide Trails Master Plan	243
Existing Gwinnett County Transit Routes and Weekday Boardings	245
Transit-Supportive Densities	248
Connect Gwinnett Short-Range Recommendations.....	250
Connect Gwinnett Mid-Range Recommendations	250
Connect Gwinnett Long-Range Phase 1 Recommendations	251
Connect Gwinnett Long-Range Phase 2 Recommendations.....	251
Gravity Sewer and Water Reclamation Facilities	254
Regional Pump Stations and Force Mains.....	255
Local Pump Stations and Force Mains.....	257
Septic System Parcels	258
AT&T Broadband Coverage.....	265
Charter Broadband Coverage	265
Comcast Broadband Coverage.....	265
Google Fiber Broadband Coverage	265
Mediacom Communications Broadband Coverage	265
Windstream Broadband Coverage	265
Number of Broadband Providers at 25/3 Mbps (Download/Upload) Available by Census Block*	265

Figures marked with a "*" are repeats of graphics shown previously

Population Density (2016)	267
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences*	269
Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences*	269
Change and Preserve Likelihood Infrastructure Composite*	270
Change and Preserve Likelihood Economic Development Composite*	270
Change and Preserve Likelihood Land Use & Housing Composite*	270
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood*	271
Interface of Urban Scale and Character Areas*	277

Chapter 5: Implementation

Gwinnett County Future Development Map*	291
Activity Centers*	293
Employment Centers*	301
Residential Neighborhoods*	307
Low Intensity Areas*	317
Locations of Gwinnett's Unincorporated Communities	323

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 2: Research & Trends

Gwinnett County Workforce and Employment by Industry	72
Gwinnett County Workforce and Employment by Age (2015)	78
Gwinnett County Workforce and Employment by Education Level (2015)	78

Chapter 3: Our Vision

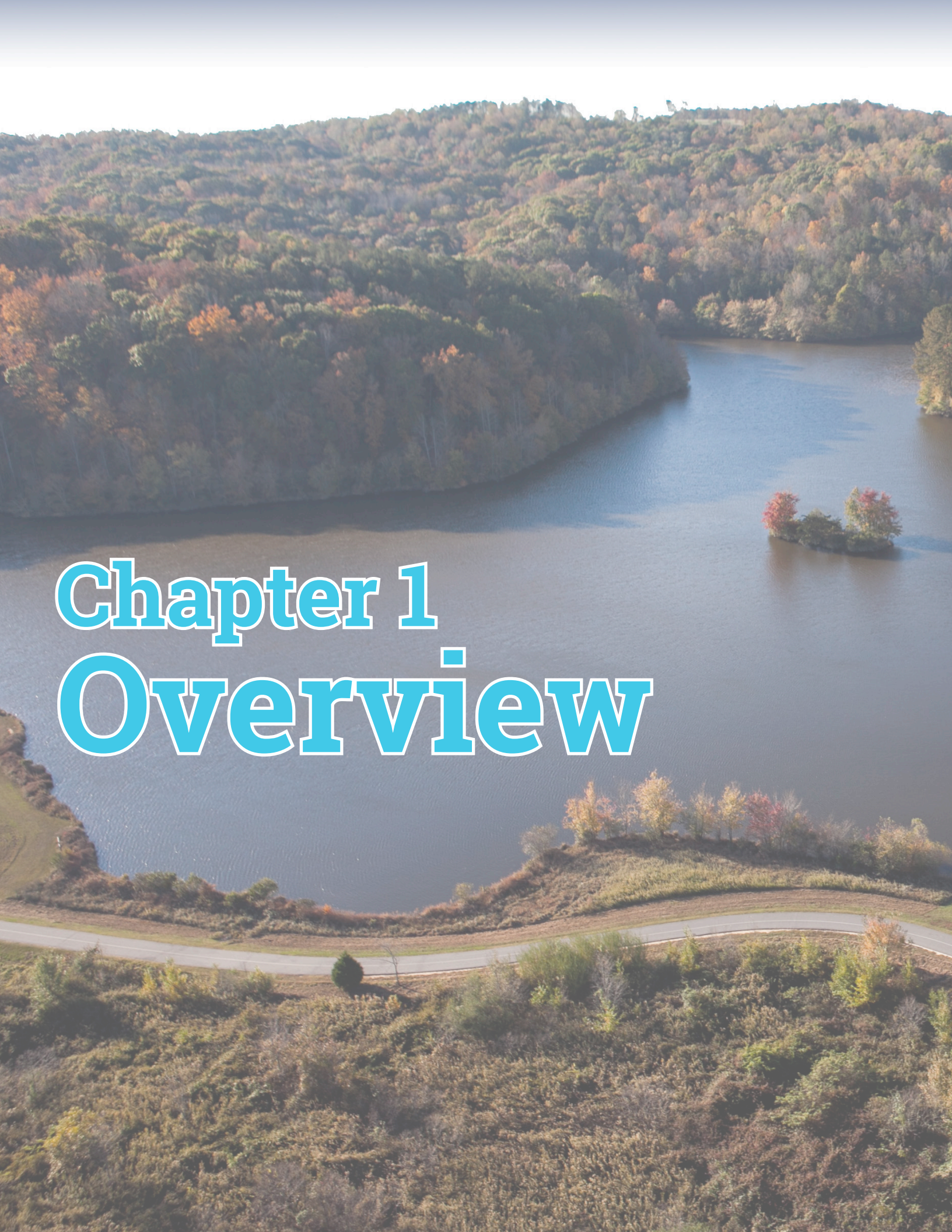
Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Topics and Dates	100
Speaking Engagements	103
Intercept Interview	103
Pop Up Events	105
Radio Engagements	105
Public Agreement with Policies from the 2030 Unified Plan	111

Chapter 4: Plan Development

GCT Service Strengths and Weaknesses	246
Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan Mode Descriptions	247
Sewer Master Plan 2050 Recommendations Summary	259
Broadband Access by Number of Providers for Gwinnett County, Georgia, and Nationwide	264

Chapter 5: Implementation

Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health Short Term Initiatives	369
Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment Short Term Initiatives	370
Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility Short Term Initiatives	371
Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices Short Term Initiatives	372
Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place Short Term Initiatives	373

An aerial photograph of a large, calm lake surrounded by a dense forest. The trees are in various stages of autumn, with some showing vibrant reds and oranges, while others are still green. The lake's surface is dark blue and reflects the sky. In the foreground, a paved road curves along the edge of the lake, and there are some smaller trees and bushes. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Chapter 1 Overview



Plan Purpose.

In the state of Georgia, municipal governments must retain their Qualified Local Government Status in order to be eligible for a variety of state funded programs. To maintain this status, communities must meet minimum planning standards developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Gwinnett County exceeds the minimum standards through its Unified Plan, which is called a comprehensive plan in other jurisdictions. The 2030 Unified Plan was adopted in February 2009. This 2040 Unified Plan was prepared to continue a long term vision for Gwinnett County and identify short term, incremental steps that can be used to achieve this vision. As such, this plan envisions Gwinnett County in the year 2040 and asks three fundamental questions:

1. Where do we want to go?

2. How do we get there?

3. How will we unify the policies of



land use,



**infrastructure (such as
transportation and sewer),**



parks and open spaces,



economic development, and



housing

**to ensure that Gwinnett remains a
“preferred place” to live and work?**

How to Use this Document.

This Unified Plan is intended to serve many different functions for various agencies and groups within and outside of Gwinnett County. For instance, it is intended to communicate how Gwinnett County meets the minimum planning standards to DCA and also serve as a guide for Gwinnett County staff in day-to-day decision making. Given all the different interests and requirements related to this document, there are many different ways to use this document. The document is divided into chapters, described below.

OVERVIEW

This chapter is intended to provide an introduction to the Unified Plan and act as a summary of the overall process and findings.

RESEARCH AND TRENDS

This chapter focuses on a discussion and examination of the characteristics and phenomena that make Gwinnett County unique. This includes a review of socioeconomic data, economic development trends, housing conditions, transportation issues, and the history of development in the community.

OUR VISION

In this chapter, the distinct vision for the future of the community is described. This vision is articulated through a description of needs and opportunities and a corresponding policy framework developed around five themes for the future.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This chapter describes how different aspects of Gwinnett County interface and can work together to help achieve the community's desired vision. The individual pieces of this chapter include elements on major topics including:

- Economic Development
- Community Infrastructure (including transportation, community amenities, and broadband)
- Housing
- Land Use

These individual elements are also documented in a manner that can act as stand alone documents. As such, they include an overview of research and trends, applicable components of the community vision, and recommendations.

IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter describes further how the plan can be implemented. Focusing on the immediate next five years, this includes the Short-Term Work Program, which provides a description of individual activities that the County undertakes. In broader terms, the Future Development Map and the Character Areas described depict how the community can develop (outside of municipalities, as they are responsible for their own land use planning). As a companion piece to the Future Development Map and the Character Areas, this chapter also takes the additional step of discussing individual communities (again, outside of Gwinnett's municipalities) within the County in order to further emphasize the future vision for these areas.

Background.

Over the past few years, the County has embarked on several infrastructure and regulatory plans (as indicated in the list below). This Unified Plan is intended to be an overarching document and plan to demonstrate how these different efforts can support each other and act as a framework for the continued success of Gwinnett County. Similarly, as the Unified Plan is intended to address the DCA minimum planning standards, there is particular focus on how these different plans support the County's overall vision as it relates to the development, land use, and character of Gwinnett County.

- Destination 2040 Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Gwinnett Trails Master Plan
- Sewer Master Plan 2050
- Consolidated Plan (Housing)
- Connect Gwinnett Transit Plan

Gwinnett County
Consolidated Plan

Destination2040

Gwinnett's Comprehensive Transportation Plan



Gwinnett 2040

UNIFIED PLAN



Gwinnett
TRAILS



SEWER MASTER PLAN 2050



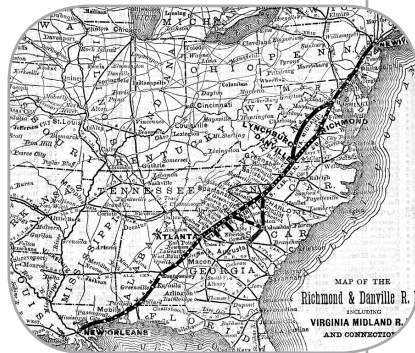
Gwinnett
Water Resources

Another broader consideration of why this plan is important to the future success of Gwinnett County is to reflect on where Gwinnett County has been and where it is likely going. Over a few decades, Gwinnett County evolved from a predominately rural and agrarian community to an astonishingly diverse community approaching 1 million people. Looking to the future, Gwinnett continues to grow and is expected to be - at some point - the most populous county in the state of Georgia, with credible estimates suggesting that the population could potentially be over 1.5 million people by the year 2040.

Gwinnett County Population and Historic Events

1871 The Danville and Piedmont Air Line railroad (now Norfolk Southern) is built, inducing the founding of Norcross, Duluth, Suwanee, and Buford

1885 Historic Gwinnett County courthouse constructed



1818 Gwinnett County formed by an act of the Georgia General Assembly

1820 First U.S. Census including Gwinnett County; Population: 4,589

1850
Population: 11,257

1861-1865
American Civil War

1891 The Georgia, Carolina, and Northern Railway (now CSX) is built

1900 Population: 25,585

2040 Population estimates range from 1.29 to 1.56 million

2018 Gwinnett County celebrates its bicentennial



2009 Gwinnett Stadium (now Coolray Field) opens



2003 Gwinnett Arena (now Infinite Energy Arena) opens



2001 Discovery Mills (now Sugarloaf Mills) opens

2001 Gwinnett County Transit begins operations



2017 Population: 920,260

2010 Population: 808,719

2007 First iPhone Released

1999 Mall of Georgia opens



2000 Population: 588,448

1996 Atlanta and Georgia host the Centennial Summer Olympics



Atlanta 1996

1984 Gwinnett Place Mall opens



1990 Population: 352,910

1988 Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center opens

1965 Section of I-85 between South Carolina and Suwanee completed



1986-1988 Gwinnett County is the fastest growing county in the United States with a population over 100,000

1980 Population: 166,903

1963 Kennedy assassination

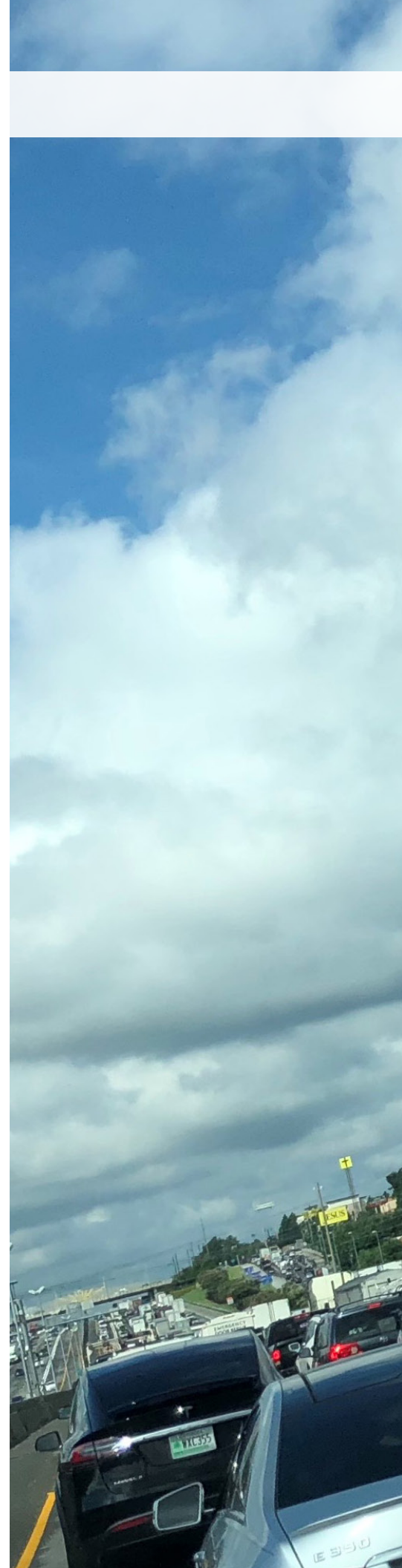
1956 The gates of Buford Dam are closed, creating Lake Lanier

1941 Pearl Harbor attacked, USA enters WWII

1970 Population: 72,349

1960 Population: 43,541

This growth has come with challenges and trade-offs. While there is still tremendous opportunity and demand for greenfield development in the eastern parts of the County, there are conversely parts of the County that are increasingly in need of revitalization and redevelopment. Transportation access and mobility is often a key topic in public opinion polls and regularly came up during this Unified Plan process. Aging septic systems throughout the County remain a challenge for individual homeowners and for the collective success of the community. Increasing evidence of poverty in some parts of the community are an increasingly sobering and unfortunate reality. As Gwinnett County has grown, our challenges have become more dynamic, more inter-related, and ultimately, more complex.



A typical morning on I-85 headed southbound



The Infinite Energy Arena, home of the Gwinnett Gladiators and the Georgia Swarm, and the centerpiece of Gwinnett's entertainment district and planned mixed-use redevelopment project known as "Revel."





Meanwhile, the opportunities and potential for Gwinnett's continued success remain bountiful. In recent years, many of the County's municipalities have successfully revitalized or created walkable, human scaled downtowns. Gwinnett County Public Schools consistently rank as among the best in the state of Georgia, and County parks are similarly renowned. The 2017 announcement of Revel, a mixed use development to further anchor the Infinite Energy Center, has created energy and anticipation throughout the community. Similarly, the demolition of the Olympics Tennis Center creates opportunity on the US 78 corridor, and the mid 2018 announcement that the County will be purchasing part of the OFS site near Jimmy Carter Boulevard and I-85 has produced similar expectation for the future. The County has developed a framework for future transit and trails, recognizing their ability to be transformative for economic development, transportation, and overall quality of life. This Unified Plan takes these disparate elements and issues to produce a common and unified vision so that all these initiatives and ideas can be truly 'vibrantly connected.'

How the Plan Was Put Together.

The planning process began in late 2017, officially kicking off with a Public Hearing on December 19 and subsequently encompassed five overall stages.

Research

In the research phase, the planning team performed a variety of fact finding exercises to establish existing conditions and review recent trends. This phase is documented primarily in the “Research and Trends” chapter.

Vision

In the vision phase, the findings of the research phase were reconciled with feedback and communication from the Gwinnett community to establish a unified and ideal vision for the future of the County. This phase is documented primarily in the “Our Vision” chapter.

Develop

In the develop phase, the planning team drew from the vision of the community and a series of technical analyses to identify initiatives to achieve that vision. The centerpiece of this part of the process was a series of techniques referred to as the “Opportunity for Change” analysis to identify where change was either likely and/or desired (and conversely not likely and/or desired) in the community. This phase is documented primarily in the “Plan Development” chapter.

Document

In the document phase, the planning team began the process of documenting its efforts and recommendations to articulate the desired vision and initiatives for the community. This phase is documented primarily in the “Implementation” chapter.

Adopt

In the adopt phase, the planning team went through the administrative process of having the plan reviewed by partner agencies and ultimately adopted by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners.

winter 2018 spring 2018 summer 2018 fall 2018 winter 2019

step one
research

step two
vision

step three
develop

step four
document

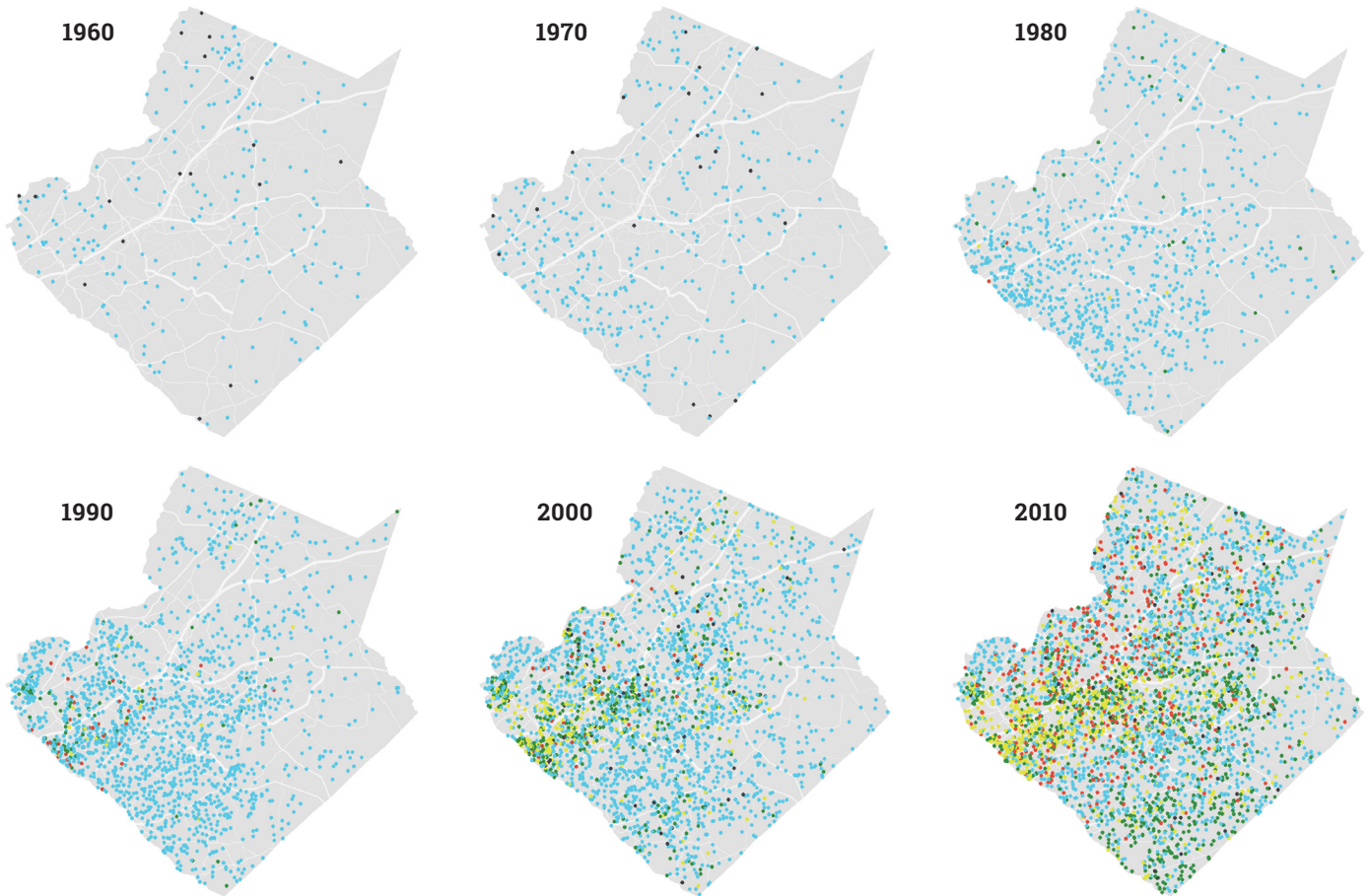
step five
adopt

RESEARCH

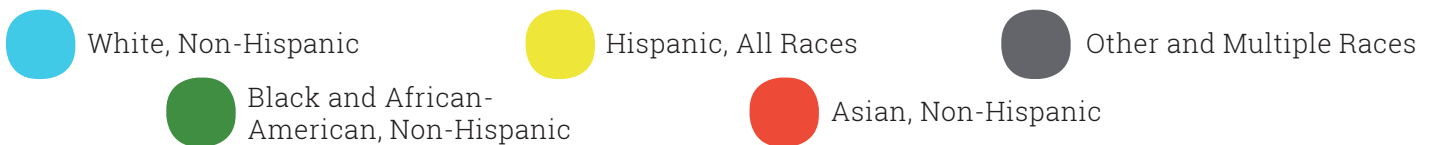
In the research phase, our planning team was ultimately trying to address fundamental questions about who we are and where we are going. What is unique about Gwinnett County and what are the trends that have shaped who we have become?

While there are many trends to consider that are discussed further in the 'Research and Trends' chapter of this Plan, the most notable is to understand the rapid development from an agrarian community to the diverse 21st century community we are today. In 1960, only 43,351 people called Gwinnett County home. Just 50 years later, the population was 805,321 people and by 2017, the US Census estimated an increase to 920,260 people. How did this rapid growth occur?

Population Density and Diversity (1960-2010)



Each point represents approximately 200 residents. In 1960 & 1970, due to limitations in Census data, all residents are either "White" or "Other"

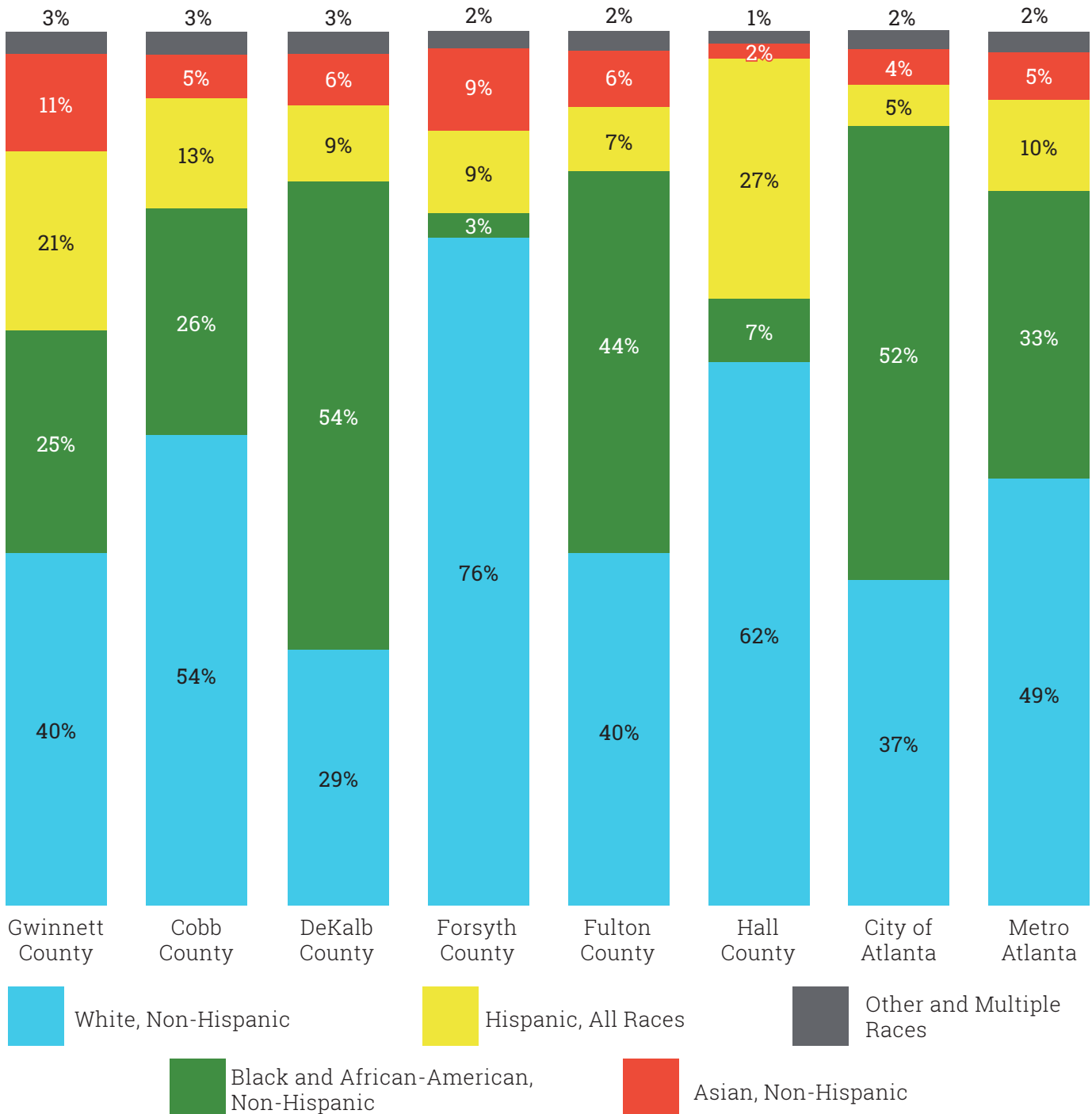


Source US Decennial Census

Starting in the 1970s and clearly visible by 1980, the suburban expansion of Atlanta (to our southwest) can be viewed in waves of growth, each decade pushing further and further north and eastward. By 2010, most new growth in the County occurred in the northern and eastern parts of the Gwinnett community, with opportunities for new greenfield development becoming increasingly limited.

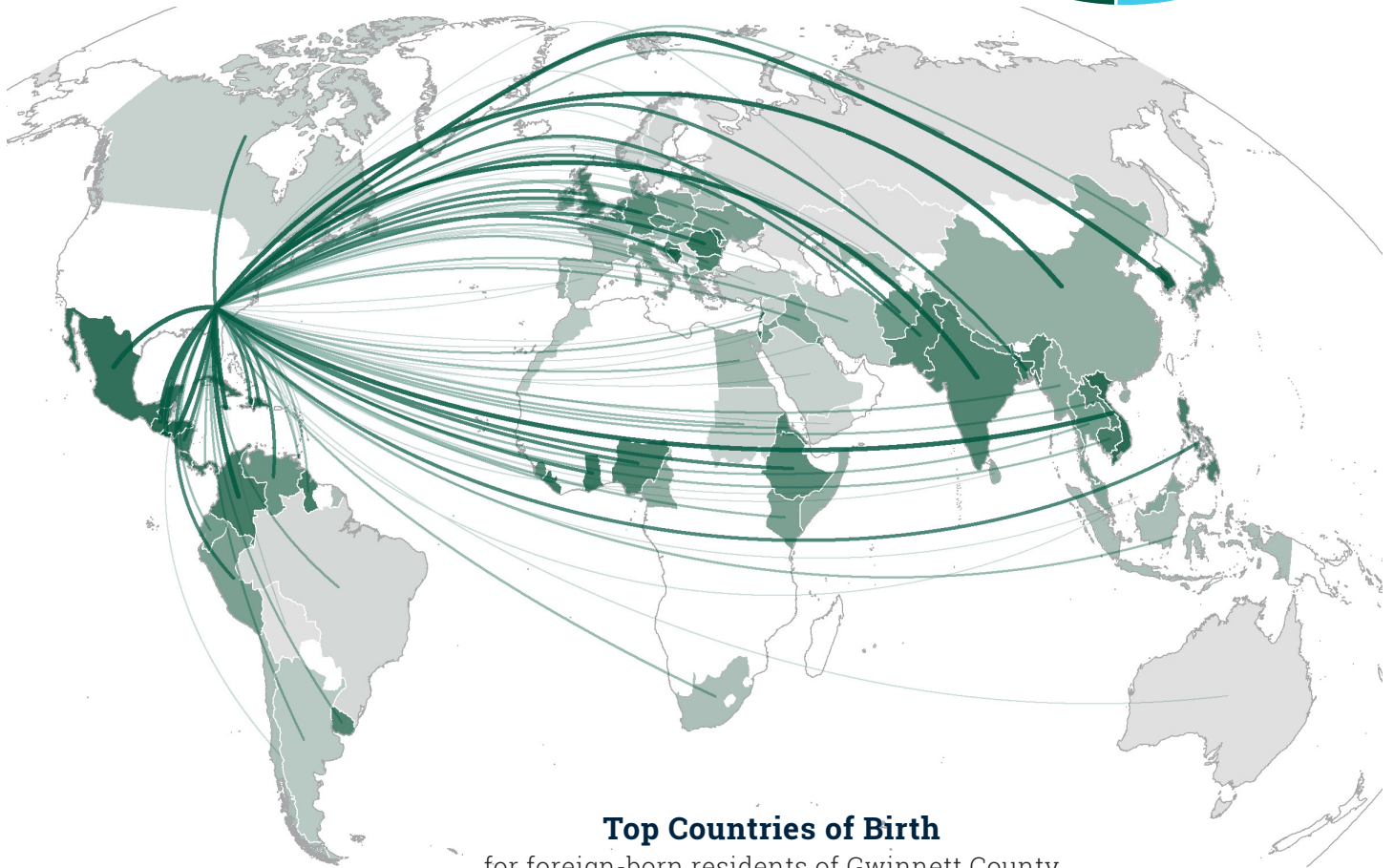
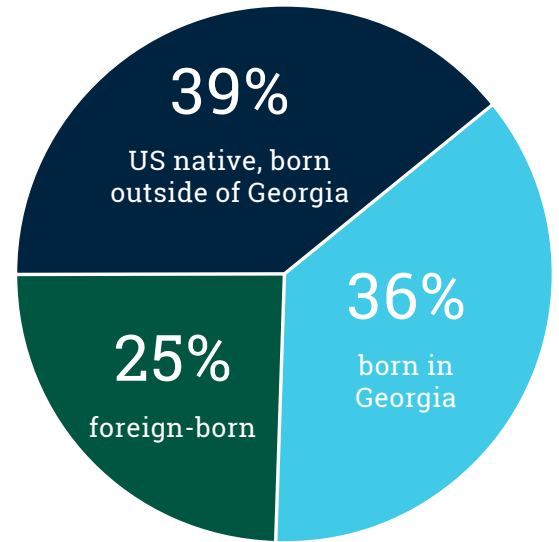
Similarly, while the Gwinnett County of 1980 was mostly white, by 1990 the first outward signs of the diversity to come can be seen with some small pockets of non-white population in the extreme western parts of the County. In 2000, that diversity is clearer and anchored by the I-85 corridor, and starkly obvious by 2010. At this point, Gwinnett was officially recognized as a “minority-majority” community, in which the Caucasian population had become less than fifty percent. A US Census estimate for the year 2016 indicated that the White population, while still the largest overall group in the County, had been reduced to forty percent, with notable African American (twenty-five percent), Hispanic (twenty-one percent), and Asian (eleven percent) communities. While other metro Atlanta communities also show increased signs of diversity, they do not necessarily have the plurality of different racial and ethnic groups with significant sizes, an opportunity that Gwinnett County can use to be a true model for a 21st century community.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Gwinnett County and Peer Communities (2016)



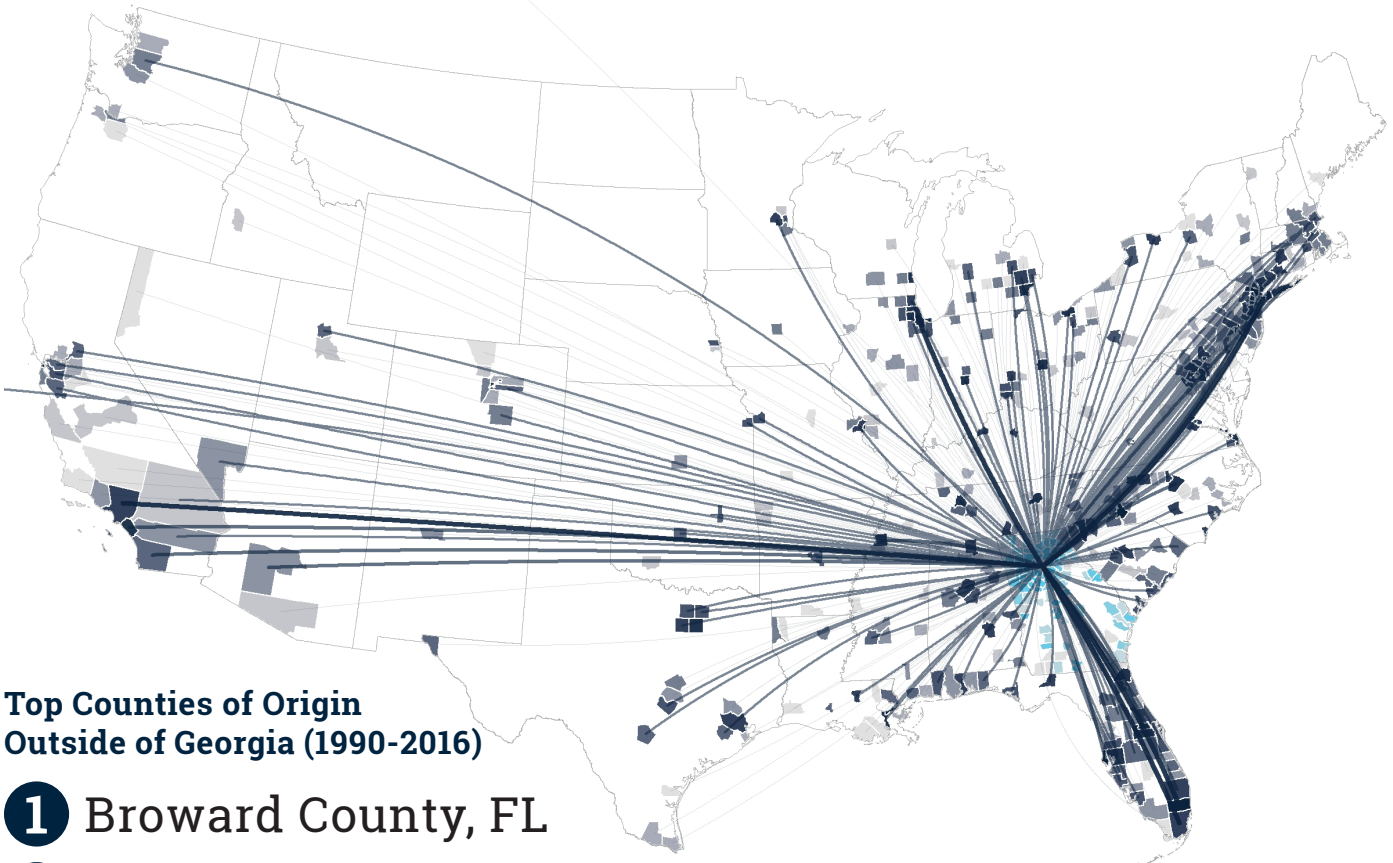
Source US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016

As this rapid growth and change implies, many of today's Gwinnett residents began life somewhere else. We are a community of transplants and locals who are merging our customs and traditions into something that is uniquely Gwinnett.



- 1 Mexico
- 2 Korea
- 3 India
- 4 Vietnam
- 5 China

Source US Census Bureau, ACS
5-Year Estimates 2012-2016

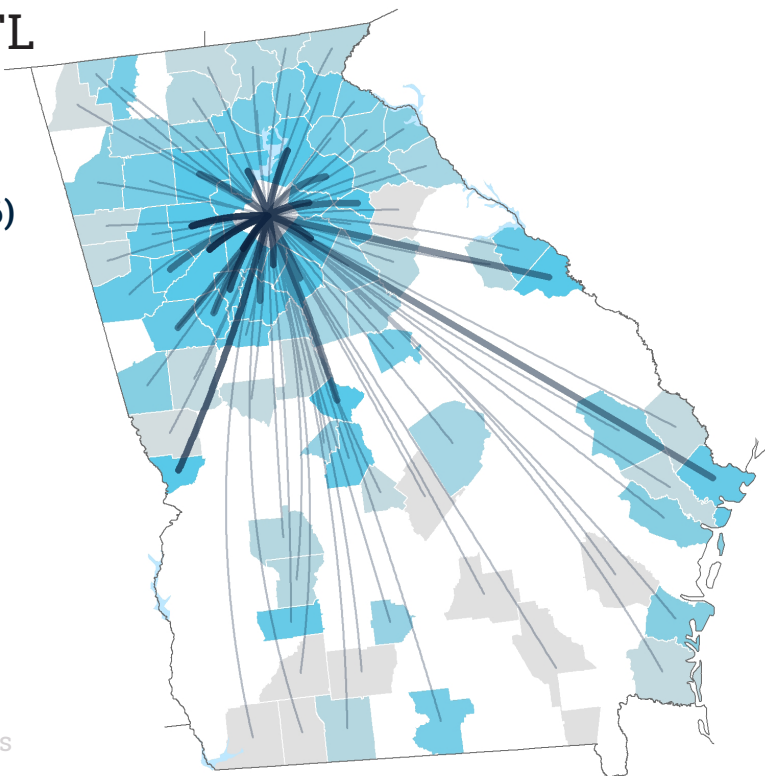


**Top Counties of Origin
Outside of Georgia (1990-2016)**

- 1** Broward County, FL
- 2** Los Angeles County, CA
- 3** Queens County, NY
- 4** Cook County, IL
- 5** Miami-Dade County, FL

**Top Counties of Origin
Within Georgia (1990-2016)**

- 1** DeKalb
- 2** Fulton
- 3** Cobb
- 4** Hall
- 5** Barrow



Source US Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Division, Migration Data 1990-2016

VISION

With such a diverse community of so many walks of life, what is our collective vision?

A large part of this planning effort was focused on simply discussing the future throughout the community. This multi-faceted community outreach process included:

Traditional Outreach Methods

- Public Hearings (2)
- Community Open Houses (15 opportunities throughout the County)
- Planning Advisory Committee Meetings (4 formal meetings and 1 open house)
- Online Survey

Non-Traditional Outreach Methods

- Speaking Engagements (with civic groups, Community Improvement Districts, and other interested parties)
- Pop Up Events (attending various events throughout the community to publicize the plan)
- Intercept Interviews (at various County locations)
- Engagement on Radio (with focus on Spanish language radio)
- Living Room Chats (a mechanism for us to capture others' conversations about the future of the County)

Additionally, this process included regular coordination and communication with partner agencies and County decision makers including:

- Gwinnett County Planning Commission
- Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners
- Technical Advisory Committee (consisting of various Gwinnett County departments)
- Gwinnett County Planning Committee (membership consisting of other Gwinnett County departments and planning staff from the municipalities)



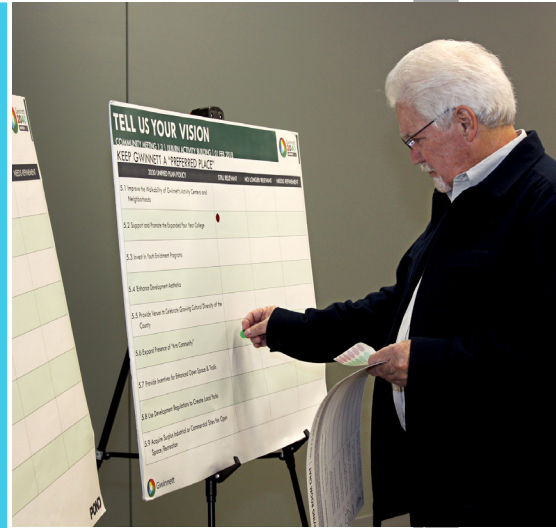
16,228
online survey comments

1,165
online survey respondents

59
intercept interviews
around Gwinnett County

20%
of intercept interviews
conducted in Spanish

80+
community open houses, meetings,
speaking events, intercept events,
and other outreach opportunities



THE FIVE THEMES

As part of the 2030 Unified Plan process, Gwinnett County identified Five Themes to act as an overall framework to guide policies that were woven throughout the plan. In the years since, the County has looked to these themes when making decisions on future land use, fiscal health, transportation and infrastructure investment, and community amenities. Through the 2040 Unified Plan outreach, the policies were considered and discussed in the 'Our Vision' chapter of this Plan.

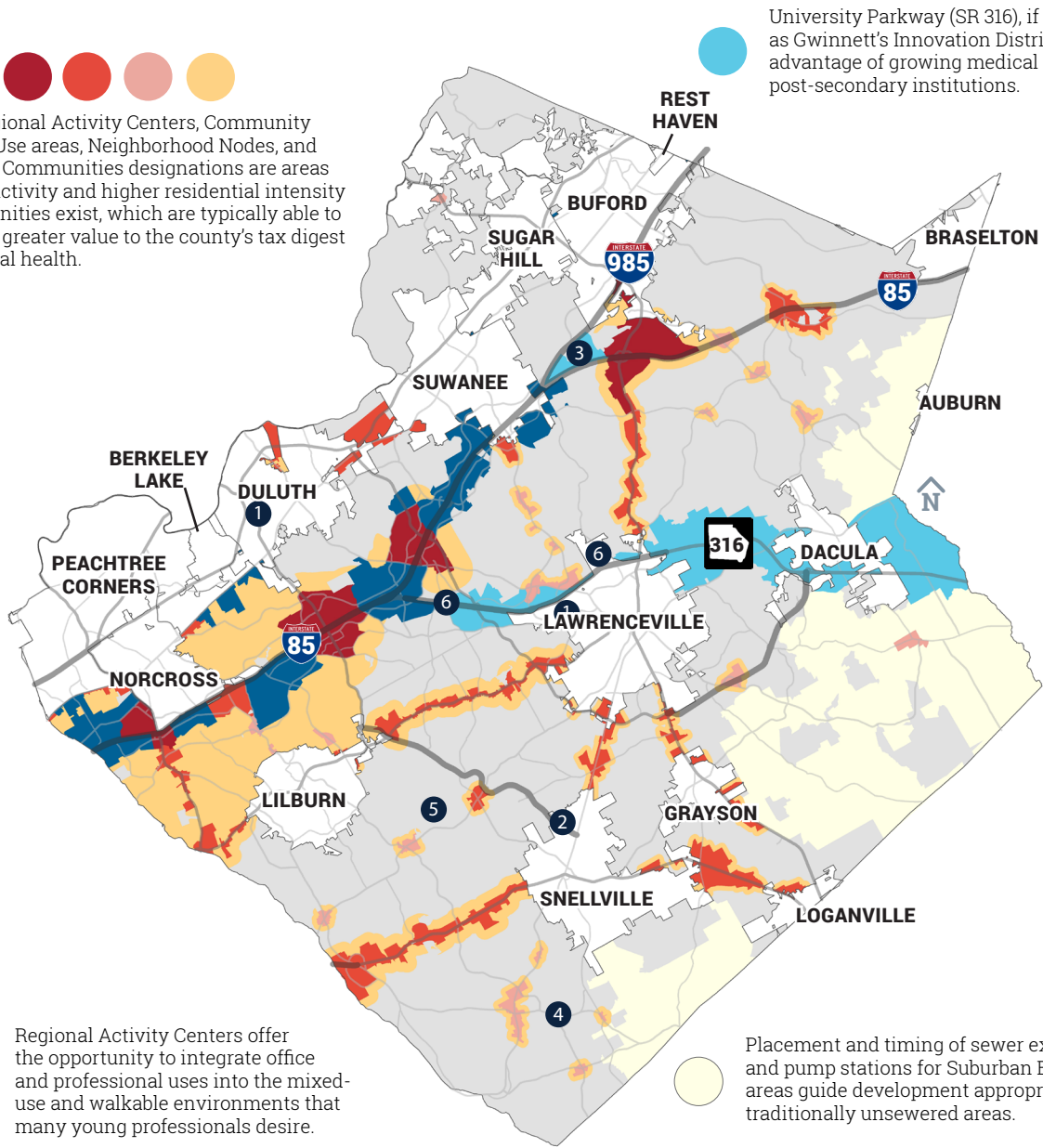
Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health

- Promote Mixed-Use, Nodal Development Along Major Corridors
- Promote Office Use as Part of Larger, Mixed-Use Developments
- Coordinate with Department of Water Resources (DWR) on Placement of Water and Sewer in Conjunction with the 2050 Sewer Master Plan
- Promote University Parkway (SR 316) as Gwinnett's Innovation District
- Employ Debt Financing, User Fees, Public-Private Partnerships, and Other Methods to Finance Major Infrastructure
- Encourage Redevelopment/Renovation of Existing, Aging Retail Centers, and Promote New Retail as Part of Mixed-Use Developments

Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health



Our Regional Activity Centers, Community Mixed-Use areas, Neighborhood Nodes, and Vibrant Communities designations are areas where activity and higher residential intensity opportunities exist, which are typically able to provide greater value to the county's tax digest and fiscal health.



University Parkway (SR 316), if marketed as Gwinnett's Innovation District, can take advantage of growing medical and post-secondary institutions.



Regional Activity Centers offer the opportunity to integrate office and professional uses into the mixed-use and walkable environments that many young professionals desire.



Employment Centers are identified as places in the County focused on employment opportunities and uses.



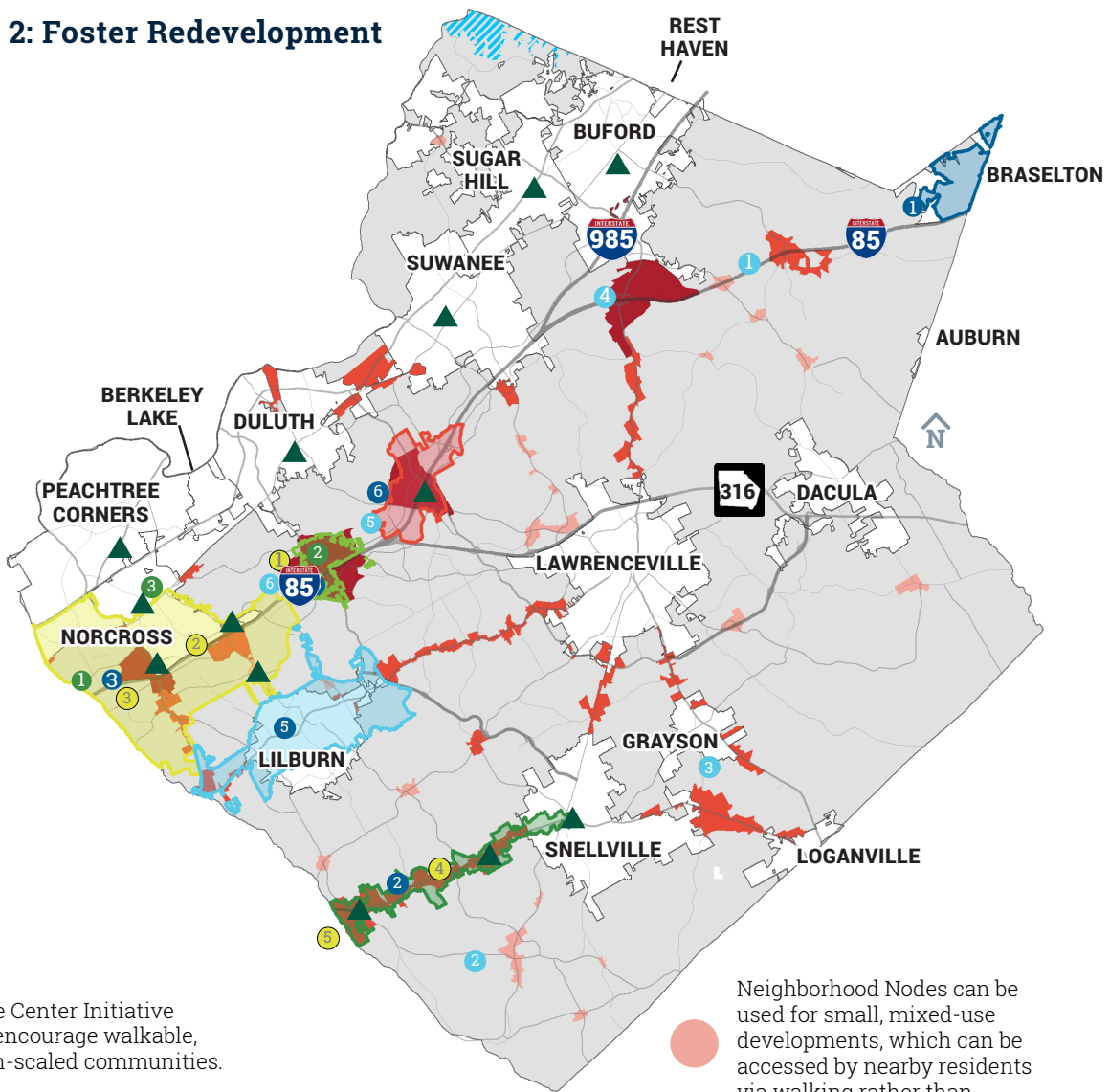
Placement and timing of sewer extensions and pump stations for Suburban Estate Living areas guide development appropriately in traditionally unsewered areas.

- 1 Gwinnett Medical Center Locations
- 2 Eastside Medical Center
- 3 Planned Water Innovation Center for Applied Research, Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development
- 4 Planned Water Reclamation Facility/Environmental Campus to support population growth and economic development.
- 5 The County is evaluating mechanisms to encourage and assist property owners currently on septic to connect to sewer.
- 6 Georgia Gwinnett College and Gwinnett Tech are a means to create a localized labor force.

Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment

- Institute a Variety of Redevelopment Incentives and Bonuses
- Promote Densification in Specific Areas Designated for Mixed-Use Through Rezoning and Increased Infrastructure Capacity
- Use Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)
- Promote Shared Infrastructure Facilities
- Allow Corner Neighborhood-Serving Uses in Defined Residential Nodes

Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment



Livable Center Initiative areas encourage walkable, human-scaled communities.



Regional Activity Centers offer the opportunity to integrate office and professional use and walkable environments that many young professionals desire.



Neighborhood Nodes can be used for small, mixed-use developments, which can be accessed by nearby residents via walking rather than driving for quick trips.



Community Mixed-Use areas offer opportunities for integrated development on our major corridors and nodes.

Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)

- 1 Braselton
- 2 Evermore
- 3 Gateway85 Gwinnett
- 4 Gwinnett Place
- 5 Lilburn
- 6 Sugarloaf

County Overlay Districts

- 1 Hamilton Mill/Highway 124/Highway 324 Overlay District
- 2 Centerville/Highway 124 Overlay District
- 3 Grayson/Highway 20 Overlay District
- 4 Mall of Georgia Overlay District
- 5 Civic Center Overlay District
- 6 Venture Drive Overlay District

County Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)

- 1 Gwinnett Place TAD
- 2 Indian Trail TAD
- 3 Jimmy Carter TAD
- 4 Lake Lucerne TAD
- 5 Park Place TAD

Opportunity Zones

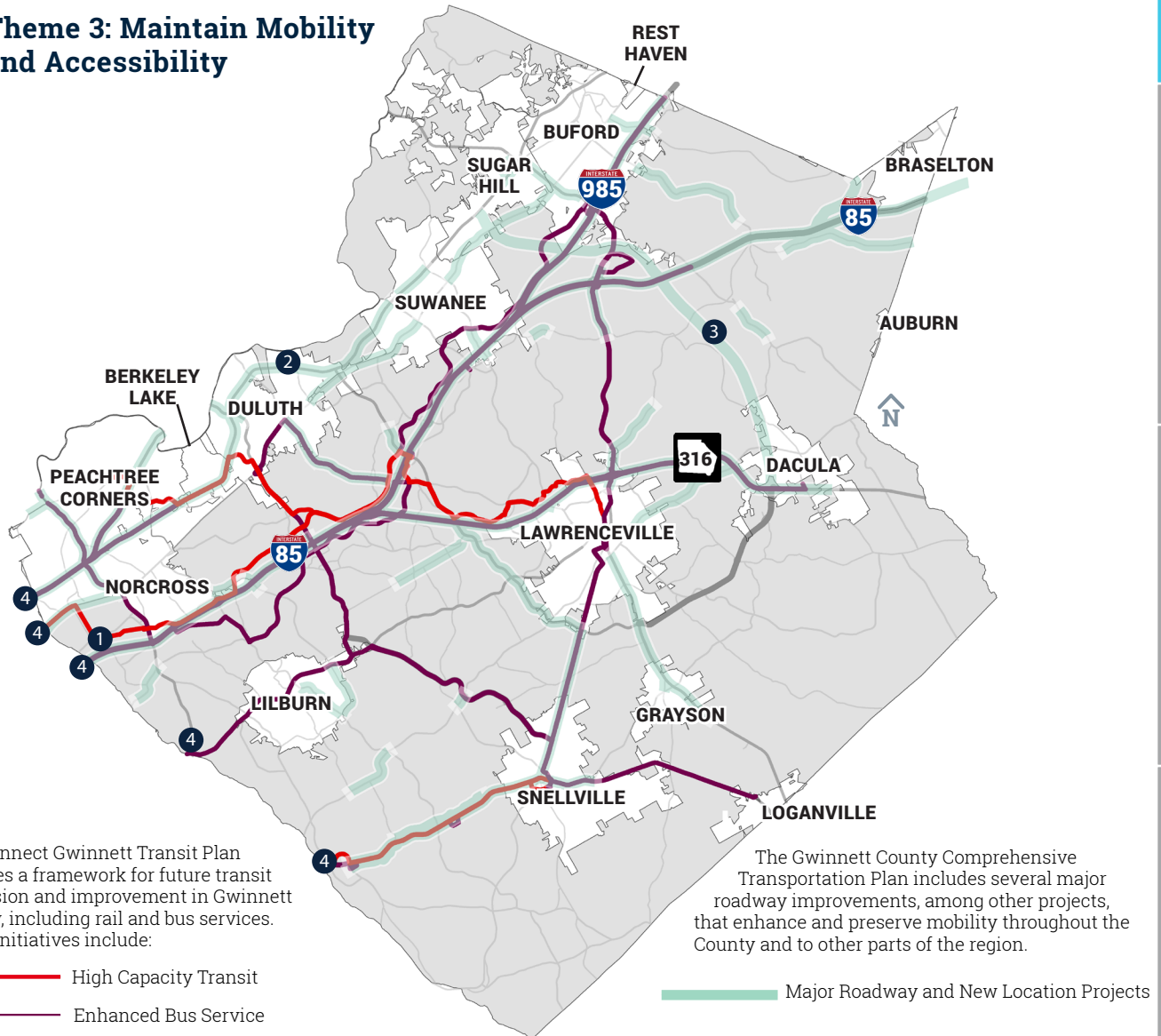
- 1 Gateway 85
- 2 Gwinnett Place
- 3 Norcross

Note: Other Overlay Districts and TADs are administered by cities within their boundaries

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility

- Enhance Signal Coordination and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Promote Inter-Parcel Access on Arterials in New Development and Redevelopment, to Cut Down on Curb Cuts
- Enhance Incident Management (Traffic Control Center)
- Establish a Road Connectivity Requirement for New Development
- Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at Proposed Transit Stations/ Hubs
- Support the Recommendations and Policies in the Connect Gwinnett: Transit Development Plan
- Adopt and Promote Land Use Policies that Support Recommendations and Policies in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility



The Connect Gwinnett Transit Plan provides a framework for future transit expansion and improvement in Gwinnett County, including rail and bus services. Major initiatives include:

The Gwinnett County Comprehensive Transportation Plan includes several major roadway improvements, among other projects, that enhance and preserve mobility throughout the County and to other parts of the region.

- High Capacity Transit
- Enhanced Bus Service

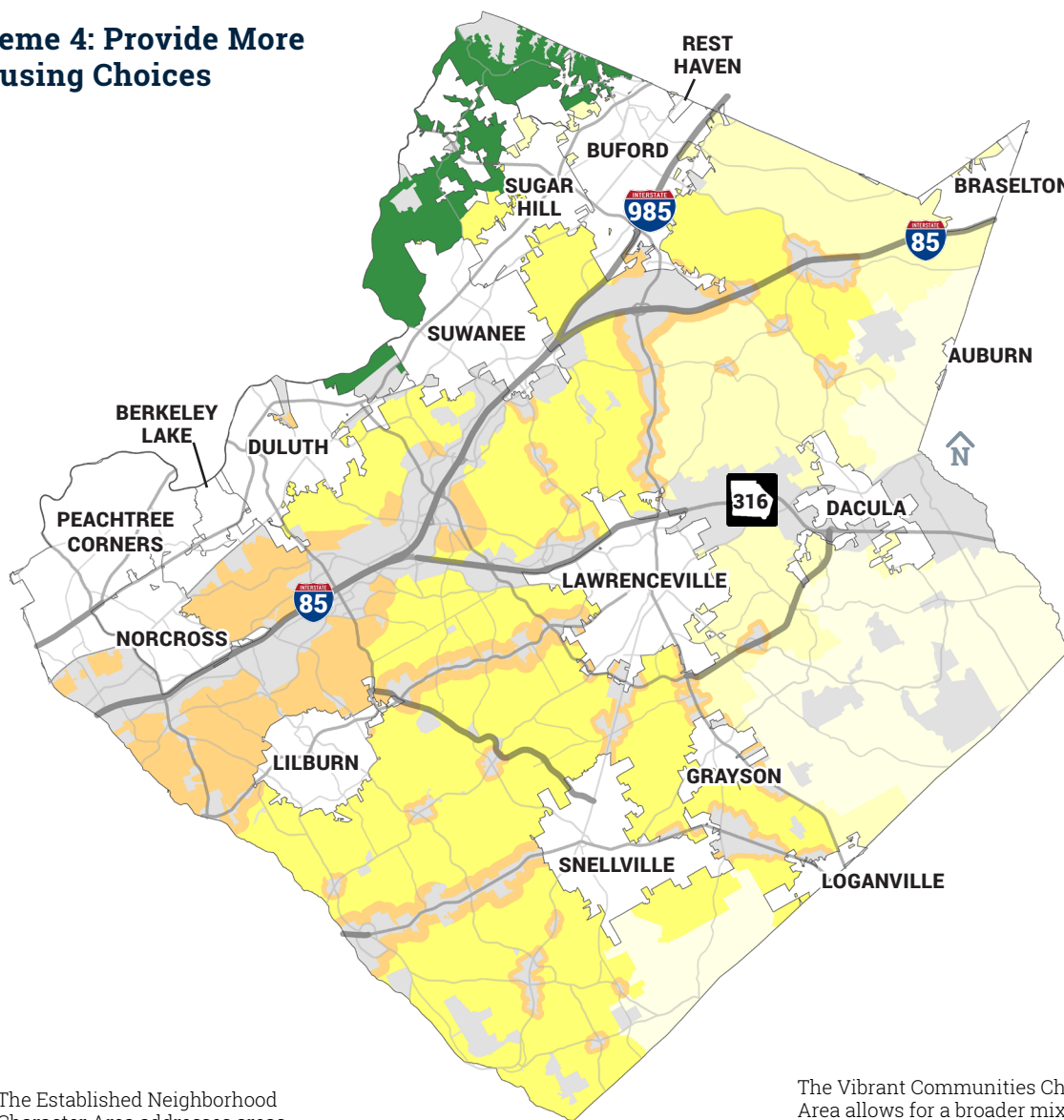
— Major Roadway and New Location Projects

- 1 Heavy rail transit expansion to Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Gwinnett Place.
- 2 Connected vehicle opportunities on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
- 3 Tolling options being explored to underwrite construction of Sugarloaf Parkway - Phase 3.
- 4 Transit connections into neighboring metro communities.

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices

- Preserve and Expand Housing for All Income Levels and Phases of Life
- Expand Maintenance and Rehabilitation Assistance to Homeowners
- Support Expanded Housing Opportunities for Seniors

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices



The Established Neighborhood Character Area addresses areas that are largely single family oriented neighborhoods that act as the backbone for Gwinnett to continue to attract families seeking a traditionally suburban lifestyle.



The Suburban Estate Living Character Area has been designated to help with preservation of remaining low intensity development areas of the County where infrastructure (i.e. road, sewer) is limited.



The Vibrant Communities Character Area allows for a broader mix of housing types, income levels, and phases of life. These areas are also identified to surround the areas designated as Activity Centers in the plan to maximize accessibility to commerce, jobs, and entertainment.

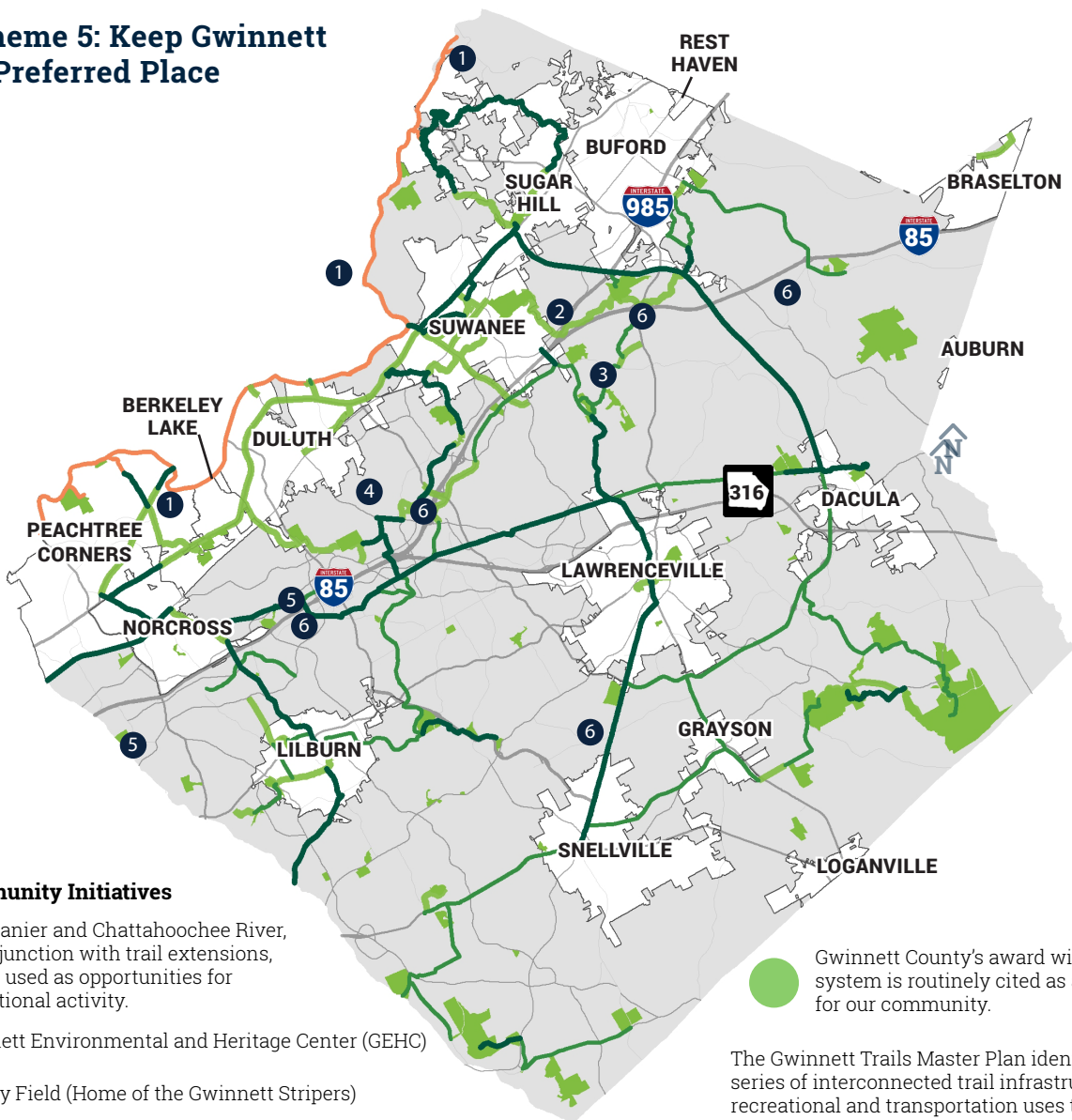


Executive housing areas on and along Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River.

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place


- Improve the Walkability of Gwinnett’s Activity Centers and Neighborhoods
- Support and Promote the Expanded Four-Year Colleges
- Invest in Youth Enrichment Programs
- Draft Design Guidelines for Areas That Are Ready for Redevelopment or New Development
- Provide Venues to Celebrate the Cultural Diversity of the County
- Expand Presence of the “Arts Community”
- Provide Incentives for Enhanced Open Space Trails
- Create Trail Connections Between Existing Parks, Schools, Libraries, and Other Community Facilities as Appropriate
- Ensure Protection of Gwinnett’s Environment, Recognizing that a Healthy Environment is the Basis of a Desirable Community

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place







Community Initiatives

- 1 Lake Lanier and Chattahoochee River, in conjunction with trail extensions, can be used as opportunities for recreational activity.
- 2 Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center (GEHC)
- 3 Coolray Field (Home of the Gwinnett Stripers)
- 4 Revel and the Infinite Energy Center will be the backbone of Gwinnett's entertainment district.
- 5 As the Gwinnett population becomes more diverse, there are increasingly more opportunities to immerse ourselves in the food and culture of our newest residents.
- 6 Our major retail centers attract both Gwinnettians and visitors from surrounding communities.

 Gwinnett County's award winning park system is routinely cited as a major asset for our community.

The Gwinnett Trails Master Plan identifies a series of interconnected trail infrastructure for recreational and transportation uses throughout the County.

-  Core Trail Network
-  Chattahoochee Trail Network
-  Priority Trails
-  Existing and Funded Trails

DEVELOP

The overall purpose of the plan is to understand and convey how the County's infrastructure (such as transportation and sewer) will interface with land use, economic development, parks, open spaces, and housing policies to ensure that Gwinnett remains the "preferred place" in metro Atlanta to live and work as described in the five themes.

In the 'Plan Development' chapter, there are individual explorations of how these elements work interdependently, often building off of separate and distinct planning efforts. Therefore, the centerpiece of this 2040 Unified Plan focuses on how these components work together and interface with the overall community vision. This process, which we call the "Opportunity for Change" analysis is comprised of three distinct parts.

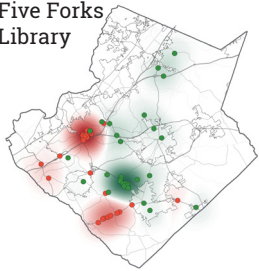
Opportunity for Change

Change and Preserve Preferences

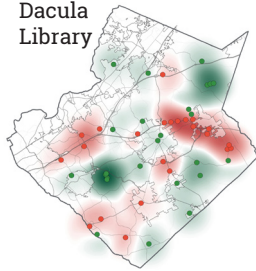
The first component is called "change and preserve preferences" and was an exercise developed to understand the parts of our community that residents would like to preserve as they exist today and conversely, the parts of our community where they see an opportunity for change. At various community outreach events, participants were asked to place red and green dots on maps of the County to show areas where change is desired (in the darkest hues of red), where preservation of existing character is desired (in the darkest hues of green), and everything in between.

Community Open Houses Round 1

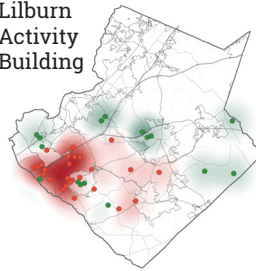
Five Forks Library



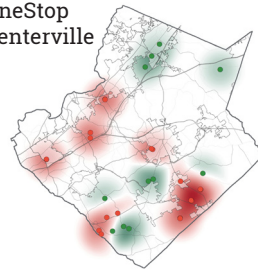
Dacula Library



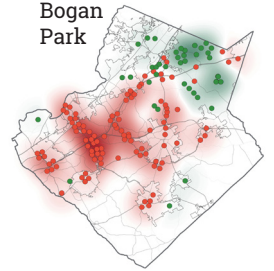
Lilburn Activity Building



OneStop Centerville

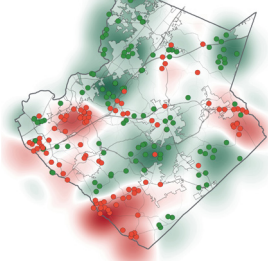


Bogan Park

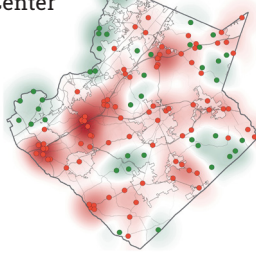


Other Target Groups

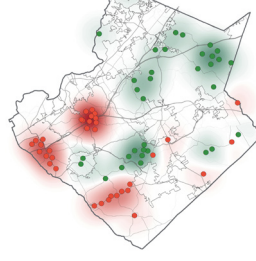
Planning Advisory Committee



Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center



Planning Commission



● "Change" Dot

● "Preserve" Dot

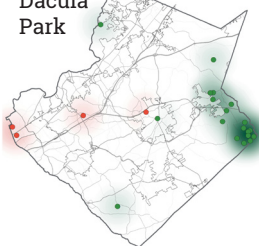
Highest desire for change

Highest desire for preservation

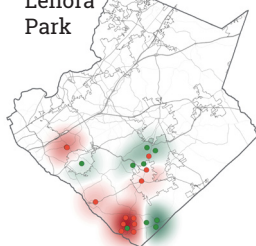


Community Open Houses Round 2

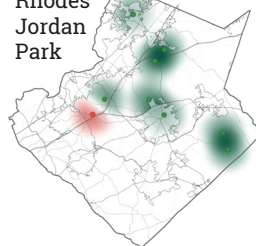
Dacula Park



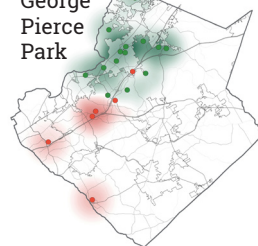
Lenora Park



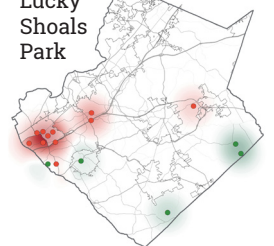
Rhodes Jordan Park



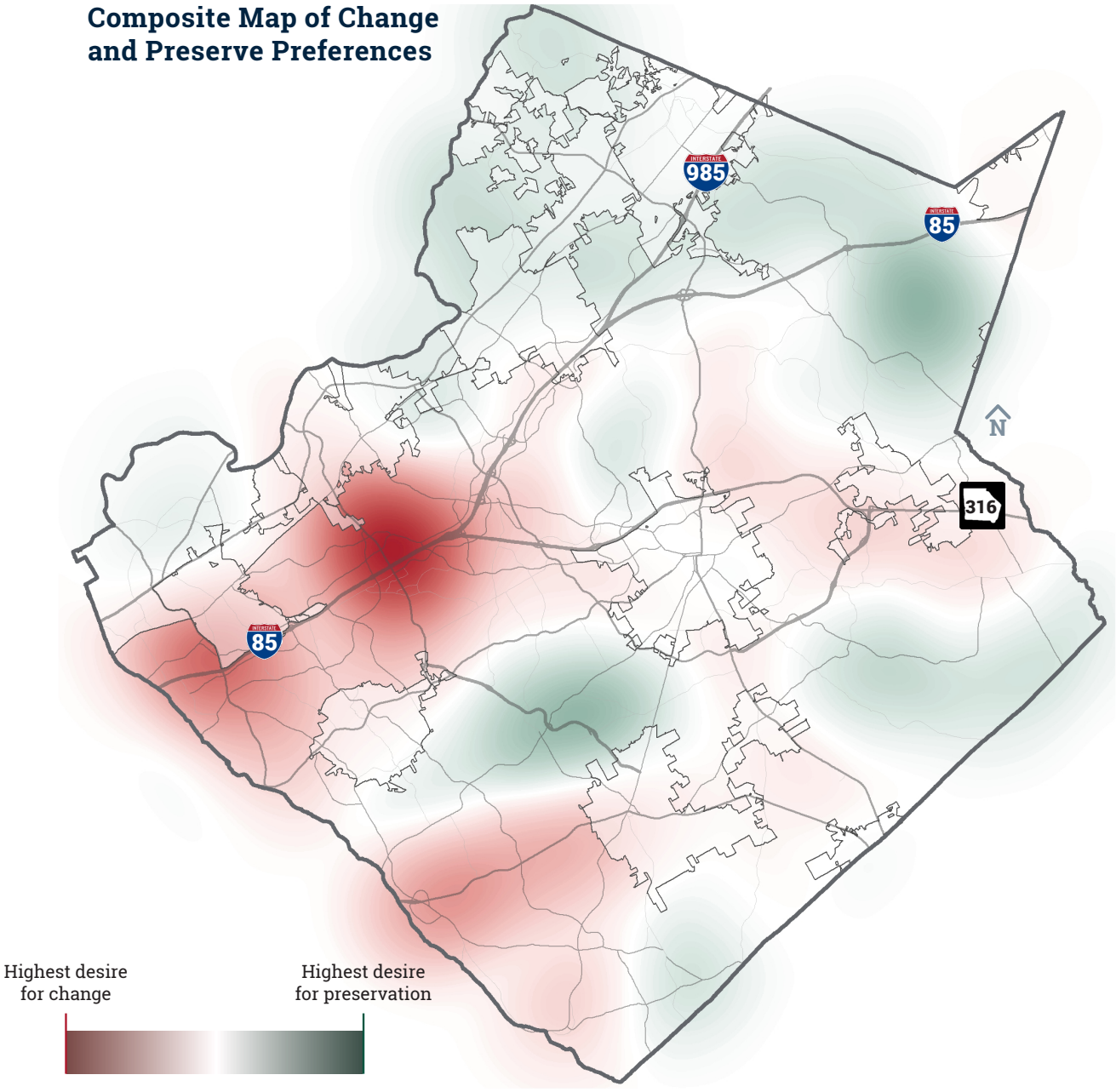
George Pierce Park



Lucky Shoals Park



Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences

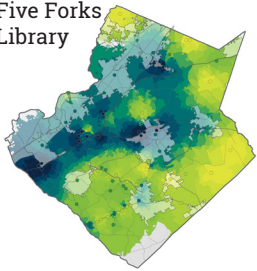


Urban Scale Preferences

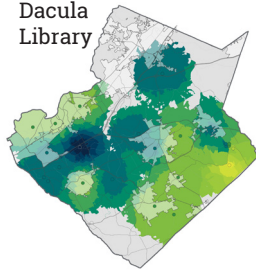
The second component is called “urban scale preferences” and was a companion exercise designed to understand what types of development and intensity the community felt appropriate. Using a scale from undeveloped areas to suburban areas to urban areas, community outreach participants used colored dots to voice their vision for the future of different parts of Gwinnett County.

Community Open Houses Round 1

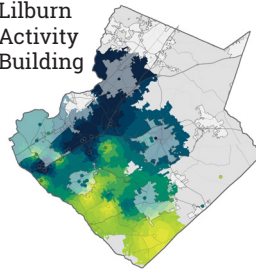
Five Forks Library



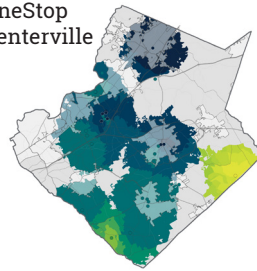
Dacula Library



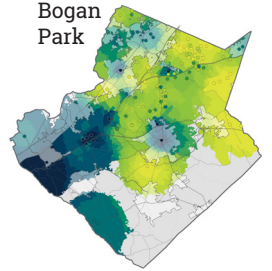
Lilburn Activity Building



OneStop Centerville

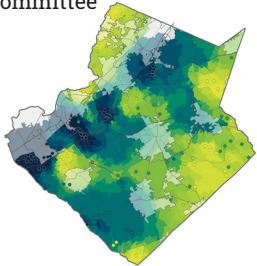


Bogan Park

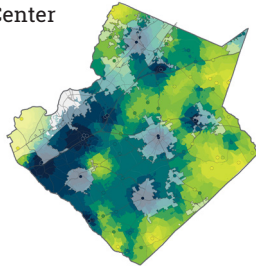


Other Target Groups

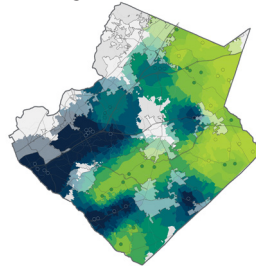
Planning Advisory Committee



Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center



Planning Commission

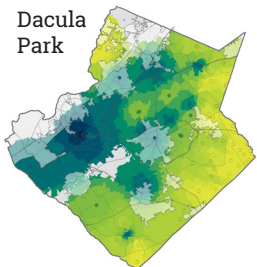


Open Space

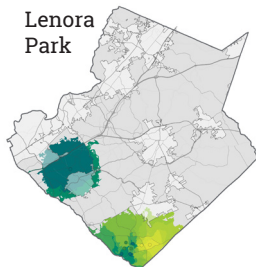
Urban Center

Community Open Houses Round 2

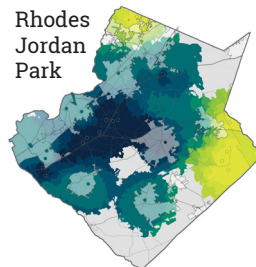
Dacula Park



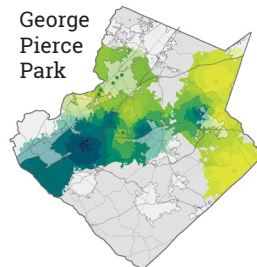
Lenora Park



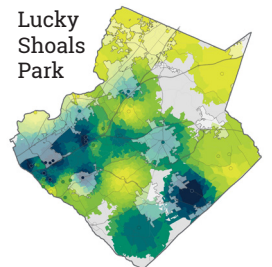
Rhodes Jordan Park



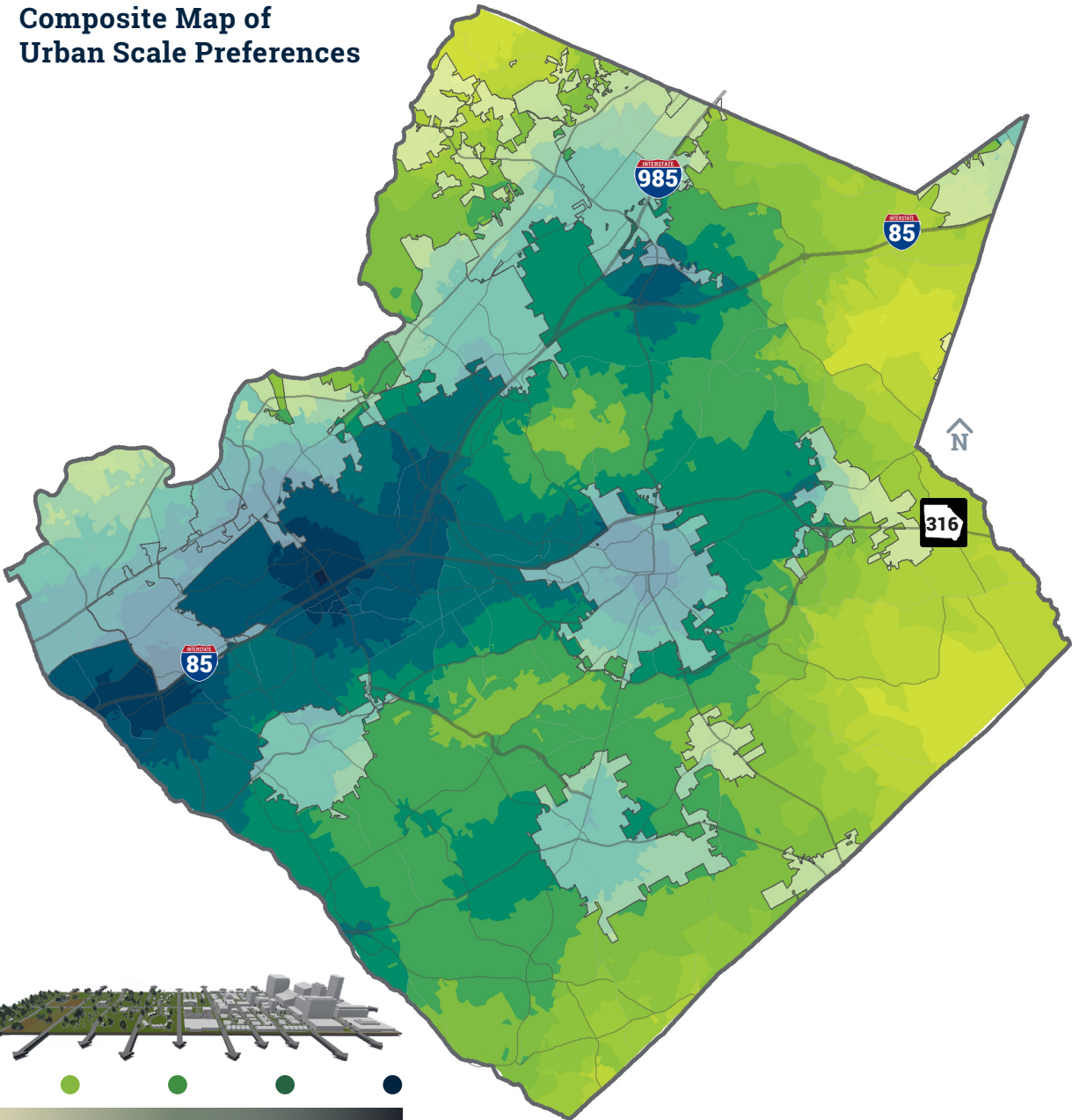
George Pierce Park



Lucky Shoals Park



Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences



Open Space

Urban Center

Change and Preserve Likelihood

In the third and final component, called “change and preserve likelihood,” a series of analyses were performed and compiled to understand what parts of the County are actually likely to change and what parts are more likely to retain their current character. Grouped into three major categories, this analysis included:

Infrastructure Assessment Factors

- Planned Sewer Access (from Sewer Master Plan 2050)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Suitability Score (from Comprehensive Transportation Plan)
- Trail Access and Investments (from Trails Master Plan)
- Planned Transportation Investments (from Comprehensive Transportation Plan)

Economic Development Factors

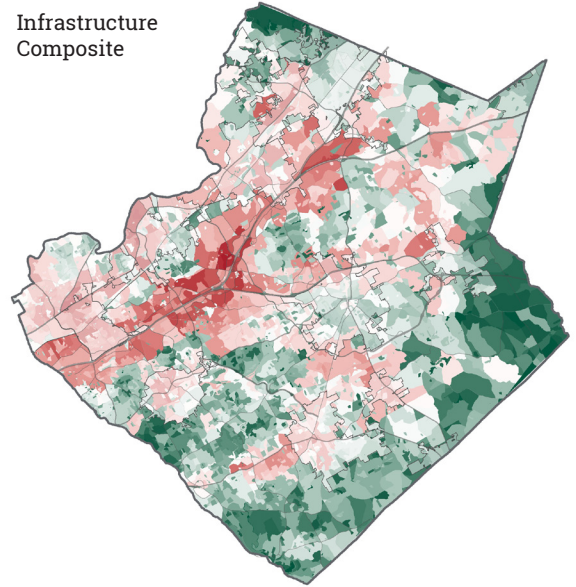
- Land Value (source: Tax Assessor data)
- Improvement to Land Value Ratio (source: Tax Assessor data)
- Development Interest (source: land use and rezoning data)

Land Use & Housing Factors

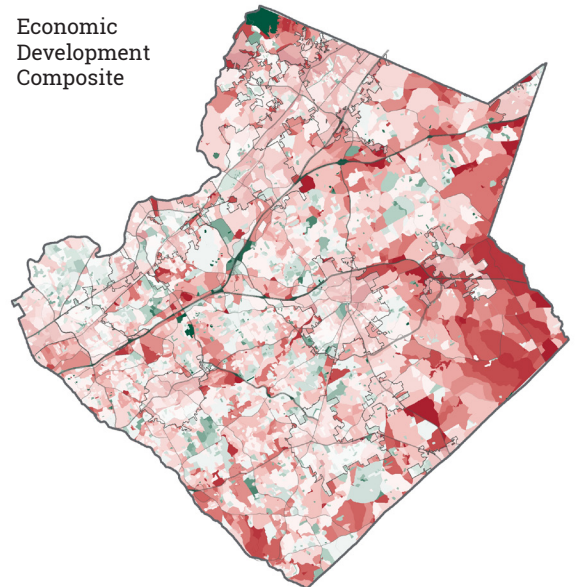
- Concentrations of Retail (source: land use data)
- Owner Occupancy of Housing Units (source: US Census)
- Urbanity Scores (source: ESRI Tapestry Data, which reflects inherent consumer values, and were correlated to understand where changes to a more urban environment would be more likely to be welcomed)

These three major categories were then reconciled to develop an overall assessment of the likelihood of change or preservation within Gwinnett County.

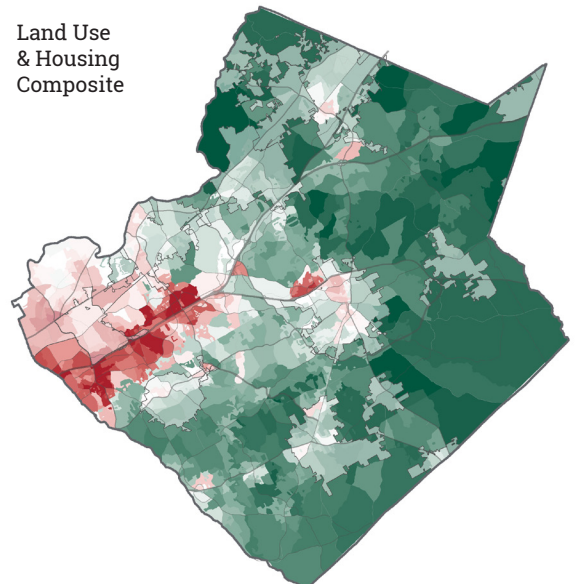
Infrastructure Composite



Economic Development Composite



Land Use & Housing Composite

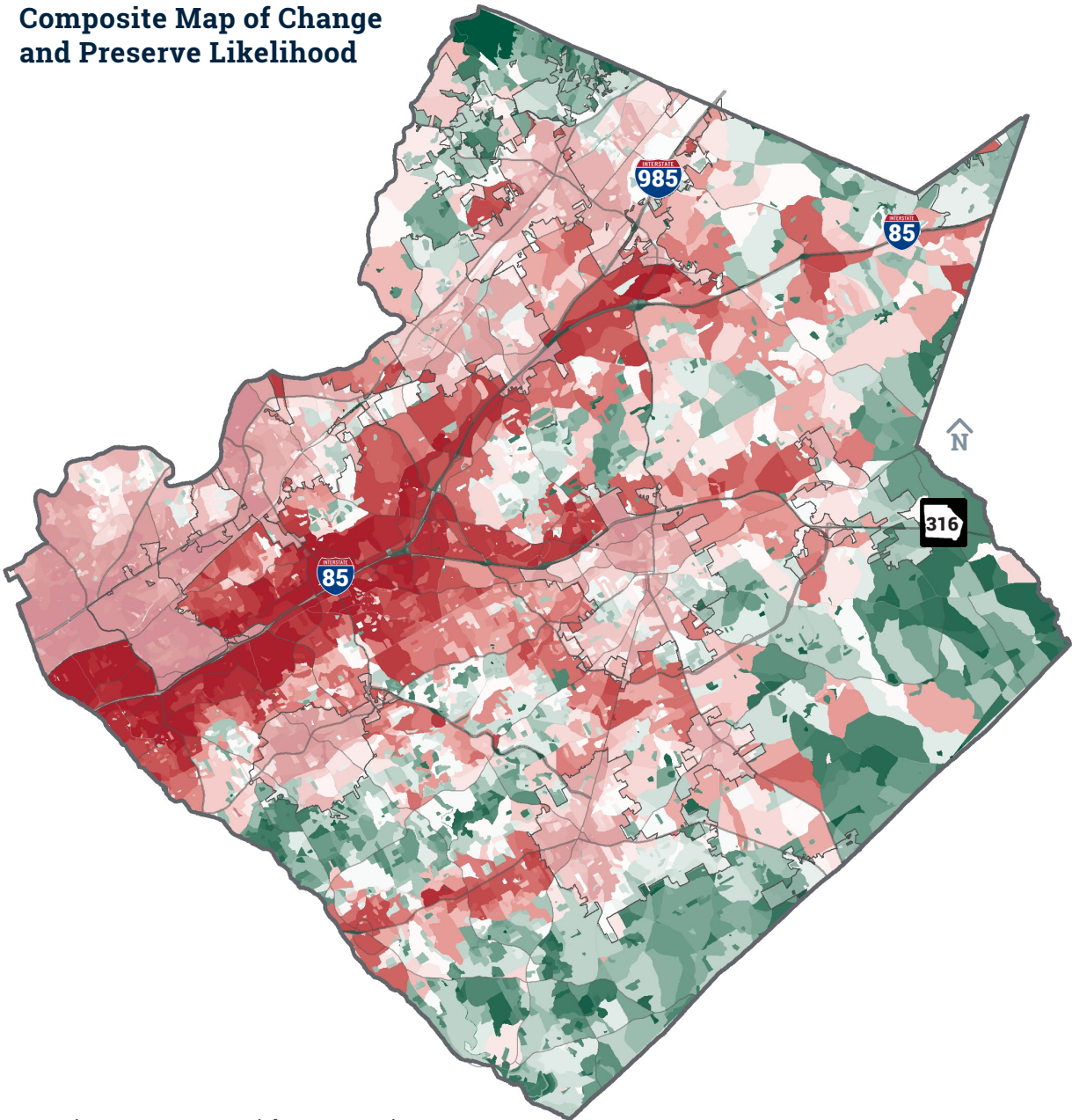


Highest propensity
for change



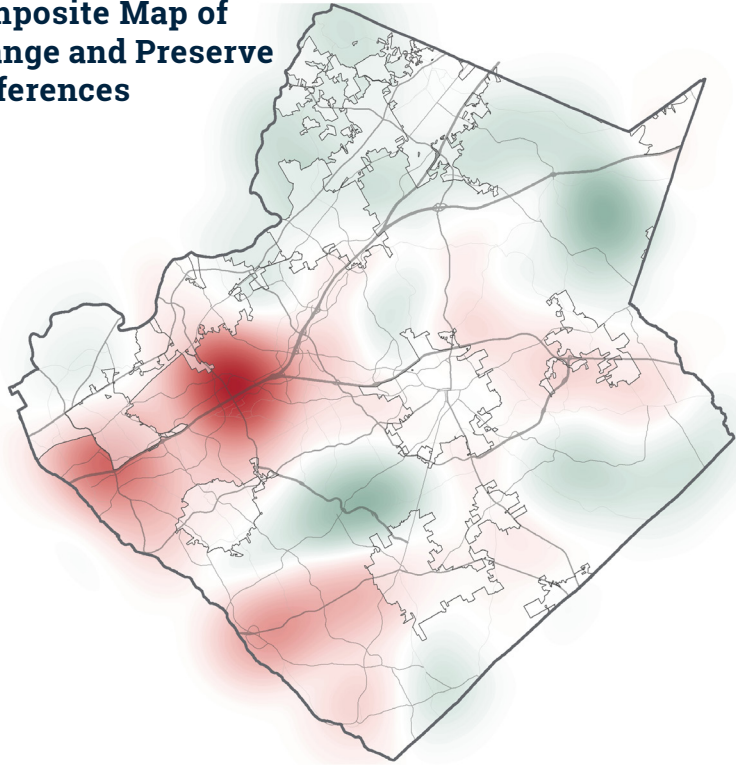
Highest propensity
for preservation

Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood

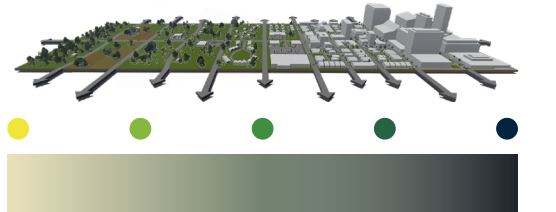
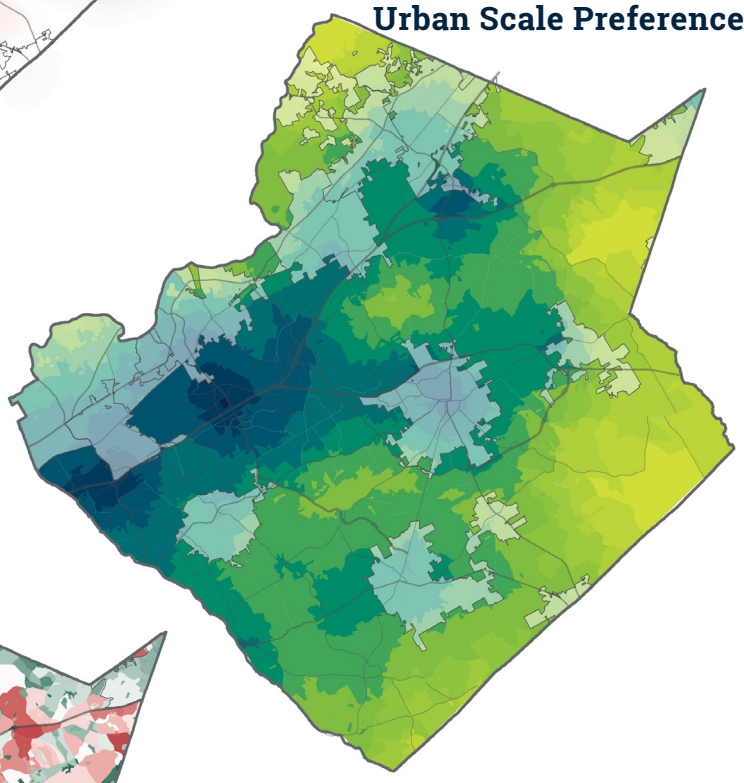


The overall thematic conclusions of this analysis suggests broad agreement and interest in likely future outcomes for the future of Gwinnett County, with the most intense interest for urban environments along the I-85 corridor; the US 78 and SR 316 corridors reflecting this interest as well. A corresponding arc shows desire for less intense development along the eastern and southern edges of the County.

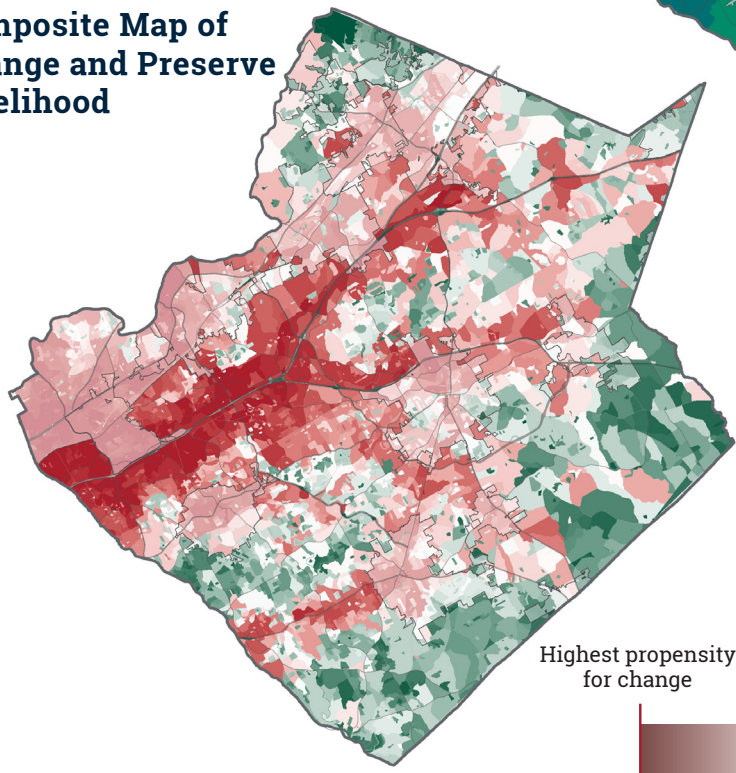
Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences



Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences



Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood



Guiding Philosophies

These conclusions from the Opportunity for Change analysis led to the development of six Guiding Philosophies, developed and used by the planning team to assist in how the community's vision could be implemented in the Plan.

Use Character Areas to Establish Transitional Areas

The plan should include measures so that areas targeted for more intense urban development relate appropriately to lower intensity areas of the community. Recognizing a broad need for more flexible and creative housing products, the establishment of transitional areas can serve both needs.



Encourage Redevelopment in Key Areas While Still Allowing for Greenfield Development Opportunities

While greenfield development of the undeveloped parts of eastern and southern Gwinnett County is still likely, there must also be a correspondingly strong effort to revitalize and redevelop the older parts of Gwinnett County, with particular emphasis on the I-85 corridor and its surrounding areas.



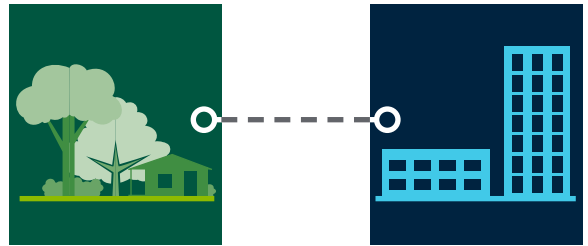
Preserve the Character of Areas That Are Still Relatively Undeveloped

With a focus on regionalism, further outlying communities are beginning to develop more intensely on or near the Gwinnett County border. As a result, demand for development in eastern and southern Gwinnett County is not likely to subside. However, this plan can also cast a vision so that development in these areas is responsible and appropriate relative to the existing character of the area.



Use Urban Scale to Communicate and Articulate Implied Densities and Character

The implementation of this plan would result in a Gwinnett County that would have much more variety in its urban geography than our existing, mostly suburban character. While much of that suburban character would be retained, there would also be areas of much more intense development and conversely, areas of much less intense development. Beyond just focusing on the compatibility of land uses and zoning, using the concept of urban scale - which is replicated throughout this plan - will provide the County with a broader mechanism to talk about how different parts of our community can relate to one another.



Encourage Development to Be More Nodal Than Linear

Instead of continuing our historic pattern of linear strip commercial development, future areas of activity and intensity should be focused in more central and nodal environments.



Incorporate and Integrate Office Areas Into Mixed-Used Districts

In the future, Gwinnett County should continue to retain areas that are primarily employment oriented, but future development should also promote the integration of these areas with other uses.

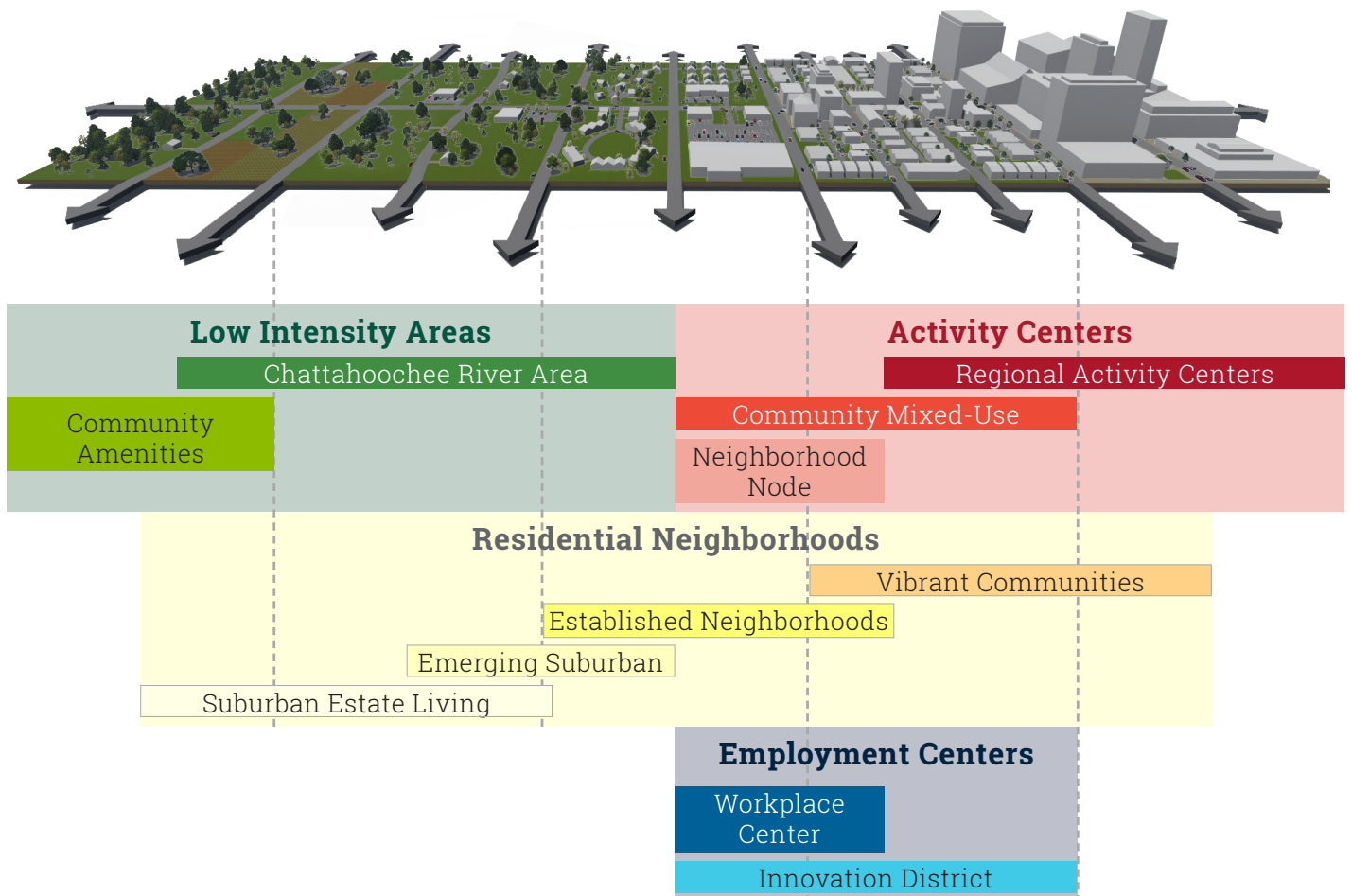


DOCUMENT

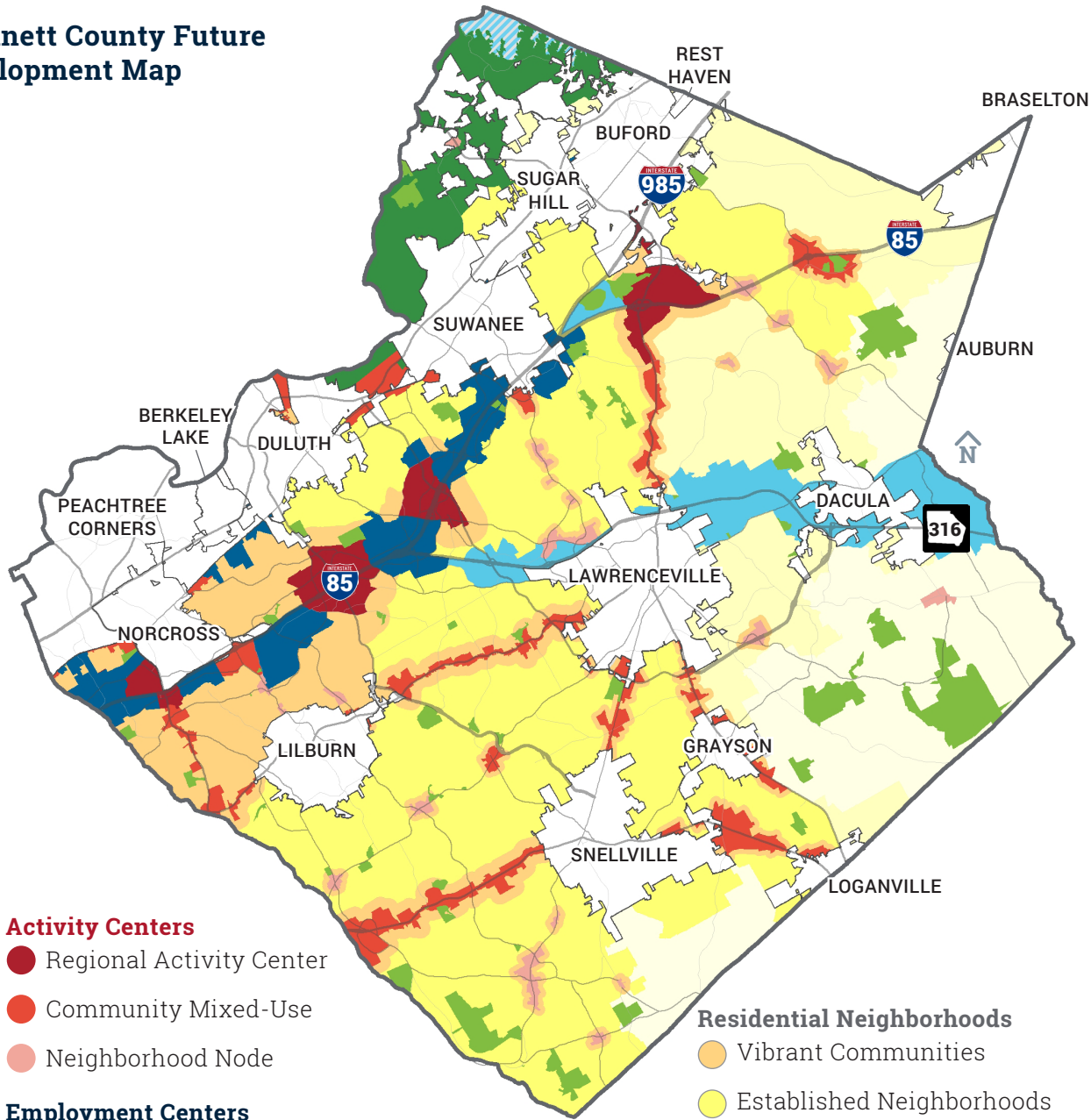
While the Unified Plan incorporates and considers many subjects, its focus is the relationship to land use and development, which is discussed in detail through the 'Implementation' chapter of this report. The overall mechanism for the implementation of this plan are the ideas documented through what is called the Future Development Map and the corresponding Character Areas that would guide the character and type of future development throughout the community.

The eleven Character Areas are grouped further into four overall categories, collectively comprise the future of Gwinnett County, and articulate how the interface between urban scale and development types can work together.

Interface of Urban Scale and Character Areas



Gwinnett County Future Development Map



Activity Centers

- Regional Activity Center
- Community Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Node

Employment Centers

- Workplace Center
- Innovation District

Other

- Municipalities
- Lake Lanier

Residential Neighborhoods

- Vibrant Communities
- Established Neighborhoods
- Emerging Suburban
- Suburban Estate Living

Low Intensity Areas

- Chattahoochee River Area
- Community Amenities

Note Character Areas and components of the Future Development Map are limited to the unincorporated parts of Gwinnett County. The municipalities have similar comprehensive plan efforts to articulate the visions of these individual communities. Our process included coordination and discussion with these partner communities to ensure comparability of ideas, especially in areas of shared influence. Also, only those community amenities (i.e. parks) that are unincorporated parts of Gwinnett County are displayed. Several County facilities are located within Gwinnett County municipalities.

Activity Centers

The Activity Center character areas on the Future Development Map are those areas where the most intensive forms of future development are suggested. Broadly related to those areas of the County where redevelopment should be focused, these places are envisioned as walkable districts of varying intensities, with the development scale achieved through the three character areas described below:

Regional Activity Center

The Regional Activity Center Character Area is intended for areas that have intense commercial and office/employment activity, as well as some residential elements. The dominant focus of Regional Activity Centers are major activity centers for Gwinnett County and the broader region, and would include a combination of retail, office, and residential uses and possibly transit. To encourage a pedestrian friendly, walkable, live/work/play environment around these activity centers, developments should include a variety of building types. Specifically, residential development should encompass mid to high rise buildings.

Community Mixed-Use

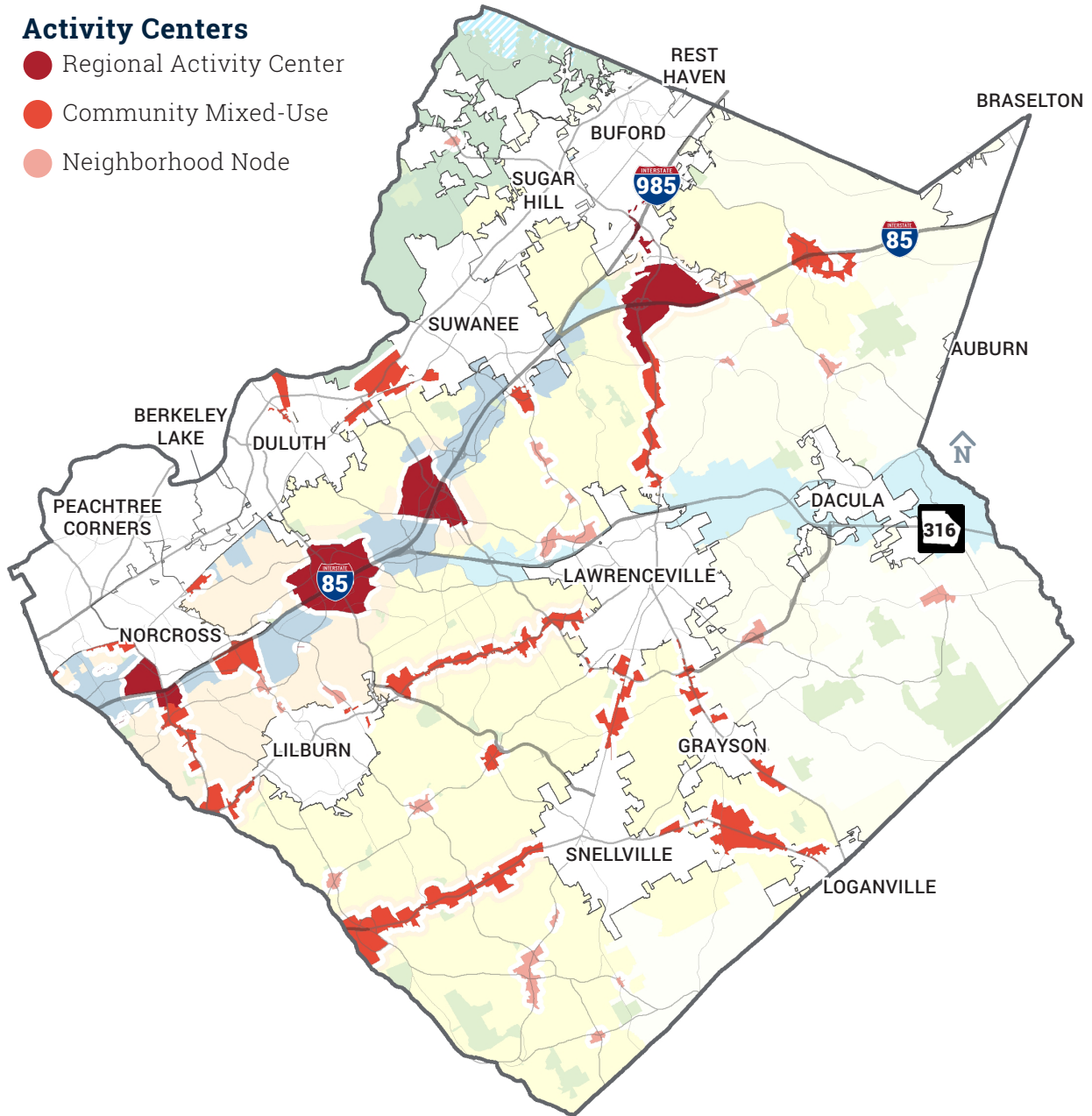
The Community Mixed-Use Character Area is intended for activity nodes and connecting areas located along major corridors including Jimmy Carter Boulevard, Lawrenceville Highway (US Highway 29), Scenic Highway (State Route 124), Stone Mountain Freeway/Athens Highway (US Highway 78), Buford Drive/Grayson Highway (State Route 20), and Sugarloaf Parkway. Future development and redevelopment should focus on making these corridors more pedestrian oriented with intensity focused in specific nodes. A node is defined as the area surrounding the intersection of two roadways classified as 'collectors' or higher. This is characterized by mixed-use developments incorporating mostly commercial uses with some smaller office tenants, and medium to high density residential uses concentrated at major intersections. The section of the corridors between the higher intensity nodes should redevelop as lighter intensity mixed-use centers with lower residential densities, or commercial uses integrating high quality aesthetics and site design.

Neighborhood Node

The Neighborhood Node Character Area is intended for smaller commercial/retail nodes at various intersections located throughout the County. Mainly serving the residents of the surrounding residential neighborhoods, these nodes will most likely draw customers from the nearby area. Future development and redevelopment should maintain the community-oriented feel of these areas, with a focus on creating small mixed-use areas combining retail, low intensity office uses, and medium density residential uses in a pedestrian friendly environment, allowing nearby residents to safely walk to and within them. As the county continues to develop, and the unified plan is updated, additions to this category should be expected as a means of creating new neighborhood nodes.

Activity Centers

- Regional Activity Center
- Community Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Node



Employment Centers

The areas indicated as Employment Centers for the County are those areas that are either currently or anticipated to orient primarily towards employment uses, though other uses that are supportive should be included.

Workplace Center

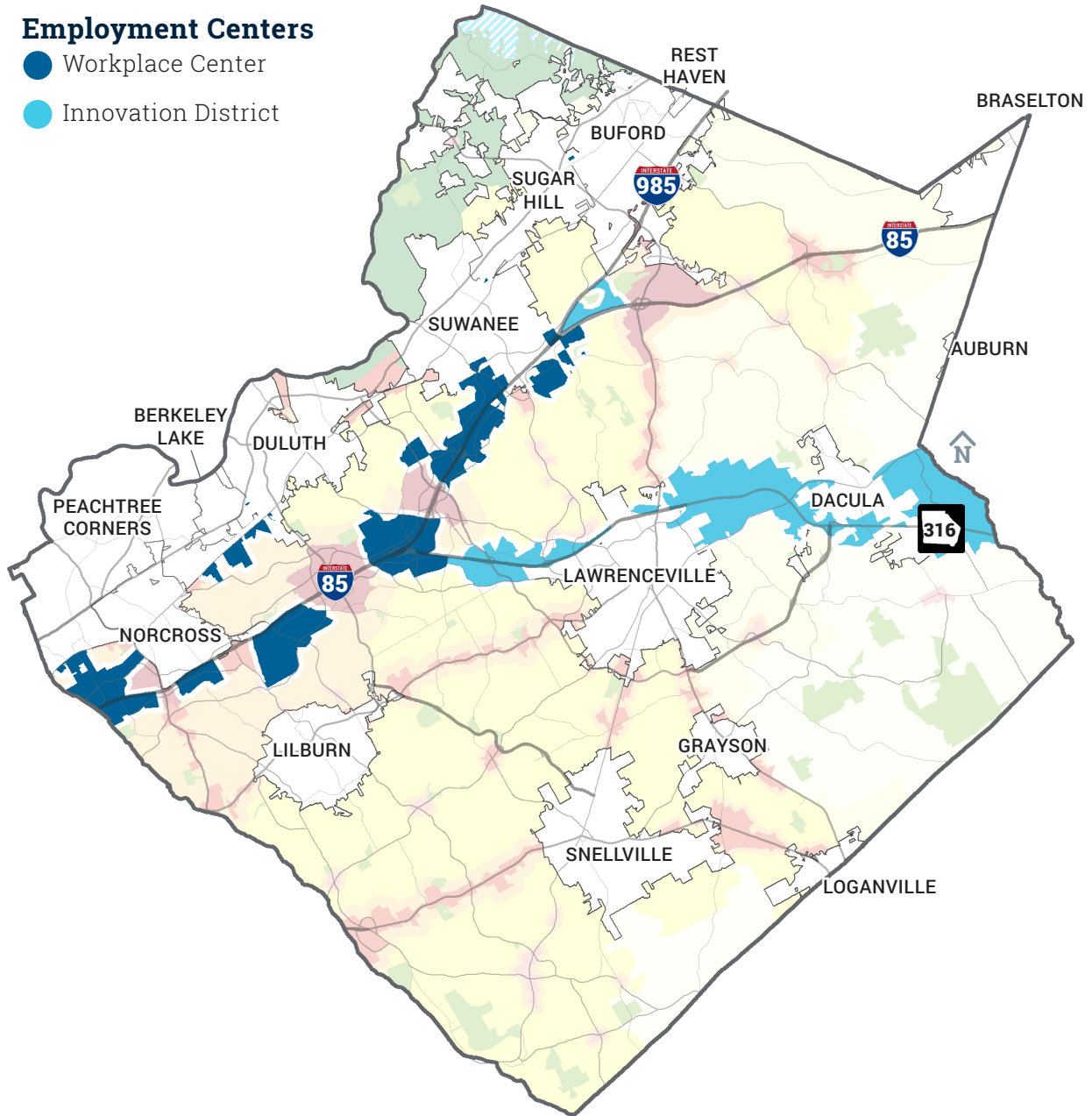
The Workplace Center Character Area is for predominantly employment-oriented uses and includes office parks, industrial parks, and locations for freight oriented and logistic uses. However, focus should be put on attracting a larger share of the region's service employment in these areas to offset anticipated shrinking in manufacturing, light industrial, and retail employment, and help maintain Gwinnett's overall employer variety and household incomes. While reserving these lands to focus on employment uses, these elements should be supported, where appropriate, by opportunities for residential uses and multi-use oriented commercial areas.

Innovation District

The Innovation District Character Area is intended where the predominant use is research and development, technology companies, industrial parks, and areas where there are colleges and universities. Therefore, it lies predominately along University Parkway (State Route 316), which has been designated as a Research and Development Corridor by the County. This corridor includes Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett Technical College, Gwinnett Medical Center, and Gwinnett County Airport with Briscoe Field, which serves mainly private aviation and corporate jets. The proximity of these elements provides the opportunity for an enterprise-type relationship between the colleges, the medical center, and research and development companies. These elements should be supported, where appropriate, by opportunities for including residential and multi-use oriented commercial areas. The F. Wayne Hill Water Reclamation Plant and Water Innovation Resource Center is designated within the Innovation District due to the focus on development of innovative water treatment techniques.

Employment Centers

- Workplace Center
- Innovation District



Residential Neighborhoods

The areas indicated as Residential Neighborhoods are those areas that are intended to be primarily residential.

Vibrant Communities

The Vibrant Communities Character Area is intended to serve as a transition between neighborhood nodes and mixed-use activity centers and surrounding, established single-family residential areas. It is generally located away from the primary intersections where the various types of activity centers and nodes are located. Dependent on the setting, zoning pattern, and intensity of development characterizing these various locations throughout the County, new development and redevelopment in Vibrant Communities may contain a mix of housing types, including small-lot single-family housing, multifamily housing, townhomes, and senior housing. Corner/neighborhood serving non-residential or institutional developments/uses may be integrated into Vibrant Communities. These communities will function as a buffer between neighborhood nodes/mixed-use areas and the larger, established residential areas. The extent of this transitional area as depicted on the Future Development Map is both flexible and conceptual in nature, and is intended as a general guide in making zoning decisions based on the scale and intensity of surrounding development.

Established Neighborhoods

The Established Neighborhoods Character Area designates well established neighborhoods and single-family residential areas that are unlikely to undergo any significant changes or redevelopment in the next 20 years. Corner/neighborhood-serving, non-residential or institutional developments/uses may be integrated into Established Neighborhoods. The intention of this character area is to underscore areas where changes in land use are not anticipated or encouraged, and any new development - including residential infill properties - should be consistent in scale, architecture, and use with surrounding properties.

Emerging Suburban

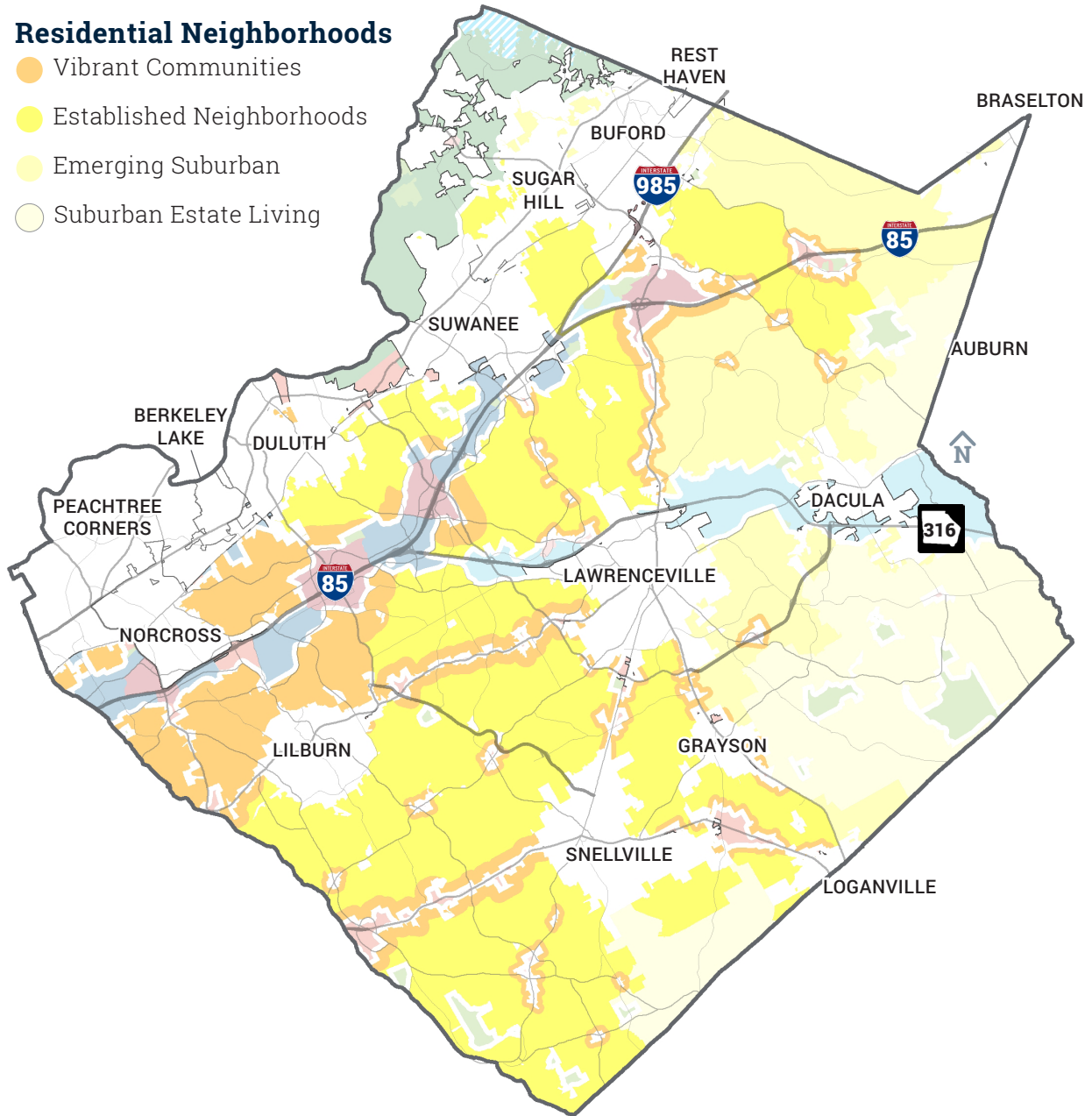
The Emerging Suburban Character Area designates areas that are currently, mainly residential, but have not yet matured into established communities due to relatively large amounts of remaining, undeveloped land. They are expected to experience new development during the 20-year planning period contemplated by the Unified Plan. These areas generally rely on the nearby activity centers to provide goods and services. However, corner/neighborhood serving, non-residential or institutional developments/uses may be integrated into Emerging Suburban areas, where appropriate. Most Emerging Suburban areas are located on local, collector, or minor arterial roads rather than major arterials and corridors. As this character area develops, it is likely that new Neighborhood Nodes will be designated at key intersections.

Suburban Estate Living

The Suburban Estate Living Character Area is one of the last remaining character area types that would provide large tracts of land for greenfield development and include some remnants of agricultural uses. This area is intended to convey the County's desire to preserve its historical and agricultural character so that new development is low in intensity, and consists primarily of large residential lots. For many residents of these areas, these are the last communities in Gwinnett County that reflect its character before rapid development began in the 1980s. These areas may also have less intense infrastructure, such as less sewer service.

Residential Neighborhoods

- Vibrant Communities
- Established Neighborhoods
- Emerging Suburban
- Suburban Estate Living



Low Intensity Areas

The areas indicated as Low Intensity Areas include the areas surrounding and including the Chattahoochee River corridor protection area, areas adjacent to Lake Lanier, and active recreation and passive greenspaces preserved as County parkland. These are areas of the County where additional sensitivity to development should be considered or land should continue to be reserved to serve community functions. These character areas include:

Chattahoochee River Area

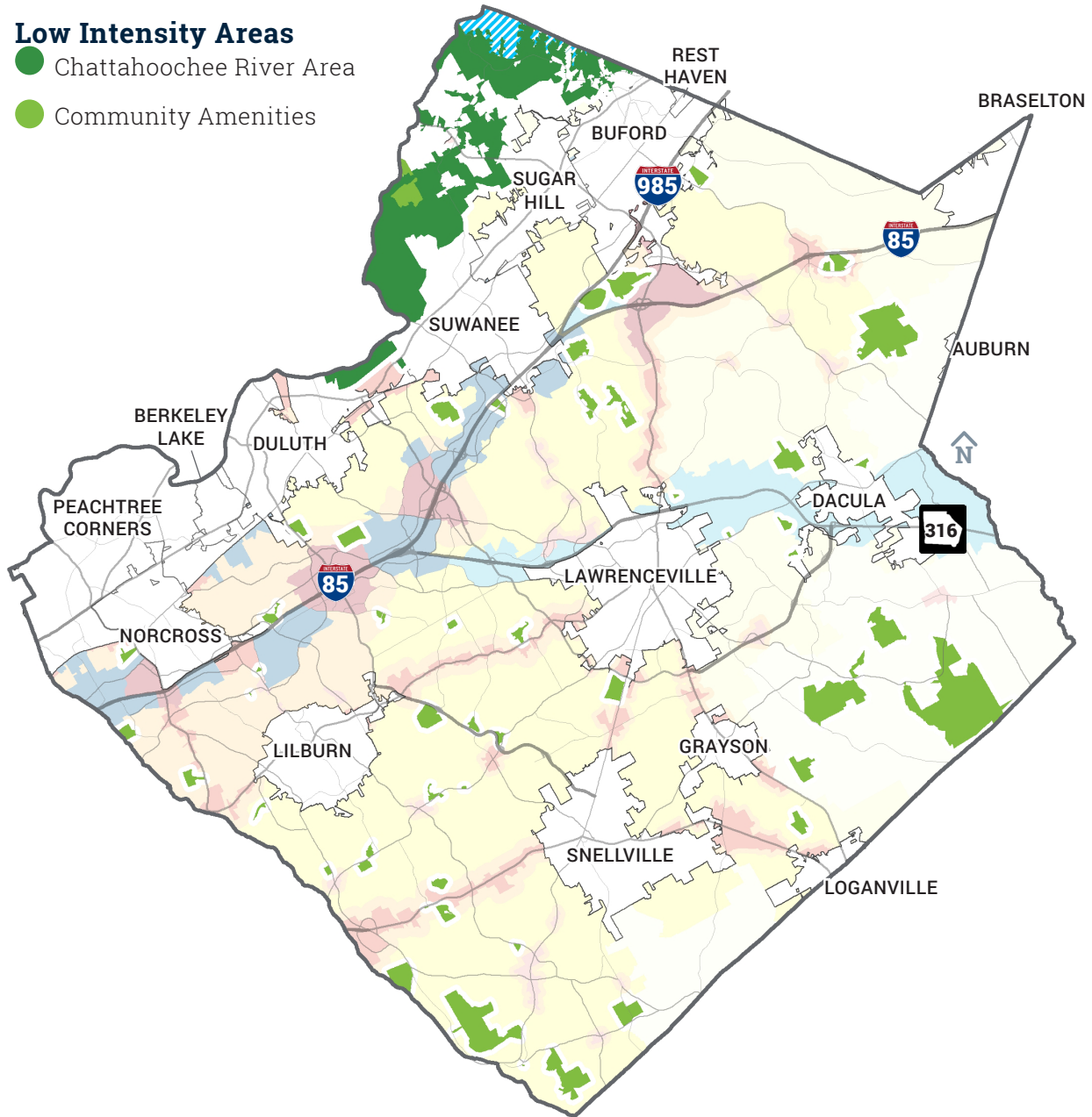
The Chattahoochee River Area is the designation used for unincorporated areas along the Chattahoochee River and Lake Lanier. Due to its location along the river and its natural landscape, development in this area should remain as low density residential to protect the water quality and environmental character of the Chattahoochee River (which is protected by the state legislated Metropolitan River Protection Act) and Lake Lanier (which is under the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers). These areas have access to neighboring communities to fulfill the residents' need for more intense commercial and service needs. Non-residential uses that relate to the enjoyment of the river and lake, such as boat storage and bait shops, may be considered.

Community Amenities

This Character Area is reserved for designating publicly owned County facilities, County owned parks, including recreation centers, activity buildings, aquatic centers, ball/soccer fields, playgrounds, pavilions, paths, etc.; other greenspace and conservation areas; and trails and greenways; and other types of green space, including lands along the Chattahoochee River that are under federal ownership.

Low Intensity Areas

- Chattahoochee River Area
- Community Amenities



Note Only those community amenities (i.e. parks) that are unincorporated parts of Gwinnett County are displayed. Several County facilities are located within Gwinnett County municipalities.

ADOPT

The process of adopting the plan, largely administrative, followed the formulative steps described below.

Planning Commission Public Hearing – October 2, 2018

As part of Gwinnett County's typical rezoning public hearings before the Planning Commission, this plan was formally considered.

Public Hearing with Board of Commissioners to Transmit – October 23, 2018

Through a Public Hearing, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners was asked to consider the Plan and subsequently transmit to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for a compliance review.

Adoption of Plan – February 5, 2018 (anticipated date)

Following the appropriate incorporation of relevant comments and suggestions from ARC and DCA, the plan was formally considered and adopted by the Board of Commissioners.





GWINNETT JUSTICE AND ADMINISTRATION CENTER

NOTICE
RENTAL AND PURCHASE
FOR THE SERVICE CENTER
GWINNETT COUNTY
GWINNETT COUNTY
GWINNETT COUNTY

75



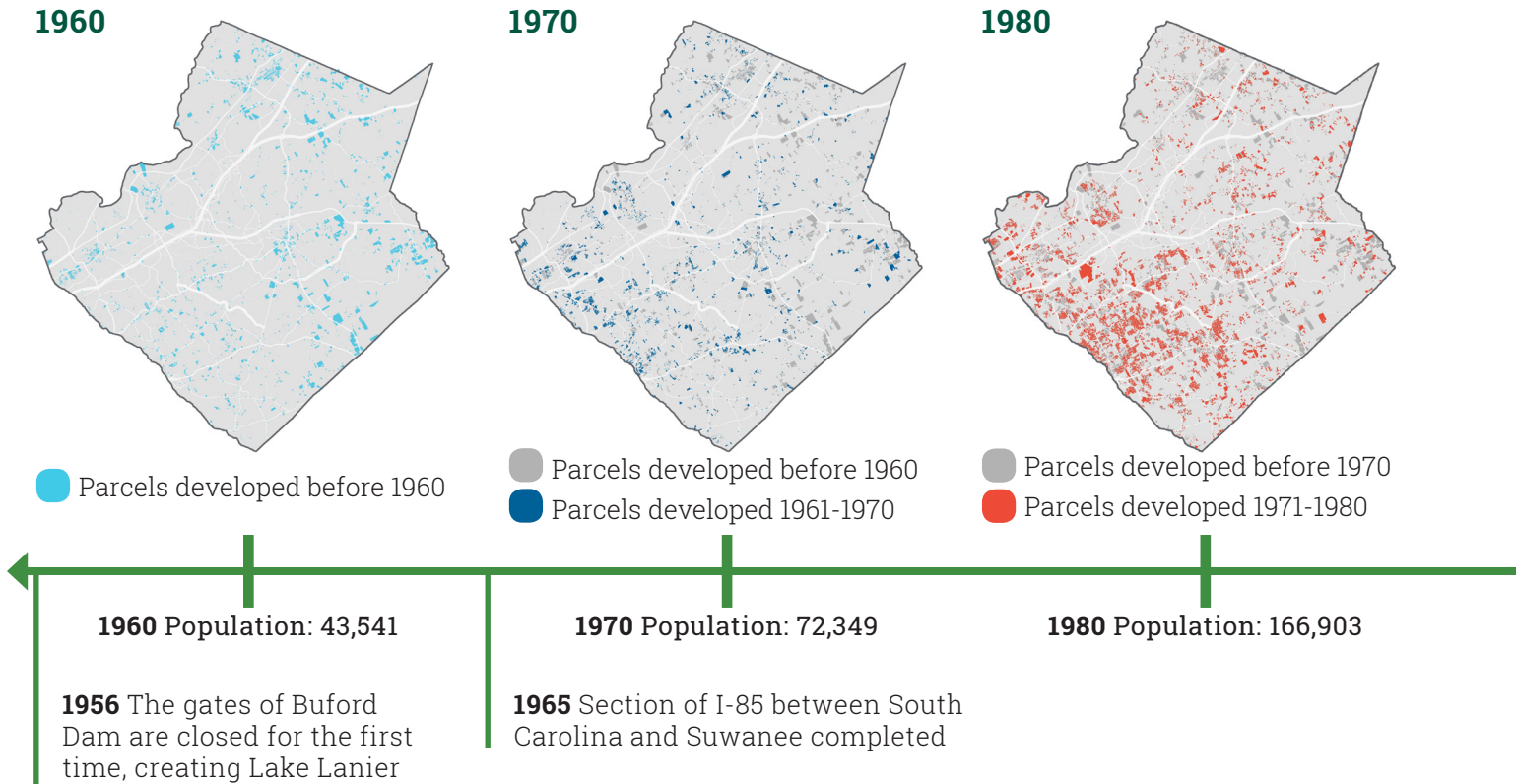
Chapter 2 Research & Trends



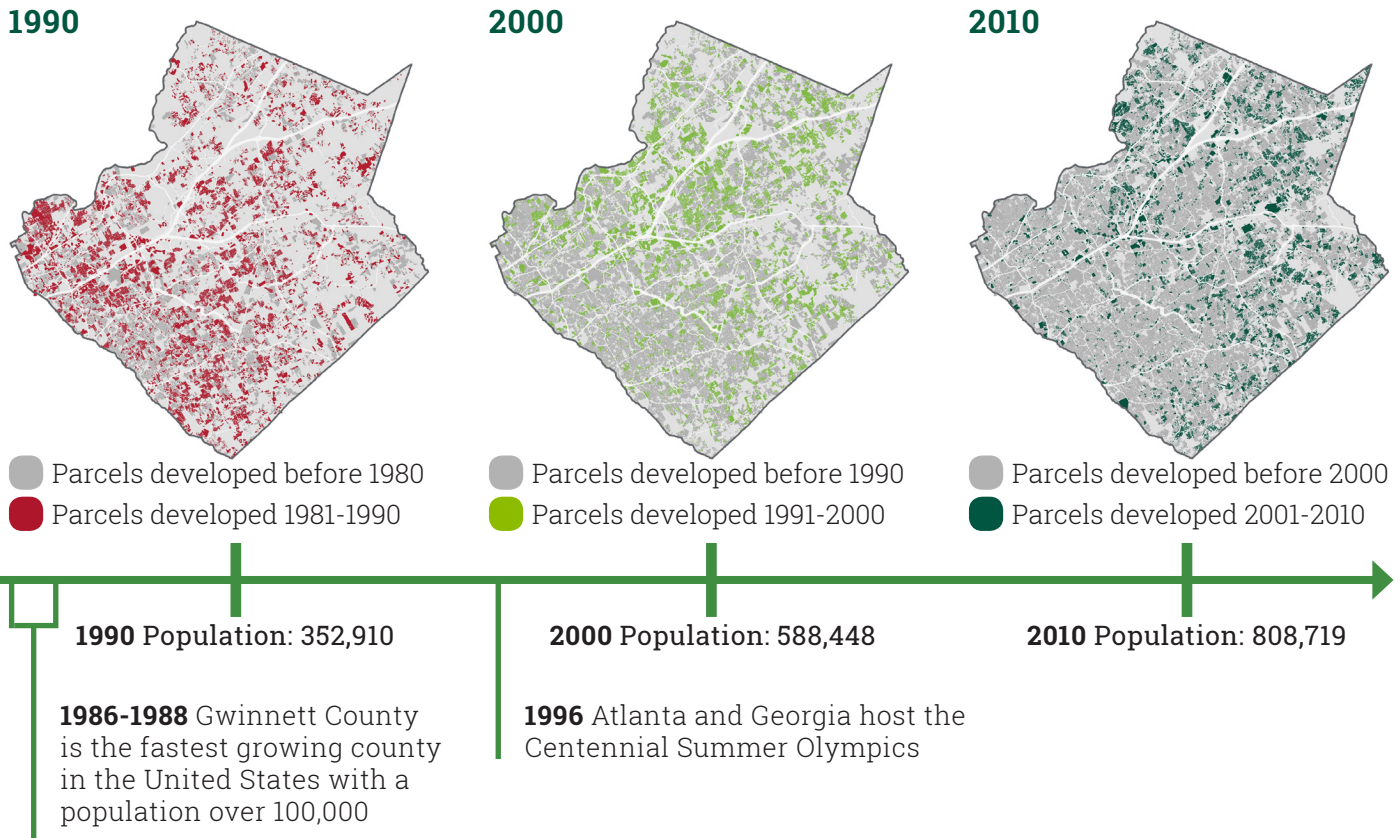
Our Story.

The story of Gwinnett County begins in 1818, with our establishment by the Georgia General Assembly. The subsequent expansion of railroads into the County - the Danville and Piedmont Air Line in 1871 and the Georgia, Carolina, and Northern Railway in 1891, now known as Norfolk Southern and CSX, respectively - helped to establish many of the municipalities we know today as Norcross, Duluth, Suwanee, Buford, Lilburn, and Lawrenceville. Despite slow and steady growth in population, Gwinnett County remained largely agrarian until the middle of the 20th century, when I-85 opened and the creation of Lake Lanier compounded with the then relatively new national trend of suburbanization in previously outlying communities. Then, growth in metro Atlanta, which emerged as the de facto economic and social capital of the Southeast, fueled further

Gwinnett County Population and Parcels by Decade of Development, with Selected Historic Events (1956-2010)



growth in Gwinnett County which was further capped off by unique events such as the 1996 Olympics. In the 2000s, this growth has continued as Gwinnett County has also emerged as a uniquely diverse 21st Century melting pot attracting people from all over the United States and the world. With an estimated 2017 population of over 920,000 people, Gwinnett County is fast approaching the day that we welcome our 1 millionth resident. Looking further into the future, nearly all demographers presume that Gwinnett will eventually be the most populous community in all of Georgia.



Naturalization Ceremony at the Gwinnett County Multi-Cultural Festival, 2017

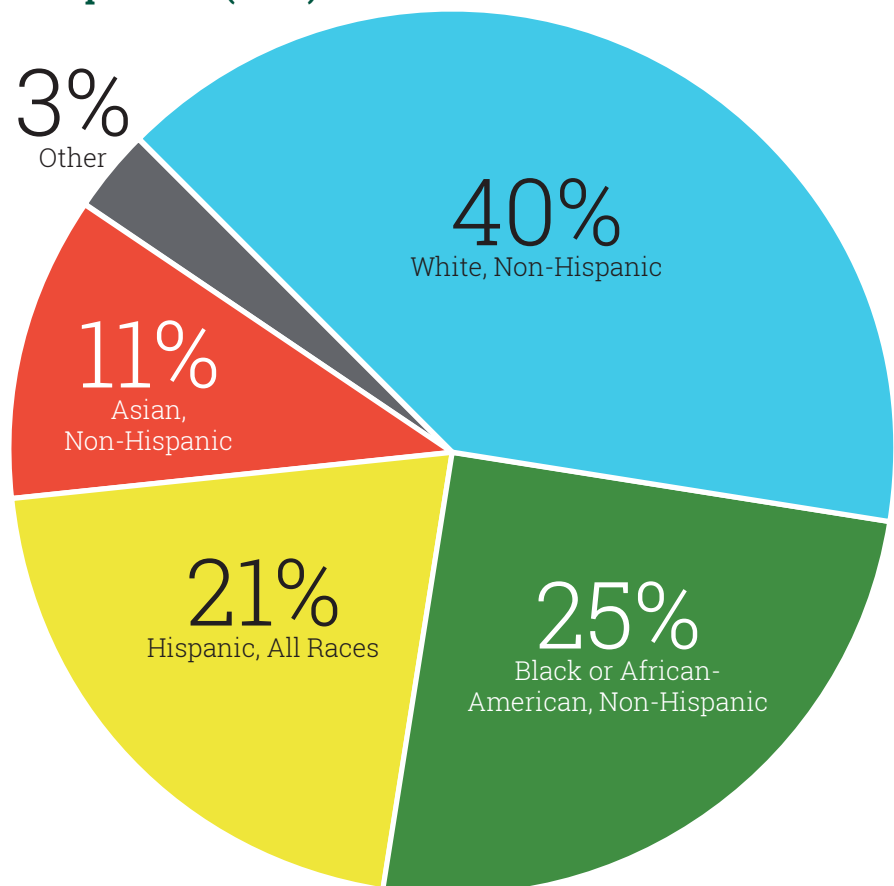




Who We Are Today.

Looking at the Gwinnett of today and focusing beyond the sheer number of people who live here, the most clearly remarkable thing about our community is the diversity of our people and our culture. There are few places in the world where one can pick up authentic tortas, a banh mi, a slice of NY style pizza, a bowl of pho, a plate of naan, a Cuban sandwich, or sit down for a southern meat-and-three all within a few blocks of each other. Gwinnett County has emerged as one of those unique and few places where this is genuinely possible and with this, our community broadly reflects the demographics that many forecasters predict for the United States in the coming generations. Gwinnett County is a model for a successful 21st century community.

Gwinnett County Racial and Ethnic Composition (2016)

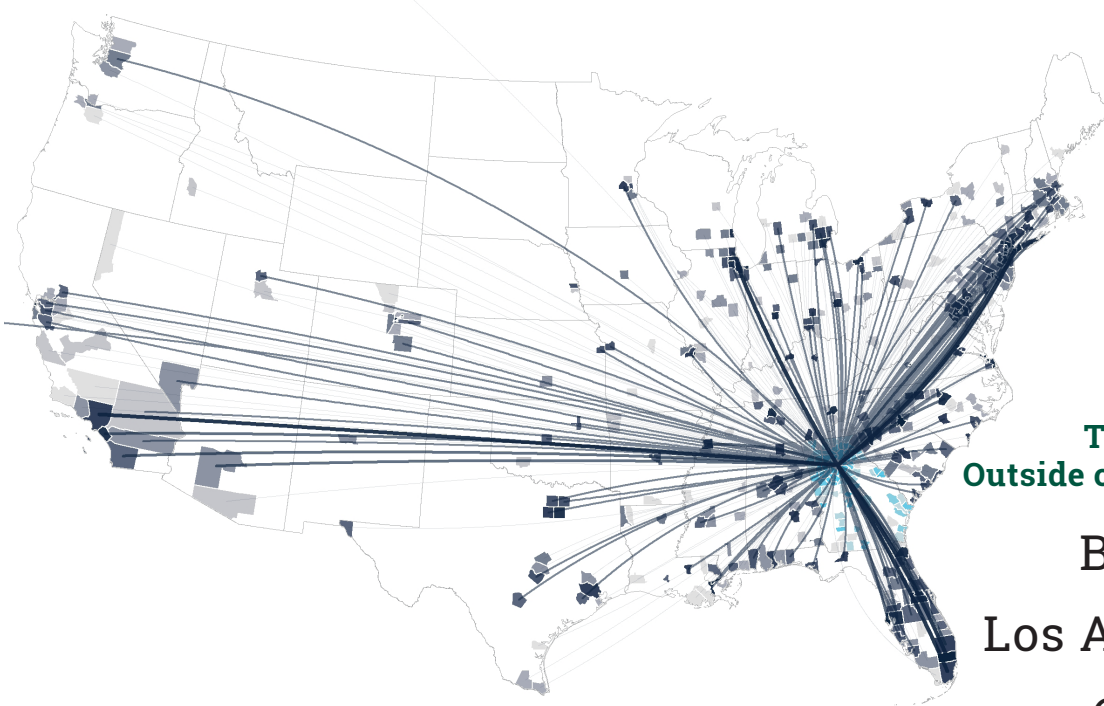


Source US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016

Top Countries of Birth

for foreign-born residents of Gwinnett County

- 1 Mexico
- 2 Korea
- 3 India
- 4 Vietnam
- 5 China

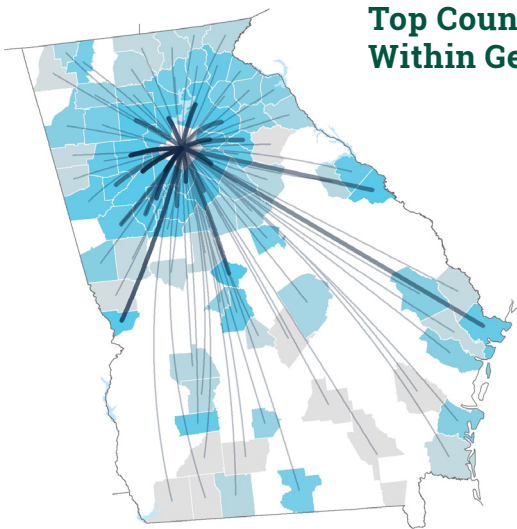


Top Counties of Origin Outside of Georgia (1990-2016)

- Broward, FL 1
- Los Angeles, CA 2
- Queens, NY 3
- Cook, IL 4
- Miami-Dade, FL 5

Top Counties of Origin Within Georgia (1990-2016)

- 1 DeKalb
- 2 Fulton
- 3 Cobb
- 4 Hall
- 5 Barrow

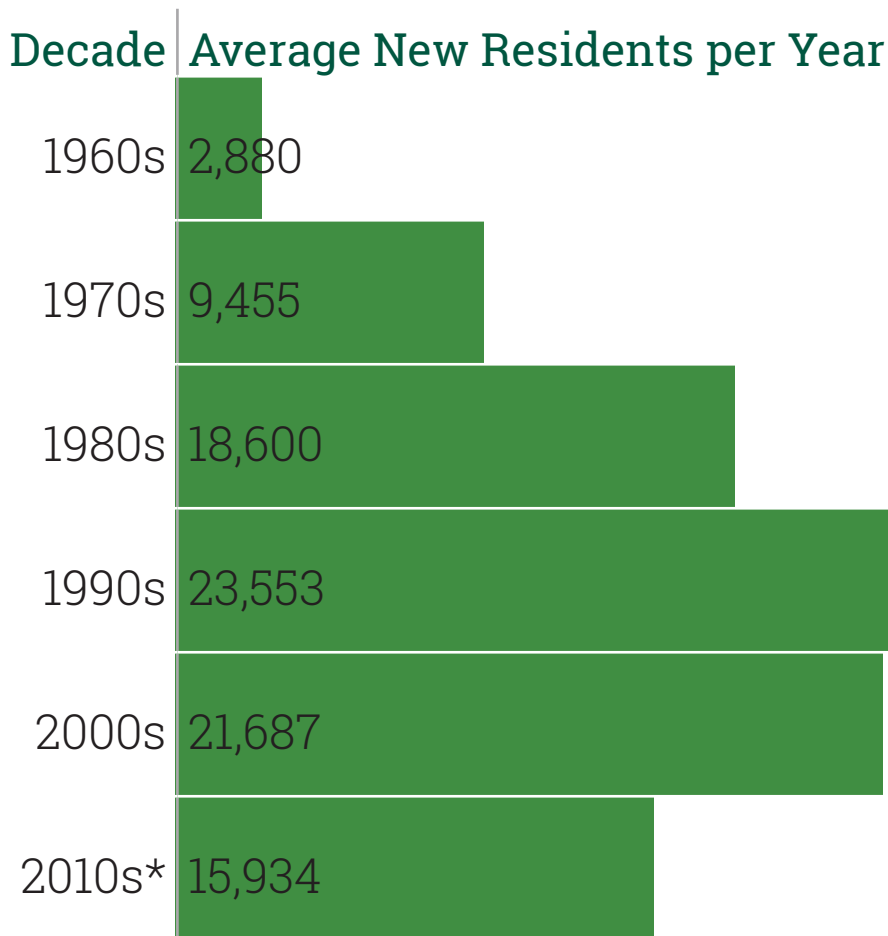


Top Source US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016
 Middle and Bottom Source US Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Division, Migration Data 1990-2016

WHERE WE COME FROM

Looking at the growth of Gwinnett County over the years, it is easier to understand how this came to be. From a population of 43,541 in 1960 to an estimated population of over 900,000 in 2017, clearly the growth had to be fueled largely by people moving here. While growth has clearly slowed slightly from a peak in the 1990s, a key indicator will be our official 2020 Census population number to calculate the type of growth we have had in recent years.

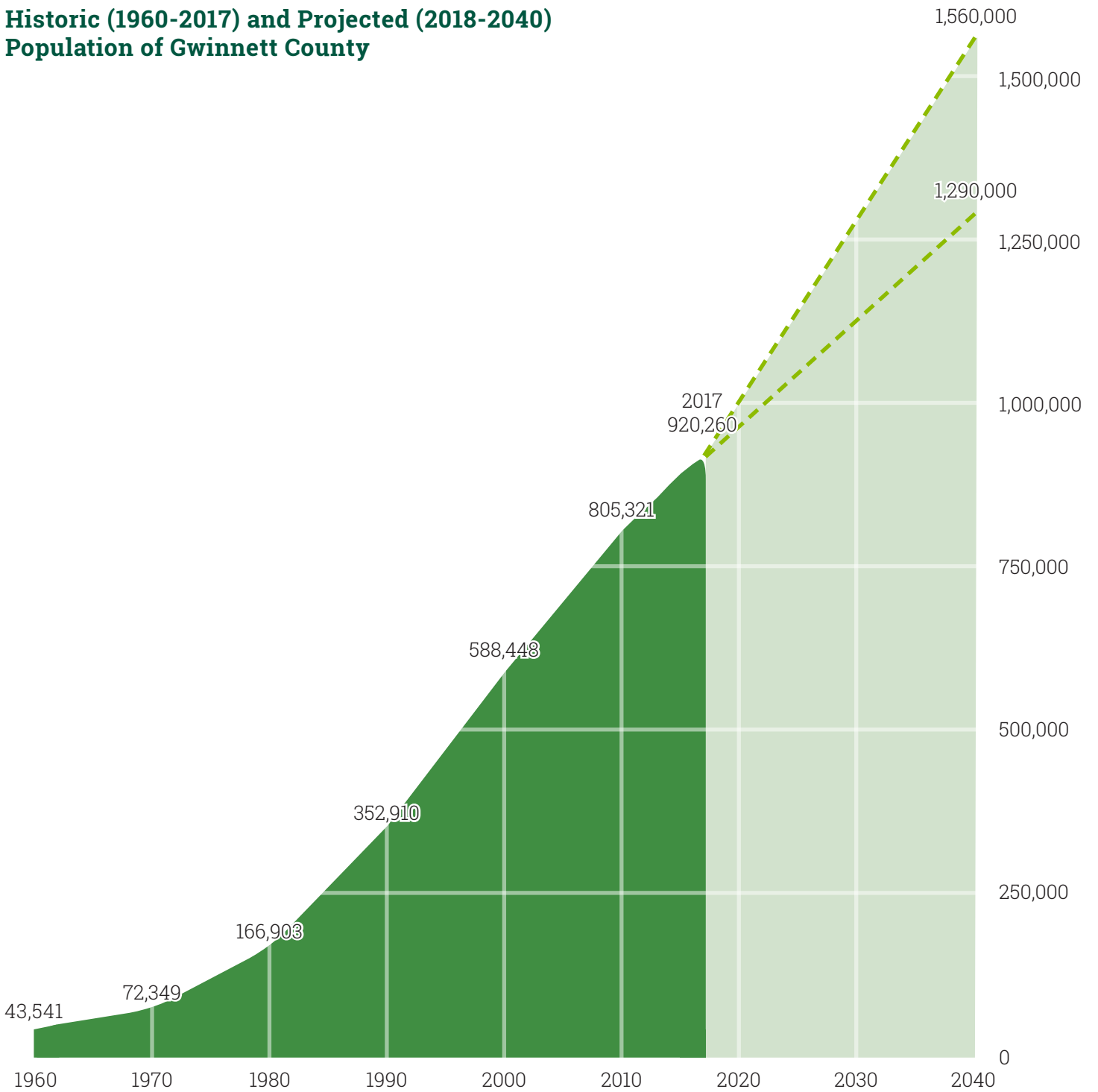
Average Annual Population Increase by Decade



* Based on the US Census Population Estimate for 2017

Source US Census Bureau

Historic (1960-2017) and Projected (2018-2040) Population of Gwinnett County



Historic Population Source US Census Bureau Decennial Censuses (1960-2010) and Population Estimates (2011-2017)

How We Might Grow.

Looking to the future and the year 2040, all credible estimates acknowledge that Gwinnett County will eventually reach over 1 million people and will likely be the most populous county in Georgia.

The lowest estimate of our population in the year 2040 - 1.29 million people - represents a continuation of our most recent growth trends, which are slower than in our peak growth years in the 1990s and 2000s. Generally, this scenario is most likely if redevelopment opportunities are not pursued or successful, and Gwinnett County's model for most growth relies primarily on new suburban-oriented greenfield development.

The highest projection of our population in the year 2040 - 1.56 million people - has been estimated by Woods & Poole, an economic forecasting firm, that represents a broad continuation of our ongoing growth trends since the 1970s and 1980s when Gwinnett County transitioned from a primarily agrarian community to an increasingly suburban one. This scenario is most likely if Gwinnett County transitions primarily to a redevelopment model that includes more urban environments. Many of the policies of the Unified Plan aim to aid this transition.

There are certainly other phenomena and events that will influence Gwinnett County's future. At the time of this publication, a March 2019 referendum is planned for Gwinnett County voters to consider entering into an agreement with MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) that will result in transit expansions into the community, which could have transformative implications for how and where Gwinnett County grows. Similar advances in Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) offer an array of possibilities for how the Gwinnettians of 2040 might move around and how this could potentially influence what is considered to be desirable housing and communities. The state of the Atlanta region and its ability to continue to grow in people and diversify in its economy will likewise have a huge influence. National and even global trends will all surely have an effect:

Will household size continue to become smaller?

Will we continue to shift to a service-based economy?

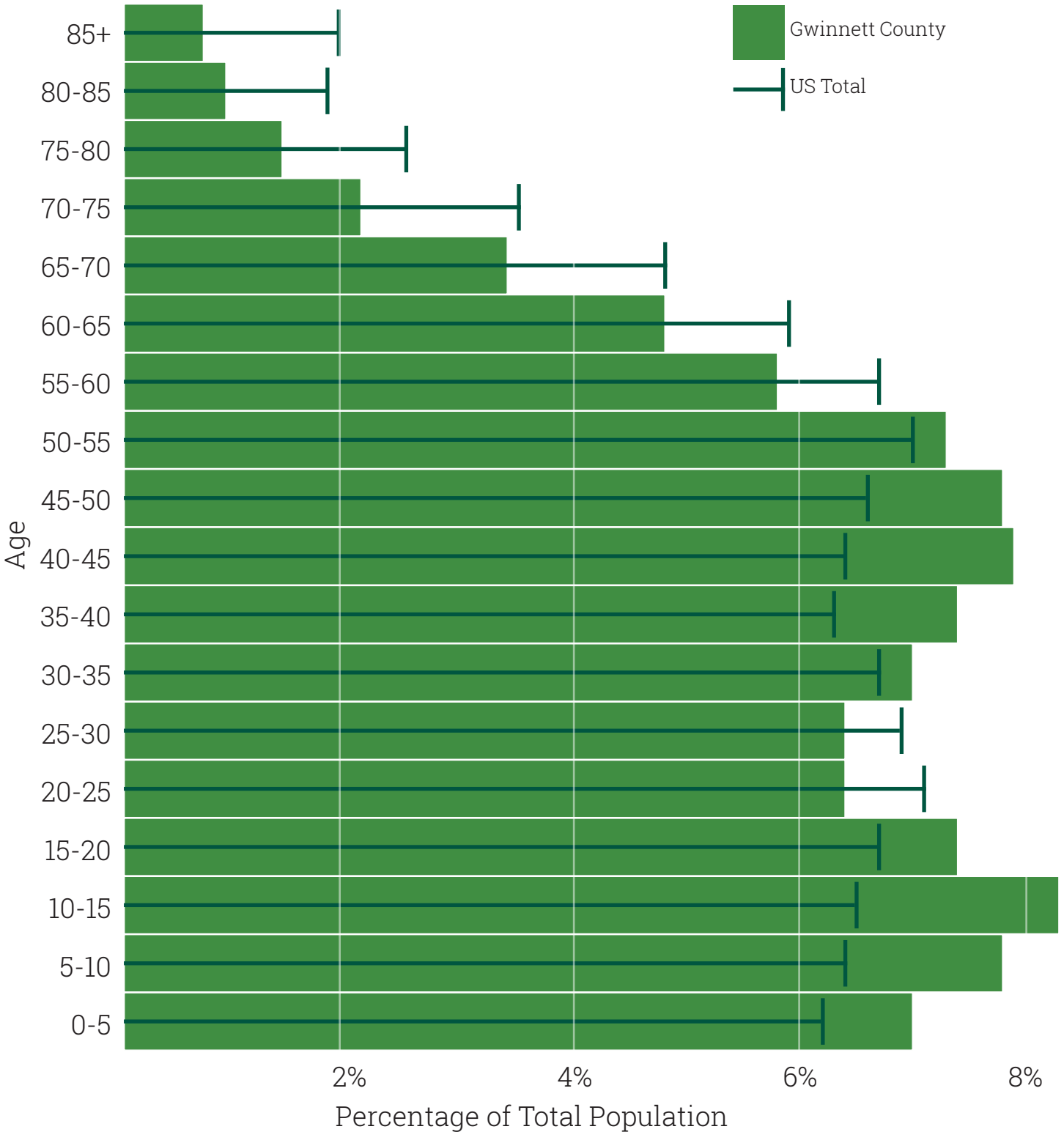
Will advances in medicine and science continue to extend our lifetimes?

The broad point is that there are an exponential number of ways in which Gwinnett can change and grow. This plan is scalable and adaptable to those ways with our identified range – from 1.29 to 1.56 million people – guiding what is most likely reasonable and possible.

AGING AND GWINNETT COUNTY

Gwinnett County has a broad population in all age and gender groups. Compared to the entire United States, we do not have many young adults, but we do have a significantly larger middle aged population (those 35 to 54) and a correspondingly large population of children (0 to 19).

Age Cohort of Gwinnett County and USA (2016)

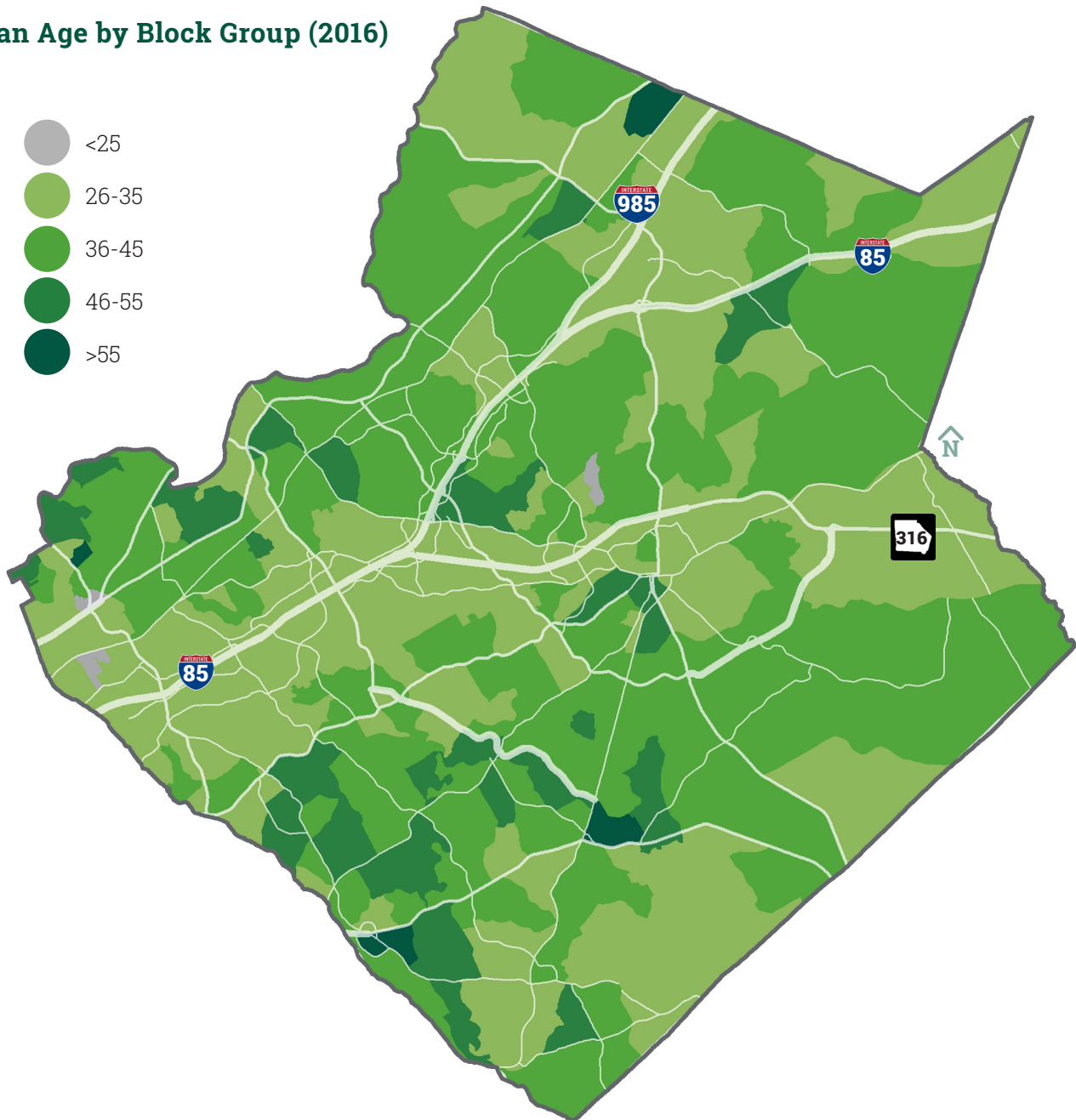


Source US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates (2012-2016)

What will the needs and desires of these age groups be in the year 2040? Today's middle aged population will be at or nearing retirement. Will Gwinnett County have the housing, transportation services, medical, and overall amenities to remain attractive to these people? Similarly, what about their children? They will be in the early stages of their adulthood. How can the Gwinnett County of 2040 appeal to the needs of its young people?

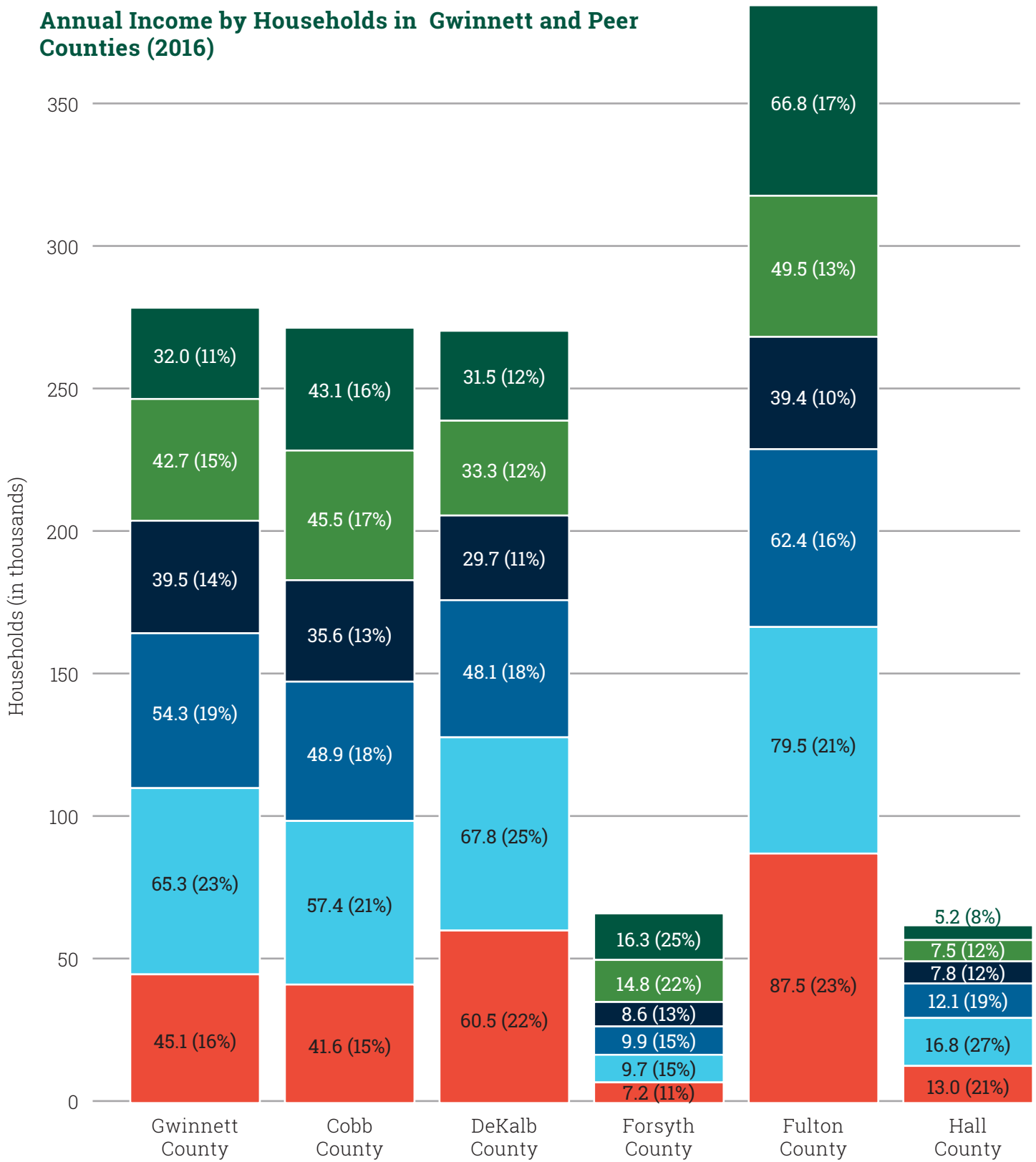
A more nuanced look at the County reveals more. There are parts of Gwinnett County – particularly along the I-85 corridor up to the SR 316 split- where the median age is exceedingly young. Conversely, there are parts of the community – most notably in the area between US 29 and US 78 west of Snellville – with a remarkably older median age. What is unique about these different parts of Gwinnett County that reflect such different communities? What happens to these places as their populations age and move into different phases of their lives?

Median Age by Block Group (2016)

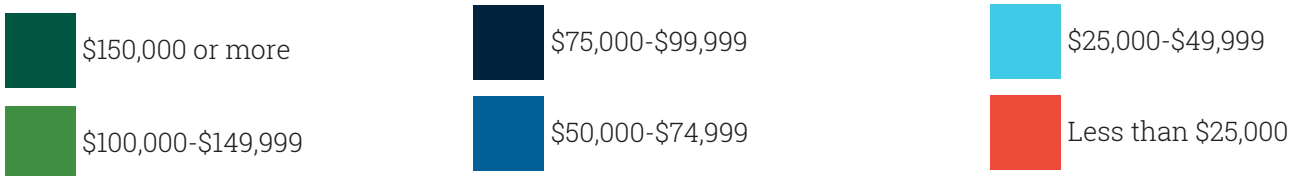


Source US Census Bureau ACS
5 Year Estimates (2012-2016)

Annual Income by Households in Gwinnett and Peer Counties (2016)



Key Thousands of Households (Percentage of Households in County)



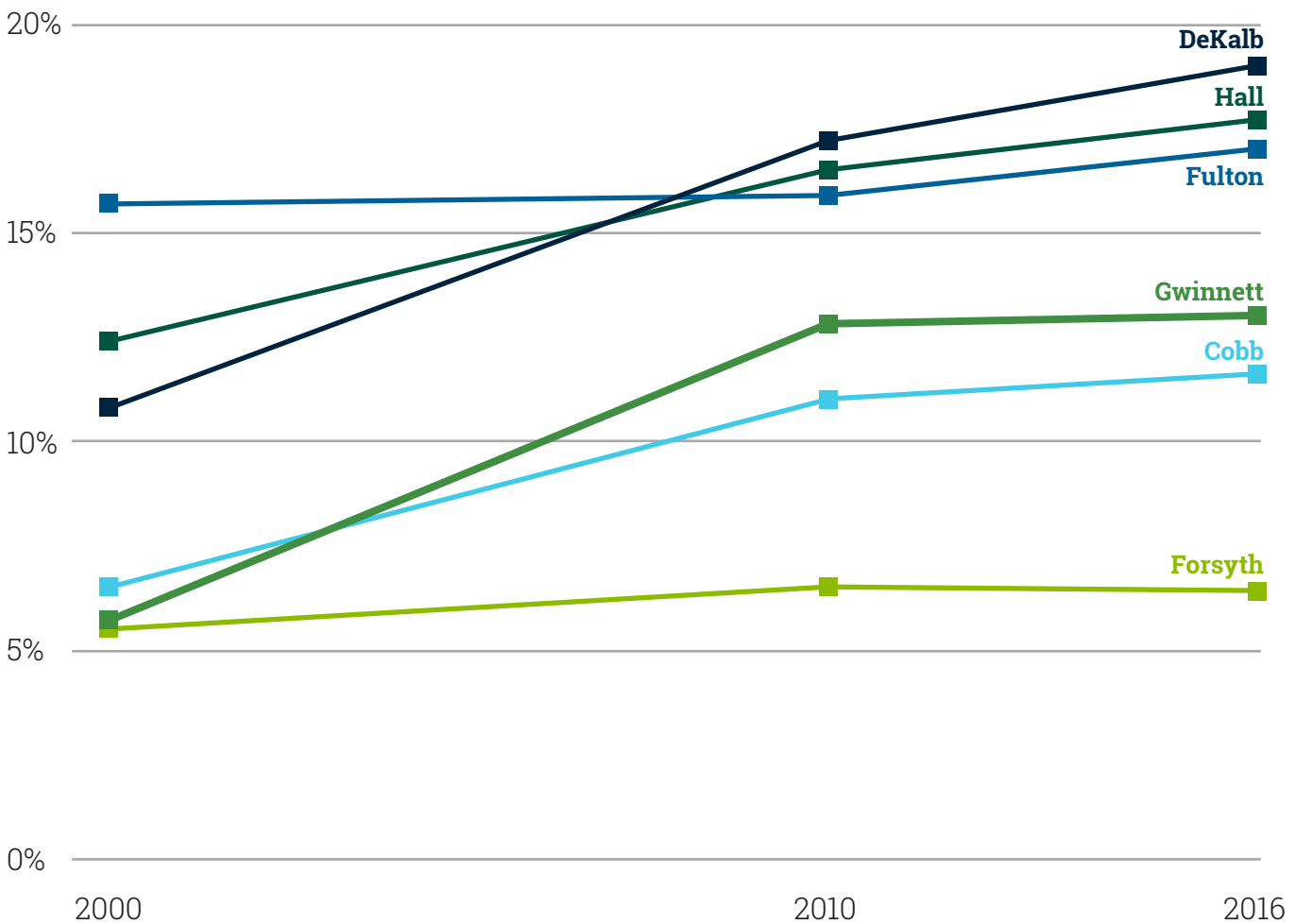
Source US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates (2012-2016)

INCOME AND POVERTY

Median household income in Gwinnett County is similarly diverse, with different parts of the community showing both extreme affluence and low income.

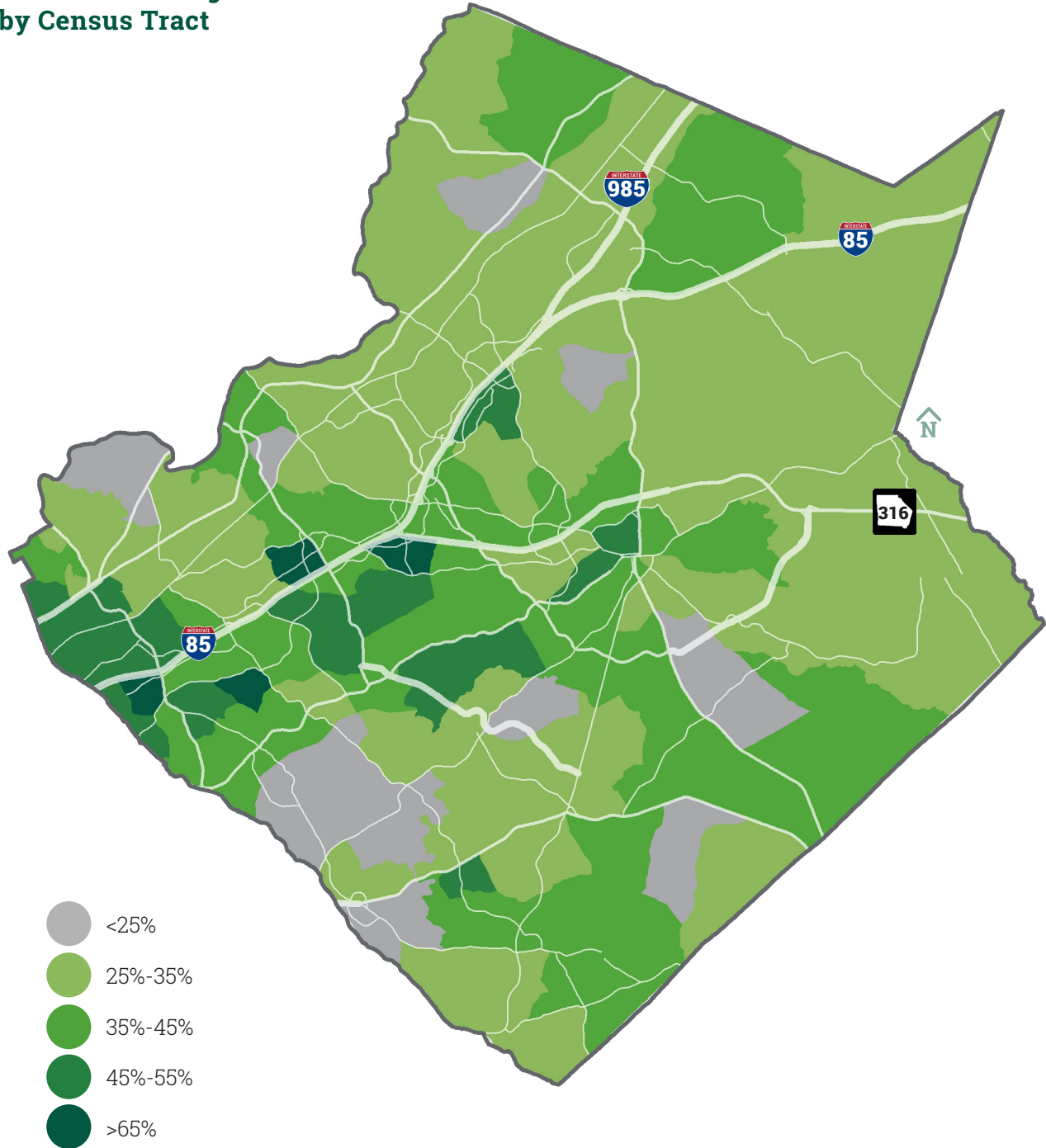
The 2016 poverty rate for Gwinnett County was estimated at 13.0%, a substantial increase from the 5.7% of the year 2000. Reviewing peer communities shows that Gwinnett is not alone in experiencing the ongoing suburbanization of poverty, and what was (in 2010) likely intertwined with the challenges of the Great Recession. Notably, even during this period of increasing poverty, Gwinnett County continued to grow (from a 2000 population of 588,488 to a 2010 population of 805,321) and the increase in poverty appears to have stabilized in recent years despite continued growth.

Poverty Rates in Gwinnett and Peer Counties



Source US Census Bureau
ACS 5 Year Estimates

Rates of Housing Cost Burden by Census Tract



Source US Department of Housing and Urban Development

HOUSING

Income and poverty have a direct correlation to defining housing affordability and the housing burdens present in our community. As a general rule of thumb, households that have over 30 percent of their living cost wrapped up in their housing are more likely to be over-extended and vulnerable to financial instability. Overall, 35 percent of Gwinnett households spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing compared to 49 percent statewide (Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016), suggesting a relatively healthy amount of households have the ability to accommodate for other living expenses. However, concentrations of burdened households – as seen along the I-85 corridor - are potentially problematic for the long term stability of an area while similarly suggesting a relative lack of disposable income in these areas.

We also exhibit a general lack of diversity of options in our available housing types. Our initial waves of growth were largely driven by families seeking a traditional suburban lifestyle. As a result, nearly three-fourths of our housing units are single-family homes, but our diversity of family sizes, types, and ethnicities means that there is likely a significant demand for more housing types. On opposite ends of the spectrum, this includes smaller housing for single-person households, housing with more bedrooms for larger families. This should be considered relative to origins broad national trends that indicate the number of single-person households (currently 19 percent of Gwinnett households) and multi-generational households are likely to increase.

ATTITUDES & VALUES

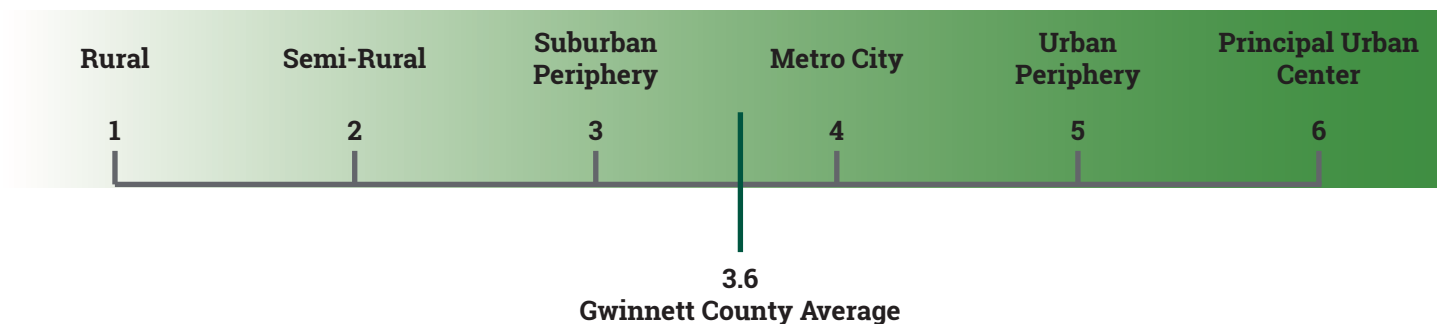
Our community can also be viewed through the lens of Tapestry Segmentation. This data product, produced by Esri, Inc., provides and details the diversity of the American household based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition, categorizing every household into one of 67 Tapestry Segments, each with common characteristics.

Tapestry Segmentation is most often used in marketing to help retailers and other businesses locate convenient to their customer bases. However, it can also be adapted to understand a community's attitudes and values, particularly what they are looking for in terms of housing, entertainment, retail options, workplaces, and how they spend leisure time.

To simplify the differences between these market segments, Esri groups these market segments into six Urbanization Groups, in which markets share similar land use and housing preferences and share similar ideas in how they relate to and use their physical surroundings.

- Our largest urbanization Group is "Suburban Periphery", which represents 63 percent of all Gwinnett Households.
- 32 percent of Gwinnett Households are in the three most urban groups: Metro Cities, Urban Peripheries, and Principal Urban Centers.
- The weighted average of Gwinnett Households places the average household firmly between "Suburban Periphery" and "Metro Cities"

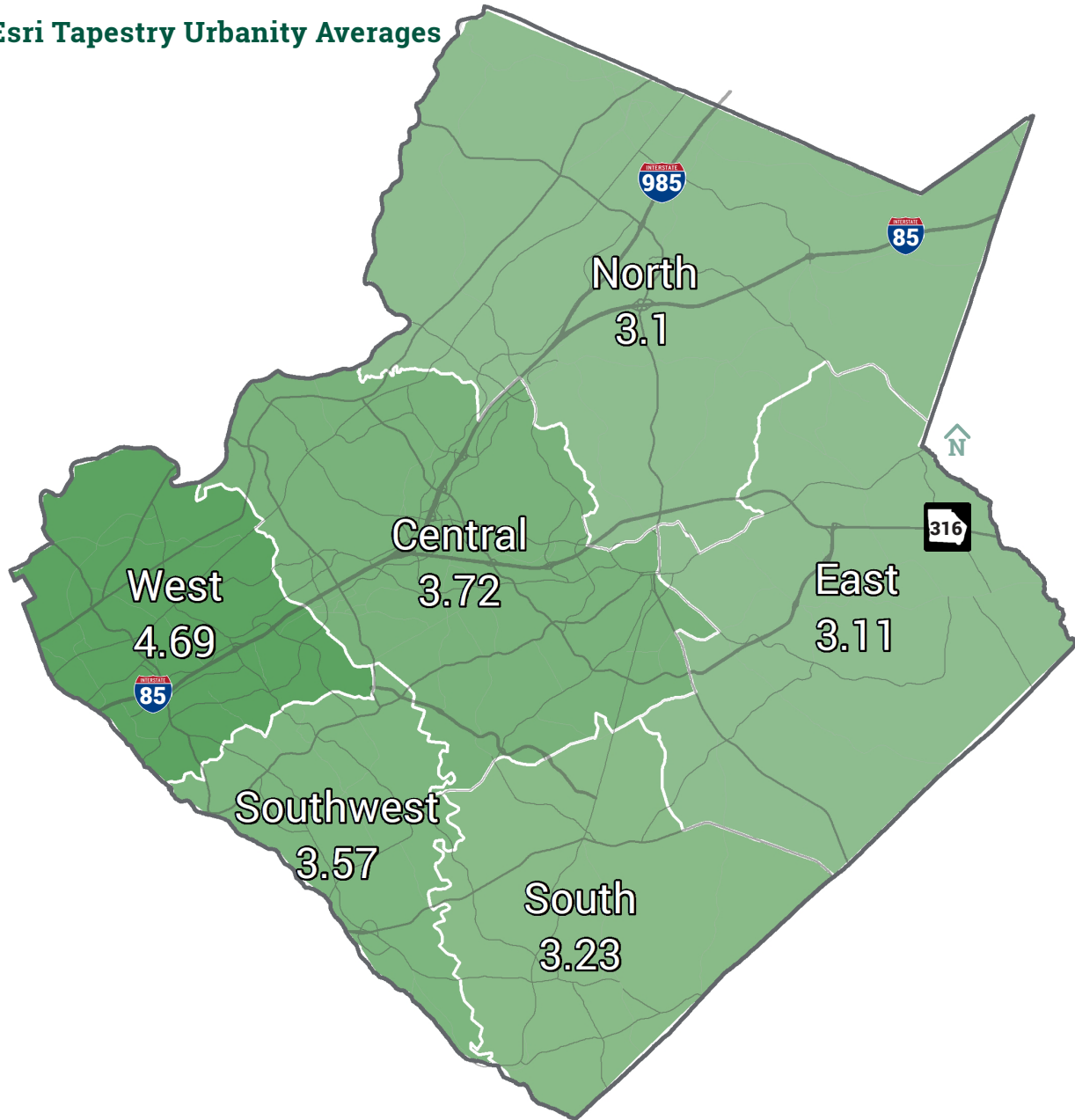
Esri Urbanization Groups



Taking a more granular look at parts of the County, we are able to see a wide range of urbanization within the County.

- The western part of the county exhibits significantly higher average urbanization levels, with a weighted average score of 4.7 out of 6.75 percent of households in the three most Urban categories.
- On average, households in the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the county all exhibit varying degrees that can be generally classified as Suburban.
- In a sharp contrast to the west part of the county, just 7 percent of households in the eastern part of the County are in the three most Urban categories.

Esri Tapestry Urbanity Averages



What We Do.

When considering “what we do” – in effect, our employment - it is important to define and understand what we mean by the word “we”. There are two fundamental ways of looking at a community and its relationship to employment.

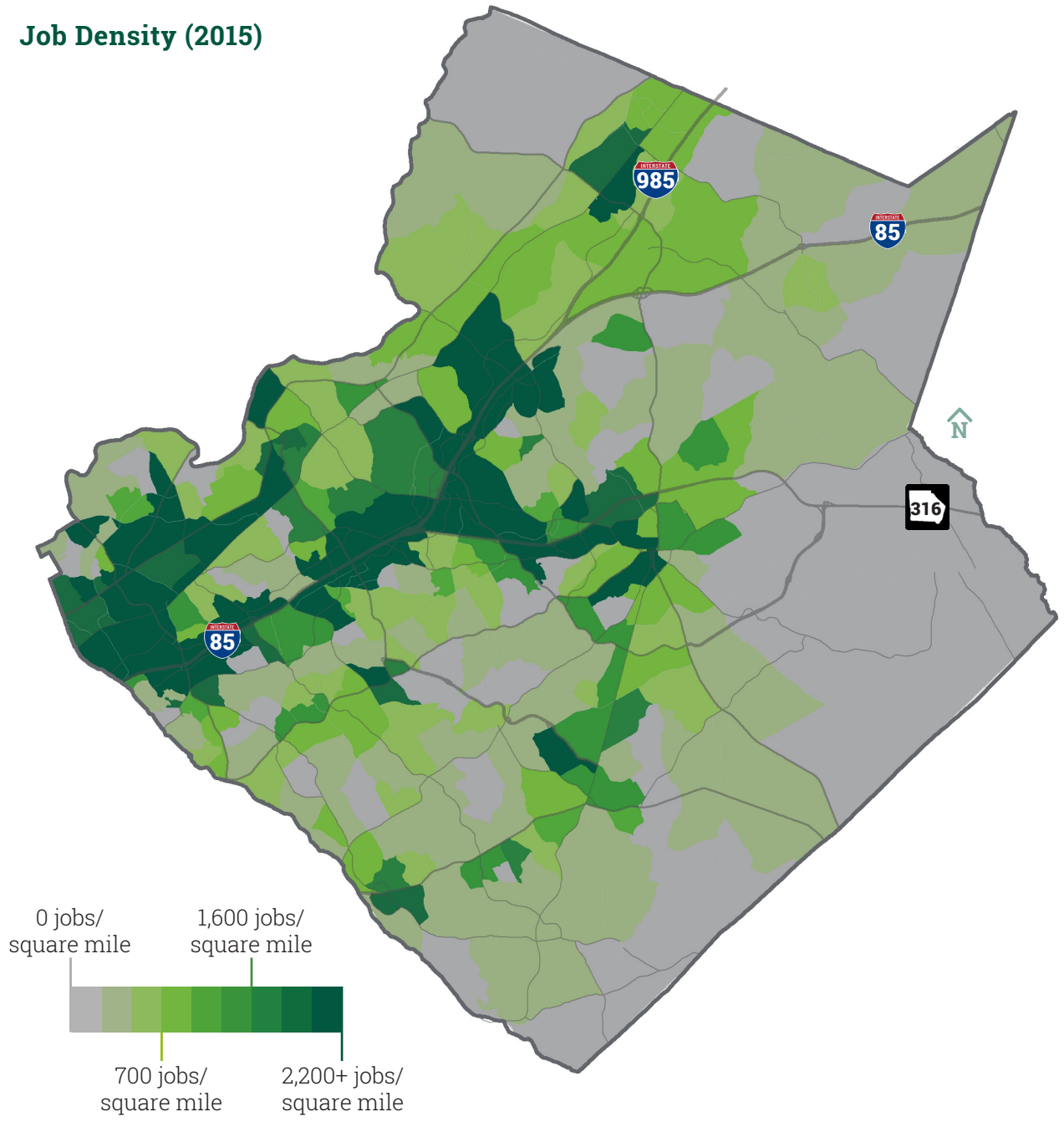
- Jobs refers to people whose employment is based in Gwinnett County. These people may live anywhere, but they work in Gwinnett County. In 2017, Gwinnett County had an estimated 350,000 jobs.
- Workforce refers to working people who live in Gwinnett County. They may work anywhere but their primary residence is in Gwinnett County. This only includes people who live in the County and who are actively working or seeking work and includes nearly 370,000 people.

A major element of Gwinnett’s Economic Development Policy is to ensure that the County’s jobs and workforce are well matched.

Our jobs and workforce are well diversified, with strong representation in a wide range of employment sectors, reflecting a sustainability and resiliency that can stand up to economic challenges. Our largest employment sectors are retail trade, accommodation and food services, wholesale trade, health care and social assistance, and administrative & waste services.

Workforce	Employment	
47,303	51,520	Retail Trade
40,060	29,210	Health Care and Social Assistance
34,803	29,399	Accommodation and Food Services
31,863	32,643	Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation
30,573	26,852	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
28,823	27,532	Educational Services
27,264	34,668	Wholesale Trade
23,447	25,685	Manufacturing
18,041	16,115	Finance and Insurance
15,373	18,635	Construction
14,193	12,039	Information
13,217	8,216	Transportation and Warehousing
11,443	7,202	Public Administration
9,615	8,419	Other Services
8,441	8,967	Management of Companies and Enterprises
6,448	6,128	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
4,602	3,019	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
1,023	346	Utilities
375	211	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
129	83	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction

Job Density (2015)



Source US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2015)

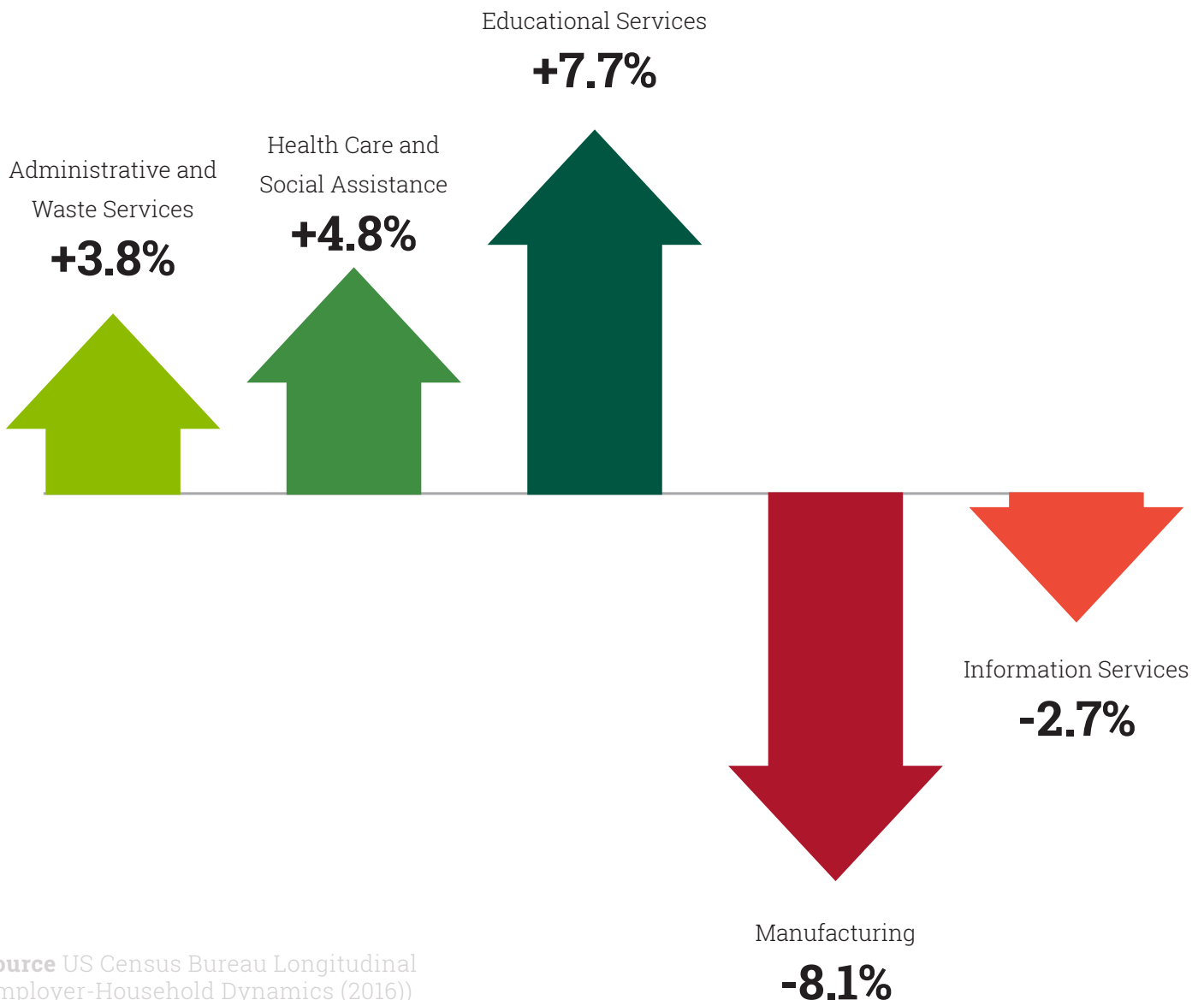
Today's economic picture is evolving from the economy that drove the County's growth in the 1970s through the 1990s. Service industries are replacing goods-producing industries as the dominant employment sector.

- In 1990, there were 137,877 people employed in Gwinnett County, with the largest sectors being retail trade, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and accommodation and food services.
- By 2000, Gwinnett's employment more than doubled to over 283,000 employees.
- In 2017, Gwinnett had approximately 350,000 workers.

Since 1990, the manufacturing sector and the wholesale sector, both of which are dominant in the County's economy, have both declined significantly. This is consistent with global shifts towards off-shore production.

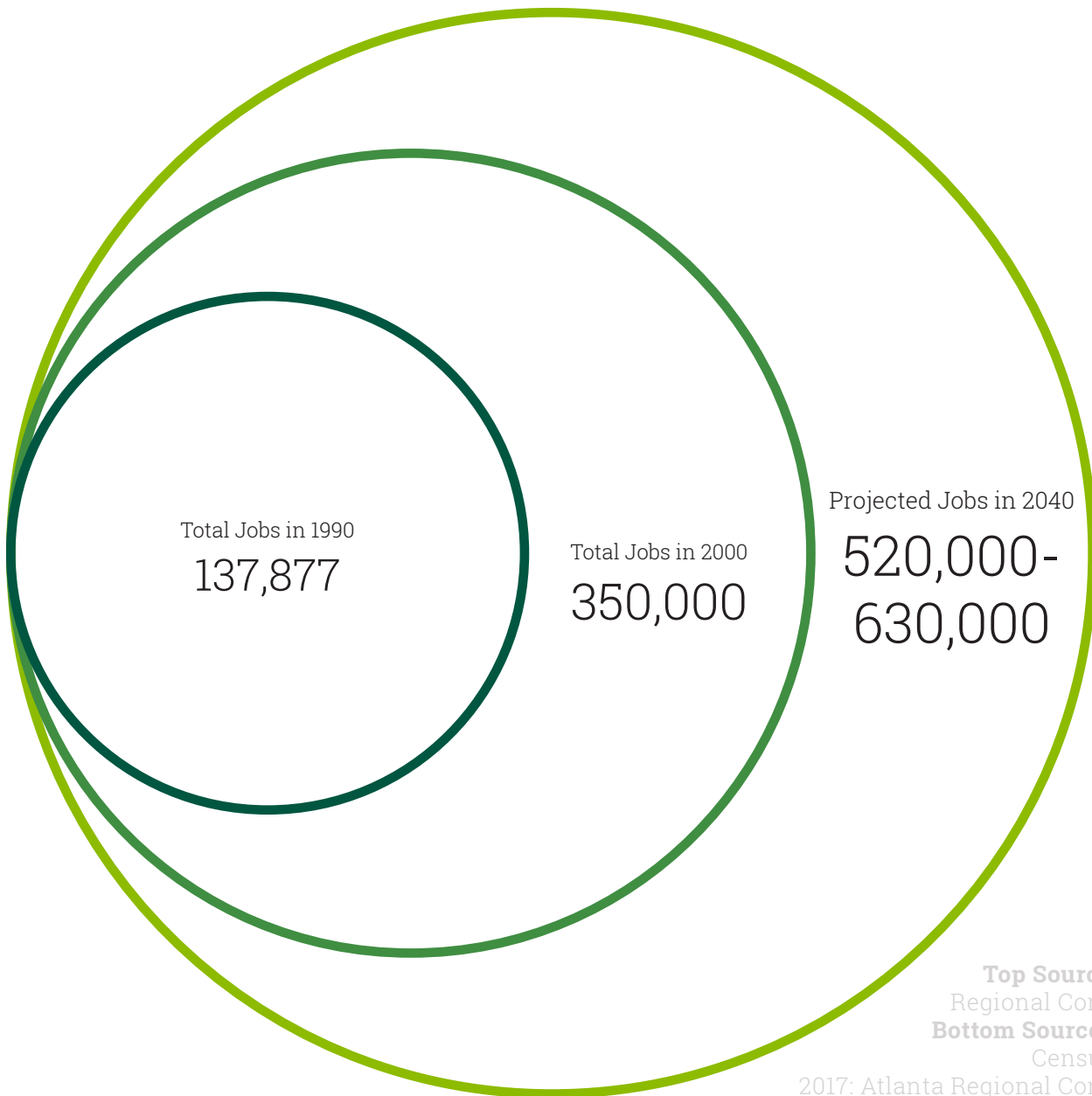
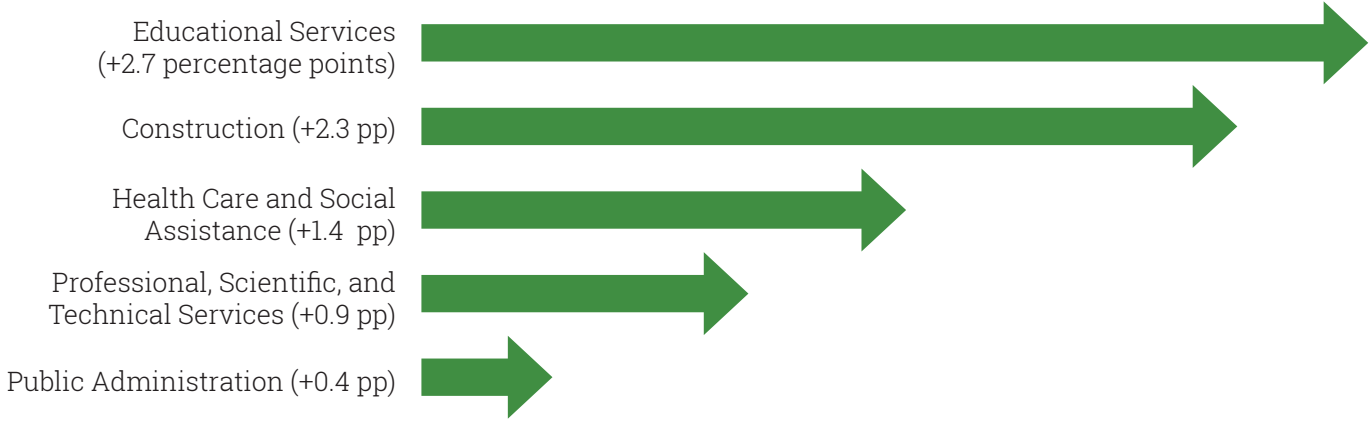
Looking to the future, employment in Gwinnett County is expected to grow rapidly over the coming decades. Job growth, particularly in the service and administration sectors, is closely linked to population growth, and is thus inextricably linked to the provision of adequate housing that is accessible to a wide range of households in terms of household size, building type, tenure type, and affordability. Continued transportation accessibility will also be critical to supporting job growth, as will land development policies that encourage more integration and mix of uses. As there are numerous possibilities of how our community might continue to grow, and depending on how well these different factors interface with each other, County employment in 2040 is estimated to be somewhere between 520,000 and 630,000 jobs.

Employment Changes by Industry, 1990 to 2017



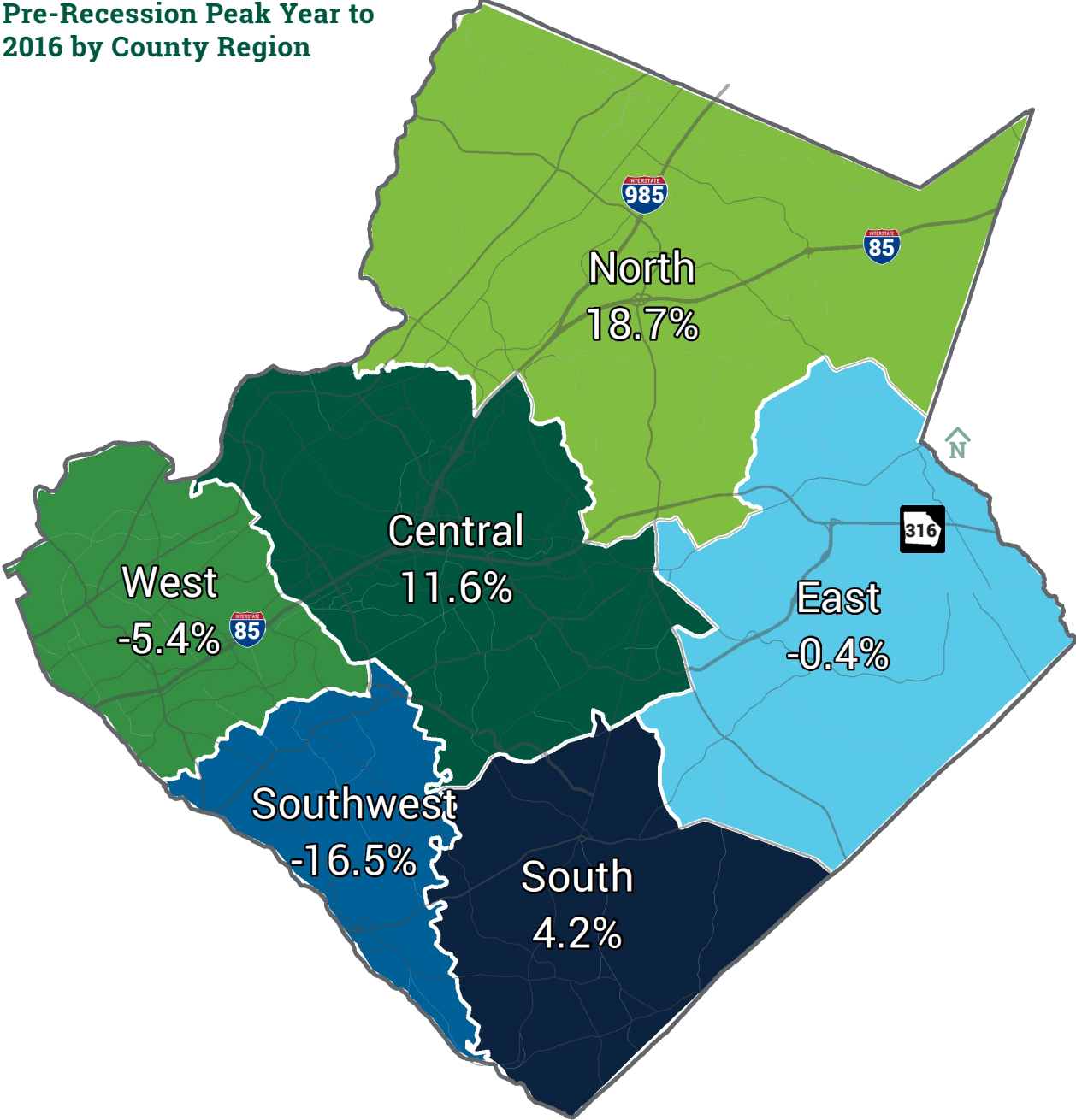
Source US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2016))

Industries with the Largest Projected Increase in Share of Gwinnett County's Employment, 2015-2040



Top Source Atlanta Regional Commission
Bottom Source 1990: US Census Bureau
 2017: Atlanta Regional Commission

**Change in Jobs from
Pre-Recession Peak Year to
2016 by County Region**

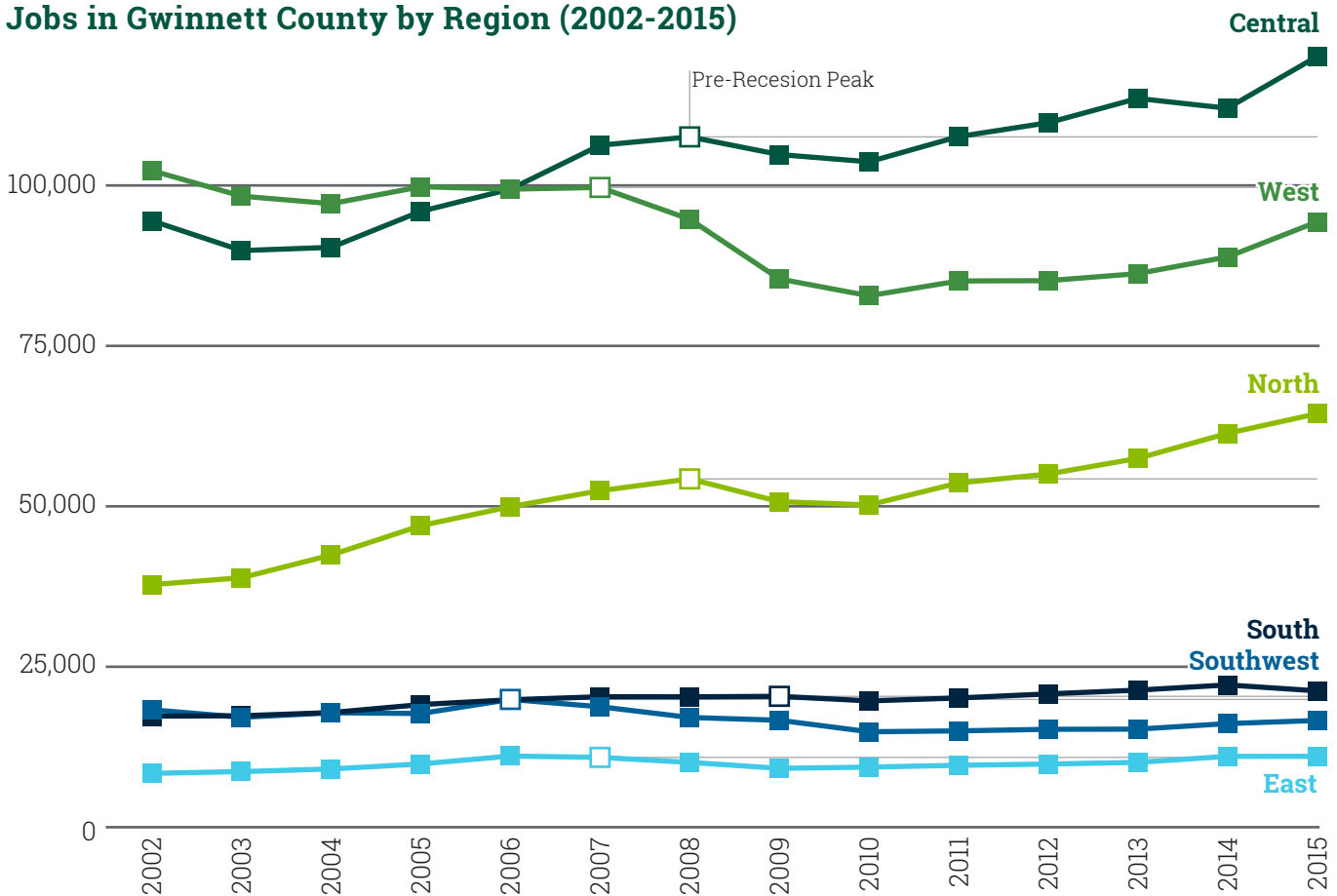


Source US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

In understanding our economic development health, the last ten years are worth looking at in detail because of the major impact that the recession of 2008 had on the local economy. Between 2008 and 2012, Gwinnett County lost nearly 10% of its jobs. While 50,000 jobs were added between 2012 and 2017, that growth has not been evenly distributed throughout community. Certain parts of the County have seen strong employment growth, while others have not recovered the jobs lost in the Recession.

- In the western and southwestern parts of Gwinnett, we have not recovered jobs lost during the recession. These areas are both very strong in manufacturing and warehousing, both of which are declining as a share of the County's jobs. The southwestern area also has low absolute numbers of jobs when compared to the total number of County jobs.
- The eastern part of the County has shown flat growth while the southern part has exhibited modest (4 percent) growth.
- The northern and central parts of Gwinnett have shown strong growth (19 & 12 percent, respectively).

Jobs in Gwinnett County by Region (2002-2015)



Source US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

As suggested earlier, a major element of Gwinnett's Economic Development Policy is to ensure that the County's jobs and workforce are well matched. Interfacing with this are broad efforts to make sure jobs are reasonably accessible for Gwinnett's workforce. Gwinnett County has an excellent balance of jobs and workforce. The age and education profiles of the jobs located in the county, and the workforce that lives in the county are closely correlated.

The overall number of jobs and workforce in Gwinnett County are closely matched, with slightly more workers than jobs, reflecting the proximity of Gwinnett County to several major employment centers in the region.

Commuting patterns of employees coming into and leaving Gwinnett County are roughly similar, with 219,867 employees leaving the County and 199,720 employees coming to the County to work. Of workers that live in Gwinnett County, nearly 150,000 or forty percent of them also work in the County, a higher in-area labor force efficiency rate than many in metro Atlanta, including Fulton County, Cobb County, or DeKalb County.

Gwinnett County Workforce and Employment by Age (2015)

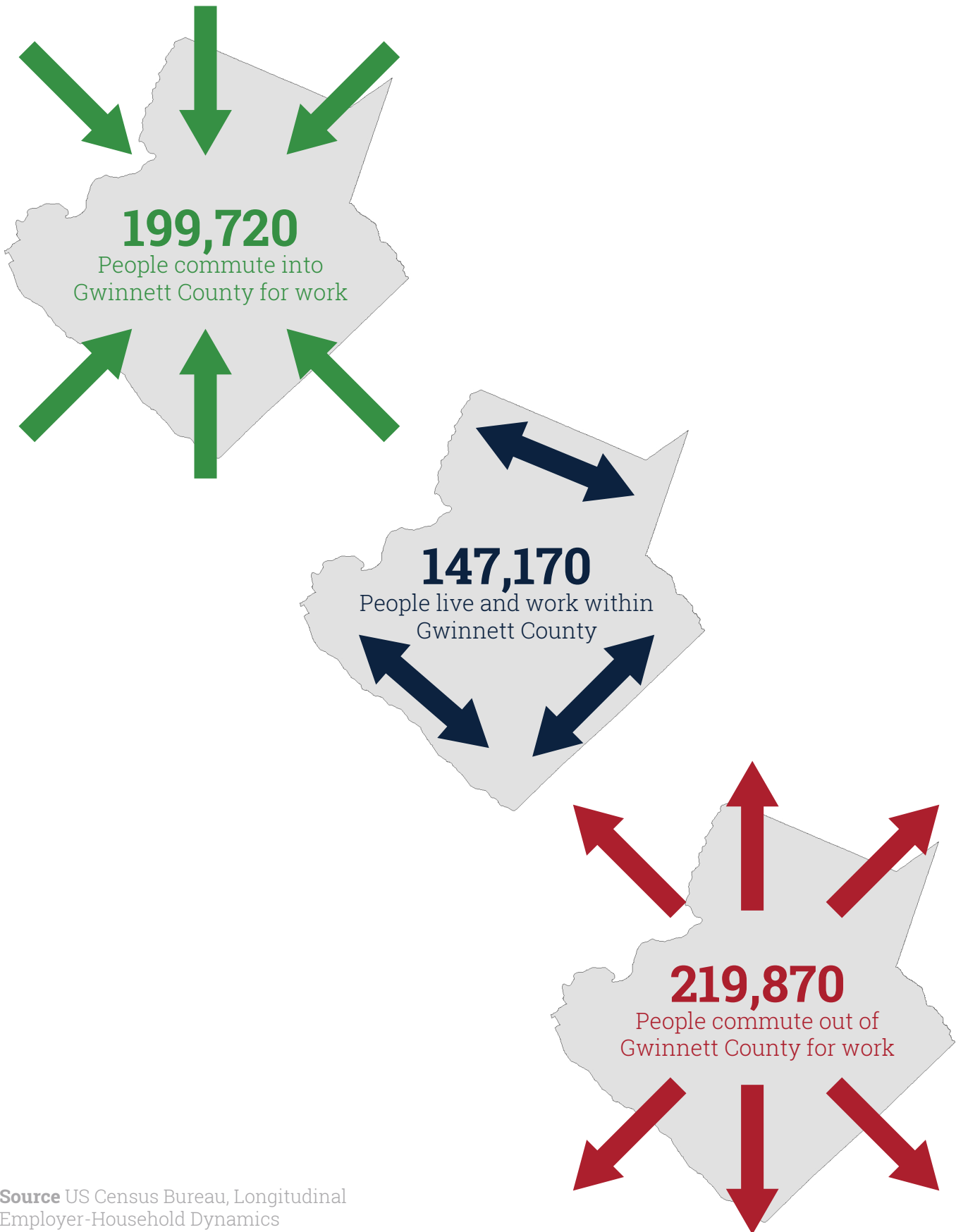
Age	Employment		Workforce	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Age 29 or younger	76,259	22.0%	76,715	20.9%
Age 30 to 54	202,532	58.4%	217,506	59.3%
Age 55 or older	68,098	19.6%	72,815	19.8%

Gwinnett County Workforce and Employment by Education Level (2015)

Education	Employment		Workforce	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Less than high school	34,267	9.9%	37,510	10.2%
High school or equivalent, no college	70,941	20.5%	74,244	20.2%
Some college or Associate degree	84,127	24.3%	88,902	24.2%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	81,295	23.4%	89,665	24.4%
Educational attainment not available (workers aged 29 or younger)	76,259	22.0%	76,715	20.9%

Source US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Gwinnett County Commuting Patterns (2016)



Source US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Our Infrastructure and Community Amenities.

Gwinnett County would not have been successful in becoming such an attractive place to live and work if it were not for the high quality of our infrastructure and community amenities. Our future success similarly depends on a constant maintaining and improving of our community facilities. The County has embarked on several efforts to anticipate future needs and desires and begin the process of programming for our future amenities.

TRANSPORTATION

The Gwinnett County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) –Destination2040–provides a framework to improve quality of life for everyone in the County by facilitating the mobility of people and goods safely and efficiently across all modes of transportation. The CTP was unanimously adopted by the Board of Commissioners in December 2017 and included a programmatic list of transportation initiatives and policies for the County to consider in the coming years. There were more than 1,300 projects identified across the County that made up this transportation wish list. As with any “wish list,” not everything can be afforded or implemented through the plan’s horizon year of 2040, so the planning team worked with County staff, technical and stakeholder committees, and engaged community members to narrow this list of projects. This process is referred to as project prioritization, and for Destination2040, it was completed in conjunction with the County’s Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project selection process.

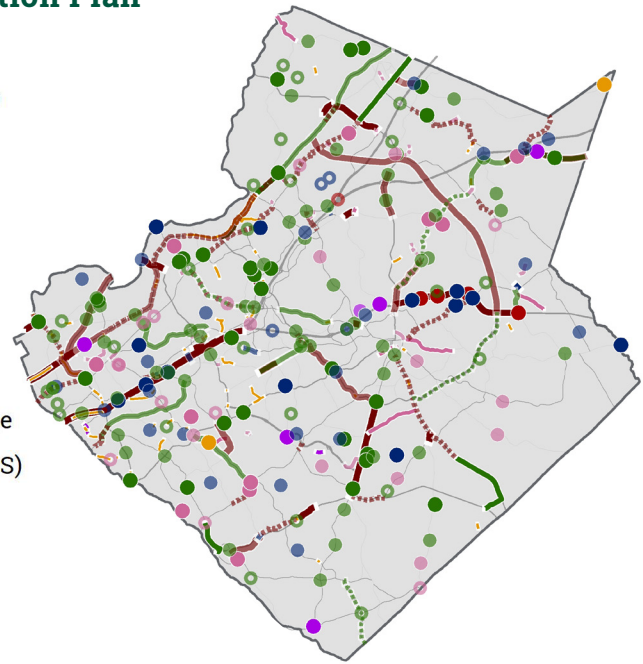
The CTP also provided the framework for subsequent efforts focused on trails and transit expansion in the County. The Gwinnett Trails Master Plan was a collaboration between the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation and the Gwinnett County Department of Community Services to examine trail initiatives from both recreational and traditional transportation purposes. Beginning as a compilation of various planning efforts including the Bicycle and Pedestrian element of the CTP, the Gwinnett County Greenways Plan, and several initiatives identified by the County’s various municipalities and planning partners, the resulting plan identified:

- The Core Trail Network is composed of trail segments identified as part of the larger Countywide system anticipated for initial plan implementation. Full implementation of the Core Trail Network may take multiple decades, if considering current and likely funding sources. Additional financial support may mean earlier implementation.
- Priority Trails are anticipated to be implemented after the Core Trail Network is realized.
- Trails with Partners may be built through County development/redevelopment requirements or other partnerships.
- The Chattahoochee Trail Network is a regionally significant trail (from Coweta County north to Buford Dam) that is expected to be implemented through a partnership among multiple agencies.

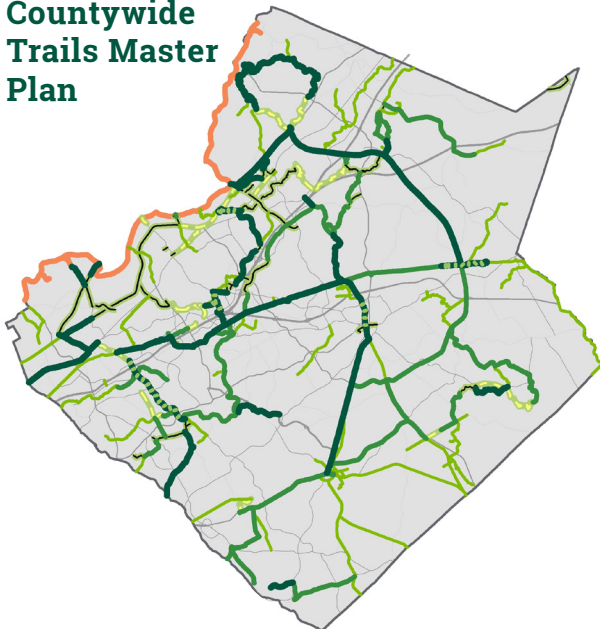
The Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan (Connect Gwinnett), is the County’s first comprehensive look at transit since the system was incepted in 2001. Connect Gwinnett is a Comprehensive Transit Development Plan (CTDP), a roadmap for how the County would like to develop its transit networks to serve current and future needs and includes several considerations for future transit expansion, including implementation of High Capacity Transit and Enhanced Bus Service in addition to improvements to local bus service.

Gwinnett County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---|
| Partially Funded | Fully Funded | |
| | | Bridges, Culverts and Transportation Drainage |
| | | Intersections |
| | | Major Roads |
| | | Road Safety and Alignment |
| | | School Safety |
| | | Sidewalks and Pedestrian Safety |
| | | |
| Partially Funded | Fully Funded | |
| | | Bridges, Culverts and Transportation Drainage |
| | | Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS/ATMS) |
| | | Major Roads |
| | | Road Safety and Alignment |
| | | School Safety |
| | | Sidewalks and Pedestrian Safety |

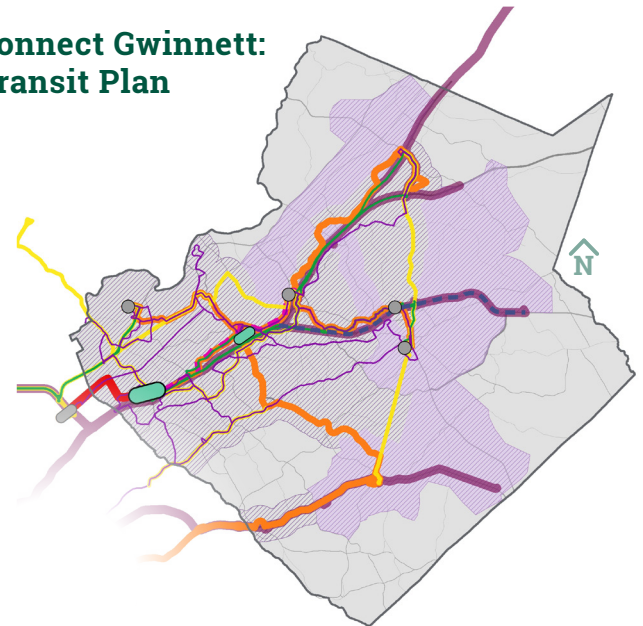


Countywide Trails Master Plan



- Core Trail Network
- Chattahoochee Trail Network
- Priority Trails
- Trails with Partners
- Existing Trail
- Funded Trail
- Partially Funded Trail

Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan



- Managed Lanes
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Rapid Bus
- Direct Connect
- Local Bus
- Heavy Rail Transit
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Express Commuter Bus
- Flex Service Areas
- Paratransit Area
- Transit Centers
- Multimodal Centers

WATER & SEWER

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources (DWR) has several initiatives that interface with the Unified Plan. Gwinnett's water system serves the entire County except Buford, Lawrenceville, Suwanee and Loganville. Gwinnett's sewer system serves then entire County except Buford and Loganville. To serve Gwinnett's population, DWR has:

- Two water filtration plants that use water from Lake Lanier to produce drinking water and have a total treatment capacity of 248 million gallons per day (MGD)
- Ten drinking water storage tanks and ten booster pump stations
- Three water reclamation facilities with a total treatment capacity of 98 MGD, including the F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center, one of the most technologically advanced treatment facilities in the country
- Nearly 3,800 miles of water mains to distribute drinking water across the County, including over 80,000 valves and 43,000 fire hydrants
- Nearly 2,800 miles of gravity sewer, 278 miles of sewage force main and 218 pump stations to collect wastewater and transport it to the water reclamation facilities

DWR is also responsible for Gwinnett's Stormwater Utility. The Stormwater Utility is responsible for maintaining over 1,500 miles of storm drainage pipes throughout the County and is funded by the County's stormwater utility fee. The County has adopted the State of Georgia's model stormwater ordinances related to floodplain management, soil erosion and sediment control, and stream buffers, including more stringent requirements.

In 2018 DWR completed the 2050 Sewer Master Plan. DWR will complete the 2050 Distribution System Master Plan in 2019. The Master Plans identify long-term capacity needs for the collection and distribution systems throughout the County. As development occurs, DWR uses the information in the Master Plans to ensure that infrastructure upgrades meet the future capacity needs. Coordination with DWR, particularly on sewer service and expansion, is important when considering where future land uses, new/ greenfield development, and redevelopment will likely take place.

A growing concern is the number of residential properties without sewer service. Over 74,000 water customers in Gwinnett County remain on septic tanks, which equates to about 30% of residential properties. These septic systems are throughout the County, but have the highest density in the Yellow River basin in the southern half of the County. Without proper maintenance, these systems will eventually fail and have negative effects on water quality in streams and rivers in the community. The County has been actively working to find a solution to converting these properties to sewer service, and DWR is developing a long-term septic-to-sewer program as part of the County's Safe and Healthy Community objective.

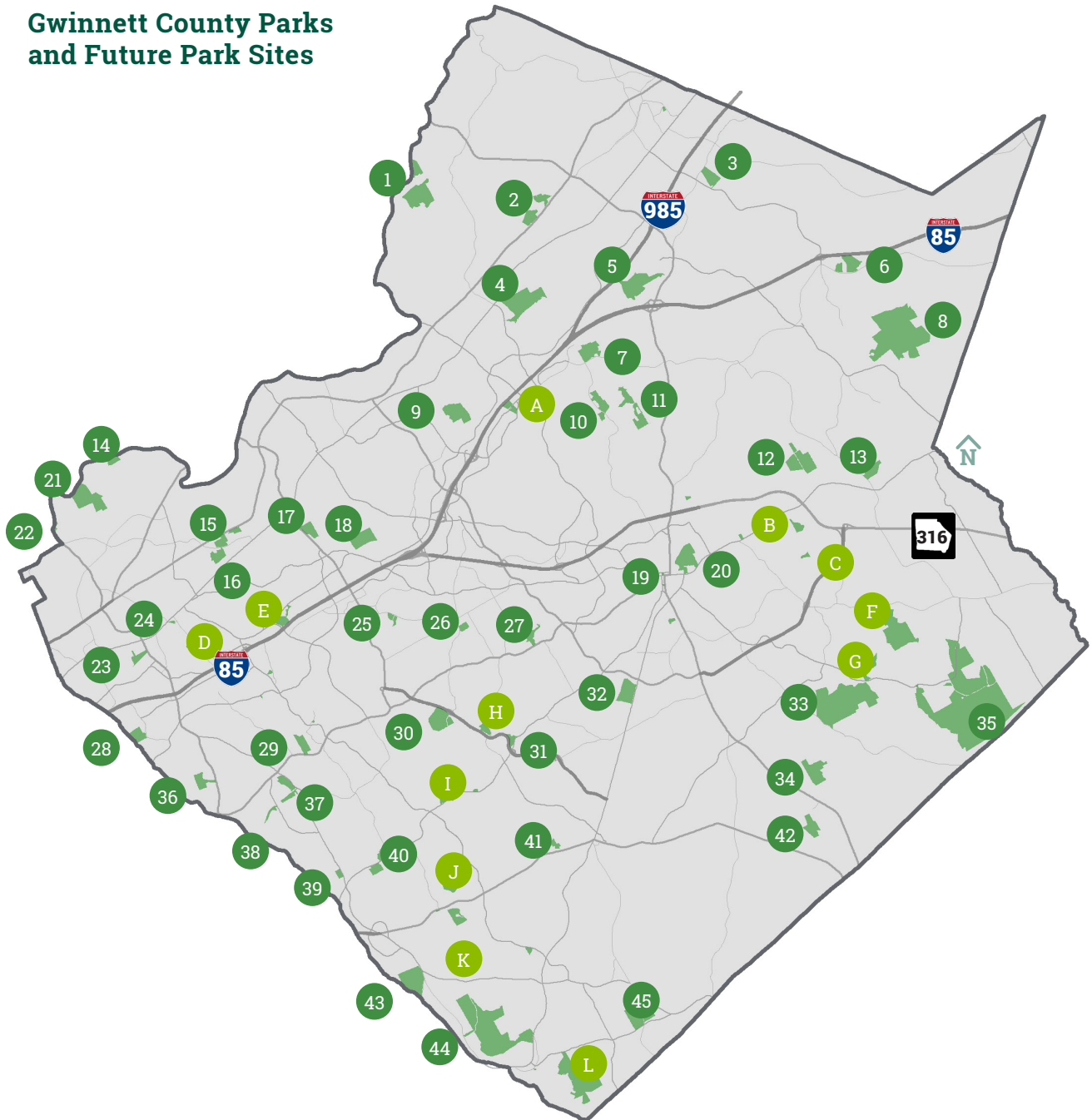
As a result of the 2050 Sewer Master Plan it was determined that additional wastewater treatment capacity will be needed within the next 15 years. DWR is considering construction of a fourth water reclamation facility, located in the southern portion of the County, in order to better accommodate sewer flows in the Ocmulgee basin.



Yellow River Water Reclamation Facility



Gwinnett County Parks and Future Park Sites



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Gwinnett County's Community Services Department encompasses several areas, including the University of Georgia (UGA) Extension Service, the Environmental & Heritage Center, Health & Human Services, Parks & Recreation, Animal Welfare, Gwinnett County Public Libraries, and Voter Registrations & Elections. For the purposes of the 2040 Unified Plan, the focus is on parks and recreation opportunities, public libraries, and senior services. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the Gwinnett County Trails Master Plan was a collaboration between the Department of Transportation and Department of Community Services.

Parks & Recreation

Gwinnett County has a robust parks and recreation system that includes 40 parks, five aquatic centers, four pools, two soccer complexes, and one golf course (Collins Hill Golf Course). Early in Gwinnett's development, County leaders decided that parks and recreation would be a top priority and went about acquiring the land needed to pursue its system. To date, the County owns, maintains, and operates approximately 9,670 acres of park land. The majority is unprogrammed space with playgrounds, pavilions, dog parks, open space, and multi-use trails, but there are several parks that include baseball, softball, soccer, football, and/or multi-purpose fields, while others have recreation centers or activity buildings that support indoor sports, like basketball and volleyball, as well as other activities and classes.

Current Gwinnett County Parks

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Settles Bridge Park | 12. Rabbit Hill Park | 24. Cemetery Field | 37. Lions Club Park |
| 2. E.E. Robinson Park | 13. Dacula Park | 25. Club Drive Park | 38. Harmony Grove Soccer Complex |
| 3. Bogan Park | 14. Jones Bridge Park | 26. Sweet Water Park | 39. Montain Park Park |
| 4. George Pierce Park | 15. West Gwinnett Park | 27. Yellow River Wetland | 40. J.B. Williams Park |
| 5. Environmental and Heritage Center | 16. Pickneyville Park | 28. Graves Park | 41. South Gwinnett Park |
| 6. Duncan Creek Park | 17. Shorty Howell Park | 29. Bryson Park | 42. Vines Park |
| 7. Rock Springs Park | 18. McDaniel Farm Park | 30. Bethesda Park | 43. DeShong Park |
| 8. Little Mulberry Park | 19. Gwinnett Historic Courthouse | 31. Ronald Regan Park | 44. Yellow River Park |
| 9. Peachtree Ridge Park | 20. Rhodes Jordan Park | 32. Alexander Park | 45. Lenora Park |
| 10. Collins Hill Park | 21. Simpsonwood Park | 33. Tribble Mill Park | |
| 11. Collins Hill Golf Course | 22. Holcomb Bridge Park | 34. Bay Creek Park | |
| | 23. Best Friend Park | 35. Harbins Park | |
| | | 36. Lucky Shoals Park | |

Gwinnett County Park Sites (Planned Future Parks and Expansions)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Northbrook Park Site | H. Oak Road Greenspace |
| B. Alcovy River Greenspace (Dixon Tract) | I. Lee Park Site |
| C. Freeman's Mill Park | J. Riverbend Park Site |
| D. Beaver Ruin Greenspace | K. Strickland Trailhead Site |
| E. Beaver Ruin Park Site | L. Promised Land Historic Site & Don Moore Branch Park Site |
| F. Palm Creek Park Site | |
| G. New Hope Greenspace | |

Public Libraries

Gwinnett County Public Library (GCPL) has 15 branches located throughout the county. In addition to offering access to a vast collection of books, the libraries offer computers, study and research space, and programming such as story times, classes, and training for county residents. GCPL also has an app for smart phones that allows members to access its catalog of books and other print resources, and through external sources, browse digital books, audiobooks, and magazines; learn skills on demand; and learn up to 70 foreign languages.

Senior Services

Gwinnett County operates four senior centers located in Buford, Centerville, Lawrenceville, and Norcross, and also offers programming for seniors at eight of its parks. As indicated earlier in this chapter, Gwinnett's population is aging, and as a result senior services – especially those offered to low-income seniors – will become increasingly important in offering supportive services to this segment of the population. Services offered include:

- Arts and crafts
- Exercise
- Line and tap dancing
- Bridge
- Clogging
- Computer training
- Trips and special events



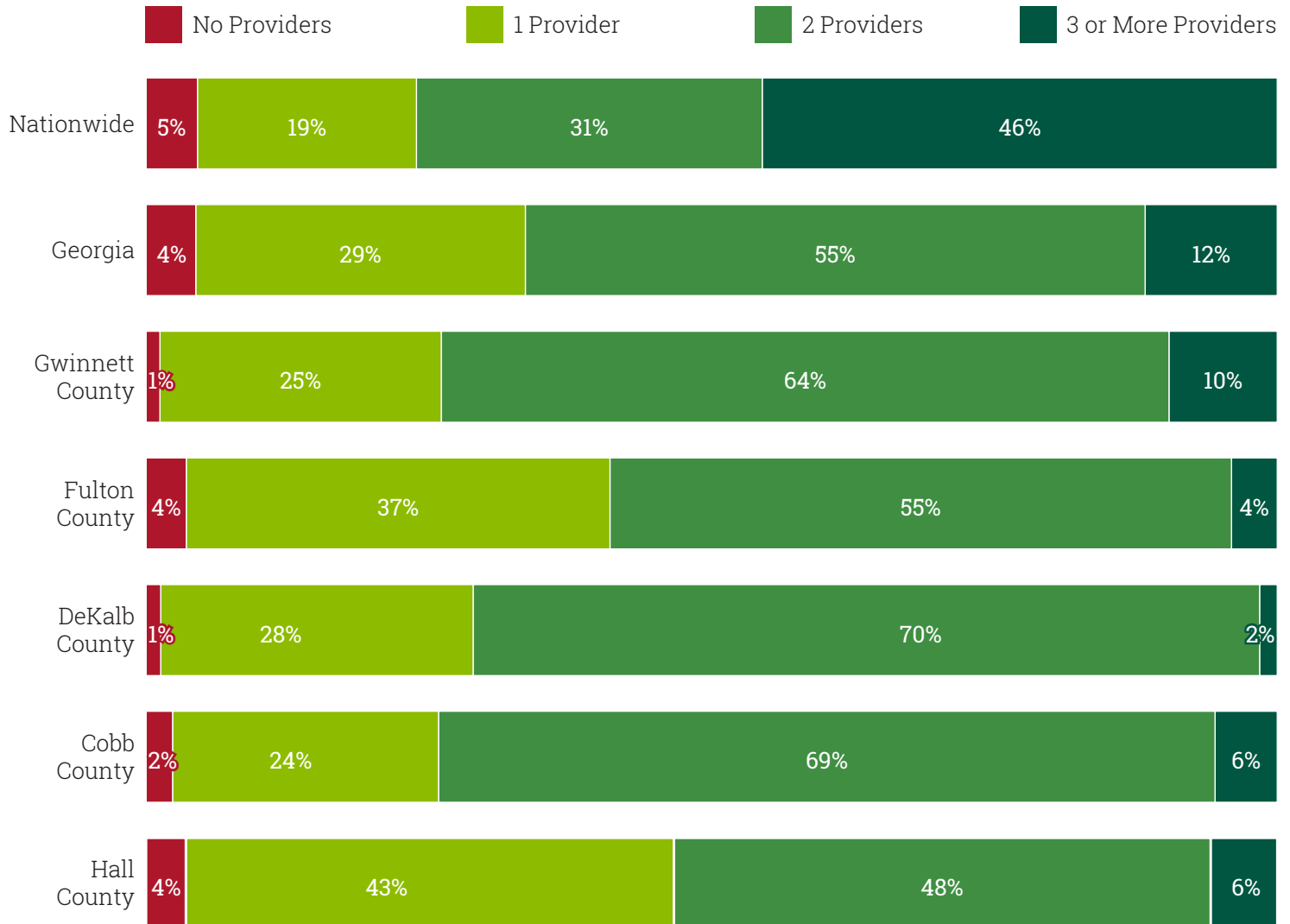


BROADBAND ACCESS

In Georgia, the 2018 State Legislature passed the Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act (Senate Bill 402) initiating a renewed focus on broadband accessibility. While not a function of Gwinnett County's government's services, broadband access is becoming increasingly important. This access has increasingly become an integrated part of societal participation, business, and overall livelihood.

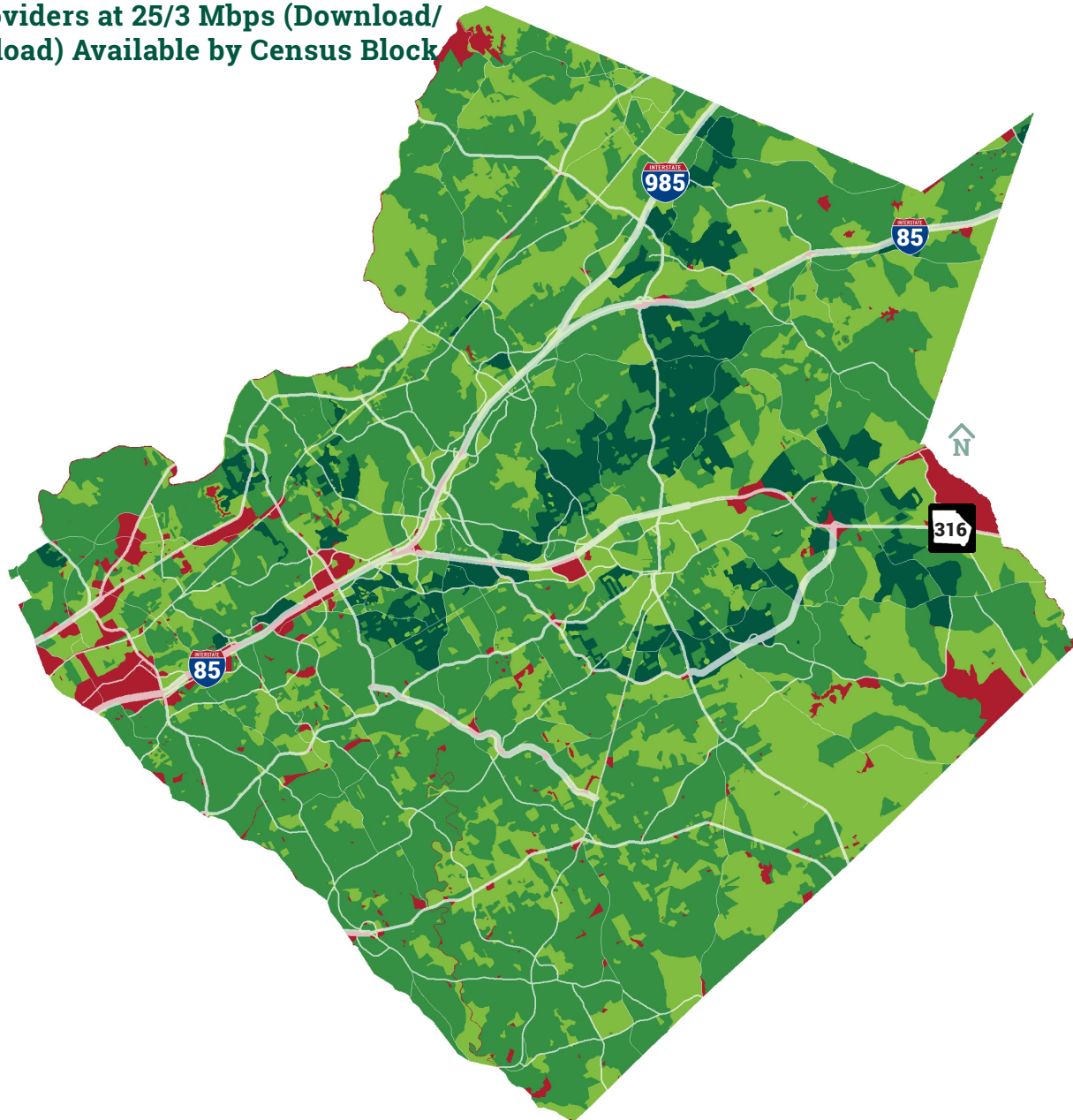
A review of broadband access and speed shows that Gwinnett fares incredibly well, especially when compared nationwide, statewide, and to peer communities. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) sets the definition of broadband as download speeds of at least 25 Megabytes Per Second (Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps. Nearly 99 percent of our population has access to at least one broadband provider that is able to provide this level of service, compared to a rate of 95 percent nationwide and 96 percent in the state of Georgia.

Percentage of Population with Coverage by Broadband Providers at 25/3 Mbps (Download/Upload)



Source US FCC (December 2016) Technology: ADSL, Cable, Fixed Wireless, Satellite, Other

Number of Residential Broadband Providers at 25/3 Mbps (Download/Upload) Available by Census Block



Source US FCC (December 2016) Technology: ADSL, Cable, Fixed Wireless, Satellite, Other
Note Providers only tracked in areas with residential population; some areas that show zero providers may actually be lacking residential population

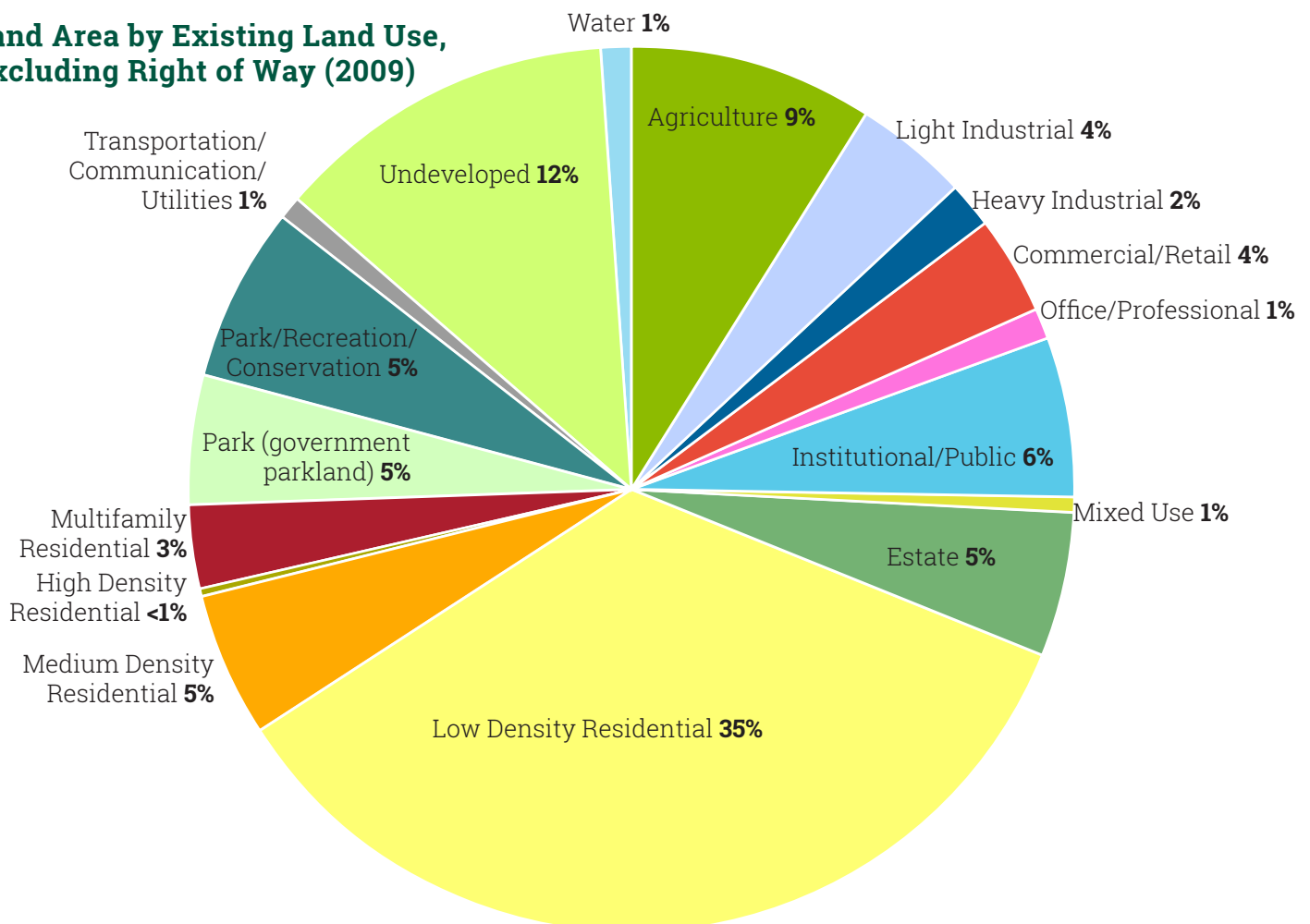
Land Use & Built Environment.

With the majority of Gwinnett’s tremendous growth to this point having been fueled by a suburban expansion from Atlanta, the majority of our built environment is generally characterized as suburban in form, with relatively low density, one to two story buildings that are typically setback from the road, surface parking, and a general lack of a transportation grid and connectivity.

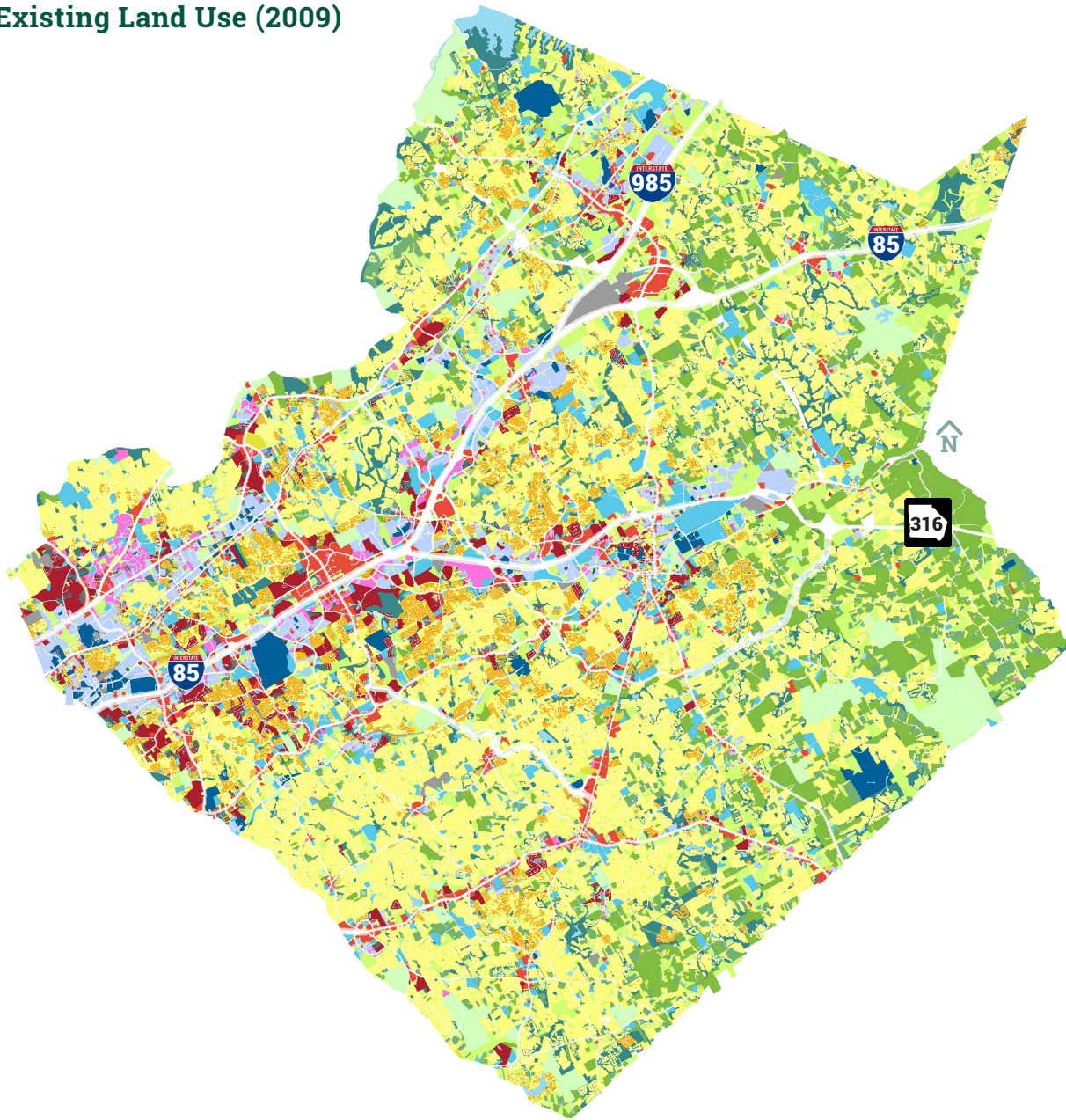
This expansion occurred earliest in the western and southern portions of the county, rapidly expanding to the north and east at relatively low densities, leaving few tracts undeveloped. Development momentum moved north and east, leading to lower levels of investment in previously developed areas. Today, real estate in the western and southern parts of the County tends to exhibit higher vacancies, lower average rents, but also a greater potential for reinvestment.

Focusing on land use, our development pattern tended to result in separation and homogenized land uses. Across the entire county, the largest single category of land use is single-family residential, which encompasses forty percent of the total land area (excluding rights of way) followed by undeveloped land, which occupies twelve percent of the total area of the county. Commercial, industrial, office, and institutional land uses tend to be arranged along major roads and scattered throughout the County.

Land Area by Existing Land Use, Excluding Right of Way (2009)



Existing Land Use (2009)



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ● Agriculture | ● Mixed Use | ● Park (government parkland) |
| ● Light Industrial | ● Estate | ● Park/Recreation/Conservation |
| ● Heavy Industrial | ● Low Density Residential | Right of Way |
| ● Commercial/Retail | ● Medium Density Residential | ● Transportation/Communication/Utility |
| ● Office/Professional | ● High Density Residential | ● Undeveloped |
| ● Institutional/Public | ● Multifamily Dwellings | ● Water |

A resulting characteristic is the preponderance of areas with buildings of a similar type and a similar age. As the County developed, much of the development at any given time was dominated by widespread construction of a single type of structure, focused in a widespread pattern, within a single area, built over a short period of time.

This has resulted in a non-diversified spatial distribution of structures that are similar in terms of design, use, and age. As consumer and market trends shift over time, widespread areas can become vulnerable and difficult to adapt incrementally, as any factor or market trend that lessens the viability of these buildings undermines the collective health of a widespread area.

Undermining factors that can threaten the economic viability of these areas include:

- Physical obsolescence: Many buildings were built with a functional lifespan of only 40-50 years.
- Functional obsolescence: Shifts in demand related to building heights, floor-place size, and other factors may limit the re-use of existing buildings.
- Market obsolescence: As real estate, industrial, and consumer preferences change, entire classes of buildings, such as enclosed malls or big-box stores, are vulnerable to losing market relevance.
- Consumer preference: Changing consumer preferences, particularly in regard to homes and residential buildings, could potentially limit the viability of large swaths of the county's housing stock.

The images to the right show areas within Gwinnett County that have buildings exemplifying these challenges, reflected in four different kinds of uses/buildings:

- Industrial/Flex Spaces,
- Big-Box Retail Stores,
- Warehouse and Distribution Buildings, and
- Office Parks.

Gwinnett's particular distribution of these buildings requires these challenges to be met all at once for widespread districts.



Industrial/Flex Districts



Warehouse and Distribution Districts



Big-Box Retail Districts



Office Park Districts

Perceptions.

As a final research piece, our planning team also investigated perceptions of our community by holding marketing style focus groups – complete with mirrored glass – to understand the perceptions that young people in the metro Atlanta area have regarding Gwinnett. The intent of this process was to better understand the types of amenities and features that young people are looking for when choosing a community to reside, with an understanding that the future success of Gwinnett will depend on our ability to continue to attract young people and families.

These focus groups included twelve participants each, all under the age of 35 and randomly selected from throughout the metro Atlanta area to reflect the region’s overall demographics. The groups were further classified by those who had successfully obtained a four year secondary-education degree and those who had not. Questions and topics were sourced through the plan’s Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) and further reflection from the planning team under the four following classifications:

- Overall perceptions of Gwinnett
- Attitudes toward housing
- Desired community amenities
- Personal goals for the year 2040

A broad conclusion and reflection made was a general tendency for the college graduates in the focus group to prefer a more urban lifestyle seeking active and alternative modes of transportation, pedestrian friendly environments, and entertainment options (everything from nightlife and restaurants to shopping) that are open late. Conversely, those who had not obtained a four year degree tended to be more interested in a traditional suburban lifestyle with one participant summarizing they wanted to be “further out from the city and away from traffic, but still hav(ing) accessibility to things to do.” Common values from both groups included good schools, low crime rates, having a sense of community, recreational opportunities, and shopping convenient to home. A full transcript and summary of the focus groups are provided in Appendix A.



Gwinnett County's planned Revel development was mentioned by multiple members of the focus groups as a positive sign for the future of our community



Image Credit: North American Properties



Chapter 3

Our Vision



With such a diverse and complex community of so many walks of life, what is our collective vision?

In this chapter, we discuss the process to understand that vision, work with our partner communities, and how a collective vision emerged under the framework of five themes and accompanying policies.

Engaging the Community

Our community engagement program was designed to engage with all members of Gwinnett's very diverse community and included a combination of traditional outreach methods and other approaches to target specific communities and groups for their participation.





TRADITIONAL OUTREACH METHODS

Our traditional outreach methods included the conventional ways of obtaining input as part of a planning process, including Public Hearings, Community Open Houses, the regular convening of a stakeholder committee (the Planning Advisory Committee) to help guide and vet the planning process, and the use of an Online Survey.

Public Hearings

Three public hearings were held. The first public hearing was held December 19, 2017 to formally kickoff the planning process and brief the community on what to expect. The second public hearing was held on October 2, 2018 with the Gwinnett County Planning Commission to formally ask for their consideration of the plan. The third and final public hearing was held October 23, 2018 to ask for the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners' consideration and approval to transmit the plan for a compliance review by the Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Further documentation of these Hearings is provided in Appendix B.

Community Open Houses

Over the course of the planning process, the planning team held three distinct rounds of open houses with five meeting opportunities each. In each round, locations were selected to be geographically diverse including a north, south, east, west, and central Gwinnett location. The three rounds also correlated with the progress on the plan, with the initial meetings serving as an overall introduction, the second round of meetings focused on the direction of the plan and emerging ideas, and the third round focused on the draft recommendations. Further documentation of these meetings are provided in Appendix B. Additionally, the following sections of this chapter discuss the various exercises and activities that were included in these meetings.

Planning Advisory Committee

The Planning Advisory Committee convened five times over the course of the planning process. This committee was used as a sounding and vetting board and membership was carefully cultivated to include elected officials; planning and economic development staff; staff from partner agencies including Community Improvement Districts (CIDs); staff from stakeholder agencies in the county including those representing the homeless, environmental groups, and civic groups; citizen appointments; and other residents included to invite participation from the different and diverse communities in Gwinnett County.

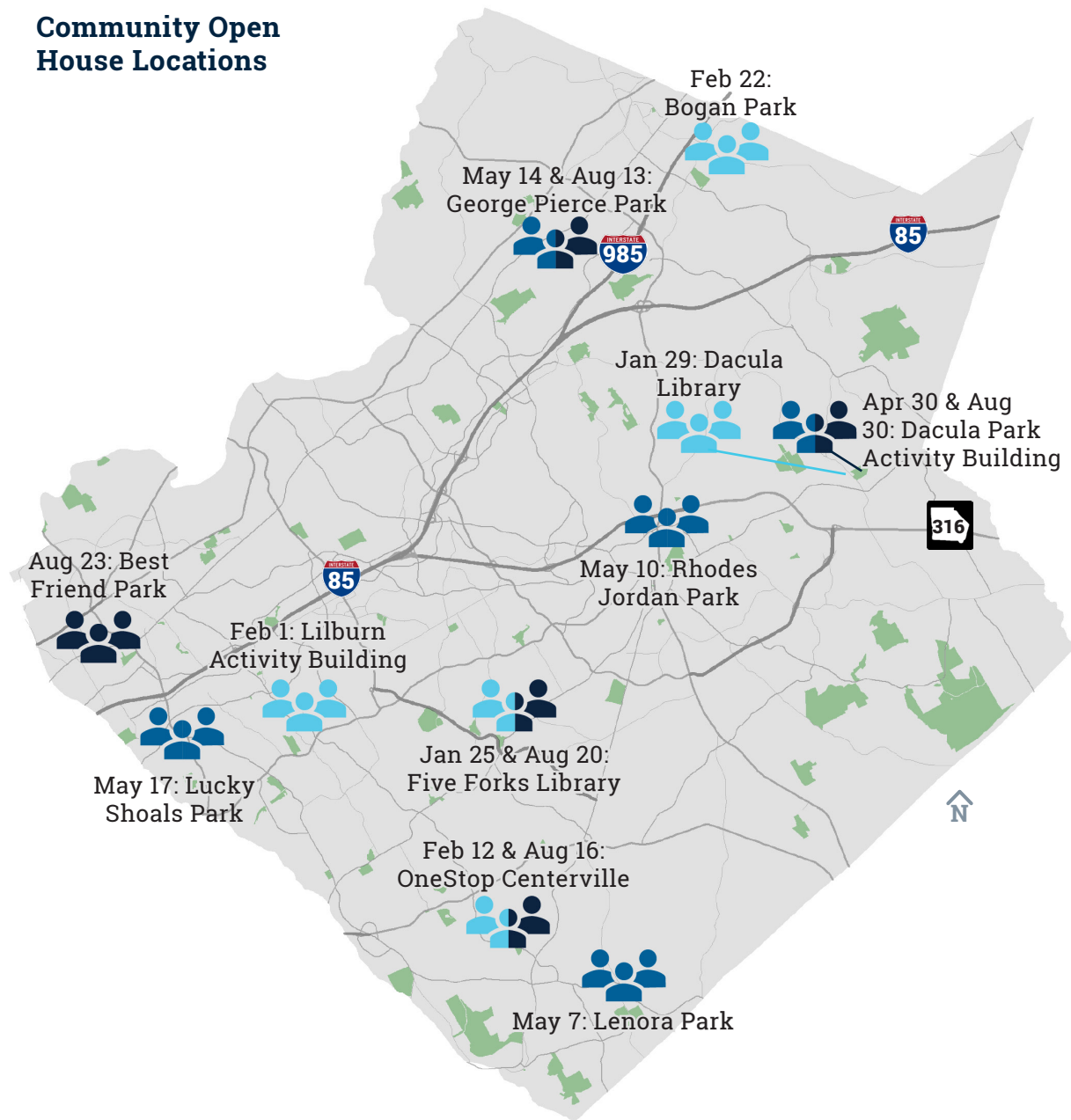
Meeting	Topics	Date
1	Review of Research and Trends SWOT Discussion	January 11, 2018
2	Policies Needs & Opportunities Broad Vision Discussion Preserve & Change Preference Urban Scale Preferences	March 8, 2018
3	Community Engagement Process Focus Group Perceptions Community Assets Guiding Philosophies Future Development Map Discussion	April 26, 2018
4	Recap of Planning Process Future Development Map Changes Character Area Narratives	June 14, 2018
5	Draft Recommendations	August 7, 2018

In addition to documentation of these meetings in Appendix B, the following sections of this chapter also discuss various exercises, discussions, and activities that were included in these meetings.

Online Survey

An online survey was also prepared, consisting of fifteen questions designed to understand overall values and attitudes amongst the over 1,100 people who responded. The survey was opened in coordination with the first Community Open Houses and closed on May 31, 2018 following the second round of Community Open Houses. The raw survey results are available in Appendix B.

Community Open House Locations



Round 1 Open Houses

January 25	Five Forks Library
January 29	Dacula Library
February 1	Lilburn Activity Building
February 12	OneStop Centerville
February 22	Bogan Park

Round 2 Open Houses

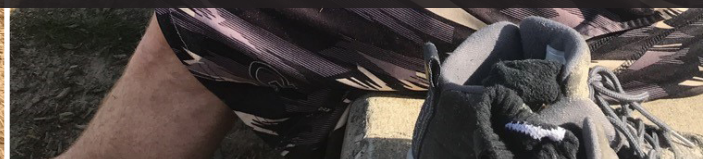
April 30	Dacula Park Activity Building
May 7	Lenora Park
May 10	Rhodes Jordan Park
May 14	George Pierce Park
May 17	Lucky Shoals Park

Round 3 Open Houses

August 13	George Pierce Park
August 16	OneStop Centerville
August 20	Five Forks Library
August 23	Best Friend Park
August 30	Dacula Park Activity Building



Intercept Interviews were conducted in various public places such as parks, grocery stores, and shopping malls in order to engage with community members going about their daily business



NON-TRADITIONAL OUTREACH METHODS

The outreach process also included a variety of supplemental and non-traditional outreach methods in order to reach a wide audience for discussion in the plan’s formation.

Speaking Engagements

Speaking Engagements were conducted throughout the County with civic groups, Community Improvement Districts, and other interested parties as indicated below. The speaking engagements typically included a briefing on the planning process and a short question/answer period. At many of these engagements, the planning team also took the opportunity to publicize upcoming community open houses and other project events.

Group	Date	Time	Location/Event
Partnership Gwinnett Redevelopment Task Force	1/3/2018	8:30 AM	Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce
Gwinnett Place CID	2/14/2018	7:30 AM	Board Meeting
Sugarloaf CID	3/8/2018	9:30 AM	Board Meeting
Lilburn CID	3/13/2018	5:00 PM	Lilburn Library
Sugarloaf Rotary Club	4/19/2018	12:15 PM	Sugarloaf Country Club
Snellville Lions Club	5/3/2018	7:00 PM	Walton EMC
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	5/8/2018	8:00 AM	Chamber of Commerce
Gwinnett Place CID	7/11/2018	9:00 AM	Board Meeting
Partnership Gwinnett Redevelopment Task Force	8/1/2018	8:30 AM	Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce
Sugarloaf CID	8/8/2018	9:30 AM	Board Meeting
Evermore CID	8/22/2018	2:30 PM	Board Meeting
Partnership Gwinnett Implementation Committee	9/11/2018	8:15 AM	Board Meeting
Lilburn CID	9/14/2018	7:30 AM	Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce

Intercept Interviews

In order to reach a broader population in Gwinnett County, the planning team conducted a series of intercept interviews in order to reach out to traditionally underserved communities and others in the community who would typically not otherwise engage with the planning effort. Armed with a clipboard and a series of questions intended to promote discussion and dialogue, this process included our team members approaching people at public locations in order to engage in these conversations. Documentation of these interviews is provided in Appendix B.

Notably, about twenty percent of the intercept interviews were conducted in Spanish, matching the share of Hispanic population in Gwinnett County.

Date	Interview Times	Location/Event
3/4/2018	12:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Santa Fe Mall
3/25/2018	12:30 - 3:00 PM	Plaza Las Americas
4/3/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Rhodes Jordan Park
4/5/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Bogan Park
4/10/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Best Friend Park
4/11/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Shorty Howell Park
4/17/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Lenora Park
4/19/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Bethesda Park
4/25/2018	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Little Mulberry Park
4/29/2018	1:00 - 4:00 PM	Harbins Park



Radio Interview with VidaAtlanta



Gwinnett Multicultural Festival



Super H Mart



Lilburn Middle School Career Day



State of the County



Vietnamese New Year Festival

Pop Up Events

Members of our planning team attended various events throughout the County during the planning process to publicize the plan, educate on ways to get involved, and solicit broad input on the vision for the future of Gwinnett. Documentation of these events is provided in Appendix B.

Pop-Up Event	Date
MLK Jr. Day Parade	1/15/2018
Chairman's State of the County	2/14/2018
UVAC TET Festival	2/18/2018
Bethesda Park Senior Center	2/21/2018
Centerville Senior Center	4/4/2018
Button Gwinnett Day	4/11/2018
Multi-Cultural Festival	4/14/2018
Chamber of Commerce Family Festival	4/21/2018
Kids Expo	4/28/2018
Super H Mart (Pleasant Hill Road)	7/14/2018

Radio Engagements

Our team participated in three interviews and appearances on local radio to discuss the plan. All three of these occasions were used as outreach to the Hispanic community, with fluent Spanish speaking members of our team participating.

Radio Station	Date
La Raza 102.3/100.1 FM	2/20/18
VidaAtlanta 1010 AM	2/23/18
La Que Buena 101.9 FM	7/26/18

Living Room Chats

Our team also prepared a toolkit we called the 'Living Room Chat' as a mechanism for people to hold discussions about the past, present, and future of Gwinnett. With probing questions similar to what was conducted in the Intercept Interviews, over 50 people participated in the Living Room Chats. The raw results of these chats are provided in Appendix B.

Other Events & Strategies

The planning team also participated in several other events, opportunities, and strategies to engage and discuss Gwinnett with the community and decision makers in the County. These included:

- Dinner & Dialogue: These events, hosted by Chairman Nash, are used to engage members of the community with different functions of Gwinnett County government.
- Career Day: Our planning team participated in the Career Day event at Lilburn Middle School.
- Planning Commission: Our team regularly briefed members of the Municipal-Gwinnett Planning Commission on the plan's progress.
- Board of Commissioners: Our team also participated in briefings and individual conversations with all members of the Board of Commissioners
- Citizens Academy: The Department of Planning and Development hosted the Gwinnett Citizens Academy on two separate occasions during the planning process and used those opportunities to solicit input on components of the plan.
- Social Media: A Facebook page was established by the planning team to generate broad interest in the plan and help advertise community meetings and events. This process also included 'post-boosting' to better reach out to members of the community likely to be interested in the plan.
- Gwinnett County Communications: The Communications Department also assisted in publicizing the plan in a variety of ways including weekly e-newsletters, press releases, and inclusion in the Gwinnett County Connection with February 2018 water bills.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Through all the various activities and events the planning team participated in, there were several exercises and activities developed to help solicit input in an engaging manner that would provide direction for the planning team.

Tell us what you think is going to happen

- TRAFFIC
 - OVERCROWDING!
 - better transportation
 - People that don't want the traffic + overcrowding will leave Gwinnett.
 - Clean transportation Alternatives
 - Connect to MARTA & Rail systems
 - New reservoirs
 - ~~Keep~~ air pollution standards to preserve our air
 - ~~Keep~~ trees/add trees / more parks
- Need for increase Police Patrol/*
- WE ARE GOING TO TURN INTO ROSWELL - BUMPER CARS*
- Add light RAIL FROM DORAVILLE to Revere AND ON TO LAWRENCEVILLE*
- Gwinnett will reach 1 million residents*

2030

- School System growth (huge)
- most popular metro Atlanta suburb
- Enormous job growth
- Loss of green space
- restriction of commercial transport vehicles in residential areas & parks
- Road improvement / potholes & etc...

* need more employment opportunities to maintain/sustain current population

universal, countywide high-speed internet & wifi accessibility

An influx of residents to Georgia (increases annually) will free better options for transportation to come to fruition. There will be more diversity in elected officials too.

Affordable Housing for senior citizens

increase home value, more home/community maint. regulations, + walkable streets + roads.

- * improved access to
- * more opportunities for arts & entertainment in Gwinnett County
- * public transportation
 - buses running at least @ minimum
 - buses running at least or later
 - buses running 7 days
 - public forums during bus
- Side walks

Timeline

In the timeline exercise, participants were able to view a series of important and relevant events from history and their relationship to Gwinnett County. Participants were then asked to provide their thoughts on what the year 2040 would hold for Gwinnett County.

This activity was held at the first two rounds (ten meetings) of the Community Open Houses, the first Planning Advisory Committee meeting, and all of the Pop Up Events.

Changes between now and 2040...

Plans for SR. population
 better restaurants. **Healthy**
 side of Duluth needs some commercial activity
 re-K 9 after school 9 summer vacation activities
 Planned infrastructure BEFORE big development projects
 more rural estate; homestead options - improved sustainable land use
 incorporation/representation for unincorporated areas
 limit on Apts. & Subdivisions
 LESS LOW INCOME HOUSING
 BETTER CONTROL OF CRIME

INCREASED WHITE FLIGHT, URBAN FLIGHT
 Self driving Cars
 implement T.D.R.
 * Redevelopment
 * Transit



Revamp Zoning Code For T.D.R. AND OTHER MODERN ZONING REGS (i.e. F.I.R., etc)

Make the County more sustainable.

ATL
 * more jobs for young professionals
 * Access to rail mass transit
 More EV charging stations
 * More activity in the area off of Old Fountain Road (Lawrenceville & Duluth)

every 1/2 hr
 til midnite
 a week
 5 times
 more of them)



BIO

CONSULTANTS
HELP US

Develop a tra

Create an area

Identify opportu

Tear down big

Work with Coalit

Connect transit

Preserve agricultura

Expand recycling into parks, rec

Right to use lanes at

Big Ideas & Priorities

These exercises were conducted to help our team understand needs and opportunities in Gwinnett.

In the Big Ideas exercise, participants were provided a few examples of possible needs or opportunities and then asked to write down additional ideas they had and/or use dots to register their agreement with ideas already indicated. This exercise was available at the first five meetings (first round) of community open houses. This exercise was also conducted in a modified form – through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) discussion at the first Planning Advisory Committee meeting.

In the Priorities exercise, participants were able to view all of the various Needs and Opportunities identified through the Big Ideas exercises and further indicate their agreement with these ideas through dots. From there, a top ten list of needs and a top ten of opportunities emerged. The Priorities exercise was available at the second round (a total of five meetings) of community open houses, the second Planning Advisory Committee meeting, and the Gwinnett County Citizens Academy.

Top Identified Needs

1. Redevelopment and revitalization of Gwinnett Place Mall area
2. Alternative modes of transit (heavy rail, light rail, etc.)
3. Create activity centers that are walkable/mixed use
4. Repurpose dead retail space
5. Address traffic congestion on major facilities
6. Accessibility and sidewalks
7. Jobs for college graduates
8. Affordability in housing
9. Develop multi-use trails
10. Incentives to attract business

Top Identified Opportunities

1. Repurpose vacant shopping centers to community spaces / Adaptive re-use for empty shopping strips / minimize abandoned retail buildings
2. Promote reuse of existing developed sites
3. Reduce number of commercial storage units on major areas ripe for mixed use
- 4 (tie). Develop improved mass transit
- 4 (tie). Protect green/low density development
- 6 (tie). Trail systems to connect activity centers
- 6 (tie). Preserve rural/agricultural properties within the county
- 6 (tie). Connect transit to neighboring counties
9. Disincentivize retailers to vacate to new locations
- 10 (tie). Minimize abandoned retail buildings
- 10 (tie). Make Gwinnett a 'Greener County'
- 10 (tie). Develop mixed age communities where shopping and services are available and affordable

Policy Review

In the Policy Review exercise, participants were able to view policies identified in the previous 2030 Unified Plan and asked to weigh in on which policies they considered to still be relevant, no longer relevant, or needing refinement. This initial exercise was conducted at the first round (first five) Community Open Houses, the first Planning Advisory Committee meeting, and the Gwinnett County Citizens Academy.


Policies where broad agreement existed (roughly less than two thirds of responses) were flagged for further review and discussion in order to determine appropriate ways to refine. This further review took the form of discussion during the second and third Planning Advisory Committee meetings and during the second round (also a total of five) of Community Open Houses.

County policies from the 2030 Unified Plan were grouped into the following five themes that further reinforce the County's tagline of being "Vibrantly Connected:"

- Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health
- Foster Redevelopment
- Maintain Mobility and Accessibility
- Provide More Housing Choices
- Keep Gwinnett a 'Preferred Place'

Public Agreement with Policies from the 2030 Unified Plan

2030 Unified Plan Policy	% Agree
Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health	
Promote Major Mixed-Use Development	70
Protect Large, Well-Located Parcels/ Areas for Office Use through Proactive Zoning	55
Strategic Placement of Sewer	83
Use Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) for Rural-Estate Housing in the East	22
Revise Current Millage Rates	51
Promote University Parkway (SR 316) as Gwinnett's Research & Development Belt	71
Employ Debt Financing of Major Infrastructure	58
Obtain Appropriate Balance of Retail	75
Foster Redevelopment	
Institute a Variety of Redevelopment Incentives and Bonuses	78
Promote Densification in Specific Areas Designated for Mixed-Use through TDRs, Rezoning and Increased Infrastructure Capacity	67
Use Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)	68
Promote Shared Infrastructure Facilities	78
Allow "Corner Stores" Within Specific Medium/High Density Areas as "Floating Zones"	47

 Policies flagged for review and further discussion with the community and Planning Advisory Committee

2030 Unified Plan Policy	% Agree
Maintain Mobility and Accessibility	
Enhance Signal Coordination and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)	83
Manage Access on Arterials	75
Enhance Incident Management Traffic Control Center	75
Establish a Road Connectivity Requirement for New Development	82
Creation of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) at Appropriate Sites through Proactive Zoning	82
Establish a More Extensive Transit System	73
Pursue Strategic Road Widening and New Alignments	69
Provide More Housing Choices	
Establish and Provide Access to More Executive Housing Areas	22
Preserve Existing Workforce Housing	62
Expand Maintenance and Rehabilitation Assistance to Homeowners and Small Businesses	90
Expand Senior Housing Options	78
Keep Gwinnett a 'Preferred Place'	
Improve the Walkability of Gwinnett's Activity Centers and Neighborhoods	88
Support and Promote the Expanded Four-Year College	70
Invest in Youth Enrichment Programs	86
Enhance Development Aesthetics	75
Provide Venues to Celebrate Growing Cultural Diversity of the County	67
Expand Presence of the "Arts Community"	89
Provide Incentives for Enhanced Open Space & Trails	87
Use Development Regulations to Create Local Parks	77
Acquire Surplus or Commercial Sites for Open Space/Recreation	75

Plan the Future

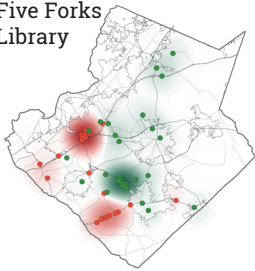
The Plan the Future exercises consisted of two table top map activities in which participants were asked to place dots indicating preferences as it relates to different parts of the County. Both activities were available at the first ten (first two rounds) of Community Open Houses and were also conducted with the Planning Advisory Committee, a briefing to the Planning Commission, and at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center.

Change and Preserve Preferences

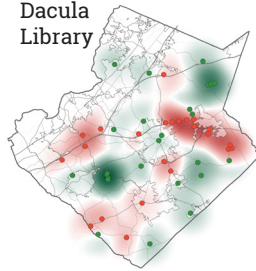
In the first exercises, participants were asked to indicate which parts of our community they would like to either preserve as they exist today (with a green dot), or the parts of our community where they see an opportunity for change (with a red dot). Dots were placed on maps of the County which were then compiled into an overall map showing areas where change is desired (in the darkest hues of red) and where preservation of existing character is desired (in the darkest hues of green), and everything in between.

Community Open Houses Round 1

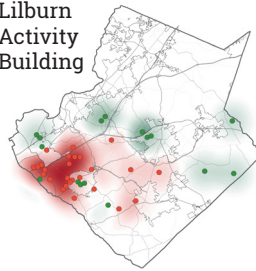
Five Forks Library



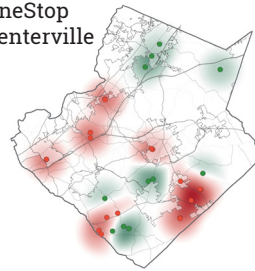
Dacula Library



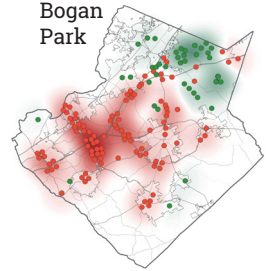
Lilburn Activity Building



OneStop Centerville

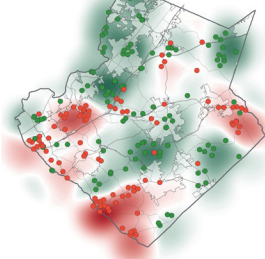


Bogan Park

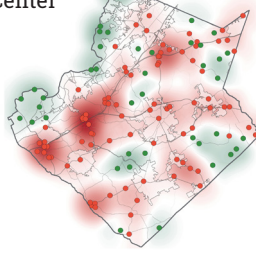


Other Target Groups

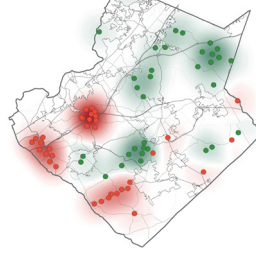
Planning Advisory Committee



Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center



Planning Commission



● "Change" Dot

● "Preserve" Dot

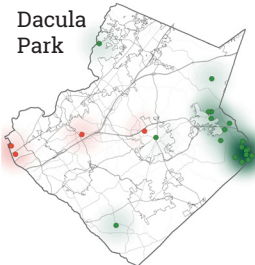
Highest desire for change

Highest desire for preservation

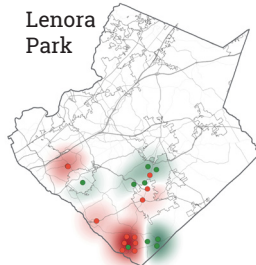


Community Open Houses Round 2

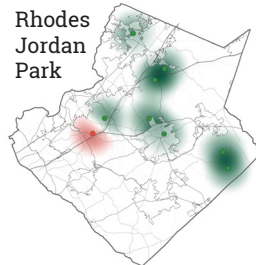
Dacula Park



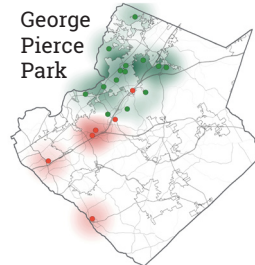
Lenora Park



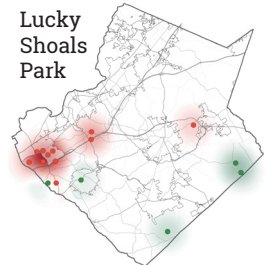
Rhodes Jordan Park



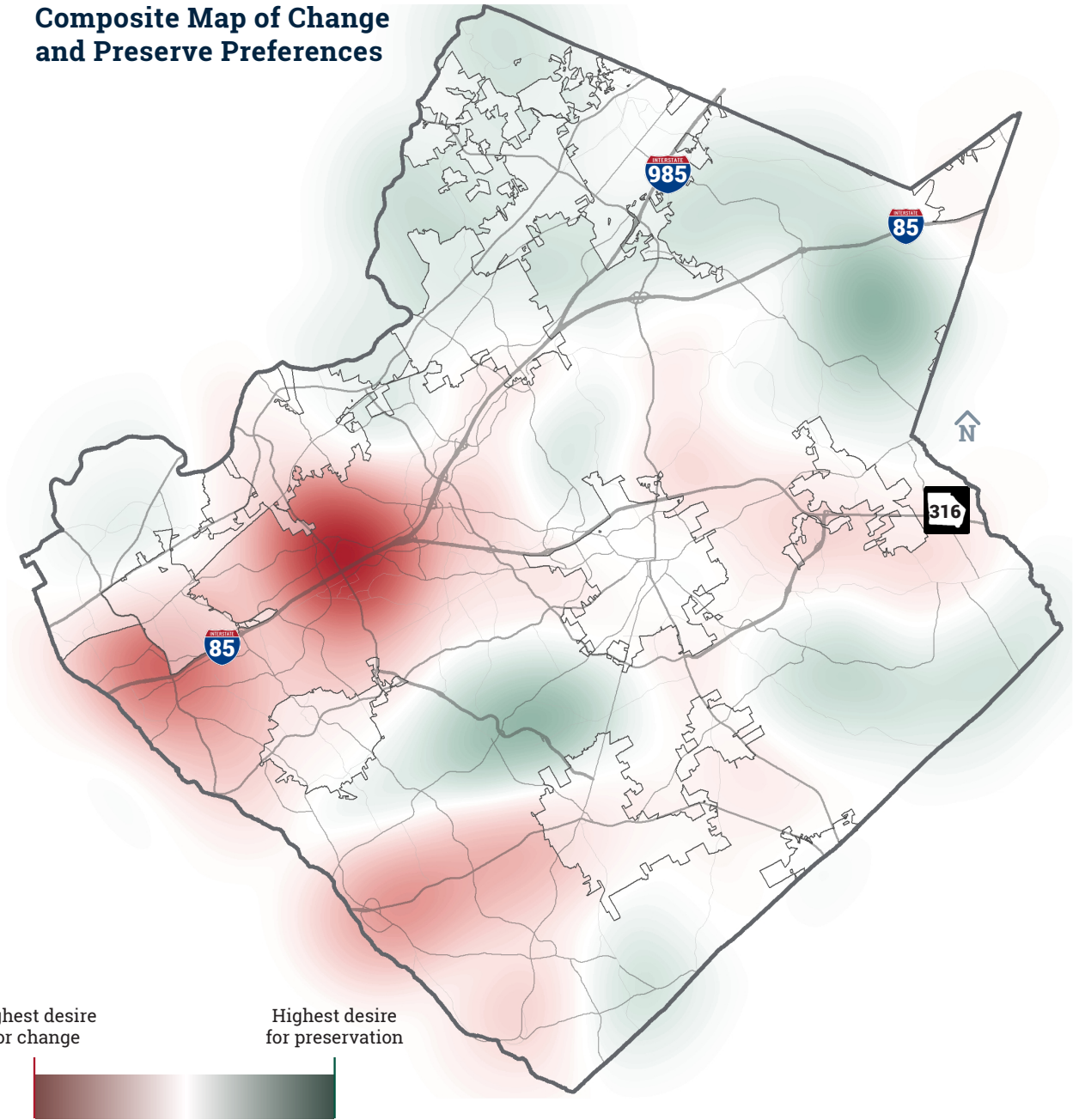
George Pierce Park



Lucky Shoals Park



Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences



Highest desire for change

Highest desire for preservation

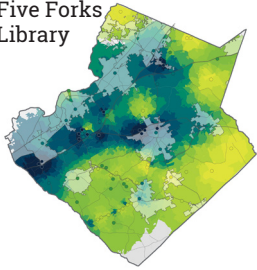


Urban Scale Preferences

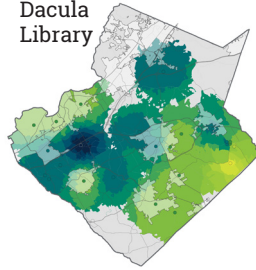
The second “Plan the Future” activity was designed to understand what types of development and intensity the community felt appropriate. Using a scale from undeveloped areas to suburban areas to urban areas, community outreach participants were able to voice their vision for the future of different parts of Gwinnett County.

Community Open Houses Round 1

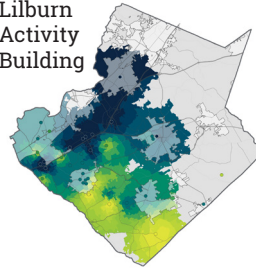
Five Forks Library



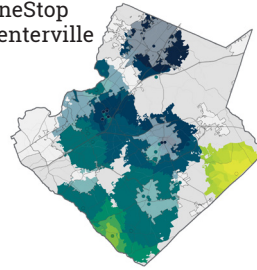
Dacula Library



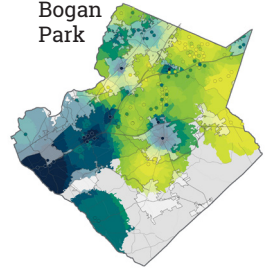
Lilburn Activity Building



OneStop Centerville

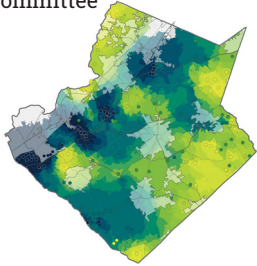


Bogan Park

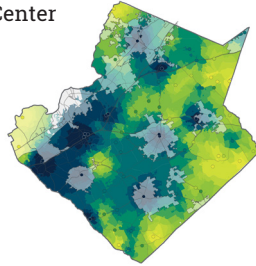


Other Target Groups

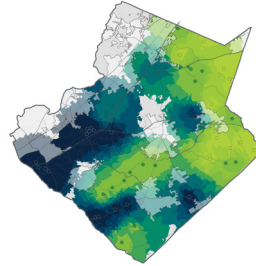
Planning Advisory Committee



Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center



Planning Commission

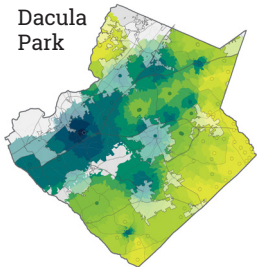


Open Space

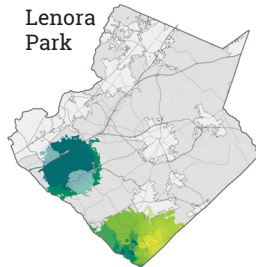
Urban Center

Community Open Houses Round 2

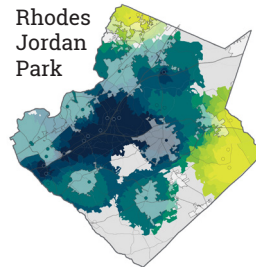
Dacula Park



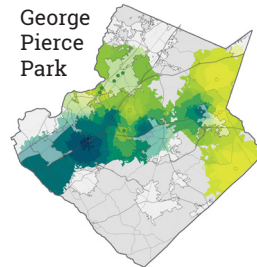
Lenora Park



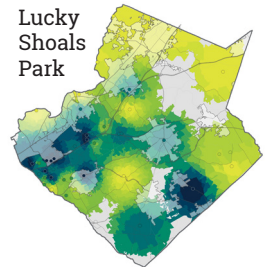
Rhodes Jordan Park



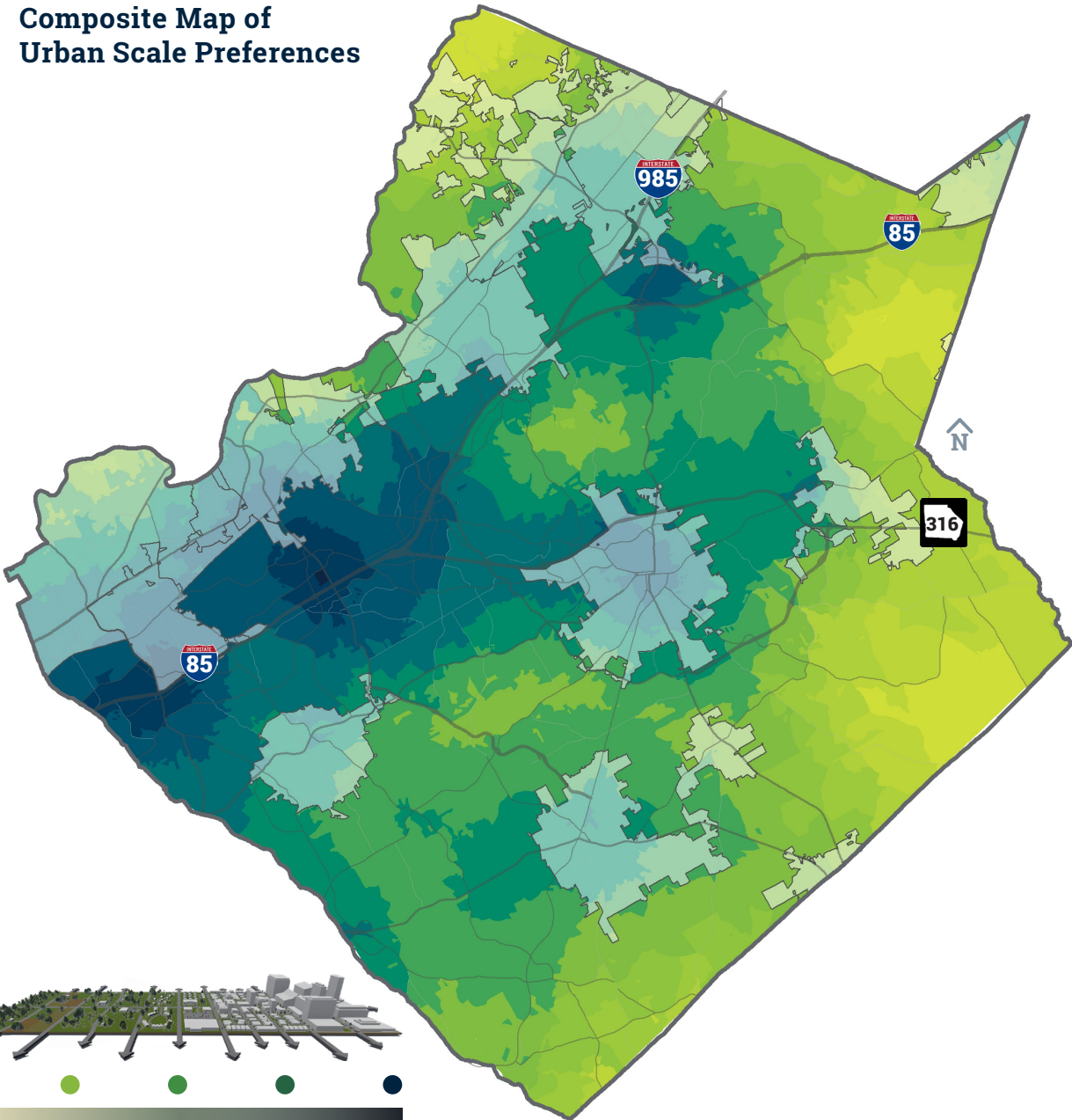
George Pierce Park



Lucky Shoals Park



Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences



Open Space

Urban Center

Guiding Philosophies

As cumulative results of the “Plan the Future” exercise began to come together and broad themes emerged, the planning team responded with the development of six Guiding Philosophies to help further guide discussion and decision making. These Guiding Philosophies were subsequently presented at the third Planning Advisory Committee meeting and all five of the Round 2 Community Open Houses. Attendees were asked for their agreement, or lack thereof, with the conceptual ideas presented. As shown, there was broad agreement with the Guiding Philosophies developed.

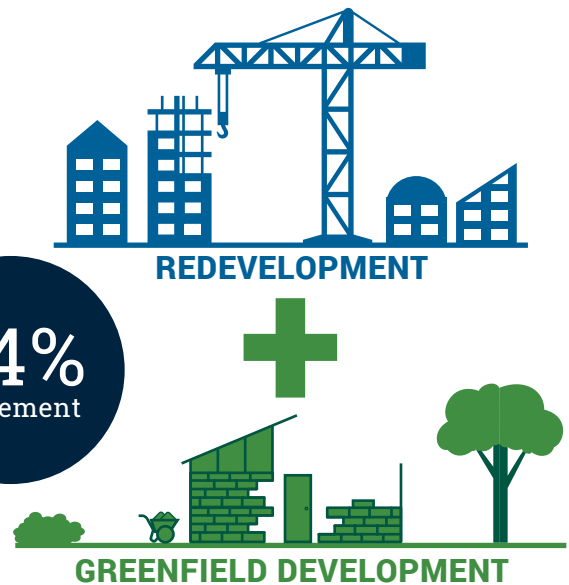
Use Character Areas to Establish Transitional Areas

The plan should include measures so that areas targeted for more intense urban development relate appropriately to lower intensity areas of the community. Recognizing a broad need for more flexible and creative housing products, the establishment of transitional areas can serve both needs.



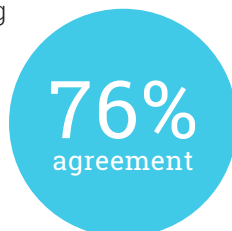
Encourage Redevelopment in Key Areas While Still Allowing for Greenfield Development Opportunities

While greenfield development of the undeveloped parts of eastern and southern Gwinnett County is still likely, there must also be a correspondingly strong effort to revitalize and redevelop the older parts of Gwinnett County, with particular emphasis on the I-85 corridor and its surrounding areas.



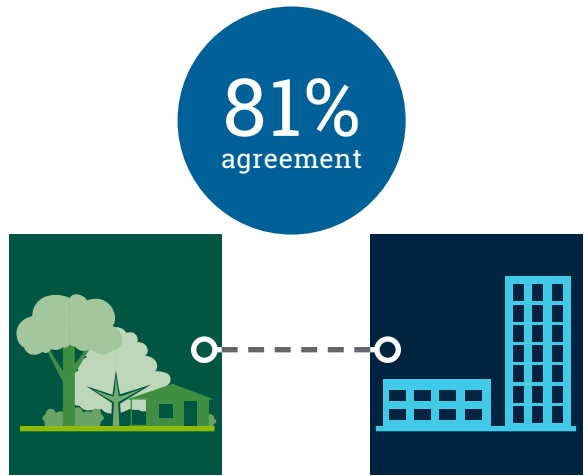
Preserve the Character of Areas That Are Still Relatively Undeveloped

With a focus on regionalism, further outlying communities are beginning to develop more intensely on or near the Gwinnett County border. As a result, demand for development in eastern and southern Gwinnett County is not likely to subside. However, this plan can also cast a vision so that development in these areas is responsible and appropriate relative to the existing character of the area.



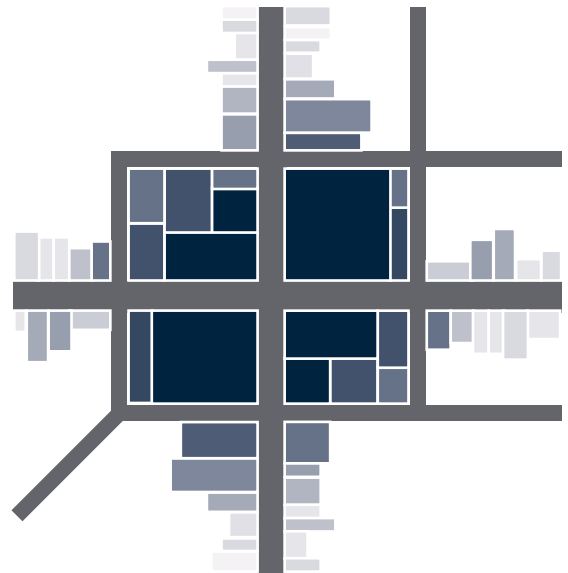
Use Urban Scale to Communicate and Articulate Implied Densities and Character

The implementation of this plan would result in a Gwinnett County that would have much more variety in its urban geography than our existing, mostly suburban character. While much of that suburban character would be retained, there would also be areas of much more intense development and conversely areas of much less intense development. Beyond just focusing on the compatibility of land uses and zoning, using the concept of urban scale - which is replicated throughout this plan - will provide the County with a broader mechanism to talk about how different parts of our community can relate to one another.



Encourage Development to Be More Nodal Than Linear

Instead of continuing our historic pattern of linear strip commercial development along roadway corridors, future areas of activity and intensity should be focused in more central and nodal environments.



Incorporate and Integrate Office Areas Into Mixed-Used Districts

In the future, Gwinnett County should continue to retain areas that are primarily employment oriented, but future development should also promote the integration of these areas with other uses.



7

12

16

12, 13
dense housing
along arterials,
Keep neighborhoods

12

- DIVERSITY
- GREAT LOCATION TO GET AROUND ATLANTA.
- GREEN SPACE
- BETTER TRANSIT
- WALKABLE

12- more live,
work, play
developments,
+ increased
market
communities



Community Assets

Similarly, in response to the emerging results of the “Plan the Future” exercise, the need to think about our large community in more granular terms became more evident. While Gwinnett County has several formally defined municipalities, many of the unincorporated parts of the County have less recognition as having distinct identities despite a wide variety of communities and characters. To help us discuss the different parts of our community better, the planning team reviewed many historical documents and developed potential ‘names’ to better identify these communities. During the five Round 2 Community Open Houses and the third Planning Advisory Committee meeting, attendees were asked to reflect on the suggested names and use post-it notes to better identify the unique characteristics and potential futures for these communities. Results from these activities were used to develop the visions discussed in the “Our Communities” section of Chapter 5.

Our Planning Partners

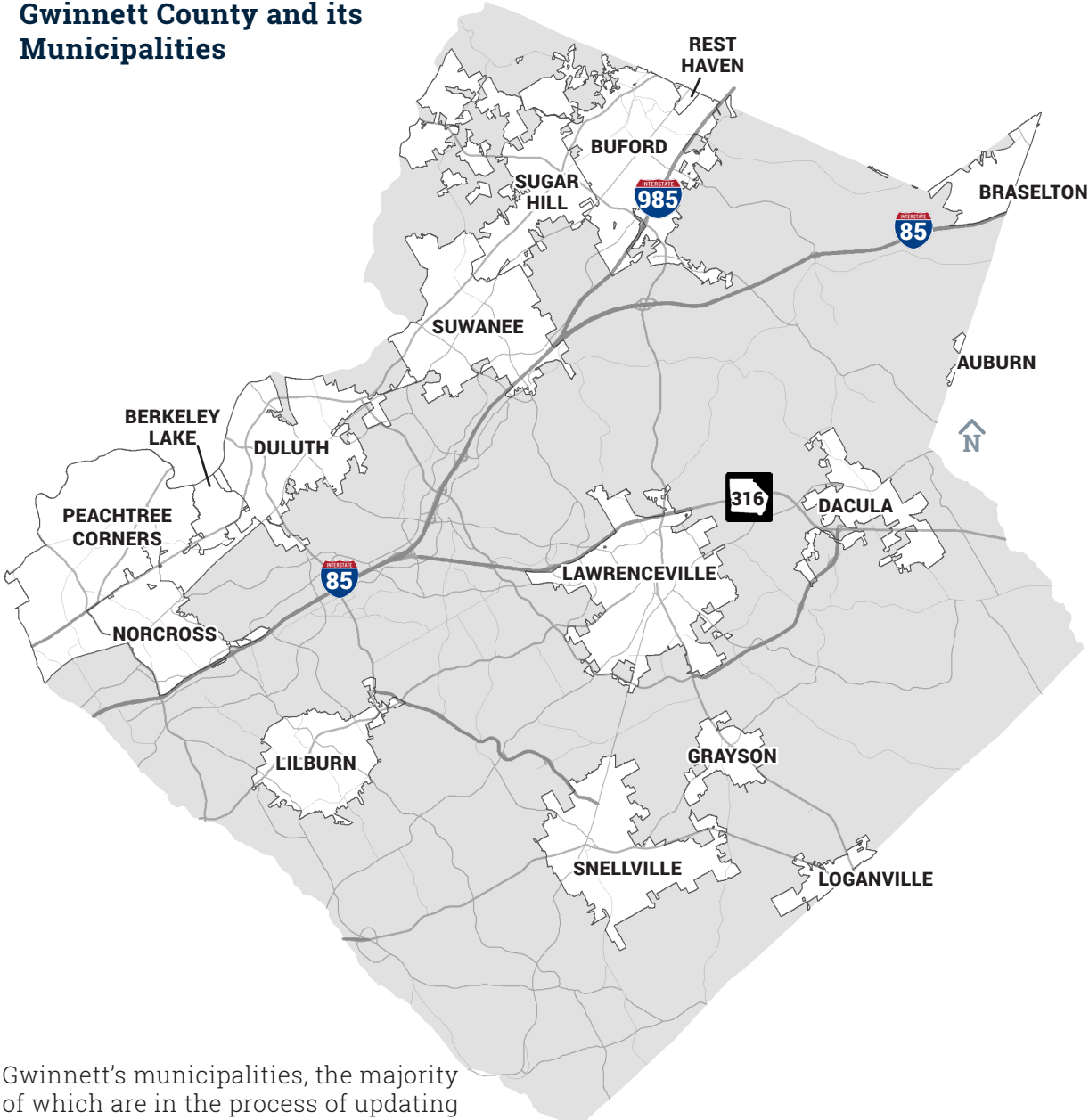
MUNICIPAL PARTNERS

Even though Gwinnett County does not have jurisdiction over land use or the other elements included in a municipality's comprehensive plan, coordination with the County's municipalities is important in the formation of its Unified Plan to ensure there is coordination in development patterns and overarching policies. As of the writing of this 2040 Unified Plan document, each municipality in the County was in the process of writing, or had recently adopted, its comprehensive plan update.

To create an environment of cooperation and coordination between the County and its cities in our collective Comprehensive Planning efforts, the Planning & Development Department re-convened the Gwinnett Planning Committee (GPC) starting in January 2018. This committee had previously met bi-monthly since 1992 until it took a recess in the late 2000s. This 2040 Unified Plan effort provided an opportune time to reconvene the GPC to allow the municipalities to participate in the process of its creation. Meetings in January, March, and July focused primarily on information sharing and discussions related to development patterns.

As it relates to development patterns, the County had previously developed a "Spheres of Influence" map, which illustrates the estimated breadth of the effects of land use and development within the cities on the surrounding areas of unincorporated Gwinnett County, and vice versa. When the County has a development under consideration within a sphere of influence, it invites planning staff from the adjacent city to review the application and voice any concerns. The "Spheres of Influence" map is provided in Appendix C.

Gwinnett County and its Municipalities



○ Gwinnett's municipalities, the majority of which are in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plans



Many of Gwinnett's cities have a thriving, historic downtown, an active town center, or both, which can be attributed to a combination of factors, including public-private partnerships, development or redevelopment authorities, implementation of plans and studies funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program, other redevelopment/revitalization plans pursued by the cities, and the National Main Street Program.

Following are brief descriptions of notable, current initiatives in each city as of the writing of the Gwinnett 2040 Unified Plan.

Auburn

Auburn is in the western corner of Barrow County, with a small portion extending into Gwinnett County, located on State Route 9 between Winder and Dacula. The city maintains a small town feel but is in the path of Atlanta Metro growth and is beginning to show signs of transition. The city is known for its historic downtown located along the railroad tracks that is the location for many community events, parks, small businesses, and the popular micro-retail Whistlestop Shops. Recently, residential development has picked up with the construction of Auburn Station near the Gwinnett County border, which will include single-family homes along with commercial development and townhomes.

The City of Auburn and its Downtown Development Authority are leading the way towards a revitalized downtown district with the planning of a new development anchored by a new city hall. Building on their 2010 Strategic Implementation Plan, city leaders have developed a public-private partnership that will expand the downtown district to include new civic infrastructure, public spaces, residential homes, and other uses. The City is working to create the catalysts for redevelopment and revitalization by leveraging existing public assets to create an attractive, market-based destination that will enhance the built environment, create jobs, improve mobility, and be sustainable through the years.

Berkeley Lake

Incorporated in 1956 with its origins as a summer retreat of fishing cottages, Berkeley Lake has grown into a thriving community of permanent homes centered on its 88-acre namesake. Berkeley Lake residents are a diverse mix of entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and other professionals. It is also home to many artists and writers. With a median household income of \$131,944, Berkeley Lake was reported to be the most affluent town in the state of Georgia in 2015. It has been named a Tree City USA for the past 18 years, reflecting the City's commitment to the natural environment.

Because the City is virtually built out and surrounded by other municipalities making expansion impossible, growth management is not an issue for Berkeley Lake. Its primary goals are insuring the highest possible quality of life for its residents and a supportive environment for its thriving business community. Protection of its abundant natural beauty and environment and provision of essential services are its top planning priorities.

Braselton

Braselton is experiencing significant growth pressures and demographic changes due to its location on the I-85 corridor, proximity to three growing statistical metropolitan areas, and the development of the new Northeast Georgia Medical Center campus. The boundaries of the town cover four different counties (Hall, Gwinnett, Jackson, and Barrow). The most identifiable areas in the Gwinnett portion of Braselton are the Château Elan residential community and the SR 211 commercial corridor.

Current initiatives and projects include the widening of SR 211 from I-85 to SR 347 to improve mobility in response to increased traffic generation related to new growth and the opening of the new SR 347, and the expansion of the city's Life Path system in the SR 211 and Thompson Mill Road corridors to better facilitate pedestrians, bicyclists, and golf carts. This project will include construction of a tunnel connecting each side of SR 211 at the Thompson Mill Road intersection.

Buford

Located in the northwest corner of Gwinnett County and partly in southern Hall County, the City of Buford is known for its excellent school system, as well as being a major local provider of utilities. In recent years, the City has made several investments in its public facilities, such as the construction of a new city gymnasium and multiple streetscape improvements in and near its historic downtown. A new state-of-the-art high school is currently under construction.

The City's Comprehensive Planning update process began in June of 2018. Although still in its early stages, the update will focus on the following priority needs and opportunities: roadway congestion, housing affordability, maintaining high quality of services (schools and utilities) in the face of growth, annexation of commercial and industrial land, continued development and investment in its downtown, and senior housing.

The community's vision has remained relatively constant since the previous comprehensive planning process. There is a strong sentiment among the community that the City is on the right track, and should continue its path of fiscal responsibility and ongoing investment in its schools and other components that contribute to its high quality of life.

Dacula

The City of Dacula is experiencing an increase of institutional growth (private schools, bank); subdivisions in various stages of planning (building, development, zoning); and road projects (Maxey Street, Tanner Road). The city is looking to attract commercial businesses and employment centers along its commercial corridor by continuing pre-existing sewer service along Hwy. 29 and Harbins Road, and establishing industrial areas along approved truck routes that have railroad access. The city is also working to improve traffic flow and transportation infrastructure with the Harbins Road bridge on Hwy. 29 and grade separation at the intersection of Hwy. 316 and Harbins Road. A final goal of the city is to create a sense of place and improve the quality of life for its residents by identifying and developing central gathering spaces.

Duluth

The City of Duluth continues to encourage density around its downtown to help support local businesses as well as to create a unique and memorable place within Gwinnett County. In addition to encouraging denser developments, the City is also exploring opportunities to connect existing neighborhoods to the sidewalk network that will enhance pedestrian connectivity throughout the City and specifically to downtown. Once the Duluth branch of the Gwinnett Public Library opens in their downtown, the City feels that there will be a large demand for students and parents to be able to walk or ride bicycles to it.

Duluth is also exploring ways to encourage executive style housing along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard where it is expected that large tracts of land could soon become available for development. It is a goal of the City to have a mix of size, style, and price of residential options. The focus on executive style homes is due to an ample amount of multi-family, starter, and mid-life housing options, but lack of upper end options within the city limits. The addition of residential units in this area of the city is needed to support the existing retail along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.

Historic buildings in Downtown Buford



The Historic Gwinnett County Courthouse, at the heart of downtown Lawrenceville



Grayson

The City of Grayson is located in southeast Gwinnett County along SR 20. Originally a stop along the Lawrenceville and Loganville (L&L) Railroad, and the site of a small passenger station, the city began to grow in the late 1800s. As mentioned in the city's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, efforts for redevelopment are to be concentrated around Grayson Parkway and Highway 20. Plans for a 7.3 acre mixed-use development, titled The RailYard, will include a number of restaurants, retail, and apartments. The City was recently recognized for these redevelopment efforts, receiving a 2017 "Live, Work, Play City" award by the Georgia Municipal Association.

Lawrenceville

Over the last few years, the City of Lawrenceville has invested significantly in redevelopment efforts through property acquisition, infrastructure improvements, future planning projects, and strategic studies. SouthLawn and City View are two privately funded, mixed-use projects that will bring more residents and retail to downtown. The arts and cultural complex – home of the Aurora Theatre – is undergoing a \$26 million expansion that should be completed in 2020. Plans are underway to convert Gwinnett's historic, all African-American Hooper Renwick School to a new, 19,000 square foot library branch.

A 2.2-mile linear park is under construction to connect Georgia Gwinnett College with downtown Lawrenceville, and Perry and Clayton Streets have both been converted to two-way thoroughfares to provide traffic congestion relief on Scenic Highway and Jackson Street. Also, the City has invested almost \$4 million in roadway, sidewalk, and drainage improvements along Park Place Drive. Finally, the City's new, state of the art public works facility has opened, while the City is in the process of upgrading its sizable gas infrastructure to better serve its 50,000 existing customers while building for future expansion.

Lilburn

The City of Lilburn is experiencing an increase in private commercial development and redevelopment proposals with varying densities and end users. The City is also reviewing subdivisions and residential proposals of varying densities to accommodate townhomes, senior housing, and less traditional style single family lots. City projects include construction of a new Police Headquarters and Municipal Court; extension of sidewalks along Hillcrest Road; replacement of a significant boardwalk along the Camp Creek Greenway Trail; and implementation of a renovation plan for Lilburn City Park, starting with the playground and parking. Finally, the city is working with ARC and a citizen Steering Committee in public meetings to draft the City's comprehensive plan update, which is anticipated to be adopted in February 2019.

The City of Lilburn's current goals are to attract quality commercial businesses and employment centers along commercial corridors; create destinations where residents and community can meet and share experiences; and reinvest resources to remain a debt-free city. To help reach those goals, the City is continuing its business friendly economic development decisions, providing flexibility in design and mix of uses, and enforcing the standards established for the Commercial Corridor and Town Center Overlay districts; sponsoring and hosting diverse outdoor events, welcoming the public in the decision making process through public meetings, boards, and committees, and continually updating its social media and website in a transparent and timely manner; and considering public investments that result in improvements that expand private development opportunities, designating appropriate funding to the Downtown Development Authority, and collaborating with the Lilburn CID to effectuate redevelopment and leverage resources.

Loganville

Situated along US 78, the City of Loganville is part of both Gwinnett and Walton counties. As with the rest of Gwinnett, Loganville has experienced significant growth in the past decade, and has recognized the need to redevelop its downtown core into a more vibrant place. The city received funding to conduct a Livable Center Initiative study, which was completed in 2010. The “Loganville Town Center” LCI Study identified a vision for mixed-use development around the intersection of Main Street and US 78.

Norcross

The Lillian Webb Gateway mixed-use project represents a significant step in attaining the goals of the Norcross Comprehensive Plan and the 2011 LCI Study along Buford Highway. The two anchor public projects in the area are Lillian Webb Park and the proposed new Norcross branch of the Gwinnett Public Library. The Norcross Downtown Development Authority has been working with a developer to construct a multi-family complex at Buford Highway and Holcomb Bridge Road consisting of a mix of apartment sizes and ground floor live-work units wrapped around a precast parking garage.

The second mixed-use project in Norcross centers around the adaptive reuse of the former West Rock corporate campus along Thrasher Street. The project includes the conversion of two existing buildings into commercial space and several live-work units; a half-acre public park; townhomes; and multifamily units which include the live-work concept and a parking deck. The City also has several parks and recreational projects programmed for the upcoming planning horizon, including the Norcross LCI Greenway Concept Plan, Veterans Park, and the conversion of green space property in the Pinnacle Center business park to a combination storm water retention facility and public park.

Peachtree Corners

Work is underway on the 21-acre tract of land, located on the 5200 block of Peachtree Parkway, that will be the site of the City’s new Town Center. When the Peachtree Corners Town Center is complete, it will feature entertainment venues, restaurants, shops, office space, townhomes, and a Town Green. This two-acre green will feature an open-air pavilion, amphitheater, fire pit, open lawn, café tables, and a community garden. It will also be the site of a veterans’ monument. The Town Center will also include a botanical garden located along a creek and adjacent to the parking deck. The garden will feature a lookout tree house, ground level deck, and botanical canopy walk along a pathway leading to the Town Green.

Over 70 upscale townhomes will complete the mixed-use Town Center development, with some homes overlooking the Town Green. The residences will be two and three-story units with parking garages. The price point will likely be \$400,000 to \$500,000.

The in-progress Town Center development in Peachtree Corners



Children playing in the splashpad at Suwanee Town Center Park, adjacent to Suwanee City Hall



Snellville

The City of Snellville's top priority is creating a unique and vibrant place for residents and visitors through the development of a walkable Towne Center. The Towne Center development will be home to a public library, public market, residences, retail, office, greenspace, business development, and educational facilities that are essential to the sustainability and vitality of the city. The population is growing, and diversity in housing, jobs, and amenities is needed. The City is also working to update its policy documents and ordinances to help staff and elected officials guide the kinds of development the City needs to encourage and manage the desires of a rapidly changing city.

Other efforts in support of the City's priorities include creating a ring trail as part of the first phase of implementation of the City's Greenway Master Plan, in conjunction with development of phase one of the Towne Center; adoption of a Unified Development Ordinance (City Council consideration is anticipated in early 2019); construction of three senior housing developments, with potential for others to be annexed into the City; and updating the Briscoe Park Master Plan, which will likely include the addition of a recreation center with a gym, workout areas, walking track, and community space.

Sugar Hill

In recent years, the City has been focused on developing downtown Sugar Hill, building the Sugar Hill Greenway, and attracting high quality development to the SR 20/Cumming Highway Corridor.

The newly constructed E Center is the cornerstone of Sugar Hill's next generation of downtown development. In addition to the retail shops, restaurants, and office space, it includes The Eagle, a beautiful art-deco inspired, 406-seat performing arts theater and a modern 22,000 square foot gymnasium and recreation center. Private development has begun to respond to the city's catalytic investments, as it is projected downtown Sugar Hill will attract a large share of the County's population growth over the next 25 years. By the year 2043, downtown Sugar Hill will be home to more than half of the City's households.

In 2018, construction began on the 16-mile loop trail called the Sugar Hill Greenway connecting downtown Sugar Hill to the nearby regional trail system and the Chattahoochee River Corridor. Sugar Hill has an aspirational plan in place for SR 20 to become a parkway like regional transportation corridor to provide a safe and inviting pedestrian experience while encouraging walkable nodes of development at key intersections.

Suwanee

Town Center Park is the civic heart of Suwanee for residents and a destination in Gwinnett County. Plans call for the mixed-use environment of Suwanee's Town Center to continue to expand down Buford Highway along the new Buford Highway streetscape and along Suwanee Dam Road, where a new 20-acre park is planned. Town Center currently has a new mixed-use project under construction just south of Town Center Park including multifamily, ground floor commercial, a parking deck, and townhomes. A new senior living facility is under construction northwest of Town Center. A second mixed-use project is planned south of Town Center that will also include multifamily units with commercial on the ground floor along the new sidewalk on Buford Highway.

The City, in partnership with GDOT, is currently reconstructing Buford Highway between McGinnis Ferry Road and George Pierce Park as a context-sensitive roadway. A new roundabout at the intersection with Russell Street will serve as a gateway into Suwanee's downtown. Another focus area for future development is around the I-85 interchange at Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, known as the Suwanee Gateway Character Area. The vision for this area is office development and other uses supportive of office that could bring more jobs for Suwanee residents.

In anticipation of future transit along the Norfolk Southern rail line, Suwanee Station, which is located between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and McGinnis Ferry Road, was master planned as a mixed-use transit-oriented development in the early 2000s. To date, a mix of 1,107 housing units have been built along with some commercial. The City owns the last undeveloped, 12-acre tract of land in Suwanee Station, which is reserved for a mixed-use transit station area. There is a significant amount of land occupied by industrial uses on the other side of the railroad tracks adjacent to Suwanee Station. Plans call for this area to redevelop with higher density mixed-use to add residential and commercial uses conducive to supporting transit.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

Gwinnett County also regularly partners with five Community Improvement Districts (CID) located in the County.

Evermore CID

The Evermore CID is located along the US 78 corridor in the unincorporated southern part of the County, from the City of Snellville to the DeKalb County line. The CID has pursued several initiatives in recent years, including the development of a Transportation Plan and the development of a parallel multimodal transportation corridor to US 78 in order to relieve localized trips. The Evermore CID area is also home to the former Olympics Tennis Center which was recently demolished in anticipation of site redevelopment.

Gateway 85 Gwinnett CID

The Gateway 85 Gwinnett CID is the largest CID by land mass in Gwinnett County and includes parts of Norcross, Peachtree Corners, and unincorporated Gwinnett County along the I-85 corridor. In recent years, the CID has led several efforts interfacing with the Unified Plan including the Jimmy Carter Boulevard Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study and the Indian Trail-Lilburn Road LCI study, both of which envision mechanisms to create more walkable, human scaled communities consisting of a mix of uses. As host to many freight and logistics uses, the CID also commenced a Freight Cluster Study in late 2018.

Gwinnett Place CID

Gwinnett Place CID is anchored in the unincorporated parts of the County along I-85 around Pleasant Hill Road and Steve Reynolds Boulevard. Gwinnett Place CID has conducted many recent efforts including multi-modal transportation corridor studies, a 2013 update to the Gwinnett LCI and the subsequent ACTivate Gwinnett study, both of which collectively envisioned initiatives that could encourage reinvestments in the area. The CID pursued further study of the major initiatives identified in that study, including a major intersection improvement at Pleasant Hill Road and Satellite Boulevard, road diets (reducing excess travel lanes and replacing with linear park and multi-modal spaces) on Mall Boulevard and Gwinnett Place Drive, and investigating connections between Gwinnett Place Mall with nearby McDaniel Farm Park and Shorty Howell Park.

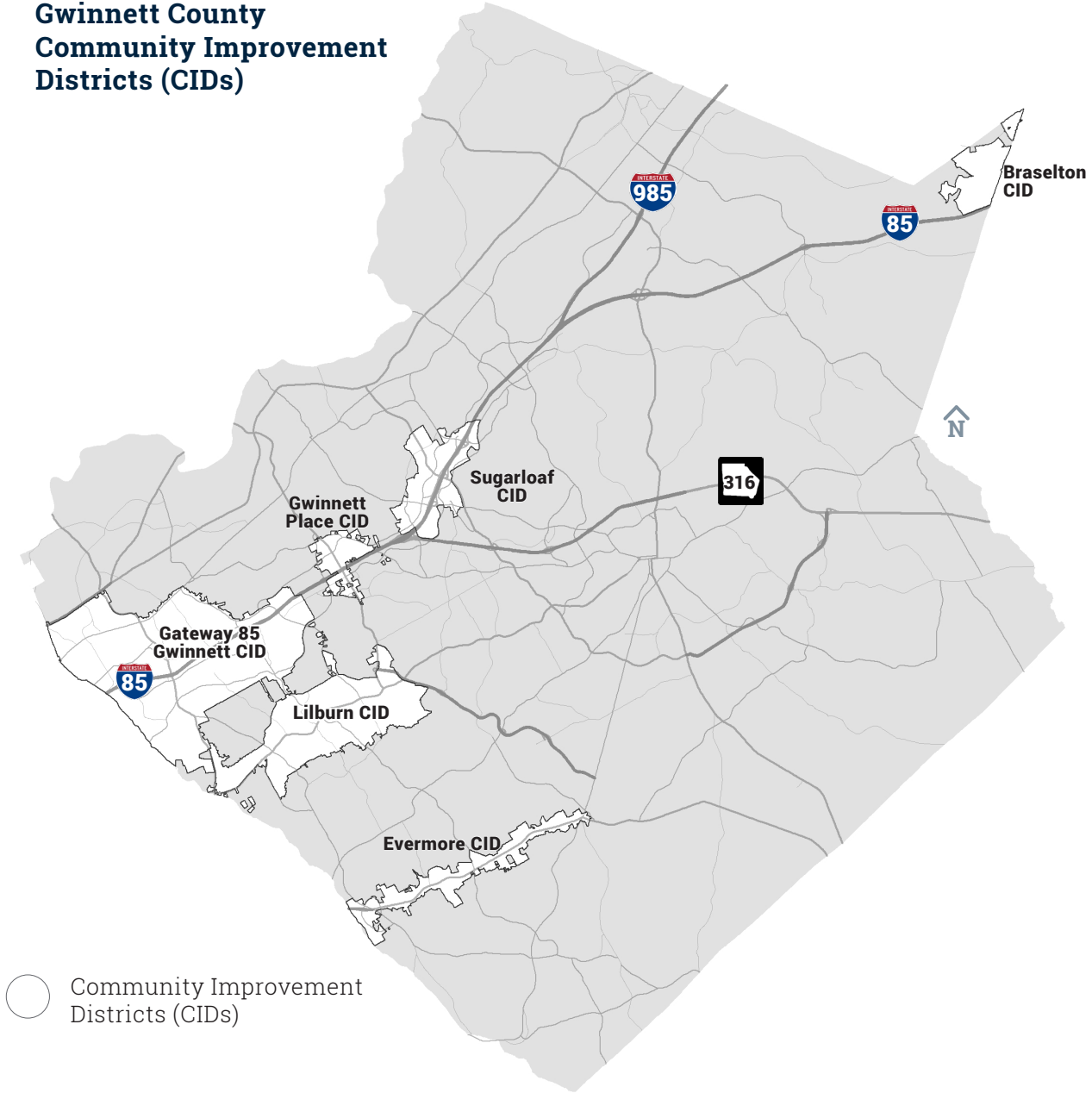
Lilburn CID

The Lilburn CID, located along the US 29 corridor, primarily in the City of Lilburn but with some unincorporated areas, has embarked on several studies, including the US 29 Boulevard of Opportunity LCI study and Mandir District study to help lead in redevelopment ideas. In late 2018, the CID also developed the Pleasant Hill Road Small Area Plan to focus on opportunities to further capitalize on the momentum created by the reinvestment of a former big box store into the Plaza Las Americas, a shopping mall targeting the local Hispanic community.

Sugarloaf CID

The Sugarloaf CID is anchored in the unincorporated area around Sugarloaf Parkway and I-85. The CID recently completed its first LCI study to identify initiatives and investments that could complement the planned redevelopment of parts of the Infinite Energy Center's surface parking into Revel, a mixed-use walkable community. The CID is also heavily involved in the planning of the Loop trail which - when combined with other trail initiatives, including those envisioned by the Gwinnett Place CID near McDaniel Farm Park - will form a larger 16-mile loop.

Gwinnett County Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)



○ Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)

Our Vision.

Combining the community engagement and reconciling it with the initiatives of our planning partners, our vision is articulated through two overall mechanisms: (1) an identification of Needs and Opportunities and (2) the overall policies described as part of a framework of five overall themes.

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

As described in previous sections, 'Needs & Opportunities' were developed through a variety of mechanisms including SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) discussion with the Planning Advisory Committee, the Big Ideas and subsequent prioritization exercises in Community Open Houses, and technical assessment by the planning team. For ease of interpretation, these 'Needs & Opportunities' are provided relative to major Elements they relate to (several overlap amongst multiple Elements) and are also reproduced in the individual Elements as part of the Plan Development chapter of this plan.

Needs

Land Use

- Create activity centers that are walkable/mixed-use
- Redevelopment and revitalization of Gwinnett Place Mall area
- Less focus on shopping centers/big box stores
- Development of entertainment nodes
- Placement of business/residential communities in relationship to schools
- Repurpose dead retail space
- Stricter zoning for signs and looks/feel of commercial properties
- Revise pen Space Conservation requirements to ensure high-quality open space set-asides
- Increase small, locally accessible park space through redevelopment

Economic Development

- Build a more specific and closer relationship between County and Gwinnett Tech
- Jobs for college graduates
- Incentives to attract/keep business
- Incentives to encourage development
- Public/private partnerships
- Create activity centers that are walkable/mixed use
- Redevelopment and revitalization of Gwinnett Place Mall area
- Less focus on shopping centers/big box stores
- Attract millennial workforce through work & play developments
- Promote shift to service economy

Transportation

- Alternative modes of mass transit (heavy rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, etc.)
- Additional bus service (weekend and after hours)
- Address traffic congestion on major facilities
- Increase walking and biking as a means of transportation
- Consideration of complete streets policies
- Accessibility and Sidewalks
- Smoother roads; improved striping
- Timely road maintenance

Housing

- Affordability in housing
- Placement of business and residential communities in relation to schools
- More senior housing
- Anti-poverty programs
- Increase housing stock in proximity to transportation facilities
- Increase housing stock in proximity to Activity Centers
- Cost burden and housing affordability in Gwinnett continue to be a barrier
- Aging housing stock needs updating, especially within western and southern parts of the County
- Continue to plan for an aging population through quality healthcare support, expanded public services, housing and redevelopment to cater to active seniors

Infrastructure and Community Facilities

- Develop multi-use trails
- Extended sewer system in county
- Free/low cost community spaces
- Places for teens to socialize
- Renew water supply system
- Access/availability to sewer for both residential and commercial development
- Stormwater runoff management
- Continue to support existing, high-quality infrastructure for development and redevelopment
- Replace or upgrade older segments of sewer and stormwater systems
- Identify and address potential barriers to increasing water supply and discharge limits

Broadband

- Encourage multiple broadband providers in all residential areas
- Encourage high speed broadband access in all residential areas

Opportunities

Land Use

- Create area focused around film/entertainment sectors
- Disincentivize retailers to vacate to new locations
- Repurpose vacant shopping centers to community spaces
- Promote reuse of existing developed sites
- Preserve rural & agricultural properties within the County
- Reduce number of commercial storage units in major areas ripe for mixed use
- Protect green/low density development
- Provide/create downtowns for unincorporated Gwinnett
- Gwinnett Harbins area - mixed use development near Archer High School
- Open land for development
- Limit future retail development to specific areas to avoid market over saturation
- Create opportunities for more mixed-use development to complement those types of developments in neighboring jurisdictions
- Plan development and redevelopment with a focus on walkability, bikeability, alternative transportation modes, proximity to office space, and urban character
- Select strategic locations for urban cores through redevelopment
- Strategically address growth in undeveloped areas

Economic Development

- Create area focused around film/entertainment sectors
- Incentivize retailers to not vacate to new locations
- Repurpose vacant shopping centers to community spaces
- Adaptive re-use for empty shopping strips
- Minimize abandoned retail buildings
- SPLOST
- Diversity - leverage it
- CIDs - create downtowns in unincorporated Gwinnett
- Autonomous vehicle testing/development labs
- Highway 316 - biomedical corridor between GT and UGA
- Newer office development
- Trail systems to connect activity centers

- Shift economic strategy to new job sectors associated with R&D and secondary education institutions
- Continue to partner with Partnership Gwinnett to promote coordinated efforts to attract new business
- Take advantage of Gwinnett County's strong brand and strategic location
- Gwinnett Technical College and Georgia Gwinnett College are growing and have innovative programs of study to continue to provide well-educated individuals

Transportation

- Connect transit to neighboring counties
- Develop improved mass transit
- Plan for impact of self-driving cars and electric vehicles
- Alternative traffic controls -> roundabouts
- Implement autonomous vehicle lanes on Pleasant Hill, Jimmy Carter, Sugarloaf, PIB
- Work with coalition to expand transit to serve more of Gwinnett
- Increase Gwinnett's Walkability Index Score

Housing

- Tear down big box stores - apartments/condos
- Aging population -> need for senior housing
- Millennials/seniors have similar housing wants
- Develop mixed-age communities where shopping and services are available and affordable

Infrastructure and Community Facilities

- Trail systems to connect activity centers
- Make Gwinnett a 'Greener County'
- Alternative traffic control -> roundabouts
- More community gardens
- Small parks/parklets in towns/cities
- Take advantage of County's AAA Bond rating
- Lake Lanier and award-winning park system offer natural resources for recreational enjoyment
- Maintain positive support of future SPLOST referendums to aid in funding infrastructure

Broadband

- With redevelopment, seek opportunities to develop model communities where broadband access and speed are maximized
- Leverage opportunities in the Innovation Districts to showcase broadband connectivity and speeds

THE FIVE THEMES

Since adopting the 2030 Unified Plan in 2009, Gwinnett County has used Five Themes to act as an overall framework to guide policies that are woven throughout this plan and build from the various suggestions that emerged in articulating our “Needs & Opportunities”. Each of these policies has specific Initiatives that can be followed to work towards the policy and its goals. The County looks to these themes when making decisions on its future land use, fiscal health, transportation and infrastructure investment, and community amenities. The Five Themes are:

1. Maintain Economic Development & Fiscal Health
2. Foster Redevelopment
3. Maintain Mobility & Accessibility
4. Provide More Housing Choices
5. Keep Gwinnett a “Preferred Place”

On the following pages, these themes are explored in more detail, including supportive policies and considerations for their implementation.

Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health

Gwinnett's ability to grow its economic base is fundamental to its long-term fiscal abilities to sustain the infrastructure, government services, and publicly provided amenities that will be a big part of its overall well-being and attractiveness as a "preferred place."

Maintaining economic development is not merely a question of capturing and adding more jobs to those that are already here. Two decades from now, Gwinnett's economic base will inevitably be different from today's business and job profile. For example, the migration of many light industrial and manufacturing jobs will likely persist. Growth based industries such as homebuilding will also decline as greenfield sites become more and more scarce, and further out regional jurisdictions become the main arena of suburban development. The shift will be to redevelopment of existing sites – particularly those along the I-85 corridor – as mixed-use, higher intensity projects with dwellings going vertical rather than horizontal in order to house the 600,000+ people projected to move to Gwinnett by 2040.

The types of businesses and jobs that can be attracted in place of Gwinnett's diminishing sectors is a major concern of the Unified Plan in large part because the results will have direct and significant implications for the income profile of Gwinnett's residents, the value of its residential and business properties, and, as a consequence, its tax base.

Policies include:

- Promote Mixed-Use, Nodal Development Along Major Corridors
- Promote Office Use as Part of Larger, Mixed-Use Developments
- Coordinate with Department of Water Resources (DWR) on Placement of Water and Sewer in Conjunction with the 2050 Sewer Master Plan
- Promote University Parkway (SR 316) as Gwinnett's Innovation District
- Employ Debt Financing, User Fees, Public-Private Partnerships, and Other Methods to Finance Major Infrastructure
- Encourage Redevelopment/Renovation of Existing, Aging Retail Centers, and Promote New Retail as Part of Mixed-Use Developments

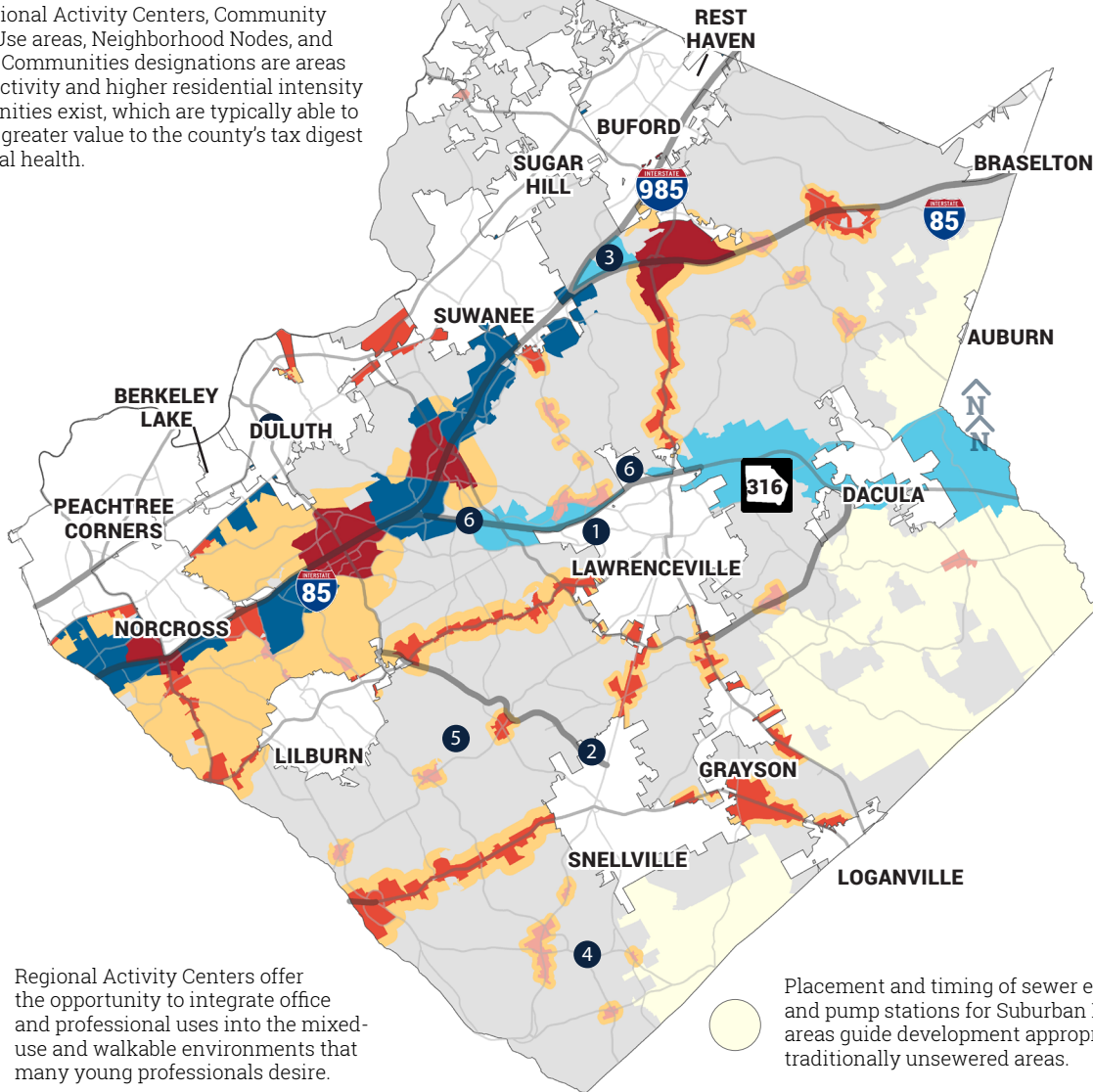
Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health



Our Regional Activity Centers, Community Mixed-Use areas, Neighborhood Nodes, and Vibrant Communities designations are areas where activity and higher residential intensity opportunities exist, which are typically able to provide greater value to the county's tax digest and fiscal health.



University Parkway (SR 316), if marketed as Gwinnett's Innovation District, can take advantage of growing medical and post-secondary institutions.



Regional Activity Centers offer the opportunity to integrate office and professional uses into the mixed-use and walkable environments that many young professionals desire.



Employment Centers are identified as places in the County focused on employment opportunities and uses.



Placement and timing of sewer extensions and pump stations for Suburban Estate Living areas guide development appropriately in traditionally unsewered areas.

- 1 Gwinnett Medical Center Locations
- 2 Eastside Medical Center
- 3 Planned Water Innovation Center for Applied Research, Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development
- 4 Planned Water Reclamation Facility/Environmental Campus to support population growth and economic development.
- 5 The County is evaluating mechanisms to encourage and assist property owners currently on septic to connect to sewer.
- 6 Georgia Gwinnett College and Gwinnett Tech are a means to create a localized labor force.

Policy 1.1 – Promote Mixed-Use, Nodal Development Along Major Corridors

Like most suburban communities, Gwinnett has developed as a predominantly auto-oriented county, with residential areas separated from the retail/commercial, employment/office, and industrial areas which provide products, services, and jobs, forcing people to get in their vehicles and drive for even the simplest errands. For those without reliable transportation, walking or biking is typically not an enjoyable experience as the design of roadways, incomplete or missing sidewalks, and patterns of development are generally not friendly or safe for pedestrians or bicyclists.

Feedback from the community engagement process strongly indicates that Gwinnett residents prefer walkable activity areas. With many of Gwinnett’s aging and vacant commercial centers in need of redevelopment, the County must take steps to encourage their revitalization in such a way that commercial, employment, and residential activity is mixed – both vertically and horizontally – and concentrated at existing nodal locations. As discussed in the Implementation Chapter of this plan, the Future Development Map aims to promote this type of development through its designation of three types of activity centers which allow for appropriately scaled developments with various levels of intensity based on their location: Regional Activity Center, Community Mixed-Use, and Neighborhood Nodes.

Potential Policy Benefits



- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Increased number of local, high-wage jobs
- Increased redevelopment opportunities
- Development focused in specific areas
- Preservation of rural areas
- Focused capital investments



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Funding for infrastructure improvements will be needed
- Land assembly could be difficult
- Delegation of some development decisions to authorities and staff to simplify the approval process



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Continued revisions to zoning regulations in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
- Shorter amount of time for permit approvals
- Increased development activity within mixed-use centers
- Increased number of jobs within mixed-use centers
- Increased County investment in mixed-use centers

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Make proactive investments in designated mixed-use centers (e.g., upgrade roads and sewers, parking structures, civic buildings, landscaping, etc.) – Gwinnett County DOT, Department of Water Resources, and Board of Commissioners
- Revisit UDO Permitted Use Table and Supplemental Table to streamline zoning and development approval process – Planning & Development
- Investigate forecasting ability to determine land use and fiscal implications of land use changes – Office of Economic Development, Planning & Development

Policy 1.2 – Promote Office Use as Part of Larger, Mixed-Use Developments

This policy ties in closely with Policy 1.1, and refines previous policy that protected “large, well-located parcels/areas for office use.” The model of large office parks with building after building of office space is generally no longer desired by employers and workers. Most people would like to be able to get out of their office at lunch time and walk to a nearby commercial area to eat lunch or take care of a quick errand or two. This is not only better for our physical health but taking a mental break from work tasks also increases productivity and focus.

While the 2040 Unified Plan Future Development Map maintains an Employment Center category for office related uses through the Workplace Center and Innovation District Character Areas – both described in more detail in the Implementation Chapter of this plan – the County should seek to encourage office uses in mixed-use environments. Further, office areas should be supported by opportunities to incorporate residential and commercial uses, where appropriate.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased number of high-wage jobs
- Development focused in specific areas
- Strengthen the tax base with targeted growth
- Faster rezoning approval and permitting process for appropriate uses



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Attracting jobs that match the skills of Gwinnett’s workforce, allowing them to live and work within the County



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised zoning maps
- Continued refinement of zoning regulations
- Increased number of high-wage jobs



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Consider amending mixed-use zoning district regulations to encourage incorporation of more office use – Planning & Development



Policy 1.3 – Coordinate with Department of Water Resources (DWR) on Placement of Water and Sewer in Conjunction with the 2050 Sewer Master Plan

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has been closely involved in the creation of the 2040 Unified Plan through department leadership and staff involvement in the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, along with targeted meetings with the planning team to discuss issues such as expansion of sewer service to the eastern portion of the County. Discussions have also focused on replacement of aging septic systems in the southern portion of the County, and how both relate to future land uses and development. It is timely that the department was in the final stages of drafting its required, 2050 Sewer Master Plan as the 2040 Unified Plan effort kicked off, as this allowed for close coordination.

The eastern and southern parts of the County currently remain largely without sewer service. While large sewer interceptors and regional pump stations were envisioned for that area over the years, sewer extensions have never been designed nor constructed due to budget limitations. Parcels that have built out on sewer have done so primarily using developer-built wastewater pumping stations and force mains designed to convey flows relatively long distances to existing sewer infrastructure. Constructing interceptors and large regional pump stations in this area of the County could limit its overall economic prosperity by directing resources needed for service in more densely developed areas in the County. Therefore, limiting sewer extensions in the east is a step toward fostering the type of growth which can revitalize Gwinnett and heighten economic development for the future. Ensuring that the sewer system is upgraded and expanded in key locations is one of the most important measures Gwinnett can take to protect its economic development potential.

For the most part, residential areas in eastern Gwinnett have not developed as executive housing areas. Limiting sewer extension to this part of the County is paramount to the County's fiscal health strategy because low density housing of average value costs the County more than it returns in revenue, unlike higher density, mixed-use developments.

Potential Policy Benefits



- Development focused in specific areas
- Provide executive housing (generally larger-lot single family developments)
- Environmental conservation
- Growth directed to desired areas
- Maintain fiscal health of County

Policy Challenges and Costs



- Pressure to rezone eastern area to more suburban uses
- Limiting length and location of sewer main extensions could be difficult
- Existing sewer facilities may be insufficient to provide the necessary treatment and transport capacity

Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks



- Revised sewer policy
- Slower growth of total length of sewer system
- Slower growth of sewer costs
- Fiscal outcomes in keeping with 2040 Unified Plan projections

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Evaluate future wastewater treatment capacity needs and location(s) for new and/or expanded water reclamation facilities - Department of Water Resources
- Review and modify as necessary septic to sewer policies and ordinances - Department of Water Resources

Policy 1.4 – Promote University Parkway (SR 316) as Gwinnett’s Innovation District

The Board of Commissioners has designated SR 316 as Gwinnett’s Research and Development (R&D) Corridor. It already has some of the feel of a high-tech corridor and the County and State have invested in making it a limited access parkway. Over the next 5 – 10 years, the County should continue its focus on leveraging the resources already located along the parkway: Gwinnett Medical Center, industrial parks, Gwinnett County Airport, Briscoe Field, Georgia Gwinnett College, and Gwinnett Technical College. These could act as anchors for a strong, Gwinnett-based high-tech business complex. The corridor can also take advantage of the airport and the lifestyle amenities that continue to emerge as part of downtown Lawrenceville’s revitalization.

Although SR 316 is an important economic development center, it will, and should, differ from the economic development centers and mixed-use nodes in the County’s I-85 corridor, as it will likely develop as suburban, campus style office parks inhabited by related activities or even single user owners or tenants. However, some residential and commercial/retail/service areas should be allowed along the parkway to provide housing and activity for employees – particularly younger, well educated people which are often attracted to the high-tech industry and prefer to live close to work as well as commercial/retail services.

Zoning and other related development policies and incentives need to treat this corridor accordingly. Encouraging an “enterprise” relationship with area colleges and Gwinnett Medical Center, evaluating the future of the airport and the needs of R&D businesses, and then revising the zoning regulations and implementing a market strategy are all steps that will promote this valuable resource.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Local job growth
- Increased number of high-wage jobs
- Development focused in specific areas



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Continued revision of zoning and development regulations
- May require County infrastructure investments (e.g., roads, sewers, high speed internet access, etc.)
- Difficult to attract enough businesses early on to create the agglomeration effect needed to attract additional business



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised regulations adopted
- Collaboration with college in expansion plans and a College master plan
- Increased number of high tech and research and development businesses in the corridor



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Continue to implement the strategy to upgrade University Parkway to a limited access highway – Gwinnett County DOT
- Consider strategic implementation of improvements to support R&D growth – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development, Gwinnett County DOT
- Refer to the 2011 Sector Plan for additional information regarding desired amenities to promote R&D corridor growth – Office of Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Partnership Gwinnett
- Foster “enterprise” relationship with Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett Technical College, and Gwinnett Medical Center to encourage the transition of promising research ideas into successful businesses – Office of Economic Development, schools, medical center
- Follow the implementation strategy to develop an R&D Overlay District with specific development regulations. Study the Innovation District Character Area – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development
- Develop and implement promotional materials to attract businesses – Office of Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Partnership Gwinnett

Policy 1.5 – Employ Debt Financing, User Fees, Public-Private Partnerships, and Other Methods to Finance Major Infrastructure

Gwinnett uses a “pay as you go” approach to fund major infrastructure projects. However, the County should explore additional ways to pay for major infrastructure projects. The County has taken steps to use debt financing, specifically to fund a major sewer treatment expansion, but it is likely that Gwinnett County will need to greatly expand its use of debt financing, and add user fees, public-private partnerships, and other methods to finance major infrastructure. For instance, the County is considering implementing tolls to finance the proposed extension of Sugarloaf Parkway.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Speed up the provision of County infrastructure
- Provide funding for roads and transit
- Increase roadway capacity
- Infrastructure funding to support redevelopment of Regional Activity Centers



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Very different method of paying for projects than the County currently employs



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Capital funds available for priority projects
- Issuance of bonds
- Faster provision of infrastructure



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Determine costs for capital improvement projects – Various Departments
- Continue to issue bonds to cover infrastructure costs – Board of Commissioners

Policy 1.6 – Encourage Redevelopment/Renovation of Existing, Aging Retail Centers, and Promote New Retail as Part of Mixed-Use Developments

With the exponential growth of online retailers like Amazon, as well as grocers and big box stores offering online shopping, the retail industry landscape is rapidly changing. With the click of a button, you can have almost any item you need delivered within a few days, or even on the same day. As a result, fewer store fronts are needed, leaving many strip commercial centers with vacancies.

Segments of Gwinnett are “over-retailed,” resulting in the County having the lowest dollar per square foot yield on retail floor space in the metro Atlanta region. Vacant and economically blighted retail centers often affect surrounding residential areas. To ensure the long-term economic health of Gwinnett County, the current land use pattern of older, distressed strip malls and empty commercial structures along major arterial corridors must be changed.

As stated in Policy 1.1, Gwinnett residents overwhelmingly prefer walkable developments, and expressed their desire to see struggling commercial centers redeveloped into thriving, mixed-use developments with residential, office, commercial/retail, and services. This would allow them to park in one area and accomplish several errands on foot rather than potentially having to drive from one shopping plaza to the next, which also adds to traffic congestion on these arterial corridors. Further, construction of these developments closer to the street and having internal or rear parking would make for a more pedestrian and bike friendly atmosphere along otherwise unsightly corridors with little landscaping or pedestrian and bike amenities.

Potential Policy Benefits



- Increased redevelopment opportunities
- Reduced percentage of retail in the County
- Development focused in specific areas
- I-85 corridor revitalized
- Number of empty stores and distressed strip centers reduced
- Increase in the taxable value of commercial properties as retail sales per square foot increase
- Tools to evaluate rezoning increased

Policy Challenges and Costs



- Owners of older, decaying commercial properties that are still profitable
- Slow market for alternative uses in the county
- Perception of negative fiscal impacts of slowing retail development

Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks



- Revised ordinances and policies
- Redevelopment of retail properties
- Improved dollar per square footage yield for retail property compared to the region
- Determination of appropriate amount and location of retail in County based on standard commercial market analysis
- Retail becomes a smaller percentage of overall non-residential development
- Higher percentage of occupied retail space
- Revitalized former retail spaces
- Periodic inventory of vacant/distressed retail space in the County

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Conduct market forecast to determine the existing and anticipated market demand for commercial/retail uses along targeted corridors – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development
- Determine priority retail centers for redevelopment. Study vacancy rates and recommend sites – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development
- Update Existing Land Use map - Planning & Development

Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment

Redevelopment is not merely a question of improving older properties or adding more features or amenities such as landscaping or better lighting. As with any maturing county, Gwinnett will increasingly need to promote redevelopment based on a redefinition of purpose of its older areas if it is to avoid finding itself saddled with wide swaths of substandard, vacant, or severely underused properties. This concern is especially acute for Gwinnett's extensive acreage of aging strip commercial and traditional shopping center developments, much of which may represent an excess of supply for such spaces. Nevertheless, redevelopment priorities will also apply to areas of aging housing units and to former light industrial or manufacturing sites for which replacement uses will need to be determined.

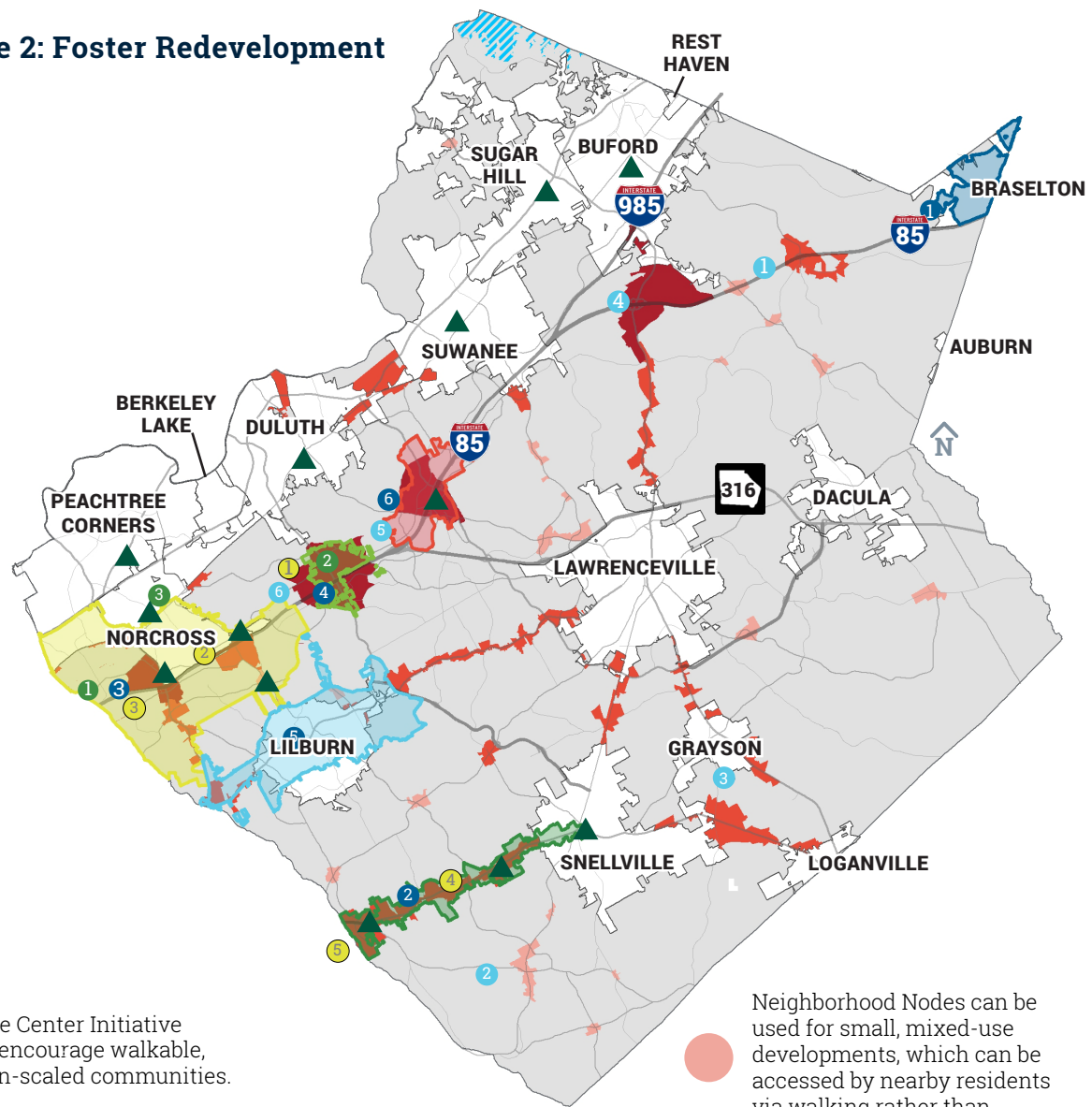
Redevelopment can be expensive and can be much more difficult – and riskier – than building on and the improvement of “greenfield” locations. As Gwinnett continues to mature, it will need to recognize the full extent of its redevelopment needs and opportunities and institute a number of incentives and initiatives to address them. Encouragement of shared infrastructure facilities could possibly bring down the costs of redevelopment.

The ARC's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a key tool that enables small, concentrated areas and corridors to apply for funding that helps attain redevelopment goals. Much like a TAD, the LCI funds can be used to set in motion certain catalyst projects that lead to an influx of private sector development. These types of projects, both public and private, lead to less reliance on personal automobile travel by creating areas where many societal transactions can take place within a safe, walkable environment. Gwinnett is home to many LCI areas – the newest of which are Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Sugarloaf Parkway – which are shown on the “Foster Redevelopment” map.


The following policies have been identified to encourage redevelopment in the County:


- Institute a Variety of Redevelopment Incentives and Bonuses
- Promote Densification in Specific Areas Designated for Mixed-Use Through Rezoning and Increased Infrastructure Capacity
- Use Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)
- Promote Shared Infrastructure Facilities
- Allow Corner Neighborhood-Serving Uses in Defined Residential Nodes


Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment



 Livable Center Initiative areas encourage walkable, human-scaled communities.

 Regional Activity Centers offer the opportunity to integrate office and professional use and walkable environments that many young professionals desire.

 Neighborhood Nodes can be used for small, mixed-use developments, which can be accessed by nearby residents via walking rather than driving for quick trips.

 Community Mixed-Use areas offer opportunities for integrated development on our major corridors and nodes.

Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)

- 1 Braselton
- 2 Evermore
- 3 Gateway85 Gwinnett
- 4 Gwinnett Place
- 5 Lilburn
- 6 Sugarloaf

County Overlay Districts

- 1 Hamilton Mill/Highway 124/Highway 324 Overlay District
- 2 Centerville/Highway 124 Overlay District
- 3 Grayson/Highway 20 Overlay District
- 4 Mall of Georgia Overlay District
- 5 Civic Center Overlay District
- 6 Venture Drive Overlay District

County Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)

- 1 Gwinnett Place TAD
- 2 Indian Trail TAD
- 3 Jimmy Carter TAD
- 4 Lake Lucerne TAD
- 5 Park Place TAD

Opportunity Zones

- 1 Gateway 85
- 2 Gwinnett Place
- 3 Norcross

Note: Other Overlay Districts and TADs are administered by cities within their boundaries



Image Credit: North American Properties

Policy 2.1 – Institute a Variety of Redevelopment Incentives and Bonuses

A variety of redevelopment incentives and density bonuses can assist in attracting development into Regional Activity Centers and other areas that are designated for revitalization. The County's existing mixed-use zoning districts and overlay districts allow density, height, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) bonuses for increased common areas/greenspace within developments and encourage more intensive development than in other parts of the County. They can also allow for denser, more varied attached/multi-family redevelopment projects that include some commercial development for the convenience of residents within the development. Such incentives can help equalize the playing field with greenfield development to attract development to areas that have lost market appeal.

Successful, widespread redevelopment may require that other tax-related incentives, such as tax rebates and deferred reassessments, be made available through legislative action. Incentives could be supplemented by public sector actions such as land assembly and infrastructure improvements. The County can permit shared facilities for certain development needs such as parking and stormwater management facilities to encourage redevelopment.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased redevelopment opportunities
- Development focused in specific areas
- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Local job growth



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Land assembly
- Cost of providing or retrofitting infrastructure in designated areas



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised ordinances and policies
- Increased developer interest in redevelopment properties
- Reduction in underutilized or vacant land within redevelopment areas
- Increased percentage of public and private dollars invested in redevelopment areas



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Consider new mixed-use zoning districts in appropriate character areas and promote redevelopment incentives that exchange increased Floor Area Ratio for community space – Planning & Development and Board of Commissioners
- Support small business activities through development of a Small Business Resource Center and staff support – Office of Economic Development, Board of Commissioners

Policy 2.2 – Promote Densification in Specific Areas Designated for Mixed-Use Through Rezoning and Increased Infrastructure Capacity

This policy directly ties in to Policy 1.1 discussed in the previous theme. The Future Development Map designates areas along the I-85 Corridor as Regional Activity Centers and encourages high density, mixed-use developments. Even with the density bonuses granted in mixed-use zoning districts by the County's Unified Development Ordinance, the allowed density in these areas needs to be substantially increased to realistically accommodate the County's projected 2040 population of up to 1.56 million people (Woods & Poole). The County can also examine the possibility of upgrading stormwater capacity or incentivize the private sector to make the necessary upgrades, to facilitate redevelopment and revitalization.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Revitalized I-85 corridor
 - Increased number of local, high-wage jobs
 - Increased redevelopment opportunities
 - Development focused in specific areas
-



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Neighborhood concerns about higher densities
 - Funding for infrastructure improvements will be needed
-



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised zoning resolution and maps
 - Increased County investment in higher density areas
 - Increased density and design standards in designated areas
-



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Revise zoning district text and/or create new districts to permit higher densities and design standards in specific areas in accordance with policy maps – Planning & Development
- Make complementary, proactive investments in redevelopment areas designated for higher densities – Board of Commissioners, Various County Agencies

Policy 2.3 – Use Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)

Tax Allocation Districts (TADs) can be a powerful way to fund infrastructure and other improvements needed to promote mixed-use development or redevelopment. In Georgia, eligible uses of funds include capital costs for the construction or improvement of public works; new buildings; renovation, repair or demolition of existing buildings; grading and clearing land; soft costs associated with these activities; land assemblage costs; and costs associated with conducting environmental impacts or other studies.

TAD (also known as Tax Increment Financing or TIFs in other states) pledge the difference between the current taxed value of property and the future tax value of properties within a designated area to finance bonds that pay for the improvements. The increase in tax revenue is based on the increased value of the property, not on a tax increase. TADs are applied to a specific, targeted location, and the tax increment is used to pay for improvements made within that specific location.

Potential Policy Benefits



- Raise revenue
- Development focused in specific areas
- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Provide funding for infrastructure projects
- Promotion of redevelopment
- Address fiscal concerns

Policy Challenges and Costs



- Securing support of affected property owners
- Annually rolling back millage rates to offset increases in real estate market values means only limited revenue will be generated by TADs
- Reaching agreements with public school system

Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks



- Identification of TAD areas
- Creation of TADs
- New infrastructure constructed in TAD areas
- Generation of tax revenue from TAD areas

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Review streamlining the TAD policy process – Law Department
- Secure bonds for projects – Office of Economic Development

Policy 2.4 – Promote Shared Infrastructure Facilities

A frequent impediment to redevelopment is the magnitude of necessary upgrades associated with certain infrastructure facilities, such as stormwater ponds and required parking. To reduce these impediments and increase the economic feasibility of potential of redevelopment areas, the County can allow several adjacent properties to install shared infrastructure facilities including, but not limited to, regional ponds and parking decks. These facilities may be owned, operated, and maintained by a common association contractually responsible for the facilities. State legislation to permit the use of shared regional stormwater ponds may be required.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Redevelopment opportunities increased
- Development focused in specific areas
- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Local job growth



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Will need to develop a formula to equitably compensate users and owners of shared properties
- Land assembly or shared easements have to be negotiated



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised ordinances and policies
- Increased developer interest in redevelopment properties
- Reduction in underutilized or vacant land within redevelopment areas
- Increased percentage of private dollars invested in redevelopment areas



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Change applicable policies and ordinances to allow multi-parcel owners to create and use shared stormwater and parking facilities – Department of Water Resources
- Develop a program to promote shared infrastructure options to developers – Department of Water Resources, Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development
- Evaluate future wastewater treatment capacity needs and locations for new and/or expanded water reclamation facilities – Department of Water Resources

Policy 2.5 – Allow Neighborhood-Serving Stores in Defined Residential Nodes

By providing neighborhood-serving shopping at small stores within residential areas, these smaller stores help shorten or eliminate car trips. Travel to and from corner/convenience stores is frequently done on foot or by bicycle and helps keep cars off major roads. While they help achieve a public purpose and are often seen as valuable and convenient by many residents, corner stores can be subject to strong opposition by adjacent residents. Therefore, the County should consider setting specific standards for their approval which, once met, allow the applicant to request a rezoning. The standards would include a lot size limit (1 acre maximum lot size), quality controls regarding permitted uses, lighting, signage, prohibiting gas pumps, etc. and would be applied for as part of an integrated design for a residential development plan of minimum size (i.e. 100 units) that exceeds a density of four dwelling units per acre.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Congestion on arterials reduced
- Bicycle and pedestrian trip-making increased
- Access for local residents improved



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Introducing new retail concept



Measures of Effectiveness

- Increased number of small-scale retail uses located in residential areas



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

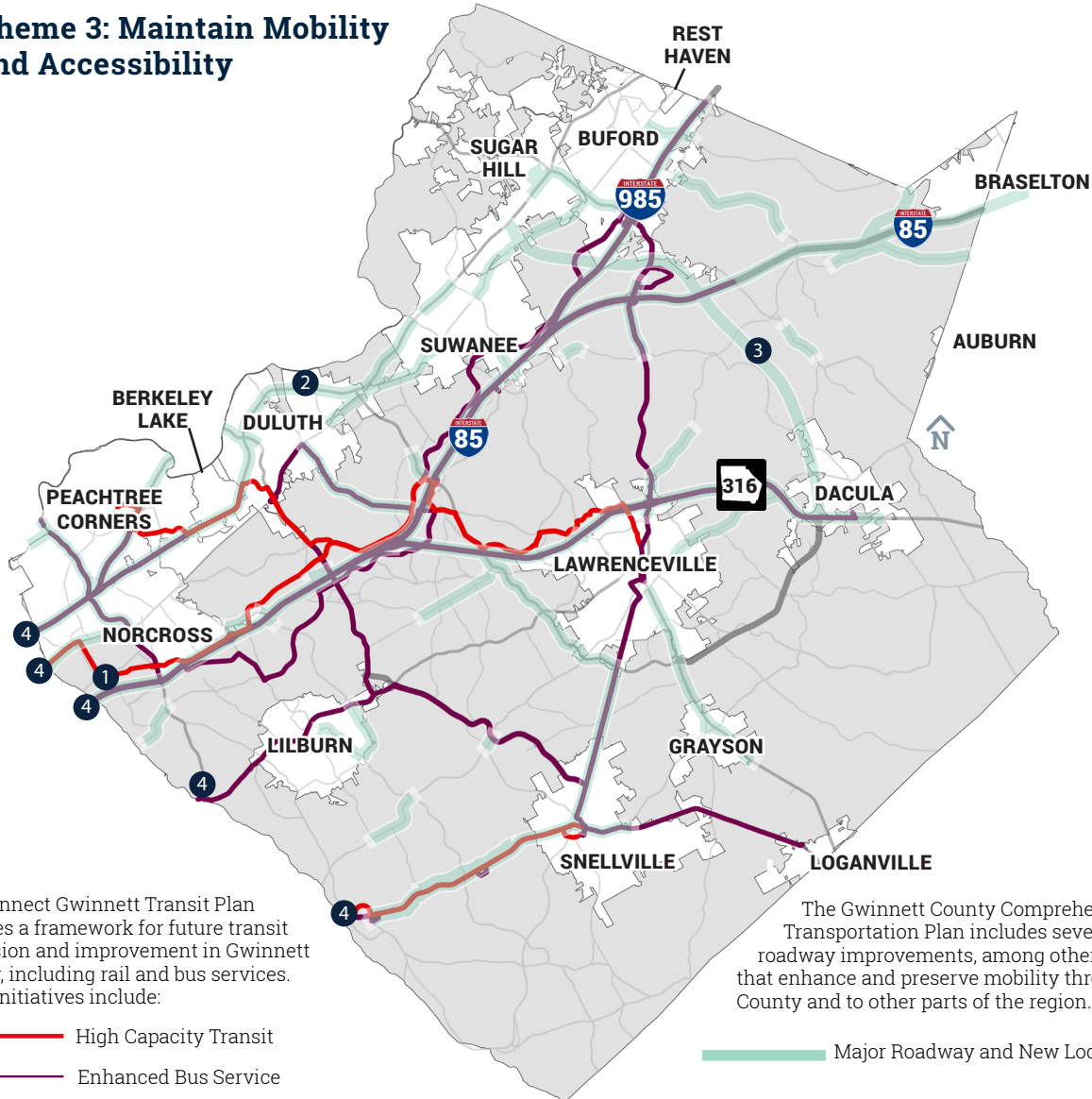
- Amend the County Zoning Regulations to allow for convenience shopping in medium and high- density residential areas if certain criteria for parcel size, aesthetics, etc. are met – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development, Board of Commissioners

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility

Perhaps no issue raises more complaints among Gwinnett residents and businesses than traffic congestion. It is also the most intractable (and expensive) issue to resolve, largely because it is a regional-scale problem over which no single jurisdiction can fully prevail. Nevertheless, Gwinnett can play its part to remove or reduce the impact of a number of obstacles to better access to activity centers and attractions within Gwinnett and the region. Gwinnett can also improve movement on the local roads and arterials within its own boundaries. Because increasing traffic congestion may be the greatest long-term threat to its economic future, Gwinnett will need to do whatever it can to mitigate congestion. Recent approval of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), Countywide Trails Master Plan, and Connect Gwinnett Transit Plan will certainly move things in a positive direction towards offering alternative mobility choices to Gwinnett residents and workers. The following policies have been identified to promote mobility and accessibility in the County:

- Enhance Signal Coordination and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Promote Inter-Parcel Access on Arterials in New Development and Redevelopment, to Decrease Curb Cuts
- Enhance Incident Management Traffic Control Center
- Establish a Road Connectivity Requirement for New Development
- Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at Proposed Transit Stations/ Hubs
- Support the Recommendations and Policies in the Transit Development Plan
- Adopt and Promote Land Use Policies that Support Recommendations and Policies in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility



The Connect Gwinnett Transit Plan provides a framework for future transit expansion and improvement in Gwinnett County, including rail and bus services. Major initiatives include:

The Gwinnett County Comprehensive Transportation Plan includes several major roadway improvements, among other projects, that enhance and preserve mobility throughout the County and to other parts of the region.

- High Capacity Transit
- Enhanced Bus Service

— Major Roadway and New Location Projects

- 1 Heavy rail transit expansion to Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Gwinnett Place.
- 2 Connected vehicle opportunities on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
- 3 Tolling options being explored to underwrite construction of Sugarloaf Parkway - Phase 3.
- 4 Transit connections into neighboring metro communities.

Policy 3.1 – Enhance Signal Coordination and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

A cost-effective way to increase the efficiency of the existing road system is to further coordinate traffic signal timing and further invest in Intelligent Transportation Systems technology such as electronic driver signboards that display traffic conditions and alternatives. The County already does a great deal of this type of activity using State and Federal funding. In order to do more, it will be necessary for the County to use its own funding.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Reduce congestion
- Increased roadway capacity
- Increased roadway safety



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Relatively low cost to implement compared to most transportation projects
- Expansion would require County funds and not simply relying on State and Federal funds



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- List of intersections in need of improvements and signboard locations
- Funding sources identified
- Improved signal coordination and traffic diversion
- Greater percentage of intersections upgraded with “smart” signals



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Continue to identify areas in need of signal coordination and/or ITS improvements – DOT with Planning & Development and Department of Financial Services
- Maintain County funding source for improvements – DOT with Planning & Development and Department of Financial Services
- Installation of ITS improvements – DOT

Policy 3.2 – Promote Inter-Parcel Access on Arterials in New Development and Redevelopment, to Cut Down on Curb Cuts

Managing access to and from properties along major roads improves traffic flow and decreases the probability of accidents. Many jurisdictions manage vehicular access onto arterials by an overlay district which limits block lengths between access roads, require shared access ways and inter-parcel connections, require frontage roads or rear access, limit curb cuts, etc. These measures conserve valuable roadway capacity and improve safety. Redevelopment of land uses along such arterials may provide opportunities to implement such access improvements, but such changes should fit into an overall strategy for each arterial.

Potential Policy Benefits



- Increased roadway capacity
- Reduced congestion
- Improved roadway safety
- Expanded roadway network
- Improved access between uses
- Create alternative routes in highway/street network

Policy Challenges and Costs



- Cooperation of property owners is needed
- Coordination with Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) may be required
- Additional development costs
- Requirement will be associated with these actions

Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks



- Revised, updated Long Range Road Classification Map
- Revised Development Regulations addressing access management
- More effective access management evident in new subdivisions and site plan practices
- Reduced number of driveways and curb cuts on arterial roads
- Increased use of access roads
- Reduced number of accidents on arterial roads

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Update the access management portion of the County's existing Activity Center/Corridor Overlay Districts Overlay Zone – DOT with Planning & Development and Department of Financial Services
- Support the interface with GDOT's Navigator System and the County's Smart Commute Program – DOT

Policy 3.3 – Enhance Incident Management (Traffic Control Center)

A main objective of the Traffic Control Center (TCC) is incident management. The TCC can help relieve congestion and increase mobility by adjusting signal timing to handle additional traffic diverted onto local roads from interstate freeways due to major incidents. Also, the TCC can produce real-time travel times, so that travelers can make better informed decisions regarding where and when to travel. Further expanding Gwinnett's current efforts in this area will pay handsomely and this will yield immediate short-term benefits at relatively little cost.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Reduced congestion
- Increased roadway safety



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Data on cost-effectiveness of investment will be required to justify the budget request



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Acquisition of equipment, technology, and personnel
- Increased speed in addressing traffic incidents compared to current benchmark



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Identify and prioritize additional resources for incident management – DOT

Policy 3.4 – Establish a Road Connectivity Requirement for New Development

Establishing a connectivity requirement based on block length will help reduce traffic congestion and improve walkability. Because most subdivisions in Gwinnett do not interconnect, even short trips require the use of major arterials and collectors, contributing to the overloading of the major road systems. Keeping local trips to destinations such as nearby shopping areas, schools, and parks off major arterials will help alleviate congestion. New development should be designed with more connections between developments and with alternative and redundant minor collector networks within developments that connect to the County's arterial roadway system.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Reduced congestion
- Increased roadway safety
- Expanded roadway network
- Improved access between uses



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Difficulty in creating connections between existing properties and new and other existing properties
- Effective implementation requires a detailed map of ideal connecting roads



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Increased connectivity between and within new subdivisions
- Increased connections between existing and new subdivisions
- Better connections between residential areas and commercial areas via secondary roads



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Define block lengths for urban and suburban areas – Planning & Development, DOT
- Adopt a Connectivity Index for all new residential subdivisions – Planning & Development, DOT
- Develop connectivity standards for new development and incorporate them into the Unified Development Ordinance – Planning & Development, DOT
- Research doing corridor studies – Planning & Development, DOT

Policy 3.5 – Create Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at Proposed Transit Stations/Hubs

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners approved its Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan in July 2018. Among its recommendations are bus rapid transit as well as expanded bus service. A transit system will help support more intensely developed, mixed-use centers in Gwinnett. A growing segment of the general population is attracted to the urban lifestyles associated with well-designed TODs whose density and use mix is a benefit for them. Creating TODs that are centered within livable, walkable mixed-use areas should be part of the County’s formula for attracting and retaining urban-acclimated professionals, tech workers, empty nesters, and other households such as senior citizens, who may not want the responsibility of maintaining a car and desire to walk or use transit as they age. Well-designed TODs also help increase ridership for Gwinnett’s anticipated high-capacity transit system. Therefore, the County should act to establish incentives that encourage development that will support transit. TODs have also been shown to affect growth and development of specific land uses – for instance, workplace centers – in surrounding areas because of the ease of access that a new and inviting transit hub affords. Employers are drawn to areas that accommodate their employees with improved quality of life amenities.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Development focused in specific areas
- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Promotion of redevelopment
- Reduced roadway demand



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Applying TOD principles and getting development community commitment in advance of transit implementation plan
- Long lead time for implementation
- Funding



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Potential transit alignments are identified
- Areas are designated for TOD
- Zoning for the TOD areas is revised
- Developer commitments to development/redevelopment at station areas
- Density increases in areas designated for TOD



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Identify possible transit alignments – Planning & Development, DOT
- Identify areas that would be suitable for TOD and station development – Planning & Development, DOT, Office of Economic Development
- Create incentives to promote development in TOD areas – Planning & Development, Office of Economic Development

Policy 3.6 – Support the Recommendations and Policies in the Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan

Efforts to minimize congestion serve to enhance Gwinnett's economic development and preferred place policies. Although transit will not greatly diminish congestion, it can provide people with travel choices. Providing people with more travel choices may encourage some number of single-occupant vehicle drivers to lessen their use of private vehicles. This may persuade others who may not have considered living or working in Gwinnett because of congestion to consider the County as a location for their homes or businesses.

The potential for bus rapid transit (BRT) along key arterials is more likely to occur during the life of the 2040 Unified Plan and also warrants future transit system investments, especially for routes that would provide an alternative to commuters to Atlanta and I-285 destinations. Finally, the County can make improvements to its local transit system to provide improved access to various destinations and east-west connectivity within the County.

It is important to note that rail transit development is not something that Gwinnett County can do alone. It will require participation of regional, state, and federal agencies including the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Transit Planning Board, and the Federal Transit Administration.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Provide mode choices
- Reduce future roadway demand



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Funding transit improvements
- Maintaining high levels of service
- Expansion costs for local bus service
- Implementation costs for BRT and rail service
- FTA New Starts submission hurdle
- Jurisdictions nationwide compete for limited Federal transit dollars



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- FTA New Starts submission
- Federal transit dollars secured
- Increased transit service
- Increased mode split
- Decreased roadway demand



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Identify additional areas to be served by transit – DOT
- Evaluate funding sources and strategically pursue state and federal aid for additional transit needs – Board of Commissioners
- Develop and implement transit promotion campaign – DOT

Policy 3.7 – Adopt and Promote Land Use Policies that Support the Recommendations and Policies in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)

Between 1970 and 2000, Gwinnett County was ranked as one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. During that period, the county absorbed approximately 25 percent of the total growth of the Atlanta Region. To counter the rapid growth, Gwinnett County invested more money in highway expansion than any other jurisdiction in the metropolitan area. Despite Gwinnett County's efforts, roadway infrastructure has not kept pace with the tremendous growth the County has experienced. A coordinated program of capacity improvement projects will provide some measure of relief. Capacity improvements include transforming key roads into "super-arterials," grade separation at key intersections, building additional travel lanes along key road segments, and constructing new roads.

Advances in technology pertaining to real-time data collection offer an excellent resource for Gwinnett County's Department of Transportation to make use of when developing a congestion management plan. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) obtains data periodically that can offer the relative travel speed on virtually any road in the metropolitan county during any hour of the day. This tool enables users to identify sections of roads with recurring congestion and even establish the relative intensity of that congestion (how long does it last, how many vehicles are affected, how much time is lost by those in the congestion, etc.). This level of data can help transportation planners strategically target segments with poor peak hour throughput in ways that have not normally been possible before and should be incorporated into future plan updates.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased roadway capacity
- Increased connectivity



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Expensive to implement
- Potential opposition to specific widening projects or new alignments
- Provides some congestion relief in the short term, but only slows the growth of longer term congestion



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Prioritized list of capacity improvement projects from CTP
- Funding strategy for priority projects
- Funding secured
- Increased number of lane miles – especially in priority corridors and between key origins/destinations



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Prioritize capacity improvement projects – DOT with Planning & Development
- Establish policy that, where feasible, new roadway construction will consider bike lanes and multi-use paths to provide alternative transportation – DOT
- Develop and implement funding plans for projects – DOT with Planning & Development, Department of Financial Services
- Improve road connections to Fulton/Forsyth per CTP – DOT



NORTH 85

↑

EAST 140

↑ ONLY

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices

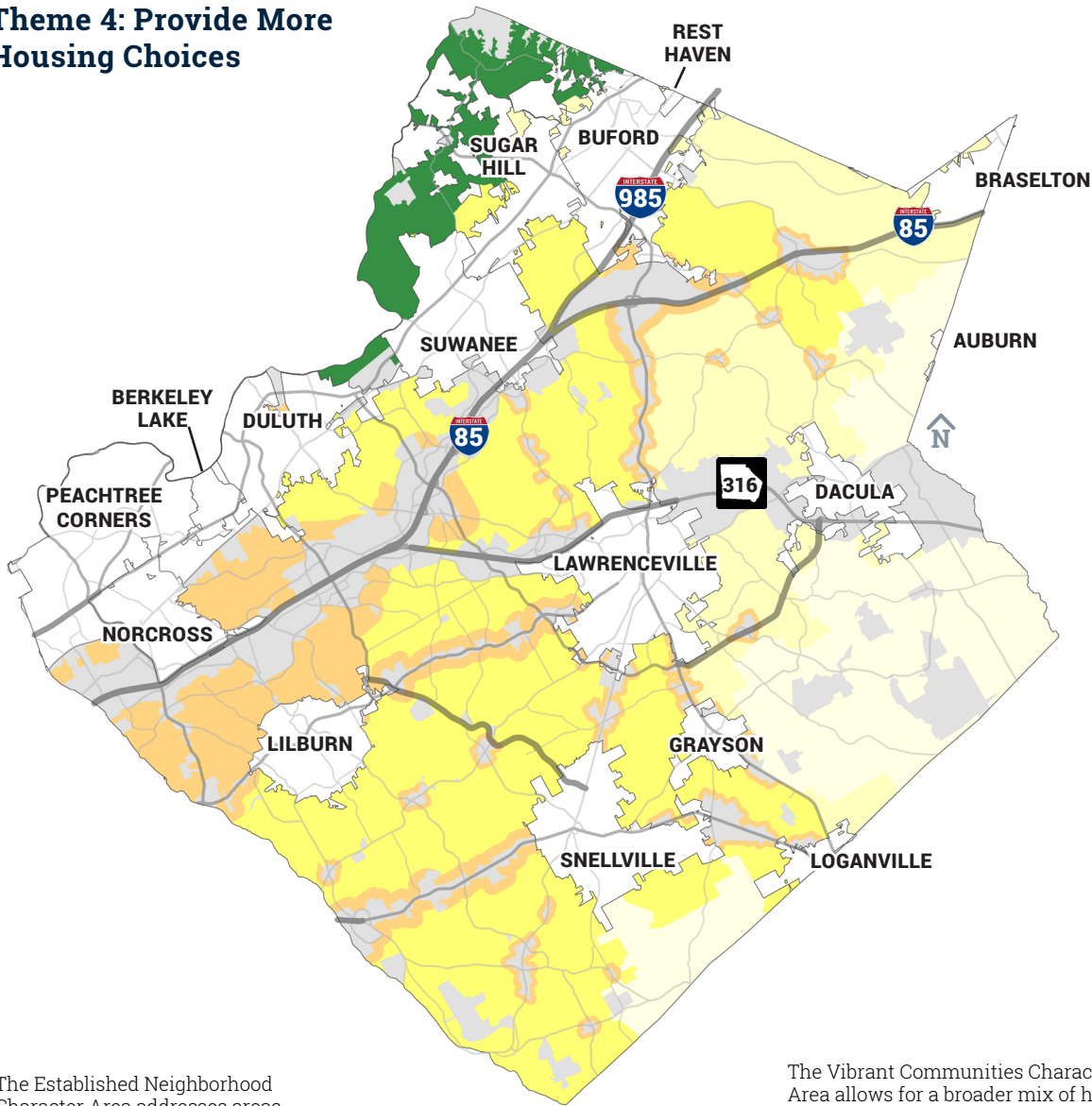
The declining quality of some of the County's oldest residential developments has been a growing concern. But, given the overall quality of most of Gwinnett's neighborhoods, the full range of Gwinnett's housing issues may not be readily apparent to many. As time passes, however, the number of current potential problems demanding attention and resources will increase and dealing with Gwinnett's housing issues will become more complex.

This theme recognizes this growing complexity and links housing issues to such topics as successful economic development and the overall quality of life of those who choose (and are able) to live in Gwinnett. Economic development and housing issues are intricately linked.

Providing the housing supply to meet increasingly varied demand is becoming more complex. As long as Gwinnett was in a rapid growth mode based on a vast influx of middle class and more affluent households seeking single-family detached neighborhoods, the for-profit housing market has generally been able to meet Gwinnett's housing needs. This may be less and less true in the future for a variety of reasons, not the least of which being the decreasing amount of available land for new housing developments and the projected 600,000+ people who will move to Gwinnett by 2040. There is simply not enough space to put everyone in a single-family home. There is also growing poverty in the County, resulting in a population who simply cannot afford to rent, and much less buy, a single-family home. Therefore, this theme also covers the prospects that non-profit providers and County government itself may need to increase their influence over or direct involvement in providing housing opportunities and maintaining the quality of Gwinnett's housing. The following policies have been identified for promoting housing choices in the County.

- Promote Policies that Encourage Housing for All Income Levels and Phases of Life
- Expand Rehabilitation Assistance to Homeowners
- Expand Senior Housing Options

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices



The Established Neighborhood Character Area addresses areas that are largely single family oriented neighborhoods that act as the backbone for Gwinnett to continue to attract families seeking a traditionally suburban lifestyle.



The Suburban Estate Living Character Area has been designated to help with preservation of remaining low intensity development areas of the County where infrastructure (i.e. road, sewer) is limited.



The Vibrant Communities Character Area allows for a broader mix of housing types, income levels, and phases of life. These areas are also identified to surround the areas designated as Activity Centers in the plan to maximize accessibility to commerce, jobs, and entertainment.



Executive housing areas on and along Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River.

Policy 4.1 – Preserve and Expand Housing for All Income Levels and Phases of Life

Gwinnett may see a decline in its ability to fill jobs in its services sector as commuting expenses and housing prices become ever greater burdens. Preserving workforce housing within Gwinnett through a variety of measures to retain a variety of housing types and price ranges will help achieve the County's goals of reducing congestion and sustaining its economic base. Two ways the County could encourage workforce housing is to implement developer incentives to build it, as well as making developers set aside requirements for new housing developments, especially within the Regional Activity Centers.

The County's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) is a component of Gwinnett County's program that is intended to make use of funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other sources to acquire and rehabilitate aging homes that are vacant and/or foreclosed. The program then sells those houses to residents who qualify based on income criteria. The NSP specifically targets those potential homeowners who make up the Gwinnett County workforce in an attempt to improve quality of life for employees who live and work in Gwinnett.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Preserve available workforce housing
- Reduce and/or eliminate substandard housing
- Reduce congestion



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Appropriate zoning to encourage mix of housing opportunities
- Finding land suitably priced to make workforce housing economically viable



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Units of substandard housing that are rehabilitated and preserved as affordable workforce housing
- Units of substandard single-family housing that are acquired/rehabilitated and sold to homebuyers as affordable workforce housing
- Units of workforce housing that are constructed to replace the existing stock of affordable housing
- Creation of Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) ordinance



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Provide rehabilitation assistance from HUD grant funds and private sources to homeowners and to existing multi-family projects that preserve affordable workforce housing – Planning & Development with Department of Financial Services
- Provide financial assistance from HUD grant funds and private sources to private and/or nonprofit developers to acquire and rehabilitate substandard single-family housing for sale as affordable workforce housing to qualifying families – Planning & Development with Department of Financial Services
- Provide financial assistance from HUD grant funds to private/nonprofit developers to construct new single-family or new multi-family projects to provide affordable workforce housing – Planning & Development with Department of Financial Services
- Continue code enforcement through Quality of Life Unit to ensure that properties are maintained – Quality of Life Unit (Gwinnett County Police Department)
- Consider creating a Housing Task Force to evaluate issues related to mixed income multi-family housing, senior housing, workforce housing, creation of an incentive-based MPDU ordinance, and housing for persons with special needs – Board of Commissioners



2283
HAMILTON HILLS

Policy 4.2 - Expand Maintenance and Rehabilitation Assistance to Homeowners

Expand existing HUD funded assistance programs to include more homeowners who may have difficulty with upkeep and needed rehabilitation of their properties. The expansion of these programs would allow the County to target many of the causes of neighborhood decline in older areas. Programs would offer long-term and recent residents of Gwinnett good advice and assistance on proper repairs and materials, low cost loans, etc. These expanded programs would provide the County with more tools to promote revitalization of declining areas.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Available workforce housing preserved
 - Substandard housing reduced
 - Appearance and upkeep of an area maintained
 - Revitalization goals of the Board of Commissioners enhanced
-



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Funding of rehabilitation programs
-



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Units of housing rehabilitated and preserved
 - Funding allocated to this program
-



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Provide rehabilitation assistance from HUD grant funds for homeowner occupied dwellings – Department of Financial Services with Planning & Development
- Expand program beyond HUD grant funds to include County funds for commercial properties – Board of Commissioners`

Policy 4.3 – Support Expanded Housing Opportunities for Seniors

As they become a larger proportion of the population, there will be an increasing call for affordable and accessible housing suitable for the changing physical and financial situations of seniors. Gwinnett has historically had limited need for senior housing. However, as more people choose to “age in place” or relocate to Gwinnett to be closer to children and grandchildren, demand for various forms of senior housing will rise.

Senior housing needs are different from that of a growing family. Seniors may not want the maintenance responsibility of a yard and may prefer to live in a smaller home than they did when they were raising a family. Row houses, condominiums, and apartments may be more suitable housing types for these seniors. (Because such housing is for people at a post-family formation stage of their life, senior housing may not affect such issues as school capacity and therefore can be developed at higher intensities than equivalent units geared towards younger families.) There will also be a growing need to provide available housing that can accommodate wheelchairs or other Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Locating housing within easy walking distance to grocery stores, drug stores, medical or other services will be increasingly desirable and useful for seniors who no longer can or want to drive. Such walkability adds to a healthier lifestyle and also puts seniors near potential employment (part of an increasing trend of seniors continuing some form of work).

Potential Policy Benefits



- Opportunities for existing residents to “age in place”
- Opportunities for senior relatives of Gwinnett residents to move closer to their families
- More diverse mix of housing types
- More opportunity to accommodate seniors with physical limitations
- Increased emphasis on walkability and mixed-use

Policy Challenges and Costs



- Appropriate zoning to encourage mix of housing opportunities
- Has not historically been a focus of the County

Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks



- Proportion of seniors living in senior oriented housing
- Number of residents aging in place

Initiatives and Responsible Parties



- Pursue locating and studying TOD sites to develop with transit components – Planning & Development, Board of Commissioners
- Establish an education program and appoint an education program manager to coordinate the structure of courses, counseling options, and marketing of the program – Department of Financial Services, Board of Commissioners
- Establish a system to disburse CDBG funds through a process to nonprofit organizations that assist with low-income citizens, seniors, at-risk individuals, disabled citizens, and others with issues related to housing – Department of Financial Services, Department of Community Services

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place

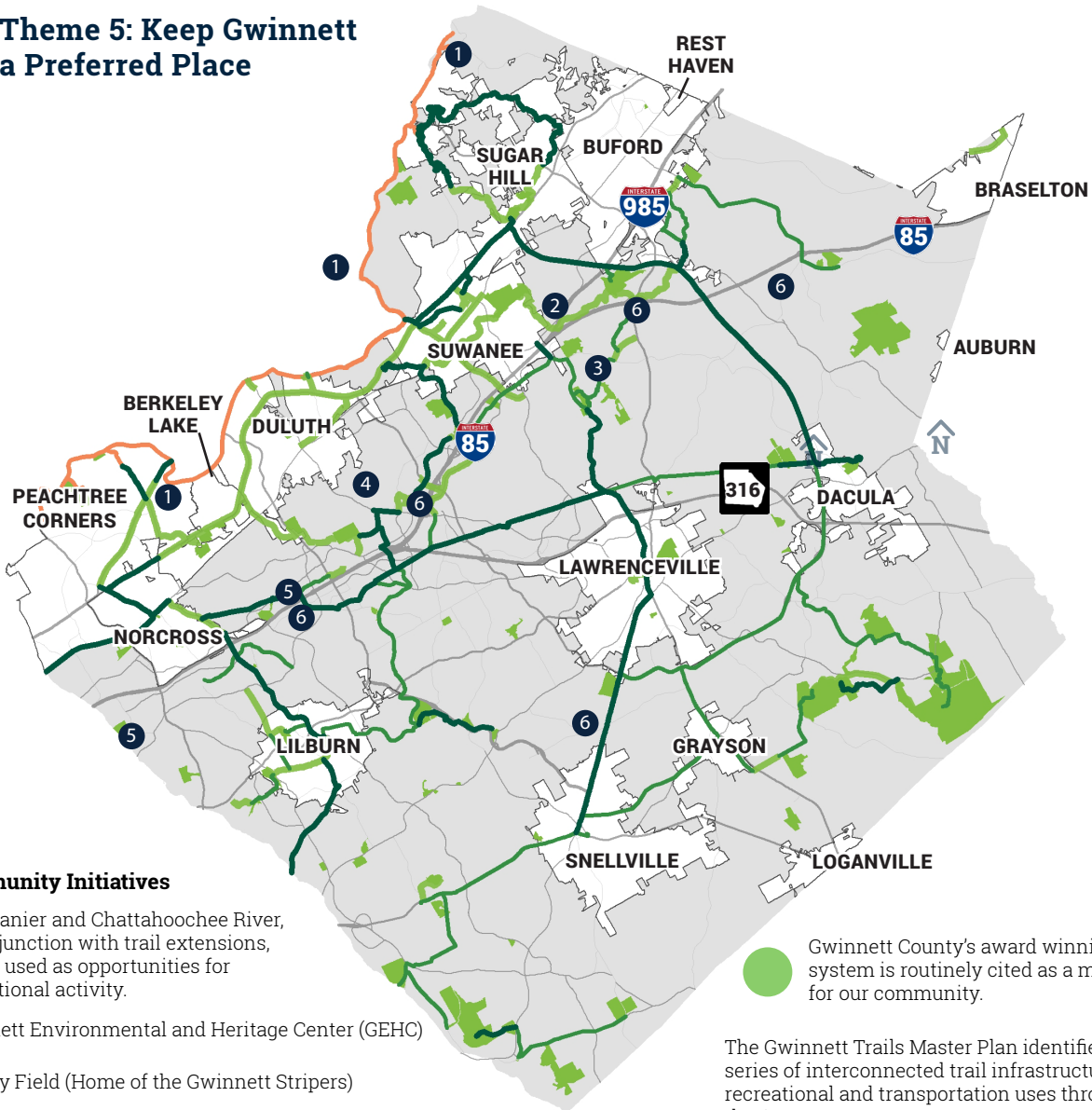
By such important measures as average incomes, neighborhood quality, quality of schools, and quality of government services, Gwinnett is a good place to live and work. Tomorrow it could be even better – a “preferred place” within the Atlanta region to live, work, play, and relax.

This theme describes and ties together a broad array of issues that underpin “quality of life.” Among these issues are those related to the environment, open space and recreation, culture and entertainment, the quality of development, and adding more amenities and convenience to Gwinnett’s neighborhoods. Although the policies and items discussed may seem like a diverse “grab bag” of ideas, they are all related to the need to energetically and purposefully pursue aspects of living in Gwinnett that have not yet fully been addressed.

Achieving this “preferred place” status requires more than resolving the problems and fulfilling the goals that the preceding four themes address. Achieving those goals will create a more efficient and more sustainable framework for economic prosperity, decent and affordable housing and the ability to get around with less difficulty. All of these are important aspects of life in Gwinnett but, as such initiatives as Partnership Gwinnett point out, they are insufficient in and of themselves to make Gwinnett more than just another successful metro Atlanta community. To go beyond this, one should imagine the improvement in overall quality of life in Gwinnett if many of the kinds of amenities and features cited in this theme were built into every new development, every redevelopment and, where possible, into existing developments. The following policies have been identified for promoting and retaining the high quality of life in Gwinnett County:

- Improve the Walkability of Gwinnett’s Activity Centers and Neighborhoods
- Support and Promote the Expanded Four-Year College
- Invest in Youth Enrichment Programs
- Draft Design Guidelines for Areas That Are Ready for Redevelopment or New Development
- Provide Venues to Celebrate the Cultural Diversity of the County
- Expand Presence of the “Arts Community”
- Provide Incentives for Enhanced Open Space & Trails
- Create Trail Connections Between Existing Parks, Schools, Libraries, and Other Community Facilities as Appropriate

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place



Community Initiatives

- 1 Lake Lanier and Chattahoochee River, in conjunction with trail extensions, can be used as opportunities for recreational activity.
- 2 Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center (GEHC)
- 3 Coolray Field (Home of the Gwinnett Stripers)
- 4 Revel and the Infinite Energy Center will be the backbone of Gwinnett's entertainment district.
- 5 As the Gwinnett population becomes more diverse, there are increasingly more opportunities to immerse ourselves in the food and culture of our newest residents.
- 6 Our major retail centers attract both Gwinnettians and visitors from surrounding communities.

Gwinnett County's award winning park system is routinely cited as a major asset for our community.

The Gwinnett Trails Master Plan identifies a series of interconnected trail infrastructure for recreational and transportation uses throughout the County.

- Core Trail Network
- Chattahoochee Trail Network
- Priority Trails
- Existing and Funded Trails

Policy 5.1 – Improve the Walkability of Gwinnett’s Activity Centers and Neighborhoods

Quality of life in Gwinnett can be enhanced by making it easier for people to walk through their neighborhoods to and from attractions such as local parks, schools, churches, or even neighborhood shopping. Walking and bicycling are also increasingly popular exercise in their own right and do not require special facilities when adequate sidewalks, pathways, and greenways are provided. Major activity centers should be easier to walk and bike to, and the uses within the centers should be better connected for pedestrian and bicycle access.

Gwinnett County currently requires the construction of sidewalks for all new development. This is the first step in making the county more walkable. However, creating a pedestrian/bicycle amenity that will enhance and promote the county as a preferred place will require additional actions, such as improving and expanding the greenway network. The County’s adoption, and future implementation, of its Countywide Trails Master Plan is a huge step towards improving the County’s connectivity.

Since 1997, Gwinnett County has allocated over \$75 million for bicycle/pedestrian safety-related projects, in addition to over \$72 million for bicycle/pedestrian safety-related projects on or near new school property.

The County should take steps to ensure that this large investment in bike/ped facilities, as well as any dedicated future funding, is coordinated with its Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan. Potential projects that are constructed along transit routes should receive priority in any project selection process. Likewise, projects that connect to or support safe routes to schools should receive priority.

Gwinnett County transportation and park planners should continue their active participation as members of Atlanta Regional Commission’s Bicycle & Pedestrian Task Force. This task force meets monthly with the goal of improving pedestrian and cycling safety and mobility throughout the region. By serving on this task force, Gwinnett County staff will stay aware of the latest bicycle and pedestrian mobility issues and apply this knowledge by providing input at the design phase of projects. Beyond safety issues and trends, the ARC Bicycle & Pedestrian Task Force facilitates and encourages the coordination of these types of inter-jurisdictional projects.

In 2014, the County updated its Open Space & Greenways Master Plan, originally adopted by the Board of Commissioners in 2002. The update was developed to provide staff with trail design standards and to conduct a feasibility study of the proposed Greenway System. This feasibility study specifically looked at new opportunities or constraints that may have arisen since the previous plan. The result of this feasibility study was a prioritized schedule for future greenway development. This prioritization schedule offers a “road map” to realistically completing trail segments within the current constraints of the County’s land use. This was subsequently followed by the 2018 adoption of the Countywide Trails Master Plan.

There are dramatic benefits that can be attributed to greenway and trail connections. Improving interconnectivity between green spaces, neighborhoods, retail, and other mixed-use developments can significantly improve land values and can be an integral component to a development/redevelopment strategy. The goal of creating regional mixed-use centers will closely tie in with the infrastructure improvements made by the County that specifically benefit those people who either choose to walk or ride a bike for certain reasons, or who may have no other option.

Additional trail mileage has a significant impact on personal health and quality of life. Gwinnett County has an interest in attracting young professionals to the county as a place of residence as well as employment. As previously discussed, employers looking to open new regional offices will often seek out those areas that are attractive to their employee base, and the employees’ perspective on walkability is similar as well; there is a trend among young professionals to seek out areas where the quality of life is high, and many young people in their 20s and 30s consider the ability to choose an alternative to the single-occupant vehicle a major amenity when deciding where to live. Not only does an improved walking system benefit the young person looking for a more walkable lifestyle but having alternatives to the personal vehicle also benefits older generations, from active seniors striving to maintain health to those who no longer feel comfortable operating a motor vehicle. One way to improve the public services that cater to the aging population is to provide the means to be active and engaged within the community



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased connectivity
- Increased County amenities
- Improved public health and safety
- Removal of barriers to mobility on sidewalks for persons with disabilities
- Development focused in specific areas
- Increased number of local, high-wage jobs



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Recognizing the need to work with local, state, and federal regulators to arrive at accommodations that will facilitate greenway construction in floodplains, buffers, etc.
- Potential increased cost of development
- Sidewalks that need to be provided by the County for high priority linkages not likely to be provided by development regulations
- Alternative mode infrastructure projects often compete over the same pot of money as traditional roadway capacity projects and safety improvements
- Trail construction can be costly if conducted independently of roadway improvements
- Zoning regulations should continue to include language to encourage and/or mandate developers to reserve space on the property for trails that are included in the Greenways Master Plan



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised zoning ordinance
- Increased number of pedestrian trips being made for short trips
- Increased trail mileage within the County
- Reduction in pedestrian accidents and death
- Increased volume of users



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Implement projects and design guidelines from updated Gwinnett Open Space and Greenways Master Plan and Countywide Trails Master Plan – Planning & Development, Department of Community Services, DOT, and Department of Water Resources
- Design/redesign busy intersections and mid-point crossings to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety – DOT
- Coordinate and implement appropriate transportation improvements to maintain safe and efficient access to post-secondary institutions – Planning & Development, Department of Financial Services, Community Development, Department of Community Services, and DOT

Policy 5.2 – Support and Promote the Expanded Four-Year Colleges

Gwinnett is home to several exceptional post-secondary institutions as well as a handful of extension campuses, such as the University of Georgia: Gwinnett Campus and the Philadelphia Center for Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM). The established institutions of Georgia Gwinnett College and Gwinnett Technical College are growing and have received national recognition for their achievements. These higher education opportunities all help increase Gwinnett's "preferred place" status. Research associated with the colleges could spawn new businesses, and employers interested in an educated workforce could choose to locate businesses nearby. The land use needs and the spin-off employment uses that seek out and benefit from a significant institution like a college should be coordinated with local jurisdictions near these schools.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Attract high-wage jobs
 - Development focused in specific area
 - Improved amenities
-



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Funding for possible infrastructure improvements
 - County, city, and college coordination related to student housing, business development, etc.
-



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Coordinated land use plan for the areas around the colleges
 - Specific action items each entity will be responsible for and timeline for accomplishment
 - County funding to support improvements that benefit the colleges and the potential spin-off development
-



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Develop a detailed land use plan for areas around colleges in collaboration with the institutions and surrounding jurisdiction(s) – Planning & Development, Department of Financial Services
- Encourage open communication between colleges/universities and organizations promoting the SR 316 corridor – Planning & Development

Policy 5.3 – Invest in Youth Enrichment Programs

Beyond crime prevention measures like community policing, good lighting and defensive site design (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED), the County, in coordination with the Gwinnett County Public School System, can take actions to involve local youth in after school programs and activities. This involvement can help deter gang activity and recruitment, provide additional opportunities for children to get exercise, learn new skills, and provide a positive use of time. Extending and expanding current programs and developing new programs is an important redevelopment and quality of life strategy.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Improved County amenities
- Increased capacity of public facilities and services
- Reduction in crime and gang activities



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Availability of funding for these types of programs.



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- List of programs to expand and offer, and costs associated with them
- Increased funding for after school programs
- Increased number of after school programs
- Correlation with reduction in youth criminal activity and other antisocial/gang activity
- Improved graduation rates
- Retention of young adults in Gwinnett's work force



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Identify programs to expand – Health and Human Services, Department of Community Services
- Identify new programs to offer – Health and Human Services, Parks & Recreation, and Department of Community Services
- Allocate additional funding resources – Board of Commissioners

Policy 5.4 – Draft Design Guidelines for Areas That Are Ready for Redevelopment or New Development

Promoting high-quality development is a strategy for attracting top quality employers, new affluent residents, and making Gwinnett a preferred place in the region. Improved development quality for commercial and office buildings and associated public areas will also encourage current employers and residents to stay in the County. To achieve this, new design standards and guidelines are needed both to encourage and promote redevelopment where appropriate, and to enhance overall development quality. The County has existing design guidelines (overlay districts) for the following designated activity centers and corridors:

- Mall of Georgia
- Civic Center
- Grayson/Highway 20
- Centerville/Highway 124
- Highway 124/324/Hamilton Mill Road

Most recently, the County adopted the Venture Drive Redevelopment Overlay District. To give Gwinnett a competitive edge, development quality can be enhanced through these existing design standards that improve the appearance of buildings and parking areas, require additional landscaping and urban design amenities, call for attractive public spaces, promote less sign clutter, and provide better lighting standards.

Additional areas of improvement may include building height allowances, massing, and introducing Floor Area Ratios (FAR) as a design standard in mixed-use and non-residential areas. Allowing increased densities for such areas will provide an incentive for developers to consider redevelopment. However, designing these private shared environments as more functional and attractive locations will also require revising the current development standards regarding such issues as access, interior road design, location of buildings in relation to streets, location and design of parking areas, open space and public realm design (including pedestrian facilities), and ability of various users to share infrastructure.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased redevelopment opportunities
- Redevelopment focused in specific areas
- Revitalization of I-85 corridor
- Number of high-income residents increased
- Number of high-income jobs increased



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Creating effective and uncomplicated application of standards
- This action has low implementation costs, but introduces new elements and processes into the County's review process



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised standards
- Improved visual appearance and improve compatibility with existing areas
- Increased urban design amenities



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Utilize overlay districts and other tools to assist in guidance and decision making – Planning & Development



Policy 5.5 – Provide Venues to Celebrate the Cultural Diversity of the County

The County can promote its diversity as a positive attraction by providing support and locations for such events as cultural fairs, music festivals, “foodways” demonstrations, etc. Members from different ethnic groups providing input during the Unified Plan’s development saw County funding and logistical support as a key catalyst in raising the profile of these events.



Potential Policy Benefits

- County amenities increased
- Benefits of County’s diversity expanded



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Lack of funding mechanism to support this policy



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Increased number of cultural events
- Increased attendance at cultural events
- Increased revenue generated by cultural events
- Regional recognition and attraction of these Gwinnett events



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Develop initiatives to engage with and leverage the diversity of our community – Chamber of Commerce, Department of Community Services
- Develop criteria for promoting existing cultural facilities – Department of Community Services, Board of Commissioners
- Develop program to increase number of cultural outreach activities – Chamber of Commerce, Department of Community Services

Policy 5.6 – Expand Presence of “Arts Community”

As a “preferred place,” Gwinnett should feature a strong array of cultural attractions and businesses that support the arts. While most of these activities will be run by non-profits or private owners (e.g., art galleries, music venues and theaters, etc.), a county-wide organization is needed to promote and link their activities into a coordinated effort to enhance the County’s quality of life. Such an organization should view promoting the arts in Gwinnett as its primary mission. To be effective, such an organization should function somewhat like the Convention and Visitors’ Bureau with adequate private sector and County support to accomplish its mission.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased County amenities
- Take advantage of the County’s diversity
- Increased number of urban-acclimated professionals, empty-nesters, tech workers and affluent residents



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Establishing needed funding
- Developing long term marketing/promotion strategy



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Creation of arts authority or commission (or similar entity)
- County contribution to the arts authority or commission
- Increased number of cultural attractions and creative enterprises
- Increased attendance at Infinite Energy Center events



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Support nonprofit Artworks! Organization – Department of Community Services, Explore Gwinnett, Gwinnett Tourism Office

Policy 5.7 – Provide Incentives for Enhanced Open Space/Trails

Gwinnett will benefit from increasing the variety of ways that open space, sensitive environments, and local recreation space, including pedestrian and bike trails, can be preserved and protected. Some examples of incentives to the developer/builder include tax benefits, smaller lot sizes, increased densities, and reduced infrastructure costs as a result of clustered development. The inclusion of major greenways in the Unified Plan and tying open space enhancement to incentives in the Zoning and Development Regulations can facilitate the provision of open space through reservation or dedication.

Other options to facilitate the provision of open space include revising current zoning districts (modified and OSC) that allow smaller lots in exchange for common open space to strengthen their appeal and ability to provide more meaningful open space, and allowing a lot size reduction in any residential zoning district. This would be in exchange for an equivalent dedication of right-of-way for greenway development or recreation area in excess of definite requirements.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Increased County amenities
- Increased amount of protected open space
- More active open space provided



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Determining maintenance responsibility (and costs) of the local parks
- Possible conflict with current Development Regulations



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Revised regulations
- Increase in the amount of local, small-scaled parkland to meet a given target of all new open space provided (e.g., 5 percent to 10 percent)



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Determine the regulations or incentives/bonus requirements in relevant zoning districts – Planning & Development, Department of Community Services, Board of Commissioners
- Revise Development Regulations appropriately – Planning & Development, Board of Commissioners

Policy 5.8 – Create Trail Connections Between Existing Parks, Schools, Libraries, and Other Community Facilities as Appropriate

Gwinnett will benefit from increasing the connectivity of its parks, schools, libraries, and other community facilities by expanding its existing network of trails. Through adoption of its Trails Master Plan, the County has already taken a positive step towards achieving this goal.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Non-vehicular connections to County amenities and institutions
 - Reduction in roadway congestion
-



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Funding expansion of the trails system to connect County amenities and institutions
-



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Use of trails to get to various locations
-



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Engage CIDs to encourage inclusion of privately owned and maintained open spaces in areas where park space has traditionally been limited – Planning & Development with Department of Community Services
- Utilize and promote new zoning districts that have incentivized inclusion of open space and trail facilities – Planning & Development and Board of Commissioners
- Develop mechanisms for including usable common open space, parks, and other community features in new developments – Planning & Development, Department of Community Services, Board of Commissioners

Policy 5.9 – Ensure Protection of Gwinnett’s Environment, Recognizing That A Healthy Environment Is the Basis of a Desirable Community

While Gwinnett is largely built out, there remains undeveloped land scattered throughout the County, particularly in the eastern portion of the County’s boundaries. The County has also carved out over 9,000 acres of parkland, which is a great amenity to its residents and visitors alike.

As the County enters its next phase where focus must turn to redevelopment and revitalization of aging housing stock and commercial developments, it is important that preservation of the natural environment be considered to keep Gwinnett a desired place to live. The County should maintain requirements for tree protection, landscaping, greenspace/open space, stormwater, buffers, and other aspects of the natural environment that ensure its protection or in some cases, encourage and require its restoration. For instance, pocket parks or squares could be required in new, higher intensity mixed-use developments to enhance their urban feel and scale while providing residents and workers easy access to greenspace. Innovative stormwater facilities can provide a water feature and centerpiece of a town green or community park. For new developments, tree preservation requirements could be increased to discourage clear cutting of large parcels of land.



Potential Policy Benefits

- Preservation or creation of additional environmental amenities
- Spaces that encourage physical activity as well as social interaction amongst the County’s diverse population



Policy Challenges and Costs

- Increased costs to developers
- Maintenance of facilities and/or increased landscaping, especially within private developments



Measures of Effectiveness/Monitoring Benchmarks

- Amendments to Unified Development Ordinance
- Increase in the amount of greenspace throughout the County



Initiatives and Responsible Parties

- Evaluate County ordinances for protection of environment – Planning & Development, Department of Community Services