

GWINNETT COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA

RESOLUTION ENTITLED: 2045 UNIFIED PLAN ADOPTION

ADOPTION DATE: FEBRUARY 20, 2024

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.

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Name	Present	Vote
Nicole L. Hendrickson, Chairwoman	Yes	Aye
Kirkland D. Carden, District 1	Yes	Aye
Ben Ku, District 2	Yes	Aye
Jasper Watkins III, District 3	Yes	Aye
Matthew Holtkamp, District 4	Yes	Aye

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On motion of Commissioner Ku, which carried by a 5-0 vote, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the following Resolution:

**A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE GWINNETT COUNTY 2045 UNIFIED PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, Gwinnett County is subject to the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, requiring the County to develop a Comprehensive Plan as a policy document and guide for future development and capital investment decisions; and

**WHEREAS**, Gwinnett County is a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission, an agency created to provide regional planning and intergovernmental coordination in the metropolitan area of Atlanta; and

**WHEREAS**, Gwinnett County is required to update its Unified Plan every five years to maintain Qualified Local Government status that enables the County to be eligible for various financial resources available through state agencies; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2045 Unified Plan was prepared according to the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, and includes the following elements: Land Use, Economic Development, Housing, Sustainable Infrastructure, Transportation, Community Resources, Broadband, Community Goals, Needs and Opportunities, and Community Work Program; and

**WHEREAS**, Gwinnett County undertook an intensive public participation process including the residents, civic groups, real estate developers, business owners, environmental leaders, government staff, and elected officials; and

**WHEREAS**, Gwinnett County undertook an intensive public participation process including the residents, civic groups, real estate developers, business owners, environmental leaders, government staff, and elected officials; and

**WHEREAS**, the minimum public hearing requirements prescribed by state law have been met; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners finds that the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan provides a coordinated and comprehensive plan for the long-term goals, objectives, and priorities for Gwinnett County and also promotes the health, safety, convenience, order, prosperity, and general welfare of the present and future residents of Gwinnett County; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2045 Unified Plan was transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review on January 17, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs have completed their review and found the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan in compliance with the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, once adopted, the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan shall be utilized by the Board of Commissioners, the Gwinnett County Planning Commission and all Gwinnett County departments, agencies, and officials as the official guide in making decisions concerning the growth and development of Gwinnett County.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan, to be effective upon its adoption.

SO RESOLVED, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: *Nicole L. Hendrickson*  
NICOLE L. HENDRICKSON, Chairwoman

Date Signed: 2/20/2024

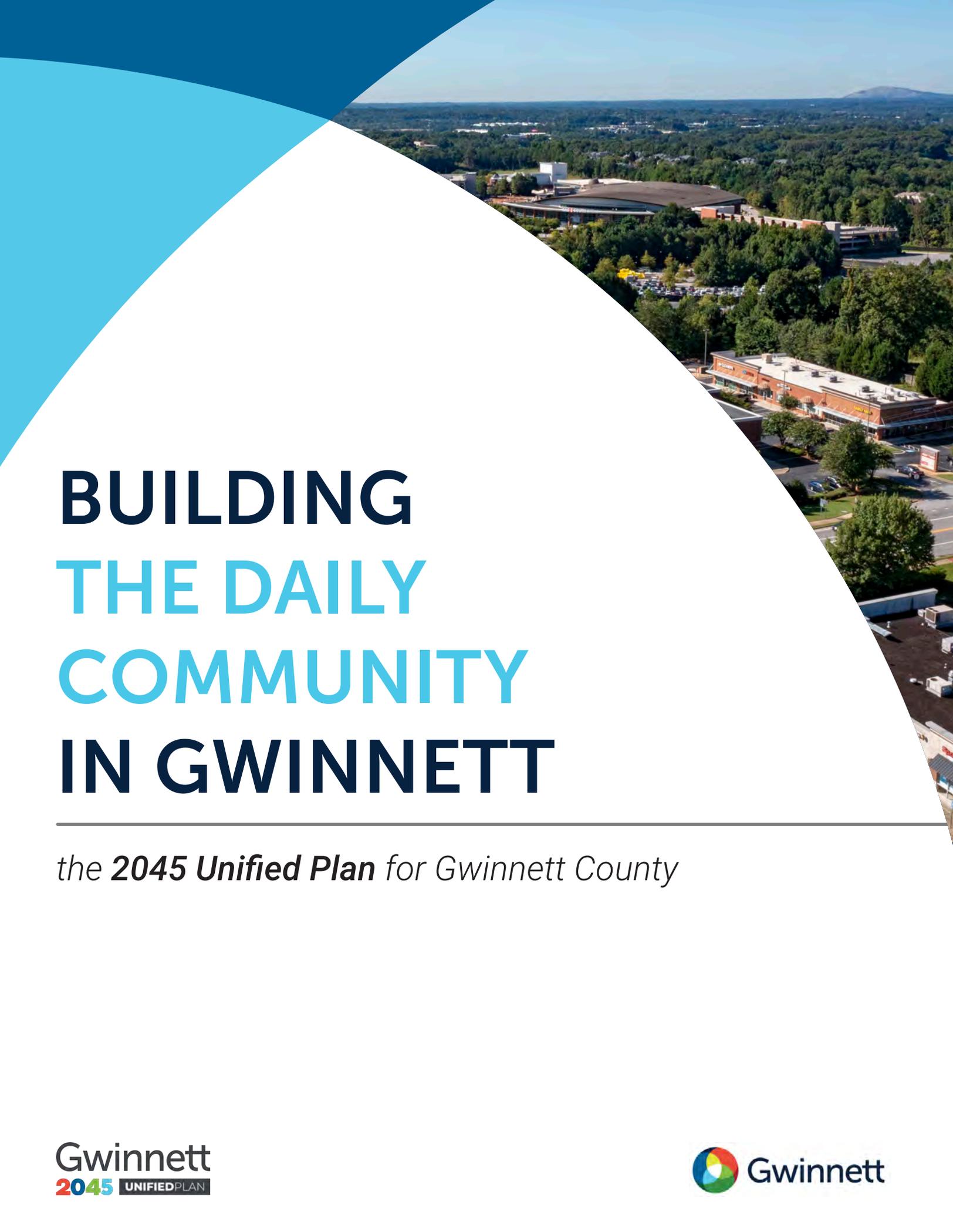
ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

*Tina M King*  
TINA KING, County Clerk



*James A. Cox*  
Deputy County Attorney



# BUILDING THE DAILY COMMUNITY IN GWINNETT

*the 2045 Unified Plan for Gwinnett County*

# Acknowledgments

## **GWINNETT COUNTY**

### **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

- » Nicole Love Hendrickson, Chairwoman
- » Commissioner Kirkland Carden, District 1
- » Commissioner Ben Ku, District 2
- » Commissioner Jasper Watkins, District 3
- » Commissioner Matthew Holtkamp, District 4

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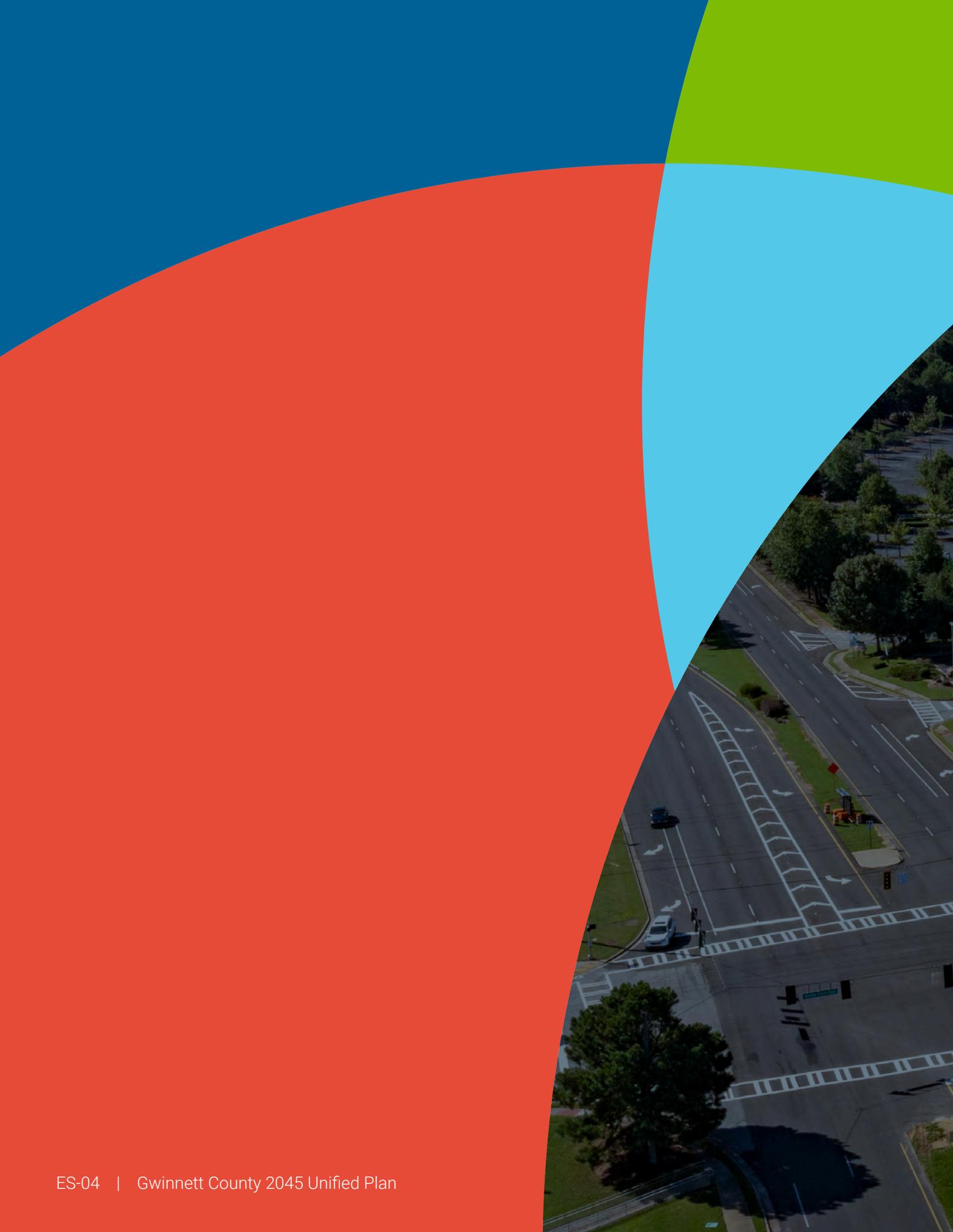
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Executive Summary

## INTRODUCTION

Gwinnett County's Unified Plan is the County's blueprint for the future. It sets the policy agenda for growth and development over the next 20 years by examining the County's current opportunities and challenges and anticipating new ones. Most of all, it is a tool that provides guidance for County staff, elected officials, and other leaders as they work to improve Gwinnett County for all its residents.

Gwinnett County is no stranger to change. It has grown quickly and steadily over the past several decades, transforming from a primarily rural and suburban county on the outskirts of Atlanta to an urbanizing place with a distinct identity. This plan focuses on how to accommodate Gwinnett's growing population while maintaining its high quality of life, encouraging development that is intentional and beneficial for communities. To that end, the plan is oriented around the idea of the Daily Community—a framework that imagines how Gwinnett's shopping centers and hubs of activity could be redeveloped to support new housing, connections, and amenities.

Using this framework, the 2045 Unified Plan explores issues related to land use, economic development, housing, transportation, sustainable infrastructure, and community resources. Within each element, guidance is provided on key issues, needs and opportunities, goals and strategies to address them, and key implementation actions. The plan builds upon the County's other studies and planning efforts, both completed and ongoing, especially in the realms of housing, transportation, and parks and open space.

The findings from each element were tested and revised through five design workshops in areas across Gwinnett. These Small Area Plans envision how specific areas of Gwinnett, of diverse character and intensity, could implement some of the 2045 Unified Plan's big ideas. Drawing from existing conditions and redevelopment potential, each plan explores draft redevelopment concepts that emphasize a mix of land uses, walkability, and creating memorable community centers for Gwinnett residents.

## THE DAILY COMMUNITY

Since the 1980s, Gwinnett's growth has followed a suburban development pattern: most of its housing consists of single family neighborhoods anchored by strip style retail and commercial centers. But while Gwinnett has a lot of existing centers already, there has been a desire to reimagine these spaces to better serve community needs. What would it look like for housing to be located within walking distance of retail and entertainment? What would it take to make it safe to walk or bike to the store as opposed to drive? What could a neighborhood park within walking distance look like?

The 2045 Unified Plan attempts to answer these questions through the Daily Community framework. Loosely inspired by the 15-Minute City concept, the Daily Community is one in which a resident can access work, goods, and services within a 15-minute trip of their home. This framework recognizes and makes space for the diversity of residents and places within Gwinnett County. By zooming in to the community scale, this plan provides clearer, more specific land use guidance. This approach creates great places, accommodates growth, and strengthens communities according to their preferences and needs.

# CONCEPT GRAPHIC FOR THE DAILY COMMUNITY



# PLAN ELEMENTS

The 2045 Unified Plan makes recommendations on six different but connected elements: land use, economic development, housing, sustainable infrastructure, transportation, and community resources. To envision where the County is headed, it is crucial to understand where the County is now regarding each of these elements.

## LAND USE

For the past several decades, Gwinnett County's population and economic growth has been swift and tremendous. Currently, Gwinnett is home to approximately 972,000 residents. That number is expected to increase to just over 1.5 million by 2045. Future housing unit demand is expected to grow accordingly. Today, Gwinnett faces two main issues:

- 1 Gwinnett County has more growth coming than its current policies can accommodate
- 2 One size fits all development no longer works in Gwinnett County

Planning for future growth requires Gwinnett to rethink its approach to development. Of the less than 10 percent of Gwinnett's land that is undeveloped, approximately 73 percent is zoned for single family detached residential. Recent development still generally favors single family residential, although denser forms of housing are on the rise.

To accommodate growth, the County must make it easier to redevelop existing areas to provide new forms of housing that embrace density and provide amenities. By doing so, Gwinnett will add more housing types that better reflect the needs of a diverse population.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Gwinnett is an economic powerhouse, boasting generally high household incomes and over 470,000 jobs in prized sectors such as healthcare, retail trade, transportation, and administrative fields. It is well connected to other jurisdictions within the Atlanta region, but maintains a distinct presence within the economic landscape. Gwinnett also has a strong entrepreneurial spirit, with an average business birth rate of 15.9, over four points higher than the nationwide average.

Gwinnett faces some economic development challenges. Notably, 60 percent of its residents commute outside the County for work. One driving factor is the misalignment of education levels and high skill job opportunities: 65 percent of Gwinnett residents have a secondary education or higher, while the majority of jobs in Gwinnett only require a high school diploma. At the same time, the median household income in the county is declining. To address these issues, Gwinnett must work to attract a broader range of high quality job opportunities within its borders.

## HOUSING

Gwinnett currently faces a significant housing shortage. Most of the County's housing units were built between 1970-2000; like many other jurisdictions across the state and nation, new development in the County has not kept pace with demand. While Gwinnett's owner occupancy rate is healthy (66 percent), the vacancy rate fell to 4 percent in 2021. High demand for housing has pushed home values and rents higher, exacerbating affordability challenges and cost burden. In recent years, the County has taken a

more active role in addressing housing issues. In 2022, its new Housing and Community Development Division released a Housing Action Plan that outlines strategies for the development of affordable housing. The County should continue to build out its governance by establishing partnerships with developers and exploring funding sources that allow for direct intervention. To meet the demand, about 8,500 housing units are needed every year. Gwinnett must embrace more housing of different types—especially missing middle housing, which would add gentle density in scale with Gwinnett’s neighborhoods. The County must also facilitate higher density development in targeted areas where it can be supported by infrastructure.

## **SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

For many years, Gwinnett has been a leader in thoughtful and sustainable water and wastewater infrastructure. The stewardship of Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River is important for both Gwinnett and communities downstream. The County manages 4,000 miles of water distribution pipes and 3,220 miles of wastewater collection pipes. Though smaller in size, the wastewater collection system is incredibly complex and provides services to approximately 180,000 accounts, while 74,000 are served by private septic systems.

Despite its sizable investment in infrastructure, development has created challenges for Gwinnett’s infrastructure maintenance and led to disparities in environmental equity. Disadvantaged communities in Gwinnett have fewer trees and more impervious surfaces than others, and they face a greater flood risk from climate change impacts. To address this, the County has launched initiatives to study how these issues affect its resources.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is an essential element in the lives of everyone who lives, works, conducts business, and passes through Gwinnett County. Interstates 85 and 985 and Highway 316 provide vehicular access across Gwinnett and have driven economic growth for decades. About 74 percent of Gwinnett commuters drive alone to work, while 11 percent carpool and 11 percent work from home; although this is a better balance of modes than many parts of the Atlanta region, it still signals an overreliance on single occupancy vehicles and creates considerable congestion at peak periods.

While surface transportation is the main method of travel in Gwinnett, the County has made significant strides toward expanding its active and public transportation infrastructure as well. The 2017 Countywide Trails Plan identifies a future core trail network, as well as other aspirational trails. The recently adopted Transit Development Plan will facilitate the growth of Gwinnett County’s fixed route and microtransit services, such that every resident will have access to transit. Lastly, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan identifies roadway safety and capacity improvements. The 2045 Unified Plan integrates all of these visions and focuses on how to build last mile connections that serve Daily Communities. The County must commit to implementing these far reaching plans, and ensure that land use decisions align with the densities that these projects are intended to support.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Gwinnett County is known throughout the Atlanta metropolitan region for its high quality of life, and the scale of the County’s community resources is impressive. The County manages 10,000 acres of parkland across 51 parks, with 145 miles of multiuse paths. The Gwinnett County Public School district includes 142 schools organized

into 20 clusters, with a robust Key Performance Indicator tracker to evaluate current progress. County led health and wellness services include the OneStop program and senior centers, which serve thousands of residents.

The challenge Gwinnett will face through 2045 is how to provide more resources at scale with its

growth. Two subsets of the population—youth and seniors—are projected to grow significantly, requiring intentional planning for scaling up services. Additionally, future development should incorporate some community resources into its designs, especially related to public space.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

Through the Daily Community concept, the 2045 Unified Plan sets goals and recommends actions based on the following core principles:

- 1 Promote and facilitate redevelopment
- 2 Encourage development of context appropriate, mixed use community centers throughout the county
- 3 Direct density to areas with sewer capacity and anticipated multimodal transportation investments
- 4 Cultivate a more diverse job market

- 5 Incentivize the development of more housing and a broader range of housing types
- 6 Promote economic mobility by supporting entrepreneurship and expanded transportation options
- 7 Invest in community amenities that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy

These core principles guide the development of each element, ensuring their recommendations work in service of a unified vision.

## NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND GOALS

Each element follows a similar format designed to offer a holistic look into Gwinnett County's current conditions and future needs and opportunities.

- 1 Analysis of Existing Conditions
- 2 Needs and Opportunities

- 3 Goals and Best Practices
- 4 Implementation Actions

By analyzing existing conditions and incorporating public feedback, the planning team identified key needs and opportunities for each element. These insights then informed the development of goals and recommended actions for the County to advance.

# LAND USE

## MAIN FINDINGS

- 1** GWINNETT HAS MORE GROWTH COMING THAN ITS CURRENT POLICIES CAN ACCOMMODATE
- 2** ONE SIZE FITS ALL FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT NO LONGER WORK FOR GWINNETT

## NEEDS

- 1** Strategic development and redevelopment
- 2** Alignment of growth with infrastructure
- 3** Amenities, retail, and workplaces closer to residences
- 4** Protection of natural resources
- 5** Recognition of Gwinnett's unique communities
- 6** Clear, balanced, flexible land use policy framework
- 7** Increased coordination with cities regarding future land use planning

## OPPORTUNITIES

- 1** Reducing barriers to redevelopment
- 2** Capitalizing on benefits of new development
- 3** Increasing housing mix
- 4** Planning for land use at the community scale
- 5** Transforming underutilized parcels into enjoyable places
- 6** Making desirable development types buildable by right



## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### EXPAND OPTIONS FOR CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT

- Incentivize redevelopment of underutilized sites in and around suburban commercial centers
- Promote quality, connected urban design in new development and redevelopment



### STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS OF DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS

- Establish preferred criteria for development, based on type and scale
- Establish a Microdevelopment Program and make desired development types permitted by right
- Educate decisionmakers on the proven benefits of new forms of development



### MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN COMMUNITY CENTERS

- Identify low hanging fruit opportunities for incremental redevelopment ideas
- Partner with diverse communities to ensure representation and avoid commercial gentrification



### DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK THAT PROTECTS REMAINING NATURAL AND RURAL PARTS OF GWINNETT COUNTY FROM OVERDEVELOPMENT

- Conserve land with high ecological productivity, difficult development challenges, or both
- Cluster new development around community services and amenities
- Use sewer and road infrastructure as a growth management tool

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Develop a Gwinnett County Land Bank with three priorities: (1) provide public private investment for redevelopment projects, (2) hold easements for pedestrian and transit connections, and (3) identify potential options for housing on land currently owned by the County
- Create design guidelines that promote denser forms of development, prioritizing good urban design principles that incrementally help stitch together suburban neighborhoods
- Develop preferred ranges for design criteria tailored to each community using the future development framework of the 2045 Unified Plan
- Identify funding sources for facelift activities, including façade improvements, code compliance projects, and small scale public space creation for underperforming properties
- Develop neighborhood level plans for other community centers in Gwinnett County using the 2045 Unified Plan's Small Area Plans as a model
- Develop partnerships with conservation organizations to identify first tier conservation projects
- Update Unified Development Ordinance to align with recommended land use categories and facilitate redevelopment in appropriate areas

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## MAIN FINDINGS

- 1 **GWINNETT'S TARGET INDUSTRIES ARE IN FLUX**
- 2 **INVESTMENT IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS CRUCIAL**
- 3 **ENTREPRENEURSHIP SHOULD BE A COUNTYWIDE FOCUS**

### NEEDS

- 1 Higher wage jobs for educated populations
- 2 Realignment of target industries
- 3 Retention of younger, educated talent
- 4 Thoughtful redevelopment of existing assets
- 5 Stronger racial equity
- 6 Housing affordability
- 7 More robust transportation and connectivity
- 8 Resources for businesses to scale
- 9 Workforce development
- 10 Support for small businesses

### OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Tapping into countywide entrepreneurial spirit
- 2 Strengthening economic development alignment
- 3 Leveraging concentration of college graduates
- 4 Continuing investment into innovation assets
- 5 Exploring redevelopment and retrofitting
- 6 Increasing connectivity and walkability
- 7 Leveraging Georgia's strong outdoor economy
- 8 Investing in arts and culture
- 9 Creating a more global brand

## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### PROMOTE INVESTMENT AT THE DAILY COMMUNITY SCALE

- Incentivize and facilitate unique attractive development
- Accommodate growth through housing and transportation infrastructure



### ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND TALENT

- Establish a thriving job market
- Amplify Gwinnett's brand
- Connect businesses to market demand and data insights



### PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MOBILITY

- Foster a culture of innovation and creativity
- Develop targeted programs to support underrepresented communities
- Connect workforce development to the county's shifting economy

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Steer investment toward commercial redevelopment areas to create more people scaled, mixed use Daily Community centers
- Utilize strong but flexible land use guidelines to dictate which areas are primed for Daily Community infrastructure investment and which should be preserved as more traditionally suburban and exurban
- Explore incentives for housing development, such as density bonuses and Tax Allocation Districts
- Continue to expand multimodal options into the transportation system, with an emphasis on walkability
- Develop a comprehensive program that offers financial support for young workers and graduates to live and work in Gwinnett County
- Identify and implement targeted incentives that foster the growth of research and development and innovation oriented companies, creating a thriving ecosystem for such industries
- Continue to build out the existing Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, both in its geographical presence(s) and service offerings
- Assemble support for a business incubator program and pilot with local startups
- Develop mentorship and resource sharing programs that connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to experienced business leaders and professional service providers
- Explore physical community entrepreneurship hubs for home-based small business owners to use in selling their goods

# HOUSING

## MAIN FINDINGS

- 1 **GWINNETT HAS A SIGNIFICANT HOUSING SHORTAGE**
- 2 **DEMAND IN GWINNETT REMAINS HIGH DESPITE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES**
- 3 **TRENDS ARE MOVING AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL, SINGLE FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS**

### NEEDS

- 1 More housing development
- 2 Larger supply of lower income housing
- 3 Increase in missing middle housing options
- 4 Higher volume of multifamily development in the right places
- 5 Increased support for nonprofit housing development
- 6 More formalized housing governance infrastructure
- 7 Education for housing developers
- 8 Variety of housing types
- 9 Increased housing for seniors
- 10 Innovative solutions for infill and redevelopment
- 11 Increased funding for mixed income and affordable housing projects

### OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Capitalizing on demand for new housing development
- 2 Catalyzing projects from regional housing developers
- 3 Reducing barriers to housing development
- 4 Growing the new Housing and Community Development Division
- 5 Involving stakeholders in housing governance
- 6 Incentivizing housing development
- 7 Encouraging high quality housing development
- 8 Embedding affordability into future development
- 9 Prioritizing density and Daily Community concepts
- 10 Redeveloping and retrofitting existing developments
- 11 Tying housing to infrastructure

## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### BUILD OUT HOUSING GOVERNANCE

- Convene a group of community stakeholders focused on affordable housing
- Develop educational programming related to housing development and its relationship to affordability
- Garner support for housing coalition



### STREAMLINE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

- Consider expediting permits and waiving fees for development that meets specific standards
- Build out housing resource hubs for developers and County staff



### ENSURE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- Consider quasigovernmental solutions like affordable housing trust funds or land trusts
- Explore affordable housing policies for new development, such as affordability impact statements and inclusionary zoning
- Promote missing middle housing development



### ADVOCATE FOR HOUSING CHOICES

- Align land use policies and regulations to accommodate more housing variety
- Renew housing standards to encourage rehabilitation for older units



### ALLOCATE FUNDING TO HOUSING

- Explore funding structures that can boost development, such as TADs and Housing Opportunity Bonds

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Partner with community groups to build out educational programming, including town halls on housing and presentations to elected officials and residents
- Found an Accessory Dwelling Unit Resource Center that encourages homeowners to build ADUs on their property and offers resources to help interested homeowners navigate the process
- Build partnerships with community members and organizations developing offmarket housing for seniors, unhoused individuals, and others
- Align housing priorities with land use policy and make updates to the Unified Development Ordinance where appropriate

# SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

## MAIN FOCUS AREAS

- 1 EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURE BASED ON SMART GROWTH
- 2 CHALLENGES OF RAPID URBANIZATION
- 3 RESILIENCY AND EQUITY

### NEEDS

- 1 Alignment between land use policy and sewer basin plans
- 2 Inclusion of climate change effects in infrastructure planning
- 3 Protection of sensitive environmental areas
- 4 Alignment of stormwater regulations with mixed use development realities
- 5 Consistent distribution of tree canopy
- 6 Expansion of green infrastructure
- 7 Improved management of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) on private property

### OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Improving infrastructure to accommodate infill and redevelopment
- 2 Coordinating between departments to strengthen development review process
- 3 Strengthening wetlands and watershed protection
- 4 Expanding tree canopy on private lands
- 5 Investing in legacy Environmental Justice communities
- 6 Pursuing sustainable design for projects across sectors

## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### ALIGN WATER, WASTEWATER, AND STORMWATER PLANNING WITH DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

- Use policy and rate setting tools to incentivize growth in areas well served by infrastructure
- Adjust stormwater regulations to promote creative solutions for redevelopment projects
- Promote community design choices that result in efficient water use



### PLAN FOR RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS THAT PROTECT NATURAL ASSETS

- Utilize climate data to inform infrastructure facility planning
- Implement best practices from the Metro Water District's 2022 Water Resources Management Plan



### REDUCE IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

- Promote retrofit opportunities of surface parking
- Encourage tree planting
- Build capacity for maintenance of private green stormwater systems



### FOSTER GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- Develop a menu of best practices for green infrastructure within private development
- Provide transparency for how green infrastructure is performing

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Ensure that P&D staff coordinate with DWR to discuss findings of the Sewer Basins Studies
- Update the calculations within the water and sewer planning studies using the growth projections from the 2045 Unified Plan
- Adjust infrastructure plans to prioritize improvements in locations where the 2045 Unified Plan anticipates more intense development/redevelopment
- Upon completing Gwinnett's wetlands inventory, evaluate the need for a new overlay district or other regulatory tool and present the findings to the Board of Commissioners
- Study social sustainability metrics, like the availability of green spaces, and identify solutions to address disparities observed between areas; metrics should include areas prone to flooding, heat island effect, limited tree canopy, and other related items
- Identify and map environmentally sensitive areas for use as a cross-reference when proposed developments are under review

# TRANSPORTATION

## MAIN FOCUS AREAS

- 1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
- 2 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
- 3 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### NEEDS

- 1 Safer walking and bicycling environment
- 2 Greater mix of destinations accessible by shorter trips
- 3 More roadways designed for all users
- 4 Slower roadway speeds
- 5 More alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips
- 6 Stronger last mile connectivity
- 7 New development that supports transit

### OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Provide a safe, comfortable walking and biking environment
- 2 Promote land use patterns that support active transportation
- 3 Utilize redevelopment projects to add Complete Street features
- 4 Improve safety and reduce speeding along major corridors
- 5 Invest in transit to reduce trip times
- 6 Provide last mile transit connections
- 7 Align land use policies with transit planning and service implementation

## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### INCREASE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Adopt standards to improve safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists
- Integrate active transportation into developments and public transportation to create shorter routes



### ENSURE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PROJECTS ENABLE MOBILITY FOR ALL

- Establish standards for transit improvements identified in TDP
- Review and consider enhancing current Complete Streets policy



### CONTINUE COUNTERMEASURES TO REDUCE SPEEDING AND ACCIDENTS

- Develop safety action plan, possibly through Safe Streets and Roads for All grant
- Pursue GDOT lump sum safety program funds for improvements



### IMPROVE TRANSIT TO COMPETE WITH PRIVATE VEHICLE TRIPS

- Implement and evaluate TDP recommendations and adjust services based on performance



### INTEGRATE TRANSIT INTO LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

- Incorporate transit access within designs for redevelopment and new development
- Target growth along major transit corridors and around transit stations

## TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY FOR THE DAILY COMMUNITY

- Follow action items for full implementation of the CTP, TDP, and Trails Plan
- Fully coordinate and collaborate with all regional transit service providers, especially on fares and schedules
- Provide dedicated staff time for coordinating multiple forms of transportation, such as on demand ride services, biking, paratransit, and other first/last mile options in new developments
- Take advantage of technology, apps, and social media to promote alternative modes and provide realtime information on services
- Identify high priority, customer facing improvements such as reduced wait times and service availability
- Review development regulations and overlay districts to ensure multiple modes are addressed
- Incorporate Complete Street principles into new roadway projects and development
- Secure new, dedicated revenue to meet Ride Gwinnett's capital and operating needs.
- Secure new, dedicated revenue to pay for additional active transportation safety features within the roadway right of way
- Revise streetscape standards and typical details to encourage a higher quality environment for walking and biking

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## MAIN FOCUS AREAS

- 1 SCALING SERVICES FOR ANTICIPATED GROWTH
- 2 STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS

### NEEDS

- 1 Maintain public safety response times
- 2 Dedicate staff for arts and culture
- 3 Provide specialized support for seniors
- 4 Adjust public space policy
- 5 Integrate education within Daily Communities

### OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Tying new public space creation with redevelopment
- 2 Requiring public art within Daily Community centers
- 3 Promoting accessibility for all
- 4 Utilizing County buildings for multiple purposes
- 5 Sharing technology and data to aid in safety planning
- 6 Improving youth experiences outside of school

## GOALS AND BEST PRACTICES



### COLLABORATE BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS AND PARTNERS TO SCALE UP COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Increase collaboration with partners to deliver quality services
- Ensure new public spaces support comfort, safety, and sense of place for all residents



### INFUSE COMMUNITIES WITH CONTEXT APPROPRIATE GREENSPACE

- Incentivize quality public spaces within private redevelopment
- Expand shared space within the public realm, including in street rights of way
- Expand and connect new public spaces along linear corridors, including trails



### **MAINTAIN RESPONSE TIMES AMIDST INCREASES IN CALL VOLUME**

- Share resources across departments
- Increase public safety access into redevelopment designs through eyes on the street



### **STRENGTHEN DAILY COMMUNITY IDENTITIES THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE**

- Identify underutilized assets in active areas
- Provide dedicated staff time and funding for artistic and cultural workflows



### **INVEST IN SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY CENTERS**

- Establish strong connections between Daily Community centers, neighborhoods, community facilities, and schools
- Find ways for educators to live in the neighborhoods they serve



### **DEVELOP THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO INCREASE HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

- Pursue policies that create accessibility/promote aging in place
- Create more opportunities for active transportation

## **KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

- Develop a cross-departmental program that promotes information sharing that makes new building types possible, such as mixed use projects and increasingly vertical buildings
- Complete a feasibility study for implementing park impact fees
- Develop public realm and greenspace pattern book, design guidelines, and standards.
- Establish policies and procedures that systematically integrate the Parks and Recreation Division into projects led by other Gwinnett Departments
- Update design guidelines with input from public safety officials and distribute them to local developers
- Hire an Arts and Culture Manager to ensure Gwinnett's focus on arts and culture is organized and formalized
- Begin exploring educator supportive housing programs such as vouchers or the creation of new housing types close to schools
- Invest in regular programming that temporarily or permanently protects active transportation facilities from cars to promote health and change perceptions about nonvehicular movement

# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Daily Community concept is the foundation of Gwinnett’s Future Development Policy and Future Development Map. This framework sorts every parcel within Gwinnett into one of three types: urban corridors, villages, or halos. Figure 1 shows how these types are distributed across Gwinnett County.

**URBAN CORRIDORS** describe areas along Gwinnett’s major highways that have the highest intensities of growth. These include retail, industrial, office, institutional, and residential uses.

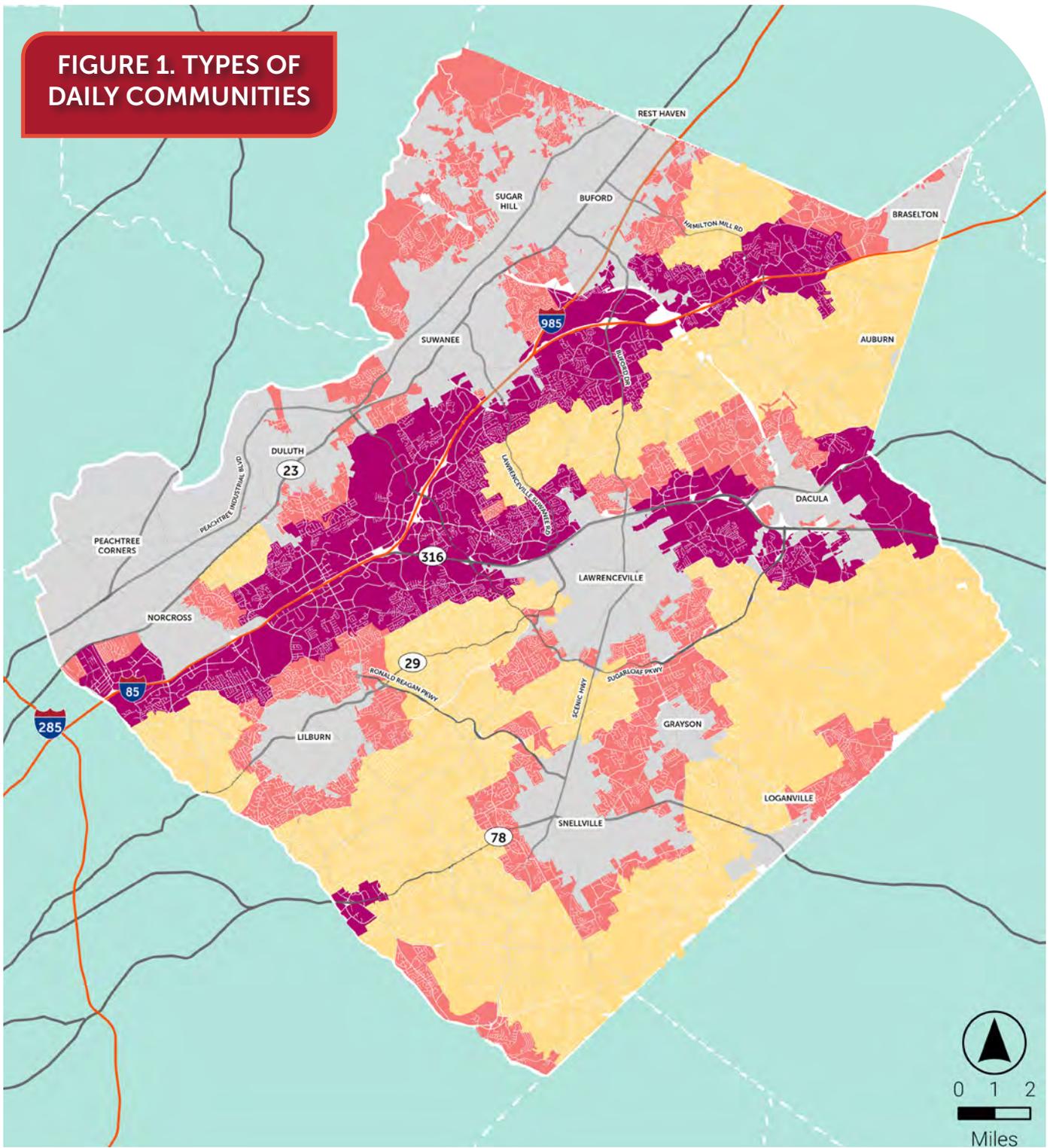
**VILLAGES** describe areas of the County designed to meet residents’ daily needs. They include a center and surrounding neighborhoods where pedestrian connectivity is a high priority.

**HALOS** are typically adjacent to one of Gwinnett’s 16 incorporated areas; they function like villages, but most are oriented toward centers in incorporated areas.

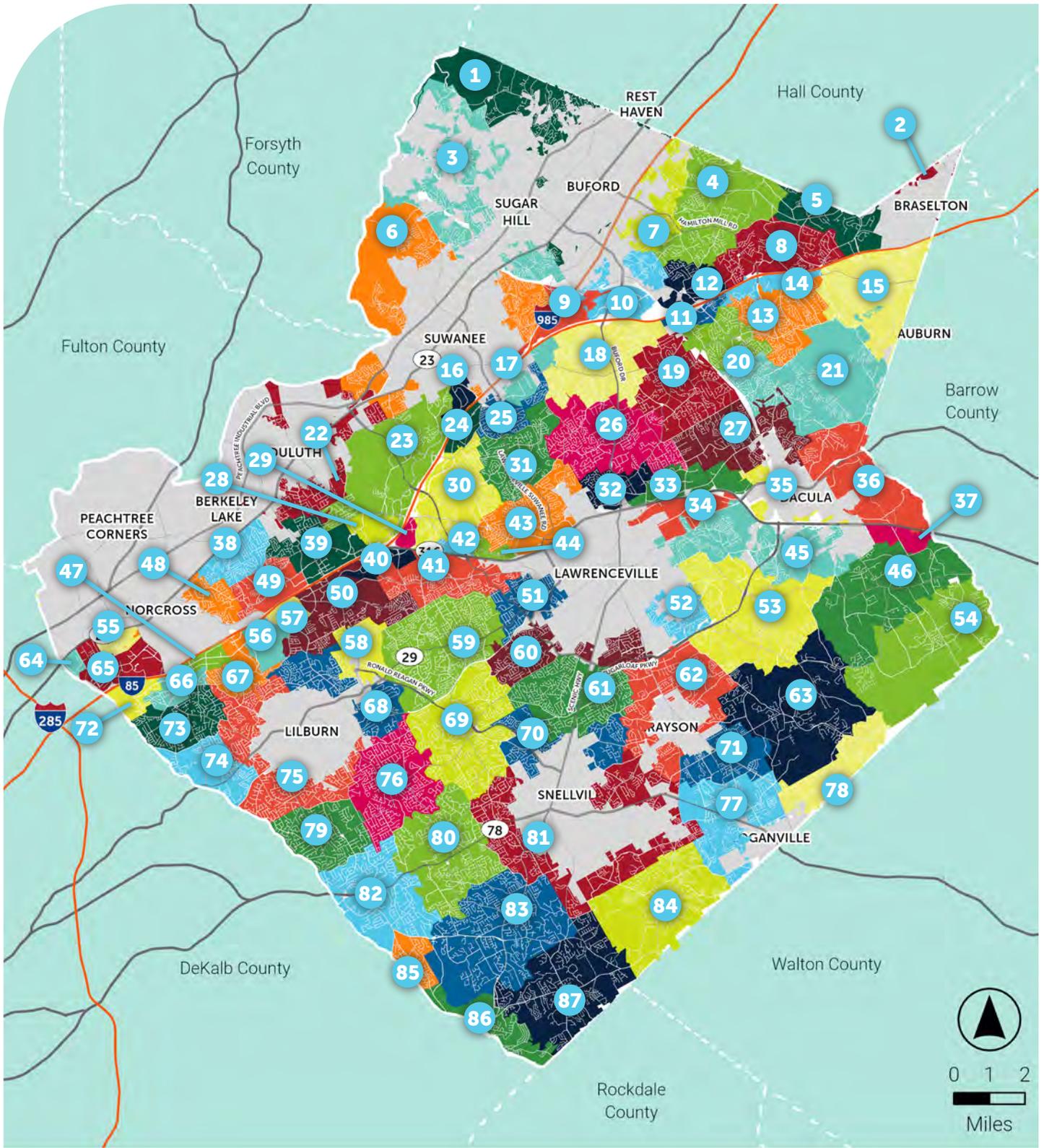
All Urban Corridors, Villages, and Halos are divided into distinct Daily Communities based on their geography (Figure 2, page ES-26). Furthermore, each parcel within each Daily Community is assigned a specific future land use category based on several parameters, including existing character, infrastructure access, proximity to future transit, and proximity to future trail corridors. (More information on specific land use categories can be found on pages 29-89.)



**FIGURE 1. TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES**



- Urban Corridors
- Villages
- Halos
- Incorporated Areas



**FIGURE 2.**  
**GWINNETT'S DAILY**  
**COMMUNITIES**

# GWINNETT'S DAILY COMMUNITIES

- 1 Buford Halo
- 2 Braselton Halo
- 3 Sugar Hill Halo
- 4 Thompson Mill
- 5 Duncan Creek
- 6 Suwanee Halo
- 7 Bogan
- 8 Sardis Church
- 9 Wayne Hill
- 10 Mall of Georgia
- 11 Little Ivy
- 12 Gravel Springs
- 13 Hamilton Mill
- 14 Mill Creek
- 15 Wheeler Creek
- 16 Satellite North
- 17 Horizon Industrial
- 18 Coolray
- 19 Old Peachtree
- 20 Mountain Crossing
- 21 Mulberry
- 22 Duluth Halo
- 23 Gas South
- 24 Northbrook
- 25 Horizon Village
- 26 Ridgewood
- 27 Dacula Village
- 28 Northmont Boggs
- 29 Newpoint
- 30 Sugarloaf
- 31 Dean Taylor
- 32 Allendale
- 33 Progress Center
- 34 Airport Industrial
- 35 Dacula Halo
- 36 Rowen
- 37 Drowning Creek
- 38 Pinckneyville
- 39 Gwinnett Place
- 40 Breckinridge
- 41 Sweetwater
- 42 Gwinnett Tech
- 43 Riverside Market
- 44 Lakes Parkway
- 45 Alcovy
- 46 Harbins
- 47 Oakbrook Parkway
- 48 Norcross Halo
- 49 Satellite South
- 50 Pleasant Hill
- 51 Monfort
- 52 Simonton
- 53 Martins Chapel
- 54 Bold Springs
- 55 Mechanicsville
- 56 Quarry
- 57 Shackleford
- 58 Plaza Las Americas
- 59 Bethesda
- 60 South Lawrenceville
- 61 Webb Gin
- 62 Grayson Halo
- 63 Ozora
- 64 Doraville Halo
- 65 Gateway
- 66 Jimmy Carter
- 67 Indian Trail
- 68 Berkmar
- 69 Five Forks
- 70 Scenic Highway
- 71 Grayson Village
- 72 Gwinnett Village
- 73 Rockbridge
- 74 Crossings
- 75 Lilburn Halo
- 76 Parkview
- 77 The Lakes
- 78 Loganville Halo
- 79 Mountain Park
- 80 Killian Hill
- 81 Snellville Halo
- 82 Park Place
- 83 Centerville
- 84 Rosebud
- 85 Waters Edge
- 86 Stonebridge
- 87 Lenora

# URBAN CORRIDORS

Gwinnett’s Urban Corridors—loosely defined as the areas near I-85, I-985, and SR 316—are the most infrastructure rich parts of the county. Historically, they have been targeted for the highest intensity. They are targeted for further investment, particularly around future plans for improved multimodal transportation.

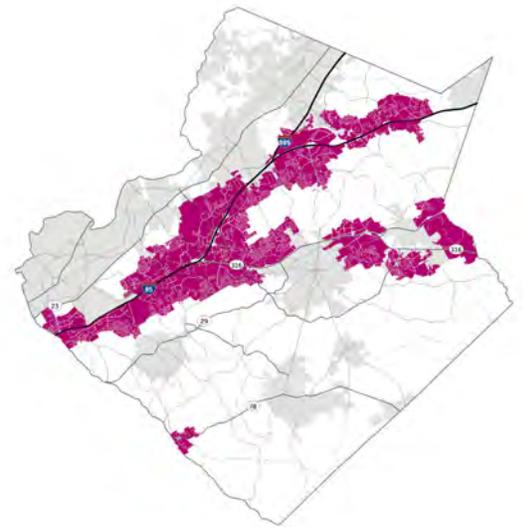
## URBAN CORRIDOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Category	Description
Urban	A mix of housing, retail, and workplaces
High	Higher intensity development in centers near major transportation infrastructure
Medium	Relatively high intensity corridors with medium scale housing types
Low	The least intensive Urban community—a transition in intensity to single family neighborhoods or other lower density uses

Category	Description
Workplace Center	Areas restricted to workplaces only
Heavy	Reserved for intense industrial uses that need to be buffered from other nonindustrial uses
Light	Areas envisioned to be a mix of light industrial, flex, and office spaces

Category	Description
Legacy	Mostly residential areas with some nonresidential uses where appropriate
Low Mix	A mix of housing: primarily missing middle types and limited nonresidential opportunities
Traditional+	Residential areas on sewer within 1 mile of a Village Center or Urban Corridor, with allowances for gentle density through Accessory Dwelling Units
Traditional	Residential areas similar to Traditional+ but without current sewer access

MAP OF URBAN CORRIDORS



# VILLAGES

The bulk of unincorporated Gwinnett has been organized into Villages that aim to meet the daily needs of residents within a 15 minute trip (by the mode of transportation most liked used based on the level of the center). These Villages have defined centers and are surrounded by neighborhoods where pedestrian improvements are a priority.

## VILLAGES FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Category	Description
Center	Mixed use cores at the heart of each Daily Community
Large	Higher density development with a rich mix of housing, retail, and office
Medium	Medium density development with a modest mix of housing, retail, and office
Small	Lower density suburban development with some retail with abundant housing
Rural	Rural in character, with cottages and some nonresidential options

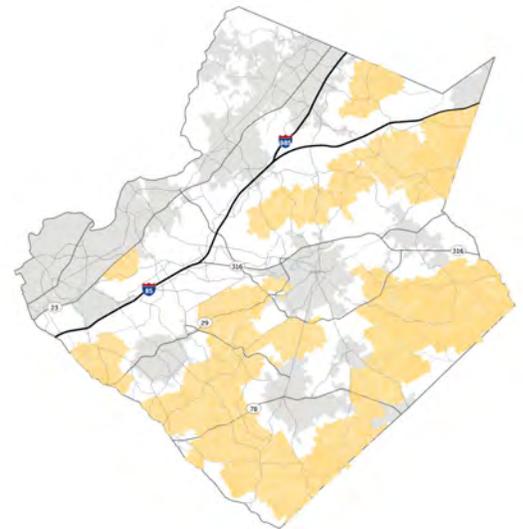
Category	Description
Neighborhoods	Residential areas surrounding centers
High Mix	A full mix of uses around large/medium centers, closer to urban corridors and cities
Low Mix	A mix of housing: primarily missing middle types and limited retail opportunities
Traditional+	Residential areas on sewer, with allowances for gentle density through ADUs
Traditional	Residential areas similar to Traditional+ but without current sewer access

Category	Description
Edges	The outskirts of Villages and Halos, beyond a walkable distance to the center
Suburban Residential	Developed, residential areas without sewer unlikely to change
Suburban Nonresidential	Nonresidential areas that developed in a traditional suburban pattern
Rural	Areas that are currently undeveloped, large lot residential, or farmland

CONCEPTUAL GRAPHIC FOR VILLAGES



MAP OF VILLAGES

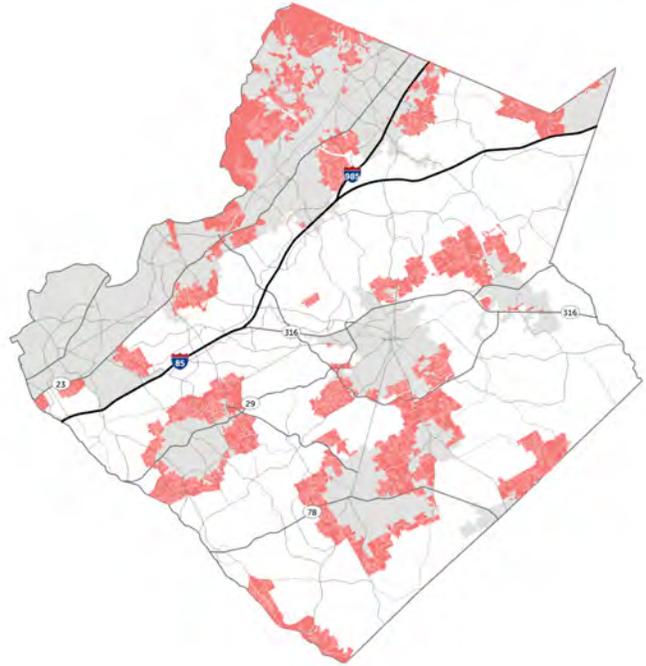


# HALOS

Halos are areas of incorporated Gwinnett that are adjacent or very proximate to a city or neighboring county. The thought is that residents and workers in these areas probably consider that city center their daily community.

The future development type in Halos can vary widely based on which jurisdiction the parcel is near. For more urbanized cities in south and west Gwinnett, the future development type can be an urban corridor type or a denser village neighborhood type. For less intensively developed parts of the county, neighborhood and edge future development types are more common.

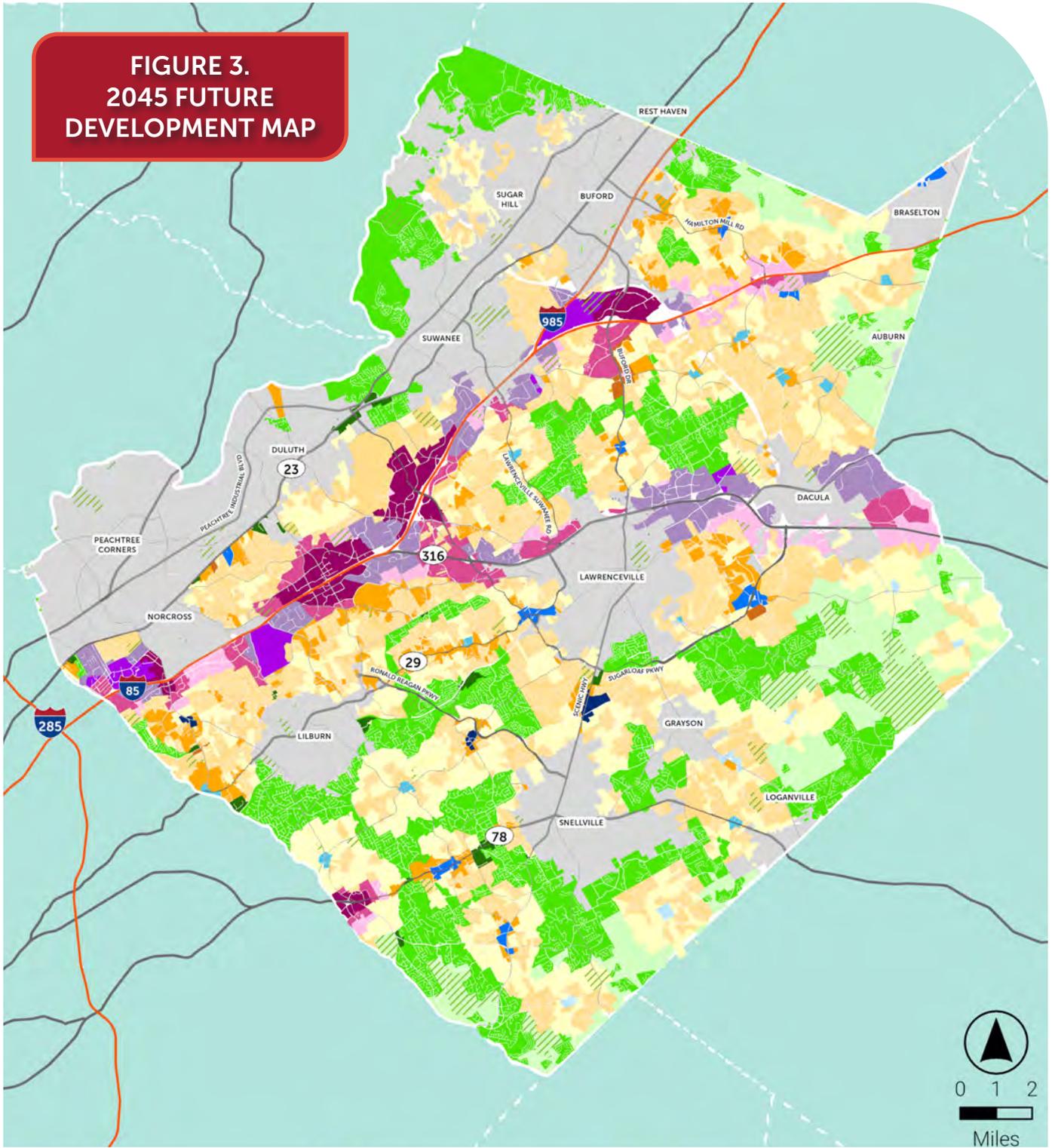
Halos can also have flares. These occur where a smaller type of commercial center (not the downtown) is located closer to the edge of the city. Due to its geography, it acts as a Village Center for residents of unincorporated Gwinnett.



# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

Using this framework, the Future Development Map provides a future development vision for Gwinnett County. Figure 2 (page ES-26) shows the kaleidoscope of Gwinnett’s Daily Communities, while Figure 3 adds another layer of detail by assigning a category to every parcel within each Daily Community.

**FIGURE 3.  
2045 FUTURE  
DEVELOPMENT MAP**



**Future Development Type**

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #800080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Urban - High      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Center - Large  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8B4513; border: 1px solid black;"></span> High Mix     | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00FF00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Suburban Residential    |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF00FF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Urban - Medium    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #0000FF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Center - Medium | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Low Mix      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #006400; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Suburban Nonresidential |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFB6C1; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Urban - Low       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00CED1; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Center - Small  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFDAB9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Traditional+ | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Rural                   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8A2BE2; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Workplace - Heavy | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Center - Rural  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFFFE0; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Traditional  |   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #9370DB; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Workplace - Light |   |  |   |

# 01





# THE DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

# Introduction

## **THE DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK**

Gwinnett County is no stranger to change. It has grown quickly and steadily over the past several decades, transforming from a primarily rural and suburban area on the outskirts of Atlanta to an urbanizing place with a distinct identity. The 2045 Unified Plan focuses on how to accommodate Gwinnett’s growing population while maintaining its high quality of life, encouraging development that is intentional and beneficial for communities.

To that end, the plan is oriented around the idea of the Daily Community—a framework that imagines how Gwinnett’s shopping centers and hubs of activity could be redeveloped to support new housing, connections, and amenities. By planning at the community scale, the Daily Community Framework attempts to provide clear, specific land use guidance.

This chapter begins with a description of five key components found in great Daily Communities (pages 5-9). Then, broad types of Daily Communities found within Gwinnett are explained (pages 15-28) before detailed guidance is provided on specific Future Development categories (pages 29-89).

FIGURE 1.1: CONCEPT GRAPHIC FOR THE DAILY COMMUNITY



# THE BIG FIVE COMPONENTS OF GREAT DAILY COMMUNITIES

What makes a great community? It is no coincidence that the same development and design principles that support multimodal transportation networks (see the Gwinnett County Transit Development Plan) are also those that create vibrant, healthy places where a variety of people want to live. The following five characteristics are the key components to get right. Guidance for each component is included for all future development types.



Development intensity is an essential part of a community’s health. Though it sometimes has a bad reputation, intensity that abides by good, people-oriented design and appropriate intensities can translate into livable and highly desirable communities. A basic level of intensity attracts more retail/restaurant options, supports different modes of transportation like walking and biking, and promotes healthy lifestyles. It also uses land more efficiently; investment in targeted intensity can help protect rural and natural areas from sprawling development.

The County measures density through dwelling units per acre and floor area ratios. Essentially, a FAR is a ratio of the amount of building on a site compared to the site’s size. For example, a parcel with an FAR of 0.5 could look like a single-story building covering half the site, or a two-story building covering one quarter of the site.

Below is an example of a typical FAR calculation:

A building of 30,000 square feet on 2 acres (87,120 square feet):

$$30,000 / 87,120 = 0.34 \text{ FAR}$$

The chart on the opposite page illustrates how a variety of FARs look on a site in terms of the general size and mass.



A mix of land uses is critical for vibrant places. Mixing land uses helps create activity from morning to night, and prevents the visual monotony of single uses stretching for miles. This is one reason why the 2045 Unified Plan does not specify only one land use per parcel, but instead provides a range. Providing an element of choice is more likely to produce a mix of use types over time.

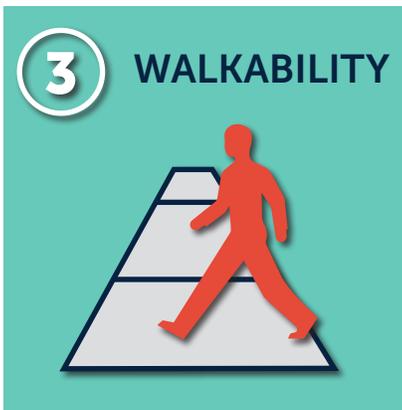
The gold standard is a vertically mixed use building. This may not always be feasible, but the goal of this type of development is to build a community rich in different uses, intensities, and activity.

**INTENSITY AS REPRESENTED BY FAR**  
 (GRAPHICS PRODUCED BY TSW)

**FLOOR AREA RATIO**

		0.5	0.75	1.0	1.5
LOT COVERAGE	50%				
	75%	N/A			
	100%	N/A	N/A		

		2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5
LOT COVERAGE	50%				
	75%				
	100%				



When it is safe, comfortable, and exciting for residents to walk, their communities prosper. Several elements help create walkable places:

- Streets scaled for people: roadways usually no more than five lanes wide with signalized crossings, pedestrian islands/bulb-outs, slow travel speeds, and on-street parking
- A pleasant walking environment: streetscape amenities like trees/shade, landscaping, furnishings, and lighting
- Short block lengths (block perimeters with a maximum of 1,600 feet), preferably in gridlike patterns; avoiding cul-de-sacs or winding streets; when large blocks cannot be avoided or retrofitted, mid-block crossings should be considered



People friendly design is what makes a place feel comfortable and beautiful. This happens when buildings and sites are built with people having first priority over vehicles. This can mean many things:

- Placing buildings close to or next to the sidewalks/street
- Making sure buildings have windows along sidewalks, clear entries, and attractive facades
- Trees that provide shade, beauty, and a sense of enclosure
- Attractive streetscapes with wide sidewalks, benches, lighting, and plantings
- Minimizing visual clutter, like overhead utilities or excessive signage
- Public spaces that are attractive and comfortable



Managed parking is not easy. It can be difficult to strike the balance between the realistic need for parking with the desire for pedestrian-friendly, walkable areas.

Most importantly, the use of large surface parking lots should be minimized. When impossible to avoid, they should be located behind buildings rather than in front. Other forms of parking should be encouraged, such as on-street parking or shared parking. For denser land uses, structured parking is preferred though it is highly costly and only financially feasible for very large projects.

These five components provide the foundation for building great Daily Communities. They provide the underlying structure of a place that is then filled with businesses, entertainment options, residences, jobs, public spaces, and other amenities. Once these are established, residents can then enjoy these spaces, interacting with them in various ways: shopping, spending leisure time, attending events, and more. Building people friendly communities starts with the form, and continues through additional investments. The graphic below captures these elements together in one scene.

## **FIVE COMPONENTS OF DAILY COMMUNITIES**

*(GRAPHICS PRODUCED BY TSW)*



- 1** Modestly dense multifamily surrounds a public plaza, providing a customer base for nearby retail and encouraging walkability
- 2** Buildings along a curving road have ground-floor storefronts for businesses and offices that can serve residents' daily needs
- 3** Wide sidewalks with vegetated buffers provide an aesthetic way to improve pedestrian safety and make it more pleasant to walk
- 4** Prioritizing spaces for people, such as plazas and fountains, increases the area's attractiveness and encourage people to linger
- 5** Parking is accommodated within the road right of way on this thoroughfare, while other dedicated spots are directly in front of businesses

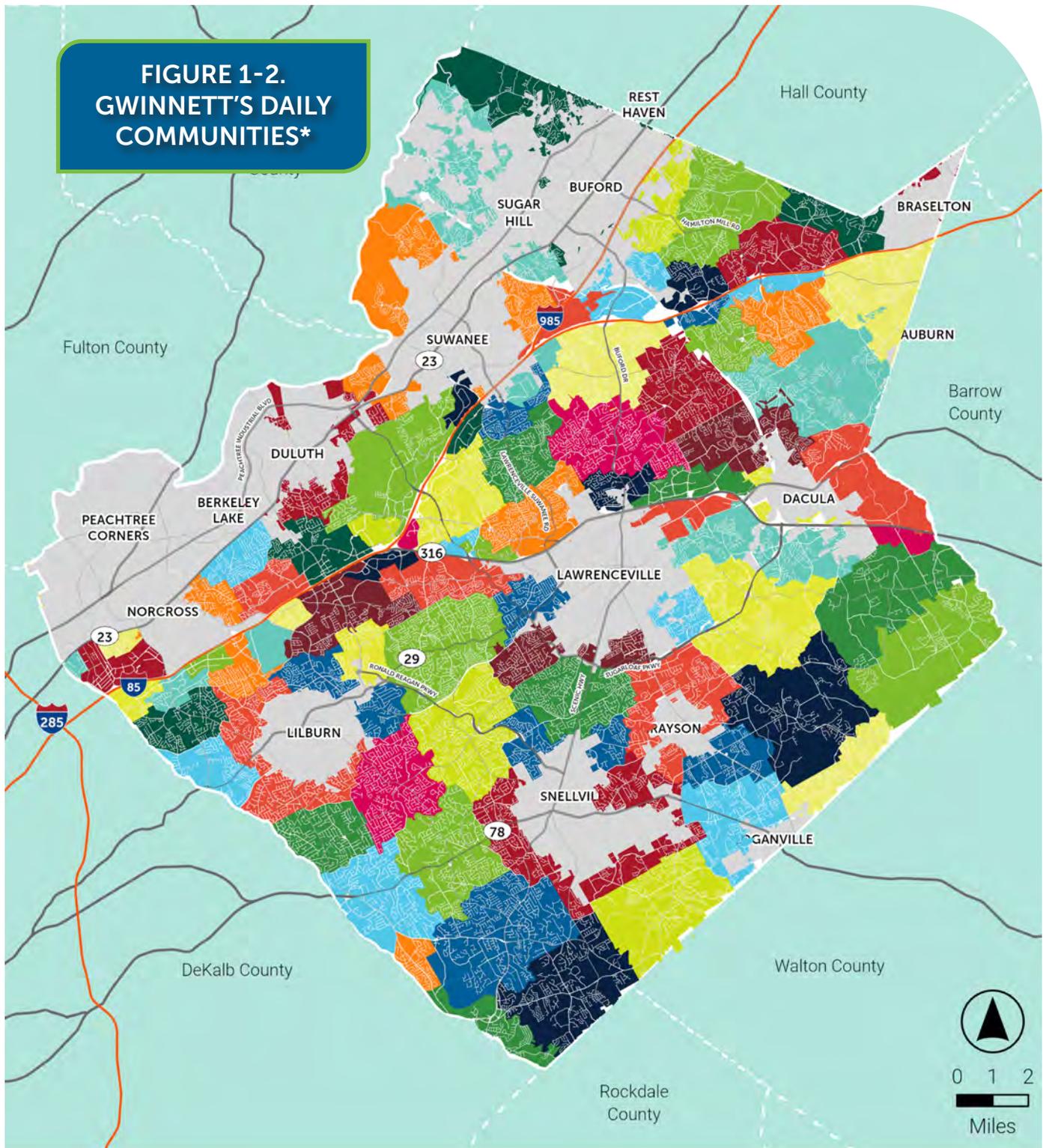
# Daily Communities in Gwinnett

## THE DAILY COMMUNITY

Since the 1980s, Gwinnett County's growth has followed a suburban development pattern. Most of its housing consists of single family neighborhoods anchored by strip style retail and commercial centers. But while Gwinnett has a lot of existing centers already, there has been a desire to reimagine these spaces to better serve community needs. What would it look like for housing to be located within walking distance of retail and entertainment? What would it take to make it safe to walk or bike to the store as opposed to drive? What could a neighborhood park within walking distance look like?

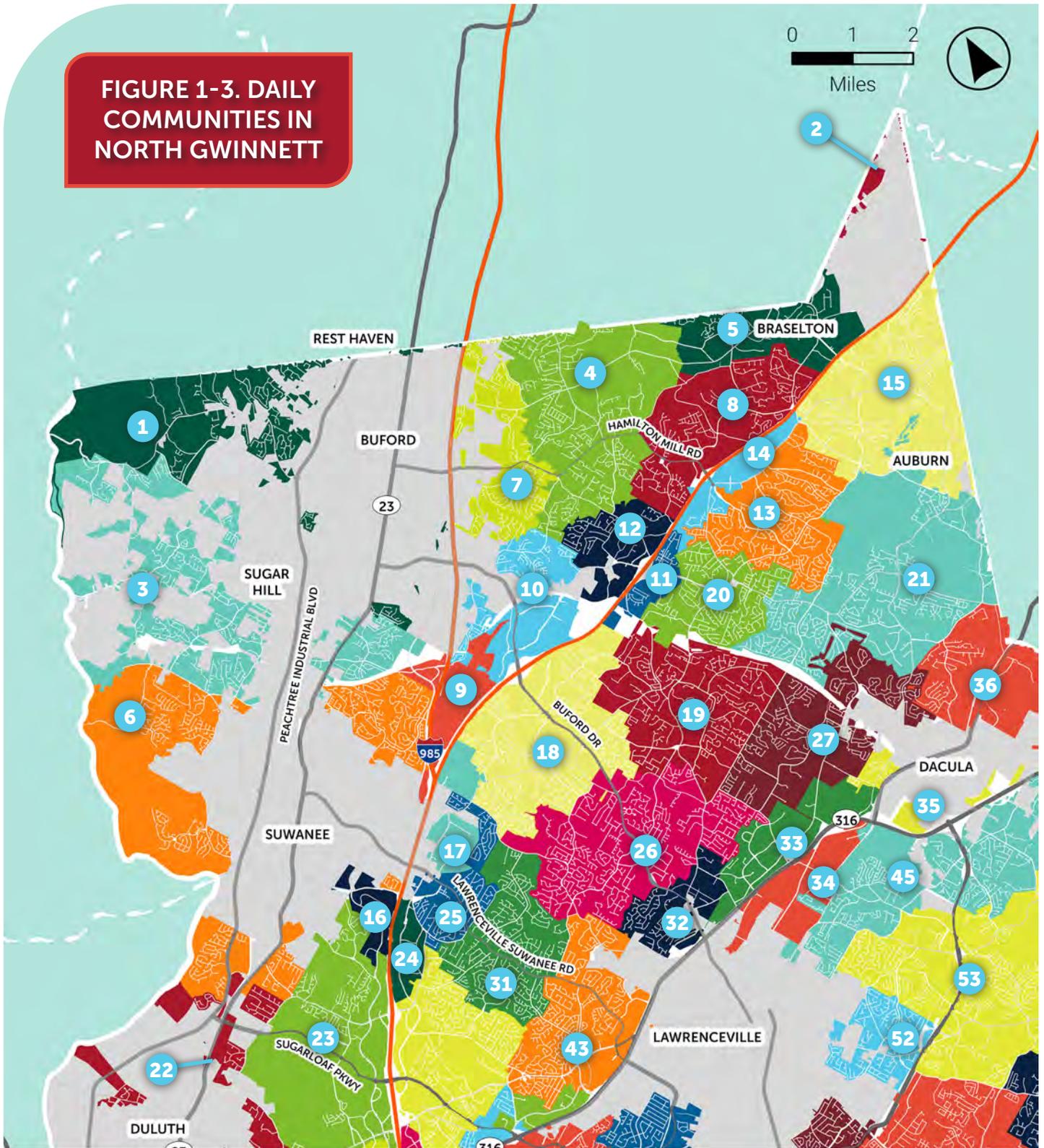
Using the framework developed for the 2045 Unified Plan, the planning team has identified 87 Daily Communities within Gwinnett (Figure 1-2). Each of these communities is distinct and adds to the diversity of residents and places within Gwinnett. This chapter offers recommendations regarding future development that can reflect this diversity and reinforce community desires and aesthetics while improving quality of life through bringing amenities and strategic redevelopment to these areas.

**FIGURE 1-2.  
GWINNETT'S DAILY  
COMMUNITIES\***

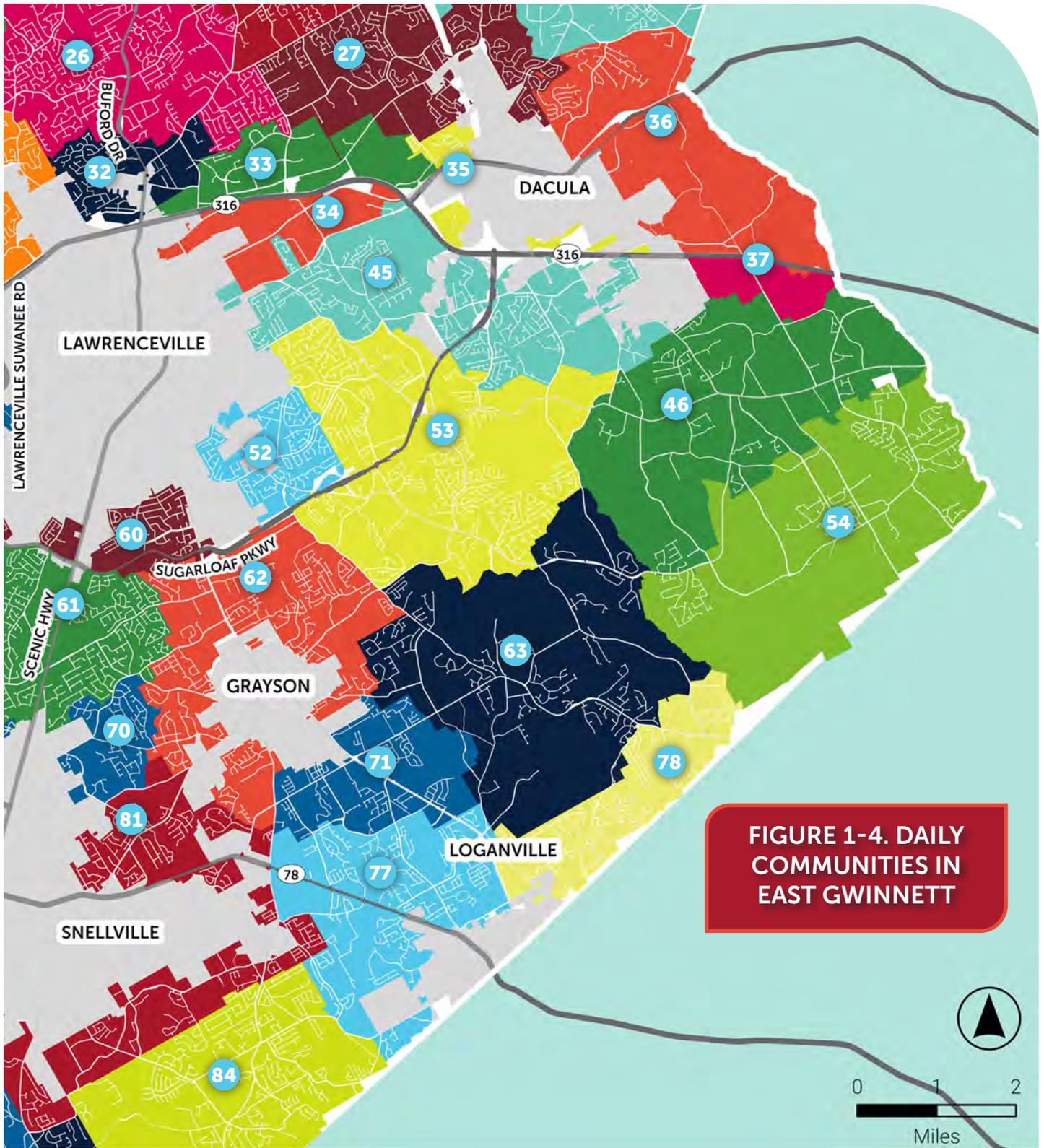


*\*Detailed maps of each Daily Community with labels can be found on pages 11-14.*

**FIGURE 1-3. DAILY COMMUNITIES IN NORTH GWINNETT**

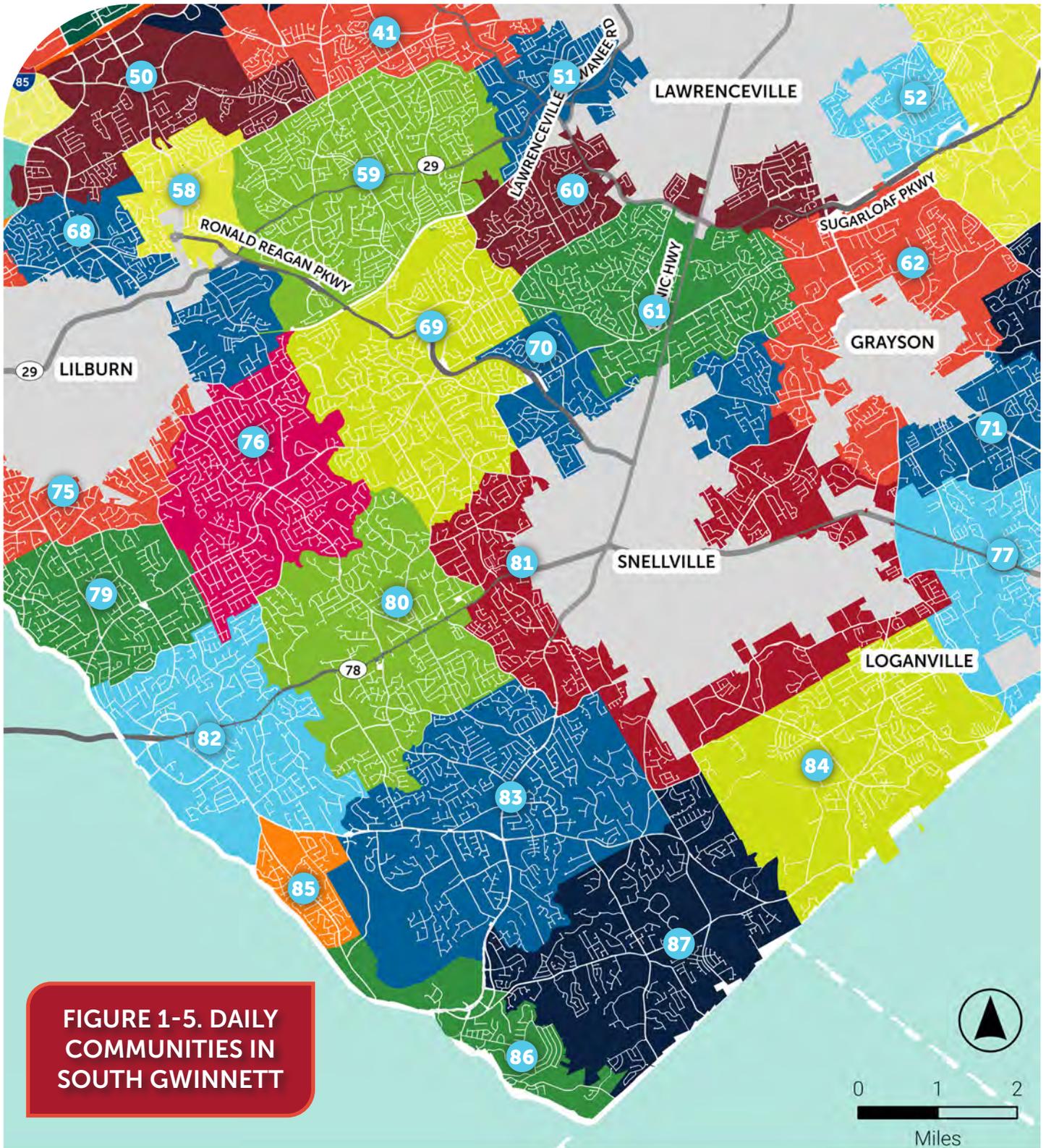


- |                   |                    |                       |                      |                    |                       |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Buford Halo     | 7 Bogan            | 13 Hamilton Mill      | 19 Old Peachtree     | 25 Horizon Village | 34 Airport Industrial |
| 2 Braselton Halo  | 8 Sardis Church    | 14 Mill Creek         | 20 Mountain Crossing | 26 Ridgewood       | 35 Dacula Halo        |
| 3 Sugar Hill Halo | 9 Wayne Hill       | 15 Wheeler Creek      | 21 Mulberry          | 27 Dacula Village  | 36 Rowen              |
| 4 Thompson Mill   | 10 Mall of Georgia | 16 Satellite North    | 22 Duluth Halo       | 31 Dean Taylor     | 43 Riverside Market   |
| 5 Duncan Creek    | 11 Little Ivy      | 17 Horizon Industrial | 23 Gas South         | 32 Allendale       | 45 Alcovy             |
| 6 Suwanee Halo    | 12 Gravel Springs  | 18 Coolray            | 24 Northbrook        | 33 Progress Center | 52 Simonton           |
|                   |                    |                       |                      |                    | 53 Martins Chapel     |

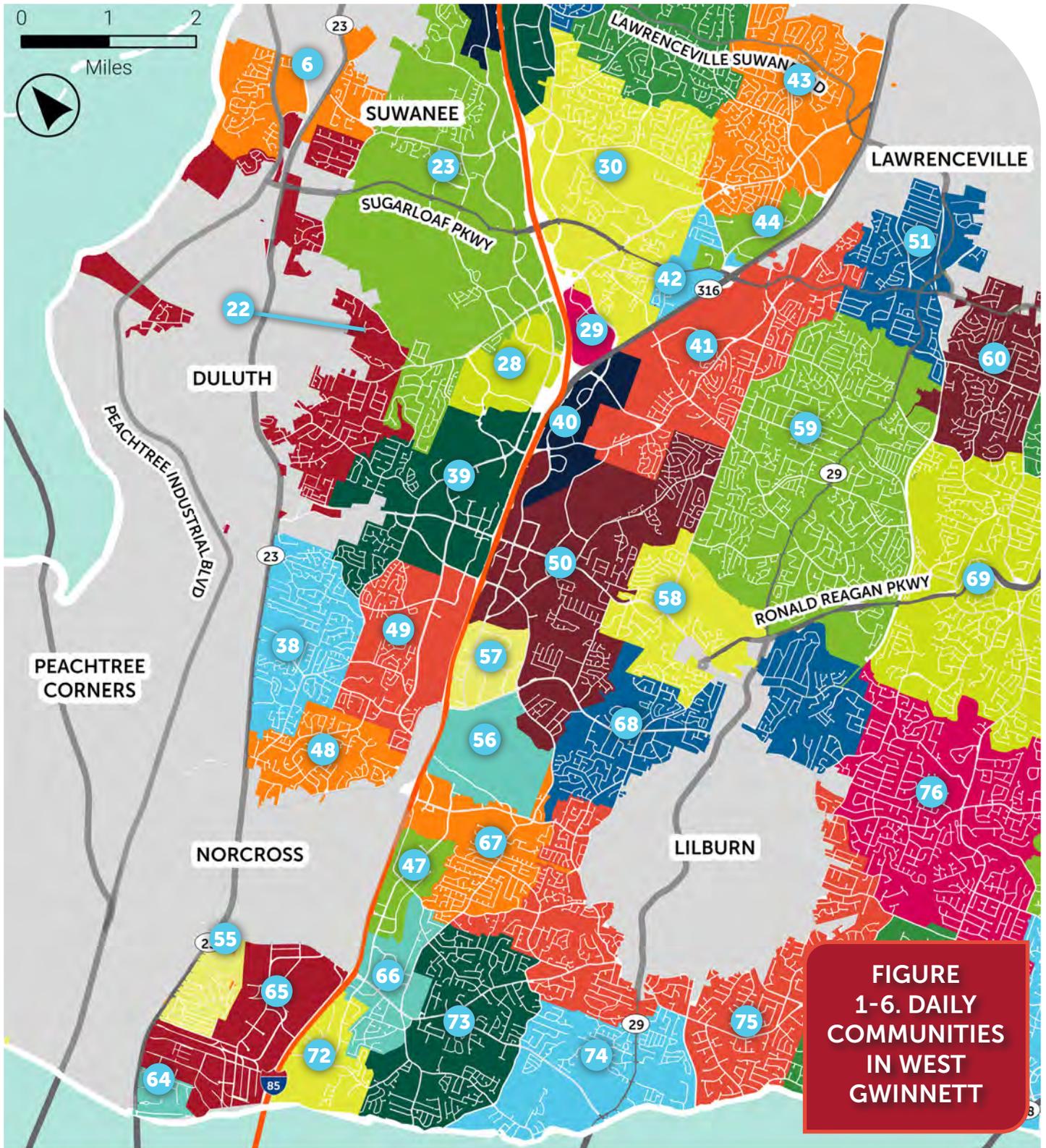


**FIGURE 1-4. DAILY COMMUNITIES IN EAST GWINNETT**

- |                       |                   |                        |                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 26 Ridgewood          | 36 Rowen          | 54 Bold Springs        | 71 Grayson Village |
| 27 Dacula Village     | 37 Drowning Creek | 60 South Lawrenceville | 77 The Lakes       |
| 32 Allendale          | 45 Alcovy         | 61 Webb Gin            | 78 Loganville Halo |
| 33 Progress Center    | 46 Harbins        | 62 Grayson Halo        | 81 Snellville Halo |
| 34 Airport Industrial | 52 Simonton       | 63 Ozora               | 84 Rosebud         |
| 35 Dacula Halo        | 53 Martins Chapel | 70 Scenic Highway      |                    |



- |                       |                        |                    |                    |           |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 41 Sweetwater         | 60 South Lawrenceville | 71 Grayson Village | 81 Snellville Halo | 87 Lenora |
| 50 Pleasant Hill      | 61 Webb Gin            | 75 Lilburn Halo    | 82 Park Place      |           |
| 51 Monfort            | 62 Grayson Halo        | 76 Parkview        | 83 Centerville     |           |
| 52 Simonton           | 68 Berkmar             | 77 The Lakes       | 84 Rosebud         |           |
| 58 Plaza Las Americas | 69 Five Forks          | 79 Mountain Park   | 85 Waters Edge     |           |
| 59 Bethesda           | 70 Scenic Highway      | 80 Killian Hill    | 86 Stonebridge     |           |



**FIGURE 1-6. DAILY COMMUNITIES IN WEST GWINNETT**

- |                    |                     |                    |                        |                     |                 |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 6 Suwanee Halo     | 39 Gwinnett Place   | 48 Norcross Halo   | 58 Plaza Las Americas  | 67 Indian Trail     | 73 Rockbridge   |
| 22 Duluth Halo     | 40 Breckinridge     | 49 Satellite South | 59 Bethesda            | 68 Berkmar          | 74 Crossings    |
| 23 Gas South       | 41 Sweetwater       | 50 Pleasant Hill   | 60 South Lawrenceville | 69 Five Forks       | 75 Lilburn Halo |
| 28 Northmont Boggs | 42 Gwinnett Tech    | 51 Monfort         | 64 Doraville Halo      | 72 Gwinnett Village | 76 Parkview     |
| 29 Newpoint        | 43 Riverside Market | 55 Mechanicsville  | 65 Gateway             |                     |                 |
| 30 Sugarloaf       | 44 Lakes Parkway    | 56 Quarry          | 66 Jimmy Carter        |                     |                 |
| 38 Pinckneyville   | 47 Oakbrook Parkway | 57 Shackleford     |                        |                     |                 |

# The Daily Community Framework

The Daily Community framework is the foundation of Gwinnett County's Future Development Map. Broadly, there are three types of Daily Communities in Gwinnett (Figure 1-7):

## 1 URBAN CORRIDORS

Similar to the 2040 Unified Plan, areas along the Urban Corridors of Interstate 85, Interstate 985, and Highway 316 have the highest intensities of growth. Generally, these areas either consist of an urban mix of residential, commercial, and public uses or are set aside for workplaces. The emphasis is less on specific uses and more on the areas' form, particularly outside of the workplace centers.

## 2 VILLAGES

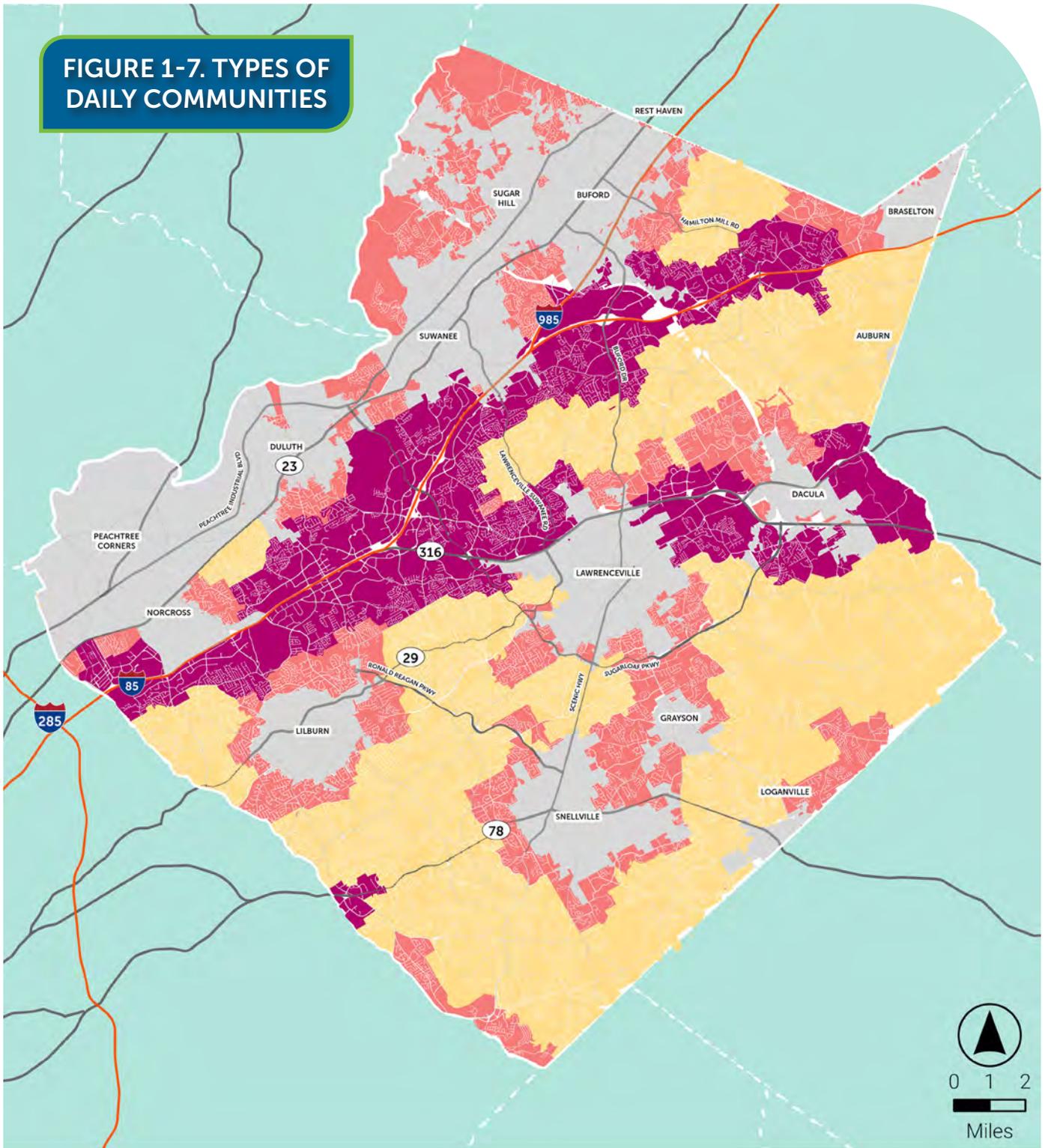
The bulk of unincorporated Gwinnett has been organized into Villages that aim to meet the daily needs of residents within a 15 minute trip. The mode varies depending on each Village's context, particularly how urbanized or rural it is. These Villages have defined centers and are surrounded by neighborhoods where pedestrian improvements are a priority.

## 3 HALOS

Given Gwinnett is home to 16 cities, the areas around each jurisdiction in the county need special consideration. Typically, these Halo areas include parts of unincorporated Gwinnett in which residents most likely look toward nearby cities to meet their daily needs. In many cases, these parcels lie directly adjacent to a city boundary, though some halos stretch farther away from city boundaries due to transportation connectivity or existing land use patterns.

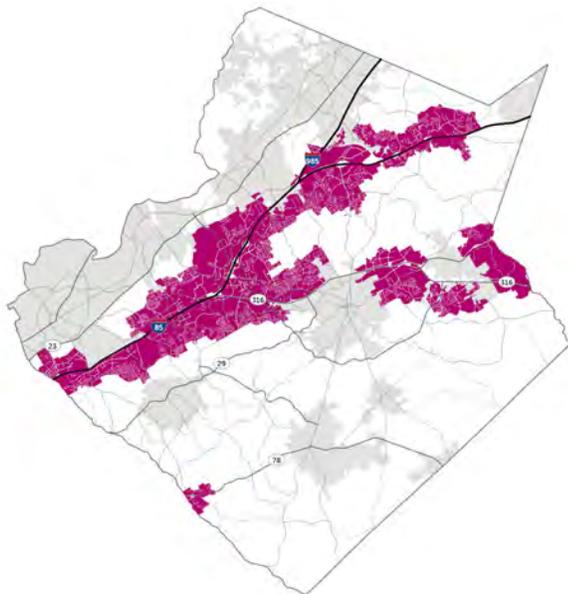
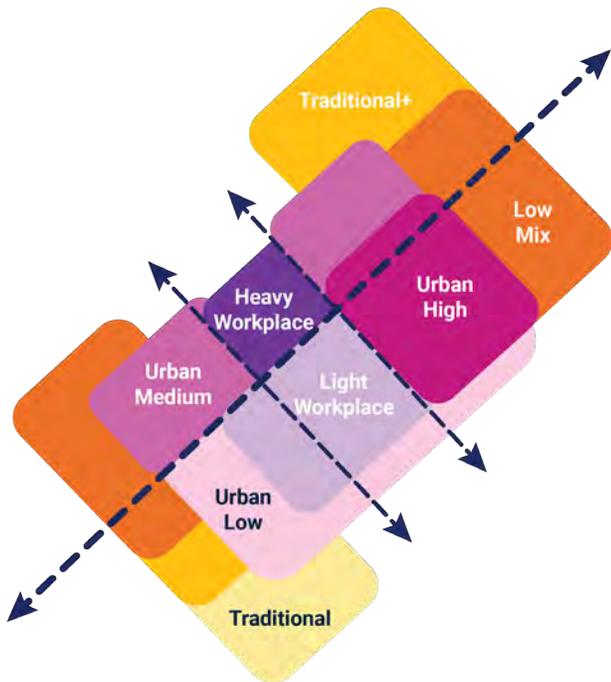
This chapter provides an overview of each Daily Community type as applied to Gwinnett's FDM.

**FIGURE 1-7. TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES**



- Urban Corridors
- Villages
- Halos
- Incorporated Areas

# 1 URBAN CORRIDORS



## OVERVIEW

The Urban Corridors of Gwinnett County—loosely defined as the areas near I-85, I-985, and Highway 316—are the most infrastructure rich parts of the county. For years, they experienced high density development.

Over the next 20 years, these areas are targeted for further investment, particularly regarding future plans for improved multimodal transportation and redevelopment.

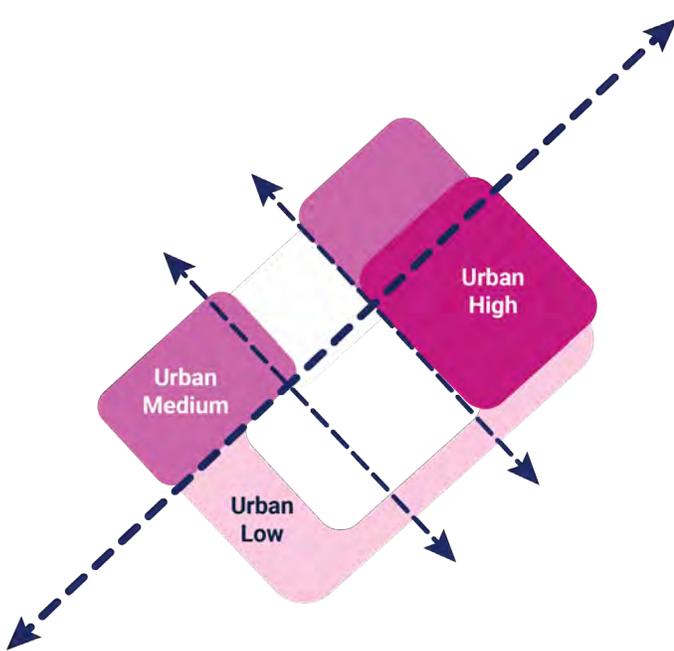
Within the Daily Community framework, Urban Corridors typically have three types of development patterns:

- 1 URBAN
- 2 WORKPLACE CENTER
- 3 LEGACY

## URBAN CORRIDOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Urban	Workplace Center	Legacy
High	Heavy	Low Mix
Medium	Light	Traditional+
Low		Traditional

# 1 URBAN CORRIDORS



## URBAN

Urban areas are envisioned to be higher intensity development areas with a range of residential, retail/entertainment, office, and public/institutional uses.

In these areas, the form of development takes precedence over its specific use, with the aim being to create people friendly design, walkability, and sufficient density to support a multimodal transportation network. This approach prioritizes design, placing less emphasis on the site's ultimate use.

In fact, the greater the mix of uses—not just in a single site or project, but overall—the healthier the community.

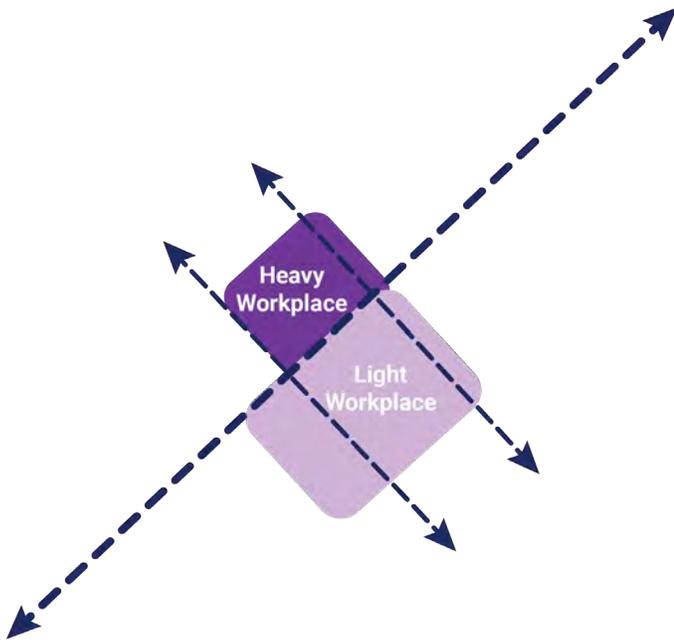
## URBAN CORRIDOR: URBAN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Urban Type	Residential and Nonresidential Types	Targeted Density Range	Parking	Transit Access Goal*	Multipurpose Trail Access Goal**
High	Mixed use (vertical), multifamily, office, retail/entertainment, institutional	2.0 - no maximum FAR	Primarily structured, low maximums	Within 1/4 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit lines or transfer facility	Within 1/8 mile of core network
Medium	Mixed use (vertical), mixed use (horizontal), multifamily, office, retail/entertainment, institutional	1.0 - 4.0 FAR	Mix of structured and surface (very low maximums, must be to the rear)	Within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit lines or transit facility or within 1/4 mile of County ride	Within 1/4 mile of core network
Low	Mixed use (vertical), mixed use (horizontal) multifamily, townhomes, office, retail/entertainment, institutional	0.5 - 2.5 FAR	Primarily surface (low maximums, must be to side or rear)	Within 1/2 mile of any transit facility	Within 1/2 mile of core network

\*See page 95.  
 \*\*See page 93.

# 1 URBAN CORRIDORS

## WORKPLACE CENTERS



Workplace Centers are separated from Urban areas to avoid potential land use conflicts. This is particularly the case for Heavy Industrial uses that need to be buffered from nonindustrial uses, and also for Light Industrial uses that can create large amounts of truck traffic.

The other reason to distinguish between Urban areas and Workplace Centers is because they possess different goals related to form. Most industrial uses are unable to adhere to the design standards for urban development, which include features such as street/sidewalk activation, short setbacks, and walkable block lengths. However, as part of an Urban Corridor, basic quality of life design requirements should be in place to promote connectivity and walkability to the extent possible.

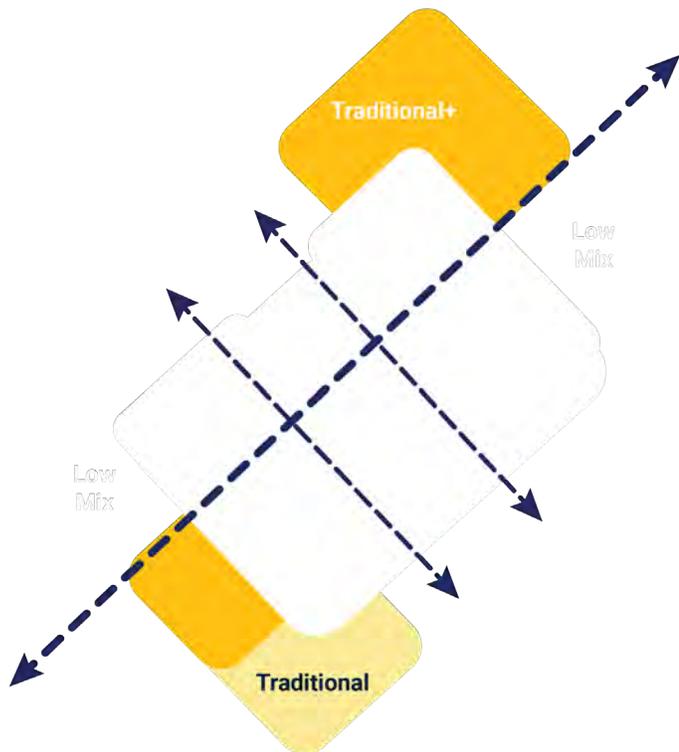
## URBAN CORRIDOR - WORKPLACE CENTERS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Workplace Center Types	Residential Land Uses	Nonresidential Land Uses	On Sewer?	Transit Access Goal*	Multipurpose Trail Access Goal**
Heavy	None	Heavy industrial, quarries, utilities	Yes	Within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit lines or transit facility or within 1/4 mile of County ride; Shared Ride Zone	None
Light	None	Light industrial, light manufacturing, warehouses, heavy commercial, offices	Yes	Within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit lines or transit facility or within 1/4 mile of County ride; Shared Ride Zone	None

\*See page 95.

\*\*See page 93.

# 1 URBAN CORRIDORS



## LEGACY

Legacy Areas consist of existing single family neighborhoods adjacent or close to Urban areas. Because of this proximity, these residential neighborhoods will likely be oriented toward Urban centers to meet their daily needs.

**These areas are grandfathered in to the Urban Corridors but should not expand past their current extent.** Generally, development in Urban Corridors should embrace density, taking advantage of the access to infrastructure those areas afford. However, exceptions may be made for developments surrounded by Legacy Areas; in these cases, development should prioritize sensitivity to the surrounding area over maximizing density.

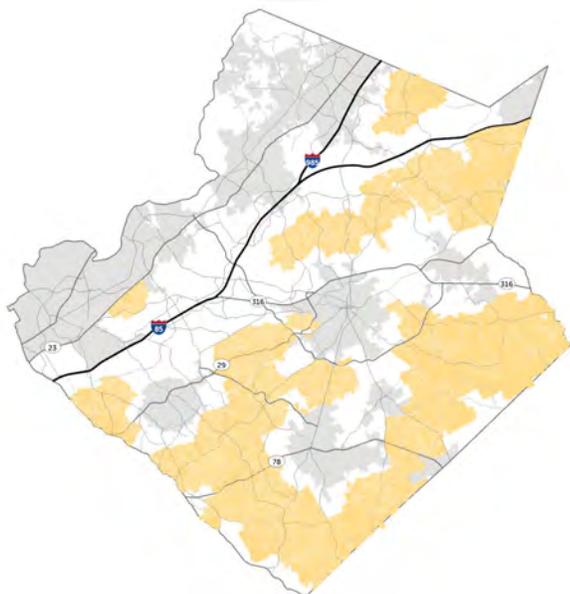
## URBAN CORRIDOR - LEGACY AREAS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Legacy Area Types	Context	Land Uses	On Sewer?	Transit Access Goal*	Multipurpose Trail Access Goal**
Traditional+	Where single family is already in place in an Urban Corridor and connected to sewer	Townhomes/ stacked flats, quadplexes/ triplexes/ duplexes, cottages, single family	Yes	Within 1 mile of any transit line; Shared Ride Zone	Within 1 mile of core trail network
Traditional	Where single family is already in place in an Urban Corridor and <b>not</b> connected to sewer	Single family detached	No	Within 1 mile of any transit line; Shared Ride Zone	Within 1 mile of core trial network

\*See page 95.

\*\*See page 93.

## 2 VILLAGES



### OVERVIEW

Villages are organized into three types of areas:

- 1 CENTERS
- 2 NEIGHBORHOODS
- 3 EDGES

The Center and Neighborhood types are determined by:

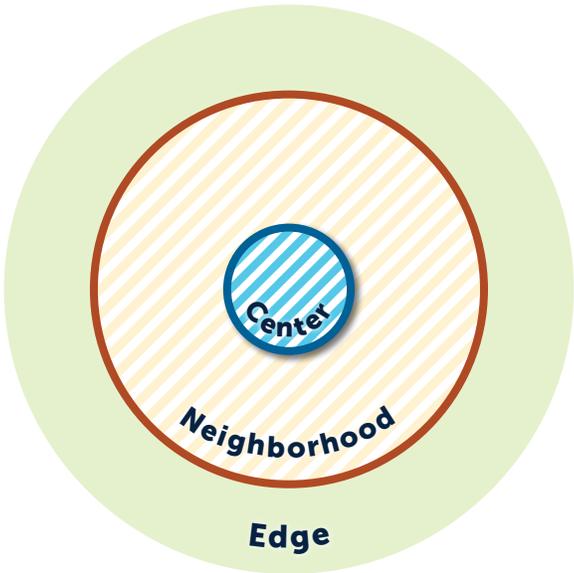
- Location within Gwinnett, specifically their proximity to Urban Corridors and other Villages
- Existing land use and character, especially if an existing shopping area is present in a Center
- Proximity to significant transportation crossroads
- Development and redevelopment potential
- Infrastructure (existing and proposed)
- Transportation (existing and proposed)
- Community input

Much of Gwinnett is already built out, and the boundaries of the Center, Neighborhood, and Edges will vary in size due to existing land uses, natural features, and neighborhood boundaries.

### VILLAGE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Center	Neighborhoods	Edges
Large	High Mix	Suburban Residential
Medium	Low Mix	Suburban Nonresidential
Small	Traditional+	Rural
Rural	Traditional	

## 2 VILLAGES: CENTERS



### CENTERS

A vibrant center close to home is the key to a great village. Centers can take many forms throughout Gwinnett County, ranging from very large centers with well-established commercial areas to future centers resembling small villages. Unlike Neighborhoods and Edges, Centers have a single future development type designation: Large, Medium, Small, or Rural.

Regardless of size, Centers are envisioned to be mixed use, with preference for commercial uses—particularly those that meet the regular needs of residents, including grocery stores, restaurants, and other services. Denser forms of housing are encouraged in these areas and the presence of comfortable, inviting public spaces is critical.

### VILLAGE CENTERS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Center Type	Context	Land Uses	Targeted Density Range	Transit Access Goal*	Multipurpose Trails Access Goal**
Large	Higher density	Mixed use (vertical and horizontal), multifamily, retail/entertainment, office, institutional, parks/green space	1.0 - 3.5 FAR	Within 1/4 mile of a quick or rapid ride or transfer facility	Within 1/4 mile of core trail network
Medium	Medium density	Mixed use (vertical and horizontal), multifamily, townhomes, retail/entertainment, office, institutional, parks/green space	0.5 - 2.5 FAR	Within 1/2 mile of a quick or rapid ride or transfer facility or 1/4 mile of a county ride	Within 1/2 mile of core trail network
Small	Lower density	Mixed use (horizontal), townhomes, quads/triplexes/duplexes, retail/entertainment, institutional, parks/green space	0.5 - 1.5 FAR	Within 1/2 mile of a County ride	Within 1 mile of core trail network
Rural	Rural	Retail/entertainment, cottages, institutional, parks/green space	0.3 - 1.0 FAR	Shared Ride Zone	Within 2 miles of core trail network

\*See page 95.

\*\*See page 93.

## 2 VILLAGES: NEIGHBORHOODS



### NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods make up the bulk of Gwinnett’s Villages. Unlike Centers, a single Village can include every Neighborhood future development type. In some cases, they can include all four. This is primarily a reflection of historic growth patterns, in which single family neighborhoods were built everywhere, at varying densities, both with and without sewer.

Generally, the closer a Neighborhood is to its Center, the more dense/intense its designation. This is particularly true for larger parcels with development/redevelopment potential.

### VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOODS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Type of Neighborhoods	Context	Land Uses	On Sewer?	Transit Access*	Trail Access**
High Mix	Around Large/Medium Centers, closer to Urban Corridors and cities	Mixed use, multifamily, townhomes	Yes	Within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride or within 1/4 mile of County ride; Shared Ride Zone	Within 1/2 mile of core trail network
Low Mix	Around Medium/Small Centers, more distant from Urban Corridors	Townhomes, quads/ triplexes/ duplexes, cottages	Yes	Within 1 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride or within 1/2 mile of County ride; Shared Ride Zone	Within 1 mile of core trail network
Traditional+	Around Medium/Small/Rural Centers, distant from Urban Corridors; or, where single family is already in place and on sewer	Townhomes, quads/ triplexes/ duplexes, cottages, single family	Yes	Within 1 mile of any transit ride line; Shared Ride Zone	Within 2 miles of core trail network
Traditional	Around Small/Rural Centers, distant from Urban Corridors; or, where single family is already in place and <b>not</b> on sewer	Single family	No	Shared Ride Zone	Within 3 miles of core trial network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

## 2 VILLAGES: EDGES



### EDGES

Edges are the outskirts of a Village, and tend to exist beyond a reasonable walking distance from the Center (over 1 mile). They are also the least dense part of a Village and may lack sewer access.

Not every Village has an Edge; these tend to be present in larger Villages closer to Gwinnett County's borders with Hall, Barrow, and Walton Counties. They are also common in Halos (page 25) as outliers that are fairly far from an incorporated area's center or Village Center, but are adjacent to a city's boundaries.

### VILLAGE EDGES FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE SUMMARY

Type of Edges	Context	On Sewer?	Land Uses	Transit Access*	Trail Access**
Suburban Residential	Areas that are already developed in a traditional suburban single family pattern that are unlikely to change	Varies	Single family	Shared Ride Zone	Within 3 miles of core trail network
Suburban Nonresidential	Areas that are already developed in a traditional suburban pattern of commercial, industrial, or institutional uses	Varies	Office, retail/entertainment, hotels/motels, heavy industrial, light industrial	Shared Ride Zone	Within 3 miles of core trail network
Rural	Areas that are currently farmland, large lot rural residential, or undeveloped and not proximate to an Urban Corridor or Village Center	No	Agriculture, rural residential	Shared Ride Zone	Within 5 miles of core trail network

\*See page 95.

\*\*See page 93.

# 3 HALOS

## OVERVIEW

Halos refer to areas of unincorporated Gwinnett that lie adjacent to, or in close proximity with, a city or neighboring jurisdiction—so much so that residents and workers in these areas likely regard that neighboring city center as their Daily Community.

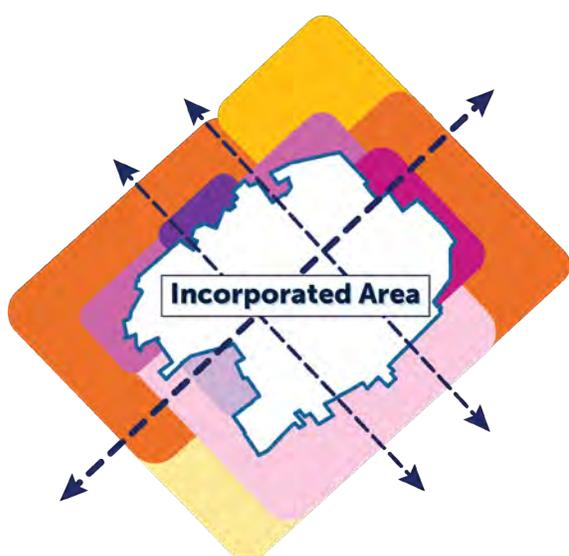
Future development areas within Halos vary widely based on which jurisdiction the parcel is near. For more urbanized cities in south and west Gwinnett, the future development type can be an Urban Corridor or denser Village Neighborhood type. For less intensively developed parts of Gwinnett, Neighborhood and Edge future development types are more common.

Halos can also have flares. These are smaller commercial hubs located near a city’s edge, acting as a Village Center for residents of unincorporated Gwinnett, distinct from the downtown area.

**HALO AS PART OF A VILLAGE:**



**HALO AS PART OF AN URBAN CORRIDOR:**



Urban	Workplace Center	Neighborhoods	Edges
High	Heavy	High Mix	Suburban Residential
Medium	Light	Low Mix	Suburban Nonresidential
Low		Traditional+	Rural
		Traditional	

# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

## INTRODUCTION

The Daily Community framework—comprised of Urban Corridors, Villages, and Halos—is the foundation for Gwinnett County’s Future Development Map. The FDM is a guide that represents the community’s land use vision.

Each parcel in unincorporated Gwinnett County belongs to an Urban Corridor, Village, or Halo (Figure 1-7, page 16). The FDM adds greater detail by prescribing a future development type from these categories:

### URBAN CORRIDORS

- Urban - High
- Urban - Medium
- Urban - Low
- Workplace - Heavy
- Workplace - Light

### VILLAGE CENTERS

- Center - Large
- Center - Medium
- Center - Small
- Center - Rural

### NEIGHBORHOODS AND LEGACY AREAS

- High Mix
- Low Mix
- Traditional+
- Traditional

### EDGES

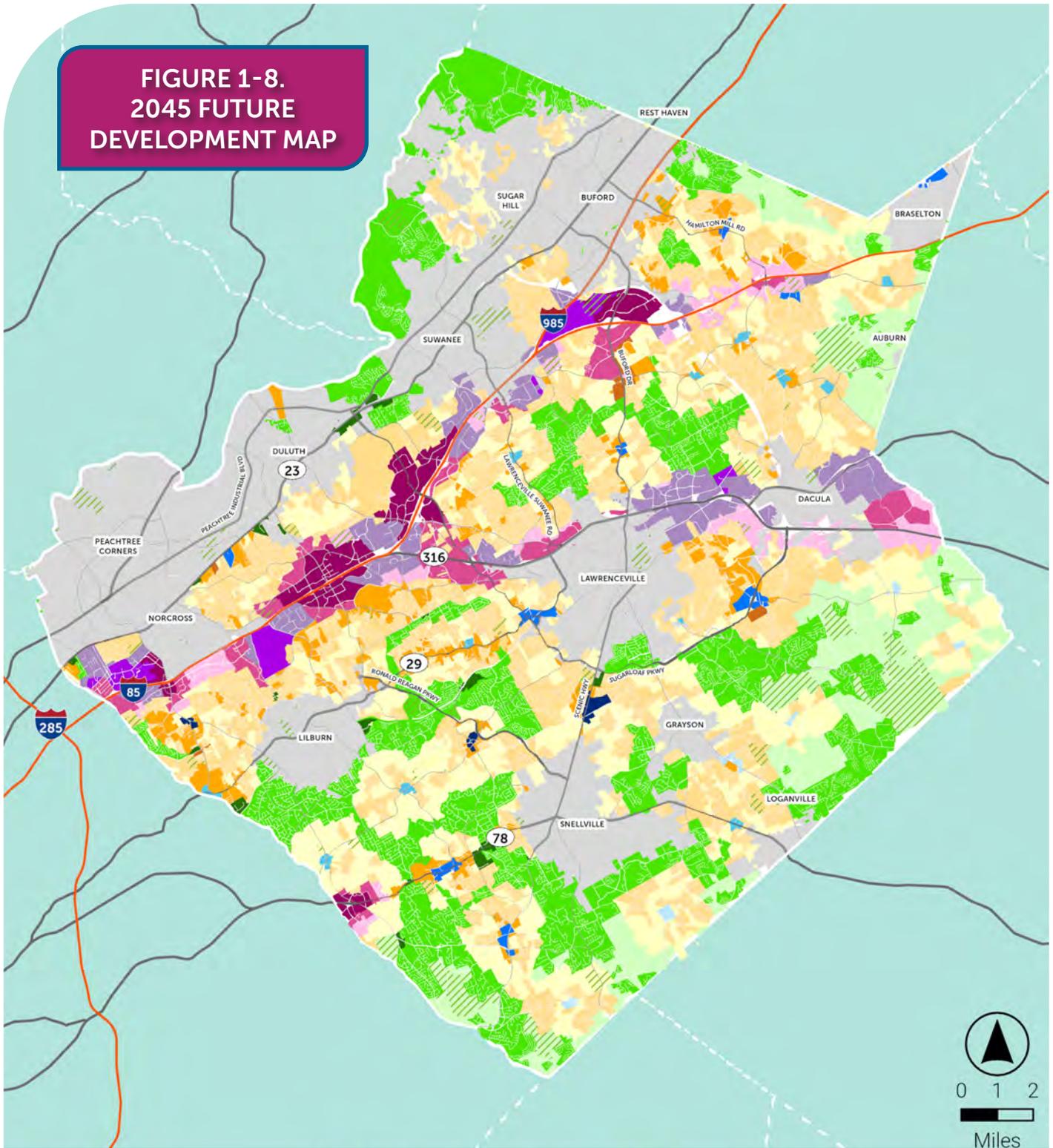
- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Nonresidential
- Rural

Each of these FDM types is described in more detail in the section that follows. These categories are designed to guide the future **form** of development: how it looks, feels, and is connected to its Daily Community.

**It should be noted that the FDM does not assign a specific land use for each parcel. This is because the exact best use of land should be determined at a much smaller scale based on specific site characteristics and market conditions at the time of development.**

Instead, the FDM provides a general menu of appropriate land uses within the broader context of the community. As long as a proposed development belongs to one of these appropriate land use types and meets Daily Community guidelines for form, it should result in a positive change for the community.

**FIGURE 1-8.  
2045 FUTURE  
DEVELOPMENT MAP**



**Legend**

**URBAN CORRIDORS**

- Urban - High
- Urban - Medium
- Urban - Low
- Workplace - Heavy
- Workplace - Light

**VILLAGE CENTERS**

- Center - Large
- Center - Medium
- Center - Small
- Center - Rural

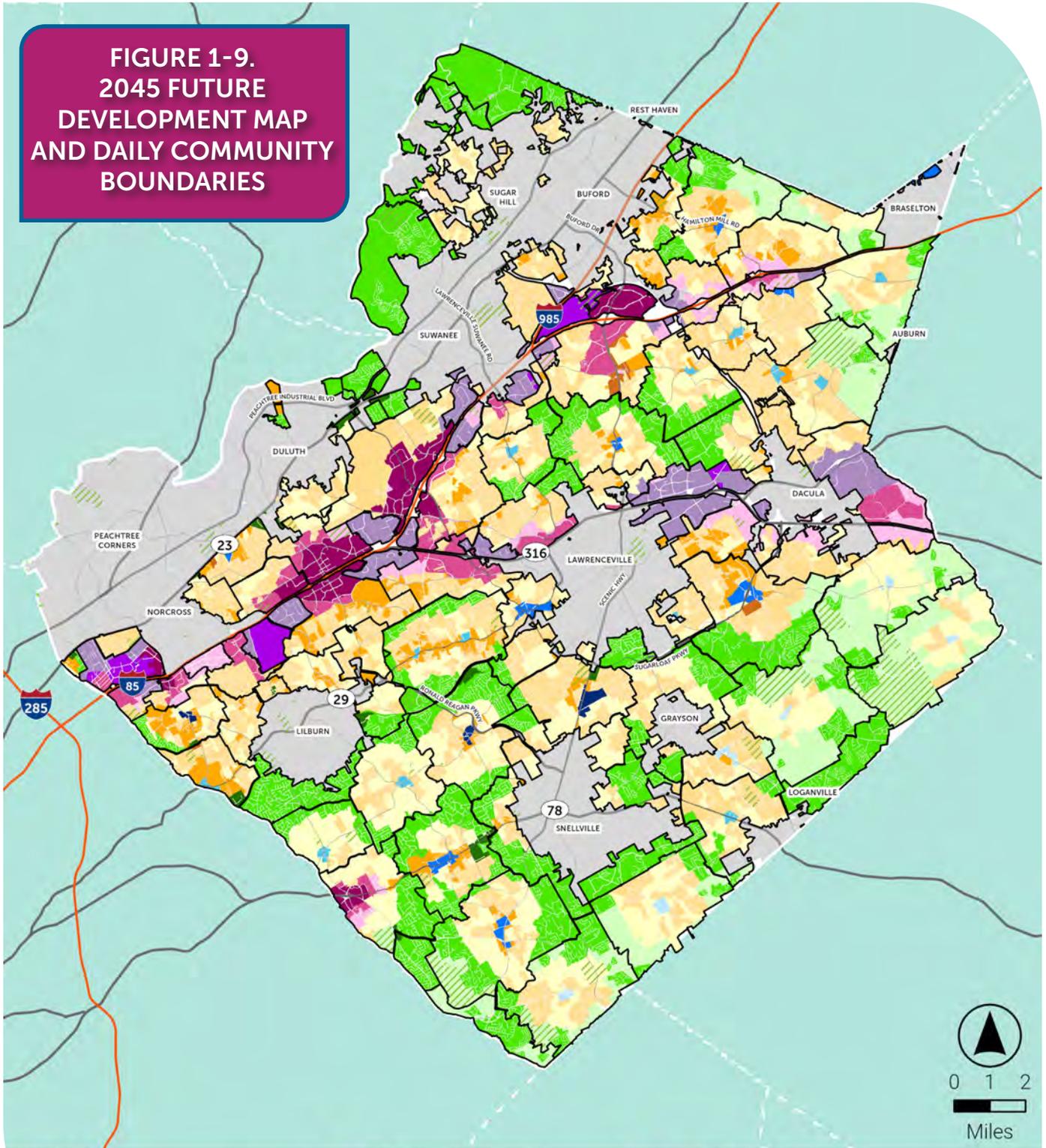
**NEIGHBORHOODS  
AND LEGACY AREAS**

- High Mix
- Low Mix
- Traditional+
- Traditional

**EDGES**

- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Nonresidential
- Rural
- Parks / Open Space

**FIGURE 1-9.  
2045 FUTURE  
DEVELOPMENT MAP  
AND DAILY COMMUNITY  
BOUNDARIES**



**Legend**

-  Daily Community Boundaries
-  Parks / Open Space

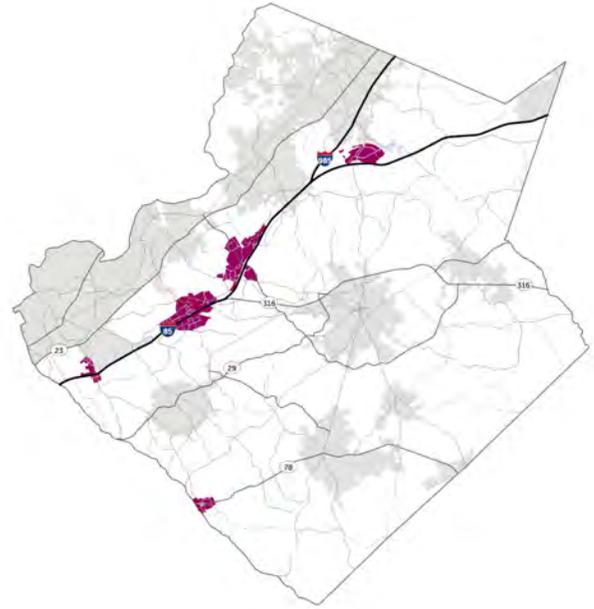
*Future Development Categories same as map left*

# URBAN - HIGH

The highest intensity future development type in Gwinnett is Urban - High, which is envisioned to be a rich mix of development types concentrated in specific centers along Gwinnett's major transportation infrastructure.

These areas, which consist of an integrated mix of different types of residential, commercial, office, and public/institutional, are primarily located along I-85 in the southern part of Gwinnett County. They are intended to absorb a significant amount of population growth over the coming years.

Areas of Gwinnett reserved for this highest intensity of development surround Jimmy Carter Boulevard, Gwinnett Place/Pleasant Hill Road, Gas South, and Sugarloaf.



## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Halos

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-R, HRR, O-I

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Offer incentive packages for first adopters of redevelopment projects
- Explore feasibility of a ground floor opt out program in which developers can pay into a Small Business Support Fund instead of providing for nonresidential land uses on the ground floor (up to 50 percent)
- Establish a Gwinnett County Parking Authority, or similar organization, to help offset high costs of structured parking
- Implement multimodal transportation projects to support higher densities

# URBAN - HIGH

## USES

(  = Appropriate )

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

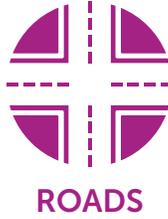
- Structured
- Surface<sup>+</sup>

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

<sup>+</sup>Small sites (2.0 acres or less) only

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Connect directly to local roadway network and provide cross-connectivity through the project
- Provide connectivity to all adjacent parcels
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Avoid adding new travel lanes to roadways
- Prioritize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists



- Located within 1/4 mile of a Rapid or Quick Ride transit line or Transfer Facility



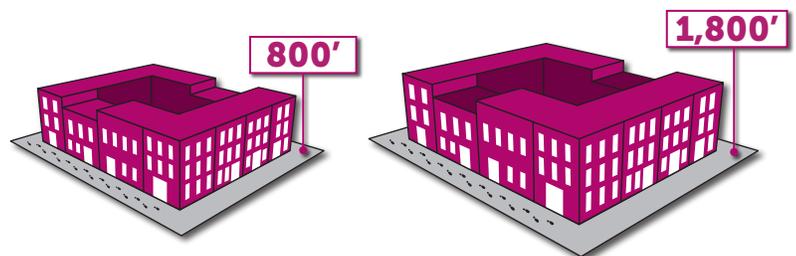
- Located within 1/8 mile of the Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95

\*\*See page 93.

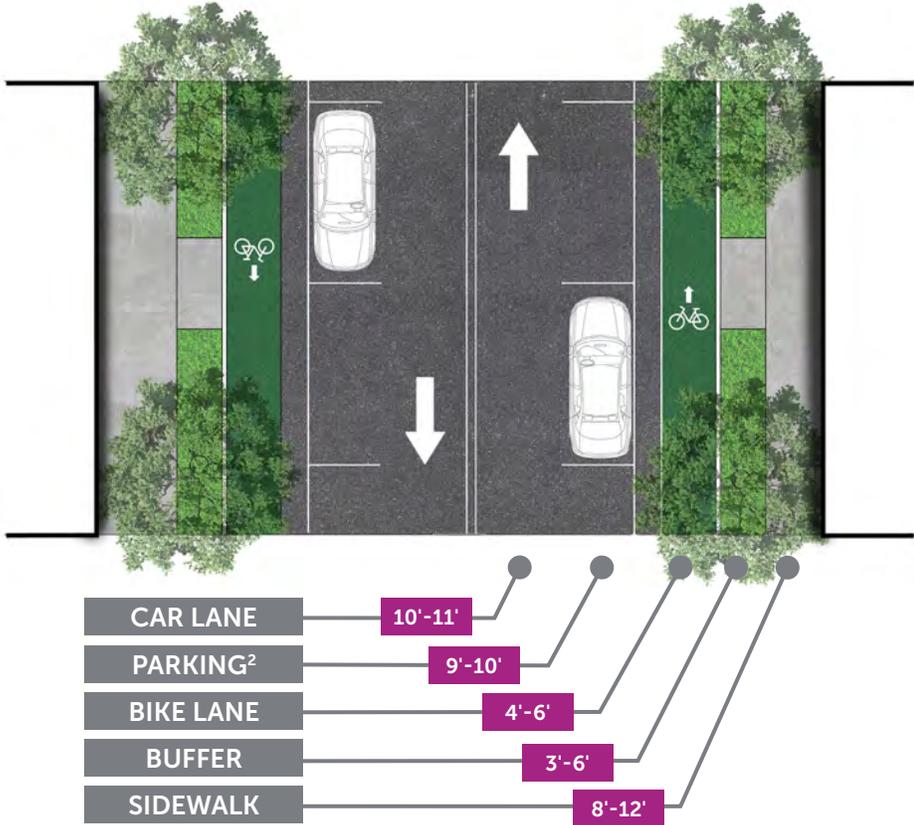
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# URBAN - HIGH

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3'; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



PLAZAS



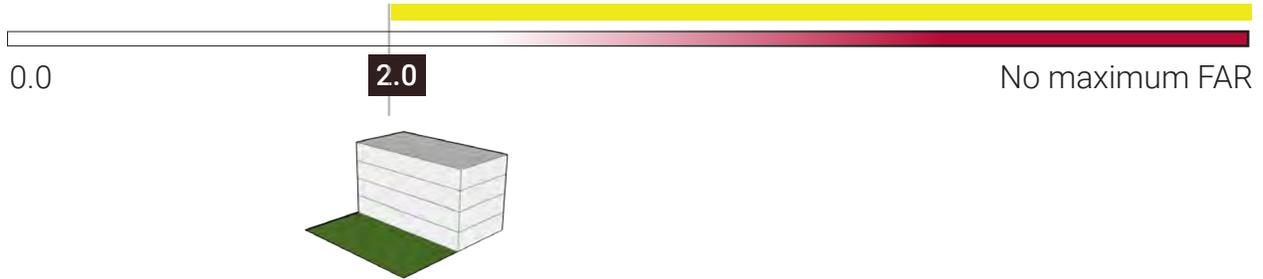
POCKET PARKS

\*See page 96.

# URBAN - HIGH

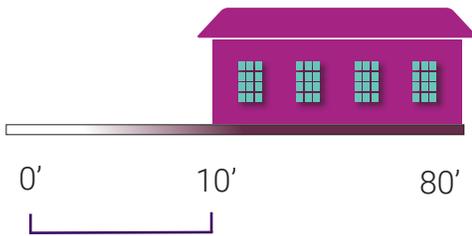
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

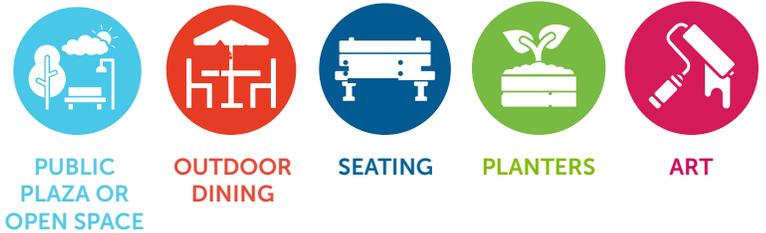


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



### WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

There are many instances in which a site cannot meet the targets above. It might be too small, have difficult geometry, or have site conditions that make these goals difficult to reach feasibly. Evaluation of these projects does not have to be pass/fail. Instead, there are alternative goals that contribute positively to creating Daily Communities in Urban - High areas. In these tough cases, the County may want to consider the following goals that also work towards building great Daily Communities:

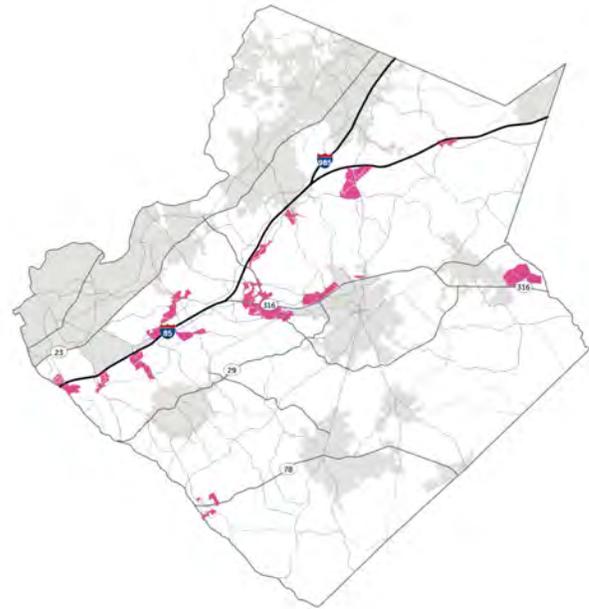
- Increase FAR by 30+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce surface parking by 40+ percent
- Include more than one use
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Provide transit shelter
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Reuse an existing building creatively

## URBAN - MEDIUM

Urban - Medium is the most common future development type in the Urban Corridors. It is the fabric of these more urbanized communities—not as dense as the Urban - High Centers, but still relatively high intensity neighborhoods that can take advantage of areas with high infrastructure investment.

One of the biggest differences between these areas and Urban - High is that Mixed Use - Horizontal is allowed, as are Townhomes/ Stacked Flats when part of a large mixed use development.

Urban - Medium is dispersed along I-85, I-985, and Highway 316. These areas can surround Urban - High Centers, but can also be centers in their own right elsewhere along the corridors.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-R, MU-C, O-I, HRR, MRR, R-TH, R-IF

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Create design guidelines for redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design
- Offer incentive packages for first adopters of redevelopment projects
- Explore feasibility of a ground floor opt out program in which developers can pay into a Small Business Support Fund instead of providing for nonresidential land uses on the ground floor (up to 50 percent)
- Implement multimodal transportation projects to support higher densities
- Revise street design guidelines to improve pedestrian safety

# URBAN - MEDIUM

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Maximize local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Avoid adding new travel lanes to roadways
- Prioritize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists



- Location within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit line; or,
- Location within 1/4 mile of County Ride

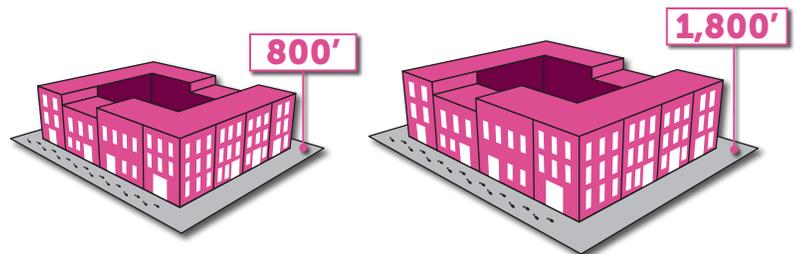


- Location within 1/4 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95  
\*\*See page 93.

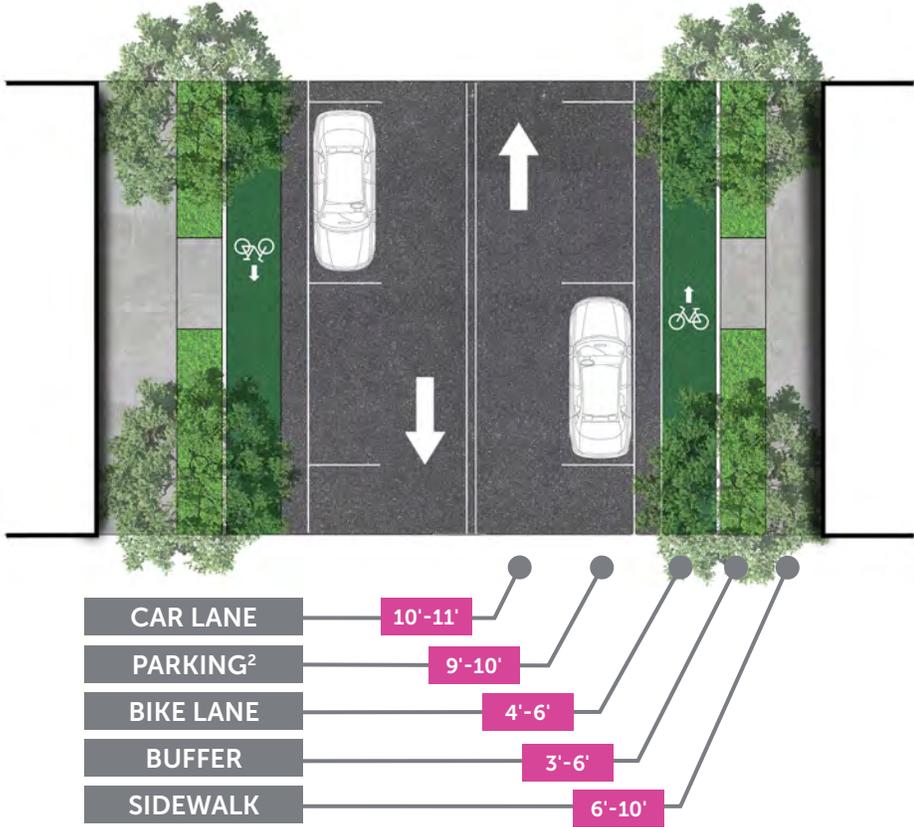
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# URBAN - MEDIUM

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3'; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



PLAZAS



POCKET PARKS



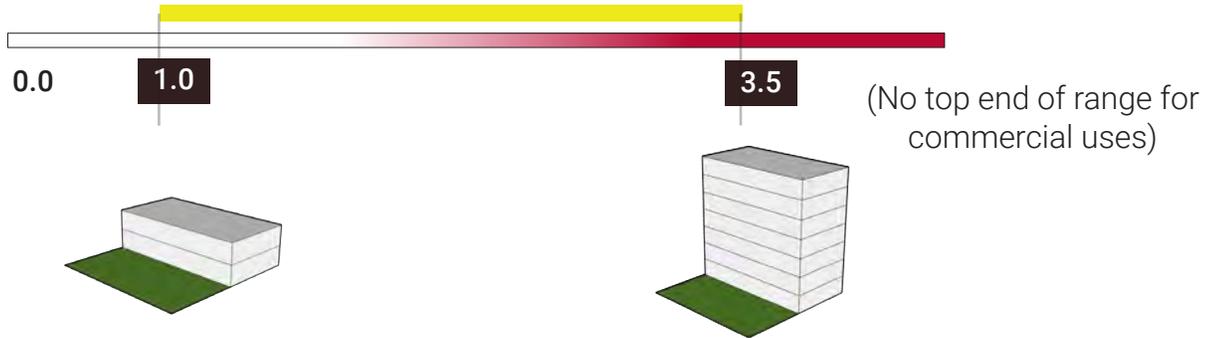
SQUARE

\*See page 96.

# URBAN - MEDIUM

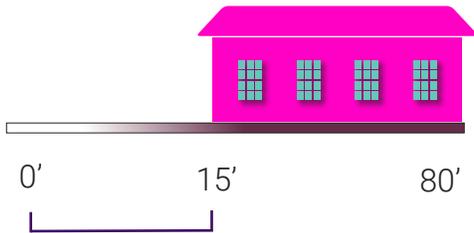
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

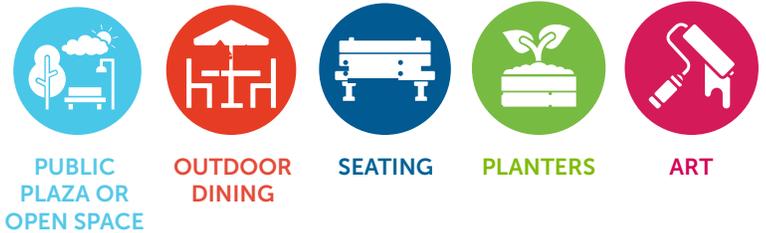


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

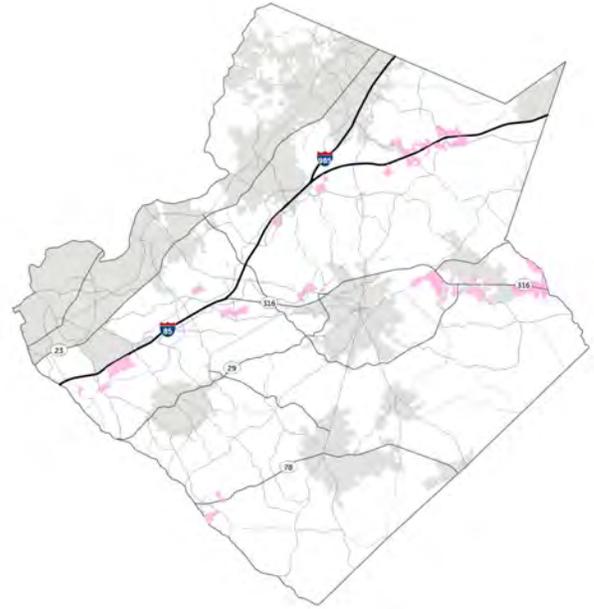
There are many instances in which a site cannot meet the targets above. It might be too small, have difficult geometry, or have site conditions that make these goals difficult to reach feasibly. Evaluation of these projects does not have to be pass/fail. Instead, there are alternative goals that contribute positively to building Daily Communities in Urban - Medium, such as the following:

- Increase FAR by 25+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce surface parking by 30+ percent
- Include more than one use
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Provide transit shelter
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Reuse an existing building creatively

## URBAN - LOW

Urban - Low is the least intensive of the mixed uses in Urban Corridors. These tend to be located at the edge of higher intensities as a step-down in intensity to single family neighborhoods or other lower density uses.

There is a good deal of flexibility in these areas, with both vertical and horizontal mixed uses encouraged, as well as the widest variety of residential uses and commercial uses allowed. In most cases these areas are not envisioned to be centers, but rather areas of urban space connecting centers together.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-C, MU-N, O-I, C-2, HRR, MRR, LRR, R-TH

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Create design guidelines for new development and redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design, as well as step-down transitions to single family neighborhoods
- Identify candidate sites for new development pilot projects
- Establish Gwinnett County Land Bank to provide public private investment for quality development projects
- Implement multimodal transportation projects to support higher densities

# URBAN - LOW

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial

*Flex/Industrial allowed if it meets walkability and people friendly design ranges*

- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Maximize local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Prioritize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists



- Location within 1/2 mile of any fixed transit service/facility

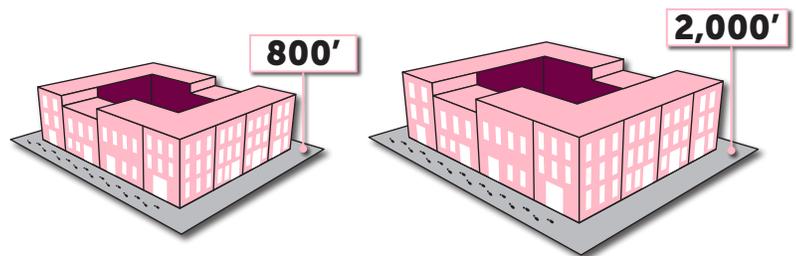


- Location within 1/2 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95  
\*\*See page 93.

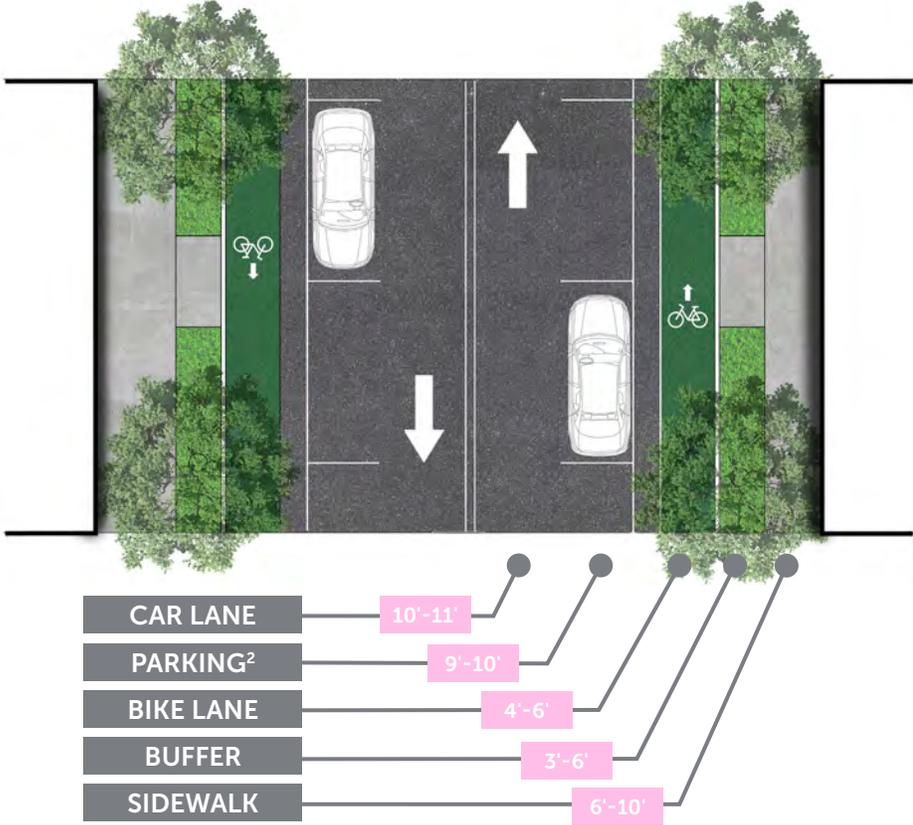
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# URBAN - LOW

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



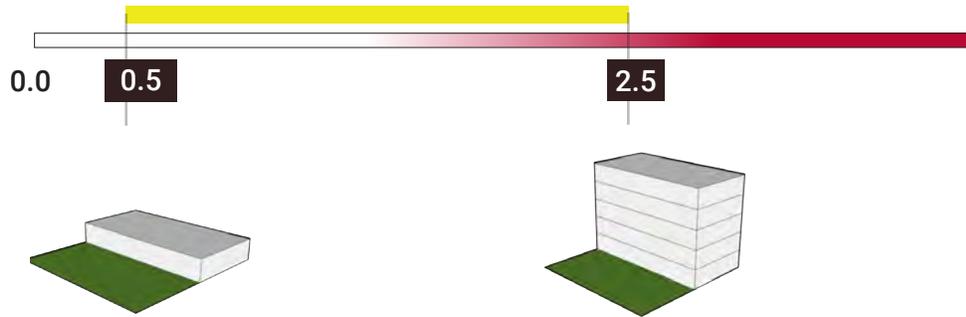
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# URBAN - LOW

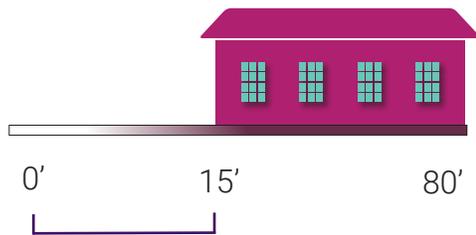
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

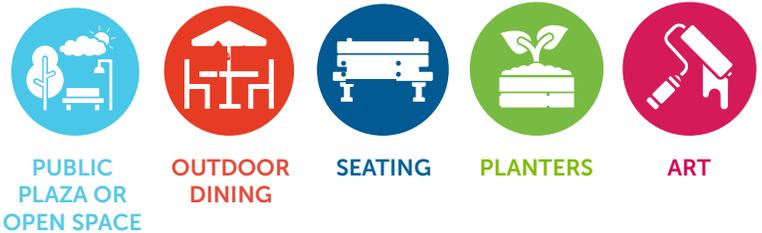


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

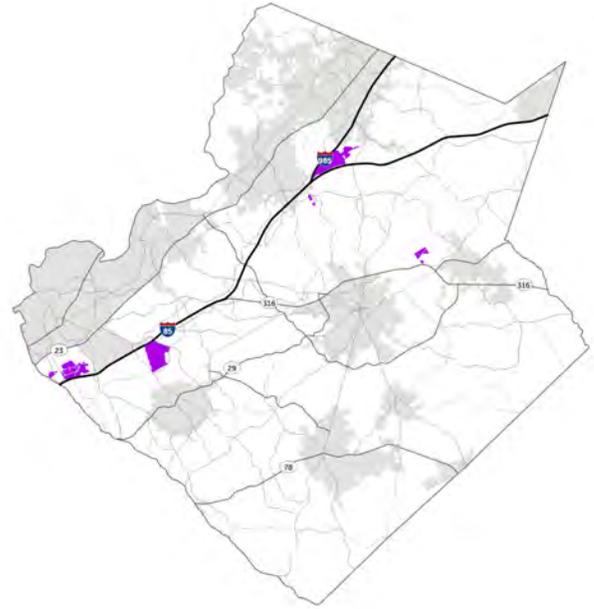
There are many instances in which a site cannot meet the targets above. It might be too small, have difficult geometry, or have site conditions that make these goals difficult to reach feasibly. Evaluation of these projects does not have to be pass/fail. Instead, there are alternative goals that contribute positively to building Daily Communities, in Urban - Low areas, such as the following:

- Increase FAR by 20+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce existing surface parking by 25+ percent
- Include more than one use
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Provide transit shelter
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Reuse an existing building creatively

## WORKPLACE - HEAVY

Workplace - Heavy areas are the places in Gwinnett County reserved for the most intense industrial uses—such as the quarry and heavy manufacturing—that need to be buffered from other nonindustrial uses. They also require strong access to truck routes, and I-85 in particular.

In many cases, these uses have very specific design and site requirements that are necessary for the business to function. Therefore, design requirements in these areas are far less stringent than in those with a more residential or commercial character.



*Images courtesy of the Gwinnett Post*

### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

M-1, M-2, C-3

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Preserve these areas from nonindustrial growth; industrial areas are needed to help maintain a balanced tax base
- Utilize buffers for beautification and modest improvements to pedestrian infrastructure for transit users
- Identify candidate sites for green infrastructure pilot projects that reclaim underutilized parking lots
- Implement multimodal transportation projects to connect workplace centers with high-density areas

# WORKPLACE - HEAVY

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Prioritize safe, efficient movement of freight
- Ensure easy access to Interstate and other truck routes
- Minimize potential conflicts with pedestrian and bicyclists



- Location within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit line or Transfer Facility; or
- Location within 1/4 mile of County ride

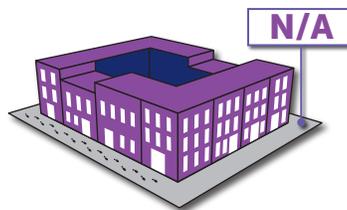


- None

\*See page 95  
\*\*See page 93.

## WALKABILITY

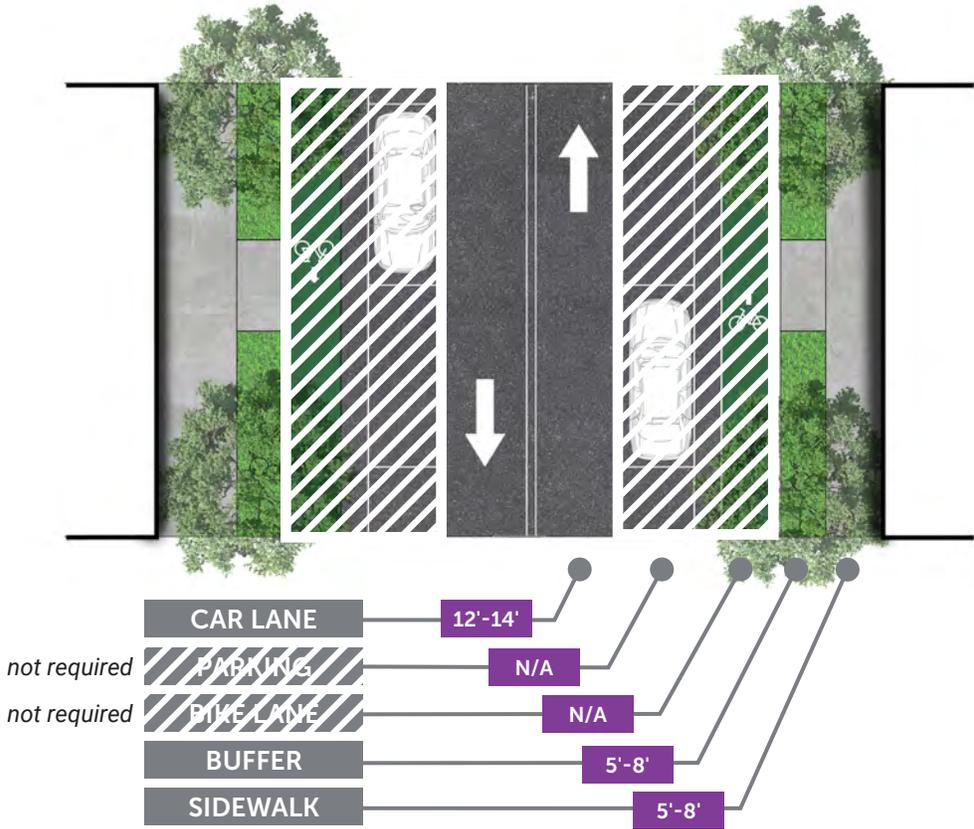
BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



N/A

# WORKPLACE - HEAVY

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply

# WORKPLACE - HEAVY

## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### Industrial Made Easy

To maintain a healthy tax base, it is important to have enough industrial and commercial uses to balance against residential uses. Although heavy industrial uses are not highly desired, they are still necessary for the County to function and fully participate in the regional and global economy.

These uses are buffered significantly from other uses in Gwinnett, and are not intended to be part a mixed use, pedestrian friendly environment—qualities which are in direct conflict with the needs of these industries. Instead, the intent is to support these industries by reducing these conflicts and not imposing stringent design guidelines that add unnecessary costs—or at worst, render the buildings unusable.

### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



LANDSCAPING



PEDESTRIAN  
CONNECTION TO  
SIDEWALK

## WORKPLACE - LIGHT

The vast majority of workplace uses in the Future Development Map are designated as Workplace - Light. These are uses that do not have the external impacts of heavier industry (like smoke or odors), but are still substantial workplaces.

Workplace - Light areas are envisioned to be a mix of light industrial, flex, and office spaces. Although they are not noxious uses, it is better to separate them from residential and mixed use because of the higher amounts of trucks and freight traffic they generate. They are also not intended to operate at the same level of walkability as the Urban areas for this reason.

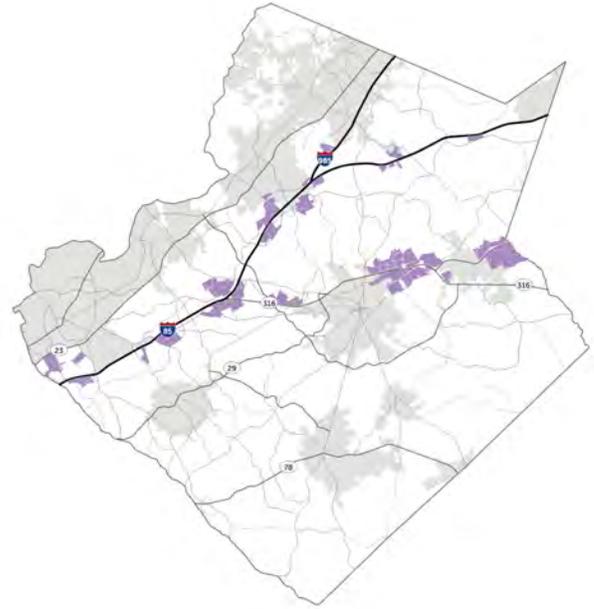


Image courtesy of City Feet



Image courtesy of LoopNet

### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

M-1, O-I, C-3

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Preserve these areas from nonindustrial growth; industrial areas are needed to help maintain a balanced tax base
- For single family neighborhoods fully or almost fully surrounded by this use, consider a pilot cottage industry program in which home occupations are defined very inclusively and can tolerate higher levels of activity
- Utilize buffers for beautification and modest improvements to pedestrian infrastructure for transit users

# WORKPLACE - LIGHT

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial\*  
\*Allowed if walkability and people friendly design ranges are met
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

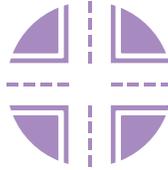
## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



ROADS

- Prioritize safe, efficient movement of freight
- Ensure easy access to Interstate and other truck routes



TRANSIT\*

- Location within 1/2 mile of Rapid or Quick Ride transit line or Transfer Facility; or
- Location within 1/4 mile of County ride



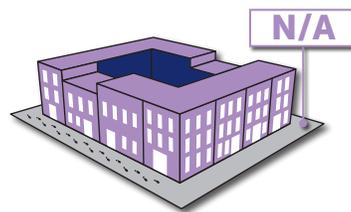
TRAILS

- None

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

## WALKABILITY

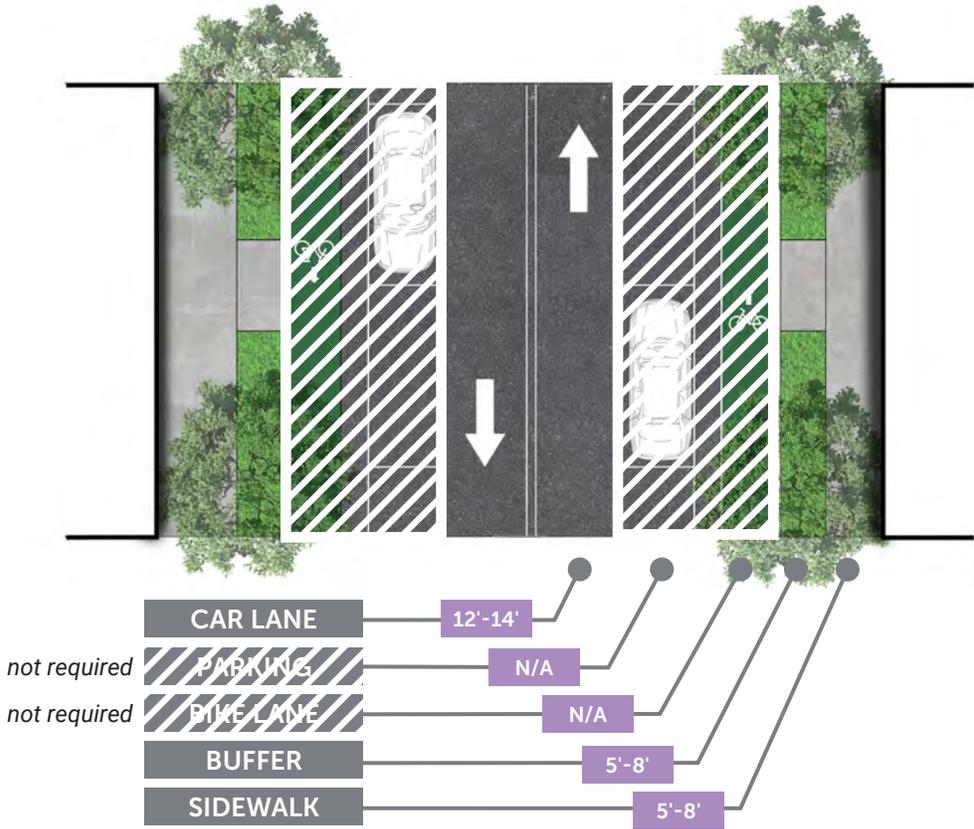
BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



N/A

# WORKPLACE - LIGHT

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

# WORKPLACE - LIGHT

## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

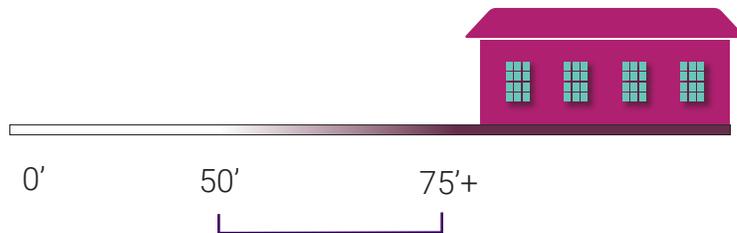
### Industrial Made Easy

Light industrial uses play better with nonindustrial uses than their heavier counterparts, but still benefit from more flexibility in design. They also benefit from some separation from residential areas, as they typically generate large amounts of truck traffic.

Most light industrial uses coming onto the market today are related to warehousing and logistics. These buildings have very large, low density footprints which do not typically foster a walkable environment. However, there is no viable way to go up and make these uses more vertical. To maintain a variety of jobs nearby and keep the tax base healthy, the future development map provides large areas of these concentrated along I-85, I-985, and Highway 316.

### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



LANDSCAPING



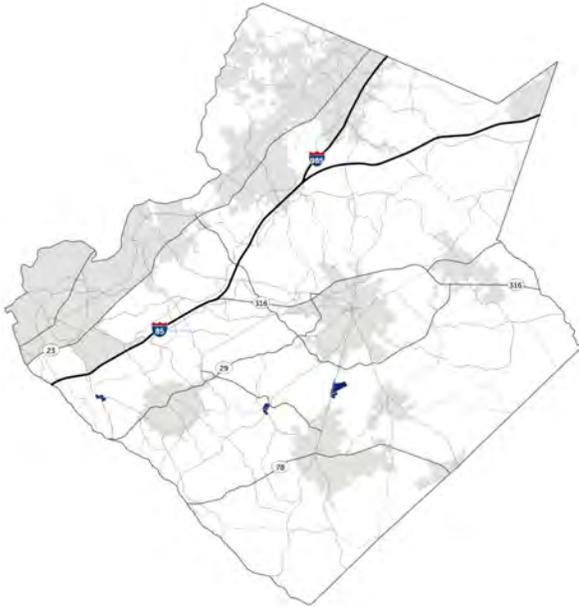
PEDESTRIAN  
CONNECTION TO  
SIDEWALK

# VILLAGE CENTER - LARGE

Village Centers - Large are the most intensive uses in Gwinnett County beyond the Urban Corridors. These are not only the most intensive of the noncorridor uses, but also the largest of the Centers in area.

They are located at key crossroads in unincorporated Gwinnett, and serve an important function in meeting a large area of residents' daily needs across a mix of commercial, residential, and public/institutional uses.

There are three Villages with large Centers: Five Forks, Rockbridge, and Webb Gin.



**TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:**

- Villages

**RECOMMENDED ZONING:**

MU-C, MU-N, MU-R

**KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:**

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market-available single family homes to build trail connections and ADUs throughout villages (see page 411)
- Create design guidelines for redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design
- Offer incentive packages for first adopters of redevelopment projects
- Imbue redevelopment with local culture through County and resident led efforts
- For properties less likely to redevelop, work with owners to refresh facades or turn extra parking spaces into public amenities

# VILLAGE CENTER - LARGE

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

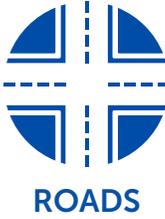
## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Back
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Prioritize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists



- Location within 1/4 mile of a Quick or Rapid Ride line or Transfer Facility

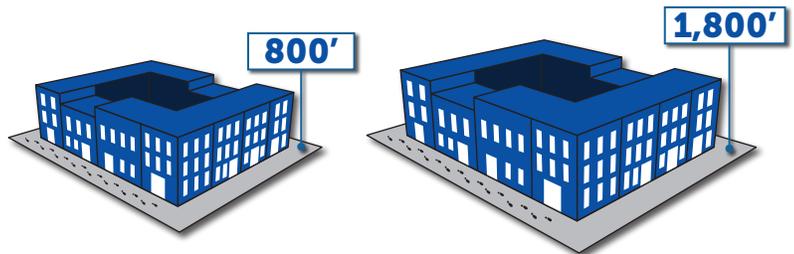


- Within 1/4 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

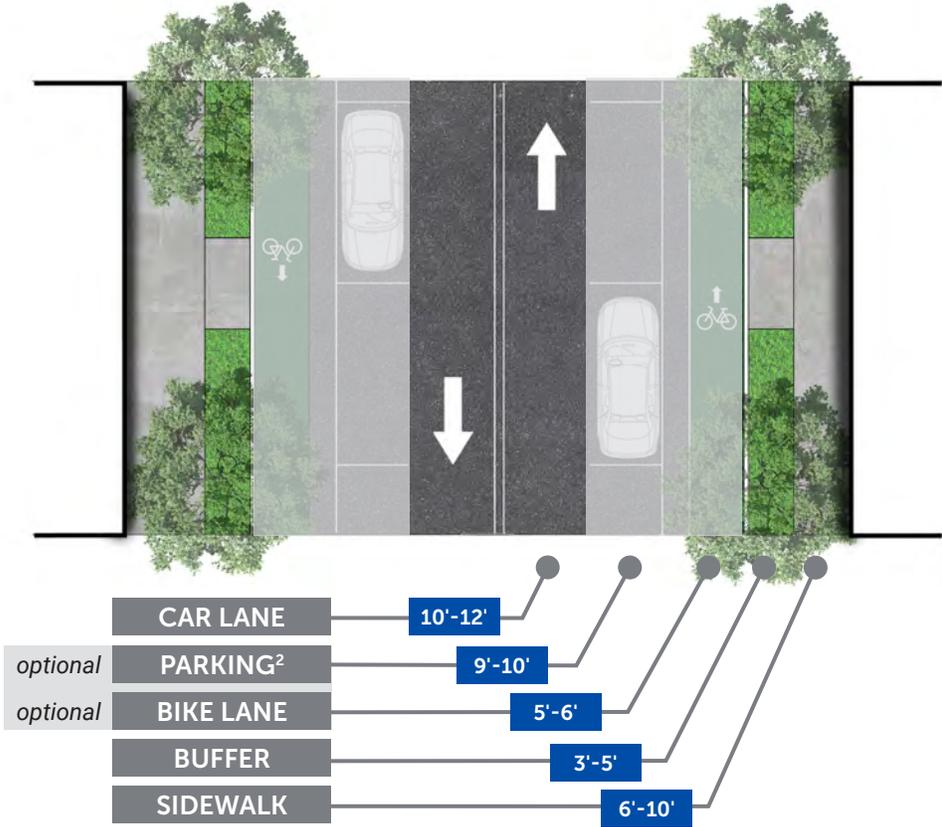
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# VILLAGE CENTER - LARGE

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3'; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



SQUARE



PLAZAS



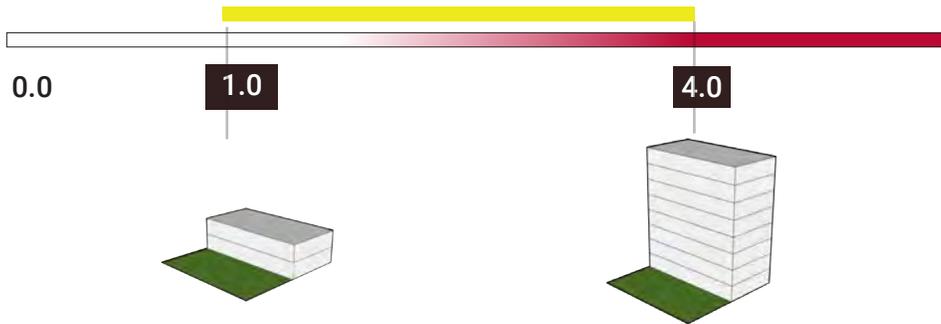
POCKET PARKS

\*See page 96.

# VILLAGE CENTER - LARGE

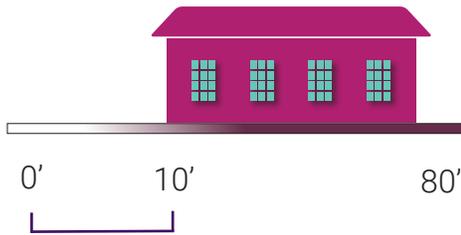
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

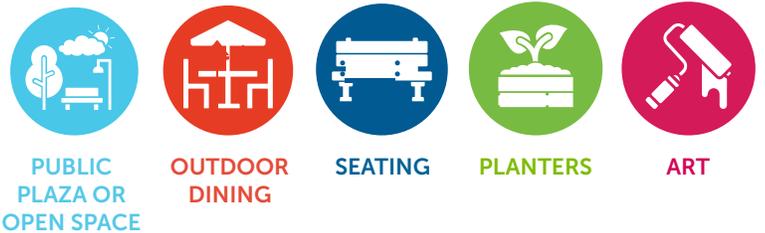


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

#### PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



#### DESIRED SETBACK USES:



## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

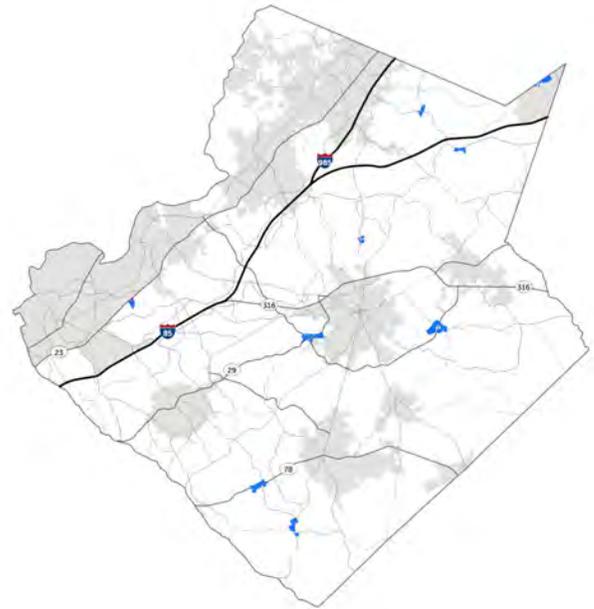
Because of the suburban roots of all Village centers, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and/or difficult sites, some alternative Village Center - Large project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 30+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Reduce surface parking by 25+ percent
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Include more than one use
- Provide transit shelter

## VILLAGE CENTER - MEDIUM

Village Center - Medium is the most common of the Village Center types. They are envisioned to be vibrant community centers with clusters of restaurants, retail, and diverse housing options. They are located across a wide range of contexts, but are predominantly in suburban areas at least a few miles from the nearest Urban Corridor.

There are nine Medium Village Centers shown on the Future Development Map: Braselton Halo, Centerville, Hamilton Mill, Killian Hill, Martins Chapel, Monfort, Pinckneyville, Ridgewood, and Thompson Mill. They range from about 40 acres to 215 acres in size.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-C, MU-N, C-3, C-2, MRR, R-TH, R-SR, TND, R-IF

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market-available single family homes to build trail connections and ADUs throughout villages (see page 411)
- Create design guidelines for redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design, as well as step-down transitions to single family neighborhoods
- Offer incentive packages for first adopters of redevelopment projects
- Imbue redevelopment with local culture through County- and resident-led efforts
- For properties less likely to redevelop, work with owners to refresh facades and turn extra parking spaces into public amenities

# VILLAGE CENTER - MEDIUM

**USES**

( ✓ = Appropriate )

**MIXED USES:**

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

**RESIDENTIAL:**

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

**NONRESIDENTIAL:**

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

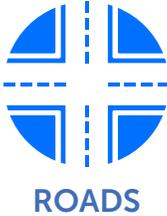
**PARKING MANAGEMENT**

- Structured
- Surface

**LOCATIONS:**

- Rear
- Side
- Front

**MULTIMODAL GOALS**



- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Prioritize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists



- Within 1/2 mile of a Quick or Rapid Ride or Transfer Facility; or,
- Within 1/4 mile of a County Ride

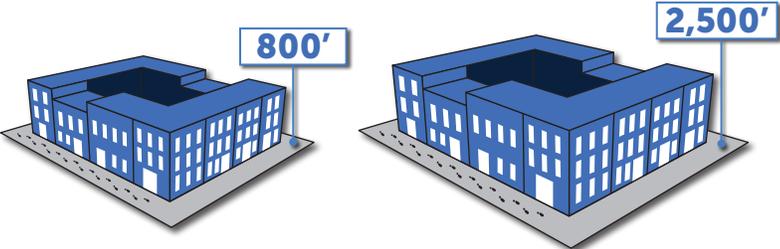


- Within 1/2 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

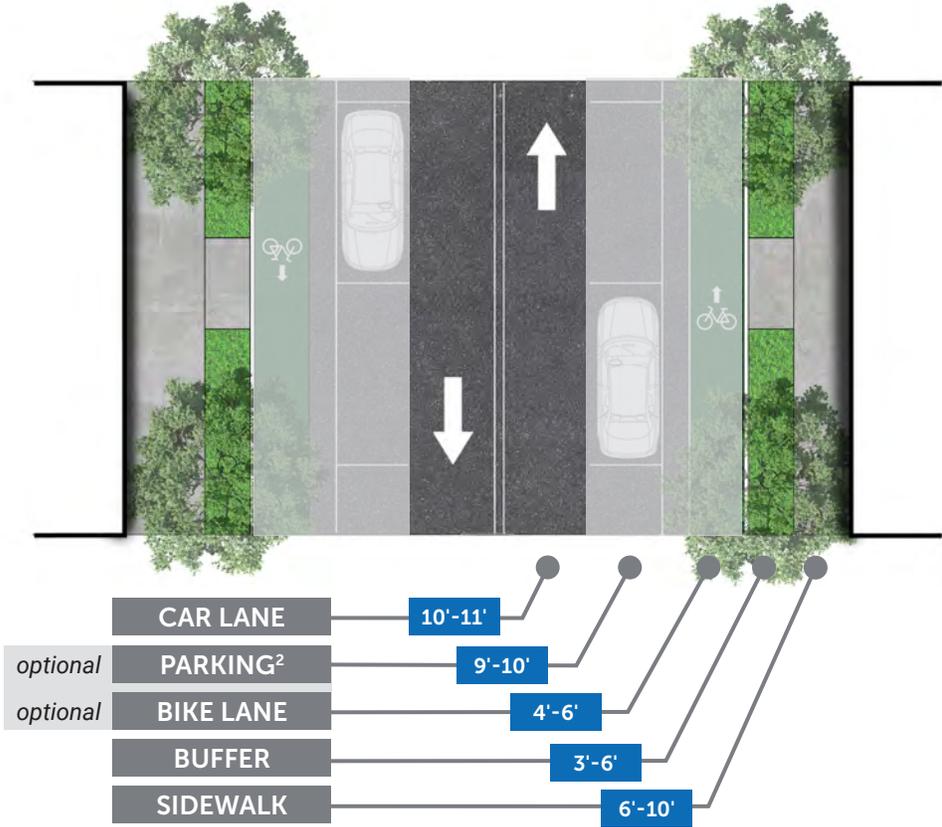
**WALKABILITY**

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# VILLAGE CENTER - MEDIUM

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



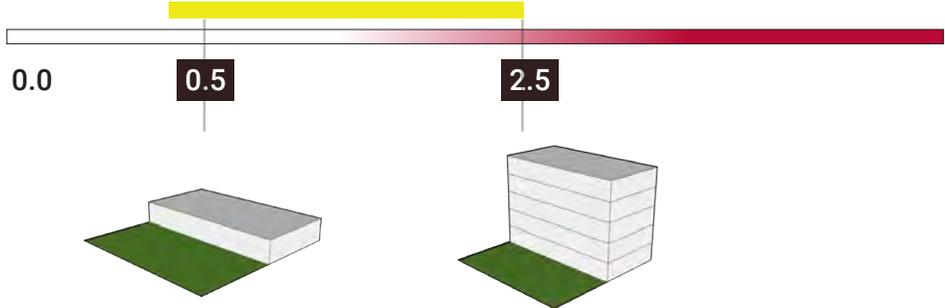
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# VILLAGE CENTER - MEDIUM

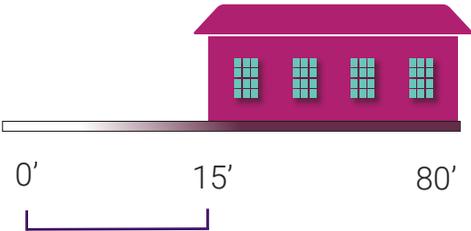
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE



### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

#### PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



#### DESIRED SETBACK USES:

Five circular icons representing desired setback uses: Public Plaza or Open Space, Outdoor Dining, Seating, Planters, and Art.

## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

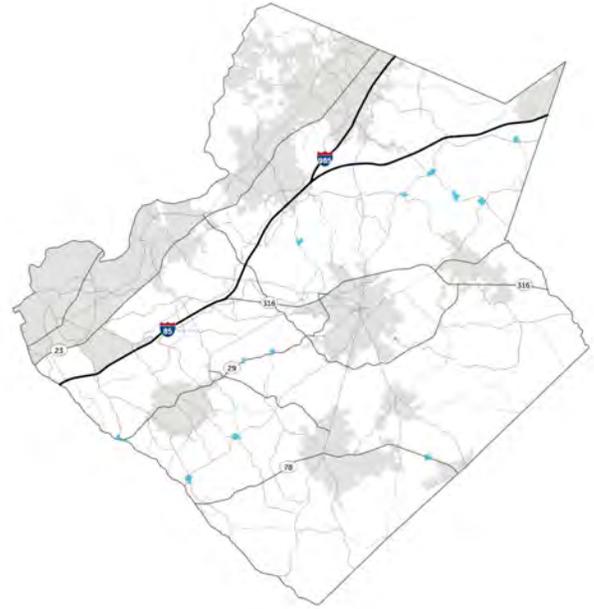
Because of the suburban roots of all Village centers, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and difficult sites, some alternative Village Center - Medium project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 25+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce surface parking by 20+ percent
- Include more than one use
- Improve diversity of housing types available in the Village
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Provide transit shelter
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space

## VILLAGE CENTER - SMALL

Village Center - Small are envisioned to be compact, vibrant spots for retail, entertainment, and more diverse housing options. These areas are relatively small in size, ranging from 40 to 70 acres in size—the size of just a city block or two. Their context can range from close to Urban Corridors to lower intensity suburban.

There are 12 Small Village Centers in Gwinnett: Bethesda, Crossings, Dean Taylor, Mountain Crossing, Mountain Park, Mulberry, Old Peachtree, Parkview, Simonton, The Lakes, and Wheeler Creek.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-N, C-1, MRR, LRR, R-IF, R-TH, R-SR, TND

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market-available single family homes to build trail connections and ADUs throughout villages (page 411)
- Invest in easy placemaking projects that showcase local culture to build support for modest redevelopment ideas
- For properties less likely to redevelop, work with owners to refresh facades and turn extra parking spaces into public amenities

# VILLAGE CENTER - SMALL

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

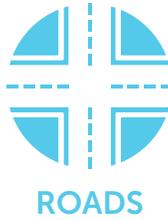
## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Balance safety of pedestrians and bicyclists with need for traffic flow



- Within 1/2 mile of a County Ride

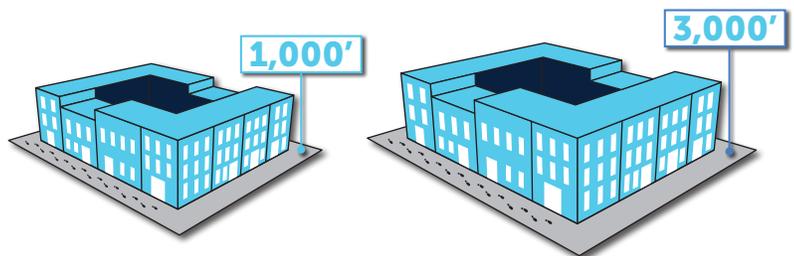


- Within 1 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

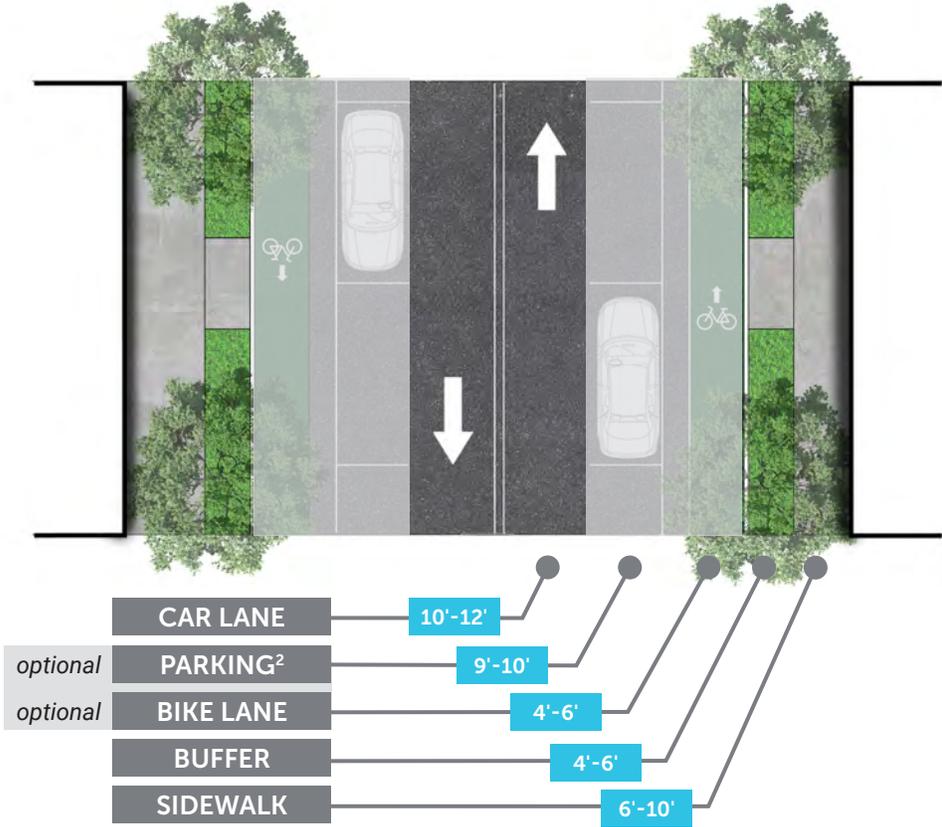
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# VILLAGE CENTER - SMALL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



GREEN



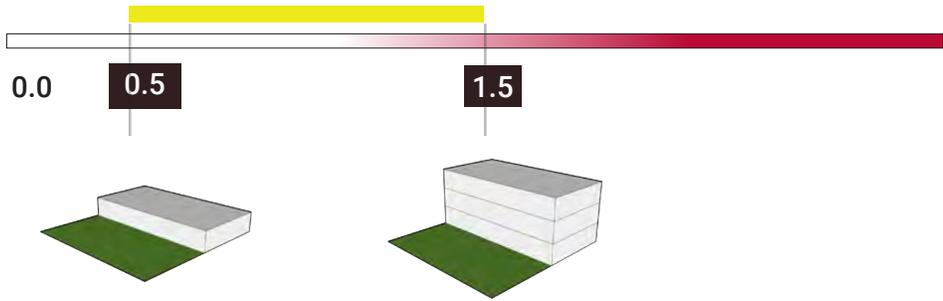
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# VILLAGE CENTER - SMALL

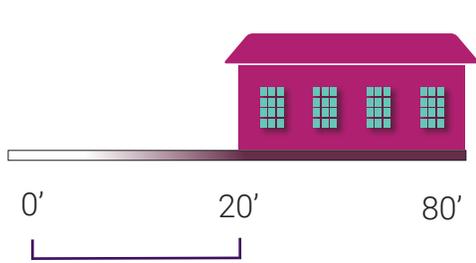
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

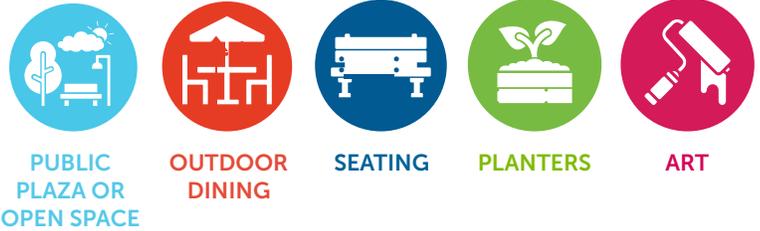


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

Because of the suburban roots of all Village centers, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and difficult sites, some alternative Village Center - Small project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 20+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Reduce surface parking by 20+ percent
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Include more than one use
- Improve diversity of housing types available in the Village

## VILLAGE CENTER - RURAL

Village Center - Rural areas are envisioned to be small, future crossroads centers to serve the most rural parts of Gwinnett County. They will primarily be commercial in nature, but residential is allowed.

There are six Rural Village Centers in Gwinnett: Bold Springs, Grayson Village, Harbins, Lenora, Ozora, and Rosebud.

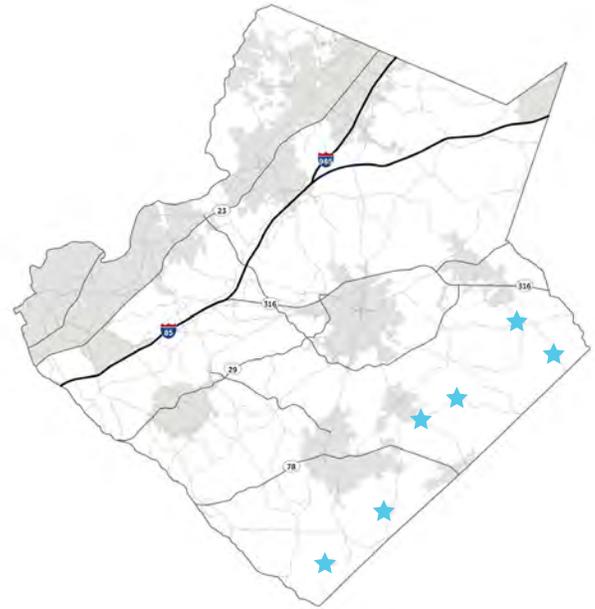


Image courtesy of Lake Norman



Image courtesy of LoopNet

### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-N, C-1, R-SR (Limited), R-IF (Limited), OSC, R-75, R-60

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Create design guidelines for new development that emphasize aesthetics and future connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods
- Invest in easy placemaking projects that showcase local culture to build support for modest redevelopment ideas

# VILLAGE CENTER - RURAL

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial\*  
\*Allowed if walkability and people friendly design ranges are met

- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

### PARKING MANAGEMENT:

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



### ROADS

- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Balance safety of pedestrians and bicyclists with need for traffic flow



### TRANSIT\*

- Shared Ride Zone



### TRAILS\*\*

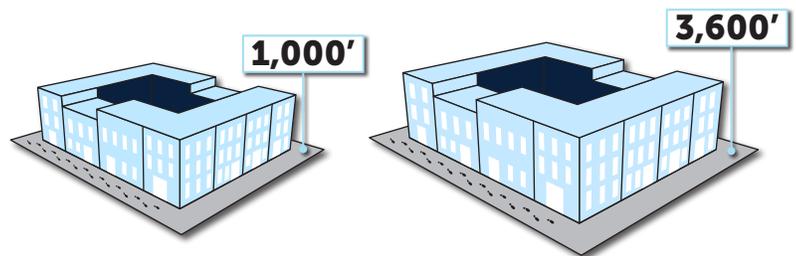
- Within 2 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.

\*\*See page 93.

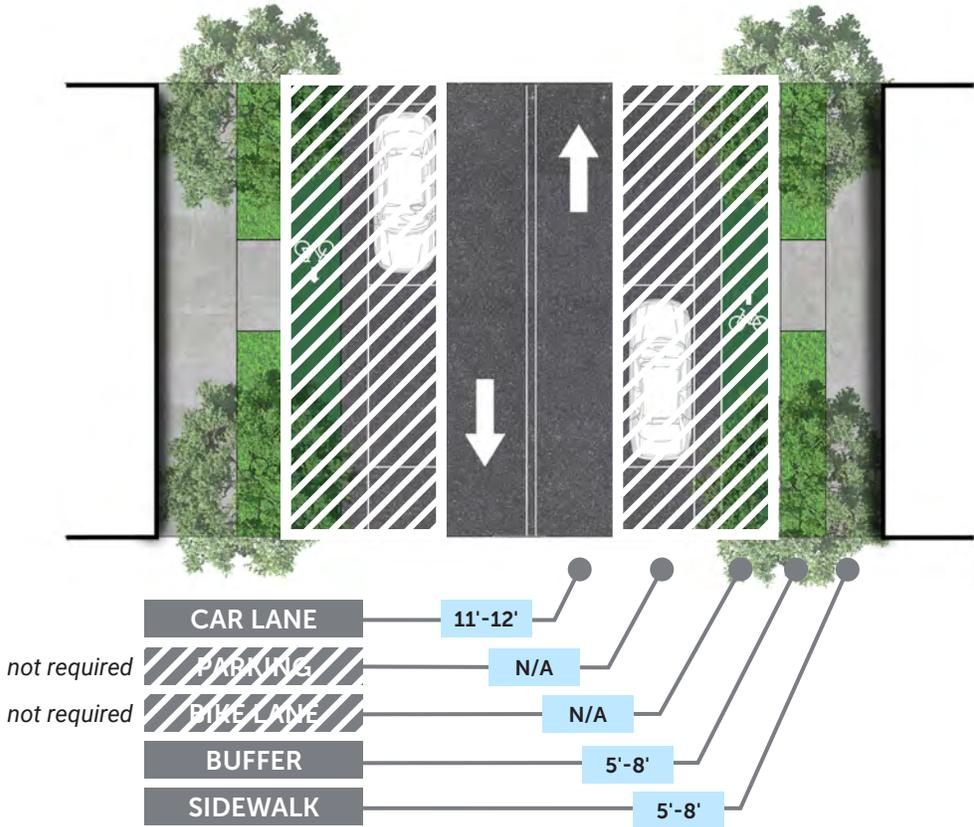
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# VILLAGE CENTER - RURAL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



GREEN



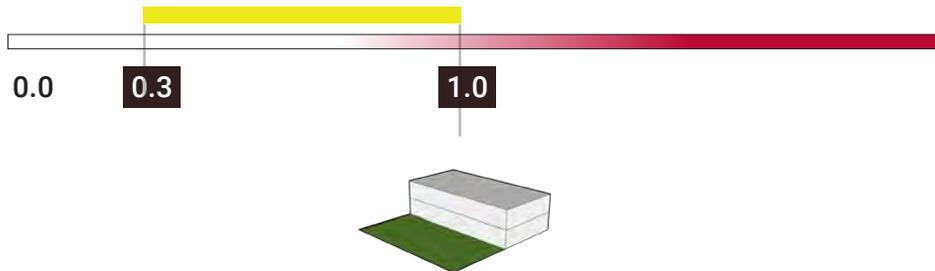
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# VILLAGE CENTER - RURAL

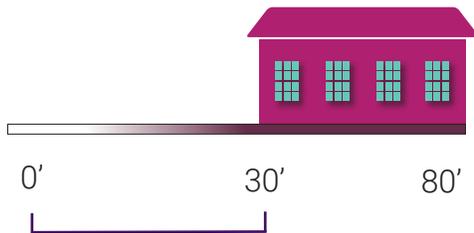
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE



### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

#### PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



#### DESIRED SETBACK USES:



### WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

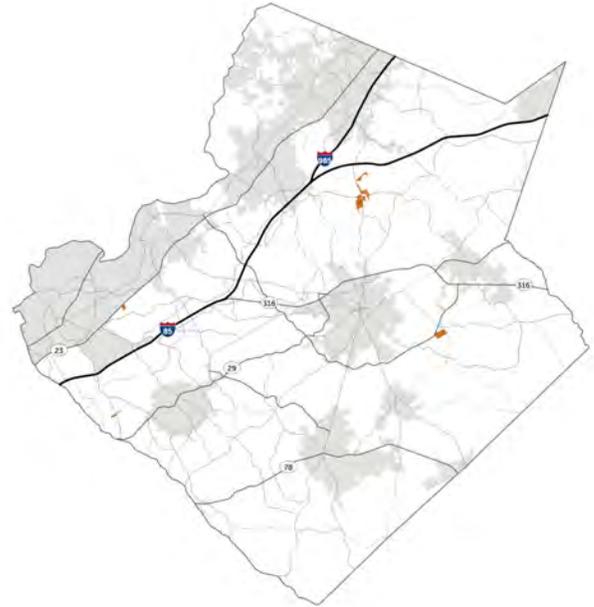
Because of the suburban roots of all Village centers, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and difficult sites, some alternative Village Center - Rural project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 20+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce surface parking by 30+ percent
- Create a new commercial/retail use where there currently is none
- Improve diversity of housing types available in the area
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space

# NEIGHBORHOOD HIGH MIX

Neighborhood High Mix is a predominantly residential use of higher intensities around Village Centers - Large. They are mostly multifamily and higher intensity townhomes, and therefore require strong infrastructure access. Uses such as retail/entertainment and office are appropriate if part of Mixed Use - Vertical, but should not be standalone.

This future development type can be found in the Crossings, and Pinckneyville Villages, as well as outside the Urban area of the Coolray Daily Community.



## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-C, MU-N, MRR, R-TH

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Offer incentive packages for first adopters of redevelopment projects
- Create design guidelines for redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design
- Invest in easy placemaking projects that showcase local culture to build support for modest redevelopment ideas
- Revise street design guidelines to improve pedestrian safety
- For properties less likely to redevelop, work with owners to refresh facades and turn extra parking spaces into public amenities

# NEIGHBORHOOD HIGH MIX

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



**ROADS**

- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Balance safety of pedestrians and bicyclists with vehicular traffic demands



**TRANSIT\***

- Within 1/2 mile of a Rapid or Quick Ride or Transfer Facility; or
- Within 1/4 mile of County Ride



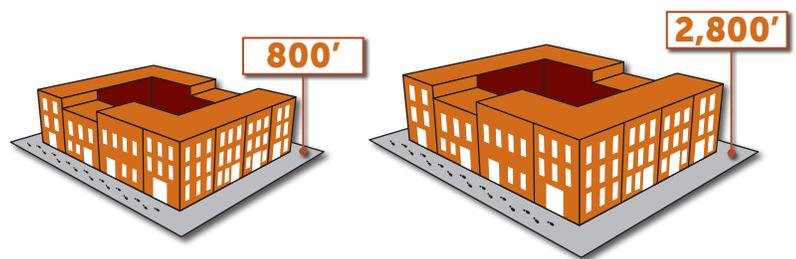
**TRAILS\*\***

- Within 1/2 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

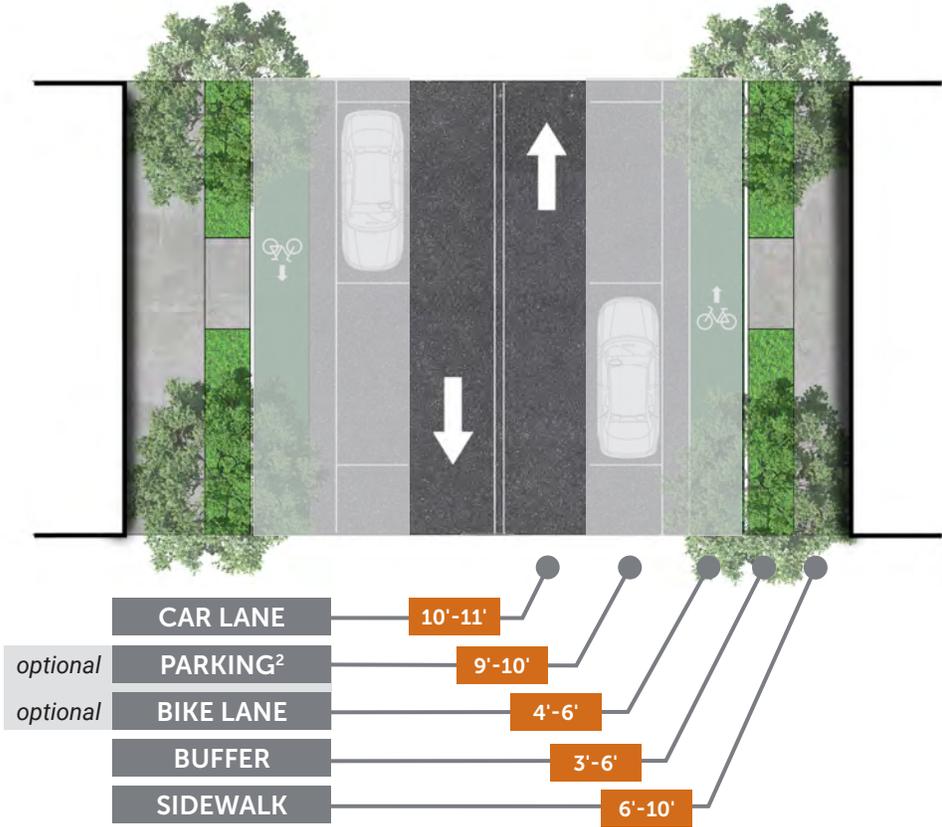
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# NEIGHBORHOOD HIGH MIX

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3'; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



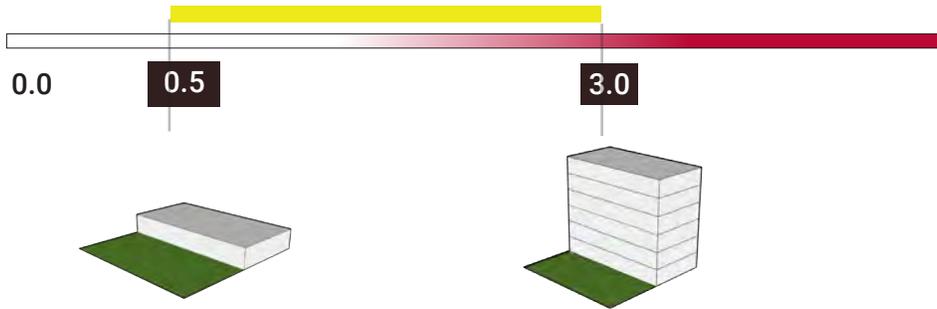
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# NEIGHBORHOOD HIGH MIX

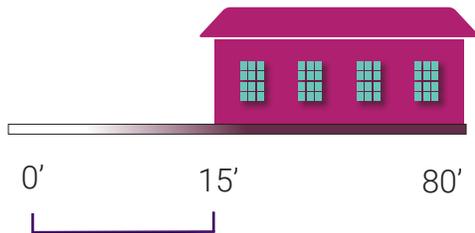
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE



### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

#### PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



#### DESIRED SETBACK USES:



## WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

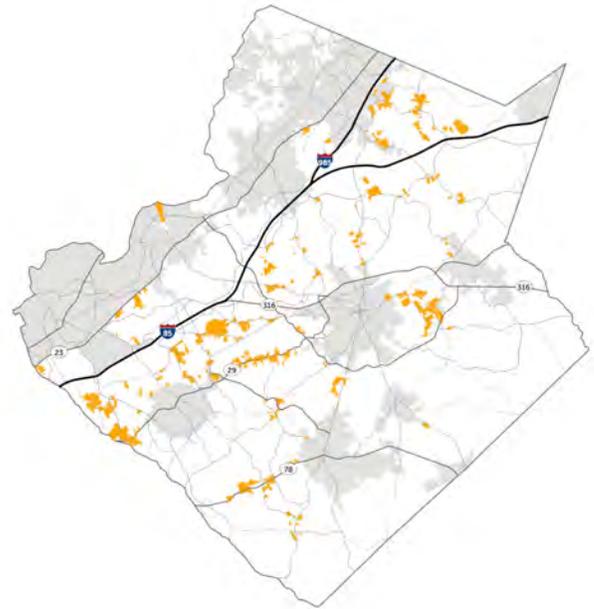
Because of the suburban roots of Neighborhood High Mix areas, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and difficult sites, some alternative Neighborhood High Mix project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 20+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reduce existing surface parking by 25+ percent
- Improve diversity of housing types available in the area
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Provide transit shelter
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space

## NEIGHBORHOOD LOW MIX

Neighborhood Low Mix is one of the most common residential uses near Village Centers. Not quite as intense as High Mix, these predominantly residential areas are primarily missing middle housing types that are not as intense as multifamily complexes, but more affordable and more diverse than those found in solely single family areas.

This future development type is present in almost every Village in Gwinnett, as well as in some transitional areas near Urban Corridors.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Villages
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

MU-N, C-1, LRR, R-TH, R-SR, TND, OSC, R-IF

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Revise UDO according to target FAR ranges
- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market-available single family homes to build trail connections and ADUs throughout villages (page 411)
- Consider establishing a New Housing Resource Center that provides tools and support for building missing middle housing types to developers and homeowners interested in building ADUs (page 411)
- Create design guidelines for redevelopment projects that emphasize good urban design, as well as stepdown transitions to single family neighborhoods

# NEIGHBORHOOD LOW MIX

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

### PARKING MANAGEMENT:

- Structured
- Surface

### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



- Improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Reduce block sizes with new roads built through redevelopment
- Balance safety of pedestrians and bicyclists with vehicular traffic demand



- Within 1 mile of a Rapid or Quick Ride or Transfer Facility; or
- Within 1/2 mile of County Ride

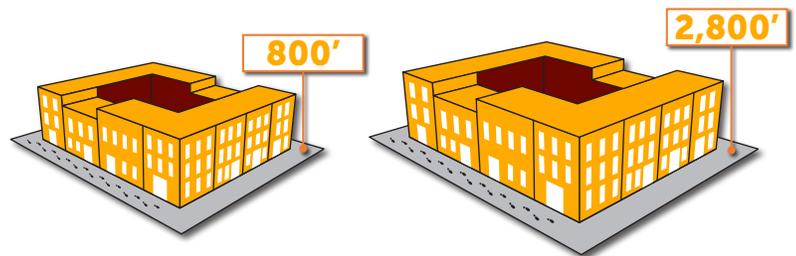


- Within 1 mile of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

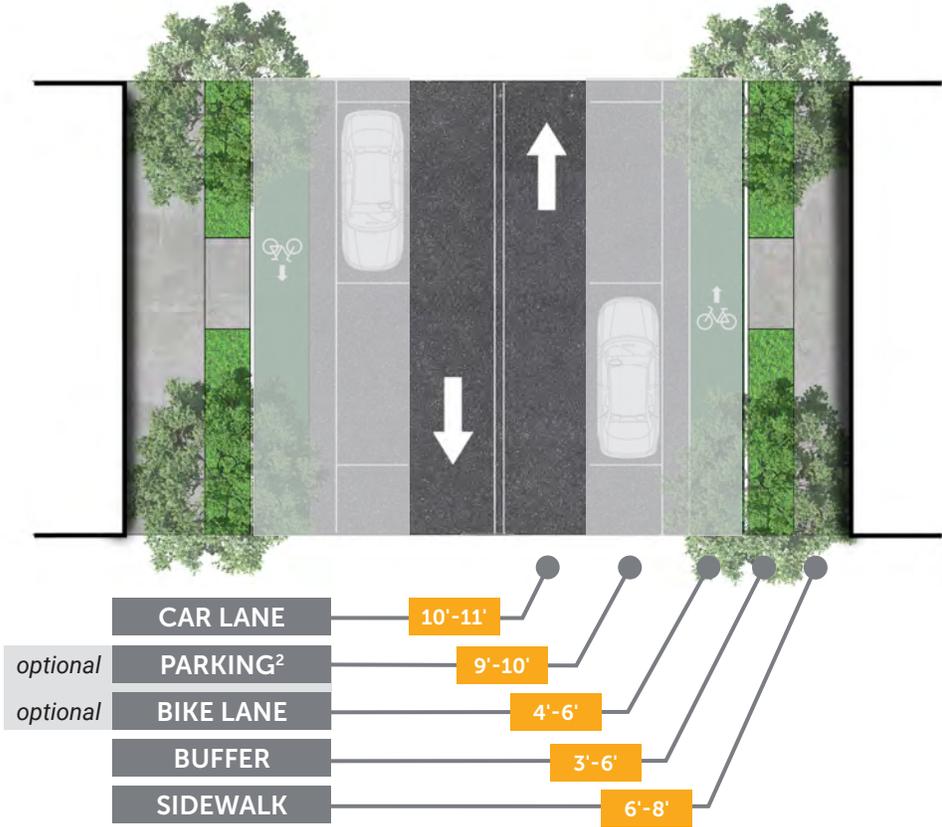
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# NEIGHBORHOOD LOW MIX

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



GREEN



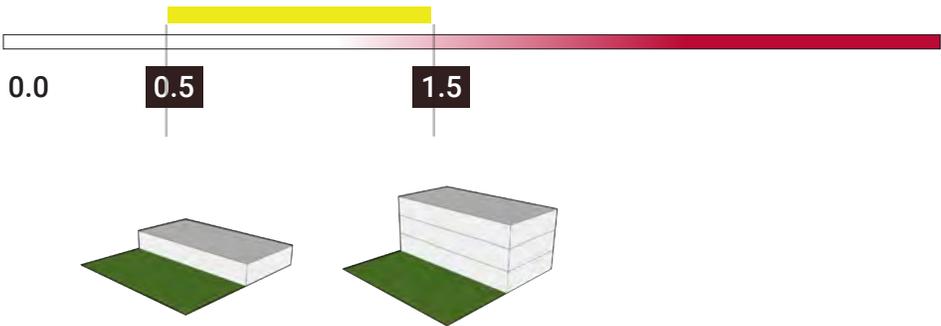
SQUARE

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks) also acceptable. See page 96.

# NEIGHBORHOOD LOW MIX

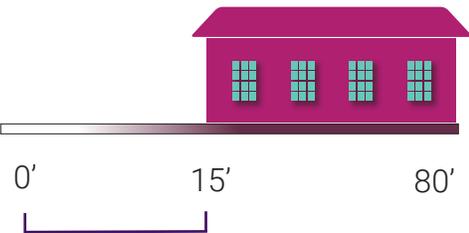
## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

### TARGETED DENSITY RANGE

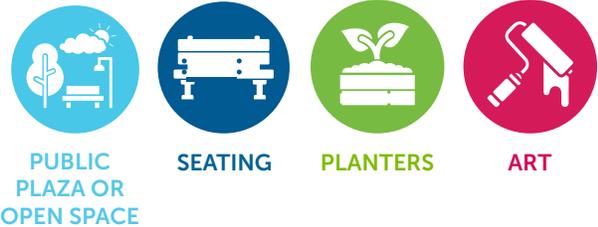


### PEOPLE FRIENDLY DESIGN

PREFERRED FRONT SETBACKS:



DESIRED SETBACK USES:



### WHEN SITES GET TOUGH - ALTERNATIVE GOALS

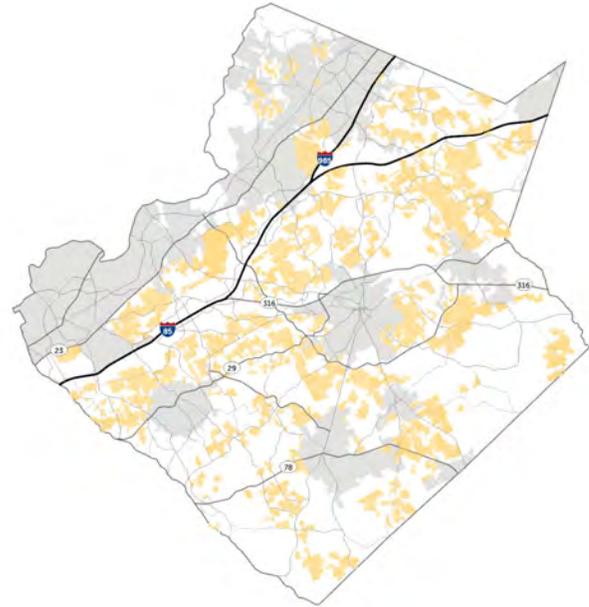
Because of the suburban roots of Neighborhood Low Mix areas, there is a variety of parcel sizes to contend with, many of which are small or do not lend themselves well to achieving these FAR targets and preferred dimensions and characteristics. For these smaller parcels and difficult sites, some alternative Neighborhood Low Mix project goals can include:

- Increase FAR by 20+ percent on sites with existing buildings
- Reuse an existing building creatively
- Build new sidewalk or core trail network link
- Reduce existing surface parking by 25+ percent
- Improve interparcel access or contributes to expansion of local roadway network
- Create at least 750 ft<sup>2</sup>+ of new semipublic space
- Improve diversity of housing types available in the area

# TRADITIONAL+

Traditional+ future development areas are primarily residential areas on sewer within 1 mile of a Village Center or Urban Corridor. Predominantly single family residential, the goal for these areas over time is to encourage gentle density through smaller footprint homes and Accessory Dwelling Units. Neighborhood level retail/entertainment that is sensitive to the community's context is allowed on collector and arterial roadways, but is not a primary use.

These are high priority areas for pedestrian investment, particularly in terms of providing safe connections between neighborhoods, their Village Centers, schools, and other major destinations.



## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Villages
- Halos

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

C-1, R-TH, R-SR (Limited), R-IF (Limited), TND, OSC, R-60, R-75

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market available single family homes to build trail connections and ADUs throughout villages (page 411)
- Consider establishing a New Housing Resource Center that provides tools and support for building missing middle housing types to developers and homeowners interested in building ADUs

# TRADITIONAL+

## USES

( = Appropriate)

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment\*  
*\*Only on arterial and collector roadways*

- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

### PARKING MANAGEMENT: RESIDENTIAL

- Garages Not Required
- If garage, orientation can be:
  - Back facing
  - Side facing
  - Front facing

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



### ROADS

- In new neighborhoods, improve connectivity of local roadway network



### TRANSIT\*

- Within 1 mile of any fixed transit route or transfer facility
- Shared Ride Zone



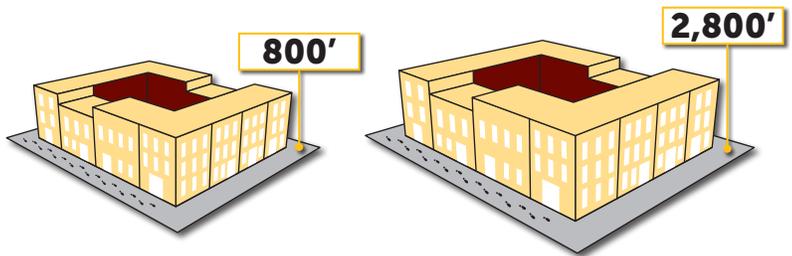
### TRAILS\*\*

- Within 2 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



### PARKING MANAGEMENT: NONRESIDENTIAL

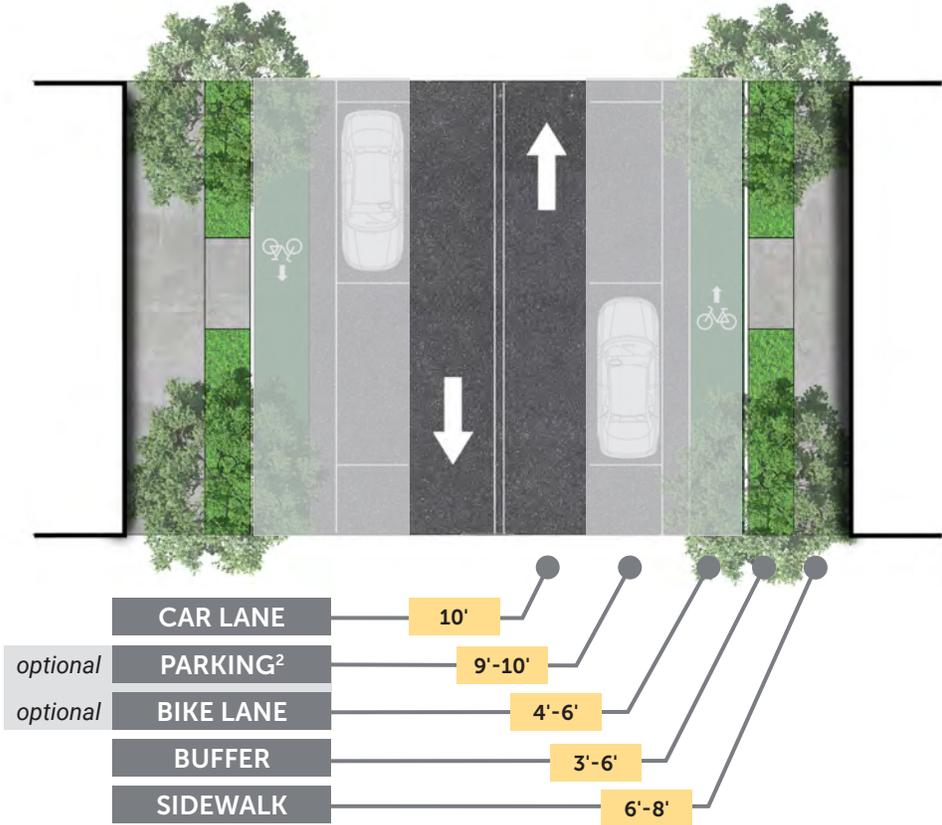
- Structured
- Surface

#### LOCATIONS:

- Rear
- Side
- Front

# TRADITIONAL+

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



GREEN



PASSIVE PARK

\*Smaller types (plazas, pocket parks, squares) also acceptable. See page 96.

# TRADITIONAL+

## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

**TARGET DENSITY: 7-8 dwelling units/acre**

### DEVELOPMENT OF NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

There are several opportunities for new neighborhoods, large and small, to be built in Traditional+ areas. As new neighborhoods are less encumbered by context than infill sites, specific components that are encouraged include:

- No requirement for garages; if they are included, they should be oriented to the side or the rear of the property (alley loaded is preferred)
- Porches and modest setbacks
- Small footprint single family homes and ADUs
- Pedestrian pathways connecting to adjacent uses as practicable

### INFILL

In some cases, the opportunity for development is a single open lot. In that context, the goal should be to match the character of the existing neighborhood as best as possible. The following components should be considered:

- Setback should be within the average setback range of the closest homes on the same side of the street
- If there are houses with porches in the neighborhood, new homes should have a porch
- Front-facing garages should be discouraged; if they are present in many homes in the neighborhood, encourage a side-facing garage instead

Accessory Dwelling Units present another opportunity for infill, especially where a small house occupies a large lot. In Traditional+ areas, the target ultimate density is between 7-8 units per acre. Depending on the lot size, the size of the existing home, and other site conditions like stream buffers, single family lots in this development area can have up to two ADUs as long as the overall density does not exceed the equivalent of 8 dwelling units per acre.

### NONRESIDENTIAL

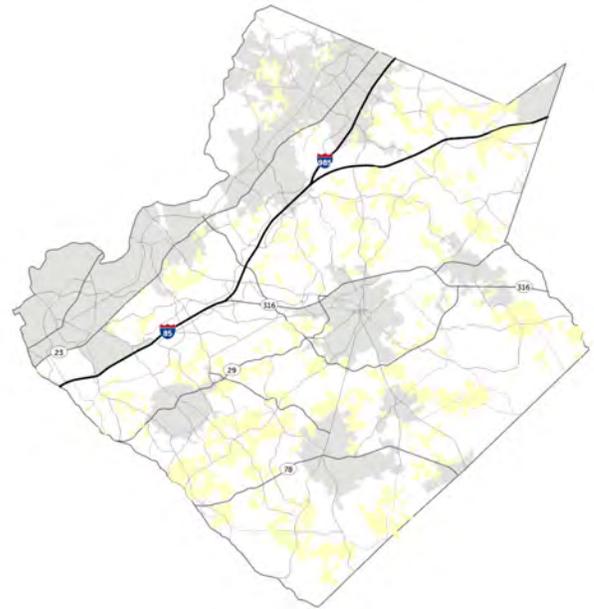
Although Traditional+ is primarily a residential zone, retail/entertainment and office uses are allowed under the following circumstances:

- Must be located on an arterial or collector, not in the interior of an established residential neighborhood
- Must adhere to the scale and character of surrounding uses—the FAR should be within 25 percent of nearby homes, and the setback should be within 10' of the average setback of the closest buildings
- Surface parking should be limited to the side and to the rear; excessive parking is strongly discouraged
- Must provide strong pedestrian linkages to its neighborhood
- If use is retail/entertainment, semipublic space like a plaza or outdoor dining is encouraged

# TRADITIONAL

Traditional neighborhood areas are similar to Traditional+ in that they are predominantly single family residential and within 1 mile of a Village Center or Urban Corridor. However, they differ in one significant way: they do not have sewer.

This lack of sewer curtails additional density from happening on many of these sites. It is also highly unlikely that these established neighborhoods will build sewer in the future due to high costs and disruption. But because they are near Village Centers, they are in priority pedestrian areas and should be encouraged to build out where lots may be very large and could be split.



## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Urban Corridors
- Villages
- Halos

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

OSC, R-100, R-LL

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Establish Village Link program, in which the County would purchase market available single family homes to build trail connections (ADUs not permitted)
- Create design guidelines for new development on large tracts that emphasizes street connectivity
- Cross reference development opportunities with sewer basin master planning efforts from DWR

# TRADITIONAL

## USES

(  = Appropriate )

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

### PARKING: RESIDENTIAL

- Garages Not Required
- If garage, orientation can be:
  - Rear facing
  - Side facing
  - Front facing

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



### ROADS

- In new neighborhoods, improve connectivity of local roadway network



### TRANSIT\*

- Within 1 mile of any fixed transit route or transfer facility
- Shared Ride Zone



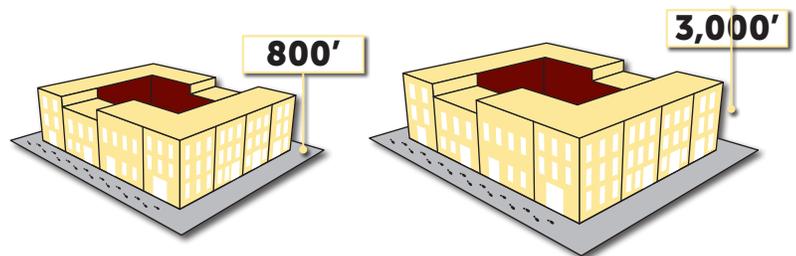
### TRAILS\*\*

- Within 2 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

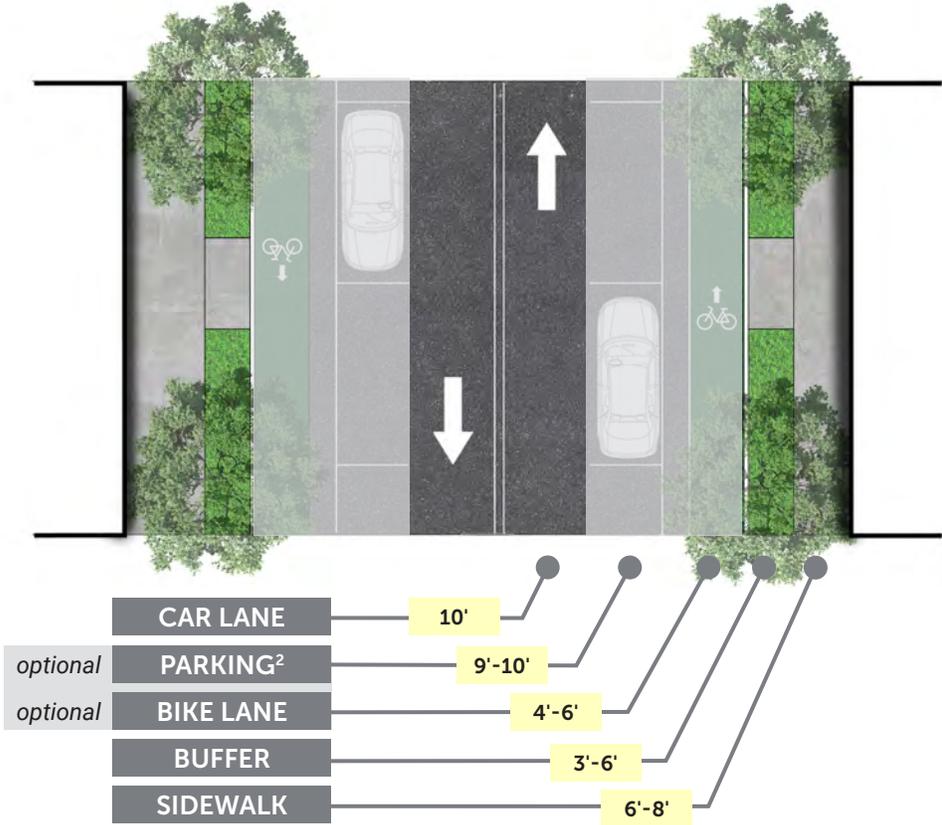
## WALKABILITY

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# TRADITIONAL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply.

<sup>2</sup> If parking lane present, buffer can be as low as 3"; if no parking lane, minimum is 4'.

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



GREEN



PASSIVE PARK

\*See page 96.

# TRADITIONAL

## DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE + CONSIDERATIONS

**TARGET DENSITY: Up to 1.7 dwelling units/acre (due to limitations of septic systems)**

### DEVELOPMENT OF NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

There are several opportunities for new neighborhoods, large and small, to be built in the Traditional areas. As new neighborhoods are less encumbered by context than single infill sites, they are an opportunity to promote the future of single family living in Gwinnett. Specific components that are encouraged include:

- No requirement for garages; if they are included, they should be oriented to the side or the back of the property (alley loaded is preferred)
- Porches and modest setbacks
- Pedestrian pathways connecting to adjacent uses as practicable

### INFILL

In some cases, the opportunity for development is a single open lot. In that context, the goal should be to match the character of the existing neighborhood as best as possible. The following components should be considered:

- Setback should be within the average setback range of the closest homes on the same side of the street
- If there are houses with porches in the neighborhood, infill homes should also include a porch
- Front facing garages should be discouraged; if they are present in many homes in the neighborhood, encourage a side facing garage instead

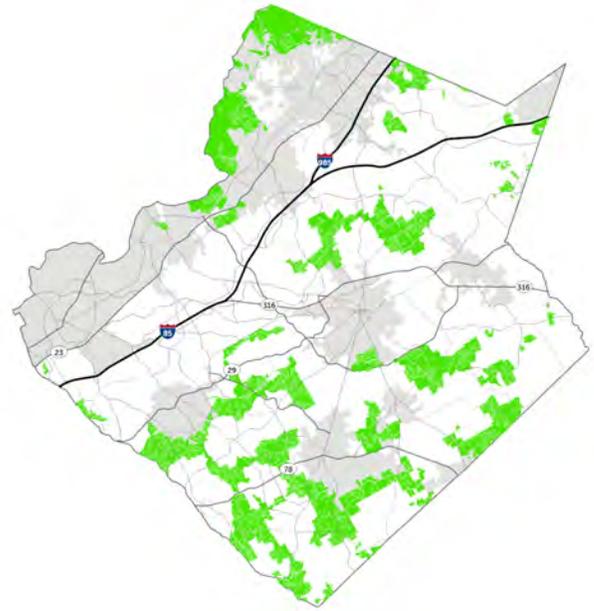
### NONRESIDENTIAL

Desirable nonresidential development in this residential context—like cafes, restaurants, and local service/retail—typically require sewer. Because Traditional neighborhoods areas are not on sewer, allowing retail/entertainment uses is not recommended.

## SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Suburban Residential areas are representative of much of the single family residential development that has occurred in Gwinnett over the past thirty years. Homes are typically larger (2,000 square feet or more), have garages facing the street, and many neighborhoods do not have sidewalks or strong roadway connectivity.

These areas are largely built out, are not in close proximity to Village Centers or Urban Corridors, and are not expected to change much in the next two decades. They are desirable to many households, and serve a role as being part of the diversity of housing types in the county. In sewered areas, ADUs are appropriate.



### TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages
- Halos

### RECOMMENDED ZONING:

OSC, R-60, R-75, R-100, R-LL

### KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Create design guidelines for new development on large tracts that emphasizes street connectivity
- Cross reference development opportunities with sewer basin master planning efforts from DWR
- Identify opportunities for improved stormwater management on sites with low topography or access to water

# SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

**USES**

(  = Appropriate )

**MIXED USES:**

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

**RESIDENTIAL:**

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

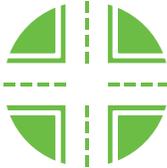
**NONRESIDENTIAL:**

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

**PARKING: RESIDENTIAL**

- Garages Not Required
- If garage, orientation can be:
  - Rear facing
  - Side facing
  - Front facing

**MULTIMODAL GOALS**



**ROADS**

- In new neighborhoods, improve connectivity of local roadway network
- Avoid dead end streets and cul-de-sacs where possible



**TRANSIT\***

- Shared Ride Zone



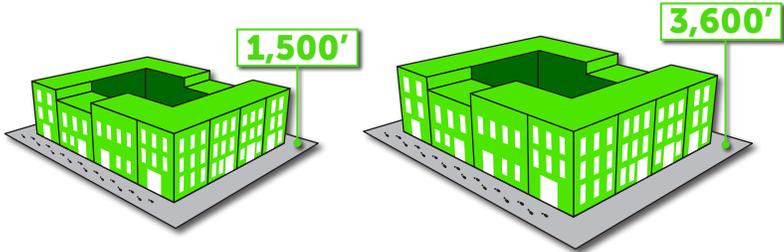
**TRAILS\*\***

- Within 3 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

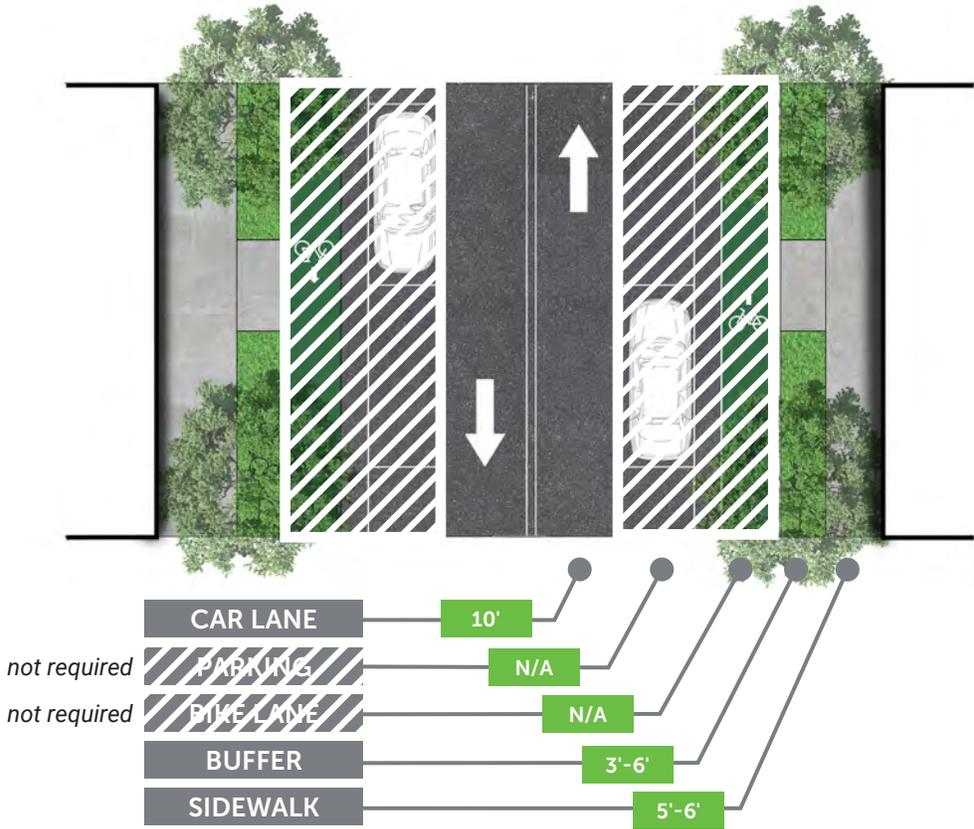
**WALKABILITY**

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply

## PREFERRED PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



PASSIVE PARK



GREEN

\*See page 96.

# SUBURBAN NONRESIDENTIAL

Suburban Nonresidential areas are mostly parcels that are currently nonresidential in use and are more than 1 mile from a Village Center or Urban Corridor.

These uses are anticipated to largely stay the same in the coming years, though some redevelopment or renovations may occur at shopping centers. Although they do not fall in the Village Center typology, these areas play an important role as an alternative (and more affordable) leasing opportunity for small and emerging businesses. They are also an important place for housing auto-related businesses that are less compatible in Village Centers.

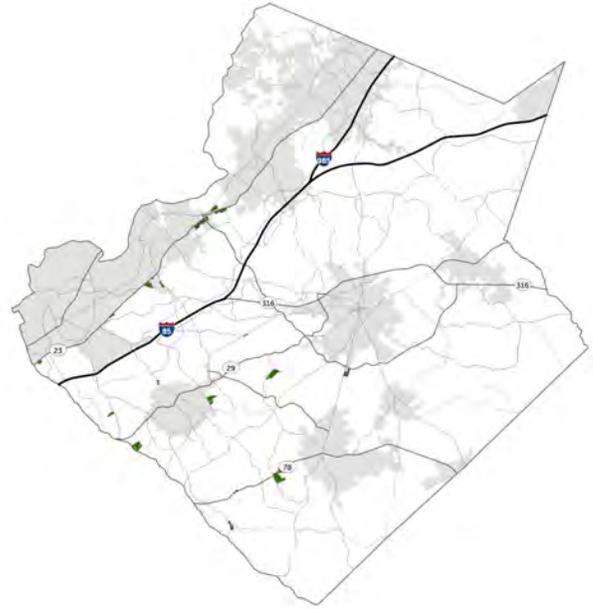


Image courtesy of Commercial Tire

## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages
- Halos

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

C-2, C-1, O-I, M-1 (Limited)

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Invest in easy placemaking projects that showcase local culture to build support for modest redevelopment ideas
- Work with owners to refresh facades and turn extra parking spaces into public amenities
- Utilize buffers for beautification and modest improvements to pedestrian infrastructure for transit users

# SUBURBAN NONRESIDENTIAL

**USES**

( ✓ = Appropriate )

**MIXED USES:**

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

**RESIDENTIAL:**

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family

**NONRESIDENTIAL:**

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

**PARKING MANAGEMENT:**

- Structured
- Surface

**LOCATIONS:**

- Rear
- Side
- Front

**MULTIMODAL GOALS**



**ROADS**

- Avoid adding new dead end streets and cul-de-sacs



**TRANSIT\***

- Shared Ride Zone



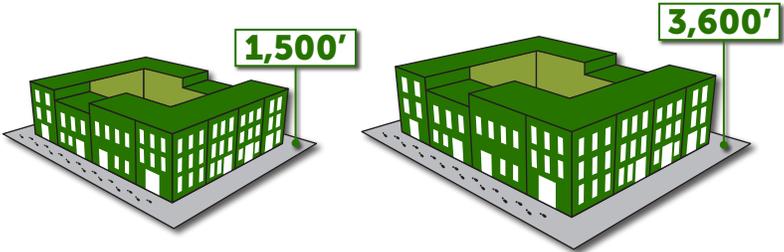
**TRAILS\*\***

- Within 3 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95.  
\*\*See page 93.

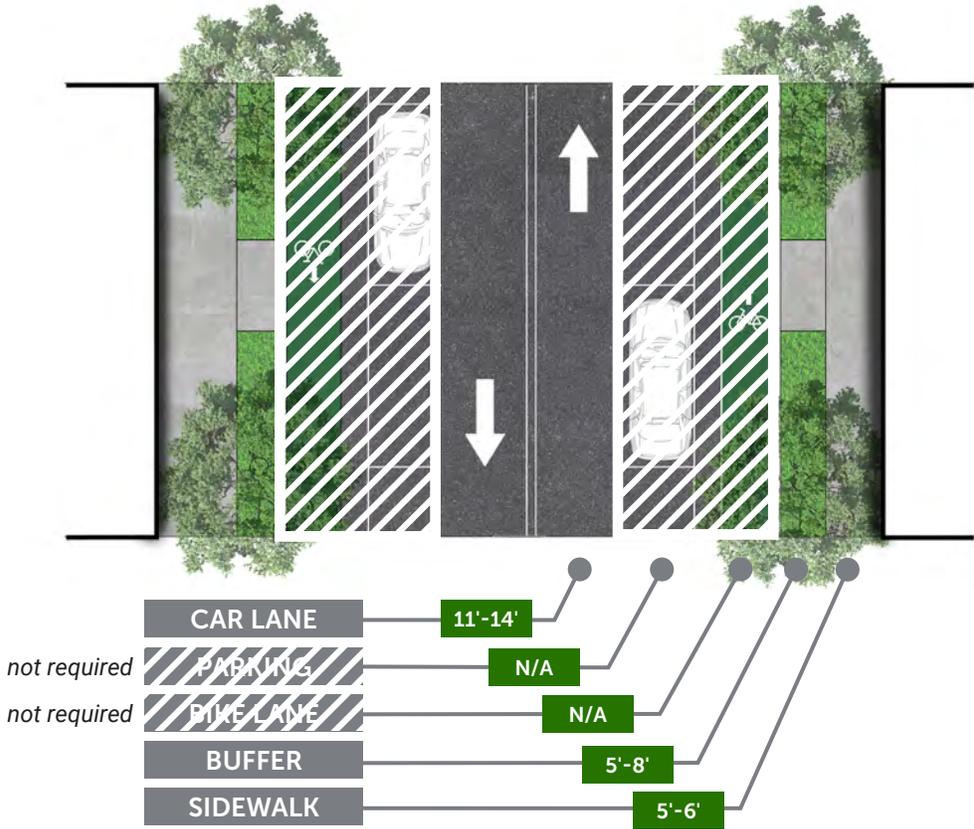
**WALKABILITY**

BLOCK PERIMETER: Preferred Range



# SUBURBAN NONRESIDENTIAL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply

## PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



POCKET PARK



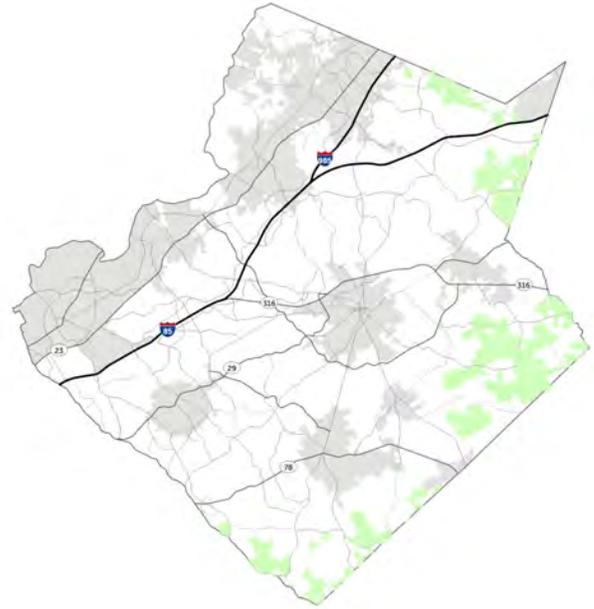
SQUARE

\*Plazas also acceptable. See page 96.

# RURAL

Rural areas are the outermost parts of Gwinnett that have historically seen little development. This is changing as growth pressures mount; however, there is a desire to keep these remaining areas of countryside rural.

Rural areas are on septic and typically are at least more than 2 miles from any Village Center or Urban Corridor. The intent is for these areas to maintain their very low intensity, pastoral character.



## TYPES OF DAILY COMMUNITIES:

- Villages
- Halos

## RECOMMENDED ZONING:

R-100, R-LL, RA-200

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- Develop design guidelines for new development
- Cross reference development opportunities with sewer basin master planning efforts from Department of Water Resources
- Identify sites for first tier conservation projects and partner with state and local agencies to advance them
- Cross reference conservation opportunities with Parks Master Plan

# RURAL

## USES

(  = Appropriate )

### MIXED USES:

- Mixed Use - Vertical
- Mixed Use - Horizontal

### RESIDENTIAL:

- Multifamily - High Rise
- Multifamily - Mid Rise
- Multifamily - Low Rise
- Townhomes/Stacked Flats
- Quads/Triplexes/Duplexes
- Single Family Cottages
- Single Family
- Agriculture/Rural Residential

### NONRESIDENTIAL:

- Office
- Retail/Entertainment
- Auto Oriented Commercial
- Hotels/Motels
- Heavy Industrial
- Flex/Light Industrial
- Institutional
- Utilities
- Parks/Open Space
- Conservation

## MULTIMODAL GOALS



### ROADS

- Avoid dead end streets and cul-de-sacs



### TRANSIT\*

- Shared Ride Zone



### TRAILS\*\*

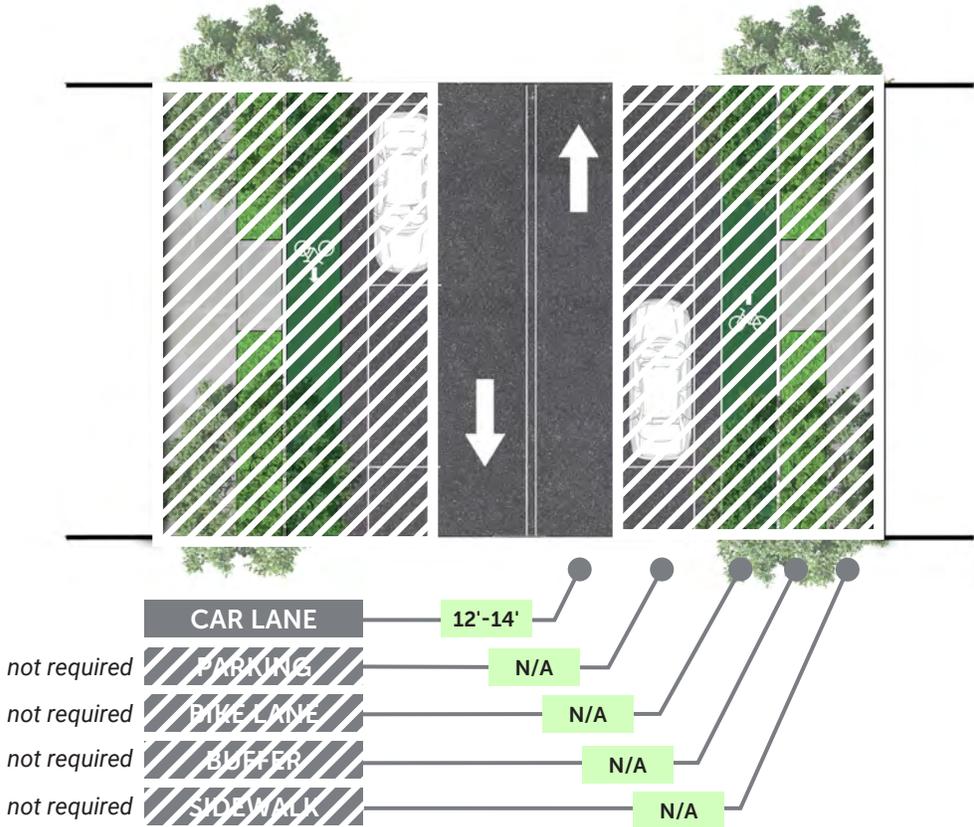
- Within 5 miles of Core Trail and Priority Trail network

\*See page 95..

\*\*See page 93.

# RURAL

## PREFERRED STREET SECTION RANGES<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> For state roadways, GDOT standards apply

## PARK TYPOLOGIES\*



PASSIVE PARK



ACTIVE PARK

\*Greens also acceptable. See page 96.

# LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

LAND USE	DESCRIPTION	IMAGE
<b>MIXED USE</b>		
<b>Mixed Use - Vertical</b>  Typical FAR: 4.0+	The Mixed Use - Vertical land use category represents the most urban type, featuring nonresidential uses on the ground floor with residential uses above. From a market standpoint, it is often impractical for an entire ground floor to be devoted to nonresidential use. As such, a blend of residential and nonresidential spaces is sometimes required. Nevertheless, a minimum of 50 percent of the ground floor area should be allocated for nonresidential purposes.	
<b>Mixed Use - Horizontal</b>  Typical FAR: 1.5+	Mixed Use - Horizontal is intended for larger sites that can support multiple uses, but not at high enough densities to necessitate stories and structured parking. Common uses are retail/entertainment, office, and multifamily.	
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>		
<b>Multifamily - High Rise</b>  Typical FAR: 7.0+	Multifamily - High Rise is the highest intensity residential use in Gwinnett. It includes apartments and condominiums with seven or more stories, with structured parking.	
<b>Multifamily - Mid Rise</b>  Typical FAR: 3.0 -6.0	Multifamily - Mid Rise is defined as apartments or condominiums that ranging from four to six stories high and typically have some structured parking. As the tallest structures that can be stickbuilt, they are the most common type of multifamily use.	
<b>Multifamily - Low Rise</b>  Typical FAR: 0.5 - 2.5	Multifamily - Low Rise is defined as apartments or condominium buildings ranging from two to three stories high, with surface parking.	
<b>Townhomes/Stacked Flats</b>  Typical FAR: 0.6 - 1.5	Townhomes are attached single family homes, usually two to four stories tall. Stacked Flats may resemble townhomes in density, but differ in layout; instead of individual vertical units, Stacked Flats feature one or two story horizontal floor plans stacked atop one another.	

LAND USE	DESCRIPTION	IMAGE
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>		
<b>Quadplexes/ Triplexes/ Duplexes</b>  Typical FAR: 0.4 - 1.2	Popular in the first half of the 20th century, these buildings resemble large single family homes yet contain four, three, or two units, respectively. The smaller unit size of this housing type provides a more affordable option for many households without large increases in density. They require sewer access.	
<b>Cottages</b>  Typical FAR: 0.3 - 1.0	Cottages are small footprint single family homes typically 1,200 square feet or less. These can be constructed as standalone homes, integrated into cottage courts, or within mixed residential communities. They require sewer access.	
<b>Single Family</b>  Typical FAR: 0.2 - 0.7	Single Family designations apply to single family homes or neighborhoods with houses typically exceeding 1,200 square feet—often significantly so. At lower densities, these do not require sewer access.	
<b>Agricultural/Rural Residential</b>  Typical FAR: 0.0 - 0.2	Rural Residential areas are characterized by very low density housing often with no more than one unit per two acres, and include rural and agriculture-based uses. They are very rarely on sewer.	
<b>NONRESIDENTIAL</b>		
<b>Office/Professional</b>  Typical FAR: 0.2 -10.0+	Office/Professional zones are designated for commercial uses that do not engage in onsite sales, manufacturing, storage, or distribution. These zones typically house office-based businesses with a high job density per square foot.	
<b>Retail/Entertainment</b>  Typical FAR: 0.2 - 3.0+	Retail/Entertainment consists of storefront operations such as restaurants, movie theaters, shops, and service providers. The form and intensity of this land use vary depending on the specific businesses housed within. This does not include auto oriented uses such as gas stations, auto shops, auto sales lots, etc.	
<b>Auto Oriented Commercial</b>  Typical FAR: 0.1 - 0.3	Auto oriented Commercial uses are those geared toward the maintenance and sale of vehicles. This includes gas stations, auto maintenance shops and services, vehicle sales lots.	
<b>Hotels/Motels</b>  Typical FAR: 1.5 - 10.0+	Hotels and Motels, while commercial uses, often resemble multifamily residential buildings in their appearance. For this reason, they are classified as a separate category within nonresidential land uses.	
<b>Heavy Industrial</b>  Typical FAR: 0.0 - 3.0+	Heavy Industrial refers to high impact land uses that typically have many external impacts such as noise and fumes. These include uses such as quarries, chemical processing plants, and older industrial uses. They should be heavily buffered from surrounding land uses.	

LAND USE	DESCRIPTION	IMAGE
<b>NONRESIDENTIAL</b>		
<b>Flex/Light Industrial</b> Typical FAR: 0.4 - 2.0+	Flex space and Light Industrial uses are typically large buildings that house businesses involved in activities where potential negative impacts to neighborhoods—such as loud noises or noxious emissions—are kept within the structure. They tend to generate significant truck traffic.	
<b>Public/Institutional</b> FAR: Varies	Public and Institutional uses are operated by public agencies such as the County, City, or School District, or quasipublic organizations like places of worship. They vary broadly in size, style, and intensity depending on their function.	
<b>Utilities</b> FAR: N/A	Utilities are necessary land uses, and vary widely in their size, look, and function. By law, public utilities are allowable in every part of Gwinnett County regardless of the designation on the Future Development Map.	
<b>Parks/Open Space</b> FAR: N/A	Parks and Open Spaces can be formal/official parks operated by Gwinnett County or other agencies. They can also be natural areas that are not accessible to the public, but are not under formal conservation agreements. See page 96 for typology information.	
<b>Conservation</b> FAR: Usually 0	Conservation lands are those that are under formal conservation agreements. Typically, they protect unique natural or, at times, cultural resources and are not developable.	

### FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE, FUTURE LAND USE, & ZONING...WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Land use planning can be confusing. It can seem like future land use, future development types, and zoning all refer to the same thing. While they are connected, they operate at different scales and regulatory strength.

Future development types operate at the highest level. They provide general guidance on what the community envisions for future development by providing a range of appropriate uses and design preferences. Future land use adds a layer of detail, determining a specific preferred use for each parcel. Zoning is the only tool with regulatory teeth—it consists of very detailed regulations governing exactly what can be built on a parcel. Zoning regulations must be followed; the only way to build something different than what zoning allows is to go through a formal rezoning process.

The rezoning process is where the future development areas come into play: if a property owner wants to build something other than what their current zone allows, they must apply for a rezoning. When staff and officials review the request, they will reference the Future Development Map to see if the change aligns with the future development guidance for that parcel as one of the items they are authorized to consider. The project's alignment with the FDM is a major factor in determining if staff will recommend approval, and if elected officials will approve the request.

# TRAILS, TRANSIT, AND PARKS GUIDANCE

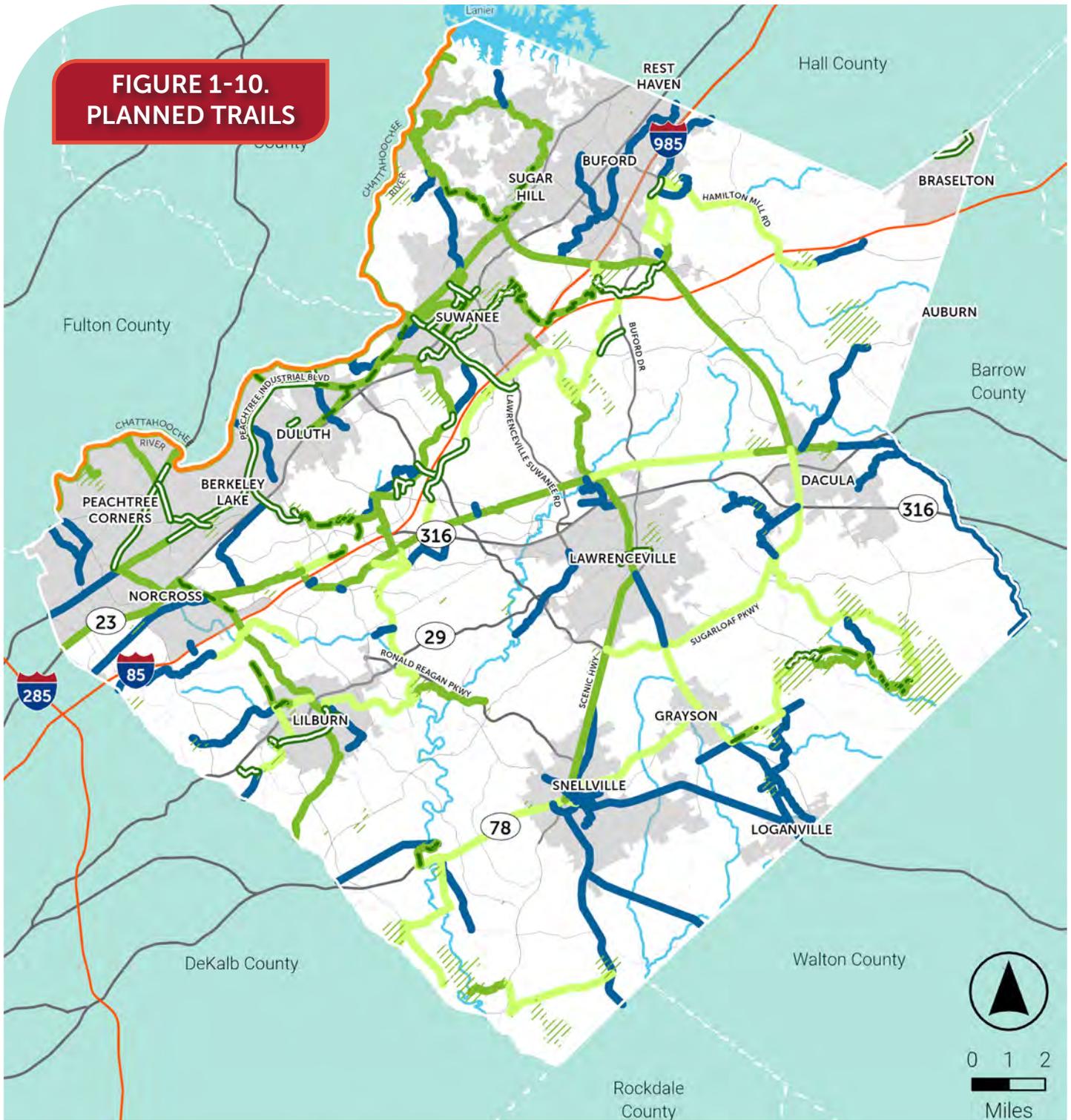
One of the primary goals of the Unified Plan is to meaningfully integrate other County planning efforts into future land use planning. In this 2045 update, each future development type directly intersects with recommendations from the *Countywide Trails Master Plan*, the *2023 Transit Development Plan*, and the *2020 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.

## TRAILS: COUNTYWIDE TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The 2018 Countywide Trails Master Plan identified a wide reaching network of future trails in Gwinnett. This high-level plan categorizes trails in a variety of ways. For the purposes of the future development types, the implementation-based categorization is used:

TRAIL TYPE	DEFINITION	FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TYPE APPLICATION
<b>Core Network</b>	Anticipated for initial plan implementation	Combined, these two trail types are considered the target trail network; strong access to these trails is an important mobility goal for higher intensity future development types.
<b>Priority Trails</b>	Segments for implementation after the Core Network	
<b>Trails with Partners</b>	Trails that will be built through development/redevelopment (private sector) or other partners	Not included in the future development type mobility goals, but supported through improved development regulations.
<b>Chattahoochee Trail Network</b>	Regionally significant trail along the Chattahoochee River expected to be implemented across multiple agencies	As a geographically specific corridor, this trail type is not included in future development type mobility goals but is an important quality of life component in western Gwinnett Daily Communities.

**FIGURE 1-10.  
PLANNED TRAILS**



**Legend**

**Existing & Funded Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails**

- Existing Trail
- Funded Trail

**Planned Trails**

- Core Trail Network
- Priority Trails
- Trails with Partners
- Chattahoochee Trail Network

Rivers

Parks

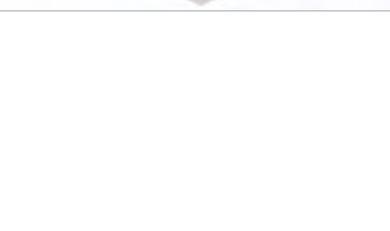
# TRANSIT: 2023 TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Adopted in the fall of 2023, the TDP proposes five main modes of transit for Gwinnett. The five modes are summarized in the table below, with additional detail in the Transportation Element. All the modes except Airport Ride are integrated into future development type mobility goals. In general, modes with higher capacity and greater frequency should serve the more intense future development types.

TRANSIT	MODE	DESCRIPTION
	Quick Ride	High frequency service with bus priority improvements and enhanced stops
	Rapid Ride	High capacity service with dedicated right of way and stations
	County Ride	Regular bus with set routes and schedules
	Shared Ride	Door to door microtransit service accessible via on demand ride hailing
	Airport Ride	Limited stop service to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

## PARKS: 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The 2020 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan established a park typology based on development context, from Most Urban to Least Urban. This typology is carried forward in the future development types, with a particular focus on the park types most commonly provided by the private sector as part of the development process. Higher capacity and greater frequency should serve the more intense future development types.

PARK TYPE	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	PROVIDED BY:
 <p><b>Plaza</b></p>	Most Urban	No minimum size, fronted by high intensity development; mostly passive space and paved with landscaping	Mostly private sector through development and redevelopment
 <p><b>Pocket Park</b></p>	More Urban	Space 0.5 to 2 acres in size fronted by high intensity development; mostly passive space with mix of paved areas and green space	Mostly private sector through development and redevelopment
 <p><b>Square</b></p>	Urban	Space 0.5 to 5 acres in size fronted by medium intensity development; mix of paved areas and green space	Mostly private sector through development and redevelopment
 <p><b>Green</b></p>	Less Urban	Space 0.5 to 8 acres in size fronted by lower intensity development; mostly green space	Mix of private sector through development and redevelopment and public sector
 <p><b>Active Park</b></p>	Less Urban	Space that is 8 acres minimum, not fronted by development, mostly active recreation facilities	Almost always public sector
 <p><b>Passive Park</b></p>	Least Urban	Space that is 8 acres minimum, not fronted by development, almost all green space, parking lot provided	Mix of private sector through development and redevelopment and public sector

# 02

# LAND USE



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

For the past several decades, Gwinnett County's population and economic growth has been swift and tremendous. Beginning in the 1980s, Gwinnett rapidly transformed from predominantly rural into a suburban, bedroom community of Atlanta. Single family neighborhoods proliferated, anchored by strip style shopping centers, with some industrial and office uses clustered around transportation corridors. Thus, Gwinnett's primary suburban character was established.

In recent years, Gwinnett has diversified, both in terms of demographics and development patterns. Finding ways to accommodate its projected population growth, support its new demographic diversity, and ensure that quality of life remains high for all residents will be the County's main challenge. The Land Use element addresses that challenge.

From the analysis of existing conditions and interviews with key stakeholders, the planning team identified Gwinnett's principal land use needs and opportunities for accommodating expected growth. Two major issues emerged, as stated on page 100.

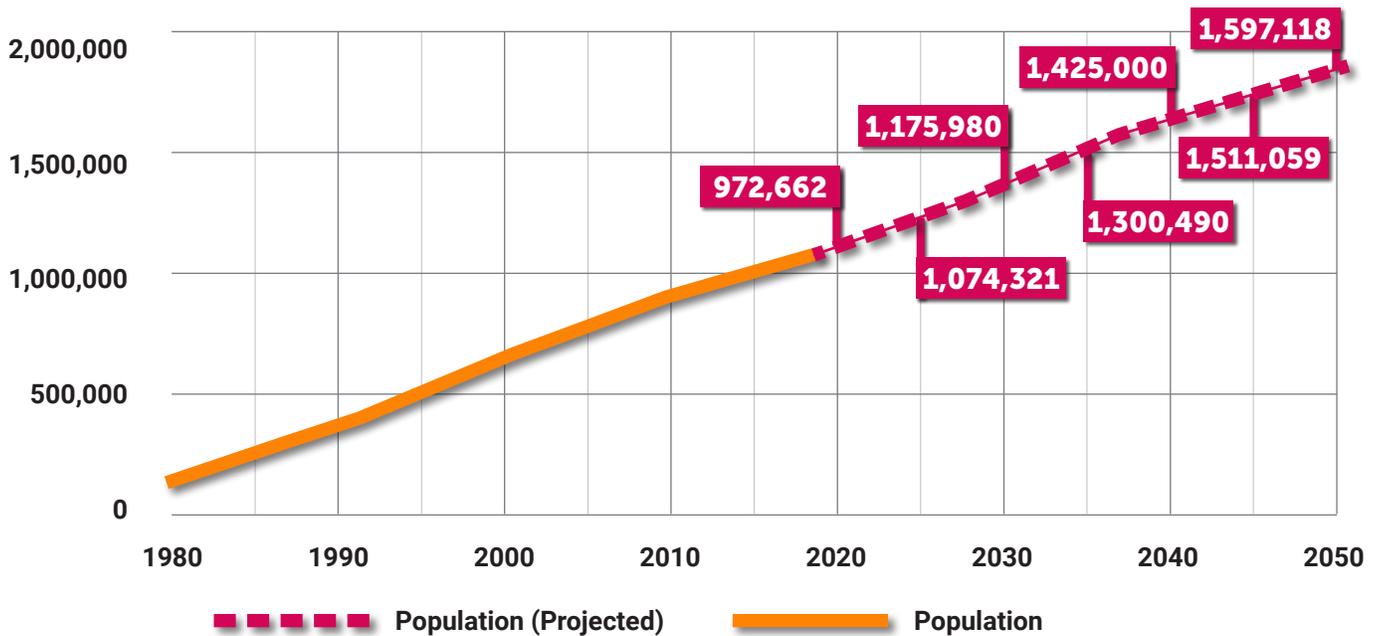
# MAIN ISSUES

## 1 GWINNETT HAS MORE GROWTH COMING THAN ITS CURRENT POLICIES CAN ACCOMMODATE

Gwinnett County is home to almost 1 million residents; however, future projections estimate it will surpass 1.5 million residents by 2045. The County's current policies cannot accommodate this anticipated growth. Some existing policies support denser forms of development but not sufficient to meet the expected demand over the next 20 years. New approaches and policy tools that promote redevelopment, gentle density, and community connectivity will be critical for maintaining Gwinnett County's regional competitiveness and high quality of life.

**FIGURE 2-1: GWINNETT COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

SOURCE: FOURTH ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF LIGHTCAST AND US CENSUS BUREAU DATA



## 2 ONE SIZE FITS ALL FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT NO LONGER WORK FOR GWINNETT

Gwinnett can no longer be considered uniformly suburban. Not only has Gwinnett's population diversified since the 1980s, but its urban form has also changed. Growth along major transportation routes and in popular retail and workplace destinations has altered the built environment significantly, resulting in distinct regions of varying intensities. These regions evolved to meet specific needs of residents throughout the county and are recognized for their unique characteristics. Given this diversity, a new approach to land use planning is necessary to support the distinctive qualities of the county's broad range of communities.

## WHY ACCOMMODATE POPULATION GROWTH?

Growth can feel threatening, especially in an area like Gwinnett County where longstanding residents remember a more rural community. However, there are many benefits to growth. First, a growing population—especially residents with technical skills or high levels of education—can signal to industries and businesses that they should locate in the area to capitalize on a strong workforce. This economic momentum can lead to new jobs in better employment sectors and higher employment rates. Supporting industries, like the service industry, tend to follow, creating more opportunities at various skill levels. Increased property taxes from new businesses and residents alike fund improvements to transportation networks and other critical infrastructure.

A growing tax digest also supports better amenities, including schools, parks, health services, and other programming. Properly managing residential and commercial growth can also encourage the density required for new retail, entertainment options, and public transit. Together, these benefits support high quality of life, especially when carefully accommodated through strong planning and development policies.

Growth can also bring significant challenges, particularly for infrastructure. However, the consequence of not growing when demand is high can be catastrophic. A 2022 study on the benefits and costs of smart growth holds that growth control policies, including restrictive zoning, can end up exacerbating problems—traffic, especially—often associated with growth (Litman 2022). In Gwinnett’s case, a lack of available housing is likely to push prospective residents to nearby counties who will still commute to or through Gwinnett, increasing traffic congestion without contributing to the tax base that pays for road maintenance. Housing prices would likely increase resulting from high demand and low supply, further contributing to the County’s affordability issue. If this trend were to accelerate, investment in the county could stagnate, leading to lower quality or cut services.

The benefits of embracing growth, especially in a high demand area, far outweigh the growing pains. From a land use perspective, planning for growth can strengthen neighborhoods, connecting them to new job opportunities and housing options. Building more densely can reduce trip distances and vehicle miles traveled—in some cases up to 52 percent (Litman 2022)—and build support for transit. All these benefits could enhance Gwinnett’s already high quality of life and resolve some of its current planning challenges.

Source: <https://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/mdo738/research/agenda.pdf>



# Existing Conditions

This section analyzes historic land development trends and current conditions in Gwinnett County, addressing the two fundamental issues introduced at the start of this element:

- 1 **Gwinnett has more growth coming than its current policies can accommodate.**
- 2 **One size fits all forms of development no longer work for Gwinnett.**

## **ISSUE #1: GROWTH CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED BY CURRENT POLICY**

Future housing unit demand in Gwinnett is anticipated to grow from 330,569 units in 2020 to 541,745 in 2045—an increase of over 211,000 units. To accommodate this expected demand, Gwinnett County must pursue different policies that allow for and incentivize housing types other than traditional single family homes. This section discusses the County's current policies and recent trends to demonstrate the need for a new approach.



## HISTORIC GROWTH

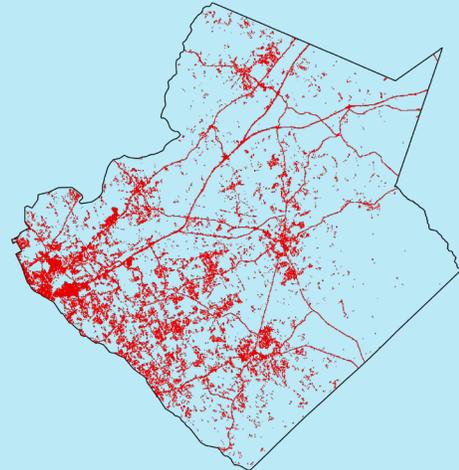
Gwinnett County has embraced suburban development, including single family subdivisions, low rise office parks, and shopping centers. In 2020, data showed that 89 percent of Gwinnett's residential land use consists of single family homes. Commercial land in Gwinnett is often separated from residential uses, leading to a car dependent population, a common feature of suburbs.

The rate of development has been swift. According to land cover data analyzed by the Georgia Conservancy's Georgia Now and Forever initiative, over 130,000 acres of land (about 48 percent of total land area) were developed in Gwinnett County between 1974 and 2019 (Figure 2-2). This leaves only about 19,000 acres of undeveloped land, comprising less than 10 percent of the total unincorporated area.

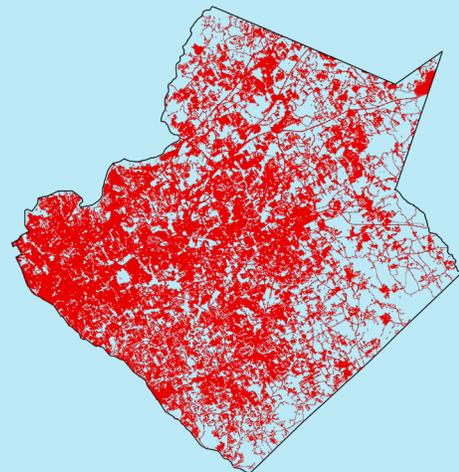
Population projections indicate that Gwinnett will continue to grow. With the projection of 600,000 new residents by 2045 from the 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study (Figure 2-1) and limited undeveloped land available, a new approach to growth is essential.

## FIGURE 2-2: DEVELOPED LAND COVER OVER TIME

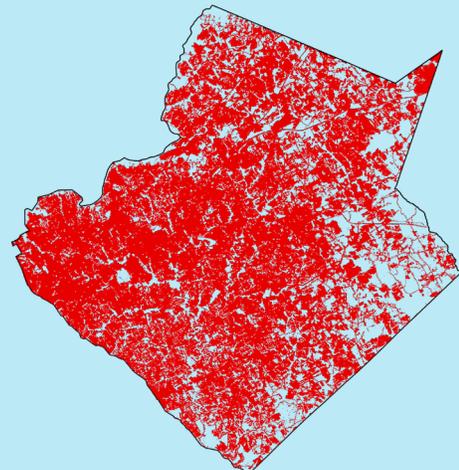
*SOURCE: GEORGIA CONSERVANCY, GEORGIA NOW AND FOREVER INITIATIVE*



**1974**

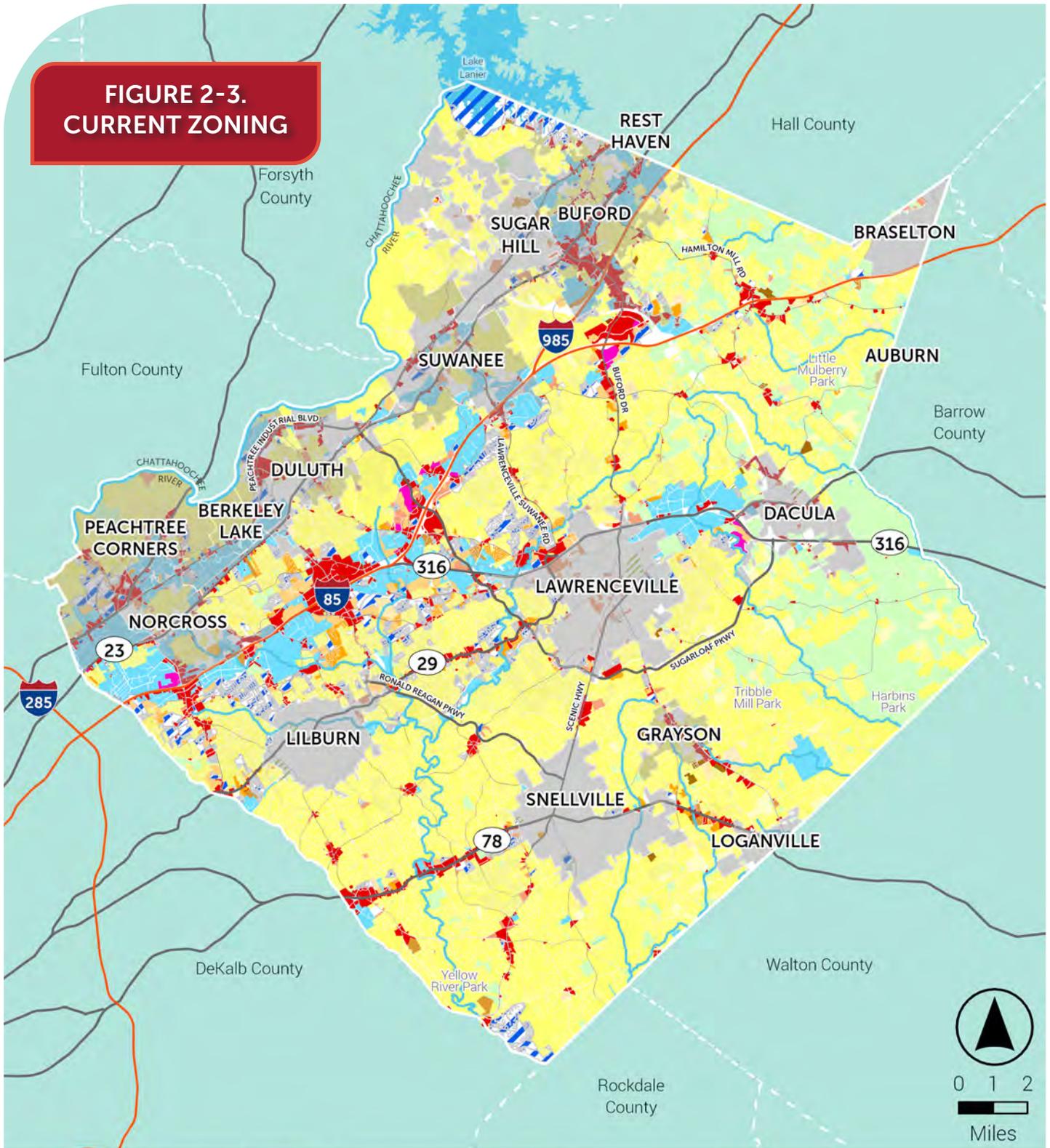


**2001**



**2019**

**FIGURE 2-3.  
CURRENT ZONING**



**Legend**

<span style="color: red;">■</span> C1 - C2 - C3	<span style="color: pink;">■</span> MUC	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> OR	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> R60	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> RM13	<span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> TND
<span style="color: brown;">■</span> HRR	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> MUN	<span style="color: lightyellow;">■</span> OSC	<span style="color: yellowgreen;">■</span> R75	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> RM24	<span style="color: blue; border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">■</span> nonconforming with UDO
<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> M1 - M2	<span style="color: magenta;">■</span> MUR	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> R100	<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> RA200	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> RSR	
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> MH	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> OI	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> R140	<span style="color: green;">■</span> RLL	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> RTH	

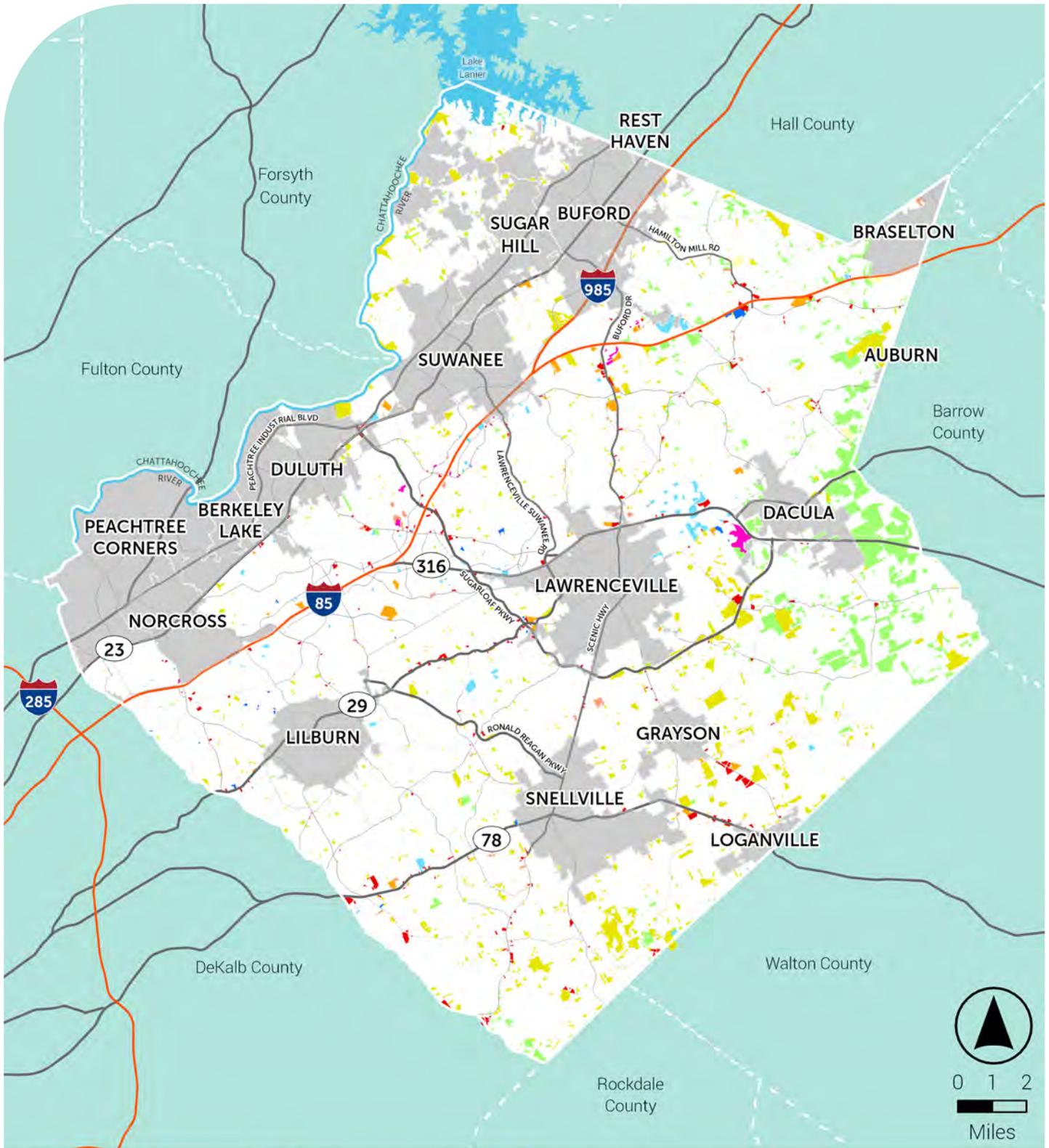
## CURRENT ZONING

Gwinnett County's current zoning map (Figure 2-3) reflects the prevailing land use patterns in the county. Approximately 63 percent of the county's land is zoned for single family residential, including large lots. Not all land zoned for single family is utilized this way; some land is set aside for parks, recreation, utilities, and public right of way. (For an in depth discussion on existing land use, see page 115.)

Multifamily zoning accounts for only 7 percent, while mixed use districts make up less than 1 percent of Gwinnett's total land. To a degree, this makes sense; while multifamily and mixed use buildings naturally require less land than single family subdivisions with the same number of housing units, this distribution does not align with the County's goals of creating active, connected communities in line with its growth trajectory.



Image Source:  
Gwinnett County Communications



**Legend**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Commercial             | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Open Space Conservation      | <span style="color: blue;">■</span> nonconforming with UDO |
| <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Industrial            | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Multifamily                  |  |
| <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Mixed Use          | <span style="color: limegreen;">■</span> Single Family Residential |  |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Office/Institutional | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Large Lot Single family  |  |

**FIGURE 2-4. ZONING OF BUILDABLE, UNDEVELOPED LAND**

Gwinnett County's remaining buildable, undeveloped land (Figure 2-4) follows a similar trend: 72.6 percent is zoned for single family residential, including large lots, while only 5.3 percent allows for multifamily or mixed use of any kind. A substantial portion of the land zoned single family consists of the Rowen Foundation's future site (see page 136 for more details), meaning there will be a change in this distribution as that project progresses. However, if Gwinnett continues its historical growth patterns and predominantly invests in single family neighborhoods, there will not be enough housing created to meet the forecasted demand.



*Image Source: Rowen Foundation*

## RECENT PERMITS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

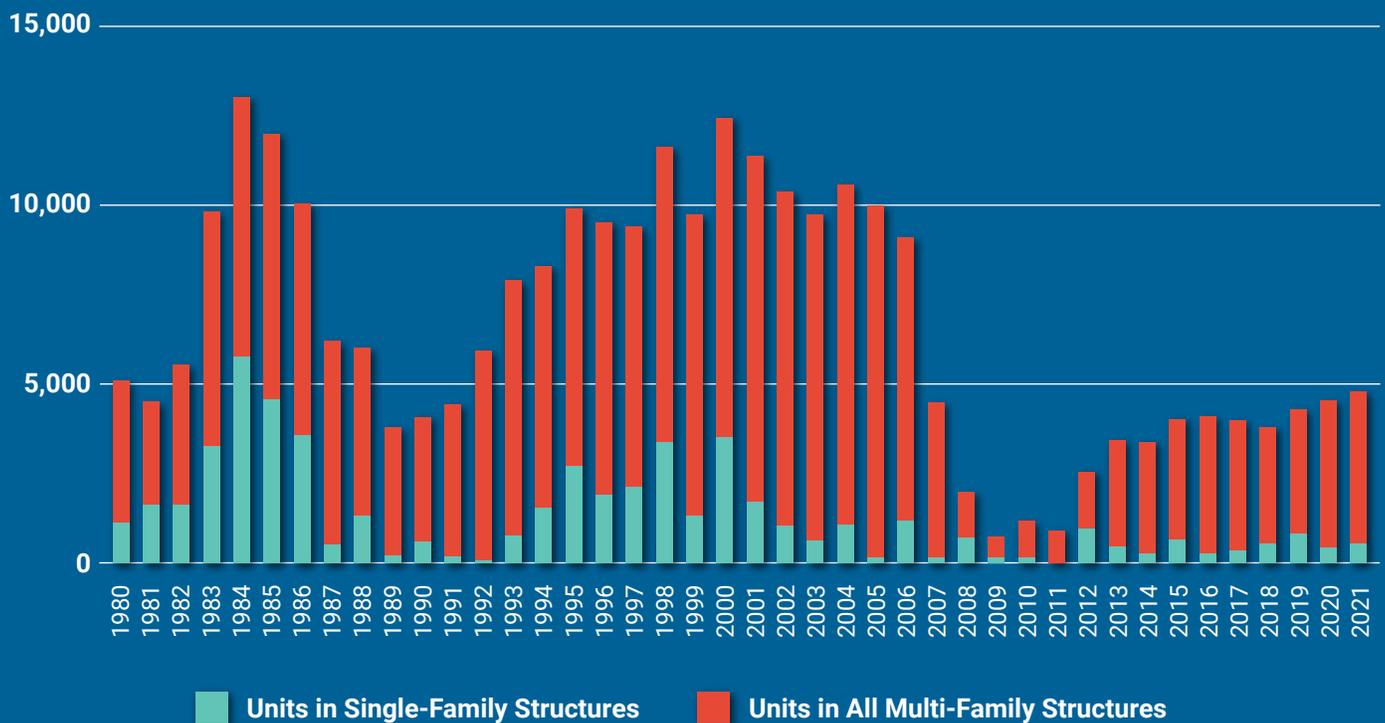
Permit data from 1980-2021 (Figure 2-5) shows that the pace of housing development in Gwinnett County has slowed down since the Great Recession. From 2010 to 2021, the County permitted an average of 3,666 units per year, 88 percent of which were single family housing.

To meet projected market demand based on population growth, approximately 8,500 new units must be built in Gwinnett annually. The continued predominance of single family unit construction will not meet this demand. Increasing the level of multifamily construction is important to reaching higher levels of overall housing unit production and to close the 4,834 unit gap between the future housing unit demand and the existing level of permitted housing units. This will be explored in more depth in Chapter 4, Housing.

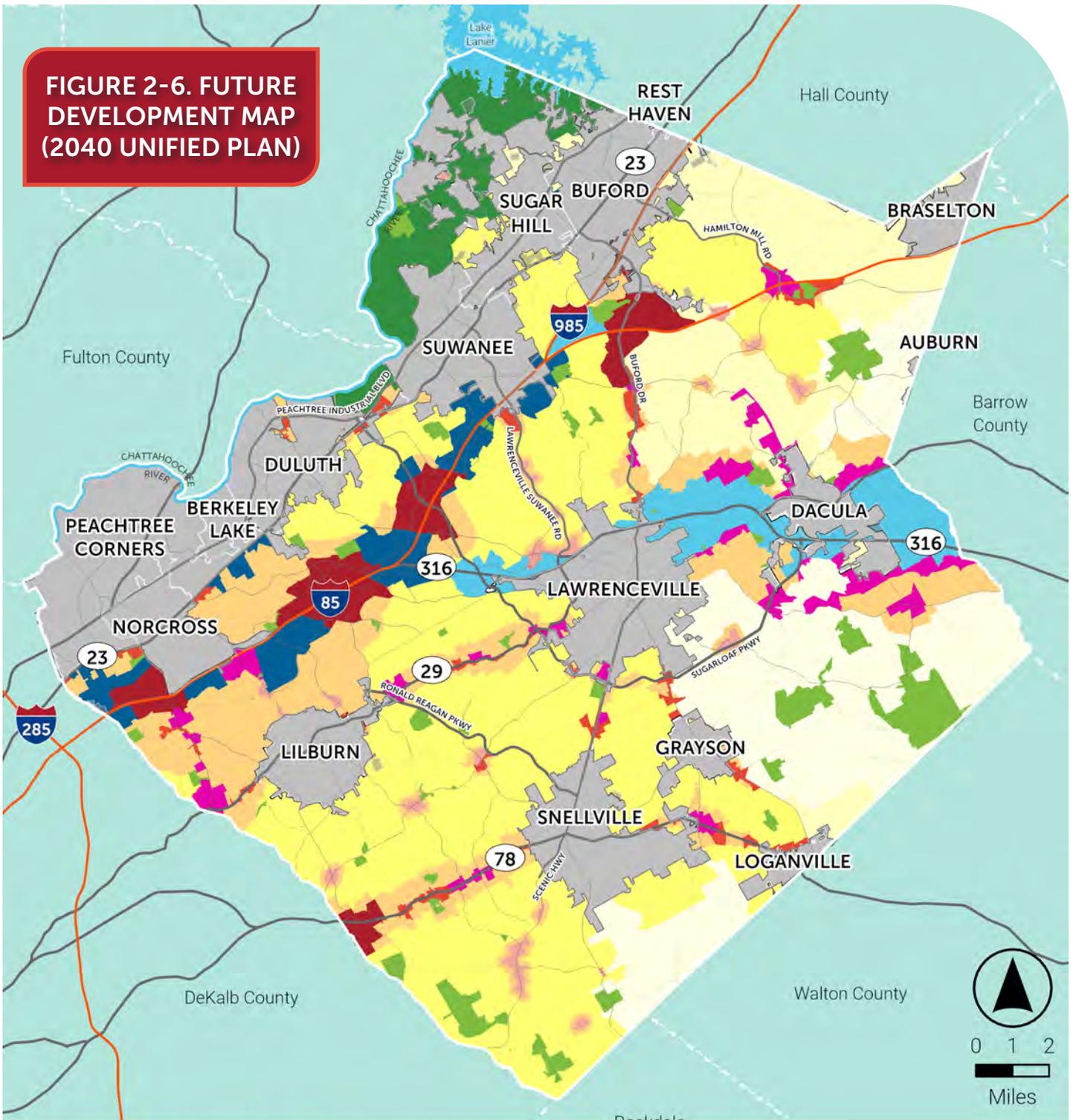
Gwinnett County's growth is guided through its Future Development Map (Figure 2-6), which was most recently updated in the 2040 Unified Plan. This map divides the county into four main character area types: Activity Centers, Employment Centers, Residential Neighborhoods, and Low Intensity areas. Each is further split into subcharacter areas for added specificity in terms of intensity and character for a total of 11 distinct character areas for Gwinnett.

**FIGURE 2-5: BUILDING PERMITS - SINGLE & MULTIFAMILY UNITS**

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, SCODS

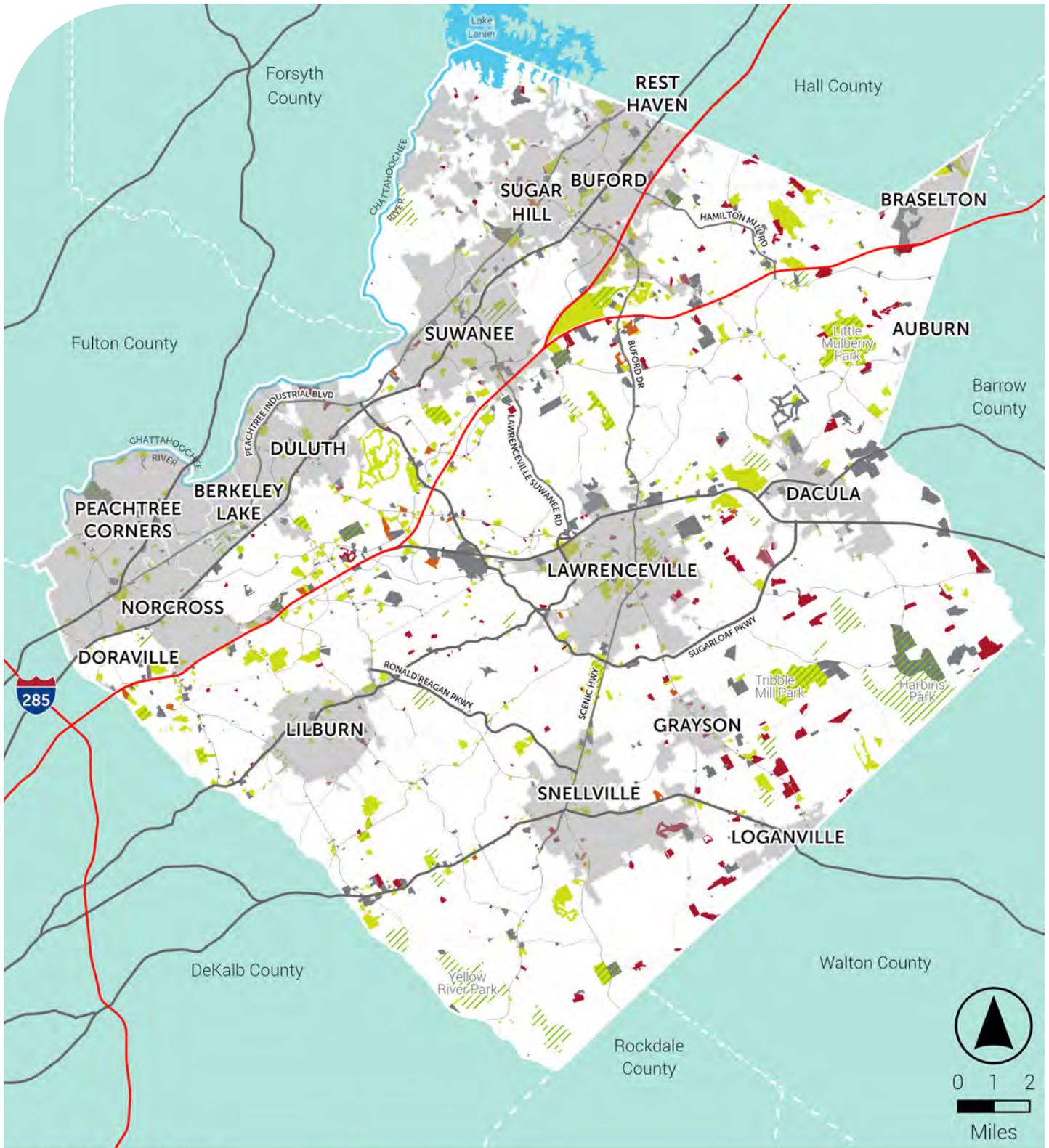


**FIGURE 2-6. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP (2040 UNIFIED PLAN)**



**Legend**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #800000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Regional Activity Center | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #00AEEF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Innovation District       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFF2CC; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Emerging Suburban      |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #E91E63; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Community Node           | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #4CAF50; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Chattahoochee River Area  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFF9C4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Suburban Estate Living |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF7F50; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Community Mixed Use      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8BC34A; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Community Amenities       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #A9A9A9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Municipalities         |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFB74D; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Neighborhood Node        | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFC107; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Vibrant Communities       |  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #0056B3; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Workplace Center         | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFEB3B; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Established Neighborhoods |  |



**Legend**

- Commercial Development Permit
- Multifamily Development Permit
- Subdivision Development Permit
- All Other Development Permits

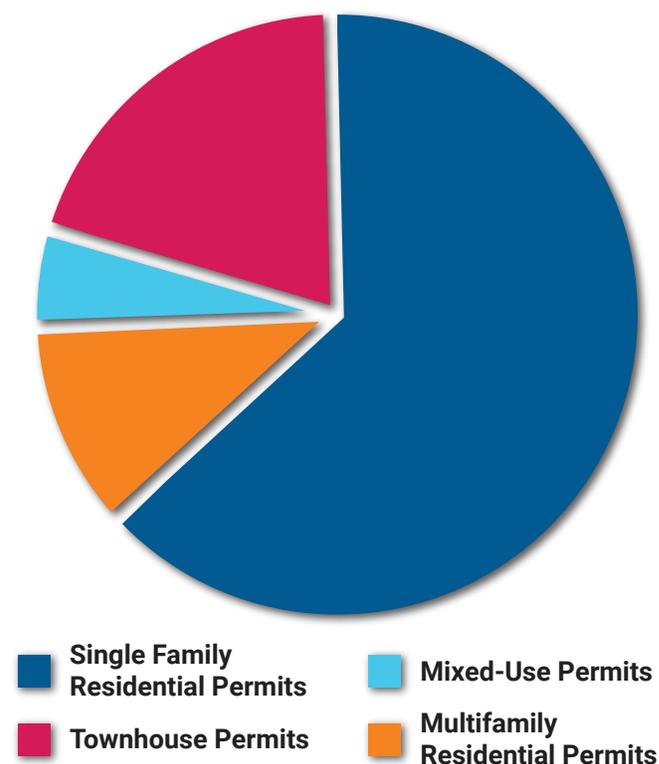
**FIGURE 2-7:  
DEVELOPMENT  
PERMITS BY TYPE**

While Activity Centers and Employment Centers are intended to be dense, mixed use, and explicitly nonresidential districts, many subcharacter areas within these two larger categories still allow single family residential development within their boundaries intending to create buffers between differing densities across uses. An analysis of the Development Permit Requests shows developers are taking advantage of this inclusion. 352 Single family Residential Development Permits have been processed since 2016 (Figure 2-7). In that same time frame, 91 Mixed Use or Multifamily Development Permits have led to a 4:1 ratio of single family to multifamily and mixed use developments in the county in recent years (Figure 2-8).

There have been five single family development permits in character areas where the previous Unified Plan explicitly does not allow them, specifically the Innovation District and the Regional Activity Centers. 46 single family residential building permits have been in areas intended for higher densities and mixed use, such as Community Mixed Use, Community Nodes, Neighborhood Nodes, and Vibrant Communities. The number of mixed use and multifamily permits in these areas is a close second at 43. This development pattern is an almost even mix of single family and mixed use/multifamily residential in character areas intended for mixed use, dense residential or no residential development.

This trend indicates that the existing plan still favors single family development more than intended. While the intent in the existing plan sets a vision for a denser urban form, the language lacks specificity on the ratio of single family and mixed use or multifamily development to achieve that vision. Therefore, it can be challenging for Gwinnett County Planning and Development staff to assess incoming permit requests to ensure the envisioned balance is achieved since there is nothing to measure it against.

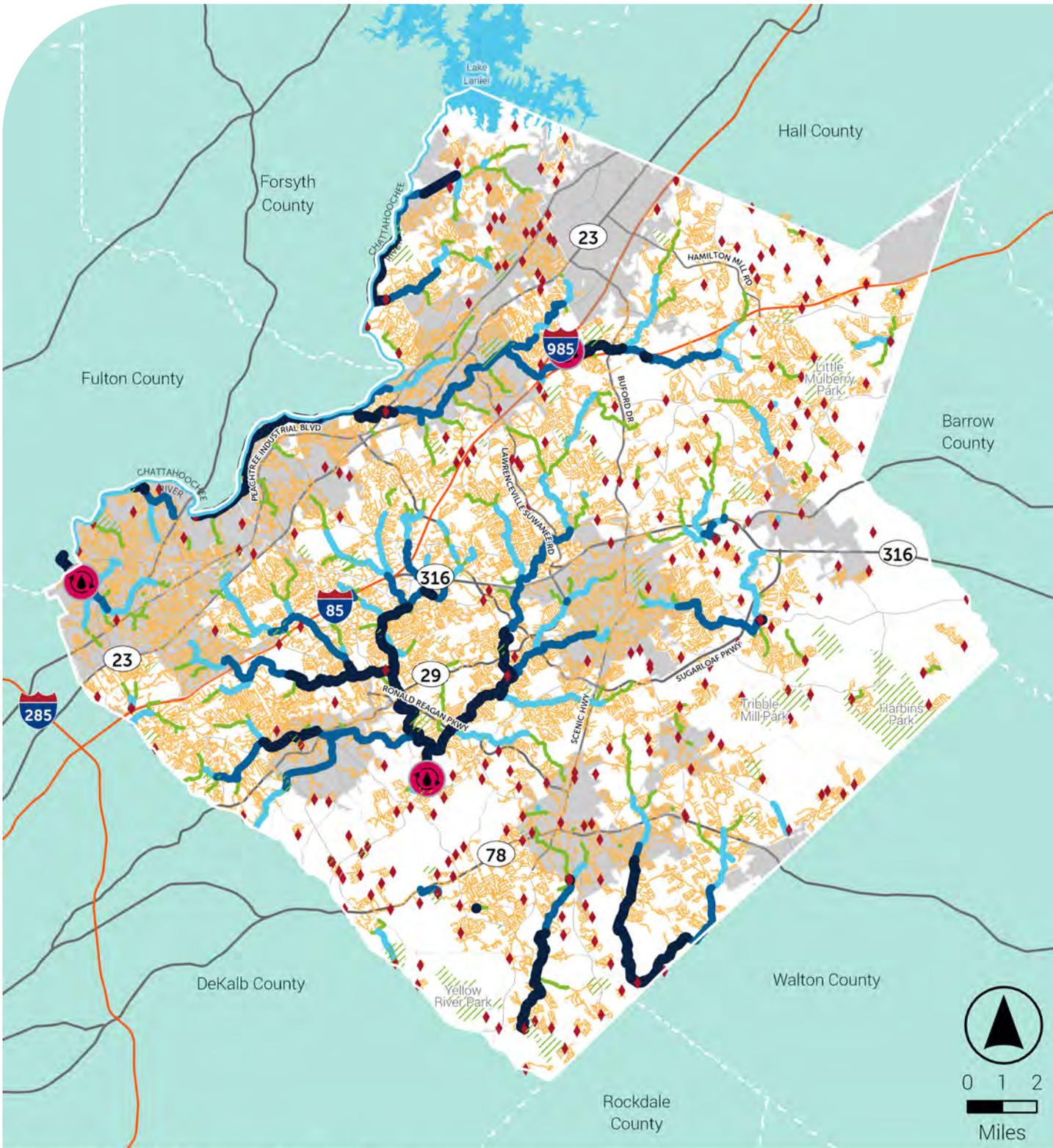
**FIGURE 2-8: RESIDENTIAL PERMITS BY HOUSING TYPE**



The residential development permit ratios could also indicate that Gwinnett is either not incentivizing multifamily and mixed use developments enough, and/or there are significant barriers to overcome. These barriers include:

- Community pushback against apartments
- Increased costs of building materials
- Financing challenges for nontraditional product types
- Unified Development Ordinance restrictions (including amenity requirements and/or stormwater regulations)
- Infrastructure capacity

If the trend continues, given the County's tendency toward single family residential, the character areas intended for denser and varied development likely will not be built to the density the 2040 Future Land Map envisions.



**Legend**

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ◆ Pump Station          | <i>Sewer Gravity Mains</i> |
| ● Sewer Treatment Plant | 6-10 inches                |
|                         | 12-16 inches               |
|                         | 18-24 inches               |
|                         | 27-36 inches               |
|                         | 42-72 inches               |

**FIGURE 2-9:  
WASTEWATER SYSTEM  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

## INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Much of Gwinnett County's more intense development has occurred along major transportation corridors like I-85 and Highway 316. Gwinnett has over 2,500 miles of right of way, which has expanded as the county has grown. Despite this expansion, the road network itself has not matched the pace of development, leading to greater congestion with few opportunities for correction beyond roadway capacity improvements that aren't always effective. The Gwinnett County Department of Transportation is actively pursuing alternative modes, including on-demand micro transit and trails, to reduce the number of car trips overburdening its roads.

Gwinnett County's wastewater infrastructure is a similar driver and inhibitor of growth. Approximately 180,000 consumers are connected to the sewer system, which follows a west to east pattern of development that aligns with Gwinnett's general development pattern (Figure 2-9). However, about 78,000 consumers, primarily in eastern Gwinnett, rely on private septic systems, which require larger lot sizes for their drain fields and maintaining a more rural character in that area.

Sewer expansion faces physical challenges. Southern Gwinnett County's vast reserves of bedrock have made it challenging and expensive to expand. Additionally, Gwinnett's rolling topography has required ingenious solutions for wastewater treatment, including an intricate pumping system that transports effluent to the County's three treatment facilities.

Because conditions vary across Gwinnett, development and redevelopment opportunities must consider each community's unique topographic and geologic context. Design and density guidelines must align with existing infrastructure, allowing certain areas of the county (such as the West and along major corridors) to accommodate a higher share of growth than the southern or eastern areas.

Two things are clear based on this analysis. First, Gwinnett must accelerate its development pace to accommodate expected demand over the next 20 years. Second, given challenges related to infrastructure, topography, and other environmental factors, redevelopment of sites closer to critical infrastructure will be a key pillar of a functional growth strategy. Introducing density in well served areas close to services is a must.

## **ISSUE #2: ONE SIZE FITS ALL DEVELOPMENT NO LONGER WORKS**

Known for decades as a bedroom community, Gwinnett County's development pattern has been characterized—unfairly, in many cases—as homogeneous. Much like the diversity of its residents, Gwinnett's built environment is no longer one size fits all.

### **DIVERSITY IN TYPE**

Existing land use data from 2020 (Figure 2-10) show that alternative housing types are emerging in Gwinnett. This is especially true in Gwinnett's more urbanized western corner, especially along major transportation corridors.

Almost half (41 percent) of Gwinnett's land is dedicated to single family residential uses (Figure 2-11, page 117), spread evenly throughout the County.

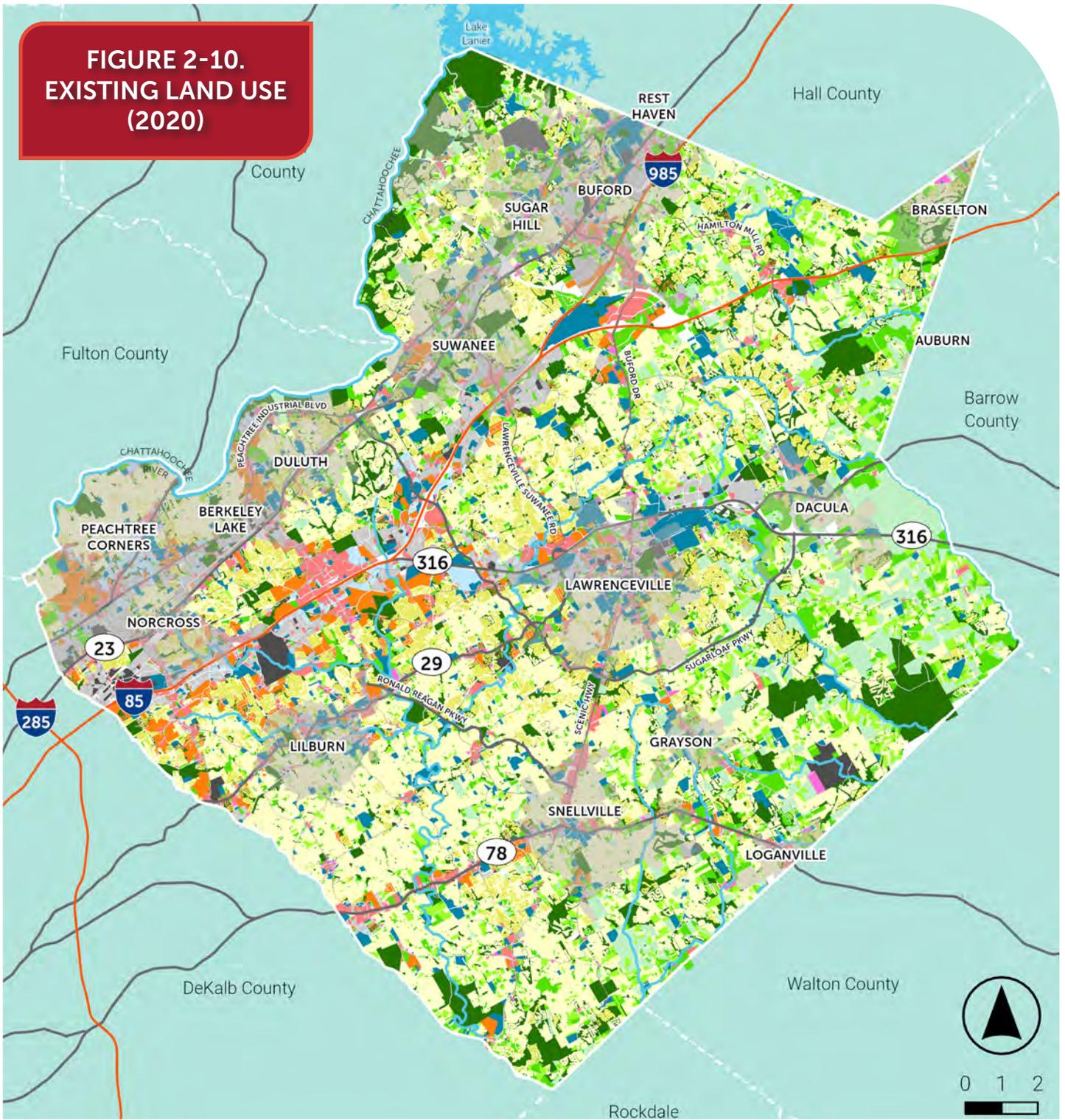
About 33 percent (84,422 acres) of the single family lots fall into the low-density residential category, where lot sizes range from 0.33 to 5 acres. A smaller but growing portion (8 percent) of detached single family homes fall into the medium-density residential category, with lot sizes between 1/8 and 1/3 of an acre (reaching densities of 3-8 units per acre).

Gwinnett County's residential properties with densities above eight units per acre, which include townhomes, mixed use, multifamily, and some dense single family, are mostly located in western and central Gwinnett (Figure 2-12, page 118). These properties are concentrated between I-85 and Highway 29, with some located near Lawrenceville near Highway 316.

Data from the American Communities Survey demonstrates this further (Figure 2-13, page 119). Not counting multifamily within incorporated areas, most of Gwinnett's multifamily units are located just south of I-85, with pockets of multifamily clustered on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and near The Mall of Georgia.

While these development patterns historically have been concentrated in specific areas, they are beginning to appear in less urbanized areas of the county.

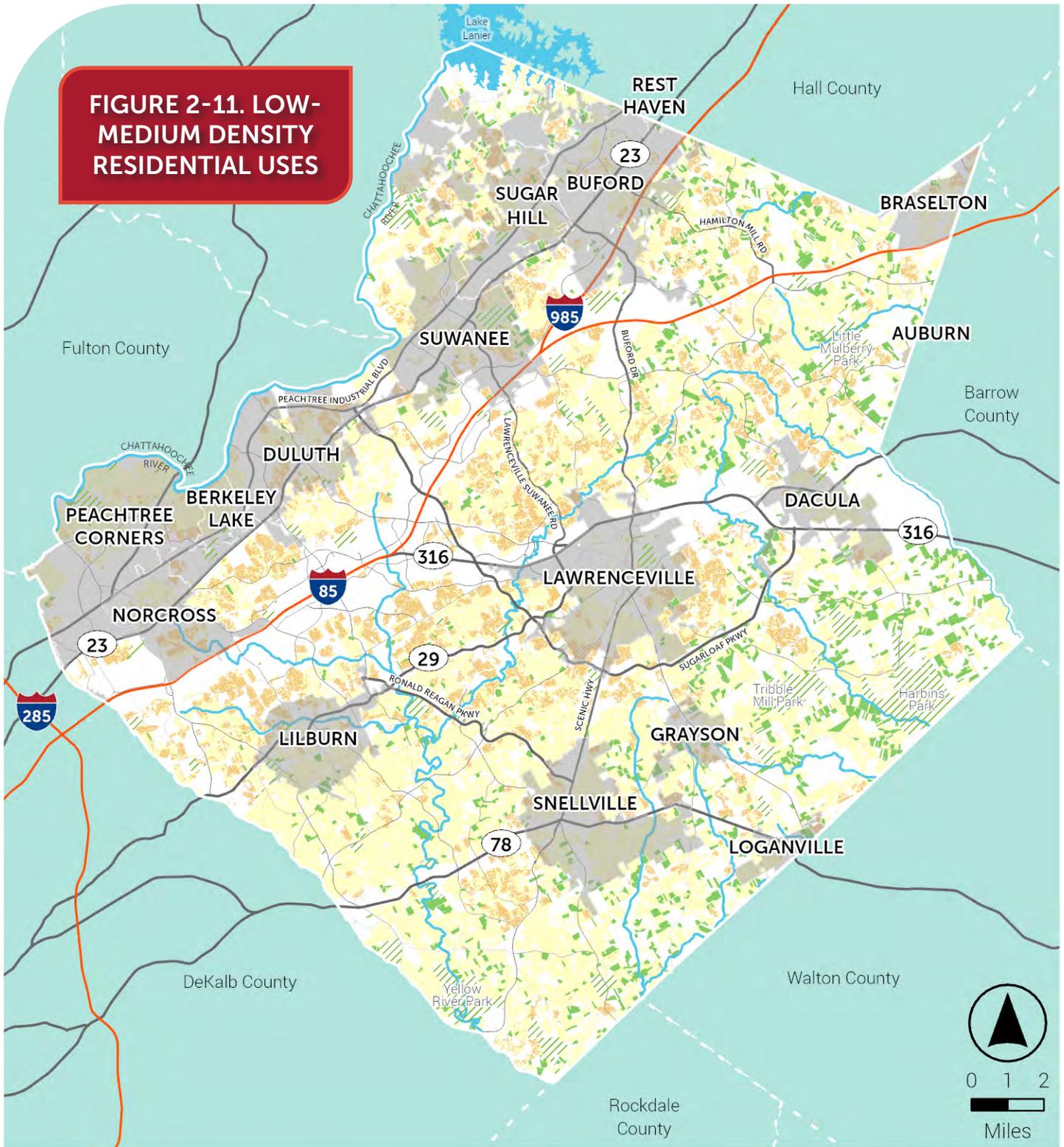
**FIGURE 2-10.  
EXISTING LAND USE  
(2020)**



**Legend**

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <span style="color: #90EE90;">■</span> Agriculture                          | <span style="color: #D3D3D3;">■</span> Light Industrial        | <span style="color: #FFFF00;">■</span> Medium Density Residential | <span style="color: #008000;">■</span> Park/Recreation/Conservation |
| <span style="color: #FF4500;">■</span> Commercial/Retail                    | <span style="color: #404040;">■</span> Heavy Industrial        | <span style="color: #808000;">■</span> High Density Residential   | <span style="color: #90EE90;">■</span> Undeveloped                  |
| <span style="color: #ADD8E6;">■</span> Office/Professional                  | <span style="color: #008080;">■</span> Institutional/Public    | <span style="color: #FF00FF;">■</span> Mixed Use                  |   |
| <span style="color: #808080;">■</span> Transportation/Communication/Utility | <span style="color: #32CD32;">■</span> Estate                  | <span style="color: #FF4500;">■</span> Multifamily                |   |
|   | <span style="color: #FFFF00;">■</span> Low Density Residential |   |   |

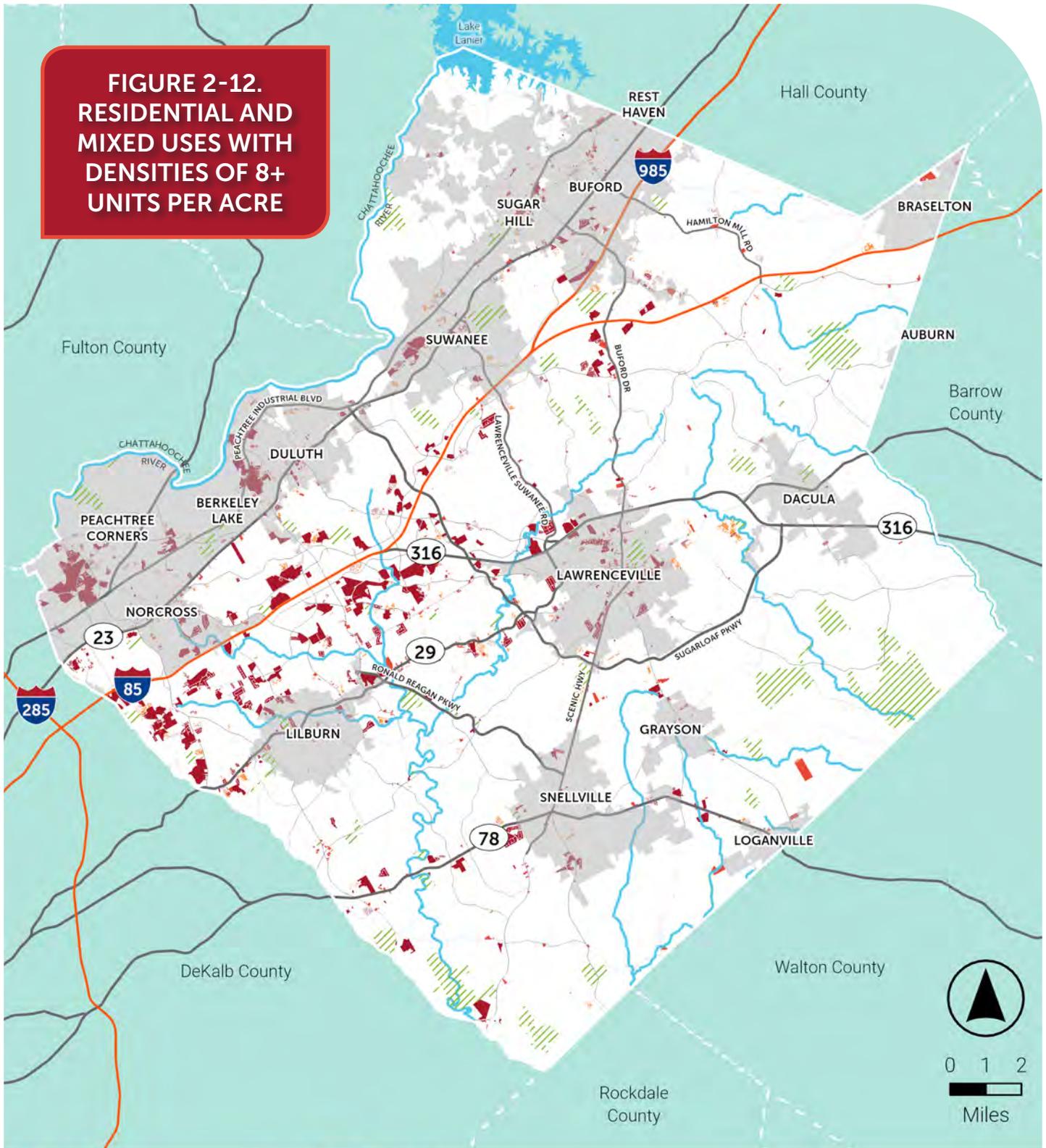
**FIGURE 2-11. LOW-MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL USES**



**Legend**

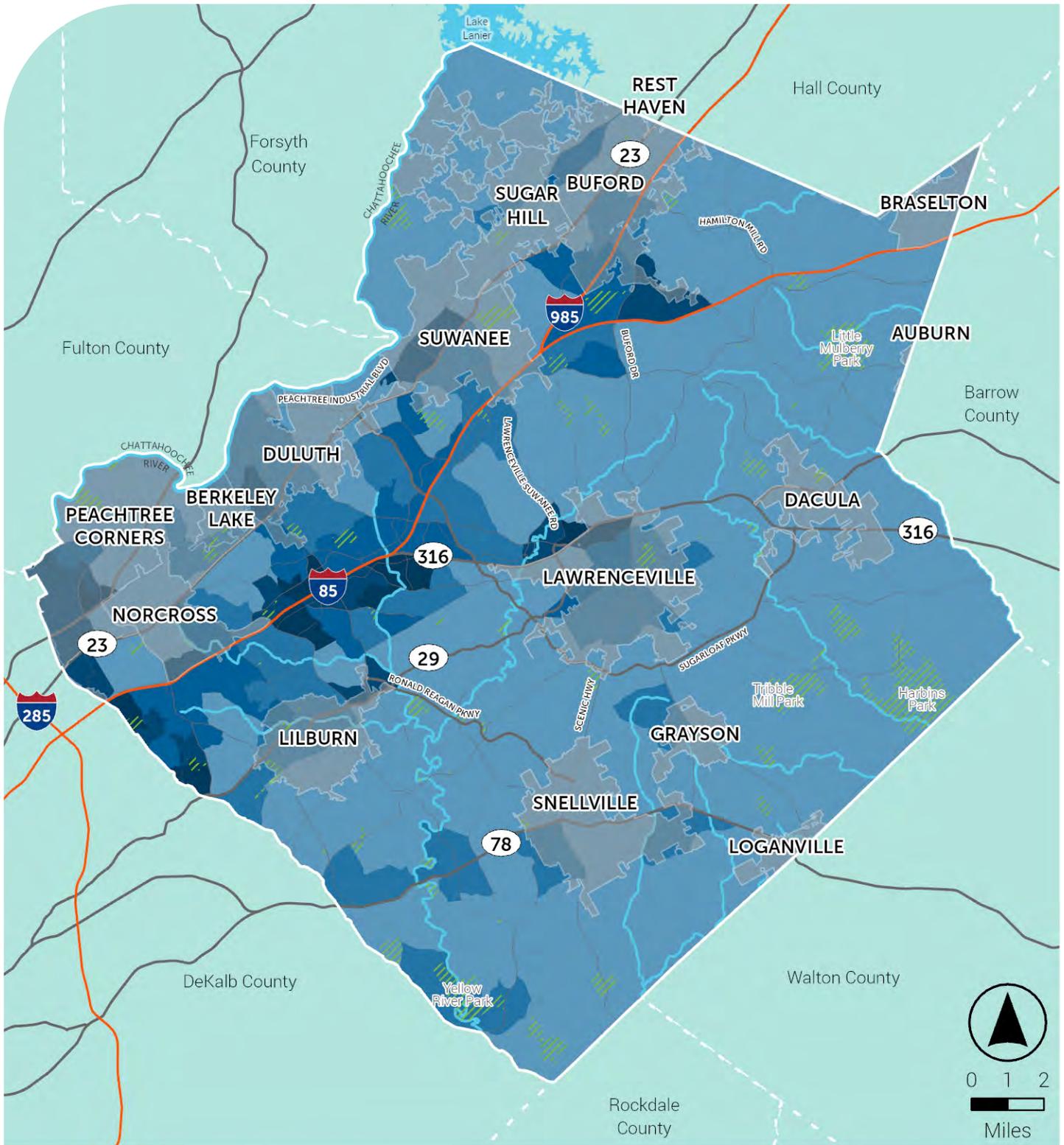
- Estate (single family over 5 acres)
- Low Density Residential (1/3 acre to 5 acres)
- Medium Density Residential (1/8 acre to 1/3 acre)
- Parks

**FIGURE 2-12.  
RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USES WITH  
DENSITIES OF 8+  
UNITS PER ACRE**



**Legend**

- High Density Residential (8 or more units/acre)
- Mixed Use
- Multifamily Dwellings (includes mobile home parks)
- Parks
- Rivers



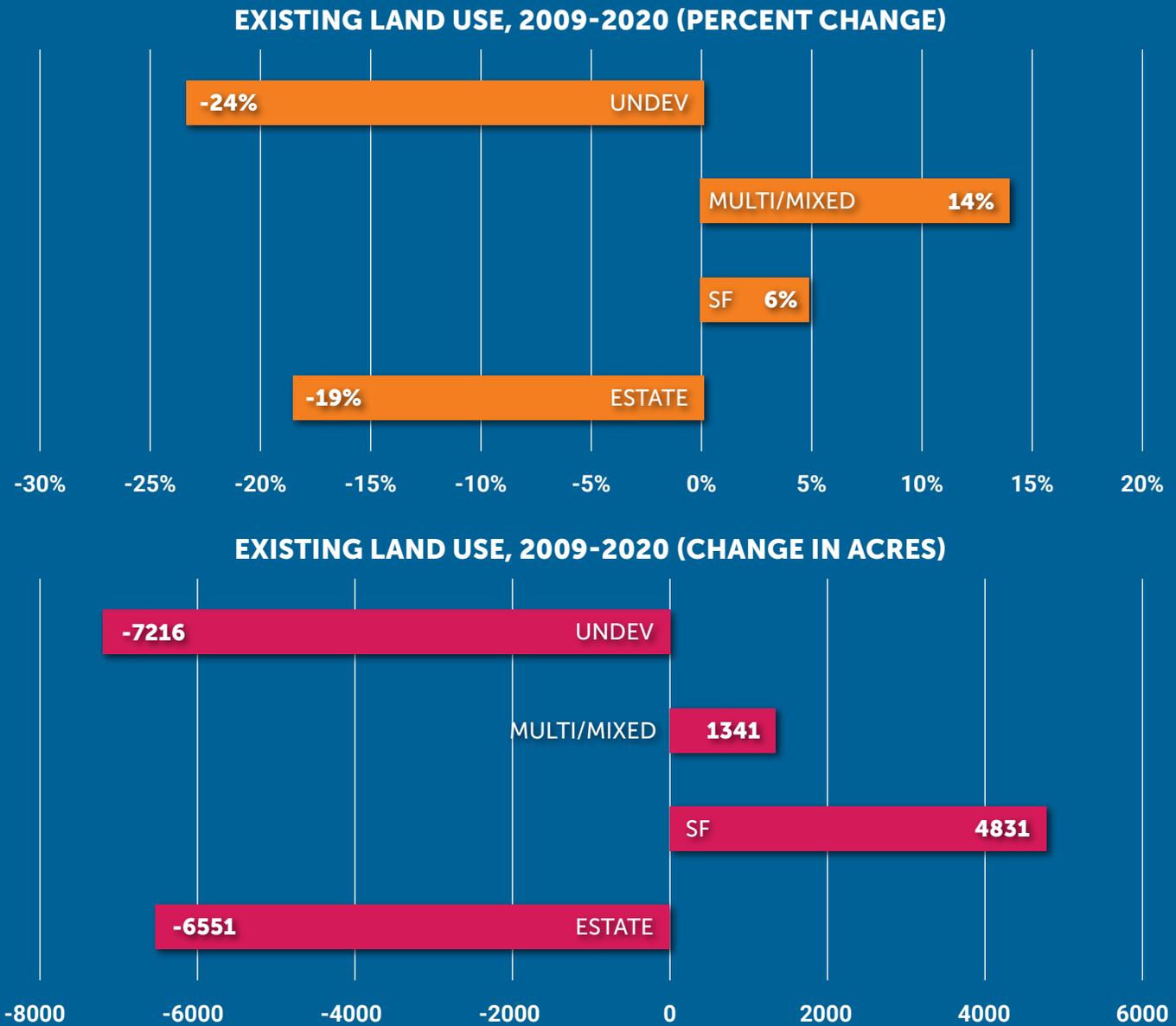
**Legend**

- 0-20% multifamily
- 20.01-40% multifamily
- 40.01-60% multifamily
- 60.1-80% multifamily
- 80.01-96.45% multifamily
- Parks
- Rivers

**FIGURE 2-13.  
MULTIFAMILY  
PERCENTAGES BY  
CENSUS TRACT**

Types other than traditional single family housing are on the rise. A comparison of Existing Land Use data from 2009 to 2020 reveals that, while low density residential remains predominant, Gwinnett County has developed over 6,000 acres of new medium-density residential and 1,400 acres of multifamily housing in the last ten years, resulting in percent change figures of 48 percent and 19 percent respectively (Figure 2-14). While this increase in denser forms of housing is a step in the right direction, this trend must continue to accommodate projected population growth.

**FIGURE 2-14: EXISTING LAND USE CHANGE, 2009-2020**



## DIVERSITY IN DENSITIES

A deeper dive into the distribution of residential uses across Gwinnett shows great variety in lot size and density among single family neighborhoods, especially among lots developed in the last decade.

Gwinnett County has approximately 238,000 lots designated as single family residential, shown by year built in Figure 2-15. About 47 percent of these lots are between 1/3 of an acre and 1 acre. **However, an equal percentage is 1/3 of an acre or less.** This means there are just as many single family lots at densities between 3-8 units per acre as those at lower densities (Figure 2-16, page 123).

Examining residential distribution throughout Gwinnett, it also becomes evident that single family subdivisions at higher densities are proliferating throughout the county (Figure 2-17, page 124).

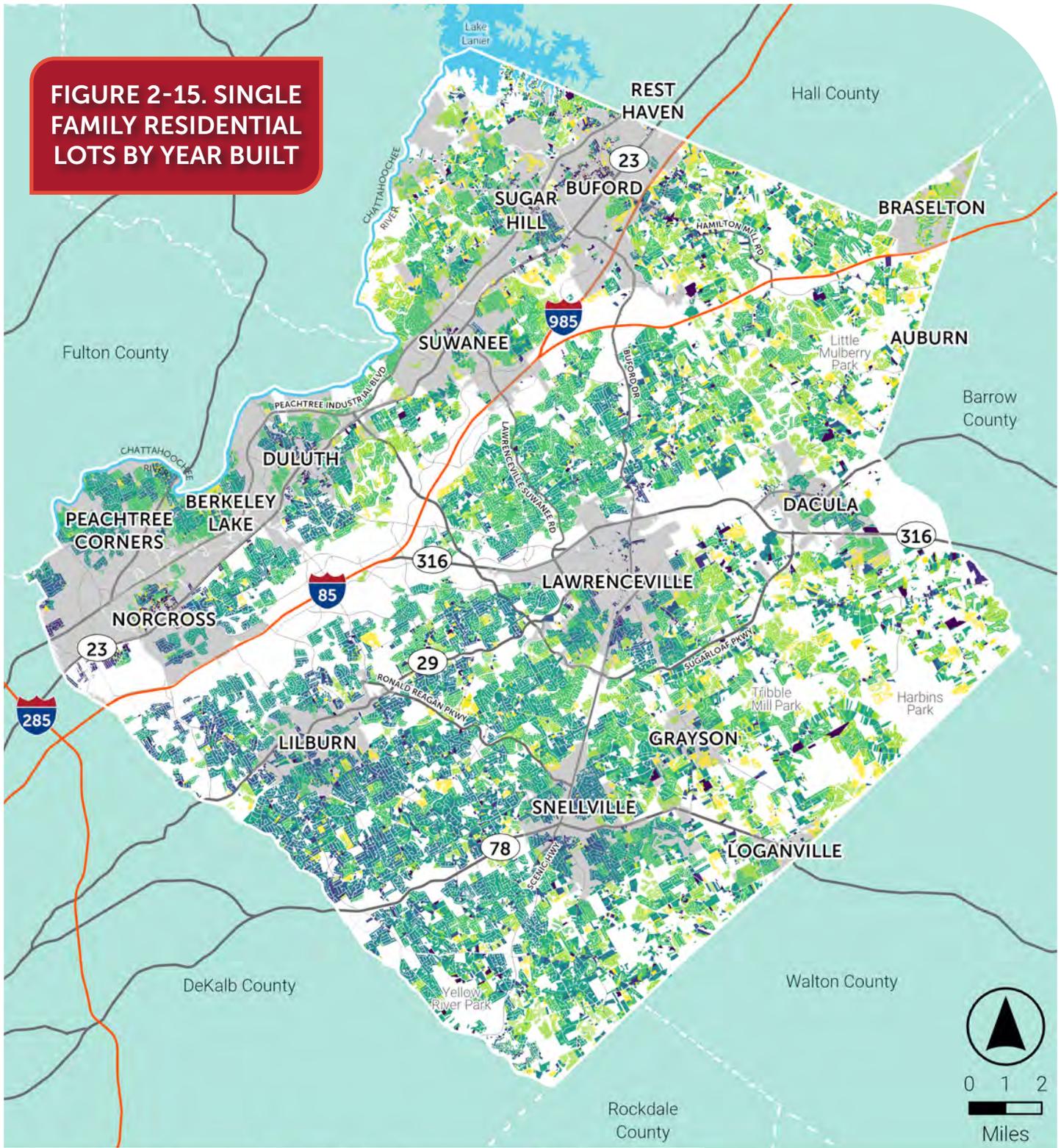
This pattern is reinforced by ACS data measuring density of housing units by census tract (Figure 2-18, page 125). Higher density concentrations are not just limited to the areas where multifamily buildings are more common; they also extend into census tracts that are predominantly single family subdivisions.

These land use patterns add further detail to Gwinnett County's suburban to urban evolution. Early suburban developments were built close to I-85, providing residents with convenient access to Atlanta. Given Gwinnett was mostly rural at the time, these early lots and retail centers were built at very low densities. As more residents moved to the county in the following decades, development spread further to the southern and eastern portions of Gwinnett. Demand accelerated, and single family subdivisions became denser to accommodate a greater influx of new residents. This trend continues today, with new, denser single family being sited in remaining undeveloped areas of the county that are infrastructurally challenged and farther from transportation corridors that could better support this greater density.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Gwinnett will need more than single family development to accommodate projected population growth. Not all current residents want to live in single family homes, and future residents may also want more diverse housing options. Redevelopment—especially of aging, underperforming development in locations well served by infrastructure—will be critical for delivering new housing, retail, and community amenities catered to diverse populations with minimal strain on infrastructure and remaining undeveloped land.

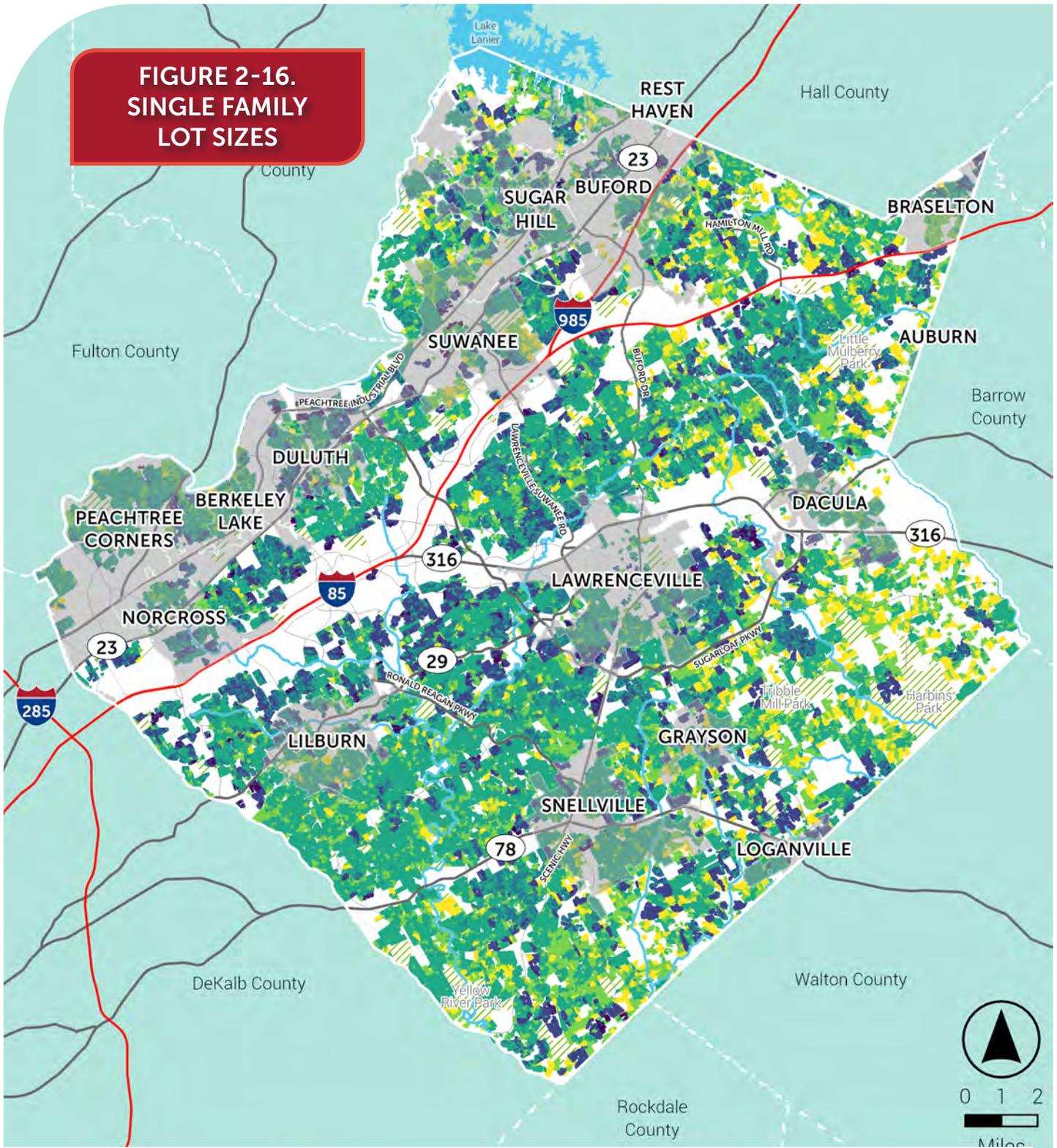
**FIGURE 2-15. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOTS BY YEAR BUILT**



**Legend**

- |   |             |   |             |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|
|  | 1889 - 1950 |  | 1981 - 1990 |
|  | 1951 - 1960 |  | 1991 - 2000 |
|  | 1961 - 1970 |  | 2001 - 2010 |
|  | 1971 - 1980 |  | 2011 - 2020 |

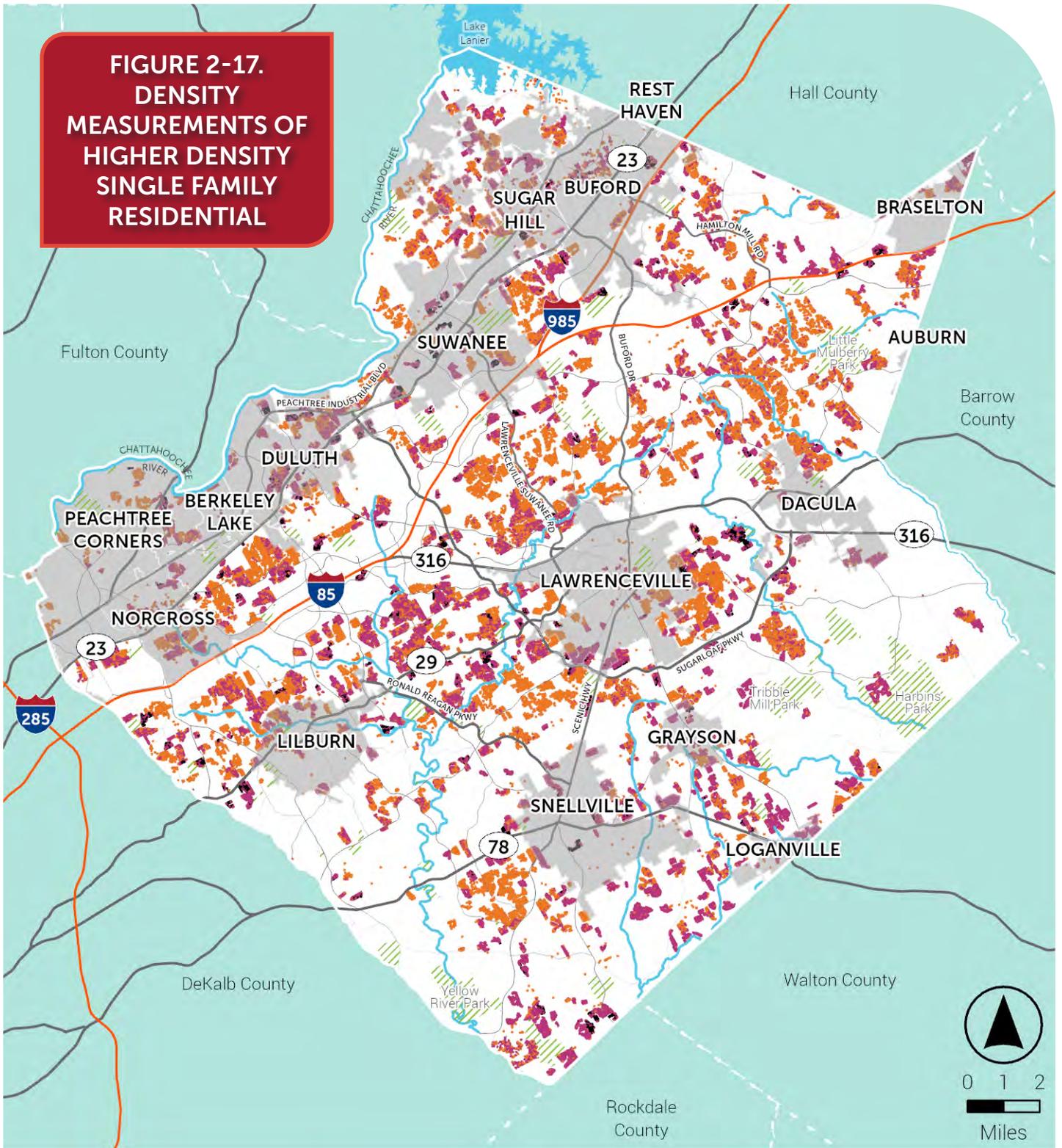
**FIGURE 2-16.  
SINGLE FAMILY  
LOT SIZES**



**Legend**

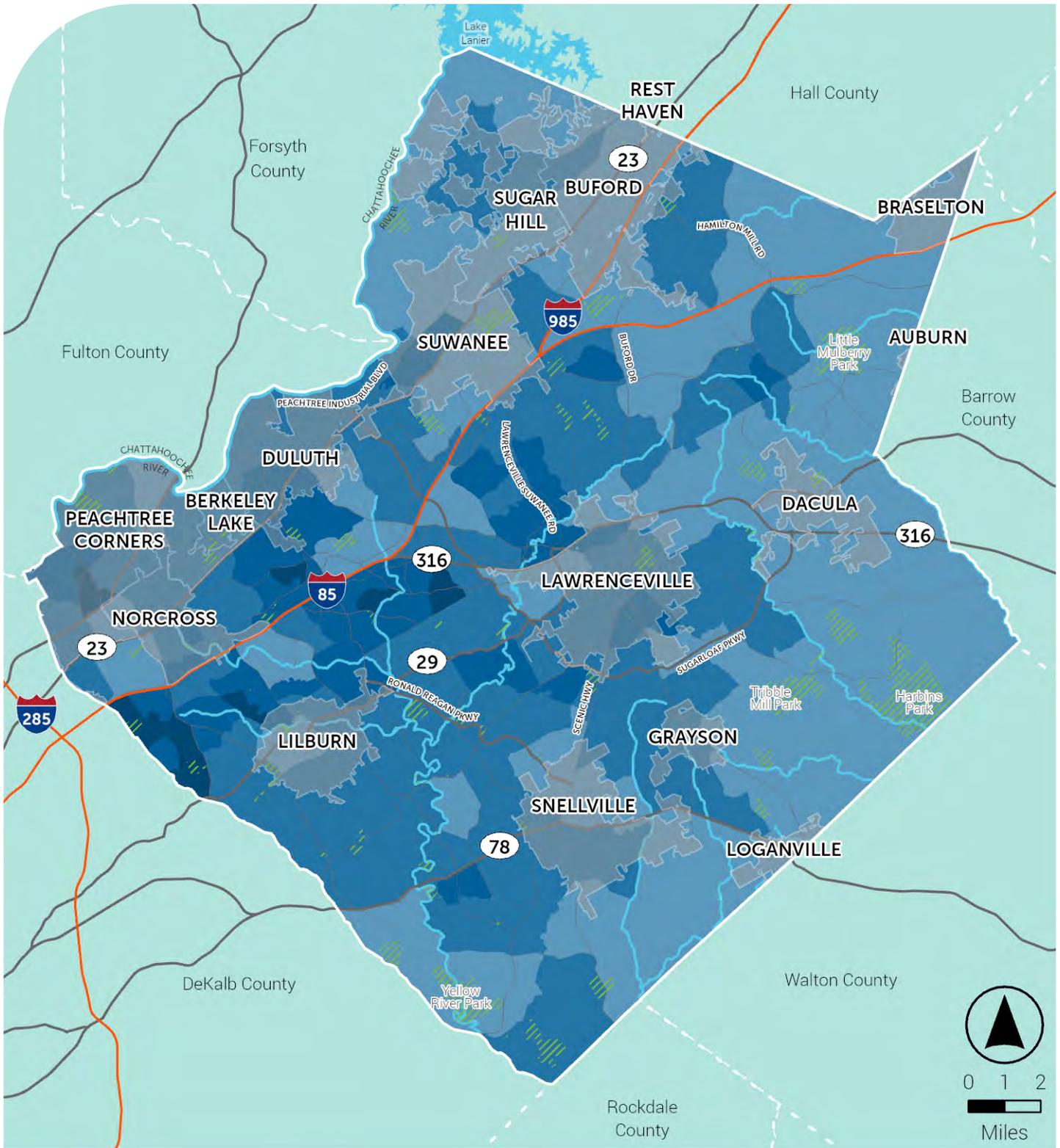
- 1/8 acre
- 1/4 acre
- 1/3 acre
- 1/3-1 acre
- 1 acre - 5 acres
- 5+ acres

**FIGURE 2-17.  
DENSITY  
MEASUREMENTS OF  
HIGHER DENSITY  
SINGLE FAMILY  
RESIDENTIAL**



**Legend**

- 8+ units per acre
- 4.1-8 units per acre
- 3.1-4 units per acre



**Legend**

- 0 - 1.0 units/acre
- 1.1 - 2.0 units/acre
- 2.1 - 4.0 units/acre
- 4.1 units/acre or more

**FIGURE 2-18.  
AVERAGE HOUSING  
DENSITIES BY CENSUS  
TRACT**

## WHAT DOES DENSITY LOOK LIKE?

Density is most often defined by units per acre. Different numbers are typically attributed to different zoning designations and serve as one mechanism for guiding development, while other design regulations like setbacks and maximum lot coverage make up the rest.

What does density actually look like? The basic calculation of units per acre doesn't reveal the configuration of a set of housing units. For example, a development of eight housing units per acre could take one of the following forms:

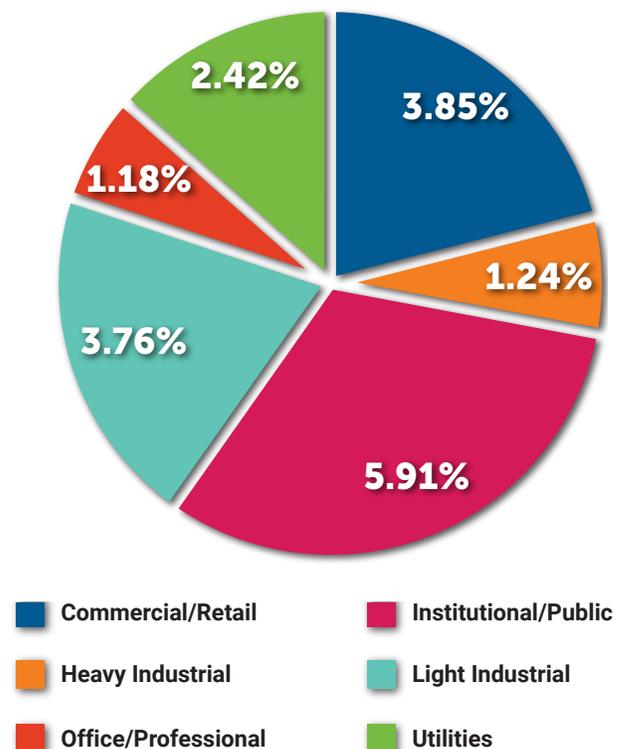
- Eight single family homes, each on one 1/8 acre lot
- Four duplexes, each on one 1/4 acre lot
- A single, four story building with eight apartments or condos surrounded by retail or other nonresidential uses

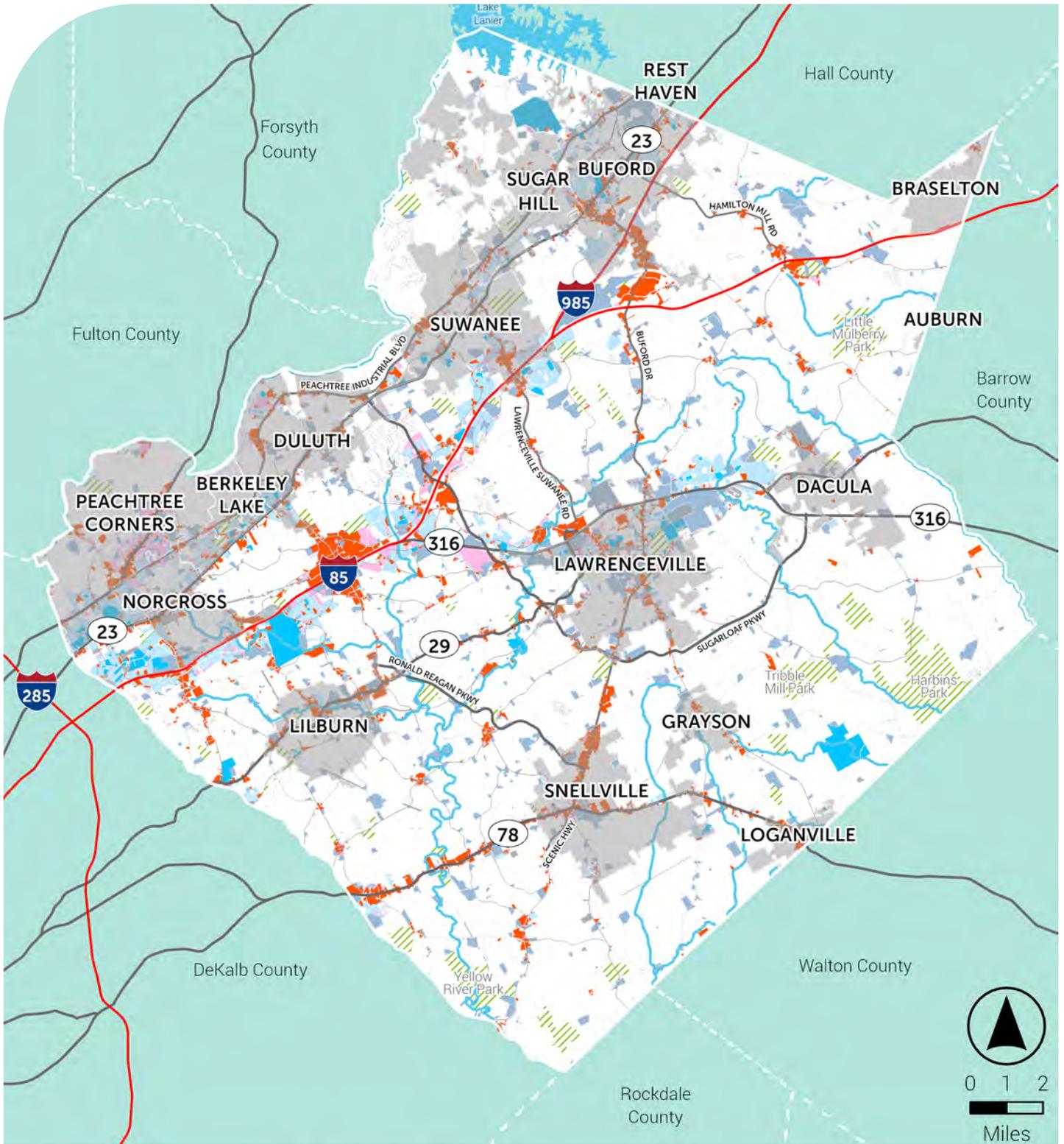
The preceding analysis shows that parts of Gwinnett County that could be considered more rural with a higher concentration of estate zoning include some housing developments at these higher densities (most of which are single family subdivisions). Other regulations related to form can be more useful for establishing standards for future development. Interested residents can learn more about density in the book *Visualizing Density* by Alex MacLean and Julie Campoli.

## NONRESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Nonresidential uses cover approximately 18.4 percent of Gwinnett County, with a significant portion dedicated to institutional/public and light industrial uses (Figures 2-19 and 2-20, page 127). Many retail, office, industrial, and institutional uses are concentrated in the western part of Gwinnett. However, bands of nonresidential uses (mostly retail) extend across major transportation corridors.

**FIGURE 2-19: NONRESIDENTIAL LAND USES**





**Legend**

- Commercial/Retail
- Office/Professional
- Transportation/Communication/Utility
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Institutional/Public
- Parks
- Rivers

**FIGURE 2-20.  
NONRESIDENTIAL  
LAND USES**

## DIVERSITY IN PEOPLE

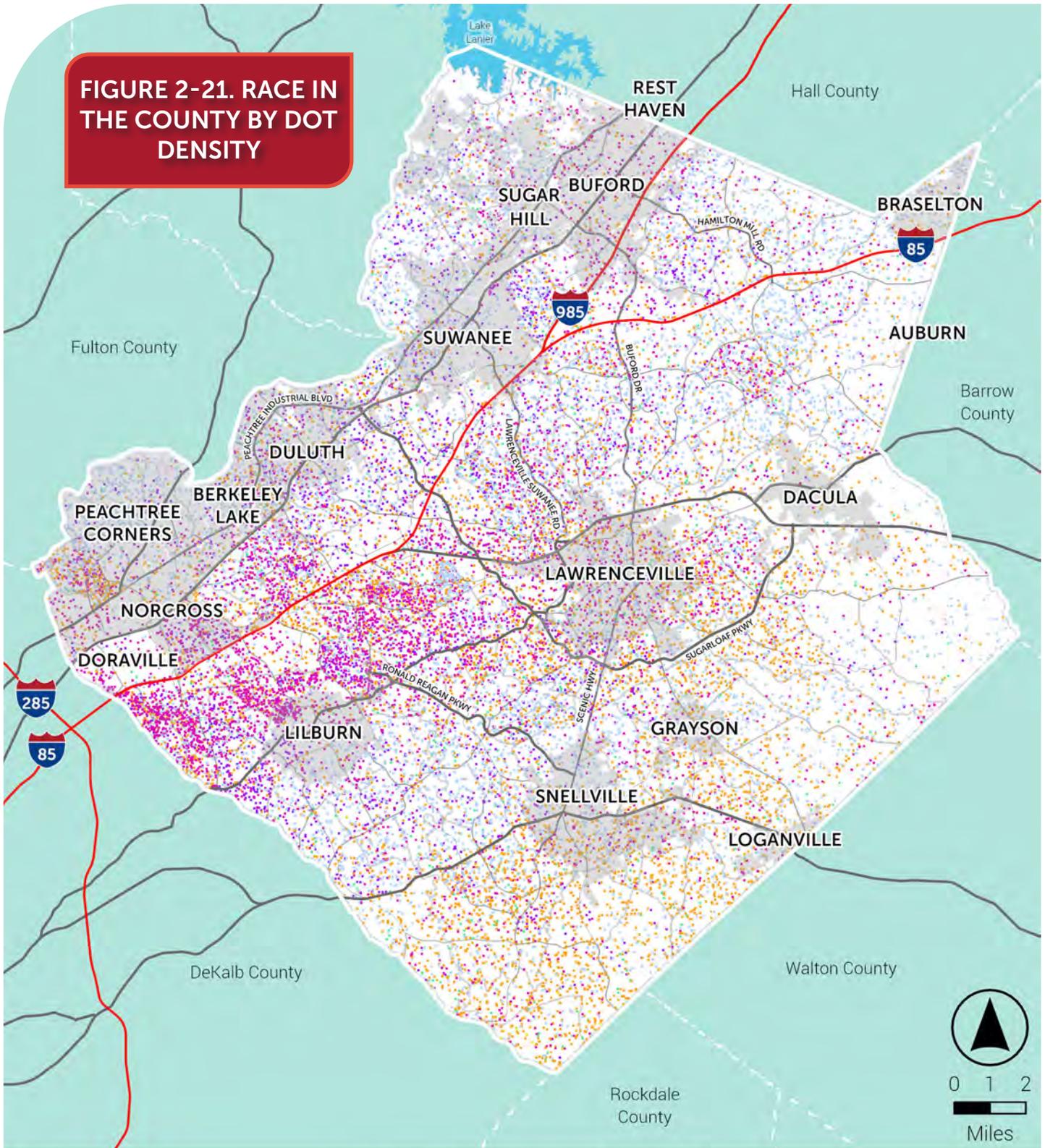
Gwinnett County's population has grown more diverse in recent years, and the County has taken intentional measures to include and celebrate residents of diverse communities in its civic engagement, programming, and brand.

Looking at racial and ethnic background in detail shows Gwinnett's unique blend of diversity throughout the county (Figure 2-21, page 129). Over 60 percent of Gwinnett County's census tracts are majority nonwhite, with nearly 20 percent being over 75 percent nonwhite (Figure 2-22, page 130). A smaller number (~9 percent) are majority Hispanic/Latino, although several other census tracts also feature large Hispanic/Latino populations (Figure 2-23, page 131). Many of these racially and ethnically diverse census tracts are clustered in the western and southern portions of Gwinnett County, with some near Lawrenceville, Duluth, and Buford.

These demographic maps correlate closely with median household income (Figure 2-24, page 132). About 28 percent of census tracts have a median household income of \$60,000 or less; over half have a median household income under \$80,000. These lower median HHIs are mostly concentrated in the western part of the County, specifically between the I-85 and Highway 29 corridors and around the perimeter of the City of Lawrenceville.

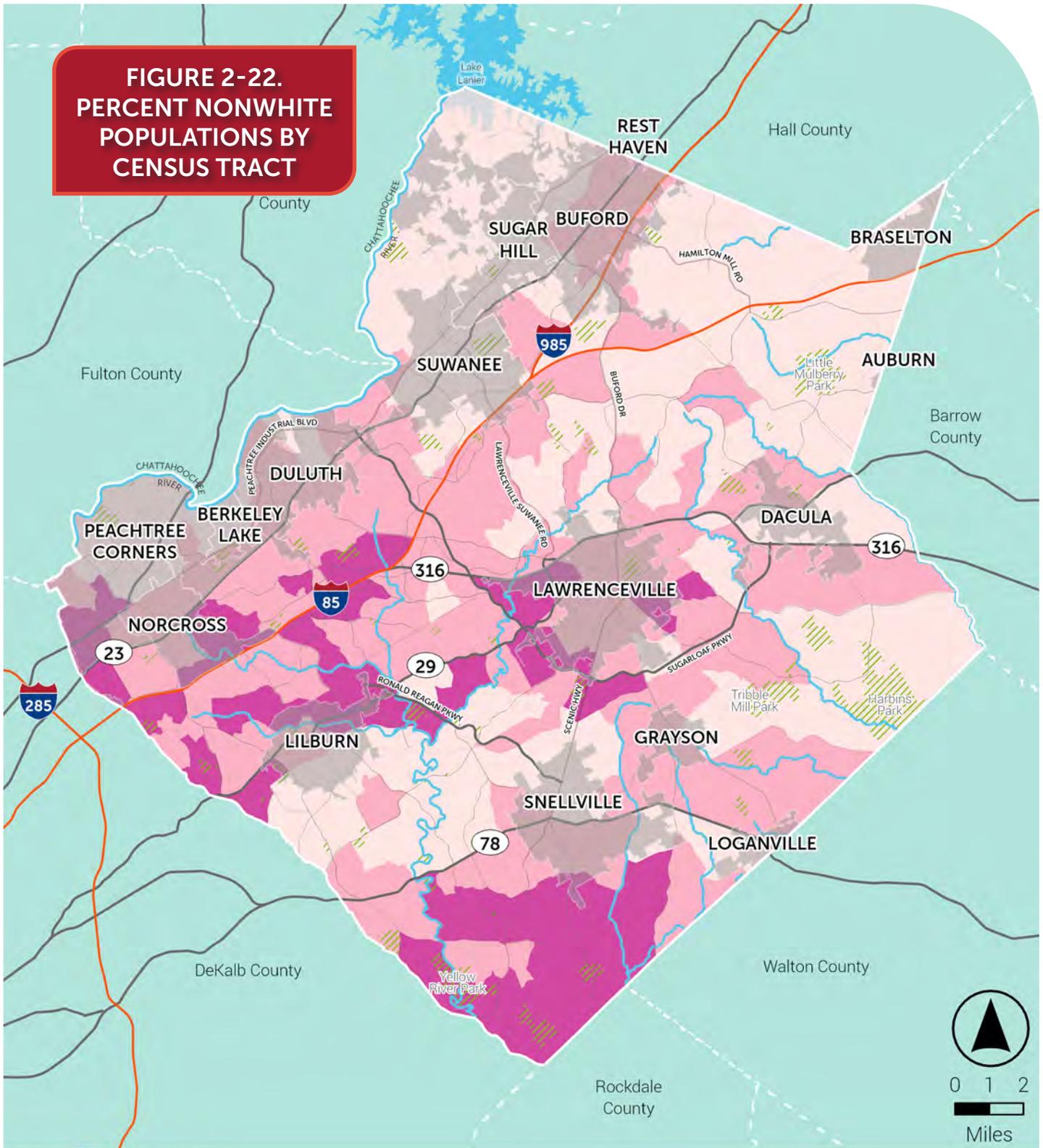
These factors suggest patterns of diversity within Gwinnett and a need for future growth policies prioritizing equity. When these trends are juxtaposed against land uses, most of Gwinnett County's multifamily and high-density residential buildings are also located in these lower-income, majority nonwhite census tracts (Figure 2-25, page 133). The issue of housing affordability will be explored further in Chapter 4, Housing.

**FIGURE 2-21. RACE IN THE COUNTY BY DOT DENSITY**



- Legend**      1 Dot = ~15 people
- Non-Hispanic White
  - American Indian and Alaska Native
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - Two or More Races
  - Black or African American
  - Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
  - Asian
  - Other

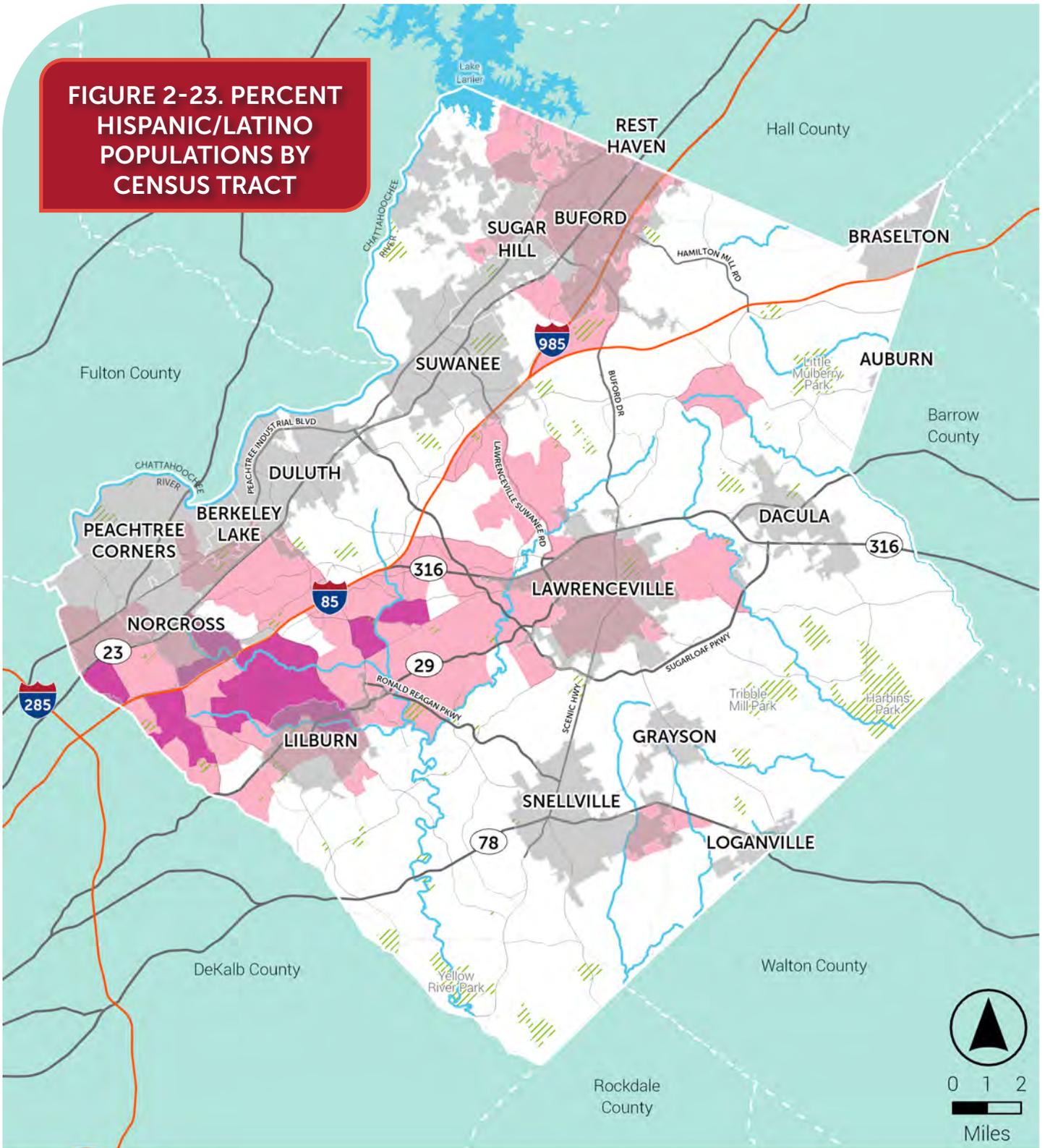
**FIGURE 2-22.  
PERCENT NONWHITE  
POPULATIONS BY  
CENSUS TRACT**



**Legend**

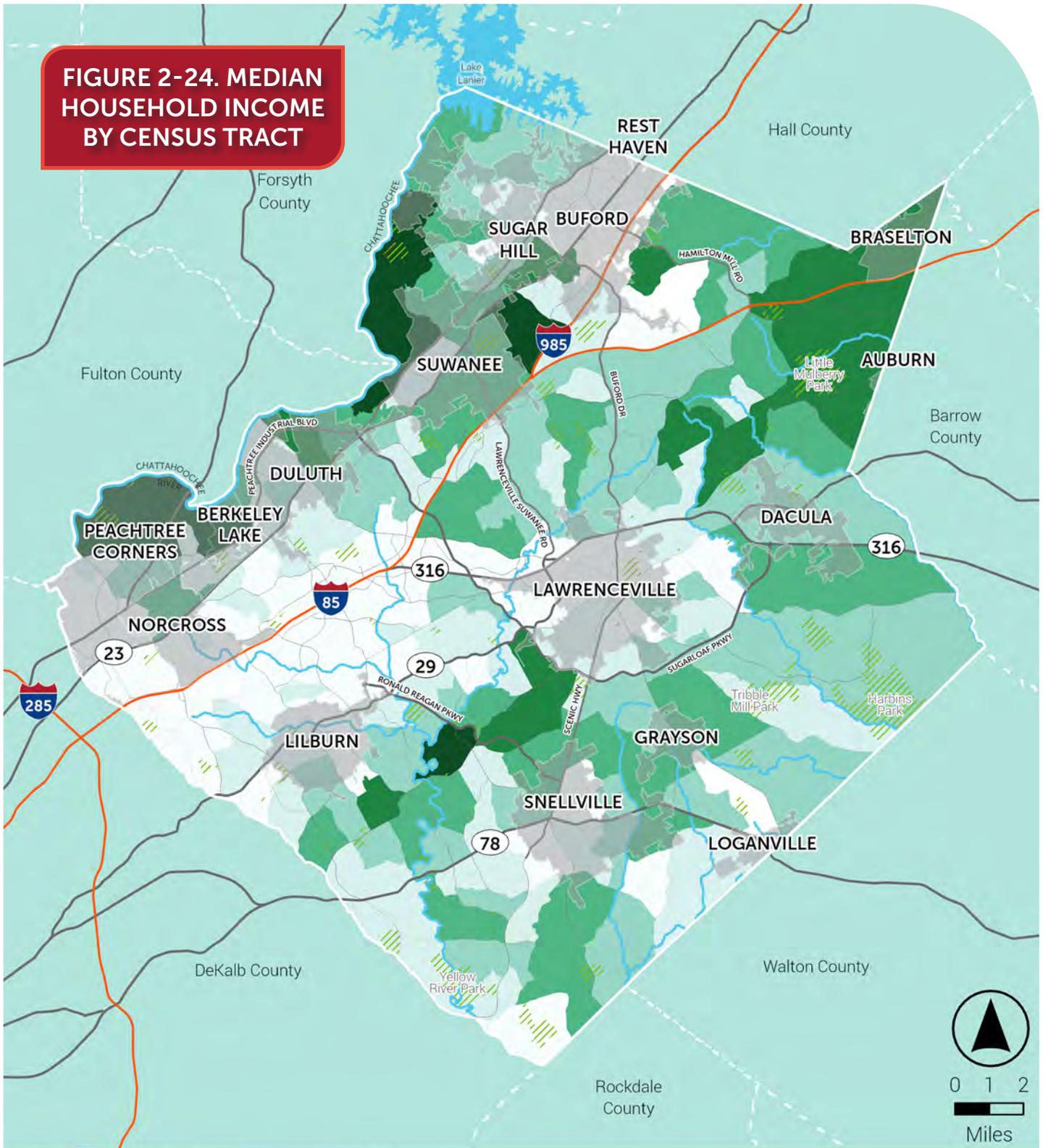
- 50% and under
- 50% - 75%
- 75% and over

**FIGURE 2-23. PERCENT HISPANIC/LATINO POPULATIONS BY CENSUS TRACT**



- Legend**
- 25% and under
  - 25% - 50%
  - 50% and over

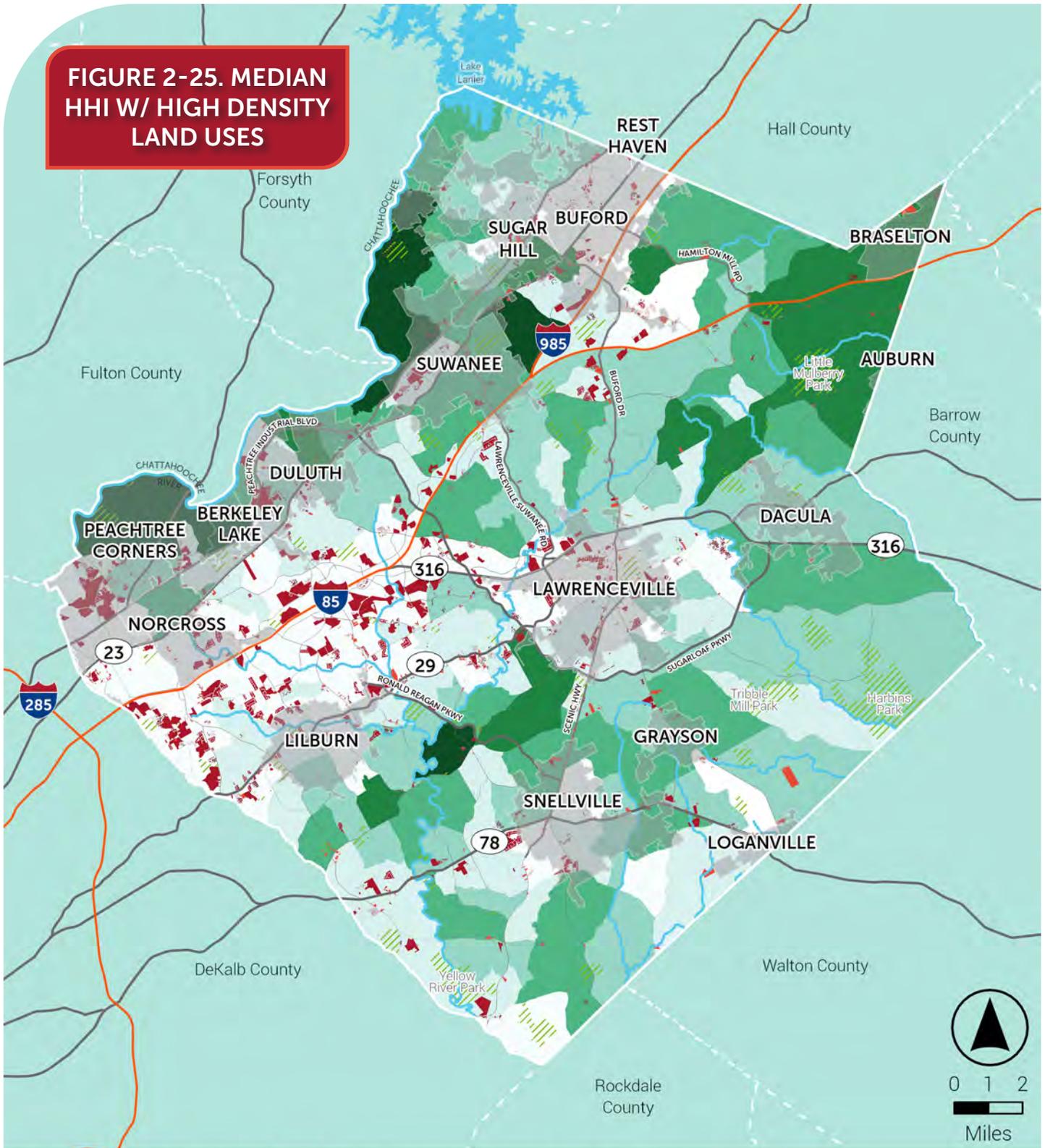
**FIGURE 2-24. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY CENSUS TRACT**



**Legend**

- \$60,000 or lower
  - \$60,001-\$80,000
  - \$80,001-\$100,000
  - \$100,001-\$120,000
- \$120,001-\$140,000
  - \$140,001 or higher

**FIGURE 2-25. MEDIAN HHI W/ HIGH DENSITY LAND USES**

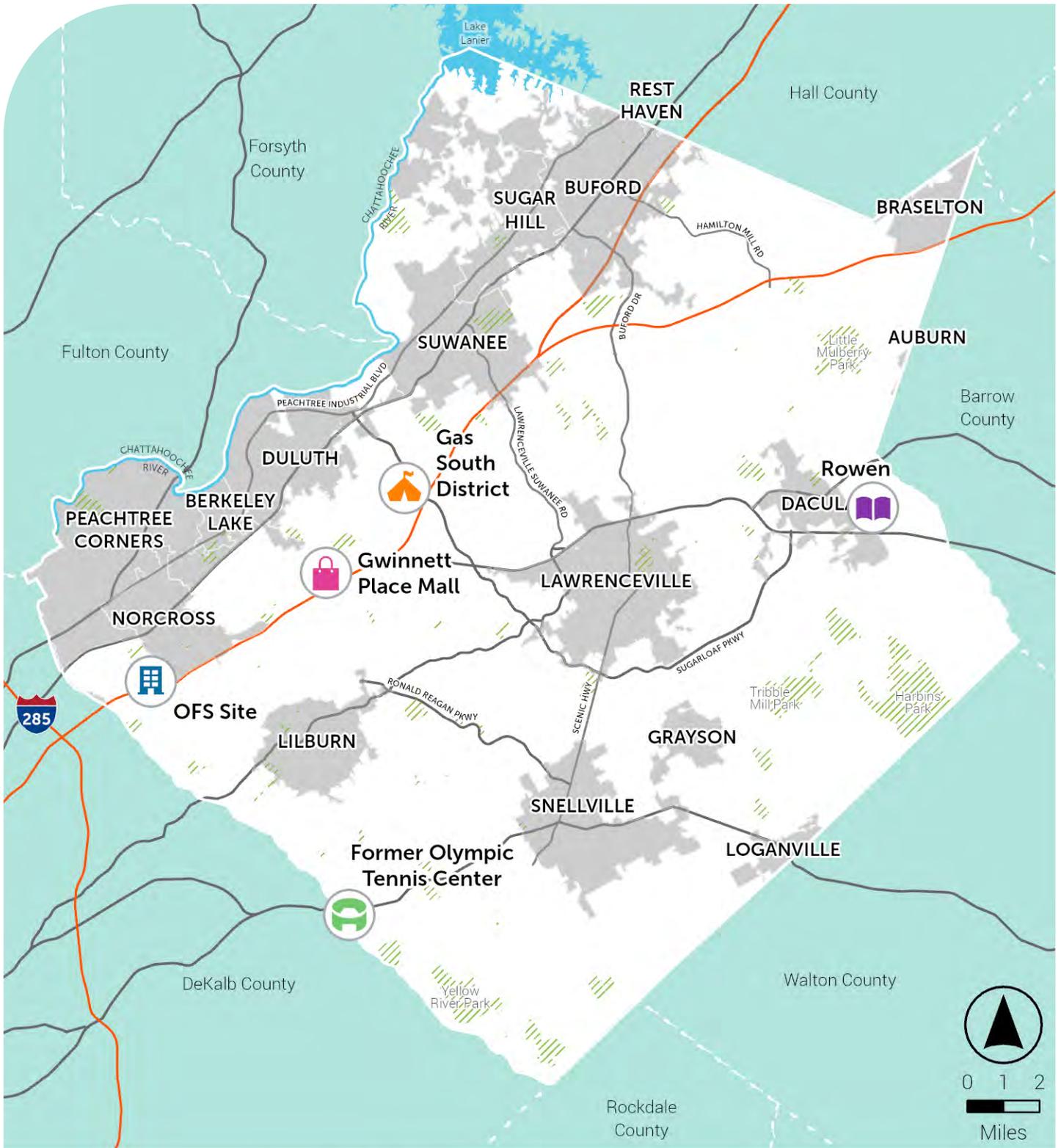


**Legend**

- |                |                     |              |                     |            |                          |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Lightest Green | \$60,000 or lower   | Dark Green   | \$120,001-\$140,000 | Dark Red   | High Density Residential |
| Light Green    | \$60,001-\$80,000   | Medium Green | \$140,001 or higher | Orange-Red | Mixed Use                |
| Medium Green   | \$80,001-\$100,000  |              |                     | Red        | Multifamily Dwellings    |
| Dark Green     | \$100,001-\$120,000 |              |                     |            |                          |

Additionally, much of Gwinnett County's industrial land—which hosts a variety of light and heavy industries, including manufacturing and logistics—is located close to I-85, the County's main transportation artery. While it is necessary for industrial areas to have freeway access, the County should consider expanding housing options that promote affordability in areas that pose fewer health and safety risks, especially for disadvantaged groups.

This analysis shows that not only are Gwinnett's residents more diverse than ever, but the County is not uniformly suburban from end to end. Denser housing types are growing more popular, and single family subdivisions are becoming denser as well. These housing types are not necessarily being sited in ideal locations, however, which can result in unintended consequences for specific communities. Going forward, new land use policies must embrace a diversified approach that tailors recommendations to Gwinnett's kaleidoscopic communities.



**FIGURE 2-26. MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

**Legend**

-  Gas South District
-  Gwinnett Place Mall
-  Former Olympic Tennis Center
-  OFS Site
-  Rowen

# UPCOMING INITIATIVES & PROJECTS

Gwinnett County has recognized the need for new types of development and is actively working towards implementing several major projects of its own (Figure 2-26).

## ROWEN

Rowen is an upcoming development along Highway 316 that seeks to create Georgia's largest knowledge community on 2,000 acres in eastern Gwinnett County. The Rowen Foundation leads the project and aims to create over 22 million square feet of offices, research facilities, public spaces, and residences while preserving 500 acres of forest and constructing 5 miles of walking trails throughout the site. The Rowen Foundation intends to take advantage of Gwinnett's proximity to over 50 educational institutions to create a research hub for various fields, including medicine, agriculture, and environmental protection. Design guidelines are in place to ensure the campus takes a sustainability-centered design approach partnered with zero-emission strategies. Phase 1 sites became available in Q1 of 2023, with completion slated for Q1 of 2024. The Rowen Village, a vibrant space with a mix of offices, multifamily residential, community spaces, restaurants, and the arts, will anchor the site.

## GWINNETT PLACE MALL REDEVELOPMENT

At its pinnacle, Gwinnett Place Mall was one of the most popular destinations in the area. However, several factors have left the mall largely, but not totally, vacant. Gwinnett County purchased a 39 acre portion of the site for \$23 million in 2020. The redevelopment vision for the site is to support economic security by creating a dense, mixed use center of activity that is well connected, green, and walkable. However, the anchor tenants own their land, complicating the County's redevelopment process. A Livable Centers Initiative project proposed a mixed use strategy called the Global Villages in August 2022, and the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners adopted a separate but complementary revitalization policy in February 2023. The next steps involve demolishing the County owned property of the mall building and the former Sears.

## OPTICAL FIBER SOLUTIONS REDEVELOPMENT

In 2018, Gwinnett County officials bought 103 acres of the OFS plant site at the Jimmy Carter Boulevard exit off I-85. The site is within the Gateway 85 Community Improvement District, which has been active in its redevelopment planning, contributing to the first redevelopment study for the area in 2011. Several visions have been proposed for the site, including a multimodal transit hub and mixed use area with housing, retail, office, and greenspace. The most recent proposal, Atlanta Media Complex, proposes reusing the site as a movie studio, complete with sound stages, back lots, offices, and student housing.

## **FORMER OLYMPIC TENNIS CENTER REDEVELOPMENT**

This 31 acre site off Highway 78 hosted the 1995 Olympic tennis matches but has been underused since and was cleared in 2017 to make way for redevelopment. Gwinnett County owns the site and has been working on crafting a development plan that excites residents and maximizes the site's potential. On October 24, 2023, the Board of Commissioners approved a rezoning application and site plan that proposes mixed use development, including over 240 multifamily units, a large footprint commercial space that could house a grocery store or similar business, small scale commercial and retail space, office space, and a communal green space.

## **GAS SOUTH DISTRICT EXPANSION**

The Gas South District has been the focus of redevelopment efforts for quite some time. After several years of construction and planning, it hosted the grand reopening of its Convention Center in January of 2023. Other key sites within the District include the Hudgens Center for Art and Learning, Gas South Arena—which hosts concerts, hockey games, and other events—and several family-friendly entertainment options. The center will be further enhanced by the nearby Westin Hotel, set to open in Spring 2024. In addition to its more corporate side, the entertainment area will be redeveloped to add mixed use development on the current surface parking lot.

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RESIDENTS

Across the engagement activities for the 2045 Unified Plan, it became clear that residents want to focus land use improvements on two things:

- 1 bringing services and amenities closer to neighborhoods
- 2 keeping the Gwinnett feel that they have come to enjoy

The project team oriented engagement activities around digging deeper into these two themes. Community workshops, presented as Daily Community Cafes, offered residents a chance to discuss in detail the types of development they considered appropriate for their community. These workshops also served to educate residents on their Daily Community's fair share of Gwinnett's projected growth and the benefits that come with growth.

The preferences below summarize feedback the project team received, but do not capture all the nuances of that feedback which the Daily Community framework can accommodate. For a full summary of engagement, see Appendix C.

### COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: LAND USE

New development and redevelopment should create more opportunities to walk, enjoy public space, and take advantage of amenities

Focus development in areas that are already disturbed instead of undeveloped land

Cluster development in between neighborhoods at existing centers of activity (e.g. shopping centers, along main corridors)

Preserve rural, undeveloped areas and maintain tree canopy

Make sure new development is high quality and attractive

Incorporate new public space and greenspace into redevelopment

Reduce the amount of parking in shopping centers

Make sure new development does not put undue stress on transportation infrastructure

# Needs & Opportunities

Based on existing conditions, the planning team identified several land use needs and related opportunities in Gwinnett County. These needs and opportunities are also organized according to the two themes put forth by the analysis above.

## NEEDS

### ISSUE #1: GWINNETT HAS MORE GROWTH COMING THAN CURRENT POLICIES CAN ACCOMMODATE.

#### 1 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Gwinnett County has about 19,000 acres of buildable, undeveloped land remaining (Figure 2-4, page 107). Some of this is already slated for development (see Upcoming Projects, page 136). However, the County aims to approach the development of this land judiciously, with a goal of preserving rural and natural lands where preservation is appropriate and supported by the community. Additionally, some of these development opportunities face significant limitations, including a lack of access to sewer infrastructure.

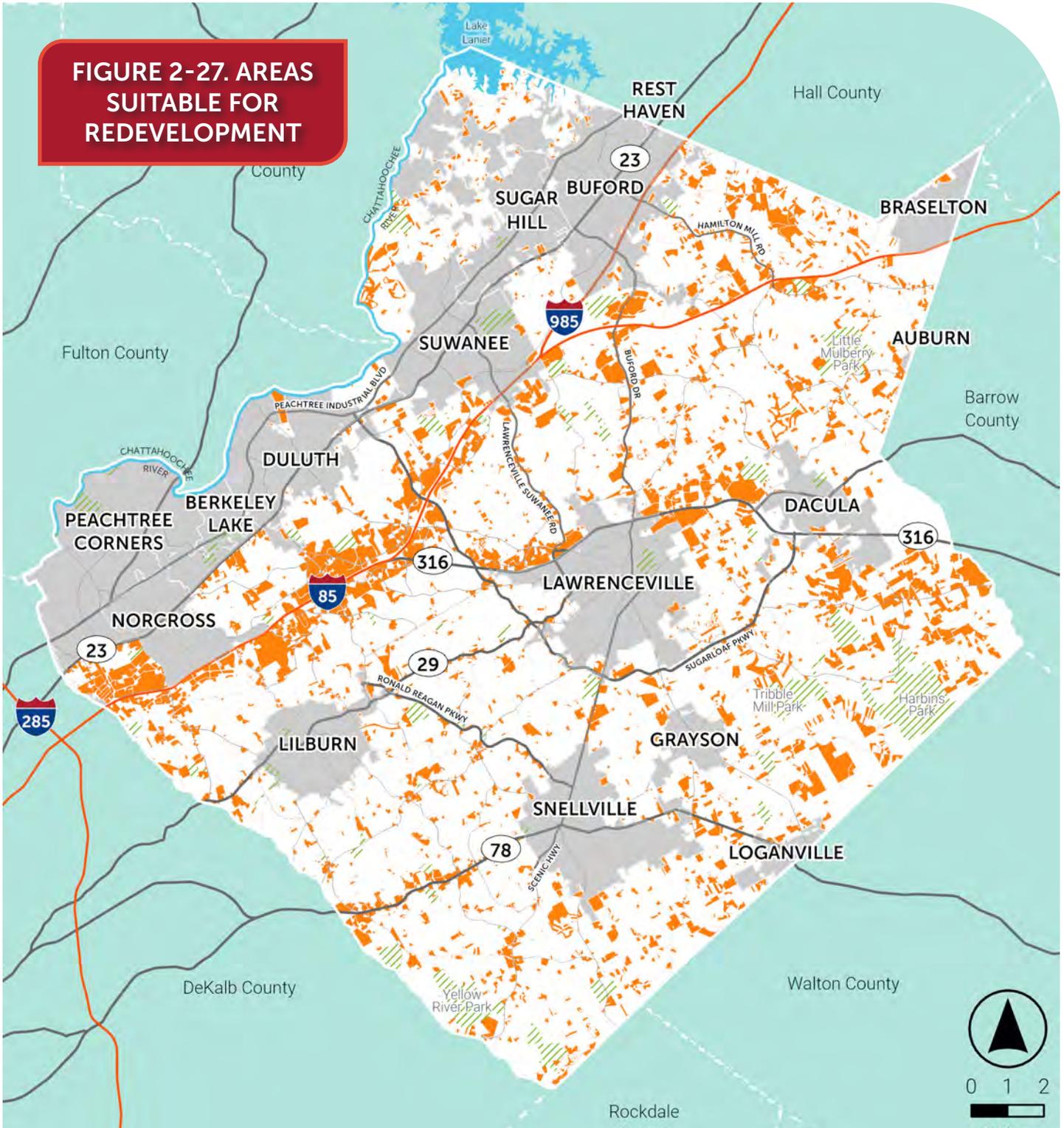
Between the relatively small amount of land remaining, development limitations, and the desire to preserve remaining natural resources, it will be vital for the County to focus on redevelopment opportunities. Approximately 26,000 acres of land can be considered potentially suitable for redevelopment (Figure 2-27).

This suitability measurement considers various qualities that would render a parcel more susceptible to change, including but not limited to:

- A high ratio of land value to improvement value (meaning that the land is more valuable than what's on it) (Figure 2-28, page 141)
- Proximity to transportation corridors
- Proximity to wastewater infrastructure
- Large areas of underutilized space (i.e., surface parking lots) (Figure 2-29, page 142)

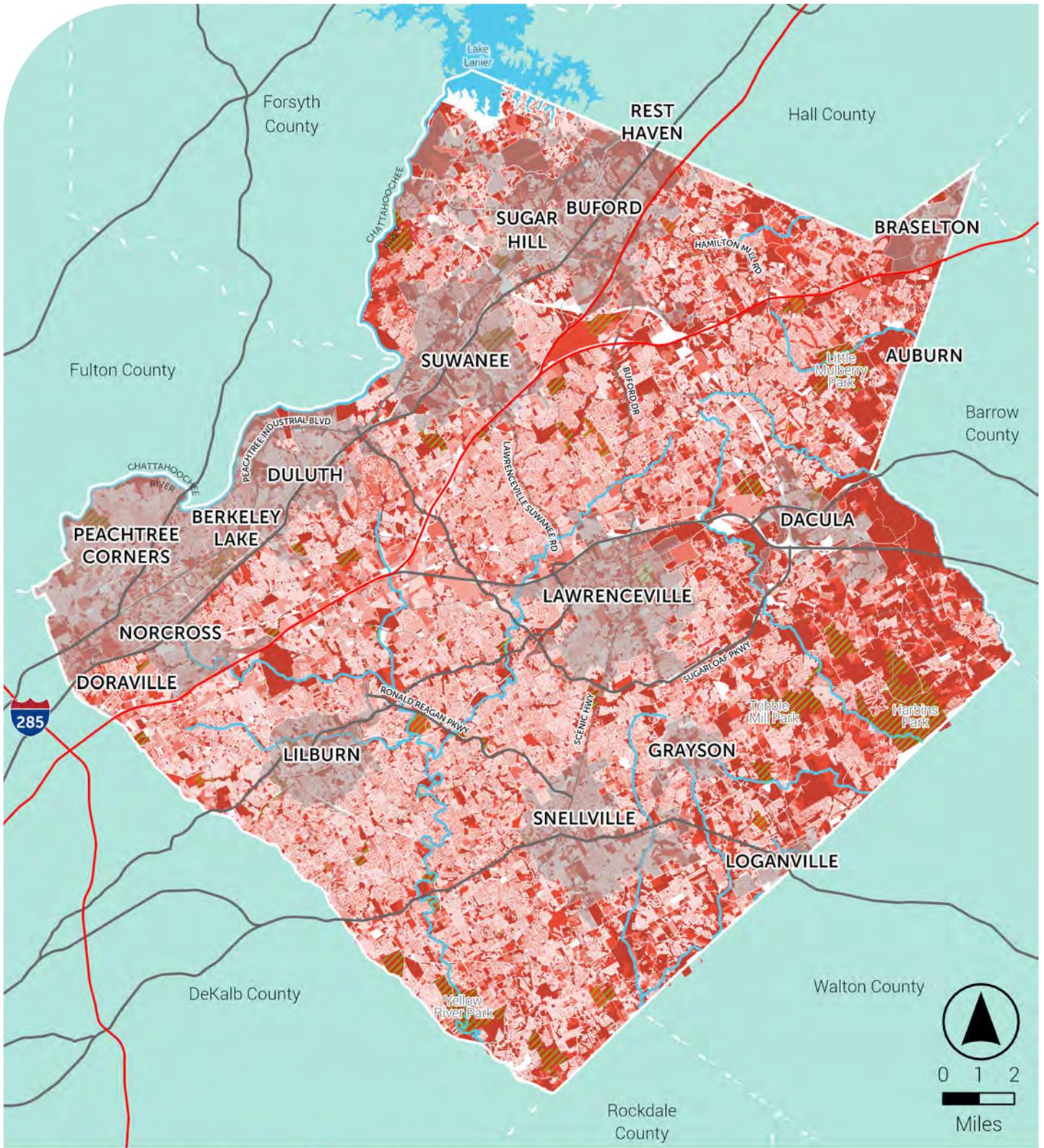
Figure 2-27 shows where some of these opportunities for redevelopment exist. Using this analysis and recommendations provided in later sections, Gwinnett County Planning and Development staff can identify particularly good opportunities for new redevelopment projects that support the growth communities want to see.

**FIGURE 2-27. AREAS SUITABLE FOR REDEVELOPMENT**

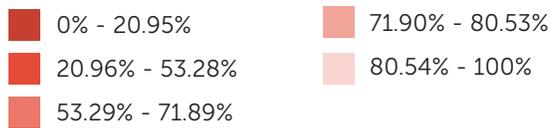


- Redevelopment Potential
- Parks
- Municipalities



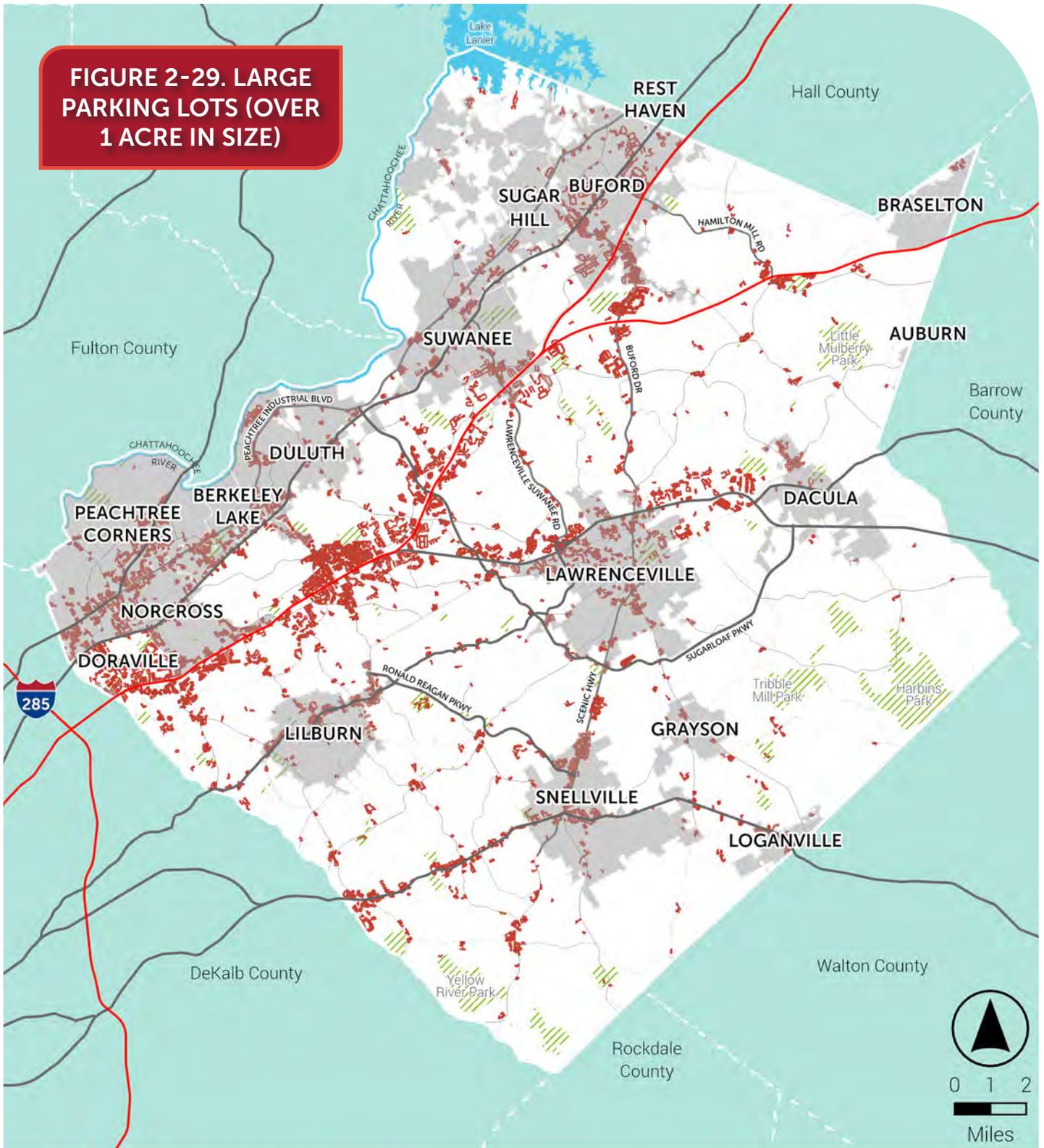


**Legend**



**FIGURE 2-28. LAND-IMPROVEMENT RATIO**

**FIGURE 2-29. LARGE PARKING LOTS (OVER 1 ACRE IN SIZE)**



**Legend**

- Parking Lots over 1 acre
- ▨ Parks

## 2 ALIGNMENT OF GROWTH WITH INFRASTRUCTURE

As the County grows and densifies, new development must align with infrastructure improvements and vice versa. Several County departments share a strong desire to jointly address issues related to growth and development. The Department of Water Resources is engaged in very detailed planning efforts for its sewer infrastructure. Similarly, the Department of Transportation has completed its Transit Development Plan to recommend alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips. The County could consider establishing a holistic impact fee program, so that new development and redevelopment projects can support infrastructural systems through financial resources, helping development pay for itself with minimal burdens to residents.

## 3 AMENITIES, RETAIL, AND WORKPLACES CLOSER TO RESIDENCES

In addition to new housing development, the County must identify strategic opportunities to create local jobs, retail, and other amenities that more households can support. There is a strong desire for more opportunities near people's homes, which could be added through strategic redevelopment.

## 4 PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Many former forests and farms in Gwinnett County have been developed into suburban subdivisions or industrial uses. Nearly 91,000 acres of forest and 38,000 acres of pasture lands and farmland have been lost since 1974. Some rural areas remain in northern and eastern Gwinnett but are experiencing growth pressure, especially if they have sewer access. Residents and County staff would like to prioritize preserving these remaining undeveloped areas to maximize their natural resource benefits. However, this can only be done with respect to private property rights. The County could evaluate the feasibility of a Transfer of Development Rights program that protects these remaining natural lands, transferring the density allowed by right into Daily Community centers.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## ISSUE #1: GWINNETT HAS MORE GROWTH COMING THAN CURRENT POLICIES CAN ACCOMMODATE.

### 1 REDUCING BARRIERS TO REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment is less common than greenfield development for many reasons. Chief among them is that redevelopment is usually more expensive, complex, and lengthy. On top of these barriers, developers often face other hurdles, including complicated review processes, complicated regulations, and financing. Gwinnett County should reduce barriers to redevelopment and find ways to incentivize these projects if they satisfy community development goals.

### 2 CAPITALIZING ON BENEFITS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment offers opportunities to invest in community infrastructure. Tying the improvement of transportation systems (sidewalks, trails, bike lanes), public spaces, and aesthetics and safety (wayfinding, streetlights) to new development will allow those benefits to be more smoothly produced, making communities more active, connected, and lively.

### 3 INCREASING HOUSING MIX

As older commercial and industrial buildings and some housing reach the end of their life cycles (typically 50 years), Gwinnett County should discourage defaulting to single family housing and promote a mix of units that satisfy the variety of needs and preferences of its residents.

# NEEDS

## ISSUE #2: ONE SIZE FITS ALL DEVELOPMENT NO LONGER WORKS

### 1 RECOGNITION OF GWINNETT COUNTY'S UNIQUE COMMUNITIES

Residents are passionate about where they live. Many communities within Gwinnett are quite established (Centerville and Mountain Park, for example) and consider their slice of Gwinnett distinct from others. Recognizing these delineations can cultivate a sense of pride and investment in making these communities better. As communities and preferences change, it will be imperative to offer housing and amenities that create a more holistic, balanced community where residents feel at home and are represented.

### 3 IMPROVED COORDINATION WITH CITIES REGARDING FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING

There are 16 municipalities either entirely or partially located within Gwinnett County. While the boundaries are vivid on a map, residents routinely cross them to access retail, employment, and entertainment opportunities. As the County plans for future growth, it will be imperative to coordinate with cities on initiatives that can be mutually beneficial for economic development, housing, transportation, and quality of life improvements.

### 2 CLEAR, BALANCED, AND FLEXIBLE LAND USE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The County's Planning and Development staff need more specific direction on land-use decisions. Because Gwinnett is diversifying, developments must consider a hyper-localized, holistic context to be successfully welcomed by the existing community. Current development policy is too vague and broad to accomplish this and creates challenges and inefficiencies within the development review process. As a result, developers shy away from innovative projects and residents find recent development unsuitable to their communities. Clarifying and specifying the County's land use policy can make it easier for decisionmakers to approve quality development and redevelopment that fits within communities.

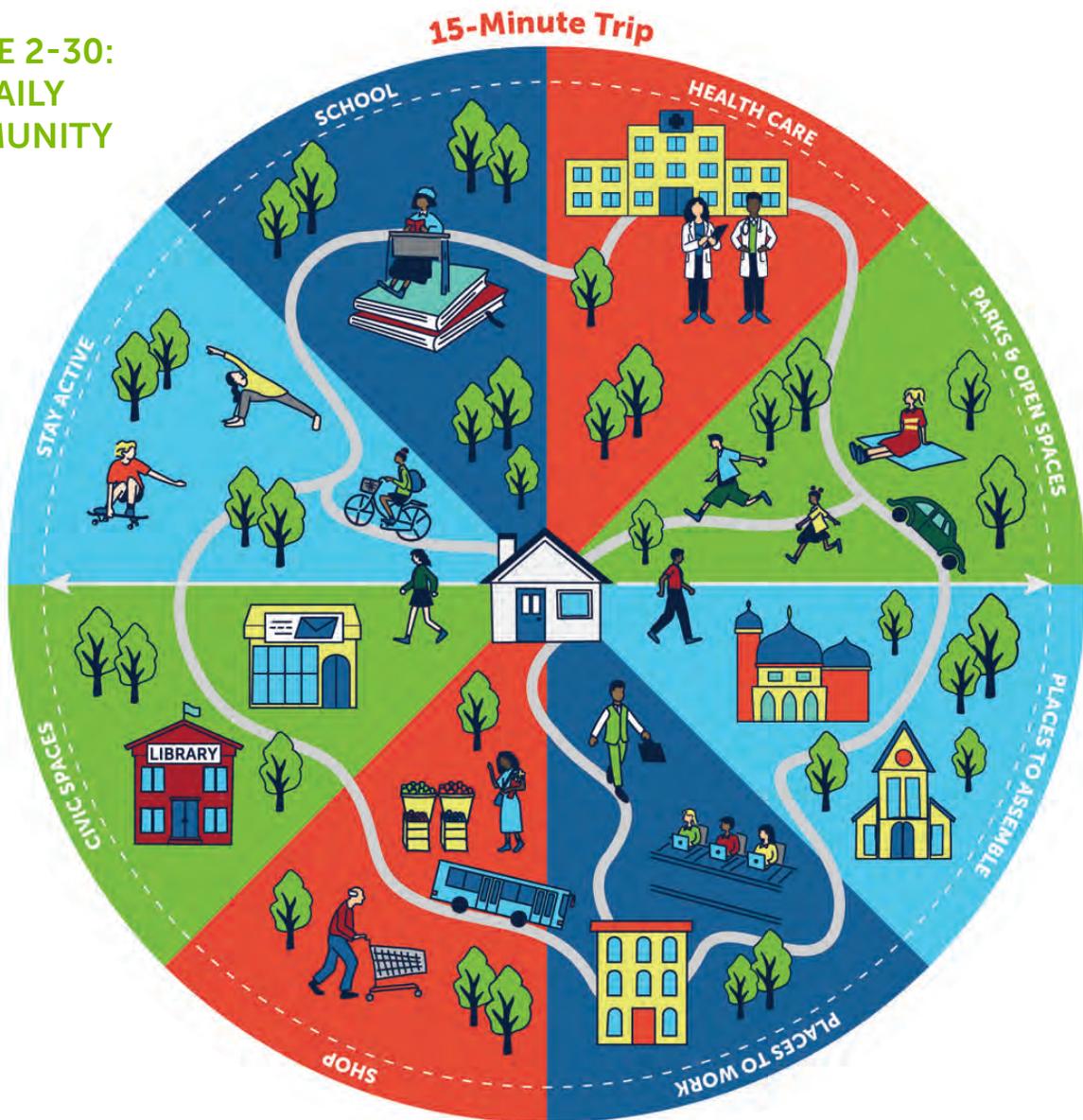
# OPPORTUNITIES

## ISSUE #2: ONE SIZE FITS ALL DEVELOPMENT NO LONGER WORKS

### 1 PLANNING FOR LAND USE AT THE COMMUNITY SCALE

Honoring Gwinnett County’s diverse communities is crucial when planning for future growth. To advance a more specific approach that plans for land use at a smaller scale, the planning team proposes the use of the Daily Community framework (Figure 2-30).

FIGURE 2-30:  
THE DAILY  
COMMUNITY



Loosely inspired by the 15 Minute City concept, the Daily Community is one in which a resident can access work, goods, and services within a 15 minute trip of their home. Adapted for a Gwinnett context, the Daily Community consists of a central core surrounded by neighborhoods, supported by connectivity through multiple transportation options. This framework recognizes and makes space for the diversity of residents and places within Gwinnett County. By zooming in to the community scale, this plan provides clearer, more specific land use guidance that creates great places, accommodates growth, and strengthens communities according to their preferences and needs.

## 2 TRANSFORMING UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS INTO ENJOYABLE PLACES

Many aging retail centers no longer serve the needs of nearby neighborhoods and have become underutilized. Residents then drive further to meet their daily needs, increasing traffic and wear on the roadway infrastructure. These underutilized areas are ripe to be redeveloped into community hubs that serve their Daily Communities' needs and wants.

## 3 MAKING DESIRABLE DEVELOPMENT TYPES BUILDABLE BY RIGHT

One of the biggest hurdles to development occurring is the length of time the process can take—every month a developer or investor holds onto a property, the higher their costs rise (which are then typically passed on to the end user). Types of development that help meet Gwinnett goals—such as Accessory Dwelling Units and small-footprint cottage courts—should be allowed by right in appropriate zones throughout the county. These types of development often serve the greater good and provide many benefits but can be seen as threatening the status quo and are commonly derailed by a handful of residents who oppose them.



# Goals & Best Practices

Throughout this chapter, the planning team has presented two main issues: the County must prioritize redevelopment to accommodate future growth, and this development must reflect the changing needs and preferences of Gwinnett County's diverse communities. To address these issues, the planning team proposes four goals:

- 1 Expand options for creative redevelopment.
- 2 Strengthen administrative controls of development decisions.
- 3 Maintain a high quality of life through investments in community centers.
- 4 Develop a framework that protects remaining natural and rural parts of Gwinnett County from overdevelopment.

Within these goals, the planning team developed guiding principles and implementation steps that Gwinnett County leaders can follow when engaging in development projects that advance the Daily Community.



## EXPAND OPTIONS FOR CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment projects are rare for several reasons. They can be difficult for developers to deliver without a fully committed public partner, and they often are prohibited in many places. Opportunities for quality redevelopment should be expanded across unincorporated Gwinnett County to accommodate future growth, provide amenities, and create the connected communities residents desire. The County should also expand its partnerships with developers to see these projects through to completion. Two best practices should be followed to achieve this goal:

## **1 INCENTIVIZE REDEVELOPMENT OF UNDERUTILIZED SITES IN AND AROUND SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL CENTERS.**

This plan’s analysis identifies areas where redevelopment opportunities are more likely, and proposes future land uses accordingly. Gwinnett County can be better prepared to act on these opportunities by:

- Aligning development regulations with these new opportunities, ensuring they abide by guidelines from goal #2 (page 153)
- Pursuing relationships with property owners who see opportunities in redevelopment
- Establishing funding structures at the County level to support these deals
- Supporting desired redevelopment with by right development types as much as possible

## **2 PROMOTE QUALITY, CONNECTED URBAN DESIGN IN NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT.**

In the design of every new project, ensure that urban design principles are upheld. These include things like:

- Keeping block sizes small to encourage walkability
- Fostering a relationship between buildings and the street
- Providing adequate open space and pedestrian infrastructure
- Offering multiple points of ingress/egress
- Transitioning from suburban to urban scales

### **DESIGN IN A SUBURBAN ENVIRONMENT**

The built environment of any place is very difficult to change once lots are subdivided, blocks are established, and streets are paved. The suburban environment in particular has remarkable staying power thanks to its form. While there are some universal principles for good urban design, some will be less appropriate for parts of unincorporated Gwinnett that are distinctly suburban. However, incorporating these principles where possible—alongside other suburban design ideas specific to Gwinnett—and considering community needs can create new places or reimagine old ones to maximize their full potential as wonderful areas to live.

## CASE STUDY: INNOVATIVE REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS

### SITE FINDER - MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT

Manchester, Connecticut, hosts a GIS program on their website called the Site Finder. The program is a one stop shop for developers to find available properties within the city. With a focus on commercial and industrial sites, the properties are identified on an interactive map. Basic information on pricing, square footage, allowed uses, and other categories is provided, similar to information compiled by sites like Zillow for residential real estate. The map includes iconography to let the user know at a glance if the site is already improved with a structure or whether it is considered a developable greenfield. Providing this information on the city's website allows users to easily cross reference to the applicable zoning and other information pertinent to the site's development or redevelopment. If the County adopted an approach comparable to the Site Finder, Gwinnett could prioritize specific areas suitable for redevelopment. Several best practices within Goals 2 and 3 could also be incorporated into such a tool, creating a comprehensive and systematic approach to development within the county.

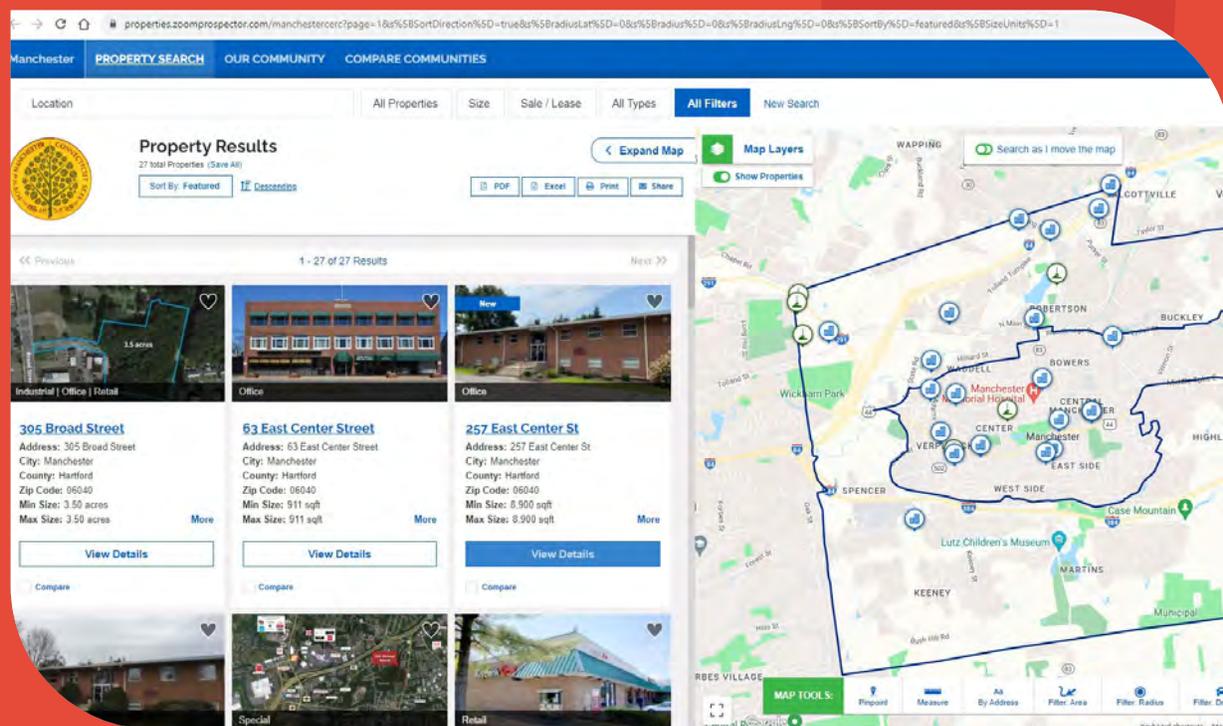


Image Source: City of Manchester Economic Development

# CASE STUDY: STRIP MALL REDEVELOPMENT

## TOCO HILLS SHOPPING CENTER - DECATUR, GEORGIA

Once a state-of-the-art shopping center when it was built in the 1950s, Toco Hills Shopping Center’s best days seemed to be long gone. Older commercial strip developments in Gwinnett are likely familiar with the phenomenon: a rotating cast of tenants came and went, leaving behind empty storefronts and declining tax revenues. However, national retail developer EDENS saw Toco Hills’s potential. Starting in 2005, they gained control of the property in pieces, giving parts of the site a full makeover to bring back their original 1950s flair with a more people-centered approach. Eighteen years later, the number and quality of tenants have increased dramatically. The Toco Hills Shopping Center highlights the importance of focusing on smaller commercial developments. It also demonstrates that success can happen incrementally, and when it comes to sites with complicated ownership and committed leases, taking a long-term approach can lead to success.



*Image Source: Flying Biscuit Café*



## **STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS OF DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS**

Gwinnett County stakeholders with experience at various stages of the development process have noted that existing regulations lack clarity and specificity. In addition, loopholes within them have enabled low quality development to be approved. Development reviews should be straightforward and supportive of the County's diversified, community centric land use vision. Finally, many projects with community benefits are often stymied by a handful of well organized groups who oppose most (and sometimes all) types of development. To better facilitate this, the planning team proposes strengthening governance regarding development decisions, following these best practices:

### **1 ESTABLISH PREFERRED CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT, BASED ON TYPE AND SCALE**

This plan's Future Development Map reflects the diversity of Gwinnett County's neighborhoods and community centers, some of which have yet to be developed. Each center will require different parameters for development to fit within that area's scale and character. This Unified Plan proposes a rubric for new development, with passing grades awarded if proposals meet the standards across a sliding scale of appropriateness for each community. Ranges for density, proportional mix of uses, FAR, height, and other design-based guidelines can be set based on each community's character.

### **2 DETERMINE DEVELOPMENT TYPES THAT CAN BE PERMITTED BY RIGHT**

Projects that add much needed housing—particularly with smaller footprints or in apartment-style developments—should be permitted by right where their form is aligned with community character and the future development map.

### **3 EDUCATE DECISIONMAKERS ON THE BENEFITS OF NEW FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT**

Breaking development norms can be a tough sell—it's more difficult to achieve, difficult to pencil out budget-wise, and can strain infrastructure. However, the benefits of greater tax value per acre, overall economic impact, housing, and alternative transportation options can outweigh the drawbacks. Educating decisionmakers on these benefits will allow for more confidence in policy directions and decisions that bring community benefit.

## CASE STUDY: PREFERRED CRITERIA RUBRIC

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Baltimore County, Maryland created a Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies, synthesizing land-use development policies and zoning regulations into a simple, easy-to-use format. The manual guides development according to the goals of the County's master plan. It divides commercial development into typologies (such as Main Street, Freestanding, Offices, and Shopping Center/Mall) and provides guidelines for on-site design, parking, landscaping, open space, and signage for each one. Along with individual typologies, the manual also defines how they apply within specific geographic areas of the county and provides guidelines for development according to their unique characteristics.

An approach like Baltimore County's could support the development of Daily Communities within Gwinnett County, emphasizing redevelopment projects that follow a range of desirable standards. Tailoring development policies to each community center provides more control over the type of development, leading to less homogeneity in design and creating a sense of place, strengthening community character.





## **MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN COMMUNITY CENTERS**

In recent years, marquee redevelopment sites (see page 136) have received significant planning and investment attention. While these are exciting and hold enormous potential, Gwinnett County should consider pursuing smaller, incremental redevelopment projects in other areas—especially areas south and east of I-85. Pilot projects could show the potential of infill, redevelopment, and community-building without breaking the bank and could build support for future investments. To accomplish this goal, the planning team recommends two best practices:

**1**

### **IDENTIFY LOW HANGING FRUIT OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREMENTAL REDEVELOPMENT**

These include face lifts of suburban shopping centers that are well leased, modest infill projects like cottage courts and other missing middle housing, and small scale public space projects that align with other civic uses (like schools).

**2**

### **PARTNER WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITIES TO ENSURE REPRESENTATION AND AVOID COMMERCIAL GENTRIFICATION**

Many of Gwinnett's commercial areas in need of revitalization are far from underutilized or empty. Revitalization could make these areas more desirable, thus raising rents and potentially pushing current businesses out. Ensuring that business owners and community members are involved in revitalization marks one step toward achieving the dual goal of supporting those communities and creating quality, enjoyable spaces.

## CASE STUDY: INCREMENTAL REDEVELOPMENT - FUNDING TOOLS

*MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT*

The City of Manchester, Connecticut, has established two grant programs for redeveloping aging properties. One is specifically dedicated to facade improvements, while the other addresses compliance issues with building, fire, and health codes, as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Each grant program sets parameters for eligibility and distributes the funds on a sliding scale. The facade grant program also requires matching funds by the owner or developer to ensure that projects will move forward consistent with the application submitted. Between 2020 and 2023, 57 homes were rehabilitated under these programs. Gwinnett could look to model these programs for both residential properties as well as commercial properties to give incremental updates where larger redevelopment is not feasible.



*Image Source: Manchester City Government*

## CASE STUDY: INCREMENTAL REDEVELOPMENT – HOUSING POLICY CHANGES

CLARKSTON AND COLLEGE PARK, GEORGIA

Jurisdictions across metro Atlanta have begun implementing incremental changes in housing policies in recent years, following national trends. Because of these policy changes, less common housing types are being constructed, catering to a wider variety of housing needs.

In Clarkston, the Cottages on Vaughan—a pocket community of eight micro-homes—has been overwhelmingly successful. Sitting on a half acre lot a few blocks from downtown Clarkston, the 250-500 square foot homes are arranged around a central green, which acts as the yard and open space for every home in the community. The site was fully developed and sold out within two years of its announcement. The pre-bid list included over a thousand interested buyers.



Source: *MicroLife Institute*

The success of the Cottages on Vaughan proves there is a desire for nontraditional housing types in the Atlanta metropolitan area. South Park Cottages, a similar project in College Park featuring 29 micro-homes ranging from 400-600 square feet, officially opened in June 2023. All the houses sold before opening, with a long wait list of disappointed would-be buyers. Though the houses are small, the amenities—including a dog park, walking paths, and other shared open space—create an attractive community environment not typically found in single family developments.

Much like the micro-home development in Clarkston, South Park Cottages are located on a small infill lot within an established area close to desirable services. By utilizing these nontraditional sites with ready access to infrastructure and reduced land costs, additional housing can be delivered affordably while limiting the impacts that a standard suburban-style housing development would have on the environment. The financial achievements of both cottage-style developments prove smaller units can succeed in the marketplace.



South Park Cottages Nearing Completion,  
Source: *Georgia Municipal Association*

## CASE STUDY: EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT: PREDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Hennepin County's Predevelopment Program for emerging developers from historically marginalized groups provides an example of an initiative that caters to the local community. The program establishes parameters on who qualifies, including a cap on the total projects a person has completed, to ensure that the initiative isn't being offered to developers who are already familiar with the development process. The Predevelopment Program is intended to support emerging developers through necessary predevelopment activities to get a project off the ground. It focuses on commercial, mixed use, and multifamily development projects. Qualified developers are eligible to receive assistance with architectural, financial, and real estate services. Recipients are then partnered with qualified third-party design or financial consultants based on their needs. A similar program could be created for Gwinnett, focusing on revitalizing commercial strip developments and empowering communities to take ownership.



Image Source: KSTP



## **DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK THAT PROTECTS REMAINING NATURAL AND RURAL PARTS OF GWINNETT COUNTY FROM OVER-DEVELOPMENT**

Gwinnett County leaders and residents share a strong desire to protect the County's remaining natural resources. Protection of forests, farmland, and scenic landscapes provides benefits for water quality and flood mitigation, as well as aesthetic value. Equally important, however, is supporting Daily Communities within more rural areas of Gwinnett County. These two priorities are not mutually exclusive. By focusing development close to retail, workplaces, and amenities, more land is left available for conservation and ecosystem services. To build out this strategy, we propose three best practices:

### **1 CONSERVE LAND WITH HIGH ECOLOGICAL PRODUCTIVITY, DIFFICULT DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES, OR BOTH**

Not all land is created equal. Certain sites will more readily support new development, while others face insurmountable challenges like challenging topography, bedrock, or wetlands. Gwinnett County should develop a conservation strategy with a combination of methods, including direct acquisition or community partnerships, that allows for a mix of strategic conservation and context-appropriate development.

### **2 CLUSTER NEW DEVELOPMENT AROUND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES**

In areas where infrastructure is limited, building densely close to services and other amenities provides multiple benefits. First, return on public investment is higher. By clustering new development, fewer miles of pavement and pipe need to be extended to support it. This type of development also encourages community interaction, especially if oriented around public spaces or common destinations. For eastern Gwinnett, it is important to remember that density does not always mean tall. Rather, Daily Communities in this region of Gwinnett would likely adopt a gentler density that provides amenities at an appropriate scale.

### **3 USE SEWER AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE AS A GROWTH MANAGEMENT TOOL**

One of the greatest growth management tools a jurisdiction has in Georgia is where it elects to expand sewer service and transportation infrastructure. Without these, there is no other development possible other than large-lot residential uses or basic commercial services (these uses, however, are not always desirable either). In considering expansion of sewer and roadway networks to eastern Gwinnett communities, there should be frank discussions on the tradeoffs.

## CASE STUDY:

### GEORGIA PIEDMONT LAND TRUST – SUWANEE, GEORGIA

While there are several land trusts that operate throughout Georgia, Georgia Piedmont Land Trust is unique in its explicit focus on land conservation within urbanizing areas. Conservation projects they've undertaken range from large scale wetlands restoration parks and farmland conservation in counties on the urban fringe to small scale community gardens within the City of Atlanta. Georgia Piedmont Land Trust either acquires land directly, or works with local landowners to place land under a conservation easement. The latter requires a land management plan, which the landowner is responsible for with Georgia Piedmont Land Trust's technical assistance. Working with local land trusts is one strategy Gwinnett County could pursue to protect land at minimal expense and develop a strategy for long term land conservation.



*Rocky Face Ridge Park  
Image Source: Georgia Piedmont Land Trust*

## CASE STUDY:

### FEARRINGTON VILLAGE – PITTSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Surrounded by rolling hills and idyllic pastures in between Chapel Hill and Pittsboro, North Carolina, the rural mixed use community of Fearington Village could provide inspiration for how Gwinnett County can develop specific areas of its remaining buildable, greenfield land. Fearington Village began with the purchase of a 640 acre farm on the outskirts of the growing Research Triangle region. The founders were interested in creating a village with a true mix of uses, including residential, shopping, dining, and other services connected by streets and walking paths. Though its aesthetics are quaint—the residences and shops are modeled after an English country hamlet—the community’s form has produced a livable, walkable, and highly desirable neighborhood that showcases how development and rural character can go hand in hand. Fearington Village is now home to approximately 2,300 residents and boasts several local retail establishments, including a bookstore, coffee shop, restaurant, and an award-winning hotel. Its geographic context as one of the last remaining rural areas within a short to the job centers of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill provide a useful analog for how clustered development can help the rural parts of Gwinnett maintain their character.



*Image Source: Trip Advisor*

A rural landscape featuring a lush green field in the foreground, a dark wooden fence curving across the middle ground, and a barn with a red roof in the background. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. A large, semi-transparent white box with a red border is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

## LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION

To meet the projected demand coming to Gwinnett County over the next 20 years, strategic redevelopment that fosters new forms of housing, community amenities, public spaces, and connections is vital for maintaining and enhancing the high quality of life enjoyed by Gwinnett residents. The Land Use section of the Community Work Program (page 407) identifies short- and long-term steps for how to encourage this type of development, according to the proposed goals and best practices devised by the planning team.

# UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Gwinnett County's Unified Development Ordinance serves as the day to day regulatory framework for all development in Gwinnett. The UDO establishes specific zoning districts with parameters for form and use, as well as regulations governing subdivision, stormwater, signage, and more. The UDO is updated regularly; revisions to its residential zoning categories were adopted in a major update by the Board of Commissioners as recently as 2023.

Throughout the 2045 Unified Plan, there are recommendations to change Gwinnett County's UDO that would be recommended or necessary to allow the Daily Community framework to flourish. High-priority changes that would align the 2045 Unified Plan's future development framework with the County's current UDO are listed below.

## 1 FLOOR AREA RATIO

Many of the Future Development Types propose FARs that are higher than those currently allowed. It is recommended that the allowable FAR for the following districts be increased to match the targeted density ranges and typical land use FAR identified in the comp plan: LRR, MRR, MU-N, MU-C, MU-R (both base and bonus), O-I, C-2, C-3. Additionally, determine the frequency with which bonuses for FAR in MU-R are used, eliminate bonuses which are ineffective, and add density provisions to those which are being utilized by developers.

## 2 HEIGHT MAXIMUMS

Several zoning districts should be reviewed to ensure that height maximums are sufficient for updated FAR. This is especially true for mixed use and multifamily residential districts. O-I and high density commercial zoning districts should also be reviewed for height allowances.

## 3 INCENTIVES FOR TOUGH SITES

For sites with size, geometry, or topography challenges, consider revising the UDO to provide

incentives for development, including FAR bonuses, density bonuses, height bonuses, by right parking reductions, or expedited review processes.

## 4 BLOCK SIZE REGULATION

Implementing maximum block length standards in additional districts. Standards should be adopted in mixed use districts, especially those within Urban and Village Center areas, to encourage adherence to the People Friendly Design guidelines.

## 5 ASSESS INDUSTRIAL TYPES

Verify that the industrial categories are aligning with Gwinnett's needs. Consider the creation of a lighter, true flex industrial use category, which could be allowed in a broader range of zones beyond traditional industrial districts, including C-3 or other higher use districts.

## SPECIFIC RECOMMENDED UDO CHANGES

### Sec. 210-120

- Revise maximum FAR for LRR district to 2.5
- Revise maximum height for LRR district to match guidance from Urban - Low future development type
- Revise maximum FAR for MRR district to 3.0
- Revise maximum height for MRR district to match guidance from Neighborhood - High Mix future development type

### Sec. 210-130

- Change “Dwelling, ADU” use designations from conditional to permitted in R-100, R-75, and R-60 districts
- Change “Dwelling, Cottage Court” use designations from conditional to permitted in R-75, R-60, and R-IF districts
- Change “Dwelling, Duplex” use designations from conditional to permitted in R-IF and LRR districts
- Change “Dwelling, Triplex” use designations from conditional to permitted in R-IF and LRR districts
- Change “Dwelling, Fourplex” use designations from conditional to permitted in R-IF and LRR districts
- Consider making cottage courts, duplexes, and fourplexes permitted uses in lower-density residential districts

### Sec. 211-70

- Remove maximum FAR for O-I district
- Remove maximum height for O-I district
- Remove maximum FAR for C-2 district
- Remove maximum height for C-2 district
- Remove maximum FAR for C-3 district
- Remove maximum height for C-3 district

### Sec. 211-80

- Consider removing convenience stores with fuel pumps from list of appropriate uses for C-2 districts
- Consider new flex industrial category of uses, to include smaller scale production, maker spaces, craft manufacturing (i.e. small manufacturing of other goods that does not produce noise, odor, smoke, or other nuisances)
- For flex industrial uses, require onsite retail sales, tours, classes, or other regular public interaction
- For flex industrial uses, establish standards for maximum floor area, storage of goods and materials, landscaping, and screening requirements
- If flex industrial category is added, permit use within C-3 district

### Sec. 211-90

- Establish distance requirements between uses for convenience stores with fuel pumps
- Consider adding maximum inventory capacity to automobile rental and sales to reduce size of establishments
- Consider additional design guidelines for these uses, including outdoor storage regulations and work bays placed along side setbacks

### Sec. 211-100 (new section)

- Consider adding design standards (similar to Sec. 213-80) for O-I, C-1, C-2, and C-3 districts based on recommendations for Urban future development types

## ALL PROPOSED UDO CHANGES

### Sec. 211-110 (new section)

- Consider adding design standards for M-1 and M-2 districts based on recommendations for Workplace Center future development types

### Sec. 213-50

- Revise maximum FAR for MU-N district to 2.5
- Revise maximum height for MU-N district to match guidance from Urban - Low future development type
- Revise maximum FAR for MU-C district to 2.5
- Revise maximum height for MU-C district to match guidance from Neighborhood - High Mix future development type

### Sec. 213-60.3

- Add permitted uses for flex industrial (from Sec. 211-80) to list of permitted uses for MU-C

### Sec. 213-60.4

- Add permitted uses for flex industrial (from Sec. 211-80) to list of permitted uses for MU-C

### Sec. 213-70

- Eliminate bonuses which are ineffective and add density to those which are being utilized by developers

### Sec. 213-80

- Add block length maximums for mixed use districts based on guidance from Urban and Village Center future development types
- Adjust design guidelines for mixed use districts to align with recommended block size, street design, and open space metrics found in the Urban and Village Center future development types

### Sec. 900-60

- Review street design standards based on recommendations from Land Use and Transportation Elements of the 2045 Unified Plan

### Sec. 900-90

- Review sidewalk requirements based on recommendations from Land Use and Transportation Elements of the 2045 Unified Plan



# 03

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

In recent years, Gwinnett County has placed great importance on economic development, actively pursuing investment through initiatives such as the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, the Gwinnett Place Mall Redevelopment, and the ongoing progress of the Rowen Foundation Development. The County remains committed to fostering inclusive and equitable economic growth, ensuring that current residents and businesses have opportunities to thrive while attracting new prospects and stimulating the local economy.

Building upon research and the implementation of effective solutions, the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan's Economic Development Element aims to provide a comprehensive strategy for future countywide economic development. This strategy begins with insights from local and regional data analysis and active stakeholder engagement, which then inform economic development needs and opportunities. To address these needs and opportunities, this element proposes three overarching economic development goals the County and its partners should pursue over the next two decades, which are supported by best practices observed in similar communities nationwide. Finally, each goal is broken down into actionable and implementable policies or programs in the final section, creating an economic development playbook for the future.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## 1 PROMOTE INVESTMENT AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE

To embrace the concept of Daily Communities, Gwinnett County must make substantial investments in a range of assets that enhance quality of life and sense of place across its distinct communities. These investments are crucial for the County to maintain its economic competitiveness and attractiveness for development. Over the years, Gwinnett's leaders and residents have recognized that the county's suburban nature is both a strength and a weakness. People desire to lead fulfilling and healthy lives, and require access to the amenities, transit systems, and infrastructure typically found in urban areas to do so. By adopting the Daily Communities approach as a guide for new investment, Gwinnett can pursue active, connective, and affordable improvements to the built environment. This shift requires reimagining Gwinnett's character as more than just a suburban, bedroom community for the Atlanta metropolitan area.

Housing stands out among these various investments as a crucial focus area. Gwinnett County faces a significant housing shortage of over 4,800 units annually, which hampers the County's ability to attract new residents and businesses. To realize its growth potential in terms of population and economy, Gwinnett must prioritize the development of robust new infrastructure related to housing, transportation, and commercial assets. This will ensure that the County remains an attractive location for starting a business, purchasing a first home, forging meaningful connections with neighbors and residents, and planning for the future.

## 2 ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND TALENT

Gwinnett County has become a desirable destination for knowledge-based jobs in fields such as innovation, research and development, and other related industries. However, Gwinnett faces a challenge in retaining a significant portion of the nearly 100,000 college graduates who enter the regional workforce each year. Many of these graduates opt for more urban environments with better access to diverse housing, entertainment, transit, and amenities.

To increase its share of attractive employment opportunities in the region, Gwinnett should create a live-work environment that appeals to young professionals. Diversifying in this way provides Gwinnett residents with an option to stay within their community, spending more time and money at businesses closer to home, and reducing long commutes. Additionally, Gwinnett can capitalize on its diverse population to attract businesses and individuals from a wider national and international audience. By strengthening its efforts to build a distinct identity, connecting with diverse groups of residents, and highlighting its unique opportunities and advantages compared to intown Atlanta communities, Gwinnett can position itself as a distinctive place for investment.

## 3 PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MOBILITY

Gwinnett County has long been known as a place where residents can achieve socioeconomic mobility, and it continues to provide transformative economic opportunities. One notable demonstration of this commitment is Gwinnett's recent emphasis on fostering diverse forms of entrepreneurship. By further investing in entrepreneurship, the County aims to ensure that individuals from all walks of life have equal access to the resources necessary to secure employment, start their businesses, and nurture their ventures for long term success. This concerted effort will contribute to an inclusive and dynamic economic landscape.

To further promote economic growth and mobility, Gwinnett County can enhance its strategy for workforce development, creating opportunities for workers with varying levels of education and skill sets. By aligning workforce development initiatives with the County's vision for future job prospects, Gwinnett can establish itself as a hub for local employment opportunities. This approach will enable individuals to find meaningful work and contribute to the county's overall economic growth.

# Existing Conditions

To establish an informed baseline for economic development in Gwinnett County, this section synthesizes several layers of data and analysis including:

- An overview of existing economic development organizations and leadership
- A review of previous economic development reports, studies, and actions
- An updated data analysis focused on key socioeconomic data and trends
- Brief descriptions of current economic development projects
- Brief descriptions of the goals and priorities of current economic development action plans.

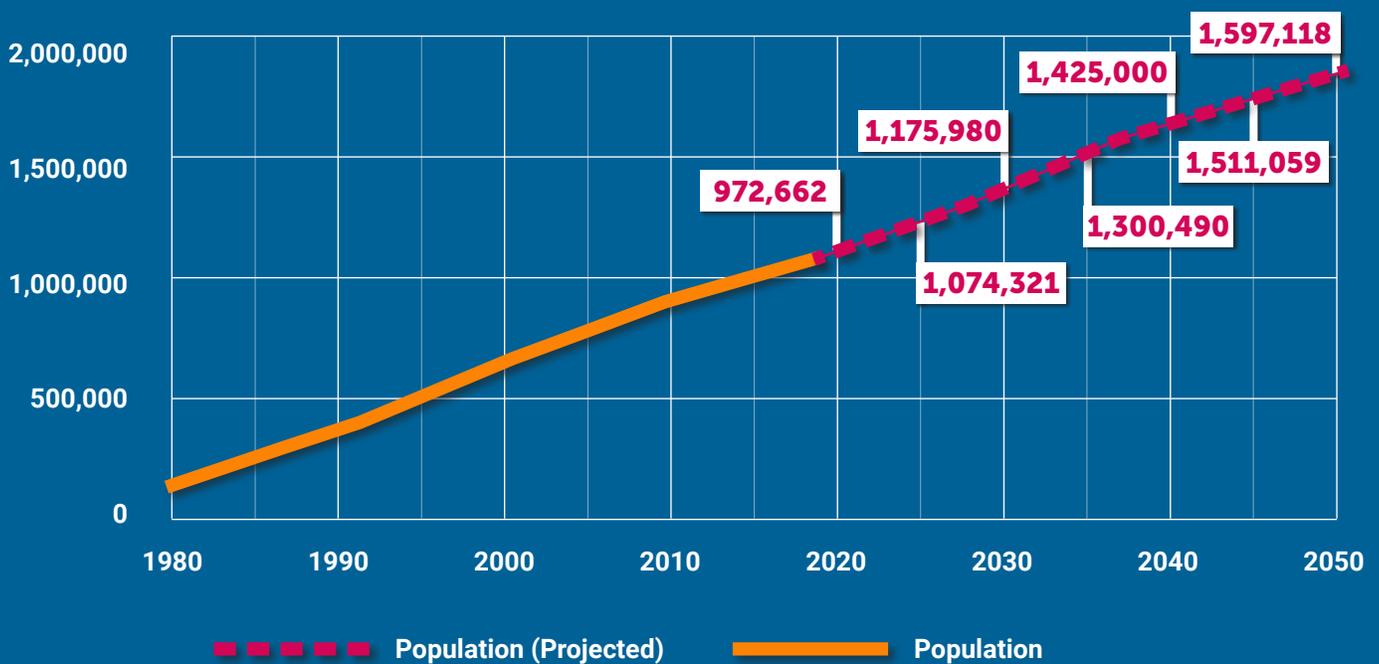
## SOCIAL DATA

### POPULATION GROWTH

Using a variety of prior projections and new data, the planning team projects Gwinnett to continue on a linear path of population growth. The county population may increase by over 50% by 2045, eclipsing 1.5 million residents (Figure 3-1).

**FIGURE 3-1: GWINNETT COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

SOURCE: FOURTH ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF LIGHCAST AND US CENSUS BUREAU DATA



## EDUCATION

Gwinnett’s population is highly educated, with 65% of residents having a secondary education or beyond. Furthermore, most new residents moving into Gwinnett also have higher education levels.

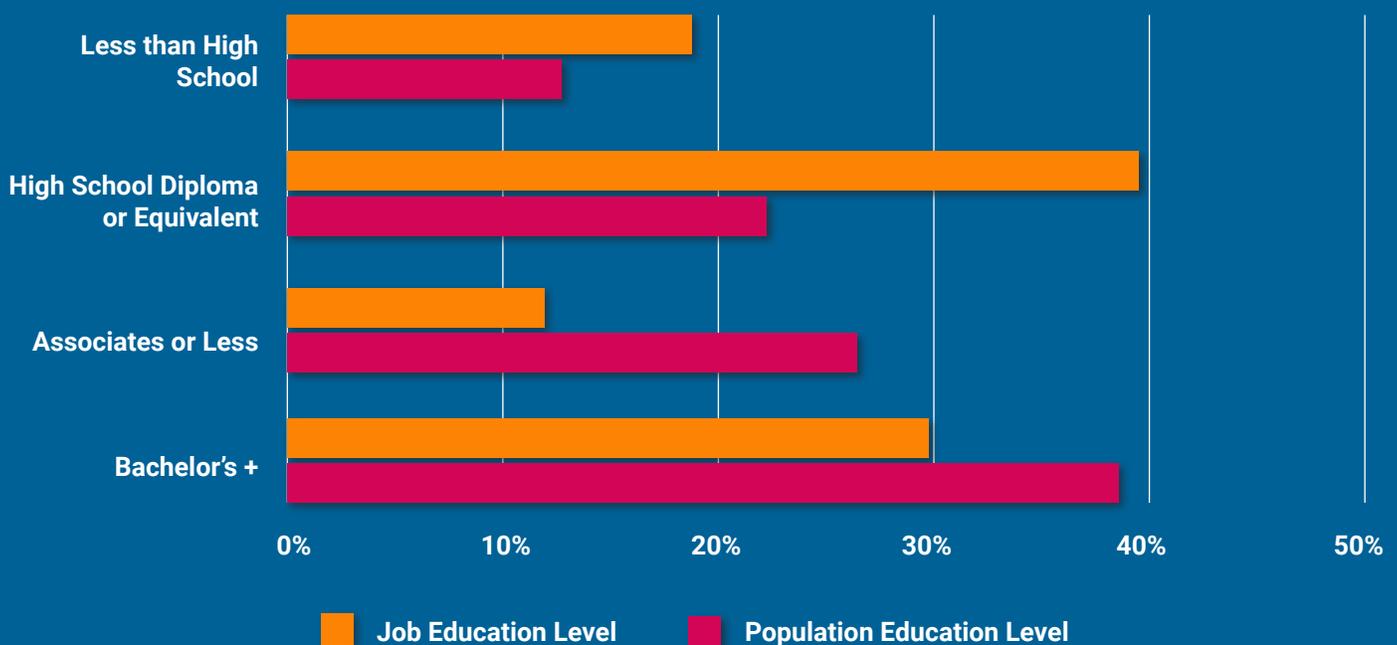
Although there are some knowledge-based job opportunities, most jobs in Gwinnett require a high school diploma or less (Figure 3-2). This is an essential consideration regarding job requirements for those in the county and the potential to attract more people to the area to live or work. Since most jobs do not require secondary education, many residents travel outside of the county for work resulting in increased congestion and degradation of road infrastructure. The effects of the education and employment mismatch are a major contributor to Gwinnett’s traffic congestion.

## PROXIMITY TO COLLEGE GRADUATES

Gwinnett is surrounded by educated talent. Most of the state’s major higher education institutions, such as Emory University, Georgia Tech, Georgia State, Oglethorpe University, and the Atlanta University Center (Morehouse & Spelman Colleges) in Atlanta, and the University of Georgia in Athens, are within 45 minutes of the county. The county’s own Georgia Gwinnett College and Gwinnett Technical College also add to the pool of annual graduates, totaling up to 75,000 annually for the region. These graduates end up dispersed throughout the region for a variety of reasons; proximity to jobs, family, friends, and amenities are a few leading factors. Gwinnett struggles to retain its fair share of graduates, losing many potential residents to other living situations and jobs across the Atlanta metropolitan region.

**FIGURE 3-2: JOBS REQUIRED BY EDUCATION LEVEL**

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST



## AGE

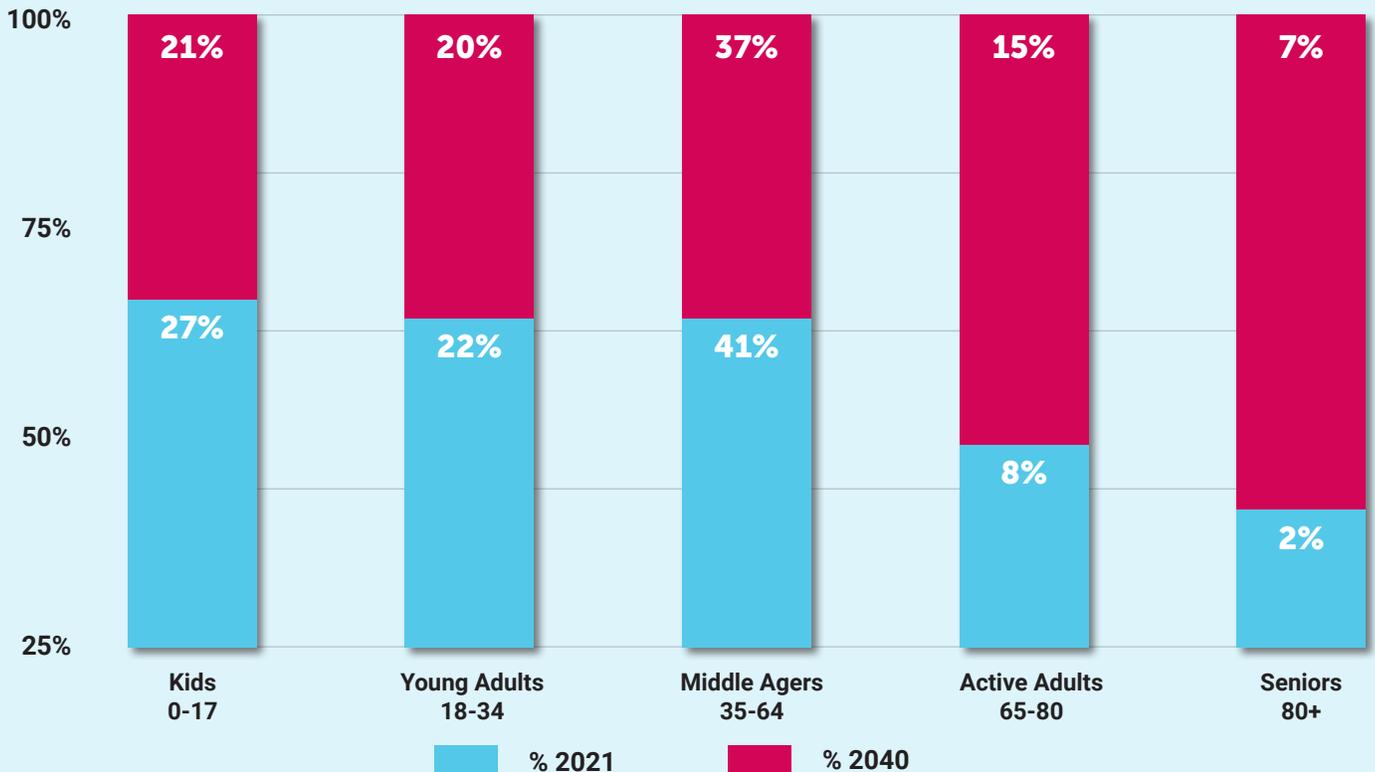
Data from the Atlanta Regional Commission suggests that up to a third of Gwinnett’s population in 2050 will be 55 or older, compared to 20% of the population in 2015. Data from the Census Bureau suggests a similar trend by 2040 (Figure 3-3). With a decreasing share of young people choosing to locate in Gwinnett County immediately after high school or college graduation, Gwinnett will need to pursue intentional strategies to maintain an active workforce and its current median age of 35.7.

## RACIAL EQUITY

Gwinnett County faces disparities in opportunities and outcomes among residents of different races and ethnicities (Figures 3-4 through 3-6). People of color in Gwinnett are disproportionately affected by poverty, with a higher likelihood of experiencing economic hardships compared to white residents. Educational disparities exist as well, with lower educational attainment among certain racial groups. For instance, Hispanic residents have lower bachelor’s degree attainment rates compared to their white, non-Hispanic counterparts. Homeownership rates also show significant gaps for Black and Hispanic residents.

### FIGURE 3-3: POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

SOURCE: GWINNETT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING STUDY & U.S. CENSUS ACS 2016-2021



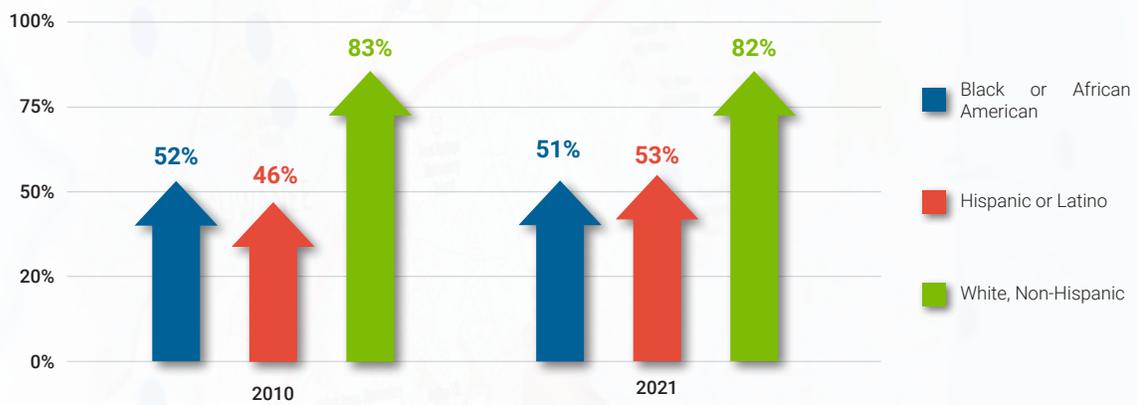
### FIGURE 3-4: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



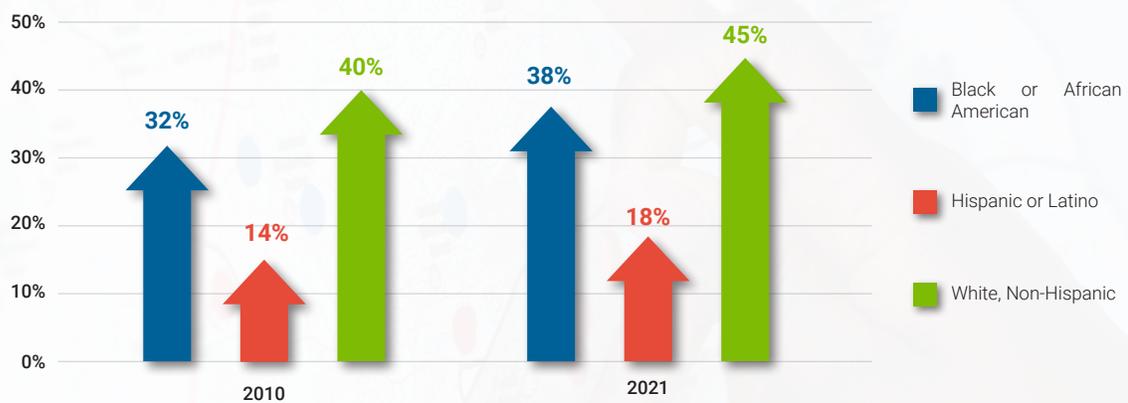
### FIGURE 3-5: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE BY RACE & ETHNICITY

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



### FIGURE 3-6: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: BACHELORS' DEGREE+

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



# BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DATA

## JOBS

Gwinnett County has experienced substantial job growth in the last decade, adding over 78,000 jobs between 2010 and 2021. As of 2022, the county boasts a total of over 470,000 jobs. **The healthcare sector witnessed the most significant increase in employment, followed by administrative roles, construction, and retail trade.**

To gain a deeper understanding of Gwinnett’s job growth compared to the Atlanta metro area, a shift share analysis was conducted (Figure 3-7). This analysis examines industries in Gwinnett

that either outperform or underperform the Atlanta metropolitan area in terms of growth. The findings revealed that several industries in Gwinnett exhibited robust regional growth, **including trade, transportation, warehousing, manufacturing, healthcare, and professional services.** These sectors demonstrated a positive trend, indicating their strength and contribution to the local economy.

However, weaknesses were identified in certain industries within Gwinnett County when compared to the broader Atlanta metropolitan area. These areas of weakness were concentrated in the management of companies,

**FIGURE 3-7: SHIFT SHARE, 2010-2021**

SOURCE: FOURTH ECONOMY ANALYSIS OF U.S. CENSUS QUARTERLY WORKFORCE INDICATORS, 2010 TO 2021

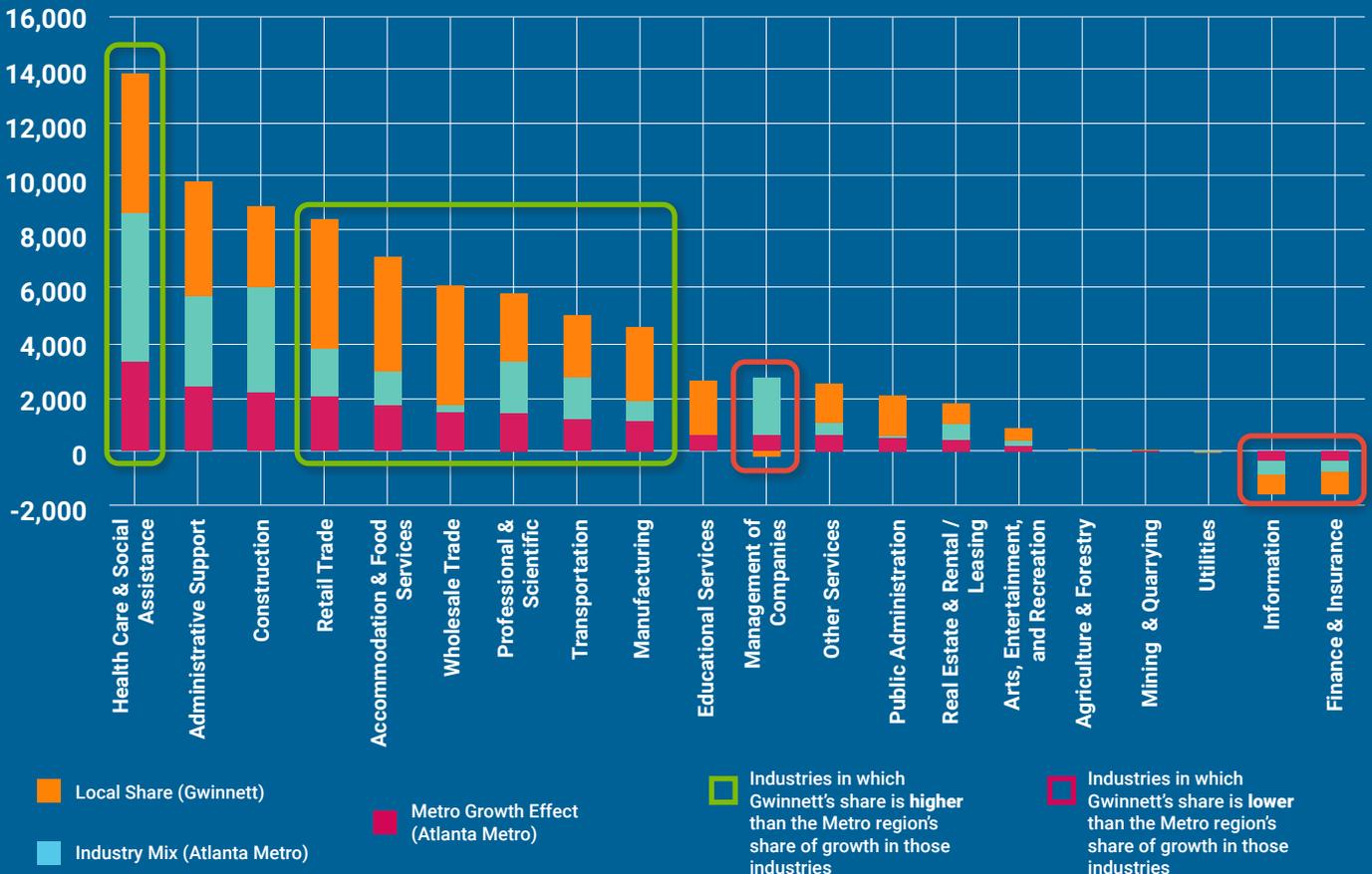




Image Source: Northside Hospital

information services, and finance/insurance sectors. Identifying these industries allows for a targeted focus on areas that require further development and attention to foster growth and maximize their potential.

Overall, the shift share analysis sheds light on the industries experiencing strong local growth within Gwinnett County while highlighting areas that are relatively weaker compared to the broader metropolitan region.

## INDUSTRY

The growing industries by employment are **Healthcare and Social Assistance**, Administration and Support, Construction, Retail Trade, Accommodations, Wholesale Trade, **Professional Services**, and **Transportation and Warehousing**; these sectors have added 65,098 jobs, which is 82% of the total employment growth between 2010 and 2021.

The largest industries by employment are Retail Trade, Administrative and Support, Government,

**Healthcare and Social Assistance**, and **Professional Services**. These sectors comprise 224,142 jobs or 49% of total employment in Gwinnett County as of 2021.

Target industries identified by Partnership Gwinnett include **Information and Technology Solutions; Health Sciences and Services; Professional and Corporate Services; Supply Chain Management; and Advanced Manufacturing**. These industries accounted for 27,539 new jobs between 2010-2021. It's important to note that **Information and Technology Solutions** declined by 16% between 2013 and 2023, showing a mismatch between this industry's growth and the County's plans to focus on and attract new businesses and jobs.

## LIVE-WORK

Most people living in Gwinnett commute outside of the county for work. The number of workers who either commute in or out of the county for work—totaling nearly 429,000 daily commuters—has increased by more than 85,000 since 2010, exceeding total job growth in the county by 7,000+ jobs (Figure 3-8). In total, 60% of residents who live in Gwinnett work elsewhere, creating a missed opportunity for economic impact for the county. The commuting patterns have meant more traffic and longer commute times for people entering and leaving the county for work.

Resident employment differs from employment within the county. More residents are employed in Healthcare and Social Assistance (13%) and Retail Trade (13%) than in Accommodation and Food Service (9%) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical (8%). Those working in Gwinnett are employed in Retail Trade (14%), Healthcare and Social Assistance (10%), Wholesale Trade (10%), and Administrative & Support Waste Management (9%). Workers and residents have a significant percentage in Healthcare and Social Assistance and Retail Trade, but there is a stark

difference in average earnings. The median household income for residents in Gwinnett is \$75,853, while the average earnings for workers in Gwinnett is \$66,236. The difference indicates that jobs in Gwinnett pay lower than jobs in the surrounding areas where most residents commute for work, further indicating a lack of jobs appropriate for many Gwinnett residents.

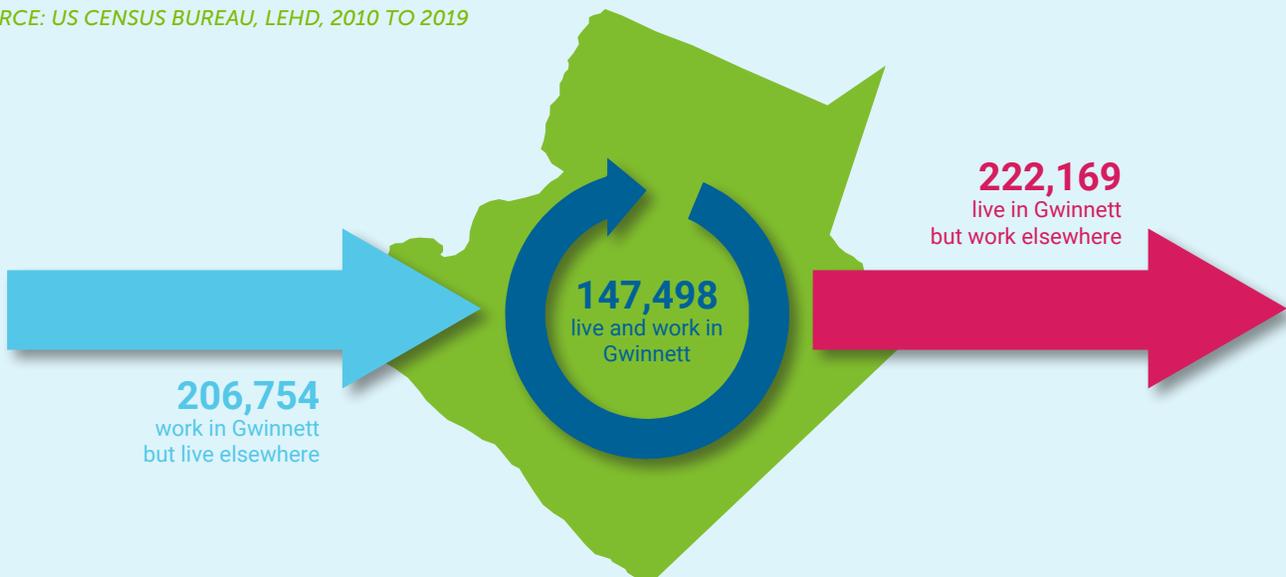
### RETAIL TRADE

Retail Trade is Gwinnett's largest industry and employs 12% of the total workforce in the County, yet the average pay was \$50,158 in 2021. As for the target industries, the average pay for each is as follows:

- **Information and Technology Solutions:** \$118,090
- **Professional and Corporate Services:** \$101,474
- **Advanced Manufacturing:** \$87,960
- **Supply Chain Management:** \$66,020
- **Health Sciences and Services:** \$61,608

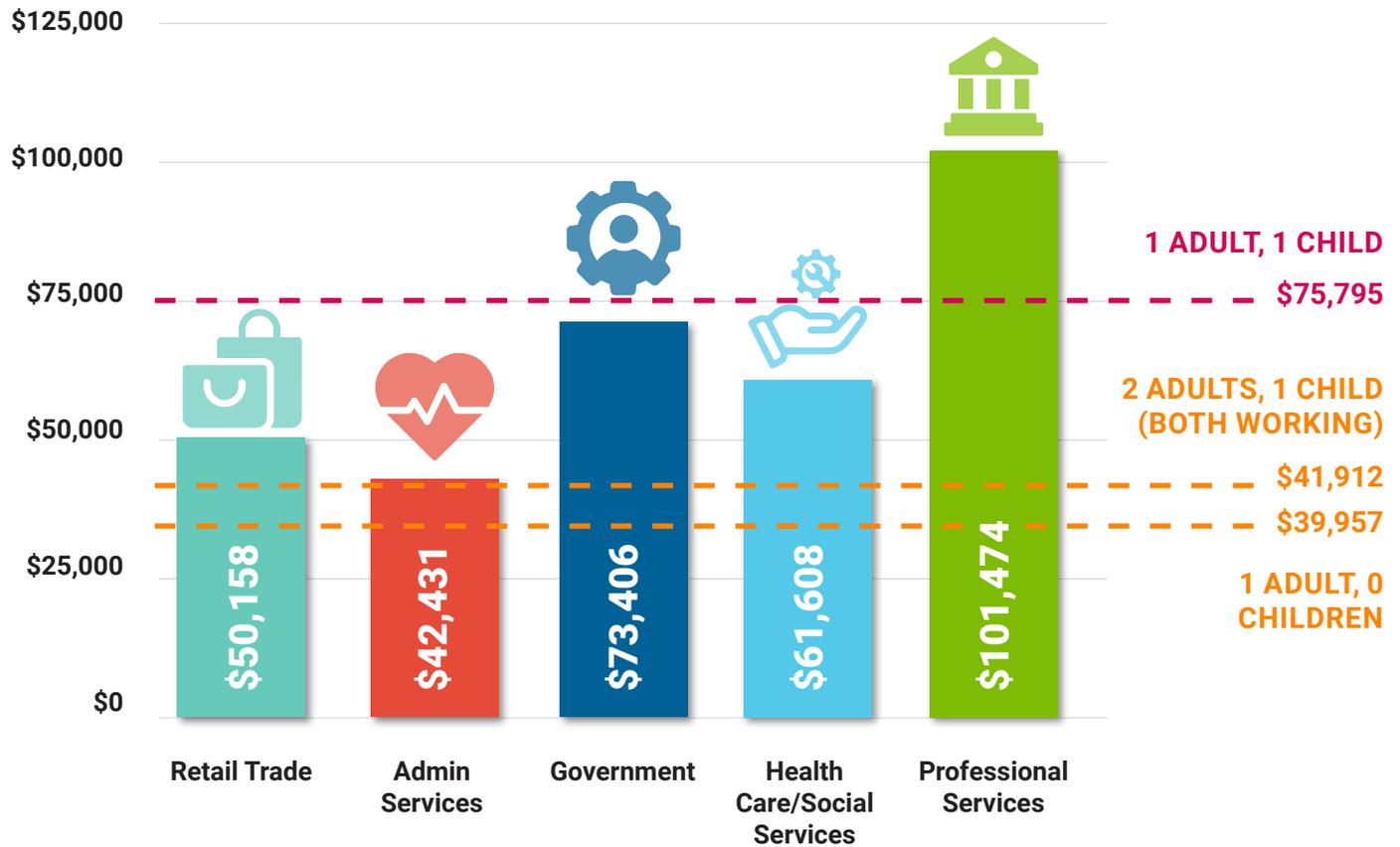
## FIGURE 3-8: INFLOW/OUTFLOW OF GWINNETT COUNTY JOBS

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, LEHD, 2010 TO 2019



## FIGURE 3-9: LIVING WAGE BY INDUSTRY

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST & MIT LIVING WAGE CALCULATOR



## WAGE

The average earnings of workers in Gwinnett in 2021 was \$66,236. For Gwinnett County, the living wage per adult breakdown by family size is:

**\$75,795**  
1 adult, 1 child

**\$41,912**  
2 adults, 1 child

**\$39,957**  
1 adult

It is important to note that **four of the five largest industries that employ workers in Gwinnett do not provide a living wage sufficient for a single adult and one child.**

In comparison to similar suburban counties, Gwinnett ranked 19th out of 20 in terms of wage growth in recent years. This ranking is surprising considering the County's strong performance in employment growth (14th), population growth (10th), and median household income growth (13th) in the same timeframe.

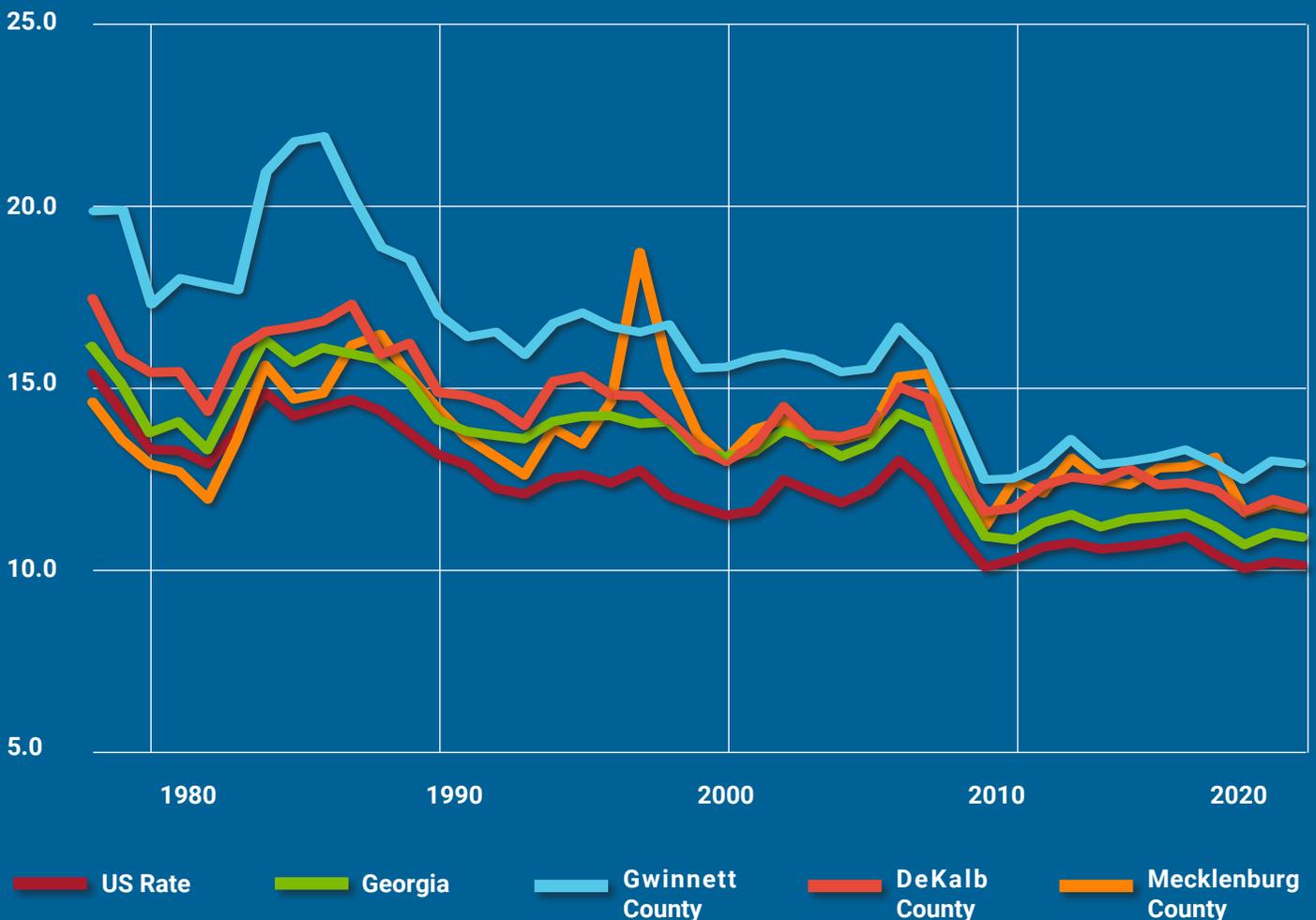
## BUSINESS BIRTHS AND SURVIVAL

Gwinnett County is highly entrepreneurial, as seen through the high business birth rate compared to surrounding counties, Georgia, and the United States. Between 1985 and 2020, Gwinnett's business birth rate averaged 15.9 and the business death rate averaged 7.6, while Georgia's was 12.9 and death rate was 7.2. The U.S.' business birth rate was 11.7, while the death rate was 6.9 (Figure 3-10). A strong entrepreneurial community can show promise in bringing in small businesses and growing in new sectors.

According to Partnership Gwinnett and Gwinnett County's Office of Economic Development, 75% of Gwinnett's businesses have fewer than 20 employees, and 88% have less than 100 employees. These figures mirror national averages, but lag behind major metropolitan areas like Atlanta, which host a plethora of larger, corporate entities.

**FIGURE 3-10: NEW ESTABLISHMENTS PER 100 EXISTING ESTABLISHMENTS**

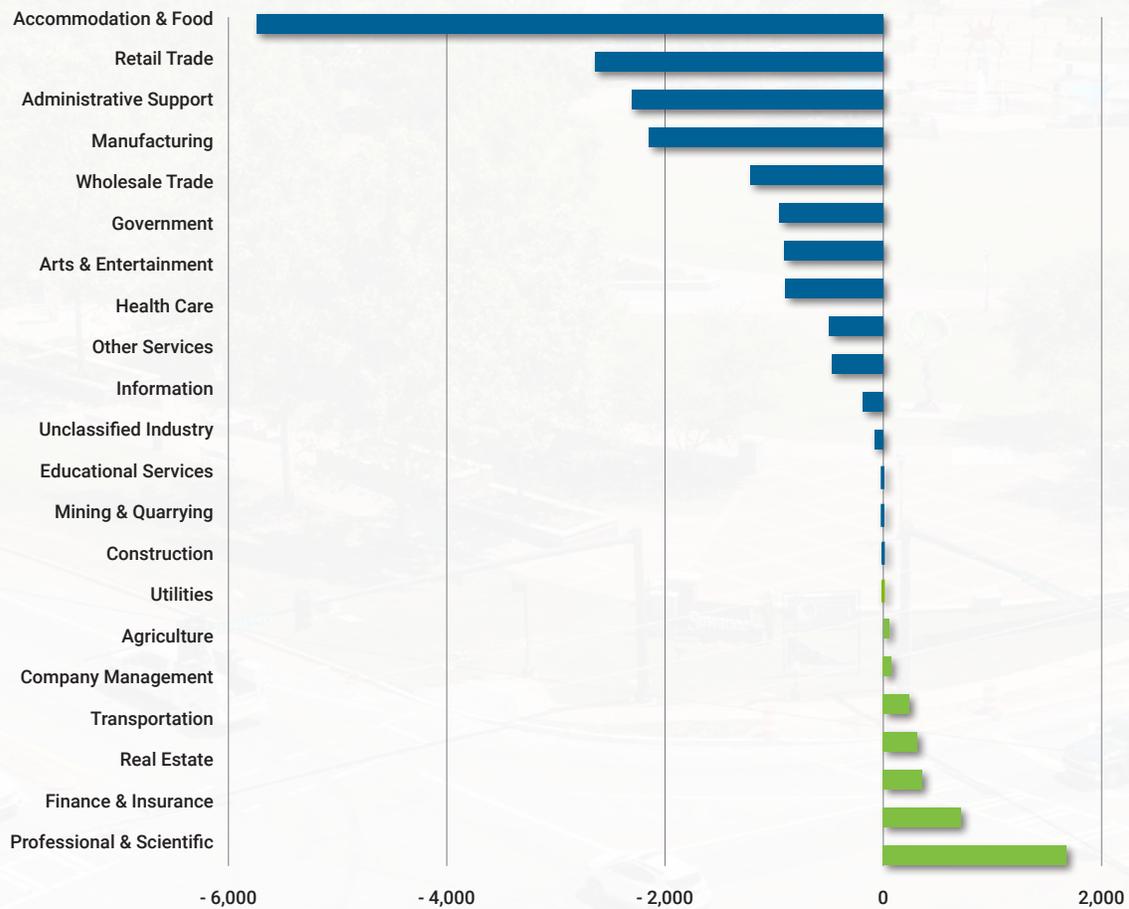
SOURCE: BUSINESS DYNAMIC STATISTICS



## FIGURE 3-11: INDUSTRIES IMPACTED BY THE PANDEMIC

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST

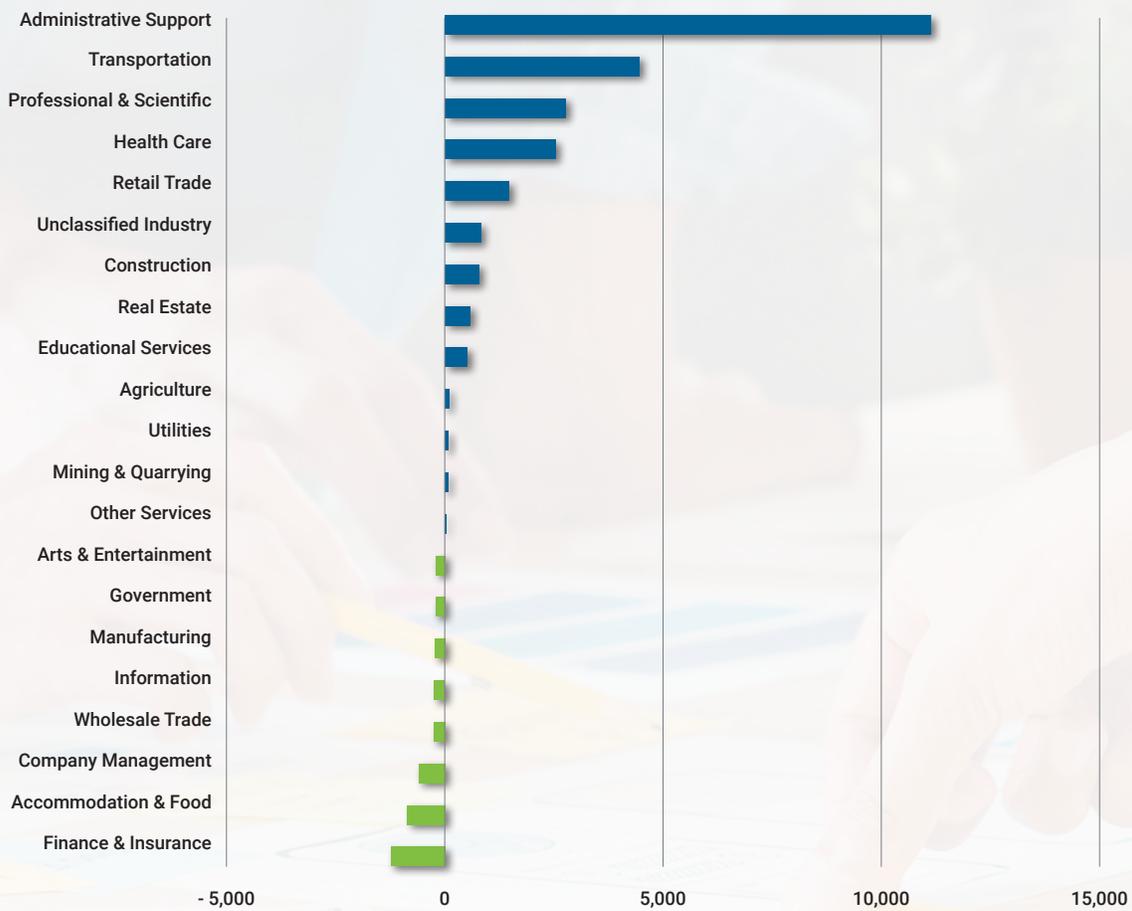
The COVID-19 Pandemic hit Gwinnett County hard, causing losses of nearly 18,000 jobs between 2019 and 2020. Most of the decreases came from Accommodation & Food Service, Retail Trade, Administrative & Support, Manufacturing, and Wholesale Trade, which amounted to 78% of all losses. Between 2019 and 2020, industry growth occurred in Professional Services, Finance & Insurance, Transportation and Warehousing, Real Estate & Insurance, and Management of Companies, which accounted for 3,000 jobs.



## FIGURE 3-12: INDUSTRY RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST

Administration & Support and Retail Trade have recovered and grown from 2019 to 2022 by adding over 13,000 jobs. However, many industries have yet to recover, like Accommodation & Food Services, Manufacturing, and Wholesale Trade, which decreased by 1,400 jobs between 2019 and 2022. Interestingly, industries that grew during the pandemic, like Finance & Insurance and Management of Companies, lost 1,900 jobs over the same period. While the pandemic had significant impacts, many industries recovered and grew from 2020 to 2022, showing economic resilience and the ability to recover swiftly from future economic upheaval.



# KEY ECONOMIC THEMES

## HOUSING

Interviewees and project stakeholders consistently cited housing as one of the largest barriers between Gwinnett and sustained economic development. Gwinnett’s annual housing development shortage of 4,800 units represents a material roadblock to population growth. Without more units, potential new residents will not have the opportunity to call Gwinnett home. More specifically, the affordability of new units is an increasingly urgent issue; data shows only 2 percent of new units are built for lower income residents. This figure will need to rise closer to 28 percent for affordability to accommodate projected population growth. Specifically, the County’s housing market lacks homes in the price range of \$100,000 to \$200,000 and the supply of affordable rental units has not kept pace with demand. About 53 percent of renters and 23 percent of owners are cost burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing. More detailed housing data and information is provided in the Housing Element of this 2045 Unified Plan.

## TRANSPORTATION

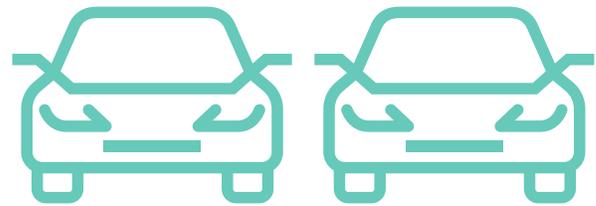
Gwinnett lacks major public transit outside of its bus system, requiring most residents to own and use their car for travel to work, activities, and key resources and amenities. The unsuccessful transit referenda in recent years have delayed the prospect of connection to regional bus and rail networks even further. As such, most residents rely on automobiles for transportation: 74 percent of county residents commute to work by car, with an average commute time of 34 minutes. Nearly 66 percent of all county jobholders commute more than 10

miles to work. And, walking to work rates have decreased by 22 percent since 2016. More detailed transportation data and information is provided in Chapter 6, Transportation.

Enhanced connectivity would significantly benefit potential new residents seeking proximity to amenities, housing, and work. The Daily Community approach aims to make it easier for Gwinnett County residents to access essential resources and services within a reasonable distance of their home. This would mark a distinct change from how Gwinnett has developed over the past several decades.

# 74%

of county residents  
commute by car



with an average  
commute time of

# 34

MINUTES



## ARTS, CULTURE, & THE OUTDOORS

Gwinnett's increasing demographic diversity has led to an increased cultural richness. The breadth of international cuisines, houses of worship, and languages on various forms of signage across the county is impossible to miss. This melting pot of religions, cultures, and identities has pushed the county towards a more vibrant arts and culture scene, exemplified by Artworks Gwinnett's recent endeavor to create the county's first Arts and Culture Plan. Specific installations and activations, the presence of public art, and cultural events and festivals may all help drive a new form of resident and tourist experience in the county. More detailed information on these subjects is provided in the Community Resources Element of this 2045 Unified Plan.

Similarly to the niche economies of arts, culture, and tourism, Gwinnett County continues to invest in the outdoor recreation economy. The County's intentionality in building out new parks, greenspaces, and greenways represents a commitment to public health, active lifestyles, and connectivity across geographies. However, the County must continue to preserve these spaces and ensure they connect to each other, allowing individuals to maneuver across the county through a variety of natural areas and trails.

## CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In recent years, Gwinnett has taken on complex development and redevelopment projects to catalyze economic development, improve the built environment, and create opportunities for homeownership and socioeconomic mobility. Efforts such as Exchange @ Gwinnett, the Gas South District, and the Gwinnett Place Mall redevelopment aim to make use of previously

underutilized assets, bringing higher intensity, mixed use concepts to the County through the combination of apartments, workspaces, recreation spaces, amenities, and activities for leisure. Though at different phases of the development process, each development has experienced its challenges, namely in attracting the types of development proposals that meet the community's vision.

To catalyze job growth and commercial opportunity, Gwinnett has intentionally invested in and attracted innovation assets to begin growing the share of entrepreneurial success stories, research and development projects, and higher wage, knowledge economy jobs for residents to pursue. County owned assets such as the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center allow for the County to directly support existing and potential entrepreneurs with technical support. The newly operating Water Tower represents an opportunity for the County to connect a niche form of research and innovation into an economic opportunity for residents and their communities. Curiosity Labs has grown into a regional case study for physical lab space that drives entrepreneurship and technology development.

Rowen presents the largest opportunity of this pool of projects and investments. The project aims to create 18,500 jobs by 2035 and up to 100,000 jobs at full buildout, adding billions to the regional economy. Continuing to monitor and evaluate the progress of these and other projects, and ensuring that they continue to align with the County's economic development objectives, will be key in the years to come.

## PREVIOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

The County's two most recent economic development planning efforts, Partnership Gwinnett 4.0 (2021) and the Economic Development Element of the 2040 Unified Plan (2019), serve as a baseline for new economic strategies and goals. These are summarized below.

PLAN	THEME	OVERVIEW
Partnership Gwinnett 4.0	Business Development	Strategies for business development include expanded marketing materials for target industries and businesses; establishing an entrepreneur council to connect emerging and existing founders to experienced members of the business community; supporting new technology centers; and utilizing incentives to align with community development goals.
	Talent Development	Talent development tactics include establishing a council to ensure alignment between postsecondary offerings and business needs; strengthening workforce development initiatives; and launching a new talent attraction and retention campaign.
	Community Development	Community development actions include providing continued assistance to countywide economic development projects and stakeholders; building a new attraction campaign targeting external developers; and better understanding business needs via an annual survey.
Gwinnett County 2040 Unified Plan	Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health	Key economic development goals include promoting mixed use development alongside major corridors; positioning University Parkway as the County's Innovation District; utilizing various financial sources for new infrastructure improvements; and encouraging the revitalization of existing retail centers.
	Foster Redevelopment	To foster redevelopment, Gwinnett County aims to implement new pro-development incentives and bonuses; promote density in specific areas; utilize Tax Allocation Districts for development finance; and promote shared infrastructure and new corner stores.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

<p><b>Gwinnett County Planning and Development</b></p>	<p>Gwinnett’s Department of Planning and Development manages economic development activities within Gwinnett through its staff of subject matter experts and practitioners. The Economic Development Division is dedicated to ensuring the financial prosperity of the County, its businesses, and its residents. This effort includes effectively managing tax incentives and abatements, overseeing Tax Allocation Districts to encourage targeted development, operating the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center to foster entrepreneurship and innovation, and helping to plan and execute significant projects such as the Gwinnett Place Mall Equitable Redevelopment Plan. By fulfilling these responsibilities, the team ensures a favorable environment for economic development and growth within Gwinnett.</p>
<p><b>Partnership Gwinnett</b></p>	<p>Partnership Gwinnett plays a pivotal role in fostering economic prosperity in Gwinnett County. Their efforts are focused on attracting, expanding, and retaining quality businesses, aligning and developing diverse talent, and contributing to the exceptional quality of life in the county. As a public private initiative, Partnership Gwinnett has made significant contributions to the local economy, resulting in the creation of over 32,000 new jobs and an impressive \$3.7 billion in capital investment since 2007. Partnership Gwinnett oversees the attraction, retention, and growth of Gwinnett’s target industries, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and Technology Solutions</li> <li>• Health Sciences and Services</li> <li>• Professional and Corporate Services</li> <li>• Supply Chain Management</li> <li>• Advanced Manufacturing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce</b></p>	<p>The Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce is a major economic development player in the county. Working closely with Partnership Gwinnett, the Chamber is a champion for businesses of all sizes and promotes a business friendly environment through events, programs, and policy advocacy.</p>
<p><b>Community Improvement Districts</b></p>	<p>The five CIDs in Gwinnett—Gateway 85, Gwinnett Place, Sugarloaf, Evermore, and Lilburn—are significant organizations in the County’s development. They are the equivalent of homeowners associations for businesses, collecting fees and investing in their area’s safety, mobility, and aesthetics.</p>
<p><b>Rowen Foundation</b></p>	<p>Sparked by the county but now an independent, nonprofit organization, the Rowen Foundation is the keeper of the planning vision of the Rowen site. It is responsible for the implementation of this large scale, long term development that will fundamentally change the course of development in eastern Gwinnett County.</p>

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RESIDENTS

Conversations with residents about economic development followed three general themes:

- 1 how to attract high-paying job opportunities
- 2 how to attract and support more retail establishments
- 3 how to support and train young, diverse entrepreneurs

Through survey questions and specific activities at the Daily Community Cafes, residents were offered several choices for which businesses, industries, and types of retail they considered appropriate for their community. Other engagements also sought to educate residents on how new housing can support the growth of high quality retail and other industry sectors.

The preferences below summarize feedback the project team received, but do not capture all the nuances of that feedback which the Daily Community framework can accommodate. For a full summary of engagement, see Appendix C.

### COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bring more small, local businesses to Gwinnett communities and develop programs to support them

Attract and accommodate more high paying job opportunities

Create more shopping, retail, and entertainment options, particularly within commercial areas close to where residents live

Support Gwinnett's highly educated population through innovative workforce opportunities

Invest in other forms of transportation; traffic is often cited as a reason businesses do not want to locate in Gwinnett

*Pictured: Gwinnett's Gas South Convention Center and Arena  
Image credit: Gwinnett County Communications*

# Needs & Opportunities

In the following section, the review of previous studies, analysis of data and trends, and engagement with key stakeholders and decisionmakers in Gwinnett County are synthesized to showcase the high priority economic development needs and opportunities in the county.

## NEEDS

Gwinnett County faces several challenges to future prosperity and socioeconomic mobility. Key issues include:

### 1 HIGHER WAGE JOBS FOR EDUCATED POPULATIONS

The majority of Gwinnett's residents, specifically individuals with higher education levels, leave the county for work. This is representative of a metro effect: people live in the county for its amenities and community, but consistently go to more urbanized parts of the region for work and other experiences. As expectations surrounding in person work change alongside the county's commercial profile and built environment, Gwinnett must intentionally attract higher wage jobs for educated individuals that enable people to live and work in the county. These jobs should not come at the expense of existing essential industries and workers, whose jobs are held by both local residents and commuters from other nearby counties. Rather, new jobs can add to Gwinnett's economy and retain more people in the county on a daily basis.

### 2 RETENTION OF YOUNGER, EDUCATED TALENT

Gwinnett struggles to retain its newly educated talent in local jobs, with young professionals only making up 25 percent of the county population. While the education rate of local residents is high, most of them are leaving the county for work daily. Gwinnett must intentionally retain young talent to live and work in the county to sustain population and economic growth.

### 3 REALIGNMENT ON TARGET INDUSTRIES

As exhibited in Gwinnett's shift share analysis, the County can realign its target industries to better reflect existing growth trends. The Information and Technology Solutions sector has seen significant retraction in recent years, decreasing in employment by 16 percent between 2013-2023. Analyzing new potential target industries could help Gwinnett's economic developers have more success in attracting jobs for locals to work in, specifically those with higher wage levels.

#### 4 THOUGHTFUL REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING ASSETS

There is a need for purposeful redevelopment in Gwinnett County that brings amenities closer to communities, improves infrastructure, provides housing options, and reimagines existing spaces for community benefit. There is no silver bullet to ensure developments are perfect. Rather, a holistic approach is required to understand specific community needs, use cases, and feasibility surrounding site specific improvements. Additional information on this need is discussed in the Housing Element.

#### 5 STRONGER RACIAL EQUITY

Gwinnett County's lack of racial equity manifests itself in a variety of topics: income, education level, and homeownership rates are just a few categories where nonwhite individuals aren't participating equally in economic prosperity. Cultural and language barriers further complicate matters, as effective communication with the diverse population can be challenging for the government and public institutions. Addressing these racial equality disparities requires concerted efforts to promote equal access, as well as improved cultural competency and language support services.

#### 6 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

While Gwinnett's housing market remains relatively affordable compared to the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area, lower to middle income families are increasingly finding it challenging to afford homes in the county. To

address this issue, Gwinnett needs to prioritize the construction of affordable housing units to accommodate the existing population and meet future demand. Additional information on this need is discussed in the Housing Element.

#### 7 MORE ROBUST TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Public transit is consistently cited as a missing link between Gwinnett and increased prosperity in public opinion and planning efforts. Gwinnett has few public transit options outside its bus system, which currently runs 11 routes. Furthermore, ballot initiatives to expand transit into Gwinnett have been unsuccessful. Gwinnett residents' average commute to work is 34 minutes, exhibiting inefficiency in both getting around and leaving the county for work. This lack of connectivity to the community for work drives up commute times and leads people to spend their money elsewhere. Additional information on this need is discussed in the Transportation Element.

#### 8 RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES TO SCALE

Countywide figures for average business size mirror national averages, but suggest room for Gwinnett to improve and scale businesses into larger economic producers. Recent planning efforts suggest that small businesses in the county lack access to investment capital, a connected network of innovation assets, and incentives to gain a competitive advantage in their work. Investment into these resources can help Gwinnett's businesses continue to scale and employ local talent.

## 9 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

While Gwinnett's workforce is one of its greatest assets, further investment in improving talent and offering continuing education opportunities is crucial for keeping Gwinnett competitive in its target industries.

## 10 SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Gwinnett's residents exhibit a strong entrepreneurial spirit, leading to Gwinnett having a high rate of business births. The County has taken strides to provide support for entrepreneurs and small business owners, and should continue to strengthen that programming.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## 1 TAPPING INTO COUNTYWIDE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Gwinnett history is full of entrepreneurship. To this day, Gwinnett has a higher business birth rate than other parts of Georgia and the country, and the County is only just beginning to focus on business creation as a key form of economic development. County officials must continue to tap into this spirit of growth and success, leveraging the new Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, existing business development resources, and the range of diverse business establishments found in Gwinnett to incorporate resident owned businesses in new forms of redevelopment.

## 2 STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP

Gwinnett County Planning and Development, Partnership Gwinnett, the Chamber, and more localized efforts of the CIDs and the Rowen Foundation are critical in supporting Gwinnett's economic development future. However, these organizations are challenged to keep pace with the size and complexity of Gwinnett's economy

and development aspirations. Additional staff, capabilities, and potentially new organizations will be needed to implement the initiatives that will meet the County's goals.

## 3 LEVERAGING PROXIMITY TO COLLEGE GRADUATES

With proximity to 75,000 annual college graduates, Gwinnett has a potential labor shed that moves across the country and world upon finishing school. As Gwinnett's economy develops with new companies and jobs, there is a strong opportunity to capture more of these graduates, seeing an increase in county population, employment, and educational pedigree.

## 4 CONTINUING INVESTMENT INTO INNOVATION ASSETS

Gwinnett County is increasingly working to unite its innovation assets, mixing R&D with entrepreneurship in order to create jobs and build a robust innovation sector within the county. Assets include the Gwinnett Entrepreneurship Center, Curiosity Labs, Atlanta Tech Park, and 22 Tech Park. The Water Tower and Rowen R&D sites will add further capacity to the innovation

ecosystem, bringing more research expertise and creativity to the county.

## 5 EXPLORING REDEVELOPMENT AND RETROFITTING

As the County's supply of undeveloped land grows sparse, existing buildings and assets must be considered for redevelopment. The County has already begun to explore redevelopment opportunities through the Gwinnett Place Mall redevelopment and Stone Mountain Tennis Center. Gwinnett should ensure that key development sites meet various community needs, from housing to office space, entertainment areas to childcare facilities. Smaller scale redevelopment should focus on improving the sense of place in Gwinnett's Daily Communities, using urban design best practices and investing in facade improvements, the creation of new amenities, and updates to underutilized areas like parking lots, strip malls, and old warehouses.

## 6 INCREASING CONNECTIVITY AND WALKABILITY

Improving transit and transportation systems is one of Gwinnett County's largest priorities. These systems can take on numerous forms: rail, buses, urban trails, sidewalks, and bike paths all help incentivize public transit and micromobility. With the completion of a new Transit Development Plan, opportunities exist to develop other forms of local transit, generating connectivity and potentially shortening commute times to work and other amenities due to decreases in traffic.

## 7 LEVERAGING GEORGIA'S STRONG OUTDOOR ECONOMY

Gwinnett's 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan reflects the countywide desire for more connected, usable parks and protected land. The County managed parklands are strong, and there is an opportunity to build more connected greenways and park systems that protect Gwinnett's natural and cultural character. These investments can tie into Georgia's large outdoor economy sector to drive local amenities and connectivity.

## 8 INVESTING IN ARTS AND CULTURE

Local public private partnership ArtWorks Gwinnett has compiled a strategic cultural plan for Gwinnett to grow creative sectors, build more employment, and amplify the impacts of this industry. This coordinated strategy will help the County invest in specific arts and culture assets and organizations, create more equity in cultural access, and develop experiences that draw new residents and tourists to Gwinnett.

## 9 CULTIVATING A GLOBAL BRAND

As Gwinnett County's diversity has increased, so has its prominence for both population and business attraction. Gwinnett has an opportunity to become a more global, household name, as many areas adjacent to major cities—such as Arlington, Virginia and Fort Lauderdale, Florida—have accomplished. Developments such as Rowen can accelerate this branding effort, exposing Gwinnett to a broader international audience of potentially impactful economic players.

# Goals & Best Practices

Building on the needs and opportunities identified in the previous section, the following pages put forth three economic development goals for Gwinnett County. Alongside goals, case studies of best practices from similar or comparable communities around the country are shared to highlight what is possible in Gwinnett if these goals are pursued.

## **PROMOTE INVESTMENT AT THE DAILY COMMUNITY SCALE**

Gwinnett County's transition towards developing connected Daily Communities necessitates a shift away from traditional suburban forms of development in favor of new ones that can support a mix of activities and a strong sense of place. Compelling public spaces, distinctive architectural styles, and captivating artistic installations can attract businesses and residents, foster strong community identities, and promote a more connected and accessible lifestyle. Through policy and regulation, the County can influence, prioritize, and incentivize specific development types that better align with higher quality, connected communities.

However, Gwinnett County faces challenges in housing and transportation that need to be addressed. The county has a notable shortage of housing units, coupled with limited alternative transportation options. To modernize housing options and enhance connectivity, it is essential for the County to adopt an intentional approach through effective governance, strategic funding, and investment attraction. Addressing

these issues is critical as they directly impact economic development and future projections of population and job growth in the county. More in depth analysis and recommendations surrounding these issues can be found in this 2045 Unified Plan's other elements.

To invest in Daily Communities, two overarching best practices should be pursued when building out new economic development projects and initiatives:

### **1 INCENTIVIZE & FACILITATE UNIQUE, ATTRACTIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Encourage and explore development projects that support the Daily Community framework—investing in mixed use community centers surrounded by traditional neighborhoods—throughout the county. These developments should encourage housing next to goods and services, provide greater connectivity/walkability, and enhance residents' quality of life.

### **2 ACCOMMODATE GROWTH THROUGH HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE**

Ensure that housing options and transportation infrastructure align with the county's continued growth. This includes addressing the shortage of housing units and improving alternative transportation modes to reduce commute times and enhance accessibility.

## MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY:

### ARLINGTON MILL COMMUNITY CENTER - ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Arlington Mill Community Center, located in the historic Columbia Pike Corridor in Arlington County, Virginia, is an example of mixed use redevelopment that seeks to revitalize an existing commercial corridor with a history of underperformance. Built in 2013, the Community Center replaced a vacant big box grocery store that formerly occupied the site. It includes a fullsize gym designed for intergenerational customers, a multipurpose court, a game room, a two story garage, public access computers, and wireless access. Phoenix Bikes, a local nonprofit that offers youth educational programs in addition to a full service professional bike shop and retail store, also occupies space in the Community Center.

A key element of the Arlington Mill Community Center is the Arlington Mill Residences, located adjacent to the Community Center. The Residences include 122 studio and one to three bedroom apartments, all of which are 100% affordable at different income and assistance levels. These units are supplemented by five additional units throughout the building that house formerly homeless individuals and families.

Together, the Arlington Mill Community Center and Residences are located in proximity to Glencarlyn Park, the Four Mile Run Bike Trail, and retail amenities in the Columbia Pike Corridor, connecting residents and the larger community with recreation, health, and wellness opportunities. Gwinnett County can learn from Arlington Mill's commitment to strategic investment in social infrastructure, access to health and wellness resources and amenities, and affordable and accessible housing for vulnerable community residents.

*Source: Arlington Mill Community Center and Arlington Mill - APAH*



*Image Source: DCS Design*

## MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY: SOUTHERN VILLAGE - CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

Located on 312 acres south of downtown Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Southern Village is a master planned community that includes single family homes and apartments located within walking distance from an elementary school, movie theater, grocery store, modest office space, and other retail establishments. All of these resources surround a village green, which hosts regular community events and activities.

Built in the early to mid 1990s, the Southern Village development represents a New Urbanist design that prioritizes the creation of open space, access to transit, and pedestrian opportunities coupled with diverse, integrated commercial development.

The developer collaborated closely with the Town of Chapel Hill to pursue and navigate a conditional use zoning process for the village area. Development occurred one street at a time, allowing for careful consideration and review by both parties of the design elements that would make the neighborhood function seamlessly. The finished product abides by guidelines set out in the small area plan created for the area: a walkable, mixed use community with a cohesive street system.

Southern Village remains a highly sought after community that continues to see new development, including a hotel groundbreaking that occurred in tandem with the community's 20th anniversary in 2015.

*Source: Southern Village Chapel Hill, North Carolina and What we love about living in...Southern Village - Chapel Hill Magazine*



*Image Source: Southern Village*



## ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND TALENT

Despite its strategic location between Atlanta's prestigious higher education institutions and Athens' University of Georgia, along with its own colleges, Gwinnett County faces challenges in retaining a significant share of recent graduates. Many young graduates gravitate towards the vibrant job market and lifestyle amenities of the City of Atlanta. To establish Gwinnett as an appealing destination for young professionals, deliberate steps are needed to develop a pipeline of both residents and job opportunities that differentiate Gwinnett County from Atlanta.

Gwinnett County has proven to be competitive in attracting a diverse range of residents, but this has not necessarily been replicated in the County's ability to attract a breadth of job opportunities. The County must build a foundation that can support and encourage jobs for highly educated, highly skilled workers. As the County continues to embrace its international demographics, it has the potential to become a global destination for domestic and international businesses and residents. Gwinnett can cultivate a vibrant hub of culture, community, and possibility.

At the same time, it is also important to safeguard affordability and accessibility for Gwinnett's existing businesses as growth is pursued. Balancing these often competing priorities require policies and programs that support small businesses, provide access to commercial spaces at affordable prices, and protect underresourced entrepreneurs while also allowing for continued growth.

To distinguish Gwinnett County from the rest of the region and attract new businesses and talent, the following best practices should be pursued when building out new economic development projects and initiatives:



## ESTABLISH A THRIVING JOB MARKET

In tandem with Goal #1 (Promote Investment at the Daily Community Scale), Gwinnett should invest in a holistic economic development foundation that not only attracts young workers and regional graduates to reside in Gwinnett for its quality of life, but also provides a multitude of appropriate job opportunities for them to thrive professionally. This can be achieved by fostering the growth of target industries, supporting entrepreneurship, and collaborating with educational institutions to align curriculum with local workforce needs. Rowen stands as an example of how the County is actively working to diversify the job opportunities present in Gwinnett.



## AMPLIFY GWINNETT'S BRAND

Promote Gwinnett's commercial and residential brand to a broader national and international audience, capitalizing on the county's diversity and unique identity. Potential channels for marketing may include conferences, memberships in trade associations, outreach to multinational delegations, and consistent business trips to destinations with a potential business interest in Gwinnett. Highlighting Gwinnett's distinct attributes, such as its cultural richness, economic potential, and quality of life, will help differentiate Gwinnett from Atlanta and attract businesses, individuals, and further investment. This endeavor includes prioritizing elements of the built environment—including arts and culture and placemaking—in addition to traditional forms of physical branding and marketing campaigns.

### 3

## CONNECT BUSINESSES TO MARKET DEMAND AND DATA INSIGHTS

To support the growth and success of businesses in Gwinnett County, it is crucial to provide business owners with comprehensive data and insights about the local market and demographics. By offering transparency around information on consumer behavior, market trends, and demographic profiles, the County will catalyze business owners to make informed decisions about the types of new businesses that would thrive in the area. This data driven approach will enable entrepreneurs and existing businesses to better understand the needs and preferences of the local community, leading to the establishment of businesses that align with market demands.

### ATTRACTING AND RETAINING YOUNG, EDUCATED TALENT:

#### CHOOSE TOPEKA PROGRAM

The Choose Topeka initiative, spearheaded by the Greater Topeka Partnership in Kansas, is a robust economic incentive program designed to assist local businesses in attracting and retaining talented professionals. This program uses funds approved by the Joint Economic Development Organization of Topeka and Shawnee County (JEDO) to provide reimbursement to employers for the moving expenses incurred by newly hired individuals. Participating employers offer relocation incentives ranging from \$10,000 to \$15,000, depending on whether the individual rents or purchases a home in Topeka. Once the employee has established residency in Topeka for a minimum of one year, employers are eligible for reimbursement of half of the incurred moving expenses through the Choose Topeka program.

In 2021, the JEDO allocated a total of \$300,000 for reimbursement purposes, with approximately \$100,000 already committed to specific cases. The GTP anticipates that the remaining funds will be fully utilized, and there may be future considerations to seek additional funding from the JEDO board to sustain the program's success. The Choose Topeka initiative has effectively attracted individuals from diverse locations to Topeka, resulting in tangible economic growth and an enhanced reputation for the community. The program's positive outcomes serve as a testament to its efficacy in promoting talent retention and recruitment, establishing Topeka as a more appealing destination for professionals seeking new opportunities.

By implementing a similar program, Gwinnett can proactively incentivize skilled individuals to relocate to communities across the county, bolstering its workforce and fostering economic development. Local employers in Gwinnett County may consider participating in a relocation program to attract top talent and strengthen the county's overall competitiveness in attracting skilled professionals. Such initiatives can contribute to the growth and prosperity of the county, positioning it as an attractive destination for talented individuals looking to embark on new career journeys.

*Source: Choose Topeka, and The Topeka Capital-Journal*

## USING INCENTIVES TO CREATE HIGH WAGE, KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY JOBS: *BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA*

Broward County has successfully implemented a range of programs and initiatives through the Office of Economic and Small Business Development, in partnership with the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, to incentivize the creation of targeted, high wage jobs. Key incentives that Broward County offers include:

1. **Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund:** This program provides tax refunds on corporate income, sales, property taxes, and other taxes for companies that create high wage jobs in targeted industries. Eligible applicants can receive incentive tax refunds of up to \$6,000 per new job created. Gwinnett County can consider implementing a similar tax refund program to attract businesses in high wage sectors.
2. **Job Growth Incentive:** Broward County offers direct cash incentives to both new and existing businesses that create high skill/high wage jobs. Payments of up to \$2,000 per new job created are provided under this program. Gwinnett County could establish a comparable job growth incentive to encourage the creation of high wage positions within the county.
3. **High Impact Performance Incentive Grant:** This grant is designed for designated high impact sector businesses that create many new jobs and make substantial investments. It awards 50% of the eligible grant upon the commencement of operations. Gwinnett County could explore the implementation of a similar grant program to attract businesses that generate substantial job opportunities and investments.
4. **Capital Investment Tax Credit:** Broward County offers an annual credit against corporate income tax for up to 20 years to eligible projects in designated high impact sectors. To qualify, businesses must create a minimum of 100 jobs and invest at least \$25 million in eligible capital costs. Gwinnett County could consider introducing a comparable target industry tax credit program to incentivize large scale capital investments and job creation.

Adopting similar best practices from Broward County, Gwinnett County can establish its own tailored incentive programs, collaborate with economic development partners, seek funding opportunities, and actively promote the benefits of high wage job creation. These efforts can help attract businesses in targeted industries, retain and expand existing businesses, and ultimately drive economic growth and prosperity in Gwinnett County by attracting more desirable, higher wage jobs for residents to hold.

*Source: Broward County*

## **BUILDING A REPUTATION TO ATTRACT TALENT AND BUSINESSES: FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

Fairfax County in Virginia has successfully developed a comprehensive brand strategy that effectively showcases its strategic location near a major metropolitan area while highlighting its unique assets. This brand appeals to an international audience and gives local businesses a recognizable identity. The County leverages its proximity to Washington, D.C., utilizing slogans such as Connect with America to emphasize this advantage.

In the realm of tourism promotion, Visit Fairfax, Fairfax County's Destination Marketing Organization, funded by a portion of the Transient Occupancy tax, plays a crucial role. It supports event organizers by providing marketing materials that encourage visitors to explore the region's museums, historic sites, shopping destinations, and world class restaurants. Additionally, the County has implemented initiatives like Made in Fairfax to foster support for local businesses. This program specifically focuses on small scale production businesses and makers within the county, offering resources, networking opportunities, and marketing support to entrepreneurs interested in establishing or expanding such enterprises.

Gwinnett County can draw valuable insights from Fairfax County's case study by capitalizing on its proximity to Atlanta, creating a distinct brand identity, and supporting local businesses. By highlighting its advantageous location, implementing effective marketing campaigns, and providing resources for small businesses, Gwinnett County can enhance its appeal to businesses, tourists, and residents alike.

*Source: Visit Fairfax, and Made in Fairfax*



*Image Source: Fairfax County EDA*

## EQUIPPING BUSINESS OWNERS WITH KEY MARKET INSIGHTS: WAKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Wake County in North Carolina is committed to creating a supportive ecosystem for small business owners looking to grow and develop their entrepreneurial vision. Wake County is home to the Wake Tech Small Business Center, a state funded organization that is a part of Wake Technical Community College in Raleigh and the larger Small Business Center Network of North Carolina.

With the understanding that starting and building businesses requires in depth knowledge of market conditions and industry trends, the Wake Tech Small Business Center offers research support to its clients through the Western Wake Campus Library team. This encompasses free access to critical data including market analyses, competitor intelligence, demographic data and industry assessment. Wake Tech positions itself to enhance the understanding of small business owners looking to create jobs for Wake County, creating success within the local economy.

Gwinnett County can incorporate this model from Wake County by drawing upon its own educational institutions and entrepreneur support organizations to offer similar business data requests. Doing so will similarly position Gwinnett County to become a leader in small business development and economic success for the area.



*Image Source: Visit Raleigh*



## PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MOBILITY

Gwinnett County has recognized the importance of entrepreneurship and local small business growth as a fundamental aspect of its economy and identity. The establishment and success of the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center exemplifies this commitment, with the County investing in technical assistance, resource sharing, and flexible meeting spaces to support local business owners. Building upon this entrepreneurial momentum, Gwinnett can implement programs and initiatives to help businesses scale up and provide essential support to aspiring entrepreneurs through mentorship and professional services. A suite of programs can also specifically target underserved demographics and populations, working to grow economic equity throughout the county.

Meanwhile, workforce development in Gwinnett County involves various partner entities, including government, educational institutions, economic development groups, and regional centers. However, there is a need for a coordinated effort to ensure that Gwinnett residents have the skills to match the jobs in the county, and vice versa.

Additional best practices for promoting economic growth and mobility in Gwinnett include:

### 1 FOSTER A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Foster a culture of innovation and creativity by continuing to build out programs, funding opportunities, innovation hubs, and coworking spaces that bring together entrepreneurs, creatives, and professionals from different industries. These programs and spaces can serve as collaborative environments for idea exchange, accessing funding opportunities, networking, and resource sharing, nurturing the

growth of innovative businesses and fostering socioeconomic mobility.

### 2 DEVELOP TARGETED PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

Develop targeted programs to support underrepresented communities and individuals in starting and growing their own businesses. This can include initiatives that provide specialized training, mentorship, and access to capital for entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed and contribute to the county's economic growth.

### 3 CONNECT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO THE COUNTY'S SHIFTING ECONOMY

Connect workforce development to the county's shifting economy, ensuring existing county residents are upskilling into higher wage jobs. The county needs an entity specifically focusing on workforce development, working to connect residents with various levels of education and training to a wide variety of jobs and other economic opportunities.

By pursuing these goals and implementing creative strategies, Gwinnett County can strengthen its economy, promote economic mobility, and establish itself as a dynamic and inclusive community that attracts businesses and talent from diverse backgrounds.

## CATALYZING A SCALING INNOVATION ECONOMY: *NEWLAB, NEW YORK CITY*

Established in 2016, Newlab was created to address significant societal challenges by advancing and commercializing innovative technologies and businesses. With a track record of success, this organization has played a pivotal role in guiding over 200 member firms to secure more than \$2 billion in capital from approximately 260 venture capital companies. These efforts have resulted in successful exits valued at over \$1.5 billion and a total valuation exceeding \$5 billion. Today, Newlab is at the forefront of driving progress and adoption of technologies crucial for reducing global carbon emissions and improving societal outcomes.

Located in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, a historic shipbuilding site from World War I and II, Newlab received valuable support from the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) through a \$30 million grant as part of the NYCEDC's Made in NYC initiative, which fosters job creation and economic growth through innovation. Newlab boasts a membership of over 300 companies and institutions, ranging from startups to universities and government agencies. It serves as a shining example of how public private partnerships can effectively promote innovation and drive economic development. The impact of Newlab extends beyond the Brooklyn Navy Yard, benefiting both New York City and the wider innovation community.

Some key roles of Newlab include:

- Providing members with access to state of the art facilities, equipment, and resources necessary for their research and development endeavors.
- Facilitating connections between members and industry experts, mentors, and potential collaborators to foster knowledge sharing and cross-pollination of ideas.
- Encouraging collaboration among member firms to drive innovation and the development of groundbreaking solutions.
- Offering funding opportunities and comprehensive support for member projects, enabling them to reach their full potential and contribute to economic growth.
- Promoting the achievements and initiatives of its members to the public and potential partners, helping to forge valuable connections and opportunities.

The Newlab case study serves as an excellent guide for Gwinnett County, demonstrating how public private partnerships can fuel innovation and stimulate economic growth. By adopting a similar model on a smaller scale, Gwinnett County can establish its vibrant innovation ecosystem, support local businesses, create employment opportunities, and drive economic development. Furthermore, this approach can address the specific needs and challenges of the community, positioning Gwinnett County as a hub for innovation and a catalyst for positive change.

*Sources: Newlab, and NYCEDC*

## CONNECTING R&D TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

### *TRIANGLE UNIVERSITIES CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDIES*

Triangle Universities Center for Advanced Studies, Inc. (TUCASI) is a vital institution situated within the Research Triangle Park that serves as a crucial link between education and job opportunities. Established in 1975, TUCASI's primary mission is to facilitate nonprofit research and educational programs that utilize and enhance the intellectual and physical resources of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, and North Carolina State University at Raleigh.

At the heart of TUCASI's work is the cultivation of collaboration and innovation. The organization serves as a catalyst, forging partnerships between faculty members from the three universities and scientists within RTP. By creating an environment that fosters interdisciplinary cooperation, TUCASI acts as a central hub, bringing together various organizations dedicated to advancing research and education. Through its collaborative approach and emphasis on leveraging the intellectual assets of the universities and RTP, TUCASI plays a pivotal role in aligning education with job opportunities in the region. Noteworthy achievements include the establishment of the state's renowned biotechnology center, groundbreaking research in the humanities, and significant contributions to digital networking technologies.

Gwinnett County can draw valuable insights from the success of TUCASI and Research Triangle Park in bridging the gap between education and job opportunities. The development at Rowen has similar goals, and can look to TUCASI for lessons learned and potential application in Gwinnett.

*Source: Research Triangle Park (rti.org)*



*Image Source: TUCASI | Research Triangle Park (rtp.org) - Research Triangle Park*

## PROTECTING AGAINST COMMERCIAL GENTRIFICATION:

### BROOKHOLLOW, TEXAS

Just as gentrification can raise property values in a way that makes it unaffordable for residents to remain in an area, so too can gentrification lead to displacement for small business owners as the cost of renting or owning a storefront becomes untenable.

To combat commercial displacement and support small business owners, the City of DeSoto, Texas worked with a local developer to redevelop the longtime Brookhollow Shopping Center to better support the needs and interests of the predominantly Black suburb. The resulting space features Grow DeSoto, a small business incubator designed to foster new and developing businesses. The incubator serves as the anchor for the shopping center, with space for 60 businesses, including small retailers, service businesses, and microrestaurants. The development also holds space for outdoor food vendors. As of 2021, five years after the opening of the redeveloped Brookhollow Shopping Center, the space reported an occupancy rate of 90% despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Source: DeSoto Transforming Hardware Store into Entrepreneurial Haven » Dallas Innovates and Grow DeSoto: Lessons from a suburban business incubator – Ash + Lime*



*Image Source: DeSoto Transforming Hardware Store into Entrepreneurial Haven » Dallas Innovates*

# Implementation

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION**

To achieve these goals for economic development, a series of integrated implementation steps will need to be pursued by the County. These actions involve multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, community organizations, educational institutions, and private sector partners. Funding for the various programs and initiatives must be secured through a combination of county resources, grants, public private partnerships, and corporate sponsorships. The implementation timeline, found in the Community Work Program (page 417), spans a period of 20 years, with specific actions and milestones outlined for each goal and corresponding policy or program.



# 04



# HOUSING



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

Gwinnett County is currently facing a critical housing challenge characterized by a shortage of units—particularly those that meet the needs of middle to lower income individuals, workers, and families. To tackle this pressing issue, Gwinnett has established the Housing and Community Development Division, presenting a unique opportunity to invest in housing throughout the County and explore innovative concepts, policies, and partnerships. The early stages of this division are crucial for setting the direction of Gwinnett’s housing ecosystem and addressing the County’s growing housing needs.

This element aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the goals, best practices, programs, and case studies that can guide Gwinnett County’s housing development and governance efforts, meeting Daily Community needs. The element’s goals are organized into five main sections: Each section explores specific strategies, examples, and initiatives that have

- 1 Building Out Housing Governance
- 2 Streamlining Housing Development
- 3 Ensuring Housing Affordability
- 4 Maintaining Lifestyle Choices in Housing
- 5 Allocating Funding to Housing

proven successful in other jurisdictions, providing valuable insights that can inform Gwinnett’s housing strategy.

By leveraging the insights and examples presented in this chapter, Gwinnett County’s Housing and Community Development Division, alongside key partners, can chart a comprehensive and effective course of action towards Daily Community models.

# HOUSING GOALS

## 1 BUILD OUT HOUSING GOVERNANCE

Gwinnett County's newly established Housing and Community Development Division represents a significant commitment to prioritizing housing development, affordability, and governance. As the Division evolves, its early actions and decisions will be instrumental in shaping the county's housing landscape. Gwinnett County can learn from similar counties and engage with its residents to foster creative and impactful governance that drives the creation of new housing units.

## 2 STREAMLINE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

The County faces a pressing housing shortage, requiring approximately 8,500 new and replacement units annually to meet market demand. Gwinnett must adopt a countywide approach to streamline housing development to overcome this challenge. This entails implementing actions, policies, and programs that facilitate the efficient construction of high quality housing units catering to a range of income levels and diverse lifestyle needs.

## 3 ENSURE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The most significant housing challenge within Gwinnett County is the lack of affordable units for middle and lower income individuals, workers, and families. As the County seeks new housing development, it must prioritize affordability across multiple income levels. By implementing specific strategies that create and preserve affordable units based on Area Median Income, Gwinnett can support its growth potential, retain essential workers, and foster a diverse population throughout the county.

## 4 ADVOCATE FOR LIFESTYLE CHOICES IN HOUSING

Balancing housing priorities and land use decisions is crucial when developing new housing, especially with the Daily Communities framework in mind. The County must prioritize housing development to meet demand while preserving its communities' distinct lifestyles and preferences.

## 5 ALLOCATE FUNDING TO HOUSING

Housing development at scale necessitates new funding sources. Across Georgia and the nation, innovative funding mechanisms are being utilized to drive the creation of housing units at various price points. Gwinnett County must increase its housing investment by allocating adequate funding to address the countywide housing shortage—**it will not happen naturally within the market.** This endeavor begins with a collective agreement among influential stakeholders that the lack of housing development poses one of the most significant social and economic threats to the county's wellbeing.

# Existing Conditions

## HOUSING DATA

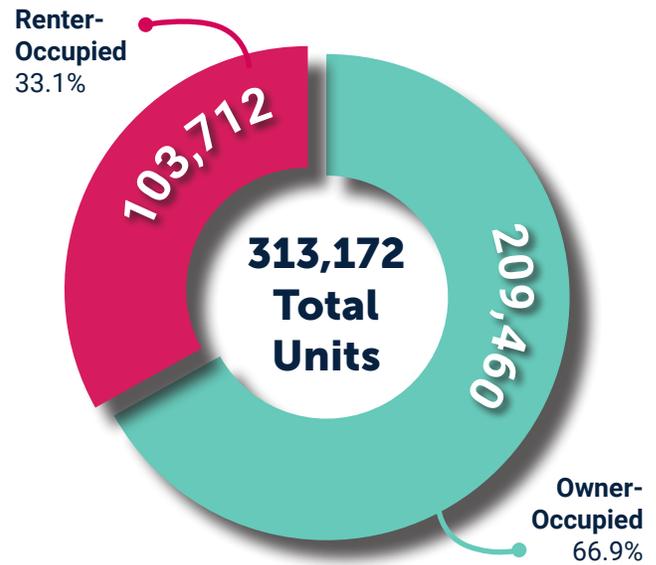
The housing landscape in Gwinnett County reflects a dynamic interplay between owner and renter occupied units, with significant changes in family composition and renter profiles. This introduction sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the housing dynamics in Gwinnett County, focusing on owner vs. renter ratios, cost burden among households, changes in family composition, and shifts in renter profiles.

### OWNER VS. RENTER

As of 2021, Gwinnett County had 326,458 housing units with 313,172 occupied housing units. The majority of housing in the County is owner occupied, accounting for 67 percent of all units, while renter occupied units comprise 33 percent (Figure 4-1). Between 2016 and 2021, the number of renter occupied units increased by 9,000 (10%) and owner occupied units increased by 25,000 (14%). Additionally, Gwinnett County added over 27,000 new housing units during this period, resulting in a 33 percent decline in vacancy rates (Figure 4-2). The demand for housing is high, with new units being occupied quickly after construction.

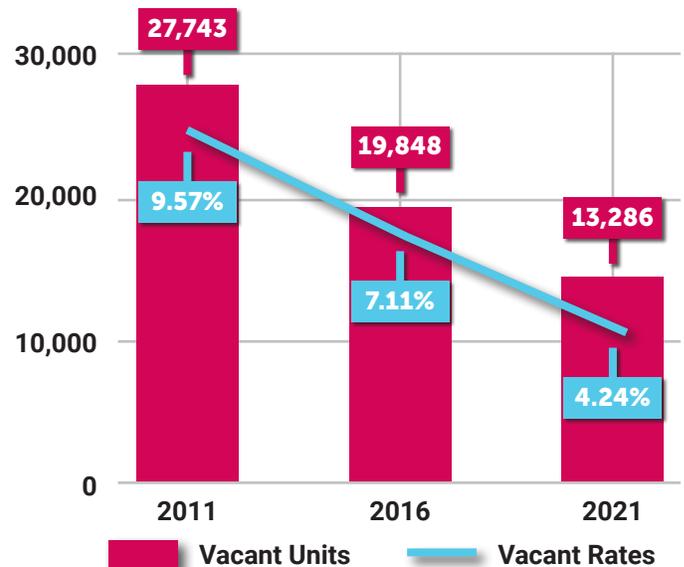
**FIGURE 4-1: HOME OWNERSHIP VS. RENTERSHIP**

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU ACS 2017-2021 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



**FIGURE 4-2: VACANT UNITS & VACANCY RATES**

SOURCE: CENSUS ACS 2017-2021 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



## COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

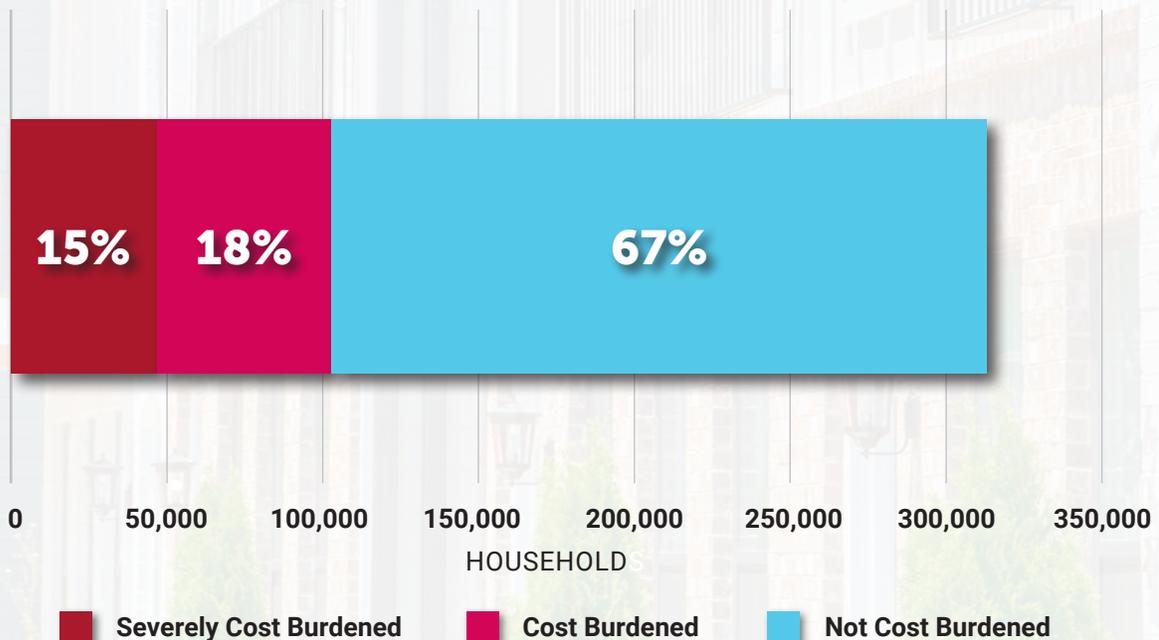
'Cost burden' refers to households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. When a household pays more than 50 percent of their income toward housing, they are considered severely cost burdened, which can put them at risk of homelessness.

In Gwinnett County, 56,000 households (18%) are classified as cost burdened, while 46,000 households (15%) are severely cost burdened. However, most households, 210,000 (67%), are not cost burdened or severely cost burdened (Figure 4-3).

Owners and renters face different levels of cost burden. 27 percent of homeowner households are cost burdened, in comparison to 56 percent of households who rent. Addressing cost burden is crucial to ensure housing affordability and stability for residents.

### FIGURE 4-3: COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU ACS 2017-2021 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



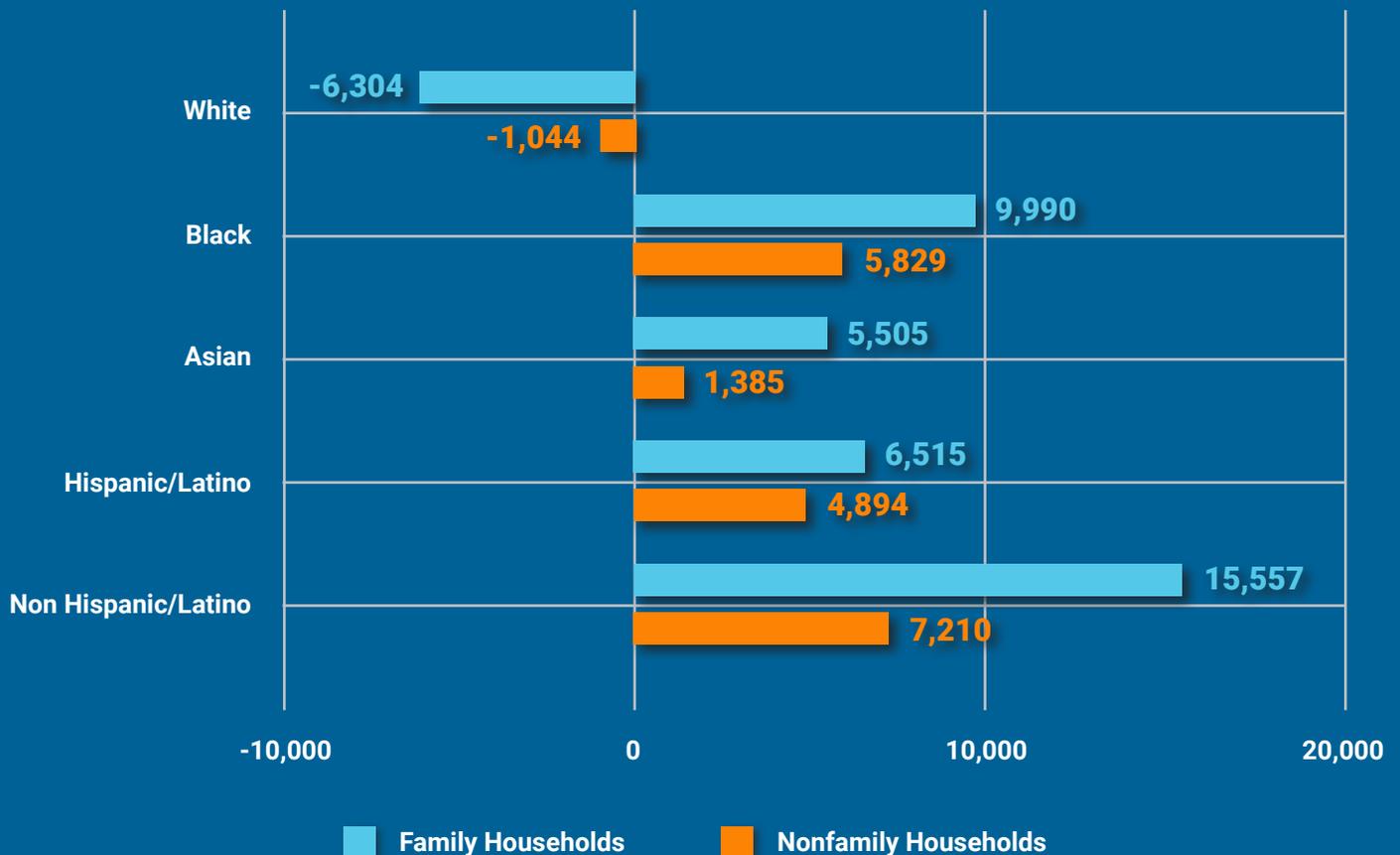
## CHANGES IN FAMILY COMPOSITION

The composition of families and households in Gwinnett County has changed since 2016. During this period, the County experienced an increase of over 34,000 new households, representing a growth of 12 percent. Family households, which include married couples and single parent households, grew by 22,000, a 10 percent increase, while nonfamily households—such as people living alone or with individuals who aren't relatives—rose by 12,000, an 18 percent increase (Figure 4-4).

Notably, there has been a significant increase in single male households (19%) compared to single female households. Additionally, the number of households headed by individuals aged 65 and older living alone has risen by 32 percent, particularly among renters (Figure 4-5). As Gwinnett County plans for the future, addressing the housing needs of its aging population will become increasingly important, including housing types that allow for aging in place.

**FIGURE 4-4: HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY RACE, 2016-2021**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU ACS 2017-2021 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



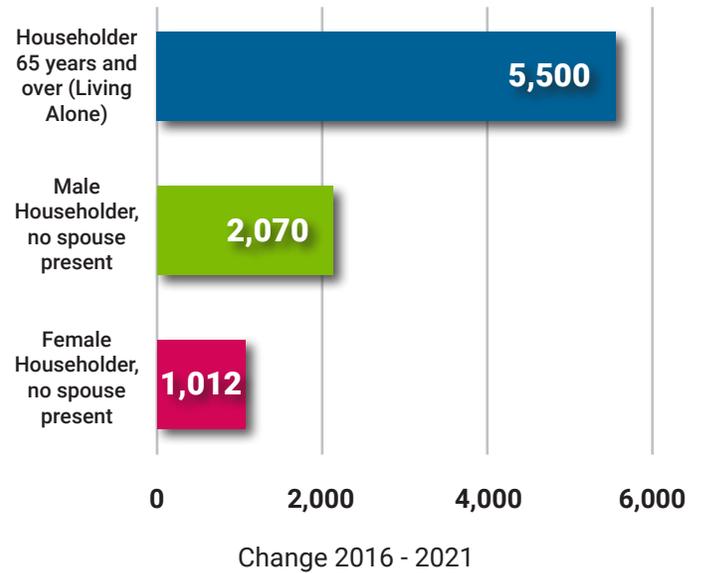
## CHANGES IN RENTER PROFILES

The profiles of renter households in Gwinnett County have also experienced shifts from 2016 to 2021. There has been a decrease of 700 (7%) younger married couples (aged 15 to 34) renting, indicating a shift in housing preferences among this demographic. In contrast, there has been an increase of 2,700 (11%) middle aged (35 to 64) and older adult (65+) households opting for rental properties. This trend suggests that renters in the county are generally getting older, with more individuals in these age groups choosing to rent. Additionally, there has been a notable increase in the number of single males and females aged 65 years and older who are renting, indicating a growing number of single older adults seeking rental housing compared to five years ago.

The number of renters living alone has been growing across all age categories, highlighting the increasing trend of individuals choosing to live independently. Middle aged renters (aged 35 to 64) form the largest group of renters living alone. Meanwhile, the number of renter households with children has dropped 5 percent in the past five years, indicating a decrease in the number of families with children choosing to rent. This shift in renter profiles underscores the need to consider the diverse housing needs of different age groups and household compositions in Gwinnett County's housing planning and development efforts.

## FIGURE 4-5: HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY TYPE

SOURCE: CENSUS ACS 2017-2020 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



The analysis of housing data in Gwinnett County reveals key insights into the housing landscape and highlights its residents' evolving needs and preferences. Most housing units are owner occupied, but the demand for rental housing has steadily increased. Efforts to address the cost burden among households, with 18 percent classified as cost burdened and 15 percent as severely cost burdened (Figure 4-3), are crucial to ensuring housing affordability and stability for residents. Additionally, changes in family composition, including the rise in nonfamily households and the increase in single male homes, stress the need for diverse housing options to accommodate the varying needs and preferences of the county's population.

# TRENDS DRIVING HOUSING DATA & DEMAND

The housing market in Gwinnett County is also influenced by a range of trends, both national and local, that shape housing data and demand. Understanding these trends is crucial for stakeholders involved in housing planning and development, as they significantly affect the availability, affordability, and suitability of housing options. This section highlights key trends driving the housing market both nationally and in Gwinnett, including shifts in housing preferences, household compositions, rental demand, and the growing interest in diverse housing options.

## NATIONAL TRENDS AFFECTING GWINNETT

<p><b>DECLINING MARRIAGE RATE</b></p>	<p>The declining marriage rate nationwide has contributed to a decrease in families and births. This trend could result in a stronger demand for smaller homes and housing choices other than traditional single family neighborhoods.</p>
<p><b>AGING NATIONAL POPULATION</b></p>	<p>Like many other regions in the nation, Gwinnett County's population is aging. The 65+ population in Gwinnett is projected to double in the next 20 years, accounting for a significant portion of the county's total population. This demographic shift reinforces the need and future demand for age friendly housing options.</p>
<p><b>ONGOING NATIONAL HOUSING SHORTAGE</b></p>	<p>Since the 2008 financial crisis, there has been a persistent housing shortage nationwide. The demand for housing has consistently outpaced the production of new units, resulting in a shortage of over 4 million units across the country. This shortage impacts housing affordability and availability, affecting rental and ownership markets.</p>
<p><b>LACKING ACCESS TO HOME FINANCE</b></p>	<p>Younger and lower income individuals face increasing challenges in saving for down payments and qualifying for mortgages. Limited wage growth, stricter lending standards, and rising home prices have made homeownership less accessible for many. This trend affects housing affordability and contributes to the growing demand for rental housing.</p>
<p><b>INCREASING INDIVIDUAL DEBT</b></p>	<p>Young people, on average, have experienced a rise in personal debt, largely attributed to the escalating costs of higher education. The burden of student loans and other debts can impact the ability to save for homeownership and influence housing choices.</p>
<p><b>GROWING DEMAND FOR RENTALS</b></p>	<p>The combination of housing affordability challenges, changing preferences, and a desire for flexibility has led to a growing demand for rental housing across the country. Many younger households favor the benefits of renting over homeownership, such as flexibility and reduced maintenance responsibilities. This trend also aligns with the findings of the 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study.</p>
<p><b>RISING PRICES DURING COVID PANDEMIC</b></p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated housing prices, driving them up even more than normal market forces. The pandemic's impact on the housing market has resulted in increased competition, limited inventory, and rising prices, posing additional challenges for prospective homebuyers and renters.</p>

## GWINNETT COUNTY SPECIFIC TRENDS

<p><b>MORE HOUSE-HOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN</b></p>	<p>Between 2011 and 2021, Gwinnett County experienced a 4 percent increase in households without children (55 to 59 percent). This demographic shift influences housing preferences and drives the demand for housing units that cater to the needs of individuals and couples without children.</p>
<p><b>MORE 1-2 PERSON HOUSE-HOLDS</b></p>	<p>The county has seen an incremental rise in 1-2 person households (49 to 51 percent). This trend reflects changing demographics and household compositions, with more individuals and smaller households seeking housing options that align with their needs and lifestyles.</p>
<p><b>MORE DEMAND FOR RENTAL HOMES</b></p>	<p>The inability of many individuals to afford homeownership has led to a growing demand for rental homes in Gwinnett County. 33 percent of households in Gwinnett are renters. Rental properties offer flexibility, convenience, and affordability, making them an attractive option for a significant portion of the population, particularly younger households.</p>
<p><b>MORE INTEREST IN WALKABLE, MIXED USE AREAS</b></p>	<p>Gwinnett County residents have shown increased interest in towns, mixed use areas, and urban walkable developments, while demand for larger, single family homes is declining. These urban style Daily Community areas offer a combination of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, providing a vibrant community environment and convenient access to amenities.</p>
<p><b>MORE DEMAND FOR MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING</b></p>	<p>The demand for Missing Middle housing (see page 215) is rising in Gwinnett County. Developing these housing types occurs less frequently due to their slim profit margins and the absence of subsidies available to affordable housing developers. They are often presented as good options for workforce housing, given their relatively compact size. As housing costs continue to outpace income growth, there is an urgent need for housing options that cater to individuals and families with moderate incomes.</p>
<p><b>LIMITED SUPPLY OF LAND FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	<p>Gwinnett has a relatively low amount of land available for greenfield development. Insufficient land is available to meet market demand while continuing the County's historical trend of developing single family housing units. Limited land availability requires increased density and redevelopment projects to increase the County's housing stock.</p>

## WHAT IS MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING?

The term missing middle housing refers to housing types that have become less common over time. They are denser than single family detached homes, but less dense than large apartment complexes. Duplexes, triplexes, above retail units, and small scale standalone multifamily buildings all fall under this umbrella term.

The reason these types are missing is because they are often not allowed by local land use and zoning policy. In recent years, there has been growing consensus that they fulfill an important niche in the housing market.

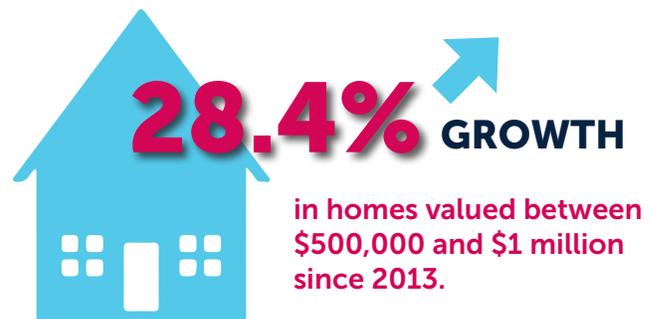


## BARRIERS TO ATTAINABLE HOUSING

In 2020, Gwinnett County conducted a countywide study to identify potential impediments to fair housing for existing and potential residents. The study revealed that compared to other areas, Gwinnett has relatively few barriers to fair housing. Notably, modern segregation in housing choices is relatively low, zoning policies are not overly restrictive, and housing production remains steady.

However, the age of Gwinnett's housing stock poses a concern for the county's future. Many homes in Gwinnett were built during the significant population boom between 1980 and 2010. As these homes age, they decrease in cost, but their quality diminishes. At the same time, newer homes are not being constructed for sale under \$200,000 or rent under \$1,250 per month, limiting new housing options to middle

and high income individuals and families. This disparity in the distribution of housing is evident in the notable 28.4 percent growth in homes valued between \$500,000 and \$1 million since 2013.



Although the barriers are worse in many other jurisdictions, Gwinnett County’s 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study did identify several impediments to fair housing. These include:

<b>Rising Land Costs</b>	Increasing land prices make it more challenging to develop affordable housing options.
<b>Rising Costs of Building Materials</b>	Escalating costs of construction materials contribute to the overall expense of housing development.
<b>Shortage of Trained Construction Workers</b>	The need for more skilled labor in the construction industry helps the timely completion of housing projects.
<b>Buyers Purchasing Homes as Investment Properties</b>	Some individuals purchase homes solely for investment purposes, reducing housing availability for primary residency.
<b>Cash Purchasers Competing Against Local Homebuyers Reliant on Mortgage Loans</b>	Cash buyers have a competitive advantage over local homebuyers who rely on mortgage loans, further limiting housing opportunities.
<b>Demand Exceeding Supply</b>	The high demand for housing surpasses the available supply, resulting in increased competition and higher prices.
<b>Lack of Housing Options</b>	The limited diversity in housing options, such as multifamily and townhome options, restricts the choices available to residents.

These impediments collectively affect housing affordability, availability, and diversity within Gwinnett County. They contribute to an imbalanced housing market favoring higher income individuals and restricting opportunities for lower and middle income residents. Addressing these challenges will require collaborative efforts from various stakeholders, including policymakers, developers, and community organizations. The goal of these efforts is to promote equitable and inclusive housing practices and ensure that Gwinnett County remains a place where diverse residents can afford to live.

# DEMAND FOR NEW HOUSING

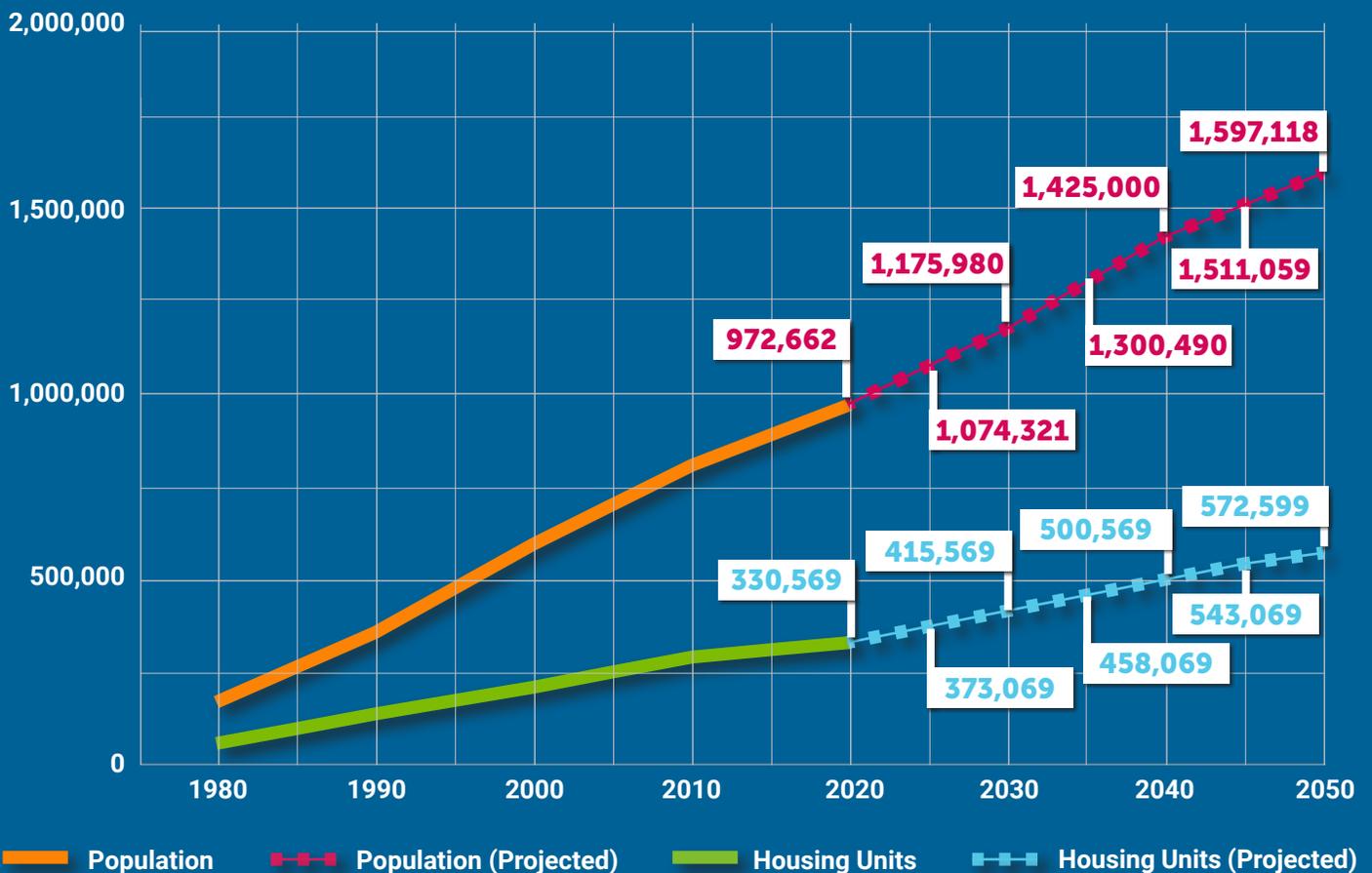
Many factors drive future housing unit demand – but the most important factors are population and people per unit.

- 1. Population Projections:** Gwinnett is projected to grow from 972,662 people in 2020 to a population of 1,511,059 people in 2045 .
- 2. People Per Unit:** From 1980 to 2020, the number of people in each housing unit in Gwinnett County ranged from 2.56 to 2.94 people per unit, with an average of 2.79 people per unit.

Assuming consistent population growth (as per the 2022 Housing Study) and an average of 2.79 people per housing unit (1980-2020 data), Gwinnett County’s **future housing demand is projected to rise from 330,569 in 2020 to 543,069 in 2045**. This indicates an **annual net increase of 8,500 housing units**. Based on the County’s demand forecast model, Gwinnett will have 1.51 million residents in 2045. Figure 4-6 demonstrates these projections overlapped with one another.

**FIGURE 4-6: GWINNETT COUNTY POPULATION AND HOUSING UNIT DEMAND**

SOURCE: FOURTH ECONOMY HOUSING MODEL



This population growth will require 8,500 new or replacement housing units per year, on average, over the next 20 years. For more information on how these housing types are divided by land use categories, see Chapter 2, Land Use.

The average fair share of housing is split between 6,135 units or 72 percent in unincorporated Gwinnett and 2,365 or 28 percent in incorporated areas within Gwinnett.

### FIGURE 4-7: NEW PERMITTED UNITS 1980-2021

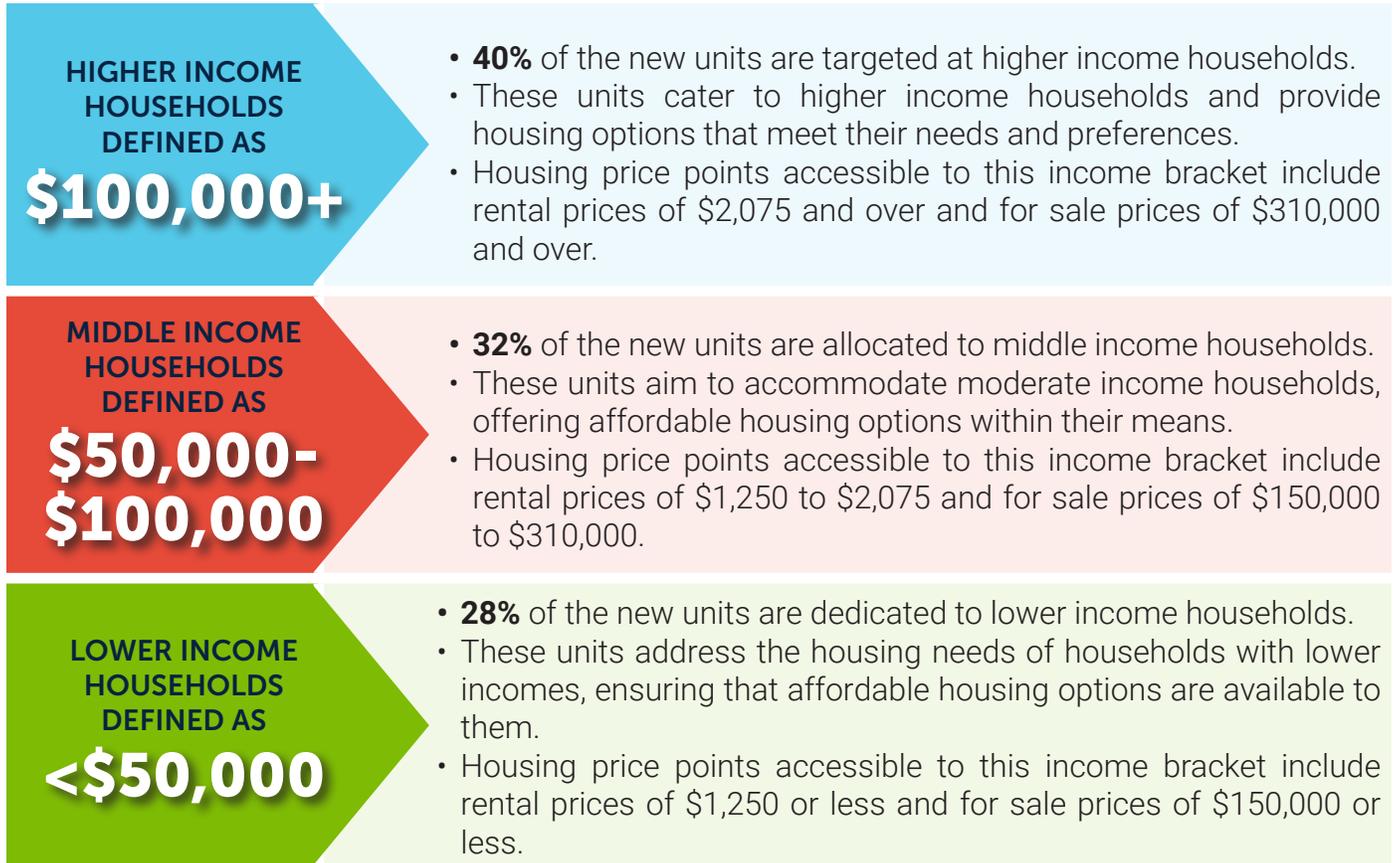
SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, SOCDS DATA

YEARS	NUMBER OF UNITS PERMITTED, ANNUAL AVERAGE	% SINGLE FAMILY UNITS	% MULTIFAMILY UNITS	# SINGLE FAMILY UNITS	# MULTIFAMILY UNITS
1980-2007	8,330	80.1%	19.9%	6,673	1,657
2010-2021	3,666	87.7%	12.3%	3,215	451



From 1980 to 2007, Gwinnett County permitted an average of 8,329 housing units per year (Figure 4-7). Following the collapse of the housing industry and the great recession, building permitting has slowed in the county. From 2010 to 2021, the county permitted an average of 3,666 units per year. Of note, **development patterns from 1980 to 2007 more closely align with projected housing demand.** Between 1980 and 2007, development saw a greater focus on constructing multifamily units, averaging over 1,200 additional units annually, compared to the development trends of 2010 to 2021. **This highlights the significance of multifamily construction in achieving higher overall housing unit production levels.**

The demand for these 8,500 new annual units is also analyzed based on the affordability of the units. The distribution of new units by affordability is as follows:



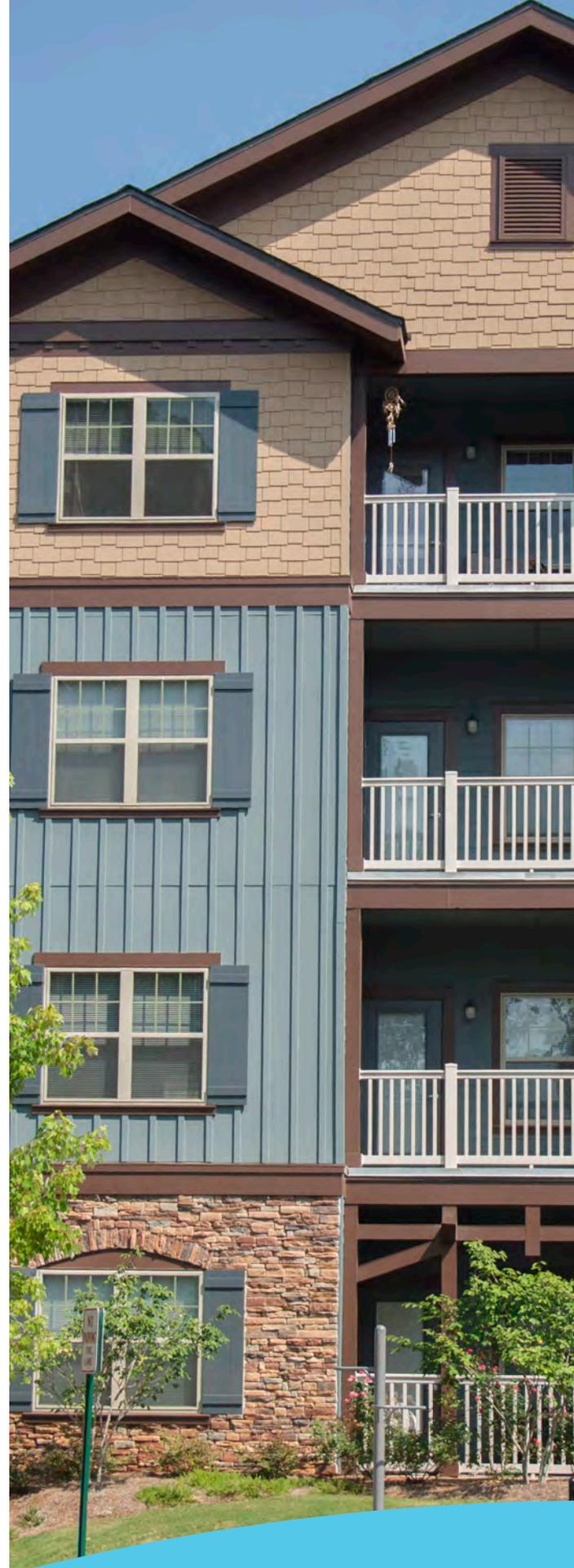
By understanding the breakdown of demand by new and replacement housing units, net new housing units, and affordability, Gwinnett County can effectively plan and allocate resources to meet the diverse housing needs of its residents. This data driven approach enables the county to promote housing affordability, support population growth, and create a balanced housing market for all income levels.

## CURRENT HOUSING PROJECTS

Current housing development projects in Gwinnett span efforts by County officials, private developers, and nonprofit actors to fund and construct a variety of housing types accessible at numerous price points. Historically, private developers have driven housing projects in Gwinnett, building out single family subdivisions and multifamily apartment complexes throughout the county. While the County has approved permits and design standards for these developments, their role in funding and developing housing themselves has remained relatively low until recently.

With the creation of the County's Housing and Community Development Division, Gwinnett has taken a more intentional stance towards catalyzing housing development. Much of the County's grant funding for housing is currently going to nonprofit developers, such as the Gwinnett Housing Corporation and the local Habitat for Humanity, to develop hundreds of new affordable units. The Division will likely also play a role in developing housing for several ongoing, large development and redevelopment projects, such as Gwinnett Place Mall, Stone Mountain Tennis Center, and Rowen. The blend of units found at these mixed use sites will likely range from privately developed and owned to publicly subsidized, with the County working to build out and manage affordable units. The Division is utilizing its 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study to guide initial insights and action items, including focuses on governance, making use of County owned land, seeking housing affordability, and ensuring all residents have access to housing stability.

In general, the County's current stance on housing development mirrors what the data suggests: significantly more affordable units are required at scale throughout Gwinnett County. The current capacity and subsidies for the development of these units are insufficient to meet demand. Furthermore, more housing units are needed, regardless of price point. Ideally, many of these units would bring density to key corridors and nodes, driving Daily Community concepts in the built environment they create.



# HOUSING LEADERSHIP

Gwinnett County has taken significant steps to prioritize housing options and opportunities by establishing its Housing and Community Development Division in 2022. This division, operating within the Department of Planning and Development, comprises ten employees and works with a budget of \$23 million, primarily sourced from federal funding. The County's FY23 General Fund contributed \$250,000 towards the creation of the division. One of the division's key responsibilities is administering funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through programs such as the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Community Development Block Grant, and the Emergency Solutions Grants Program.

In addition to the Housing and Community Development Division, Gwinnett County implements various programs to address housing needs within the community. These programs include:

## HOME OWNERSHIP INITIATIVES

Through the Gwinnett County Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program, the County aims to enhance affordable housing access for low income residents. The program provides income eligible homebuyers with a \$7,500, five year, zero percent deferred payment loan, assisting them in overcoming financial barriers and achieving their goal of homeownership.

## TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Gwinnett County offers financial assistance to residents who have outstanding rental arrears and require medium term rental support to prevent eviction and maintain stable housing. This program ensures that individuals and families facing financial challenges can sustain their housing and avoid experiencing homelessness.

## REDUCE SUBSTANDARD HOUSING PROGRAM

Gwinnett County provides income eligible homeowners with five-year deferred payment loans to make essential home repairs. This initiative aims to preserve existing affordable housing by addressing substandard conditions and ensuring the safety and livability of homes. The county promotes housing stability and quality of life by assisting homeowners in improving their properties.

## HOUSING RELIEF ACTIVITIES

Gwinnett County is committed to addressing homelessness and supporting vulnerable populations. In 2021, the County allocated \$426,754.58 towards homelessness reduction activities, providing housing support and financial assistance to homeless individuals or those at risk of homelessness. These initiatives focus on preventing and mitigating homelessness, offering pathways to stable housing for all residents.

## HOUSING DEVELOPERS

DEVELOPERS	OVERVIEW
<b>For Profit Developers</b>	<p>A variety of Atlanta and Southeastern region developers actively invest in projects based in Gwinnett County. From entire communities to small, mixed use redevelopments, key residential developers include: Alliance Residential Company, North American Properties, Gateway Ventures, and MidCity Real Estate Partners. Developers maintain diverse relationships with county and municipal leaders as well as government administrators, frequently engaging with different jurisdictions to finance and plan developments.</p>
<b>Nonprofit Developers</b>	<p>Gwinnett’s nonprofit developers help fill the County’s gap of affordable housing options, utilizing a variety of financing sources to develop affordable units for lower income demographics. Major developers in this space include the Gwinnett Housing Corporation, Habitat for Humanity, and the Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership. These nonprofits oversee the development of affordable housing, manage unit sales and rental agreements, and oversee programs related to down payment assistance. Due to the funding constraints of nonprofit status, these organizations are unable to develop affordable units at a large enough scale to meet countywide demand.</p>



## 2022 COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING STUDY

Gwinnett's 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study identified a range of goals and actions to facilitate the successful development of the County's housing stock. These strategies aim to address housing challenges, promote affordability, and ensure stability for Gwinnett's residents. Strategies include:

- 1 Establish Gwinnett County housing goals and priorities.
- 2 Support and develop organizational infrastructure.
- 3 Review current zoning and land use regulations for potential housing related amendments.
- 4 Leverage public land ownership and development priorities to promote affordable and workforce housing.
- 5 Expand housing affordability to improve access to housing for low and moderate income households.
- 6 Preserve and maintain Gwinnett's existing affordable and lower cost housing stock.
- 7 Sponsor and support housing stability

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RESIDENTS

Housing was a very popular topic throughout all community engagement activities. Several themes emerged:

- 1 Housing in Gwinnett has become very expensive and supply is limited
- 2 New housing should be accessible by transit service
- 3 New, large scale housing projects should be focused in areas already disturbed by development

Through survey questions and specific activities at the Daily Community Cafes, residents were asked to select which types of housing they considered appropriate for their community. Another workshop activity asked residents for help selecting areas of their Daily Community where new housing of various types could go. Though housing can be a challenging subject, residents overall embraced the Daily Community as a model for how the County—and their communities—can welcome new neighbors.

For a full summary of engagement, see Appendix C.

### COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: HOUSING

Invest in new housing types that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods

Concentrate density around existing commercial or retail centers

Provide a clear path for lower income households to attain housing

As much as possible, locate affordable housing close to job centers

Provide a greater variety of housing for different needs, particularly for young people looking for their first home

Provide options for seniors wanting to age in place

Make it easier to build missing middle housing types

# Needs & Opportunities

In the following section, the review of previous studies, analysis of data and trends, and engagement with key stakeholders and decision makers in Gwinnett County are synthesized to showcase the high priority housing needs and opportunities in the County. The themes discussed here inform goals, best practices, and implementation actions discussed in the following sections.

## NEEDS

### 1 MORE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Analysis suggests that Gwinnett County faces an annual shortage of around 4,834 units. This annual shortage is calculated as the difference between the projected housing demand (8,500 new units) and current production volume (an average of 3,666 units permitted annually from 2010 to 2021). This housing shortage inhibits population growth, business attraction, and other economic development by raising housing prices and failing to accommodate new residents. A higher volume of housing development is needed to meet economic goals and countywide growth potential.

### 2 LARGER SUPPLY OF LOWER INCOME HOUSING

According to the 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study, only 2 percent of demand per annum is met at a price range attainable to the county's lower income residents, defined as <\$50,000. The current lack of options for low income residents prevents many workers from living

in the county, causing individuals and families to move elsewhere, or creating homelessness. Specifically, many lower income residents are essential workers that the County relies on, such as teachers, safety officials, waiters and waitresses, and retail workers.

### 3 INCREASE IN MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING OPTIONS

Gwinnett County needs new housing units meant for middle income individuals and families to meet the demand created by essential workers, entry to midlevel employees, and immigrants from new countries looking to live and work in the county. These alternative housing types, such as duplexes, garden apartments, or townhomes, help support a live-work economy where individuals of a variety of means and income levels can comfortably hold jobs and reside in the area. Allowing for greater options that offer new choices depending on residents' needs can also help ease the burden of rising home prices seen across the county.

#### 4 HIGHER VOLUME OF MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RIGHT PLACES

As Gwinnett grew into a populous county in the past 50 years, single family homes have become the primary housing type. Individuals and families who work in Atlanta but desire more space and unique amenities have been drawn to Gwinnett’s suburban lifestyle. Yet, this reliance on single family development has brought a housing shortage to the county, and continuing this development behavior will cause large challenges in Gwinnett’s ability to attract the population.

#### 5 INCREASED SUPPORT FOR NONPROFIT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Gwinnett only has three prominent nonprofit housing developers. While these groups succeed at developing affordable housing at scales attainable to their organizations, their combined efforts cannot make a significant dent in Gwinnett’s housing gap. This reality only exacerbates the county’s housing shortage.

#### 6 MORE FORMALIZED HOUSING GOVERNANCE INFRASTRUCTURE

While the creation of Gwinnett’s new Housing and Community Development Division is a step in the right direction, the County is still far behind numerous other counties in Georgia and across the country that have long invested in and administered housing programs at the government level. Additions are needed to Gwinnett’s housing governance infrastructure

to ensure community opinions are heard, grants achieve a proper impact, and the County’s broader vision for housing is clear and achievable.

#### 7 EDUCATION FOR HOUSING DEVELOPERS

Gwinnett lacks formal training and educational opportunities for both new and existing housing developers. Many areas across the country require developers to participate in community specific training, ensuring all builders understand hyper specific guidelines, financial considerations, and countywide priorities. These educational efforts often include specific training on affordable housing projects. Education for new housing developers also provides an opportunity to support entrepreneurs; many developers and real estate agents are individuals hoping to grow the local economy and support Gwinnett.

#### 8 VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES

As preferences for new housing change, orienting neighborhoods around the idea of the Daily Community provides opportunities to encourage denser, apartment and condominium style developments and communities. Some residents want gated communities, others want farmland, and younger residents tend to seek density. Gwinnett can meet all these priorities by being intentional, working to understand community preferences, and building policies and programs to support specific, localized strategies.

## 9 INCREASED HOUSING FOR SENIORS

As Gwinnett County's average age increases, the amount of residents looking to age in place will only grow. The County's reliance on single family is a positive for younger families within their prime working ages, but could represent a challenge for an aging population. Elderly residents require varying levels of physical assistance and accommodating facilities and infrastructure. Existing assets adequately support the county's senior population, but this new wave of elderly individuals will require additional units and infrastructure and consideration in future redevelopment opportunities.

## 10 INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR INFILL/ REDEVELOPMENT

As the amount of undeveloped land dwindles, the County must look for more creative and innovative solutions to develop housing units and accommodate population growth. This

may involve exploring denser housing types and new models for development, including mixed use buildings, adaptive reuse of nonresidential buildings, and revitalizing underutilized spaces to optimize land usage and create a healthier, feasible housing development ecosystem while considering community desires and standards.

## 11 INCREASED FUNDING FOR MIXED INCOME AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Currently, Gwinnett's funding for housing development does not meet the scale necessary to make a significant impact against the existing housing shortage. Grant funding supports affordable housing developments and subsidies, and the county will involve itself with a variety of mixed use developments with housing components in the coming years. However, to catalyze development at scale, new funding sources are required to drive a multitude of developments that can help the County meet its growth potential.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## 1 CAPITALIZING ON DEMAND FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Gwinnett County has a clear and identified demand for continued population growth, creating a need for additional housing development to accommodate the influx of new residents. By strategically addressing this demand, Gwinnett County has the potential to grow by nearly 50 percent over the next 20 years, fostering a thriving community and unlocking new opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.

## 2 CATALYZING PROJECTS FROM REGIONAL HOUSING DEVELOPERS

According to housing experts within the County, housing developers have a strong appetite to invest in countywide projects, including a diverse range of housing options and price points. This robust interest from developers signifies a promising and vibrant county poised for population growth and abundant opportunities in the years ahead.

### 3 REDUCING BARRIERS TO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

As Gwinnett attracts interest from housing developers, the County can streamline many of its processes to catalyze more efficient development. Gwinnett can look to its permitting process, building standards, and zoning code to make policy and administrative improvements to the processes that may serve as barriers to housing development. The County should also consider ideal criteria for redevelopment to help streamline proposals for redevelopment of existing structures into housing. While expediting these processes, the County should still ensure adequate time is put into vetting developments and ensuring individual projects meet countywide standards.

### 4 GROWING THE NEW HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Leveraging the establishment of Gwinnett's new Housing and Community Development Division in 2022, the County is now equipped with a dedicated entity to prioritize housing development initiatives, including addressing homelessness and expanding the housing stock. This Division represents a significant step in formalizing and specializing countywide governance to identify housing issues and implement effective solutions. Building upon the 2022 Comprehensive Housing Study, the Division has taken proactive measures based on the study's findings to drive positive change in the housing landscape.

### 5 INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN HOUSING GOVERNANCE

The Gwinnett County Housing and Community Development Division needs robust governance structures for consistent stakeholder and resident engagement. To enhance community involvement and ensure that priority issues and programs are effectively addressed, Gwinnett can learn from comparable agencies nationwide that embed committees, forums, and town halls into their operations. Stakeholders include private developers, landowners, public officials, and leadership from improvement districts, all of whom have varying experiences and levels of satisfaction with existing housing practices. By creating tailored community involvement, Gwinnett can provide opportunities for residents to actively contribute to housing development, affordable housing initiatives, and other key issues.

### 6 INCENTIVIZING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

As the Gwinnett County Housing and Community Development Division evolves, it presents an opportunity to implement innovative programs and funding initiatives that incentivize housing development. Previously, the County's limited focus on housing development as a government matter has been challenging. However, establishing this new Division brings a fresh perspective and the potential to explore impactful, cutting edge concepts for housing development and standards throughout Gwinnett. By embracing creative approaches, the Division can effectively address the county's housing needs and foster a thriving community.

7

**ENCOURAGING HIGH  
QUALITY HOUSING  
DEVELOPMENT**

With the potential for new and redeveloped units across the county, Gwinnett faces an opportunity to improve its building standards to attract quality units. Implementing new standards for energy efficiency, building materials, aesthetics, accessibility for seniors and disabled residents, and the installation of infrastructure such as sidewalks and art can enhance home quality and foster the creation of appealing Daily Community developments simultaneously.

8

**EMBEDDING  
AFFORDABILITY INTO  
FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

Gwinnett County officials can mandate affordability measures into all future housing developments through a variety of policies and programs. Governments across the country ensure affordability in new developments, often requiring a certain percentage of units to meet particular AMI levels. These affordability measures are frequently matched with gap financing for developers, subsidizing their financial loss in exchange for keeping units affordable.

9

**PRIORITIZING DENSITY  
AND DAILY COMMUNITY  
CONCEPTS**

National and local housing trends suggest an increased need for denser, amenity rich housing development. In prioritizing Daily Community frameworks, Gwinnett can create a higher volume of density, inspiring connectivity and access to amenities while decreasing the existing housing shortage.

10

**REDEVELOPING AND  
RETROFITTING EXISTING  
DEVELOPMENTS**

With Gwinnett County's emphasis on redevelopment rather than greenfield development, there is a significant opportunity to maximize the potential of existing buildings and land for both housing and economic prosperity. Considering ways to bring housing closer to services through the redevelopment and retrofitting of underutilized buildings and land promotes efficient land use and attracts more residents to the county, contributing to its longterm growth and development.

11

**TYING HOUSING TO  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

An increase in the volume of housing development represents an opportunity to invest in new forms of infrastructure that support housing units and healthy living. The development of new units on underutilized and undeveloped land can mean new sidewalks and thoroughfares, public spaces, and even public art for residents to enjoy. Necessary infrastructure like sewer and stormwater management systems can also see upgrades as new housing develops. This new infrastructure can help Gwinnett achieve much of the positive potential that growth provides.



# Goals & Best Practices

Gwinnett's future residential market and ecosystem must meet numerous requirements to succeed in adequately housing the current and future populations of the county. Although there is an annual target for the number of units the County must provide to meet demand, other factors must also be considered. New housing developments need to adhere to particular price points and building standards, balance lifestyle preferences of current residents, and align with existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the County needs to determine how to build out more structured governance over all these developments, as well as secure the funding required to lead a more deliberate, community driven expansion housing supply. The following goals provide a framework for the County pursuing stronger housing governance, development types, funding streams, and more.



## **BUILD OUT HOUSING GOVERNANCE**

Gwinnett's newly established Housing and Community Development Division presents an exciting opportunity to prioritize and invest in housing throughout Gwinnett County. With the ability to explore innovative concepts, collaborate with key stakeholders, and leverage underutilized assets, the Division can significantly increase the volume of housing units in Gwinnett. While the full impact of the Division is yet to be realized, these early stages will play a crucial role in shaping the direction of the County's housing ecosystem.

## **HOUSING GOVERNANCE GOALS**

- 1** Utilize best practices from other successful public agencies to enhance the capabilities and effectiveness of the Housing and Community Development Division.
- 2** Integrate community advisory boards and engagement processes into countywide housing strategy and governance.
- 3** Develop transparent governance structures and mechanisms that promote accountability, foster trust, and ensure equitable distribution of resources and benefits. This includes clearly defining roles, responsibilities, and decisionmaking processes within the Division and establishing ongoing evaluation and feedback mechanisms.
- 4** Forge strategic partnerships with local organizations, nonprofits, developers, and financial institutions to leverage their expertise, resources, and networks.
- 5** Leverage data and analytics to inform evidence-based decisionmaking. Invest in robust data systems to track housing trends, monitor the impact of policies, and measure progress toward housing goals.
- 6** Integrate housing goals and strategies with broader countywide goals, such as economic development, transportation, and environmental sustainability.

**7** Foster a constant learning and adaptation culture within the Housing and Community Development Division.

**8** Stay informed about emerging trends, research, and innovative practices in the field of housing to respond to evolving needs and challenges in the community proactively.

By pursuing these goals, Gwinnett County can strengthen its housing governance model, enabling the Division to address the county's housing needs effectively, enhance community engagement, and promote equitable and sustainable housing development.

## CASE STUDY:

### COMMUNITY HOUSING ADVISORY BOARDS – LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**Location:** Loudoun County, Virginia | **Timeline:** 2017 - present

Loudoun County, Virginia, recognizes the importance of public involvement in shaping housing policies and projects. The county hosts several housing advisory boards that engage stakeholders, government members, and active community members.

**Affordable Dwelling Unit Advisory Board (ADUAB):** ADUAB is part of the Affordable Dwelling Unit program, which aims to assist eligible low and moderate income households in accessing affordable housing units. The ADUAB advises the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors on implementing the ADU program, including the development of rules and regulations, standards for qualifying households, and the administration of the ADU Rental Program and ADU Purchase Program.

**Housing Advisory Board:** The board's primary objective is to provide recommendations on policy and program development related to affordable housing. The HAB mobilizes business and community support to develop and sustain workforce housing programs, ensuring the availability of housing options for the county's workforce. It also plays a crucial role in reviewing and recommending grant applications to secure funding options.

**Housing Choice Voucher Resident Advisory Board:** The RAB serves as a forum for facilitating communication between the Public Housing Agency and voucher program residents. The primary role of the RAB is to assist the PHA in developing the PHA Plan and providing recommendations for any significant amendment or modification to the plan.

Loudoun County's advisory boards exemplify an inclusive governance model that promotes transparency, comprehensive planning, and stakeholder involvement in county housing policies. Gwinnett County's Housing and Community Development Division can look to adopt or adapt this governance model to foster inclusive and comprehensive housing strategies for the benefit of residents.



## STREAMLINE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

The recently formed Housing and Community Development Division in Gwinnett County offers a promising chance to place housing at the forefront and allocate resources across the county. By delving into novel ideas, partnering with essential players, and making the most of underutilized resources, the Division can notably amplify the number of housing units in Gwinnett. While the complete effect of the Division remains to be seen, these initial phases will be pivotal in molding the trajectory of the county's housing landscape.

### HOUSING DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1 Increase the housing supply to accommodate projected population and economic growth in the coming decades.
- 2 Promote higher density development in strategic areas of the county, encouraging the construction of multifamily units to reduce reliance on single family housing.
- 3 Implement zoning and land use policies supporting mixed use development that allows for a blend of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces.
- 4 Expedite housing projects' permitting and approval processes to reduce barriers and facilitate timely construction, assuming desired criteria are met for individual developments.
- 5 Encourage public private partnerships to leverage resources and expertise for housing development.
- 6 Explore innovative housing solutions such as modular construction, micro units, missing middle housing types, and accessory dwelling units to maximize land use and provide diverse housing options.
- 7 Invest in infrastructure and transportation improvements that support housing developments and enhance connectivity within the county.
- 8 Collaborate with community stakeholders, developers, and housing experts to identify opportunities and address challenges in the housing market.
- 9 Monitor market trends and adjust housing development strategies to meet changing demands and preferences.
- 10 Ensure that housing developments align with sustainability principles, energy efficiency, and accessibility.

## CASE STUDY:

### MALL REDEVELOPMENT FOR NEW HOUSING, AMENITIES – ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

**Location:** Rockville, Maryland

**Timeline:** 2002 - 2007

**Development Type:** Mixed Use (Main Street Retail, Multifamily For Sale and Rental Housing, Library, Arts Center, Open Space, Structured Parking )

**Funding Mechanism:** City, County, State, Federal, private sources, and debt financing

**Cost:** \$320M

Rockville Town Square, situated in Rockville, Maryland, is an exciting urban mixed use development that serves as a vibrant focal point for Montgomery County. It has transformed a suburban area into a thriving center of activity by combining commercial and residential buildings with inviting public spaces and amenities. After the demolition of the Rockville Mall in 1995, the city engaged consultants and stakeholders to conduct extensive interviews, surveys, and public meetings to shape the vision outlined in the Rockville Town Center Master Plan of 2001. The realization of this vision required securing financial commitments from local, state, and federal entities to support downtown redevelopment.

The Rockville Town Square case study exemplifies how a thoughtfully designed mixed use development can create a thriving and cohesive community. By integrating commercial and residential properties with public amenities like the library and arts center, RTS enhances livability and accessibility, fostering a sense of belonging among its residents. The project highlights the significance of comprehensive community planning and collaboration, showcasing the positive outcomes that arise when public and private stakeholders align their efforts to achieve a shared vision, as exemplified through the master planning process. It could be used as a model for Gwinnett County in bringing together public and private partners for development, and harnessing opportunities for mixed use development in the central corridors of Daily Communities, as well as a model for existing initiatives, such as Gwinnett Place or Tennis Center, to follow as they continue advancing.

*Source: Rockville Town Square, ULI.*

*Image Source: Rockville Town Square – Visit Montgomery*



## ENSURE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The Housing and Community Development Division presents an opportunity to prioritize housing and distribute resources across the county. Through exploring innovative concepts, collaborating with key stakeholders, and leveraging underutilized resources, the Division could significantly increase the quantity of housing units in Gwinnett. Although the complete impact of the Division is yet to be realized, these initial stages are critical in shaping the county's housing environment.

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY GOALS

- 1 Develop new housing units while ensuring a significant portion is designated as affordable housing across different AMI bands.
- 2 Maintain a balanced mix of housing options that are suitable and affordable for all workers in Gwinnett County, including missing middle housing types for essential workers who play a critical role in the County's economy.
- 3 Collaborate with public and private stakeholders to explore innovative financing models and incentives that facilitate the creation and preservation of affordable housing.
- 4 Implement inclusionary zoning policies in targeted areas to require a percentage of affordable units within new developments, promoting economic diversity and accessibility.
- 5 Foster partnerships with nonprofit organizations and developers specializing in affordable housing to leverage their expertise and resources in addressing the affordability challenge.
- 6 Support programs that provide down payment assistance, rental subsidies, and other financial assistance to help lower income households access and maintain affordable housing.
- 7 Advocate for state and federal funding initiatives and grants that support affordable housing development and preservation efforts in Gwinnett County.
- 8 Review ordinance and incentive opportunities to prioritize a low barrier approach to the attainability of affordable housing.

## CASE STUDY:

### NEW AFFORDABLE AND MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT – DRAPER, UTAH

**Location:** Draper, Utah

**Timeline:** 2015 -2016

**Development Type:** Multifamily affordable housing

**Funding Mechanism:** Combination of public and private sources, including tax exempt bonds, low income housing tax credits, and private equity.

**Cost:** \$40M

Veranda, a garden style multifamily housing development in Draper, Utah, exemplifies effective urban planning strategies to address the pressing need for workforce housing. In the face of a nationwide decline in affordable housing options, Veranda specifically targets households earning 60 percent or less of the area's median income, providing rental rates 20-30 percent below the market average. This intentional housing model creates an inclusive urban community catering to single parents, single income families, early career professionals, and individuals on fixed incomes. The development comprises 239 units spread across 5.2 acres, resulting in a density of 46 dwelling units per acre.

One of the key aspects of Veranda's urban planning strategy was the emphasis on location. The site was carefully selected to ensure easy access to employment opportunities and public transportation, strategically positioned within a ten minute walk of the Draper commuter rail station. Proximity to major employment hubs was also taken into consideration. In terms of design, adherence to Salt Lake City's building regulations ensured that the workforce housing units met the same high standards as market rate and luxury developments. Sustainability was also a priority during the planning process, leading to the incorporation of energy efficient appliances, water efficient fixtures, and solar panels. These ecofriendly features reduced environmental impact and contributed to lower utility costs for Veranda's residents.

The Veranda case study can provide valuable insights for Gwinnett County on improving countywide workforce housing strategy. It illustrates how housing programs can be designed to serve specific population segments, such as single parents, single income families, and early career professionals, by offering rental rates below the market average. Veranda's success demonstrates that thoughtful urban planning can address the critical need for workforce housing, creating vibrant and sustainable communities. By considering location, design standards, accessibility, and sustainability practices, Veranda is a model for future developments seeking affordable and inclusive housing options for individuals and families in need.

*Sources: Workforce Housing Case Study: Veranda, Veranda Apartments*



## ADVOCATE FOR LIFESTYLE CHOICES IN HOUSING

As a suburban county with both urbanizing and rural geographies, Gwinnett faces the challenge of accommodating diverse community and neighborhood preferences. The limited availability of new land for development further constrains housing options in the county. However, Gwinnett can still make intentional decisions about housing types that align with different neighborhood character. By balancing housing priorities with the current and future built environment, Gwinnett can cater to the preferences of urban, suburban, and exurban residents, ensuring a range of lifestyle choices.

### LIFESTYLE CHOICES GOALS

- 1 Develop new housing in areas deemed suitable for development and redevelopment, such as underutilized parking lots, vacant parcels, repurposed commercial buildings, and areas with convenient access to transportation assets.
- 2 Preserve critical natural areas and the rural character of many of Gwinnett's communities while also balancing the need for new housing development.
- 3 Ensure that housing developments align with each neighborhood's existing infrastructure and amenities, enhancing the existing character of neighborhoods.
- 4 Encourage the development of housing options that cater to different demographic groups, including families, young professionals, seniors, and multigenerational households.
- 5 Ensure a housing stock with different combinations of elements such as size, type, number of bedrooms, layout, and adjacency to amenities.
- 6 Foster community engagement and collaboration in new housing development planning and design processes to ensure that the changing needs of residents are met into the future.

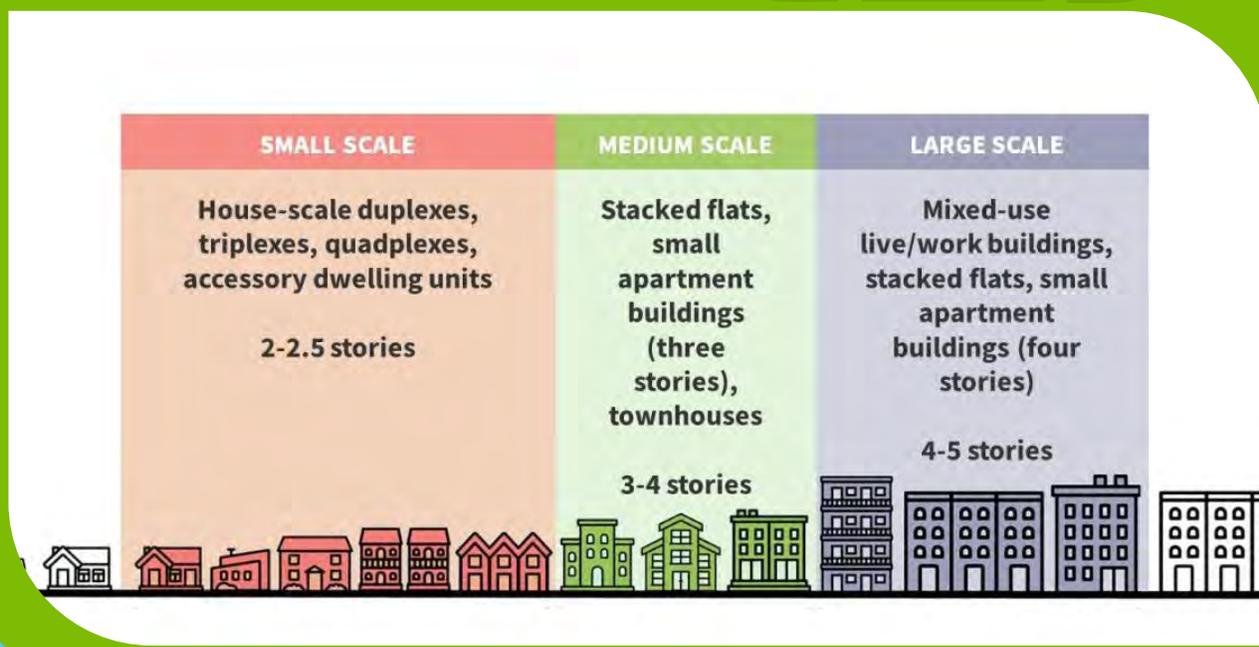
## CASE STUDY:

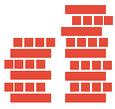
### PLANNING FOR NUMEROUS HOUSING OPTIONS – MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Facing a dire housing shortage a decade after the 2008 housing crisis, Montgomery County officials decided to take action towards creating more affordable, attainable housing typologies that can meet different community needs throughout the county. Beginning with a 2018 Missing Middle Housing Study, County officials identified the supply of homes, condominiums, townhomes, and other multifamily units for middle income residents as a glaring issue for sustained economic development and quality of life in the county. To better understand how different housing types might fit into unique existing areas, the county formalized different housing scales, ranging from small to large. Individual neighborhoods, thoroughfares, and municipalities gained the opportunity to clearly advocate and plan for the housing types that fit their desires and needs, using these scales as a reference point for potential developments. These scales have furthered their impact through inclusion in numerous countywide strategies since 2018: the county's 2050 General Plan, 2021 Attainable Housing Strategy, and numerous small area plans utilize this framework in aligning different scales with community preferences, land use realities, and actionable policies to catalyze new housing development. A similar planning exercise could help direct the actions of Gwinnett's Housing and Community Development Division in tackling its housing shortage as well.

Sources: *Attainable Housing Strategies, Missing Middle Housing in Montgomery County*

Image Source: *Attainable Housing Strategies – Montgomery County, Maryland Planning Department*





## ALLOCATE FUNDING TO HOUSING

New funding sources dedicated to specific projects and broader countywide priorities will be crucial for housing development to occur at scale in Gwinnett County. Communities throughout Georgia have demonstrated their ability to identify creative mechanisms for prioritizing housing funding by utilizing various sources, from federal grants to locally sourced dollars, to bring new housing units to the market. However, the first step in allocating more funding to housing is to recognize and prioritize housing as a key countywide issue. It requires alignment among politicians, funders, and residents on the significance of addressing the housing shortage and its challenges to the county's growth and wellbeing.

### HOUSING FUNDING GOALS

- 1 Identify and incorporate housing as a key countywide priority into strategic plans and policy frameworks.
- 2 Recognize the importance of housing in supporting economic development, community wellbeing, and social equity.

- 3 Increase investment in housing by utilizing existing County funding streams and exploring new capital sources.
- 4 Explore innovative financing models to attract investment in residential development.
- 5 Prioritize funding allocations towards projects that align with the County's housing goals and priorities.
- 6 Encourage collaboration among stakeholders, including government agencies, developers, nonprofits, and financial institutions, to pool resources and expertise.
- 7 Explore funding partnerships and collaboratives that would prioritize housing as a key priority.
- 8 Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of housing funding strategies and adjust them as needed.

## CASE STUDY:

### TAD FUNDING FOR HOUSING – INVEST ATLANTA, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

**Location:** Atlanta, Georgia

**Timeline:** 2020 - present

**Development Type:** Multifamily affordable housing

**Funding Mechanism:** TAD

**Cost:** \$3 million

Invest Atlanta, the economic development authority for the City of Atlanta, plays a crucial role in strengthening the city's economy and promoting its global competitiveness. Through various tools and initiatives, Invest Atlanta attracts businesses and investments to drive opportunities and prosperity for Atlanta's residents. One such tool is the Tax Allocation District grant, a financing incentive to support infrastructure improvements, economic development projects, and affordable housing initiatives. By diverting a portion of property taxes generated within a designated district to a special fund, TAD grants provide a unique source of financing that would not be otherwise available.

In 2021, Invest Atlanta's board approved over \$3 million in TAD grants to create 298 affordable housing units in Atlanta. This funding supported a mixed use development near Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard corridors, comprising 138 housing units with varying affordability rates and 10,000 sq ft of retail space. Additionally, a \$1 million grant was allocated to constructing a new senior housing development in Chosewood Park, providing 160 multifamily housing units with different income availability levels. Invest Atlanta effectively combines public resources with a dedicated financing source by utilizing TAD funding for affordable housing. This approach allows for targeted support in creating and preserving affordable housing and assisting specific demographic groups like seniors. Furthermore, TAD grants can directly benefit homeowners through initiatives such as down payment assistance and owner occupied rehabilitation.

Gwinnett County can leverage similar financing mechanisms, like TAD grants, to support affordable housing initiatives.

*Image Source: TAD Grants to Fund More Affordable Housing – Invest Atlanta*



## CASE STUDY:

### SPLOST FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING – ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA

**Location:** Athens-Clarke County, Georgia

**Timeline:** 2020 - present

**Development Type:** Multifamily affordable housing

**Funding Mechanism:** Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

**Cost:** \$44.5 million

In 2019, affordable housing hit the ballot in Athens-Clarke County via public referendum. The question: should the county allocate \$44.5 million in Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax funding towards the development of more affordable housing options in the county? With SPLOST funding traditionally spent on projects relevant to infrastructure, community assets, park development and maintenance, and capital improvements for the local airport, this affordable housing addition marked a shift in how county officials planned to utilize this stream of tax revenue. The referendum passed with over 78 percent of the votes in favor, thereby opening up a new funding avenue to support the following initiatives: the ownership of affordable housing; the construction of essential public infrastructure, including public roads, sidewalks, water lines, sewer lines, and stormwater facilities, to support these housing options; and the establishment of partnerships with both public and private affordable housing providers and investors. These partnerships aim to drive the development and redevelopment of affordable housing, which encompasses mixed income, mixed use developments or redevelopments. Such projects may include affordable or public multifamily rental units as well as opportunities for homeownership.

To date, Athens-Clarke County is one of the few Georgia counties to utilize SPLOST funding for tackling affordable housing issues. In Gwinnett, a county where the shortage of affordable housing has become increasingly prevalent in the past decade, no SPLOST funding is allocated to affordable housing, with the County instead choosing to focus on: Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Civic Center Expansion, Public Safety, Libraries, Senior Services, and Cities Share.

Athens-Clarke County's commitment to affordable housing development and redevelopment can serve as a model for Gwinnett to build off in the coming years. SPLOST funding will not be up for reapproval by the voting public for another 6 years; however, the funding stream presents a longterm opportunity for Gwinnett County Government to allocate funding to the development of multifamily, affordable housing products that provide more demographics and income brackets a chance to live and work in the county.

*Source: Athens-Clarke County Unified Government*



## HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION

Gwinnett's new Housing and Community Development Division can explore a variety of policies, programs, and decisions surrounding infrastructure to drive housing development, specifically targeting higher quality dense, affordable development that fits within the Daily Community framework. There are many potential approaches the County could take to cultivate a robust housing market that serves a variety of residents and provides various needs. Recommendations for how to carry the Division's momentum forward can be found in the Community Work Program (page 427).

# 05



# SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

The Sustainable Infrastructure Element emphasizes Gwinnett County's water infrastructure and natural resources. The County is a recognized leader in these areas among its peers and was among the first in Georgia to join the state's WaterFirst certification program in 2003. Since then, it has remained a leader in sustainability and water efficiency.

Through this Sustainable Infrastructure Element, the County seeks to build consensus around priorities for a sustainable system of both natural and built infrastructure. Specifically, this chapter addresses smart growth planning through an infrastructure and natural environment perspective, urbanization, stormwater, and resiliency and equity. The impacts of climate change are also a key component, as water resources are particularly susceptible to anticipated natural changes. The objective of the element is to identify policies and actions to put in place today to ensure that current and future generations of Gwinnett residents can enjoy its natural resources and continue to benefit from the County's award winning water services.

# SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOCUS AREAS

## 1 EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURE BASED ON SMART GROWTH

Expanding the wastewater system can unlock development or redevelopment potential of different parts of Gwinnett County; however, some areas of Gwinnett are more primed for sewer development than others. The County needs to be strategic in where it invests so that infrastructure is cost effective and natural resources are protected. Much of Gwinnett is developed, so large swaths of untouched green space are rare. To protect these areas that provide an abundance of ecosystem services, the County is encouraging infill and redevelopment in areas that are already well served by infrastructure. Future infrastructure investments that involve expansion into greenfield areas warrant a critical review to ensure a balance between smart growth and protection of ecosystem services.

## 2 CHALLENGES OF RAPID URBANIZATION

As the County pursues a more sustainable growth pattern, it must closely examine development choices that alter natural hydrology to mitigate any negative impacts on the community's quality of life. Urbanization tends to bring more impervious surfaces, which in turn, leads to challenges with runoff quantity and quality as well as heat islands. Many streams in Gwinnett do not meet water quality criteria for their designated use. This is not a unique issue, as jurisdictions across the state find themselves in a similar predicament. The County can lead the way to more stewardship minded development practices to mitigate the harms caused by traditional development.

## 3 RESILIENCY AND EQUITY CONCERNS

Concerns about a changing climate have spurred plans to look more closely at environmental justice issues. This element examines how segments of Gwinnett's diverse population might be differently exposed to environmental burdens or barriers to accessing environmental resources. Climate change issues are likely to hit these vulnerable populations the hardest. To ensure that the whole community can adapt and be resilient to nature's changes, it is vital that these issues are explored and woven throughout the Unified Plan.

# Existing Conditions

## OVERVIEW

This section is divided into an inventory and analysis of existing water resources and infrastructure, followed by a review of upcoming initiatives related to sustainability. It also discusses the interplay between infrastructure and the natural environment, focusing on how that relationship impacts the people of Gwinnett County. In light of a changing climate, it is crucial to evaluate the County's existing plans and protocols for environmental protection and a hazard resilient infrastructure system.

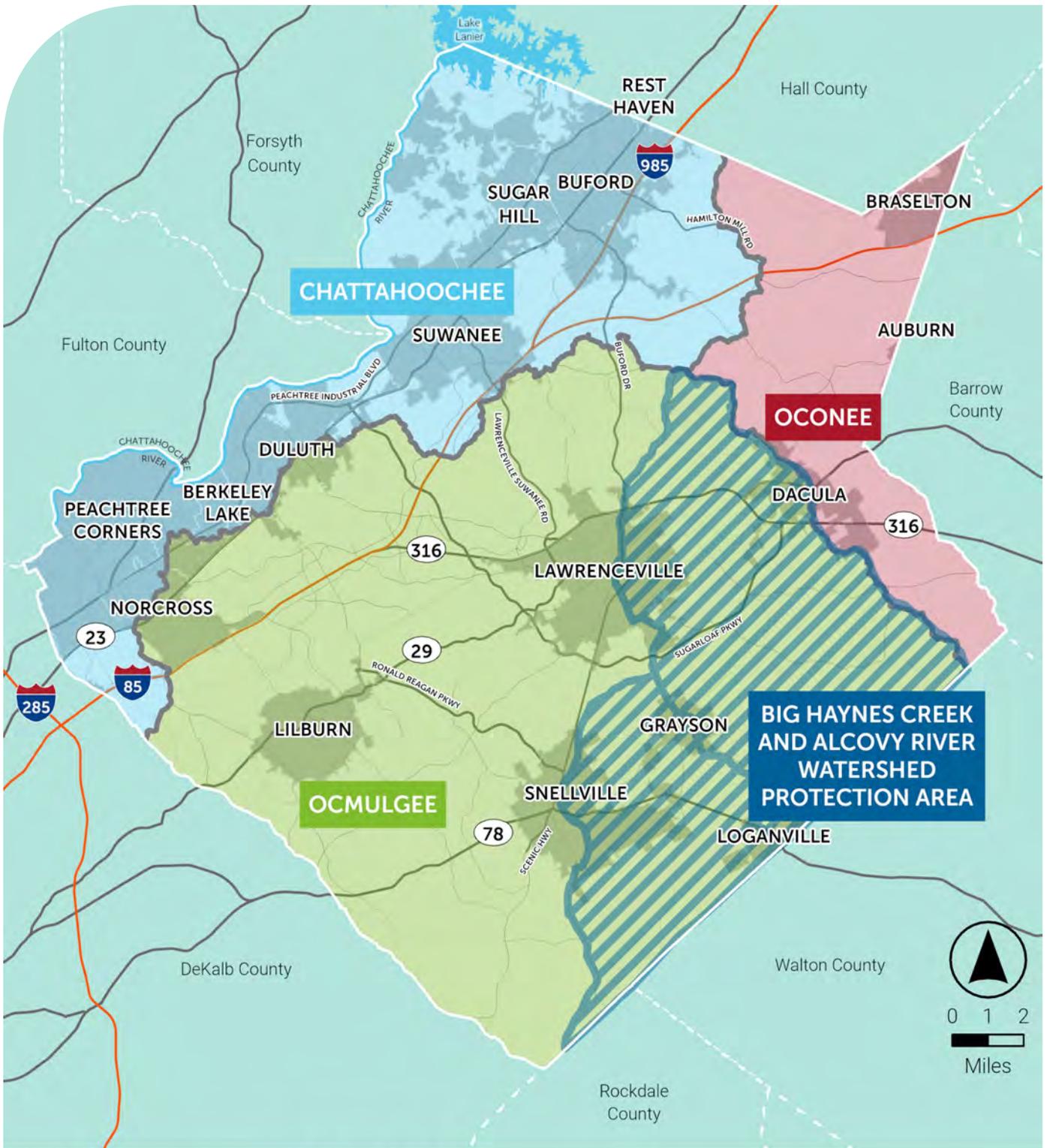
Through the 2045 Unified Plan and other processes, Gwinnett County leaders and residents have expressed desires for where to promote growth and preserve nature. The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources plays a critical role in implementing this vision. Both development and redevelopment depend on water and sewer infrastructure, and stormwater management safeguards new investments and existing structures.

## NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Gwinnett County is located on a continental divide. Water naturally drains from the area west of the divide to the Gulf of Mexico, whereas water to the east of the divide drains to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of Gwinnett's cities, particularly Duluth and Norcross, have installed signage and art sculptures to highlight the significance of the continental divide.

Gwinnett County contains portions of three major river basins: the Chattahoochee Basin, the Ocmulgee Basin, and the Oconee Basin (Figure 5-1). The Chattahoochee Basin drains into the Gulf of Mexico, while the Ocmulgee and Oconee Basins drain to the Atlantic Ocean.

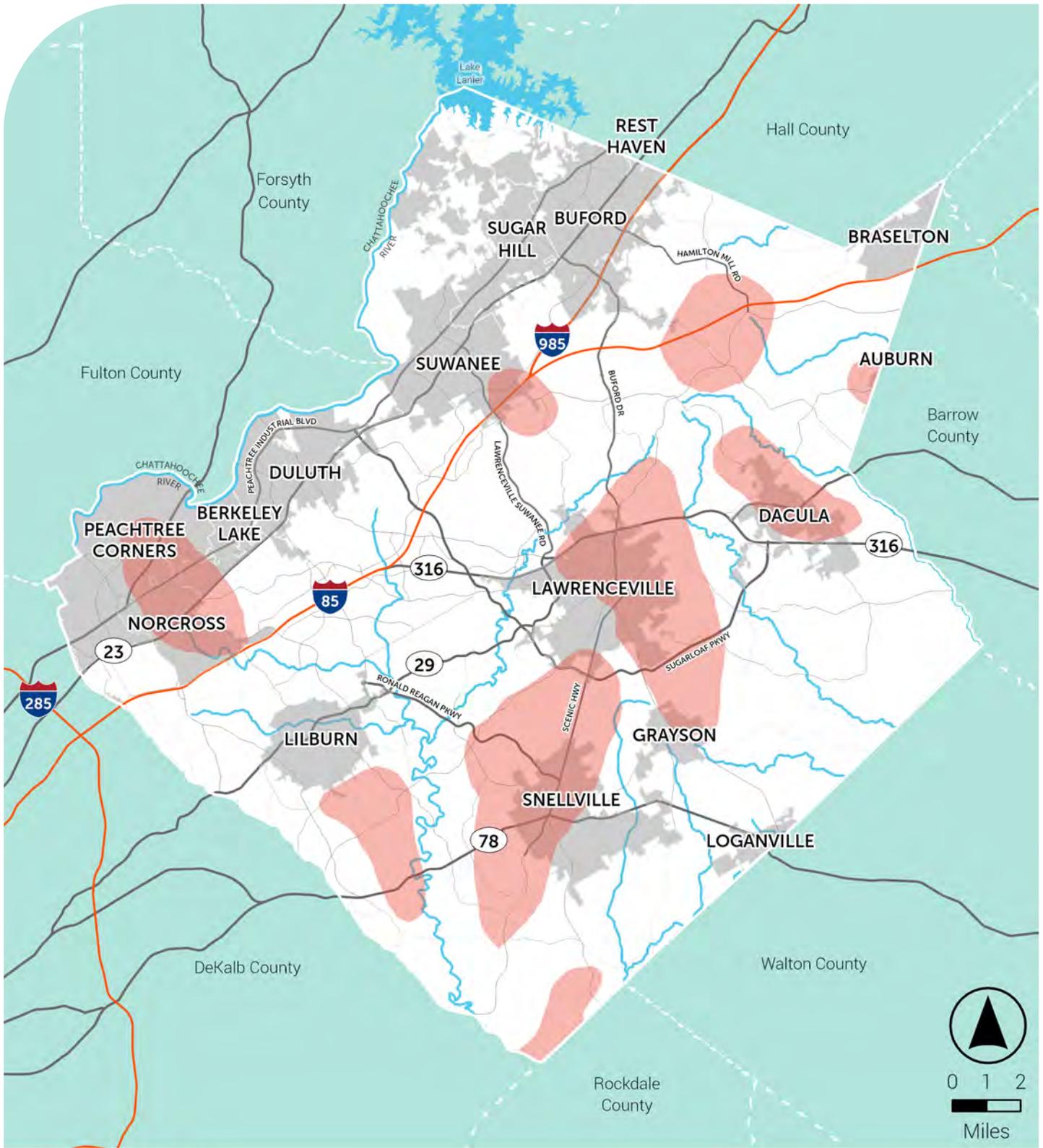
Two of the most significant water bodies in the metropolitan Atlanta area are partially located in Gwinnett. Figure 5-1 also portrays the Chattahoochee River Corridor and Lake Lanier, which are vital components of the region's economy. The following sections provide context for the local, regional, state, and federal entities that play a role in protecting these resources.



**Legend**

- Chattahoochee Basin
- Ocmulgee Basin
- Oconee Basin
- Chattahoochee River Corridor
- Big Haynes Creek and Alcovy River Watershed Protection Area

**FIGURE 5-1: RIVER BASINS AND PROTECTED WATER RESOURCES**



**Legend**

Groundwater Recharge Areas

**FIGURE 5-2. GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS**

## PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES

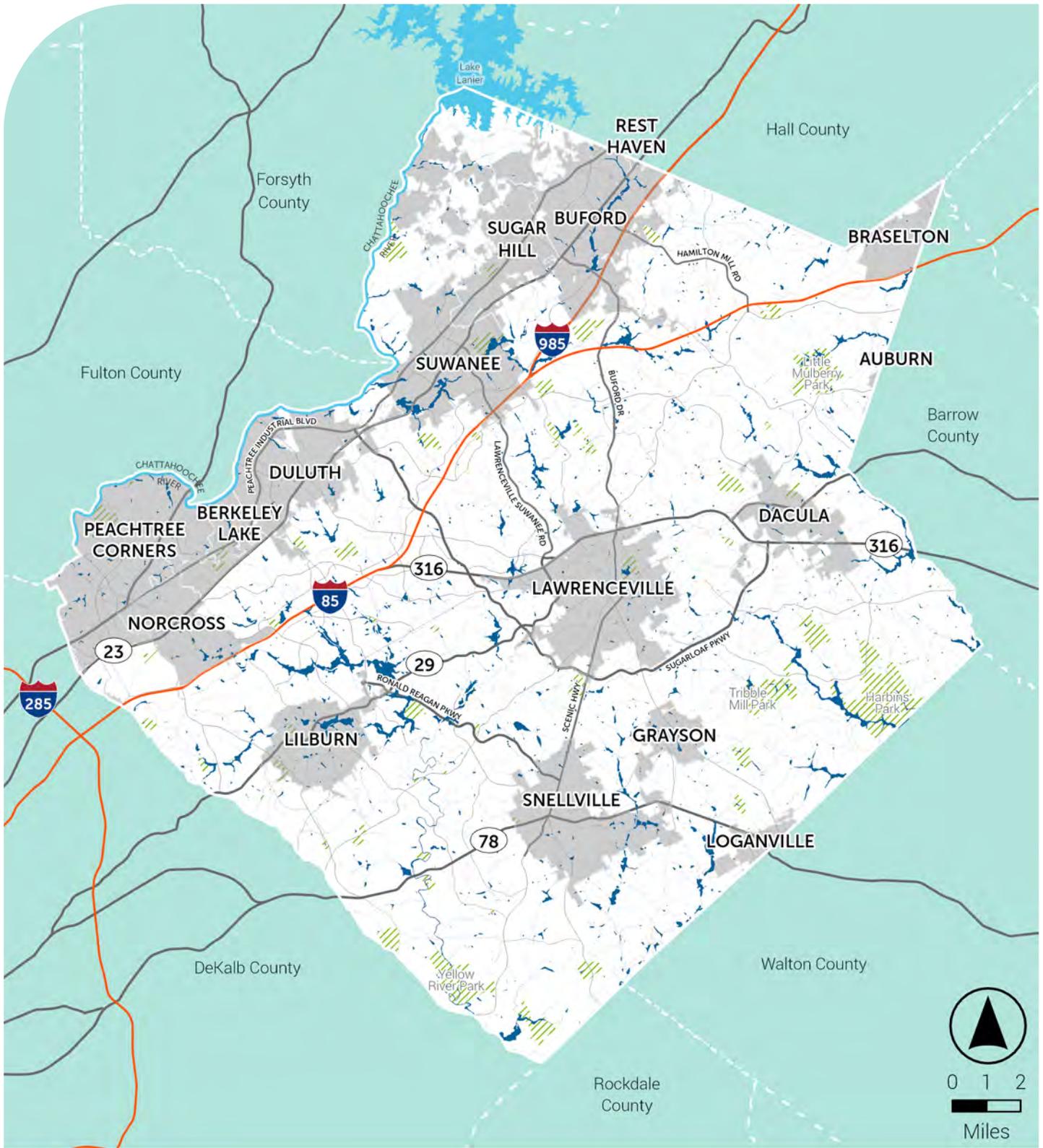
Gwinnett County's most vital water resources are Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River. Lake Lanier is the sole drinking water source for the entire county. Though the Chattahoochee River is not a source of drinking water for Gwinnett, it is the drinking water source for downstream communities. The County's Unified Development Ordinance (Section 500-10) includes provisions that enforce the State's requirements for the Chattahoochee Metropolitan River Protection Area. Federal protections, enforced by the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, are also in place.

Georgia mandates that local governments review the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria, which include water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, the Metropolitan River Corridor, and wetlands; and adopt the necessary protections. Chapter 500 of the UDO includes development regulations that meet or exceed the state's rules. The area identified as the Big Haynes Creek and Alcovy River Watershed Protection Area (Figure 5-1) is a water supply watershed for Rockdale County where enhanced stream buffers and other protections are enforced. Gwinnett County's Department of Planning and Development verifies whether a property is within the Watershed Protection Area during the development review process.

## GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS

Groundwater recharge areas (Figure 5-2) are delineated by the Georgia 1992 Hydrologic Atlas. The nine groundwater recharge areas in Gwinnett cover about 20 percent of Gwinnett's total land area. All groundwater recharge areas within Gwinnett are considered to have low pollution susceptibility and are protected by various restrictions enforced by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.





**Legend**

- Wetlands
- Parks

**FIGURE 5-3. WETLANDS**

## WETLANDS

Wetlands are found throughout Gwinnett County, particularly near streams and river systems. Wetlands provide erosion control and protect against floods, making them a critical environmental asset. However, wetlands are at risk of degradation due to national policy changes. In May 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* that federal protections only apply to wetlands that adjoin a water body, which is a much narrower definition than how the Clean Water Act had previously been interpreted. Now, wetlands separated by dunes, berms, or other barriers are no longer subject to federal protections and will require state or local protective policy. As Gwinnett grows, wetlands may face development pressures, and areas that have traditionally been considered wetlands may be challenged in court. The County should consider adopting a wetlands protection overlay district that defines wetlands in the context of Gwinnett rather than referring to the National Wetlands Inventory.

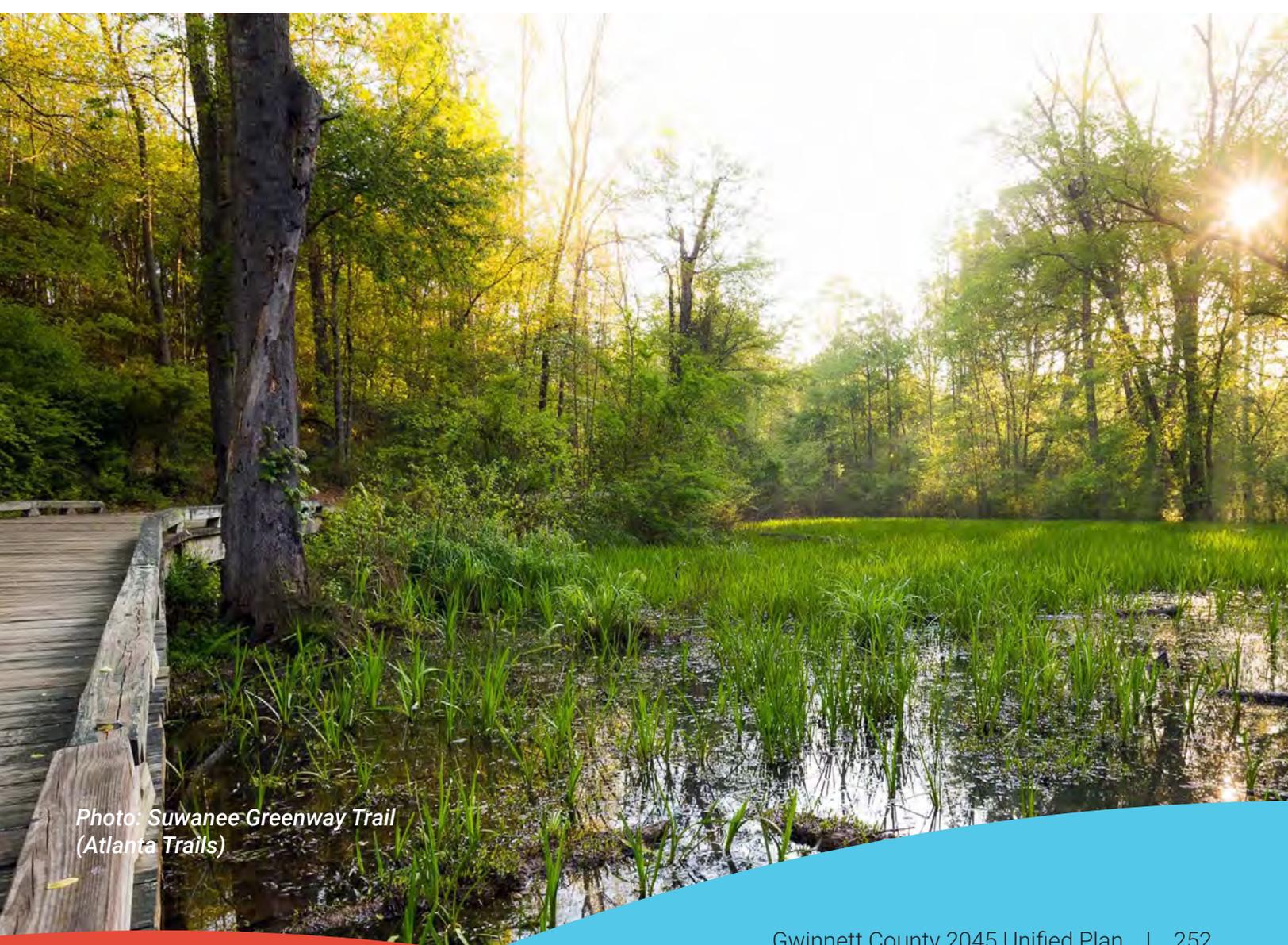
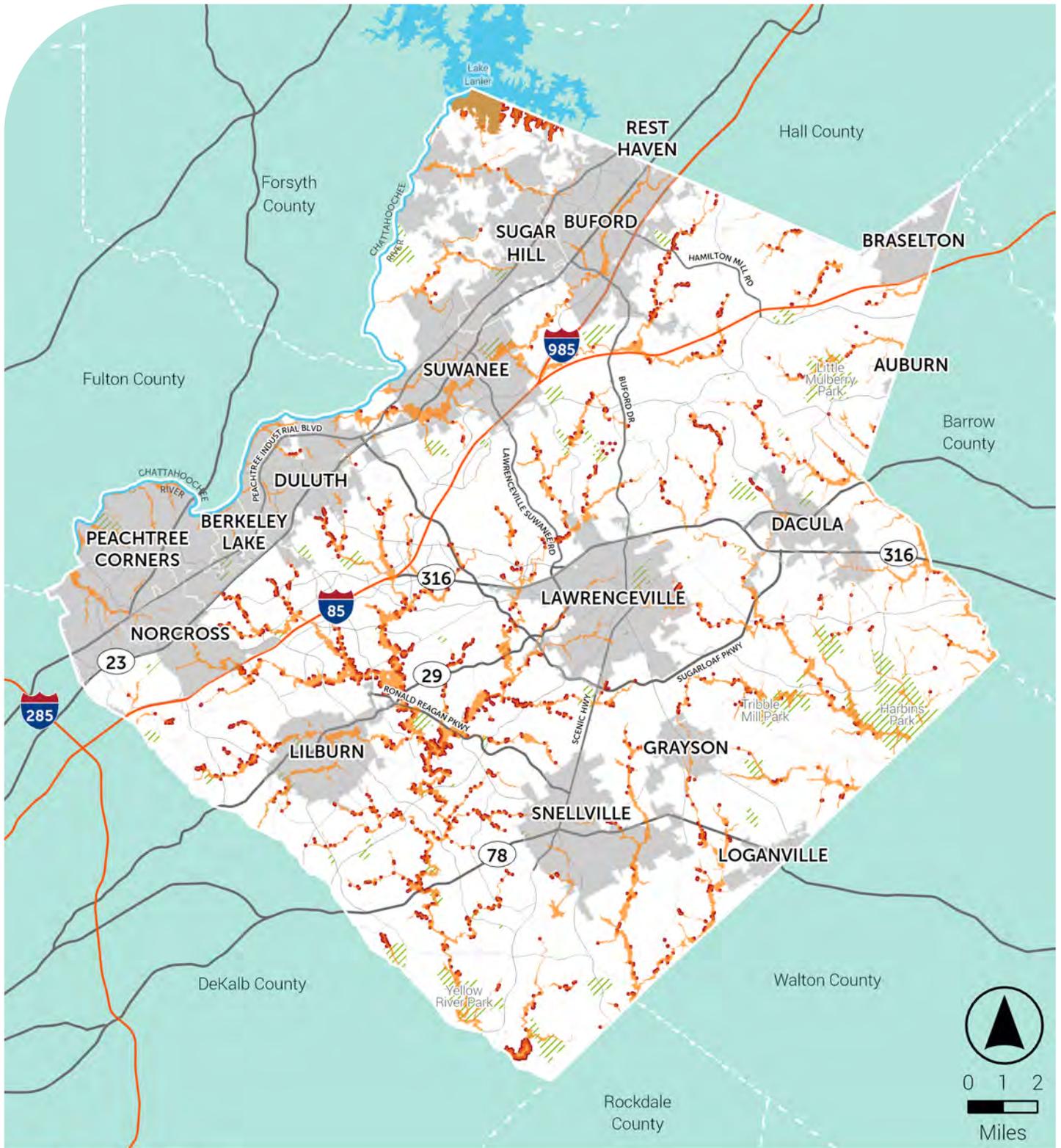


Photo: Suwanee Greenway Trail  
(Atlanta Trails)



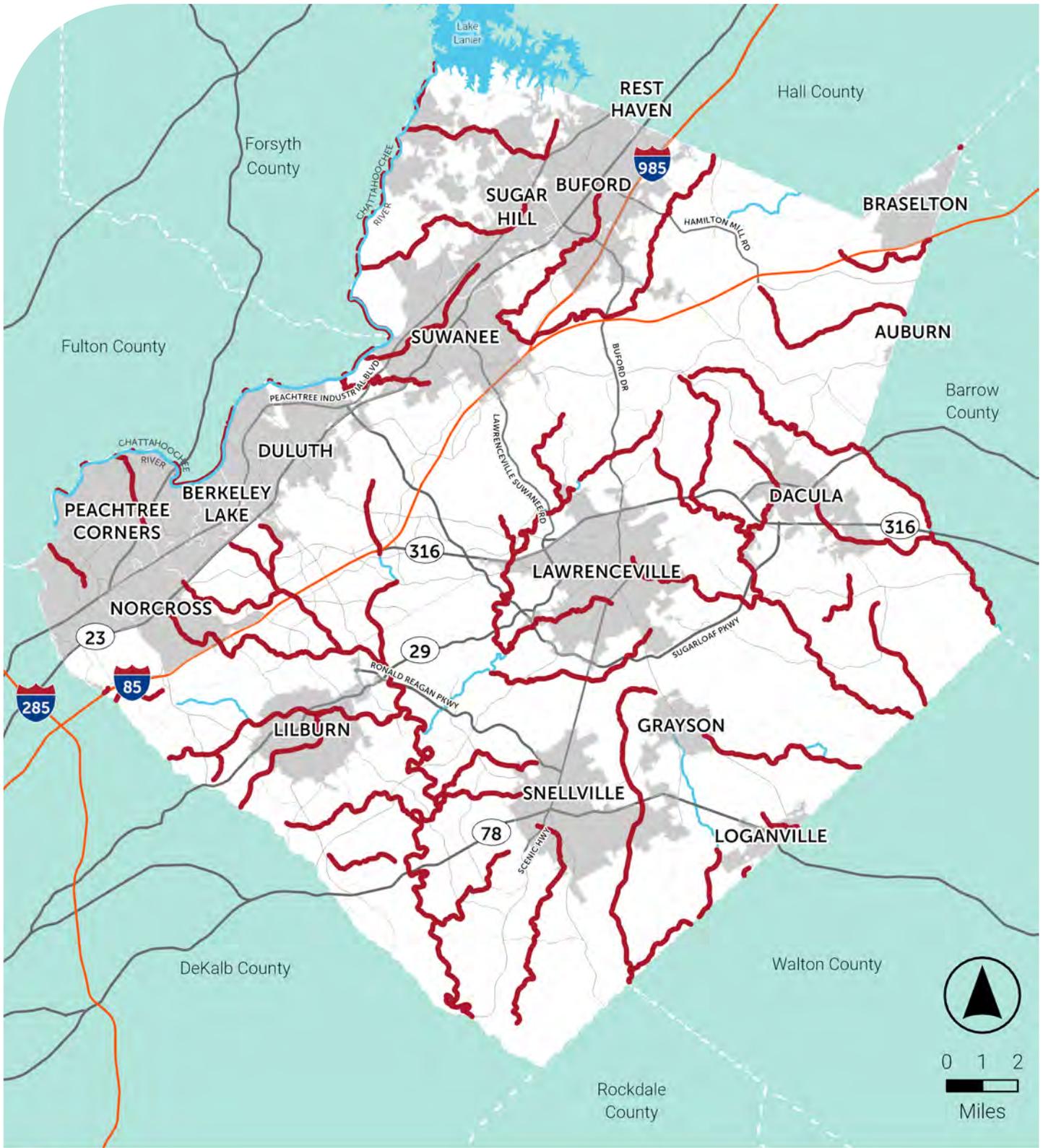
**FIGURE 5-4. EXISTING BUILDINGS WITHIN FLOOD RISK AREAS**

## FLOOD RISK AREAS

Flood risk areas are also included on the map (Figure 5-4). Gwinnett County's UDO standards are consistent with those of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (the Metro Water District's) Model Ordinance for Floodplain Management/Flood Damage Prevention. The UDO prohibits new developments on 100-year floodplains and wetlands. However, many properties were developed before the County adopted this policy. Currently, 3,326 buildings overlap with the floodplain, and 2,835 are located within wetlands. The County may consider an initiative to acquire these properties, especially if they are subject to repetitive losses from flooding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has a grant program to support property buyouts. Gwinnett County has implemented buyouts on a limited basis.

DWR and P&D each play a role in future flood risk planning. The County maintains records of repetitive loss properties and phone complaints received from property owners. An online Flood Information Portal is available through the County's website to provide information on flood sources and risks. The County may consider updating its future flood risk model to account for changing storm patterns in addition to land use changes. This data will inform the County's future resiliency policies and investments.



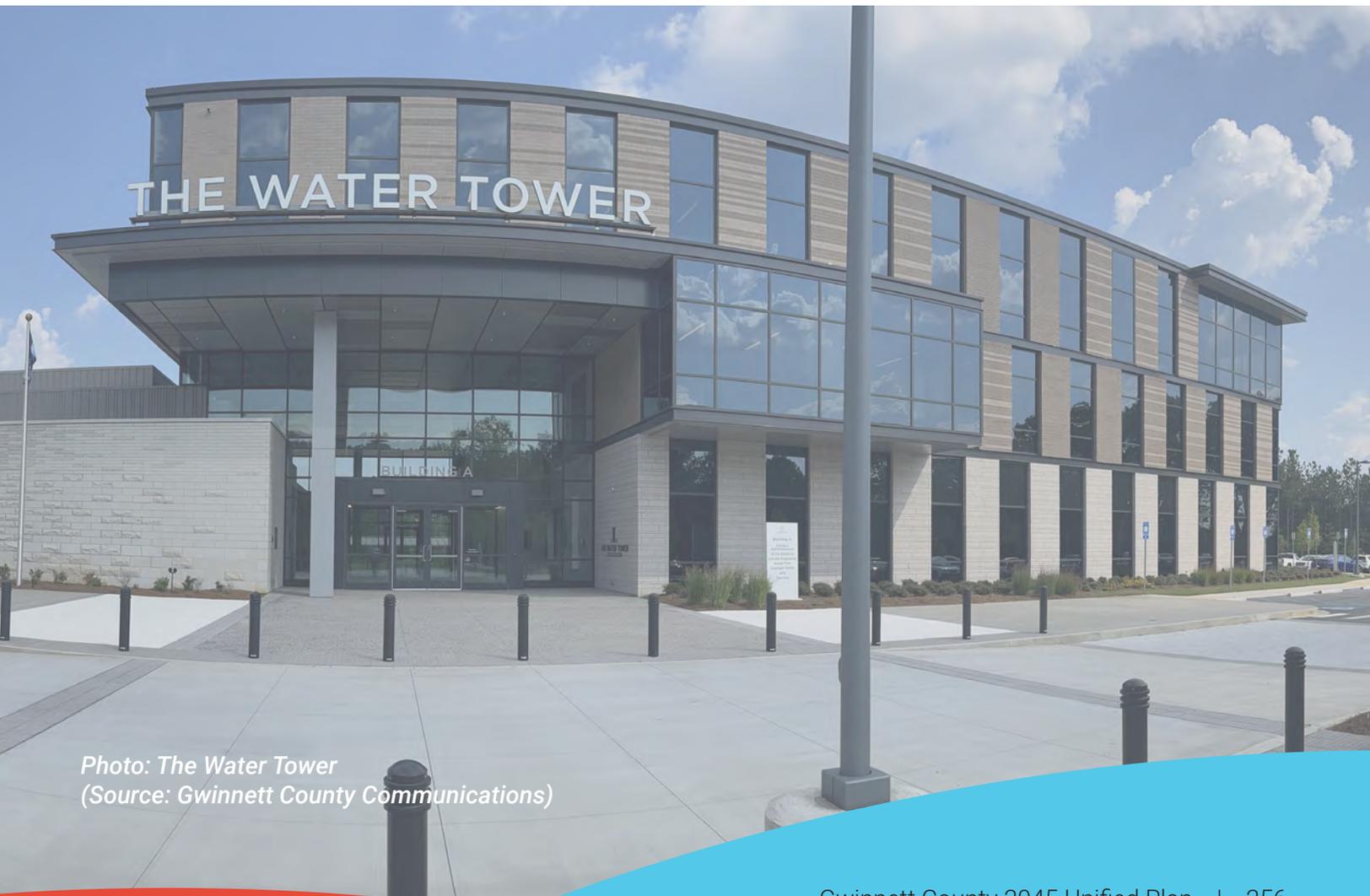


**FIGURE 5-5. IMPAIRED STREAMS**

## WATERSHED HEALTH

Gwinnett County conducts watershed improvement planning and programs as a requirement of the County's wastewater permits from Georgia EPD. These programs are funded by the Water and Sewer Fund, and DWR has developed Watershed Improvement Plans for each watershed across Gwinnett. Through a partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, DWR has a Long Term Trend Monitoring program to analyze and evaluate water quality of streams and ponds. The County is committed to stewardship of the area's watersheds through both structural solutions to water quality concerns as well as volunteer programs managed by the Parks and Recreation Department and partner organizations, such as Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful.

About 50 stream segments, constituting 187 miles of streams, are impaired (Figure 5-5). An impaired stream is one that is not meeting at least one of its designated uses. This data is derived from the 2022 publication of Georgia EPD's 305(b) and 303(d) Integrated Report. This problem is not unique to Gwinnett; impaired streams are found across the state. The County may consider continuing and expanding its current program in anticipation of potential impacts as a result of redevelopment to further improve the watershed conditions. This can be accomplished through enforcement of policies, such as erosion and sedimentation control measures and nature-based solutions, such as stream restorations.



*Photo: The Water Tower  
(Source: Gwinnett County Communications)*

# SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Water resources are particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Drought and inland flooding are both significant water management issues that Gwinnett County will have to grapple with over the coming decades. Total precipitation is on the rise, and storm events are becoming more severe. Gwinnett County's Office of Emergency Management coordinates updates to the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan, which identifies risks and community assets that are vulnerable to different types of natural hazards. The County should continue to track climate trends and collaborate on safeguarding efforts to protect the people and property throughout the community.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS & POLICIES

Gwinnett County has been a regional sustainability leader for many years. In 2009, Gwinnett attained the Atlanta Regional Commission's Green Communities Bronze Certification. Over the ensuing decade, Gwinnett revalidated and enhanced its status to Silver in 2012, Gold in 2014, and ultimately achieved Platinum in 2018. Gwinnett was the first county in Georgia to achieve Platinum. A few of the County's notable policies that relate to watersheds and green infrastructure are summarized below:

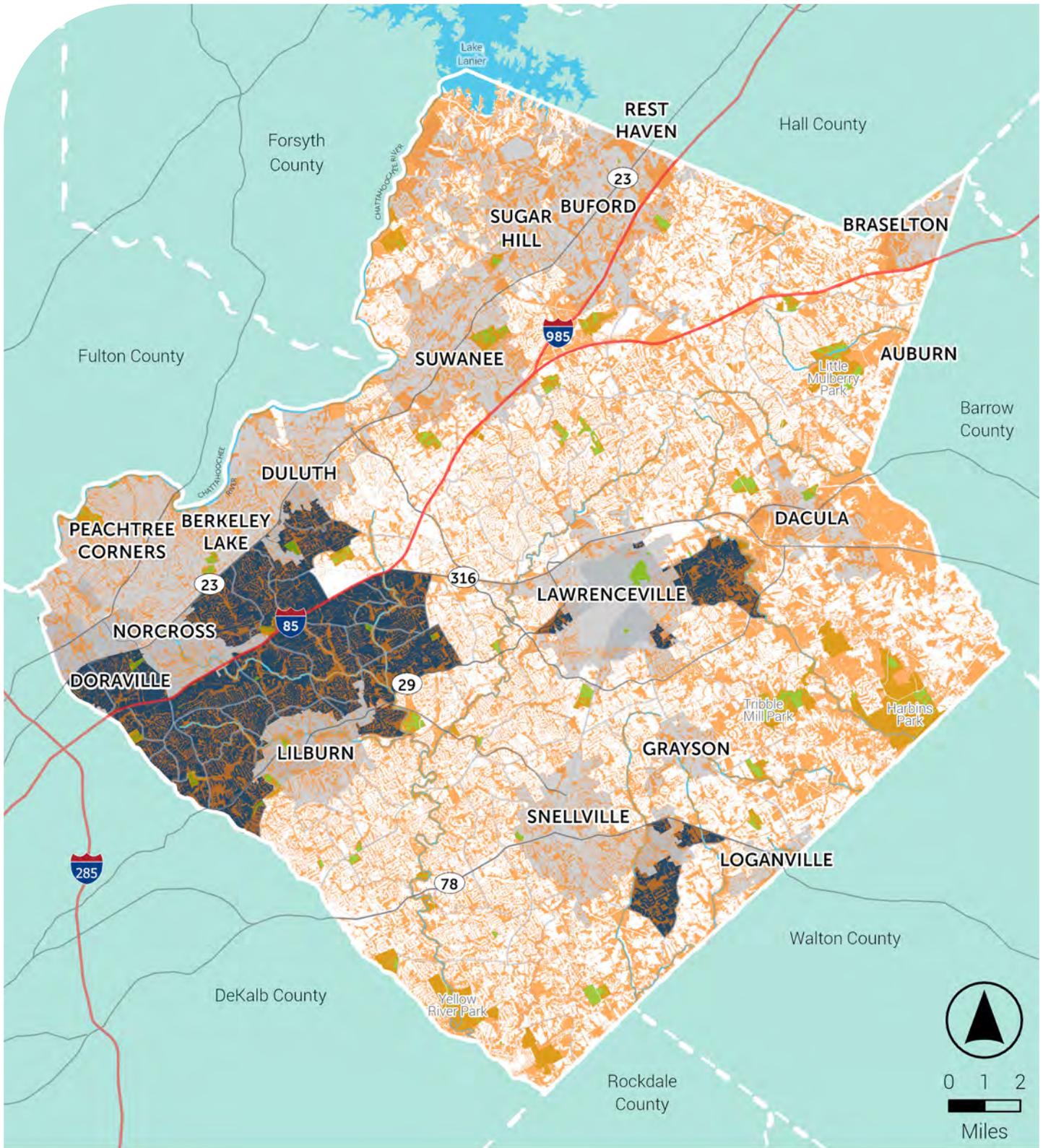
- **Green Building Credit for New Commercial and Residential Construction:**
  - » A 5 percent reduction of the building permit fee shall be applied to new commercial building projects that indicate application and are LEED certification compliant.
  - » A 5 percent reduction of the building permit fee shall be applied to new multifamily residential building projects that indicate application and are EarthCraft Multifamily certification compliant.
  - » A 5 percent reduction of the building permit fee shall be applied to new single family residential building projects that indicate application and are EarthCraft House certification compliant.
- **Community Shade Coverage Policies:**
  - » The UDO includes design standards to ensure that developments provide for shade coverage through parking lot canopies, tree density units, tree canopy measurements, buffers, specimen trees, and landscape strips.

While achieving Platinum status marks the pinnacle on ARC's Green Communities scale, Gwinnett County has the potential to further push the boundaries of sustainability. The ARC Green Communities Program website shares how Gwinnett compares to other Green Communities awardees for each of the credit categories. Some of the areas where Gwinnett has achieved fewer credits compared to its peers are: Trees and Greenspace, Transportation and Air Quality, and Education. The Green Communities Program Manual is a resource for Gwinnett to strengthen its sustainability programs.

## SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

In 2021, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners approved the creation of a Sustainability Commission. This Commission is responsible for providing recommendations to the Board of Commissioners that accomplish the following:

- 1** Consider the needs of Gwinnett County now and in the future, based upon existing and projected growth patterns.
- 2** Review and assess environmental sustainability options for Gwinnett County, including those suggested by members of the community.
- 3** Review and assess the feasibility of differing environmental sustainability options in Gwinnett County.
- 4** Review and assess options for reducing Gwinnett County's environmental impact through its buildings, fleets, and practices.
- 5** Provide public education and outreach on sustainability issues and encourage the community to reduce its environmental impact.



**Legend**

- Disadvantaged Communities (Justice40)
- Tree Canopy Cover
- Rivers
- Parks

**FIGURE 5-6. TREE CANOPY COVER AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES**

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The Justice40 Initiative, announced by the Biden-Harris Administration in January 2021, is a major federal strategy to center equity in the fight against climate change. Through this initiative, the federal government has committed that 40 percent of certain funding streams will be spent to improve the conditions in communities identified as “marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution” (WhiteHouse.gov).

The White House Council on Environmental Quality developed the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to identify disadvantaged communities where Justice40 funding should be directed. Several categories of environmental and socioeconomic burdens are captured in this screening tool. In Gwinnett County, the most prevalent types of burdens include:

- Proximity to Risk Management Plan facilities (facilities that handle substances with significant environmental and public health risks)
- Linguistic isolation
- Diesel particulate matter exposure
- A high relative cost and time spent on transportation

Tree canopy cover is one example of a disparity that exists between Gwinnett’s disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged Census tracts. The County’s tree canopy is not evenly distributed; the Justice40 disadvantaged communities only have 24 percent tree canopy cover, compared to the nondisadvantaged communities where the tree canopy cover is 28 percent (Figure 5-6).

Trees contribute immensely to community health, particularly as it relates to providing refuge from higher temperatures during the warm weather months and helping mitigate the urban heat island effect. Urban heat islands refer to locations with dense concentrations of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat (EPA).

To learn new ways to promote tree canopy protection and expansion, Gwinnett County’s Sustainability Commission should keep tabs on resources that become available to support implementation of new federal funding programs. For instance, a Colorado research collaborative called the Center for Regenerative Solutions established an Urban Nature-based Climate Solutions Accelerator in 2023. This Accelerator will focus on identifying effective uses for the urban forestry funding coming down to the local level through the Inflation Reduction Act.

# INFRASTRUCTURE CONTEXT

## STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Gwinnett County's significant recent achievement was securing long term rights to water supply storage from Lake Lanier through a successful agreement with the State of Georgia. This arrangement followed the State's negotiation of a Master Storage Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, marking a significant victory in the longstanding tristate Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint water wars.

Gwinnett County and the Metro Water District collaborate on water policy and implementation, following the guidance of the Metro Water District's 2022 Water Resources Management Plan. The Water Resources Management Plan sets overarching water policies and action items for all Metro Water District jurisdictions. Gwinnett is a technical assistance partner with the Metro Water District and is actively involved in studies to help the region with its water management issues.



*Photo: Lake Lanier  
(Gwinnett County Communications)*

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE METRO WATER DISTRICT'S 2022 WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The 2022 Water Resources Management Plan focuses on five categories of action items:

- 1 Integrated Water Resources Management
- 2 Water Supply and Conservation (WSWC)
- 3 Wastewater Management
- 4 Watershed Management
- 5 Public Education

Action items that are particularly germane to Gwinnett County are provided below:

### **INTEGRATED ACTION ITEM 1:**

Conduct an annual meeting with local watershed management staff and land use planning and zoning staff on issues related to watershed management, as they are linked to land use planning and decisions.

Consider holding this meeting more frequently, particularly during updates to the local Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).

### **INTEGRATED ACTION ITEM 5:**

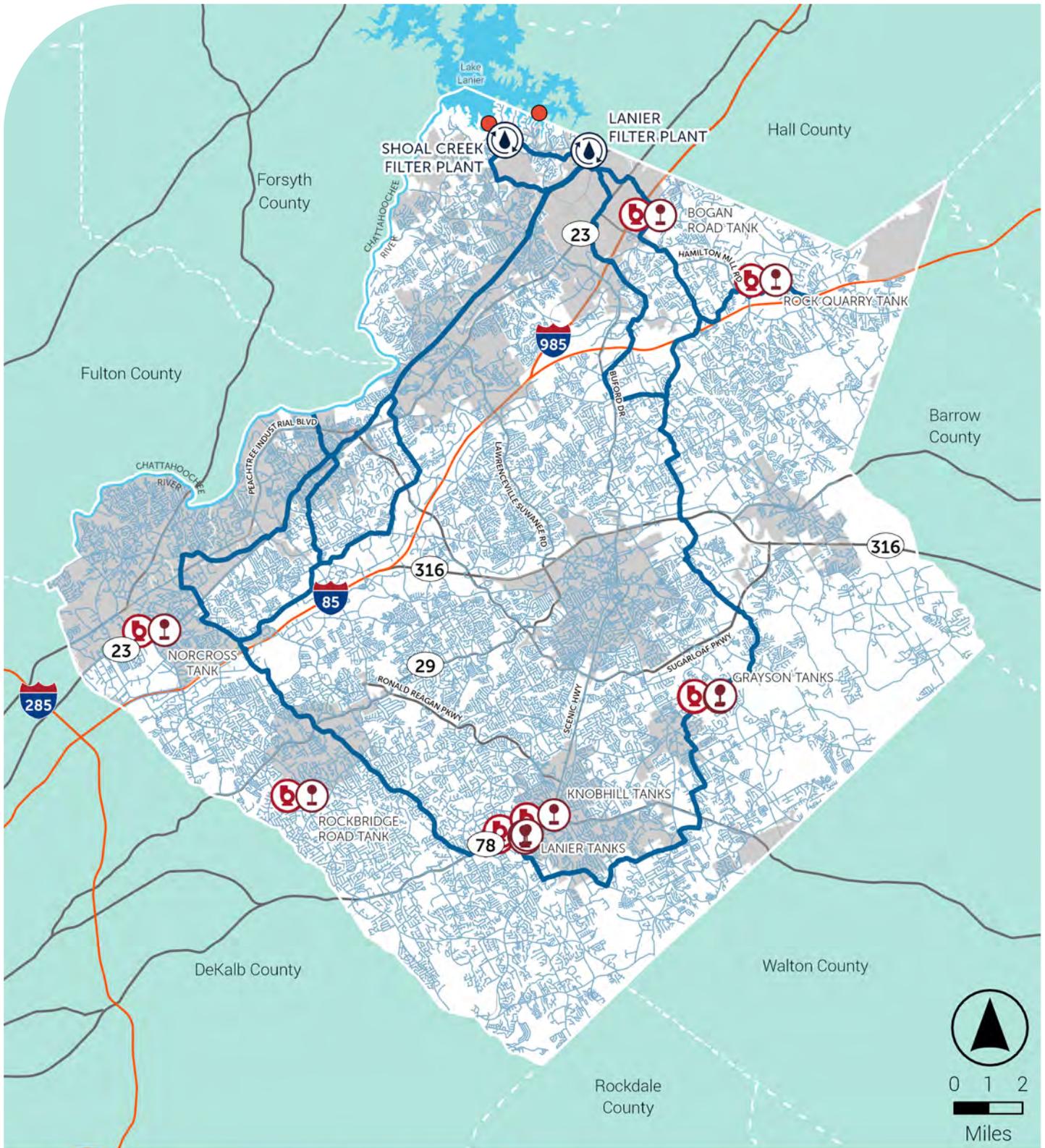
Each local government shall coordinate with the local wastewater provider and develop and maintain sewer connection policies, including policies addressing redevelopment and conversion of septic systems to sewer service.

### **INTEGRATED ACTION ITEM 13:**

Coordinate integrated water supply uses and the return of highly treated wastewater to Lake Lanier and Allatoona Lake to support the long term, sustainable use of water from these reservoirs and their watersheds. Successful implementation of large scale indirect potable reuse at Lake Lanier requires close coordination among local water providers, wastewater providers, District staff, and relevant regulatory agencies.

### **WSWC ACTION ITEM 8:**

Each local government shall adopt by January 1, 2024 and thereafter maintain the Metro Water District – Water Efficiency Code Requirements as a local amendment to the Georgia State Minimum Standard Plumbing Code. The new amendment will require the use of more efficient fixtures, appliances, and landscape irrigation system technologies in all new installations. This Action Item expands and adds to the landscape irrigation system design requirements from the 2017 Plan by applying many of the requirements to all systems and not just large landscapes.



**Legend**

- Intake
- ⓑ Booster Pump
- Ⓢ Filter Plant
- Ⓣ Tank
- Water Mains**
- 30" diameter or more
- Under 30" diameter

**FIGURE 5-7. WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES**

## DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANS

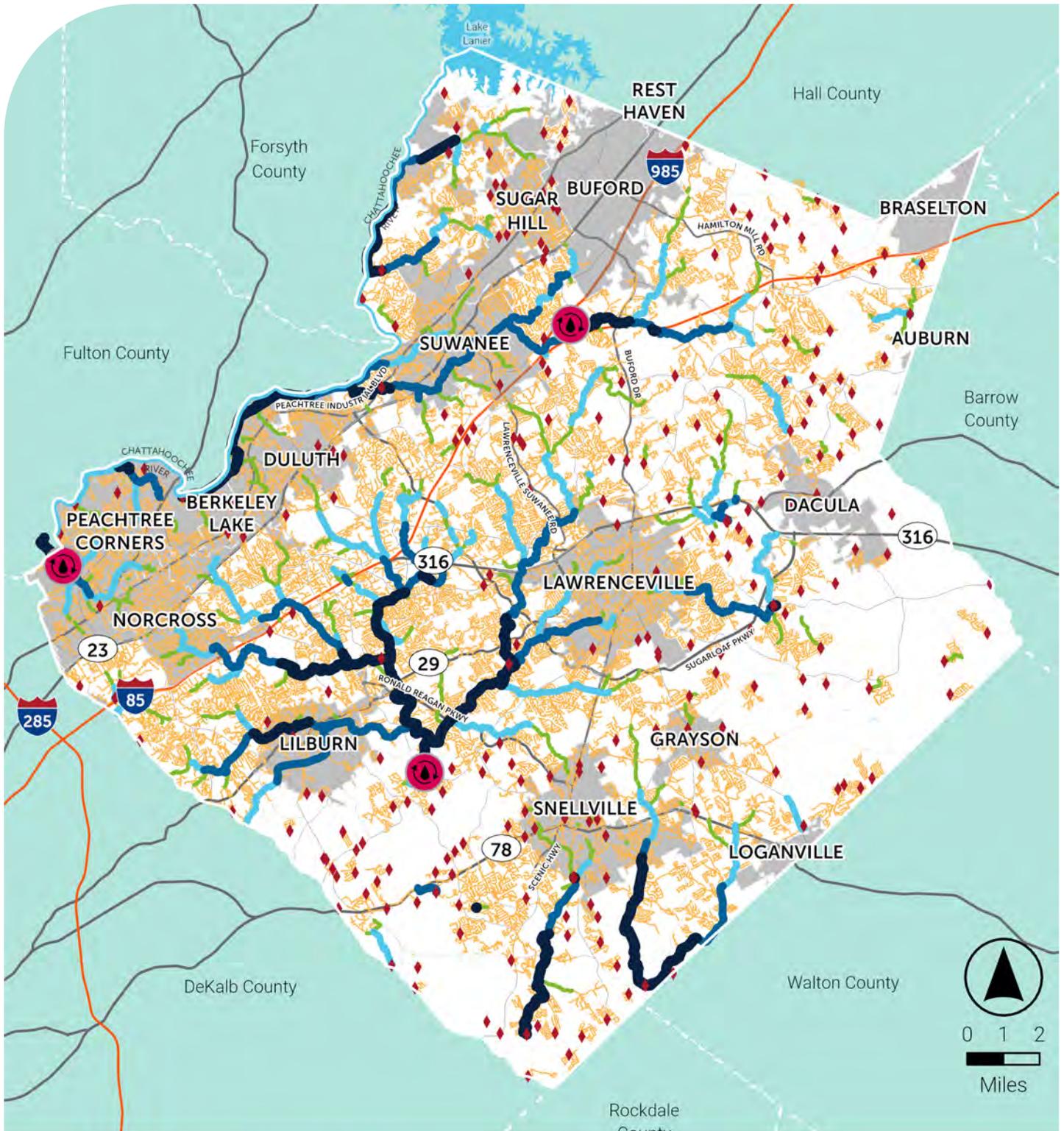
As noted in the prior section, Lake Lanier is Gwinnett County's sole water supply source, and the County treats all water it retrieves from the lake at its two water filter plants: the Lanier Filter Plant and the Shoal Creek Filter Plant. Protection of the water supply is a top priority of the Gwinnett community.

The Water Tower, a research and innovation hub in Gwinnett, has committed to supporting the health of Lake Lanier. The Water Tower's 5-Year Research Plan focuses on studying the impacts of community growth and climate change on the lake, such as nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms. This research will benefit Gwinnett greatly.

Gwinnett County DWR owns and maintains over 4,000 miles of water distribution pipes. Figure 5-7 shows the major components of the water supply and distribution system. DWR's 2050 Distribution System Master Plan guides its priority investments for the next few decades. This living document is monitored for trends that indicate the need for more timely or specific improvements. Many of the projects in this plan are geared toward managing pressure in the system, improving system performance, increasing operational efficiency, and improving water quality.



*Photo: Lanier Filter Plant  
(Gwinnett County Communications)*



**FIGURE 5-8. WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES**

**Legend**

- ◆ Pump Station
- Wastewater Treatment Plant

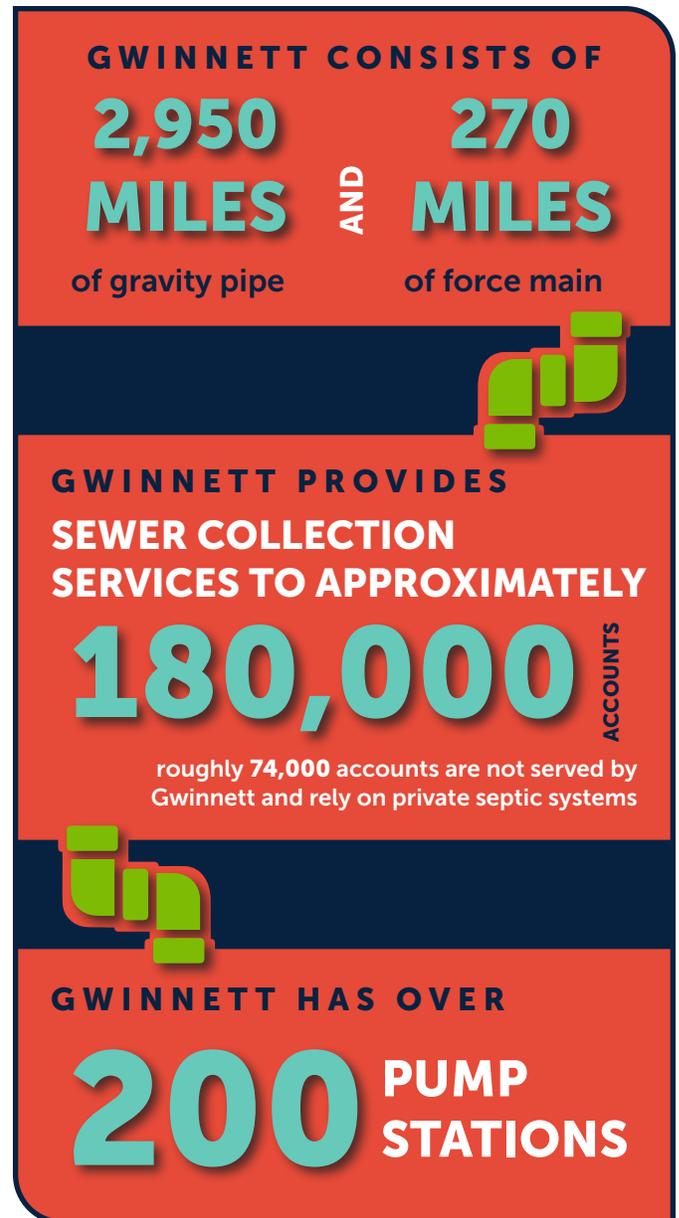
- Sewer Gravity Mains*
- 6-10 inches
  - 12-16 inches
  - 18-24 inches
  - 27-36 inches
  - 42-72 inches

## WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANS

The Gwinnett County Wastewater Collection System (Figure 5-8) consists of about 2,950 miles of sewer gravity mains and 270 miles of force mains. The County provides sewer collection services to approximately 180,000 customer accounts. Roughly 74,000 water customer accounts in Gwinnett are not served by public sewer and rely on private septic systems. The highest concentrations of septic tanks are found in the Yellow River sewer basin, located in south Gwinnett.

Gwinnett County's sewer collection system is complex due to the large topographic variation throughout Gwinnett. With an elevation difference of about 560 feet between the lowest point and the highest point in the county, it is difficult to design wastewater facilities that will flow naturally by gravity. As such, the County has over 200 pump stations, which require energy and chemical costs to operate. New development often relies on the developer to install new sewage pump stations, which has implications for the cost of development as well as increased operational costs for the County. DWR consistently seeks opportunities to eliminate pump stations whenever feasible to reduce operational costs.

The County currently operates three water reclamation facilities for treating wastewater and returning high quality effluent to lakes and rivers. The Collection and Treatment Master Plan (2020) analyzes the needs for additional treatment capacity, sewer line expansions, collection system rehabilitation, and more. Gwinnett County will likely need to build a fourth wastewater treatment facility as its population continues to grow. Sewer planning efforts have



two primary objectives: 1) maintain efficient operations of existing infrastructure, and 2) respond to community needs for infrastructure expansions where it is feasible from a technical and cost effectiveness standpoint. Master planning helps DWR to meet its mission of providing superior water services at an excellent value.

## STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANS

Stormwater infrastructure, planning, and policies in Gwinnett, as in many jurisdictions, are complex. With approximately 1,500 miles of stormwater pipes conveying stormwater to the nearest waterbody, the County's framework is multifaceted. Alongside the traditional gray infrastructure, Gwinnett's stormwater system includes over 3,000 stormwater management best practices such as detention ponds and bioretention areas. Owners of these BMPs are required to enter maintenance agreements with the County that outline inspection and maintain activities the owner must perform to ensure these assets function as designed.

Gwinnett County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit mandates the inspection and upkeep of stormwater Best Management Practices, regardless of public or private ownership. Ownership and access, as well as the significant number of BMPs across the County, make inspection and maintenance a challenge.

The County operates a stormwater utility to assess a fair fee for property owners, relative to the impact their property has on the stormwater system, determined by impervious surfaces. This provides a dedicated stream of funding for the County to address drainage system maintenance, achieve compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and fund drainage related construction projects.

The stormwater utility includes several types of water stewardship credits, which apply as discounts on property owners' stormwater utility fees. Below are examples of several available stormwater credit activities, with varied discount percentages:

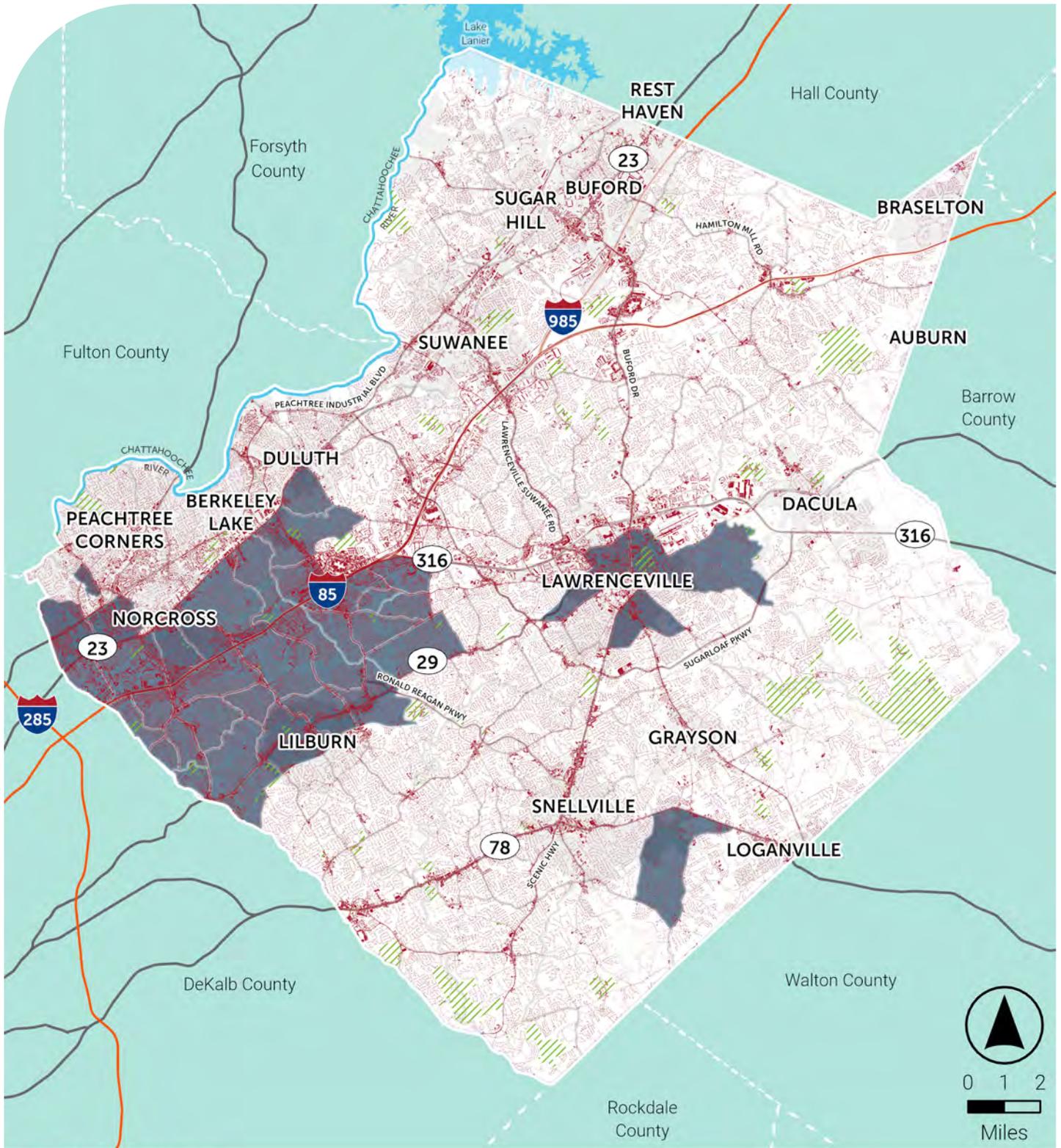
- Engagement in an approved Water Stewardship activity for a minimum of 4 hours, such as stenciling storm drains, engaging in a stream cleanup project, or attending and successfully completing an Adopt-a-Stream training course
- Participation in a training or workshop to learn about water quality and stormwater runoff
- Involvement in a streambank restoration cleanup
- Placement of a property into a conservation easement
- Installation of automatic sensor sprinklers
- Installation of a rain barrel

New developments and redevelopments must meet both water quality and volume management requirements of the UDO, which are further explained through the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual. This manual has strong policy provisions, many of which exceed the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual's policies.



*Photo: Green infrastructure at Collins Hill Library  
(Southeast Stormwater Association, c/o W K Dickson)*

DWR recently conducted two audits of the County’s policies to identify barriers to green infrastructure implementation. As tools for benchmarking Gwinnett’s policies, DWR used the EPA Water Quality Scorecard and the Center for Watershed Protection’s Code and Ordinance Worksheet Scoring Spreadsheet. On the EPA Scorecard, Gwinnett received relatively low scores (60 percent or less of the best practices were achieved) in two specific areas: “Design Complete, Smart Streets that Reduce Overall Imperviousness” and “Encourage Efficient Provision of Parking.” The audits indicated a few policy areas where the County could strengthen its provisions, including street design, open space design, and land conservation incentives. Particularly, the County currently does not promote green infrastructure in the public right of way, due to maintenance concerns. An interdepartmental policy charette (with DWR, P&D, CS, and GcDOT) would be a useful exercise for identifying cost effective and low maintenance solutions.



- Legend**
- Disadvantaged Communities (Justice40)
  - Impervious Surface
  - Parks

**FIGURE 5-9. IMPERVIOUS SURFACES**

## CLIMATE HAZARDS AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACE

The county's disadvantaged Census tracts (as earlier introduced under the Environmental Justice section) have a disproportionate share of the County's impervious land cover. Approximately 19 percent of the land in the disadvantaged communities is impervious, compared to approximately 14 percent impervious land area in the nondisadvantaged communities. Consequently, some residents are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including increasing rainfall, nuisance flooding, and the intensifying urban heat island effect due to rising average daily temperatures, especially during warmer months. Many of the Justice40 areas in Gwinnett overlap with areas known for large shopping centers, industrial warehouses, and older neighborhoods. These developments were likely implemented before the County introduced its more stringent stormwater management protocols. This underscores the need for redevelopment or retrofits to improve these communities through the incorporation of green stormwater infrastructure. Green infrastructure can bring many benefits, such as cleaner water and air, cooler temperatures, beautification that leads to economic investment, and more.

### WHAT WE LEARNED FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Engagement with residents on infrastructural issues focused on protection of natural resources, especially tree canopy. County staff also highlighted the importance of aligning future development with wastewater capacity. Survey questions asked residents about what sustainability actions Gwinnett County should prioritize. Through the community education Speaker Series, national experts connected community design with sustainability and responded to audience questions and feedback for Gwinnett's unique context. For a full summary of engagement, see Appendix C.

### COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Protect natural resources, including trees, waterways, and open space

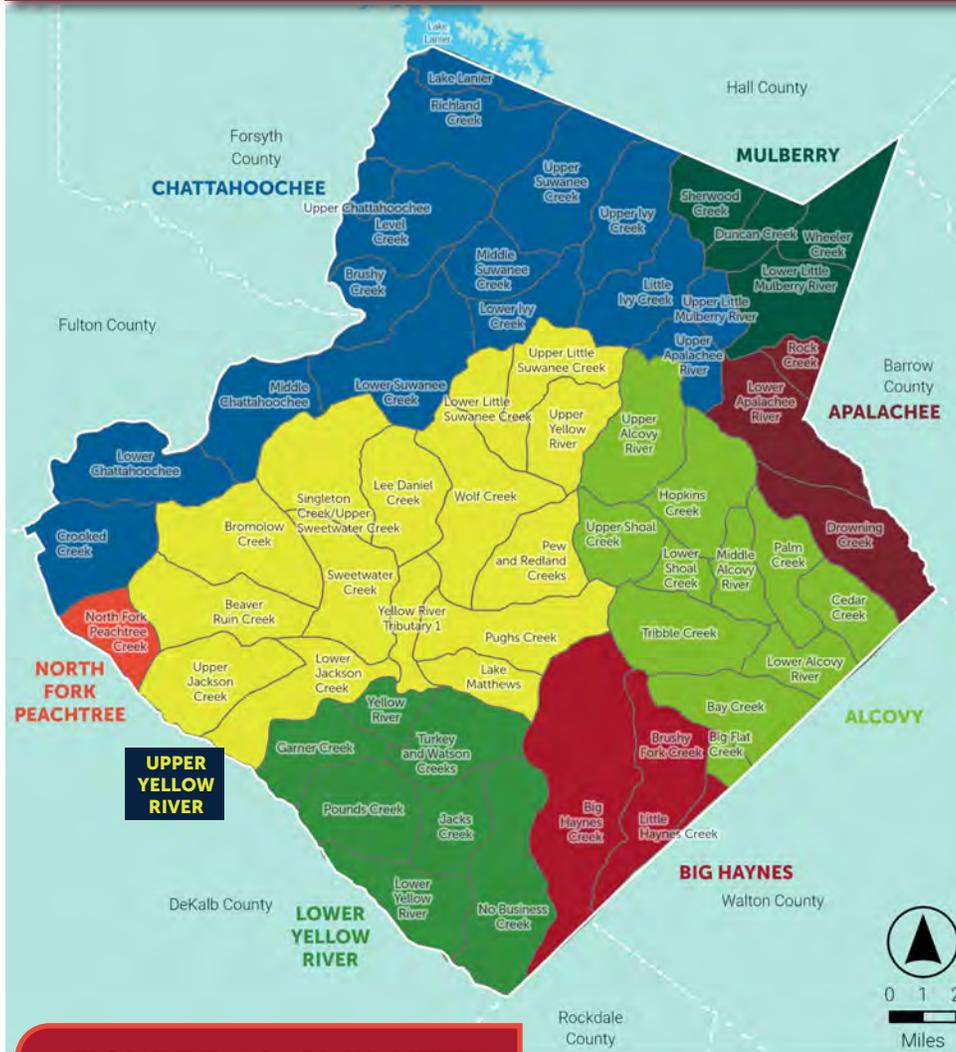
Protect drinking water quality

Align future land use planning with sewer capacity and expansion plans

Integrate green infrastructure into public space

# UPCOMING INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

## SEWER BASIN STUDIES



DWR is using a systematic approach to study the entire county's sewer assets by sewer basin areas. The objective of these studies is to evaluate the impact of land use and development, particularly more intense development, on the sewer system's capacity, as well as new infrastructure to support growth and development. The full county's assessment is slated to be complete in 2024.

**FIGURE 5-10. GWINNETT COUNTY SEWER BASINS**

## COUNTYWIDE TRAILS PLAN



Gwinnett  
**TRAILS**

# COUNTYWIDE TRAILS MASTER PLAN

APRIL 2018

*Photo: Gwinnett County Trails Plan*

As further discussed in the Community Resources Element, the Gwinnett Countywide Trails Plan is an ambitious plan to provide more mobility connections throughout the county via different types of trails and greenways. While the County already boasts several trails, these facilities tend to be within parks and are not connected to a broader system of trails. The proposed trail system will expand access to nature, offer pedestrian and cycling routes, and contribute to climate change mitigation through benefits like enhanced stormwater management and improved air quality.

The plan represents a great opportunity for the County to drive more sustainable development. Though the plan relies heavily on funding and partnerships, policy tools also play an important role in trail implementation. An innovative approach the County is currently employing to achieve cost savings involves utilizing water and sewer easements on private property as trail access easements. The County already has a policy to pursue public access easements (to provide for trail use) on any new water or sewer easements, as evidenced by the Eastern Regional Infrastructure Project.

## EASTERN REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT



(Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

The Eastern Regional Infrastructure Project is a significant undertaking to upgrade and expand water and sewer services in eastern Gwinnett, near the Barrow County border. It includes upsizing five miles of water mains and installing six miles of new gravity sewer, seven miles of parallel sewer force mains, and a 14 million-gallons-per-day regional pump station. In addition to water and sewer infrastructure, the project also includes five miles of new trails, with a trailhead at Harbins Road. The Board of Commissioners awarded a \$125 million design build contract in 2021, and the project is anticipated to be completed in 2024.

This regional infrastructure project will facilitate new development in the area, particularly the master planned Rowen Knowledge Community. Both the County and the Rowen Foundation have been very intentional about sustainable site development and construction practices to mitigate harm to natural systems like the Apalachee River. The County is pursuing certification through the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure's Envision Rating System for the infrastructure components of the project. This rating system encourages high performing, sustainable infrastructure that reduces negative impacts on the community and the environment.

## THE WATER TOWER



Photo: The Water Tower  
(Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

Gwinnett County helped establish The Water Tower to lead the way on regional water related issues and innovation. One of The Water Tower's major research projects is the Five Year Research Plan for Lake Lanier. This research will build on many of the County's previous efforts and studies related to the Lake's management.

Going forward, The Water Tower's goal is to become an international destination for water innovation. One of their key strategies is encouraging R&D companies or other water startups to locate their operations at The Water Tower campus. The Water Tower requires all businesses that locate on their campus to meet the following criteria:

- Conducting industry leading research on water science, including technologies to monitor and treat water;
- Creating and sustaining partnerships with universities, foundations, utilities, and private industry in order to facilitate the research and application of water science;
- Providing economic opportunities for County residents in the form of workforce development programs; and
- Educating the general public on the importance and impact of water and the work performed at The Water Tower.

# Needs & Opportunities

The following water infrastructure and natural resources needs and opportunities emerged as priorities based on the analysis of existing systems, engagement with key stakeholders, and other decision makers within Gwinnett County. They are listed in no particular order.

## NEEDS

### 1 ALIGNMENT BETWEEN LAND USE POLICY AND SEWER PLANS

DWR has a robust planning effort underway to identify infrastructure and natural environment concerns across the county through subbasin studies. Because these subbasins are at a small geographic level of analysis, the County will be able to glean area specific insights to inform future planning. The Department of Planning and Development should coordinate closely with DWR to identify policy changes that may be needed based on the findings of the subbasin studies. P&D and DWR should also align their planning efforts to prioritize infrastructure improvements need based on smart growth priorities and land use policy changes identified in the 2045 Unified Plan.

### 2 INCLUSION OF CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The federal government is funding scientific research that provides reliable climate change data, trends, and impacts. Gwinnett County should monitor this research and incorporate findings and best practices into its planning practices to help ensure that capital improvements are designed to be resilient to or help mitigate anticipated changes to weather patterns. The County should also coordinate closely with The Water Tower to develop a Gwinnett specific approach to adaptation and resiliency. As new developments are built and changes to the natural environment and weather patterns occur, The Water Tower can support the County's analysis of infrastructure systems and the natural environment. For instance, the Water Tower and DWR could work together to update the County's future flood risk model to account for storm pattern changes in addition to land use changes.

### 3 PROTECTION OF SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS

Gwinnett County's most critical natural assets, Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River, should continue to be protected. The County should also scale up protection and restoration for wetlands and impaired streams. Gwinnett County and partner organizations such as Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful have always strived to be good stewards of the environment. As future development intensifies, it is necessary to study hydrologic impacts to natural water systems. The County should continue monitoring land cover changes and the impact on water quality in the county's lakes, rivers, wetlands, and streams.

### 4 ALIGNMENT OF STORM-WATER REGULATIONS WITH MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT REALITIES

Managing stormwater within an urbanizing county like Gwinnett presents a major regulatory challenge, especially as land for development grows scarce. Redevelopment projects are rarely as straightforward as new builds on greenfields. The County should consider alternative approaches to stormwater requirements that promote environmental health while also helping the County and its development partners create great places.

### 5 CONSISTENT DISTRIBUTION OF TREE CANOPY

Trees are a vital type of sustainable infrastructure. As discussed previously, tree canopy cover is not evenly distributed throughout the county, so future tree planting initiatives should seek to address this inequity.

### 6 EXPANSION OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Sediment and erosion control is important to mitigate impacts of land disturbance during construction. Large development sites can be difficult to manage and at times overwhelms well intended controls, particularly stream buffers. Stormwater management is needed to alleviate impacts of increased impervious area. Increased stream buffers for large development sites and the continued use of green infrastructure best management practices are recommended to help address these issues, particularly in redevelopment sites that may lack stormwater controls due to the age of the development.

### 7 IMPROVED BMP MANAGEMENT ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Property owners often neglect proper maintenance activities to ensure the functionality of their BMPs. DWR has already established a comprehensive education program, encouraging landowner engagement through credits on their stormwater utility fees. The County should continue in offering these workshops and promoting wider participation.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## 1 IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE TO ACCOMMODATE INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

The 2045 Unified Plan communicates the priority of redevelopment and infill areas through the Future Development Map. It is essential that DWR continues to invest in its existing systems to expand the useful life and capacity of the infrastructure so that the County is well positioned to accommodate redevelopment and infill projects.

## 2 COORDINATING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS TO STRENGTHEN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The plan review process already necessitates that both DWR and P&D review developments to ensure that development plans adequately plan for water and sewer connections, as well as stormwater quantity and quality control measures. Staff from both departments should collaborate to identify common issues and potential policy solutions. More performance standards could help bring more quality development. Both departments should coordinate in advance to develop design and permitting guidance specific to infill and redevelopments related to water metering, sewer connection, and stormwater management.

## 3 STRENGTHENING WETLANDS AND WATERSHED PROTECTION

Gwinnett County's UDO and corresponding plan review checklists could be strengthened by more clearly defining certain definitions related to watersheds and wetlands. For instance, the Big Haynes-Alcovy River Water Protection Overlay District and the Rockdale Reservoir 7-Mile Buffer are both terms used to describe the same area of Gwinnett where certain development standards are in place. A consistent term and boundary need to be considered during plan reviews conducted by P&D and DWR. Additionally, the UDO Section 210-50.6 mentions that primary conservation space shall include wetlands as determined by the National Wetlands Inventory, and Section 500-20.1 states that the standards are in addition to State/Federal regulations. These provisions could be strengthened if the County removes the reference to the National Wetlands Inventory and instead delineates its own wetland protection area overlay.

## 4 EXPANDING TREE CANOPY ON PRIVATE LANDS

Many local governments around the Metro Atlanta region have partnered with Trees Atlanta on successful front yard canopy tree planting programs. Gwinnett County should explore this opportunity with Trees Atlanta or other Gwinnett specific organizations to enhance its tree canopy, mitigate rising temperatures, improve air quality, promote a culture of stewardship, and provide opportunities for workforce development.

# 5

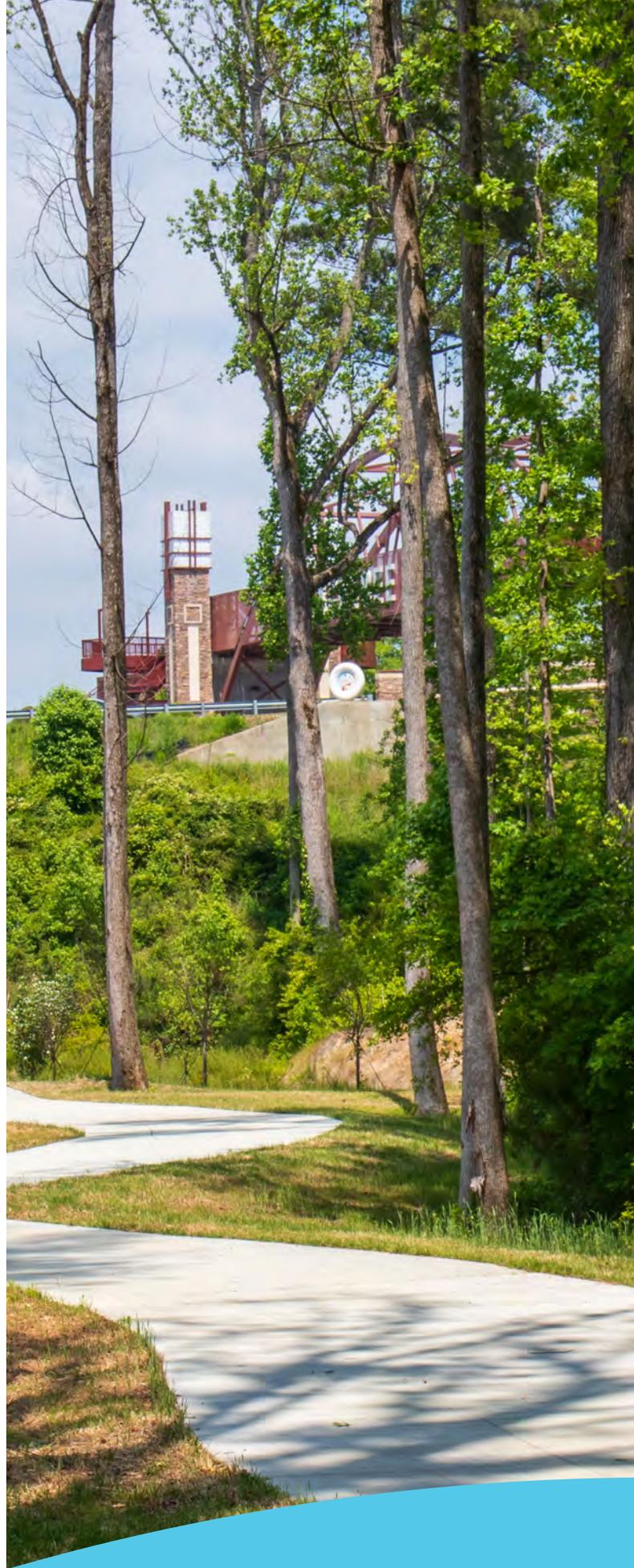
## INVESTING IN LEGACY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES

The Justice40 measure for disadvantaged communities considers various types of environmental burdens, such as legacy pollution and flooding risk. As reviewed in the prior section, Gwinnett County’s Justice40 communities have disparate access to environmental assets, such as trees. Green amenities may include green stormwater infrastructure, trees, parks, etc. The federal government is making historic commitments to advance equity through federal funding programs on the Justice40 Initiative Covered Programs List. The County should look for every opportunity to drive investment that addresses its environmental inequities and expands access to green amenities. State agencies such as DCA and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority often release new notices of funding availability, so Gwinnett staff should monitor these opportunities as they arise.

# 6

## PURSUING SUSTAINABLE DESIGN FOR PROJECTS ACROSS SECTORS

Multiple County departments are experienced with pursuing sustainable design certifications through third party rating systems. More communication among departments may help identify opportunities for additional project types to achieve certifications.



# Goals & Best Practices

Infrastructure is foundational for the development of Daily Communities in Gwinnett County. Each of Gwinnett’s diverse communities must be supported by adequate water and sewer capacity in order to sustain a mix of land uses. Additionally, stormwater infrastructure is fundamental for protecting property; particularly, green stormwater infrastructure is a key tool for climate resiliency. In Gwinnett’s endeavor to promote sustainable Daily Communities, understanding how water moves within a site is pivotal—spanning from drinking water to wastewater, stormwater, and potentially reuse water. New developments need to be planned with early input from the County’s staff that are intimately familiar with the ridges, creeks, and other elements of the natural water system.

## **ALIGN WATER AND WASTEWATER PLANNING/INVESTMENTS WITH THE DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK**

DWR should refer to the Future Development Map as it conducts master plan updates for water and sewer infrastructure. In addition, the County should consider new policies or fees to help incentivize growth in well served areas. When developments are built on the fringe of the existing wastewater system’s extents, the community takes on a greater burden of the ongoing operational and maintenance costs to serve that new development. DWR and P&D need to promote smart growth so that services can be provided at an affordable rate. This overarching best practice should be pursued in the following initiatives:

### **1 USE POLICY AND RATE SETTING TOOLS TO INCENTIVIZE GROWTH IN AREAS WELL SERVED BY EXISTING WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Growth management strategies, such as service delivery boundaries and system development charges, are essential tools for smart growth. The EPA and Smart Growth America often publish research on the fiscal impacts of smart growth strategies. Based on the land use framework established in the 2045 Unified Plan, Gwinnett County should consider fee structure adjustments that incorporate location dependent tap fees.

### **2 ADJUST STORMWATER REGULATIONS TO PROMOTE CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Redevelopment of disturbed land is often less straightforward than greenfield development, and thus requires more creativity when addressing stormwater impacts. Opportunities to adjust stormwater regulations in exchange for creative solutions—such as green infrastructure BMPs or improving upon natural features already on site—can reduce pain points for developers and County staff interested in cultivating redevelopment within Daily Communities.

### 3

## PROMOTE COMMUNITY DESIGN CHOICES THAT RESULT IN EFFICIENT WATER USE

Design strategies, such as compact developments, are often more cost effective for both the developer and the County, as they make efficient use of space. If the development aligns with new infrastructure, opting for a compact design over a dispersed one is likely to yield cost savings during installation and across its lifespan, owing to the reduced length of pipe required by the compact layout. Additionally, the end user—the property owner—will benefit from a smaller lawn, resulting in watering cost savings. Consequently, compact developments impose fewer demands on both the water distribution and wastewater collection systems.

### CASE STUDY:

#### LOCATION DEPENDENT CONNECTION FEES—SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

For new developments to connect to the sewer system, the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District charges different fees based on location. For both new residential and commercial development, the connection fee for developments outside of the current collection system's limits is about double the fee charged for new developments located in the existing service area. After Regional San implemented this fee structure adjustment, it was better able to manage the pace of the community's growth.

*Photo: Regional San Logo (Source: RegionalSan)*



# REGIONALSAN

**CASE STUDY:**  
*ENVISION UTAH*

Envision Utah is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to create and sustain communities that are beautiful, prosperous, healthy, and neighborly for current and future residents. Since 1997, Envision Utah has worked with communities across the state to understand the implications of their policies and to promote growth management strategies. Model ordinances, a growth management guide, and other tools for integrating water and land use are available on the organization’s website.

Envision Utah conducts research to inform its planning toolkits. One of their early studies in 1997 has been validated by how the pattern of development has played out in the Greater Wasatch Front (10 county region). This study analyzed various development scenarios, ranging from low density, auto oriented to very compact, transit oriented development. The researchers found that the compact, transit oriented development had substantial savings with regard to water demand and cost of infrastructure. The following chart summarizes the findings.

	APPROACHES	BASELINE	QUALITY GROWTH	QUALITY GROWTH SAVINGS
<b>Water Demand</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in lot size</li> <li>• Different allocation of population and employment across area</li> <li>• Use of conservation pricing (although overall price of water did not change)</li> </ul>	298 gallons per day per capita	267 gallons per day per capita	10.4%
<b>Cost of Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced length of new pipes required</li> <li>• Expanded length of new pipes required</li> <li>• Comprehensive use of existing infrastructure through infill development</li> </ul>	\$2.629 billion (in 1999 dollars)	\$2.087 billion (in 1999 dollars)	20.6%

*Figure: Envision Utah Quality Growth Impacts (Source: Growing Toward More Efficient Water Use: Linking Development, Infrastructure, and Drinking Water Policies, EPA)*



## **PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS THAT PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS**

Sustainable growth is very closely tied to infrastructure planning and management. As Gwinnett County plans for new infrastructure, it is important to pursue sustainable design choices that minimize impact on the area's natural features. It is also critical to design for resiliency considering the extreme weather resulting from climate change. The County should continue to partner with the Metro Water District and neighboring jurisdictions to share data and inform best practices for the region's benefit. Regional coordination is paramount for protecting shared resources, such as Lake Lanier.



### **UTILIZE FORWARD LOOKING CLIMATE DATA TO INFORM INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITY PLANNING**

Resiliency to future climate impacts is essential for maintaining high quality water services. Currently, the County uses ATLAS 14, a precipitation frequency dataset from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to support its decisionmaking for infrastructure, such as design storm calculations. NOAA ATLAS 15 is a new national precipitation frequency standard, developed with funding from the 2022 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The adjustments from ATLAS 14 to ATLAS 15 account for climate change. Gwinnett County DWR should explore the implications of adjusting its ATLAS 14-informed planning calculations to use the ATLAS 15 estimates. New climate realities could impact when infrastructure exhausts its useful life. Thus, it is important to use climate data not only to inform future investments, but also to understand if existing infrastructure facilities need improvements to extend the useful life.



### **IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES OUTLINED IN THE METRO WATER DISTRICT'S 2022 WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN, AND SHARE DATA TO INFORM FUTURE REGIONAL WATER PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

Local governments within the Metro Water District's service area are required to implement certain management actions as a matter of compliance, while Georgia EPD enforces compliance through permits and audits. Gwinnett County should also continue serving as a technical assistance partner with the Metro Water District to inform future planning methods and recommendations. The 2022 Water Resources Management Plan was the first edition of the Metro Water District's regional water plan to include a stormwater forecast. The Metro Water District recognizes that this unique stormwater forecast will require periodic adjustments as more local data becomes available to validate its assumptions.

## ATLANTA CASE STUDY:

### STORMWATER MASTER PLAN STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT—DECATUR, GEORGIA

The City of Decatur also serves as a Technical Assistance Partner with the Metro Water District. The City has been a leader in stormwater management and planning. From 2018 to 2020, the City conducted a stormwater master planning process that extensively engaged with stakeholders and the general public. Several materials from the master plan engagement activities are still accessible via the DecaturNext webpage. Some unique engagement strategies that were implemented during this planning process include: 1) a walking tour of the stormwater facilities in the Oakhurst neighborhood, 2) a public input map survey, and 3) tradeoff discussions focused on scenarios with different levels of development intensity. DWR and P&D may be able to enhance their stormwater management programming and planning by emulating the City of Decatur's strategies.

## Stormwater Academy: Oakhurst Walking Tour



### **Oakhurst Park**

- Sign in
- Pick up handouts

2

### **East Lake Drive**

- HUD Drainage Improvements
- Detention Pond/Dog Park



3

### **Sugar Creek Channel/Basin**

- Concrete lined stream channel

4

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

- Local Drainage Problem
- Flume discharge to road



5

### **Maxwell Street**

- Residential land use changes and impervious surface increases

6

### **Oakview Rd at Underwood St**

- Public/Private infrastructure



7

### **Oakhurst Streetscape**

- Green Infrastructure project



8

### **City SW Project**

- Park facilities project and SW mitigation

Image: Oakhurst Walking Tour for Stormwater Master Planning Process (Source: DecaturNext)



## REDUCE IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Impervious surfaces modify the functioning of the natural hydrologic system. Places with more impervious land cover tend to have greater runoff management volumes to control, as well as issues with stormwater pollution that ends up in local water bodies. While the natural system has already been modified by development in much of the county, it is possible to reintroduce green infrastructure elements that mimic the predeveloped conditions so that stormwater can be better managed. As more stringent regulations are issued from the State for protecting the quality of the county's streams, the County needs to ensure that nature-based solutions are a part of its watershed improvement approach.

1

### PROMOTE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE RETROFIT OPPORTUNITIES, PARTICULARLY OF SURFACE PARKING IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Impervious land cover is an issue that disproportionately impacts disadvantaged communities. This is not unique to Gwinnett County; development patterns across the country often result in concentrations of industrial land uses in lower income areas. Communities are now confronting the wrongs of the past to bring forth more equitable development. One way to do so is by introducing more greenery into these communities. Green infrastructure retrofits, either funded by the County or in partnership with private entities, can be restorative for environmental justice communities.

Community involvement in the planning for green infrastructure can be very impactful. Retrofit projects should be developed with the community to ensure that they are designed to meet the community's needs. The Equity Guide for Green Stormwater Infrastructure Practitioners, coauthored by the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange and Greenprint Partners, is a great resource for engaging communities in the green infrastructure design process.

2

### ENCOURAGE TREE PLANTING AS A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PRACTICE

Gwinnett County has Tree Preservation and Replacement Regulations within its UDO, which is a great tool for preserving the existing tree canopy to the extent possible during new development; however, the County does not currently have a voluntary program for increasing tree canopy through plantings on existing properties. Trees are an invaluable asset, as they provide carbon sequestration, stormwater filtering and runoff control, cooling effects to the environment, and more. Gwinnett County should look to both ARC Green Communities and Tree City USA for reference on ways that it can boost its tree canopy enhancement efforts.

3

**BUILD CAPACITY FOR MAINTENANCE OF PRIVATE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Because stormwater facilities are distributed across private properties around the county, it can be challenging to monitor and ensure that the facilities are in good working order. Sometimes, property owners are not aware that they are responsible for maintaining the stormwater BMPs on their property. Gwinnett County already offers a number of workshops to teach the public about stormwater management, but it will continually be necessary to find creative ways to build capacity for stormwater maintenance. Some communities have worked with private entities – both for profit companies and nonprofit organizations – to further build capacity for stormwater maintenance. The case study on the opposite page provides details about Atlanta CREW, a workforce development program that provides training on proper green infrastructure maintenance.

**CASE STUDY:**

*FRONT YARD TREE PLANTING PROGRAM—DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA*

Trees Atlanta, a nonprofit organization, currently partners with the following municipalities to administer front yard tree planting programs: City of Atlanta, City of Sandy Springs, City of Brookhaven, City of Decatur, City of Dunwoody, and DeKalb County. These local governments each have an agreement with Trees Atlanta, whereby Trees Atlanta provides a certain number of trees to residents who apply for a front yard tree planting. Depending on how the program is set up, the local government can subsidize the cost, even making the trees available at no cost to the resident.

DeKalb County’s partnership with Trees Atlanta is branded as Releaf DeKalb. DeKalb County has taken their program to the next level—Releaf DeKalb I was focused on front yard tree planting at residences, but Releaf DeKalb II expanded the program to include public properties. DeKalb

County sets up service days for the public property plantings and coordinates with Trees Atlanta to encourage volunteerism. In the first two months of 2023, DeKalb Releaf II had already planted 214 trees in the public rights of way. Gwinnett Department of Community Services, in conjunction with other County partners, should look into the feasibility of implementing a similar program in Gwinnett.



*Photo Source:  
Releaf DeKalb (Source: DeKalb County)*

## CASE STUDY:

### ATLANTA CREW GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Atlanta CREW, which stands for Culture-Resilience-Environment-Workforce, is a free workforce development program that operates in the City of Atlanta, particularly in the Utoy Creek watershed. It is a partnership of Southface Institute and West Atlanta Watershed Alliance. This program provides hands on training to community members to be able to install and maintain a green infrastructure facility. In addition, the program partners with landscaping employers to help their newly trained participants land job opportunities.

The City of Atlanta's Water Equity Roadmap includes Atlanta CREW as a promising practice. This callout helps to elevate the good work that these nonprofits are doing to expand community-based green infrastructure. Atlanta CREW's green infrastructure installations are unique because they are designed with cultural and artistic visions.



*Photo: Atlanta CREW (Source: Southface Institute)*

## CASE STUDY:

### STORMWATER QUALITY PROJECTS INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM— LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

Through the Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grant program, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government provides a mechanism for sharing costs for green infrastructure installations with the private sector. Eligible applicants include businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools, churches, homeowners associations, and other incorporated community groups. By participating, these entities can earn a credit on their Water Quality Management Fee (similar to Gwinnett County's Stormwater utility fee). The Incentive Grant Program provides three different types of grants depending on the purpose and type of applicant. Businesses, schools, churches, and nonprofits can apply for infrastructure retrofit projects, including but not limited to pervious pavement or bioretention features such as rain gardens. Design and construction projects can apply for a maximum of \$360,000 with a 20 percent cost share, which can be met through an in kind donation. Feasibility studies can be funded as well, with a maximum grant award of \$55,000 including a 20 percent cost share.

The second type of Incentive Grants support educational programming either in school curriculums or through community outreach. These grants are also available for businesses, churches, schools, and nonprofits. If the application meets the program criteria, the applicant can be awarded \$3,000 with no cost share, and up to \$40,000 with a 20 percent cost share. The third type of Incentive Grants are available to neighborhood groups such as homeowners' associations. These grants can support both physical improvements (such as rain gardens) as well as educational or volunteer programming such as stream cleanups. Applications that meet the program criteria can be awarded a maximum of \$120,000 with a cost share of 20 percent.

The webpage for the Incentive Grant Program shares a number of resources, such as templates for neighborhood associations interested in rain gardens or stream cleanups. LFUCG also shares information about funded projects through an interactive map.

*Photo: LFUCG Incentive Grant Case Study (Source: Gresham Smith)*

*Frontier Highway, a 900-unit multifamily property, implemented green infrastructure retrofits with funding from the Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grant Program. It created a water walk consisting of rain gardens, pervious pavers, and educational signage to highlight the site's green infrastructure features. Source: Gresham Smith*





## **FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AMENITIES THAT PROVIDE MULTIPLE BENEFITS**

As daily communities seek to become more vibrant places, green infrastructure is an important component to require of development—particularly, green infrastructure that is designed to function as a community amenity. There is not a one size fits all approach for green infrastructure, but there is a wealth of resources and examples for the development community to reference. For projects both large and small, the County should promote collaboration with the private sector to introduce innovative solutions that yield numerous public benefits.

### **1 DEVELOP A MENU OF BEST PRACTICES FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ACHIEVE MULTIPLE BENEFITS**

Stakeholders in the 2045 Unified Plan process have expressed that stormwater management BMPs are often selected merely to check the box for water quality and quantity control, per the County's development regulations and Stormwater Management Manual. It is not typical for developers to include green infrastructure elements that can be considered community amenities.

Through this plan, and subsequent policy documents and programs, Gwinnett County can foster more desirable types of green infrastructure. The County should bring together a set of stakeholders to develop a menu of desirable green infrastructure practices. This menu can serve as guidance for developers in the short term. Longer term, the County may consider codifying the menu of options, potentially requiring the fulfillment of a certain number of criteria. Alternatively, the County could incentivize these green infrastructure practices through a County led grant program.

### **2 PROVIDE TRANSPARENCY ABOUT HOW GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IS PERFORMING**

Public education is a key component of the County's watershed stewardship practices. To inform the public of steps the County has taken to mitigate climate change, a central website hub for education about green infrastructure metrics could significantly contribute to teaching community members about the value of ecosystem services. Interactive maps, dashboards, and other online tools can be utilized to share information in an engaging way.

## CASE STUDY:

### *PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM—SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA*

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission developed a Green Infrastructure Grant Program in 2019. All projects must meet minimum performance metrics for stormwater management, but beyond that, the competitiveness of the applications is determined by how well the applicant demonstrates that the green infrastructure will provide multiple benefits. Applicants must meet at least two of the cobenefit categories identified in the Grant Guidebook. The categories are: 1) Environmental Justice, 2) Public Access, Open Space, and Recreation, 3) Community Engagement, Collaboration, and Placemaking, 4) Education and Water Stewardship, 5) Green Infrastructure Job Training, 6) Water Supply, 7) Climate Resilience, and 8) Biodiversity.

The Green Infrastructure Grant is capped at a maximum of \$930,000 per impervious acre managed, or a total of \$2,000,000 per grant. The Green Infrastructure Grant Agreement requires that the property owner maintains the project for 20 years. The maintenance agreement is incorporated as a Declaration of Deed Restriction that is recorded against the property.



*Photo: San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Green Infrastructure Grant (Source: SFPUC)*

## CASE STUDY:

### RIVER AUTHORITY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE DASHBOARD—SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Since 2014, the San Antonio River Authority has provided incentives, such as rebates, for the creation of green infrastructure features. The Authority collects information from the projects that it funds, not only for recordkeeping purposes, but also to highlight the data through a public education hub. The San Antonio River Authority's website displays a Green Stormwater Infrastructure Dashboard, with key metrics such as total projects, funding type, volume treated, sediment removed, and bacteria removed. As a part of the dashboard, viewers can zoom in on an interactive map to see where the green infrastructure projects have occurred. By clicking on individual project points on the map, more information about the specific project can be found.

Gwinnett County DWR is experienced with using dashboards to convey information and glean insights. A green infrastructure dashboard would be a great next step for the County to engage the public in its watershed stewardship efforts.

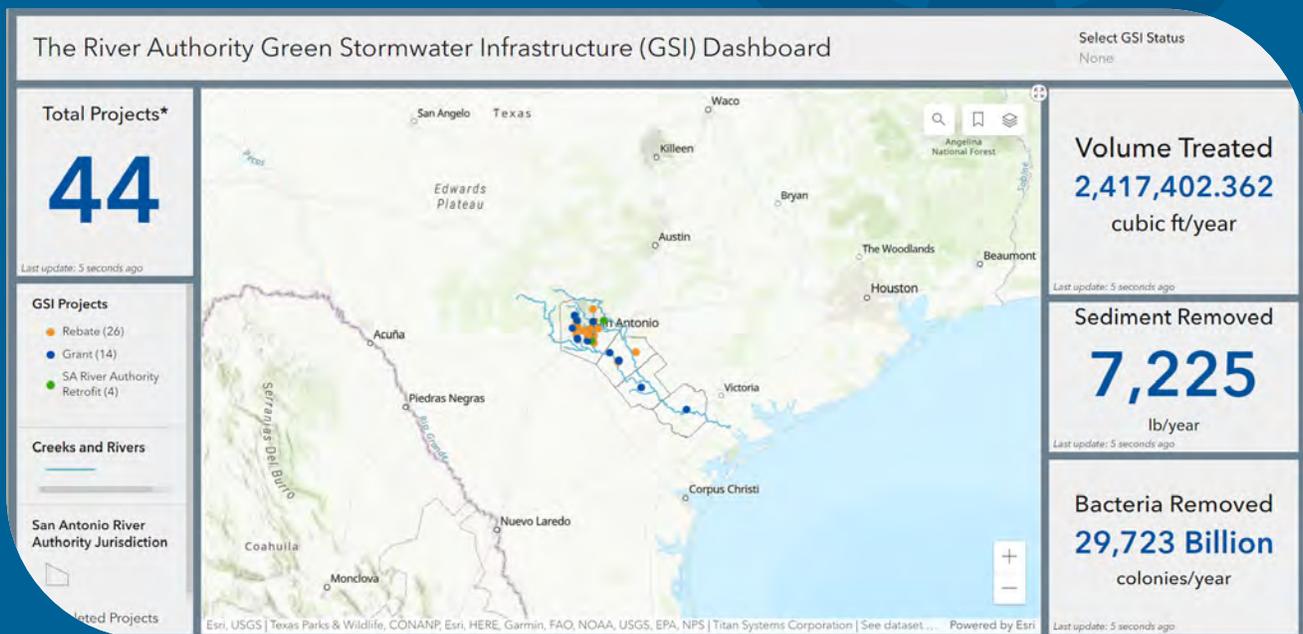


Photo: Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Dashboard  
(Source: San Antonio River Authority)

# Implementation

## **SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION**

In this Community Work Program, starting on page 435, each of the goals is broken down into a series of strategies and action steps. Most of these action steps will involve coordination between Gwinnett County Departments, including Planning and Development, Water Resources, and others depending on the location of infrastructure projects.

While these Departments should have ownership over many of these actions, others will require partnerships with other organizations, agencies, and governmental bodies. Gwinnett County's new Sustainability Commission, for example, should be involved in projects that overlap with their strategic pillars. The County should also continue its involvement with the Metro Water District for strong, regional water planning efforts.



# 06



# TRANSPORTATION



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

Transportation is an essential element in the lives of everyone who lives, works, conducts business, and passes through Gwinnett County on a daily basis. While some public agencies provide various transportation operations in the County, transportation infrastructure in Gwinnett is operated, maintained, and improved primarily by the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation. Gwinnett DOT's stated mission is to enhance quality of life by facilitating the mobility of people and goods safely and efficiently. Gwinnett DOT seeks to accomplish this mission by planning, constructing, operating, and maintaining aviation, transit, and surface transportation systems in Gwinnett. Several aspects of surface transportation (roads, bridges, sidewalks and trails) and transit functions are particularly important in supporting the everyday lives of those who live and work in Gwinnett and in supporting the Daily Community.

# TRANSPORTATION FOCUS AREAS

## 1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation is particularly important to the Daily Community, and it should be considered an integral part of the local transportation and community network. Local pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in most areas of Gwinnett is not currently fully integrated with land uses or with other modes of travel. Pedestrians and cyclists may feel unsafe crossing or traveling along roadsides and trip distances may be infeasible, particularly for pedestrians.

## 2 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

The road right of way has four primary users: personal vehicles, commercial vehicles, transit vehicles, and pedestrians/cyclists. Currently, road rights of way in Gwinnett heavily favor personal and commercial vehicles for reasons discussed earlier. This infrastructure does not fully provide features that integrate all of these uses, restricting some users from reaching their destinations safely and efficiently. While certain improvements and accommodations are required to carry active and transit users, personal and commercial vehicles will still require roadway capacity in a safe and efficient manner in many of the corridors within Gwinnett's various and diverse communities. In some areas, features that restrict speed, improve both vehicular and active use safety, encourage use of more thoroughfares instead of local roads, and provide alternatives may require additional investment.

## 3 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Transit service is currently limited in Gwinnett in terms of overall coverage, frequency, efficiency, and last mile connectivity, reducing its usefulness in many local communities. Additionally, supporting infrastructure such as turn outs, stops, stations, hubs, dedicated lanes, and amenities are not fully developed and are not entirely coordinated with land use and development. Transit funding for both capital construction and longterm operations is constrained and competes with various other important County functions. This limits the full implementation of improvements that would significantly increase the network and supporting infrastructure that would result in adoption of this mode by many more residents and workers.

# Existing Conditions

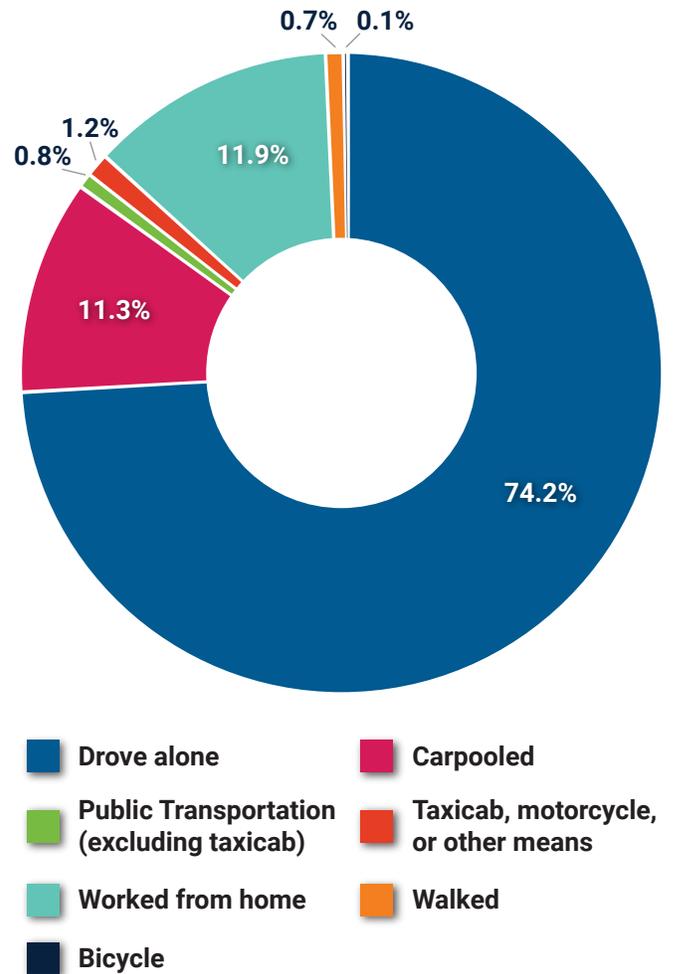
## COMMUTING PATTERNS

Gwinnett’s development patterns and transportation mode uses are important to understanding the challenges facing current transportation infrastructure and its support of the Daily Community. Due to suburban growth patterns, the automobile continues to be the leading mode of travel in Gwinnett County. Beginning in the early 1980s, Gwinnett grew rapidly as a bedroom community for the metropolitan Atlanta area. Major thoroughfares such as I-85, Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, SR 141, SR 316, Lawrenceville Highway, and US 78, provided connectivity between regional employment centers and residential developments in Gwinnett. A reputation for high quality schools and parks further spurred rapid residential development throughout the county. Historically, both public support as well as public and private sector investments reinforced this car centric culture. From 2017 to 2021, data shows 75% of Gwinnett trips were made via single occupancy vehicles (Figure 6-1). A moderate number of workers carpooled or worked from home, whereas transit and active transportation only accounted for a very small percentage of trips.

While over 85 percent of Gwinnett workers travel to their jobs by single occupant vehicle or carpool, and many of these trips were quite long (over 25% are 25 miles or longer), a significant number of workers are finding jobs somewhat closer to home. As of 2020, over 35% of residents travel less than 10 miles in their commutes. Both the distance of commute and the direction can be seen in Figure 6-2.

**FIGURE 6-1: TRIPS TO WORK BY TYPE**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

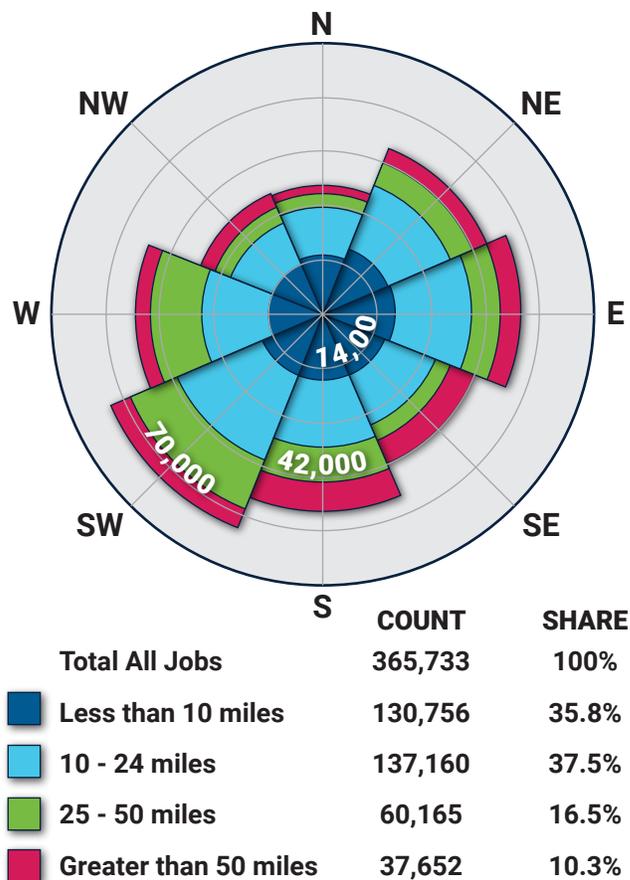


Transportation planning in Gwinnett County is governed by a few key planning processes and investment programs. These include the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax; Destination 2050, Gwinnett County's 2050 Comprehensive Transportation Plan, and the Transit Development Plan. To address some of the major challenges facing the County's transportation system, County leadership and staff acknowledge that multimodal options must be expanded while also providing support for improvements to its roadways. These priorities are reflected in the recently approved 2023 SPLOST list of projects, as well as the recommendations that will be developed as part of the ongoing CTP and TDP processes (see page 299-300).

To serve these emerging trends, a sensible, multimodal transportation system should be developed. A balanced system uses multiple modes of travel—including **Active Transportation** (bicycles and walking), **Surface Transportation** (personal and freight vehicles), and **Public Transportation**—to move people and goods safely and efficiently not only with cross county and regional mobility in mind, but also to serve the needs of the Daily Community. To support the land uses and development patterns as proposed in other elements of the plan, the Transportation element of the 2045 Unified Plan identifies issues and corresponding needs that should be addressed within the major modes of travel. While each mode is closely interconnected with the others, their unique features and challenges as part of the Daily Community are discussed separately here and in following sections of this element.

## FIGURE 6-2: COMMUTE DISTANCE

SOURCE: LONGITUDINAL EMPLOYER-HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS (LEHD) 2020 DATASET



While SPLOST, the CTP, and the TDP are addressing more regional improvements, they also propose allocating resources to needs at a smaller scale. Major shifts in work culture and technology mean that Gwinnett's future transportation system requires a balanced, multimodal network. The ability for many people to work from virtually anywhere has eliminated many traditional commuting trips. Additionally, many Gwinnett residents favor a community where most trips, including most work trips, can be accomplished without the need for a privately owned vehicle.

# COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANNING EFFORTS

Gwinnett is engaged in multiple ongoing planning efforts that overlap in terms of subject matter and addressing the future needs of the community. Two of the three planning processes listed here (the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Transit Development Plan) were developed in concurrence with the 2045 Unified Plan. The CTP and TDP examine transportation and transit needs at a much more detailed level, including project funding estimates and tiered programming. Meanwhile, the Unified Plan focuses on broader, aspirational goals and high level policy recommendations that incorporate and support the others' more granular recommendations. The plans' similar timelines allowed for a greater level of coordination that can support the vision set forth by the Unified Plan of building Daily Communities across Gwinnett.

## DESTINATION 2050 (COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN)

The CTP for Gwinnett County envisions a transportation system that:

1. Enhances safety and mobility for all people across all modes of travel
2. Preserves community livability and attractiveness
3. Respects and values existing community open spaces and prioritizes transportation projects that positively impact the human and natural environment
4. Proactively embraces future transportation opportunities, continues to be a good steward of transportation resources, expands connectivity, and leverages the county's transportation system to improve (support) economic vitality and quality of life.

The vision statements developed for Destination 2050 are either entirely consistent with or supportive of the primary recommendations found in the Transportation Element of the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan.

Similarly, Destination 2050 goals related to safety, resilience and climate, and improved connectivity are closely aligned with and advocate recommendations in the Unified Plan related to transportation. Some Destination 2050 goals are more specific than typically would be included in a comprehensive plan. For example, expanding infrastructure to support electric vehicles, enhancing asset management practices and software are appropriately included as specific goals in the CTP. This review concludes that both the high level and more detailed objectives outlined in the CTP are either supportive of or entirely consistent with transportation policies and investments that further the Daily Community concept as advocated in the 2045 Unified Plan.

## TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Transit Development Plan set several ambitious goals for transit service in Gwinnett, including:

1. Increase mobility options for all Gwinnett residents
2. Improve access to mobility options to connect people to more places, more jobs, and support economic development
3. Enhance the user's experience by making transit easy to use, safe, and comfortable
4. Create vibrant multimodal places that generate a variety of activities
5. Minimize environmental impact by reducing cars on the road and using cleaner technology
6. Provide robust information about mobility alternatives and their benefits to all residents

The plan proposes a system that connects 100% of Gwinnett residents to transit service by 2033. This is accomplished through a suite of fixed route as well as innovative micro transit zones (explored in further detail on page 324). The plan was approved by the Board of Commissioners in September 2023.

## INTEGRATION WITH 2045 UNIFIED PLAN CONCEPTS

The CTP, TDP, and the Countywide Trails Master Plan support multiple recommendations made by the 2045 Unified Plan, especially in regard to building safe and enjoyable communities across Gwinnett. The table below highlights a few of these concepts.

TRANSPORTATION PLANS		FEATURES				
PLAN NAME	DESCRIPTION	LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY	SUPPORTS DAILY COMMUNITY	PEDESTRIAN SAFETY	REDUCED AUTO DEPENDENCY	ADDRESSES ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan	Envisions more than tripling the existing system through capital investments in new trail facilities with design standards, including cohesive branding and a identification system.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Destination 2050: Gwinnett County's Comprehensive Transportation Plan	The CTP outlines how the County's transportation needs will be met using Land Use information, transportation network details, including roads, transit routes, bicycle amenities, and pedestrian facilities and transportation performance data, such as travel time, cost, and congestion.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transit Development Plan	The TDP evaluated changing transportation demands, considered significant population growth, and aligned transit services and infrastructure investments with the County's identified priorities and needs.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Gwinnett County transportation system maintains more than 2,650 centerline miles of roadway, 2,500 miles of sidewalk, and 750 traffic signals, most with interconnected Intelligent Transportation System capabilities. A limited trails system is also in place across the county. Ride Gwinnett services seven local routes and five commuter routes with 92 transit buses. Paratransit vans provide door-to-door service for transit riders who qualify based on a condition that keeps them from driving and who live within close proximity to local routes. A new micro transit service in Snellville and Lawrenceville is currently being implemented. The Gwinnett DOT also operates a 500 acre general aviation airport, Briscoe Field.

Several existing and ongoing plans, including the current CTP and TDP, as well as the existing Countywide Trails Master Plan, contain components that support the Daily Community concept. These three planning documents provide existing conditions, funded and identified transportation improvements, needs, and recommendations that allow for alignment between the Unified Plan and transportation planning moving forward. The three primary modes of transportation—Active Transportation, Surface Transportation, and Public Transportation—are discussed to assess current conditions, such as existing physical infrastructure, travel patterns, demographics associated with transportation uses, and service levels. In addition to existing conditions, upcoming initiatives and projects that are planned and have some level of committed funding have also been documented.

GWINNETT COUNTY HAS

750

TRAFFIC SIGNALS

2,500

MILES OF  
SIDEWALK

2,650

CENTERLINE MILES  
OF ROADWAY

## SIDEWALKS

Gwinnett developed as a suburban destination from west to east. Early residential developments lacked requirements for the addition of sidewalks at the time. Consequently, older subdivisions and many roadways in the western part of the county have lacked sidewalks. Beginning in the early 1990s, Gwinnett required the installation of sidewalks as part of many new developments through its development regulation process. SPLOST revenues have also been used to add many miles of sidewalk along public roadways and a limited number of multiuse side trails.

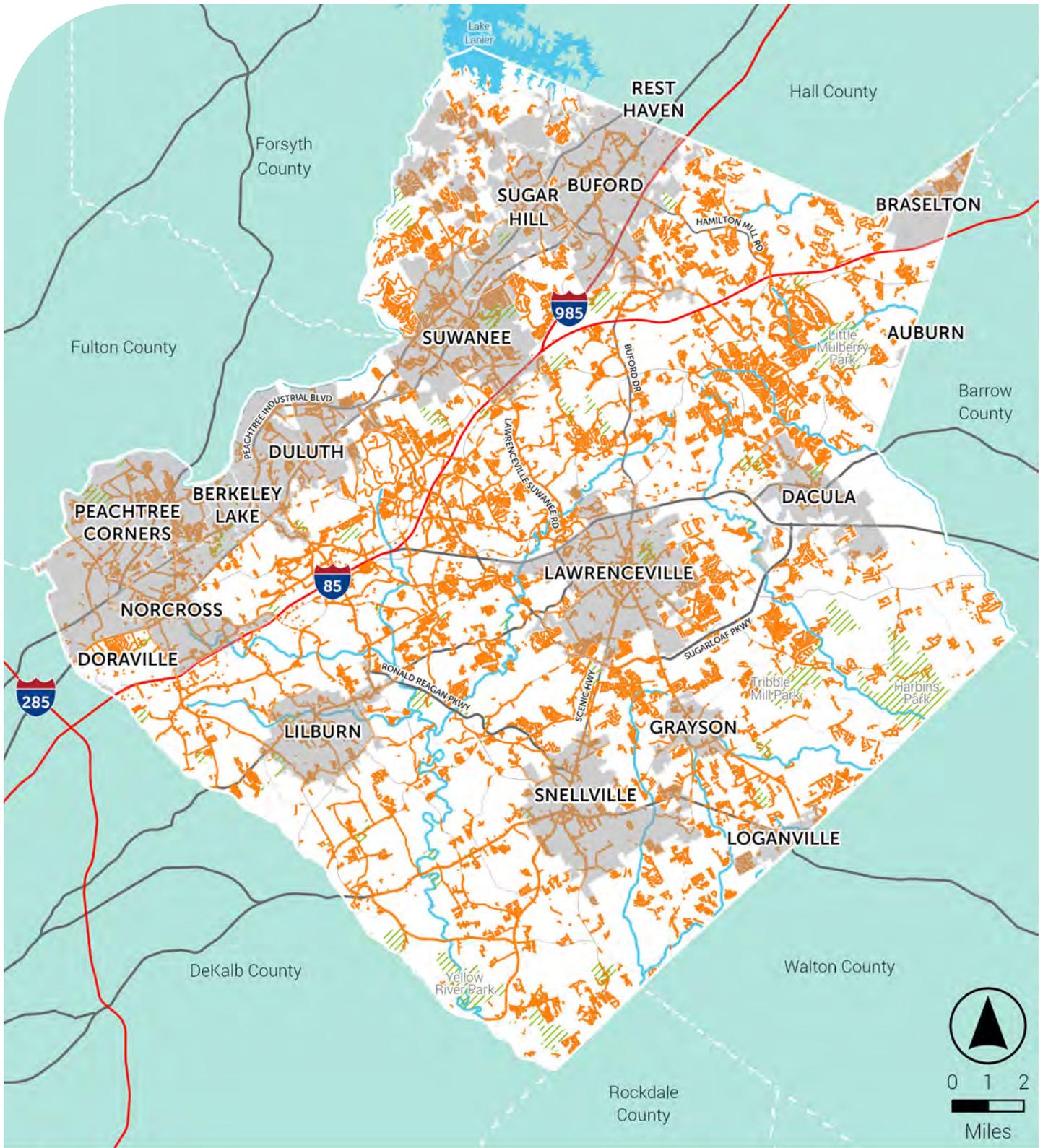
Recent programs have also included funding to upgrade roadway crossings to improve pedestrian and bike safety as it interacts with vehicular traffic. Coverage is still somewhat limited in quite a few areas of the County (Figure 6-3, page 303). In many locations where sidewalks are prevalent, they currently exist on only one side of the road.

### SIDEWALKS VS. TRAILS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The distinguishing characteristic of a sidewalk versus a trail/multiuse path is not necessarily width but rather the intended use of the facility. A public sidewalk is generally limited to use by pedestrians whereas trails/multiuse paths can be used by pedestrians, bicyclists, and other modes of nonmotorized transportation. Another key difference is that public sidewalk is almost always constructed within the right of way of an adjacent roadway, whereas a trail/multiuse path may be constructed independently of the road right of way.

Funding sources for active transportation improvements include local transportation sales tax dollars, local recreation funds, federal transportation funds distributed from the Atlanta Regional Commission, and partnerships between the County and other organizations such as the CIDs. The recent Federal Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act includes funding specifically designed to help local communities create safe places for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Countywide Trails Master Plan recommends approximately \$1 billion in projects including specific alignments of the numerous trails across Gwinnett. Additionally, recent SPLOST program unfunded project lists have included many more requests for additional sidewalk than SPLOST funding could address. In addition to using funds specifically earmarked for active transportation projects, both Gwinnett DOT and GDOT generally require sidewalk and pedestrian infrastructure to be included in roadway project designs. This requirement has resulted in the addition of more sidewalks to the system, even from project types not directly associated with pedestrian and bike projects, such as intersection improvements and major road widenings. Although numerous sources of funding exist to develop active transportation improvements, in the past, available funding was not sufficient to meet all requests and needs. Identified projects significantly exceed funding availability, therefore careful consideration is given when deciding where to use resources.



**Legend**

- Rivers
- Sidewalks
- ▨ Parks

**FIGURE 6-3. CURRENT SIDEWALKS (2016)**

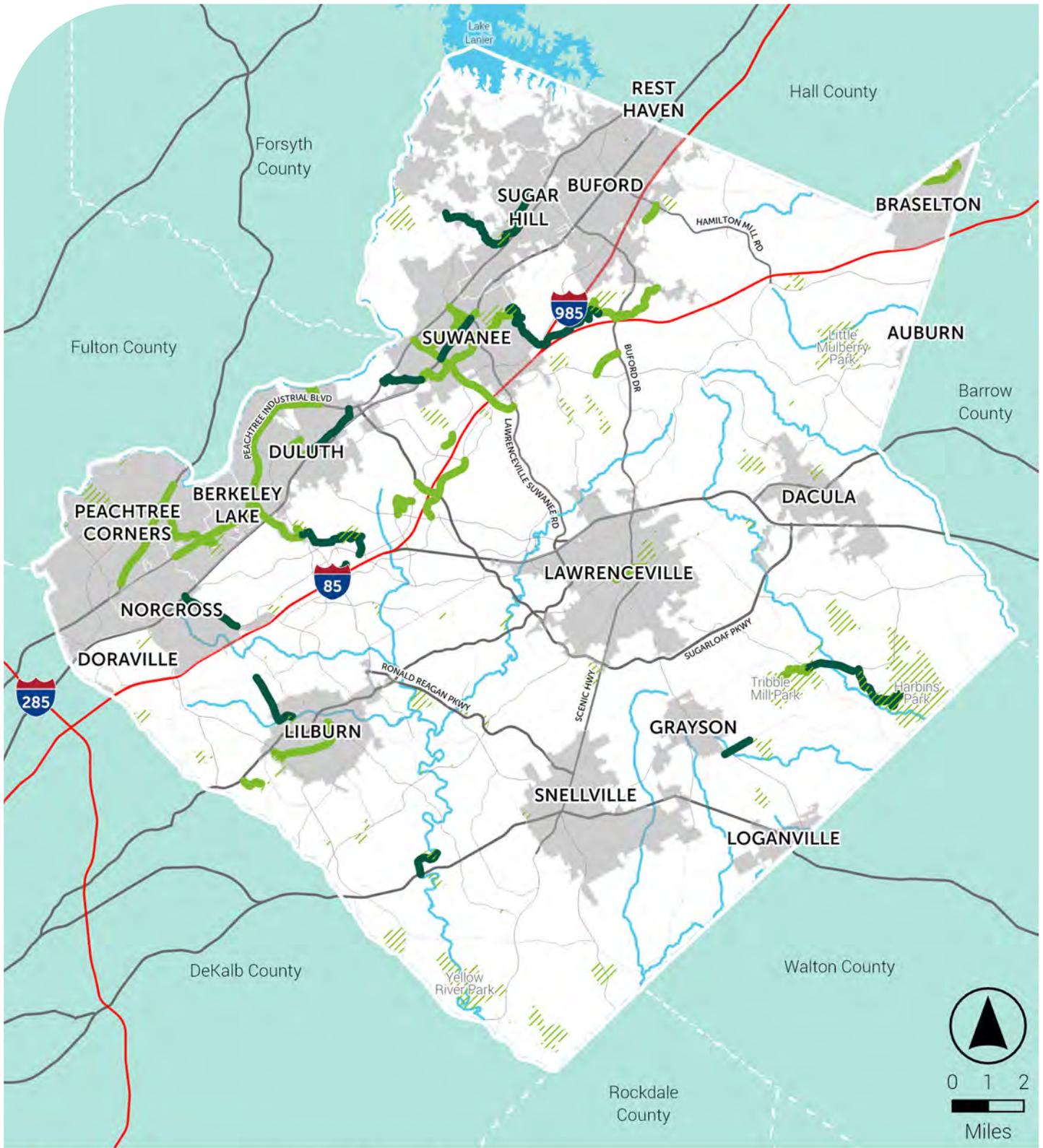
## SIDEWALKS CONTINUED

In addition to publicly funded infrastructure projects, the Gwinnett County Unified Development Ordinance states that sidewalks and curb ramps shall be constructed in all new development or redevelopment along all abutting or internal streets. (Section 900-90.1). The Unified Development Ordinance also includes requirements which help address issues of connectivity, utility, and pedestrian safety. Developers must connect proposed sidewalks on developed property to the adjacent property's sidewalks. The Unified Development Ordinance also includes sidewalk design and construction standards related to sidewalk width and setbacks. Section 900-100.1 of the Unified Development Ordinance includes requirements for multiuse paths. Where provided, multiuse trails and paths must be a minimum of 10 feet in width. Multiuse paths must be designed to minimize direct auto pedestrian and/or auto conflicts by such means as striping and signs, and shall connect to crosswalks at intersections, where applicable. Multiuse paths shall be concrete, except if the multiuse path is constructed in a floodplain, adjacent to a stream, or adjacent to undisturbed land, then alternative surfaces, such as pervious asphalt, may be considered.

## TRAILS

Some trails in Gwinnett, such as those located inside large county and city parks, were built for recreational purposes. Other trails, such as the Western Gwinnett Bikeway and the Ivy Creek Greenway serve both recreational users as well as mobility purposes. In addition to serving a mobility or recreational need, trails in Gwinnett generally assume one of two forms. Off-road trails follow their own alignment and often run adjacent to streams or through utility easements and allow for encounters with the natural environment. Most of the trails that have been built outside of public parks in Gwinnett are described as side paths in the Countywide Trails Master Plan, and they are built directly adjacent to roadways.





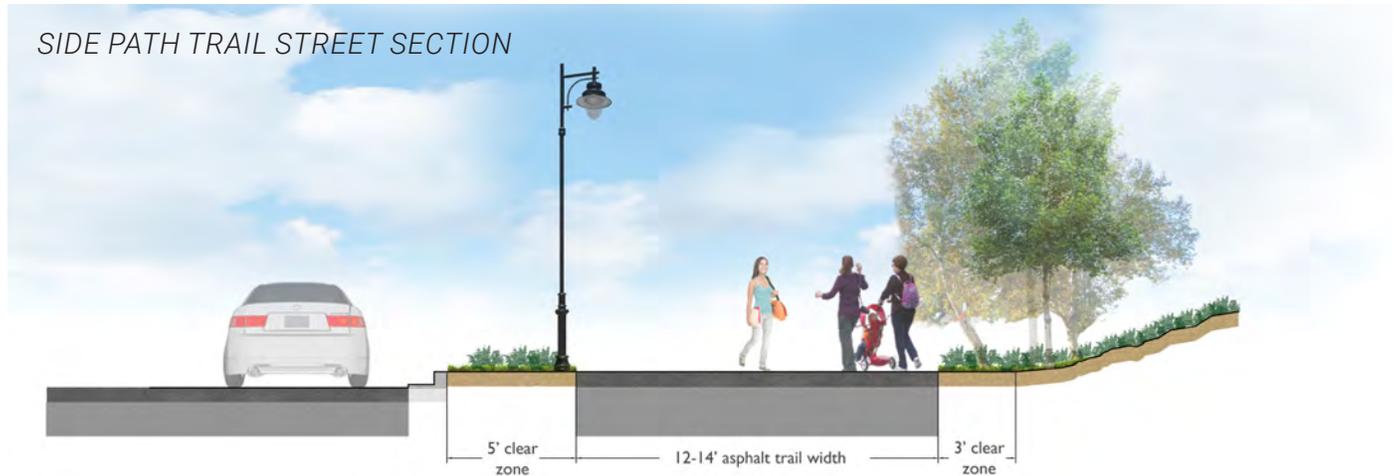
**Legend**

- Rivers
- Existing Trail
- Parks
- Funded Trail

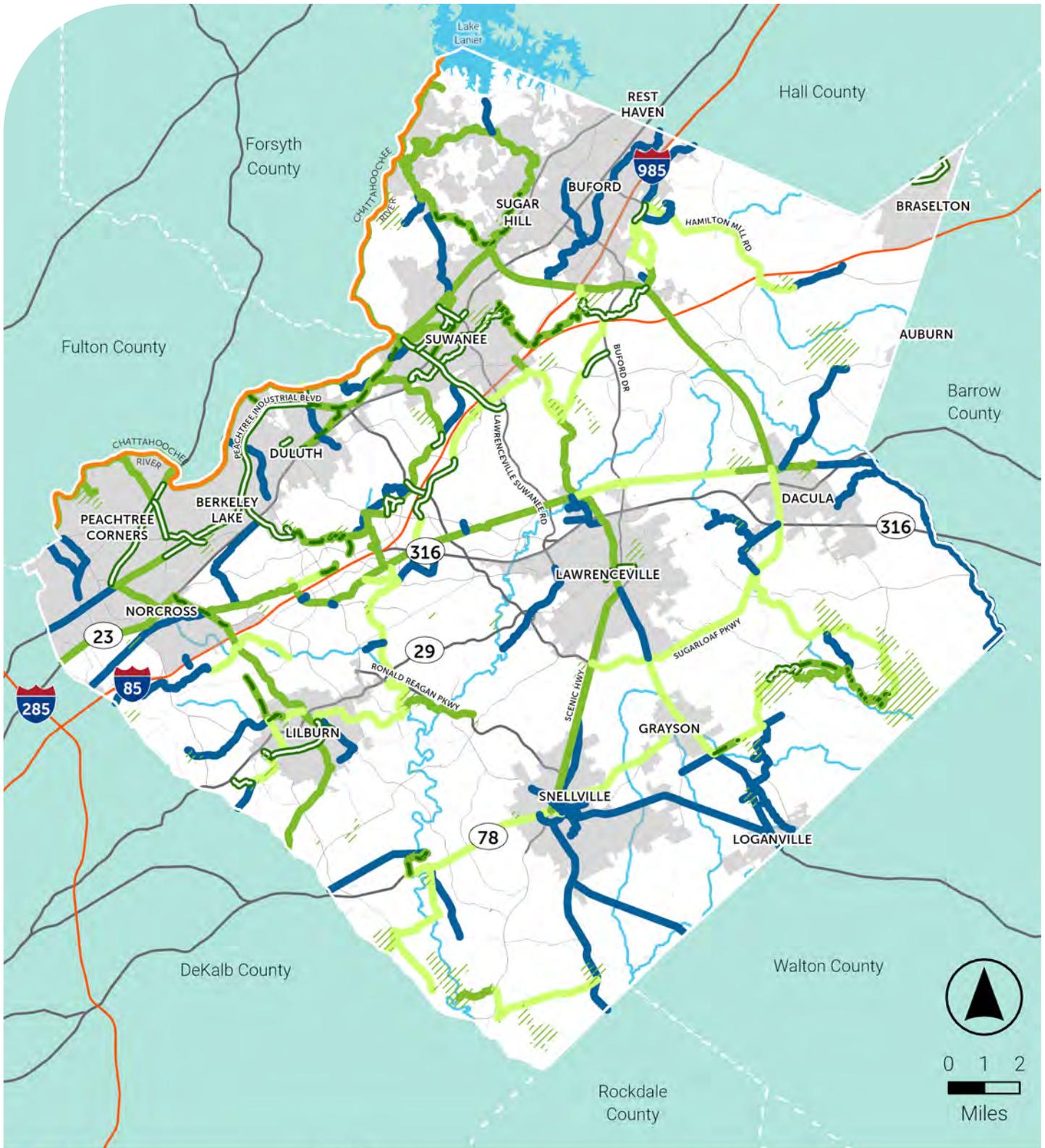
**FIGURE 6-4.  
EXISTING TRAILS**

## TRAILS CONTINUED

Over 145 miles of multiuse paths are open to date, with additional significant additions underway. Existing trails (Figure 6-4) are mostly located in western Gwinnett, as is documented in the Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan. The plan also identifies numerous proposed trails, with initial priority placed on a Core Trail Network, followed by Priority Trails. Trails with Partners are a third tier of identified trails that may be built through County development and redevelopment requirements or other partnerships (Figure 6-5).



The Countywide Trails Master Plan also includes a branding/wayfinding effort to create an identity for the system while also helping to promote usage as well as continued and enhanced investment in the system. Different wayfinding and signage types can enhance the aesthetic experience and safety of the system. Each type functions to fulfill a specific need or purpose, while borrowing from a consistent palette of colors and materials to create a cohesive design and character. Branding/wayfinding can also be tailored to smaller, specified areas to reflect the unique characteristics that may be present in the community.



**Legend**

- Rivers
- ▨ Parks

**Existing & Funded Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails**

- Existing Trail
- - - Funded Trail

**Planned Trails**

- Core Trail Network
- Priority Trails
- Trails with Partners
- Chattahoochee Trail Network

**FIGURE 6-5.  
PLANNED TRAILS**

## TRAILS CONTINUED

The Countywide Trails Master Plan also makes recommendations regarding trail design standards. Off road trails are ideally 12 to 14 feet in width and typically will be constructed with concrete as well as timber bridges and boardwalks around wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas. Side paths, also ideally 12 to 14 feet in width, are multiuse trails that run adjacent to the roadway with a buffer separation in between the trail and the roadway. These trails typically will be constructed with asphalt. In addition to sidewalk and trail projects, another important aspect of active transportation safety is the implementation of safer roadway crossings. Depending on the location and particular deficiency, these improvements can include installing enhanced crosswalks, flashing beacons, high intensity activated crosswalk signals, improved striping and signage, pedestrian overpasses, refuge islands, and other measures. The installation of street lighting in high pedestrian and bike usage areas also improves safety and security. Gwinnett regularly uses these techniques at locations across the county. SPLOST funding is set aside for these improvements.



*Pictured: Suwanee Creek Greenway*

# SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

The County maintains more than 2,650 centerline miles of roadway. Two lane residential streets make up most of this mileage. Other road classifications include major and minor arterials, major and minor collectors, and principal arterials. Ronald Reagan Parkway and sections of Sugarloaf Parkway operate as freeways and are maintained by the County. Considerable local funds have been used in the past to improve interstate highways and state routes although the County does not have maintenance responsibility for these roads. Most of the state routes and arterial roadways have been widened to at least four lanes, and several routes in Gwinnett serving regional trips have been widened to six lanes.

## TRAFFIC CONGESTION

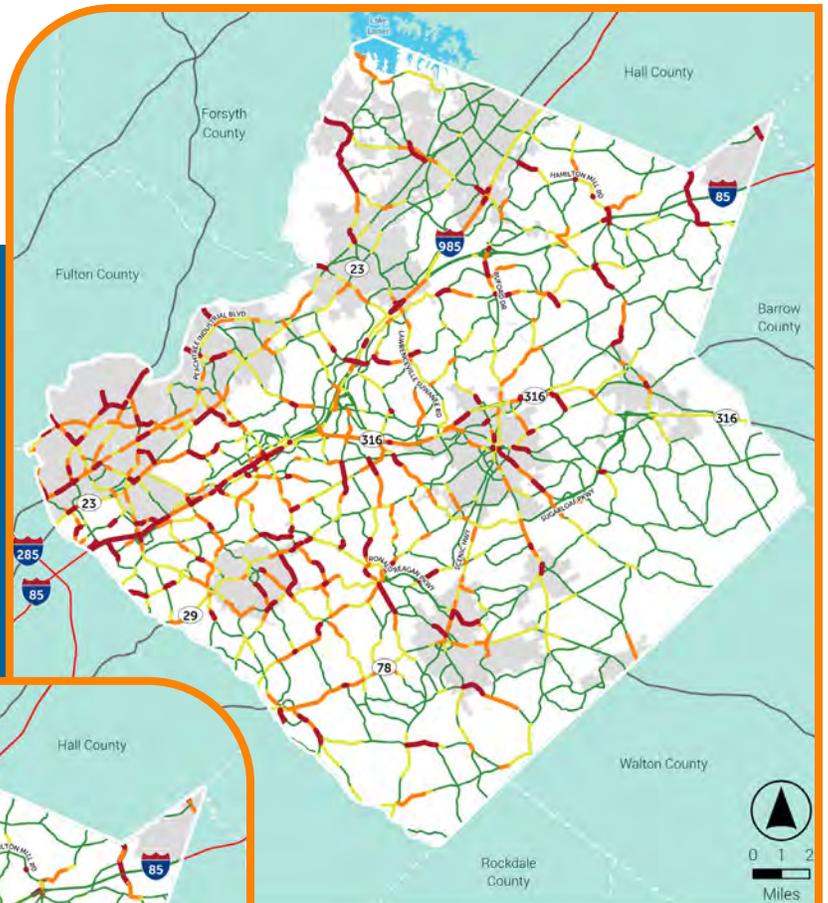
There are 752 signalized intersections in Gwinnett, as well as 250 Closed Circuit Television cameras. The County monitors and optimizes signal timing to reduce delays at intersections. Congestion is prevalent on many roadways in the county. Daily traffic counts show that the highest traffic volumes occur along I-85 in the western portion of the county. Some roads that connect to and across I-85 also have high traffic volumes of 60,000 vehicles per day or more. In fact, many corridors throughout the county, both radial toward Atlanta and cross-county, experience significant congestion and delays in peak and even offpeak hours. This condition is common in large metropolitan areas across the Country.

This congestion affects both private automobiles and freight vehicles which rely on the surface transportation system as do transit vehicles that do not operate in their own space. Truck traffic is at or reaching a level of high congestion on many road segments across the county. The following maps show roadway level of service in 2020 during the AM and PM peak periods. LOS E and F shown on the maps in orange and red, respectively, indicate corridors at or exceeding capacity (Figure 6-6). Motorists, including freight and transit vehicles, experience recurring, significant congestion along many corridors across most Daily Communities in the peak travel periods.

## TRAFFIC SAFETY

While congestion is a major concern across Gwinnett, roadway safety is also of critical importance. As is the case with congestion, crash incidents are common throughout the county. Crash concentrations are highest along similar segments of road where there are the highest traffic volumes and congestion: along I-85 and on the roads that connect to I-85. There are also hotspots of crashes in and around Snellville and Lawrenceville (Figure 6-7).

**FIGURE 6-6. AM & PM LEVEL OF SERVICE**



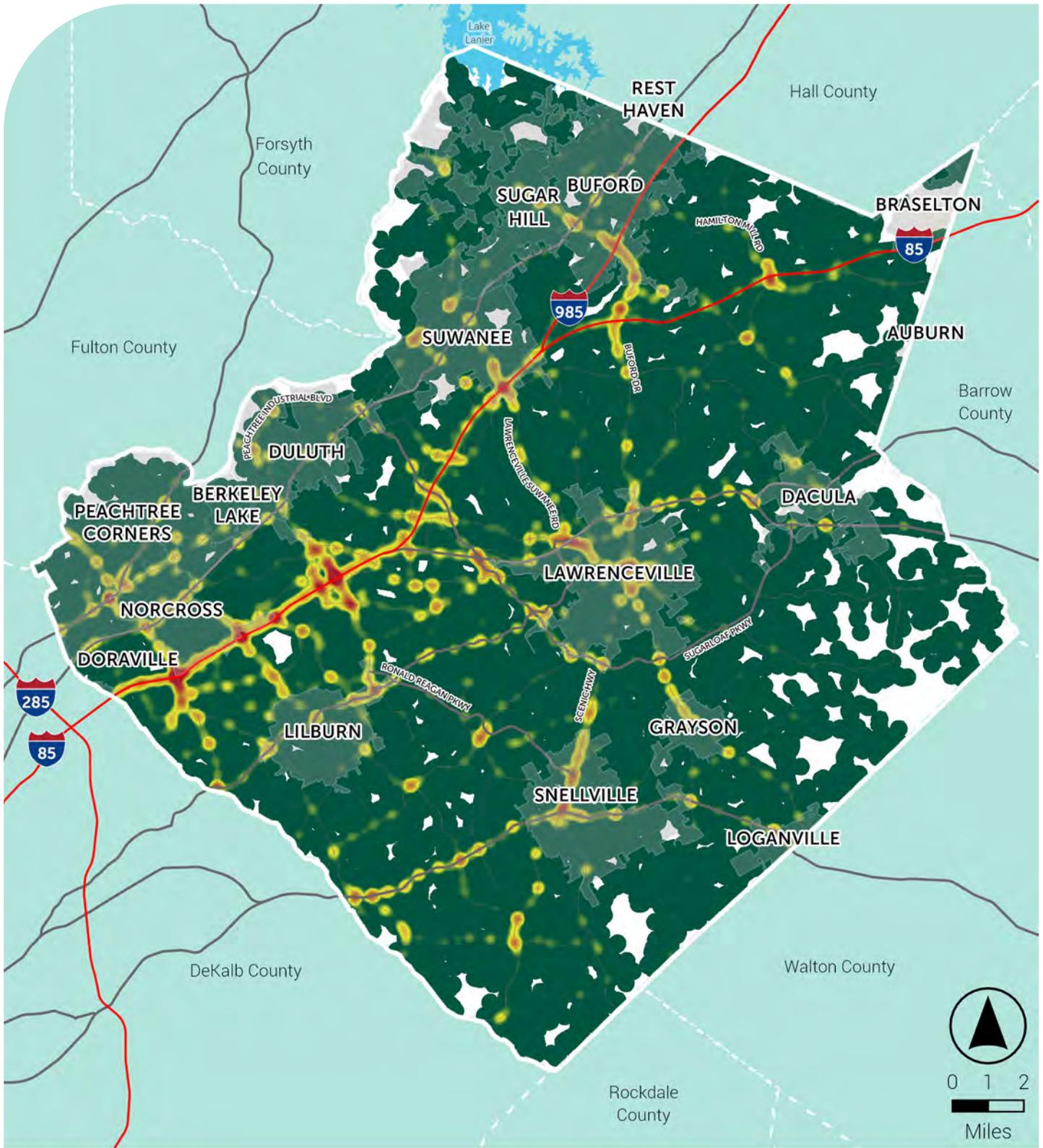
**2020 PM LOS**

- LOS A/B
- LOS C
- LOS D
- LOS E
- LOS F



**2020 AM LOS**

- LOS A/B
- LOS C
- LOS D
- LOS E
- LOS F

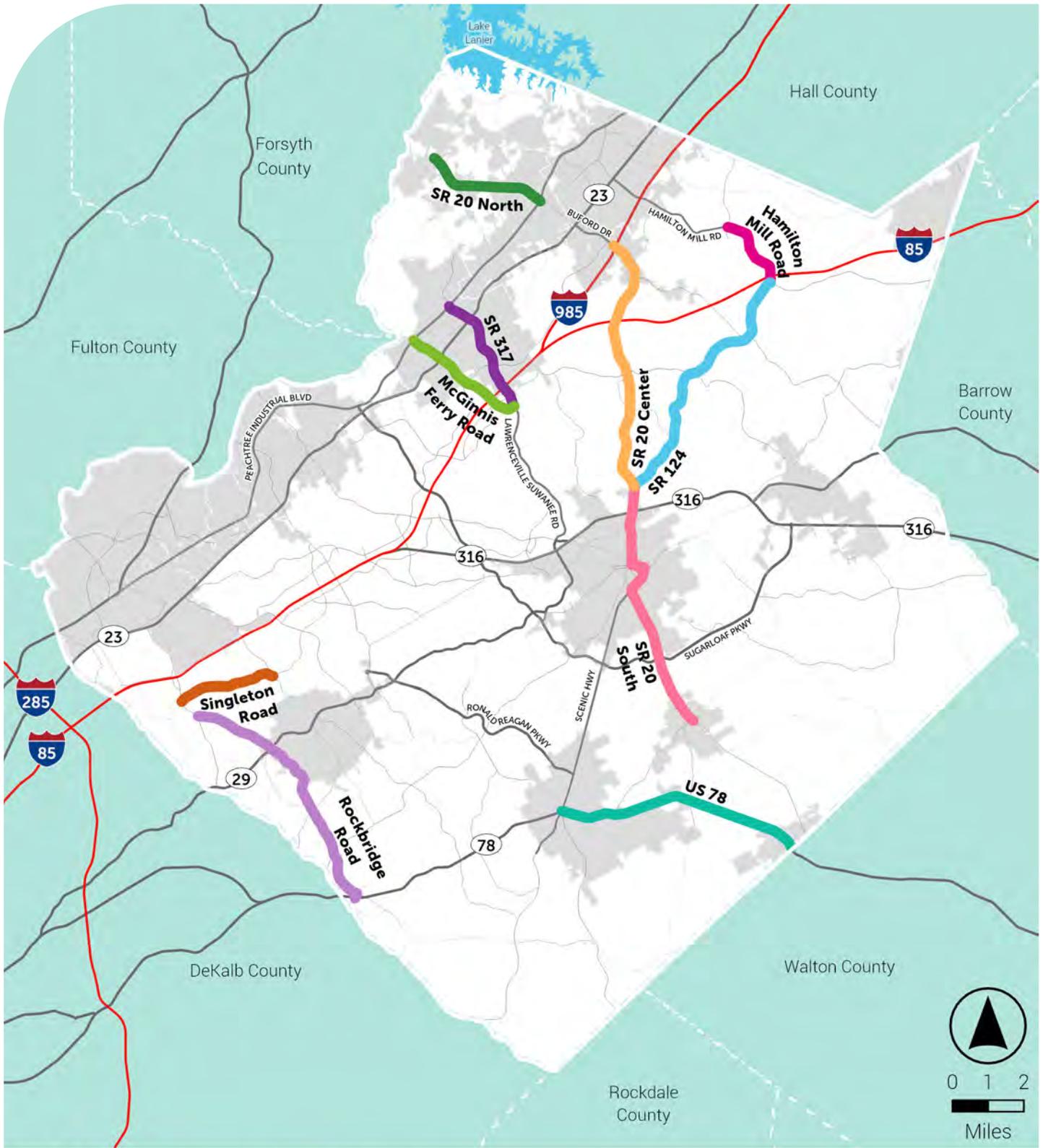


**FIGURE 6-7. CRASH HOTSPOTS**

In an effort to address both congestion and safety concerns on major thoroughfares, as part of the CTP, the County is performing detailed analyses and providing recommendations for future improvements to ten roadway corridors throughout Gwinnett (Figure 6-8).



Source:  
Gwinnett County Communications



**Legend**

- Hamilton Mill Road
- SR 20 Center
- SR 317
- McGinnis Ferry Road
- SR 20 North
- Singleton Road
- Rockbridge Road
- SR 20 South
- US 78
- SR 124

**FIGURE 6-8. CTP STUDY CORRIDORS**

While traffic congestion and safety concerns require that significant resources be dedicated to major road projects, parallel efforts to invest in more locally focused projects have been underway using SPLOST program funding for many years. Beginning with the 1997 SPLOST, and continuing through the new 2023 program, several SPLOST categories invest in projects which address needs at a smaller scale and provide operational and safety improvements. The categories include bridges, culverts, and transportation drainage, intersections, residential speed control, road safety and alignment, and school safety. These types of projects will be important to the Daily Community into the future.

Although the existing condition of transportation in Gwinnett is largely dependent on the improvements discussed above, another often overlooked aspect of the transportation network in the community is the state of good repair of the entire transportation right of way. Roadway maintenance and traffic engineering are primarily funded through the County's general fund, with resurfacing and rehabilitation, as well as bridge rehabilitation being funded through SPLOST. The existing condition of Gwinnett's road, bridge, and traffic signal systems is regarded as one of the best in the Atlanta region.



# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

Multiple operators provide scheduled, route-based public transportation that is available to Gwinnett residents within or close to the county. Ride Gwinnett is the transit service provided by Gwinnett DOT, offering local service within the county, express commuter routes to Atlanta, and paratransit service. Local bus routes presently connect to the MARTA rail station in Doraville and Gwinnett residents can also use Xpress regional commuter coach service, operated by the ATL.

Ride Gwinnett has grown to offer seven local bus routes within the county, five express bus routes to downtown Atlanta or Emory, and curb to curb paratransit, which operates within a 3/4-mile area surrounding the existing local bus route.

In 2022, Ride Gwinnett, formerly known as Gwinnett County Transit, transported over 1 million passengers. The local routes operate Monday through Saturday and are concentrated in areas between Norcross and Lawrenceville. Paratransit service hours are Monday through Saturday in line with the local fixed route bus service. The express routes operate Monday through Friday, making trips to and from Park and Ride lots in Gwinnett County and points in Atlanta. Ride Gwinnett also offers a cell phone application, MyStop, that provides real time information and trip planning assistance.



## RIDE GWINNETT

The Gwinnett County Transit Development Plan takes stock of Gwinnett’s existing transportation realities, projected growth and diversification, and input from stakeholders and the public to inform a comprehensive plan for efficient, public transportation services that will help Gwinnett meet its residents’ needs and thrive in the future. The following information provides a brief synopsis of existing conditions for Ride Gwinnett.

Gwinnett County varies widely in its density of economic activity and population. Jobs and population are highest in concentration in areas along I-85 in the southwest corner of the county, from Gwinnett’s border with DeKalb County to Suwanee, and Lawrenceville in the center of the county. More sparsely populated areas with lower job concentrations are in the eastern crescent of the county. Population density is a key factor in determining where transit service is located and what types of services should be offered. Additional demographic data can be valuable in determining ridership needs.

A 2019 onboard survey conducted by the ARC collected the following key findings about riders of GCT fixed bus routes:

- Over one quarter of riders are younger than 25. Riders aged 25 to 34 and 45 to 54 roughly account for 20 percent each. Very few fixed route riders are aged 65 or older.
- Most riders’ income is between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per year.
- Twenty-nine percent of riders do not own a vehicle.
- A majority of riders self-identify as Black or African American.
- Close to three quarters of riders are employed fulltime.
- Fulltime college students account for 17 percent of riders.
- Most trips are between home and work.



Generally, the most transit supportive land uses in Gwinnett can be found along major corridors and in population centers located west of Interstate 85 and south of SR 120/Duluth Highway. Areas south of US 29/Lawrenceville Highway and east of SR 20 primarily contain low density suburban and rural land uses. An absence of connected sidewalks and trails that tie to transit services is a critical barrier to transit usage. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure extent and quality varies widely across Gwinnett. Internal sidewalks are common in many newer developments and along major state and county maintained roads, but many residential neighborhoods lack true connectivity.

The County's past investment in Ride Gwinnett means that Gwinnett residents have access to important destinations and connectivity to the greater region. Fixed routes provide reliable, low cost trips and are a vital service to the transit dependent population. As currently configured, the local bus routes cover large geographic areas of the County and generally provide access to a majority of those most in need of public transportation. However, there remain areas with high transit propensity that are not served by fixed route transit. Gaps include areas in and around Duluth, Snellville, Mountain Park, Peachtree Corners, Lawrenceville, and south of I-85. In addition to the above places, Duluth, and the area southeast of I-85 west of Lawrenceville have the largest gap between transit potential and transit service.

When a large area is covered by a single route, as exemplified by local routes 35 and 40, the routes can become very long, and the in vehicle trip can become time consuming.

For the transit dependent population, who are often hourly employees, these lengthy trips can consume a large part of the workday, especially if a transfer is necessary. While a choice rider may reach a desired destination via transit, Ride Gwinnett transit trips are often 2-3 times longer than using a personal vehicle.

An evaluation of Ride Gwinnett services found that six of the seven local routes serve 50,000 passengers annually, while four exceed 100,000 passengers per year. Ridership on most express routes is below 25,000 per year, except for the 103, which serves nearly 50,000 passengers per year. Route 103A, provides the only reverse commute option. GCT's paratransit is a bit below national averages in terms of passengers per revenue hour.

Ride Gwinnett's capital and operating budgets are funded from federal and local sources, as well as from fare box collections. The current funding sources are not sufficient to implement a major expansion or build out many of the County's priorities.

# UPCOMING INITIATIVES/PROJECTS

Several transportation planning and investment projects are underway in Gwinnett. In addition to the SPLOST program, CTP, and TDP, some studies have examined specific corridors for safety improvements and possibilities for transit expansion.

## TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Transit Development Plan proposes a suite of forward thinking transit service options that, when rolled out, will provide transit connections for every Gwinnett resident. This is accomplished through a few different service options:

### FIXED ROUTE SERVICE

Gwinnett County plans to implement 29 total routes by 2043, divided across four major types (Figure 6-9).

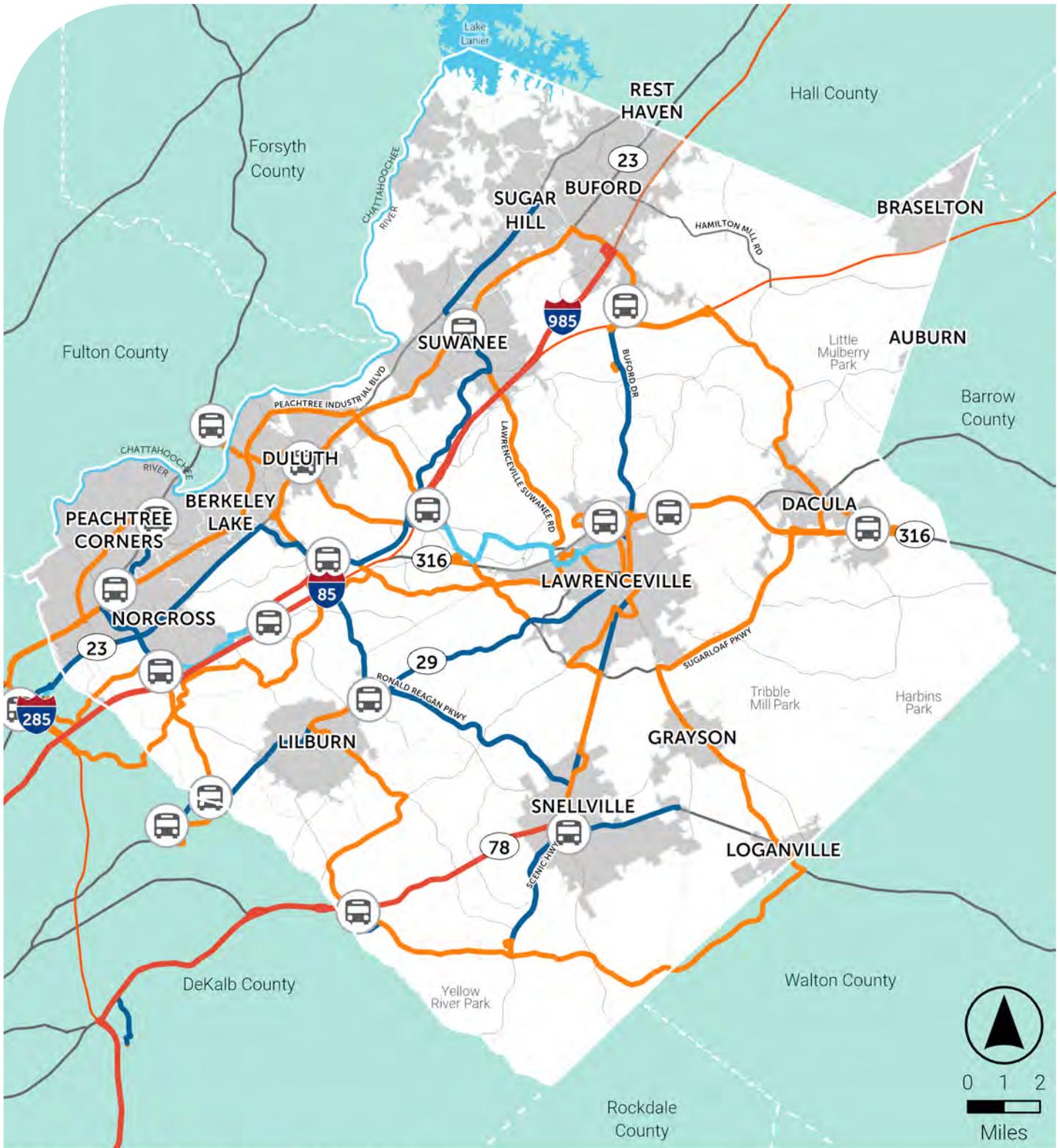
- Eighteen County Ride services are closest to standard bus routes with multiple stops in between popular destinations across Gwinnett.
- Eight Quick Ride services are more direct routes between designated proposed transfer stations. Vehicles on these routes will benefit from bus priority improvements along roadways to ensure efficient trips.
- One Rapid Ride route will transport passengers from the Doraville MARTA station to the proposed Lawrenceville Transit Station, with stops at major destinations along the way including Optical Fiber Solutions site, Gwinnett Place Mall, Gwinnett Technical College, Georgia Gwinnett College, and others.
- Two Airport Ride routes will provide direct service to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport.
- Expanding service hours for all routes to 12-18 hour days, with improved headways, will benefit all.

### SHARED RIDES

In addition to fixed route service, the Transit Development Plan proposes countywide microtransit deployment across 27 zones within Gwinnett County (Figure 6-10). Rides can be hailed and paid for using an app, and services are operable 18 hours a day. These zones are designed for shorter trips within a specific geographic area, many of which are anchored by a transfer facility that connects to broader fixed route service. Two zones (Lawrenceville and Snellville) are currently being piloted, with the majority of the remaining zones to be rolled out in 2027.

### APPLICATION TO THE DAILY COMMUNITY

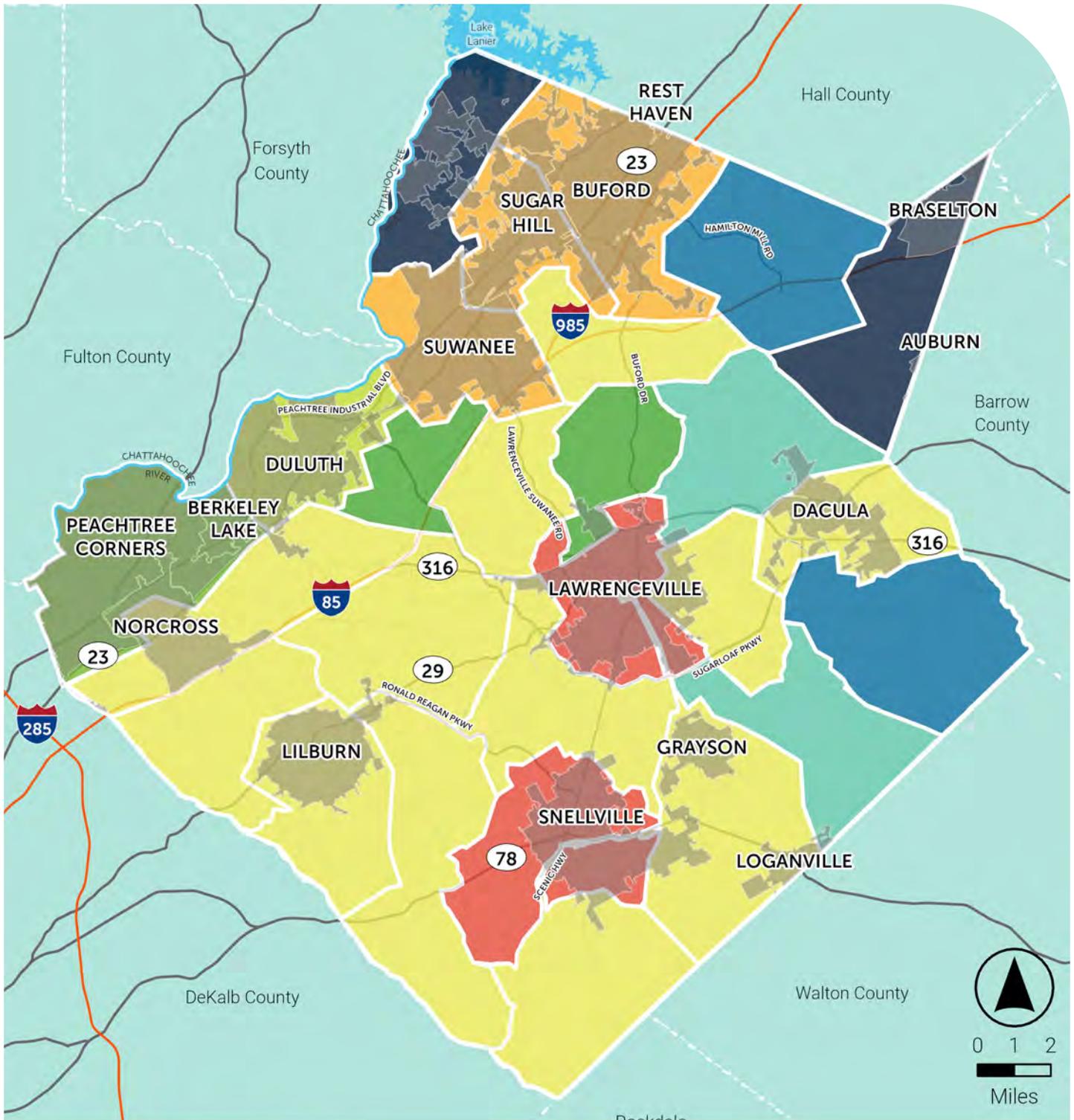
The service concepts advanced through the Transit Development Plan are very supportive of the Daily Community development framework explored in Chapter 1, Land Use. While transit service typically only operates in the public right of way along fixed routes, microtransit offers crucial last mile connectivity for transit riders who may otherwise be daunted by unsafe roadway conditions and long walking trips at the beginning and end of their journeys.



**Legend**

- Rapid Ride
- Quick Ride
- County Ride
- Airport Ride
- Planned Transfer Facilities

**FIGURE 6-9. PLANNED TRANSIT ROUTES**



**Legend**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> 2023     | <span style="color: #4CAF50;">■</span> 2029 |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> 2026  | <span style="color: #388E3C;">■</span> 2030 |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> 2027  | <span style="color: #4DB6AC;">■</span> 2031 |
| <span style="color: #AEEA00;">■</span> 2028 | <span style="color: #2196F3;">■</span> 2032 |
|   | <span style="color: #191970;">■</span> 2033 |

**FIGURE 6-10.  
PLANNED SHARED  
RIDE ZONES**

The Daily Communities identified as a part of this plan are also well supported by the Transit Development Plan’s transit proposals. Many of the community centers identified through the Gwinnett County 2045 Unified Plan process align with proposed microtransit zones, as well as new fixed route service. Providing additional mobility opportunities within and between Daily Community centers enables shorter trip times, reduction of vehicular traffic, enhanced safety, and the ability to choose how a resident interacts with and enjoys their community. Transit expansion has many benefits—including economic development, physical and public health, and reduced congestion on roadways—but chief among them is the heightened quality of life for those residents who rely on alternative forms of transportation to access their Daily Communities.

## 2023 SPLOST IMPROVEMENTS

In the 2023 SPLOST program, \$57 million has been approved for new sidewalk and pedestrian safety projects. Requested and potential sidewalk projects were ranked using a scoring system which considers connectivity to pedestrian scale activities such as walking to parks, schools, libraries, and shopping. This process resulted in a recommendation for funding 42 identified sidewalk and side path trails spread throughout the County. Below is a list of several key side paths and trails to be developed as part of the 2023 SPLOST program.

2023 SPLOST SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS CATEGORY – KEY TIER 1 TRAILS	
PROJECT LOCATION	EXTENT
Indian Trail Lilburn Road	Exchange Place to Hillcrest Road and Burns Road to Hillcrest Road
McDaniel Farm Park Connector	Commerce Avenue to McDaniel Farm Park
SR 20 / Buford Drive	Old Peachtree Road to Mall of Georgia Boulevard
SR 124 / Scenic Highway	Sugarloaf Parkway to Gwinnett Drive
Satellite Boulevard	Freedom Way Avenue to Wildwood Road
US 78	DeKalb County Line to Lake Luceme Road

A total of \$177 million is being dedicated through the 2023 SPLOST to both reduce congestion and improve safety along some key corridors currently operating at suboptimal levels. Significant capital investments are being made along SR 124, Sugarloaf Parkway, SR 20, major I-85 crossings, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and several other locations. Several SPLOST categories invest in projects which address needs at a smaller scale and provide operational and safety improvements. These vital investments in the Daily Community encompass the following categories: bridges, culverts, transportation drainage, intersections, residential speed control, road safety and alignment, and school safety. The 2023 SPLOST program is dedicating a total of \$214 million to these project types. A second tier of projects will be budgeted later in the program if collections allow.

## SATELLITE BOULEVARD BUS RAPID TRANSIT CORRIDOR STUDY

The 2021 Satellite Boulevard to Jimmy Carter Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Study focused on a 10 mile corridor from Jimmy Carter Boulevard to Sugarloaf Parkway and across to the Sugarloaf Mills Park and Ride. The planning area included an evaluation of three transit stations/hubs: the Multimodal Hub (near Jimmy Carter Boulevard), Gwinnett Place Transit Center, and Infinite Energy Center. Significant funding has been acquired for improvements at two of the hubs identified in the plan. The 2023 SPLOST includes funding for improvements in the vicinity of Jimmy Carter Boulevard and I-85, including the area of the proposed multimodal hub. In addition, the County was recently awarded a RAISE grant in the amount of \$20 million for an expansion of the Gwinnett Place Transit Center located on Satellite Boulevard. Major investments beyond the improvements identified above would most likely involve new funding sources not currently in use.

## I-85 CORRIDOR STUDY

Another major planning effort is a comprehensive corridor study along I-85 between I-285 and I-985. The study area is roughly 18 miles long and is primarily located within Gwinnett County, with a small portion in DeKalb County. The study will propose solutions for the corridor to reduce congestion, enhance traffic operations, and improve safety. A wide range of potential alternatives is being identified, including transit and multimodal strategies. Improvements subject to analysis in the study include Bus Rapid Transit stations above the interstate, enhanced commuter buses on managed Lanes (including inline stations and direct ramps), and new feeder bus routes to help address last mile connectivity issues in Gwinnett County.

### WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RESIDENTS

Engagement on transportation issues focused on strengthening connections between the CTP, TDP, and Trails Plans and the Daily Community concept. Through surveys and community workshops, residents reinforced the need for safe pedestrian and reliable transit options throughout their communities. Below are several trends gathered from engagement activities; see Appendix C for a full summary.

### COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: TRANSPORTATION

Manage traffic as population increases throughout Gwinnett; do not exacerbate traffic problems

Create safer, more connected pedestrian and bike networks

Improve and expand pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and commercial centers

Create safer streets through lighting and streetscape improvements

Expand transit network

# Needs & Opportunities

## NEEDS

Gwinnett County has significant needs related to the mobility and safety of all users of the transportation system. Use of each mode within the Daily Community presents particular challenges.

### 1 SAFER WALKING AND BICYCLING ENVIRONMENT

Pedestrians and bicyclists sometimes feel unsafe due to their proximity to vehicular traffic. In some areas, the sidewalk or trail ends abruptly, and the traveler must use the road shoulder to complete their trip. Where facilities do exist, active transportation users may feel unsafe due to lack of offsets and barriers. Most trips eventually require crossing the street to reach the desired destination. This can feel unsafe due to lack of a protected crossing or limited safety features at a protected crossing. The safety of pedestrian and bicycle trips is also sometimes disrupted due to roadway, utility, and development construction adjacent to the travel corridor. In addition to safety concerns, users may have an unpleasant or uncomfortable experience due to a lack of inviting features such as benches, wayfinding, tree canopies, lighting, and appropriate landscaping.

### 2 GREATER MIX OF DESTINATIONS ACCESSIBLE BY SHORTER TRIPS

While sidewalks and trails exist to varying degrees in different areas of the County, connectivity via walking and bicycling is still incomplete. Connectivity is lacking because destinations are widely dispersed, resulting in unrealistic trip distances and times. Land use patterns that fit within the Daily Community concept—places just a few miles wide that include where people live, shop, dine and/or seek entertainment, work, or go to school—are not common in Gwinnett.

A mix of destinations does not exist on a neighborhood scale so residents usually must make trips in a private automobile to meet their needs. In addition to the lack of Daily Community trips available to pedestrians and cyclists, trips of a greater distance that involve a combination of active and public transportation are not widely available further exacerbating congestion issues throughout the county.

### 3 MORE ROADWAYS DESIGNED FOR ALL USERS

The automobile is by far the leading mode of travel in Gwinnett County and has been over the past several decades during a period of remarkable growth. For this reason, roads have been designed and built over the years to focus almost entirely on this mode of travel. In the past, many road project concepts were dedicated to addressing deficiencies for vehicles, tackling those needs at the expense of active transportation and with little consideration for transit movements.

### 4 SLOWER ROADWAY SPEEDS

Speeding and accidents in the right of way have become a national concern with continued increases in crashes involving personal, commercial, and public transportation vehicles. Pedestrians and cyclists are particularly vulnerable when accidents occur. High accident rates and speeding are complex problems that the County and the entire Atlanta region face.

### 5 MORE ALTERNATIVES TO SINGLE OCCUPANCY VEHICLE TRIPS

Gwinnett County's local service includes routes that cover large geographic areas. This is done to provide service to some of the areas of the county most in need of transit using limited resources. A tradeoff to this coverage is that the routes can become very long, and the in vehicle trip can become time consuming. Some routes have limited frequency of service as well, increasing wait times at the bus stop, particularly in offpeak service hours. Local service is inefficient and not

competitive with Single Occupancy Vehicle trips. Many areas of the County have no coverage at all, eliminating any alternative to SOV trips.

### 6 STRONGER LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY

Countywide, the lack of reasonable walking distance trips illustrates the need for transit service that closes the last mile gap between origins and destinations. As discussed in the Existing Conditions section, microtransit is a service that provides point to point trips, supporting last mile connectivity in the local community. The County plans to expand its microtransit service countywide.

### 7 NEW DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT SUPPORT TRANSIT

Gwinnett County developed as an autocentric suburb of Atlanta. As the population increased and more demand was placed on the roadways, investments were made to increase roadway capacity, which, in turn, encouraged more personal vehicle use. Transportation Demand Management policies and programs, such as encouraging carpools and constructing High Occupancy Vehicle lanes, have had a positive effect on traffic congestion and environmental benefits, but do not change fundamental trip patterns. While mixed use development exists in some places, the traditional suburban model remains prevalent. This condition, combined with incomplete transit system, has limited opportunities to coordinate land use with transit and thus reduce SOV trips.

# OPPORTUNITIES

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## 1 PROVIDE A SAFE, COMFORTABLE WALKING AND BIKING ENVIRONMENT

The County should identify additional features and projects which provide an inviting environment where bicyclists and pedestrians feel at ease and safe while traveling throughout the community. This involves both a review of current practices related to development regulations and roadway design, and the identification of additional available practices that could be implemented through development plan review and public project delivery.

## 2 PROMOTE LAND USE PATTERNS THAT SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

A new, holistic view of transportation modes and infrastructure should be woven into the development process. Using its authority to regulate developments, at least residential and commercial land uses should be planned to coexist in smaller geographic areas with less reliance on automobile trips. Over time, a complete sidewalk network, combined with interparcel access, will allow many distances to be covered with an easy walk or bike ride. Such initiatives, when combined with the Daily Community concept, create true opportunities to make short trips without a car.

## 3 UTILIZE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO ADD COMPLETE STREET FEATURES

GDOT, and many local governments, including Gwinnett County, have adopted standards for context specific Complete Streets design on new projects. Complete Streets is a transportation design process that considers the needs of all users of the right of way including active and public transportation modes and users with disabilities. While this process has gained greater acceptance and use in recent years, opportunities exist through both private developments and public projects to add features that benefit all users within the public right of way.

## 4 IMPROVE SAFETY AND REDUCE SPEEDING ALONG MAJOR CORRIDORS

Gwinnett County, the entire Atlanta region, and GDOT are collaborating to reduce accidents and curb speeding statewide. A variety of effective counter measures that reduce speeding and both the frequency and severity of accidents are present in some locations. The broader implementation of these countermeasures, and the identification and use of additional methods to improve safety are needed across both major thoroughfares and more locally focused roadways.

## 5 INVEST IN TRANSIT TO REDUCE TRIP TIMES

Expanding public transportation to cover more of the County presents a significant opportunity. This involves developing more efficient local service and implementing other transit options that compete with single occupancy vehicle trip times. Such improvements would benefit current riders and meet the needs of the community, providing advantages for both workers and employers, and attracting choice riders.

## 6 PROVIDE LAST MILE TRANSIT CONNECTIONS

While active transportation has an important role in last mile connectivity, transit can also connect people to their local destinations within the Daily Community. Microtransit provides a new form of transit for short trips within that community and serves as a connection to local fixed route service and even commuter or high capacity service to more regional destinations. In addition to the two new Microtransit zones being launched in Lawrenceville and Snellville, the current Transit Development Plan is considering significant Microtransit service area expansion, possibly countywide. This service expansion would address unmet needs across much of the county if implemented.

## 7 ALIGN LAND USE PLANS & POLICIES WITH TRANSIT PLANNING AND SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

Integrating public transportation with land uses allows transit to be easily accessed with a short walk, reducing the need for personal vehicle trips. Transit investments and a framework to coordinate those investments with complementary land uses leads to higher ridership and the adoption of transit usage as a daily routine and a realistic alternative to personal automobiles. Gwinnett County's transit system will require significant additional resources in order to make extensive transit investments throughout the county. To make the most of those investments, improvements should be prioritized in coordination with land use plans.

# Goals & Best Practices

The application of the goals listed below to the Daily Community is important because many of the transportation features needed to support this concept are absent due to traditional growth patterns discussed previously. These goals and best practices, when implemented, will move the County toward a future where everyone will have full access to a safe, efficient transportation network.



## INCREASED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

According to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, walking and bicycling make up less than 1 percent of trips made in Gwinnett County. Yet every transit rider becomes a pedestrian at both the beginning and ending of their trip, and many short trips can be completed by walking or bicycling. Benefits to the community due to an increased use of active transportation include reduced roadway congestion, cleaner air, increased transit ridership, and physical fitness and health. Practices that make pedestrians and cyclists feel safe and comfortable are factors in increasing walking and bicycling as a mode of travel. Another factor in increased walking and bicycling is integrating active transportation into Daily Community developments and into public transportation planning to create shorter routes.

To increase the use of active transportation, the following best practices should be pursued:

1

### ADOPT ADDITIONAL STANDARDS AND CONTINUE TO INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IMPROVES THE SAFETY AND COMFORT OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS IN THE ROAD CORRIDOR

Safety improvements in and adjacent to the road may include physical barriers which affect the speed of vehicles, textured pavement treatments, and lanes delineated by color between vehicular traffic and active transportation users. Safety improvements related to crossing vehicular traffic can include enhanced crosswalks, flashing beacons, high intensity activated crosswalk signals, improved striping and signage, pedestrian overpasses, refuge islands, and other measures. The installation of street lighting in high pedestrian and bike usage areas also improves safety and security. Amenities, such as benches, decorative retaining walls, streetscaping, tree canopies, public art, wayfinding signs, and informational placards, all contribute to a more pleasant and comfortable experience. Many of these improvements are consistent with the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and recommended priority allocations of funding in the SPLOST program.

## **2 INTEGRATE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INTO DAILY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS AND INTO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TO CREATE SHORTER ROUTES**

Adding features directly adjacent to destinations and providing interparcel access at the local scale encourages active transportation in smaller geographic areas. Walking and bicycling become attractive options when multiple land uses are linked to an extensive sidewalk and trail network with proximity to public transit services.



## CASE STUDY:

*SAFETY FOR PEDESTRIANS AND BIKES (FEBRUARY 2022): METROPLAN (SOURCE: METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR CENTRAL ARKANSAS)*

Metroplan, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for central Arkansas, including Little Rock, published a set of best practices for pedestrian and bike safety in February of 2022. The best practices guidelines begin with the identification of pedestrian and bike flows through busy corridors to gain an understanding of where improvements are needed, followed by design tips for safer streets.

Lane narrowing, road diets, mini traffic circles, and roadway center splitter islands are all identified as measures to both slow traffic and call attention to pedestrians and cyclists. Roadway center islands can not only serve to slow vehicles, but they can also be refuge islands for pedestrians and bikes while crossing busy roads. An example of a sidewalk separated from the road by pedestrian scale lighting, street trees, benches and a different color and texture of pavement is shown as well. These benefits provide safety by creating an offset from the roadway and a comfortable environment that includes benches and shade trees.



Raised crosswalks called speed tables, with and without refuge islands, are shown at both intersections and midblock locations. They are delineated with a bright color and appropriate striping and signage to call greater attention to drivers to watch for pedestrians. Examples of bulb out curbs to shorten the crossing and slow turning vehicles, and chicanes to slow through traffic, are also used as design examples to protect pedestrians and bikes.

Audible signals are discussed as a way to assist visually impaired pedestrians. Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) at signals give pedestrians the opportunity to walk before vehicles in the crossroad have the ability to turn left or right, establishing the walker in the cross walk and avoiding a conflict with the turning vehicle. Measures at nonsignalized locations that provide pedestrians and bikes with greater protection than crosswalks alone include Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons or HAWKS. For complete separation from very heavily traveled corridors, pedestrian overpasses and underpasses, while very expensive, can be considered. Metroplan also provides a reference to their new multimodal guidelines.

## CASE STUDY:

### HOW MINNEAPOLIS BECAME A TOP U.S. BIKE CITY (JULY 2023)

The City of Minneapolis has successfully utilized planning and policy initiatives to encourage forms of active transportation, leading to dramatic increases in the number of bicycle trips made throughout the city. Minneapolis' status as a cyclist's haven is both a combination of strategic multimodal investments as well as deliberate complimentary policy guidance over time. In just 5 years, PeopleforBikes City Ratings for Minneapolis went from a score of approximately 28 in 2018 to approximately 68 in 2023. The key components of Minneapolis' cycling trail network are relevant and realistic, to varying degrees, to Gwinnett County, as described in the table below:

KEY COMPONENTS OF MINNEAPOLIS' TOP RATING FOR BICYCLING	
COMPONENT	RELEVANCE TO GWINNETT COUNTY
51-mile Loop Trail (backbone of system)	Yes, Loop trail study + Western Gwinnett Bikeway
Transition from traditional unprotected bike lanes to protected facilities	Yes, along some limited corridors
Make bicycle lanes more comfortable, safer, and more appealing to a wider group of people	Yes, along some limited corridors
Increase trail mileage	Yes, system expansion is ongoing
Redesign intersections and reduced speeds	Yes, at limited locations
Install bicycle facilities on any major throughway undergoing reconstruction, including resurfacing	Yes, along some limited corridors
Education and Advocacy	Yes, would require staff participation and active bicycle clubs



## ENSURE THAT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS AND PUBLIC PROJECTS ENABLE MOBILITY FOR ALL USERS

As transit and active transportation trips increase, the potential for a greater number of conflicts with vehicles in the public right of way is higher. Additionally, the needs of seniors and disabled residents are important to accommodate as part of a Complete Streets initiative. These needs will be explored further in Chapter 7, Community Resources. While some progress has been realized, both private developments and public projects should take on a more holistic approach and add features that benefit all users within the public right of way.

Smart Growth America developed ten elements as a national model of best practices for creating a policy that can be implemented at any level of governance, in any type of place. For communities considering updating an existing Complete Streets policy, an ideal model does the following:

- 1 Establishes commitment and vision
- 2 Prioritizes underinvested and underserved communities
- 3 Applies to all projects and phases
- 4 Allows only clear exceptions
- 5 Mandates coordination
- 6 Adopts excellent design guidance
- 7 Requires proactive land use planning
- 8 Measures progress
- 9 Sets criteria for choosing projects
- 10 Creates a plan for implementation

## CASE STUDY:

### HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION

In 2023, Howard County was awarded a perfect score for its policy from the National Complete Streets Coalition. The policy covers every transportation project, whether new or retrofit, capital improvement, or subdivision and land development. Certain operations, repair, and maintenance activities also create an opportunity for safer, more accessible streets for users of all ages and abilities, who walk, bike, take the bus, and drive cars, motorcycles, and trucks. The table below lists the primary implementation steps toward effective policy implementation and the applicability of each step to Gwinnett County:

HOWARD COUNTY MARYLAND COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION	
STEP	APPLICABILITY TO GWINNETT
Convene a Complete Streets Implementation Team	Yes, it could involve multiple Departments
Update Regulations and Standards; Review every 5 years	Yes, it could involve DOT and P&D
Establish a detailed project prioritization process and then prioritize projects.	Yes, it could be function of the Complete Streets Implementation Team
Education and Training	Yes, it could be function of the Complete Streets Implementation Team
Maintenance of traffic shall be applied to all modes	Yes, DOT responsibility
Funding for construction, operations, and maintenance is expected from various sources, including County budgets, developer projects, state and federal grants, and others.	Yes, use Gwinnett's development regulation authority; apply for state and federal grants



## CONTINUE COUNTERMEASURES TO REDUCE SPEEDING AND ACCIDENTS

Gwinnett County provides safety improvements at a local scale in several ways including routine operational upgrades and through its SPLOST program categories such as Road Safety and Alignment, School Safety, and Sidewalk and Pedestrian Safety. It should be noted that Gwinnett County continually makes investments in a state of good repair, such as replacing signs, repainting edge lines and centerlines, maintaining signals, and other measures that contribute to road safety. Various safety best practices have been developed by the Federal Highway Administration and other agencies. Many of these practices are important to implement on local roads at the community level. The National Association of Counties provided guidance on design elements that can positively impact safety through its newsletters and other publications. Below are nine proven countermeasures from NACO's Smart Transportation Planning at Work: Proven Safety Countermeasures (March 2016).

### 9 PROVEN SAFETY COUNTERMEASURES

- 1 The Safety Edge
- 2 Corridor Access Management
- 3 Medians and Pedestrian Crossing Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas
- 4 Back plates with Retroreflective Borders
- 5 Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes on Two Lane Roads
- 6 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
- 7 Roundabouts
- 8 Delineation and Friction for Horizontal Curves
- 9 Road Diet



*Pictured: Safety edge*



*Pictured: Signal back plate*

## CASE STUDY:

### *SPEEDING COUNTERMEASURES FOR VERMONT - FINAL PROJECT REPORT (MAY 2023)*

In May 2023, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, in coordination with the University of Vermont Transportation Research Center, published a final project report on statewide countermeasures for speeding for local decisionmakers and transportation engineers to use in new roadway projects. The report summarizes design features that are incorrectly considered speeding countermeasures (including speed limit and stop signs) and encourages uptake of other design elements that are proven to increase safety. These are compiled into a user friendly Traffic Safety Toolbox. Key countermeasures included in the report that are of potential value to Gwinnett County are shown in the table below:

SELECTED SPEEDING COUNTERMEASURES FOR VERMONT		
TYPE OF COUNTERMEASURE	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABLE TO GWINNETT COUNTY
Horizontal Deflection	Lane or street narrowing	Yes (limited)
Horizontal Deflection	Lateral shift	Yes
Horizontal Deflection	Bulb out / pinch point / choker	Yes
Horizontal Deflection	Median island	Yes
Vertical Deflection	Raised crosswalk	Yes
Vertical Deflection	Raised intersection	Yes
Perceptual/Passive	Road diet	Yes (limited)
Perceptual/Passive	Radar speed feedback signs	Yes
Perceptual/Passive	Gateway signing/landscaping	Yes
Perceptual/Passive	Pavement word marking	Yes (limited)



## IMPROVE TRANSIT TO COMPETE WITH PRIVATE VEHICLE TRIPS AND PROVIDE LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY

Gwinnett County's current transit system is inefficient due to limited resources. It is important to plan for and invest in a transit system which reduces trip times, making them more competitive with SOV trips. It is also important to invest in transit that provides last mile connections to local destinations within the Daily Community.

The recently approved Transit Development Plan provides a major expansion of existing service and creation of new modes of transit that will establish both more efficient service and needed last mile connections. The Transit Development Plan's goals include providing improved mobility options for all Gwinnett residents by connecting all people to more places and jobs, as well as enhancing the user's experience by making transit easy, safe, and comfortable. A review of the proposed service expansion shows how these goals are met and how greater efficiency and last mile connectivity will be achieved. The Transit Development Plan includes characteristics for fixed route, high capacity, microtransit, and regional connector services that provide for a much more efficient, connected system. See page 318 for a breakdown of the Transit Development Plan proposals.



## INTEGRATE TRANSIT INTO LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The Gwinnett Transit Development Plan has a stated goal of creating vibrant multimodal places that generate a variety of activities. This goal aligns well with the Daily Community concept. Certain transit improvements such as stations, major transfer hubs, and route amenities can add to community centers in a way that supports mixed use development. High capacity transit that offers direct connections between major activity centers and busy areas, with dedicated transit lanes and upgraded amenities can support higher density Transit Oriented Development. Investments in capital transit improvements, including high capacity transit corridors often serve as catalysts for development.

As stated by the Federal Transit Administration, *"the term transit supportive development broadens the definition of a concept that has existed for years—that the utilization of effective and predictable transit encourages surrounding development, which, in turn, supports transit. The basic principle is that convenient access to transit can be a key attraction that fosters mixed use development, and the increased density in station areas not only supports transit but also may accomplish other goals, including reducing urban sprawl, reducing congestion, increasing pedestrian activity, increasing economic development potential, realizing environmental benefits, and building sustainable communities."*

## CASE STUDY: WEST END ALEXANDRIA

On July 6, 2021, the Alexandria, Virginia, City Council approved redevelopment agreements for the former site of the Landmark Mall. The plan calls for 4 million square feet of new development across 52 acres, anchored by the relocation and expansion of Inova's Alexandria Hospital. Surrounding developments will include medical office buildings, for rent and for sale multifamily units, retail, commercial buildings and entertainment venues. The project will also provide park space, a new transit hub, affordable housing and a fire station. The site, an abandoned suburban mall adjacent to the interstate, bears resemblance to both the Optical Fiber Solutions property in Norcross and some parcels in the Gwinnett Place area.



# Implementation

## **TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION**

To align with overall Daily Community initiatives, Gwinnett County's transportation goals, require implementation strategies that focus not only regionally but also on the local level. Implementation of these strategies will involve not only commitments at the County government level, but also partnerships with state and federal agencies, as well as other local partners. The development community is also part of these strategies related to transportation improvements as part of new projects and redevelopments. Each recommendation includes a time horizon and funding options for implementation. These can be found in the Community Work Program, starting on page 445.

## OVERARCHING STRATEGY

With a population approaching 1 million spread out over a land area of 437 square miles, Gwinnett County's mobility needs are complex. Historically, development was built on a scale which assumed mostly private automobile trips. Momentum exists to fund major roadway projects that support traditional suburban communities and that is needed and will continue into the foreseeable future. Changing priorities to invest in policies, programs, and projects that support connected, multimodal systems at smaller scale communities will be difficult and will require an overarching strategy. Some relatively near term actions have been identified to achieve this transformation and include:

Follow action items for full implementation of the CTP, TDP, and Trails Plan
Fully coordinate and collaborate with all regional transit service providers, especially on fares and schedules
Provide dedicated staff time for coordinating multiple forms of transportation, such as on demand ride services, biking, paratransit, and other first/last mile options in new developments
Take advantage of technology, apps, and social media to promote alternative modes and provide realtime information on services
Identify high priority, customer facing improvements such as reduced wait times and service availability
Review development regulations and overlay districts to ensure multiple modes are addressed
Incorporate Complete Street principles into new roadway projects and development
Secure new, dedicated revenue to meet Ride Gwinnett's capital and operating needs.
Secure new, dedicated revenue to pay for additional active transportation safety features within the roadway right of way
Revise streetscape standards and typical details to encourage a higher quality environment for walking and biking

# 07



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES



# Introduction

## CONTEXT

Gwinnett County is known throughout the Atlanta metropolitan region for its high quality of life. While there is no universal definition for high quality of life, residents often credit the County's educational, artistic, recreational, and health resources as significant components. Amenity-filled parks, high-achieving schools, and diverse cultural offerings have defined and enhanced the county's reputation as a great place to live. This is apparent from Gwinnett County's mission, which holds its ability to deliver quality services in high importance.

The County's continued success in these areas hinges on its ability to grow in community-supportive ways. As explored in previous elements, one method of accommodating Gwinnett County's projected growth by 2045 involves encouraging the development of Daily Communities. Community Resources are a key component that makes the Daily Community concept work: outside of home, work, and school, Daily Communities are filled with entertainment options, arts and culture, public space, and other features that make a place feel welcoming and special.

### **GWINNETT'S MISSION STATEMENT**

Gwinnett proudly supports our vibrantly connected community by delivering superior services.

For the purposes of the 2045 Unified Plan, the Community Resources Element examines the following:

- 1 Parks and Recreation
- 2 Public Safety
- 3 Arts and Culture

- 4 Education
- 5 Health and Wellness

Several County departments are entirely dedicated to providing the above resources. Far from duplicating their efforts, this Community Resources Element seeks to understand how growth and development may impact each area. Through the planning team’s interviews with these departments and additional analysis, one single word describes growth and development’s impact on Gwinnett’s Community Resources: more. This manifests into two distinct needs: scaling up operations and assets to have more resources in anticipation of population growth and supporting more coordination between departments.



Rhodes Jordan Park Summer Camp  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOCUS AREAS

## 1 SCALING SERVICES FOR ANTICIPATED GROWTH

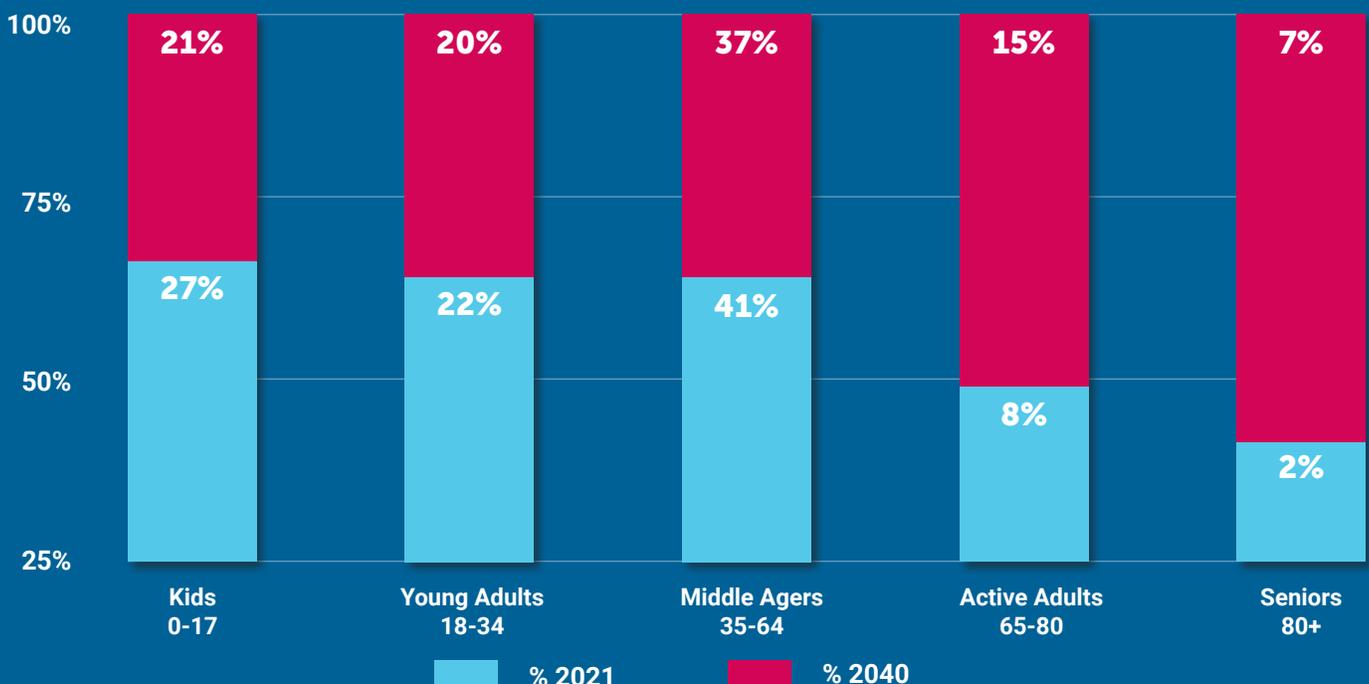
Gwinnett County's projected population growth is both a challenge and an opportunity. Each stakeholder interviewed for this element defined current and projected growth as a challenge to delivering the quality of services Gwinnett is renowned. Rather than shy away from this challenge, many service providers are seeking to scale up their resources to meet the projected future demand increase. They also acknowledged that different communities have different needs, and providing their services equitably is essential to successfully scaling for growth. The Daily Community framework is uniquely positioned to assist with this challenge. While it is clear that Gwinnett is growing, specific demographic trends—such as the growth in school-aged and elderly populations—significantly impact how to plan for Community Resources.

### SCHOOL AGE POPULATION

Children (ages 0 to 17) comprise 27 percent of Gwinnett's population, totaling approximately 256,000 (Figure 7-1). Although their portion of Gwinnett's population is projected to decrease to 21 percent in 2040, the number of children is expected to increase to 315,000 in the same year. This translates to an estimated increase of 58,900 additional children over the next 20 years. While this category includes children who have not yet entered school and those who may not enroll in Gwinnett County Public Schools, the District can anticipate a significant surge in enrollment over the next 20 years. The demand for additional services, such as sports leagues, summer programs, family doctors, and arts

**FIGURE 7-1: POPULATION BY AGE GROUP**

SOURCE: GWINNETT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING STUDY & U.S. CENSUS ACS 2016-2021



and culture offerings, is also expected to rise. While public education is almost exclusively targeted toward Gwinnett’s youth, other sub-areas such as parks and recreation, arts and culture, and health and wellness provide programs and resources for youth. Understanding how this demographic group may change is crucial to appropriately planning resources.

## SILVER TSUNAMI

On the other end of the age spectrum, the County must also consider the specific needs of seniors. Select residents ages 60 years or older qualify for amenities and services for seniors provided by Gwinnett County’s Department of Community Services. Gwinnett’s senior population is expected to grow significantly through 2045. The combined population of active adults (ages 60–80) and seniors (ages 80 and above) currently accounts for 10 percent of Gwinnett’s population. By 2040, this group is projected to surge to 22 percent of the population, with numbers increasing from 94,850 active adults and seniors to roughly 330,000, signifying an almost 250 percent increase.

## 2 STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS

Stakeholders from County departments highlight collaboration as the key to their greatest successes. Yet, collaboration is more of the exception than the norm. Given that many Community Resources needs are influenced by development patterns and the built environment, it is crucial for Planning and Development to work closely with other departments and public agencies, including Community Services, Fire and Emergency Services, Police, and Gwinnett County Public Schools to ensure their priorities are integrated into development and redevelopment opportunities.



2023 Gwinnett Public Safety Fall Festival  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

# Existing Conditions

This analysis provides an overview of existing conditions for the five Community Resources topic areas and explores their relationships to land use. The objective is to identify areas for improvement and potential opportunities to ensure community resources remain one of Gwinnett County's best strengths and meet the diverse needs of its Daily Communities.

## PARKS & RECREATION EXISTING CONDITIONS



Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation, a Division within the Department of Community Services, manages 10,000 acres of parkland across 51 parks. The team also manages an extensive network of recreation fields, playgrounds, and buildings. Management and growth of these resources are guided by the extensive and detailed 2020 Gwinnett Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Gwinnett Parks and Recreation also works with the County's Department of Transportation to manage 145 miles of multiuse paths, aiming to triple this distance as projected in the Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan adopted in 2018. Recently, DoCS has expanded its cross-departmental collaboration to work with the Department of Water Resources to obtain trail easements in conjunction with DWR obtaining utility easements. This process has led to more streamlined trail development.

Funding for these initiatives comes from department specific funds and the Special Purpose Location Option Sales Tax. The most recent SPLOST program from 2017 raised \$97.6 million for projects, including an expansion for the Dacula Park Activity Building. From its new Senior Wing, to a gym and dance study, this project is an excellent example of how cross-departmental collaboration can fulfill multiple community resource needs: expanding access to parks and recreation and providing services to all ages. Gwinnett Parks and Recreation is accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies, one in only 13 in the state to achieve this status, and was the Georgia Recreation and Park Association State Agency of the Year in 2022.



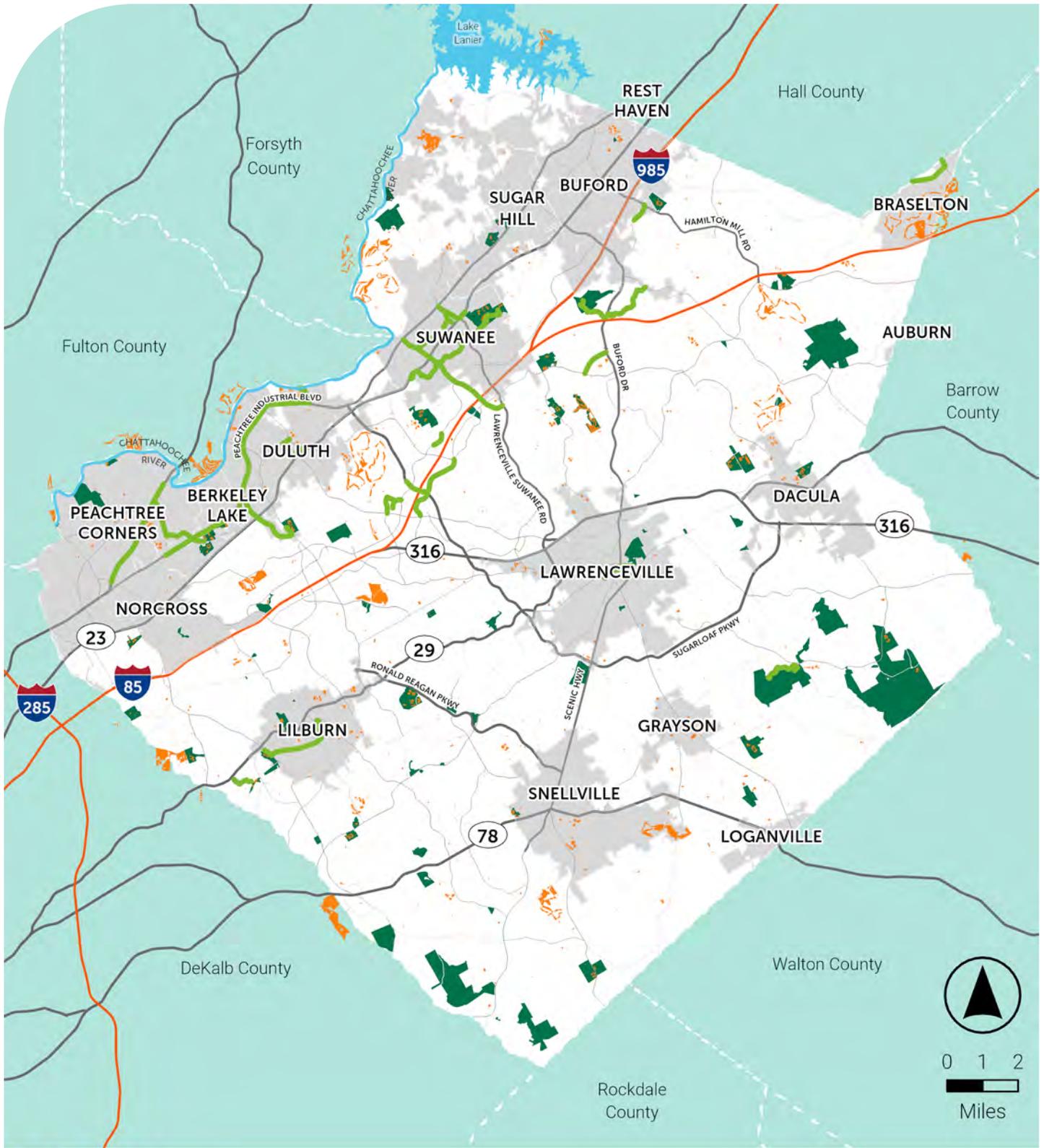
Gwinnett County was a finalist for the 2023 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management.

## RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND THE DAILY COMMUNITY

Public spaces, including parks, plazas, and trails, provide multiple benefits to a community. These benefits include better physical health and well-being, protection of natural resources, and greater connectivity. They also contribute to community aesthetics and culture. Providing these public spaces in Daily Communities—particularly their centers—can create gathering places that enhance a sense of place. If communities do not have easy access to these amenities, they cannot enjoy the full extent of these benefits. Figure 7-2 shows current facilities managed by Gwinnett Parks and Recreation. The 2020 Gwinnett Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan highlights areas where these resources may not fully meet the service needs of Gwinnett residents. The Countywide Trails Master Plan will be updated in the future to identify further gaps to increase connectivity. These trails can also serve as connectors within and between Daily Community centers.



*GREAT Little Minds Library at Shorty Howell Park  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)*



- Legend**
- Recreational Amenities
  - Parks
  - Trails
  - Municipalities

**FIGURE 7-2: PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATIONAL AMENITIES**



*Gwinnett County Rock Springs Park Trail  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)*

# PARKS AND RECREATION: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## NEEDS

### 1 ADJUST PUBLIC SPACE POLICY

While the County enjoys a robust and well-planned parks and recreation system, some policies keep the Division from executing that vision. Outdated amenity requirements in new subdivisions and trail developments that go unreported to the County make it more difficult for the Division to accomplish its goals of a well-connected system. Past Unified Development Ordinance requirements have burdened the Division with 477 acres of inaccessible recreation set-asides left over from developments (Figure 7-3). These tracts, which were deeded back to the County, are often the worst sections of land, providing few greenspace benefits and taking up division resources. On average, they are about 3 acres in size.

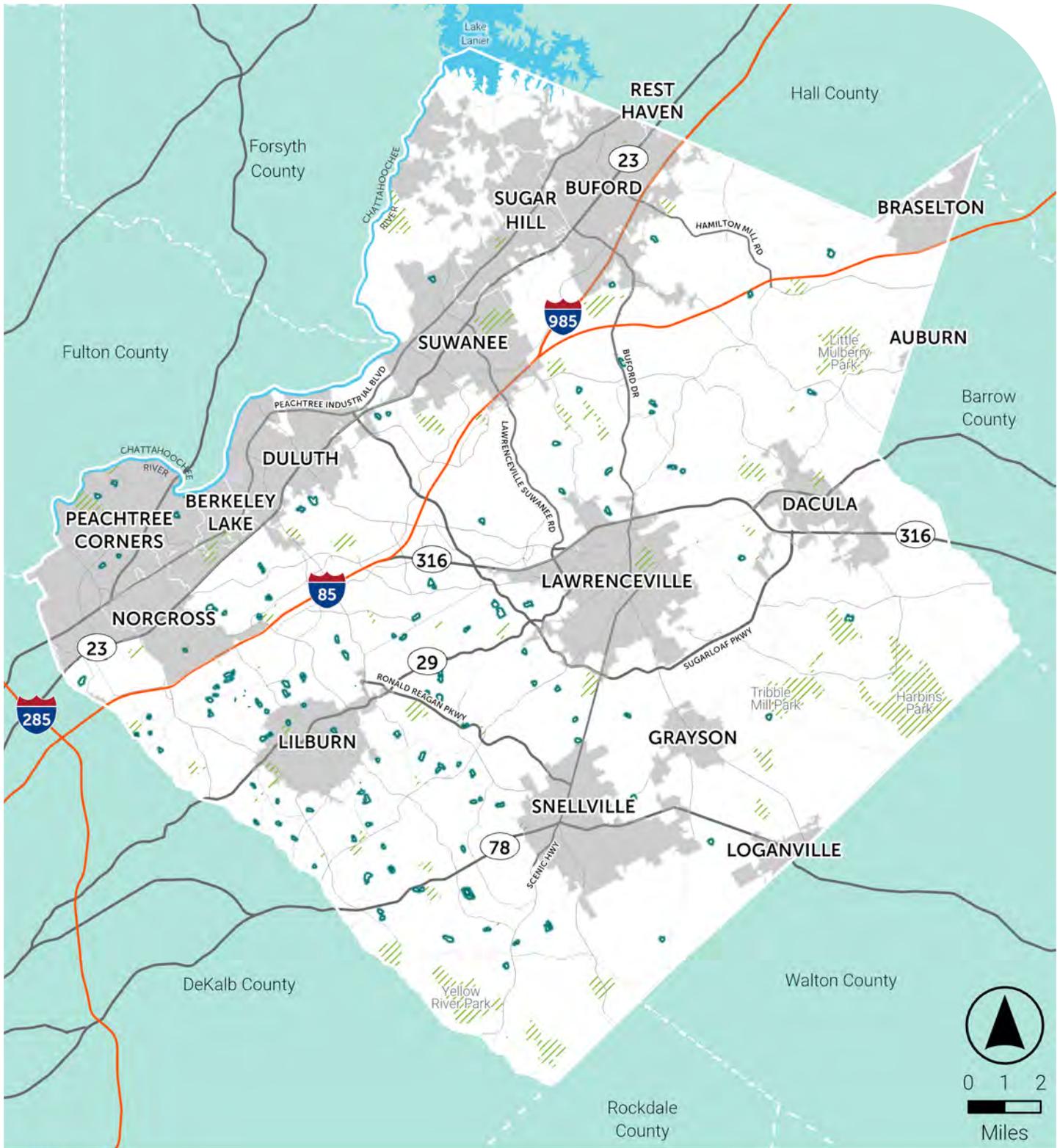
## OPPORTUNITIES

### 1 UTILIZING COUNTY BUILDINGS FOR MULTIPLE PURPOSES

Including multiple uses within one building allows departments to provide services more efficiently and take advantage of synergies between their work. Gwinnett Community Services has begun to integrate its own programming in County facilities, setting a model other departments could follow. Future County facilities and renovation projects should recognize that residents' needs evolve over time and explore options for how cross-departmental use of buildings, as well as features of the built environment, such as shared parking, can strengthen communities.

### 2 TYING NEW PUBLIC SPACE CREATION WITH REDEVELOPMENT

As underutilized sites are redeveloped, they bring opportunities for new amenities to be incorporated into site design. Public spaces, trails, and other community spaces can be accounted for alongside housing and retail space. Providing clear guidelines and partnering with developers can make new public spaces enjoyable and inviting, but clear and sustainable management and maintenance strategies are needed.



**Legend**

- Parks
- Recreation Set-Asides
- Municipalities

**FIGURE 7-3:  
RECREATION SET-ASIDES**

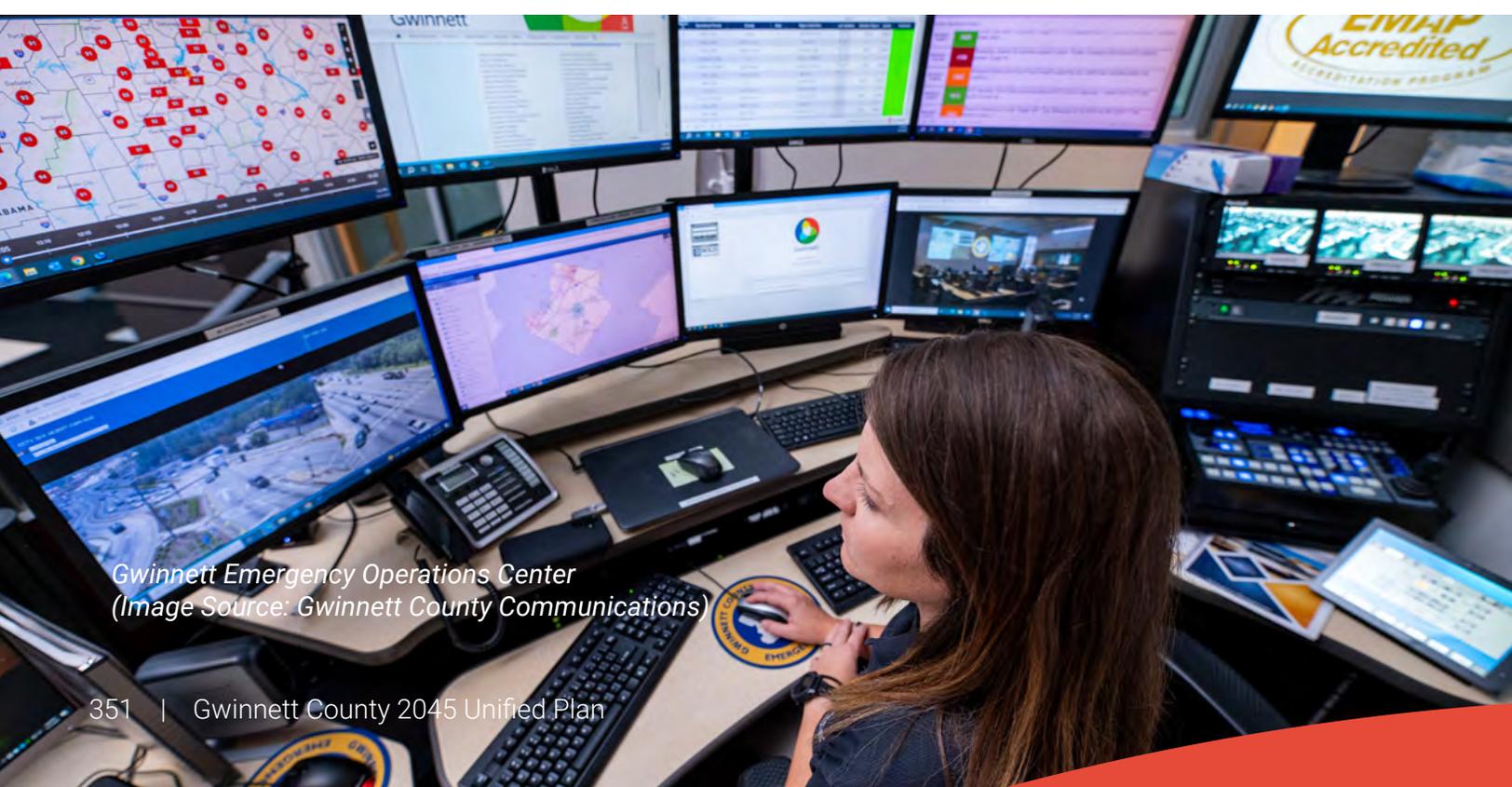
# PUBLIC SAFETY EXISTING CONDITIONS

Public safety refers to government-enabled resources that ensure the wellbeing and security of residents. In Gwinnett County, law enforcement agencies such as the Gwinnett County Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and the Fire and Emergency Services Department are responsible for extending these services.

## GWINNETT COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

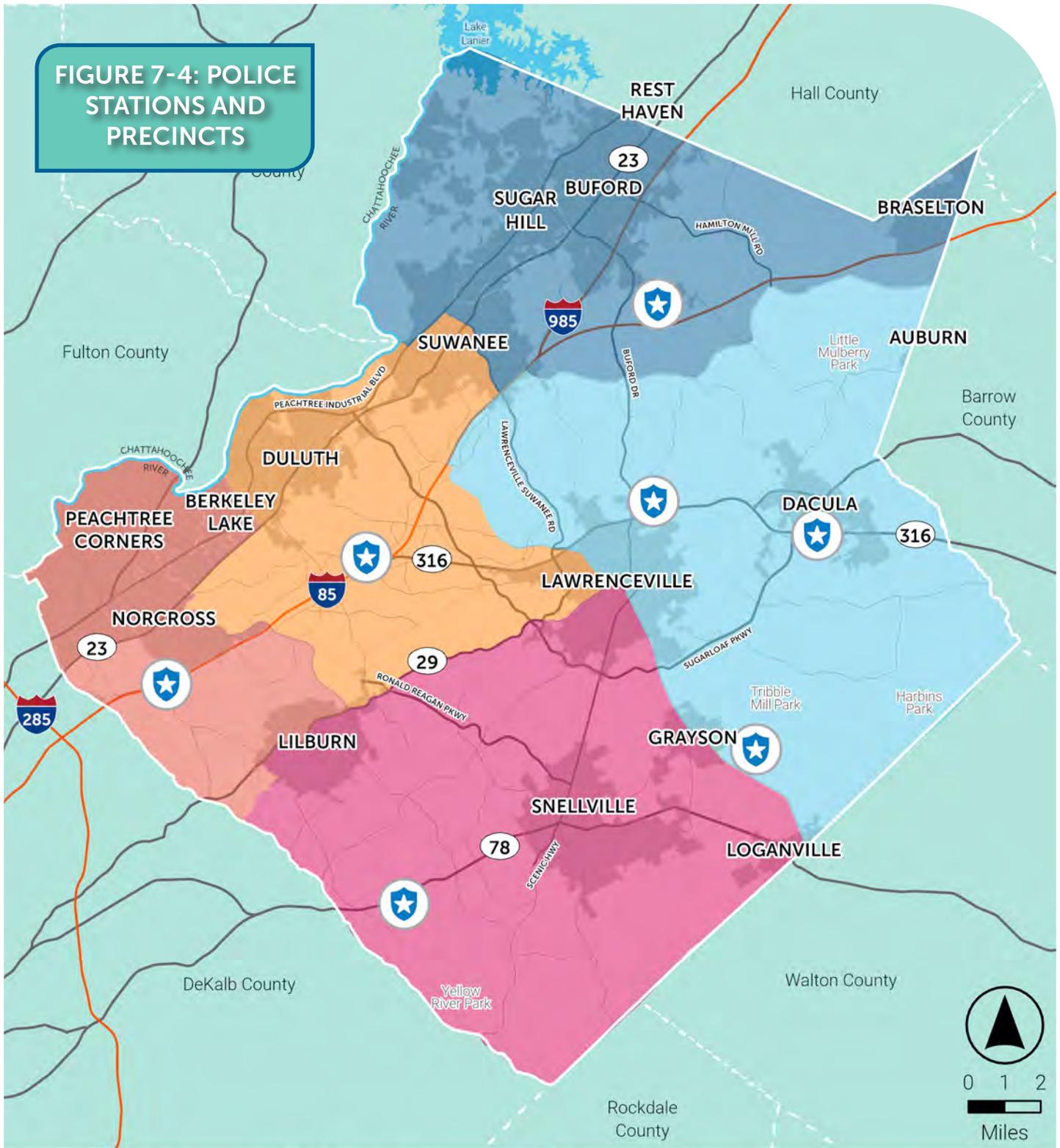
The Gwinnett County Police Department consists of 930 sworn officers and 129 communication officers, whom 296 civilian employees support. Their jurisdiction spans the entirety of the unincorporated county and seven municipalities that do not have their own police force (Berkeley Lake, Buford, Dacula, Grayson, Peachtree Corners, Rest Haven, and Sugar Hill). To successfully provide safety services to such a large area, they work across six precincts throughout the county (Figure 7-4). The County plans to build a new GCPD headquarters in 2025 to expand its coverage and operational capacity. The Department has maintained its Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies certification for 30 years.

The GCPD's primary goal is maintaining response time among an ever-increasing call volume. To accomplish this, the Department must be appropriately staffed. Staffing is one of the most significant challenges, as their officers often are recruited away from the Department by Gwinnett County Public Schools or neighboring police departments. The Department expanded and updated their training facility in 2023 to assist with recruiting, training, and retaining new officers. In future planning exercises conducted for Gwinnett County at large and for the Department specifically, they are also exploring the use of technology to add capacity where they may have staff shortages. This includes Flock cameras, drones as first responders, and access to Gwinnett County Department of Transportation cameras.



Gwinnett Emergency Operations Center  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

**FIGURE 7-4: POLICE STATIONS AND PRECINCTS**



**Legend**

-  Police Stations
-  Municipalities

*District Number*

-  1
-  2
-  3
-  4
-  5



## FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services employs 1,044 staff across 31 fire stations, each with engine and medic companies, responding to over 96,000 aid requests annually (Figure 7-5). The Department is responsible for training the staff and has maintained its excellent Insurance Services Office rating of 2/2x. All emergency response vehicles are staffed with EMTs and paramedics. GCFES completed an extensive master planning process in June 2023 that evaluated current conditions, identified future needs, and provided recommendations and strategies to deliver its goals. Key recommendations include two sites for new fire stations, one in eastern Gwinnett off Highway 316 and the other in the Centerville community. Adding these fire stations will address anticipated population growth in areas currently less developed but expected to densify. Like GCPD’s needs, the master plan also recommended increasing staff capacity to meet industry standards regarding workloads and response times. The Department is using SPLOST funds to begin implementation of these recommended projects.



The Gwinnett County Fire & Emergency Services Department

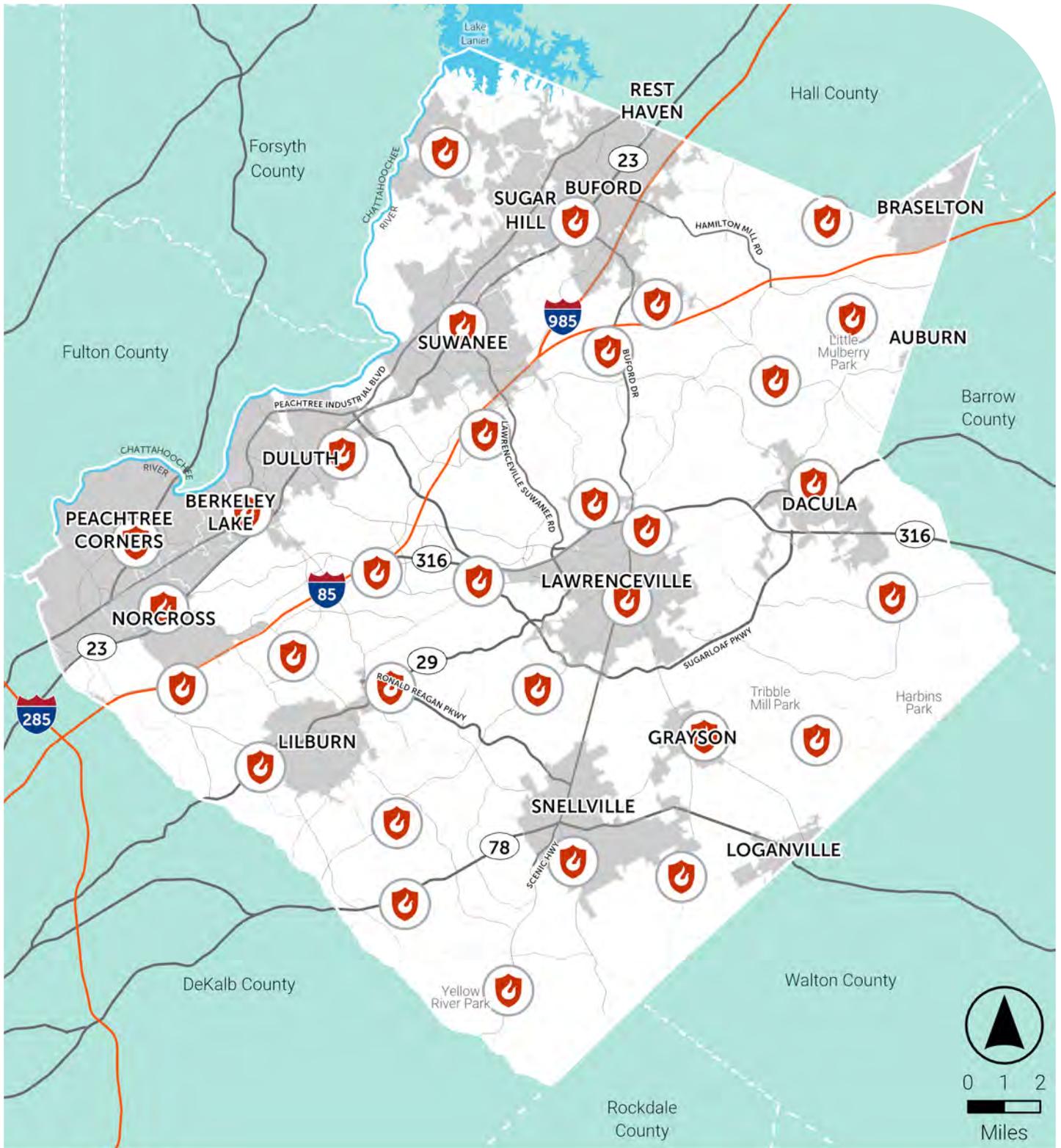
RESPONDS TO OVER

**96,000 REQUESTS ANNUALLY**

## RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND THE DAILY COMMUNITY

2022 TOTAL CALL VOLUME BY QUARTER					
TOTAL CALLS	1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER	3RD QUARTER	4TH QUARTER	TOTAL
Fire Calls	1,197	1,130	957	-	-
Medical Calls	17,946	18,503	19,227	-	-
Other Calls	4,702	4,950	5,150	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,845</b>	<b>24,583</b>	<b>25,334</b>	-	-

*Credit: Gwinnett County. Fire calls include all fire and suspected fire calls. Medical calls include any medical emergency, including drowning, stroke, and cardiac arrest. Other Calls include alarms, assisting residents, gas leaks, water in buildings, hazmat, and cave-in/collapse.*



- Legend**
-  Fire Stations
  -  Municipalities

**FIGURE 7-5: FIRE STATIONS**

There are several connections between public safety and land use. As land use policy encourages areas to develop more densely, public safety officers must consider alternative approaches to accessing certain types of development and allocating resources accordingly. Strategies for this could include different types of service vehicles that can navigate tighter spaces. Additionally, densifying development may increase public transit service and walkability, reducing vehicular trips and congestion and helping decrease response times amidst a growing population needing assistance. Less vehicular trips can also contribute to fewer car accidents, which police officers and EMTs respond to often.

Another consideration is that aspects of the built environment can also impact these departments' accreditation ratings. For example, Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services Department's top rating is due to factors such as 99.5 percent of streets and roads within their service area being within a five-mile travel distance of a fire station, and 97.4 percent of the service area being within 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant. This success stems from proper community servicing, as lower service ratings may impact residents' and businesses' insurance costs. Finally, as land use and development patterns change, methods of accessing areas to provide these vital services may also need to be updated. Current considerations of the Gwinnett Police and Fire teams are using all-terrain vehicles to access the far reaches of large parks that have trail systems rather than access roads, using smaller fire trucks in developed areas with narrow roads, and implementing high-rise fire safety training as buildings within the county increase vertically.

**99.5%** of streets/roads within their service area fall within

**5 MILES** of a fire station



**97.4%** of the service area falls within

**1,000 ft** of a fire hydrant



# PUBLIC SAFETY: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## NEED

### 1 MAINTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE TIMES

The primary responsibility of public safety officials is to respond to calls for assistance. With significant growth and development, hiring more staff and building or expanding facilities will be necessary, but they are far from the only solutions. With redevelopment comes the potential to reduce roadway congestion by expanding transportation options and shortening trips, which can lead to faster response times. In addition to using technology to identify public safety hot spots, maintaining the County's efficient public safety response times can also be achieved by improving each Daily Community's built environment.

## OPPORTUNITY

### 1 SHARING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA TO AID IN SAFETY PLANNING

Besides building new facilities or expanding transit service—which either take significant time, are governed by other departments, or both—public safety agencies can invest in new technology to maintain response times and improve efficiency. Understanding the location of crash hotspots or utilizing advanced traffic signaling can aid in fast response times for fire, EMT, and police services. Being able to see building footprints to plan response tactics ahead of an emergency can also help with safety planning. This data and technology may be readily accessible to other departments, such as GCDOT or P&D, and sharing with public safety departments can increase their resources without significant costs. Other technologies to consider are different vehicles, including vans and ATVs, which are already being deployed on a small scale countywide.

# ARTS & CULTURE EXISTING CONDITIONS

While generally appreciated as a community resource of great value, arts and culture programming within Gwinnett County has been supported mainly by a decentralized group of private companies, nonprofits, volunteer associations, and cultural organizations. In recent years, Gwinnett has explored ways to support arts and culture activities more centrally, building partnerships with multicultural groups and coordinating with theaters, art centers, and other organizations to hold festivals, fairs, and other County events.

A conclusive step in this direction is the Artworks Board of Directors’ approval of **Create Gwinnett: Arts and Culture Master Plan**. The plan includes an extensive registry of Gwinnett’s arts and culture assets. The County’s cultural assets have not been inventoried since the Atlanta Regional Commission conducted a regionwide study in 2011. Another step in centralizing arts and culture is redeveloping Central Gwinnett High School as the School of the Arts, which re-opened in Fall 2023.

Arts & Culture Assets by the Numbers:							
18 sites on the National Register of Historic Places				28 sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places			
				15+ Murals			
12+ Live music venues (including one Arena sized venue)				12 Museums			
				9 Art Galleries		8 Theaters	

In addition, there is a wide range of both eastern and western religions supported by places of worship in the county, some notable across the region, such as BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir. With such a wide variety and extensively dispersed set of assets, a full-time staff position may be considered to coordinate with the hundreds of active cultural and artistic organizations that have been leading the charge in this area for the last several decades.

## RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND THE DAILY COMMUNITY

Land use regulations such as zoning often include requirements around signage and sometimes even dictate requirements about public art. Usually, the signage requirements within ordinances restrict public art. However, when created or updated with community input, these ordinances can be written to promote public art and determine an appropriate governmental relationship with its creation and maintenance. Another area of connection is through the preservation of historic places. Public art, historic preservation, and culturally relevant development practices such as multi-generational homes can strengthen the sense of belonging and the identity of a Daily Community. Gwinnett has seen positive reactions to the efforts in historic preservation particularly.

# ARTS & CULTURE: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## NEED

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### 1 DEDICATE STAFF FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

As Gwinnett County continues to formalize its commitment to arts and culture planning, determining an optimal role is the County's most basic need. Hiring dedicated staff to build partnerships with existing cultural groups and arts associations, identifying gaps in programming, and building out support for art within the built environment should be a top priority.

## OPPORTUNITY

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### 1 REQUIRING PUBLIC ART WITHIN DAILY COMMUNITY CENTERS

As Daily Community concepts are advanced through redevelopment across Gwinnett County, there is a natural opportunity to work with community leadership to install new public art that improves aesthetics and reinforces the unique identities of Gwinnett County's diverse communities.

## EDUCATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

Gwinnett County Public Schools manages public education services. The school system operates separately from the Gwinnett County Government and is overseen by its own governing board.

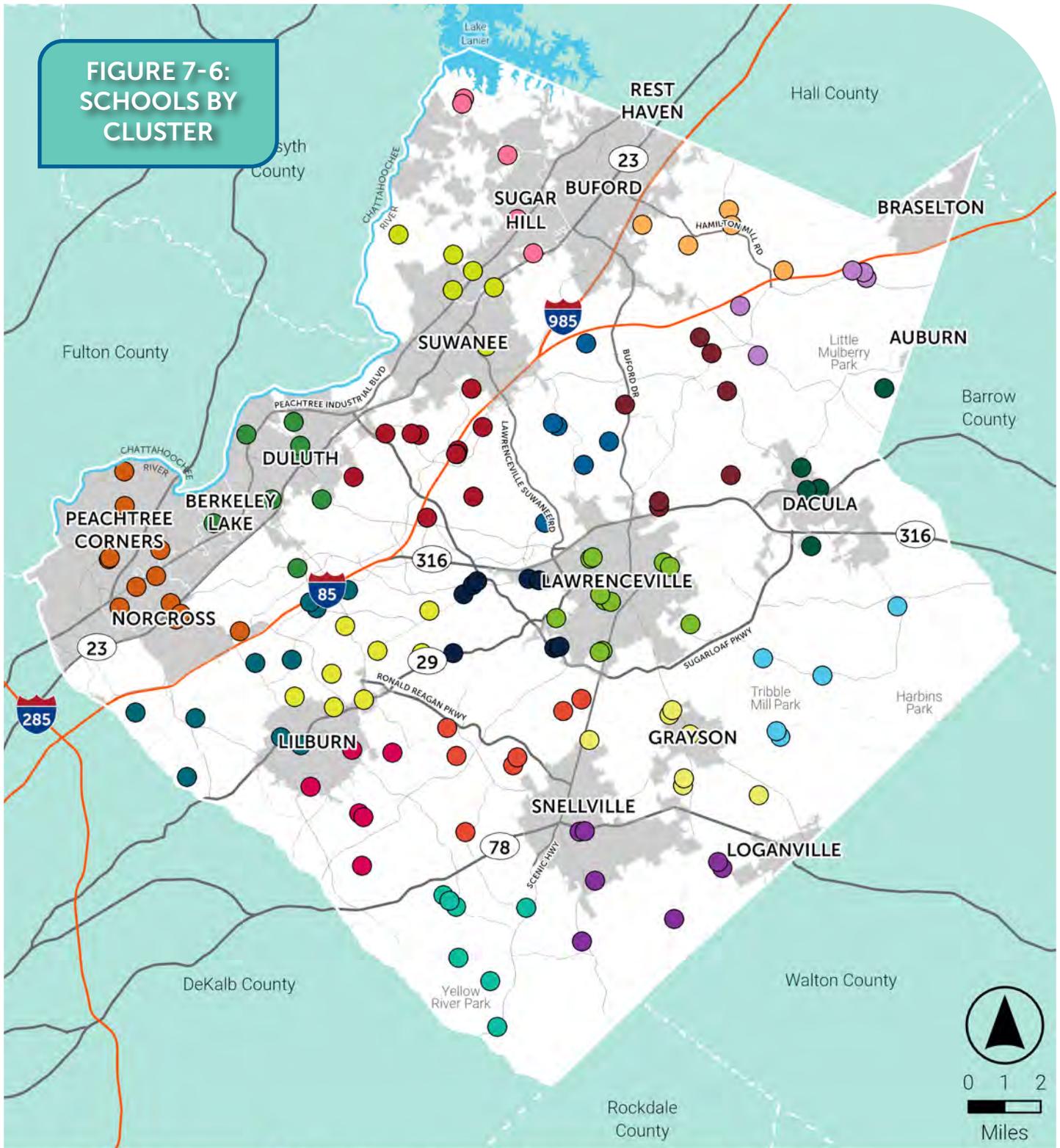
The district covers all 437 square miles of the county, consisting of 142 schools (81 elementary, 29 middle, 24 high, and eight specialty schools) organized into 20 clusters (Figure 7-6). The City of Buford has its own school district, but the two districts have an agreement in which the County provides more specialized services as needed. Most attendance for Gwinnett children is determined by where they live in the cluster, but not always. GCPS is the largest employer in Gwinnett County and the fourth largest employer in the Metropolitan Atlanta area.

GCPS operates under its master plan, *Our Blueprint to the Future*, finalized in Winter 2022, which guides the system from 2023 through the 2026-2027 school year. The district utilizes an online, real-time Key Performance Indicator tracker to analyze data from the plan's initial year (the 2021-2022 school year), assessing their advancements towards the plan's objectives. Funding for GCPS comes from property taxes and education specific SPLOST funds, which are allocated for developing the system's facilities and infrastructure.



*Gwinnett County Hamilton Mill Library  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County  
Communications)*

**FIGURE 7-6:  
SCHOOLS BY  
CLUSTER**



**Legend**

*School Cluster*

- |           |                  |                |                 |
|-----------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Archer    | Central Gwinnett | Lanier         | Parkview        |
| Berkmar   | Collins Hill     | Meadowcreek    | Peachtree Ridge |
| Brookwood | Dacula           | Mill Creek     | Seckinger       |
|           | Discovery        | Mountain View  | Shiloh          |
|           | Duluth           | Norcross       | South Gwinnett  |
|           | Grayson          | North Gwinnett |                 |

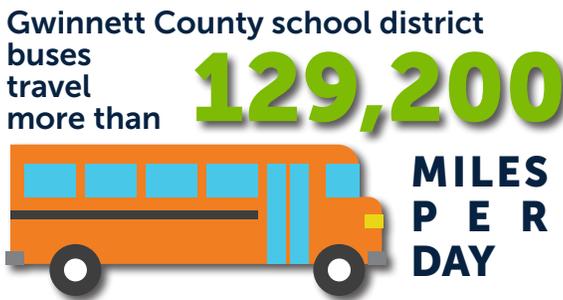


## RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND THE DAILY COMMUNITY

GCPS is particularly sensitive to the demands of a growing population and where land use policies funnel that growth. Clusters are routinely updated to ensure schools are not exceeding their capacities; these will need to be continuously monitored as the number of young people in the county is expected to increase by approximately 58,900 children over the next 20 years. Currently, 179,581 students attend GCPS, which leaves about 76,500 students who attend private schools, schools outside GCPS, such as Buford City Schools, or are homeschooled. Assuming the ratio of GCPS to non-GCPS students remains the same, GCPS can expect 44,000 more students to enroll over the next 20 years.

To ensure schools can accommodate new students appropriately, the GCPS Planning Department works closely with Gwinnett County's Department of Planning and Development. Gwinnett County P&D shares development permit and rezoning requests with GCPS, while GCPS shares estimates on projected school age population impacts from residential projects through monthly reports to P&D, Gwinnett County Planning Commission, and the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners. This exchange of information allows GCPS to plan for more efficient resource distribution and ensure development decisions consider impacts on the school system.

As evidenced by Education-Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (E-SPLOST) spending, building new schools is an expensive undertaking. School development patterns have followed the same pattern of suburban sprawl Gwinnett has historically seen in its residential development. It has been more cost-effective for the school system to build fewer schools, each with higher capacity, rather than smaller, neighborhood level schools throughout the county, even if that increases other costs.



To accommodate this pattern and get children across the county to school while avoiding overcrowding, GCPS has created and maintains one of the largest school district owned bus fleets in the nation at 1,968 buses. The fleet transports 127,269 students twice daily over 8,308 routes, traveling more than 129,200 miles per day. To fund this, the GCPS's annual transportation budget for FY 2022 was \$131,345,284. FY23 and FY24 budgets expect that number to grow by \$20 million in the next two years. Reliance on this expensive system limits

what GCPS can provide students access to programming outside of standard school hours. Students who do not have access to regular transportation at home or live within walking distance of their school cannot participate in extracurricular activities before or after school.

GCPS and the Department of Community Services seek to correct the challenges created by dispersed development patterns through the Community Schools Model. This national strategy uses the Coalition of Community Schools framework to unlock additional resources in historically underserved areas through strengthening partnerships between the schools, families, and the community. The model is adaptable to each community's unique needs and assets, with each school specific application designed for the community by the community.

## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MODEL

The Four Pillars of Community Schools are: Integrated Student Supports, Expanded and Extended Learning Time and Opportunities, Active Family and Community Engagement, and Shared Leadership and Practices.

The model was first introduced through GCPS's most recent strategic plan, Blueprint for our Future. Currently, there are 21 community schools, led by a community school coordinator at each comprehensive high school and one shared by Gwinnett School of Math, Science and Technology and Maxwell. The Community Schools Coordinator is a licensed school administrator who works afternoons and evenings Monday through Thursday and the regular school day on Fridays. There is currently a pilot expanding the program at Shiloh High School. If successful, Gwinnett Community

Services will support the implementation of a comprehensive community school in every Gwinnett County cluster over the next five years.

While the model is student focused, DoCS is exploring how close collaboration with families and residents can benefit communities surrounding the schools. There is a natural synergy between the Community Schools Model and the Daily Community framework in that schools are often at the center of many families' daily social lives. Ensuring greater access and support for community schools can help build stronger communities and provide vital resources to residents of all ages and backgrounds.

# EDUCATION: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## NEED

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### 1 INTEGRATE EDUCATION WITHIN DAILY COMMUNITIES

Schools are community hubs that organize a large part of residents' social lives. The Daily Community framework seeks to capture and promote this social structure within the built environment. GCPS's commitment to advancing the Community Schools Model aligns well with the objective to create active, thriving community centers across Gwinnett. Identifying ways to integrate educational opportunities could strengthen a community's access to education while also encouraging different forms of school siting that refocus on the neighborhood aspect of neighborhood schools. Growth can aid in this objective rather than serve as an obstacle.

## OPPORTUNITY

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### 1 IMPROVING YOUTH EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Between the Community School Model pilot programming and potential redevelopment opportunities, there are multiple ways to provide social benefits to youth. First, projects that offer shorter bus times or even allow children to walk to school can be pursued by aligning school growth with redevelopment. Situating new schools within the Daily Community context or fostering redevelopment around existing schools can strengthen connections between Gwinnett County's exemplary educational institutions and the daily lives of their students and families.



*Elizabeth H. Williams Library and City of Snellville Business Center  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)*

# HEALTH & WELLNESS EXISTING CONDITIONS

Resources devoted to the health and wellness of Gwinnett's diverse communities are primarily housed under the Department of Community Services' Health and Human Services Division, with other departments supporting initiatives promoting health and wellness in Gwinnett County. The Division maintains several centers from which they execute their extensive programming. There are three OneStop Centers and the Gwinnett Senior Services Center at which they provide OneStop 4 HELP programming and resources to residents of all ages facing hunger, health, housing, and other issues. They also manage four Senior Centers and a satellite program that offer a variety of services ranging from weekday programming, meals, and transportation services to qualifying residents (Figure 7-7). In the past year, over 176,000 meals were served to Gwinnett seniors in their homes and at the Gwinnett Senior Services Center.

## ONESTOP 4 HELP

Gwinnett County provides emergency services to all residents through its OneStop 4 HELP program. Originally proposed in a previous Unified Plan, the OneStop program offers emergency assistance related to hunger, health, housing insecurity, and other challenges. Requests can be filed over the phone, email, through an online form, and also at four physical locations throughout the County (Figure 7-7).

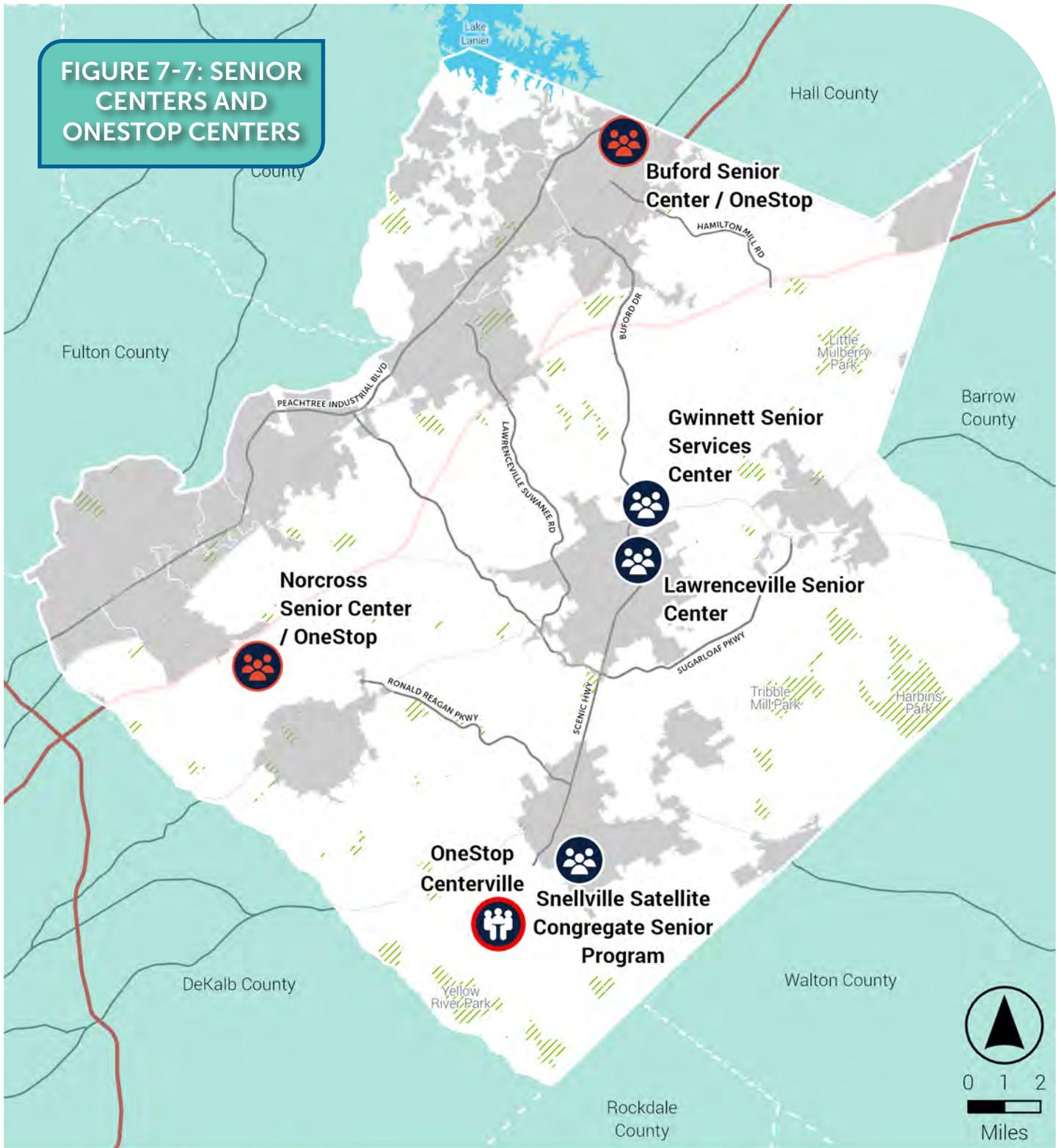
In addition to these targeted efforts and centers, Health and Human Services also has programs geared toward veterans, children and families, and anyone needing additional physical or mental health support. Prevention-focused resources are provided through Live Healthy Gwinnett, a countywide Health and Wellness Initiative in Community Services. This work is critical to address preventable chronic illnesses that impact individuals of Gwinnett. To better understand the human services ecosystem holistically, the Division recently conducted a Health and Human Services Needs Assessment scheduled for adoption at the end of 2023. This comprehensive analysis will include a community needs assessment to understand what is needed beyond what Health and Human Services provide.

## RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND THE DAILY COMMUNITY

The built environment directly affects community health and wellness by facilitating or limiting how physically active residents can be. Being able to walk or bike to a destination safely can reduce poor health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes.

Land use planning can support health and wellness by ensuring all residents have access to these health benefits despite their base physicality. Transportation and aging in place are both priorities for H&HS. Their transportation services are separate and unique from transit programs run by the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation. The 56,000+ trips provided using H&HS transportation services are in conjunction with care management plans as well. Design and transportation requirements that promote accessibility between places and within buildings and homes can aid in allowing seniors to age in place.

**FIGURE 7-7: SENIOR CENTERS AND ONESTOP CENTERS**



**Legend**

-  Municipalities
-  Senior Center
-  Senior Center/OneStop
-  OneStop



# HEALTH & WELLNESS: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## NEED

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### 1 PROVIDE SPECIALIZED SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

Attainable housing and accessible transportation are two of the most urgent health and wellness needs across all population groups in Gwinnett County. However, seniors are adversely affected due to insufficient suitable housing and transportation services. Given the incoming silver tsunami expected in Gwinnett County, planning initiatives and redevelopment projects should incorporate provisions for seniors to ensure they enjoy robust social lives within their Daily Communities.

## OPPORTUNITY

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### 1 PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

The built environment influences how people of all ages navigate through their community. To ensure Daily Communities are accessible to all people, the built environment must accommodate mobility and accessibility needs across different ages and ability levels. New development and redevelopment can advance these concepts on a small scale before they are expanded to other parts of each community. Prioritizing the needs of individuals who require particular safety and accessibility features can lead to spaces that everyone can enjoy.

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM RESIDENTS

Residents were eager to talk about their appreciation for Gwinnett's high quality community resources and expressed their desire for more of the services they have come to enjoy. Some of these included:

- 1 More world-class parks, especially parks within walking distance
- 2 More arts and education programming
- 3 More programmatic support for youth and seniors

Through survey questions and specific activities at the Daily Community Cafes, residents were asked to select which resources belong in their ideal Daily Community. Other activities at these workshops sought to educate residents on how redevelopment could bring these amenities to bear. Public space was of particular interest to residents.

For a full summary of engagement, see Appendix C.

## COMMUNITY PREFERENCES: COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Improve access and connectivity to resources (e.g. parks, libraries, educational institutions)

Create public spaces with amenities and interactive features

Expand and connect trail network between neighborhoods, centers, and public spaces

Provide more programming for seniors

Provide more ways for youth to get involved in their communities

Expand and enhance OneStop facilities

Communicate with Gwinnett County Public Schools regarding large scale housing developments that may impact attendance

*Centerville Senior Center  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)*

# Needs & Opportunities

Though the central theme of Gwinnett County's future vision of Community Resources is summed up by one word—more—the needs and opportunities associated with that vision are intricate and specifically tied to different subject areas. They are consolidated here for convenient reference.

## NEEDS

### MORE RESOURCES NEEDS:

#### 1 MAINTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE TIMES

The primary responsibility of public safety officials is to respond to calls for assistance. With significant growth and development, hiring more staff and building or expanding facilities will be necessary, but they are far from the only solutions. With redevelopment comes the potential to reduce roadway congestion by expanding transportation options and shortening trips, which can lead to faster response times. In addition to using technology to identify public safety hot spots, maintaining the County's efficient public safety response times can also be achieved by improving each Daily Community's built environment.

#### 2 DEDICATE STAFF FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

As Gwinnett County continues to formalize its commitment to arts and culture planning, determining an optimal role is the County's most basic need. Hiring dedicated staff to build partnerships with existing cultural groups and arts associations, identifying gaps in programming, and building out support for art within the built environment should be a top priority.

#### 3 PROVIDE SPECIALIZED SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

Attainable housing and accessible transportation are two of the most urgent health and wellness needs across all population groups in Gwinnett County. However, seniors are adversely affected due to insufficient suitable housing and transportation services. Given the incoming silver tsunami expected in Gwinnett County, planning initiatives and redevelopment projects should incorporate provisions for seniors to ensure they enjoy robust social lives within their Daily Communities.

## MORE COLLABORATION NEEDS:

### 1 ADJUST PUBLIC SPACE POLICY

While the County enjoys a robust and well-planned parks and recreation system, some policies keep the Division from executing that vision. Outdated amenity requirements in new subdivisions and trail developments that go unreported to the County make it more difficult for the Division to accomplish its goals of a well-connected system. Some of these requirements have burdened the division with 477 acres of inaccessible recreation set-asides left over from developments (Figure 7-3, page 356). These tracts, which are deeded back to the County, are often the worst sections of land, providing few greenspace benefits and taking up division resources. On average, they are about 3 acres in size.

### 2 INTEGRATE EDUCATION WITHIN DAILY COMMUNITIES

Schools are community hubs that organize a large part of residents' social lives. The Daily Community framework seeks to capture and promote this social structure within the built environment. GCPS's commitment to advancing the Community Schools Model aligns well with the objective to create active, thriving community centers across Gwinnett. Identifying ways to integrate educational opportunities could strengthen a community's access to education while also encouraging different forms of school siting that refocus on the neighborhood aspect of neighborhood schools. Growth can aid in this objective rather than serve as an obstacle.

# OPPORTUNITIES

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## MORE RESOURCES OPPORTUNITIES:

### 1 TYING NEW PUBLIC SPACE CREATION WITH REDEVELOPMENT

As underutilized sites are redeveloped, they bring opportunities for new amenities to be incorporated into site design. Public spaces, trails, and other community spaces can be accounted for alongside housing and retail space. Providing clear guidelines and partnering with developers can make new public spaces enjoyable and inviting, but clear and sustainable management and maintenance strategies are needed.

### 2 REQUIRING PUBLIC ART WITHIN DAILY COMMUNITY CENTERS

As Daily Community concepts are advanced through redevelopment across Gwinnett County, there is a natural opportunity to work with community leadership to install new public art that improves aesthetics and reinforces the unique identities of Gwinnett County's diverse communities.

### 3 PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

The built environment influences how people of all ages navigate through their community. To ensure Daily Communities are accessible to all people, the built environment must accommodate mobility and accessibility needs across different ages and ability levels. New development and redevelopment can advance these concepts on a small scale before they are expanded to other parts of each community. Prioritizing the needs of individuals who require particular safety and accessibility features can lead to spaces that everyone can enjoy.

## MORE COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES:

### 1 UTILIZING COUNTY BUILDINGS FOR MULTIPLE PURPOSES

Including multiple uses within one building allows departments to provide services more efficiently and take advantage of synergies between their work. Gwinnett Community Services has begun to integrate its own programming in County facilities, setting a model other departments could follow. Future County facilities and renovation projects should recognize that residents' needs evolve over time and explore options for how cross-departmental use of buildings, as well as features of the built environment (like shared parking), can strengthen communities.

### 2 SHARING TECHNOLOGY AND DATA TO AID IN SAFETY PLANNING

Besides building new facilities or expanding transit service—which either take significant time, are governed by other departments, or both—public safety agencies can invest in new technology to maintain response times and improve efficiency. Understanding the location of crash hotspots or utilizing advanced traffic signaling can aid in fast response times for fire, EMT, and police services. Being able to see building footprints to plan response tactics ahead of an emergency can also help with safety planning. This data and technology may be readily accessible to other departments, such as GCDOT or P&D, and sharing with public safety departments can increase their resources without significant costs. Other technologies to consider are different vehicles, including vans and ATVs, which are already being deployed on a small scale countywide.

### 3 IMPROVING YOUTH EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Between the Community School Model pilot programming and potential redevelopment opportunities, there are multiple ways to provide social benefits to youth. First, projects that offer shorter bus times or even allow children to walk to school can be pursued by aligning school growth with redevelopment. Situating new schools within the Daily Community context or fostering redevelopment around existing schools can strengthen connections between Gwinnett County's exemplary educational institutions and the daily lives of their students and families.

# Goals & Best Practices

The Daily Community framework offers an opportunity to redevelop some of the County's underutilized spaces into active community centers with various amenities, including new greenspace, public art, safety infrastructure, and more. This section outlines several goals that expand community resources along with redevelopment opportunities. The first goal is specific to the issue of scaling resources for anticipated growth and increasing collaboration between departments. The remaining goals aim to use land use strategies to expand community resources in the county.



## **COLLABORATE BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS AND PARTNERS TO SCALE UP COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

**1**

### **INCREASE COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS**

As Gwinnett County grows, collaboration between County departments, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and resident groups will be crucial for moving forward together without duplicating efforts or putting up barriers to others' objectives. Collaboration also keeps all parties informed of each other's goals and progress and could lead to joint ventures that co-locate services, such as OneStop centers being located on park property. These collaborations can also be mutually beneficial in that they leverage multiple funding sources and staff time available to provide resources at scale and equitably throughout Gwinnett County.

The most important actions P&D can take regarding interdepartmental collaboration is (1) to continue sharing updates on current and upcoming pipeline projects and (2) to involve other departments in long range plans for the redevelopment of areas within Gwinnett County. Enhancing collaboration in long term growth planning can resolve concerns from various departments regarding resource distribution, such as new facilities and staff, as well as service delivery, including equipment needs and delivery obstacles. Growth, particularly when strategically planned to include diverse housing and land uses, offers numerous community benefits but may also cause concern among service providers. Incorporating other departments' needs into long-range planning can build partnerships across departments and allow greater lead time for their own service delivery strategies.

**2**

### **ENSURE NEW PUBLIC SPACES SUPPORT COMFORT, SAFETY, AND A SENSE OF PLACE FOR ALL RESIDENTS**

Providing robust Community Resources is not limited to the built environment, but it often starts with it. For example, it is often more expensive and time consuming to add accessibility features after an area has been developed than during its initial construction. There are many aspects to what makes a place accessible, including removing physical impediments for people with disabilities and enabling

multiple transportation methods to that place. Perceptions of safety and feeling welcome can also limit a place's accessibility.

The built environment forms the foundation of a great place. Wide sidewalks, bike lanes, streetlights, public space, and visual art all, to some extent, depend on development patterns that promote interaction and engagement. A solid community foundation makes it much easier to provide programming that further establishes a sense of place and identity in communities, encouraging activity and promoting quality of life. The Daily Community framework is built on these principles, with a crucial emphasis on making its benefits accessible to everyone. An essential part of the Daily Community framework is a thriving community center where residents can attend to their daily needs and enjoy various services and amenities. Well-designed public spaces, like parks and plazas, can support these kinds of activities. As the County develops more public spaces, including features that facilitate social interaction, comfort, and safety in their design, it could provide Daily Communities with worthy and enjoyable centers.

Similarly, this applies to streetscapes. In many ways, streets are the original public spaces where people socialize, exercise, and travel between private places. Often, streets are designed to optimize the convenience of drivers and car traffic. Within the Daily Community context, streets should balance the needs of all user types, rather than defaulting to maximizing efficient travel for cars.

## **CASE STUDY:**

### *JOINT AD HOC ALEXANDRIA MUNICIPAL FACILITIES PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE - ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA*

In the city of Alexandria, Virginia, the local school board and the city council were challenged to work together to align their unique visions for long term capital improvements planning in the city. To tackle this challenge, they created a third-party entity in 2017, the Joint Ad Hoc Alexandria Municipal Facilities Plan Steering Committee, to synthesize their visions for the city's future. The committee was comprised of consultants, representatives from relevant education institutions, local development companies, and nonprofit leaders who were nominated from across the general community and interviewed by the city manager with input from the school board. The committee's work has guided both the city and the school board's capital improvements program for the next 10 years. This process has provided increased transparency for the community into two department's planning practices, increased community participation in the planning process, and helped create a unified growth vision for their city. A similar board may help streamline communications and vision setting between Gwinnett County P&D and GCPS.

*Source: City of Alexandria, Task Force Subcommittees*

## **CASE STUDY:**

### *THE FRONT PORCH - CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA*

The Front Porch is an early-intervention program that provides youth services in the City of Savannah and Chatham County with an opportunity to avoid entering the justice system. With population growth, the area wanted to address the increase in juvenile-committed crimes. The program creates a Multi Agency Resource Center – the MARC – that is comprised of The Chatham County Juvenile Court System, City of Savannah Police Department, and Savannah-Chatham County School District. These agencies worked with a local nonprofit that provided staff, technical assistance, and facilitated strategic planning efforts with regional stakeholders. Through joining forces to share resources and create new programs and services, Chatham County and City of Savannah were able to achieve their objective of decreasing youth crime. Referrals from Savannah Chatham schools to the County Juvenile Court declined by 85% in the Front Porch's first year of Operation. In the first three years of operation (October 2018 - October 2021), 700 youth have been served. Though Gwinnett may not have the same exact objective, the MARC system may be a way to foster interagency collaboration to tackle other population growth issues. Perhaps Senior Services and GCDOT could collaborate with cities on expanding senior transit services.

## CASE STUDY:

### ALPHA LOOP - ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA

The Alpha Loop is a network of existing and planned multiuse trail segments currently being constructed in Alpharetta, Georgia. When fully built out, it will offer safe, active transportation connections to several popular activity centers across the City—including Downtown, Avalon, and North Point Mall—as well as to the Big Creek Greenway, which runs just south of North Point Mall. Originally proposed through a series of concept designs in 2016 by the City of Alpharetta, the idea quickly gained steam and was reinforced through a series of plans, including a 2018 Livable Centers Initiative study for the North Point District. With such strong momentum and public support, the City was able to partner with private developers to build out Phase 1 of the trail incrementally. Currently, the trail connects Avalon (via Avalon Fitness Park and streetside connections) to Thompson Street Park before terminating in downtown Alpharetta at Brooke Street Park. The trail provides a few key takeaways for Gwinnett County, especially as it builds out its vision for an extensive trail network. Not only does the Alpha Loop provide safe, comfortable, and accessible greenspace for its users, it also details a path forward for implementation that utilizes redevelopment as a vehicle for incremental improvements to the built environment. Gwinnett County can leverage these types of partnership and spirit of collaboration to create community connectivity and public space benefits.



*Image Source:  
City of Alpharetta*



## **PARKS AND RECREATION - INFUSE COMMUNITIES WITH CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE GREENSPACE**

The 2020 Gwinnett Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan outlines a clear vision of creating great public spaces and greenspace that serve their neighborhoods. Building high quality public spaces within these areas can anchor the County's collection of neighborhoods and provide social connectivity for its residents. The best practices below offer several strategies to prioritize creating new greenspace within redevelopment projects, existing rights of way, and prospective trail networks.

**1**

### **INCENTIVIZE QUALITY PUBLIC SPACES WITHIN PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT**

It can take a long time to find land for and develop a new public greenspace or public space, despite how much public support Parks and Recreation Divisions usually have. Another vehicle for developing new public space is through private redevelopment. As highlighted above, this does not always result in high quality public space; however, with active collaboration with developers interested in investing in Daily Community concepts, new public spaces at the neighborhood scale could be created.

**2**

### **EXPAND SHARED SPACE WITHIN THE PUBLIC REALM, INCLUDING IN STREET RIGHTS OF WAY**

As mentioned in Goal #2, streets are often overlooked as public spaces. Despite clear traffic and safety issues, many Gwinnett rights of way possess the potential for streetscape improvements that can create public spaces and enrich pedestrian experiences. New greenspace in the right of way can also improve stormwater management through green infrastructure and offer opportunities for public art and wayfinding resources. Different designs will be needed for different urban scales, but the point remains: streets are for people and should be designed accordingly.

**3**

### **EXPAND AND CONNECT NEW PUBLIC SPACES ALONG LINEAR CORRIDORS, INCLUDING TRAILS**

Outside of Daily Community centers of activity, other public spaces can be delivered through trails. The County's ambitious goal for new trail miles offers many opportunities for new public space. Structured activities and passive greenspace could offer new public space with clear access points for maintenance.

## CASE STUDY:

### NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA PARK PROVISION AND PARK IMPACT FEES - NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA, 2021

Nassau County, FL, is one of the few remaining undeveloped counties in Florida and is considered the Eastern Gateway to Florida. As the County continues to grow, the County's Parks Administrative Procedures and Design Manual establishes policies that ensure all new private developments containing a residential component address both the neighborhood and regional parks and recreation needs of existing and future residents.

The Design Manual states that all developments containing 25 units or more in nonrural residential development areas would construct and maintain a Neighborhood Park that is based on the standard of four acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. While Neighborhood Parks are recommended to be within 5-10 acres, the Design Manual provides a series of Prototypical Neighborhood Parks that guide the type of land, layout, design, and orientation of proposed parks.

Additionally, all new development containing a residential component would dedicate a proportionate share of recreation land or pay the applicable impact fee for parkland to mitigate the new demand on Regional Parks created by new residents within the proposed development based upon the level of service standards adopted in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The County has the sole decision to require land dedication or accept payment of impact fees in accordance with the adopted Impact Fee Regulations. Gwinnett County could work with private developers early in the master planning process to explore strategies of how proposed parkland from one development could be located along the edges of the development boundary and be combined with the proposed parkland of adjacent future developments to create a larger, integrated green space for the community.

Source: (Nassau County, 2021)



## CASE STUDY:

### NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NYCDOT) PLAZAS PROGRAM - CITY OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, NEW YORK, 2023

While Manhattan Island is urbanized to a vastly different degree than Gwinnett County, the City of New York's Plazas Program offers some insightful lessons for how to set aside public space within existing infrastructure corridors.

The City of New York has established a goal for all residents to be able to live within a 10-minute walk of a quality open space. One of the strategies to achieve this goal is to transform underused streets into vibrant, social public spaces. To accomplish this, NYC DOT partners with select organizations to transform these underutilized streets and create neighborhood plazas that contain tables, seating, trees, plants, lighting, bike racks, public art, and drinking fountains.

The design and construction of the sites are funded by the NYC DOT and designed through a community engagement process. Community groups are then responsible for these spaces' operations, maintenance, management, and programming so they continue to be vibrant pedestrian plazas. This public partnership requires high community engagement and trust but has yielded impressive results. This model could fit nicely within the Daily Community framework: it would build community buyin and repurpose existing infrastructure to create the

connected communities that Gwinnett County residents want to see.



*Image Source:  
Ryan Russo/NYC DOT*

## CASE STUDY:

### *LAFITTE GREENWAY, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA - LAFITTE GREENWAY, 2023*

The Lafitte Greenway is a 2.6 mile linear park and multiuse trail in the heart of New Orleans. The Greenway transforms one of the city's most historic transportation corridors—originally a canal connecting to Bayou St. John to the edge of the French Quarter and later a railroad right of way that sat vacant since the mid 20th century—into a multiuse transportation corridor and linear park. The Greenway features recreational facilities, fitness and cultural programming, open green space, and innovative stormwater management features. The path is fully lit with LED energy efficient trail lighting and includes curb extensions, signalized high visibility crosswalks, Americans with Disabilities Act compliant curb ramps at sidewalk corners, environmental remediation, a crushed stone walking path and a bicycle and pedestrian roundabout. While these kinds of existing linear structures are less common in Gwinnett County, the programming around the trail provides a good example of how the County might infuse future trail corridors with high quality public space.



*Source: Dana Brown & Associates*



## PUBLIC SAFETY – MAINTAIN RESPONSE TIMES AMIDST INCREASE IN CALL VOLUME

While maintaining response times amidst increases in call volumes are the top priorities for the Gwinnett County Police Department and Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services, the responsibility for maintaining the county as a place of choice falls on all departments. As previously discussed, land use and consequent transportation issues have impacts on departments tasked with Public Safety; therefore, Planning and Development should consider growth best practices that facilitate public safety's top priorities where possible.

### 1 SHARE RESOURCES ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

While Gwinnett County is fortunate to have a strong tax digest, the growing demands of an increasing amount of residents can put a strain on budgets, making hiring staff, acquiring equipment, and keeping up with workloads challenging. However, sharing resources, such as staff knowledge and time, advanced technology (particularly digital tools), and proactively providing information can help reduce the burdens of growth. Pertinent technology may include GIS data, license, and modeling. As previously mentioned, sharing development plans well in advance can help give proper planning time. Sharing data on traffic accident hot spots can inform GCDOT's roadway improvements, aiming to reduce accidents and subsequently decrease the emergency calls requiring response from officers, firefighters and EMTs.

#### CASE STUDY:

##### *ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROTECTION AND CRIME TRACKING (EMPACT), FLORIDA*

Geographic Information Systems, commonly referred to as GIS, are computer based tools that help to visualize, analyze, and interpret geographic data. Many public safety departments across the country are already using this software to help respond to emergencies. For example, police departments in Florida implement GIS software through a program called EMPACT: Electronic Monitoring Protection and Crime Tracking. This program automatically correlates data from GPS software used to track parolees, those on probation, or individuals released before their trial with local crime incident data. This can determine whether an individual was at the scene of the incident. While this may not be a tool GCPD is interested in, working with Planning and Development's GIS team may help them discover other uses for the software that can help maintain ideal response times.

## **2 INTEGRATE PUBLIC SAFETY ACCESS INTO REDEVELOPMENT DESIGNS THROUGH EYES ON THE STREET**

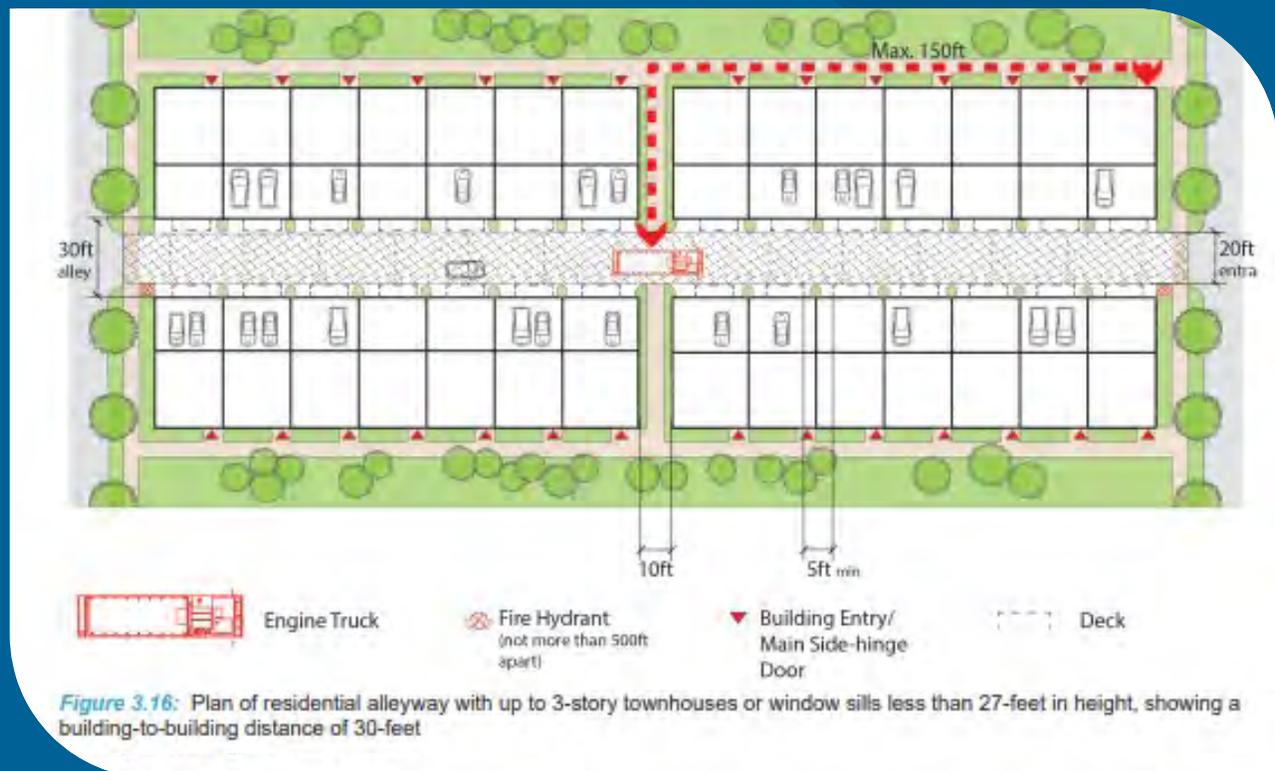
Some aspects of good design, such as human scaled buildings and multi-functional roadways, may make emergency response more challenging. As the Montgomery County Case study highlighted however, good design and safety do not have to be at odds with each other. Design guidelines should be developed with input from public safety. With advanced notice, public safety providers can also explore alternative forms and scales of transportation for fire fighters, police, and EMTs that fit within denser developments, including smaller vehicles and additional mobility options. Again, using new technologies such as drones could also facilitate this.

A primary benefit of good land use planning is decreases in congestion as walkability and connectivity are integrated into redevelopment. Gwinnett County Police and Fire and Emergency Services both recognize this can help decrease response times for their respective departments. P&D partnerships with GCPD and GCFES can help promote public support for these policies throughout the community as both these departments are two of the most public facing throughout the county.

## CASE STUDY:

### FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS PERFORMANCE-BASED DESIGN GUIDE - MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services worked with Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service to produce a design guideline booklet for professional design communities and developers within their county. The Fire Department Access Performance-Based Design Guide was a collaborative effort between MCPDS, MCFRS, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The guide explains existing fire department design elements, provides studies in performance-based access, utility, and street design alternatives, and makes recommendations for streetscapes and pedestrian and bicycle safety infrastructure that are both best design practices and compatible with fire protection services. The guide includes helpful street diagrams that account for both the best practices and fire needs. The diagrams include measurements related to the code requirements as well. Gwinnett County Planning and Development and Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services could either create a similar document specifically using Gwinnett's requirements or look to the collaboration process between the departments when writing larger design guidelines for the County.

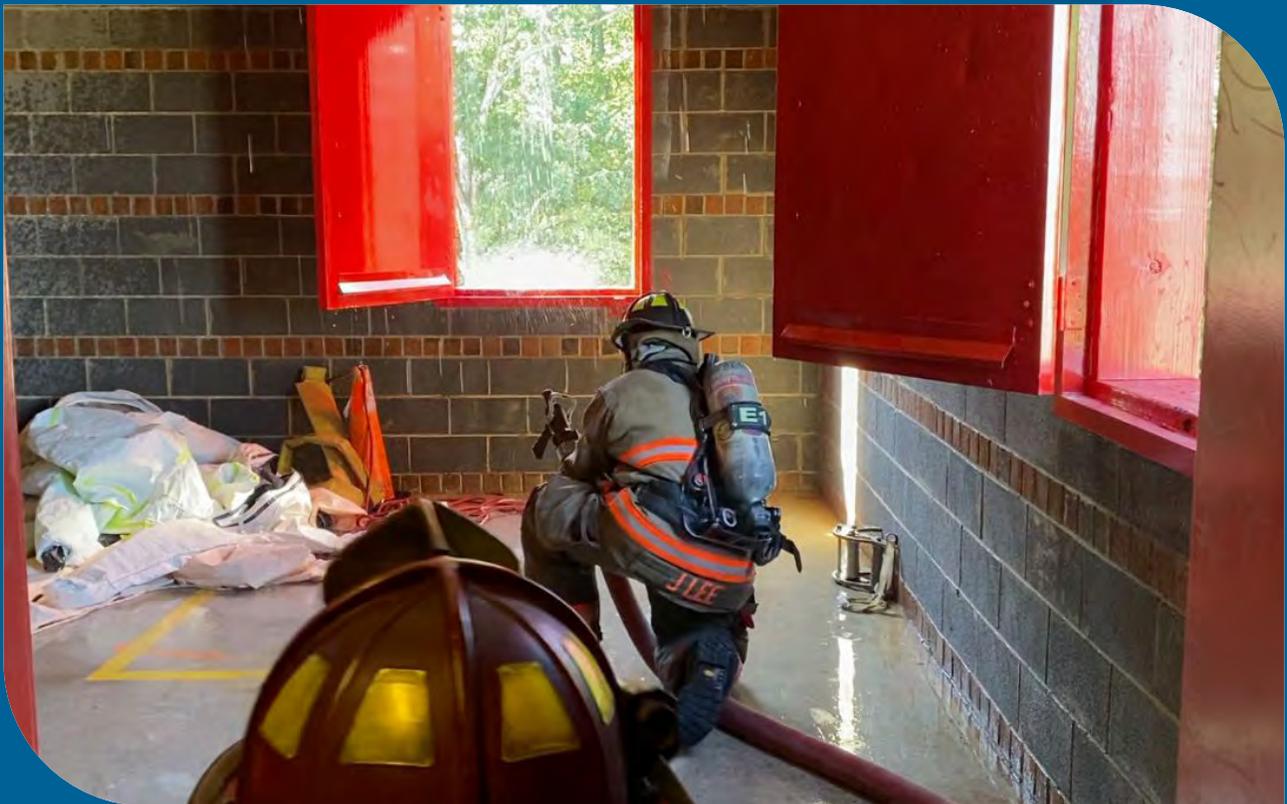


Source: Maryland County Department of Public Safety

## CASE STUDY:

### *DURHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT HIGH RISE FIRE TRAINING - RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA*

Like Gwinnett County, the Research Triangle area in North Carolina has seen a rapid increase in its population and a consequent shift in its urban development patterns. Specifically, the Raleigh and Durham skylines are beginning to grow vertically to accommodate denser development patterns and more walkable cities. The Durham Fire Department is responding to the change by instituting high-rise specific training opportunities for its officers. They specifically created the high-rise training course that recruits must complete in response to the 27 high rise development projects that were underway in 2022. This case study shows how planning departments and public safety providers can work together to share information crucial to future resources. Gwinnett County Fire and Emergency Services may want to explore development specific training, such as mixed use buildings as new development patterns are introduced into the county in the coming year. Gwinnett's P&D department should collaborate with GCFES.



*Image Source: Spectrum News*



## **ARTS & CULTURE – STRENGTHEN DAILY COMMUNITY IDENTITIES THROUGH ART AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING IN CENTERS**

Currently in Gwinnett County, people feel connected to their communities through regularly visiting places for daily needs, such as grocery shopping, work, or school. However, these identities could be strengthened through celebrating the intangible aspects of these communities and highlighting their diverse cultures through public art and cultural programming.

**1**

### **IDENTIFY UNDERUTILIZED ASSETS IN DAILY COMMUNITY CENTERS**

The County should work to identify underutilized arts and culture assets that can be targeted through new programming and investment. The first step is to conduct an asset inventory within Daily Community centers, then work to identify candidate sites for aesthetic improvements. These could be funded through partnerships with local business owners and artists, or through grant funding. Other areas to seek grant finding for are facade and streetscape improvements. These investments can help residents feel a sense of pride in their community, which in turn leads to better civic engagement, better public safety, and increased economic activity.

**2**

### **PROVIDE DEDICATED STAFF TIME AND FUNDING FOR ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL WORK**

As the County begins to expand its participation in the ongoing arts and culture work of residents, providing a dedicated staff person and funding for both arts and culture funding can accomplish a lot of necessary tasks. This staff member can design and support tactical, low stakes projects as a catalytic project to increase public support. They can further the support by working with property owners and residents to increase buy in. They could then go on to create public private partnerships with existing community groups dedicated to arts promotion countywide, including cities. Finally, they should lead work to update the Unified Development Ordinance to remove barriers to public art, have appropriate requirements around its creation, and formalize a public art maintenance strategy. If a current staff member is tasked with this portfolio, the county should consider applying them for the Georgia Economic Placemaking Collaborative two year curriculum.

## CASE STUDY:

### *THE PARKING SPACES - IOWA CITY, IOWA*

The Parking Spaces project is an audio and artistic art project in Iowa City that invites residents and visitors to explore the city and learn about the history of specific places through scanning QR codes posted in artistic installations in parking spaces throughout the city. Upon arriving at an installation, visitors can scan the QR code and begin listening to a 5-10 narration of the site, concluded with recommendations on which site to visit next. The Iowa City Public Library will be providing pre-loaded mp3 players for those who don't have a smart phone to participate with. Residents who have participated in the project, both through its creation and its enjoyment, say that the project has helped them find accessibility and belonging in their city. It's also helped with economic development as visitors return to hear updates to the project as new parking space installations are brought online. Given the extensive history and parking spaces in Gwinnett, the County could explore a similar project.

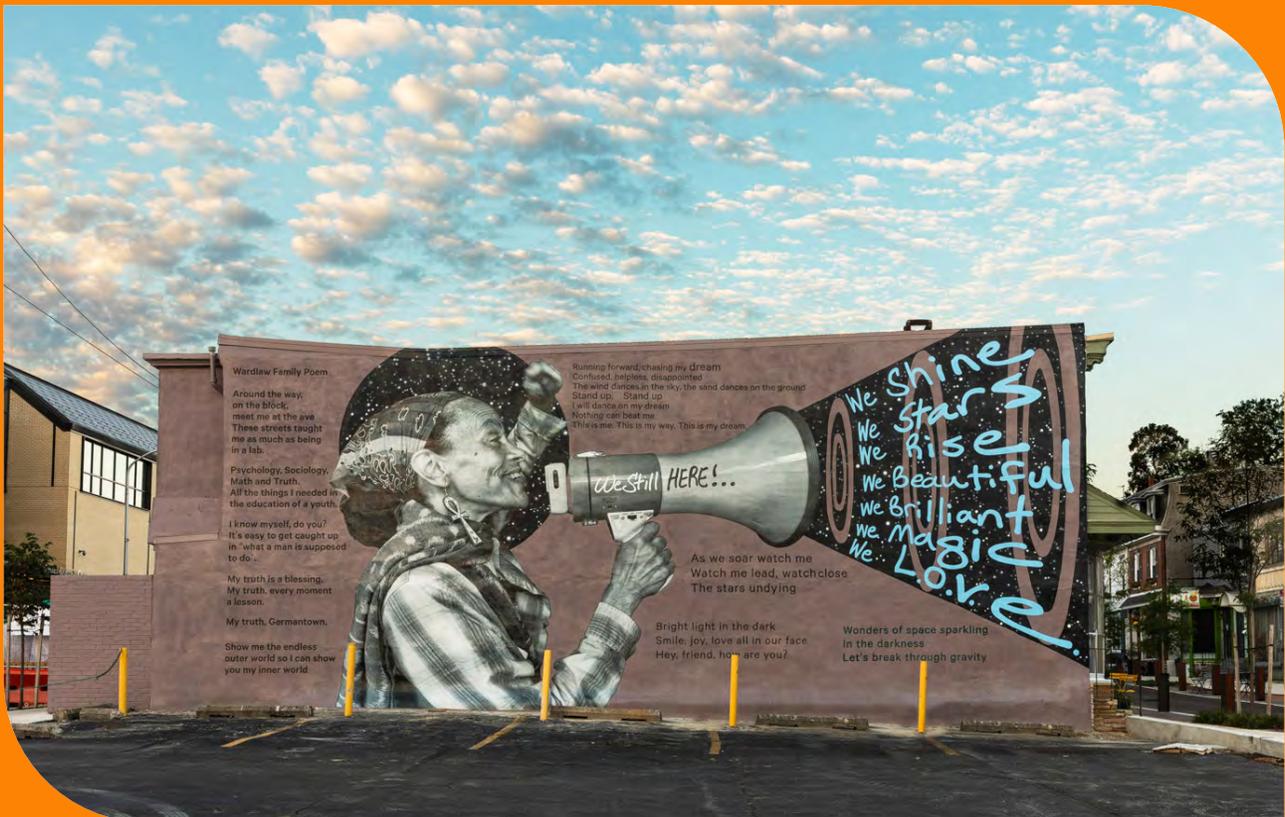


*Contributor Margee Miller near space 7 installation  
Image Source: IowaCityPress-Citizen*

## CASE STUDY:

### MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA - PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia has become known as the Mural Capital of the World and is home to 4,000 murals. Many of these were created through the Mural Arts Philadelphia program, which promotes a collaborative process with communities, artists, and the public realm they occupy to create public art. MAP started out as a public program in 1984 out of the mayor's office. The objective was to redirect young graffiti artists into positive public art projects in approved public spaces. As the program grew in success and began attracting renowned artists, it evolved into Mural Arts Philadelphia, as formally recognized by the mayor's office in 1997. They create 50-100 public art projects per year, and fund maintenance and restoration projects as well. In addition to public art, the program engages the community through art education, environmental justice work and restorative justice work. Much of their work is centered in their outdoor art gallery, and an area that attracts over 15,000 residents and visitors per year and contributes to the arts economy in the city. As Gwinnett gears up to be more actively involved in creating public art, it can look to Mural Arts Philadelphia for inspiration on context-centered work driven through partnerships with residents.



*We Are Still here Mural by Chi Thomas aka Jetsonorama and Ursula Rucker  
Image Source: Artworks Philadelphia*



## EDUCATION – INVEST IN SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY CENTERS

Schools are already focal points for a specific subset of the community: children and their families. From homework to transportation and extracurricular activities, school related logistics and programming organize, at least in part, the lives of many Gwinnett residents. Building stronger connections between schools and the communities they serve is central to the Community Schools Model and can reinforce the Daily Community framework throughout Gwinnett.

### **1 ESTABLISH STRONG CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DAILY COMMUNITY CENTERS, NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AND SCHOOLS**

Like many other Georgia communities, Gwinnett County Public Schools struggle with long student commutes. Extended trips via bus or car exert pressure on both the students and the broader educational system. Busing, especially in Gwinnett, is expensive. When considering new school-site locations, alternatives should be considered for pedestrian access, especially those near Daily Community centers or existing or planned trail corridors.

For existing schools, Planning and Development should coordinate with DOT to conduct sidewalk audits, filling gaps where appropriate. Opportunities could also exist to establish incremental pedestrian connections within existing single family neighborhoods, stitching entire communities together and providing safe school routes.

### **2 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATORS TO RESIDE IN THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE**

Teachers provide a crucial resource to the communities they serve. However, across the country, many cannot fully become members of those communities due to nationwide housing affordability issues and Georgia teacher pay shortages. When teachers cannot afford to reside in their school district, or in the case of a district as large as GCPSS, reside close to their school of employment, it can accelerate teacher staffing problems. While Gwinnett teachers enjoy an adjusted average salary of \$63,825, new teacher salaries are about \$47,000. With the housing shortage issues discussed in the Housing Element, Gwinnett needs innovative strategies to ensure housing solutions contribute to teacher staffing stability and support increasing the scale of teachers as new teachers must be hired to continue to meet the demand of Gwinnett's projected 2045 youth population. A stable teacher workforce strengthens the sense of community, improves education outcomes, and can help increase staff for the growing population as teachers with long-standing tenures are able to train incoming teachers more effectively. Helping teachers to reside close to their schools could involve offering housing vouchers beyond regular salaries, constructing residences on school premises or nearby government owned land, or redeveloping unused school buildings into cost effective apartments for teachers.

## CASE STUDY:

### LINDEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY PATHWAY - ARGENTINE TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

Argentine Township, and the Linden, Argentine, Fenton and Fenton Township Pathways Group began planning for a community pathway primarily for cyclists across southwest Genesee County in Michigan. LAFF eventually teamed up with Linden Community Schools and the Genesee County Road Commission to expand this vision to turn the project into a multiuse path that would facilitate regionwide connectivity as well as local connectivity to link neighborhoods in the Township to public school campuses. This group used Michigan's Safe Routes to School Guidelines to create an in depth planning process and receive a grant to bring this connected vision to life. Though there were a large number of entities involved in that process, the school board and township leadership credit the community with driving the million dollar project to completion. The trails are getting high use from the students, and they have even inspired neighboring communities to support the creation of a wider regional trail system. A catalytic project such as this could help Gwinnett schools better integrate into their neighborhoods and align the physical environment to the Community Schools Model's goals.



*Image Source: Michigan Safe Routes to School*

## **CASE STUDY:**

### *SCHOOL DISTRICT CREATED TEACHER HOUSING - ARIZONA SCHOOL DISTRICTS*

Several school districts across the state of Arizona are investing in expanding housing options in their communities to support recruiting and retaining teaching staff. Eight school districts are building housing directly using federal pandemic relief money. This new teacher-exclusive housing will be heavily subsidized as well. Many of these housing projects are smaller-scale and meant to be transitional. The Chino Valley Unified School District is building 10 units at 400 square feet and \$5,500 a month, while the Sedona-Oak Creek School District is converting a vacant school building into 1 and 2-bedroom apartments. Another Prescott Unified School District is building six 800 square-foot homes in the long directly behind an elementary school. Gwinnett County should consider explore how partnerships between Departments can foster similar opportunities for school faculty and system staff.



## **HEALTH & WELLNESS – DEVELOP THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO INCREASE HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Every Gwinnett County resident deserves access to the renowned amenities and opportunities the County offers. This involves ensuring mobility and access is open to people of varying health needs and ability levels. Because the built environment governs the level to which residents can be active safely in their community, special considerations must be made to ensure equitable access for residents of all ages.

**1**

### **PURSUE POLICIES THAT CREATE ACCESSIBILITY / PROMOTE AGING IN PLACE**

With the silver tsunami on the horizon, the need to provide places for Gwinnett's seniors to age in place will be critical. This will require coordination with housing initiatives that promote alternative housing types across Daily Communities that fit within their context. These could include denser types (townhomes, multifamily) within centers, and duplexes and accessory dwelling units in the surrounding neighborhoods. The County should work with private developers to ensure appropriate community space and amenities exist within new or redeveloped housing projects. Beyond just housing, the greater senior population requires safe access to goods and services, along with enhanced programs to maintain lifelong quality of life. A first step would be to inventory redevelopment opportunities near existing Senior Centers or OneStop Centers as targeted senior housing opportunities.

**2**

### **CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SAFE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION**

Personal mobility is a critical component for maintaining mental health. Providing mobility options for those too young to drive or who can no longer drive because of deteriorating health (seniors or otherwise) enables all residents to partake in the benefits of their Daily Community.

In Gwinnett County's case, retrofitting a more connected street grid will be arduous and lengthy. While efforts to build new pedestrian connections are underway, there are other methods for promoting safe roadways for all users, including Complete Streets principles and aligning denser land uses with transportation infrastructure. In the short term, the County can begin to encourage active transportation and other alternative modes through programming. GCPS, DOT, and P&D should collaborate to organize walk/bike/ride to school days for young people, helping children understand their route to school. For seniors, recreational street closure programs in specific areas could begin to reframe the conversation about mobility and shape improvements that encourage that type of environment in Daily Communities.

## CASE STUDY:

### ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS - PORTLAND, OREGON

Accessory Dwelling Units, known by many colloquial names like granny flats or mother-in-law suites provide one housing option for active adults and seniors looking to downsize without relocating completely. While they're becoming more popular among many generations, Portland's approach has kept seniors' desires to age in place at the forefront of its strategy. Through updates to its zoning, the City increased the allowable size of ADUs to 75 percent of the lot up to 800 square feet. The City also suspended fees to support infrastructure improvements, which could in some cases rise to \$10,000, creating burdens for anyone interested in building ADUs but especially retirees. Since these changes were proposed, about 10 times as many ADUs have been built, several by seniors who are interested in remaining in their neighborhoods—and in some cases, on their own lot while they rent out the main structure.

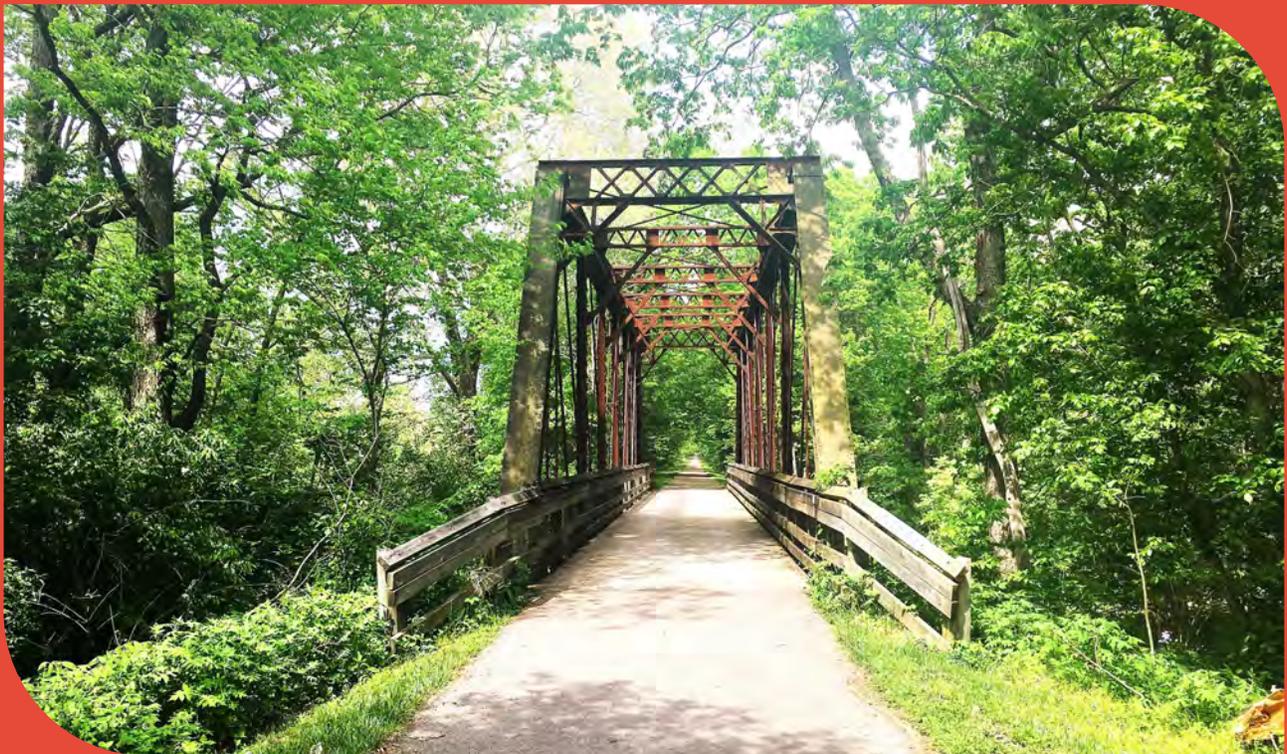


*Case Study Source: AARP  
Image Source: John Anderson*

## CASE STUDY:

### *EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS - LITTLE MIAMI SCENIC TRAIL, YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO*

Communities along the Little Miami Scenic Trail in South Central Ohio have taken advantage of the trail's scenic beauty to bring students closer to nature—and encourage physical activity, health, and wellness in the process. This 78-mile trail corridor began humbly in the 1980s when the Ohio Department of Transportation began converting pieces of the former rail corridor to trail segments, starting in Xenia, Ohio before expanding southwest and northeast. The trail now hosts hundreds of thousands of Ohio residents per year who use it for recreation, as well as active transportation. Not only has the trail drawn visitors from far and wide, but it has also built out programs for outdoor education, health, and wellness. In partnership with the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Yellow Springs School District hosts an outdoor education program called Into the Wild every year, which brings in public agencies like the Department of Natural Resources to organize outdoor classroom experiences for middle schoolers in between the miles they spend on their bikes. While the Little Miami Scenic Trail is much longer than Gwinnett's current trail systems, the County can imbue its own trail expansion plans with cross-disciplinary programming along the future Chattahoochee River Corridor, Yellow River Greenway, and others—connecting students with nature, encouraging physical health and wellness, and offering safe ways to explore their communities.



*Image Source: Wikimedia Commons*



Center

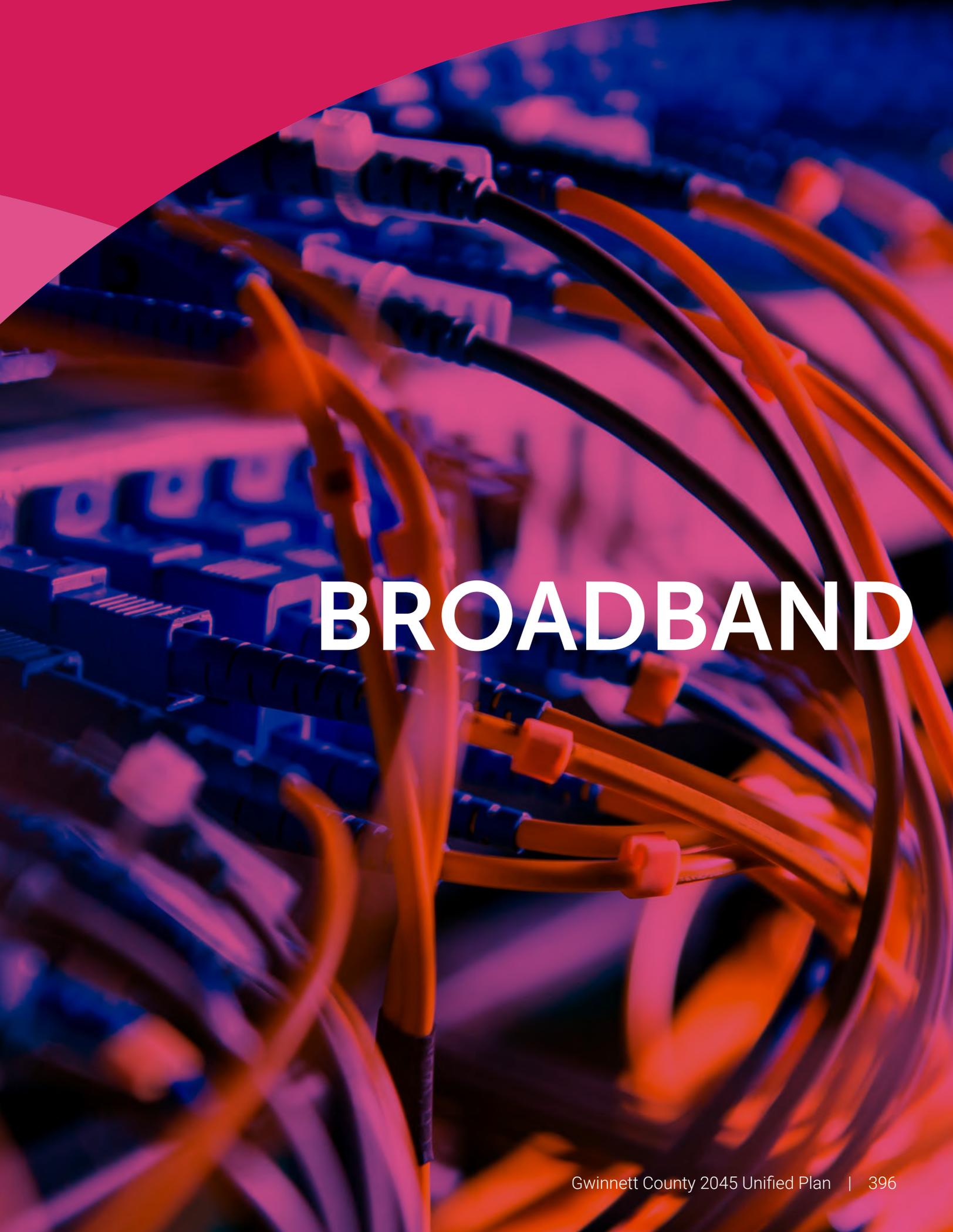


## COMMUNITY RESOURCES IMPLEMENTATION

Between award winning parks, quality education, unique artistic and cultural offerings, and innovative approaches to health, wellness, and public safety, Gwinnett County has been at the forefront of providing high quality services and amenities for many years. In anticipation of projected growth, the County's challenge going forward will be scaling up quickly and efficiently. Building a solid foundation by investing in County resources, building partnerships across departments and with communities, supporting new services with appropriate planning for development, and continuing to think outside the box will serve Gwinnett County and its residents well over the next 20 years. Specific actions can be found in the Community Work Program, starting on page 453.

Centerville Senior Center  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

# 08



# BROADBAND

# Introduction

## CONTEXT

In 2018, the State of Georgia launched the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative to recognize how vital broadband is to communities' economic and social strength. The State defines a high-speed broadband internet connection as a 25 megabits per second download speed and a 3Mbps upload speed. Like other forms of utilities, broadband access and infrastructure can play a significant role in shaping land use patterns, influencing where residential, commercial, and industrial development may occur.

For example, areas with strong broadband internet, especially those supported by fiber optic infrastructure, are more likely to attract businesses that rely on the internet, such as tech startups and e-commerce companies. This can result in a preference for cleaner industries over heavier industrial uses that could increase freight traffic. These also align with Gwinnett County's target industries, identified in Chapter 3, Economic Development.

Broadband also presents opportunities for economic growth via the digital marketplace or by providing work from home solutions for residents in more rural areas. Daily Communities hoping to attract these businesses will want to invest in providing this crucial infrastructure.

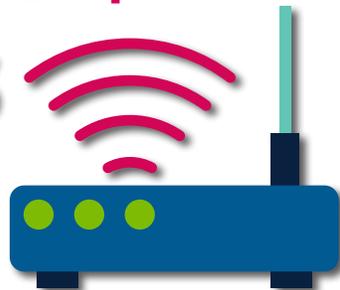
Currently, Gwinnett County enjoys a high level of broadband coverage. However, reaching 100 percent broadband coverage can help the county achieve its economic development goals and accommodate growth throughout a variety of community resources. It will be vital to ensure future developments, particularly the Rowen Foundation, are aligned with high coverage areas.

## HIGH SPEED BROADBAND INTERNET PROVIDES AT LEAST

**25 MBPS** download speed &

**3 MBPS**

upload speed



# Existing Conditions

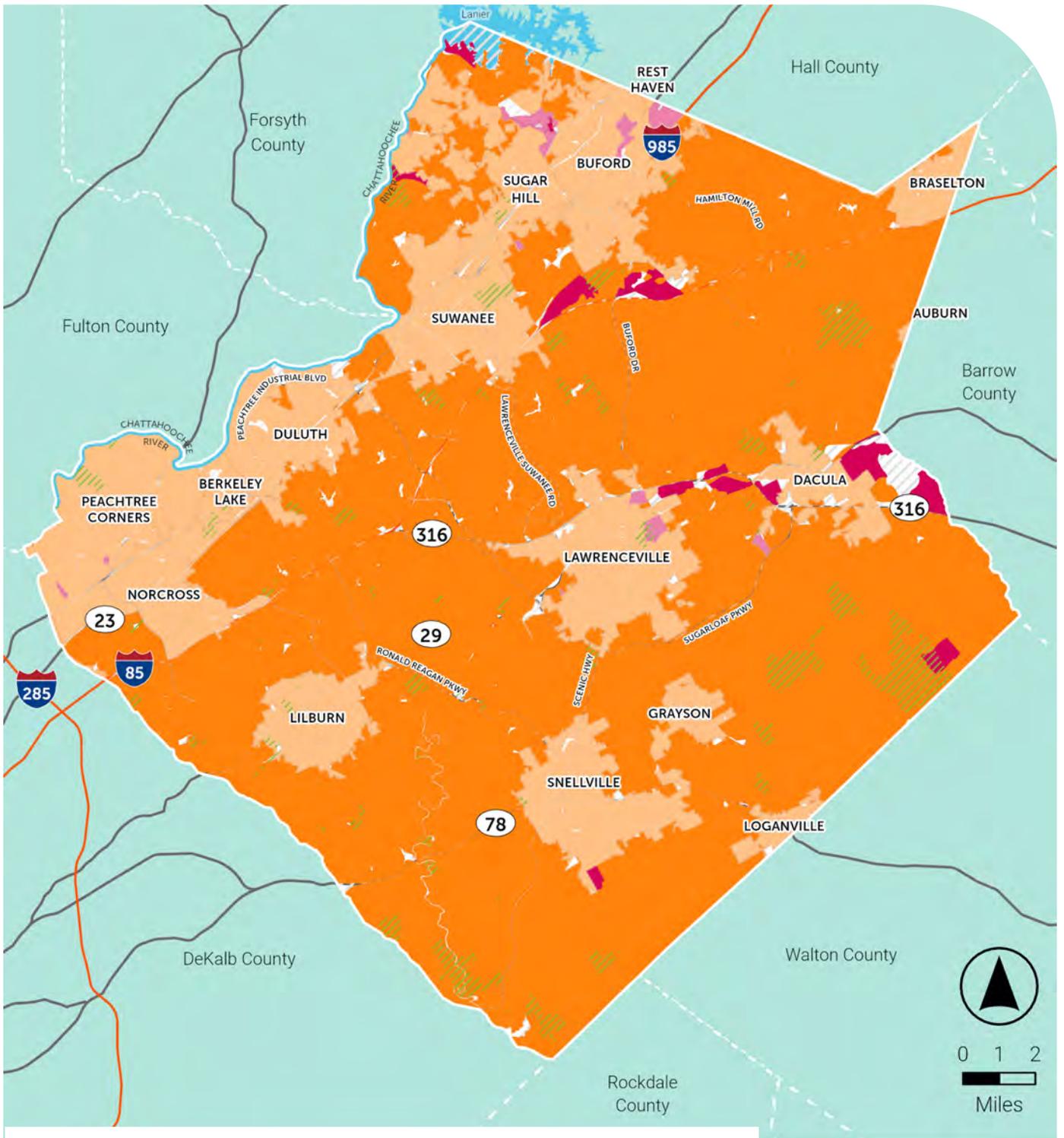
This analysis examines areas both covered and uncovered by broadband, utilizing 2023 data from the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative. Additionally, it assesses future projects and their anticipated contribution to the overall broadband coverage within Gwinnett County.

## **BROADBAND COVERAGE**

Gwinnett County is privileged to have widespread broadband coverage, with less than one percent of its area unserved. As of 2022, there are only 103 unserved locations within the county. Figure 8-1 illustrates geographically where these served and unserved areas are located. The areas within Gwinnett that are neither served nor unserved are classified as No Location, meaning there is no commercially available source for the data.

It should be noted that unserved location data is pulled at a specific point in time and can include neighborhoods or buildings under construction that are not yet served by broadband, but will be served once occupied. Locations with no current use for broadband connectivity such as a freight distribution lot, portions of Gwinnett's airport, and other public property were also found to be listed as unserved locations.

Areas of the county not served by broadband include some rural communities to the east between State Route 316 and Winder Highway around the city of Dacula. Communities to the north around Lake Lanier also lack coverage. The County must closely monitor broadband deployment along the eastern portion of Highway 316. As the Rowen Foundation develops into a significant academic, research and development focused area, private developers will need to install broadband infrastructure to support the foundation's work. This can also bring broadband to neighboring communities and continue to strengthen Gwinnett's strong coverage.



- Legend**
- Served
  - Unserved
  - No Location

**FIGURE 8-1:  
BROADBAND COVERAGE**

# Needs & Opportunities

The following section reviews the needs and opportunities for building and maintaining high quality broadband infrastructure throughout Gwinnett County.

## NEED

### 1 MONITOR BROADBAND COVERAGE

While Gwinnett enjoys extensive broadband coverage, pockets of the County remain unserved. Broadband expansion is needed around Highway 316, as the future home of the Rowen Development site. Since this development will focus on research and development, broadband will be crucial to support its vision, and development could bring this to nearby communities.

## OPPORTUNITY

### 1 EXPANDING BROADBAND THROUGH REDEVELOPMENT

Like other essential utilities such as water, wastewater, and transportation, broadband should be prioritized during development and redevelopment projects. Not only does broadband service offer substantial social benefits, but it also enables residents and businesses to enjoy greater economic opportunities and increases economic competitiveness. In areas where broadband coverage already exists, upgrading the infrastructure from cable to fiber optic wiring can further distinguish Gwinnett as a prime location for both residents and businesses.



Bay Creek 911 Center  
(Image Source: Gwinnett County Communications)

# Goals & Best Practices

As the pace of technological advancement continues to accelerate, Gwinnett County must persist in expanding and enhancing its broadband services, ensuring that all residents have access to the connectivity and information these services offer. This section highlights proposed goals the County can pursue over the next 20 years.



## **REACH FULL BROADBAND COVERAGE FOR GWINNETT COUNTY**

Providing full broadband coverage across Gwinnett County can facilitate economic development goals and foster ideal land use practices. For Gwinnett specifically, expanding broadband coverage in Eastern Gwinnett will be crucial to the success of the future Rowen Foundation research and development site. To unlock state funding to support this goal, the County could pass a Broadband Ready model ordinance. There is also a national push to support broadband expansion through federal spending packages the County may want to pursue. This work could also be achieved collaboratively between cities, the County, and various departments. Planning and Development can coordinate with private providers when right of way maintenance occurs to diminish costs to upgrade broadband service when DWR and GCDOT perform right of way maintenance.

Two best practices should be pursued to accomplish this goal:

**1**

### **PASS BROADBAND READY MODEL ORDINANCE**

While the county does not presently meet the criteria to be labeled a Broadband Ready Community by the state, it has initiated the first steps toward this designation by incorporating broadband into its 2045 Unified Plan. The next step toward joining 34 other counties in the state that enjoy this designation is passing the model ordinance, as outlined in O.C.G.A. §50-40-40. The designation's purpose is to show that the County has taken the step to reduce obstacles to broadband infrastructure investment.

**2**

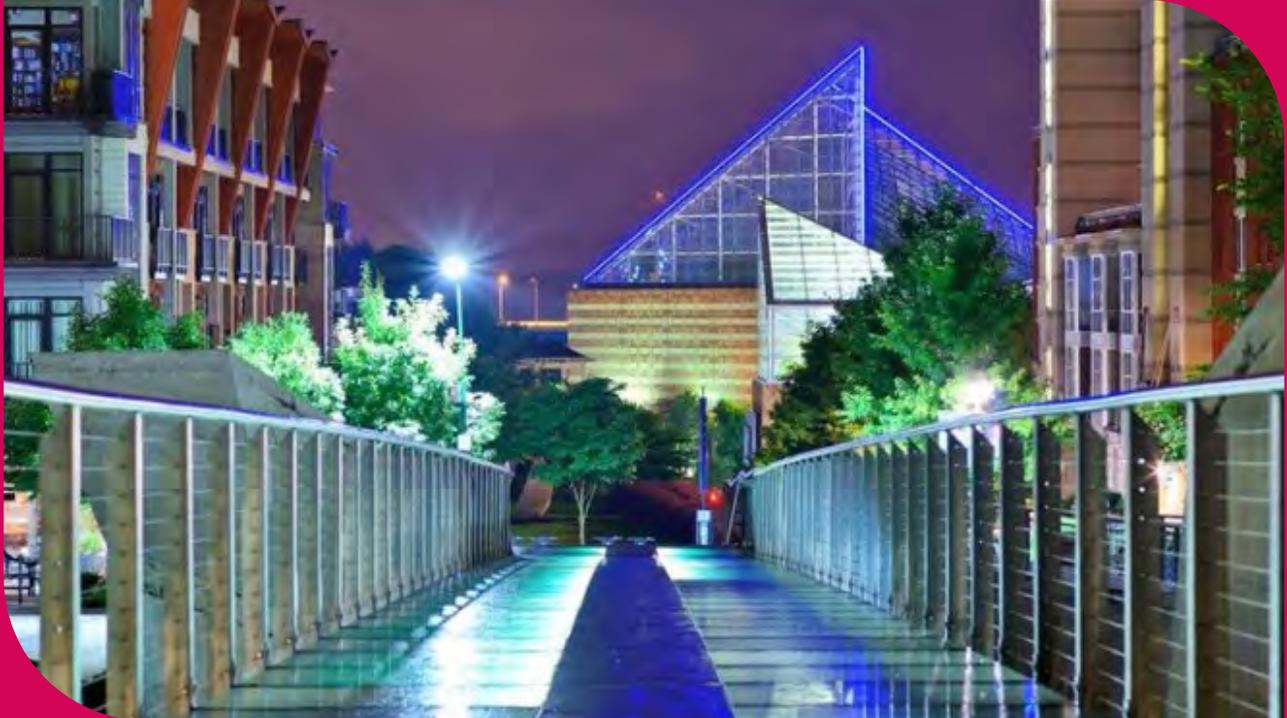
### **INSTALL AND UPGRADE BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT, AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

Though most of Gwinnett County enjoys broadband coverage, reaching the remaining areas currently without service can be achieved by installing broadband infrastructure in future developments. Opportunities to upgrade existing infrastructure to include fiber optic connections should be taken advantage of during redevelopment projects or updates to existing utilities such as roadways or waterlines. This will take coordination between departments as well.

## CASE STUDY:

### STRATEGIC BROADBAND INVESTMENT - CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

Just across the Georgia border, the city of Chattanooga's collaborative public and private leadership has executed several initiatives to increase the quality of life for its residents over the last twenty years. These initiatives, across economic development, parks and recreation, planning and conservation, were buoyed by an early 2000s investment in a complete redesign of the power grid and internet services. The project was referred to as Gig City, and went live in 2010 with contributions from local and regional entities. Today, Chattanooga is known for having the fastest municipal internet grid in the entire Western hemisphere. It runs about 200 times faster than the national average. The economic development that followed has dramatically increased the quality of life for residents and allowed the city to provide better community resources as well.



*Image Source: Chattanooga Government Technology*

## BROADBAND IMPLEMENTATION

There are several reasons to prioritize full broadband coverage, including economic competitiveness, viability of future developments, and equitable digital access for residents. Recommendations for actions related to broadband can be found in the Community Work Program on page 459.

09

# COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

# Community Work Program

LAND USE	
GOAL 1	EXPAND OPTIONS FOR CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY 1.1	Incentivize redevelopment of underutilized land in and around suburban commercial centers.
ACTION	
LU 1.1.1	Develop an incentive package for first adopters of redevelopment of underutilized properties: tax credits, grants for specific improvements, and others.
LU 1.1.2	Develop a Gwinnett County Land Bank with three priorities: (1) provide public private investment for redevelopment projects, (2) hold easements for pedestrian and transit connections, and (3) identify potential options for housing on land currently owned by the County.
LU 1.1.3	Consider special purpose tax districts for funding redevelopment in high interest areas.
LU 1.1.4	Identify properties for proactive rezonings that could support redevelopment.
+LU 1.1.5	+ <i>Make proactive investments in designated mixed use centers (e.g., upgrade roads and sewers, parking structures, civic buildings, landscaping, etc.).</i>
+LU 1.1.6	+ Investigate forecasting ability to determine land use and fiscal implications of land use changes.
+LU 1.1.7	+ <i>Determine priority retail centers for redevelopment. Study vacancy rates and recommend sites.</i>

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.



## LAND USE

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	-	X					\$50,000	General Fund*, private
P&D	DOT, DoCS	X	X	X			\$500,000	General Fund
P&D	CIDs and local businesses		X	X			\$0	Staff Time, Special tax districts
P&D	-			X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
GCDOT	DWR, BOC	X	X	X	X	X	up to \$50,000,000 (project dependent)	SPLOST, Grants
P&D	private consultants	X	X	X	X	X	\$50,000	General Fund
P&D	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

## LAND USE

### GOAL 1

### EXPAND OPTIONS FOR CREATIVE REDEVELOPMENT

#### STRATEGY 1.2

Promote quality, connected urban design in new development and redevelopment.

#### ACTION

LU 1.2.1	<p>Create design guidelines that promote denser forms of development, prioritizing good urban design principles that incrementally help stitch together suburban neighborhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Define block lengths for urban and suburban areas</li> <li>+ Develop and incorporate connectivity standards for new development into County's Development Regulations</li> <li>+ Research doing corridor studies</li> </ul>
LU 1.2.2	<p>Partner with academic institutions and community partners to offer urban design training programs for developers, elected officials, and community members.</p>
LU 1.2.3	<p>Work with the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation to revise street design guidelines for better pedestrian accommodations.</p>
LU 1.2.4	<p>Conduct audit of tree and stormwater regulations to assess for barriers to connected developments.</p>
LU 1.2.5	<p>Continue implementation of redevelopment studies for Gwinnett Place Mall.</p>
LU 1.2.6	<p>Continue implementation of the Rowen Foundation Master Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Continue to implement the strategy to upgrade University Parkway to a limited access highway.</li> <li>+ Consider strategic implementation of improvements to support R&amp;D Growth</li> <li>+ Follow the implementation strategy to develop an R&amp;D Overlay District with specific development regulations. Study the Innovation District Character Area.</li> </ul>
+LU 1.2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Make complementary, proactive investments in redevelopment areas designated for higher densities.</li> </ul>
+LU 1.2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Change applicable policies and ordinances to allow multiparcel owners to create and use shared stormwater and parking facilities.</li> </ul>
+LU 1.2.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Update the access management portion of the county's existing activity center/corridor overlay districts overlay zone</li> </ul>

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

## LAND USE

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$100,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	ARC, universities, Georgia Realtors Association	X	X	X			\$0	General Fund, Grants
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X			\$25,000	General Fund, community partnerships
P&D	DWR, DoCS	X	X	X			\$25,000	General Fund, GDOT, GCDOT
P&D	BOC, DWR, GCDOT, CIDs	X	X	X	X	X	TBD, based on GPM Revitalization Strategy	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	BOC, GCDOT, GDOT, Rowen Foundation	X	X	X	X	X	TBD, based on Rowen Foundation Master Plan Strategy	Staff Time, General Funds, SPLOST, GDOT
P&D	Law Department	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR			X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
GCDOT	P&D, DoFS			X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

<b>GOAL 2</b>		<b>STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS OVER DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 2.1</b>	Establish preferred criteria for development, based on type and scale.	
<b>ACTION</b>		
LU 2.1.1	Develop preferred ranges for design criteria tailored to each community using the future development framework of the 2045 Unified Plan.	
LU 2.1.2	Partner with other County departments to ensure their criteria are included, including proximity to transit, availability of infrastructure, and parameters for new amenities.	
LU 2.1.3	Discuss identified criteria with developers to better understand how guidelines create challenges and increase costs.	
LU 2.1.4	Update the UDO accordingly once these criteria are created. (See page 163-165 for a starter list of recommended changes.)	
LU 2.1.5	Hire staff to create and lead a Developer Coordination Program, in which developers whose proposals do not incorporate preferred criteria receive feedback and expedited review on proposals if they are revise plans to align with criteria.	
LU 2.1.6	Evaluate effectiveness after 1-3 years of implementation and adjust criteria accordingly.	
+LU 2.1.7	<i>+ Utilize overlay districts and other tools to assist in guidance and decision making.</i>	
<b>STRATEGY 2.2</b>	Establish a Microdevelopment Village Link Program and explore making desired development types permitted by right.	
LU 2.2.1	Develop a strategic plan for a program that addresses two major goals: incremental housing increases and community connections, including pedestrian infrastructure.	
LU 2.2.2	Explore funding opportunities through federal and state institutions to support the program.	
LU 2.2.3	Once strategic plan is complete, assess UDO for necessary changes.	
LU 2.2.4	Ensure alignment with Countywide Trails Master Plan and identify initial target areas.	
LU 2.2.5	Build relationships with developers, realtors, and other involved parties to conduct a pilot of 5 sites.	
<b>STRATEGY 2.3</b>	Educate decisionmakers on the benefits of new forms of development.	
LU 2.3.1	Hire staff to develop a Housing & Development Educational Curriculum for Gwinnett County Leadership, taking advantage of existing programs in Georgia.	
LU 2.3.2	Develop partnerships with local nonprofit and small scale developers to provide tours of alternative housing types to decisionmakers.	

*+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.*

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D		X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DoCS (Parks & Rec), DWR, DOT	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Development Community	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$50,000	General Fund
P&D	Development Community, Housing and Community Development Division			X	X	X	\$150,000	General Fund, CIDs
P&D					X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$250,000	General Fund
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D				X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DoCS, DOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	Development and real estate communities	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	ARC, Georgia Academy of Economic Development	X					\$100,000	General Fund, Grants
P&D		X					\$10,000	Staff Time, General Fund

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

GOAL 3	MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN COMMUNITY CENTERS
STRATEGY 3.1	Identify low hanging fruit opportunities for incremental redevelopment.
	ACTION
LU 3.1.1	Conduct a countywide audit of redevelopment potential using guidance from the 2045 Unified Plan.
LU 3.1.2	Classify projects within neighborhood centers identified in the initial scan by level of effort/transformation required.
LU 3.1.3	Identify funding sources for face lift activities, including facade improvements, code compliance projects, and small scale public space creation for underperforming properties.
LU 3.1.4	Over the course of three years, develop neighborhood level plans for five other community centers in Gwinnett County using the 2045 Unified Plan's Small Area Plans as a model.
LU 3.1.5	Evaluate success of the Small Area Plans and make changes to the process and recommendations; then, develop neighborhood level plans for remaining community centers.
STRATEGY 3.2	Partner with diverse communities to ensure representation and avoid commercial gentrification.
LU 3.2.1	Begin building support for redevelopment by investing in placemaking activities. These could include takeovers of parking lots, do it yourself solutions for transit improvements (i.e. bus benches), and other such volunteer led projects.
LU 3.2.2	Consider applying to the Georgia Economic Placemaking Collaborative.
LU 3.2.3	Identify community champions from various neighborhoods across Gwinnett and connect them with educational resources on the benefits of development.
LU 3.2.4	Develop community specific best practices that can imbue redevelopment with local culture: arts committees, community benefits coalitions, and others.
+LU 3.2.5	<i>+ Develop initiatives to engage with and leverage the diversity of our community (to help provide venues to celebrate the Cultural Diversity of the County).</i>
+LU 3.2.6	<i>+ Develop criteria for promoting existing cultural facilities.</i>
+LU 3.2.7	<i>+ Develop programs to increase the number of cultural outreach activities.</i>

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	Consultant Team	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D				X	X	X	\$250,000	General Fund, ARC, Grants
P&D	DOT, DWR, DoCS					X	\$1,500,000	General Fund, ARC, Grants
P&D	Community partners (religious institutions, arts institutions, others)	X					\$25,000	General Fund, Recreation Funds, Private Funding
P&D	GMA	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Community Partners	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Community Partners			X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Recreation Funds, Staff Time
Chamber of Commerce	DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DoCS	BOC	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
Chamber of Commerce	DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$50,000	General Fund

\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.

<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK THAT PROTECTS REMAINING NATURAL AND RURAL PARTS OF GWINNETT COUNTY FROM OVERDEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.1</b>	Conserve land with high ecological productivity, difficult development challenges, or both.
	<b>ACTION</b>
LU 4.1.1	Catalog and grade potential sites for ecological productivity, scanning for wetlands, forests, native grasses, and endangered or threatened species.
LU 4.1.2	Catalog and grade potential sites for development challenges, including hard bedrock, steep slope coverage, and any remediation needs.
LU 4.1.3	Cross-reference site criteria with infrastructure capacity and develop a tier list of conservation and development opportunities.
LU 4.1.4	Develop partnerships with local conservation organizations to identify first tier conservation projects.
<b>STRATEGY 4.2</b>	Cluster new development around community services and amenities.
LU 4.2.1	Develop design guidelines for new development.
LU 4.2.2	Identify candidate sites for pilot projects using tier list for developable sites.
LU 4.2.3	Identify and build partnerships with developers willing to experiment with new forms, using incentive structures developed under Goal 1.
<b>STRATEGY 4.3</b>	Use sewer and road infrastructure as a growth management tool.
LU 4.3.1	Coordinate with DWR to align redevelopment strategy with Sewer Basin Master Plan efforts.
LU 4.3.2	Coordinate with GCDOT to align redevelopment strategy with CTP, TDP, and corridor studies.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	Georgia EPD, Nature Conservancy, Open Space Institute	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Georgia EPD, Nature Conservancy, Open Space Institute	X	X	X			\$100,000	General Fund
P&D	DWR, local land trusts	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Local land trusts	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Grants
P&D		X	X	X			\$50,000	General Fund
P&D	CIDs, development community, Rowen Foundation	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	CIDs, development community	>	>	>	>	>	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1	PROMOTE INVESTMENT AT THE DAILY COMMUNITY SCALE
STRATEGY 1.1	Incentivize and facilitate unique, attractive development.
ACTION	
ED 1.1.1	Steer investment toward commercial redevelopment areas to create more people scaled, mixed use Daily Community centers.
ED 1.1.2	Utilize strong but flexible land use guidelines to dictate which areas are primed for Daily Community infrastructure investment and which should be preserved as more traditionally suburban and exurban.
ED 1.1.3	Begin to build relationships with developers interested in advancing projects supportive within the Daily Community Framework.
ED 1.1.4	Pursue changes to policy that would refine building standards and support development of Daily Community centers.
ED 1.1.5	Craft a robust funding strategy to support small scale redevelopment.
ED 1.1.6	Continue to build relationships with developers interested in creating people centered developments supportive of the Daily Community concept.
ED 1.1.7	Implement Daily Community infrastructure within county owned and operated developments.
ED 1.1.8	Attract amenities to match new developments, including leisure, recreation, and essential products and services.
+ ED 1.1.9	+ Determine costs for capital improvement projects.
+ ED 1.1.10	+ Continue to issue bonds to cover infrastructure costs.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS							
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING	
P&D	Development Authority of Gwinnett County, Private Developers, Civic Leaders, Neighborhood Associations, Municipal Partners, CIDs	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	General Fund, Staff Time, SPLOST Funding, Tax Allocation Districts, Debt and equity financing from nonprofits and commercial developers, state and federal grants, CDFIs	
		X	X	X	X	X	\$0		
		X	X	X			\$0		
		X	X	X			\$0		
				X	X	X	\$0		
					X	X	X		up to \$100,000,000 (dependent on project)
					X	X	X		\$50,000
P&D	DWR, GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time	
P&D	DWR, GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time	

\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>PROMOTE INVESTMENT AT THE DAILY COMMUNITY SCALE</b>
<b>STRATEGY 1.2</b>	Accommodate growth through housing and transportation infrastructure.
<b>ACTION</b>	
ED 1.2.1	Explore incentives for housing development, such as density bonuses and Tax Allocation Districts (TADs).
ED 1.2.2	Continue to expand multimodal options into the transportation system, with an emphasis on walkability.
ED 1.2.3	Emphasize the development of housing and transportation as key economic development priorities.
ED 1.2.4	Make physical investments into housing and transportation infrastructure.
ED 1.2.5	Bring regional attention to new developments in Gwinnett surrounding housing and transportation.
ED 1.2.6	Attract new residents and businesses to the county with renewed housing options.
ED 1.2.7	Market Gwinnett’s transportation infrastructure as a key component of the area’s strong quality of life.
ED 1.2.8	Continue to meet housing and transportation needs according to growth projections and desires.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D, GCDOT	Development Authority of Gwinnett County, Nonprofit and commercial housing developers, GDOT, CIDs	X	X	X			\$0	General Fund, Staff Time, SPLOST, TAD financing, debt and equity financing from nonprofits and commercial developers, state and federal grants, Community Development Finance Institutions
		X	X	X			up to \$25,000,000 (project dependent)	
		X	X	X			\$0	
				X	X	X	up to \$100,000,000 (project dependent)	
				X	X	X	\$25,000	
						>	\$0	
						>	\$25,000	
						>	\$0	

\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.

GOAL 2		ATTRACT BUSINESS AND TALENT
STRATEGY 2.1	Establish a thriving job market.	
ACTION		
ED 2.1.1	Develop a comprehensive program that offers financial support for young workers and graduates to live and work in Gwinnett County	
ED 2.1.2	Introduce incentives that encourage the creation of higher paying jobs within the county, supporting both new companies and the expansion of existing ones.	
ED 2.1.3	Attract more high wage jobs to Gwinnett County, creating opportunities for both new and existing residents.	
ED 2.1.4	Identify and implement targeted incentives that foster the growth of research and development (R&D) and innovation oriented companies, creating a thriving ecosystem for such industries.	
ED 2.1.5	Continue to foster the growth of companies in the county that offer high quality job opportunities.	
ED 2.1.6	Establish Gwinnett County as a nationally recognized hub for R&D.	
ED 2.1.7	Directly market Gwinnett as an attractive and rewarding place to live for college graduates, showcasing the unique benefits and opportunities the county offers.	
STRATEGY 2.2	Amplify Gwinnett's brand.	
ED 2.2.1	Develop a comprehensive place-based brand for Gwinnett County that can be utilized in business and population attraction, tourism, and regional marketing efforts.	
ED 2.2.2	Collaborate with key partners to create targeted campaigns that highlight Gwinnett's unique offerings to both domestic and international audiences.	
ED 2.2.3	Market Gwinnett County as a premier destination for living and doing business, leveraging the established brand to attract talent, companies, and investment.	
ED 2.2.4	Build a self-sustaining economy in Gwinnett that encourages residents to both live and work within the county, promoting the local business ecosystem and quality of life.	
ED 2.2.5	Position Gwinnett County as a distinctive location for doing business, capitalizing on its demographic, cultural, and commercial assets to attract companies seeking a diverse and vibrant community.	
ED 2.2.6	Share the success and best practices of Gwinnett's marketing and economic development initiatives with other communities, serving as a model for replication and inspiring similar achievements.	
+ ED 2.2.7	<i>+ Refer to 2011 Sector Plan for additional information regarding desired amenities to promote R&amp;D corridor growth.</i>	

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	Development Authority of Gwinnett County, Private Developers, Civic Leaders, Neighborhood Associations, Municipal Partners, CIDs	X	X	X			\$250,000	Staff Time, State and federal grants, General Fund, Public private partnerships, and Corporate sponsorships and investments
		X	X	X			\$500,000	
				X	X	X	\$50,000	
				X	X	X	\$0	
						>	\$0	
						>	\$0	
						>	\$50,000	
P&D	Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Gwinnett County Convention and Visitors Bureau, local business associations and industry specific organizations	X	X	X			\$100,000	Staff Time, General Fund, Partnership Gwinnett, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Explore Gwinnett, corporate sector partnerships
		X	X	X			\$50,000	
				X	X	X	\$0	
				X	X	X	\$0	
						>	\$0	
						>	\$0	
						>	\$0	

GOAL 3		PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MOBILITY
STRATEGY 3.1		Foster a culture of innovation and creativity.
ACTION		
ED 3.1.1	Continue to build out the existing Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, both in its geographical presence(s) and service offerings.	
ED 3.1.2	Assemble support for a business incubation program and pilot with local startups.	
ED 3.1.3	Compile an organized list of resources to share with new and existing entrepreneurs in the county.	
ED 3.1.4	Develop mentorship and resource sharing programs that connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to experienced business leaders and professional service providers.	
ED 3.1.5	Explore physical community entrepreneurship hubs for home-based small business owners to use in selling their goods.	
ED 3.1.6	Explore service gaps and continue to iterate Entrepreneur Center programming ideas.	
ED 3.1.7	Examine the physical expansion of the Entrepreneur Center in new locations in Gwinnett.	
ED 3.1.8	Have numerous businesses entering and successfully exiting the business incubator program.	
ED 3.1.9	Capture business incubator graduates as mentors for the next generation of entrepreneurs.	
ED 3.1.10	Celebrate the business success stories that are expanding in Gwinnett.	
+ ED 3.1.11	<i>+ 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.</i>	
STRATEGY 3.2		Develop targeted programs to support underrepresented communities and individuals.
ED 3.2.1	Educate county economic developers on best practices in equitable economic development.	
ED 3.2.2	Develop KPIs for tracking nonwhite entrepreneurial activity and economic impact.	
ED 3.2.3	Gather funding targeted to minority owned businesses and startups.	
ED 3.2.4	Continue to fund minority owned businesses.	
ED 3.2.5	Implement best practices of equitable development throughout Gwinnett.	
ED 3.2.6	Track and refine KPIs on nonwhite entrepreneurial activity and economic impact.	
ED 3.2.7	Continue to develop programming that inspires racial equity in Gwinnett's economy.	
ED 3.2.8	Market Gwinnett as a hub for diverse entrepreneurship with ample resources.	
ED 3.2.9	Celebrate minority owned business success stories in the county.	

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS							
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING	
P&D	Gwinnett Entrepreneurship Center, Partnership Gwinnett, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, private businesses, local business associations and trade groups	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time, General Fund, private philanthropy, corporate sponsorship, Community Development Finance Institutions	
		X	X	X			\$150,000		
		X	X	X			\$0		
		X	X	X			\$100,000		
					X	X	X		\$0
					X	X	X		\$0
					X	X	X		\$0
							>		\$0
							>		\$0
							>		\$0
		X	X	X	X	X	\$0		
P&D	Gwinnett Entrepreneurship Center, Partnership Gwinnett, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, business support organizations, diverse trade associations and industry groups	X	X	X			\$50,000	Staff Time, General Fund, private philanthropy, corporate sponsorship, Community Development Finance Institutions	
		X	X	X			\$10,000		
		X	X	X			\$0		
					X	X	X		\$200,000
					X	X	X		\$0
					X	X	X		\$0
							>		\$0
							>		\$25,000
							>		\$0

<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MOBILITY</b>
<b>STRATEGY 3.3</b>	Connect workforce development to Gwinnett’s shifting economy.
<b>ACTION</b>	
ED 3.3.1	Explore a structure and support for a workforce development public private partnership.
ED 3.3.2	Collaborate with K-12 partners to identify the educational pathways to Gwinnett’s youth attaining critical workforce skills.
ED 3.3.3	Consider what skills may be needed for future employment opportunities.
ED 3.3.4	Establish and operate a workforce development partnership.
ED 3.3.5	Identify continued funding for the prioritization of workforce development.
ED 3.3.6	Convene commercial, nonprofit, and educational partners frequently to strategize on workforce development.
ED 3.3.7	Have new workforce development programs and investments pay off in wage growth and enhanced socioeconomic mobility.
ED 3.3.8	Retain a new generation of young workers in Gwinnett.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS							
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING	
Partnership Gwinnett, P&D	Gwinnett Technical College, Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett County Public Schools, Atlanta Regional Commission, Governor's Office of Workforce Development Private Companies	X					\$0	Staff Time, State and federal grants, corporate membership and sponsorship, private philanthropies, General Fund	
		X					\$0		
		X					\$0		
				X			\$100,000		
				X			\$0		
				X			\$25,000		
							>		\$0
							>		\$0

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

## HOUSING

<b>HOUSING</b>	
<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>BUILD OUT HOUSING GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>STRATEGY 1.1</b>	Convene a group of community stakeholders focused on affordable housing.
<b>ACTION</b>	
H 1.1.1	Ensure there is guidance from key stakeholders on the policies, programs, and priorities that will provide direction for the new Housing and Community Development Division of Planning and Development.
<b>STRATEGY 1.2</b>	Develop educational programming related to housing development and its relationship to affordability.
H 1.2.1	Begin a public education series for residents to learn about housing problems and solutions
H 1.2.2	Encourage community to engage with housing ecosystem, and express ideas, complaints, and opinions on proposed concepts.
<b>STRATEGY 1.3</b>	Garner support for housing coalition.
H 1.3.1	Identify and invite partners to join housing coalition. Identify key initiatives for coalition to pursue, guided by the 2045 Unified Plan and Housing Action Plan.



## HOUSING

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	BOC, community groups	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	BOC, community groups	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Development community, nonprofit developers, regional agencies, community groups		X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>STREAMLINE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>
<b>STRATEGY 2.1</b>	Consider expediting permits and waiving fees for development that meets specific standards.
<b>ACTION</b>	
H 2.1.1	Establish criteria for projects that might qualify for a streamlined process.
<b>STRATEGY 2.2</b>	Consider waiving system development charges for projects that fit the County's redevelopment goals.
H 2.2.1	Establish criteria for projects that might qualify for waived system development charges.
H 2.2.2	Establish list of developers in good standing with the county to qualify for waived fees.
<b>STRATEGY 2.3</b>	Build out housing resource hubs for developers and County staff.
H 2.3.1	Identify objectives and partners to start a Housing Developer Education Series.
H 2.3.2	Once objectives are set, begin building curriculum utilizing resources from a variety of sources.
<b>STRATEGY 2.4</b>	Compile and provide access to resources related to housing development.
H 2.4.1	Develop a digital repository of housing resources and share with government administrators, residents, and developers.
H 2.4.2	Track viewership and refine information in repository as needed.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D		X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	GMA, Georgia Homebuilders Association, Georgia Academy of Economic Development, development community	X	X				\$25,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	GMA, Georgia Homebuilders Association, Georgia Academy of Economic Development, development community		X	X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D				X	X	X	\$10,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D						X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>ENSURE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY</b>
<b>STRATEGY 3.1</b>	Consider quasigovernmental solutions like affordable housing trust funds or land trusts.
<b>ACTION</b>	
H 3.1.1	Identify potential government, nonprofit and private partners for an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
H 3.1.2	Create guidelines for operations when establishing fund.
H 3.1.3	Identify key housing stakeholders in the County to serve on the oversight committee of the Trust Fund.
H 3.1.4	Explore the appropriateness of a Housing Land Trust within Gwinnett County as part of the Microdevelopment Program (see Strategy 2.2).
<b>STRATEGY 3.2</b>	Explore affordable housing policies for new development, such as affordability impact statements and inclusionary zoning.
H 3.2.1	Update requirements around affordable units in multifamily developments.
H 3.2.2	Include incentives in exchange for increasing the share of affordable units developed.
<b>STRATEGY 3.3</b>	Promote missing middle housing development.
H 3.3.1	Identify barriers to missing middle housing within the UDO and develop a timeline to adjust them.
H 3.3.2	Coordinate with developers to understand financing challenges for missing middle housing.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>ADVOCATE FOR LIFESTYLE CHOICES IN HOUSING</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.1</b>	Align land use policies and regulations to accommodate more housing variety.
H 4.1.1	Align housing priorities with land use policy and make updates to the Unified Development Ordinance where appropriate.
H 4.1.2	Align government entities, developers, and residents on issues of land use with housing to ensure future housing meets community requirements.
+H 4.1.3	+ Pursue locating and studying TOD sites to develop with transit components.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	DCA, GMA, development community	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DCA, GMA, development community	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D			X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	BOC	X	X				\$50,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	Development community, CDFIs		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X			\$100,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$75,000	General Fund, SPLOST

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<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>ADVOCATE FOR LIFESTYLE CHOICES IN HOUSING</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.2</b>	Renew housing standards to encourage rehabilitation for older units.
<b>ACTION</b>	
H 4.2.1	Identify funding sources for housing upgrades across a variety of housing aspects.
H 4.2.2	Consider the development of a housing weatherization program to reduce utility costs for homeowners and renters.
+H 4.2.3	<i>+ Provide rehabilitation and maintenance assistance from HUD grant funds and private sources to homeowners and to existing multifamily projects that preserve affordable workforce housing.</i>
+H 4.2.4	<i>+ Continue code enforcement through Quality of Life Unit to ensure that properties are maintained.</i>
<b>STRATEGY 4.3</b>	Offer opportunities to learn about and encourage housing types supportive of different lifestyles.
H 4.3.1	Establish a formal supportive housing strategy focused on efficiency and impact to accommodate homeless, disabled, and struggling residents.

*+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.*

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	ARC, DCA		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D	Georgia Power	X	X	X	X	X	\$200,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	DoFS	X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000,000	CDBG, Housing NOFA
P&D	GCPD	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D				X	X	X	\$50,000	General Fund, Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

GOAL 5	ALLOCATE FUNDING TO HOUSING
STRATEGY 5.1	Explore funding structures that can boost development, such as TADs and Housing Opportunity Bonds.
H 5.1.1	Identify strategic areas in the county that could benefit from a TAD for housing using information from the 2045 Unified Plan.
H 5.1.2	If TADs for housing are appropriate, work to establish TADs in those areas and begin the process of acquiring land and financing new residential projects to increase housing supply.
H 5.1.3	Explore potential for a SPLOST to support housing. Speak with Athens-Clarke County for more information on theirs.
H 5.1.4	Explore potential for a Housing Opportunity Bond.
H 5.1.5	Prioritize Small Areas for future concentrated strategies using information from the 2045 Unified Plan.
H 5.1.6	Identify funding mechanisms for small area housing strategies.
+H 5.1.7	<i>+ 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.</i>
+H 5.1.8	<i>+ Provide financial assistance from HUD grant funds to private/nonprofit developers to construct new single family or new multifamily projects to provide affordable workforce housing.</i>
+H 5.1.9	<i>+ Provide rehabilitation assistance from HUD grant funds for homeowner occupied dwellings.</i>
+H 5.1.10	<i>+ Expand program beyond HUD grant funds to include County funds for commercial properties.</i>

*+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.*

P&D		X	X	X	X		\$0	Staff Time
P&D					X	X	\$0	TAD collections, grants, private developers
P&D	Peer jurisdictions		X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	BOC		X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X					\$250,000	General Fund, HUD Grants
P&D		X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DoFS	X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000,000	CDBG, Housing NOFA
P&D	DoFS	X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000,000	CDBG, Housing NOFA
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000,000	CDBG, Housing NOFA
P&D				X	X	X	\$5,000,000	General Fund, Grants

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## SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

### GOAL 1

### ALIGN WATER, WASTEWATER, AND STORMWATER PLANNING WITH DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

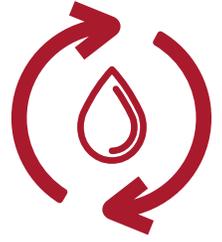
#### STRATEGY 1.1

Use policy and rate setting tools to incentivize growth in areas well served by infrastructure, in alignment with findings from Sewer Basin Studies.

#### ACTION

SI 1.1.1	Ensure that P&D staff coordinate with DWR to discuss findings of the Sewer Basin Studies.
SI 1.1.2	Identify action items and establish a work plan to address any alignment needs.
SI 1.1.3	Meet at least quarterly to evaluate issues related to land use and water.
SI 1.1.4	Document in an annual report the steps taken to mitigate environmental impacts (through land use policy or other initiatives).
SI 1.1.5	Update the calculations within future iterations of ongoing water and sewer planning efforts using the growth projections from the 2045 Unified Plan.
+SI 1.1.6	<i>+ Evaluate future wastewater treatment capacity needs and location(s) for new and/or expanded water reclamation facilities.</i>
+SI 1.1.7	<i>+ Review and modify as necessary septic to sewer policies and ordinances.</i>
<b>STRATEGY 1.2</b>	<b>Modify the UDO to adjust stormwater regulations to promote creative solutions for redevelopment projects</b>
SI 1.2.1	Conduct an inventory of wetlands throughout the County, determining if DWR has in house capacity or if external support is needed.
SI 1.2.2	Evaluate the necessity for a new overlay district or other tool upon completion of the wetlands inventory.
SI 1.2.3	Work with the development community to identify pain points in existing regulations and revise them.

*+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.*



## SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D	DWR	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR	X	X				\$25,000	General Fund
DWR				X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund
P&D	DWR	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DWR			X				\$250,000	General Fund
DWR			X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR, Development community		X	X	X		\$0	General Fund, Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget*

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>ALIGN WATER, WASTEWATER, AND STORMWATER PLANNING WITH DAILY COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK</b>
<b>STRATEGY 1.3</b>	Promote community design choices that result in efficient water use.
<b>ACTION</b>	
SI 1.3.1	Adjust infrastructure plans to prioritize improvements in locations where the 2045 Unified Plan anticipates more intense development/redevelopment.
SI 1.3.2	Consider adding reduced infrastructure costs and demand to criteria list for quality development.
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS THAT PROTECT AND EXPAND ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 2.1</b>	Utilize forward looking climate data to inform infrastructure facility planning.
SI 2.1.1	Study social sustainability metrics (such as access to green amenities) and identify solutions/actions to address disparities identified among groups. Metrics should include areas prone to flooding, heat island effect, limited, tree canopy, and other related items.
SI 2.1.2	Dedicate staff time for monitoring and pursuing funding opportunities to fund and advance action items.
<b>STRATEGY 2.2</b>	Implement best practices from the Metro Water District’s 2022 Water Resources Management Plan
SI 2.2.1	Periodically submit stormwater management volume data to the Metro Water District, particularly from large development sites.
<b>STRATEGY 2.3</b>	Establish County goals for facility rating certifications including Sustainable SITES, Envision, and others such as LEED.
SI 2.3.1	Conduct a cost benefit analysis, informed by multiple departments’ perspectives, to inform true cost accounting for construction of sustainable and resilient infrastructure.
SI 2.3.2	Set a DoCS guideline for when to pursue certification for parks and trails projects through Sustainable SITES.
SI 2.3.3	Establish a DWR guideline for when to pursue certification for infrastructure projects through ISI Envisions’s rating system.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DWR	P&D			X	X	X	\$100,000	Metro Water District, ARC, General Fund
P&D		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DWR		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Metro Water District, Staff Time
Sustainability Commission	DWR, P&D	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Staff Time
Sustainability Commission	DWR, P&D, DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
Sustainability Commission	DWR	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

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<b>GOAL 3</b>		<b>REDUCE IMPERVIOUS SURFACES</b>	
<b>STRATEGY 3.1</b>	Promote green infrastructure retrofit opportunities of surface parking, particularly in disadvantaged communities.		
<b>ACTION</b>			
SI 3.1.1	Identify and map environmentally sensitive areas for use as a cross-reference when proposed developments are under review.		
SI 3.1.2	Determine external organizations that can support environmental justice initiatives and establish a forum for collaboration.		
SI 3.1.3	Collaborate with County departments and initiatives, as well as external green building organizations and technical partners, to incorporate performance-based standards into development scorecard.		
SI 3.1.4	Educate decisionmakers on environmental and social benefits of sustainable site design.		
<b>STRATEGY 3.2</b>	Evaluate the stormwater utility fund to determine if a rate increase is warranted to meet community goals.		
SI 3.2.1	Complete a rate increase study to accomplish: benchmark stormwater utility fees with peers in the region; consider and make recommendations for potential rate increase, considering automatic rate increases tied to an index, such as the Consumer Price Index or those that consider construction prices.		
SI 3.2.2	Evaluate potential new stewardship credits that would incentivize commercial entities to participate.		
<b>STRATEGY 3.3</b>	Build capacity for maintenance of stormwater infrastructure facilities.		
SI 3.3.1	Partner with Gwinnett County CIDs to study green infrastructure deficits in Justice40 disadvantaged communities. Identify whether the county has in house capacity or if external support will be needed.		
SI 3.3.2	Study low cost strategies for implementation of green infrastructure retrofits.		
SI 3.3.3	Conduct public outreach to involve the community in the planning and implementation of green infrastructure.		
SI 3.3.4	Explore potential green infrastructure projects on existing recreational set asides that have safe access points. Work with local nonprofits and neighborhoods to increase local buy in for their maintenance.		

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR, DoCS, Sustainability Commission, green building organizations, technical partners	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	BOC	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DWR		X	X	X			\$150,000	General Fund
DWR		X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
DWR	CIDs	X	X	X	X		\$100,000	General Fund
DWR	-	X	X	X	X		\$0	Staff Time
DWR	-	X	X	X	X		\$0	Staff Time
DWR	-	X	X	X	X		\$0	Staff Time

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<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>REDUCE IMPERVIOUS SURFACES</b>
<b>STRATEGY 3.4</b>	Encourage tree planting as a green infrastructure practice.
<b>ACTION</b>	
SI 3.4.1	Conduct an audit of tree protection standards.
SI 3.4.2	Research tree planting programs in other communities as well as certification programs to facilitate. Determine appropriate actions to advance.
SI 3.4.3	Benchmark with peers in the region.
SI 3.4.4	Budget for tree plantings within the public right of way in disadvantaged communities.
SI 3.4.5	Consider wildflowers where tree canopy cannot be established within the right of way.
SI 3.4.6	Contact Trees Atlanta or other local nonprofits with similar missions. Discuss the costs for program implementation.
SI 3.4.7	Establish a pilot program in one area of the county to determine countywide feasibility. The pilot could be focused on a disadvantaged community identified earlier in this element.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AMENITIES THAT PROVIDE MULTIPLE BENEFITS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.1</b>	Develop a menu of best practices for green infrastructure that achieve multiple benefits.
SI 4.1.1	Evaluate transportation plans (such as the CTP and the Trails Plan) to identify if new strategies for green infrastructure can be incorporated.
SI 4.1.2	Study new technologies for low maintenance green stormwater infrastructure, such as the tree box filter example discussed in this element.
SI 4.1.3	Review findings of DWR Barriers to Green Infrastructure Audit to determine if relevant transportation policies can be adjusted.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
Sustainability Commission	P&D, private consultants		X				\$50,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D			X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D			X				\$0	Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT, GDOT		X	X			\$150,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT, GDOT		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
Sustainability Commission	P&D			X	X	X	\$0	Voluntary application fees for interested homeowners
Sustainability Commission	P&D			X	X	X	\$25,000	Voluntary application fees for interested homeowners
GCDOT	P&D		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
GCDOT	-		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
GCDOT	DWR		X	X			\$0	Staff Time

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<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AMENITIES THAT PROVIDE MULTIPLE BENEFITS.</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.2</b>	Create a public facing StoryMap and online dashboard for sharing metrics about green infrastructure projects.
<b>ACTION</b>	
SI 4.2.1	Create a public facing StoryMap and online dashboard for sharing metrics about green infrastructure projects.
SI 4.2.2	Determine sources of available data across departments.
SI 4.2.3	Hold an interdepartmental meeting to align on goals of the dashboard.
SI 4.2.4	Determine in house capacity and/or needs for external support.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DWR	P&D, DoCS		X	X	X		\$0	Staff Time
DWR	P&D, DoCS		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
DWR	P&D, DoCS		X	X			\$0	Staff Time
DWR	P&D, DoCS		X	X			\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

## TRANSPORTATION

GOAL 1	INCREASE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS
STRATEGY 1.1	Adopt standards to improve safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists in the road corridor.
ACTION	
T 1.1.1	Design standards for pedestrian and cyclist safety and access in line with guidance from CTP, TDP, and Trails Plan.
T 1.1.2	Revise streetscape standards and typical details to encourage a higher quality environment for walking and biking.
T 1.1.3	Incorporate Complete Streets principles into new roadway projects and developments.
T 1.1.4	Develop and maintain partnerships with local bicycle groups.
T 1.1.5	Perform supplemental, specialized subarea and corridor studies and develop specific plans and recommendations.
+T 1.1.6	<i>+ Implement projects and design guidelines from updated Gwinnett Open Space and Greenways Master Plan.</i>

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.



## TRANSPORTATION

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DOT	P&D	X					\$50,000	SPLOST, Grants, Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X					\$0	Staff Time
DOT	P&D		X	X	X	X	up to \$2,000,000 per project	SPLOST, Grants, Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$300,000	Grants, ARC, Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

*\*Unless stated otherwise, General Fund items will be funded from the General Operating Budget.*

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>INCREASED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 1.2</b>	Increase the use of active transportation by integrating active transportation planning to create shorter routes.
<b>ACTION</b>	
T 1.2.1	Follow action items for full implementation of the Countywide Trails Plan.
T 1.2.2	Provide dedicated staff time for coordinating multiple forms of transportation, such as on demand ride services, biking, paratransit, and other first/last mile options in new developments.
T 1.2.3	During project implementation, add features directly adjacent to destinations and provide interparcel access at the local scale.
T 1.2.4	Secure new, dedicated revenue to pay for additional active transportation safety features within the roadway right of way.
+T 1.2.5	<i>+ Coordinate and implement appropriate transportation improvements to maintain safe and efficient access to Post-Secondary institutions.</i>
+T 1.2.6	<i>+ Design/redesign busy intersections and midpoint crossings to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety.</i>
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>ENSURE THAT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS AND PUBLIC PROJECTS ENABLE MOBILITY FOR ALL USERS.</b>
<b>STRATEGY 2.1</b>	Establish standards for transit improvements identified in the Transit Development Plan.
T 2.1.1	Follow action items for full implementation of the TDP.
T 2.1.2	Review development regulations and overlay districts to ensure multiple modes are addressed.
<b>STRATEGY 2.2</b>	Review current Complete Streets policy.
T 2.2.1	Convene Complete Streets Implementation Team.
T 2.2.2	Revise policy according to findings of Complete Streets policy review.
T 2.2.3	Use development regulation authority to achieve compliance for development community.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	see Countywide Trails Plan	SPLOST, Grants, General Fund
P&D	DOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	up to \$2,000,000 per project	SPLOST, Grants, General Fund
DOT	P&D			X	X	X	\$10,000,000	SPLOST, General Fund,
DOT	P&D	X	X	X			up to \$15,000,000 per project	SPLOST, Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	up to \$15,000,000 per project	SPLOST, Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	see TDP	Current/future transit funding, FTA grants, TADs
P&D	DOT	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time
DOT	P&D	X					\$0	Staff Time
DOT		X	X				\$0	Staff Time
DOT	P&D		X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

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<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>CONTINUE COUNTERMEASURES TO REDUCE SPEEDING AND ACCIDENTS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 3.1</b>	Utilize the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program (SS4A) to develop a safety action plan and implement the recommendations from the plan.
	<b>ACTION</b>
T 3.1.1	Explore candidate areas for SS4A pilot interventions.
<b>STRATEGY 3.2</b>	Use SPLOST funds and pursue GDOT lump sum safety program funds for safety improvements throughout the County.
T 3.2.1	Fully implement safety improvement recommendations from the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
+T 3.2.2	+ Continue to identify areas in need of signal coordination and/or ITS improvements.
+T 3.2.3	+ Maintain County funding source for improvements.
+T 3.2.4	+ Installation of ITS improvements
<b>STRATEGY 3.3</b>	Utilize recommendations from CTP and other relevant plans and studies to expand the array of safety improvements available for both public and land development roadway projects
+T 3.3.1	+ Develop and implement funding plans for projects.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>IMPROVE TRANSIT TO COMPETE WITH PRIVATE VEHICLE TRIPS AND PROVIDE LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY</b>
<b>STRATEGY 4.1</b>	Implement and evaluate Transit Development Plan recommendations and adjust services based on performance.
	<b>ACTION</b>
T 4.1.1	Fully coordinate and collaborate with all regional transit service providers, especially on fares and schedules.
T 4.1.2	Take advantage of technology, apps, and social media to promote alternative modes and provide realtime information on services.
T 4.1.3	Identify high-priority, customer facing improvements such as reduced wait times and service availability.
T 4.1.4	Secure new, dedicated revenue to meet Ride Gwinnett's capital and operating needs.
+T 4.1.5	+ Develop and implement transit promotion campaign.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DOT	P&D	X	X	X			\$0	SS4A Grants
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	see CTP	SPLOST, SS4A Grants, Georgia DOT
DOT	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DOT	P&D, DoFS	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DOT	-				X	X	see CTP	SPLOST
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DOT	P&D, regional transit providers	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DOT	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000,000	SPLOST, General Fund, Staff Time
DOT	-			X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
DOT	-			X	X	X	see TDP	General Fund
DOT	P&D	X	X	X	X	X	\$250,000	SPLOST, General Fund

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GOAL 5	INTEGRATE TRANSIT INTO LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
STRATEGY 5.1	Incorporate transit access within designs for redevelopment and new development.
ACTION	
T 5.1.1	Establish permanent task force comprised of DOT and P&D staff charged with implementation.
T 5.1.2	Combine recommendations from TDP and 2045 Unified Plan to produce a plan documenting land use considerations and design guidelines for the Daily Community framework.
+T 5.1.3	<i>+ Identify areas that would be suitable for TOD and station development.</i>
+T 5.1.4	<i>+ Create incentives to promote development in TOD areas.</i>
+T 5.1.5	<i>+ Evaluate funding sources and strategically pursue state and federal aid for additional transit needs.</i>

*+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.*

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
DOT	P&D	X					\$0	SS4A Grants
P&D	DOT	X	X	X			\$150,000	ARC, Staff Time
P&D	DOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DOT, BoC	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
BOC	P&D, DOT	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

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## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

GOAL 1	COLLABORATE BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS AND PARTNERS TO SCALE UP COMMUNITY RESOURCES
ACTION	
STRATEGY 1.1	Increase collaboration with partners.
CR 1.1.1	Share updates on current and upcoming pipeline projects.
CR 1.1.2	Involve other departments in long range plans for redevelopment of areas within Gwinnett County.
STRATEGY 1.2	Ensure new public spaces support comfort, safety, and a sense of place for all residents.
CR 1.2.1	Develop a cross-departmental program that promotes information sharing related to the redevelopment process, public space, and other community amenities that can be delivered in new projects.
GOAL 2	INFUSE COMMUNITIES WITH CONTEXT APPROPRIATE GREENSPACE
STRATEGY 2.1	Incentivize quality public spaces within private redevelopment.
CR 2.1.1	Establish a new Gwinnett County staff position for an urban designer or architect responsible for providing leadership for the physical design of the County
+ CR 2.1.2	<i>+ Engage CIDs to encourage inclusion of privately owned and maintained open spaces in areas where park space has traditionally been limited</i>
STRATEGY 2.2	Expand shared space within the public realm, including in street rights of way
CR 2.2.1	Develop Public Realm and Greenspace Pattern Book, Design Guidelines, and Standards.
CR 2.2.2	Complete a Feasibility Study for implementing Park Impact Fees customized to the County's future Parkland and development needs.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.



## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS					COST	FUNDING
		24	25	26	27	28		
P&D	DoCS, other departments	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DoCS, other departments	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DoCS, Public Safety	X	X	X			\$50,000	Staff Time, General Fund
P&D	DoCS			X	X		\$75,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	CIDs	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	CIDs, Staff Time
P&D	DoCS, private consultants		X	X			\$200,000	General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	DoCS, private consultants	X	X				\$250,000	Grants, General Fund

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<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>INFUSE COMMUNITIES WITH CONTEXT APPROPRIATE GREENSPACE</b>	
<b>ACTION</b>		
<b>STRATEGY 2.3</b>	Expand and connect new public spaces along linear corridors, including trails	
CR 2.3.1	Establish policies and procedures that systematically integrate the Parks and Recreation Division into projects led by other Gwinnett Departments, Divisions, and partner organizations.	
	<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>MAINTAIN PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE TIMES AMIDST INCREASE IN CALL VOLUME</b>
<b>STRATEGY 3.1</b>	Share resources across departments.	
CR 3.1.1	Share technological resources across departments, including data on crime reports, emergency call concentrations, and public safety response times.	
<b>STRATEGY 3.2</b>	Integrate public safety access into redevelopment designs through eyes on the street.	
CR 3.2.1	Update design guidelines with input from planners and public safety officials and distribute them to local developers.	
CR 3.2.2	Invest in better signage along I-85 to assist those needing emergency services to provide better location information to 911 communication officers.	
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>STRENGTHEN DAILY COMMUNITY IDENTITIES THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE PROGRAMMING IN CENTERS</b>	
<b>STRATEGY 4.1</b>	Identify underutilized assets in active areas.	
CR 4.1.1	Finalize inventory of physical arts and culture assets to understand better what the county has and where improvements should be made.	
<b>STRATEGY 4.2</b>	Provide dedicated staff time and funding for artistic and cultural work.	
CR 4.2.1	Hire an Arts and Culture Manager to ensure Gwinnett's focus on arts and culture is organized and formalized	
CR 4.2.2	Intentionally avoid overregulating arts and culture production, whether in relation to programming or tangible and intangible creations. Actively work to bring down existing regulations that are barriers to this work to help arts and culture flourish in Gwinnett.	
+ CR 4.2.3	+ Support nonprofit Artworks! Organization.	

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS					COST	FUNDING
		24	25	26	27	28		
P&D	Other Departments and Divisions			X	X		\$0	Staff Time
GCPD, GCFES	P&D	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time, SPLOST, State Funding
P&D	GCPD, GCFES	X	X	X			\$50,000	Staff Time, SPLOST, State Funding
GCDOT	P&D, GCPS, GCFES, GDOT	X	X	X			\$100,000	Staff Time, SPLOST, State Funding
DoCS	ArtWorks Gwinnett, community groups	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
DoCS		X	X				\$75,000	Department Funds
P&D	DoCS, GCPD, County Commissioners, ArtWorks Gwinnett	X	X	X			\$0	Staff Time, County General Funds, State Funds, nonprofits
P&D	DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

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<b>GOAL 5</b>	<b>INVEST IN SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY CENTERS</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	
<b>STRATEGY 5.1</b>	Establish strong connections between Daily Community centers, neighborhoods, community facilities, and schools.
CR 5.1.1	As part of the Community School Model, consider adopting EPA site standards for new schools.
CR 5.1.2	Update school infrastructure to support increased public uses such as bathrooms at sports facilities, greater connectivity, and appropriate security measures.
+ CR 5.1.3	+ <i>Identify youth enrichment programs to expand</i>
+ CR 5.1.4	+ <i>Identify new youth enrichment programs to offer</i>
+ CR 5.1.5	+ <i>Allocate additional funding resources</i>
<b>STRATEGY 5.2</b>	Explore opportunities for educators to reside in the communities they serve.
CR 5.2.1	Begin researching educator supportive housing programs, such as vouchers or the creation of new housing, and assess their feasibility.
+ CR 5.2.2	+ <i>Promote and Support Georgia Gwinnett College.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop a detailed land use plan for areas around colleges in collaboration with the institutions and surrounding jurisdiction(s).</i></li> <li>• <i>Encourage open communication between colleges/universities and organizations promoting the SR 316 corridor.</i></li> </ul>
<b>GOAL 6</b>	<b>DEVELOP THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO INCREASE HEALTH AND WELLNESS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 6.1</b>	Pursue policies that create accessibility/promote aging in place
CR 6.1.1	Update UDO requirements for accessibility to ensure aging in place is possible for senior residents.
CR 6.1.2	Explore incremental improvements to the built environment.
<b>STRATEGY 6.2</b>	Create more opportunities for safe active transportation.
CR 6.2.1	Invest in regular programming that temporarily or permanently protects active transportation facilities from cars to promote health and change perceptions about nonvehicular movement.

+ This action item is continued on from the 2040 Unified Plan Community Work Program.

		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
GCPS	DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	E-SPLOST, US DOE, State of Georgia, General Fund
GCPS	DoCS, P&D	X	X	X	X	X	up to \$10,000,000 per project	E-SPLOST, US DOE, State of Georgia, General Fund
DoCS	GCPS	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
DoCS	GCPS	X	X				\$0	Staff Time
BOC	DoCS	X	X	X	X	X	\$150,000	E-SPLOST, General Fund
P&D		X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	GCDOT	X	X	X			\$100,000	SPLOST, Grants, General Fund
P&D	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000	SPLOST, General Fund, Staff Time
P&D	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time
P&D	-	X	X	X	X	X	\$100,000	SPLOST, General Fund, Staff Time

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**BROADBAND**

**GOAL 1**

**REACH FULL BROADBAND COVERAGE FOR GWINNETT COUNTY**

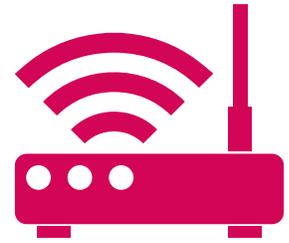
**ACTION**

**STRATEGY 1.1**

Pass Broadband Ready Community model ordinance and become designated as a broadband ready community.

**STRATEGY 1.2**

Monitor installation and upgrades of broadband infrastructure through development, redevelopment, and other infrastructure projects.



BROADBAND								
		EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION YEARS						
LEAD	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	24	25	26	27	28	COST	FUNDING
BOC	P&D, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce	X					\$0	Staff Time
P&D	DWR, GCDOT, Development Community	X	X	X	X	X	\$0	Staff Time

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