

# 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

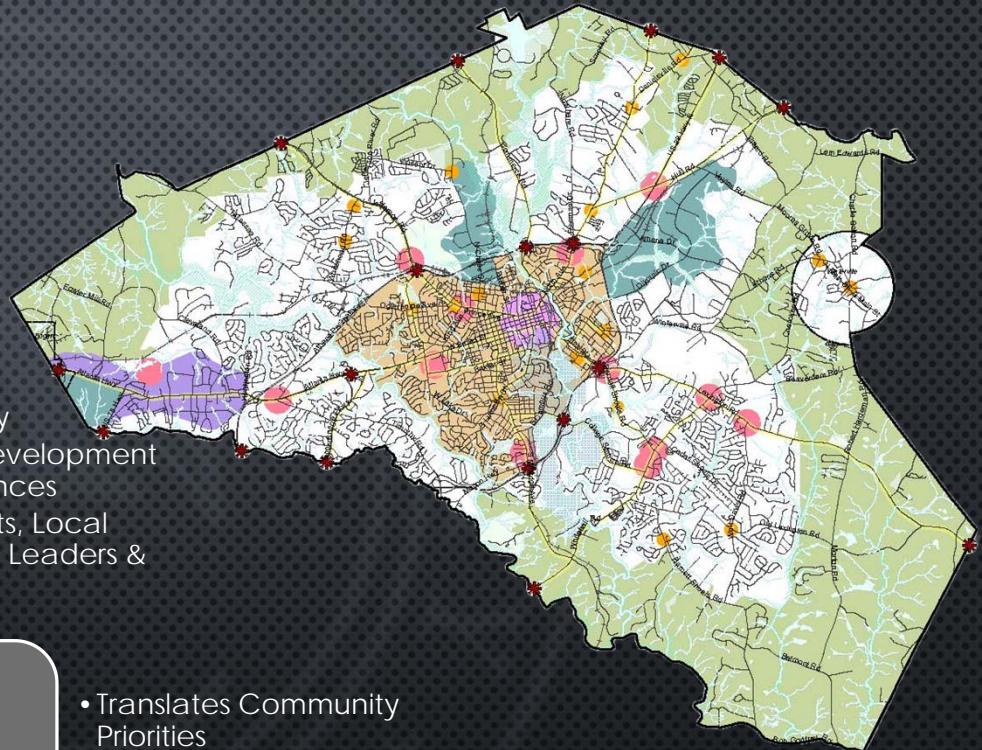
- Protects Environmental Areas
- Accounts for Infrastructure
- Accommodates Population Growth
- Identifies Developable Land

## 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



Rigid

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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



Firm

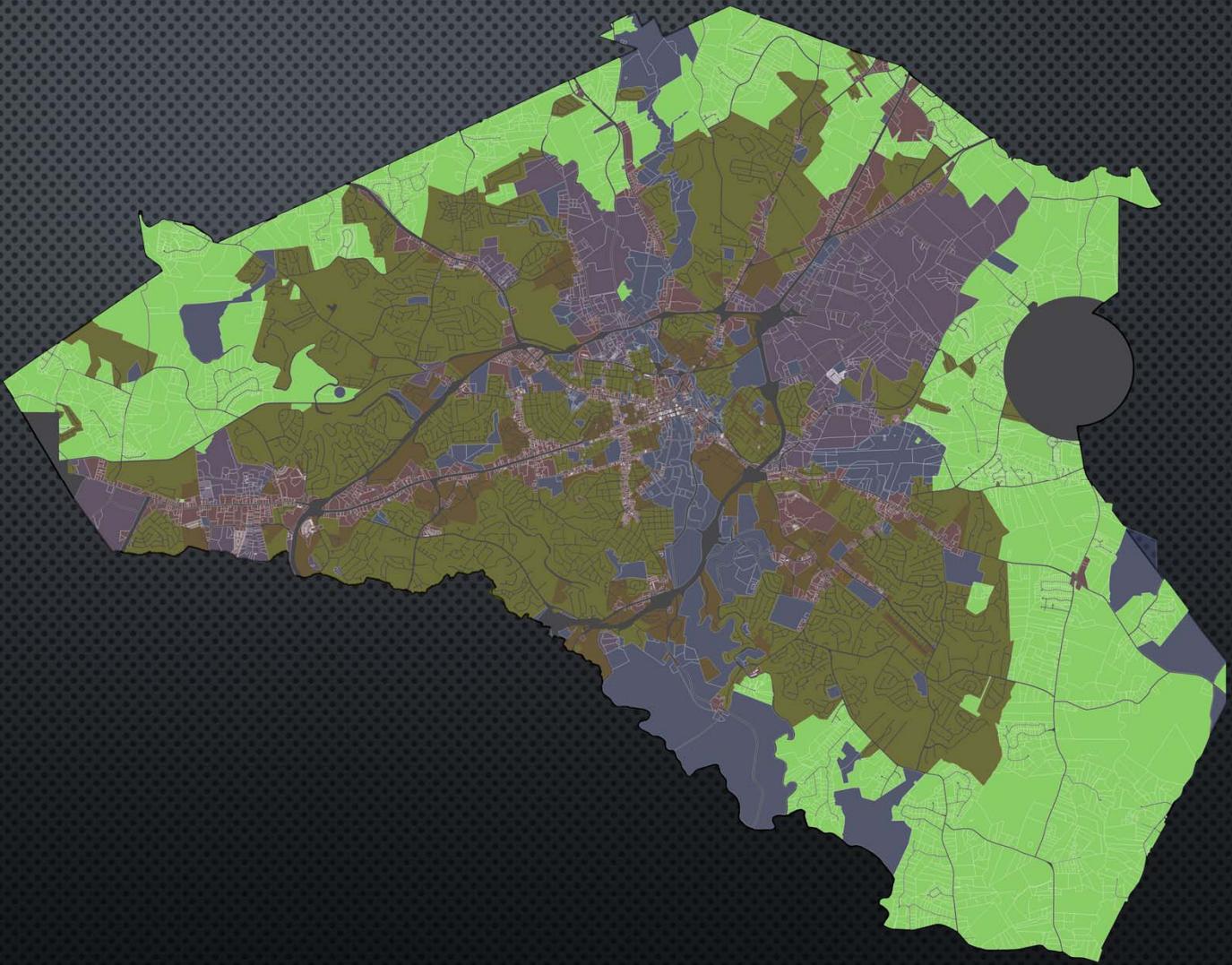
## PLANNING

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

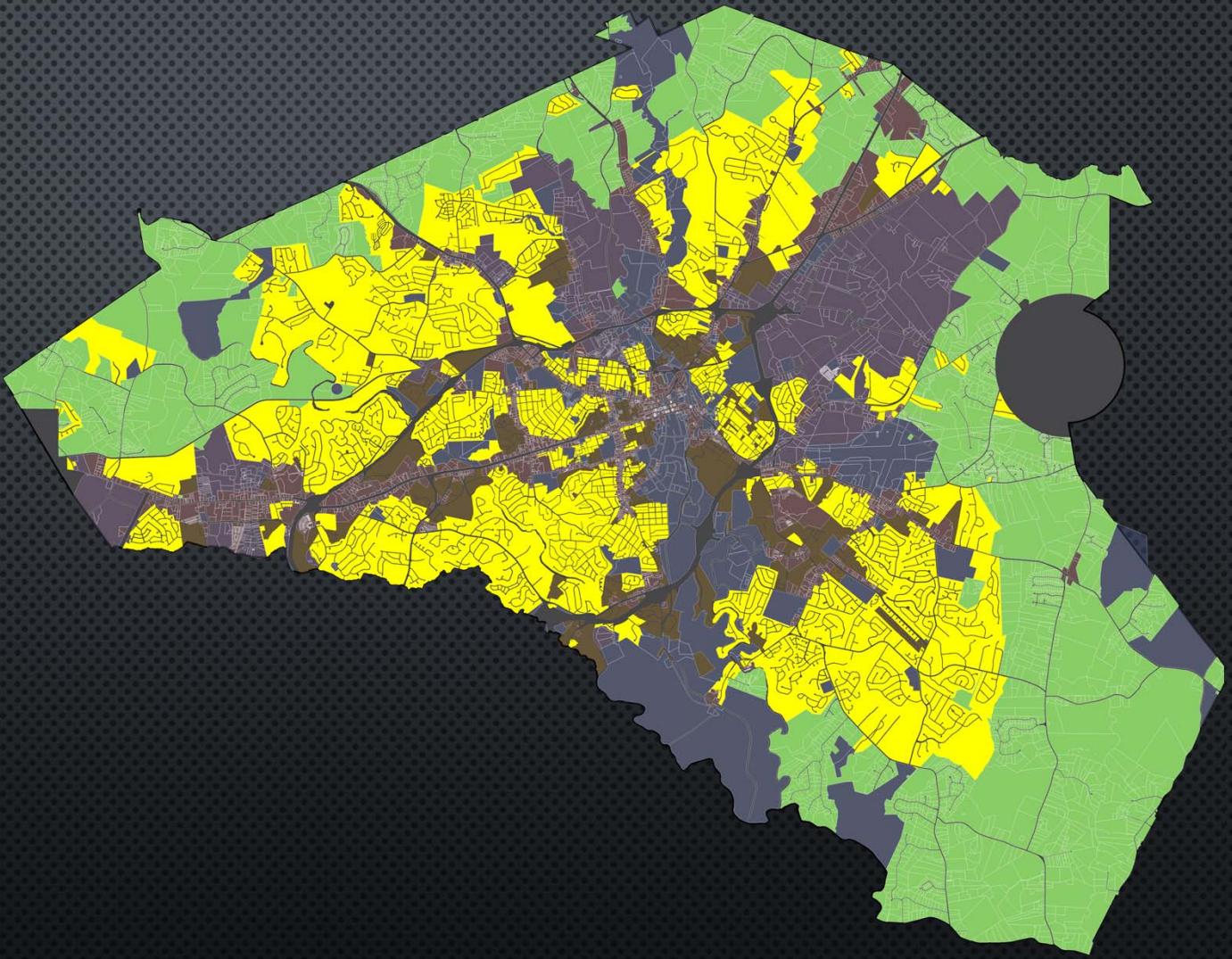
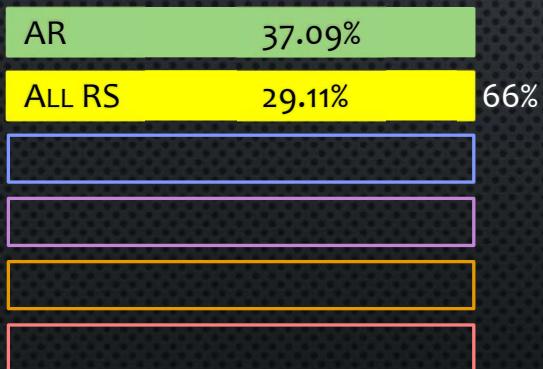


Malleable

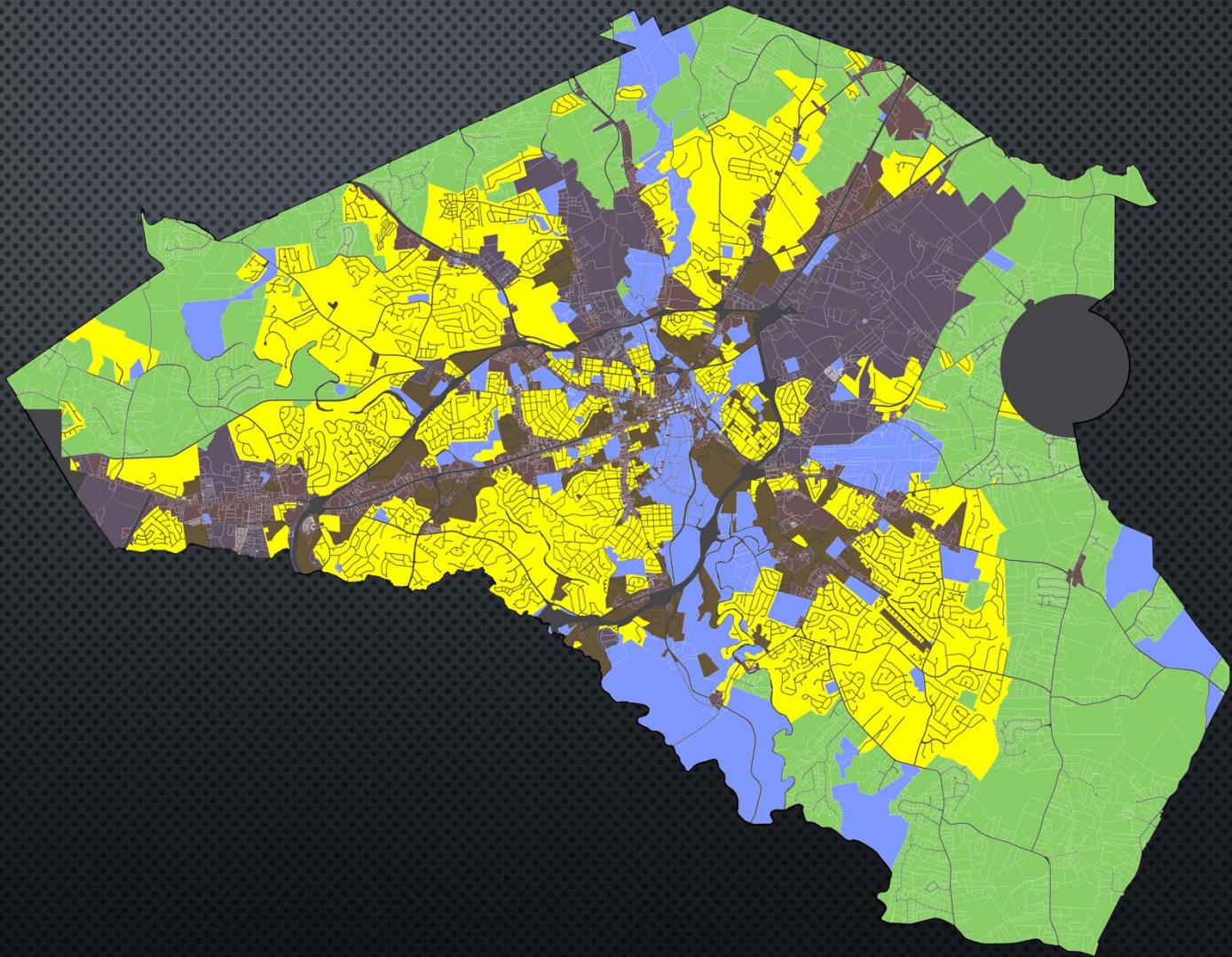
# PLANNING ZONING BY TYPE



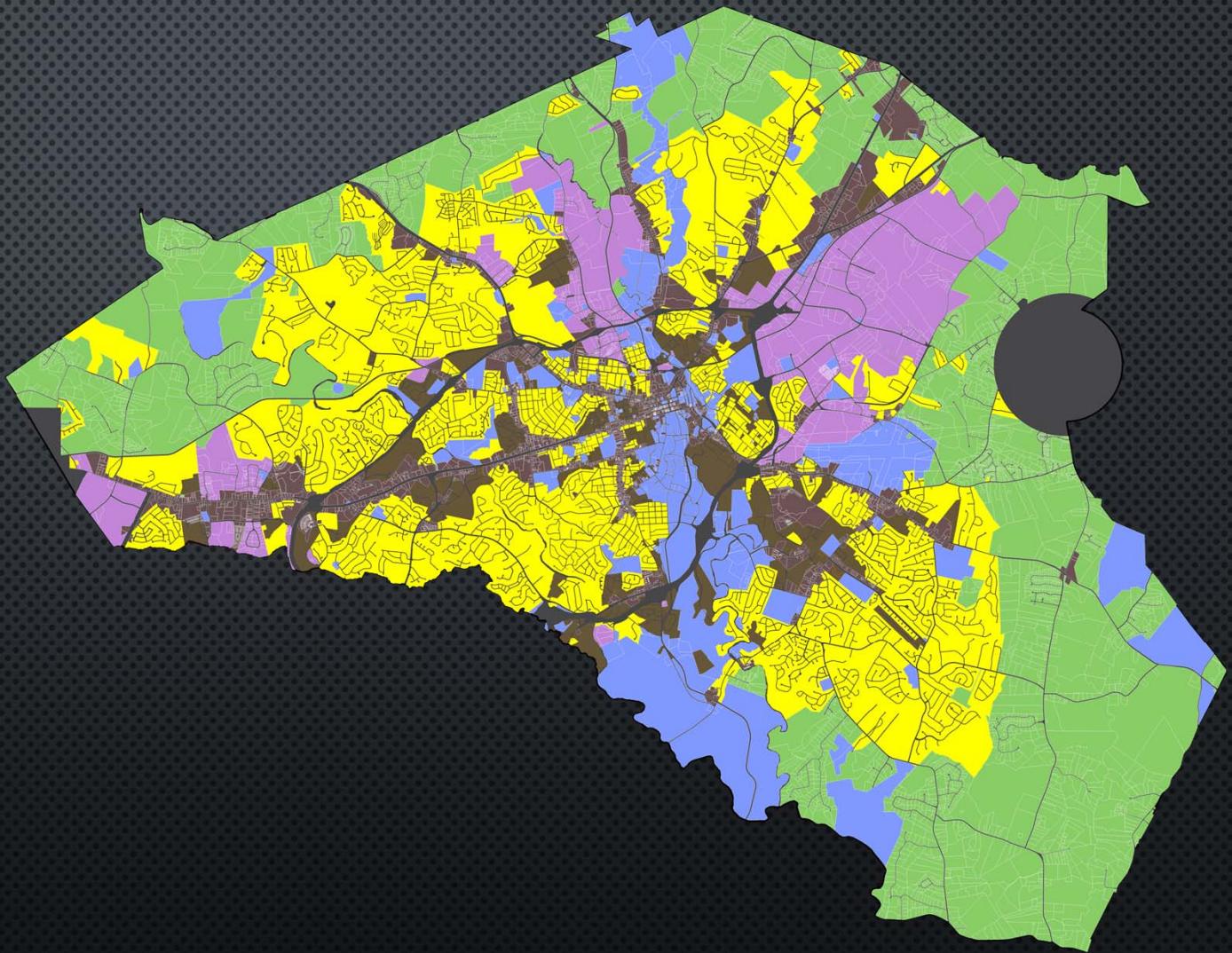
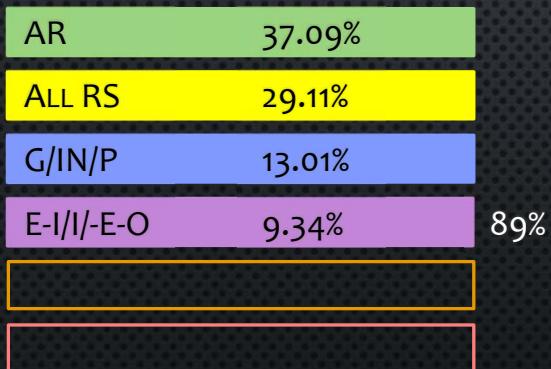
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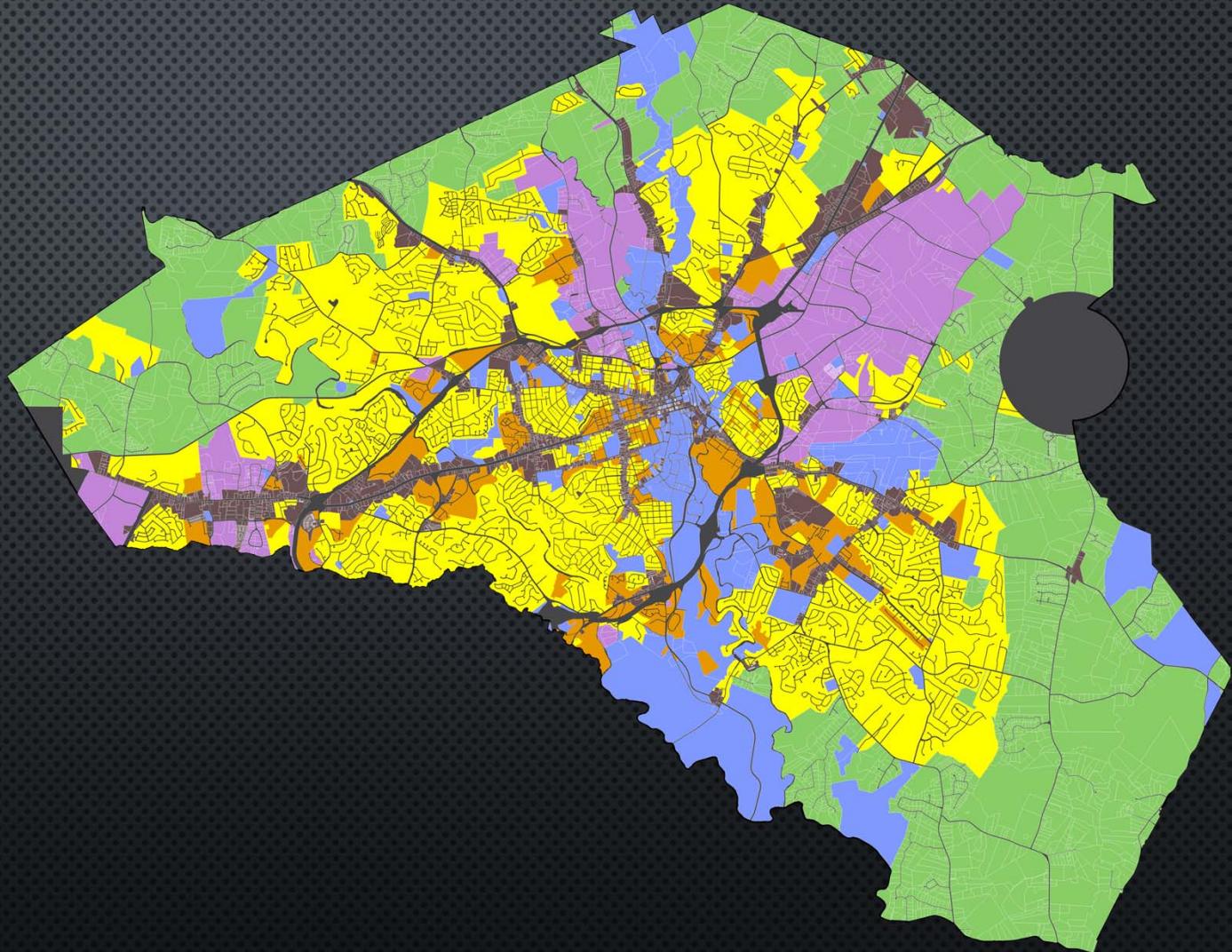
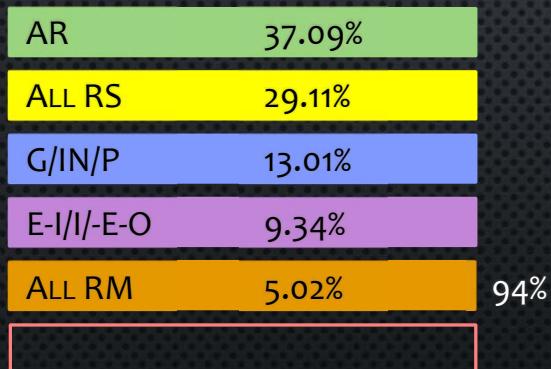
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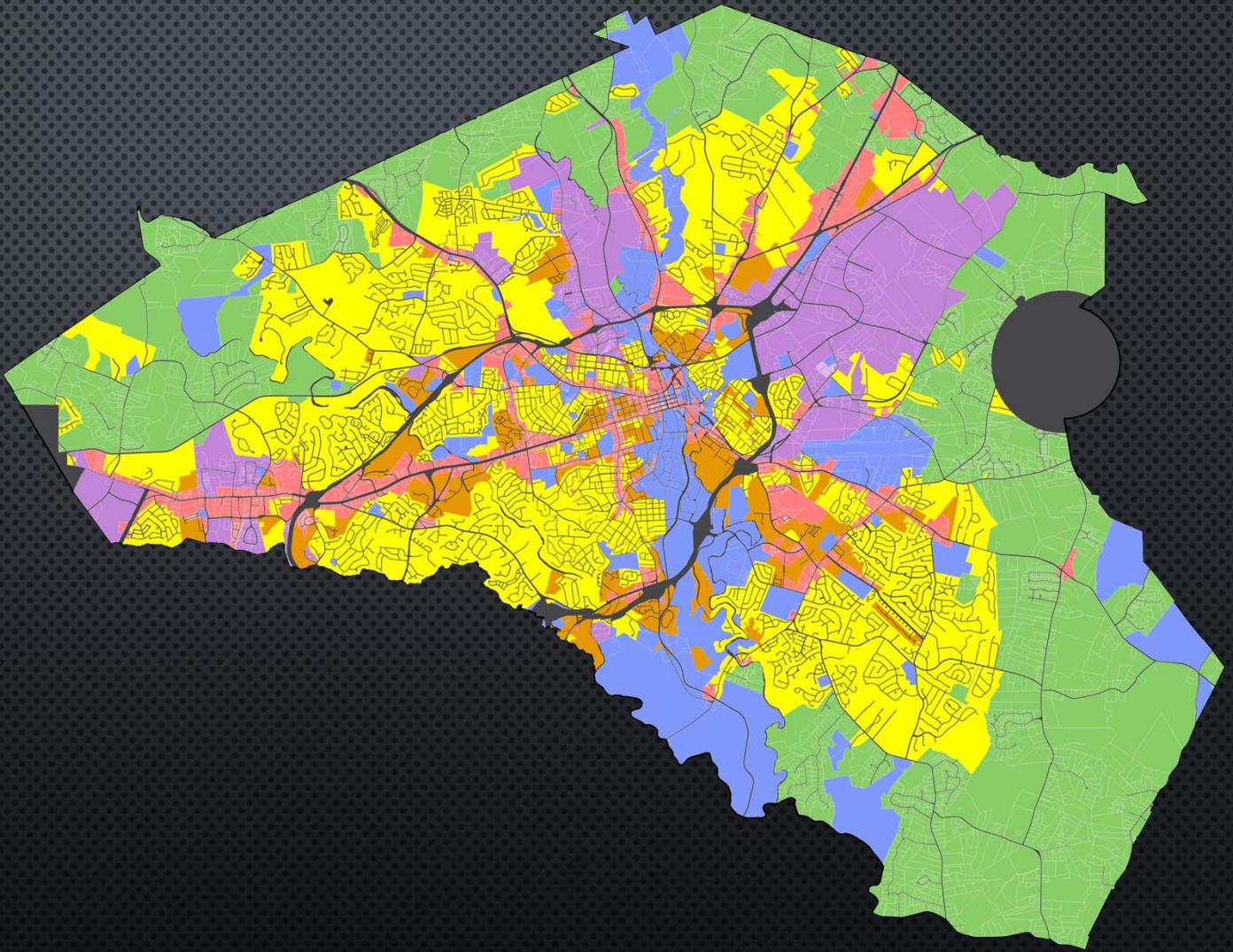
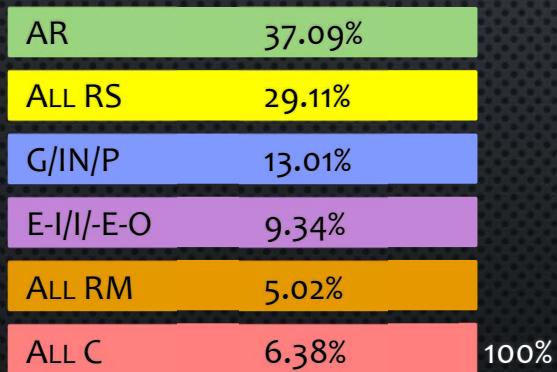
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# PUBLIC INPUT: HOW WE LEARNED

## SIT DOWN MEETINGS

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

## NEIGHBORHOOD WALKS

- 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

## BUS TOURS

- VIEWING AREAS MORE COMPREHENSIVELY
- CONNECTIONS

## TABLING

- GENERAL COMMENTS
- MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ALREADY ARE
- HIGHLIGHTS AND ISSUES

## SCHOOLS

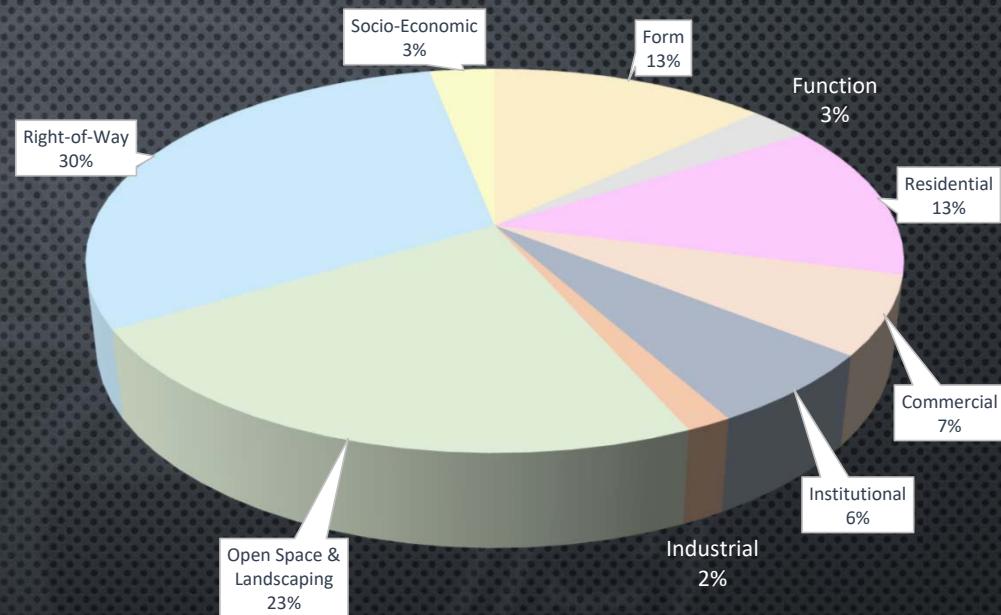
- ENGAGING YOUTH, THINKING CREATIVELY
- BRINGING ALONG OUR NEXT GENERATION



# 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

# PUBLIC INPUT: WHAT WE LEARNED

## FUNCTION

- MIXED USE

## FORM

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

## RESIDENTIAL

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



"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)

## **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

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## **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



URBAN CENTER



TOWN CENTER



CORRIDOR

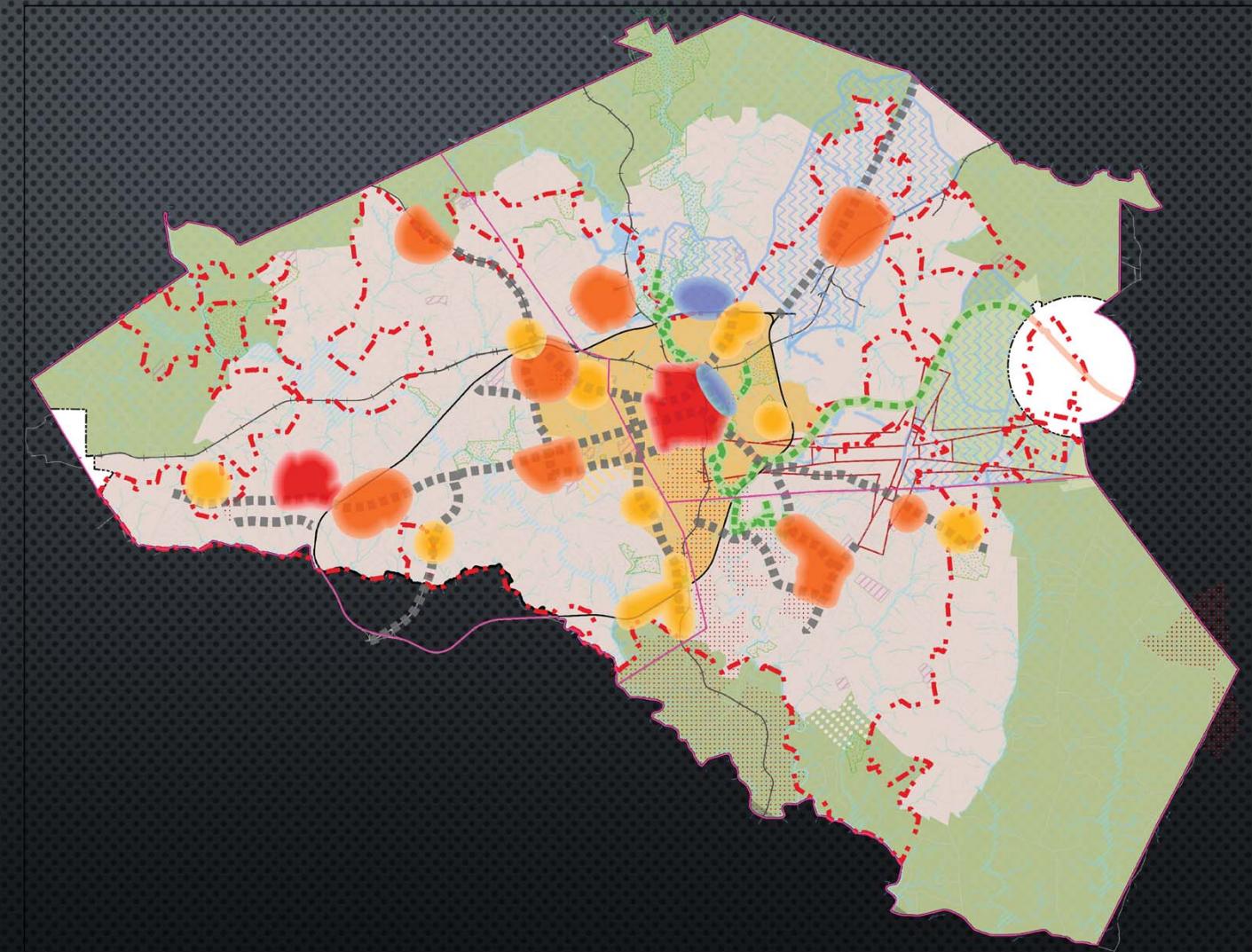


NEIGHBORHOOD  
CENTER

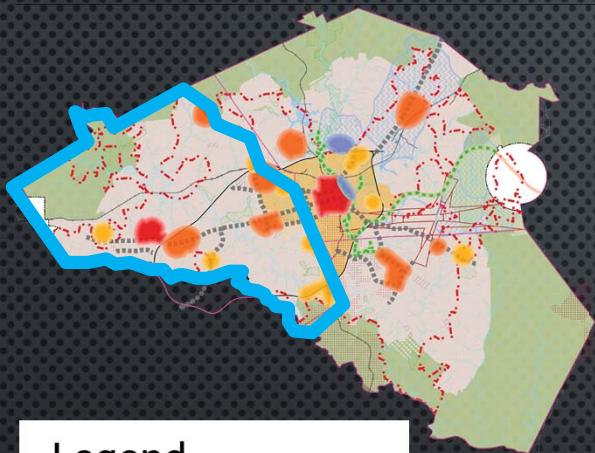
# GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

## Legend

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

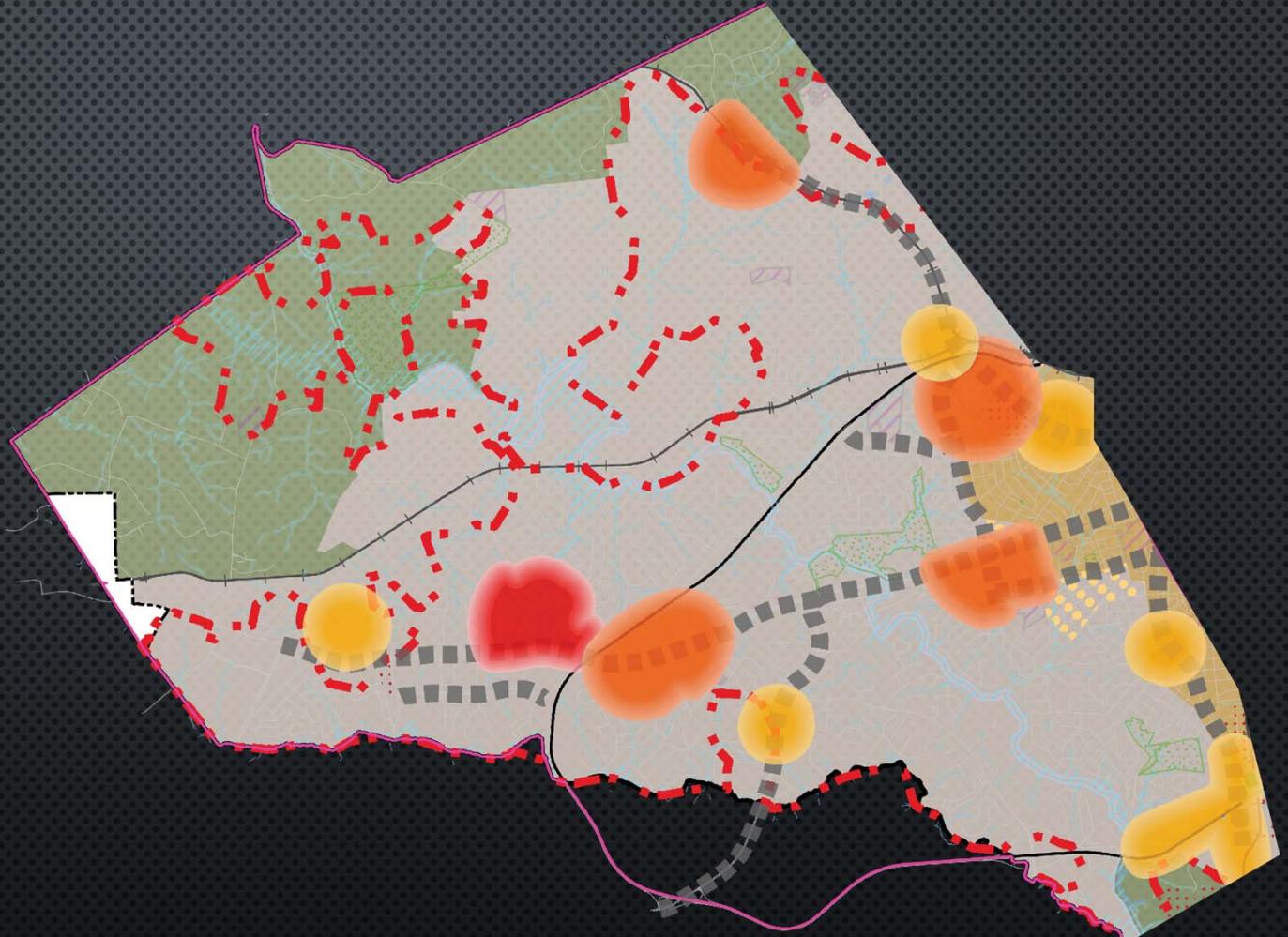


# ATHENS WEST

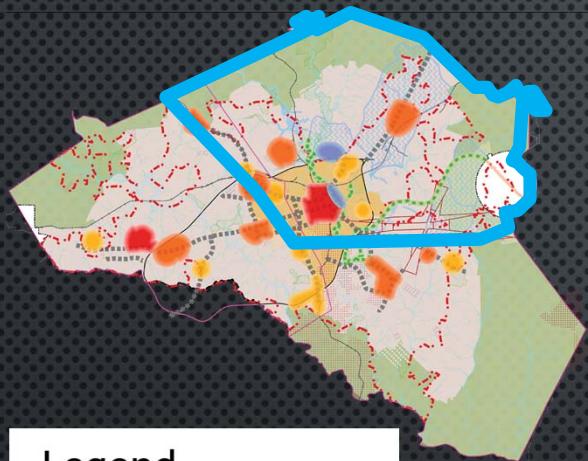


## Legend

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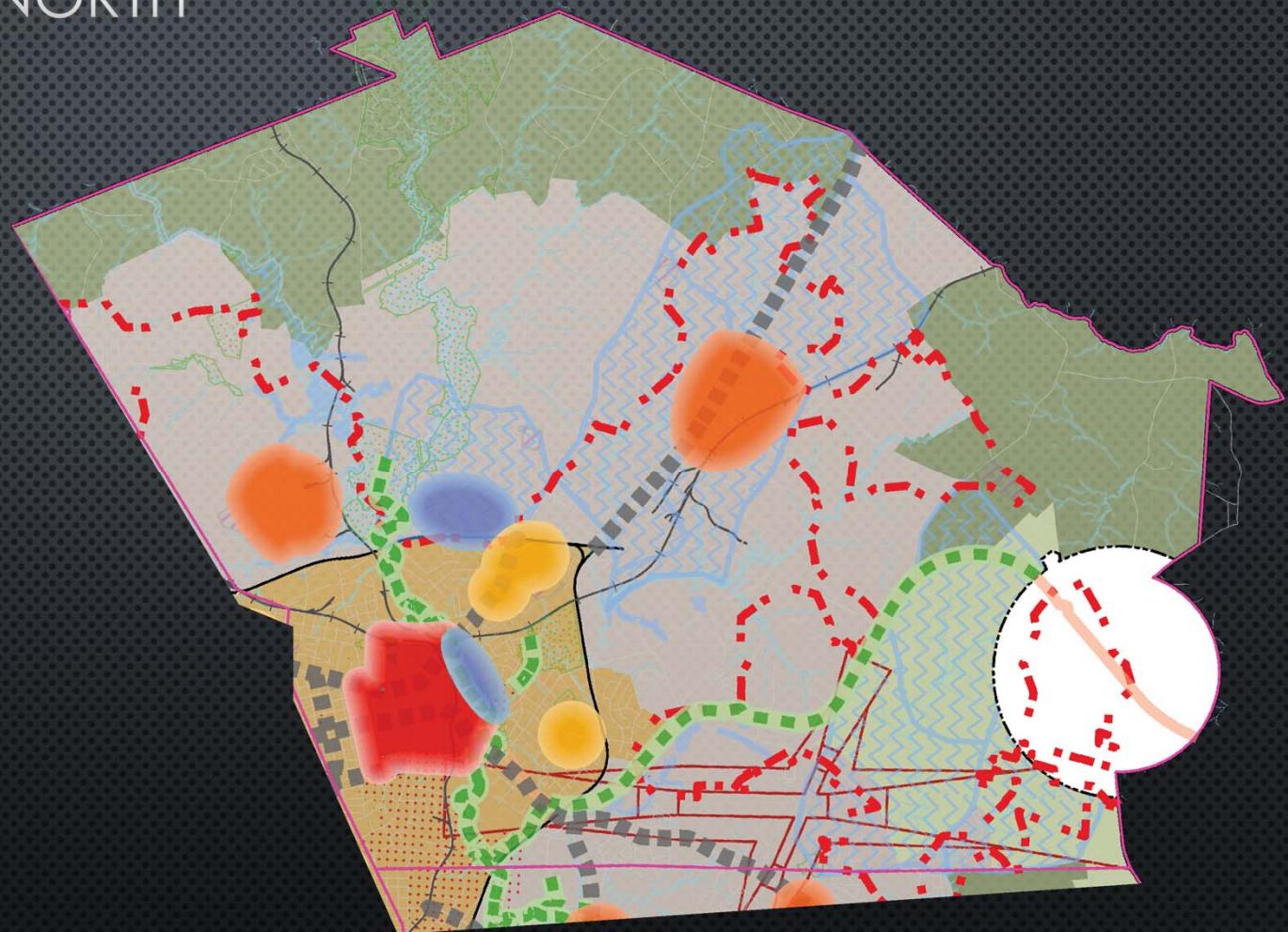


# ATHENS CENTRAL & NORTH

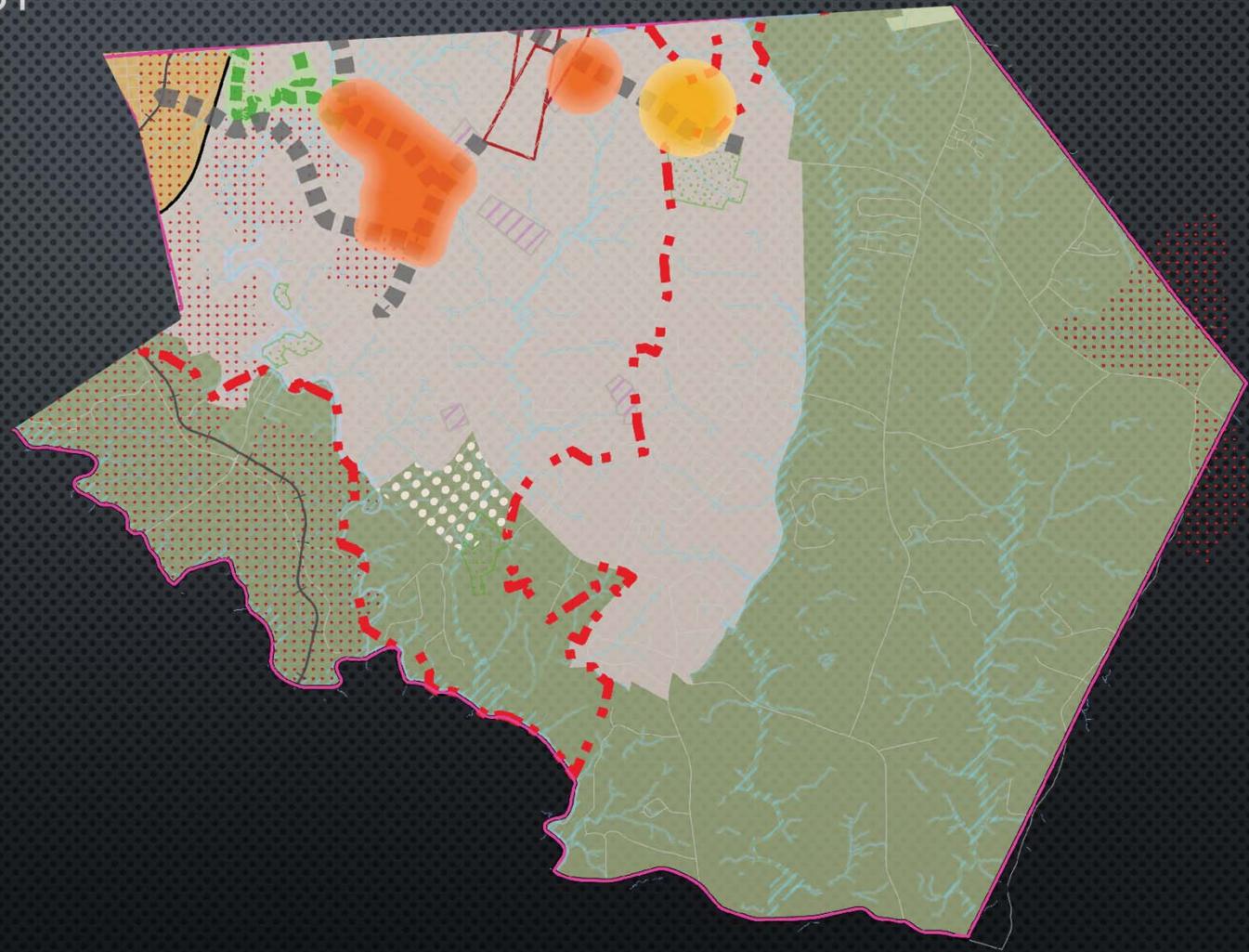
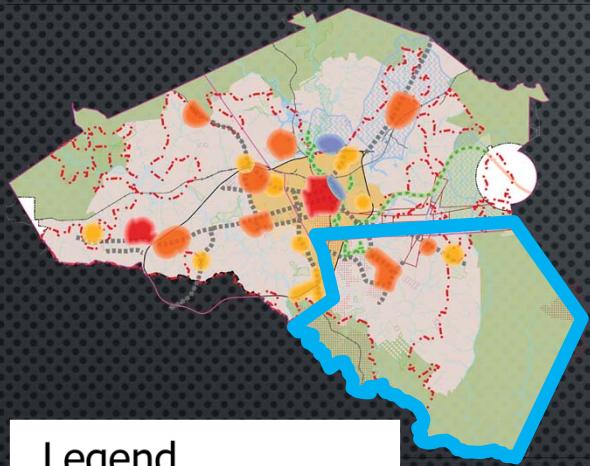


## Legend

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



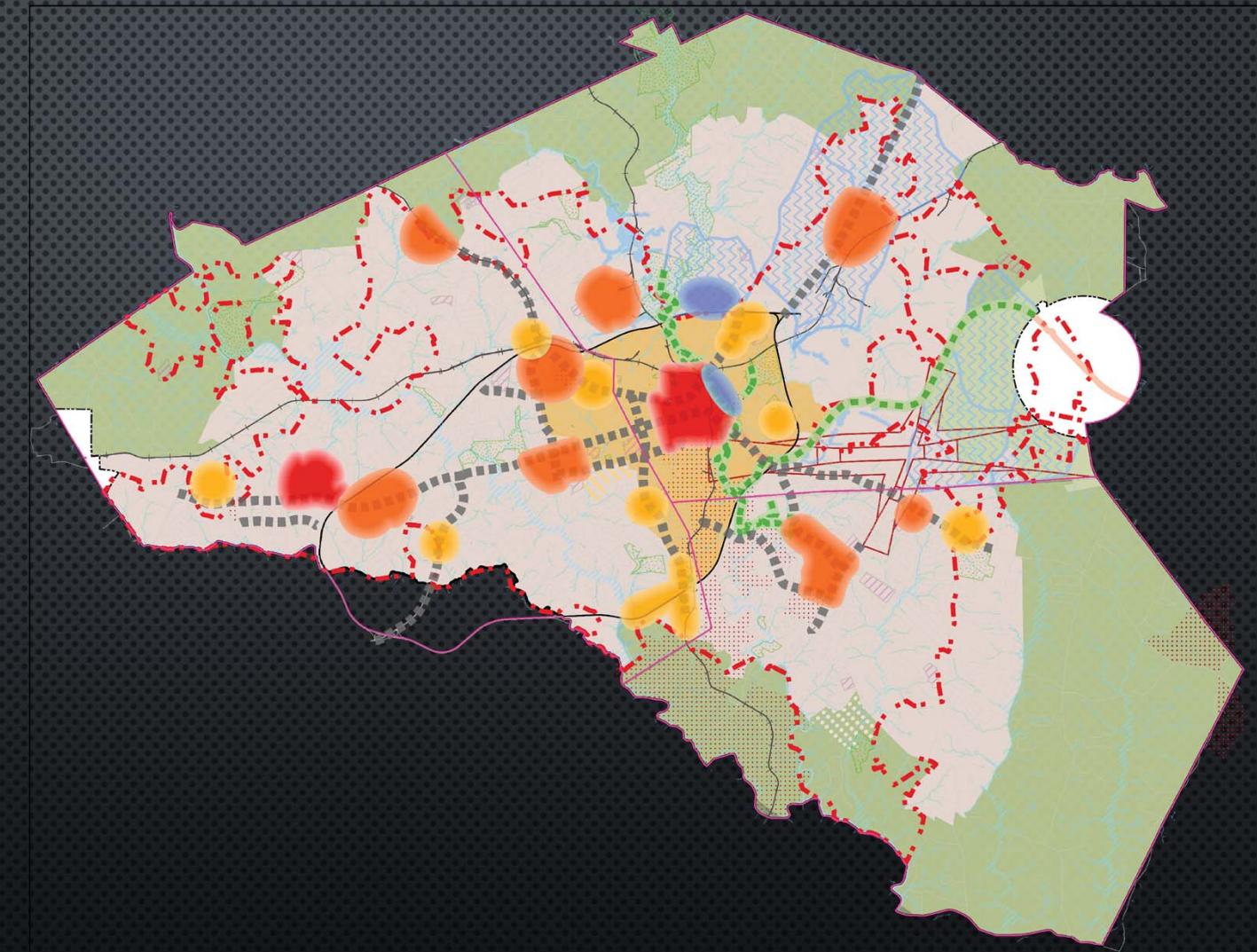
# ATHENS SOUTH & EAST



# GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

## Legend

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



# GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

## SPECIAL DISTRICTS

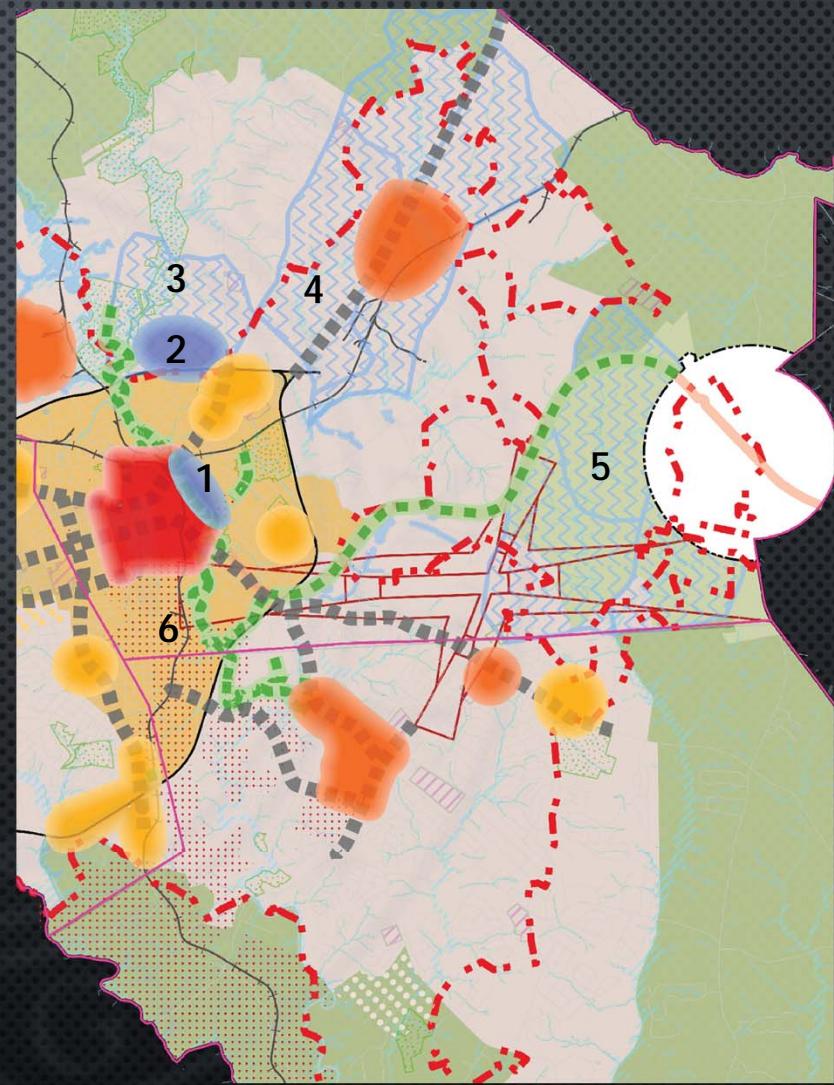
1. DOWNTOWN RIVER DISTRICT
2. FORMER RESERVOIR (Hwy 441 & 10 Loop)

## 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)

## **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
- E CAMPUS RAIL LINE

## **CORRIDORS (FORM)**

- JENNINGS MILL

# NODES

## URBAN CENTER

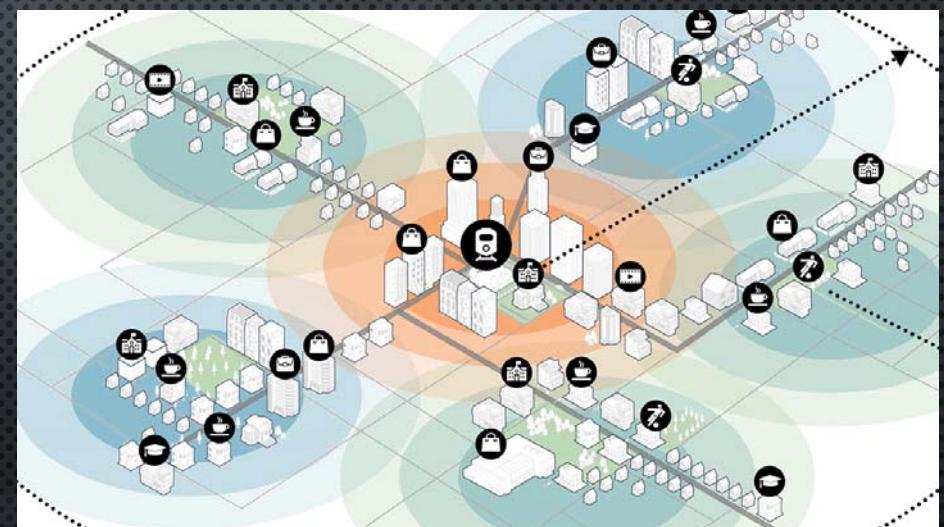
- DOWNTOWN
- THE MALL

## TOWN CENTER

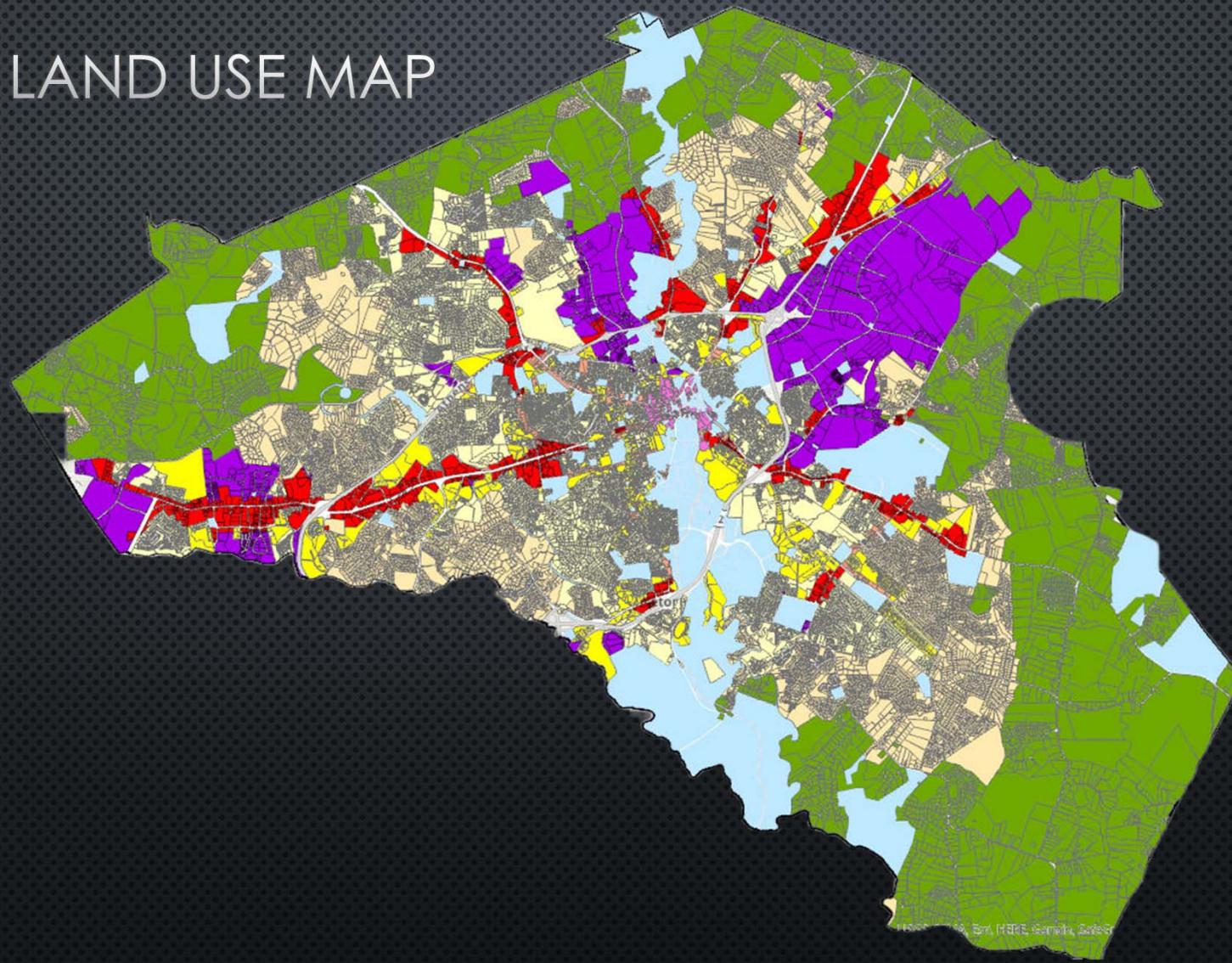
- ALPS/BEECHWOOD
- ATHENS WEST/PROMENADE
- EASTSIDE
- GENERAL TIME
- OAK GROVE
- PRINCE (NEAR THE LOOP)
- SPACE KROGER
- WILLOWOOD

## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

- CLARKE CROSSING
- E ATHENS MARKETPLACE
- FIVE POINTS
- HOMWOOD
- 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