



2045 FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

CONDOR CHOCOLATES + CHOCO COFFEE ROASTERS





2045 FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION

Who Makes Up The Committee	4
Process & Recommendations	6

OVERVIEW

Future Land Use Is not Zoning	8
Main Concepts	10
Housing Variety And Availability	12
Tradeoffs & The Impacts	14

METHODOLOGY

Guiding Principles	16
Growth Concept	18
Methodology	19

OUTCOMES

New Map, New Definitions	20
Future Land Use Characteristic Matrix	27
Stepping Down	28
The New Future Land Use Map	32
2045 Future Land Use Process Timeline	36
Land use Fiscal Impact Assessment	38

WHERE ARE WE GOING

Next Steps	42
Conclusion	44

APPENDIX

THE FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Appointed by Mayor Girtz in March 2024, the Future Land Use Steering Committee held its first meeting on April 30, 2024. The Steering Committee began its work immediately following the completion of a two-month community engagement period about the Future Land Use Planning process which included 8 public meetings held in various locations during March and April 2024. With this community input as their starting point, the Steering Committee met monthly from April 2024 to June 2025 in their effort to accomplish the following purposes.

Steering Committee Purpose:

- To guide the purposeful arrangement, intensity and variety of future land use designations throughout the community;
- To facilitate the growth of Athens-Clarke County for the next 20 years.
- Data used in the development of the Future Land Use Plan include population growth estimates, infrastructure programming, housing needs, environmental protection measures, and economic development strategies.
- The Steering Committee will have staff support from the ACCGov Planning Department, will be chaired by a Planning Commissioner, and will consult various subject matter experts as part of their meetings to inform their deliberations and decision-making.
- Public input opportunities regarding the Future Land Use Plan will be organized at key milestones that align with the Steering Committee's deliberations.
- The final draft of the Future Land Use Plan will be voted on by the Steering Committee prior to being heard by the Planning Commission for recommendation, and before Mayor & Commission consideration and final action.

Steering Committee Members

Alexander Sams, Planning Commission – Steering Committee Chair

Dr. Maxine Easom, Commission District 1

Dr. Jerry Shannon, Commission District 2

Tammie Martin, Commission District 3

June Ball, Commission District 4

Joe Hill, Commission District 5

Stephen Wright, Commission District 6

Mack Furlow, Commission District 7

Kent Middleton, Commission District 8

Shirelle Hallum, Commission District 9

Lorraine Fuller, Commission District 10

David Bradley, Chamber of Commerce

Rashe Malcolm, Industrial Development Authority

Mark Jennings, Athens Area Homebuilders

Jason Leonard, Business Owner

Andre Powell, UGA Student

Cyndee Moore, CCSD Admin/Staff

Chris Joiner, Athens Area Realtor

Jeff Bishop, Local Financial Professional

David Matheny, Local Planning Professional

Chase Lawrence, Developer/Property Manager

David Lynn, Athens Downtown Development Authority

Sam Stabler, Small Business Owner

Sheila Crisp, Housing Partner

Connie Staudinger, At Large

Alison McCullick (ex officio), UGA Director of Community Relations

FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE PROCESS

In the completion of their charge, the Future Land Use Steering Committee endorsed the following Guiding Principles that were developed based on active community input received during March and April 2024.

1. Redevelop corridors and nodes that are ripe for transformation
2. Minimize sewer expansion; Grow capacity within existing network
3. Reduce travel distances:
 - a. Localize trips by adding commercial, institutional and amenity uses
 - b. Locate people nearer destination (residents near jobs & activity centers)
 - c. Add street connections to distribute traffic efficiently across the network
4. Plan for incremental growth in all neighborhoods that are served by sewer
5. Support environmentally and fiscally sustainable growth

In their development of the 2045 Future Land Use Map, the Future Land Use Steering Committee:

- Considered the anticipated population growth data for the period 2025 to 2045;
- Received technical information regarding existing community infrastructure and programmed improvements to community infrastructure in an effort to ensure that the resulting recommendations are reasonable and based on the best available information;
- Created Future Land Use categories that reflect the community goals and values expressed in the Guiding Principles and responded to the cumulative community feedback received;
- Translated the Growth Concept Map developed by Athens-Clarke County Staff based on community input gathered during 2023 and received by the Mayor and Commission; and,
- Participated in ten community input sessions held throughout Athens-Clarke County during April 2025.

STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

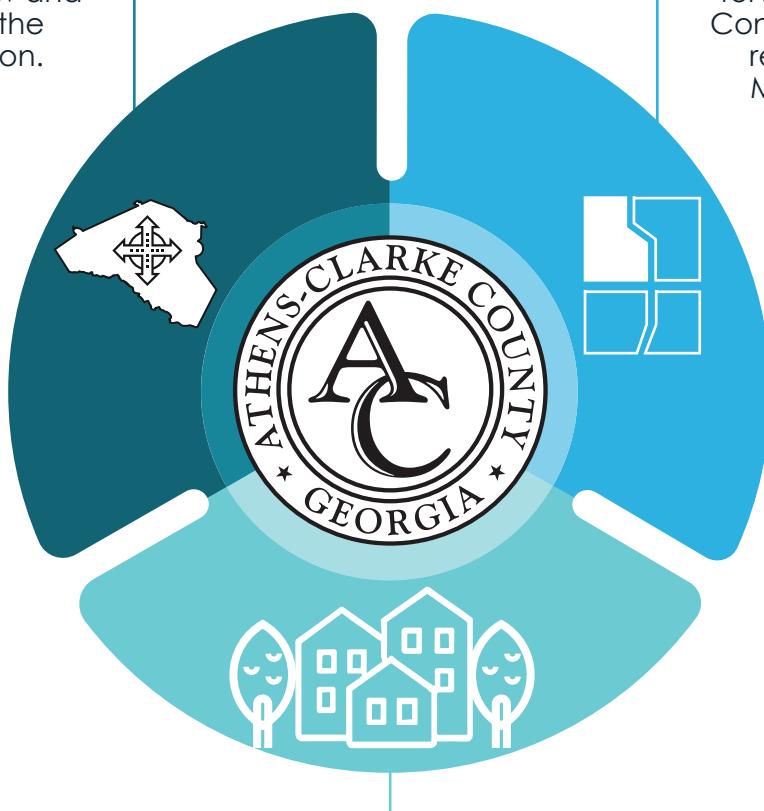
Consistent with the stated purpose for the creation of the Future Land Use Steering Committee, and having completed thorough consideration of the information outlined above, the **Future Land Use Steering Committee recommends the following:**

01

The attached draft 2045 Future Land Use Map be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the Mayor and Commission.

02

The attached wording for the 2045 Future Land Use categories be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the Mayor and Commission.



03

Upon adoption of the 2045 Future Land Use Map, the Mayor and Commission consider authorizing actions to implement the goals expressed in the 2045 Future Land Use Map, including – but not limited to – amendments to the Athens-Clarke County zoning code, design standards, and associated land use policies and regulations.

FUTURE LAND USE IS NOT ZONING

HOW WE GOT HERE

A Future Land Use (FLU) Map is an element of every community's local Comprehensive Plan as required by the state of Georgia. A Comprehensive Plan is a fact-based resource developed by and for communities to consider the performance of previous planning efforts and to set goals and expectations for the community's future. Local comprehensive planning creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, taxpayers and the general public. Additionally, the plan helps local governments to recognize and then implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives. For these reasons, the state finds that well-planned communities are better prepared to attract new growth in a highly competitive global market.

Athens-Clarke County has made minor changes to the Future Land Use Map in the last five Comprehensive Plan updates but is now seeking to modernize categories in a substantial way to more thoroughly plan for the future and promote sustainable development patterns. This current planning effort is looking to set the stage for a larger Comprehensive Plan update in 2028, building off the previous community planning efforts that have enabled Athens-Clarke County to evolve in ways that are beneficial for residents, businesses, institutions and the local environment.



Photo left:
Normaltown

What Even Is A
Future Land Use Map?

A Future Land Use (FLU) Map is an element of every community's local Comprehensive Plan as required by the state of Georgia. A local comprehensive plan is a fact-based resource for local constituents that considers the performance of previous planning efforts and then sets goals and expectations for the community's future.

Photo right:

Ansonborough
Condominiums



All parcels have two land use identifiers assigned to them - Future Land Use (see appendix B2) of category language and maps) and Zoning. Future Land Use categories are broad-based and conceptual, serving to identify a range of possibilities. The Future Land Use categories provide an idea of what an area, district or neighborhood should look like in the future. The descriptions and geographic arrangement of Future Land Use categories take the following issues into account:

1. Location based on the community: In-Town, Suburban or Rural
2. Types of uses that exist today and should be encouraged in the future: Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Industrial or Mixed-Use
3. Area to be served by the collective land use designations: Neighborhood, County-wide, Regional or State-wide

Putting those elements together gives a resident, business or visitor the understanding of how the community is anticipated to change over the life of the Future Land Use Map.

A Future Land Use Plan sets visions and concepts for development which will vary based on the context of the different regions of the County. Upon adoption, these visions and concepts are codified into policies and regulations meant to implement those visions. In short, the Future Land Use sets the table for development, and once the table is set, Zoning follows with a specific menu of development choices.

Zoning code draws heavily from the concepts presented by Future Land Use categories and translates these land use expectations into land use regulations and development standards that are adopted in the form of local laws or ordinances. References to Zoning Ordinances are more familiar to residents and property owners as interaction with these regulations is more common than discussions of Future Land Use. Zoning codes carry considerable weight in governing how a property can be used, how much of it can be developed, and how development relates to its neighbors. It is very important to understand zoning while developing a new Future Land Use Map because once the categories are laid out, residents, builders and developers will then need to work with the conceptual intent of the Future Land Use district and then apply the specific Zoning rules to build or evolve our community.

MAIN CONCEPTS

LAND USE BUDGET

Throughout this current community discussion, the Future Land Use Map update has centered on the notion of a “land-use budget.” The budget uses data and knowledge about existing and projected conditions to establish realistic boundaries and guiding factors for future development decisions. For example, the budget accounts for environmentally sensitive land, infrastructure realities, projected population growth, and the availability of land for development. The conditions in this budget sit along a spectrum:

- **Rigid** - The natural environment - Athens' most rigid constraint, since there's little that can be done to change the topography of the County, where the rivers flow, or the riparian buffers along waterways. These are often constraints or items to creatively work around.
- **Firm** - The built environment – buildings, sewer and water networks, roads, trails, etc. These elements can be changed but only slowly and at great expense.
- **Malleable** – Athens Clarke County policies and plans - since they can be changed rapidly at the direction of the Mayor & Commission but require political will and community discussion.

While this budget does not have the precision of an accountant and should not be used for exact predictions, it is helpful for organizing and conceptualizing the vision for development in Athens-Clarke County over the next 20 years.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Land development of reasonable or moderate intensity is dependent on infrastructure, therefore ACC departments that steward the community's public infrastructure were invited early into the planning process. In sharing their plans for systems like sanitary sewer, roadways, and transit, it became apparent that just maintaining the existing systems is already straining resources. This was confirmed by the fiscal impact analysis performed by Urban3 and discussed further in this report.

According to Urban3's fiscal impact assessment, Athens-Clarke County is underfunding the long-term maintenance of existing infrastructure. Given this maintenance shortfall, further system expansion would be unwise without a careful balancing of the long-term financial costs and revenues. In this context, getting more efficiency out of existing systems by building where infrastructure already exists is a sound choice for the taxpayers and ratepayers of Athens-Clarke County.



Photo right
and below:

Oak Grove
Apartments



This plan assumes that more people will come to Athens over the next 20 years. The factors that draw people to Athens, such as a historic downtown, prominent university, large employers, beautiful neighborhoods, the creative economy, attractive climate, and significant community amenities remain in effect. Since World War Two, the county has grown by approximately 1% per year. If this trend holds, the population will increase by approximately 30,000 residents of all ages by 2045, inclusive of anticipated UGA enrollment. It should be noted that this is a projection of the current trend,

not an exact prediction. The policies in this document have been informed by this estimate and should provide opportunities beyond that amount to provide space in the local market to allow for a variety of preferences and development opportunities. Population growth will bring change to Athens. Even if no one moved to town, Athens would change because people, businesses, and buildings change over time. Change is inevitable. This plan gives the community an opportunity to proactively influence change in positive directions. However, it should be noted that approximately 94%

of the County's land area will not have a substantive change from the previous Future Land Use vision. The change in these areas will be evolutionary within the current vision rather than revolutionary. These changes should be seen as incremental and driven by some policy modifications that will follow the effort. Approximately 6% of the County's land area, largely focused in nodes centered at key intersections and along primary corridors, is covered by a new vision for the Future Land Use of those properties.

OVERVIEW



Photo top left:
Residential Typologies
Graphic Showcasing
"Missing Middle" Housing

Photo bottom left:
Whitehall Village
Fee-Simple Townhomes
Athens, GA

Photo top right:
Park at Five Points
Apartments (Formerly known
as the Styles Apartments) at
the crossroads of Five Points.

Photo bottom right:
Triplex on Boulevard near the
corner of Nacoochee Ave &
Boulevard



HOUSING VARIETY AND AVAILABILITY

AND HOW IT IMPACTS ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

Did You
Know?

Single-Family Detached units are generally marketed towards families and apartment complexes are generally marketed to younger and/or single people, but there are a number of household types and sizes that are not well-served by a market dominated by these two housing choices. As household sizes shrink and fit different family arrangements across the country, the number of people in households that don't fit well into these two housing types is growing.



Since World War Two, developers have primarily focused on two types of housing: Single-Family Detached (one house on one lot, built for a nuclear family) and multi-family apartment complexes of increasingly larger scales. In this same timeframe, detached houses have increased in size (peaking only recently) while household populations have declined over the same period. Single-Family Detached units are generally marketed towards families and apartment complexes are generally marketed to younger and/or single people, but there are a number of household types and sizes that are not well-represented in a market dominated by these two housing choices. As household sizes shrink and the variety of household arrangements increases, the number of people that don't fit well into these two housing types is growing.

In the historic neighborhoods of Athens, one can see more housing variety, such as backyard cottages, large homes divided into multiple units, and small apartment buildings that are scaled to the neighborhood. This variety of housing structures allowed the local market to be responsive to a wider variety of household needs; a responsiveness that has since been reduced or removed from many zoning codes. Today, the Athens' housing market is stressed by the cost of housing and the lack of market choices. In response, this Future Land Use Map lays out a two-part complementary strategy:

1) Major and minor mixed-use transformation in largely commercial nodes and corridors, and

2) Incremental growth in existing neighborhoods that already have sewer access.

Major and minor redevelopment and expansion of nodes and corridors allows for medium to high-capacity projects to provide space for many people to live close to jobs, schools, and daily needs with the support of existing infrastructure, including transit – all without displacing residents in existing neighborhoods. Incremental growth in existing neighborhoods allows current residents to adapt their properties as their needs change and allows new ownership opportunities for those wishing to purchase homes. Combining these two approaches can provide for incremental expansion of the capacity and variety of housing that the community needs.



TRADEOFFS & THE IMPACTS

EVERY DECISION HAS A CONSEQUENCE...
BUT THAT'S NOT ALWAYS A BAD THING

The reality of tradeoffs has governed decisions during this process. In simple terms, a tradeoff is a choice to opt for one thing in order to prioritize it over something else or to compromise on a middle path that picks elements from multiple options. Community resources - including land, infrastructure, finances, etc. - are finite for residents, private institutions, and the county government, so decisions inevitably involve trying to strike the right balance between multiple - and at times competing - values, needs, constraints, and opportunities. Athens-Clarke County could, for example, open the rural areas of the County to provide more room for housing and other development, but that would sacrifice greenspace and potentially cost more to serve and maintain than it provides in revenue.

The Future Land Use public input process offered opportunities for a variety of different views and values to be expressed, some of which are opposed to each other. Rather than merely compiling a list of wants and needs, public input included efforts to gauge people's opinions on different tradeoffs.

Data has been brought to bear on these choices as well. For example, the fiscal impact of development offers an objective, data-based metric to inform the consideration of these community-wide tradeoff decisions. Ultimately, all options for governing land development over the next 20 years come with some challenges and risk—including the option to maintain the status quo. The Steering Committee debated these land use tradeoffs, sometimes vigorously, and has worked to arrive at consensus recommendations that opt for a reasonable set of tradeoffs to target long-term community success.

Quick Facts

- Growth pressure will remain constant
- 30,000+ new residents by 2045
- Housing variety and availability must increase
- Need to replace expensive and aging infrastructure
- Nodes and corridors the focus, but all areas of ACC must accept some level of growth

What's Affected?



FUTURE LAND USE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

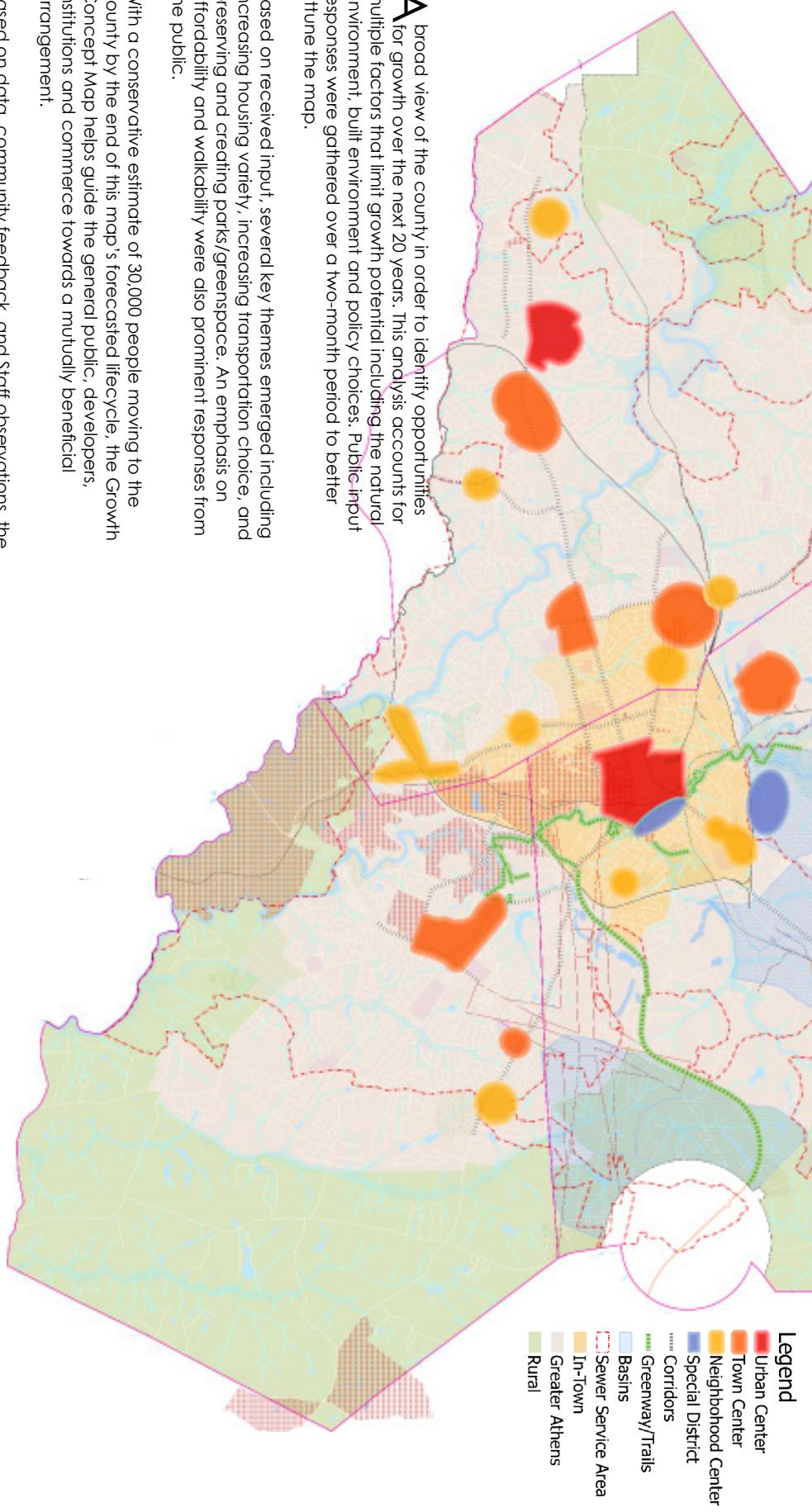
- I. Redevelop corridors and nodes that are ripe for transformation**
- II. Minimize Sewer expansion; grow capacity within the existing network**
- III. Reduce travel distances**
- IV. Plan for incremental growth in all neighborhoods that are served by sewer**
- V. Support environmentally and fiscally sustainable growth**

FUTURE LAND USE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- I. **Redevelop corridors and nodes that are ripe for transformation** – Athens has grown outward along its transportation corridors, nodes of various sizes, mostly shopping centers, have clustered at key intersections along these routes. Much of the land along these corridors and nodes is commercial and many of these sites also have underutilized parking lots that could be put to more productive use. These sites are also fully served by road, utility, and even transit infrastructure. Creating a natural incentive for redevelopment. This creates an opportunity for neighborhoods across town to have their own local center where they can access daily needs and amenities without taking long trips across town.
- II. **Minimize sewer expansion; grow capacity within the existing network** – ACC is fortunate to have a mostly gravity-based sanitary sewer system that is efficient, affordable and avoids high-cost and high-maintenance infrastructure such as lift stations and force mains. Additionally, land use adjacent to this system allows many more options, helps with efficiency and can be mixed in ways that provide some of the highest value. Building from the core and expanding only when it is needed and financially feasible helps connect people, provide services and remain fiscally and environmentally sound.
- III. **Reduce Travel Distances** – Good planning and efficient use of land makes it is easier to get from destination to destination whether that is home, work, school, a park, or a store. Destinations that are closer together require shorter trips, and shortening trips allows more choice in travel. Three land use policies can help reduce travel distances 1) Localize trips by adding compatible commercial, industrial, and amenity uses near residents across town (bringing the destinations to the people), 2) Adding housing near jobs and activity centers (bringing the people to the destinations), and 3) Adding street connections to and within the existing transportation network.
- IV. **Plan for incremental growth in all neighborhoods that are served by sewer** – No neighborhood should be subjected to sudden radical change or be entirely exempt from some change. Incremental development is an evolutionary process that allows people, buildings, and neighborhoods to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances while minimizing the chances of disruptive cataclysmic change. Large projects may bring desired transformation to certain corridors and dozens if not hundreds of housing units to market, but they are not appropriate in every neighborhood. Incremental projects are highly adaptable and can be built quicker and cheaper, providing ownership and wealth building opportunities to a broad population.
- V. **Support environmentally and fiscally sustainable growth** – Environmentally, communities need to protect their water and land from over development, ensure access to clean drinking water, combat pollution, provide and preserve sufficient greenspace, conserve habitat and environmentally-sensitive lands. Fiscally, communities need to ensure they have enough resources to pay for the services, infrastructure, and amenities they need and/or want. A highly productive taxbase adds capacity to the community to support core services and infrastructure and to add amenities that improve the quality of life.

GROWTH CONCEPT MAP



A broad view of the county in order to identify opportunities for growth over the next 20 years. This analysis accounts for multiple factors that limit growth potential including the natural environment, built environment and policy choices. Public input responses were gathered over a two-month period to better attune the map.

Based on received input, several key themes emerged including increasing housing variety, increasing transportation choice, and preserving and creating parks/greenspace. An emphasis on affordability and walkability were also prominent responses from the public.

With a conservative estimate of 30,000 people moving to the county by the end of this map's forecasted lifecycle, the Growth Concept Map helps guide the general public, developers, institutions and commerce towards a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Based on data, community feedback, and Staff observations, the following items were identified as critical considerations for the community to bear in mind when steering development towards over the next 20 years.

METHODOLOGY

THREE YEARS OF WORK & WHY PUBLIC INPUT WAS AT THE CORE

Photo below:
S. Lumpkin Street, 5
points, Athens GA



The current effort builds off of the growth patterns we have historically had as well as steps that have been taken since the last major update in 2000. Those trends, along with public input led to the creation of a Growth Concept Map and Guiding principles that built off our noticeable, historical growth phases:

- **Pre-WWII** – Downtown, Mill Developments along the river with corresponding housing, UGA and adjacent properties, In-town growth around street grid. County growth was mostly rural or agricultural
- **WWII-Unification** – Suburban growth, mostly westward within platted neighborhoods. County growth in similar suburban patterns.
- **Post-unification** – expansion of boundary to include suburban neighborhoods. Construction of Loop 10, growth of commercial strips along Atlanta Hwy & Lexington Rd. Incorporation of more natural features and rural edges.

Those epochs of growth led to a variety of factors that still apply today; good patterns for in-town, mixed neighborhoods; major corridors to be considered for growth and movement; infrastructure expansion that needs to be funded in perpetuity, bringing forth an impetus to optimize development around it; and a community that spans from a historic downtown, through strong neighborhoods, mixing with our institutional partners, suburban neighborhoods to accommodate later-20th century patterns, job centers and our bucolic, rural edge.

NEW MAP NEW DEFINITIONS

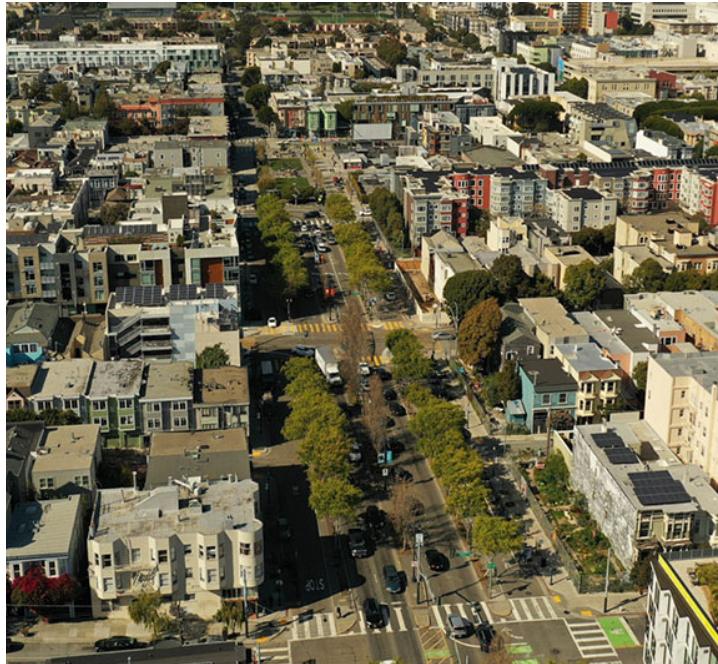


Photo above: Octavia Boulevard
San Francisco, California

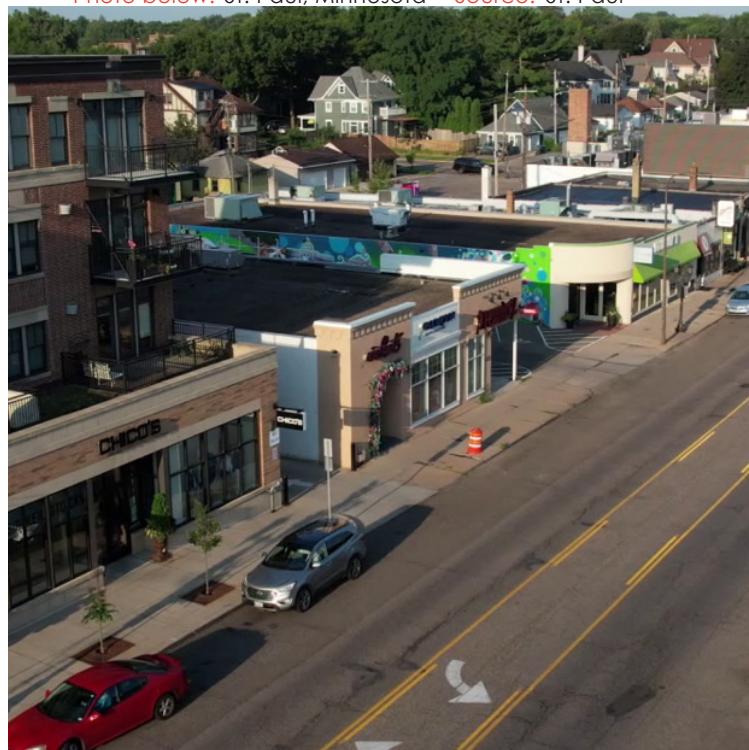
Source: San Francisco
Parks Alliance

MAJOR CORRIDOR

These are primarily commercial or multi-family areas intended for small and large-scale retail and other commercial services. Residential uses are allowed especially in mixed arrangements such as above the ground floor in multi-story buildings, horizontally mixed or as a buffer to surrounding residential neighborhoods. While some areas may be auto-oriented, pedestrian circulation and inter-parcel connectivity should be incorporated into the design. Main entrances should face the street and have direct pedestrian walkways to the street. Corridors should be served by public transit and have multi-modal opportunities. Parking lots should not be located at the street front and shared parking is encouraged.

MINOR CORRIDOR

These areas are intended to develop and redevelop secondary corridors, such as Prince Avenue and Baxter Street, with a mix of commercial and residential uses, and other compatible uses such as small-scale clean industry, schools, houses of worship, and daycares, that can also serve adjacent neighborhoods. Commercial uses should take the form of main street storefronts and multi-story buildings oriented towards the street are expected. These corridors should be designed to function as multi-modal boulevards, that are highly compatible with transit, rather than solely focusing on automobile throughput. These corridors should be comfortable to traverse on foot or sit alongside in cafe seating through the use of enhanced design elements (street trees, sidewalk furniture, lighting or traffic calming).



Grand Avenue
Photo below: St. Paul, Minnesota
Source: St. Paul

Fox 9 Minneapolis -

GENERAL BUSINESS

These are commercial areas that serve a variety of needs for the residents of the region. It is intended for small- and large-scale retailing and service uses that are auto-oriented, such as Atlanta Highway, Lexington Road and US 29 North. Pedestrian-oriented design is particularly appropriate when these streets contain neighborhood-shopping areas or are adjacent to multifamily housing or residential neighborhoods. Pedestrian circulation in these centers is a primary concern, therefore, connectivity within and to surrounding areas should be encouraged. Internal pedestrian walkways should be provided from the public right-of-way to the principal customer entrance of all principal buildings on the site. Walkways should connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as, but not limited to, transit stops, street crossings, building, store entry points, and plaza space. Walkways shall feature adjoining landscaped areas that contribute to the establishment or enhancement of community and public spaces. The street level façade of these areas should have a scale and architectural elements that relate to pedestrians. Buildings should be oriented to the street and corridors should be lined with street-trees. Small and medium scale retail stores should frame the streets with large-scale retailers located behind with focus given to pedestrian circulation rather than automobiles. Parking lots should not be located at the street front and shared parking should be encouraged.



Photo above: Beechwood Shopping Center
Athens, Georgia

Boehringer Ingelheim

Photo below: R&D Facility, Athens GA Source: Ingelheim

Boehringer



These are areas of industry, office-warehouses, research parks, and flex-space mixed uses. Some employment uses can be located near residential areas if the size and scale of the building is compatible, and the potential for the nuisances like excessive noise, light, odor, or traffic is minimal. Small amounts of retail may be compatible in some areas. Design standards regulating building placement, landscaping, and buffering should apply to mitigate the impact of noise, light, odor, and truck traffic. While individual sites may be buffered, the street network and site access should be designed with multiple transportation modes in mind so that workers can access jobs via transit and bicycles. Residential uses are not compatible with this category.

EMPLOYMENT CENTER

DOWNTOWN

This is the densest and most unique neighborhood of the county. It is a regional center that offers a mix of uses, housing, civic or municipal functions and employment opportunities. Parking structures with commercial uses with street-level frontage are encouraged, however they should have strict design requirements to protect historic integrity and to ensure that new buildings develop in a form and architectural style compatible with existing downtown character. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. Surface parking lots are not encouraged.



Photo above: Downtown Athens

Chevy Chase Lake

Photo below: Chevy Chase, Maryland **Source:** Land Company

Chevy Chase Lake



URBAN CENTER

These areas are the second most dense districts of the county. They serve people from beyond the county by offering a mix of uses, housing, and employment opportunities. They should incorporate shared-use facilities such as Greens, plazas or other third spaces. Parking should be handled at the district level or in structures with commercial uses at street-level. These nodes should have mixed-use opportunities in a vertical arrangement at their core and step-down to lower scaled multi-family structures toward their edges. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. Surface parking lots are not encouraged.



Photo above: Ludlow Alley, Columbus, Ohio Source: MKSK

TOWN CENTER

These areas are envisioned to be developed and re-developed centers that have a mix of uses including residential, commercial, office, and entertainment where people can live, work, and play. These centers will have the mid-level intensity of areas like Beechwood Shopping Center, based on the character of the surrounding neighborhood. These nodes will be designed for walking, biking, and transit access. Parking will be handled at the district level, providing an environment where people can park once and access all of their destinations on foot. Multi-story buildings are expected to be oriented towards the street; however, the edges of nodes should be designed to transition to the surrounding neighborhood. Nodes will be designed as compact, walkable spaces with dedicated open space, a functional grid system, and a prioritization on multi-modal transit. Nodes should have design standards to create and respect a cohesive character for each center. Auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

These areas are envisioned to be areas that have a mix of uses including residential, commercial, office, and entertainment where people can live, work, and play. These centers will have the lower intensity of areas like Normaltown, based on the character of the surrounding neighborhood. These centers will provide access to daily needs that provide useful walks for residents of nearby neighborhoods. These nodes will be designed for walking, biking, and transit access. Parking will be handled at the district level, providing an environment where people can park once and access all of their destinations on foot. Multi-story buildings are expected; however, the edges of nodes should be designed to transition to the surrounding neighborhood. Nodes will be designed as compact, walkable spaces with small blocks. Nodes should have design standards to create and respect a cohesive character for each center. Auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation.

Source: CNU Photo below: Parson's Alley, Duluth, Georgia



OUTCOMES

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

These residential areas include a variety of housing types including detached single-family houses, accessory dwellings units, townhouses, and multi-family buildings that are scaled like large houses (such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes). Well-connected street networks, street trees, and sidewalks are expected. Design standards should be implemented to ensure compatibility. Houses are encouraged to be located close to the street with functional front porches and a direct walkway connection to the street. Garages should be placed behind the porch and front façade. Limited commercial and other non-residential uses, designed at a neighborhood scale, are expected including home-based businesses, houses of worship, schools, daycare facilities, personal care homes, and corner stores. These neighborhoods should be characterized by incremental growth and gentle density increases as Athens' population grows.

Photo below: The Massellton, Atlanta, Georgia



SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

These are residential areas with single-family detached housing. Limited non-residential uses designed at a neighborhood scale may be incorporated in these areas (e.g. churches, schools, personal care homes and daycare facilities).

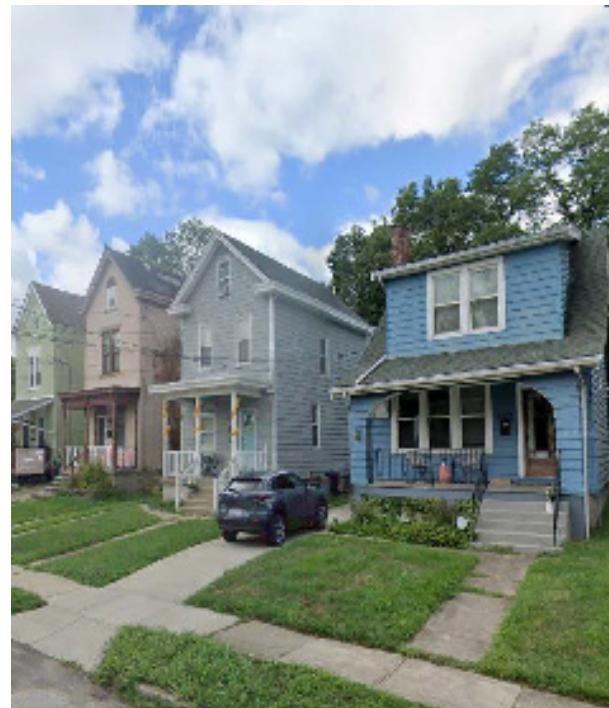


Photo above: Cincinnati, Ohio

MIXED-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

These are residential areas where higher density residential development is allowed and intended. Limited nonresidential uses designed at a neighborhood scale may be incorporated into these areas (e.g. churches, schools, daycare facilities, small businesses and offices). Buildings should be oriented towards the street and include streetscape enhancements. Their design should include connections between uses, good pedestrian connections, and compatibility with public transit. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation.

Photo below: Athens, GA





Photo above: S. Milledge
Athens, GA

RURAL

Rural lands are intended to contain agricultural uses, very low-residential density with a focus on open space. Agricultural functions are encouraged, as well as other compatible uses, including limited low-impact commercial and industrial uses such as production, agriculture, equipment dealerships, lumber yards, self-storage facilities, and animal boarding uses. These areas lack infrastructure to support density. Clustering of dwellings may occur with common open spaces protected by conservation easements. If Athens grows to the point where it becomes necessary to consider additional development in the Rural district, the Future Land Use should be changed to support compact development that will make efficient use of land and preserve remaining rural areas.

RURAL RESIDENTIAL

This category is intended for relatively rural parts of the County that are not served by sewer but have already been developed—typically in a low-density suburban pattern. This designation is meant for existing residential neighborhoods that are not served by sewer, mobile home parks, and limited low-impact commercial uses such as country stores and event spaces. Agricultural uses, beyond what can be done at a backyard scale, are not intended for this area. These areas lack infrastructure, especially sewer service, to support density. If Athens grows to the point where it becomes necessary to consider additional development in the Rural Neighborhood district, the Future Land Use should be changed to support compact development that will make efficient use of land and infrastructure and preserve remaining rural areas.

Shoal Creek Farms

Photo below: Athens, GA



OUTCOMES

GOVERNMENT

This category is for federal, state, or local government agencies. Facilities on these properties should be located and designed with community access in mind to make sure that everyone has safe and convenient access to their government. These facilities should also be designed with quality architecture that increases the value of adjacent properties and boosts civic pride.



Photo above: City Hall
Athens, GA



Photo above: University of Georgia
Athens, GA

EDUCATION

This category is intended for educational institutions including public, private, state, or local school agencies. School campuses should be located and designed as anchors for the neighborhood so that the school grounds can be of benefit to the general public outside of school hours. These campuses should be designed for safe and convenient access on foot or bicycle to reduce congestion and allow greater freedom of movement—especially for children. Student housing and student-oriented uses are expected to locate on or adjacent to campus for ease of access. Campuses should also be designed with quality architecture that increases the value of adjacent properties and boosts civic pride.

Photo below: Dudley Park, Athens, GA



PARKS & OPEN SPACE

This designation is intended for parkland and greenspaces that are intended to serve the community as active and passive recreation areas. Preservation of natural areas is desired here. Parkland should be designed to fit into the context of its surroundings, such as creating pedestrian connections so that adjacent neighborhoods and properties would have easy access to parkland. Smaller park spaces should be incorporated near denser development to provide all residents some access to outdoor space.

CHARACTERISTICS MATRIX

Future Land Use Designations	Character	Primary Use	Intensity	Height	Design	Frequency/proximity	Zoning Compatability
Major Corridor	Multi-Modal Transit-Friendly Access, Boulevard, connected parcels, Arterials or collector roads	Mixed Commercial Residential, & Office	High	3-7 stories (40-70 ft.)	Buildings At/Near Street, limited front parking, less ingress/egress	Municipal, Annual, weekly, daily	RM-2, RM-3, C-O, C-G, IN, G, P
Minor Corridor	Smaller scale Transit-Friendly Access; Local or collector roads	Mixed/adjacent Commercial, Residential & Office	Medium	2-4 stories (20-40 ft.)	Buildings At/Near Street, Parking At the Side/Rear	Municipal, Local, weekly, daily	RS-5, RM-1, RM-2, C-O, C-N, IN, G, P
General Business	Small-to-Large Scale Retail, Automobile-Oriented Uses	Commercial, Office, Residential	Low to Medium	1-6 stories (10-60 ft.)	Buildings facing the street, limited front parking, consolidate curb cuts, interparcel access	Municipal, Annual, weekly, daily	RM-3, C-O, C-N, C-G, E-O, IN, G, P
Downtown	On-street or structured parking, Public Spaces, Historic, Prominent Civic Buildings	Mixed Commercial Residential, & Office, Entertainment, Institutional	Very High	10 stories (100 ft.)	Historic, shared parking, Buildings At Street	Regional, Daily, weekly	C-D, IN, G, P
Urban Center	Park Once, streetscape, Public Green	Mixed Commercial Residential, & Office	High	4-7 stories (40-70 ft.)	Shared parking, Buildings At Street	Regional, municipal, weekly, monthly	RM-2, RM-3, C-O, C-G, IN, G, P
Town Center	Park Once and Walk to Multiple Places, Intentional third spaces	Mixed/adjacent Commercial & Residential	Medium	2-5 stories (20-50 ft.)	Shared parking, Buildings At/Near Street	Municipal, weekly, monthly	RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, C-O, C-N, C-G
Neighborhood Center	Walkable from nearby neighborhoods, Intentional Public Gathering Spaces	Mixed Commercial & Office, some residential	Medium	1-4 stories (10-40 ft.)	On-street or rear parking, Buildings At/Near Street	Local, weekly, daily	RM-1, RM-2, C-O, C-N, IN, G, P
Neighborhood Residential	Pocket Parks, Safe and Convenient to Walk, Kid-Friendly, Variety of Housing Types serving all ages and stages of life	House-Scale Residential, Small-Scale Commercial, Institutional	Low to Medium	1-2.5 stories (10-25 ft.)	Buildings Near Street, Recessed Garages, Usable Front Porches/Stoops, On-Street Parking	Local, daily	RS-5, RS-8, RS-15, RS-25, RM-1, RM-2, C-N, G, P
Mixed Density Residential	Shared Greenspaces, Kid-Friendly	Multi-Family Residential, Limited Commercial, Institutional	Medium	2-4 stories (20-40 ft.)	Multi-Family Buildings Arranged Around Shared Greenspaces	Municipal, weekly, daily	RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, C-N, IN, G, P
Single Family Residential	Pocket Parks, Safe and Convenient to Walk, Kid-Friendly	House-Scale Residential, Limited Commercial, Institutional	Low to Medium	1-2.5 stories (10-25 ft.)	Usable Front Porches/Stoops, Variety of Yard Sizes and Setbacks	Local, daily	RS-5, RS-8, RS-15, RS-25, RS-40, G, P
Employment Center	Job centers, trucking, Manufacturing, Employment campuses	Industrial, Manufacturing, Fabrication, & Warehousing	Medium	1-10 stories (10-100 ft.)	Large campuses or multi-tenant structures, surface parking	Regional, daily	C-O, E-O, E-I, I, IN, G, P
Rural	Farmland, Cluster Development, Open Space, No Sewer	Agricultural, Residential, Outdoor Recreation	Very Low	1-6.5 stories (10-65 ft.)	Very large residential lots, farms, conservation, parks	Local, daily	AR, RS-40, C-R, G, P
Rural Residential	Residential & Commercial, No Sewer, Cluster Development	Residential, Commercial, & Institutional	Low to Very Low	1-6.5 stories (10-65 ft.)	Non-sewer residential lots, conservation subdivisions, hobby farms	Local, Daily	AR, RS-40, C-R, IN, G, P
Government	Municipal functions, Publicly Accessible Buildings Should Have Multi-Modal Transit-Friendly Access	Office, Maintenance & Storage, Public Safety	Low to Medium	1-5 stories (10-50 ft.)	Municipal functions, accessible	Municipal, monthly, weekly	G
Education	Community served	Schools & Offices	Low to Medium	1-3 stories (10-30 ft.)	Expansive campuses, community gathering	Municipal, local, monthly, daily	IN
Parks & Open Space	Larger programmed parks, native parks, pocket parks, third spaces, Multi-Modal Access	Parks, Preserved Greenspace	Very Low	0-1 stories (0-10 ft.)	Integrated into surrounding neighborhoods, Bucolic	Municipal, local, monthly, weekly, daily	P

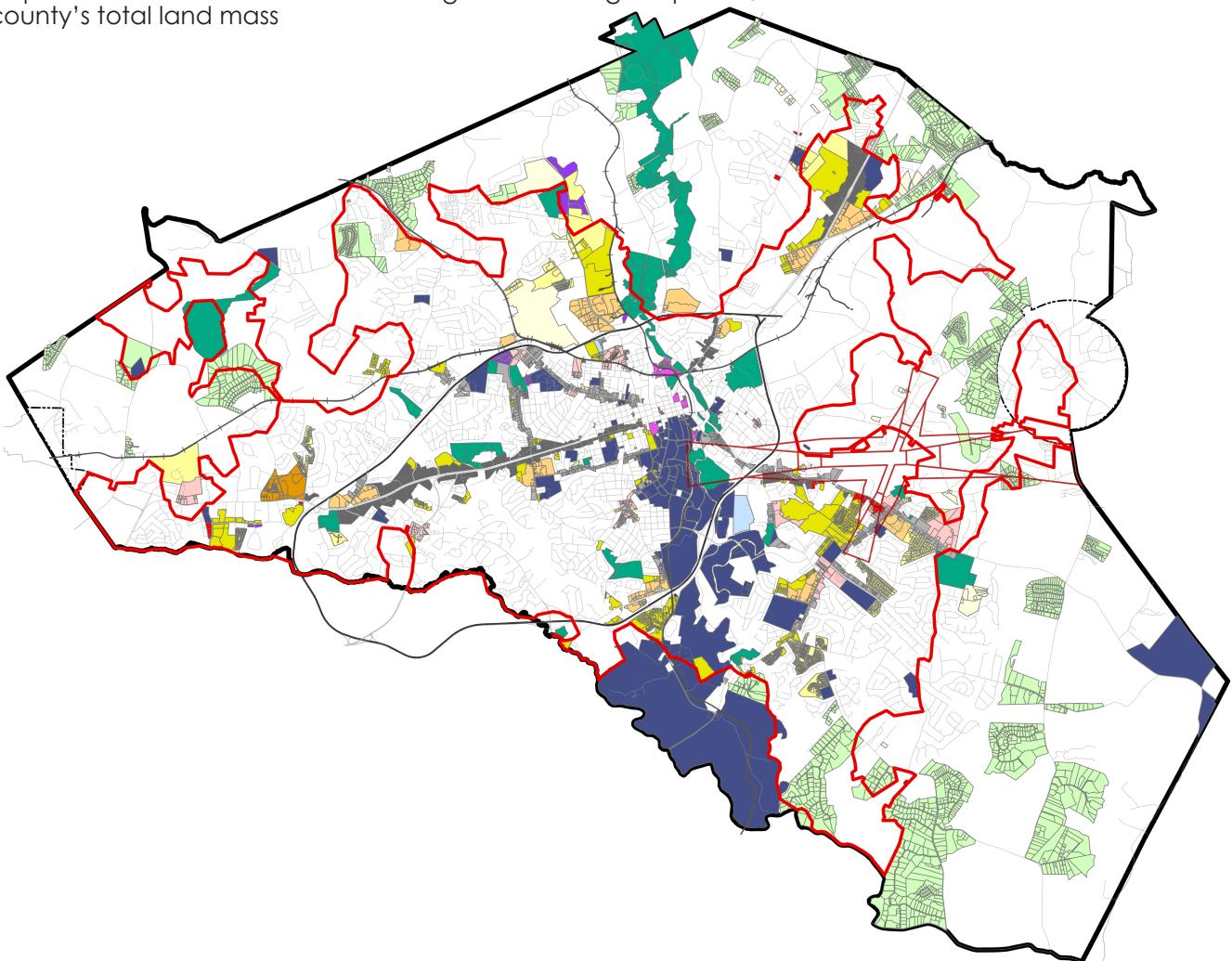
OUTCOMES

The Growth Concept Map accepted by the Mayor & Commission provides the foundation for the work of the Future Land Use Steering Committee. They discussed the entire community but focused on the nodes and corridors to arrive at a consensus on what needed to be changed to fit the 20-year vision set forth by the community. Their effort led to the expansion of the current nine Future Land Use designations, to sixteen.

STEPPING DOWN

After every change was proposed, the maps were reduced down to what parcels actually have proposed changes. The properties proposed for significant changes total **5.56%** of the county's total land mass.

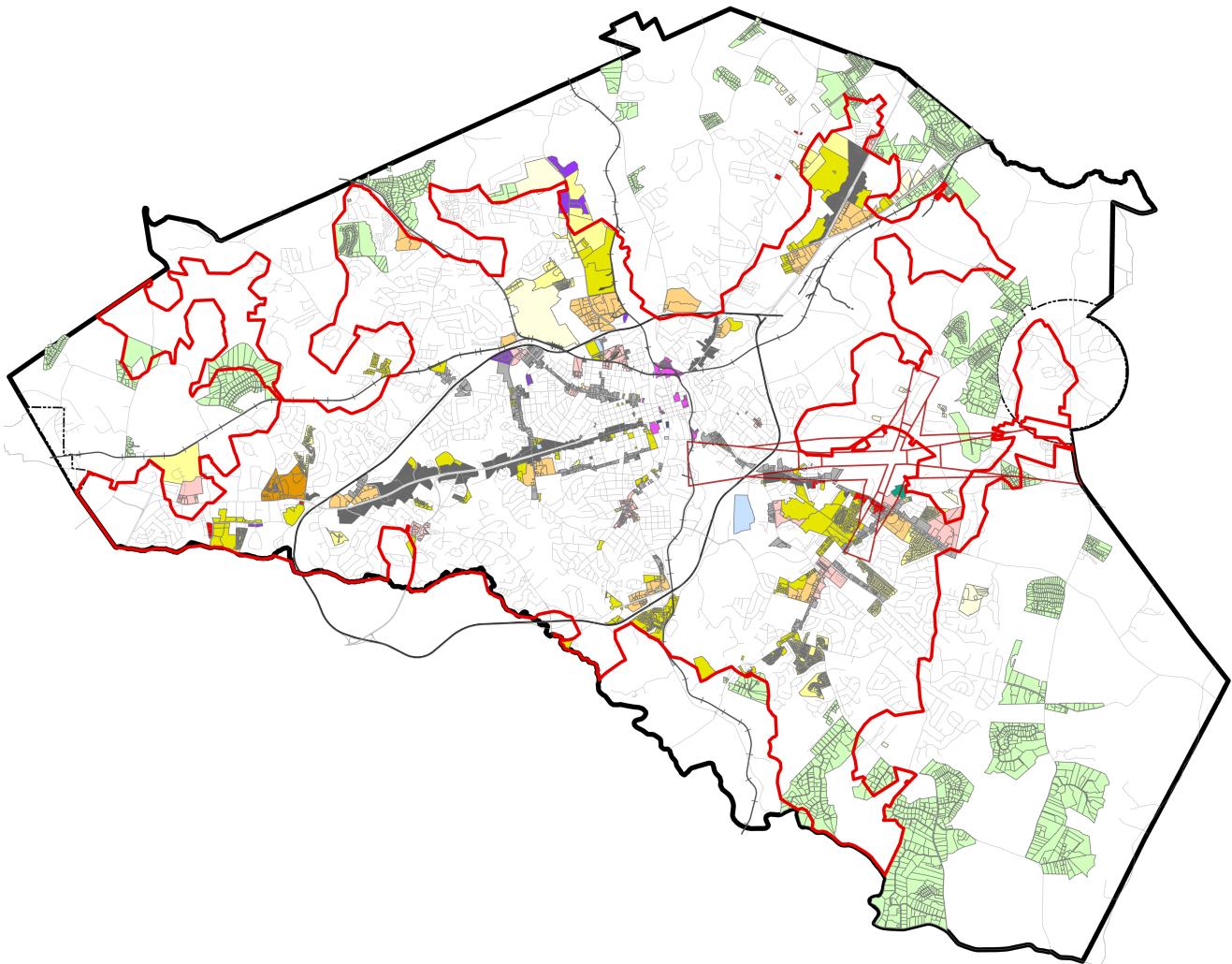
All parcels with a Future Land Use designation change equal **27%** of the county's total land mass



The Steering Committee added two main types of designations for wanted **future growth** and “**ground-truths**”. Additionally, they broke apart the Government category into Government, Education and Parks & Open Space. **Future growth** designations, like the Centers, focus on locations that are ripe for redevelopment or have the opportunity to be anchor points for Athens-Clarke County residents, businesses and visitors.

STEPPING DOWN

All changes with Government, Parks & Open Space, and Education parcels removed equals 17% of the county's total land mass.



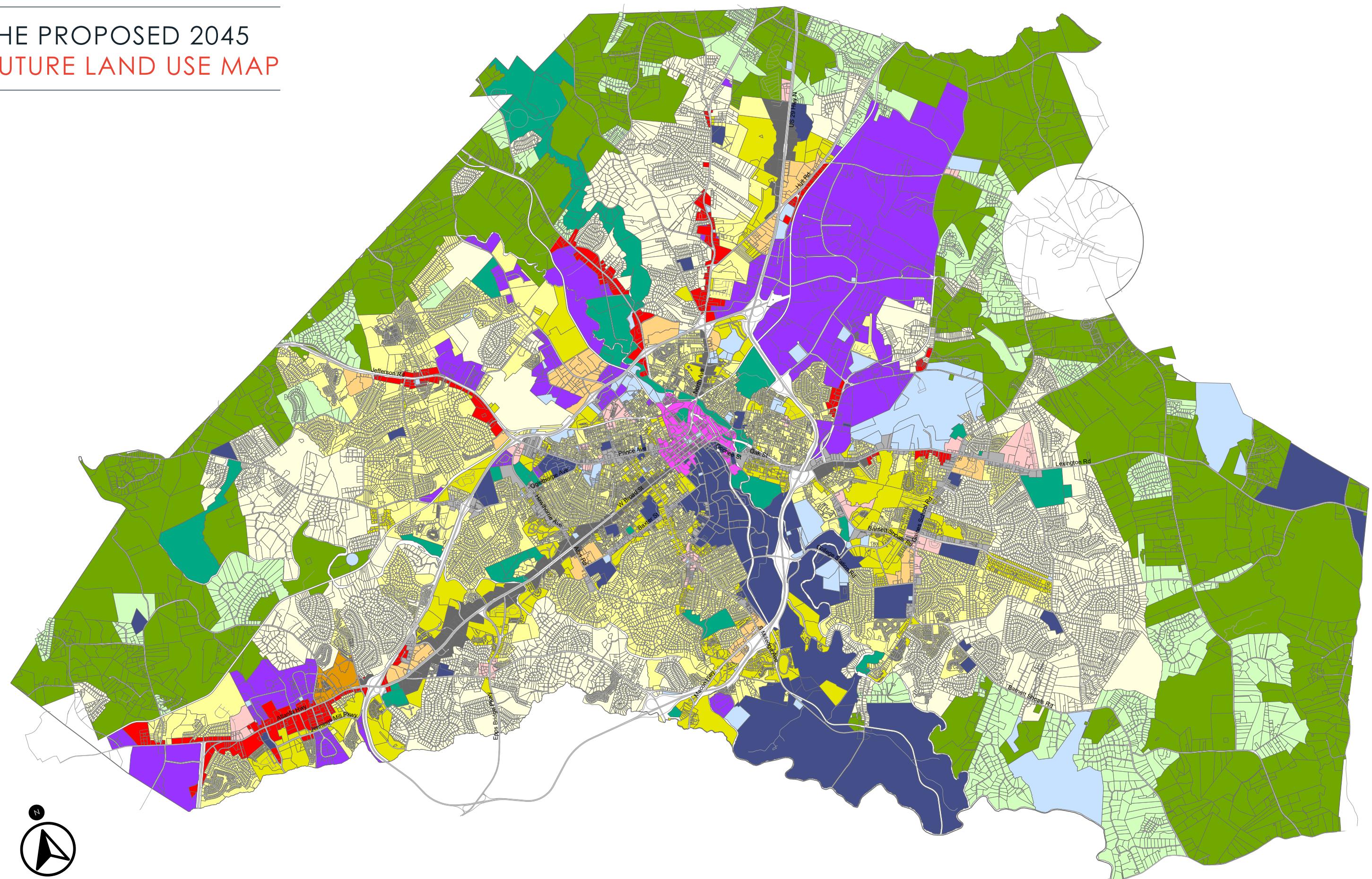
Ground-truths are locations that have already seen change, both in scope and use, and their designation has been changed to accurately reflect how the land is being used.

STEPPING DOWN

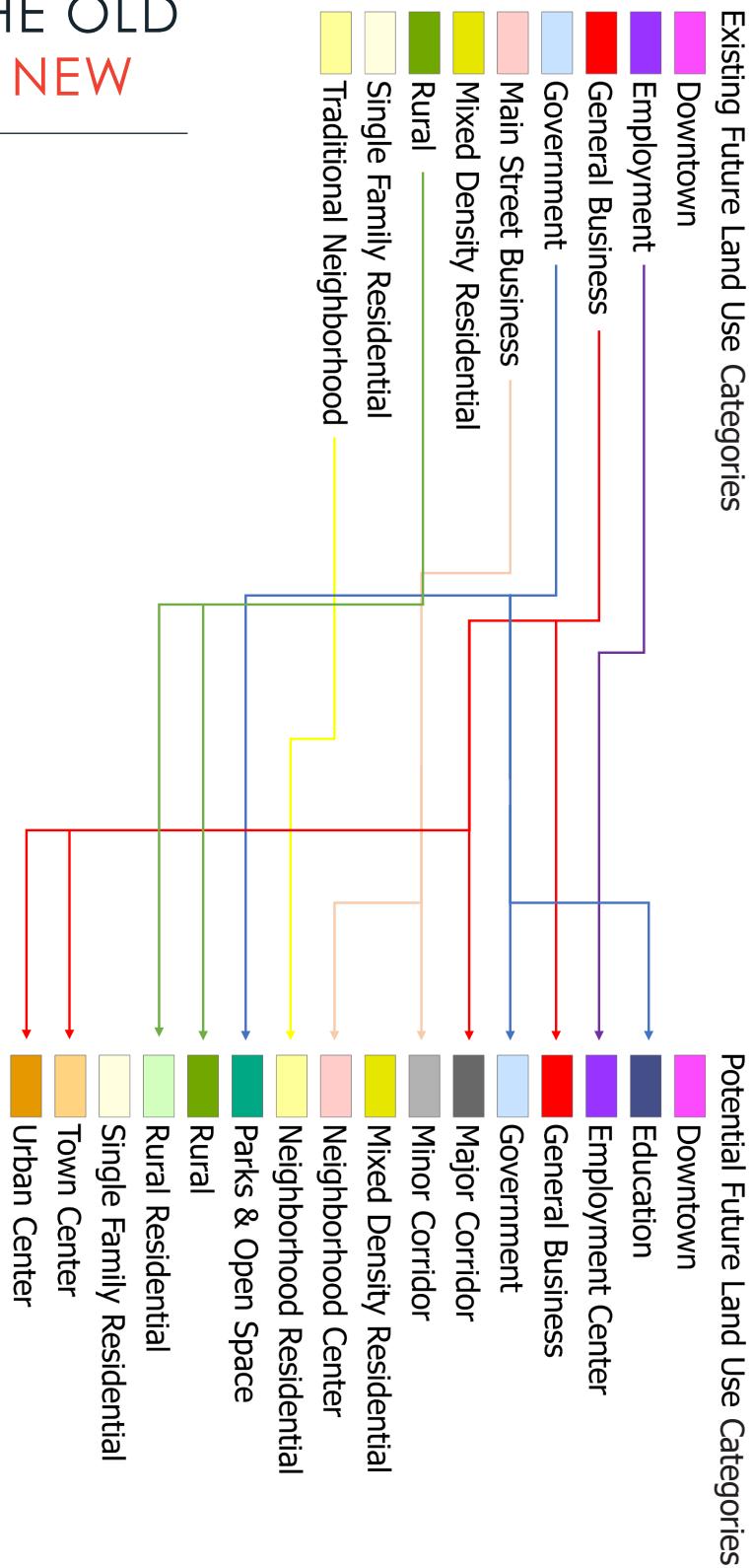
With all of the Government and ground-truth parcels removed, the remaining parcels proposed for future land use changes equals **5.56%** of the county's total land mass. The majority of the parcels are located along or adjacent to main transportation corridors and within areas that have access to public sanitary sewer.



THE PROPOSED 2045 FUTURE LAND USE MAP



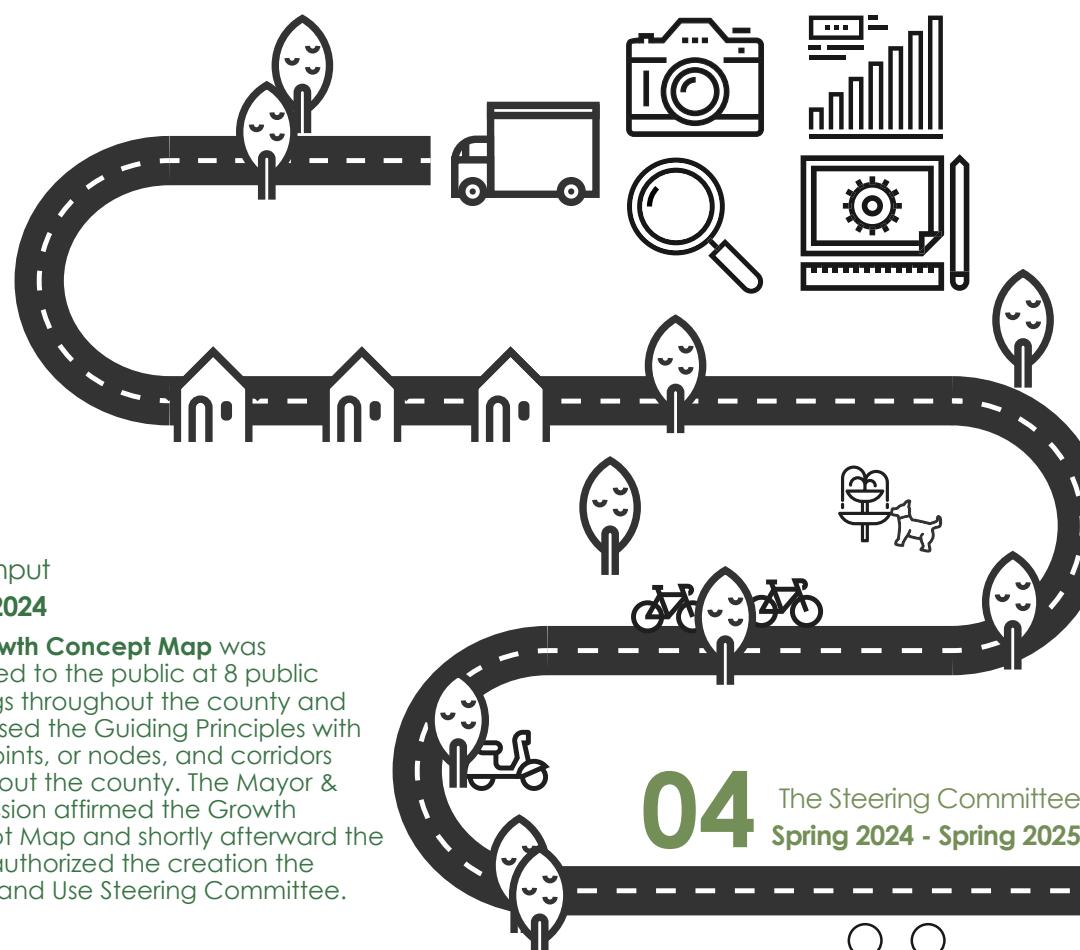
OUT WITH THE OLD IN WITH THE NEW



		Potential Future Land Use Compatibility Matrix																			
Future Land Use Designations		AR	RS-40	RS-25	RS-15	RS-8	RS-5	RM-1	RM-2	RM-3	C-R	C-O	C-N	C-G	C-D	E-O	E-I	I	IN	G	P
Major Corridor								X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	
Minor Corridor							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
General Business										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Downtown																X		X	X	X	
Urban Center												X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Town Center												X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Neighborhood Center												X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Neighborhood Residential												X	X	X	X				X	X	
Mixed Density Residential												X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Single Family Residential		X	X	X	X	X												X	X		
Employment														X			X	X	X	X	
Rural		X	X														X	X	X		
Rural Residential		X	X														X	X	X		
Government																			X		
Education																		X			
Parks & Greenspace																			X		

01 Data Gathering Spring 2023

Driven by the 2023 Comprehensive Plan, Planning Staff met with other ACCGov Departments to learn about their development-related forecasts and operational analysis for the next 20 years.



03 Public Input Spring 2024

The **Growth Concept Map** was presented to the public at 8 public meetings throughout the county and showcased the Guiding Principles with focal points, or nodes, and corridors throughout the county. The Mayor & Commission affirmed the Growth Concept Map and shortly afterward the Mayor authorized the creation of the Future Land Use Steering Committee.

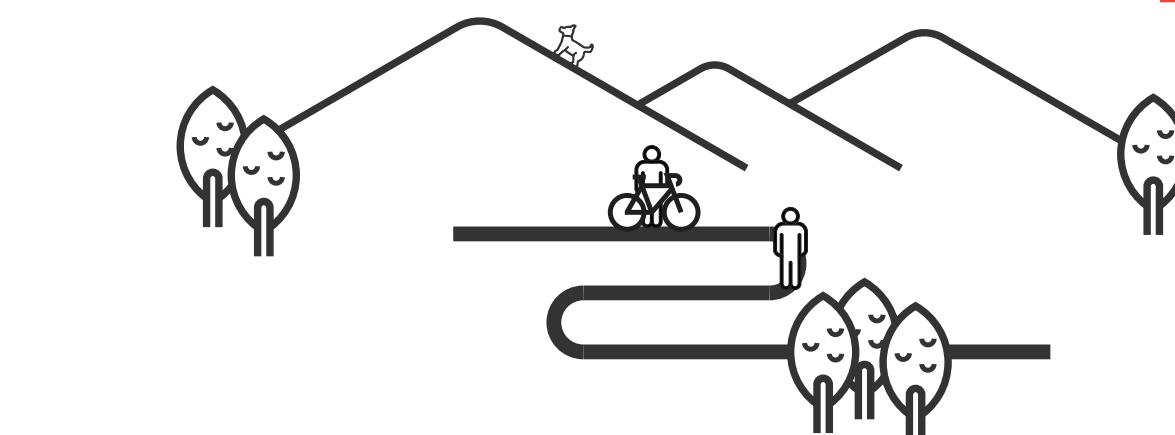


04 The Steering Committee Spring 2024 - Spring 2025



02 Data Sharing & Public Input Fall 2023

Staff held 26 public meetings, 2 bus tours, 8 walks, 2 tabling events, and received thousands of comments in-person and online. Staff categorized the input received and drafted **Guiding Principles** from the public input that was used to create the **Growth Concept Map**.



05 The New Map Public Input Spring 2025

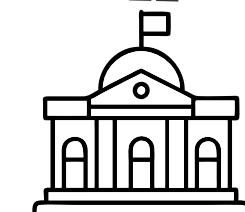
Staff held 12 public meetings throughout the community to receive input on the proposed 2045 Future Land Use Map as well as the language and characteristics of each new Future Land Use category.

06 The Proposal Summer 2025

The Planning Commission received public comment regarding the 2045 Future Land Use Map and categories at 2 public meetings. After deliberation, the Planning Commission forwards their recommendation to the Mayor & Commission.

2045 FUTURE LAND USE MAP PROCESS TIMELINE

07 Fall 2025 - Beyond



The Mayor & Commission will hold at least two public hearings regarding the proposed 2045 Future Land Use Map and categories prior to taking any action regarding adoption. Following adoption, Planning Staff will begin work on implementing the 2045 Future Land Use Map through zoning and ordinance changes that reflect the community land use goals and Guiding Principles.

LAND USE AND LAND VALUE

Using The Land Use Fiscal Impact Assessment To Our Benefit

Accurate analysis of local development data is essential in conducting responsive land use planning efforts for our community. As a parallel to the current Future Land Use planning effort, the Mayor and Commission authorized funding to engage consulting services in the preparation of a fiscal impact assessment of the current land use and development patterns throughout the community. Specifically, this analysis uses local property data and current operational costs to assess the fiscal health of our municipality. The consultant selection process identified Urban3 as the firm that would prepare this analysis. Urban3 was selected based on their extensive experience in performing similar analysis for a wide variety of communities, and for their use of spatial-based modeling to transform our primary source data into a geo-accounting method that provides a clearer picture of how our community's land use pattern is performing. The resulting analysis tells the story of what costs are associated with providing infrastructure and services to each parcel within Athens Clarke County. Urban3's data, maps, graphics and presentations were delivered in the summer of 2025 along with an accounting tool to evaluate the fiscal impacts of future projects and potential developments in our community.

Urban3 assessed the fiscal impact of our community's development patterns. The goal was to determine whether the property and sales tax revenue produced by the development on each parcel in Athens-Clarke County can pay for the associated infrastructure—including our road, sewer, water, and stormwater networks. Although cost-of-service analysis is not a new field, the advancement of Geographic Information System technology (GIS) in the last decade now allows that analysis to be performed on a lot-by-lot basis to determine which properties are producing more tax revenue than they consume in infrastructure maintenance expenses and which properties are producing less. Using a three-dimensional map to display the data, our community can now see what kinds of land development pays for itself, what pays for many others and what does not.

Why does this data matter?

We rely on water and wastewater infrastructure to deliver clean water to our faucets and to properly dispose of wastewater. We rely on road, sidewalk and trail networks to access all of the places that we need to live, work, and play. We rely on stormwater infrastructure to protect property and water quality. If these systems fail due to disaster or deferred maintenance, the health, welfare, quality of life, and wealth of the people of Athens-Clarke County suffers. These are the stakes of infrastructure maintenance. Whenever a piece of public infrastructure is built, the people of Athens-Clarke County are making a promise to each other and to future generations to maintain that infrastructure forever using pooled resources through the municipal corporation known as local government. That infrastructure must be maintained out of the tax revenue generated by the parcels of land within Athens-Clarke County. If there isn't enough revenue to pay for maintenance, then the infrastructure is financially unsustainable. If that unsustainable pattern is repeated often enough, municipalities gradually struggle to provide the services and infrastructure that people rely on. The analysis performed by Urban3 reveals that some land development is fiscally sustainable (potency) and some is not.

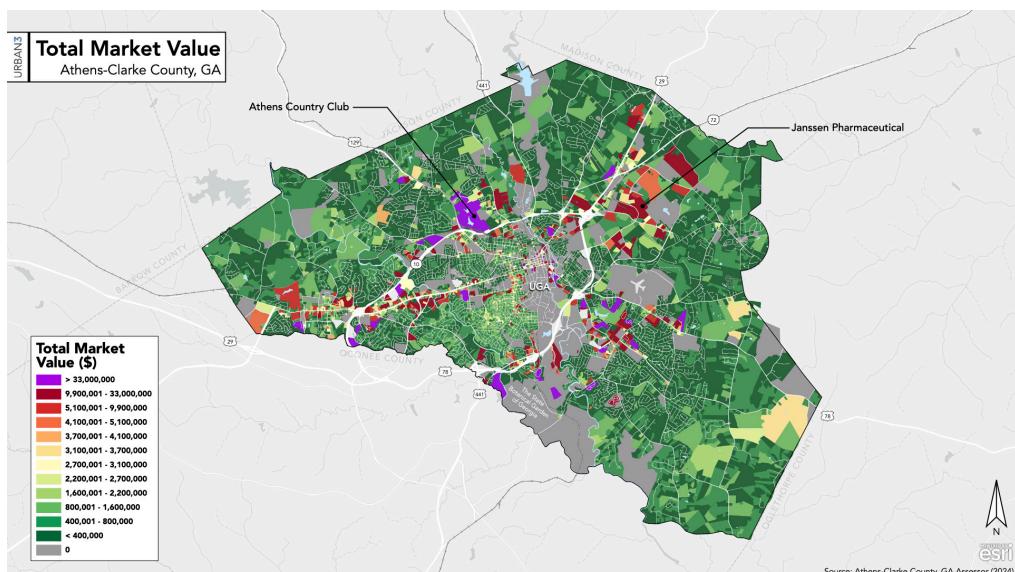
Athens-Clarke County has three development patterns – urban or in-town, suburban, and rural. Our in-town pattern is essentially what was built prior to 1945, including Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. This urban pattern is relatively compact – the lots are small and the buildings are close together. This compactness and the mixing of different uses (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) makes it easier to support daily life, which was a necessity since these places were built before cars were the dominant mode of transportation. This was the default development pattern for all towns of any size in America prior to

World War Two. As the analysis shows, this pattern is incredibly financially productive. The section of Athens-Clarke County that was developed prior to World War Two is a net positive overall, at a +\$12.8 million net position, when it comes to assessing its revenue vs. expenses.

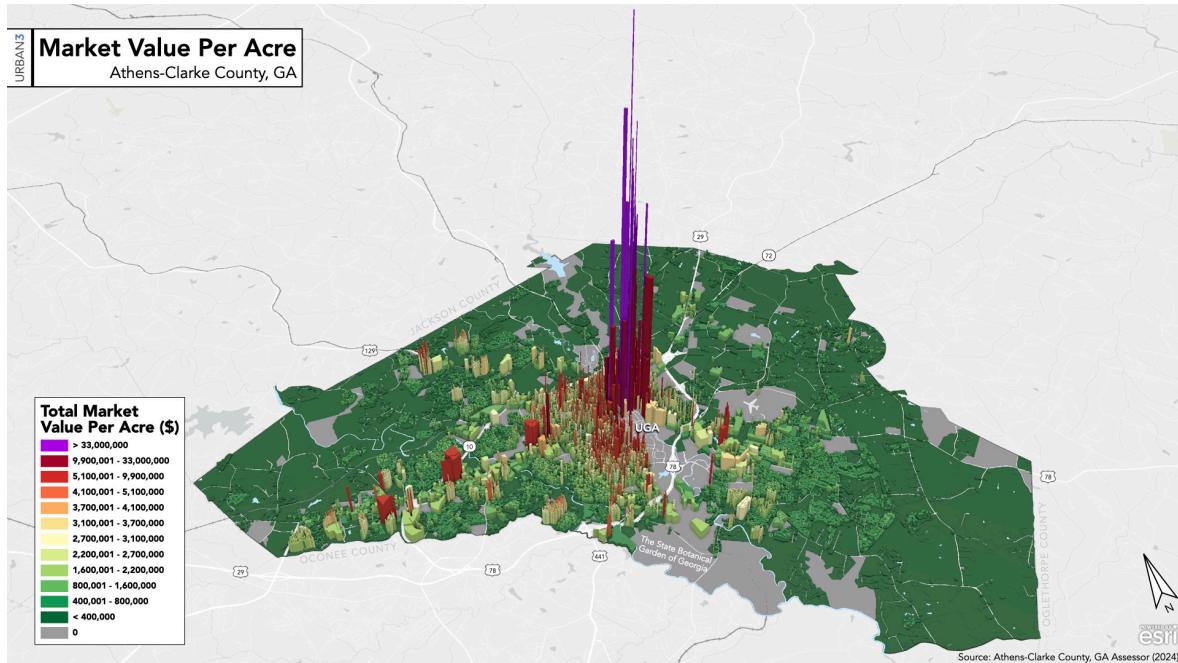
The suburban pattern, constructed after World War 2 and largely carried into the present day, is far more spread out than the urban pattern. The lots are bigger, disconnected and the buildings are farther apart. Additionally, the uses of buildings (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) are strictly separated, increasing the distance between destinations. This distance means that a car is the most practical means of transportation. Combining the need for a car with the increased distance means that this development pattern requires much more infrastructure. The analysis shows that this pattern of development is a net negative, at a ~\$24.8 million net position. It costs more to serve than it produces in taxable wealth. If it is to be maintained, it requires revenue from other areas of development that are a net positive.

The rural pattern, which is approximately one/third of the County's land area, has relatively little development at all. The lots are very large and the buildings are far apart. However, these areas do not have the same level of infrastructure as the urban and suburban areas and do not produce the same demand for services. They do not produce a lot of taxable land value, but they also do not consume as much infrastructure and services. It also often provides beneficial ecosystem services, differing opportunities for business or recreation and a pleasant edge in place unplanned sprawl. Even still, some rural areas have more infrastructure than they can afford to maintain.

It is important to remember that these are patterns, not prescriptions. Urban patterns generally outperform rural and suburban patterns in fiscal terms, but this does not mean that every property in an urban pattern is or should be a net positive financially. Nor does it mean that every lot in a suburban or rural pattern always costs more to serve than it produces in revenue. Some properties may not generate a surplus financially but are desirable and valued for other reasons. Industry, for example, usually does not produce a lot of taxable value-per-acre but it may be welcomed because it improves the community's job market. The point of this analysis is to have a data-based method to determine what is a sustainable balance, not to prescribe how everyone ought to live. Ultimately, land is this community's most valuable and constrained resource. Having the data on the cost-effectiveness of land development will help the community make wise decisions about its land moving forward.



FISCAL IMPACT



URBAN3

Zoning: Area vs. Value

Athens-Clarke County, GA



Acres



1.6x

Value



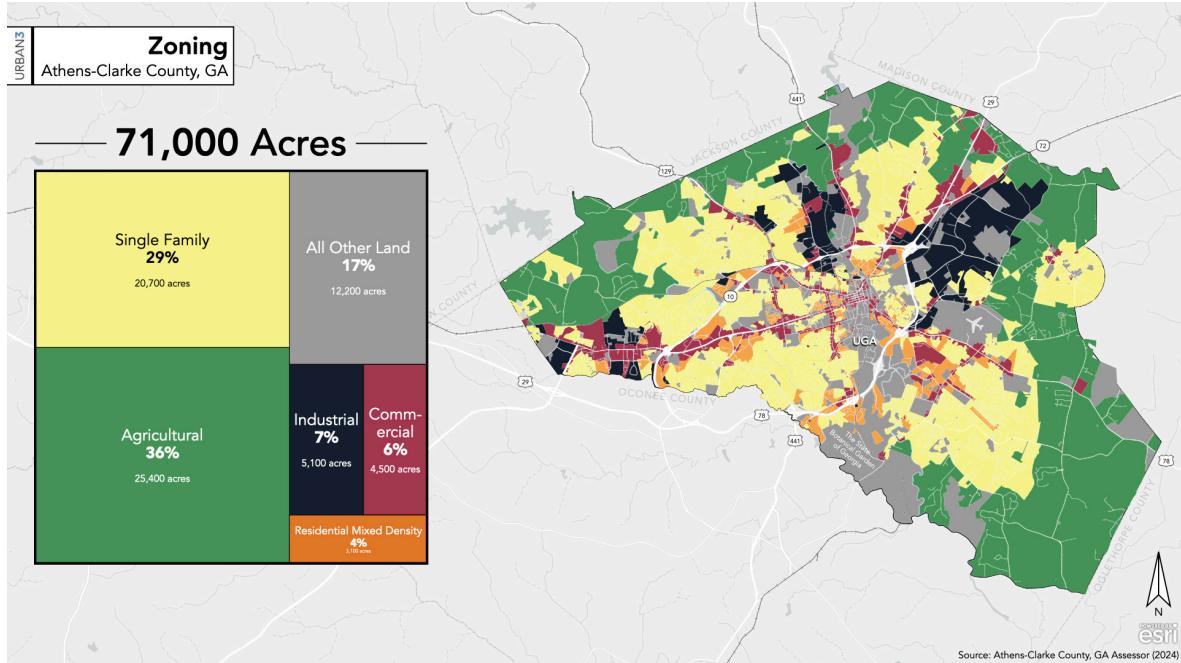
4.0x



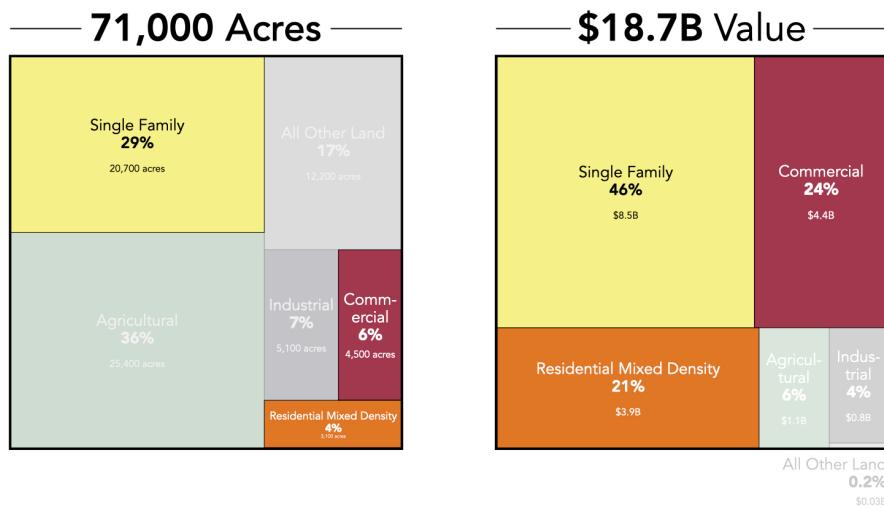
5.3x



Source: Athens-Clarke County, GA Assessor (2024)



Zoning: Area vs. Value
Athens-Clarke County, GA



Source: Athens-Clarke County, GA Assessor (2024)

WHERE ARE WE GOING

Adoption of a Future Land Use Map by the Mayor and Commission represents a significant milestone in recalibrating the community vision for future development character, form, and location. In order for the ideas represented in the Future Land Use Map to become a reality, a series of implementation steps are needed to translate the vision into action. As part of the deliberation by the Future Land Use Steering Committee, the following implementation measures were discussed as possible next steps for implementing the Future Land Use Map after adoption. The descriptions of these potential next steps are provided as a starting point for more community discussion, with the understanding that initiation of these measures first requires Mayor and Commission authorization.

Zoning Code Changes

Following adoption of the 2045 Future Land Use Map, the next step is to update the zoning code to align with the map's vision. The Future Land Use Map update sets the vision for long-term community development, but the zoning code is the compilation of specific rules and regulations that implement the vision. Without updating the zoning ordinance, a gap would open between the adopted vision and the reality of the development that could be allowed by law. For example, if the goal is to allow incremental housing growth in existing neighborhoods, amending the zoning regulations to allow backyard cottages (Accessory Dwelling Units) in residential zones with specific design standards would likely be considered. If the goal is to redevelop corridors and nodes while accommodating residential growth, then allowing ground-floor residential would likely be considered. All zoning changes will go through a public process: drafted by Planning Staff, presented for public feedback to both the Planning Commission and the Mayor & Commission, and then ultimately voted on by the Mayor & Commission.

Small Area Plans and Corridor Plans

Designating areas of the county as a node means that we will need concepts or plans to create cohesion and keep to our long-range goals. Here are some processes that might assist:

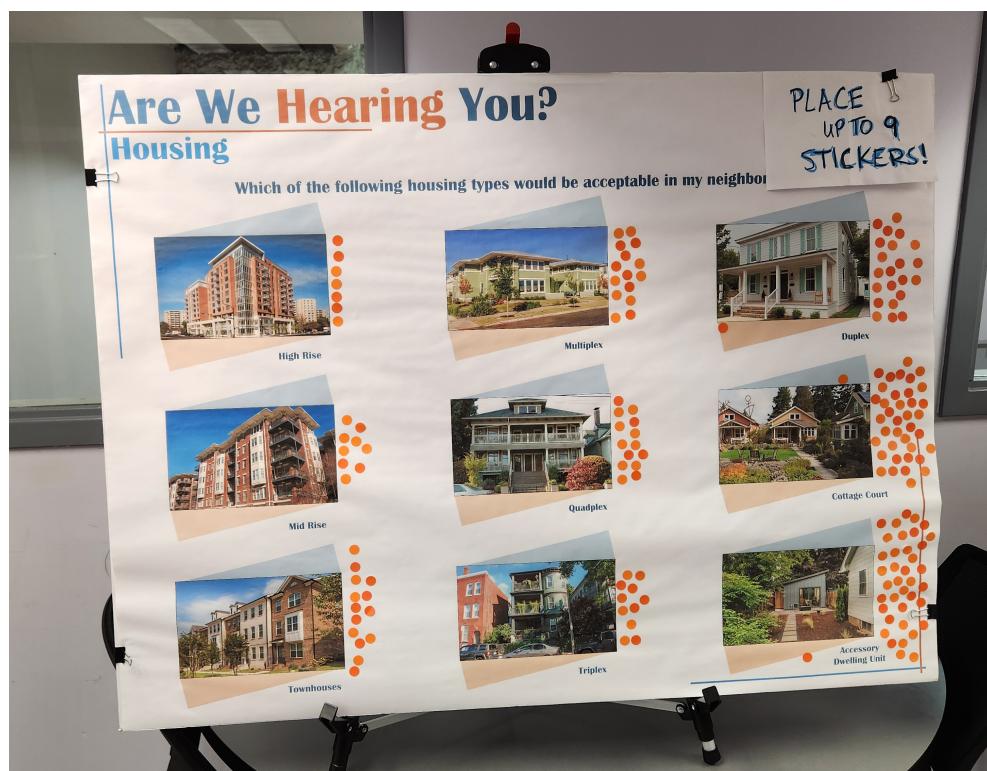
- Small Area Plans – This is the idea of creating foundational concept plans for nodes. To have an effect, certain aspects of that concept must put into regulation; this could be simple such as maximum block sizes or building heights; or it can be more prescriptive such as planning out a transportation network, laying out building footprints or putting site specific design requirements into place. A local example would be a tool like the downtown design areas or on a more regional sense, Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) that are in place in Atlanta. In that example, citizen commissions have laid portions of neighborhoods to maintain and build off of while also receiving staff support some regulatory backing. Making these efforts successful requires a lot of local buy-in, a reasonable amount of time and political will to see aspects through or appropriately pivot when necessary.
- Corridor Plans – This is the idea of creating foundational concept plans for nodes. To have an affect, certain aspects of that concept must put into regulation; this could be simple such as maximum block sizes or building heights; or it can be more prescriptive such as planning out a transportation network, laying out building footprints or putting site specific design requirements into place. A local example would be a tool like the downtown design areas or on a more regional sense, Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) that are in place in Atlanta. In that...
- Special District Overlay Districts – This is a tool we already have, our most recent one was put in place for the former Varsity site. This creates a boundary, states some ground rules, often prescribes some specific intent and can exclude facets that would take away from that cohesive vision. Currently we do this through a process that gets Planning Commission and Mayor & Commission input and scrutiny. It could make sense to fold more of the neighborhood into the decision-making picture and allow for the local commissioner or possibly smaller localized group to have more weight than our current process.

Coordination Among Development-review Participants And Customers

The Future Land Use Map is not the only determinant of what gets built. Buildings need to comply with the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Ordinance, but they also must meet detailed building and fire codes as well as technical engineering standards. Not only must they meet codes, but they also need to be financially feasible in their approach to meeting those codes. Setting the vision for development is the easiest part of the process. Translating the vision into code compliant and defensible development standards is a complex process that requires coordination between a variety of professions – public and private – representing multiple Athens-Clarke County Unified Government departments and other public agencies, engineers, architects, land planners, designers, developers, contractors, and financiers. The resulting processes must be able to be communicated effectively to elected officials, residents, businesses, and institutions.

Routine Consideration of the Fiscal Impact of Development

The fiscal impact analysis prepared by Urban3 during the course of the creation of the proposed Future Land Use Map is not intended to be a singular effort or merely an economic snapshot of a moment in time. One of the primary purposes for this analysis was to initiate ongoing consideration of cost-benefit analysis of by-right development and the proposals that involve community consideration of a requested change to the Future Land Use Map and/or change to the Zoning regulations associated with a project. The intention is to have a living data set that Athens-Clarke County will update and maintain on an ongoing basis. This will allow the Unified Government to monitor the relationship between the cost of our infrastructure liabilities and the taxbase created by the development throughout the community to ensure that the liabilities do not exceed the revenues available to cover public expenses. Staff is planning to incorporate this analysis into individual zoning cases as well as using it with other departments in the Unified Government that regulate development to make sure that the fiscal impact of various development-related policies and codes is routinely given appropriate consideration.



APPENDIX



APPENDIX A

Maps & **Transects**

APPENDIX B

Guiding Principles **Extended Explanation**

APPENDIX C

Committee **Agendas & Notes**

APPENDIX D

Demographics

APPENDIX E

Methodology

APPENDIX F

Presentations

APPENDIX G

Street **Concepts**

APPENDIX H

Visual **Preference**

APPENDIX I

Spring 2024 Online Survey **Results**

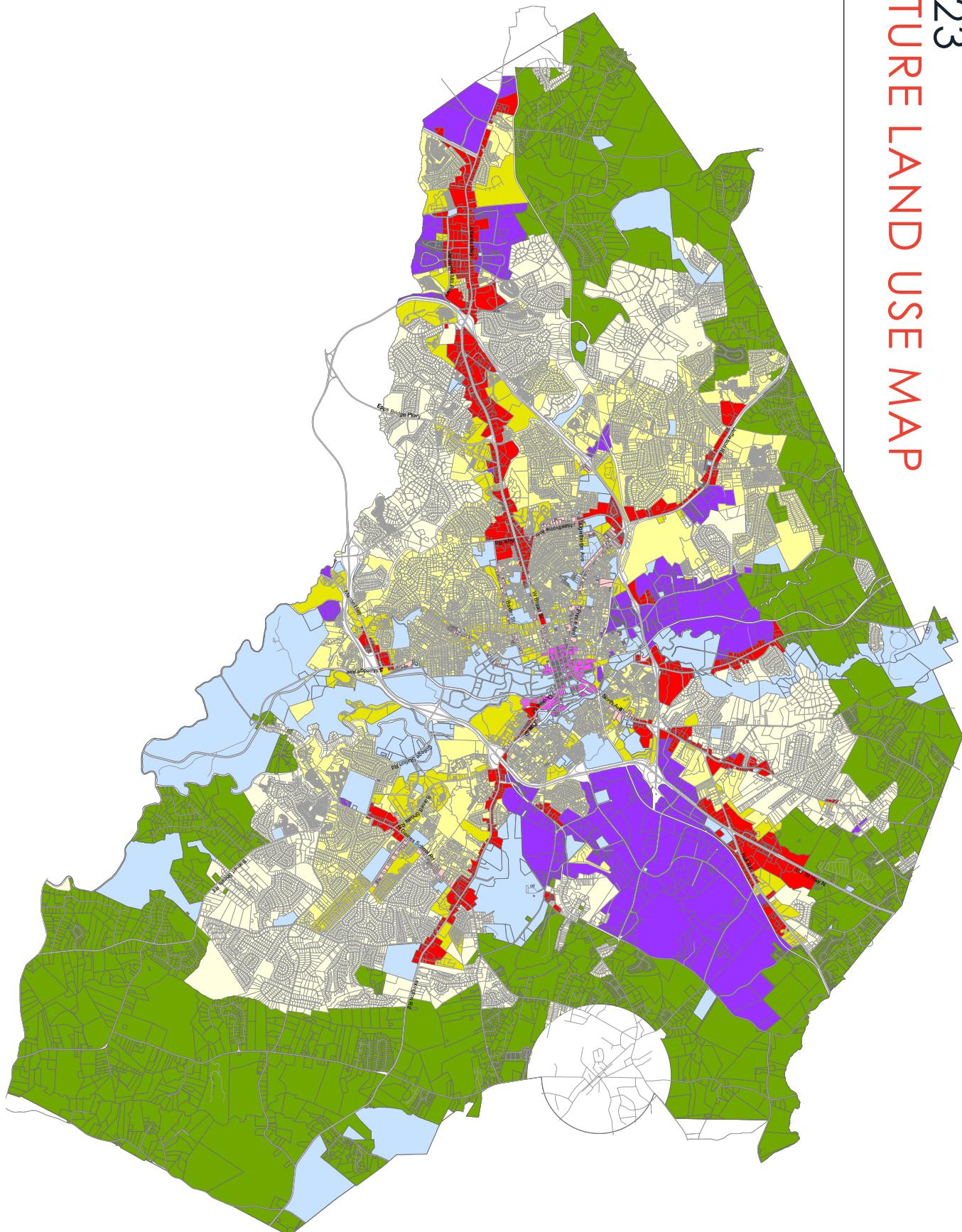
APPENDIX J

Timeline of **Events**

APPENDIX A

Maps & Transects

2023 FUTURE LAND USE MAP





Growth Concept Map

Athens-Clarke County, Georgia

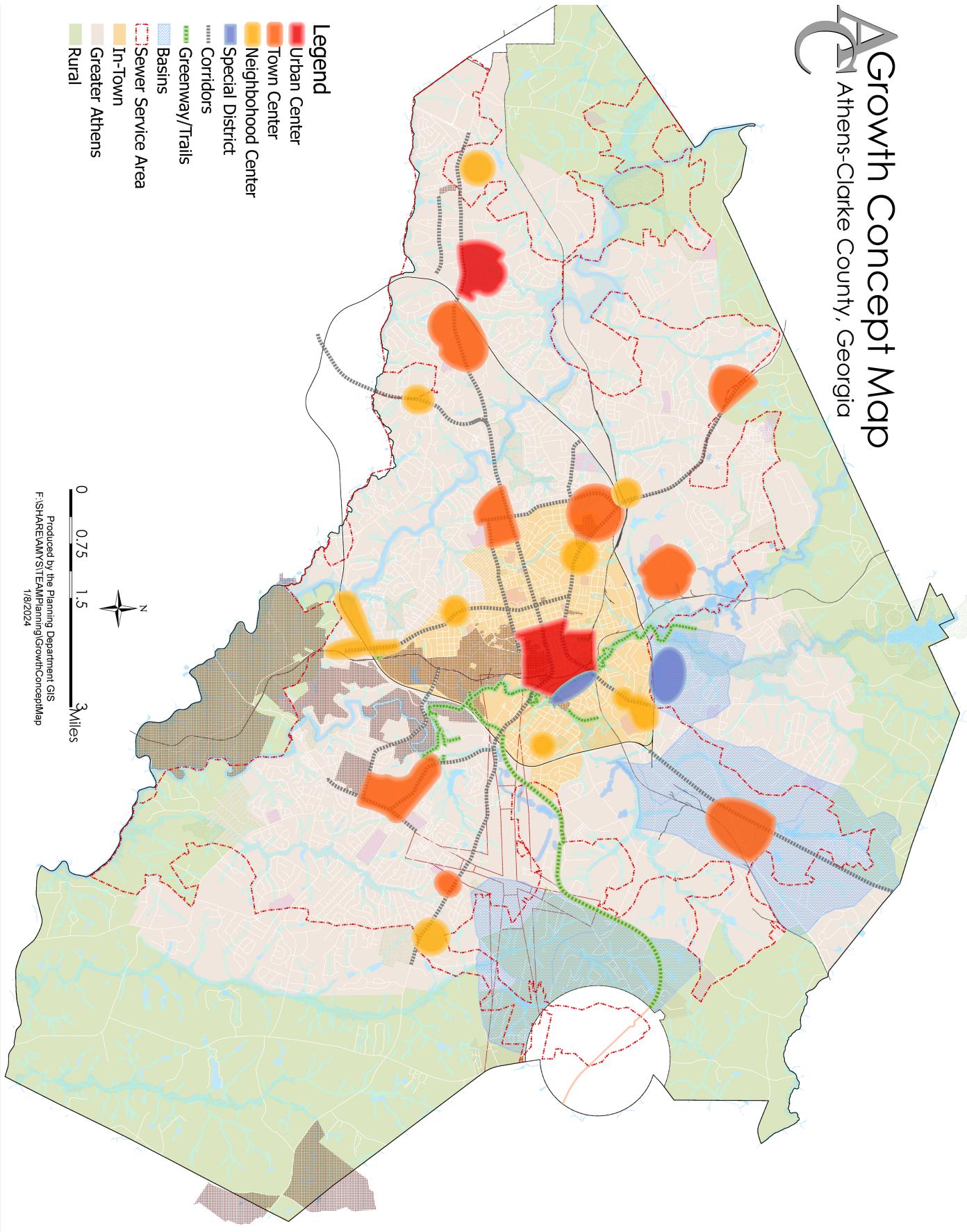
Legend

- Urban Center
- Town Center
- Neighborhood Center
- Special District
- Corridors
- Greenway/Trails
- Basins
- Sewer Service Area
- In-Town
- Greater Athens
- Rural

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles



Produced by the Planning Department GIS
F:\SHARE\EA\N\STEAM\Planning\GrowthConceptMap
1/8/2024

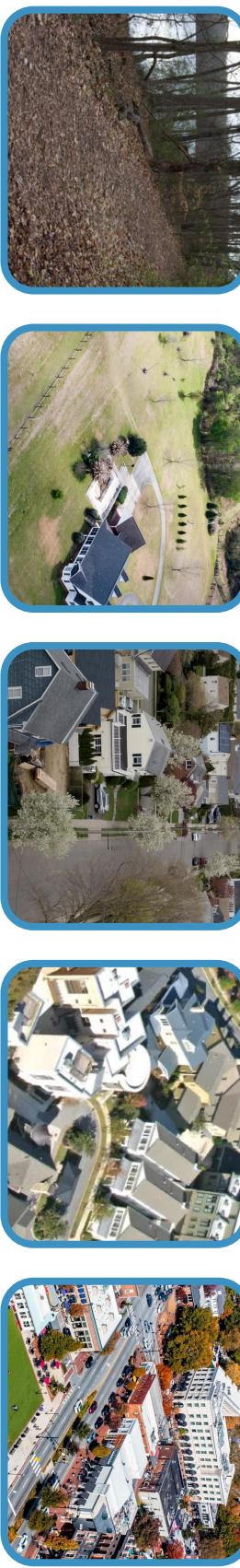
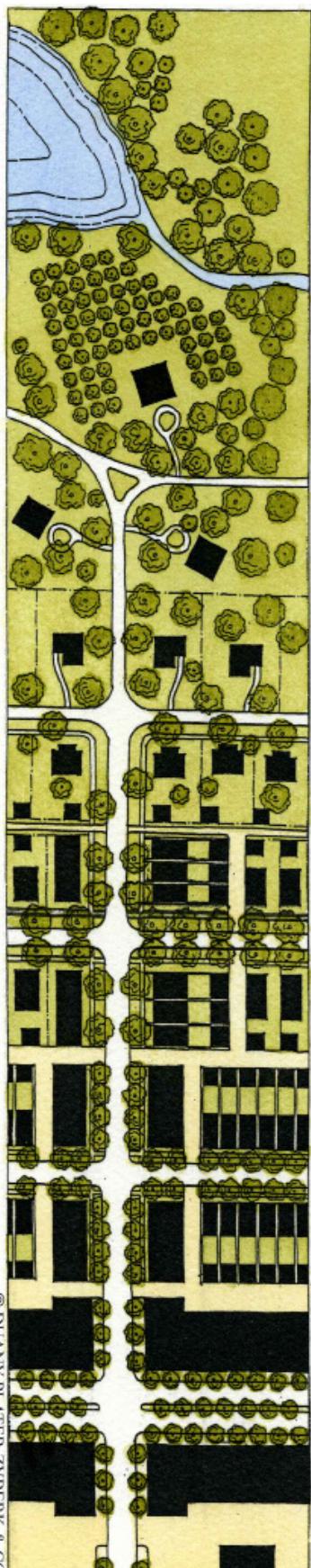


What Is A Transect?

A transect is a tool within Planning used to showcase the changes between what characterizes one land type to the next, and the context involved between each area. Traditionally, a transect is broken down into six zones, titled T1 through T6. These zones range from natural zones (T1) to Urban Core Zones (T6).

Today, Athens-Clarke County has T1 through T5 zones, with the outskirts of the county being the natural area, and T5 being the downtown area. Much of the planning process is formed around these zones, with attention given to the context of the existing area. While areas can naturally become more urbanized over time, transects help planners transition areas into new zones without fundamentally changing the character.

Transect Zones



- Wilderness areas
- Unsuitable for development due to topography

- Woodland, grassland, agriculture
- Sparse amount of buildings
- 1- to 2-story buildings

- Low density detached res.
- Non-gridded roadways
- Deeper setbacks

- Mixed-use with res. focus
- Gridded roadways
- Taller buildings

- Highest density mix of uses
- Tight network of streets, wide sidewalks

APPENDIX B

Guiding Principles Extended Explanation

- I. **Redevelop corridors and nodes that are ripe for transformation** – Athens has grown outward along its transportation corridors, including Atlanta Highway, Lexington Road, Barnett Shoals Road, Prince Avenue/Jefferson Road, Baxter Street, and College Station. Nodes of various sizes, mostly shopping centers, have clustered at key intersections along these routes, including Beechwood/Alps, the Mall, the College Station Kroger shopping center, the East Side Walmart, and others. Much of the land along these corridors and nodes is commercial in character, but many of these commercial buildings are reaching the end of their life. A number of these sites also have underutilized parking lots that could be put to more productive use. These sites are also fully served by road, utility, and even transit infrastructure. Combining aging buildings in need of reinvestment, already flattened land, infrastructure access, and underutilized lots creates a natural incentive for redevelopment. The private sector is already showing signs of thinking this way, so this plan presents an opportunity to proactively shape that development to align with community values and needs. This creates an opportunity for neighborhoods across town to have their own local center where they can access daily needs and amenities without taking long trips across town.
- II. **Minimize sewer expansion; grow capacity within the existing network** – In consultation with the ACC Public Utilities Department, sanitary sewer feasibility emerged as perhaps the largest constraint on growth patterns in the County over the next 20 years. In short, the wastewater treatment plants have a lot of useful life and capacity in them, but the sewer pipe network is constrained by aging and undersized pipes in parts of the network. Additionally, the sewer network is close to the geographic limit on what can be gravity-fed. Since gravity causes water to flow downhill, a gravity-fed sewer system uses that principle to naturally drain wastewater downhill through a series of pipes to treatment plants. If the drainage route requires water to go uphill, it must be mechanically pumped, at considerable cost, to the point where it can resume flowing downhill again. The Athens-Clarke County sanitary sewer network has reached the point where expansion into unserved parts of the community would require costly pump stations in addition to new pipes. Since the current capital budget does not have room for both maintaining the existing network and growing the reach of the network, it has been determined that the wisest use of existing funds is to maintain and upsize the existing network instead of expanding the geographic footprint of the network. There are a few basins, notably the Sandy Creek basin and the basin adjacent to Winterville, where expansion of the network would be less expensive. However, since no public policy commitment has been made to expand into these areas, the Future Land Use Plan has maintained the current vision for low-intensity development that can be built without sewer. If sewer is expanded into these areas one day, the Future Land Use Map will need to be changed to allow an appropriate increase in development intensity to a level that can financially sustain a sanitary sewer network. Given these constraints, at least two major policy implications emerge: 1) The vast majority of growth in the next 20 years will need to be accommodated in and near existing developed areas, and 2) no major development can occur in the rural areas of the County. More will be said about Point One below. Regarding Point Two, the 1999 Future Land Use Map created the Rural character area out of a community desire to protect those lands from continued suburbanization and to reflect the fact that infrastructure was limited. Both factors remain relevant today and are reflected in the proposed Future Land Use Map. This also preserves land for expansion well into the future.

III. Reduce Travel Distances – Population growth will add trips to the transportation network. The question is how to manage the demand for trips. At a foundational level, the answer is to build destinations closer together, so that it is easier to get from destination to destination whether that is home, work, school, a park, or a store. Destinations that are closer together require shorter trips, and shortening trips allows more choice in how to travel. If the trip is long, a car is typically the only practical choice, but if the trip is short, one has the freedom to add walking, biking, or riding transit to their travel options – potentially taking a car trip off the road. The Future Land Use Map does not regulate the roadway, but it does set a vision for where and how close destinations will be to each other. Three land use policies can help reduce travel distances 1) Localize trips by adding compatible commercial, industrial, and amenity uses near residents across town (bringing the destinations to the people), 2) Adding housing near jobs and activity centers (bringing the people to the destinations), and 3) Adding street connections to and within the existing transportation network. Points One and Two set the table for people to have at least some of their regular destinations, such as their favorite hangout spot, restaurant, pharmacy, grocery, or job around the corner and down the street, instead of halfway across town. Point Three is based on the principle that a well-connected street network, such as the grid in Athens' in-town neighborhoods, performs better at handling trips because it provides multiple routes to arrive at one's destination instead of funneling trips through a handful of chokepoints. As new development occurs, this principle sets an expectation that those projects will incrementally build out a street network, instead of creating islands of development with one way in and one way out.

IV. Plan for incremental growth in all neighborhoods that are served by sewer

– No neighborhood should be subjected to sudden radical change. No neighborhood should be entirely exempt from some change. Incremental development can be thought of as the middle ground between those two poles. It is an evolutionary process that allows people, buildings, and neighborhoods to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances while minimizing the chances of disruptive cataclysmic change. Large projects may bring desired transformation to certain corridors and dozens if not hundreds of housing units to market, but they are not appropriate in every neighborhood and there only a limited number of builders, bankers, and tradespeople who will likely take on these projects. Due to their size and complicated construction these projects are higher risk and take a longer time to build. Only a handful can be built at any one time and only a handful of people can afford to take ownership of these projects. In contrast, incremental development in existing neighborhoods, such as adding a backyard cottage to a home, building a triplex apartment on a vacant lot, or opening a neighborhood-friendly shop in a small-scale store, are more accessible to local builders, bankers, tradespeople, and even owner-occupants. This means these projects are highly adaptable and can be built quicker and cheaper, providing ownership and wealth building opportunities to a broad population – especially families and seniors whose lifestyle needs are not met by large multifamily complexes on busy streets. Incremental growth is also a scalable response to meet the volume that is needed. For example, allowing a backyard cottage on each of Athens' approximately 26,000 single-family zoned parcels could add capacity for 26,000 people – 87% of the projected growth over the next 20 years. Incremental growth also spreads development pressure broadly, so that a few neighborhoods don't have to bear out-sized levels of growth – lowering the likelihood of displacement. Finally, incremental growth in existing neighborhoods allows the growth to occur where infrastructure already exists—increasing the taxbase available to keep our infrastructure in good repair.

- v. **Support environmentally and fiscally sustainable growth** – In order to sustain itself indefinitely, the community must be mindful of its environmental and fiscal health. Environmentally, communities need to protect their water and land from over development, ensure access to clean drinking water, combat pollution, provide and preserve sufficient greenspace, conserve habitat and environmentally-sensitive lands, among other needs. Failure to do so may compromise the health and well-being of people and compromise the community's future.

Fiscally, communities need to ensure they have enough resources to pay for the services, infrastructure, and amenities they need and/or want. The Urban3 analysis, as discussed later in this report, shows that fiscal health goes beyond balancing an annual budget. The annual budget does not necessarily take into account the multi-decade lifecycle expenses of infrastructure. Since land development forms the cornerstone of Athens' taxbase, land use and infrastructure policies determine how productive that taxbase will be. A highly productive taxbase adds capacity to the community to support core services and infrastructure and to add amenities that improve the quality of life. A low productivity taxbase reduces capacity and can lead to service cuts and a decrease in the community's value and quality of life. Building an environmentally and fiscally sustainable city is a need that favors the kind of approaches laid out in Points A-D. However, if Athens builds on the pattern laid out by Points A-D, fiscally and environmentally sustainable growth will be the outcome.

APPENDIX C

Steering Committee Agendas & Notes

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

April 30, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium - 120 W. Dougherty Street

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Overview of Steering Committee Purpose
- B. Steering Committee Timeline
- C. Discussion of Procedures and Meeting Format
- D. Q&A

II. GROWTH CONCEPT MAP PRESENTATION

III. FUTURE LAND USE VISUAL PREFERENCE SUVEY

IV. NEXT MEETING & HOMEWORK

- A. Aiming for meeting during the last week of the month, if possible
- B. Target Dates for May meeting: May 20 -24 (week prior to Memorial Day)
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Institutional Land Use
- D. Homework: Topical background info will be shared prior to each meeting:
Committee members will be encouraged to visit areas of town that are relevant for each month's topic area.

V. OPTIONAL: FUTURE LAND USE ONLINE SURVEY

Meeting Notes

Future Land Use Steering Committee

April 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Alex Sams (Chair), Dr. Lorraine Fuller, David Lynn, Jason Leonard, Mack Furlow, Chase Lawrence, Jerry Shannon, David Matheny, Jeff Bishop, June Ball, Joe Hill, Sam Stabler, Rashe Malcolm, Cyndee Perdue Moore, Andre Powell, Shirelle Hallum, Connie Staudinger, Chris Joiner

Staff Present: Marc Beechuk (Comprehensive Planning Coordinator), Max Doty (Special Projects Planner II), Stephen Jaques (Long Range Planner III), Bruce Lonnee (Assistant Director)

Areas of Representation: Realty, Scientific community, Athens Downtown Development Authority (ADDA), government operations, Law Enforcement, Chamber of Commerce, Small business owners, Civil Engineering, Home Building, Geography, Consumer Economics, Architecture, Banking, Historic Preservation, Keep Athens Clarke Co Beautiful (KACCB), Trades, Restoration, STR, Non-profit, Clarke Co School District (CCSD), UGA, Transportation, Athens Housing Authority (AHA), Property Management, 5 Points, Cobbham, Normaltown, Forest Heights, In-town, Eastside, Quailwood/Whitehead & District 9

Intro:

- “This group is separate from staff or elected officials and needs to operate in that space, form an identity.” “Be a member of this group.”
- Speak up
- Ask questions
- Full attendance is great, but even if it’s not possible, some attendance is appreciated

Staff presentation:

- Build off the Growth Concept Map efforts & Guiding Principles from public input
- Looking 20 years into the future
- Taking a Data-driven approach, using metrics, working within existing confines (we'll discuss changes as we go)
- **Prompt** – What's missing? What do we need to talk about?
- Fall and Spring public input wrapped up on April 30th – Data presentation to come
- This group needs to make a recommendation of a new FLU map
 - o **Question** – Will the steering committee and staff have separate recommendations?
 - Idea is not to have separate maps, but possibility for multiple scenarios, particularly on an area-by-area basis
- Timeline – Current effort through fall 2024, adoption follows. Future efforts include Missing Middle housing along with policy or code changes to reflect FLU changes. Comprehensive Plan update in 2028

SC Discussion:

- How can we control sprawl around US 29 N?

- Opportunity to create new business district
- Newest and most functional infrastructure in this area of the community
- Does the Northeast GA Regional Commission (NEGRC) have regional planning efforts to look beyond ACC borders?
 - Look at housing in adjacent counties
 - NEGRC is performs a different function, does not institute specific land use policy for region. More of a clearinghouse.
- How is infrastructure handled on the borders of ACC?
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
 - Some infrastructure crosses jurisdictional boundaries
- Future Land Use effort vs. full zoning change
 - This is an early step in the process, more work to follow this effort including looking at policies that will be needed to make the FLU effort work.

Next Meeting: May 20th 2:00 – 4:00 PM

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

May 20, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Auditorium – 120 West Dougherty Street

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Brief Overview of Steering Committee Purpose and Timeline
- B. Brief Discussion of Procedures and Meeting Format
- C. Q&A

II. “RURAL” FUTURE LAND USE PRESENTATION

III. “RURAL” FUTURE LAND USE DISCUSSION

Discussion prompts and decision points...

- A. Should the “Rural” Future Land Use description be altered in any way?
- B. Are the Growth Concept Map boundaries for the “Rural” character area appropriate?
- C. Should consideration be given to altering the Riparian Buffer widths in the “Rural” character area?

IV. QUESTIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

V. NEXT MEETING & HOMEWORK

- A. Aiming for meeting during the last week of June, if possible
- B. Target Dates for June meeting: June 24 - 26
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Institutional Land Use
- D. Homework: Topical background info will be shared prior to each meeting:
Committee members will be encouraged to visit areas of town that are relevant for each month’s topic area.

Meeting Notes

FLU Steering Committee – 5.20.24 – Rural, Environment, Preservation

Notes (red = staff homework)

SC members - Sams, Lynn, Leonard, Lawrence, Easom, Ball, Hill, Stabler, Fuller, Malcolm, Bishop, Hallum, Staudinger, Shannon, Joiner

Staff - Stone, Lonnee, Wharton, Jaques, beechuk

Intro – A Sams

Discussion - Lonnee

- Rural is an expansion joint for the future (2000)
- Extent of sewer service, current edge, expansion only in purposeful manner
- Use current infrastructure
- Discussion – some infusion has already happened
 - o 2 schools in rural area, limits to growth, transportation, infrastructure
- Q (Ball) - Is there a purpose for rural other than expansion? Just keep rural?
- Rural LU description – very low res density (1/10 ac from 1/1 ac), clustering, common open space, protective easements, encourage ag, low impact commercial (equestrian, animal, fruit stand, ag w/ financial return)
- Should we allow more – schools, sewer, water higher class roadways
- Should we place protective restrictions on prime ag or any other rural uses?
- Q (Hallum) – where is sewer service expansion planned? – PU is working on capital improvement program. Using this effort to plan growth. Mostly repair.
- Area that is not served near Burney Harris Lyons
- Q (Lawrence) – who is the intended audience for growth? It should determine the product and location of new housing
- Current AR would allow around 1,300 units by right
- There are some places that have focused on their AR zones as countywide use – Emerald Necklace (growth boundary)
- Amphitheatre site – area to south is dense, area to north is quality land (mostly open)
- Sandy Creek basin – septic, environment justice issue
- Q (Lawrence) – How to view a rezone in septic area? Impossible for multi-fam
- Q (Easom) – Sewer inside city that is not up to par? What's the plan v. moving out?
 - o Priority is to upgrade the aging infrastructure, conveyance
- Q (Hallum) - Sewer system quality for density? Should we allow it where it is below standard? Prioritized where it can carry?
 - o Growth nodes took that into consideration
 - o Best and newest sewer up 29 N
 - o Staff identified areas where new growth or upzone in GCM
- Capacity issues? Mall?
 - o Mall goes to middle Oconee, Atl Hwy is the ridge
 - o What about in-town? DT has some concerns
 - PU has plans for more in-town in current plans, not so for McNutts
- Identifying rural inconsistencies (Oak Grove)

- Areas around Oak Grove (Rd.?) with failing systems?
 - o Likely across Jefferson rd
- Occupancy at Holden (next to new Publix)?
- What is land around Oak Grove zoned? And should it be?
- Back to the question on who is coming? Make plans for the people, intend for them to be in places that align with their standards of living, style of living.
 - o 30,000 across a range of groups
 - o That number might be higher, we should shoot higher if needed
 - Or do we want that amount? We should at least consider this proposition
 - If we don't plan it they won't come, but Austin did that and they grew in a very unplanned fashion
 - Students are driver of unaffordability
- We are trying to truth the map
- **Homework – dot map of where people live by block group, how much of each node is developed?**
- ******send PP******
- Rural areas inside our SSA – let's talk
- With existing allowance and small upgrades in nodes/corridors, how much should we get into the rural? What is the right way?
- *Financial standpoint (Hallum)* – it doesn't make sense to expand into our rural area. Taxes don't cover it
- *Consideration (Joiner)* - Do we have the money to maintain current infrastructure?
 - o GCM maintains current sewer service area
 - o Urban3 – coming soon, very soon
- Old Hull Rd? – students (Aspen)? Young family? We should be intentional
- Space Kroger – seems like a hub
 - o Pattern is similar to Atl Hwy back in the day – not the best way to do it
 - it could preserve in town
 - where we grow v. how we grow? Where is first in this effort
- What is needed for new septic field?
 - o 25,500 sq ft on public water, on well 50,000 sq ft
 - o If all areas need upzoning, then lower size requirement in rural
 - That is sprawl, combatted that in 2000
- Do you have to have 10 acres in AR? What about affordable housing for folks that don't want to live in town?
- **Comparison of old FLU v. proposed FLU**
- What does it look like in the green belt? Beyond the green belt?
- Conservation needs 10 acres
- Was a discussion in 2000 about rural v. rural residential (1 dwelling/5 ac)
- Conservation subdivision option – not been taken up
- How should we have rural? Row cropping, hunting, forests
 - o Morton Rd is a good example
- Ag uses? Or undisturbed land as we currently are seeing it (lush, streams, habitats)
- Engineering is allowing us to build on many tracts that couldn't have before

- Preserve it and keep boundary
- Preservation should be maintained, however areas around schools should be considered for more intention
 - School planning is a unique process, standards have pushed them out and meets requirement and real estate deal
- Land use policy looking to certain metrics – walking $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, biking $\frac{1}{2}$ mile
 - Look to these for growth around schools
 - Must have sidewalks
 - Cleveland (topo), Coile (industrial) & JJ Harris
- What would be a good density for those spots?
- What's Winterville's growth zone?
- School is an optimal central point (anchor) for nodal growth. Not just residential
- **Get a map together of $\frac{1}{2}$ & $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of each school**
- Need workforce development housing
- Industrial base is more important than residential, it pulls different figures
- Have to look school-by-school for this analysis
- Need guiding principles outside of the 5 proposed – industrial, areas around schools, what do we want the change to look like
- (Lonnee) - Existing character of our rural areas should drive that definition first – heart of rural definition
- (Lonnee) - Opportunity for rural character to be respected in certain areas with certain characteristics
- “I didn’t hear anything from the discussion to change rural”
 - There have been some locations puncturing that
 - Sewer has gone out
 - If we need density everywhere a little bit, then AR needs some options
- “Seemed like consensus that small changes to green belt is possible”
- Nodes could grow a bit
- Growth out past Oak Grove has leaped into Jackson county and might drive growth in the corridor
- How did Oak Grove area get developed if it was Rural FLU before?
 - Some development prior to Green Belt and consolidation

Size – does preservation of the green belt limit growth, opportunity and affordability?

- Natural forces come into play
- Get a true definition of affordable housing
- Affordable housing needs affordable transportation
- We could pull a lever instantly to relieve pressure = students out of neighborhoods
- Ground floor commercial is not being used
 - That is intentional
- We need more incrementalism
 - Better for local developers
- Option for allowing farming/rural area to do development that complements farming/ag
- **Find actual farms, forestry, working ag – map it**

- AR is ag and res

Next Meeting: June 24th 2-4 PM

- Doodle poll for other dates or times for opportunity

Notes instead of minutes – yes

Drop dead finish date/time from county? – we are looking for policy decisions after the outcome of this effort, Planning dept. work plan.

Go to next subject for June meeting, but keep thin on the back burner for future discussion

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

June 24th, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Auditorium – 120 West Dougherty Street

I. WELCOME

- A. Chair

II. INFRASTRUCTURE PANEL - OPENING REMARKS

- A. Public Utilities – Hugh Ogle (Assistant Director)
- B. Transportation & Public Works – Tim Griffeth (Traffic Engineer) & Rani Katreeb (Assistant Director)
- C. SPLOST – Diana Jackson (Project Manager) & Josh Hawkins (Director)
- D. Transit – Victor Pope (Director)
- E. Airport – Mike Matthews (Director)

III. INFRASTRUCTURE FUTURE LAND USE DISCUSSION

Discussion prompts and decision points...

- A. What is your department's operational vision for the next 20 years?
- B. How does your department intend to respond to increased population and community growth during the next 20 years?

IV. QUESTIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

V. NEXT MEETING & HOMEWORK

- A. Target Dates for July meeting: July 22nd or 29th
- B. Next Meeting Topic: Institutional Land Use
- C. Homework: Topical background info will be shared prior to each meeting:
Committee members will be encouraged to visit areas of town that are relevant for each month's topic area.

Panel Discussion Points

Future Land Use Steering Committee – 6.24.24

A. 2 big questions we will discuss

1. Tell us about the lens your department views community development through? How does your departmental vision shape future development over the next 20 years?
2. How does your department intend to respond to increased population and community growth over the 20 year horizon?

B. Internal points for Department's to consider. Items that will contribute to the discussion

Public Utilities

- Sanitary Sewer
- Water
- **SPLOST** value add to PUD

Transportation and Public Works

- Road network – The big picture
 - Complete street design
 - Multi-modality – steps needed to make this a reality & build the network
- Stormwater
 - County-wide infrastructure
 - Regional or group opportunities
- Can we put more density on a major corridor(s)? How would that intensification affect infrastructure? What opportunities might that offer?
- Level of Service expectations? Difference in node vs out of a node?
- **SPLOST** value add to TPW

Transit

- What does the Transit 20-year plan look like?
- Timing? Specific corridors that could have faster service and we plan for those to be more intense

Airport

- Growth? Service?
- Development around the airport

C. In order to meet goals some regulations will require trade-offs from their current position.

Items that will contribute to the discussion

- Parking requirements
- Localized connectivity – Breaking down cul-de-sacs
- Use of Public Utility easements?
- Green infrastructure? Solar, unique stormwater allowances
- Different regulations for redevelopment?
- Trees? Can we still have them in dense situations?
- Enough space for delivery, fire, emergency services

Meeting Notes

FLU Steering Committee – 6.24.24

Staff - Mike Matthews, Josh Hawkins, Diana Jackson, Tim Griffeth, Hugh Ogle, Matt Adamson, Vic Pope, Max Doty, Stephen Jaques, Bruce Lonnee, marc beechuk

SC members - A Sams, C Lawrence, D Lynn, J Leonard, M Furlow, A McCullick, K Middleton, J Ball, D Matheny, S Stabler, L Fuller, C Moore, A Powell, C Joiner

AS – development revolves around infrastructure

Public Utilities (PUD) - Hugh Ogle (Assistant Director), Matt Adamson (Engineer III)

20-year plan, work on sanitary lines, Brooklyn, Middle Oconee interceptor, downtown water line replacement

Priority 1 – system maintenance, 600 miles of sanitary sewer, 900+ miles of water, purple pipe (recycled water to industry – non-potable used for chiller towers, etc.)

All 3 wastewater facilities were all revamped around 2009 (double capacity)

Less of a priority – expansion of service, currently some developer-led lift stations

What's a lift station? – equipment that pushes waste water uphill to then meet the gravity system (2 currently planned), often pushes up and over hills to meet gravity-based system

Expected expansion of infrastructure over next 20 years? Dependent on economy and growth opportunities

ACC takes over responsibility of a lift station after installation? Yes when serving the public

- Ongoing maintenance for the county; expansion of service can lead to sprawl development or additional territory for growth

Quarry? ACC taking over (2030) for water back-up; more than 5 billion gallons (serves community for over 90 days at full pull); would still have our current 3 sources in case of need

Are we using climate models? Working with UGA on expected additional droughts; ACC is more sustainable with quarry online

Limitations on sewer capacity (eg. Barrow under development moratorium)? Close to being maxed out in some portions of town. Where? East of Middle Oconee River, McNutt's creek – development dependent

Is downtown reaching its capacity? Currently working to expand

Sewer extension to Hallmark manufactured home park (Trail Creek)? Main has been extended to the basin not a specific property

What are current operations? Upgrading existing sewer

Lift stations can move development out of creeks, are we getting more open to it? Where gravity is possible it is always preferred. Putting some nasty stuff through a mechanical apparatus

If these are a problem, why would develop those areas? Political question less than an engineering one.

Alternative systems and options? Package stations popular in Texas. Don't want a bunch of small, private systems – who maintains? who takes care when a spill happens?

Transportation & Public Works (TPW) – Tim Griffeth (Traffic Engineer)

Annual growth of around 1%. Covid changed our traffic patterns

In past 40 years – limited arterials and collectors, exception is Loop 10 and 316. Most roads in that time are subdivision roads

- Impacts possible expansion, if the county doesn't build connecting roads then private development is left doing the task and typically only address an individual site

Level of Service (LOS) – C can be ok, D in places and even an E in certain locations at peak times

- Impacts growth in nodes by allowing more traffic (potential for lower LOS) and more peak trips

Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) – done when developments have 1,000 trips/day or over 100 in any hour. Something to consider is developers justifying changes if analysis indicates too low of a reduction

Do we have desires where we would like to see roads? Yes

Big challenges growth = traffic signals (~\$400,000)

Traffic signal replacement/maintenance is needed

Pedestrian needs – sidewalks; more people = more facility needs and more crossing/connection

Pedestrian hybrid beacons – ped initiates a light, then goes yellow and red for traffic to stop

Limited Right-of-way (ROW) in older locations

GDOT would like to give ACC Milledge and Prince, but funding is needed to bring them up to standards

Chase street roundabouts – what figures initiate the need? Reduces crash points; easier and less expensive to put in a signal

Educational materials on roundabouts – intended for W broad one (next 2 years)

Oconee/Lexington/Loop – 6 lanes under loop

Poles and mast arms v. poles and wires? ACC standard is pole and arms

TPW maintains all poles and signals (ACC, GDOT & UGA) – helps with flow maintenance

What about bicycle infrastructure? Wanted, needed – Athens in Motion (AiM)

Biggest challenge in next 20 years? Funding would obviously help; no appetite to condemn properties; proper roadway classification; staffing

Changes in development pattern – live/work

TPW has been a maintenance department, looking to be a long-range looking one (AiM, bike/ped, vision zero)

- Helps with strategic and Comprehensive Planning

Low hanging fruit has been plucked, where will the growth go? Up instead of out

SPLOST – Josh Hawkins (Director) Diana Jackson (Project Manager)

SPLOST helps get money from non-residents, easing tax payer burden in order to bring amenities

Easier to pass, hard to get items on the list

Does SPLOST just fund or also provide maintenance? Sales tax dollars can only be spent on capital projects; maintenance requirements area part of the review process

SPLOST \$ used for maintenance vs. amenities, is it balanced? Process dictates the balance

Athens Transit – Victor Pope (Director)

Transit is an opportunity to assist roads, by taking trips off of them

Been a similar system for last 40 years

60-75 minute headways is not efficient enough – looking at service over expansion currently

Primarily a fixed route bus system

Good campus system that covers those areas well, eliminate duplication of service

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) (next 5-10 yrs) – main corridors, keep it all in the ROW as much as possible

- Helps frame where development should go. BRT needs to be supported by rooftops

Looking at new development projects to install infrastructure or provide an amenity for future improvements

Remote transit terminal (west ATH, central ATH, east ATH)

- Potential for Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Stop at political boundaries? Other forms of transportation do not; will Oconee get on board?

Looking at 75-100 year horizon, requirement of FTA funding

New operations & maintenance facility along with PUD, moving out of Pound St

Look at limiting vehicle trips inside the Loop via new stops and transit connections

Resources for Spanish speakers to use Transit system? Documents are in Spanish

Bus stop disparity? Based on level of service, could change with micro-mobility allowing “virtual” stops

Using rail spine along campus? Still controlled by Greater Walton Railroad

Hot spot? Walmart, library

Airport – Mike Matthews (Director)

First airport in the state 1917

5-yr updates

Recent expansion and updates to runway length and strength, more revenue (fees, fuel)

Additional economic benefit from travelers

Looking into passenger service (updated market study)

A former pilot shortage turned into a captain shortage, tenure issue – left the biggest void in regional service; some airlines also are cutting regional jets

Vertical Take-off & Landing (VTOL) – ACC looking into charging stations; air taxi

Opportunities to develop in airport overlay? Small changes have been made, but should consider others

- This point has the potential to unlock other opportunities in nodes and corridors that have a lot of other beneficial factors

Does growth correlate to passenger expansion? Yeah; classic center operations, Athena studios

Freight? Some

Points from discussion that speak to Future Land Use

- Development is mostly reliant on infrastructure. Planning based off the infrastructure is cost effective; puts people nearer daily needs, amenities and jobs; preserves greenspace/rural
- Infrastructure is costly; expansion needs to more than pay for itself as the bills will come due; maintenance and putting people near existing networks is wiser than expansion
- Finding smart/safe ways to unlock potential development has the ability to use resources wisely, build off the network and exceed thresholds that open additional opportunities (eg. BRT, strong neighborhoods, transportation options, entertainment options, etc.)
- Urban3 effort in coming months will put figures to these discussions

Next meeting: July 22

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

July 29th 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Piedmont ARMC – Regional Health Services Building
3rd Floor Boardroom

I. WELCOME

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE PANEL - OPENING REMARKS

- A. Piedmont ARMC – Jason Smith (COO), Zack Holt (Director of Facilities)
- B. UGA – Gwynne Darden (Office of University Architects)
- C. Athens Technical College – Kristen Douglas (VP Academic Affairs) & Tia Stroud (Exec. Director of Secondary Initiatives)
- D. Clarke County School District – Cyndee Moore (Exec. Director PR and Communications)
- E. Athens-Clarke County Unified Government – Andrew Saunders (Interim Asst County Manager)

III. INSTITUTIONAL FUTURE LAND USE DISCUSSION

Discussion prompts and decision points...

- 1) Please describe the long-range growth strategies for your operation?
- 2) What plans does your organization have to accommodate the expected 30-40,000 person community growth over the next 20 years?
- 3) What compatible land uses would benefit your campuses? Are there any incompatible land uses?

IV. TOPIC SUMMATION

V. QUESTIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

VI. NEXT MEETING & HOMEWORK

- A. Target Dates for July meeting: **August 19th or 26th**
- B. Next Meeting Topic: Housing and Future Land Use

Meeting Notes

Future Land Use Steering Committee – 7.29.24 – Institutional

SC Members - C Moore, A Powell, J Shannon, C Joiner, S Stabler, M Furlow, J Leonard, J Bishop, J Ball, D Lynn, A McCullick, K Middleton, A Sams, L Fuller, M Easom, D Matheny, S Hallum, J Hill

Staff - M Doty, S Jaques, B Lonnee, mb

Panel - Jason Smith (Piedmont COO), Delina Brockman, Cyndee Moore (Ex. Dir or PR and Community Relations), Gwynne Darden (UGA, University Architects), Andrew Saunders (ACC), Dr. Kristen Douglas (VP Academic Affairs), Tia Stroud (Ex. Dir. Of Secondary initiatives)

Piedmont

New tower is beginning of path for growth

427 in patient beds (operate ~350 beds), additional parking deck growth

Lot across the street for parking, Trusso lot on King Ave.

- Could factor into Normaltown Neighborhood Node

Talking with neighborhood about historic houses on campus (meet twice/year)

Campus is used for the emergencies and acute items, primary care and non-emergency off-site

Looking at space in Commerce

Employ ~3,000, annual 2-3% growth plan, regional commute (~1 hr)

Level II trauma designation (med school might elevate that to level I)

120 students from UGA med. School at build-out

~90% by private vehicle 10% walk or bus

Need good access around campus, limit temporary traffic issues

- Transportation network, street design and sensible nodal growth

UGA

Provide for academic and student needs on contiguous land – walkable

Going more vertical, removal of surface parking lots

Lots of work around freshman residential area (Baxter & Lumpkin)

Working on renovations (50%+ are over 50 yrs old)

Jack Turner Family complex growing, new track and field

- Growth and expansion of service opportunity out S Milledge

Innovation district (Thomas, E Broad, Oconee St)

UGA Health Science Campus – Intersection realignment, 92,000 SF of additions

Housing? – renovations are happening, meeting first year live on-campus requirement

- Effect on in-town housing options, policies and Future Land Use. ~80% of students live off-campus, mostly in ACC regulated properties

Housing ratio? – provide for first year - ~1/5

Strategic planning between town and gown? – ACC gets invited, good relationships at staff level

Undergrad – 30,166 Graduate – 9,952

What's total number of college students in Clarke Co?

Growth at Med school is more about staff and research

Ownership of rail line and use? UGA talking with owner (Athens Transit Partners – real estate foundation), transit options, BRT

- Very important potential transit connection or spine

UGA resources open to community? Many are – Library, Bot Garden, Art Museum. What about the Track? Possibly not at new location

New parking at Vet School? Part of the overall Park n' Ride strategy

- Transportation patterns, possibility for nodal growth, FLU implications

Requirement to not allow car for first year student?

Up instead of out requires better use of transit

Athens Technical College

New Bldg T – Industrial systems building (last planned building)

Looking at campus gateway (water tower)

- Node, wayfinding, gateways

Not looking at housing

5,500 students, looking to grow to 6,000

25% is dual enrollment – HS and Ath Tech (30% come to campus, others at career academies)

30% is taking online courses, looking at VR, minimal for brick and mortar

Dual achievement for students without HS Diploma

4,200 students enrolled

Less than 5% bus to school, need for students to have transportation

Growing with neighbors, Athena Studios

Need for a commercial truck driving range. Could we partner with surrounding counties? Have a facility that functions in another capacity? **How big?**

- Facility capacity, possibility institutional partnerships

Neighbors who contribute to workforce

Mostly have to drive to neighboring commercial center uses

- How do we tie a nodal business district to its neighbors, partners, & customers

Clarke County School District

14 elementary, 4 middle, 2 comprehensive HS, alternative school, career academy, Non-comprehensive HS

Have taken over Rutland building

2 health centers – Hilsman and Clarke MS, 2 to come (Coile and HT Edwards)

Clarke Middle getting a complete overhaul, Phase I open fall 2024, Phase II Jan 2025

Cedar Shoals getting renovations as well

Need transportation for parents, especially Spanish speaking (Winterville, eastside)

Walkability to schools would help

- Transportation network opportunities

Sidewalk map?

AiM, SPLOST projects, safe routes to schools, sidewalk gaps

Attendance peak in 2018 (13,800)

Only 12 teacher and 12 para-pro openings

Struggle with local housing prices for staff, many drive in from outside Clarke

~85% bus 15% walk or drop-off

Likely to build more schools in next 20 yrs, no current plans

Open to community, violence vs. opportunity? Constant discussion

Growth around rural Middle Schools? Community centers (B & G Club) would be an option. Flex space is designed into buildings

Housing type beneficial to student pop? teacher pop? Need it all

- Housing options
-

ACC

Public service facility growth and expansion is

Lexington – Public Safety

Downtown - administration, commission

Pound St – transportation, operations

E Athens – public service

Looking to build Judicial Center (hopefully downtown)

Firefly and Greenway expanding (more on Middle Oconee and outside of Loop 10)

East and West Community Center

E Athens Library is coming

3 parks are coming online – Beech Haven Natural Area, Tallassee Forest (330+ acres) conservation, Westside recreational style park

Re-invigorate College Square – festival, gathering space

Olympic Drive parcel has been purchased for infrastructure and Transit

Dispossession and reuse of properties – Old Co-op building on W Broad, Satula, IT Bldg (Prince Ave), W Dougherty St, Pound St

Airport commercial terminal

Looking at pocket parks for smaller parcels

- Greenspace opportunities, connection for neighborhoods

ACC looking to play a bigger role in affordable and workforce housing

Using what we have, Baxter St Library? – more of a community hub, social service provider. Challenge to reuse building, \$10's of millions invested

Facility underuse – parks, firefly

ACC Leisure Services is looking at demand

ACC could partner on truck range for transit and public safety driver training

Heavy operations/Wastewater need to be careful with surrounding uses

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

August 26th 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Housing Basics Panel – Opening remarks

- A. Jared York – JW York Homes
- B. Buck Bacon – W&A Engineering
- C. Jarrod Prickett – First American Bank
- D. Chase Lawrence – College Town Properties
- E. Chris Joiner – Joiner & Associates

III. Housing Basics Discussion

Discussion prompts and decision points...

- 1) How is housing born? 5 L's; Labor, **Land/Location, Laws**, Loans & Lumber
- 2) How is our housing stock meeting the needs of associated growth? What is needed on a basic level to accommodate 30,000+ people in the next 20 years?
- 3) How much flexibility is needed in the housing market? What level of extra capacity should we plan for in order to provide options to accommodate 30,000+ people?

IV. Topic Summation

V. Questions and other business

VI. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Please check out your neighborhood and a few suggested key locations to better understand the housing types and forms already existing in ACC
- B. Target Dates for September meeting: **Sept. 23rd or 30th**
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Housing and Future Land Use

Meeting Notes

FLU SC

Housing

Jy – flexibility for by-right is needed, 90's-2000's model does not work in current market. Cost of everything per unit is getting worse

Bb – harder parcels to develop these days; topo, EA's, infrastructure challenges. Cost to develop is more significant = need more density

cl – level of housing has gotten more sophisticated. Land is scarce, scouting is intense. Costs are high. Complexity made the project very tough and took its toll on workers. Selective and appropriate

Gainesville has done away with core downtown parking requirement, let the consumer figure it out

Need a sophisticated development and engineering team

Underwriting to the same guidelines and standards, but costs are up. Money spent even before approvals, can be north of six figures.

Property values and taxes have increased, along with insurance

Banks need to see more cash or liquidity in assets

Need more density for numbers to make sense

Since pandemic, rents on single family detached have gone up 40%, multi-fam 25%

Maintenance and renovation costs have mirrored rent increases

Who should we have driving the discussion on our interests? Local stakeholders, not out of town interests

Incremental – need to start small and grow

Big multi-fam - money is almost all outside the region other than land sale and property tax

Want local banks and local developers – need to supply missing middle opportunities. Local vendors, feeds more families

What to do with older apartments? Rehab? Tear-down? Reuse? Older structures become the more affordable housing. Older student complexes have a variety of tenants

Renovate older complexes = need more beds/ac

Students and most other demographics do not overlap well

Stormwater collection is out of scale with development opportunities

Rents have to make up for additional costs

Check out Auburn (quadplexes, triplexes & other MM)

Beds/ac vs. units/ac

Flexibility around infrastructure – try to reduce site development costs

Put stormwater under the building??? (bacon)

Greatest challenge to do what you think ACC needs?

Density, 5 ac vs. 25 ac – site development costs are about the same.

Staff have a broader perspective for solutions to land development

Density gives more options to afford the upgrades, getting unaffordable

Regulation reform, allow for different projects

Infrastructure regs are scaled for large flat parcels, reality is very different

Future Single-family, owner occupied? Market has brought as much as needed multi-fam for now

Acreage disturbance at one time needs attention

Fee simple – Athens needs a bunch of townhomes

Absorption rate under \$425K would be very high, drops precipitously above that

Single family has to be on sewer, doesn't pencil for roads when you need septic

Issues - driveway separation, smaller lots, fee simple townhomes (doesn't need road frontage), need front entry garages (two roads for one lot and topo)

What other ordinances need amendments besides density?

Frontage

Lots/one entrance

New road (everything) - costs \$1200/linear ft

Build ability to get around road on one entrance/exit in case of emergency

Cut and fill balance, cheaper on site, but capped at 25 acres

Code is tough

Put people near things, allow flexibility in town

Take the 5 bad things out of the code - Mass grading, driveway separation, allow front entry garages

Pervious paver maintenance is hollow

Most of our soils do not percolate well

When things don't work out (eg. rock under pervious pavers) simpler solutions need to be on the table

Breaking their own rules to get projects on the ground

Costs for debt is high, coming down

Insurance is skyrocketing, rents can't keep up

Vacancy #'s – 878 beds of vacant, new purpose-built student housing today

Actual rate of vacancy is 14%

Single family is the inverse to multi-fam right now

Can a bank limit a rental rate drop? Money is still money, incentives also happen to keep rent roll up

What if def. of family was fully enforced? How many new opportunities?

Many of those houses are purpose built for student rentals, repurposing is not always feasible

Have to compare what people will pay for a house vs. how it rents

How do we provide housing for homeless & low-income?

60-80% AMI does not work for a for-profit model

IRC vs. IBC – cost difference

AHA has low density housing in high demand locations

How many IZ projects in ACC?

Do the math on affordable housing before we get into a project

Code flexibility options - We should look at square footage requirements, reduce lot sizes, eliminate lot coverage, reduce setbacks

Next meeting – Sept. 23rd or 30th

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

September 23rd, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Athens Housing Authority Board Room

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Housing follow-up and details

- A. Guiding Principles, Growth Concept Map & Matrix
- B. Existing single-family figures
- C. Short-Term Rentals (STR)
- D. Missing Middle & Floor Area Ratio (FAR) – types and applications
- E. Existing Multi-fam, scope and values

III. Future Land Use category discussion

- 1) Rural
- 2) Single Family Residential & Traditional Neighborhood
- 3) Mixed Density Residential
- 4) Corridors & Nodes – Residential aspect only

IV. Questions and other business

V. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Review slides & notes; keep an eye out for follow-up about what we heard from the group
- B. Target Dates for September meeting: Oct. 14th/21st
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Non-residential Future Land Use Categories

Meeting Notes

Steering Committee Notes 9.23.24

Attendance: Alexander Sams (Chair), Maxine Easom, Joe Hill, Mack Furlow, Kent Middleton, Shirelle Hallum, Lorraine Fuller, Alison McCullick, Chris Joiner, Jeff Bishop, David Matheny, David Lynn, Sam Stabler, Jason Leonard, Sheila Crisp, Charlie Gluodenis

Staff: Stephen Jaques, Max Doty, marc beechuk

Recap of how we got here

- Growth Concept Map
- Guiding Principles

Key Factors, examples & options

Short Term Rentals (STRs) – 1776 active, 759 have homestead exemption

Single-Family – since 2022 - 22 pre-lim plats, 700 acs, 225 new SF bldg. permits

Big Projects – Winslow Park, Lakewood, Cleveland Rd, The former Mall

Missing Middle Housing – Often not allowed in Single-family (SF) zones for many yrs now (including ACC), Puts more ppl in front of more infrastructure (savings), typically done at house scale (less than 2.5 stories), can meet context sensitivity, allows incrementalism or thickening, more easily absorbed by neighbors and residents than larger projects

Multi-family – Context matters, Value per acre, mixes with commercial, can be a the buffer between corridor uses and residential

Existing Future Land Use Map & Matrix

Form & Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

ADUs (first item that committee discussed)

– ADUs should be allowed everywhere. Government should not stop people from exercising this property right.

– Homestead Exemption would be a good requirement to getting an new ADU

– ADUs should be encouraged in areas that we are looking to at higher levels of density

– ADUs everywhere as well as housing allowed in industrial zones as a way to let workers have an easier time getting to their workplace

– Adding residential in industrial could compromise those sites for future industry attraction.

Should we have an owner-occupancy requirement? D Lynn –Homestead exemption could be to permit these.

—Where are ADUs currently located and how many do we have? Where should they go?

– Why did these fail at the Mayor & Commission (in 2022)?

– Failed because of concern that they would be short-term rental. However, now that we have STR regulations, we should look at ADUs again.

— It was thought ADUs would be a way for developers to add density in existing neighborhoods and get around the definition of family restriction back in the 2000s.

Missing Middle Housing Types

- Pointed out that we have all of the large apartment buildings because they are a known entity, building code, zoning codes and financial system are all in place to make them easy and profitable.
- East Side would need investments in transit, bike, and pedestrian infrastructure/service to support any Missing Middle Housing at a town center.
- Apartments need to be context sensitive
- Should be encouraged near areas that have multi-model options

None of the building types generated significant discussion except for ADUs.

Rural FLU

- Not much agricultural use anymore. Mainly for expensive country estates
- Wealthy people buy the land, not much AG use anymore.
- Farming isn't economically viable here because the land is too expensive. Allow subdivision at 5 acres instead of 10. No sewer extension, but more intensity than what is currently allowed.
- Multiple members openly stated they want the greenbelt to stay. Members who were interested in the idea of allowing some level of subdivision argued that you can keep the greenbelt and still have housing that would only have ACC water. Mack specifically stated these subdivisions shouldn't have any county utilities. Maxine stated that her subdivision is a good example of getting density but still respecting the rural character.
- The greenbelt has worked because it keeps sprawl and environmental degradation in check. It pushed density downtown, which is good for downtown. 2000 restrictions put on AG properties worked and density was focused into the downtown/inner loop area.
- The greenbelt has not worked because it has forced density inside the greenbelt and contributed to the housing crisis by limiting the supply of land for housing. Housing crisis is still ongoing and every area of Athens needs to be buildable to a higher degree. We're restricting too much in the AR and in favor of 5 acre subdivision instead of 10.
- Can't afford to extend sewer into rural areas
- No self-storage use in AR
- We can do some density in the rural area, such as her ag neighborhood

- Need to find ways to allow septic to work, but at some point those systems will fail and we will have an environmental crisis. City will be forced to extend sewer at some point.
- Preserve the Bogart/Cleveland Rd AR specifically as the Mall/Winslow/Other large housing projects may entice developers to develop this area even more

Neighborhood Residential FLU

- Too much in one FLU category. Used South Fulton as an example of use FLU to tell developers what can/cannot be built. More land uses in FLU categories to focus growth in ways we want. ACC is such a small county, hyper specific FLU categories are needed to handle the growth.
- We used to have small commercial in neighborhoods until zoning separated those uses. We should allow more small commercial in neighborhoods.
- Developers are very sophisticated these days. Do we need to counter that at the Future Land Use or Zoning stage?
- Some people are looking for neighborhoods where they can walk to the store or their business. The character of neighborhoods is important. People might be okay with more housing variety if we had stronger design standards
- It seems like we're asking people to trade less control over the use of the property in exchange for more control over the design/form.
- Hard to define taste. Be careful about getting too detailed on design regulations. Mentioned that pre-approved building plans can help incentivize construction of buildings that the community has already vetted for their design/desirability. Design boards can also be established to govern elements of design.

Design Standards– HPC did not say you could do something to your building. It spent more time saying what you could not do to your building.

- The Committee seemed to be generally amenable to the Neighborhood Residential FLU

No comment on the Mixed Density FLU. May be optional if neighborhood residential and corridor and node FLUs suffice.

- Small businesses should be allowed throughout single-family. White Tiger/Heirloom used as examples.
- Should the FLU be used to combat developers or should the zoning?
- Nodes need to be specific and there needs to be separation to make sure characteristics are acknowledged
- For people to get on board with a combination of the SF zones, there need a strong sense of design for the community to be okay with giving up some control on each separate FLU category

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

October 21st, 2024

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Urban3 check-in

III. Residential Future Land Use follow-up and details

- A. Any follow-up questions
- B. **Potential** - Discussion of responses to homework

IV. Future Land Use category discussion

- 1) Institutional
- 2) Urban Center Node
- 3) Town Center Node
- 4) Neighborhood Node
- 5) Corridor Mixed-Use
- 6) Employment Center
- 7) Government

V. Questions and other business

VI. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Review slides & notes; keep an eye out for follow-up about what we heard from the group
- B. Date for next meeting: Nov. 11th
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Let's color the map

Meeting Notes

Steering Committee Notes 10.21.24

Attendance: Alexander Sams (Chair), Maxine Easom, Joe Hill, Mack Furlow, Kent Middleton, Shirelle Hallum, Lorraine Fuller, Chris Joiner, Jeff Bishop, David Matheny, David Lynn, Sam Stabler, Jason Leonard, Sheila Crisp, Jerry Shannon, Jacob Pember, Charlie Upchurch III

Staff: Bruce Lonnee, Max Doty

Urban3 Presentation

- Spoke on how data is collected/used
- Thinking of land use like MPG with cars
- Showing preliminary Taxable Value Per Acre for every parcel in ACC
 - Showed other communities like Ashville, Annapolis MD, Springfield MO
 - Focusing on Property Taxes only
- 56% of downtown is not taxable
- Downtown is 38 times as productive as the rest of ACC
- What is the typical revenue vs cost per acre?
 - Springfield is heavy sales tax focused
 - Most communities U3 has worked with is a net negative
- Timeline to final deliverables is early 2025
- Is FLU separated from Zoning? Adam w/U3: Yes
- Correlated aesthetics with productivity from a value per acre perspective?
 - Adam: there's subjectivity, but smaller locations that are productive have more appeal design
- Cost/revenue analysis broken down by current FLU categories?
 - Adam: Yes, but it will be pretty generalized
- How do you build in aesthetics/open space if it's not required for value per acre?
 - This is one tool in the toolbox
- Putting intent/values into definitions in order to ensure other tools are utilized
- Some of the high revenue locations are statistical anomalies
- Are we taxing our community too high based on initial numbers?
 - Use numbers to reassess millage rate
- Gainesville, FL had high non-taxable
- Showing Mall current vs when built
- Transit will be part of analysis

Recap of how we got here

- Growth Concept Map
- Guiding Principles
- Current FLU Map

Remaining Categories for new FLU Map

- Gov't
- Employment Center
- Downtown

- General Business
- Main Street Business

Government FLU (first item that committee discussed)

- Should religious institutions be added to this designation?
 - Discussion led to why they are categorized as Special Uses as the future of the land could still be used for something non-religious
- With over 50% of the downtown area being non-taxable, should the gov't buildings be downtown?
- Consolidation of gov't buildings/facilities, with the exception of schools and parks
- Water business office, pound street facility specifically should not be in the hands of the gov't
- Gov't buildings have been disrespectful of the land usage as well as with their presentation.
- Gov't should NOT follow local standards
- Should schools get their own separate designation? Town centers around schools or allow the school category to steer shops/residential
- Discussion around gov't administrative buildings vs gov't amenities. Should they be separated?
- "Fertilizer to a garden"
- Creation of 3 new categories? Education, General, and Open Space
- Consensus of the group: consolidate services and put emphasis on respecting the community and integrate into the community better.

Employment Center FLU

- Should workforce housing be integrated into category?
- Some businesses want their workers closer to the building
- Category should be as flexible as possible to encourage companies
- What to do with rural areas within sewer?
 - Newton Bridge Roads future? Keep area as Employment or shift to residential?

Quick look at vertical vs horizontal mixed use and where each does and does not work

- Various points about ground floor commercial working vs not working in vertical mixed-use situations. Primarily focused on downtown

Downtown/Proposed Urban Center FLU

- Language needs to emphasize the need to be better with engaging the street and have better design standards
- First floor commercial being necessary vs made optional
- Ground floor residential allowed on corridors?
- Should be the most wide-open district
- The Mall should not be considered an Urban Center
- Discussion around whether Urban should be used at all
 - Urban Center will confuse people

- Mall should not be allowed to go 100 feet in height
- Downtown should remain its own FLU category
 - Focus on historic nature, architecture, networks surrounding the area
 - Some felt that the architecture is already so diverse that it's hard to force a certain style

Definition word structure should be what the category allows, then what it does not allow.

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

November 18th, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Node Future Land Use follow-up and details

- A. Any follow-up questions
- B. **Potential** - Discussion of responses to homework

III. Future Land Use category discussion

- 1) Institutional
- 2) Corridor Mixed-Use
- 3) Employment Center
- 4) Government

IV. Questions and other business

V. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Review slides & notes; keep an eye out for follow-up about what we heard from the group
- B. Date for next meeting: Dec. 2nd
- C. Next Meeting Topic: Let's color the map

Meeting Notes

Future Land Use Steering Committee – 11.18.24

Alex Sams, David Lynn, June Ball, Kent Middleton, Joe Hill, Chase Lawrence, Mack Furlow, Msxine Easom, Shirelle Hallum, Sam Stabler, Cyndi Moore, Jason Leonard, Sheila Crisp, Chris Joiner, Jerry Shannon, David Matheny

Staff - Lonnee, Doty, Jaques, beechuk

Welcome - Sams – got something to say, say it; we are at an urgent point, please speak up

Potential next steps (*approx. 4 month period after SC wraps up*) – Worksession/Public presentation, PC and M&C sessions

Spread the word, public input, community effort

BL – Presentation today is getting into the language; Guiding Principles (GP), Growth Concept Map (GCM), Future Land Use (FLU) map, breakdown of categories, responding to what was said in October (*surveys and at the meeting*)

Correct the dates on presentation, need to be comfortable with wording

Name the major and minor corridors? **See GCM and survey results**

What do we do to control what is going on the corridors?

What is our role? What about boulevards?

The category words control what we get? **“yes, we need to be intentional”**

Are we talking about firefly and what level corridor it will be?

Granular? – understanding how we get there is the translation of the map. Isn’t parcel by parcel zoning?

Intersections are nodes? **“many nodes are at intersections”**

What did nodes used to be? Centers? – BL **“we didn’t have them in the past”**

Use language that the general public can understand

- Much of the language being used comes from Kevin Lynch *Image of the city*

Future task/education - When we are done there needs to be a education piece for all of the information

For nodes, parking should be at district level

Why not just say no surface parking?

What does the Urban center translate to zoning wise? **“Less than Downtown, more than what we have in Commercial General (common zoning for current, larger commercial centers)”**

Is the mall the only urban center? – **“yes”**

Should beechwood be an urban center?

What mechanism is there for a town center to go to urban center? Alps, 29/72

Reduction in surface allows for what? “more efficiency for people, uses and utilities. Share parking amongst uses.”

Will we get structured parking decks in current development pattern? **From SC members**— “no, but with more allowances it would become possible.” “Current parking prescribes a lot of surface parking.” “Shared parking makes it more walkable.”

Can we just say “no” auto-oriented uses?

Is it auto-oriented if it takes a car to get to it? “Generally if each task takes a car. Centers can be less auto-centric by arriving once and having a network to walk among buildings and uses.”

How do we get open space, sidewalks, street trees and ped infrastructure? – “design standards”

Eastside Kroger area could become Hwy 29-like; auto-oriented?

Can we vote but not have it in concrete?

Urban center language – what about the historic aspect? should we eliminate that? – “done”

Historical vs. character – “in keeping with surrounding integrity”?

Density or form, is urban center a step down from downtown? “yes”

Why is urban center and downtown being equivalent? “Closest current type. Also looking forward 20 years.”

Urban form can be more than the downtown

Why limit the mall from becoming close to downtown density if we are looking 20 years forward?

This could lead to sprawl going out to the mall

Urban3 analysis shows we could use another area with high value capacity (the mall)

“Sprawl is easier” – do people want to live in Gwinnett?

It's being stated that increasing density leads to sprawl, but not understood?

Why are we talking about the mall when its already planned?

The mall is the next dense area after downtown

*****Show town center and urban center next to each other**

Urban center densities in town center locations would have developers going wild. ACC might only need an urban center downtown.

*****What's the density of our neighborhood business district? “Below current allowances”**

Focusing more growth in neighborhood districts would have better impact, could be local.

Mall having mid-rises would spur more growth and another option for people

Would people prefer just big town center and small town center? “5 pts is town center, beechwood is market center”?

In Rural FLU - 100% for 2-5 ac lot – define by water allowance and septic allowance. More people and it doesn’t cost us.

What are we buffering with Rural?

Very opposed to not having some greenbelt

Odd to have rural category in the smallest county in Georgia. How much longer are we going to have farms in ACC? Should we be calling it rural?

Adding people in rural or suburban costs more per person than in town where there is value to adding people.

10 acre to 5 acre? 2 acre feels small (getting toward allowing tract housing)

Does having 5 acre minimums mean only wealthy people can afford?

Can we make sure to allow conservation neighborhoods?

Lantern’s walk is an example of preserving some land, but allowing affordable homes in an area on edge of suburban and Rural.

[Height choices on corridor survey question are reflective of current allowance if not below.](#)

Low hanging fruit for local developers are the small strip centers. Oak/oconee, w broad, etc

Where we place urban centers drives where people live, don’t overwhelm any one part of town.

No developing = death

The big shiny developments have developed. The smaller areas in between will allow more and are sometimes forgotten

Neighborhood residential FLU – need to show people more information to understand this, do a visual preference. Not necessarily understood by the group

- This language is a lot, simple it down
- “generally agree” vs support

Consensus on gov into 3 zones – gov, parks & open space, education? Unanimous straw poll in support

Next Meeting: December 2nd, 2-4 PM, ACC Planning Auditorium

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link: <https://youtube.com/live/wJecZIKa6fs?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

December 2nd, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

- I. Welcome
 - A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams
- II. Node Future Land Use follow-up and details
 - A. Any follow-up questions
- III. Future Land Use category discussion
 - 1) Nodes – neighborhood, town & region
 - 2) Corridor Mixed-Use – minor and major
 - 3) University
 - 4) Employment Center
 - 5) Government – Gov., Education & Park/Open Space
- IV. Questions and other business
 - 1) Visual Preference
 - 2) Finalize Category language
- V. Next meeting & Homework
 - A. Review slides & notes; keep an eye out for follow-up about what we heard from the group
 - B. Date for next meeting: Dec. 16th
 - C. Next Meeting Topic: Let's color the map

Meeting Notes

12.2.24

Future Land Use Steering Committee

Members: Alex Sams, Jason Leonard, Kent Middleton, Lorraine Fuller, David Lynn, Jeff Bishop, Sam Stabler, Joe Hill, Chris Joiner, Sheila Crisp, Chase Lawrence, Jerry Shannon, David Matheny

Staff: Lonnee, Beechuk, Jaques, Doty

Chair – welcome, speak up now, getting toward decisions and the map

Staff presentation:

- Covered the starting points – 2023/2024 public input, Guiding Principles & Growth Concept Map
- Compared how current Future Land Use categories are proposed to convert to Future Land Use categories – offered opportunities for options
- Broke down each proposed Future Land Use category into 6 descriptors, allows comparison between similar or scalable categories

General Discussion:

- The committee asked a few questions about heights in Rural and Neighborhood Residential, how Winterville fits into our plans and made comments about being able to stay in their community.
- The main discussion point was about housing mixes and where they are appropriate in the residential categories:
 - Where are there current mixes – Boulevard and 5 Points
 - How can duplexes, triplexes, and other similar housing types fit in – must have **design standards** (very consistent point)
 - People may be more comfortable with increased density/housing variety if they are confident in how the building looks (emphasis on design again).
 - Incentive for these in all zones – opportunities for more people and options, cost savings shown in Urban3 study and data
 - Concern over investors and ownership – not all have the same interests in the community
 - Small changes to existing allowances could open up more incremental options
 - Some consensus was found around more dense configurations of housing in residential areas (such as attached single family housing, ADU or certain duplexes), but still some concern over those being in all current neighborhoods
 - More people in nodes and along some corridors disrupts less of existing neighborhoods
 - Duplex is a scary term to some, be mindful of how some types will be implemented and marketed
 - Consider removing RM-1 from Neighborhood Residential Matrix but open to allowances for more house-scale residential variety than just single-family detached with new code and design standards.
- The other discussion was about this process and how we move forward:

- There was discussion over adjusting or adding to the Guiding Principles – Those were a starting point and language can be incorporated during this phase through the FLU categories
- We are not adjusting zoning currently – but these discussions lead to many points that will receive adjustment in near future
- Other factors affect many aspects that are discussed by this body, particularly certain regulations and their application along with enforcement – part of the process that needs to be discussed, however outside the view of this body.
- All text will be sent out separately for review along with the six categories – provide feedback to staff in your preferred format
- Looking to solidify wording at December 16th, 2024 meeting

Notes of record:

Initial point or question in black – responses by staff in green, responses by committee in blue

Rural – why 65 ft? – primarily for ag uses

Neighborhood res – why 2.5 stories – it equals house scale

Need neighborhood res for folks aging in place?

Why isn't Winterville integrated into ACC? Where does rural start? – part of it is infrastructure; no commercial on the edge

Is RM-1 compatible with single family neighborhoods? What's an example? – Boulevard; Carlton terrace and lumpkin; Mathis apartments with single family behind

Duplexes that fit into the neighborhood? Many function well with the right design standards. Can we have better design standards.

Architectural overlay to enforce standards

Did we decide on two rural designations? Not yet

Image always matters. Duplexes in tanglewood?

Old blocky duplexes were built prior to design standards

Can we have duplexes that look like townhouses? – yes, yes, yes

What is the incentive to bring more density to some of these zones? It was heard during public input and when paired with design it can become accepted. Cost savings for the community to have incremental increases adjacent to existing infrastructure.

Why don't the principles discuss open space and college town character? Why don't we add them – we can add more qualitative language in the FLU designations. Guiding principles were derived from public input, we are building off of them with this language. That type of language is being proposed in the Future Land Use categories

Mixed density brings in the investors – we need to keep an eye out for the owners

Empty lots and oversized lots can be turned into more density.

We need to think about new owners as much as the existing owners. We used to allow this for years and [they are grandfathered in and working well. Decision's years ago, led to very expensive current pattern](#)

Boulevard was often done as 1 bd apartments, current developers will look to max out and find loopholes.

There are many zoning changes that need to follow if we allow increased density

We haven't mentioned definition of family – it's happening under the table

There are neighborhoods where young families can't get into

Design review process for du, tri and quadplexes in single family neighborhoods?

Have a way for neighborhoods to weigh in on standards or approvals.

Multi-family zoning in Cobbham has created conflicts – also home to families

Are we looking to allow ADU's – [that is down the road and has been explored \(2 yrs ago\) at M&C](#)

We all live in single family neighborhoods and want to protect them? Affordability? [Looking to put choice on the map and set the table for broader affordability.](#)

What word frightens people the most about increased housing allowances? [Duplex](#) v. ADU;

Duplexes will be scooped up by investors!

How can these be sold to the people that need them? – [we are oversized on lots and min building size, we can change that](#)

ADU's are more digestible than some of the other housing types

Corridors have more potential for the mixed density, could get tough going into the neighborhood

If we have 18,000+ units planned we should focus on more housing types that have ownership potential

Putting more on corridors could bring some of the students out of the single family neighborhood

Do investors like single family homes with ADU's? [they like everything that makes money](#)

High rises downtown pulled some students out of the single-family neighborhoods

Don't limit to just one type of product (SFH or apts)

Are any code changes possible below 16 bds/acre and above SFH for neighborhood residential to allow some of these, but at house scale? [Smaller lot sizes, smaller allowable building sizes, unconventional lots](#)

Examples – Minneapolis, Durham (small lot allowance), Auburn, DC

Does the process need to change to get implementation?

Form is more offensive than the use ----- [Design standards!](#)

Neighborhood residential needs to be broken up and have a single family only area

Single family smaller lots, ok? **Yes**

What is North ave, Arch St? North is a mix of C-G, RM-1&2, C-N & G zone; General & Main Street Business, Mixed Density Res and Traditional Neighborhood FLU. Arch is RS-5 and Traditional Neighborhood

We could develop the corridors with more density and not disrupt the neighborhoods

Coupled cottage instead of the duplex word

Neighborhood residential with no RM, but allows some things that aren't SFH

Owner occupied + enforcement

Get the words clarified

Next meeting: December 16th 2:00 PM

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link: <https://youtube.com/live/R0D0RciRjRg?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

December 16th, 2024

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Follow-up and details from last discussion

A. Any follow-up questions?

III. Future Land Use category wording discussion

1. Do you agree with the proposed Downtown Future Land Use category language?
2. Do you agree with the proposed Urban Center Future Land Use category language?
3. Do you agree with the proposed Town Center Future Land Use category language?
4. Do you agree with the proposed Major Corridor Future Land Use category language?
5. We heard in recent discussions that a more auto accessible FLU category is needed. Do you agree in keeping General Business and the proposed language?
6. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Center Future Land Use category language?
7. Do you agree with the proposed Minor Corridor Future Land Use category language?
8. Do you agree with combining the Traditional Neighborhood & Single Family Res. former categories into a proposed Neighborhood Res. category?
9. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Residential Future Land Use category language?
10. Do you agree with the proposed Mixed Density Residential Future Land Use category language?
11. Do you agree with breaking the Government FLU category into 3 categories?
12. Do you agree with the proposed Government, Education & Parks/Open Space Future Land Use category language?
13. Do you agree with the proposed Employment Center Future Land Use category language?
14. Do you believe we need a second Rural FLU category?
15. Do you agree with the proposed Rural Future Land Use category language?

IV. Questions and other business

1) For the benefit of the group

V. Next meeting & Homework

A. Date for next meeting: **January???**

B. Next Meeting Topic: Let's color the map

Meeting Notes

Future Land Use Steering Committee – 12.16.24

Members - Alex Sams, Chase Lawrence, Connie Staudinger, David Lynn, Jason Leonard, Maxine Eason, Kent Middleton, June Ball, Lorraine Fuller, Sam Stabler, Jeff Bishop, Joe Hill, Sheila Crisp, Mack Furlow, David Matheny, Chris Joiner

Staff - Lonnee, Doty, Jaques, beechuk

Welcome – A Sams

Summary:

- The steering committee raised some points about clarity and process. Staff is working to clean up all language and make it identical across any platform or software used. Once SC makes a recommendation on the map it will go to the M&C, public, possibly back to SC if needed then through the formal process of Planning Commission and M&C for a hearing and a vote
 - Major effort was to clarify FLU category language. Here are the questions asked and **the straw poll results**, meeting ran long and some members had to leave which accounts for the changing vote totals:
 - Voting options were Yes, No or Yes but...if folks answered in the final category we asked for clarification, *****see information below results, they are labeled for each question where discussion was had*****
1. Do you agree with the proposed Downtown Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-1
 2. Do you agree with the proposed Urban Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-1-1
 3. Do you agree with the proposed Town Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 10-0-1
 4. Do you agree with the proposed Major Corridor Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 15-0
 5. We heard in recent discussions that a more auto accessible FLU category is needed. Do you agree in keeping General Business and the proposed language?
 - Yes 12-0
 6. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-0
 7. Do you agree with the proposed Minor Corridor Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 13-0
 8. Do you agree with combining the Traditional Neighborhood & Single Family Res. former categories into a proposed Neighborhood Res. category?
 - No 5-7-1
 9. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Residential Future Land Use category language?
 - Skipped vote due to results of Question #8
 10. Do you agree with the proposed Mixed Density Residential Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 11-0
 11. Do you agree with breaking the Government FLU category into 3 categories?

- **Yes 12-0**
- 12. **Do you agree with the proposed Government, Education & Parks/Open Space Future Land Use category language?**
 - **Poll skipped due to agreement on categories**
- 13. **Do you agree with the proposed Employment Center Future Land Use category language?**
 - **Yes 10-0**
- 14. **Do you believe we need a second Rural FLU category?**
 - **No 0-5, diversity of opinion, handle during coloring of the map**
- 15. **Do you agree with the proposed Rural Future Land Use category language?**
 - **No poll taken**

Do we only need one version? **No**, there is certainly room for options. Map that is sent forward will be the combined effort of the steering committee and staff, not separate maps

Who's the audience? Different audiences might need different information. **Public** and eventually the **Mayor & Commission** for a vote

Many people are worried about how it relates to the code

Some of the language that has words that need more definition. **Working on building a Glossary, see separate document and links**

What comes next for the public? **We are making a recommendation, public will have opportunities in multiple phases after this process wraps up.**

There can be dissent, it will be recorded and taken seriously. Seeking consensus

Using polling software to gauge the committee's temperature on districts

Are we able to edit the language today? **We will vote and hear edits, additional discussion to follow if needed**

Some language is slightly different from slides to paper. **Slides were final version, going forward we will seek to make them identical**

Q1) discussion

DT...a regional center that offers...

DT – add “beyond single life cycle”

DT vote – 13-1

Will downtown be anywhere else on the map? **No**

Do we need to go over the question about general business? This block splits up the general business similar categories and we will address that question in a few questions

General business has subcategories of urban, town and neighborhood centers? **No, they are all possible proposed categories**

Structured parking is “appropriate”?

What's a district level? That's within the center? Yes

***Definitions – regional, municipal, single life cycle, district level, structured parking, auto-oriented, core, semi-public, multi-modal, secondary corridors... Staff will send along with next meeting materials

Q2) Discussion

Urban Center (UC) – why have the weekly, monthly... description? It gives a sense of the standard frequency of use for an average individual, obviously this varies by peoples needs, job location, interests, etc.

UC – why is “beyond single life cycle” included? Or not in other centers? Do we need it DT? Built form is different and done with different goals in certain places. Auto-centric strip development is typically designed to be demolished or sold after initial owner depreciates the value. We don’t want that type of development downtown

Allow auto-oriented use on the edge of centers? Possibility, staff will look to include some general business for discussion

What would not be downtown in this current definition? Drive-thru, surface parking – Can these be treated as Special Uses? potentially

Context matters, additional allowances can be put in place to analyze them on a case by case basis

UC – language should mirror downtown, with limits on auto

Mixed use district based on town center concepts – don’t need urban center

The mall is one place that could be another downtown, if we don’t put urban center on the map then it will never come

Mall won’t get built as planned - Willing to throw out Urban Center

Looking to the future, we may get there in 20 years and also support a higher level of uses on a regional basis

Downtown you get 1,000 beds on four acres and only need 7 stories, do we need that at the mall?

UC seems like a relief valve

Community values a centralized business node, led to greenbelt

Don’t want the Bethlehem sprawling center

Looking for opportunities for density in sewer service area

FLU sets up areas we determine for the development community to fill in the details

We don’t have to create locations based on what developers want, we should say what we want.

We are just talking about descriptions, we haven’t put them on the map yet, we don’t have to put everything on the map

Allowing some density can free up other centers or limit growth in-town

Unchecked urbanity

Ground floor multi-family will get built out in these centers

Can we put teeth in requiring open space? Do we need it written as expected? **We say shall**

Large projects are hard to turn around after their life cycle – if it doesn't do well it becomes blight

Concerned with large tracts, if we want tall stuff, can we limit footprint, have the land split off? Limit monolithic options

How do we ensure the next step of zoning properly does happen? **This is a very public process and we will be looking to make sure to protect areas. FLU does not change anything today**

Keep alive for today? UC Vote – 13-1-1

Not at the end until we get to the end, please speak up even if it is after today

Q3) Discussion

Town Center (TC) - Multi-family without ground floor residential? Yes

Do we have to have all commercial buildings fronting streets? In bigger blocks that gets tough?

“compatible with surrounding neighborhood” vs. “based-on...”

Check out major corridor definition from public input in fall of 2023

Walmart on Lexington road would be pulled up to the street? **No, uses out parcels**

How does ground floor multi-family play out in these commercial centers? Why not everywhere in a center/node?

Q4) Discussion

Main corridor – mainstreet corridor format could also be used in town center

Major Corridor Vote 14-0 yes

Where

Q5) Discussion

General Business (GB) bullet point 5 story vs. text says 5 story

GB is contrary to many of the other descriptions

GB Vote 12-0 yes

Q6) Discussion

Neighborhood center, do we prefer 3 stories vs. 4. – folks are ok with 4

Ground floor residential allowed in neighborhood center

Stiles has ground floor commercial on Lumpkin, but then residential to the rear (alley)

Neighborhood Center Vote 13-0 yes

“front” vs “face” use words that are straightforward

Private vs. public road on interior of projects? **They tend to private**

Q7) Discussion

Minor Corridor Vote 13-0 yes

Q8) Discussion

2.5 stories vs. 3 stories, we don’t have any other half-stories? **2.5 is a common house scale**

Duplex is scary and could derail the work

Is form part of the FLU or zoning effort? **zoning**

Concern for not having a single family only FLU category

Proposed language offers choice

Does this language possibly change the character of a neighborhood?

Some allowance for multi-family could step into a neighborhood or have a context sensitive option for something beyond single-family detached – gentle density

What was just described could work with corridors allowing the multi-fam and then single family to the rear

Translation to zoning is where it could get confused, how protective do we need to be?

If we only allow ADU’s, but not du, tri and quad, more typically the owner is on site, allows some increase but not full multi-family

Should we remove this question for now and revisit?

Enforcement

Leave single family with allowance for ADU?

Are you protecting single family neighborhoods? **yes**

Duplex allows more opportunities for families than tri & quad

One size for all is not good on a county scale

NR Vote 5-7-1

Allow people to monetize their most valuable asset

Q10) Discussion

Mixed Density Vote 11-0

“comparatively higher” define and demonstrate on Mixed density residential

Q11) Discussion

Government Vote 11-0

The breakdown allows for differences on surrounding uses and intensities

Full text language needs to mirror the surrounding differences

Gov = admin, utility and operational

Q13) Discussion

Employment Center Vote 10-0

Q14 & Q15) Discussion

Rural - can lot minimums be reduced? **Through zoning**

Enough diversity of opinion to warrant two categories and we can debate locations when painting the map

Old family farms and real ag operations on the east side

Concern over losing greenbelt

Opportunity to allow more homes

Conservation subdivisions could also benefit and is mentioned in the proposed language

Conservation subdivisions can protect land

How many properties are currently on conservation easements

Rural belt could be the on the 40-60 year horizon; 10 acres to 5 acres is ok, las frontier

Keeping greenbelt could drive verticality

2nd Rural Vote 0-4 no

Last sentence of proposed language is scary for only this category – **has a lot to do with not having infrastructure**

Some would like the final sentence removed or see how it applies in other FLU categories

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link: <https://youtube.com/live/I9JYh8pdhy8?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

February 10th, 2025

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Follow-up and details from last discussion

- A. Any follow-up questions?

III. Future Land Use Map – First Cut

- 1) Big picture view
- 2) What's not changing?
- 3) What's similar in intent, but going by a new name?
- 4) Where are the changes?
 - a. Nodes
 - b. Corridors
 - c. Other uniqueness

IV. Questions and other business

- 1) For the benefit of the group

V. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Date for next meeting: **TBD**
- B. Next Meeting Topic: Let's finish the map & discuss outreach

Meeting Notes

Future Land Use Steering Committee – 12.16.24

Members - Alex Sams, Chase Lawrence, Connie Staudinger, David Lynn, Jason Leonard, Maxine Eason, Kent Middleton, June Ball, Lorraine Fuller, Sam Stabler, Jeff Bishop, Joe Hill, Sheila Crisp, Mack Furlow, David Matheny, Chris Joiner

Staff - Lonnee, Doty, Jaques, beechuk

Welcome – A Sams

Summary:

- The steering committee raised some points about clarity and process. Staff is working to clean up all language and make it identical across any platform or software used. Once SC makes a recommendation on the map it will go the M&C, public, possibly back to SC if needed then through the formal process of Planning Commission and M&C for a hearing and a vote
 - Major effort was to clarify FLU category language. Here are the questions asked and the straw poll results, meeting ran long and some members had to leave which accounts for the changing vote totals:
 - Voting options were Yes, No or Yes but...if folks answered in the final category we asked for clarification, ****see information below results, they are labeled for each question where discussion was had****
1. Do you agree with the proposed Downtown Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-1
 2. Do you agree with the proposed Urban Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-1
 3. Do you agree with the proposed Town Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 10-0-1
 4. Do you agree with the proposed Major Corridor Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 15-0
 5. We heard in recent discussions that a more auto accessible FLU category is needed. Do you agree in keeping General Business and the proposed language?
 - Yes 12-0
 6. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 14-0
 7. Do you agree with the proposed Minor Corridor Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 13-0
 8. Do you agree with combining the Traditional Neighborhood & Single Family Res. former categories into a proposed Neighborhood Res. category?
 - No 5-7-1
 9. Do you agree with the proposed Neighborhood Residential Future Land Use category language?
 - Skipped vote due to results of Question #8
 10. Do you agree with the proposed Mixed Density Residential Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 11-0
 11. Do you agree with breaking the Government FLU category into 3 categories?

- Yes 12-0
- 12. Do you agree with the proposed Government, Education & Parks/Open Space Future Land Use category language?
 - Poll skipped due to agreement on categories
- 13. Do you agree with the proposed Employment Center Future Land Use category language?
 - Yes 10-0
- 14. Do you believe we need a second Rural FLU category?
 - No 0-5, diversity of opinion, handle during coloring of the map
- 15. Do you agree with the proposed Rural Future Land Use category language?
 - No poll taken

Do we only need one version? No, there is certainly room for options. Map that is sent forward will be the combined effort of the steering committee and staff, not separate maps

Who's the audience? Different audiences might need different information. Public and eventually the Mayor & Commission for a vote

Many people are worried about how it relates to the code

Some of the language that has words that need more definition. Working on building a Glossary, see separate document and links

What comes next for the public? We are making a recommendation, public will have opportunities in multiple phases after this process wraps up.

There can be dissent, it will be recorded and taken seriously. Seeking consensus

Using polling software to gauge the committee's temperature on districts

Are we able to edit the language today? We will vote and hear edits, additional discussion to follow if needed

Some language is slightly different from slides to paper. Slides were final version, going forward we will seek to make them identical

Q1) discussion

DT...a regional center that offers...

DT – add “beyond single life cycle”

DT vote – 13-1

Will downtown be anywhere else on the map? No

Do we need to go over the question about general business? This block splits up the general business similar categories and we will address that question in a few questions

General business has subcategories of urban, town and neighborhood centers? No, they are all possible proposed categories

Structured parking is “appropriate”?

What's a district level? That's within the center? Yes

***Definitions – regional, municipal, single life cycle, district level, structured parking, auto-oriented, core, semi-public, multi-modal, secondary corridors... Staff will send along with next meeting materials

Q2) Discussion

Urban Center (UC) – why have the weekly, monthly... description? It gives a sense of the standard frequency of use for an average individual, obviously this varies by peoples needs, job location, interests, etc.

UC – why is “beyond single life cycle” included? Or not in other centers? Do we need it DT? Built form is different and done with different goals in certain places. Auto-centric strip development is typically designed to be demolished or sold after initial owner depreciates the value. We don’t want that type of development downtown

Allow auto-oriented use on the edge of centers? Possibility, staff will look to include some general business for discussion

What would not be downtown in this current definition? Drive-thru, surface parking – Can these be treated as Special Uses? potentially

Context matters, additional allowances can be put in place to analyze them on a case by case basis

UC – language should mirror downtown, with limits on auto

Mixed use district based on town center concepts – don’t need urban center

The mall is one place that could be another downtown, if we don’t put urban center on the map then it will never come

Mall won’t get built as planned - Willing to throw out Urban Center

Looking to the future, we may get there in 20 years and also support a higher level of uses on a regional basis

Downtown you get 1,000 beds on four acres and only need 7 stories, do we need that at the mall?

UC seems like a relief valve

Community values a centralized business node, led to greenbelt

Don’t want the Bethlehem sprawling center

Looking for opportunities for density in sewer service area

FLU sets up areas we determine for the development community to fill in the details

We don’t have to create locations based on what developers want, we should say what we want.

We are just talking about descriptions, we haven’t put them on the map yet, we don’t have to put everything on the map

Allowing some density can free up other centers or limit growth in-town

Unchecked urbanity

Ground floor multi-family will get built out in these centers

Can we put teeth in requiring open space? Do we need it written as expected? **We say shall**

Large projects are hard to turn around after their life cycle – if it doesn't do well it becomes blight

Concerned with large tracts, if we want tall stuff, can we limit footprint, have the land split off? Limit monolithic options

How do we ensure the next step of zoning properly does happen? **This is a very public process and we will be looking to make sure to protect areas. FLU does not change anything today**

Keep alive for today? UC Vote – 13-1-1

Not at the end until we get to the end, please speak up even if it is after today

Q3) Discussion

Town Center (TC) - Multi-family without ground floor residential? Yes

Do we have to have all commercial buildings fronting streets? In bigger blocks that gets tough?

“compatible with surrounding neighborhood” vs. “based-on...”

Check out major corridor definition from public input in fall of 2023

Walmart on Lexington road would be pulled up to the street? **No, uses out parcels**

How does ground floor multi-family play out in these commercial centers? Why not everywhere in a center/node?

Q4) Discussion

Main corridor – mainstreet corridor format could also be used in town center

Major Corridor Vote 14-0 yes

Where

Q5) Discussion

General Business (GB) bullet point 5 story vs. text says 5 story

GB is contrary to many of the other descriptions

GB Vote 12-0 yes

Q6) Discussion

Neighborhood center, do we prefer 3 stories vs. 4. – folks are ok with 4

Ground floor residential allowed in neighborhood center

Stiles has ground floor commercial on Lumpkin, but then residential to the rear (alley)

Neighborhood Center Vote 13-0 yes

“front” vs “face” use words that are straightforward

Private vs. public road on interior of projects? **They tend to private**

Q7) Discussion

Minor Corridor Vote 13-0 yes

Q8) Discussion

2.5 stories vs. 3 stories, we don’t have any other half-stories? **2.5 is a common house scale**

Duplex is scary and could derail the work

Is form part of the FLU or zoning effort? **zoning**

Concern for not having a single family only FLU category

Proposed language offers choice

Does this language possibly change the character of a neighborhood?

Some allowance for multi-family could step into a neighborhood or have a context sensitive option for something beyond single-family detached – gentle density

What was just described could work with corridors allowing the multi-fam and then single family to the rear

Translation to zoning is where it could get confused, how protective do we need to be?

If we only allow ADU’s, but not du, tri and quad, more typically the owner is on site, allows some increase but not full multi-family

Should we remove this question for now and revisit?

Enforcement

Leave single family with allowance for ADU?

Are you protecting single family neighborhoods? **yes**

Duplex allows more opportunities for families than tri & quad

One size for all is not good on a county scale

NR Vote 5-7-1

Allow people to monetize their most valuable asset

Q10) Discussion

Mixed Density Vote 11-0

“comparatively higher” define and demonstrate on Mixed density residential

Q11) Discussion

Government Vote 11-0

The breakdown allows for differences on surrounding uses and intensities

Full text language needs to mirror the surrounding differences

Gov = admin, utility and operational

Q13) Discussion

Employment Center Vote 10-0

Q14 & Q15) Discussion

Rural - can lot minimums be reduced? **Through zoning**

Enough diversity of opinion to warrant two categories and we can debate locations when painting the map

Old family farms and real ag operations on the east side

Concern over losing greenbelt

Opportunity to allow more homes

Conservation subdivisions could also benefit and is mentioned in the proposed language

Conservation subdivisions can protect land

How many properties are currently on conservation easements

Rural belt could be the on the 40-60 year horizon; 10 acres to 5 acres is ok, las frontier

Keeping greenbelt could drive verticality

2nd Rural Vote 0-4 no

Last sentence of proposed language is scary for only this category – **has a lot to do with not having infrastructure**

Some would like the final sentence removed or see how it applies in other FLU categories

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link: <https://youtube.com/live/WGTIRHdWWN4?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

February 17th, 2025

2:00 – 4:30 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Follow-up and details from last discussion

- A. Any follow-up questions?

III. Future Land Use Map – First Cut

- 1) Big picture view
- 2) What's not changing?
- 3) What's similar in intent, but going by a new name?
- 4) Where are the changes?
 - a. Nodes
 - b. Corridors
 - c. Other uniqueness

IV. Questions and other business

- 1) For the benefit of the group

V. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Date for next meeting: **TBD**
- B. Next Meeting Topic: Let's finish the map & discuss outreach

Meeting Notes

FLU Committee Notes 2.17.25

After committee has made all decisions on the map. The map will be open to the public at the Planning Auditorium. Then it will go to the public at various locations. Then back to the Steering Committee, then to the Planning Commission and finally to the M&C.

Trying to get all angles, so final product is as best as possible.

Maxine: Would it come back to us after public input?

Yes if big changes are brought up and need to be spoken about.

Planning Commission will have their own map

Kent: Considerable changes down the road? How does the Planning Commission process work?

Maybe there will be changes? A whole lot of people looking at the map for different reasons.

Planning Commission will most likely have new views and new public input.

Broadcast that the public comment is for everyone to come in and look/speak their views

Made available online for all, come to the office, make comfortable with questions

Multi-date/site public engagement

Recap:

Translation of FLU Map w/sewer line in red

Existing FLU translated to new categories

Broken up Govt

Gen Business, Major Corridor, Town Center

Main St Bus to Minor Corr and Neighborhood Center

Rural to ground-truthed Rural Residential

Trad Res to Neighborhood Res (Change in name only)

Maxine: Rural Res: Ground-truth or change? Ground-truthing

Focus is on 7.5% of total land

Translating legitimate concerns from Steering and community

Work to explain to gen public what Steering has been working out

Alex: Last 10% is the hardest, which is why this is so important

Locations

S Mill/Macon Hwy

Town Center Node at shopping plaza and block

Multi-fam on outside of loop is ground-truthing

Trail connections

Joiner: Track and Field and The Preserve could translate to more density?

Bruce: Will Hunter Rd has complications, Track and Field is the extent of the sewer.

UGA has no appetite to extend it. Opportunity in the future if there's more sewer

Maxine: Does this effort create “number” of areas that NEED sewer? Where would we add that? What discussions are there around that?

Kent: is this an area that could be identified as a good location to expand sewer?

Bruce: Yes. Sandy Creek basin is one we've discussed with this body. New vs Repair

Joiner: RM-3 isn't compatible with Minor Corridor. Make Bowling another Town Center? High intensity zoning

Lumpkin/Macon Hwy creates a good gateway to ACC

David Lynn: Should be a commercial corridor

Mack: Why not make the whole area a town center? Can walk and park anywhere with decent sidewalks. Should go up milledge to Woodland Hill Dr line

Sam: Street can be pedestrianized

David Metheny: All of northside of Macon should be Town Center

Courtside to Loop, north side of Macon Hwy, south side of Macon Hwy to Town Center.

Eastside

Joiner: Aldi and Green Acres to Town Center. College Glen to Town Center.

Kent: Town Center offers better connection to surrounding neighborhood.

Semi-open space is a deep need

Need for cohesiveness

Create a better sense of place on the Eastside

Minor is not sufficiently distinctive from the Major Corridor

Minor should not be so focused on fast traffic

Mack: I like what Kent said

Aldi, wrap-around Cedar Shoals, Green Acres Shopping Center to Neighborhood Center

Ansonborough and George Town apartments to Waffle House going to Neighborhood Center

Joiner: Cedar Shoals and Highland Park Dr should be relooked at for redevelopment opportunity

Lexington East

Maxine: Intersection should be THE SPOT for a Town Center.

David Metheny: Neighborhood Center at corner of Lexington/Gaines School

Mack: Need general business, especially if commercial airport takes off.

Lowe's would be a great multifamily location

Gen Business for airport overlay on south side, QuikTrip to Dominos.

Alex: Lowes to Gen Business?

Park is underutilized. If Lowe's were redeveloped, you have green space opportunity

Joiner: Front of Seagraves to Mixed Density Residential

7 stories for major corridor might be too much?

Balance between priming area to be more accessible and the Oglethorpe folks

Minor Corridor when backing into neighborhoods

Lexington West

B&B becoming a Town/Neighborhood Center? Airport Overlay causes stagnation

Jason: Hollis St neighborhood can have potential sewer. Upzone might get more density.

Joiner: Minor corridor along barnett shoals to library

Kent: Barnett Shoals should be a great section for a boulevard

Oak/Oconee

Maxine: Why Mixed Den on Georgia Drive?

Bruce: Pieces that front neighborhood translates to residential, not gen business

Must protect against apartment complexes

Could be similar to Prince, a nice approach into town

The Triangle

No good representation on committee w/o Rashe present

Mack: Good location for public input and Commissioner decisions

Sam: Seems appropriate

Came from direct input from community and stakeholders

Downtown/W Broad

Parkview good redevelopment location with incorporation of Housing Authority needs with potential gains

Joiner: Why not Elizabeth St area to Downtown? Optional change

River is a limiter on one side, but why not the top as well?

David: Plenty of capacity at concrete plant, but not the infrastructure (pipe size)

Will still take a couple of years

Maxine & Alex: Need to be very careful with how far to take Downtown

Jason: College Ave at the river is the Downtown border

Sam: As a resident that borders downtown, I'm okay with it

N Finley as the boundary. Public Input was very strong with support of transition

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link: <https://youtube.com/live/WGTIRHdWWN4?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

February 24th, 2025

2:00 – 4:30 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. **Welcome**

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. **Follow-up and details from last discussion**

- A. Any follow-up questions?

III. **Future Land Use Map – First Cut**

- 1) Big picture view
- 2) What's not changing?
- 3) What's similar in intent, but going by a new name?
- 4) Where are the changes?
 - a. Nodes
 - b. Corridors
 - c. Other uniqueness

IV. **Questions and other business**

- 1) For the benefit of the group

V. **Next meeting & Homework**

- A. Date for next meeting: **TBD**
- B. Next Meeting Topic: Let's finish the map & discuss outreach

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link:

<https://youtube.com/live/b8cgnzmDEgw?feature=share>

MEETING AGENDA

March 12th, 2025

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Follow-up and details from last discussion

- A. Any follow-up questions?

III. Future Land Use Map – First Cut

- A. Final inset area review – Prince Ave
- B. Review of all committee proposed adjustments

IV. Public Input

- A. Opportunity for the public to comment on the Future Land Use proposed map

V. Questions and other business

- A. Outreach for public input
- B. Education about the Future Land Use process

VI. Next meeting & Homework

- A. Date for next meeting: **TBD**
- B. Opportunity to re-convene after public input and/or Mayor & Commission worksession – *If needed*

FLU SC 3.12.25

Sams, Lawrence, lynn, furlow, Matheny, leonard, Middleton, ball, fuller, stabler, moore, joiner, McCullick

As – welcome, speak up, going through Prince, recap, pub input then going out to public for comment

KM – new term for Gaines School – “corridor of significance”

Prince – More mixed density residential, chase/boulevard to mixed density? Mixed Density going down Oglethorpe

Pound st gov buildings go to something for a future use and sale?

Keep the consistency of government

Bottleworks to downtown, make it slower and safer

Boulevard and Hiawassee (Shirey parcel & GA Power) – option for single family houses? –
***Neighborhood Residential

More neighborhood commercial on Park?

Chase/boulevard SE/NE corner – ***Minor Corridor – two houses are Historic houses that are contributing

Interior parcels Easy/Park/Satula

Barnett Shoals doesn't need minor corridor / RM Townhomes would be more likely.

Gaines School between Hilsman and Lexington – minor corridor instead of Mixed Density? MC – Sunnyview, first parcel sunnyview – springtree, school – ponderosa, ponderosa – cedar pointe, parcels in front of apartments, cedar creek to barrington

B Shoals – Kroger south – Pine woods neighborhood and across the street to Minor Corridor

Space Kroger – race trac parcel – yes / other change remove

DT – Elizabeth and willow to DT (9-0 in favor) - make sure to offer information to PC about this discussion

Public Comment – Ken Portier – Land use v. zoning, don't elongate downtown

Let the people speak

How will comments be taken in or digested?

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

Streaming Link:

MEETING AGENDA

June 16th, 2025

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Follow-up on draft committee report

- A. Please respond to the high-level aspects of the report
- B. Please let us know if there are any additions
- C. Please send along any minor edits

III. Follow-up on FLU maps and April input

- A. Staff will present what was heard from the public at April input events
- B. Please provide feedback on the input
- C. Is there anything to adjust on the maps after input?
- D. Staff will also present non-map related comments, this is helpful for informing the overall discussion and where we are going

IV. Questions and other business

- 1) For the benefit of the group

V. Next meeting

- A. Date for next meeting: **Are we there yet?**
- B. Next Meeting Topic: TBD

Alexander Sams, Chase Lawrence, Jason Leonard, Allison McCullick, David Matheny, June Ball, Lorraine Fuller, Joe Hill, Chris Joiner, Connie Staudinger

Bruce Lonnee, Max Doty, Stephen Jaques, Marc Beechuk

AS – thank you for the meetings, lots of good things heard

- Final feedback – nailed it? Good, but how about this? Redo it?

BL – thank you for the commitment

- Steering committee's map
- Survey – what did they like, what was missed?

DM – good to see "FLU is not zoning"

*AM – GP – surprised to see #2 – is this a big point? Expand existing infrastructure, make this talk about capacity vs. network

Service delivery strategy should work off of the FLU and vice versa

*AS – change Urban3 subheading title

LF – astounded that the community was irritated by U3 discussion / people missed the point at Clarke Central

JH – pub perception – "we are trying to drive up the price of real estate in Athens?"

You can read your own fear into the U3 data

Future nodal development – we need to consider time, time is money for developers

JL – Really nothing stopping a neighborhood group from doing this now? – district commissioner involved

AM – clarify that this is staff thoughts

CL – not on board with mini-neighborhood groups planning areas

LF – the community is interested in where we are going

AM – send "Where we are going" section out to the full committee for full review?

AS – trim down WWAG

CS – these are **best practices**, tools in our tool box

LF – shouldn't we be supporting some BMP's?

Add bullet points of the charge to intro

CS – WWAG is a good wrap, keep it, people don't read appendices

Add a preamble? Abstract? Recommendation?

Bring the recommendation up to front, quick summary

Executive summary

No “we think” in WWAG

Can we reach out to commissioners to explain items from the process?

The report should help explain those things, use it

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

Planning Commission Work Session

2045 Future Land Use Map

Streaming Link: https://youtube.com/live/Und9-w_Ufm8?feature=share

MEETING AGENDA

July 10th, 2025

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Planning Department Auditorium

I. Welcome

- A. Call the meeting to order – Planning Commission Chair – Sarah Gehring
- B. Planning Director – Bruce Lonnee
- C. Steering Committee Chair - Alex Sams

II. Steering Committee Purpose

- A. Planning Director

III. Summary of Steering Committee work

- A. Background and Process Overview
- B. Constraints
- C. Future Land Use Categories
- D. Mapping of all discussed changes
- E. Mapping of Final Proposed changes

IV. Comments, Discussion and Questions

- A. Planning Commission Discussion
- B. Public Input

V. Next meeting

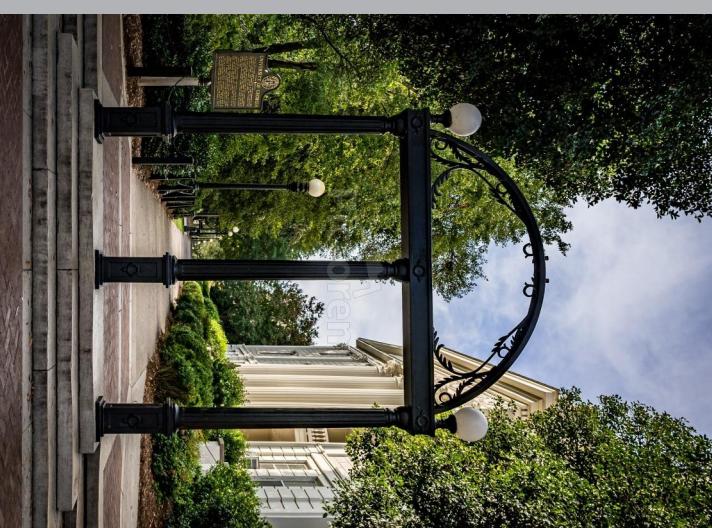
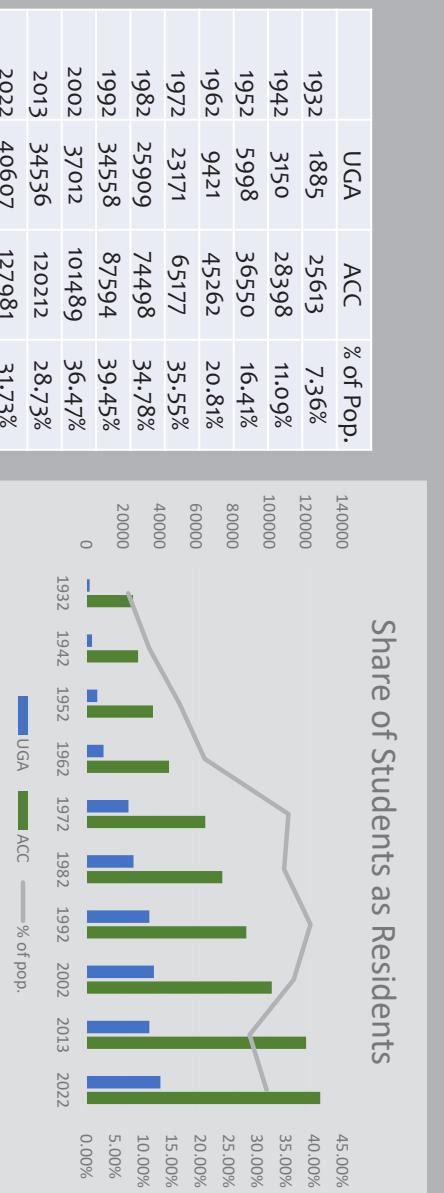
- A. Planning Commission consideration scheduled for August 7th, 2025

APPENDIX D

Demographics & Population Information

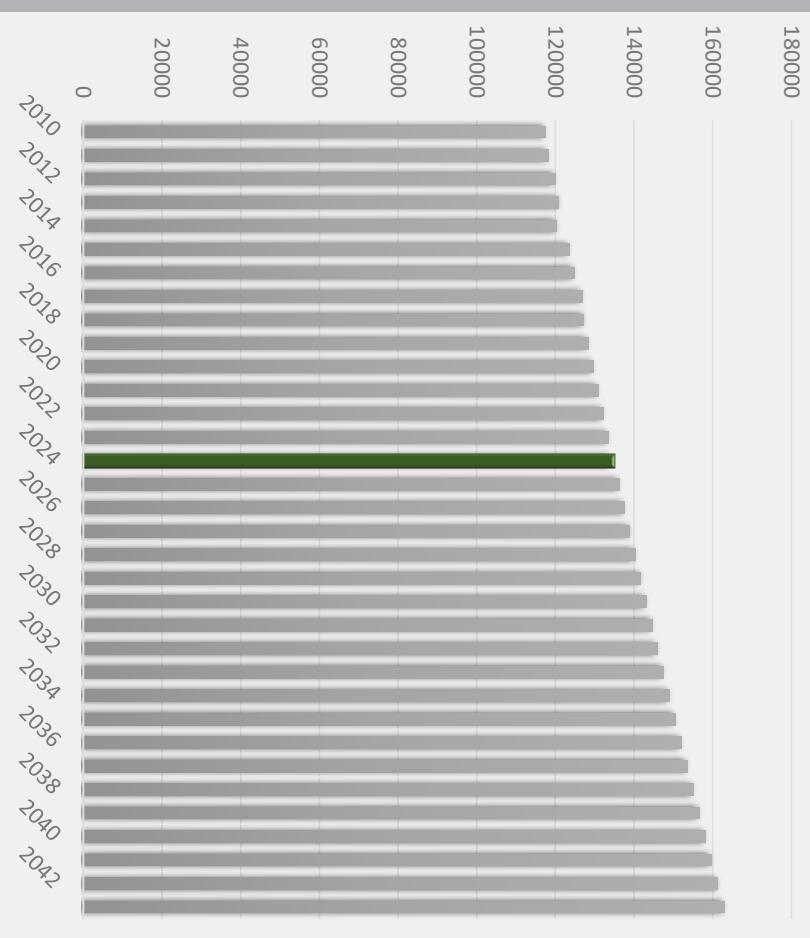
UGA STUDENT POPULATION

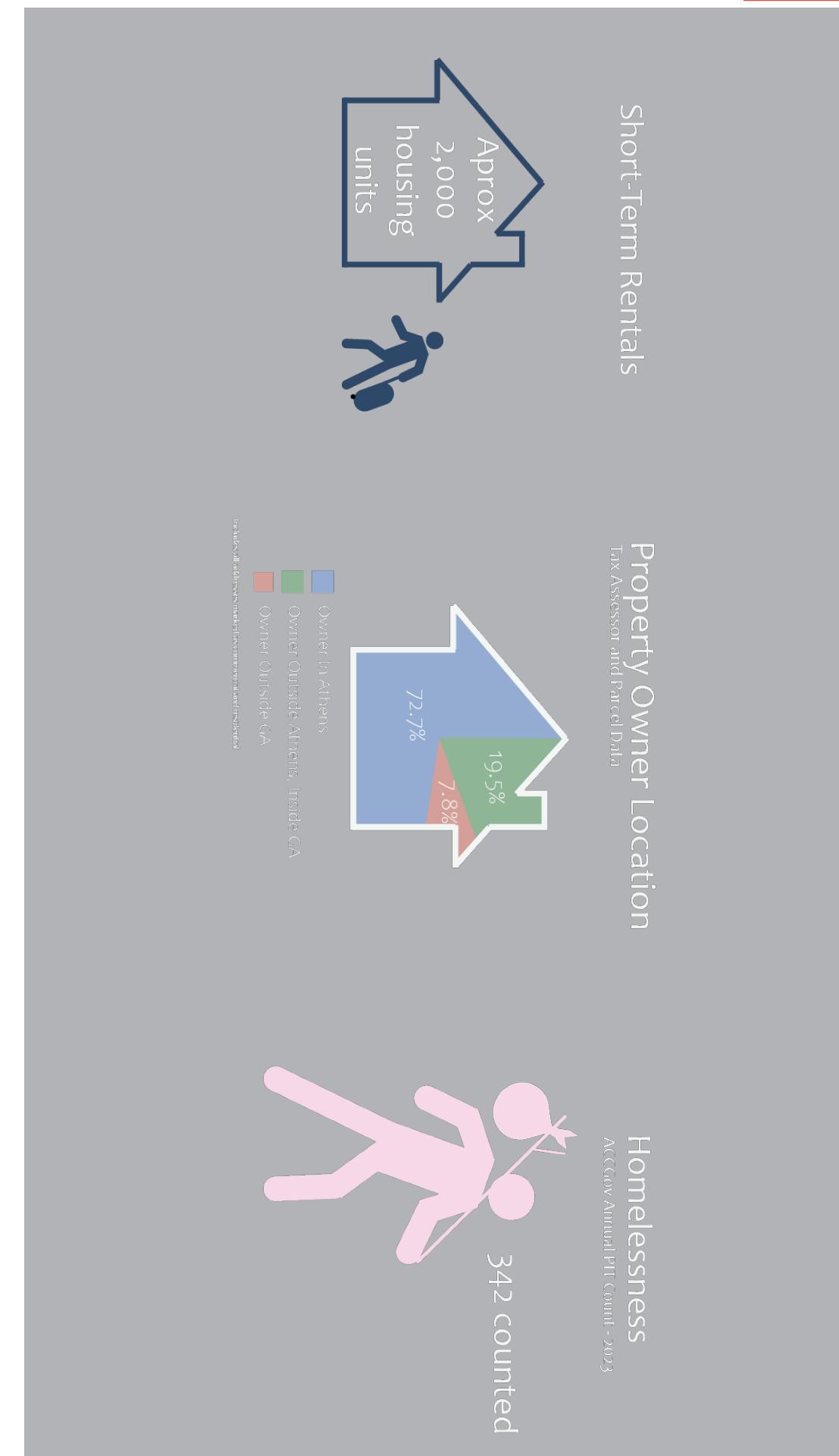
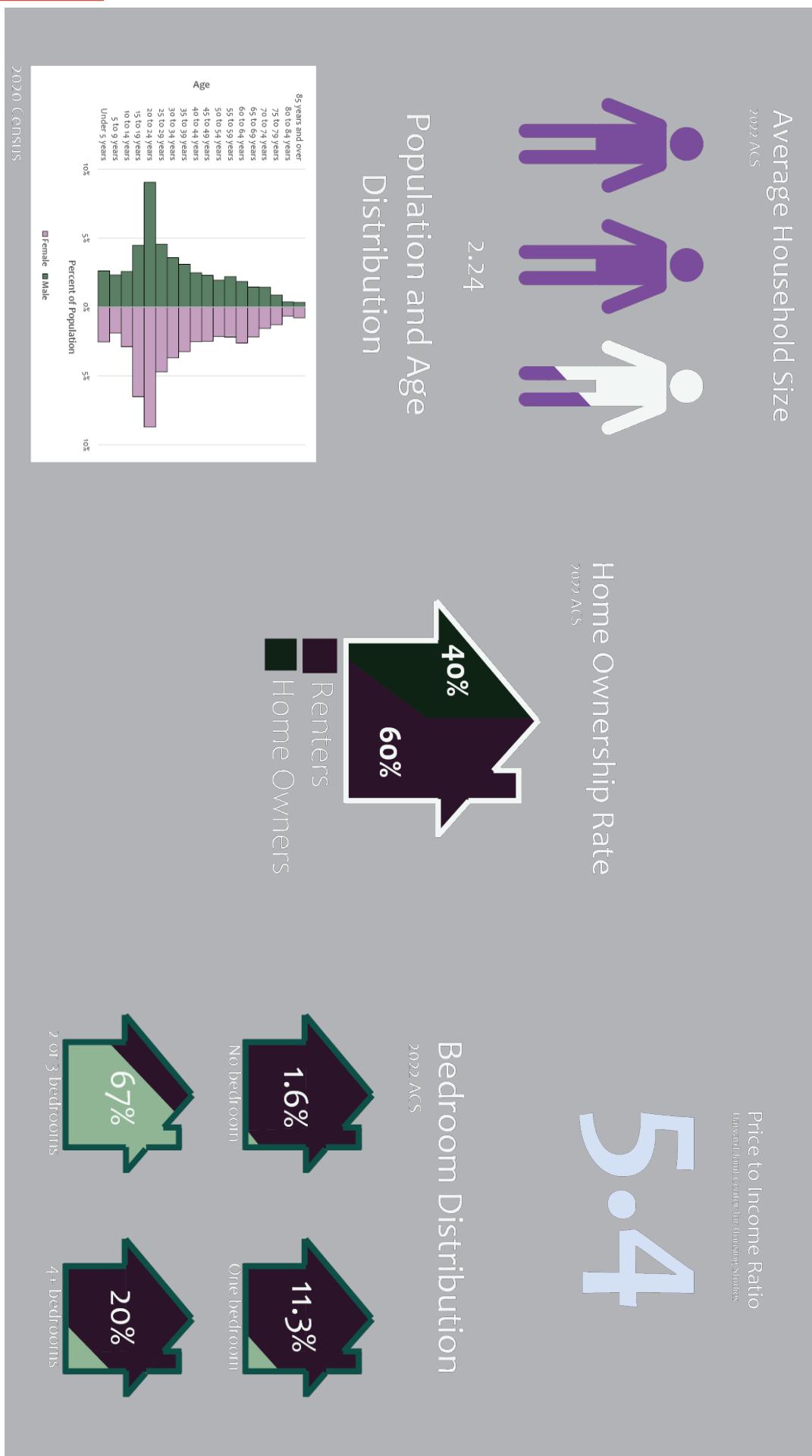
- Most flexible demographic (1-bedroom studios to 5-bedroom houses)
- Current laws try to steer students away from certain neighborhoods and towards others. This is nearly impossible to enforce.



ACC POPULATION

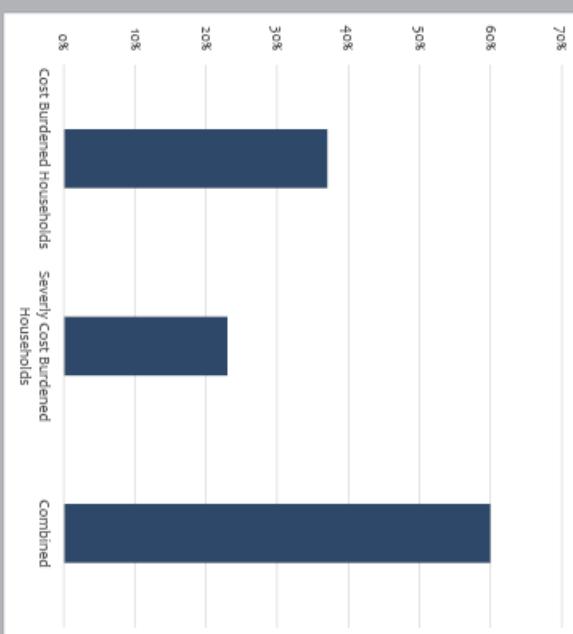
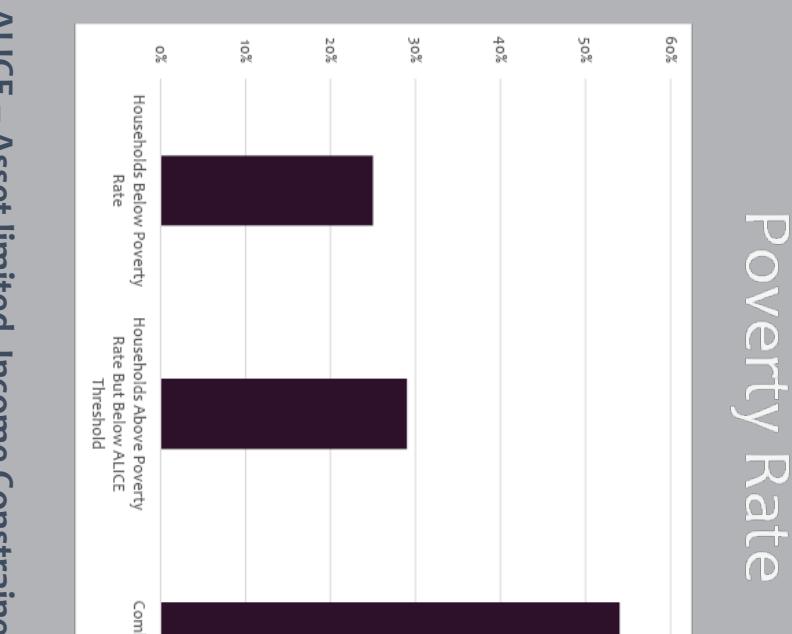
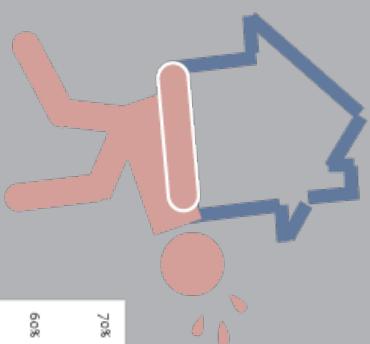
- The Population of Athens Clarke County has showed a very steady annual increase of just over 1% resulting in 163,000 Residents in 2043
- Current population is approximately 130,000
- GA population growth is just under 1% annually





Housing Burden

Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies



ALICE – Asset limited, Income Constrained, Employed

APPENDIX E

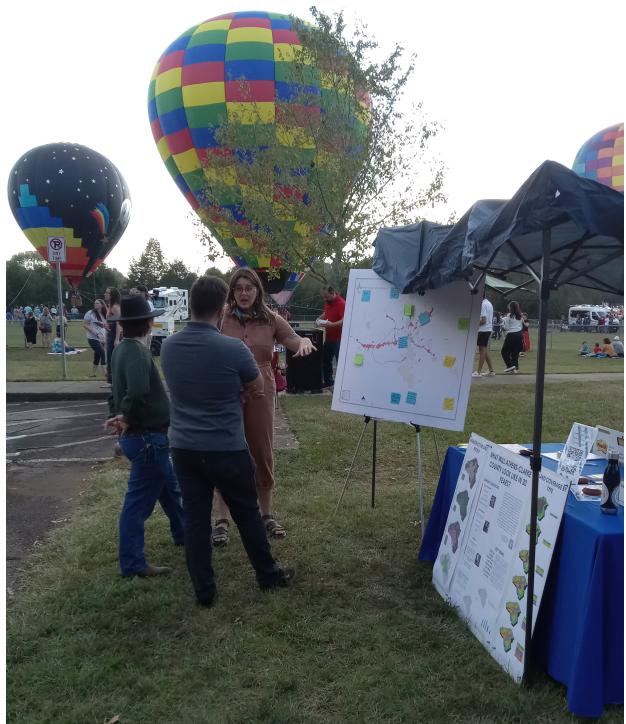
Methodology

METHODOLOGY

THREE YEARS OF WORK & WHY PUBLIC INPUT WAS AT THE CORE

Those epochs of growth led to a variety of factors that still apply today; good patterns for **in-town, mixed neighborhoods; major corridors** to be considered for growth and movement; infrastructure expansion that needs to be funded in perpetuity, bringing forth an impetus to optimize development around it; and a community that spans from a historic downtown, through strong neighborhoods, mixing with our institutional partners, suburban neighborhoods to accommodate later-20th century patterns, job centers and our bucolic, rural edge.

Planning Department Staff utilized this understanding of the historical growth of Athens in combination with local environmental factors and existing infrastructure data to begin having conversations with the public about future growth. Public input (see appendices E, G, and, H, as well as further details below) began in the Fall of 2023 and included many conversations about how these factors interact and what is the best path forward for our community. Many key values were brought forth from that effort including being fiscally responsible with our limited land and understanding the need for balance between the people who live here and the people that want to come here. Once completed we formed some guiding principles and created a broad version of how the input could be used for future development, that gave us a **Growth Concept Map** (see appendix B3-4).



“

The current effort builds off of the growth patterns we have had since the last major update in 2000. Athens-Clarke County has noticeable growth phases beginning with an incremental approach prior to World War II that can be seen in the grid network of in-town neighborhoods. That was followed in the subsequent decades with suburban expansion that was common throughout the US, providing Athens with “first ring suburbs”. This form made life more dependent on the car, cut down on the grid connections and accounts for the boom of platted neighborhoods. These subdivisions have a planned scheme and often a single housing type, predominantly single-family detached. Further community expansion beyond the city limits of Athens led to the consolidation of the City of Athens and Clarke County governments in 1991 and truly brought the town and country together in the format that remains today.

METHODOLOGY

A broad view of the county in order to identify opportunities for growth over the next 20 years. This analysis accounts for multiple factors that limit growth potential including the natural environment, built environment and policy choices. Public input responses were gathered over a two-month period to better attune the map. With a conservative estimate of **30,000 people** moving to the county by the end of this map's forecasted lifecycle, the Growth Concept Map helps guide the general public, developers, institutions and commerce towards a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Based on received input, several key themes emerged including increasing **housing variety**, increasing **transportation choice**, and **preserving and creating parks/greenspace**. An emphasis on **affordability** and **useful walks** were also prominent responses from the public. Based on data, community feedback, and Staff observations, the following items were identified as critical considerations for the community to bear in mind when steering development towards over the next 20 years:



Photo top right: Condor Chocolates in Five Points

Current Strengths

- Availability of entertainment options, historical value and walkability in Downtown area
- Predictable scaling of the community
- Sustainability of the Greenbelt
- Expansion of the greenway trail/firefly trail
- Housing options for all ages, stages of life and incomes

Areas Of Opportunity

- Design standards based on context (Both site & architectural)
- Higher density nodal, mixed-use developments with different types of businesses
- Create a more robust public transit system with multiple transit types
- Need for density in all zones
- Greenspace/Parks in underserved areas of the county

Improvement Needs

- Affordable options in housing
- Multi-use interconnections between developments, old and new
- Reduction in parking requirements
- Medical availability throughout the community
- Commercial options that focus on a wider audience than students

Obstacles

- Topography/Environmental Areas/Available Land
- Replacement of current infrastructure
- Existing ordinances
- Traffic Congestion
- Safety along major roadways

APPENDIX F

Presentations

TABLE OF CONTENTS



HOUSING

Who Builds Housing & The Issues	3
---	---

JANUARY 9, 2024

Land Use Budget & 20-Year Future	8
--	---

APRIL 30, 2024

Growth Concept Map & Public Input	33
---	----

FEBRUARY 26, 2025

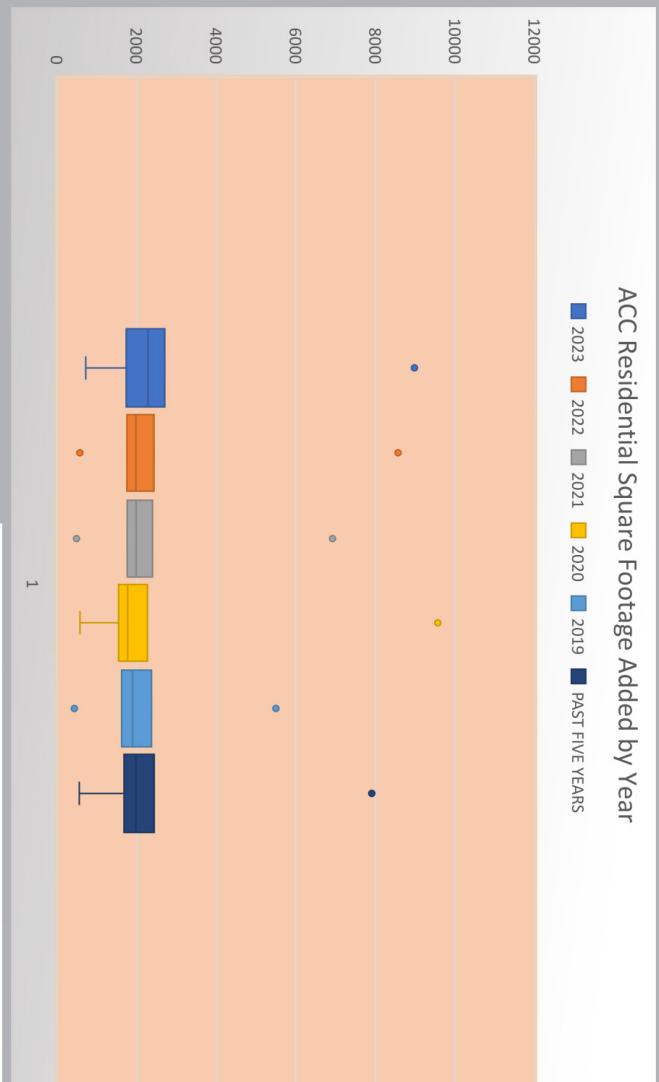
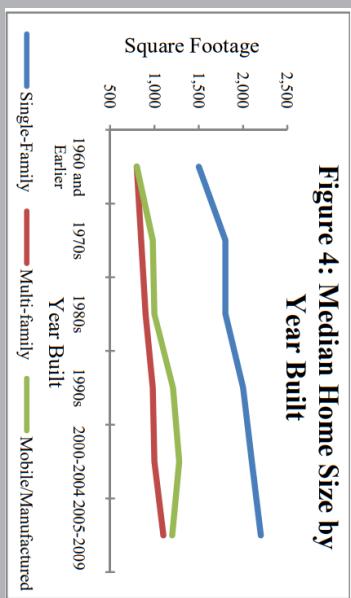
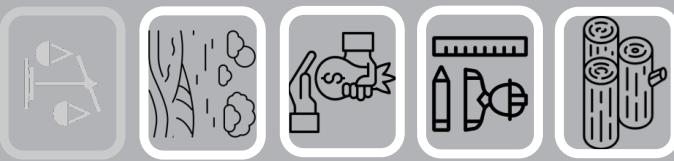
Mayor & Commission Presentation	61
---	----

WHO BUILDS OR DEVELOPS REAL ESTATE

- Fix & Flippers
 - Scale: Individual Buildings
 - Work: Rehab/Renovation of Existing Buildings
 - Capital: Sweat Equity, Friends & Family, Local Banks
- Incremental Developers
 - Scale: Neighborhood
 - Work: Adaptive Re-Use & New Builds
 - Capital: Sweat Equity, Friends & Family, Local Banks
- Regional Professionals
 - Scale: Cities & Regions
 - Work: New Builds (typically)
 - Capital: Regional & National Banks
- National (Corporate) Professionals
 - Scale: Nationwide
 - Work: New Builds (typically)
 - Capital: Regional & National Banks, Investment Funds, Institutions



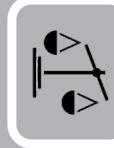
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



Heated Sq Ft	Min	Q1	Q2 (Median)	Q3	Max
2023	720	1,736	2,280	2,704	8,970
2022	570	1,752	1,974	2,431	8,563
2021	484	1,760	1,980	2,392	6,914
2020	572	1,540	1,770	2,268	9,560
2019	430	1,620	1,889	2,372	5,492
Past 5 years	555	1,682	1,979	2,433	7899.8

Source: HHES, U.S. Census Bureau

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



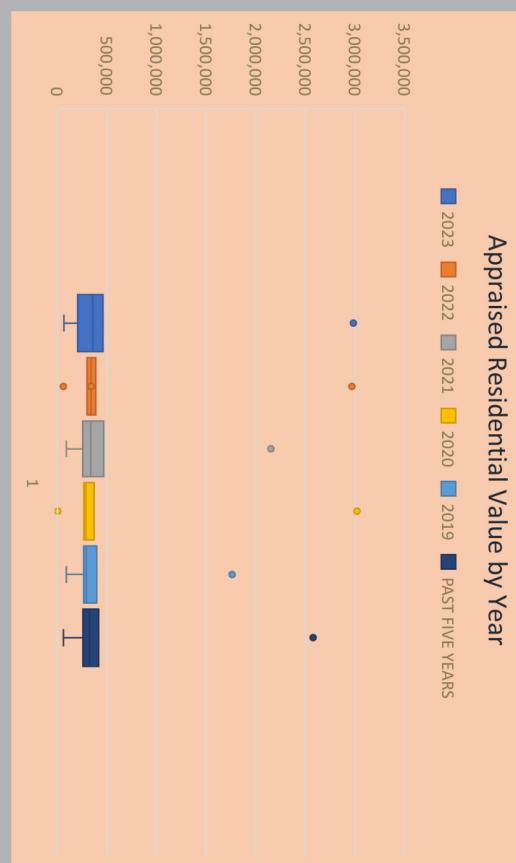
► Median sale price is

approximately

\$329,000 – \$350,000

► \$185-195/sq ft

► Up 7-10% from 2023

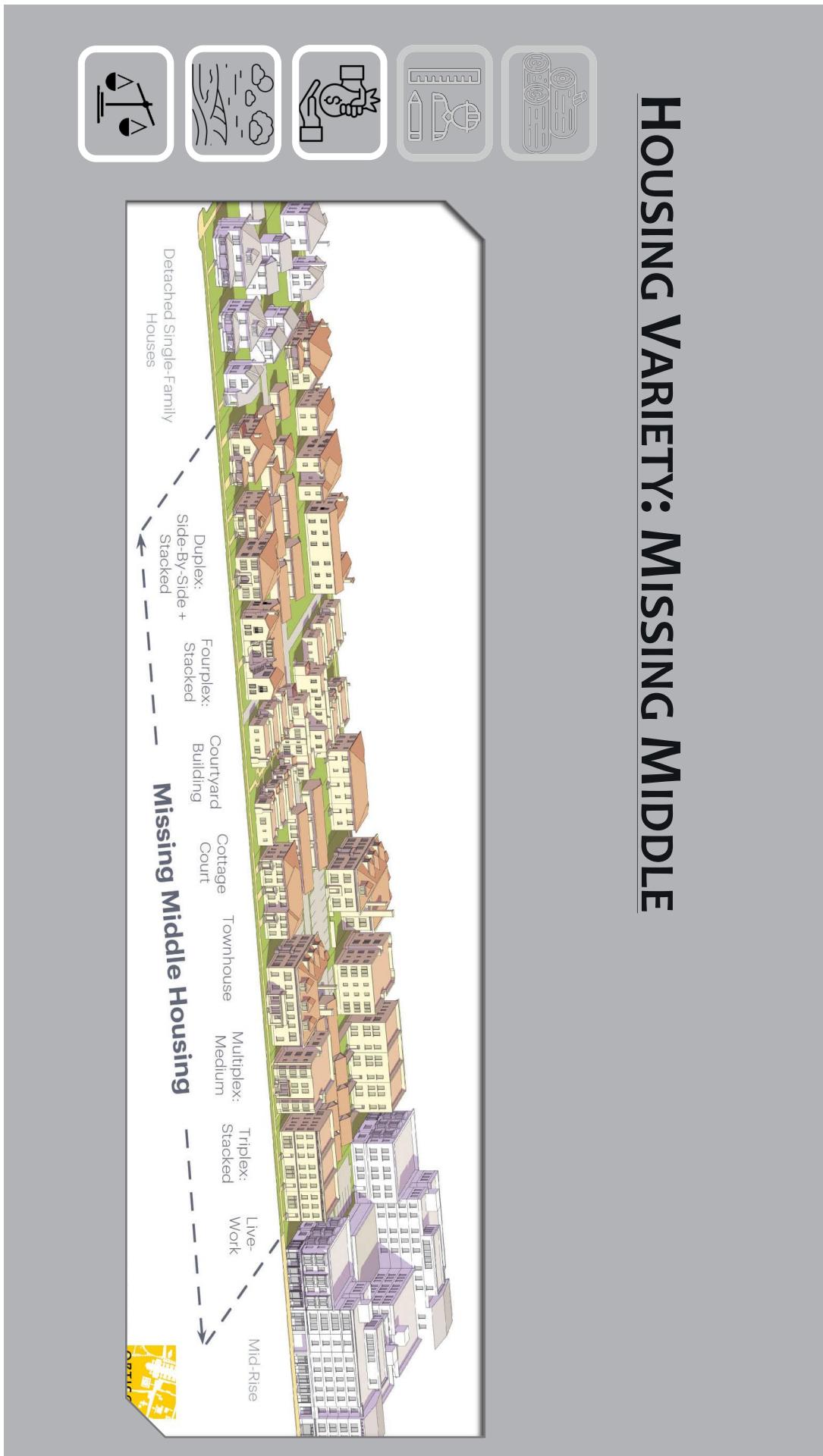


WHAT IS A HOUSING SHORTAGE?

- Vacancy is hard to pin down
- The market is nuanced
- The market requires slack to provide opportunity



HOUSING VARIETY: MISSING MIDDLE



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

ASSESSING OUR LAND USE BUDGET &
PLANNING FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

JANUARY 9, 2024

PURPOSE

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WALK THROUGH DIFFERENT GROWTH SCENARIOS RELATED TO THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP AND THE SUBSEQUENT FUTURE LAND USE MAP

LAND USE BUDGET APPROACH

→ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

→ GROWTH SCENARIOS

BIG IDEAS FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

- 1) GROWTH PRESSURE WILL REMAIN CONSTANT
- 2) 30,000+ NEW RESIDENTS BY 2045
- 3) HOUSING VARIETY AND AVAILABILITY MUST INCREASE
- 4) NEED TO REPLACE EXPENSIVE AND AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

WHY GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

1. DETERMINE WHERE CAN DEVELOPMENT DENSITY REALISTICALLY BE INCREASED?
2. CONSIDER WHAT ARE POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS FOR MORE EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERNS?
3. DISCUSS HOW AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY DESIGN BOTH CAN BE ACHIEVED?

CREATING THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

Land Use Budget

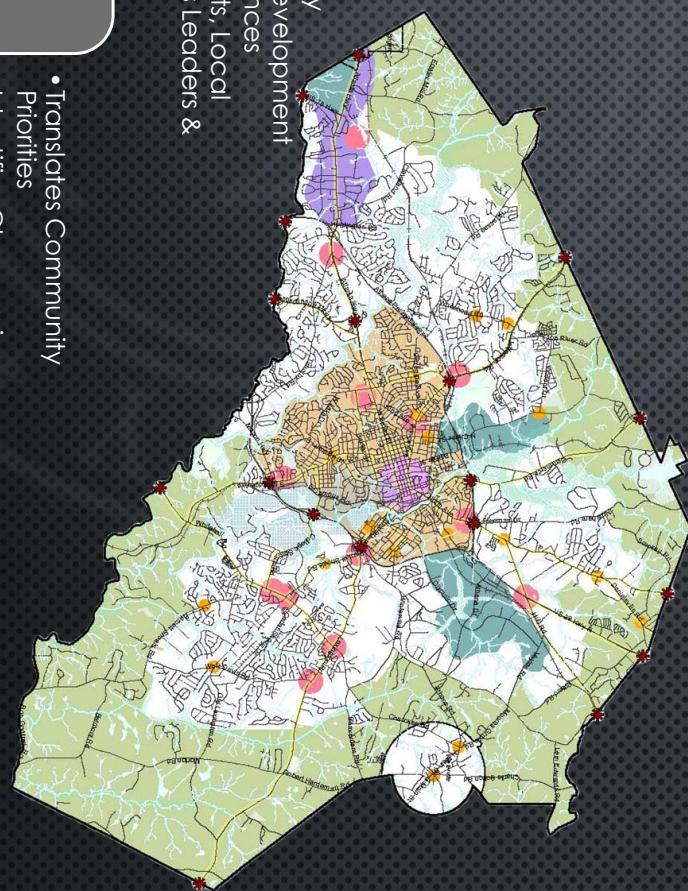
- Protects Environmental Areas
- Accounts for Infrastructure
- Accommodates Population Growth
- Identifies Developable Land

Community Engagement

- Focus on Creativity
- Identifies Broad Development Priorities & Preferences
- Work with Residents, Local Agencies, Business Leaders & Institutions

Growth Concept Scenarios

- Translates Community Priorities
- Identifies Changes in Character
- Plans for Market Choice



GUIDING CONDITIONS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



- TOPOGRAPHY
- RIVERS
- RIPARIAN BUFFERS
- PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

BUILT ENVIRONMENT



- GRAVITY BASED SEWER SYSTEM (1 LIFT STATION)
- PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM
- STORM WATER SYSTEM
- ROADWAYS
- GREENWAYS & TRAILS

PLANNING

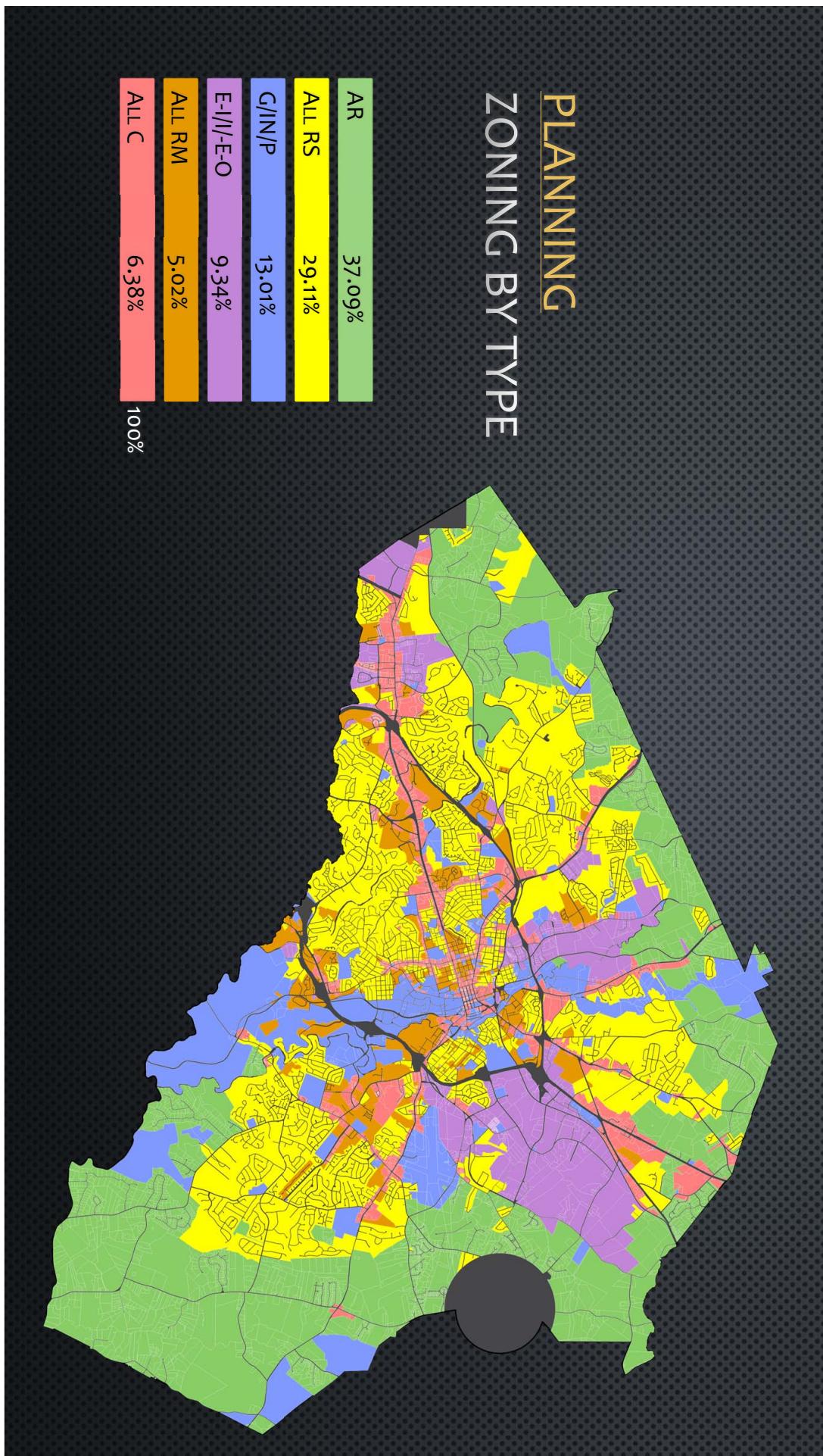


- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2023)
- ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY ZONING REGULATIONS (2001+ REGULAR UPDATES)
- ZONING MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)
- FUTURE LAND USE MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)

Rigid

Firm

Malleable



PUBLIC INPUT: HOW WE LEARNED

SIT DOWN MEETINGS

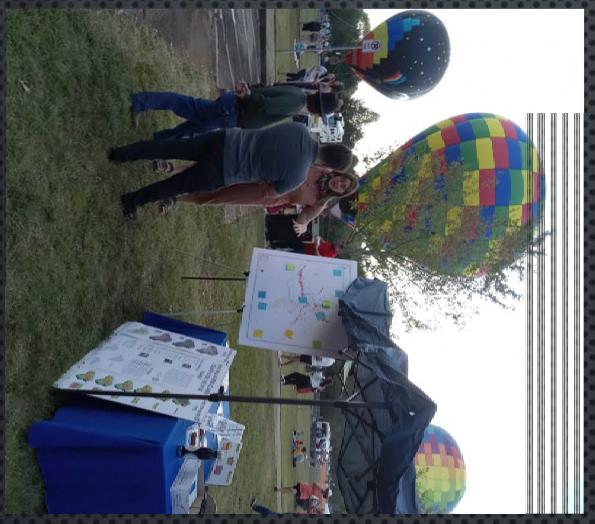
- CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT
 - FRESH THINKING, LISTENING, VALUES
- DATA PRESENTATION/Q&A
 - INFRASTRUCTURE, EXISTING PROJECTS

Bus Tours

- VIEWING AREAS MORE COMPREHENSIVELY
- CONNECTIONS

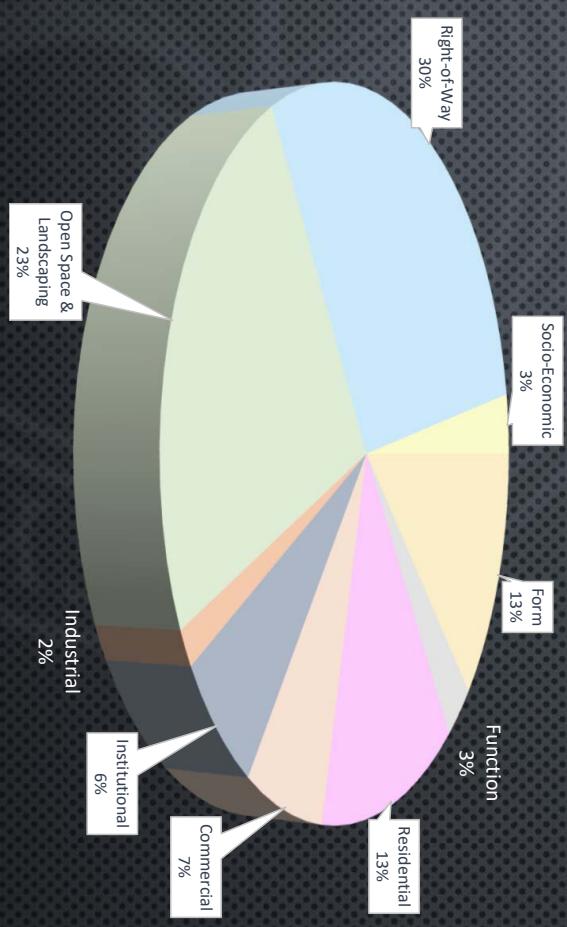
TABLING

- GENERAL COMMENTS
- SEE AND ENGAGE THE BUILT FORM
- EXPERIENCE
- DEMONSTRATION OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS THAT MIGHT BE SOLUTIONS TO GROWTH PRESSURE
- BETTER CONSIDERATION OF RIGHTS-OF-WAY IMPACT
 - ENGAGING YOUTH, THINKING CREATIVELY
- BRINGING ALONG OUR NEXT GENERATION



PUBLIC INPUT: DATA SUMMARY

- **WALKS (6)**
- **SIT DOWN EVENTS (13)**
- **BUS TOURS (2)**
- **TABLING (3)**
- **SCHOOLS (2)**



COMMENTS

- **CATEGORIZED – 1561**
- **OTHER - 506**

Categories to Assign	Form	Function	Residential	Commercial	Institutional	Industrial	Open Space & Landscaping	Right-of-Way	Socio-Economic	Figures
Tabling	6	0	8	1	5	0	5	36	10	
Exercise	57	8	69	43	60	16	223	187	14	
Walk	90	26	56	34	8	5	86	152	14	
Q&A	32	4	33	8	12	0	12	29	6	
Main Ideas	5	0	8	10	9	3	14	18	0	
Big 3	14	7	31	7	3	0	20	53	4	
	204	45	205	103	97	24	360	475	48	

PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE LEARNED

FUNCTION

- MIXED USE

RESIDENTIAL

- PROPER SCALE
- RESIDENTIAL VARIETY OR OPPORTUNITY (ADU)
- SENIOR HOUSING
- MORE HOUSES & DENSITY
- AFFORDABILITY



Future Land Use Steering Committee Report

- DESIGN STANDARDS
 - HUMAN SCALE
 - LIMIT PARKING ON CORRIDORS (ESP. IN FRONT)
 - REDUCE SETBACKS
 - NEIGHBORHOOD BLEND
 - STRUCTURED PARKING
 - DOWNTOWN CORE
 - CLUSTER/NODAL DEVELOPMENT
- “WHEN WE THINK IDEAL CITY, ROADS ARE NOT THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND”
-ATHENIAN

PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE LEARNED

COMMERCIAL

- ADDRESS COMMERCIAL VACANCY
- RESTAURANTS
- SMALL AND/OR LOCAL

INSTITUTIONAL

- INSTITUTIONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERPIECES
- MEDICAL (ESP. ON EASTSIDE)

RIGHTS-OF-WAY

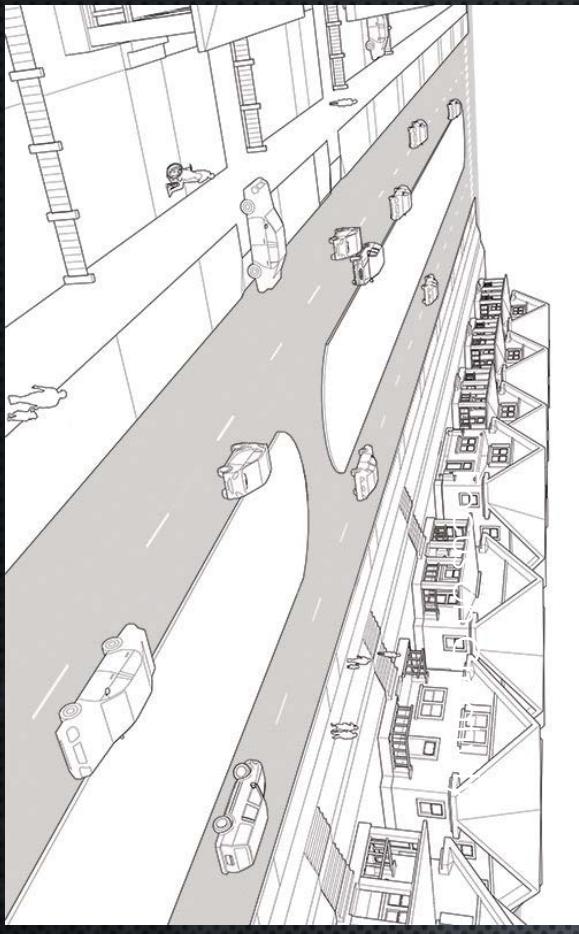
- TREES TREES TREES
- SHARED OR ACTIVATED GREENSPACE OR PARKS
- CONNECTION TO WATER
- PARKS CONNECTED TO PEOPLE (TRAILS)
- RURAL PRESERVATION
- FISHING & AGRICULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES
- SAFETY
- TRAFFIC
- MORE BIKE (MULTI-MODAL) INFRASTRUCTURE
- TOPOGRAPHY IS A CHALLENGE
- WALKABILITY & CONNECTIONS
- TRANSIT
- TRAINS (REGIONAL OR FURTHER)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

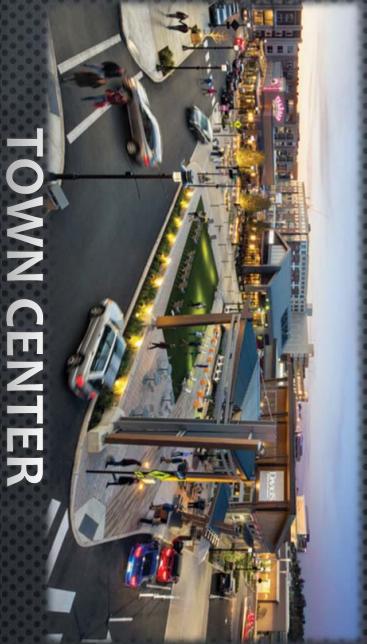
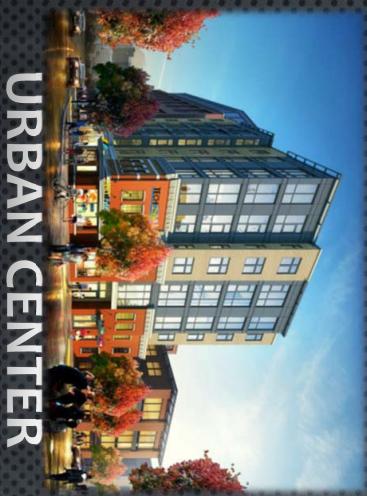
- 1) REDEVELOP CORRIDORS AND NODES THAT ARE RIPE FOR TRANSFORMATION
- 2) MINIMIZE SEWER EXPANSION; GROW CAPACITY WITHIN EXISTING NETWORK
- 3) REDUCE TRAVEL DISTANCES:
 - 1) LOCALIZE TRIPS BY ADDING COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND AMENITY USES
 - 2) LOCATE PEOPLE NEARER DESTINATIONS (RESIDENTS NEAR JOBS & ACTIVITY CENTERS)
 - 3) ADD STREET CONNECTIONS TO DISTRIBUTE TRAFFIC EFFICIENTLY ACROSS THE NETWORK
- 4) PLAN FOR INCREMENTAL GROWTH IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE SERVED BY SEWER
- 5) SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

INTERPRETING GUIDING PRINCIPLES: CORRIDORS

- GROWTH = EXPANSION OR INTENSITY OF ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT
- REDESIGN = ADJUSTMENT IN STREET SECTION TO ACCOMMODATE BUILT FORM



INTERPRETING GUIDING PRINCIPLES: TARGETED GROWTH AREAS



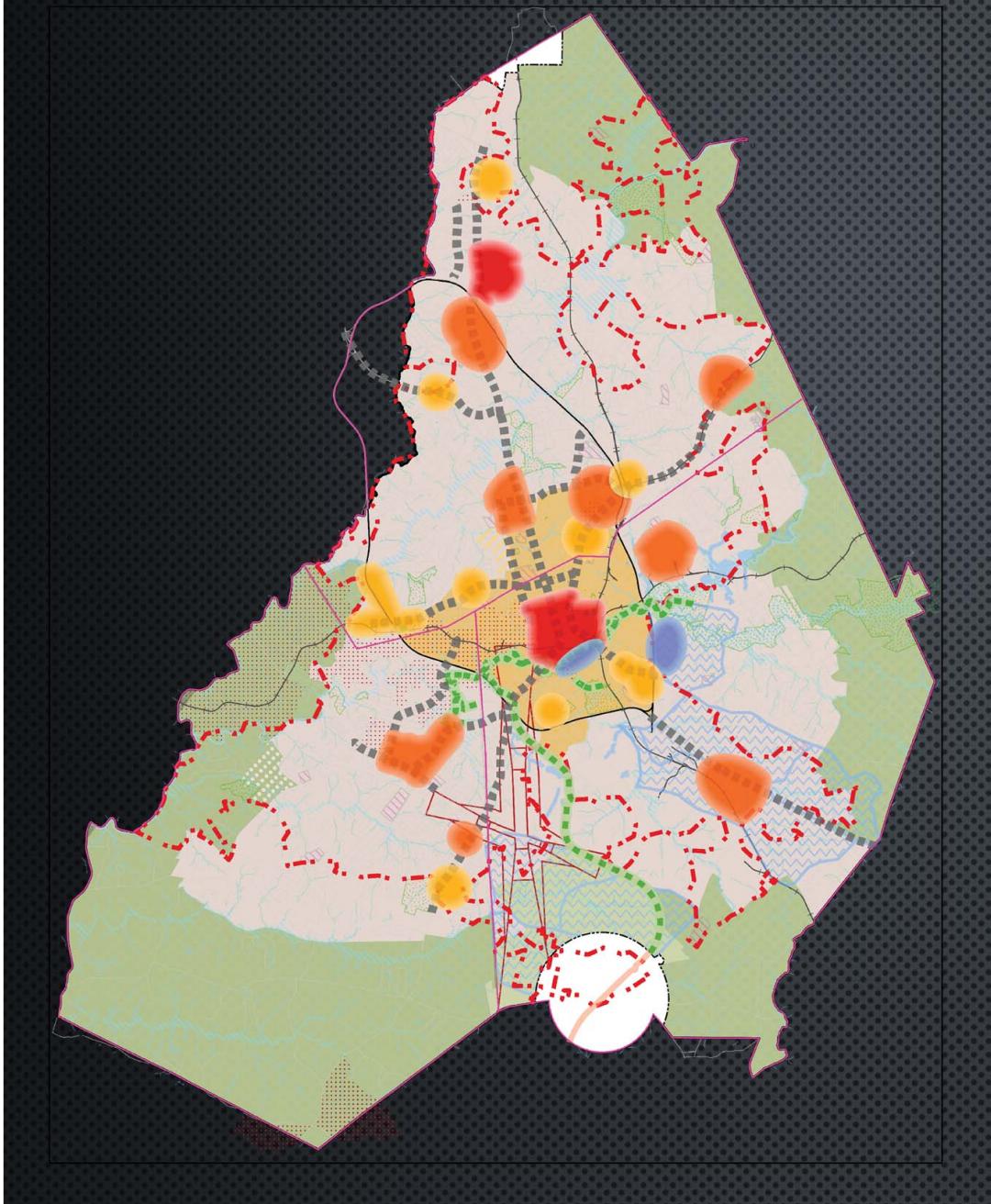
NEIGHBORHOOD
CENTER

CORRIDOR



GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

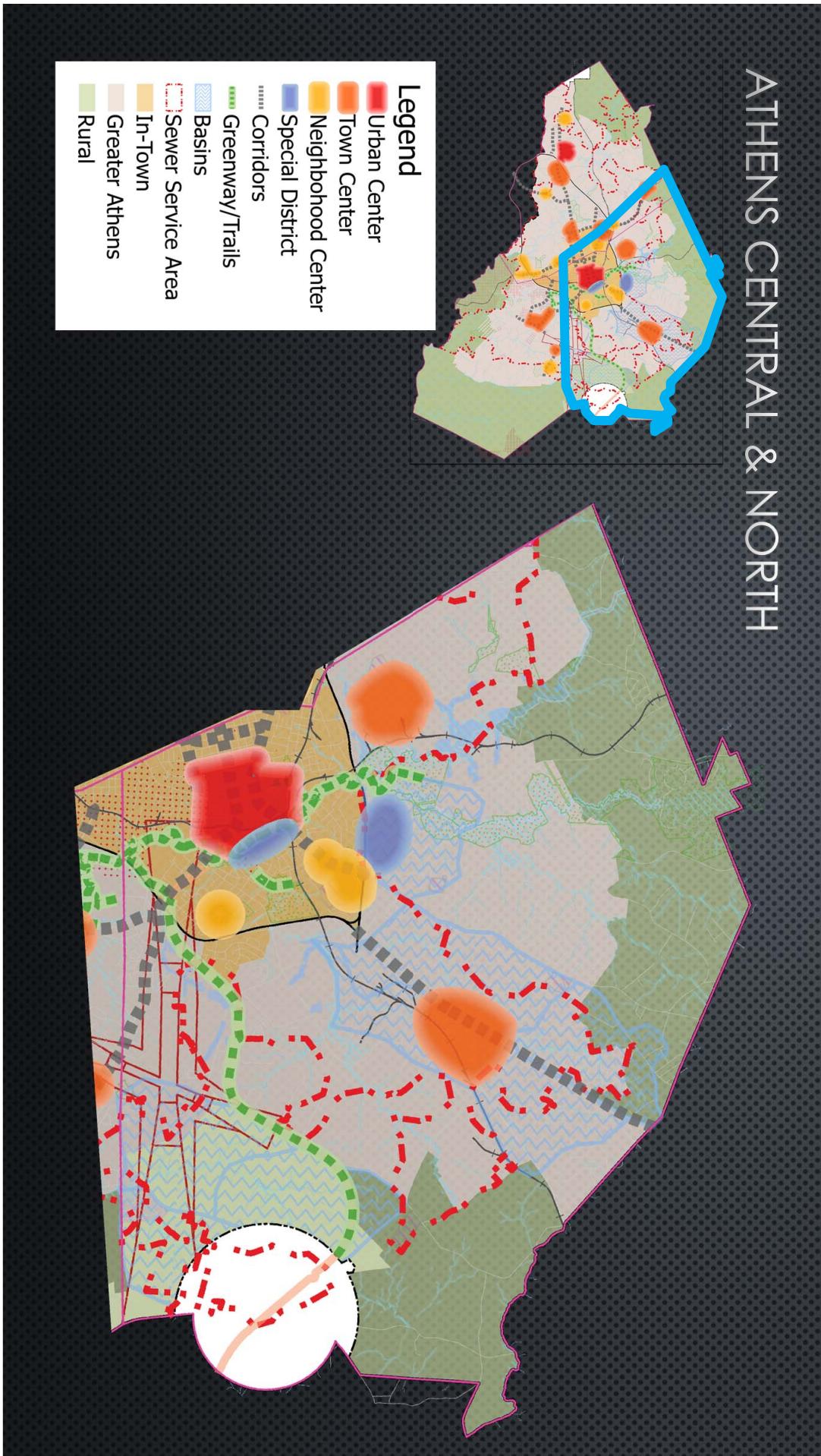
Legend	
Urban Center	■ Red
Town Center	■ Orange
Neighborhood Center	■ Yellow
Special District	■ Blue
Corridors
Greenway/Trails	... Green
Basins	Wavy Blue
Sewer Service Area	■ Orange
In-Town	■ Yellow
Greater Athens	■ Grey
Rural	■ Green



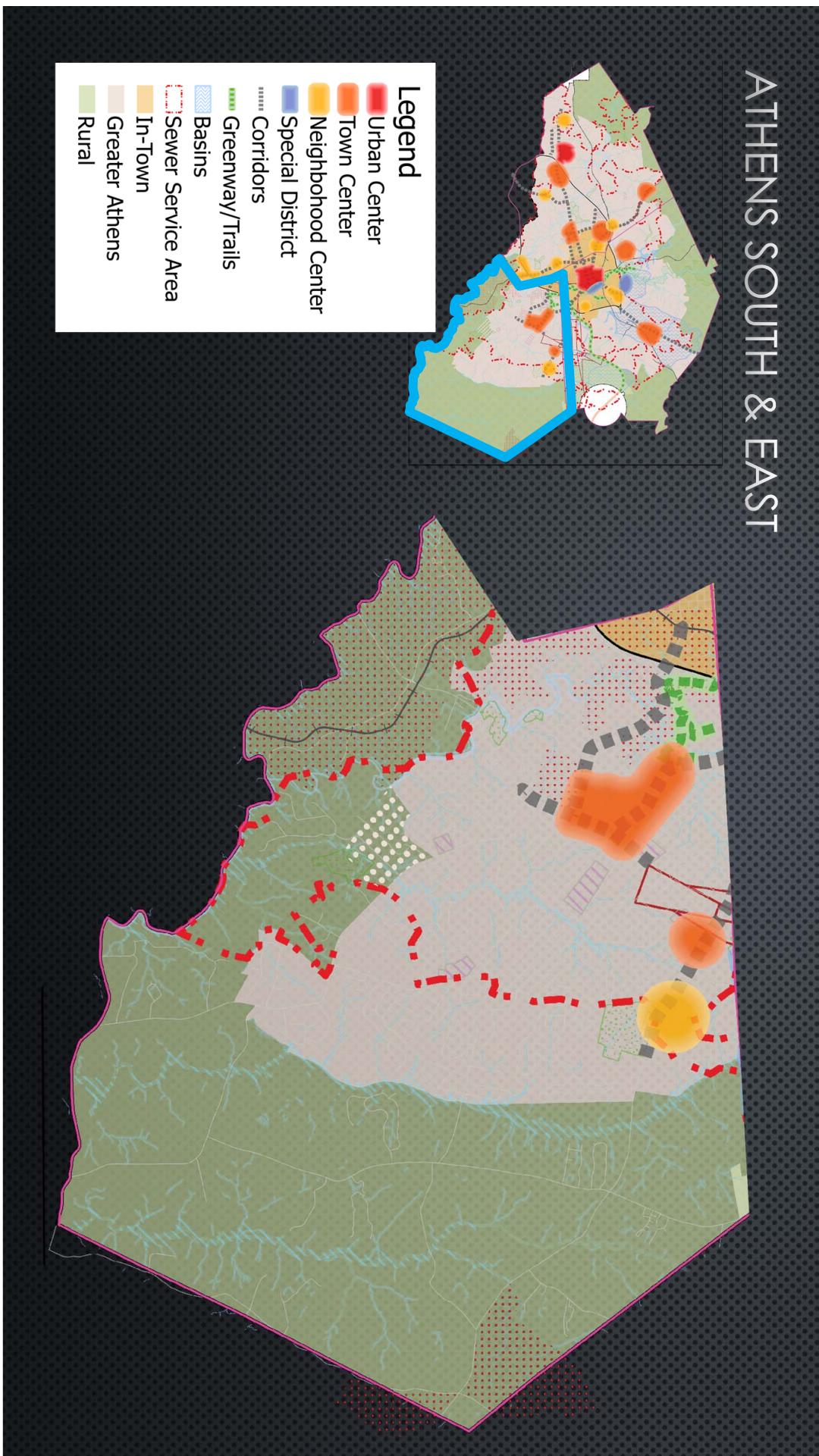
AUTHENS WEST



ATHENS CENTRAL & NORTH

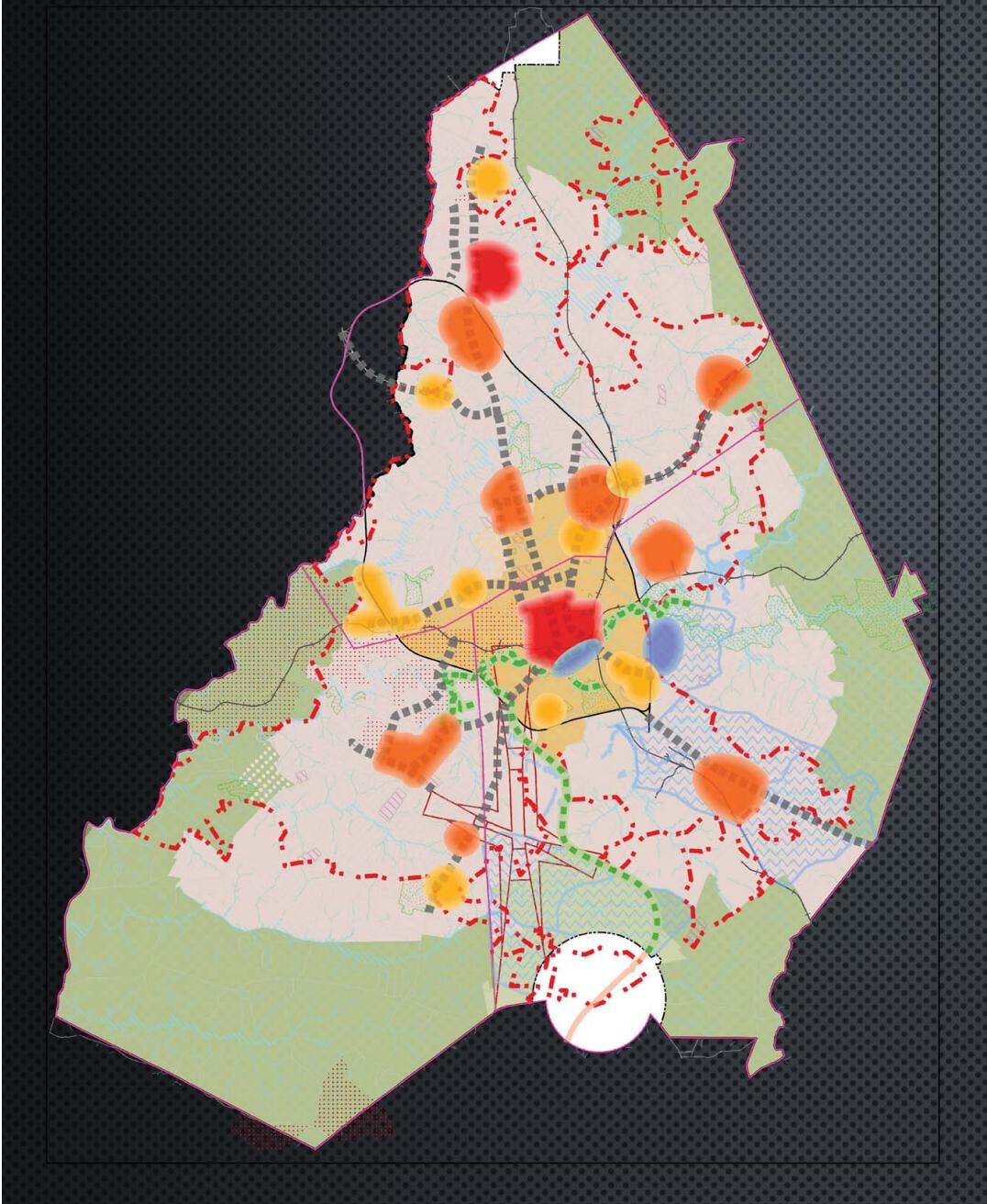


ATHENS SOUTH & EAST



GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

Legend	
Urban Center	Red
Town Center	Orange
Neighborhood Center	Yellow
Special District	Blue
Corridors	Dash-dot
Greenway/Trails	Green
Basins	Blue w/ diagonal lines
Sewer Service Area	Red outline
In-Town	Yellow
Greater Athens	Grey
Rural	Light Green



GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

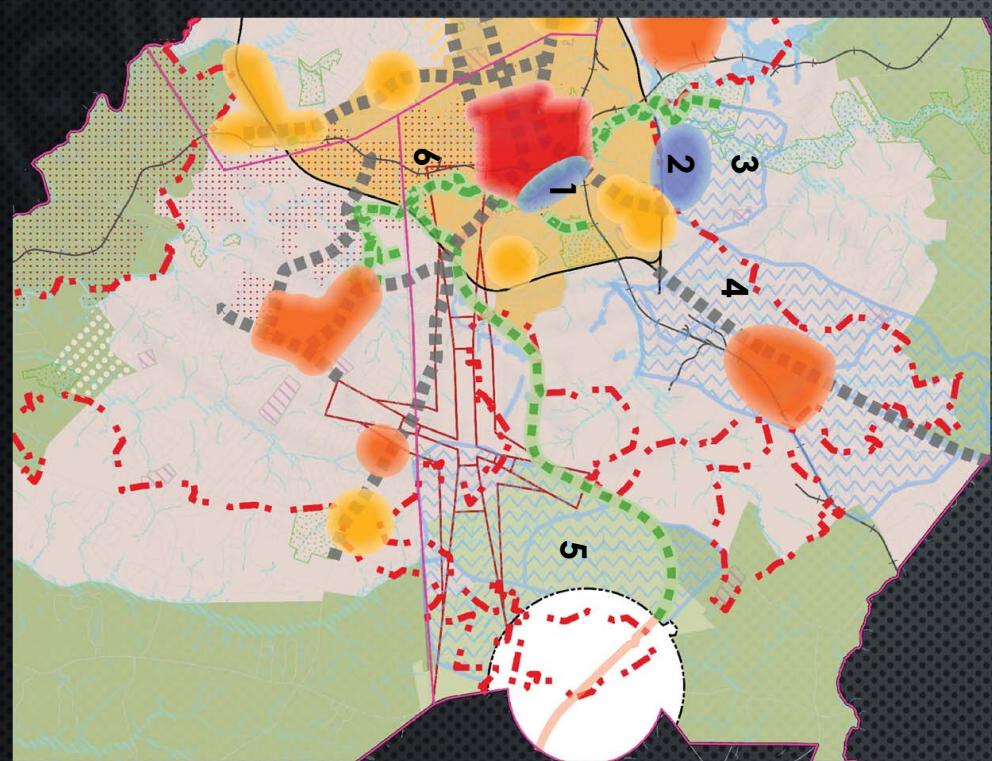
1. DOWNTOWN RIVER DISTRICT
2. FORMER RESERVOIR (Hwy 441 & 10 LOOP)

SEWER BASINS

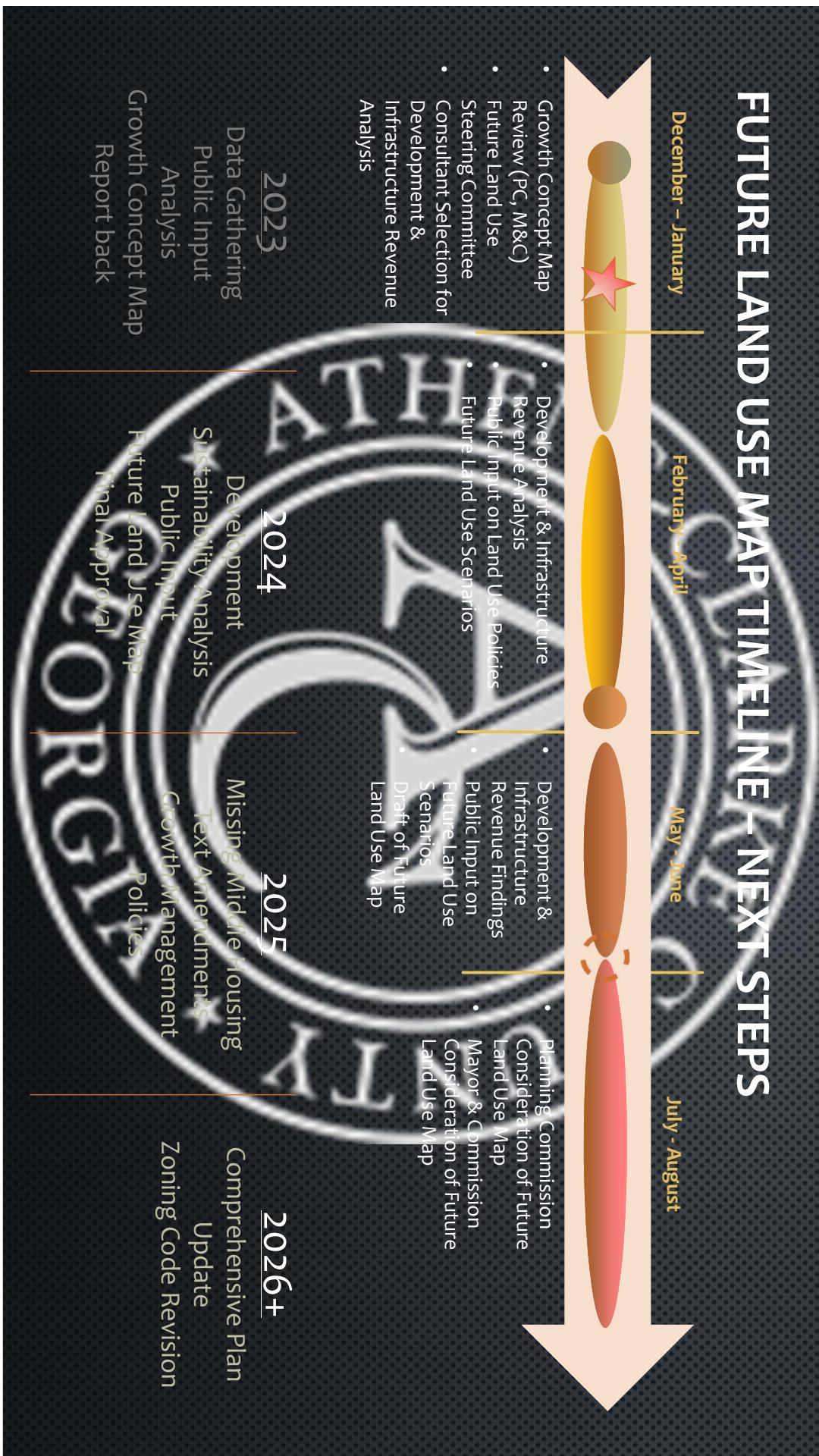
3. LOWER SANDY CREEK
4. WEST FORK TRAIL CREEK
5. UPPER SHOAL CREEK

INSTITUTIONAL

6. UGA



FUTURE LAND USE MAP TIMELINE – NEXT STEPS



DISCUSSION

1. WHERE CAN DEVELOPMENT DENSITY REALISTICALLY BE INCREASED?
2. WHAT ARE THE TRADE-OFFS FOR MORE EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERNS?
3. HOW CAN AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY DESIGN BOTH BE ACHIEVED?



CORRIDORS

- CORRIDORS (GROWTH)
- ATL HWY (TO HWY 78)
- BAXTER
- EPPS BRIDGE (TO MCNUTTS'S CREEK)
- LEXINGTON (LOOP 10 – LOY'S FARM RD)
- MILLEDGE (PRINCE - WILL HUNTER)
- PRINCE (DT – LOOP 10)
- US HWY 29 (LOOP 10 – COUNTY LINE)
- PRINCE (LOOP 10 – LAVENDER)
- CORRIDORS (FORM AND GROWTH)
- ALPS (W BROAD – RIVERHILL)
- BARNETT SHOALS (LEXINGTON – GAINES SCHOOL)
- COLLEGE STN (E CAMPUS – BARNETT SHOALS)
- HAWTHORNE
- NORTH AVE (DT – LOOP 10)
- OAK/OCONEE (DT – LOOP 10)
- OGLETHORPE AVENUE
- PRINCE (LOOP 10 – LAVENDER)

CORRIDORS (ALTERNATIVE)

- FIREFLY
- ECAMPUS RAIL LINE
- JENNINGS MILL

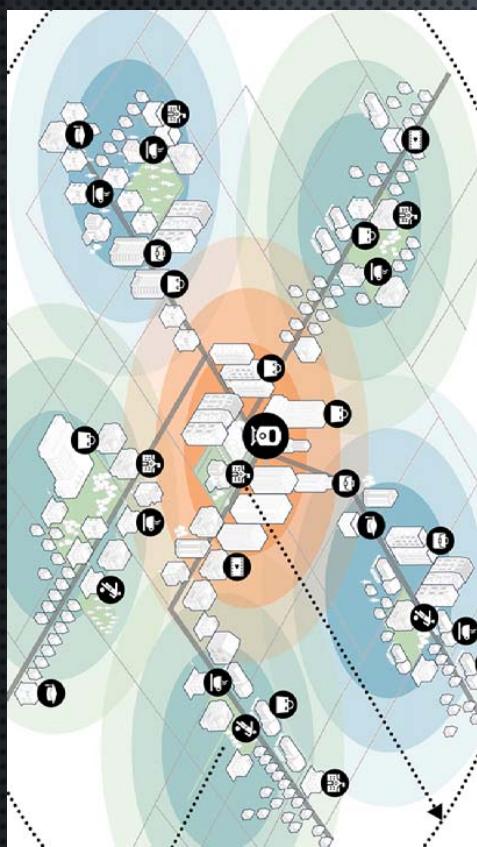
NODES

URBAN CENTER

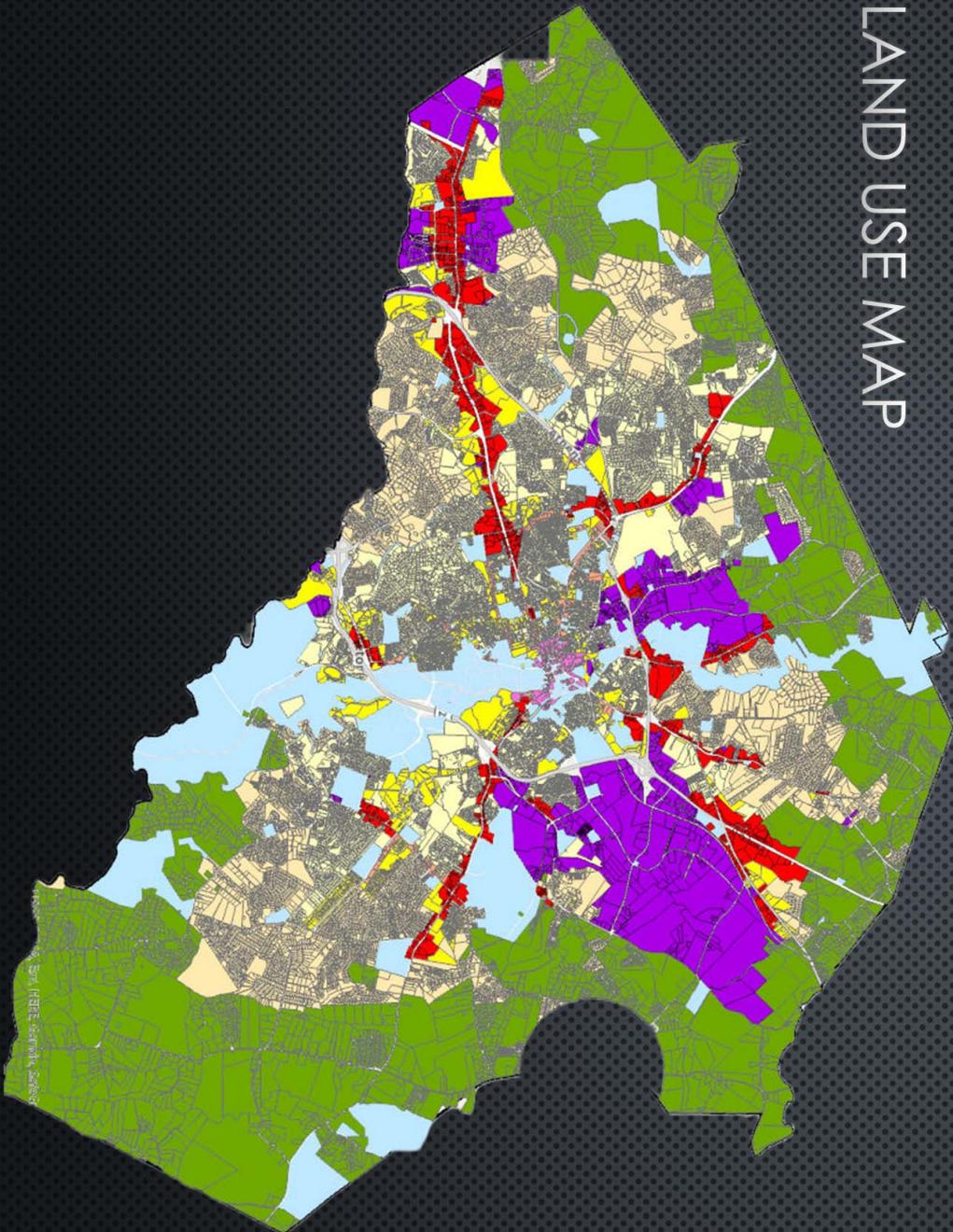
- DOWNTOWN
- THE MALL
- ALPS/BEECHWOOD
- ATHENS WEST/PROMENADE
- EASTSIDE
- GENERAL TIME
- OAK GROVE
- PRINCE (NEAR THE LOOP)
- SPACE KROGER
- WILLOWOOD

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

- CLARKE CROSSING
- E ATHENS MARKETPLACE
- FIVE POINTS
- HOMEWOOD
- MACON HWY
- NORMALTOWN
- PIGGLY WIGGLY
- TIMOTHY/EPPS BRIDGE
- TRIANGLE PLAZA



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



2024 FUTURE LAND USE MAP – TODAY'S ISSUES & POSSIBLE POLICIES

Affordable Housing

- Increased by-right density (ADUs; duplexes, triplexes, & quad-plexes in RS zones)
- Reduction of parking
- Single-Family Inclusionary Zoning
- Multi-Family redevelopment incentives

Infrastructure Management

- Sanitary Sewer Pump Station policies
- Shared septic system policies
- Tree & Sidewalk “banking”
- Stormwater design (Low Impact Standards)
- Park Fee ordinance

Urban Design

- Taller Buildings & Architectural Requirements
- Removal of minimum parking requirements
- Conservation Districts & Corridor Master Plans
- Maximum commercial lot size requirements
- Horizontal Mixed Use

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY GROWTH CONCEPT MAP & NEW FUTURE LAND USE MAP

ASSESSING OUR LAND USE BUDGET &
PLANNING FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

FUTURE LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE

APRIL 30, 2024

WELCOME AND THANK YOU!

STEERING COMMITTEE PURPOSE:

- To guide the purposeful arrangement, intensity and variety of future land use designations throughout the community;
- To facilitate the growth of Athens-Clarke County for the next 20 years.
- Data used in the development of the Future Land Use Plan include population growth estimates, infrastructure programming, housing needs, environmental protection measures, and economic development strategies.
- The Steering Committee will have staff support from the ACCGov Planning Department, will be chaired by a Planning Commissioner, and will consult various subject matter experts as part of their meetings to inform their deliberations and decision-making.
- Public input opportunities regarding the Future Land Use Plan will be organized at key milestones that align with the Steering Committee's deliberations.
- The final draft of the Future Land Use Plan will be voted on by the Steering Committee prior to being heard by the Planning Commission for recommendation, and before Mayor & Commission consideration and final action.

COMMITTEE TIMELINE

- 1) MONTHLY MEETINGS DURING APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2024
- 2) MEETINGS ON DEFINED TOPICS DURING MAY – AUGUST
 - INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE
 - ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE
 - TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE
 - HOUSING
- 3) REVIEW OF DRAFT FUTURE LAND USE MAP SCENARIOS
 - COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO PLANNING COMMISSION

PURPOSE

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WALK THROUGH DIFFERENT GROWTH SCENARIOS RELATED TO THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP AND THE SUBSEQUENT FUTURE LAND USE MAP

LAND USE BUDGET APPROACH → COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT → GROWTH SCENARIOS

BIG IDEAS FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

- 1) GROWTH PRESSURE WILL REMAIN CONSTANT
- 2) 30,000+ NEW RESIDENTS BY 2045
- 3) HOUSING VARIETY AND AVAILABILITY MUST INCREASE
- 4) NEED TO REPLACE EXPENSIVE AND AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

WHY GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

1. DETERMINE WHERE DEVELOPMENT DENSITY CAN REALISTICALLY BE INCREASED?
2. CONSIDER WHAT ARE POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS FOR MORE EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERNS?
3. DISCUSS HOW AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY DESIGN BOTH CAN BE ACHIEVED?

GUIDING CONDITIONS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



- TOPOGRAPHY
- RIVERS
- RIPARIAN BUFFERS
- PRESERVED OPEN SPACE

BUILT ENVIRONMENT



- GRAVITY BASED SEWER SYSTEM (1 LIFT STATION)
- PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM
- STORM WATER SYSTEM
- ROADWAYS
- GREENWAYS & TRAILS

PLANNING



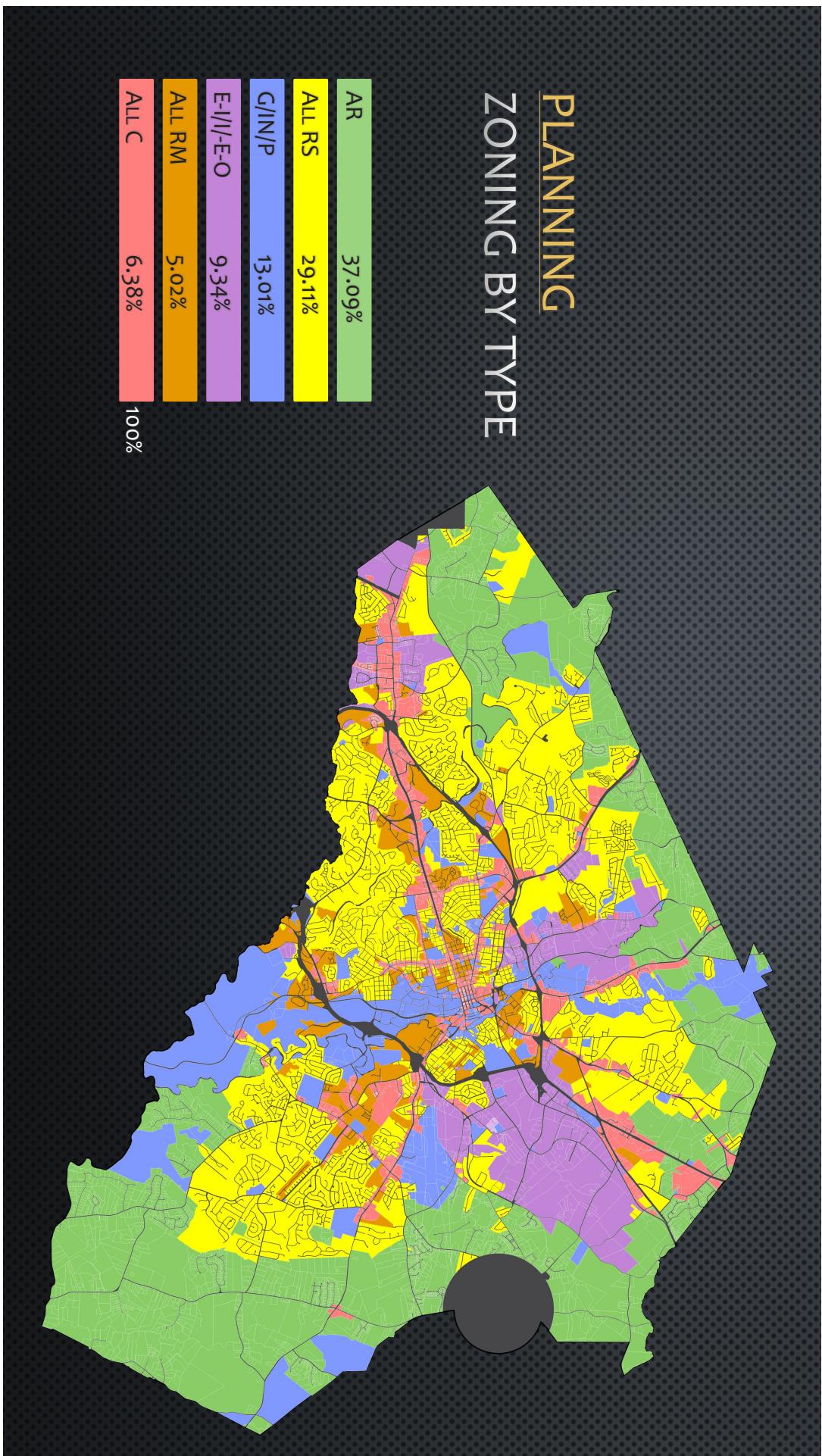
- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2023)
- ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY ZONING REGULATIONS (2001 + REGULAR UPDATES)
- ZONING MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)
- FUTURE LAND USE MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)

Rigid

Firm

Malleable

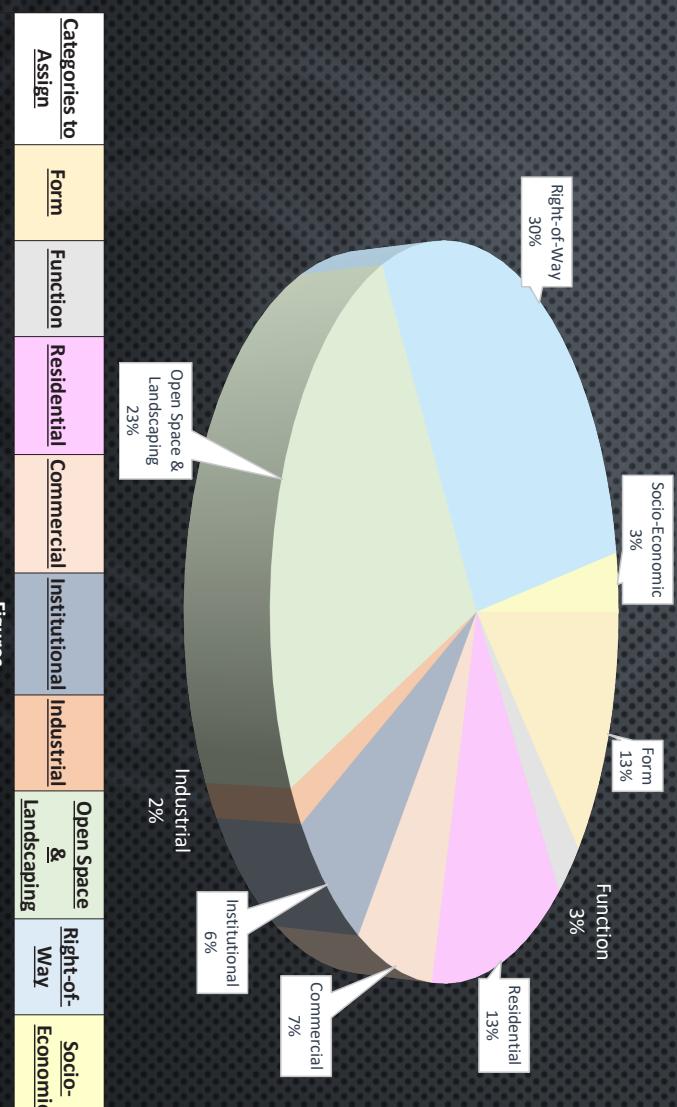




PUBLIC INPUT: DATA SUMMARY

OPPORTUNITIES

- WALKS (6)
- SIT DOWN EVENTS (13)
- BUS TOURS (2)
- TABLING (3)
- SCHOOLS (2)



COMMENTS

- CATEGORIZED - 1561
- OTHER - 506

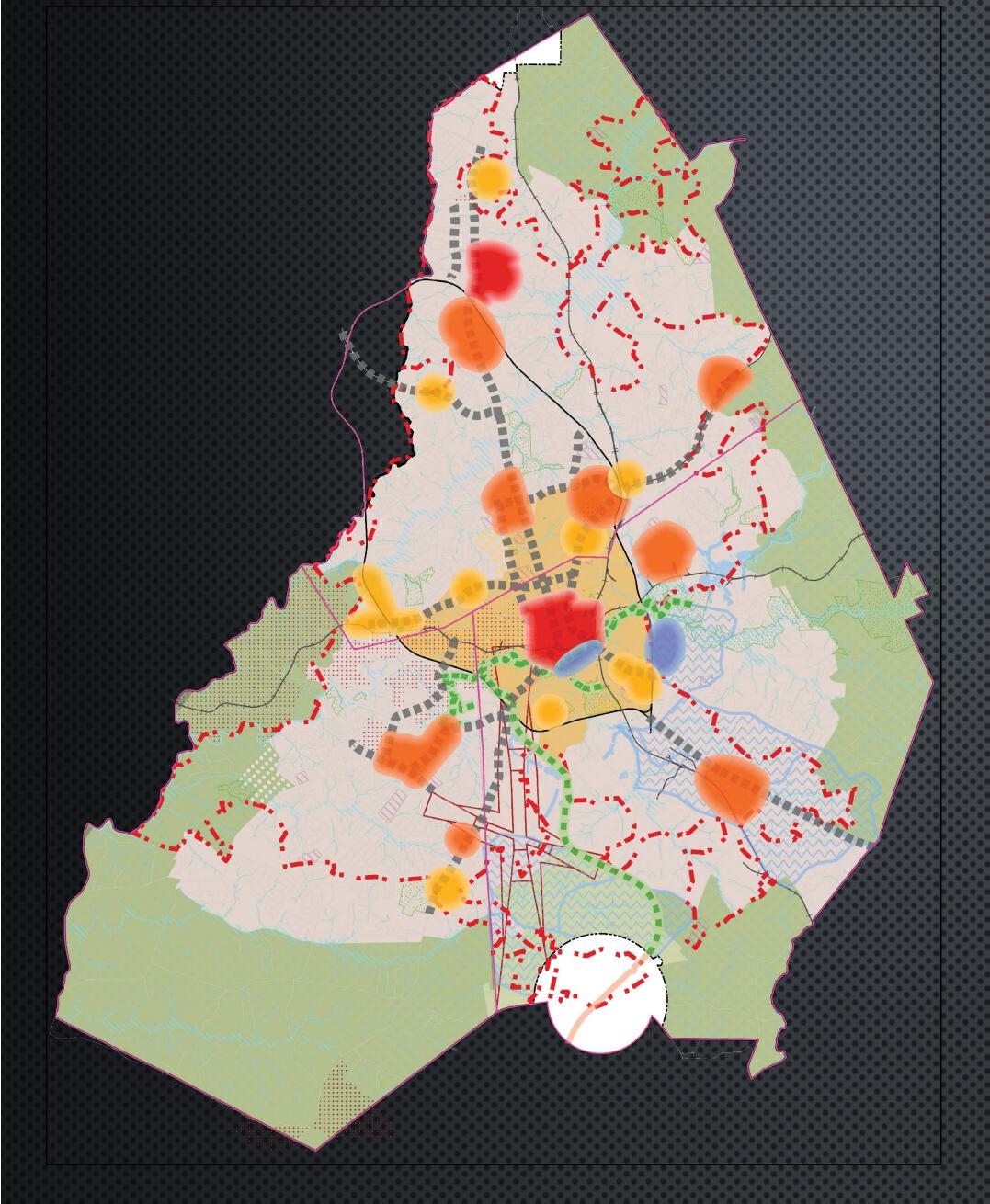
Categories to Assign	Form	Function	Residential	Commercial	Institutional	Industrial	Open Space & Landscaping	Right-of-Way	Socio-Economic	Figures
Tabling	6	0	8	1	5	0	5	36	10	
Exercise	57	8	69	43	60	16	223	187	14	
Walk	90	26	56	34	8	5	86	152	14	
Q&A	32	4	33	8	12	0	12	29	6	
Main Ideas	5	0	8	10	9	3	14	18	0	
Big 3	14	7	31	7	3	0	20	53	4	
	204	45	205	103	97	24	360	475	48	

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

- 1) REDEVELOP CORRIDORS AND NODES THAT ARE RIPE FOR TRANSFORMATION
- 2) MINIMIZE SEWER EXPANSION; GROW CAPACITY WITHIN EXISTING NETWORK
- 3) REDUCE TRAVEL DISTANCES:
 - 1) LOCALIZE TRIPS BY ADDING COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND AMENITY USES
 - 2) LOCATE PEOPLE NEARER DESTINATIONS (RESIDENTS NEAR JOBS & ACTIVITY CENTERS)
 - 3) ADD STREET CONNECTIONS TO DISTRIBUTE TRAFFIC EFFICIENTLY ACROSS THE NETWORK
- 4) PLAN FOR INCREMENTAL GROWTH IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE SERVED BY SEWER
- 5) SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

Legend	
Urban Center	■
Town Center	■
Neighborhood Center	■
Special District	■
Corridors
Greenway/Trails	■
Basins	■
Sewer Service Area	■
In-Town	■
Greater Athens	■
Rural	■



INTERPRETING GUIDING PRINCIPLES: TARGETED GROWTH AREAS



TOWN CENTER



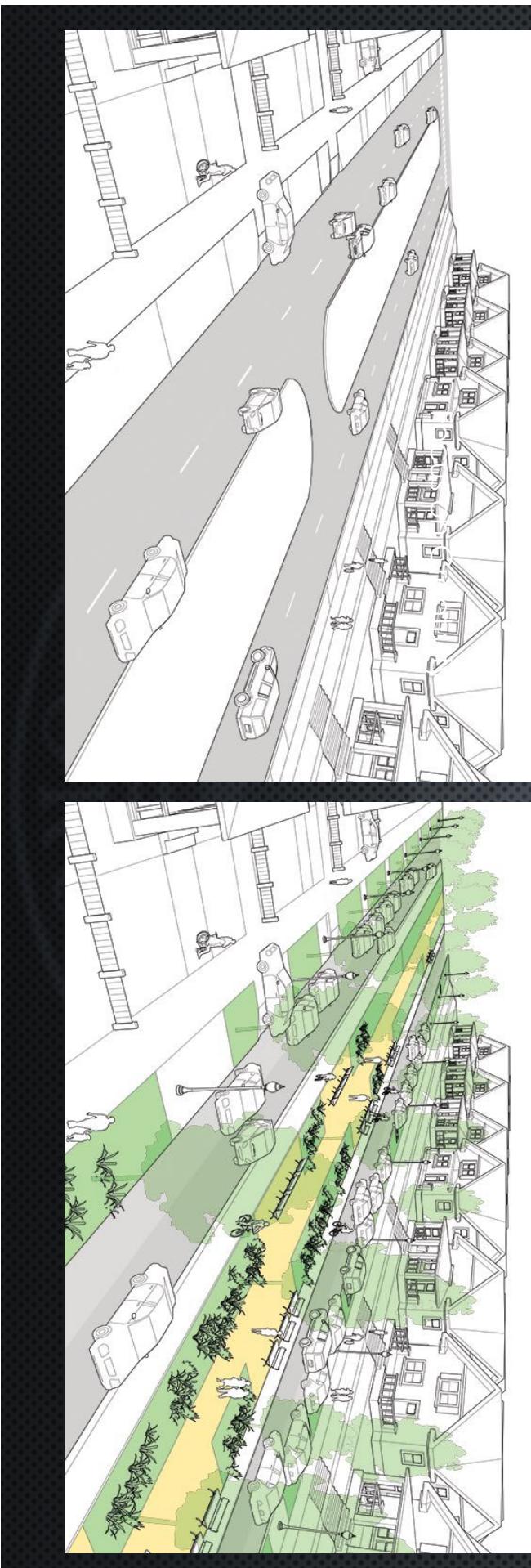
NEIGHBORHOOD
CENTER

CORRIDOR



INTERPRETING GUIDING PRINCIPLES: CORRIDORS

- GROWTH = EXPANSION OR INTENSITY OF ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT
- REDESIGN = ADJUSTMENT IN STREET SECTION TO ACCOMMODATE BUILT FORM



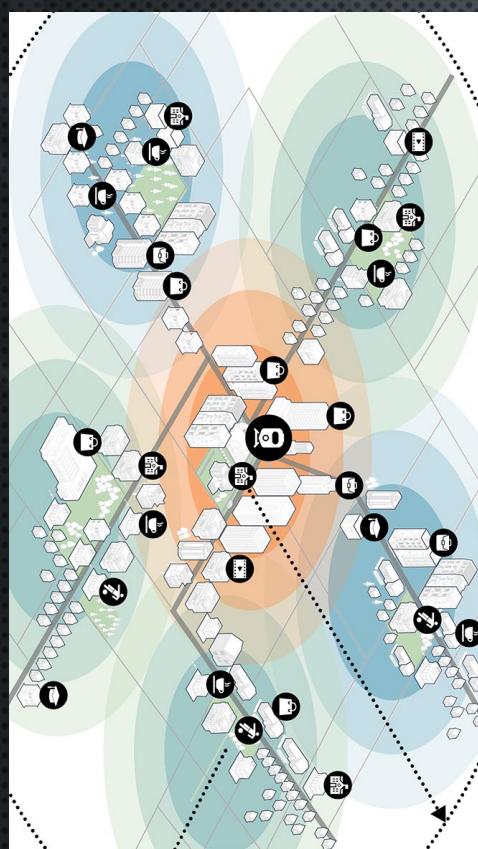
NODES

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

- CLARKE CROSSING
- E ATHENS MARKETPLACE
- FIVE POINTS
- HOMEWOOD
- MACON HWY
- NORMALTOWN
- PIGGLY WIGGLY
- TIMOTHY/EPPS BRIDGE

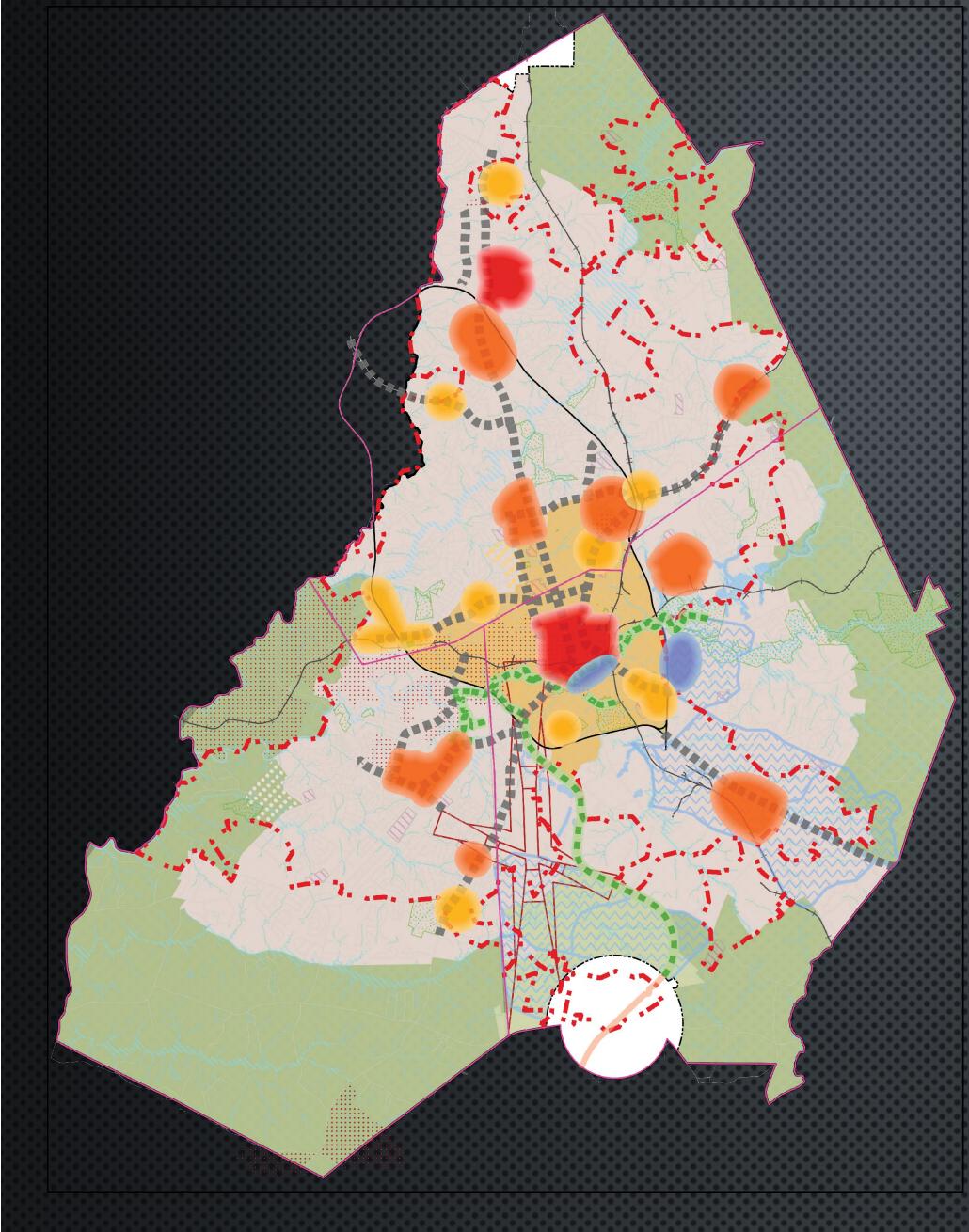
URBAN CENTER

- DOWNTOWN
- THE MALL
- ALPS/BEECHWOOD
- ATHENS WEST/PROMENADE
- EASTSIDE
- GENERAL TIME
- OAK GROVE
- PRINCE (NEAR THE LOOP)
- SPACE KROGER
- WILLOWOOD



GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

Legend	
Urban Center	■
Town Center	■
Neighborhood Center	■
Special District	■
Corridors
Greenway/Trails	...
Basins	Wavy
Sewer Service Area	□
In-Town	■
Greater Athens	■
Rural	■



SPRING INPUT

SURVEYS

- ONLINE - 586
- VISUAL PREFERENCE - 150

COUNTY ALREADY HAS

INFRASTRUCTURE AVAILABLE
(54%)

- 8 – AROUND TOWN
- DOUGHERTY ST.

RECENT GROWTH

- RECENT DEVELOPMENT IS SPRAWLING AND TOO RELIANT ON CARS (44%)

NEIGHBORHOOD GROWTH

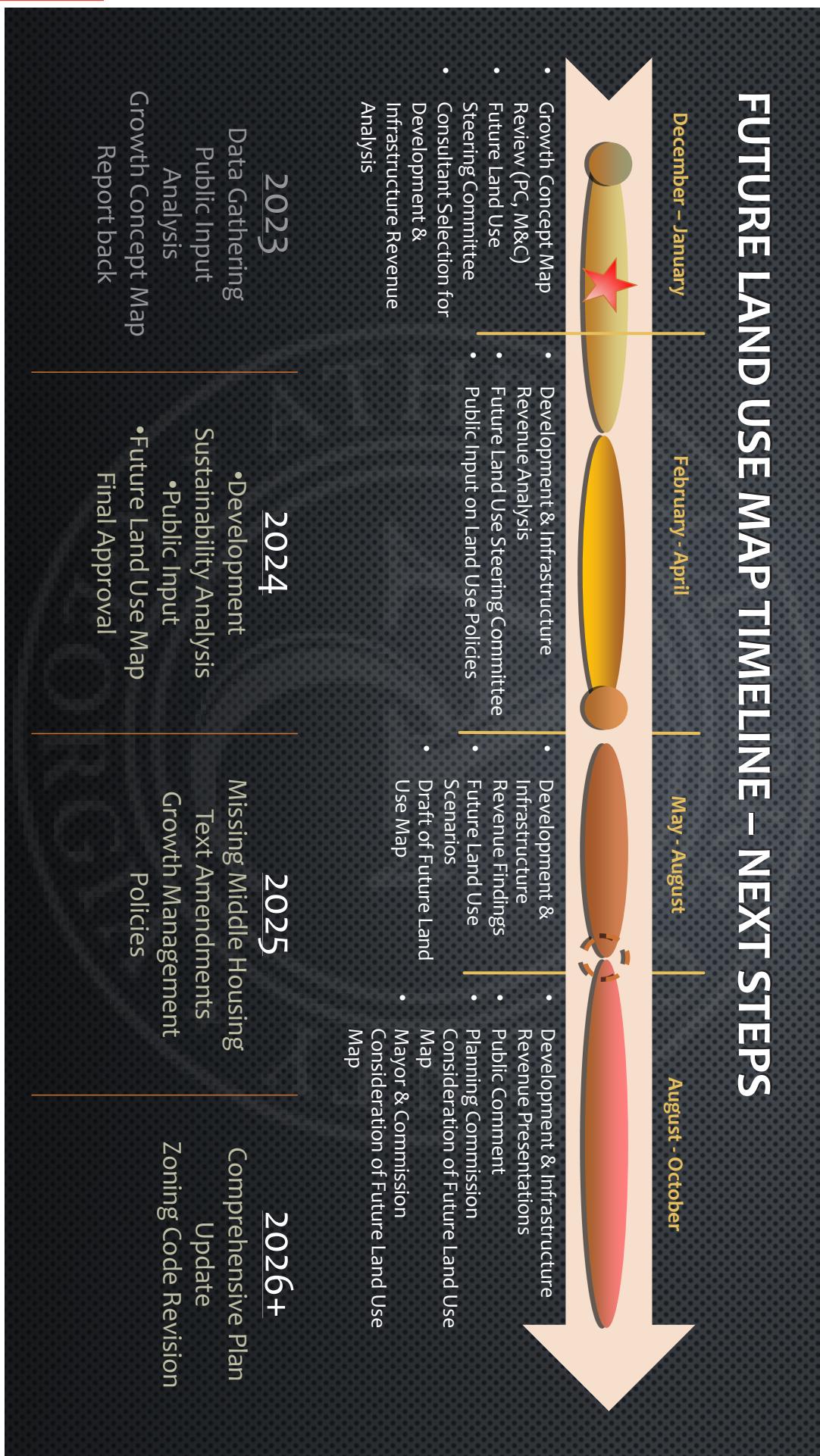
- DISTRIBUTE INCREMENTAL GROWTH BROADLY IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE THE COUNTY ALREADY HAS
- MORE DEVELOPMENT IS GOOD BECAUSE I GET MORE EXPERIENCES AND AMENITIES TO ENJOY

30,000+

DROP-IN MEETINGS

- SCIENCE NIGHT
- CLARKE CENTRAL

FUTURE LAND USE MAP TIMELINE – NEXT STEPS

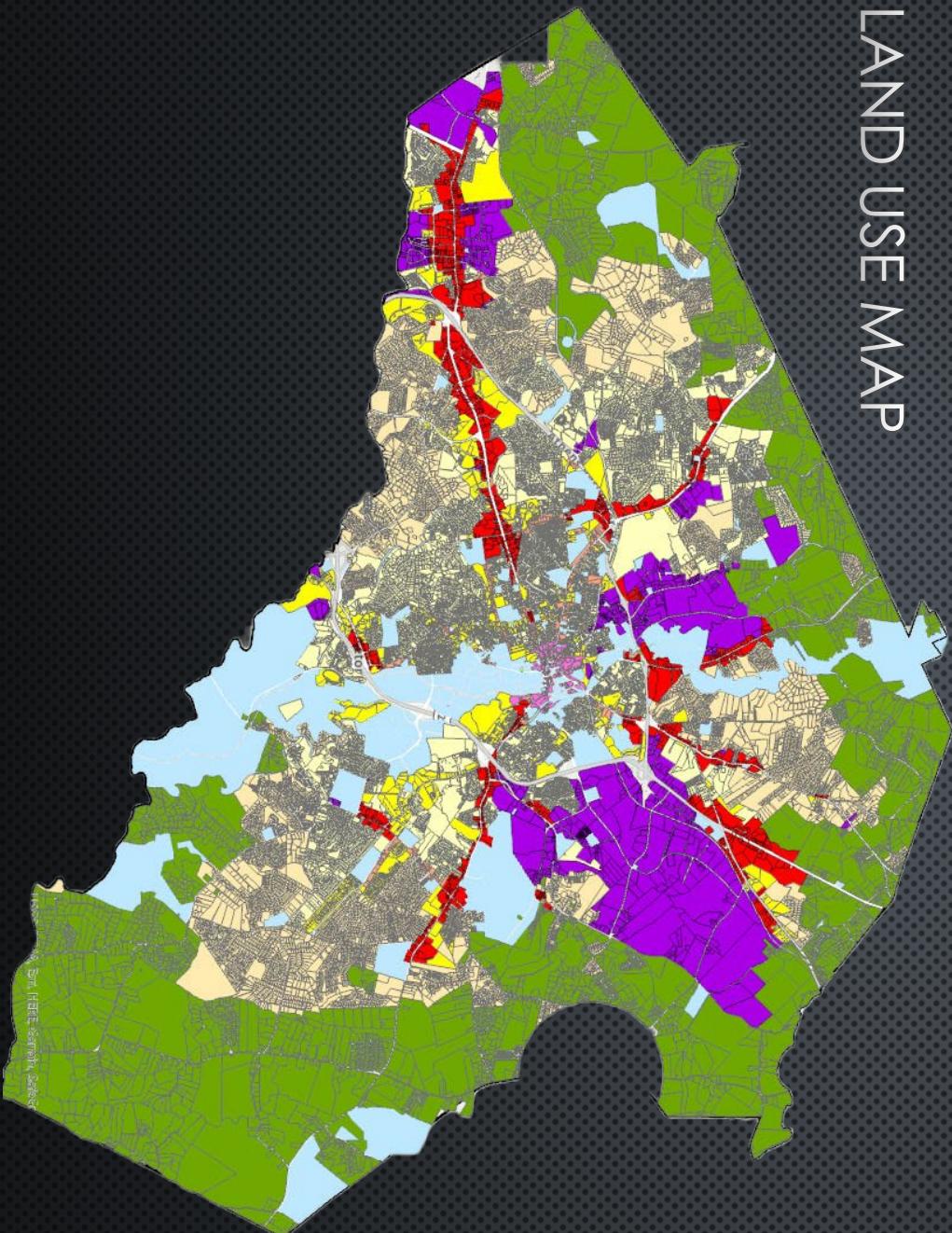


DISCUSSION

1. WHERE CAN DEVELOPMENT DENSITY REALISTICALLY BE INCREASED?
2. WHAT ARE THE TRADE-OFFS FOR MORE EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERNS?
3. HOW CAN AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY DESIGN BOTH BE ACHIEVED?



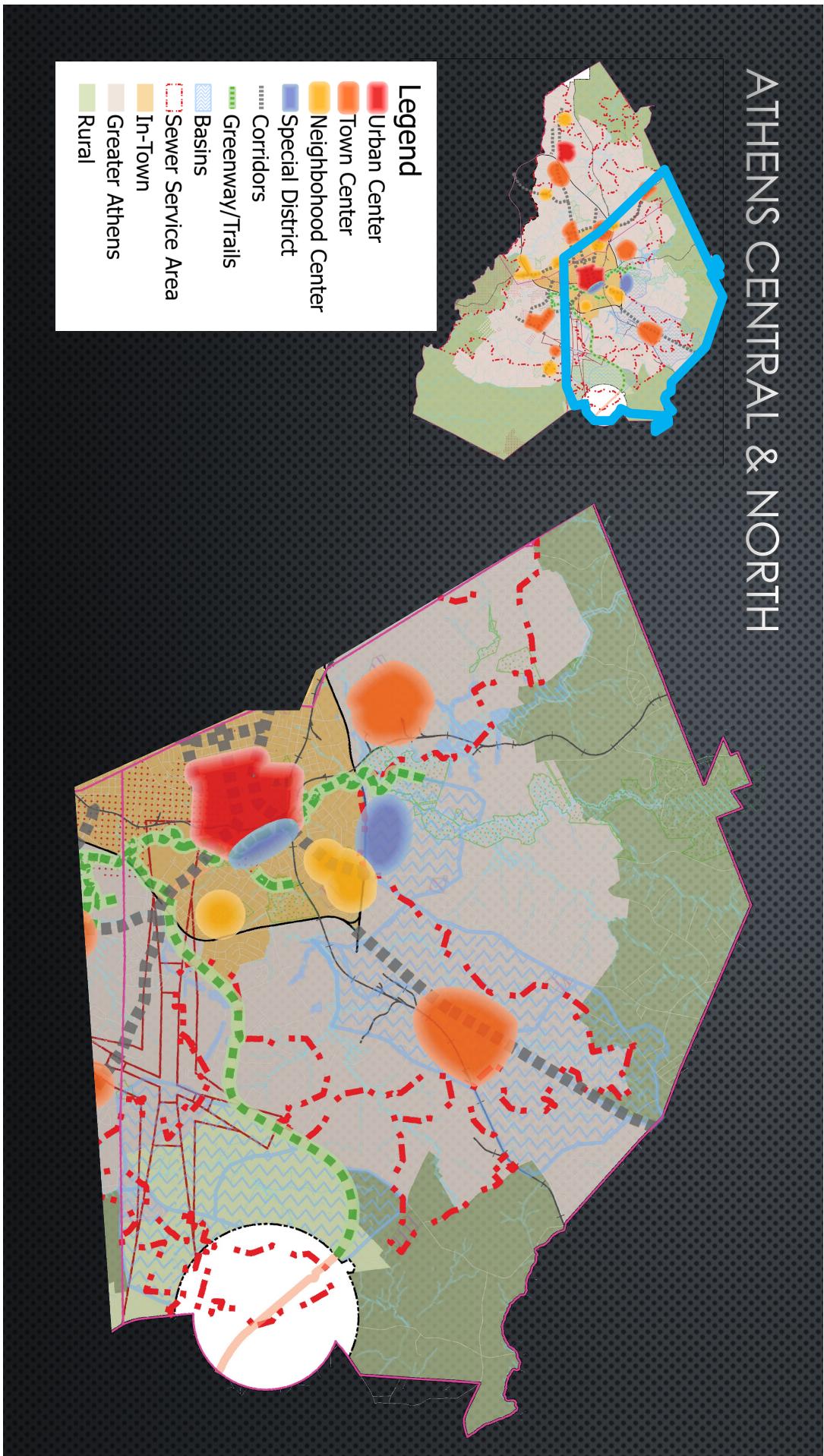
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



ATHENS WEST



ATHENS CENTRAL & NORTH



GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

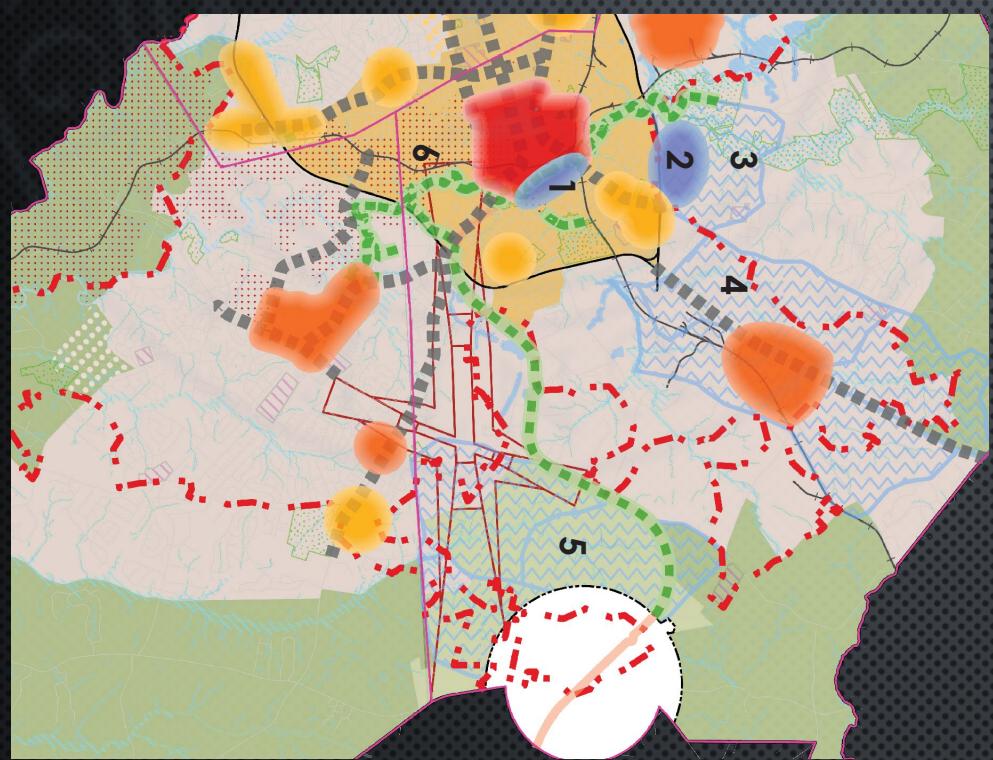
1. DOWNTOWN RIVER DISTRICT
2. FORMER RESERVOIR (Hwy 441 & 10 LOOP)

SEWER BASINS

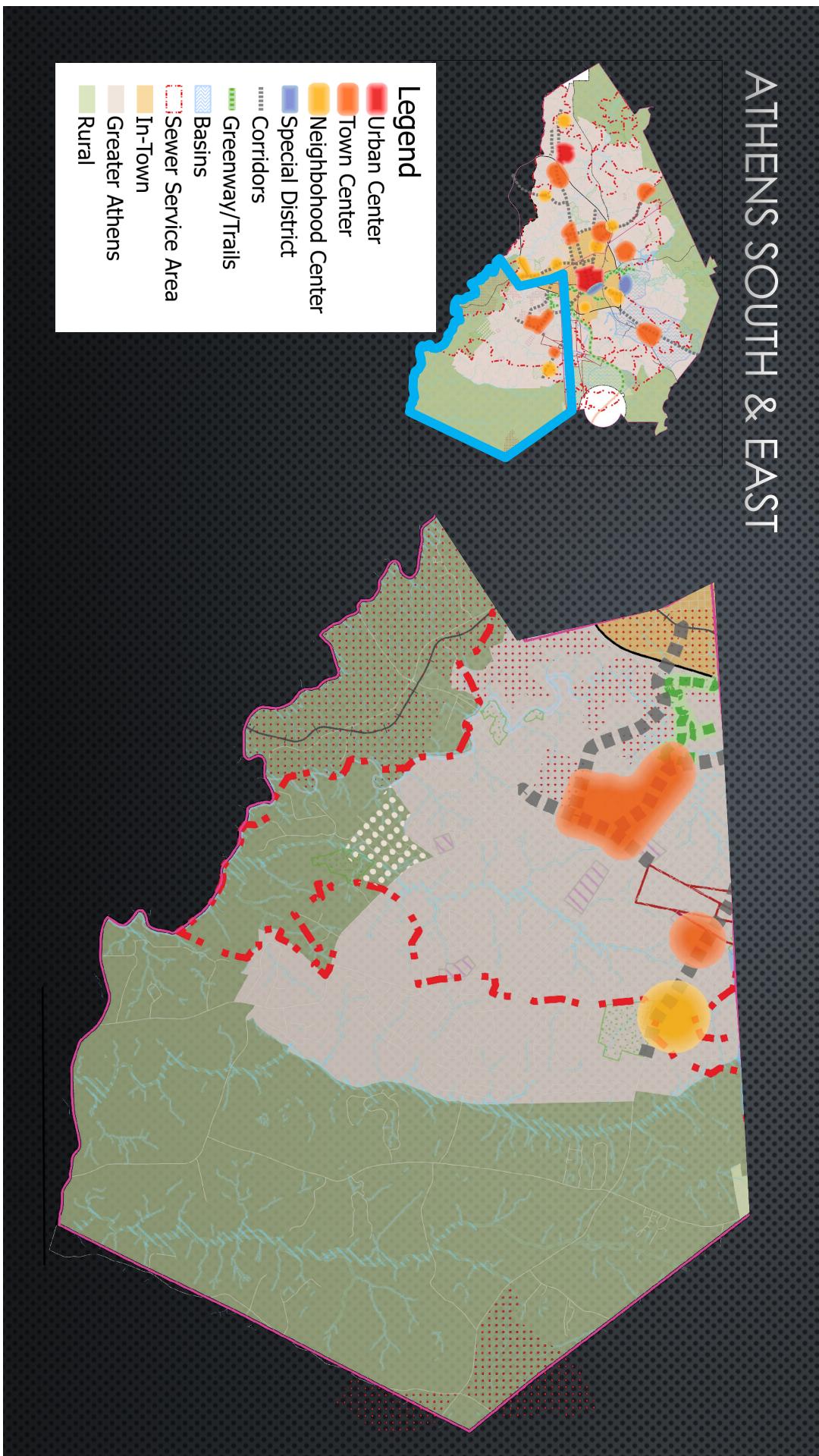
3. LOWER SANDY CREEK
4. WEST FORK TRAIL CREEK
5. UPPER SHOAL CREEK

INSTITUTIONAL

6. UGA



ATHENS SOUTH & EAST



CORRIDORS

- **CORRIDORS (GROWTH)**
 - ATL HWY (TO HWY 78)
 - BAXTER
 - EPPS BRIDGE (TO MCNUTTS'S CREEK)
 - LEXINGTON (LOOP 10 – LOY'S FARM RD)
 - MILLEDGE (PRINCE - WILL HUNTER)
 - PRINCE (DT – LOOP 10)
 - US Hwy 29 (LOOP 10 – COUNTY LINE)
 - PRINCE (LOOP 10 – LAVENDER)
- **CORRIDORS (FORM AND GROWTH)**
 - ALPS (W BROAD – RIVERHILL)
 - BARNETT SHOALS (LEXINGTON – GAINES SCHOOL)
 - COLLEGE STN (ECAMPUS – BARNETT SHOALS)
 - HAWTHORNE
 - NORTH AVE (DT – LOOP 10)
 - OAK/OCONEE (DT – LOOP 10)
 - OGLETHORPE AVENUE
 - PRINCE (LOOP 10 – LAVENDER)

CORRIDORS (ALTERNATIVE)

- **CORRIDORS (FORM)**
 - FIREFLY
 - ECAMPUS RAIL LINE
 - JENNINGS MILL

PUBLIC INPUT: HOW WE LEARNED

SIT DOWN MEETINGS

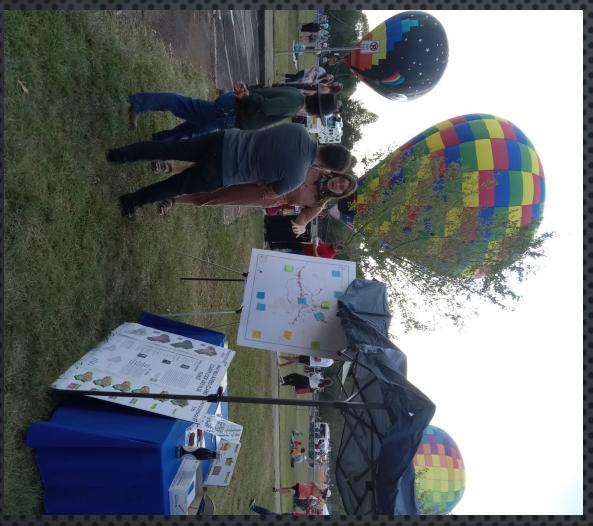
- CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT
 - FRESH THINKING, LISTENING, VALUES
- DATA PRESENTATION/Q&A
 - INFRASTRUCTURE, EXISTING PROJECTS

Bus Tours

- VIEWING AREAS MORE COMPREHENSIVELY
- CONNECTIONS

TABLING

- GENERAL COMMENTS
- SEE AND ENGAGE THE BUILT FORM
- EXPERIENCE
- DEMONSTRATION OF EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS THAT MIGHT BE SOLUTIONS TO GROWTH PRESSURE
- BETTER CONSIDERATION OF RIGHTS-OF-WAY IMPACT
 - ENGAGING YOUTH, THINKING CREATIVELY
- BRINGING ALONG OUR NEXT GENERATION



PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE LEARNED

FUNCTION

- MIXED USE

RESIDENTIAL

- PROPER SCALE
- RESIDENTIAL VARIETY OR OPPORTUNITY (ADU)

FORM

- DESIGN STANDARDS
- HUMAN SCALE
- LIMIT PARKING ON CORRIDORS (ESP. IN FRONT)
- REDUCE SETBACKS
- NEIGHBORHOOD BLEND
- STRUCTURED PARKING
- DOWNTOWN CORE
- CLUSTER/NODAL DEVELOPMENT



"WHEN WE THINK IDEAL CITY, ROADS ARE NOT THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND"

-ATHENIAN

PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE LEARNED

COMMERCIAL

- ADDRESS COMMERCIAL VACANCY
- RESTAURANTS
- SMALL AND/OR LOCAL

INSTITUTIONAL

- INSTITUTIONS AS NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERPIECES
- MEDICAL (ESP. ON EASTSIDE)

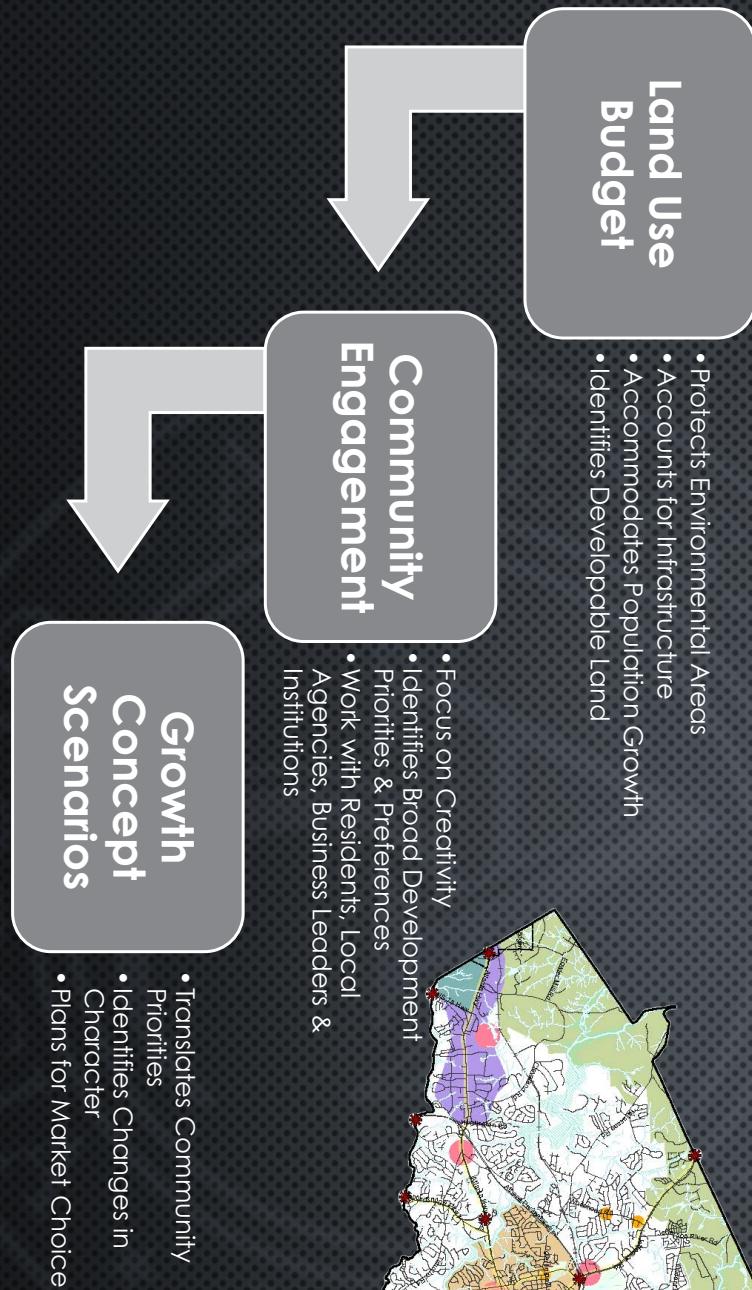
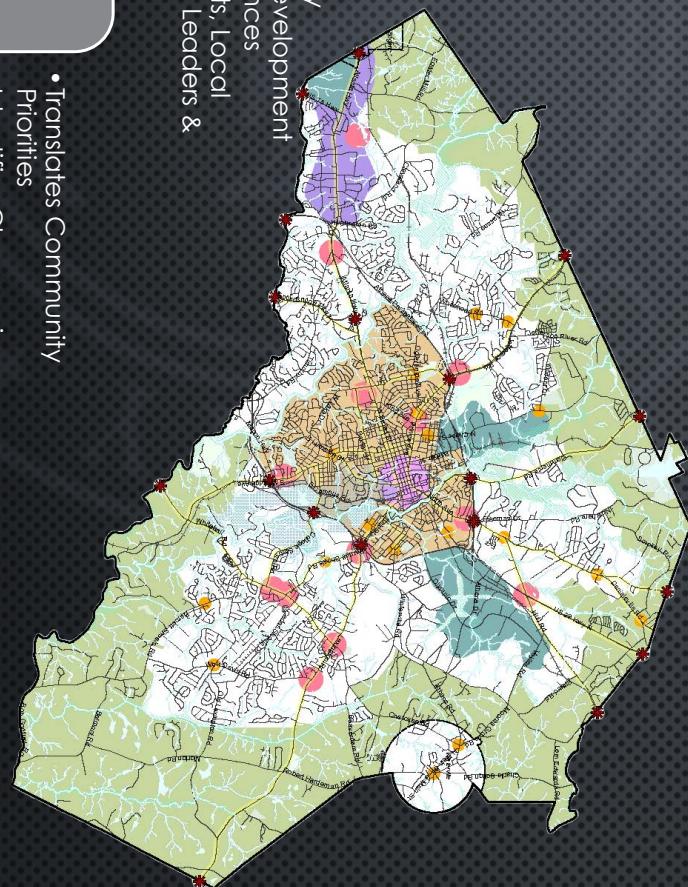
OPEN SPACE & LANDSCAPING

- TREES TREES TREES
- SHARED OR ACTIVATED GREENSPACE OR PARKS
- CONNECTION TO WATER
- PARKS CONNECTED TO PEOPLE (TRAILS)
- RURAL PRESERVATION
- FISHING & AGRICULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

RIGHTS-OF-WAY

- SAFETY
- TRAFFIC
- MORE BIKE (MULTI-MODAL) INFRASTRUCTURE
- TOPOGRAPHY IS A CHALLENGE
- WALKABILITY & CONNECTIONS
- TRANSIT
- TRAINS (REGIONAL OR FURTHER)

CREATING THE GROWTH CONCEPT MAP



2024 FUTURE LAND USE MAP – TODAY'S ISSUES & POSSIBLE POLICIES

Affordable Housing

- Increased by-right density (ADUs; duplexes, triplexes, & quad-plexes in RS zones)
- Reduction of parking
- Single-Family Inclusionary Zoning
- Multi-Family redevelopment incentives

Infrastructure Management

- Sanitary Sewer Pump Station policies
- Shared septic system policies
- Tree & Sidewalk “banking”
- Stormwater design (Low Impact Standards)
- Park Fee ordinance

Urban Design

- Taller Buildings & Architectural Requirements
- Removal of minimum parking requirements
- Conservation Districts & Corridor Master Plans
- Maximum commercial lot size requirements
- Horizontal Mixed Use



WHAT IS THE PROJECT TIMELINE?



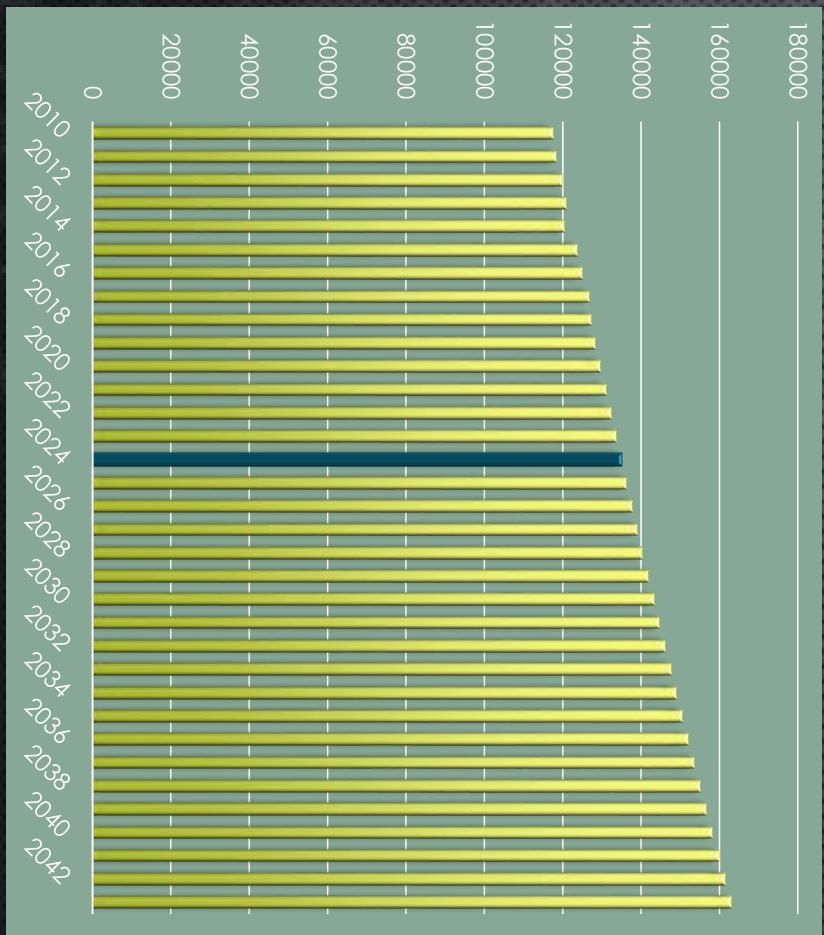
WHY CREATE A NEW FUTURE LAND USE MAP

BIG IDEAS FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS

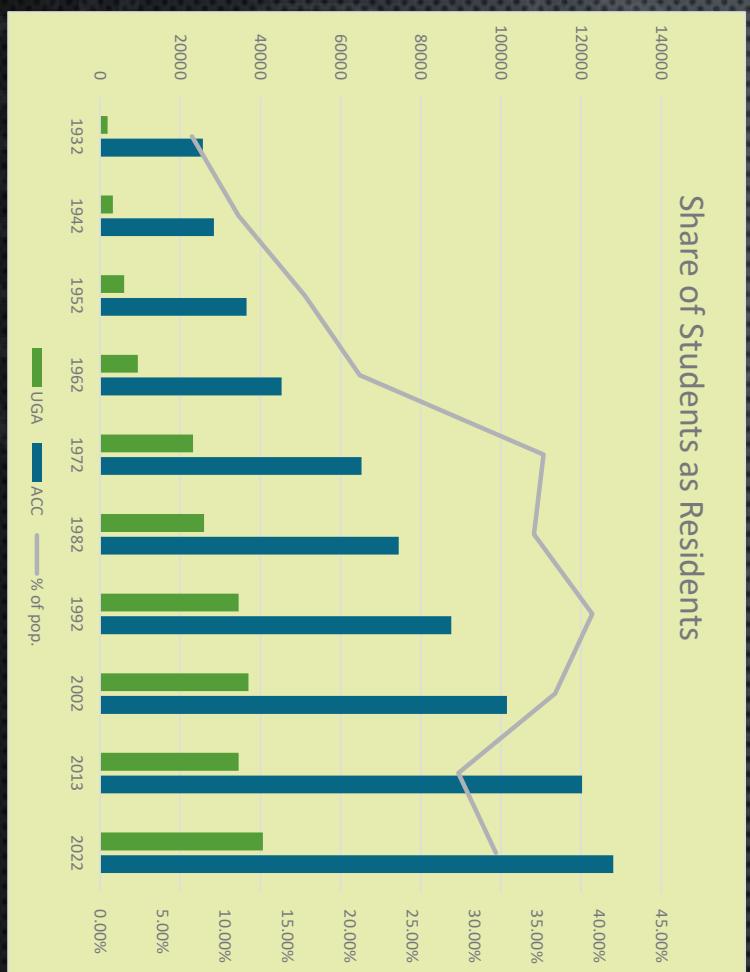
- 1) GROWTH PRESSURE WILL REMAIN CONSTANT
- 2) 30,000+ NEW RESIDENTS BY 2045
- 3) HOUSING VARIETY AND AVAILABILITY MUST INCREASE
- 4) NEED TO REPLACE EXPENSIVE AND AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

POPULATION TRENDS

- THE POPULATION OF ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY HAS SHOWNED A VERY STEADY ANNUAL INCREASE OF JUST OVER 1% RESULTING IN 163,000 RESIDENTS IN 2043
- CURRENT ACC POPULATION IS APPROXIMATELY 136,000
- GA POPULATION GROWTH IS JUST UNDER 1% ANNUALLY

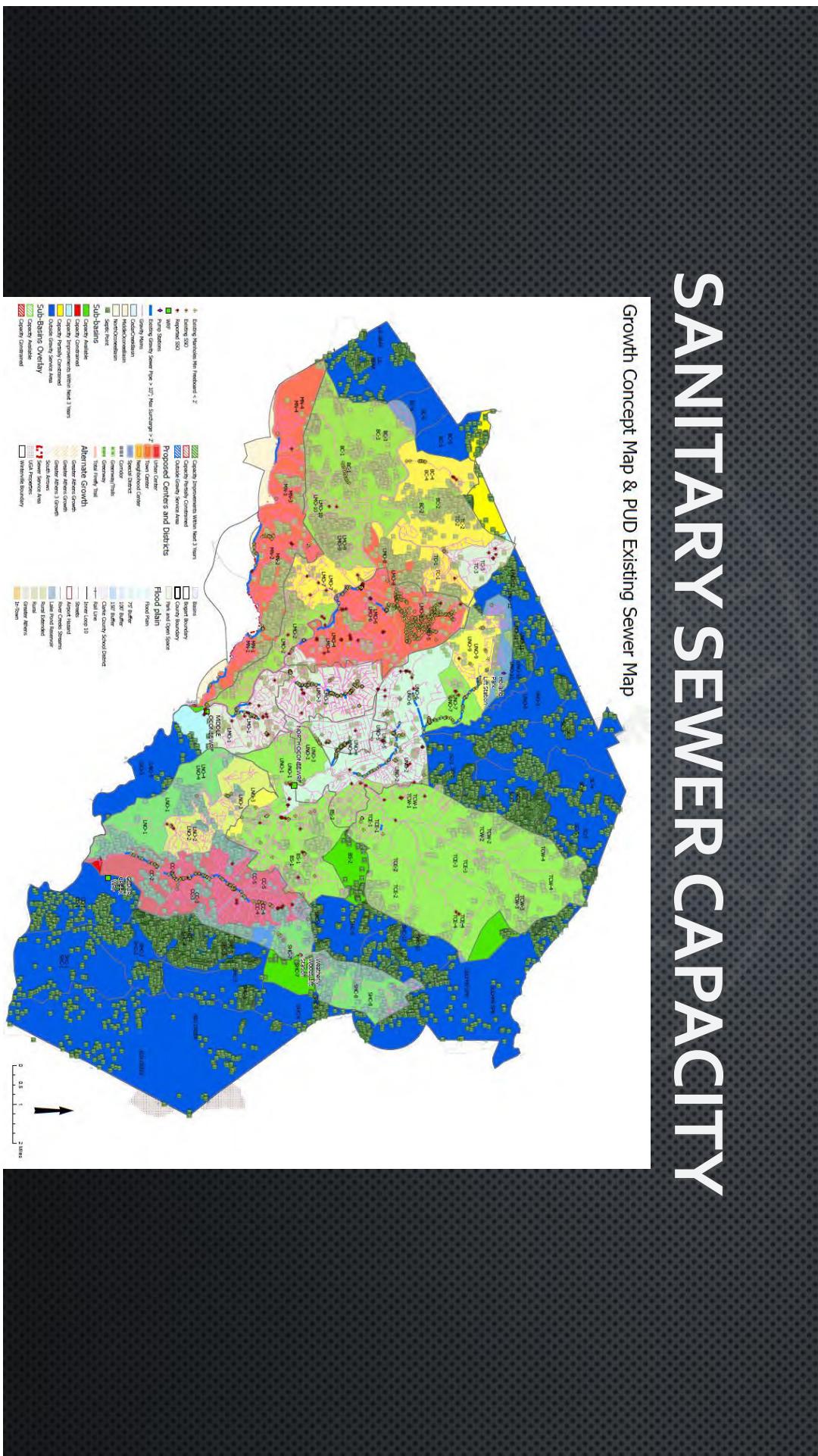


POPULATION TRENDS



SANITARY SEWER CAPACITY

Growth Concept Map & PUD Existing Sewer Map



WHY GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

1. DETERMINE WHERE DEVELOPMENT CAN REALISTICALLY BE ACCOMMODATED?
2. CONSIDER WHAT ARE POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS FOR MORE EFFICIENT LAND USE PATTERNS?
3. DISCUSS HOW AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY DESIGN CAN BOTH BE ACHIEVED?
4. REMAIN MINDFUL OF WHO IS AFFECTED BY THESE ISSUES WHEN ADOPTING POLICIES AND ADMINISTERING PROGRAMS

FUTURE LAND USE MAP – DEFINED & EXPLAINED

WHAT IS IT?

- 20-YEAR VISION FOR HOW LAND SHOULD BE USED
- BALANCES CONSERVATION GOALS WITH DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT NEEDS
- PARCEL-SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENT OF LAND USE TYPES
- REQUIRED ELEMENT OF THE ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- SUPPORTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- INFORMS OTHER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICIES & PROGRAMS

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- PROVIDES BASIS FOR LOCAL ZONING LAWS & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

- GUIDES INFRASTRUCTURE WATER, SEWER, TRANSPORTATION
- GUIDES COMMUNITY FACILITIES PARKS, LIBRARIES, SCHOOLS

GUIDING CONDITIONS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- TOPOGRAPHY
- RIVERS
- RIPARIAN BUFFERS
- PRESERVED OPEN SPACE



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- GRAVITY BASED SEWER SYSTEM (1 LIFT STATION)
- PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM
- STORM WATER SYSTEM
- ROADWAYS
- GREENWAYS & TRAILS

PLANNING

- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2023)
- ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY ZONING REGULATIONS (2001 WITH UPDATES)
- ZONING MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)
- FUTURE LAND USE MAP (REGULARLY AMENDED)

Rigid

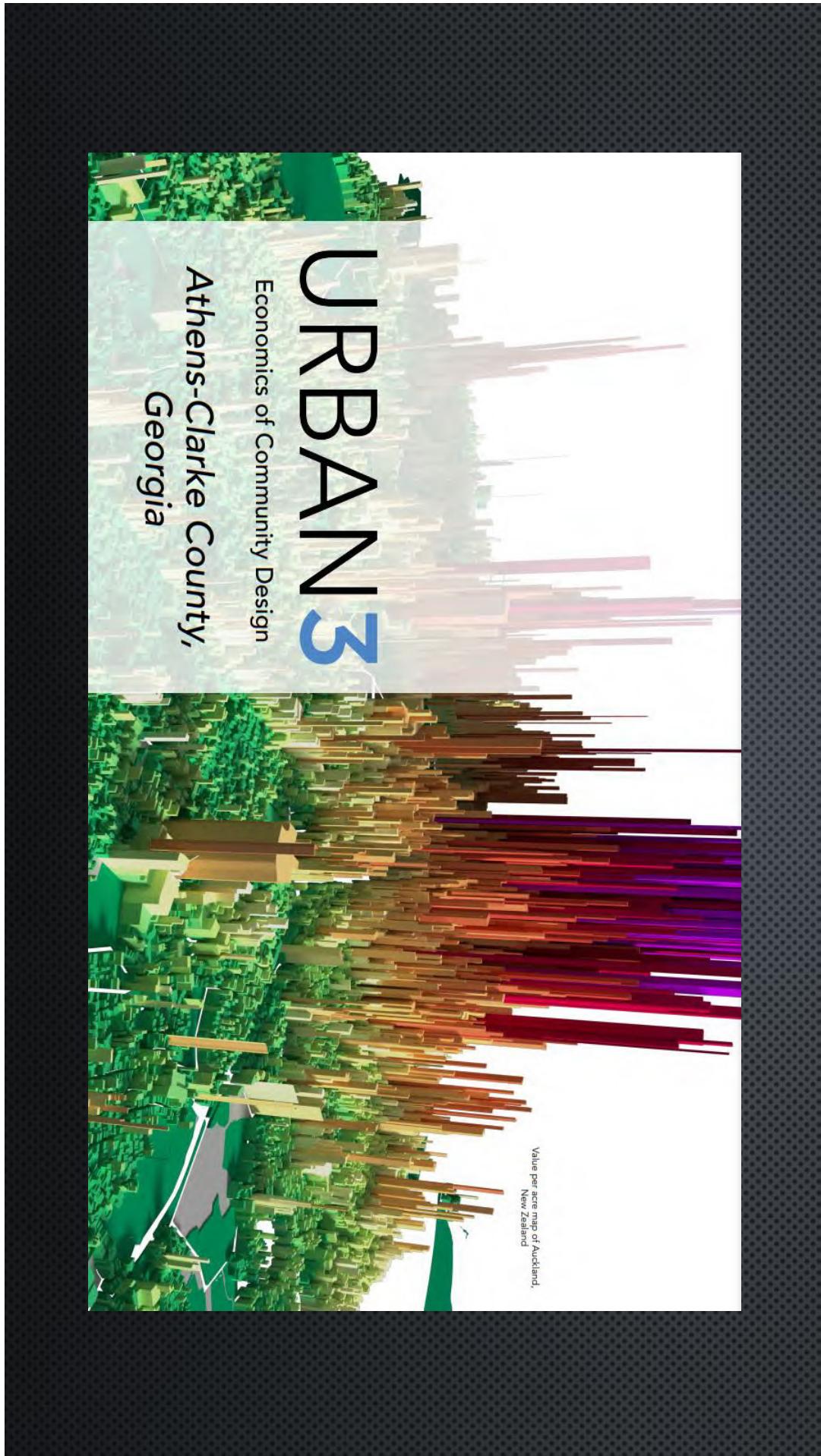
Firm

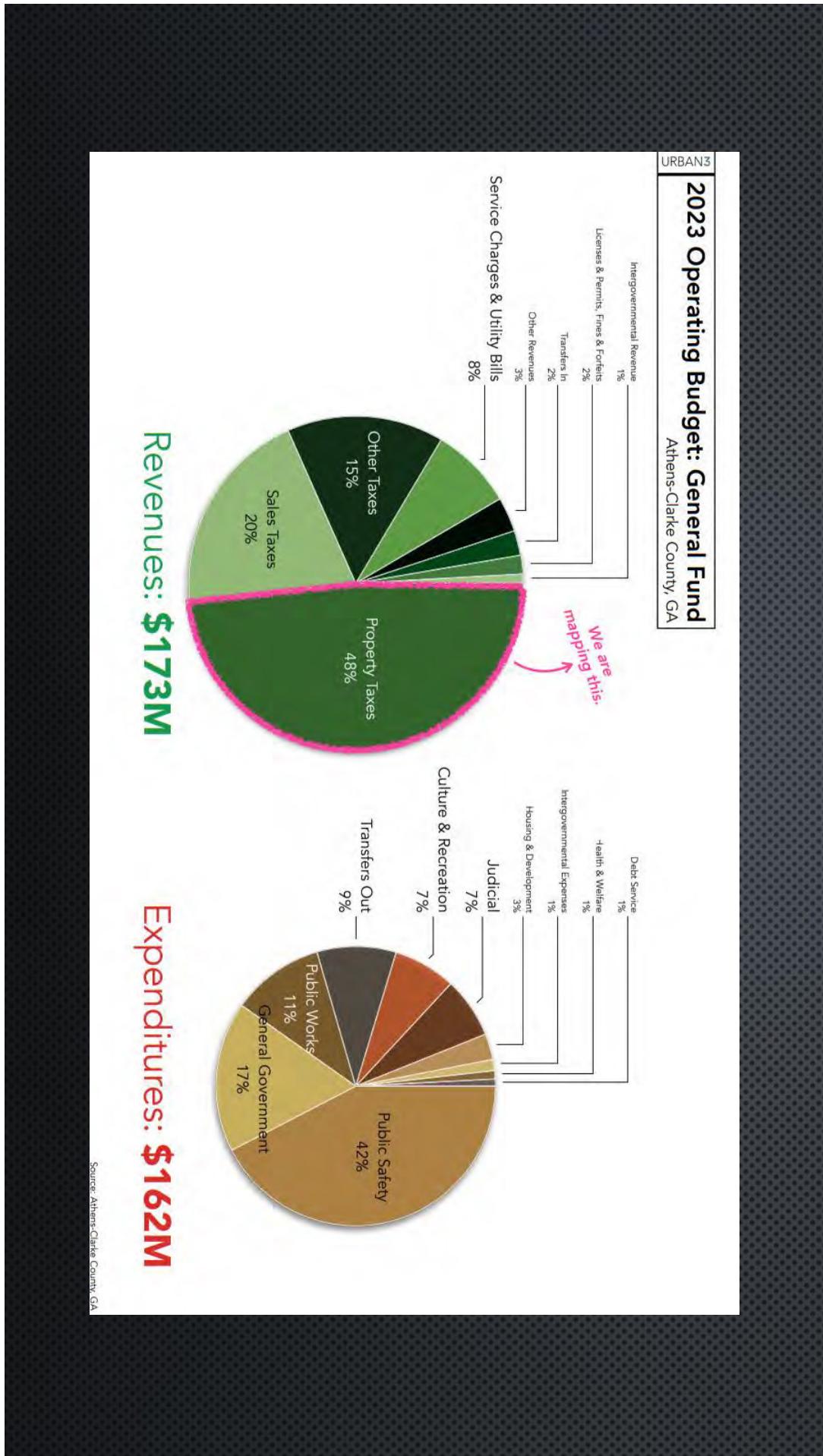
Malleable

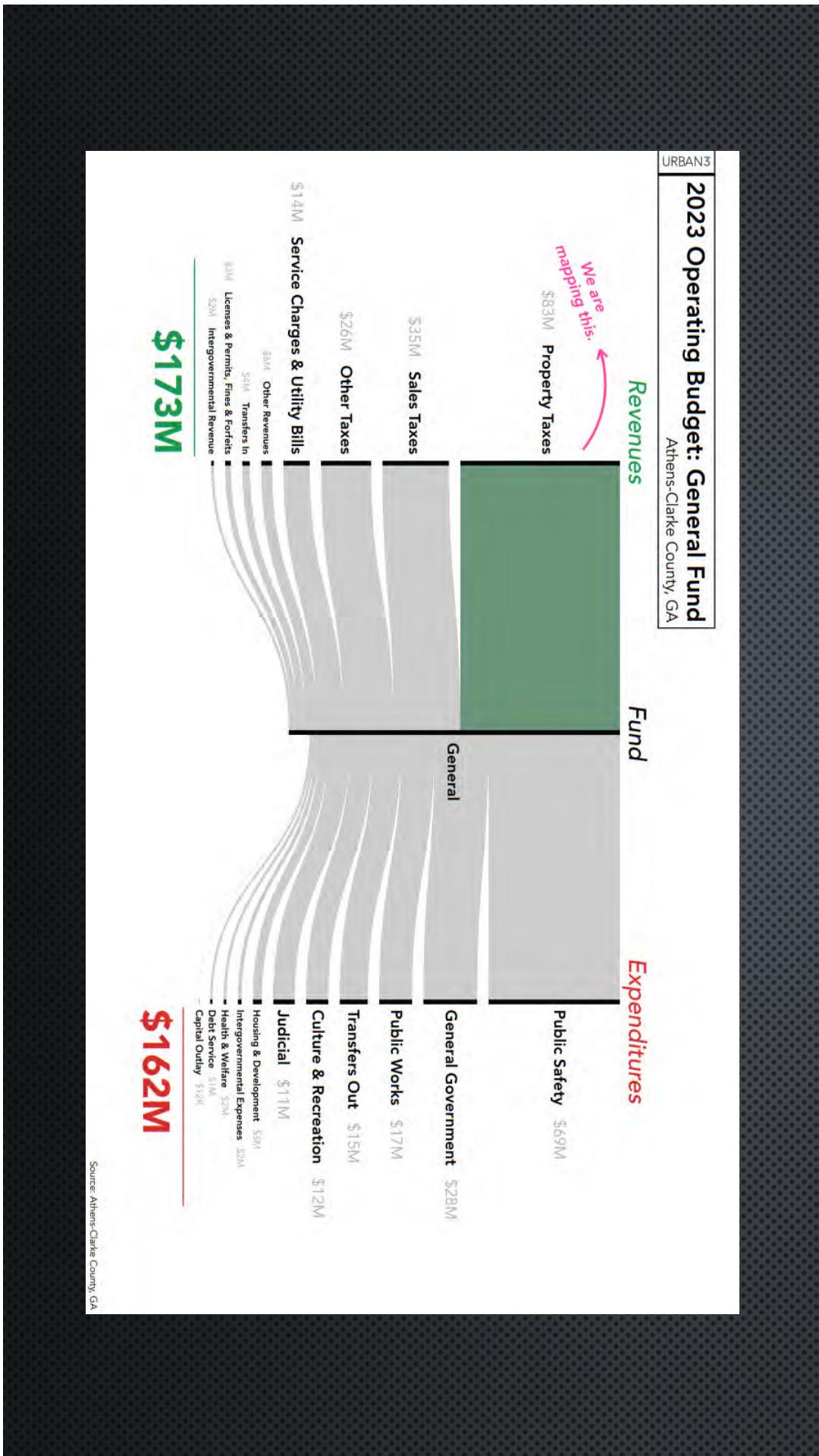


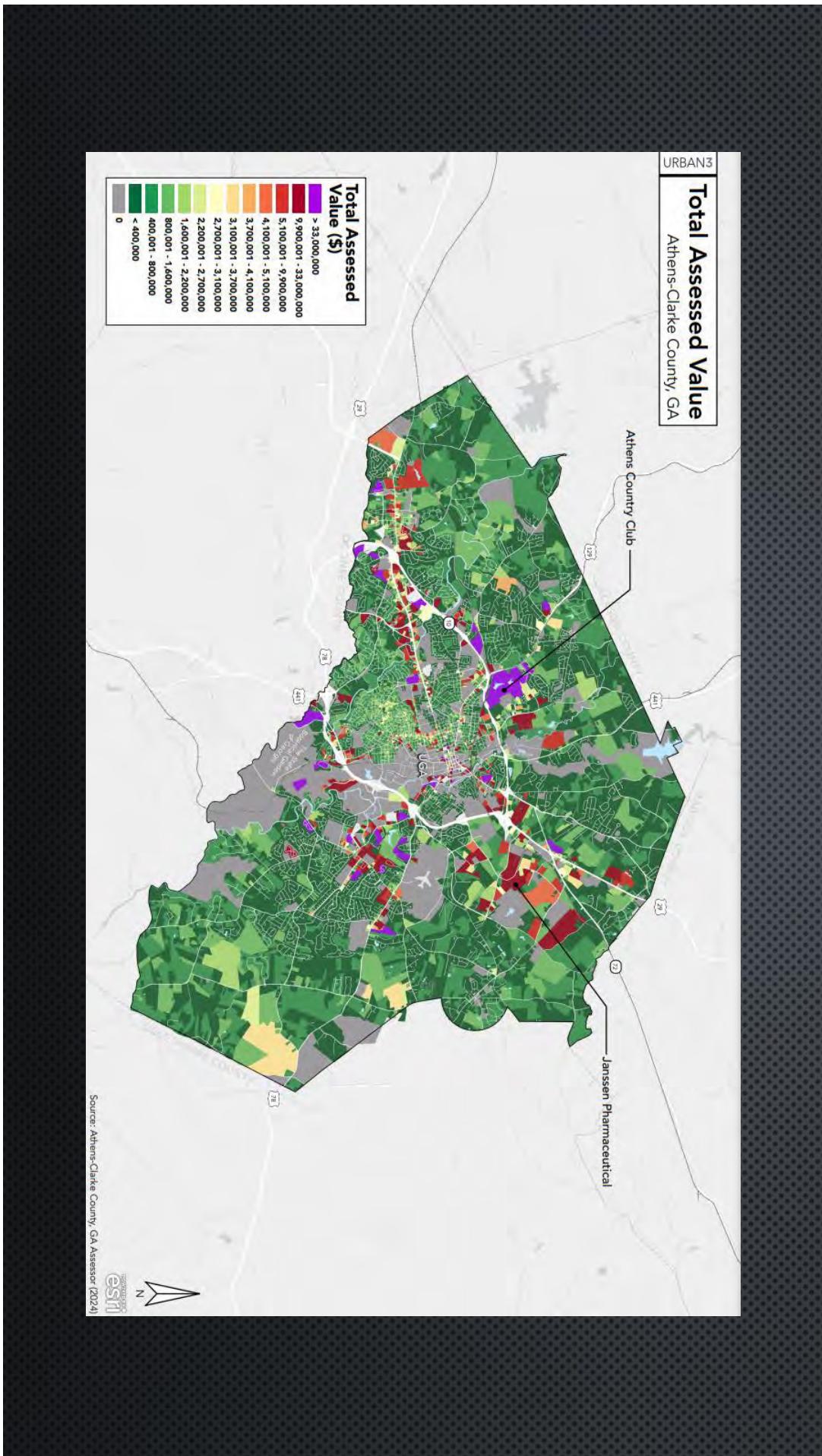
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

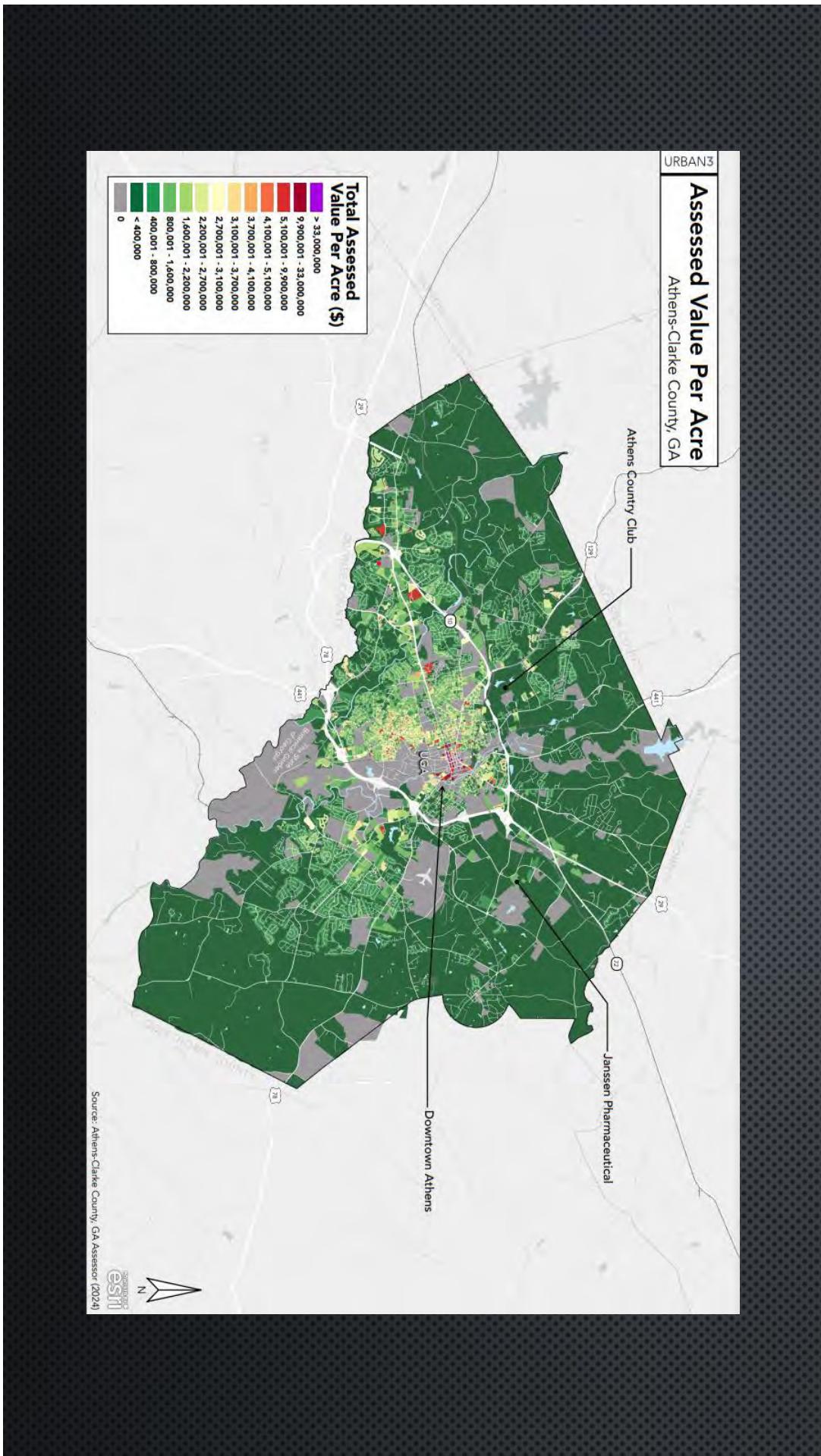
- 1) REDEVELOP CORRIDORS AND NODES THAT ARE RIPE FOR TRANSFORMATION
- 2) MINIMIZE SEWER EXTENSION; GROW CAPACITY WITHIN EXISTING NETWORK
- 3) REDUCE TRAVEL DISTANCES:
 - 1) LOCALIZE TRIPS BY ADDING COMMERCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND AMENITY USES
 - 2) LOCATE PEOPLE NEARER DESTINATIONS (RESIDENTS NEAR JOBS & ACTIVITY CENTERS)
 - 3) ADD STREET CONNECTIONS TO DISTRIBUTE TRAFFIC EFFICIENTLY ACROSS THE NETWORK
- 4) PLAN FOR INCREMENTAL GROWTH IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE SERVED BY SEWER
- 5) SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

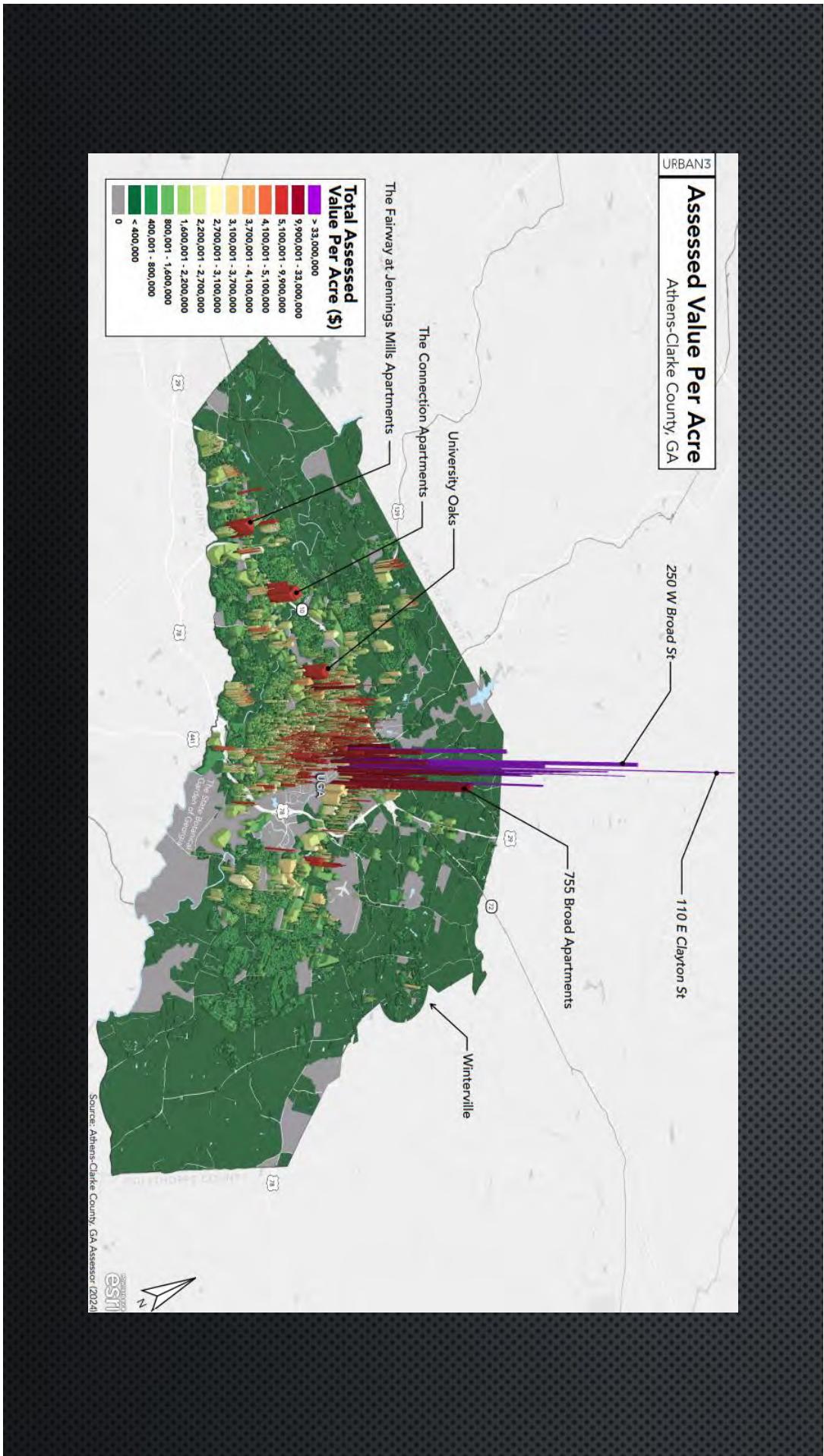


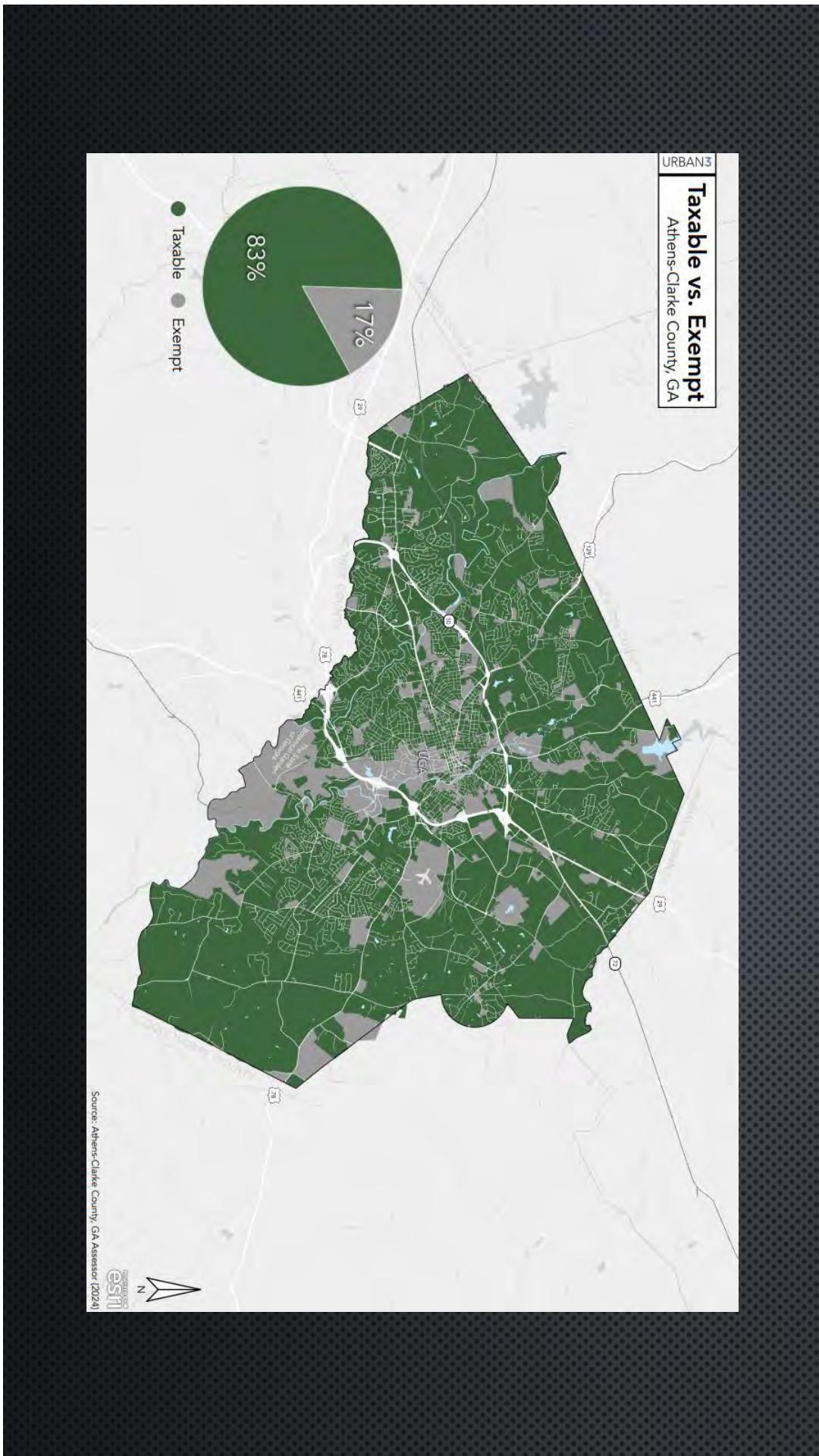




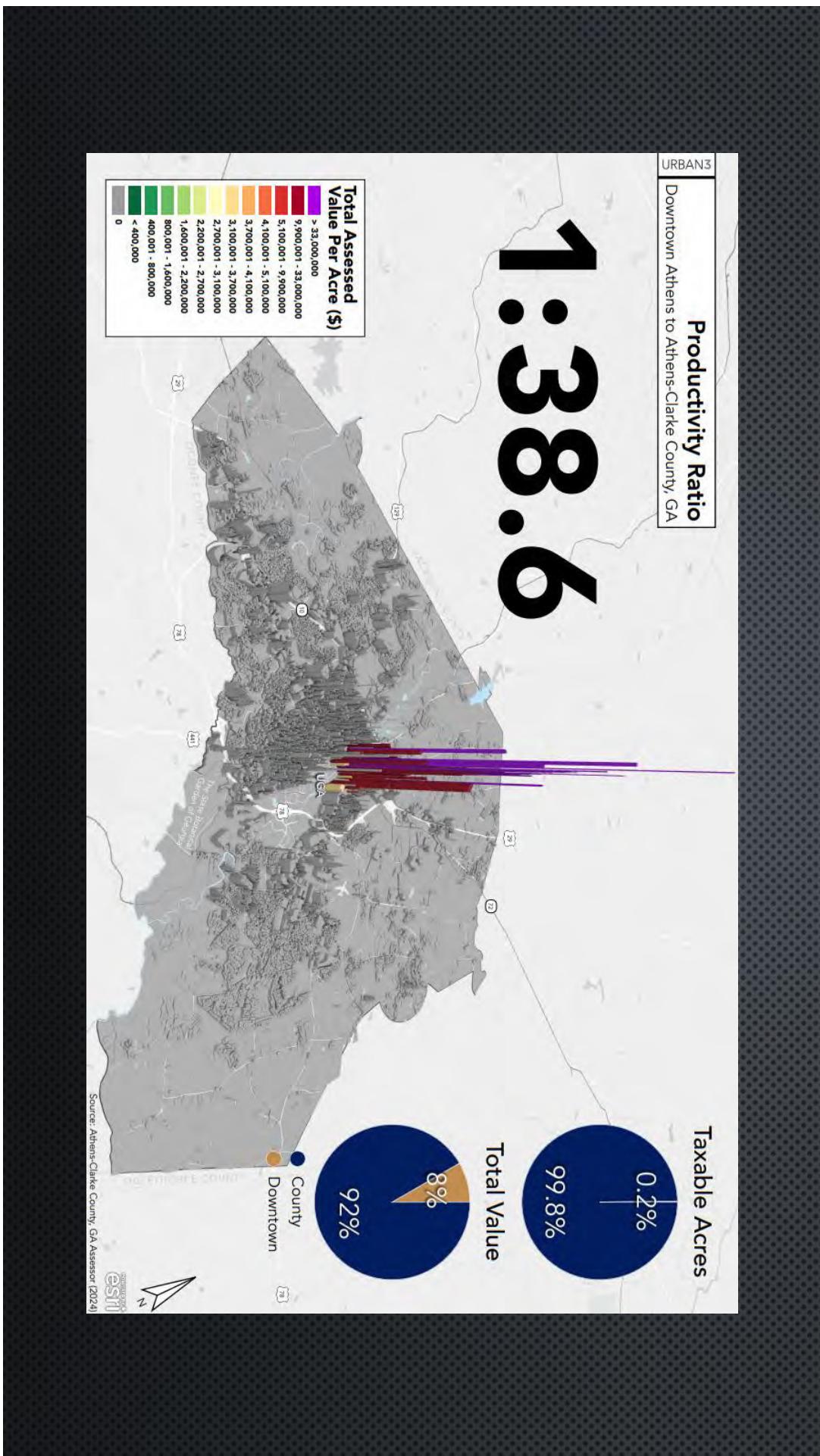


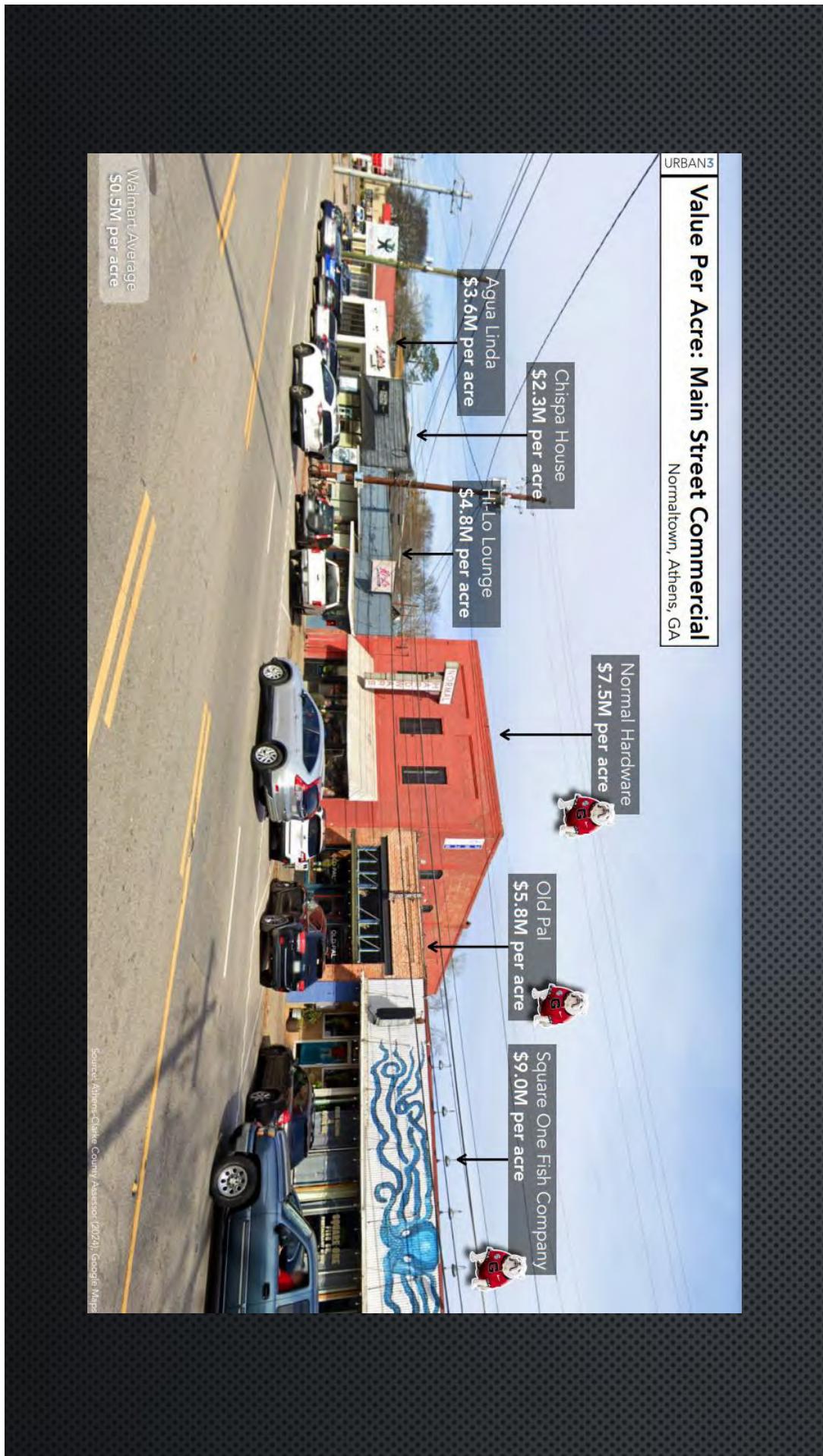


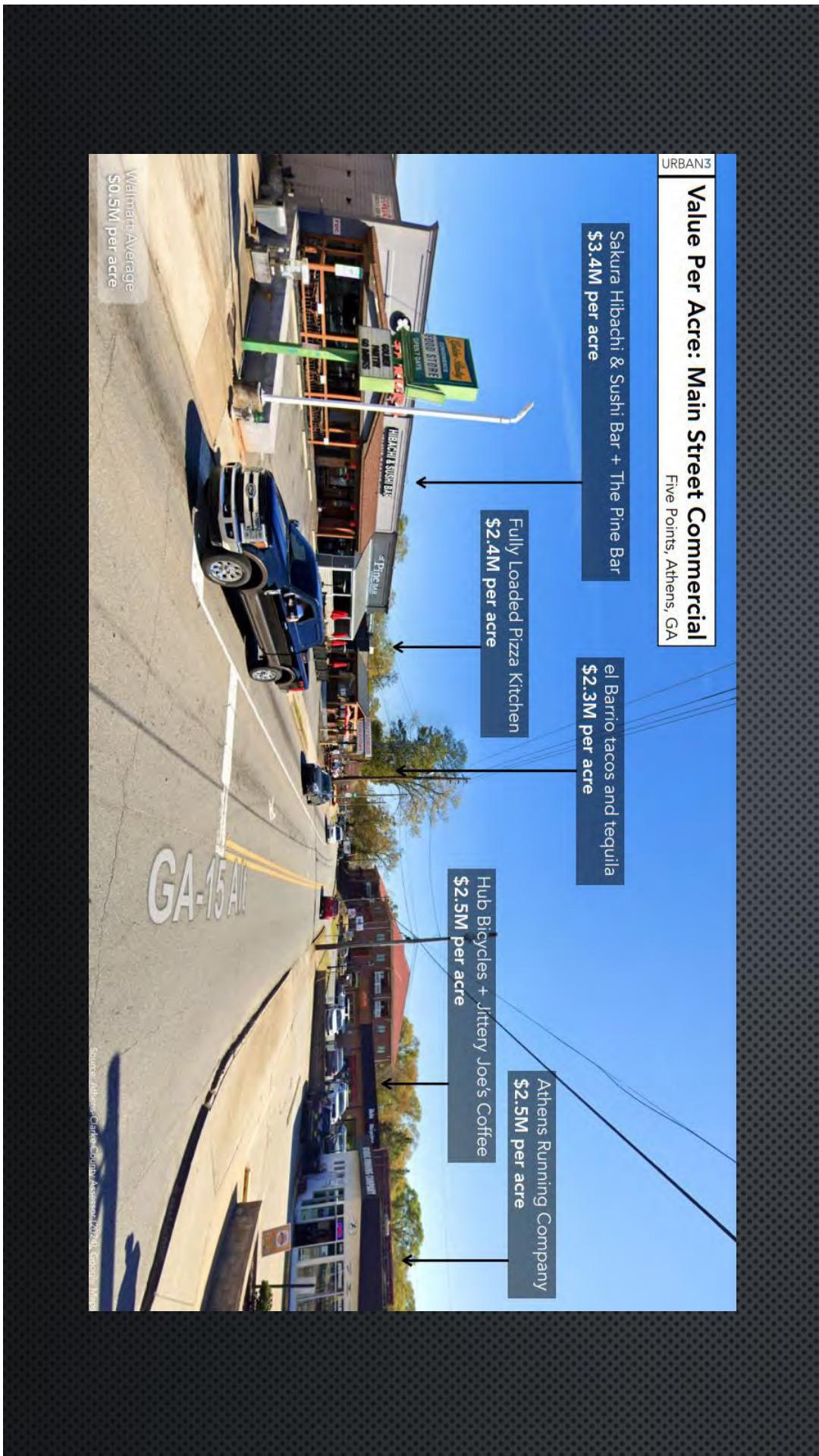




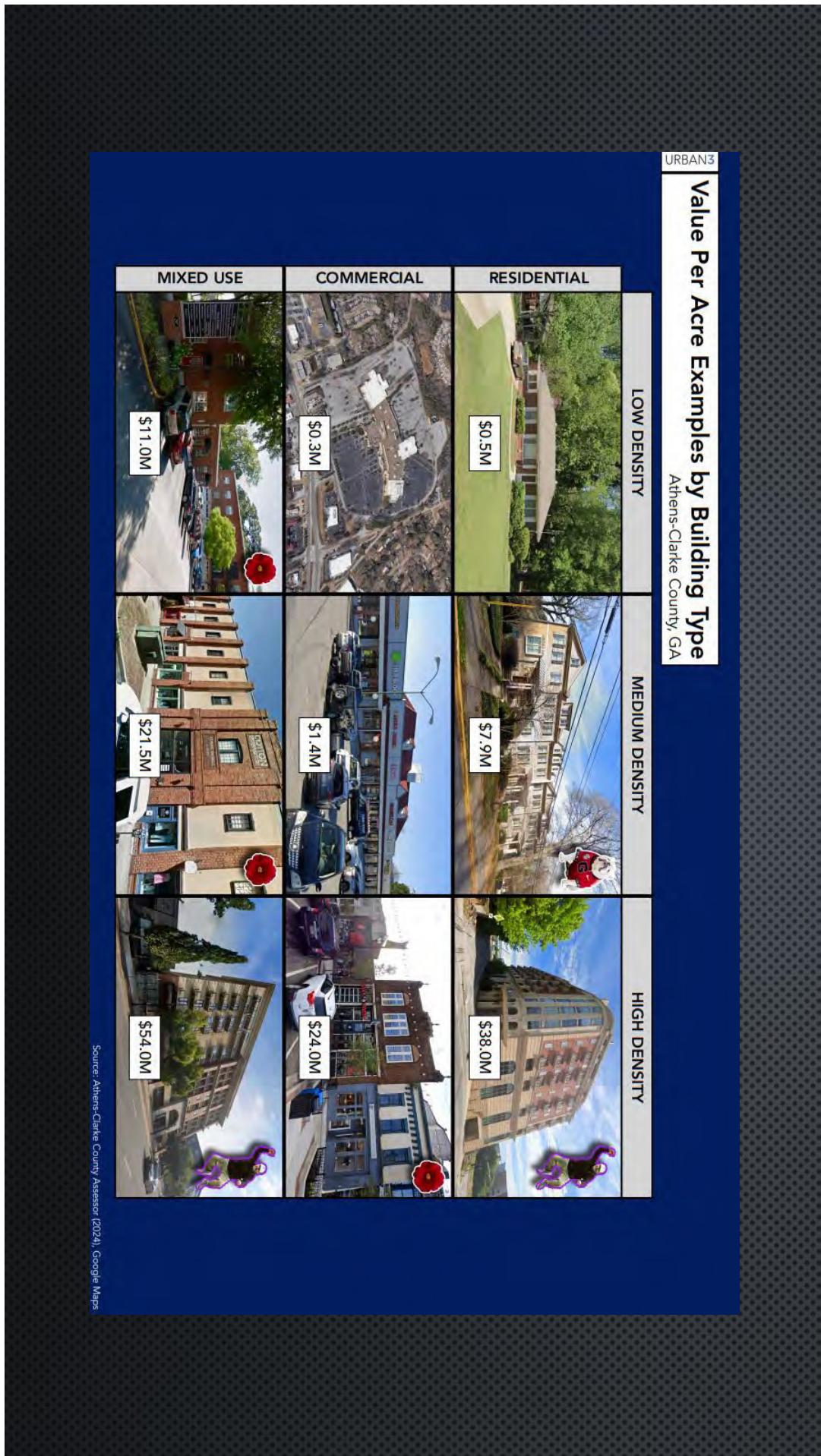


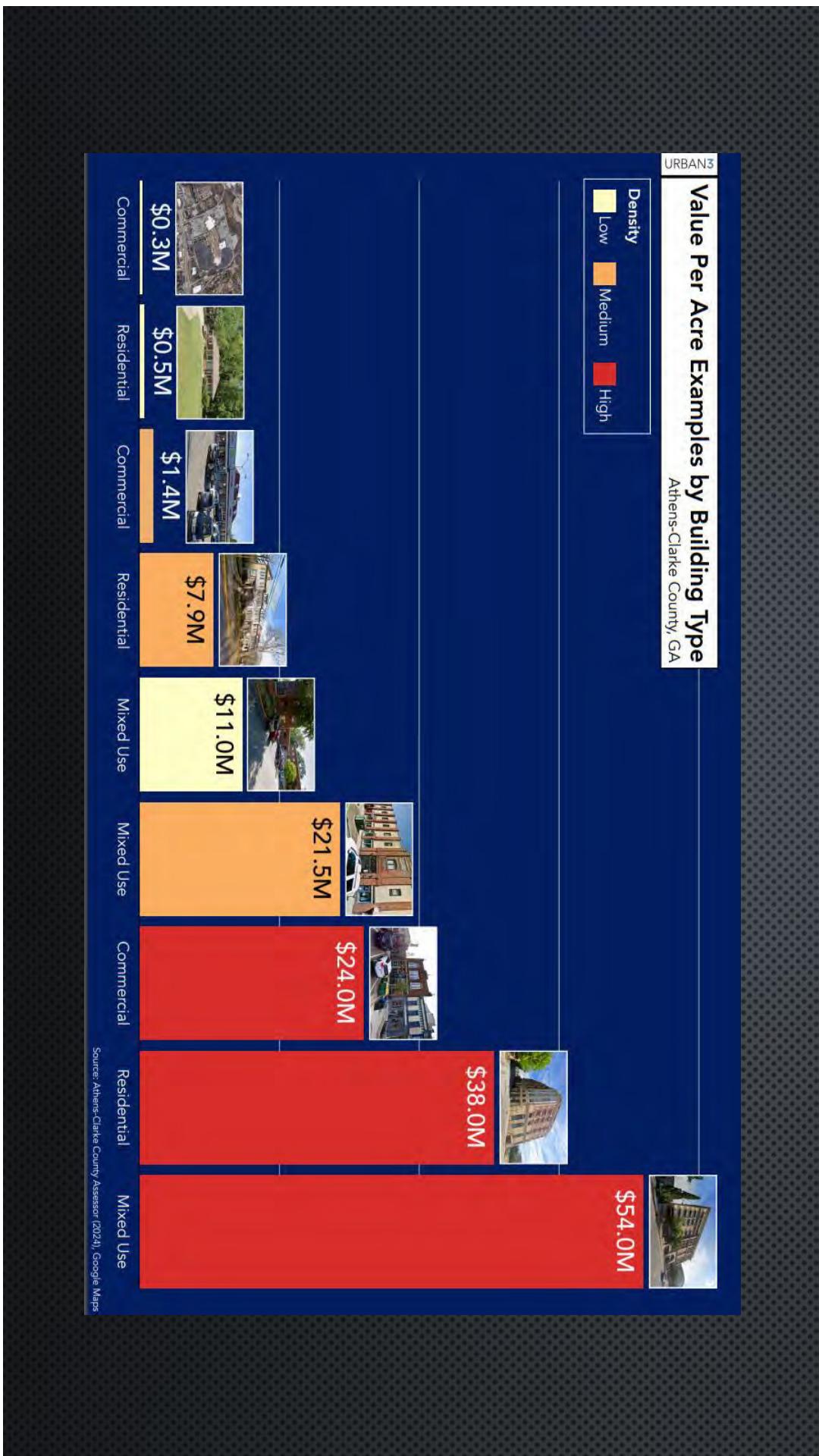


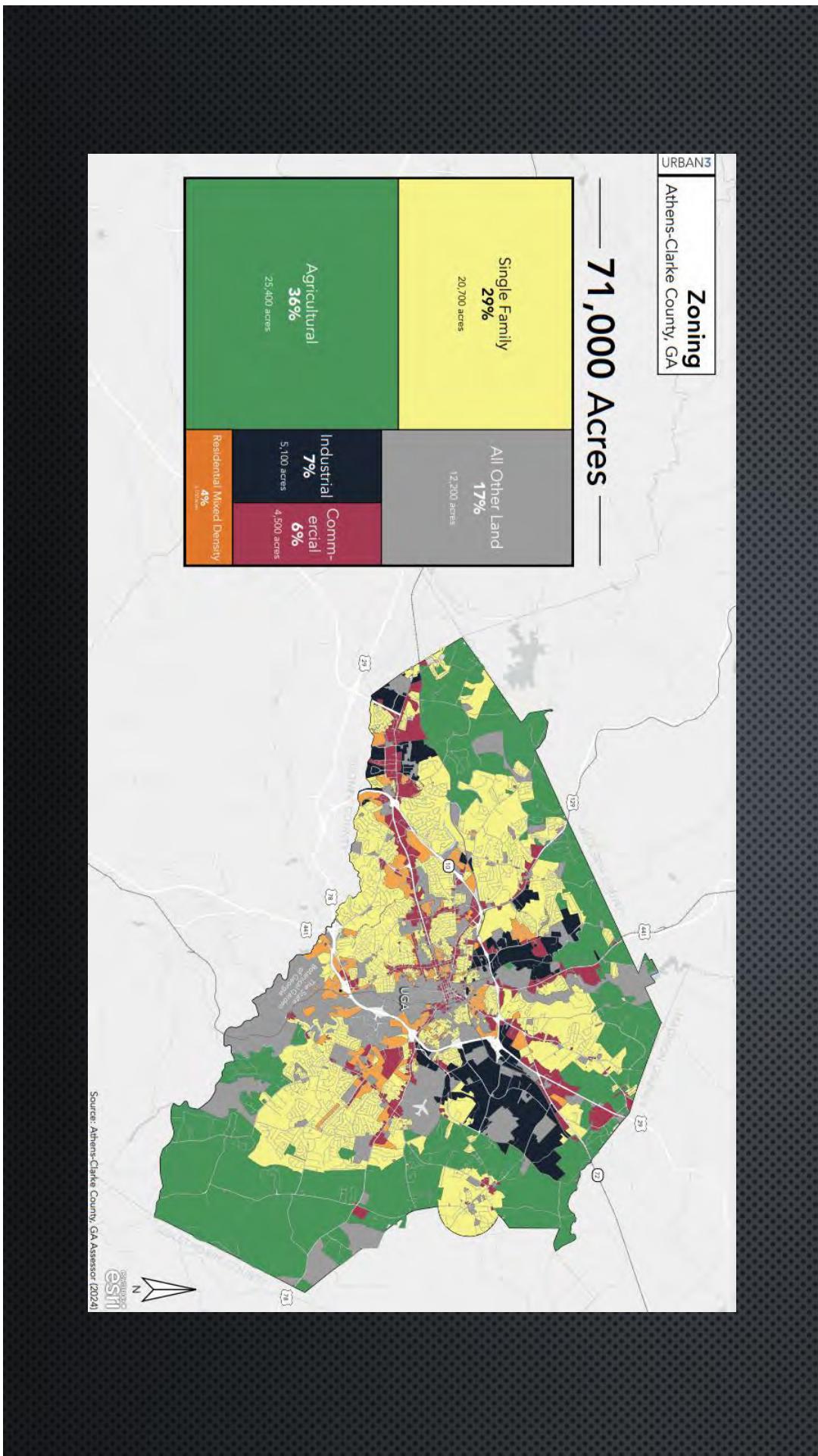




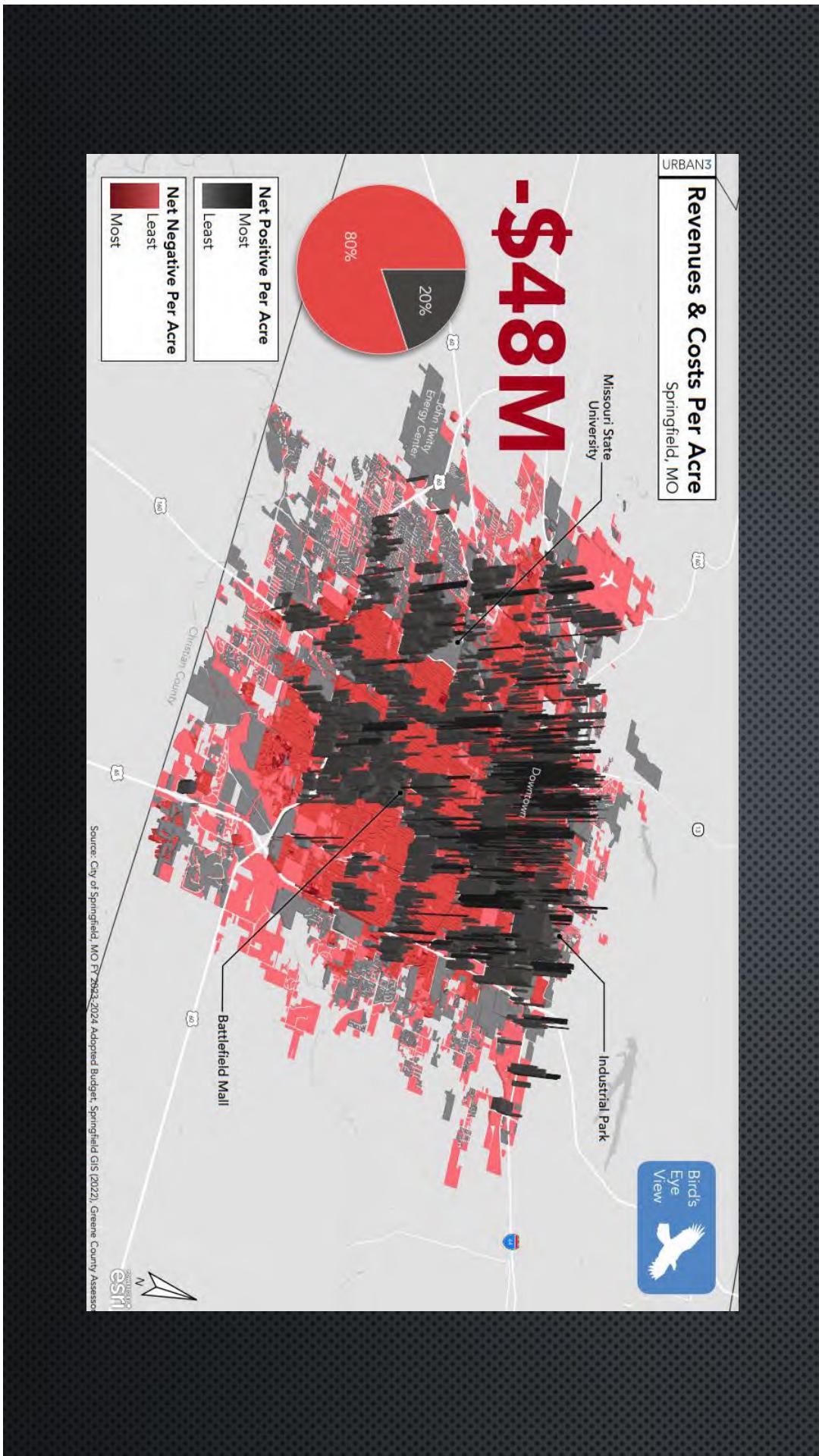










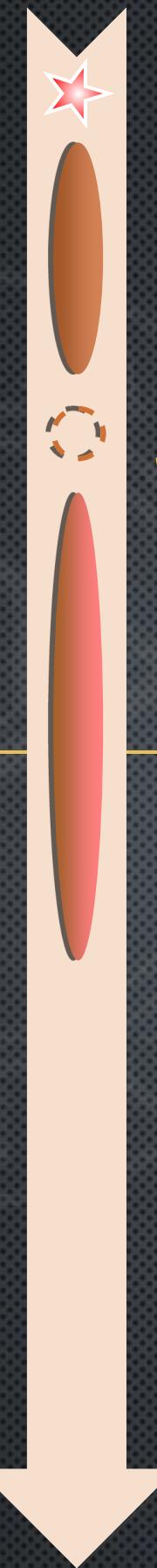




NEXT STEPS

2025

2026+

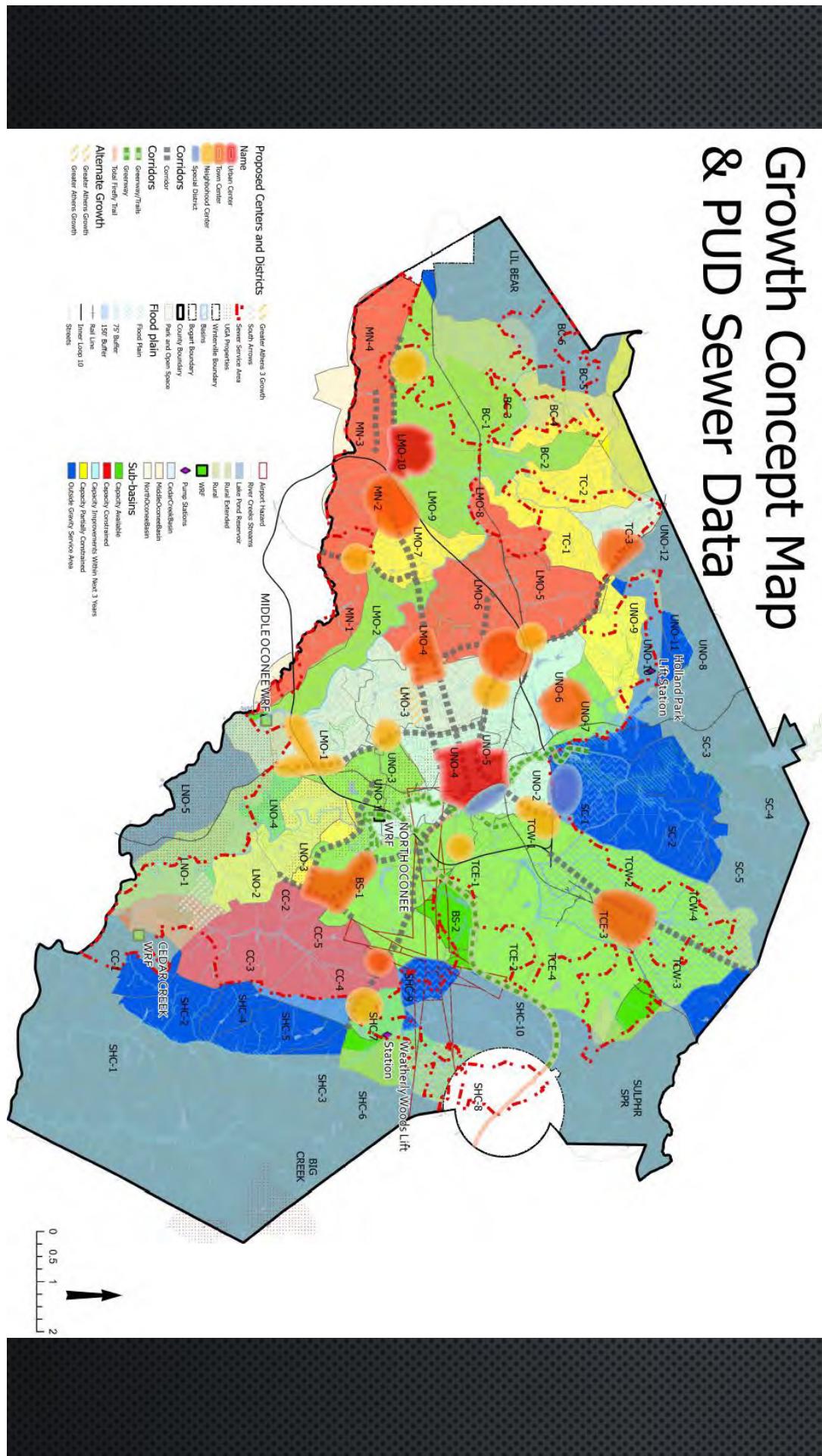
- 
- Future Land Use Steering Committee recommendations completed
 - Development Sustainability Analysis Completed
 - Public Input on draft Future Land Use Plan
 - Final Draft Future Land Use Map Consideration & Adoption
 - PUD Service Delivery Plan Completed
 - Development Code Amendments Focus on Missing Middle Housing
- Continue Development Code Updates
 - Continue infrastructure upgrades
 - Implement Development Activity Data Dashboard
 - Create ACCGov Service Delivery Plan for 2027 Adoption
 - Begin 2028 ACCGov Comprehensive Plan

Planning Department

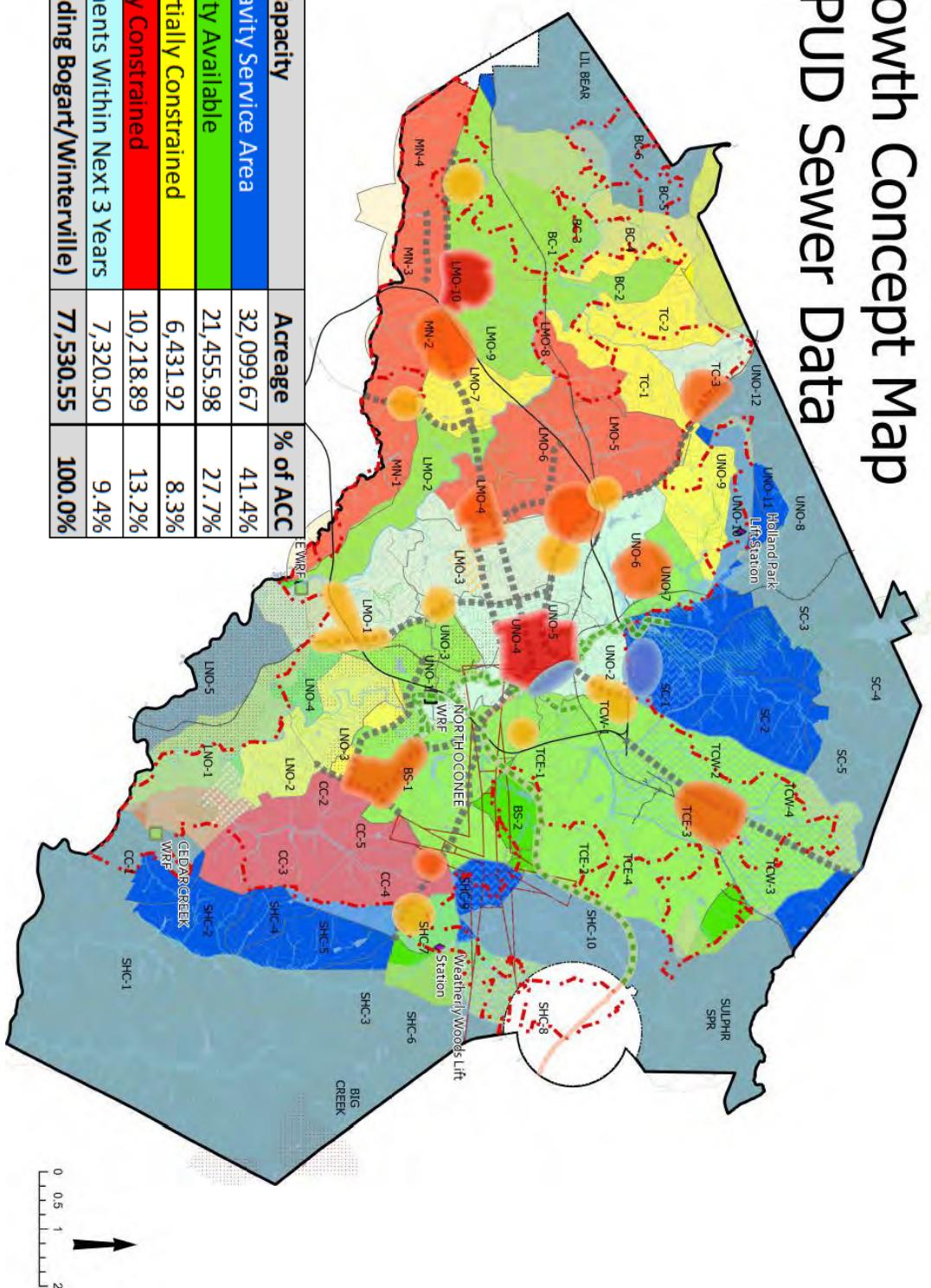
Questions & Discussion

1. Format for providing information to the M&C prior to the final consideration of the Future Land Use Plan
2. Timing of interaction between General Public, PC, and M&C

Growth Concept Map & PUD Sewer Data



Growth Concept Map & PUD Sewer Data



CATEGORIES FOR THE NEW FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Comparison of Future Land Use Categories

Current	Proposed
Government	Parks & Open Space
Employment Center	Education
Downtown	Government
General Business	Employment Center
Main Street Business	Downtown
Rural	Urban Center
Mixed Density Residential	Town Center Nodes
Single Family Residential	Major Corridor
Traditional Residential	Minor Corridor

WHAT IS THE PROJECT TIMELINE?



THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP INFORMS

- DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND REGULATIONS
- OTHER ACCGOV DEPARTMENTAL PLANS & PROGRAMS
- OTHER LOCAL STAKEHOLDER PLANNING EFFORTS
- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

2025 FUTURE LAND USE MAP – TODAY'S ISSUES & POSSIBLE POLICIES

Affordable Housing

- Increased by-right density (ADUs; duplexes, triplexes, & quad-plexes in RS zones)
- Reduction of parking
- Single-Family Inclusionary Zoning
- Multi-Family redevelopment incentives

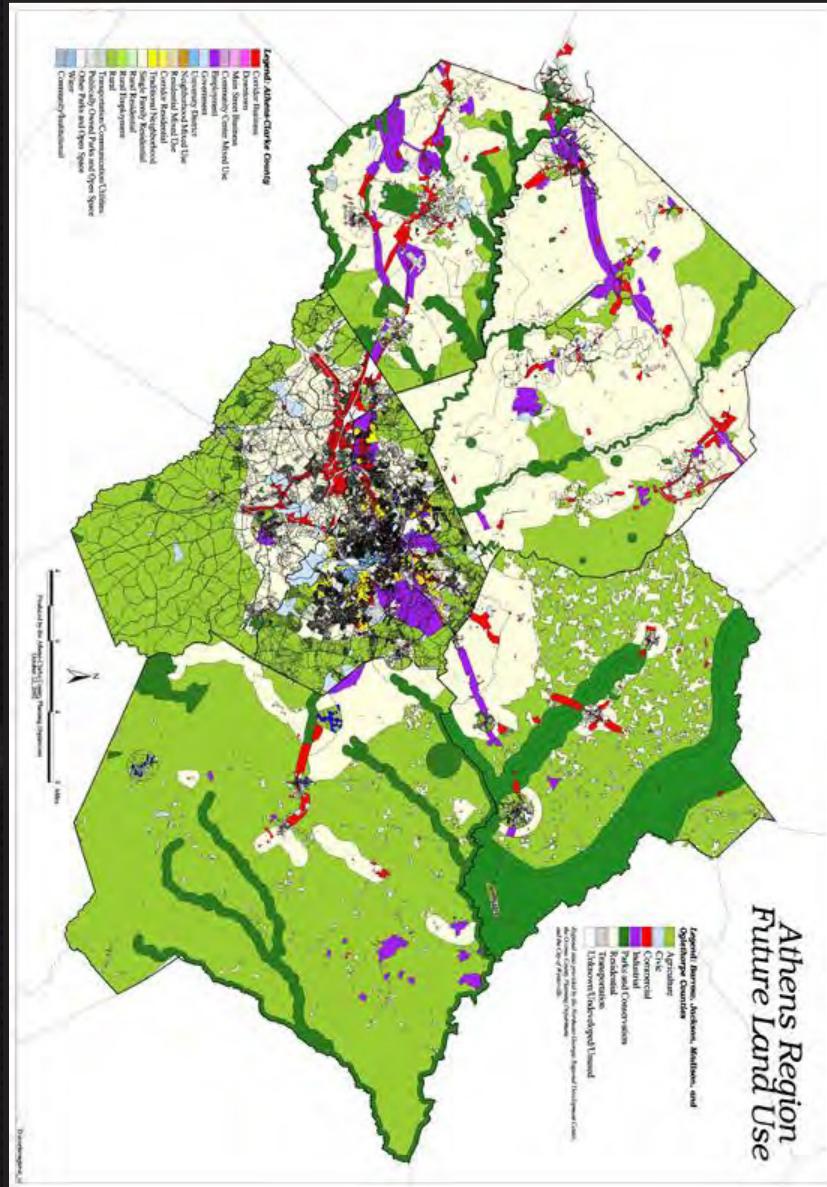
Infrastructure Management

- Sanitary Sewer Pump Station policies
- Shared septic system policies
- Tree & Sidewalk “banking”
- Stormwater design (Low Impact Standards)
- Park Fee ordinance

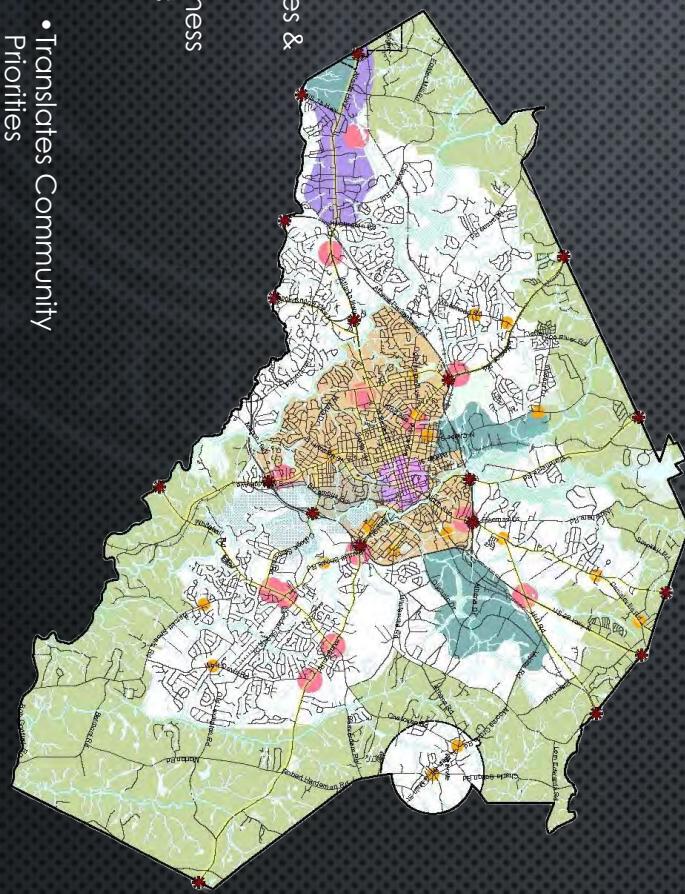
Urban Design

- Taller Buildings & Architectural Requirements
- Removal of minimum parking requirements
- Conservation Districts & Corridor Master Plans
- Maximum commercial lot size requirements
- Horizontal Mixed Use

REGIONAL LAND USE TRENDS



HOW WE'RE CREATING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Land Use Budget

- Protects Environmental Areas
- Accounts for Infrastructure
- Accommodates Population Growth
- Identifies Developable Land

Community Engagement

- Identifies Broad Development Priorities & Preferences
- Work with Residents, Local Agencies, Business Leaders & Institutions
- Focus on Creativity

Growth Concept Scenarios

- Translates Community Priorities
- Identifies Changes in Character
- Plans for Market Choice

APPENDIX G

Street Concepts

Appendix F: Street Concepts

Main points

Streets Are Public Spaces - Streets are often the most vital yet underutilized public spaces in cities. In addition to providing space for travel, streets play a big role in the public life of cities and communities and should be designed as public spaces as well as channels for movement.

Great Streets are Great for Businesses - Cities have realized that streets are an economic asset as much as a functional element. Well-designed streets generate higher revenues for businesses and higher values for homeowners.

Streets Can Be Changed - Transportation engineers can work flexibly within the building envelope of a street. This includes moving curbs, changing alignments, daylighting corners, and redirecting traffic where necessary. Many city streets were built or altered in a different era and need to be reconfigured to meet new needs. Street space can also be reused for different purposes, such as parklets, bike share, and traffic calming.

Design for Safety - In 2012 in the U.S., over 34,000 people were killed in traffic crashes, which were also the leading cause of death among children aged 5–14. These deaths and hundreds of thousands of injuries are avoidable. Traffic engineers can and should do better, by designing streets where people walking, parking, shopping, bicycling, working, and driving can cross paths safely.

Streets Are Ecosystems - Streets should be designed as ecosystems where man-made systems interface with natural systems. From pervious pavements and bioswales that manage storm- water run-off to street trees that provide shade and are critical to the health of cities, ecology has the potential to act as a driver for long- term, sustainable design.

Potential Road designs to make a safe and cohesive node



Residential Collector Boulevard (before)

Consider these streets adjacent to nodes or corridors as they transition from slightly higher intensities.



Residential Collector Boulevard (after)

Consider these streets adjacent to nodes or corridors as they transition from slightly higher intensities.



Residential Street (in node)

Consider these streets in nodes or along corridors. Tighter front yards, on street parking, streetscape furniture & active sidewalks.



Commercial or Mixed-Use Boulevard (*in node or connector*)

Consider these streets in nodes, along corridors or connecting to them. Enhanced streetscape to provide transportation options and parking. These provide public space and build adjacent value.



Main Street (*before*)

Consider these streets in nodes, also a model for in-town corridors with reduced commercial. Active users, commercial activity, reduced speeds & mixed-use.



Main Street (after)

Consider these streets in nodes, also a model for in-town corridors with reduced commercial. Additional space for active users, streetscape enhancement, commercial activity (interface w/ public realm), reduced speeds, additional transportation modes & mixed-use.



Residential Alley (in node)

Consider these secondary streets in nodes or along the back of corridors. Allows buildings to be pulled forward, provides space for people and activities along with services such as trash pick-up, deliveries or storage.

APPENDIX H

Visual Preference Survey Results Spring 2024

20.4%

Respondents preferred a low-to-mid-rise urban center instead of a high-rise urban center.



A

79.6%



B

57.7%



A

2

42.3%

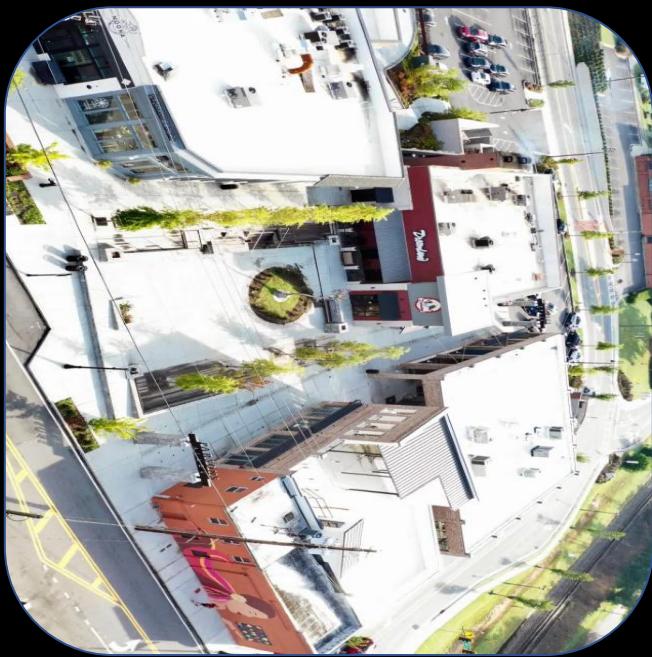


B

Respondents preferred a larger open space park to the pocket park

Respondents split evenly over the preferred neighborhood center form.

50.9%



A

3

49.1%



B

68.5%

Respondents preferred closer setbacks (buildings near the street) over deeper setbacks (buildings pushed away from the street).



A

31.5%



B

4

Respondents preferred wider activated sidewalks instead of narrow sidewalks with less programming.

61.3%



A

5

38.7%



B

53.9%



A

6

46.1%



B

Respondents split with a small preference for a corridor marketplace over a plaza marketplace

28.6%
70.2%

Respondents preferred centrally located parking over suburban shopping center lots



B



A

7

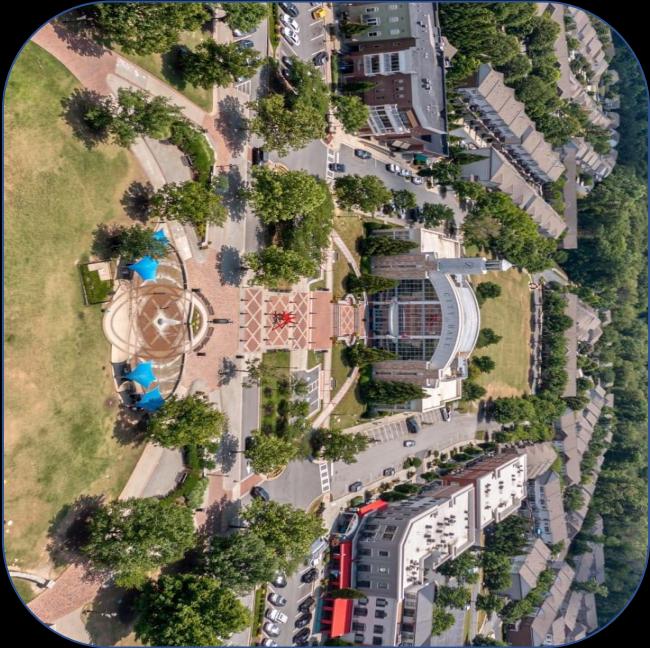
45.8%



A

8

54.2%



B

Respondents split with a small preference for a town center with a large greenspace vs. a more compact town center

34.5%



A

9

64.9%



B

Respondents preferred a multi-modal boulevard to a vehicle-centric boulevard.

57.1%



A

10

41.7%



B

Respondents preferred a river walk style district over a natural waterway.

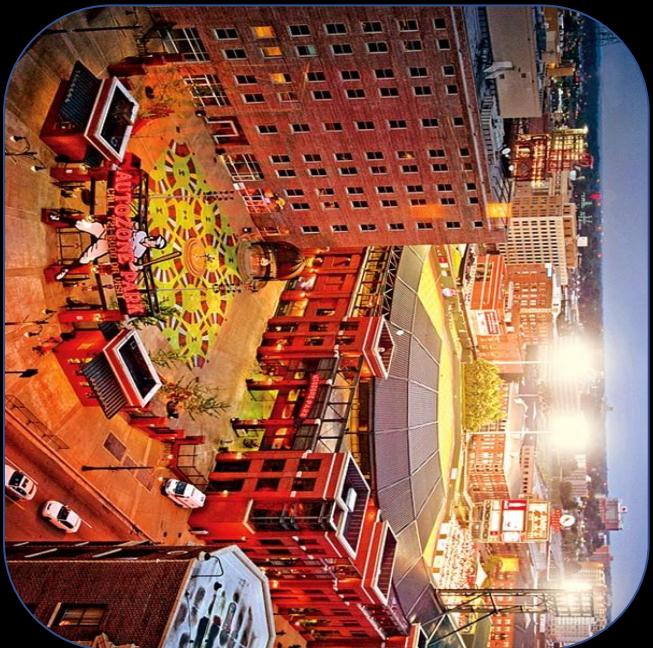
26.2%

Respondents preferred an entertainment district that is integrated with the rest of the neighborhood over one that is not integrated.



A

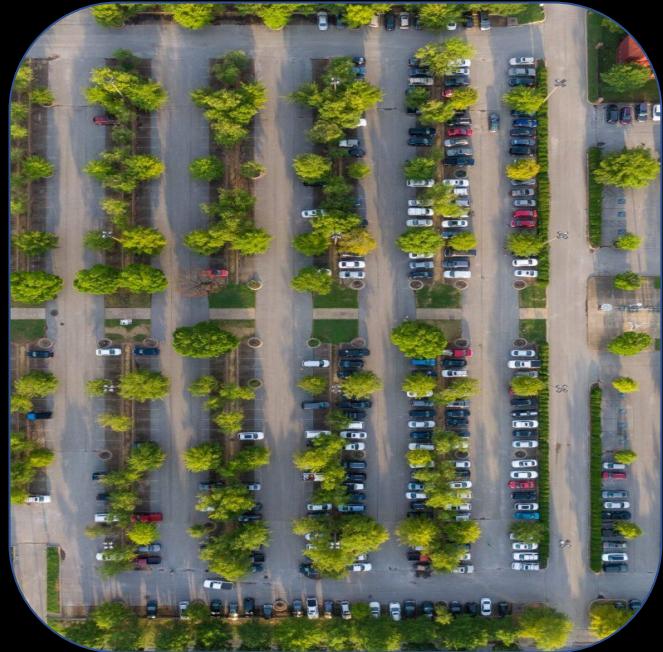
73.2%



B

11

37.5%



A

12

61.3%



B

Respondents preferred parking lots with solar panels over parking lots with trees.

63.1%



A

13

36.3%



B

Respondents preferred single-family detached houses over attached townhomes.

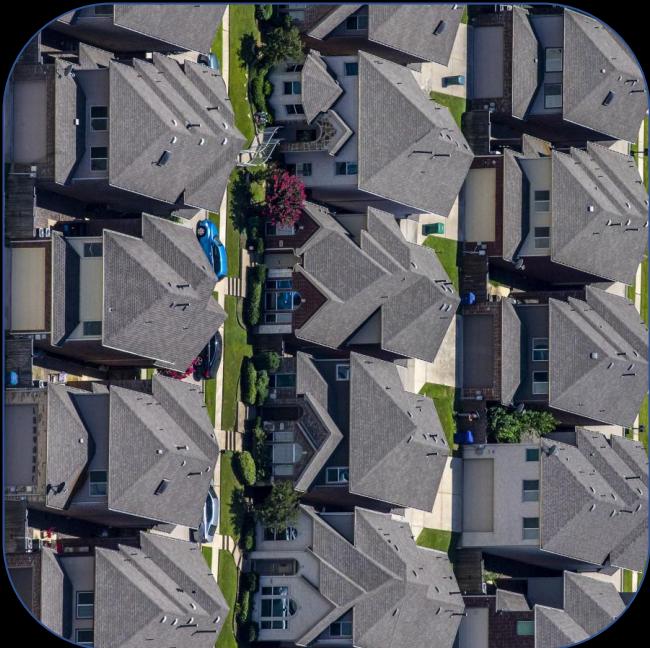
79.2%



A

14

19.6%



B

Respondents preferred cottage courts over a single-family subdivision of similar density.

Respondents preferred natural parks
over programmed parks.

72.6%



A

15



B

APPENDIX I

Spring 2024 Online Survey Results

APPENDIX I

Which map feature is being	What do you want us to know about this location?	This area represents	This area should instead be	Other (Please Specify Below) -
Town Center	i want to live here. preferably in a mix of housing unit types that are compact, but do have access to greenspace	Agree with		
Urban Center		Agree with	Urban Center	
Town Center		Think is not dense enough	Urban Center	
Town Center		Think is not dense enough	Urban Center	
Commission		Agree with	Neighborhood	
Neighborhood		Agree with	Neighborhood	
Commission District 1	Multi-path bike/transport lanes to connect to the pathway on the east side of campus are needed (something to connect Barnett shoals/college station over by the new Kroger development)	Think is not dense enough	Town Center	
Corridor	There are too many underutilized spaces on Hawthorne, it is largely blight but there are always people walking around with limited cafes, coffee shops, and retail spaces to patronize. This needs to become a neighborhood center serving oglethorpe, hawthorne, and the surrounding neighborhoods. A park would go a long way here. dense enough	Think is not dense enough	Neighborhood Center	
Corridor	put a park here somewhere please	Think is not dense enough	Neighborhood Center	

	This is one of the most walkable areas and right now it is filled with very low density and highly expensive houses that do not pay their fair share in property taxes. I live in this neighborhood and the only place I can afford my place is because it is zoned RS15 and is in violation of minimum house size, lot width, and minimum setbacks. More small houses/apartments should be available in this highly desirable neighborhood. This should not be single family housing.	Think is not dense enough	Town Center
Commission District 10	Be mindful of industrial traffic from business on Newton Bridge such as semi access to 10 loop and how that works with bike/residential traffic that shares access. Maybe establish a bike/pedestrian path near cleared lan around electrical transmission towers. Agree with		other
Commission District 5			

	Adding more sidewalks along roads and streets, especially along Bob Holman where it leads to Sandy Creek Park. Ideally there should be sidewalks on 441 from Sandy creek nature center to Sandy creek park, but GODT is responsible for the highway. Needs to be a better way to connect Sandy creek nature center with Sandy creek park. Other options are to turn the now defunct Cook's trail into part of the greenway to connect it to the existing greenways.	Think is not dense enough	Neighborhood Center
Commission District 9	I like the concept of closing more streets off to make them pedestrian areas. I feel like this contributes to the creation of 3rd places that people can hang out in without having to spend a ton of money or been run off for loitering.	Agree with	Urban Center
Urban Center	Making these areas more pedestrian and public transit friendly would make me more inclined to visit them. As it stands, the only reason I ever go to them is if they have a very niche/specific store. They're not places I want to hang out at and would like to if there was a reason/excuse to do so.	Think is not dense enough	Town Center

	<p>It'd be nice to have some smaller grocery stores here. Nothing crazy, but useful if you're running low on food and need to make something quick.</p> <p>Also, smaller stores might make it easier for local folks to rent out a storefront and start their own businesses. If I had the head for it, I certainly wouldn't mind starting up my own bakery in one of these areas.</p>	Agree with	Neighborhood Center
Neighborhood Center	<p>I'd like to see more of these around town, such as the west and eastern sides. I see them as great opportunities to create entertainment centers or places to create experiences.</p> <p>Concert venues, stadiums, or maybe your basic open air mall with fun stores.</p>	Agree with	Special District
Special District	<p>So many of these corridors have little to no public transit serving it and so many sections are extremely unfriendly to pedestrians. I've walked down Lexington and chunks of Broad St past Alps Road. It was unpleasant all around, both in terms of safety and the area was not aesthetically pleasing.</p> <p>Also, I had to step over a dead deer at one point, but I will just blame the person who dragged that onto the sidewalk. Think is not and not our infrastructure.</p>	Agree with	Special District
Corridor	<p>dense enough</p>	Corridor	

	I would like there to be more of these around town. It would make me feel safer walking or biking somewhere, since cars wouldn't be flying past me. It would actually encourage me to commute to work via walking/biking instead of just driving.	Agree with Agree with Agree with Agree with Agree with	other	Pedestrian Pathway
Greenway Corridor	would like to see river district developed in way that connects people to the river. It is part of history and nature and we aren't utilizing it as an asset.	Disagree with		
Special District	Would like to see development here to protect other natural areas from development. There is already a sea of concrete here that doesn't accomplish much. Would be great to have increased public transportation to go along with the development.	Agree with		
Urban Center	Would like to see better traffic management and more inviting entrance to the city. Used to be a main shopping area but many of the stores have moved to epps bridge.	Disagree with		
Corridor	Great model for what we should have near most neighborhoods around Athens.	Agree with	Neighborhood Center	Neighborhood Center
Greenway Corridor	Greenway Trails are awesome, but we really need to rethink closing the facilities after dark.	Agree with	Corridor	Corridor

Greenway Corridor	Greenway Trails are awesome, but we really need to rethink closing the facilities after dark. This area needs lighting as well since it is a critical transportation corridor.	Agree with	Corridor
Commission District 6	This is an affordable housing opportunity. Expand sewer in this area.	Disagree with	other
Town Center	Close to schools and soon to be multi-use trails. Transitional area along Hawthorne / Prince.	Think is not dense enough	Neighborhood Center
Corridor	This road is too dense with vehicular travel lanes. This needs to be bikeable and have slower traffic.	Think is too dense	Corridor
Special District	I am tired of the Classic Center determining how the eastern side of our downtown looks. We should close down Willow Street and allow for development along the river, while retaining the greenspace along the river. If you reduce Willow Street to only allow bikes and pedestrians, then you could have businesses build on the footprint of the existing road. Ultimately, we shouldn't turn the park into a riverfront district, but the road is kind of pointless.	Think is not dense enough	Special District
Commission District 1	increase the density on 3875 Old Lexington to match the Highland Park neighborhood adjoining it	Agree with	Corridor

Commission District 9	Improve existing shopping centers along 441 corridor from the sandy creek park to the loop. Install pedestrian friendly walkways or sidewalks. Turn the failed amphitheater into a park.	Think is not dense enough	Neighborhood Center
Commission Urban Center	Free space do not develop	Agree with	Urban Center
Commission Commission District 1	I do not want any one else moving here.	Agree with Disagree with	Town Center other Tree planting.
Neighborhood Center	North Avenue needs a road diet. There are so many residents on either side of the road. But right now it's so hard to walk to any of the businesses. It is a great location for coffee shops, restaurants, a new park, and a new grocery store!	Agree with	Neighborhood Center
Urban Center Neighborhood Center	The urban area should be bigger and should also be dense	Think is not dense enough	Urban Center
Town Center	Should have more density Needs to allow for more density	Think is not dense enough	Urban Center
Commission District 1 Commission	There needs to be careful consideration as to what is happening in this area, instead of just allowing building on every square inch of land available because people need housing. It is a tricky question - this is a beautiful area, but with too many houses it will not allow for environmental or ecological stability, unless there is thought put into each development.	Think is too dense Agree with	Neighborhood Center Neighborhood

	<p>Let's clean up and beautify the River and make it a destination in town (similar to Greenville or Chattanooga) and other cities on a river. Right now, the river is not much to look at nor is it very pretty (except near school of social work). Can we add water features (such as current/rock features or manmade waterfalls) or increase water flow to enhance curb appeal?</p>		
Special District	<p>Let's add cafes and businesses overlooking the riverfront green space. Right now, it's on the outside of downtown and in some ways, forgotten. It's a River - let's make it a focal point (especially with new arena district)!</p>	Think is not dense enough	Urban Center

to live, work, and play. Many people live and play here, but there is not a lot of work. Particularly local professional and corporate professional roles. We need to attract corporate businesses (beyond govt professional jobs) and provide class A office space. Jobs/Careers such as technology, start-ups, fintech, banking, customer service, business executives, and others are needed to really propel Athens as a city.

Of course, students are paramount (given proximity to UGA), but we need to make Athens enticing for all. Growth should focus on more than just students. Young corporate professionals, young families, and retirees all have vitality to add to the downtown city life.

Urban Center	While housing downtown is The area is so ripe to provide downtown value. It is the next frontier for downtown expansion. Similar to the proposed bottleworks expansion (which I like), I see this area helping downtown to grow beyond students. Young professionals like this area, and we need to make this attractive to corporate professionals and young families. It has awesome restaurants, great walkability, and some local grocers. Would architectural townhomes work here to add density behind the main Prince/Broad corridors? Corporate office space? The vibe is there. Let's not ruin it	Think is not dense enough	Urban Center
Commission District 4	with more mega student housing.	Think is not dense enough	Town Center

This is the gateway to downtown (and has a nice skyline view). It is becoming more a part of downtown as downtown expands and goes more vertical. I think this corridor could have much more curb appeal and really make the drive towards downtown a focal point. Focus on landscaping and signage. This area has some charm but the roads/signage/landscaping could use upgrading. Make this gateway to downtown memorable!!

I like the Finley and Pope project and I think the mixed use project with streetfront cafe and incorporation with Reese Pope park could be an incredible addition to this area.

It is thoughtful and respects downtown green space.

Corridor

Agree with

Urban Center

How can we get growth without pricing out small local (mom and pop) businesses? I hate seeing local businesses close, only to be replaced with large corporate brands. Small local businesses are what provides Athens with its small southern charm. Is there a way to tier rents/leases so

Urban Center

corporate brands pay more?

Agree with

Urban Center

APPENDIX J

Timeline of Events

2023 – Placelt!; Toole survey; Meeting presentation; walking tours; bus tours; tabling; creation of the guiding principles

Throughout the fall of 2023, Staff engaged residents via 26 public meetings, 2 bus tours, multiple walks and tabling events and received thousands of comments. We categorized them into bands that align with the zoning code and regulations affecting development. More than half focused on 2 areas; Open Space and/or Landscaping; and the Rights-of-Way. Another quarter were grouped around development form and residential growth.

These categories focus on how we get around, preserve the environment, recreate, build in relation to our neighbors and very importantly, provide shelter for all. Spatial relationships are very important and they form much of the basis of zoning administration. We heard many positive comments about thoughtful, compact growth to best utilize existing infrastructure, keep people near daily needs and preserve open space.

2024 – Growth Concept Map; Urban3; FLU Steering Committee; M&C retreat; M&C worksession (2)

The first three guiding principles derived from the Fall 2023 input established the need to redevelop corridors and nodes, minimize sewer expansion, and reduce travel distances. One way to address all three needs is to create centers that take on high levels of density, while also providing the commercial and institutional needs for daily life. Being able to easily reach key destinations, whether it be by walking, public transportation, or by vehicle, allows for residents and non-residents alike to better utilize their time while also making better use of the existing infrastructure.

Not all nodes are created the same. Context matters and the nodes must reflect on the area surrounding it. Some focus on accommodating both residents from the county and people from far away, while others focus on people in the immediate vicinity. At this time, three types of centers are being proposed: Urban Centers, Town Centers, and Neighborhood Centers. Strategically placed throughout the county, these nodes achieve the guiding principles and functions expressed by residents.

Another way to address these guiding principles is through corridors. These are areas along primary or secondary, linear transit roads and may have a multitude of low- and mid-rise buildings, with employment, commercial, multi-family and retail business. For many people, these are considered main funnels of transit in and throughout the county or major commercial stretches of road. These corridors provide some of the most opportunity throughout the county, both from a use and a transit focus, allowing growth to align with Guiding Principles.

The immediate outcome of the Growth Concept Map was another round of public input in Spring 2024 before ultimately being reviewed and accepted by the Mayor & Commission. From there, Mayor & Commission established the Future Land Use Steering Committee. Bringing together citizens of the community from a wide aspect of backgrounds, from banking to development to community institutions. This committee was tasked to use the Growth Concept Map and the guiding principles as a starting point with the end goal of creating a new county-wide Future Land Use Map.

Committee members were introduced to representatives of important fields like local builders or institutional administrators to get a holistic view of everything that goes into land planning. Members also looked at different development patterns such as transect {SHOW TRANSECT IMAGE} types throughout the county to better understand the county's land use makeup. One of the more challenging tasks was looking at the established Future Land Use categories and their definitions and deciding what has and what has not worked since their adoption in 2001. The Committee decided that new categories must be added and that most of the current definitions needed reworking. From this, 16 categories were proposed.

2025 – Finish Steering Committee work, translated map; public input on proposed map

With the 16 categories finalized, along with the locations for each category on the map, Staff brought the Steering Committee's work out one more time for public input in Spring 2025. The main focus of this public input was to show the new, proposed Future Land Use Map as well as the language and char-

CONCLUSION

The Steering Committee believes that the Future Land Use Map update is a formative step toward revising our local development regulations, planning for future growth, and programming future public infrastructure improvements. The Future Land Use Map also serves as a guide for creating more detailed community plans that can inform local development policies, technical standards, and permitting procedures. The Steering Committee also supports the use of local development data analysis to keep Athens-Clarke County fiscally sustainable while providing the highest quality opportunities for people to live, work and play.

The Steering Committee has also heard from many people that want to keep our community character consistent with the current conditions or - in some instances – return the community to a previous condition that they recall from their past. This planning effort understands that change can be stressful, and one of the underlying goals of this effort to take proactive measures to manage change in order to provide a measure of predictability, to guard against negative forms of change, encourage sustainable growth, and to provide the greatest access for all to a high quality of life.

Along with the efforts to retain important areas of our community, there is also a need to create opportunities for new favorite places to spring to life, for new people to contribute positively to the community fabric, and for all Athenians to have a meaningful place to thrive in this wonderful community. The 2045 Future Land Use Map seeks to provide new options for people in realistic locations and build from the community strengths that define Athens-Clarke County so that many generations of our families will be able to make a home here in the Classic City.

01

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
PLANNING DEPT.

120 W Dougherty Street
Athens GA, 30605

Phone
706.613.3515

Email
planning@accgov.com

Website
www.accgov.com/planning