

# Where We Are: Future Land Use

## Downtown

Retail, office and entertainment uses are encouraged, as is high-density multifamily housing. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. As parking is handled on a district level, off-street parking for individual commercial development is not intended. Parking structures with commercial uses on the street-level frontage are encouraged rather than surface parking lots. This area 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.

## Employment Center

These are areas of industry, office, research parks, and flex-space mixed uses. Large-scale employment areas, which include large industrial areas, manufacturing, office parks, and research centers, is incompatible with housing. Smaller-scale employment areas are appropriate to be in close proximity to a neighborhood area. Design standards regulating building placement, landscaping, and buffering should apply. Small amounts of retail may be compatible in some areas. Retail, office and entertainment uses are encouraged, as is high-density multifamily housing. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. As parking is handled on a district level, off-street parking for individual commercial development is not intended. Parking structures with commercial uses on the street-level frontage are encouraged rather than surface parking lots. This area 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.

## Government

These areas are in use or proposed for use by federal, state, or local government agencies, including the University of Georgia and Clarke County Board of Education. Many of these locations are intended to serve the community, and should encourage walkability, landscaping and neighborhood-oriented transportation alternatives.

## 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 facade of these areas should have a scale and architectural elements that relate to pedestrians. Buildings should be oriented to the street corridors which 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.

## Traditional Neighborhood

These are medium density neighborhoods with traditional qualities including well-connected street systems, sidewalks, street trees, and a variety of housing types. Homes are often built close to the street with front porches. Garages are set back farther than the homes and porches. Traditional Neighborhood areas support single-family residences, duplexes which resemble large homes, and townhouses. Strict design standards should be implemented to ensure appropriateness of design and to protect neighborhood character. Limited commercial and other non-residential uses designed at a neighborhood scale are encouraged, but only in areas close to principal and minor arterial routes that have good access to transit.

## Main Street Business

These are areas of industry, office, research parks, and flex-space mixed uses. Large-scale employment areas, which include large industrial areas, manufacturing, office parks, and research centers, is incompatible with housing. Smaller-scale employment areas are appropriate to be in close proximity to a neighborhood area. Design standards regulating building placement, landscaping, and buffering should apply. Small amounts of retail may be compatible in some areas. Retail, office and entertainment uses are encouraged, as is high-density multifamily housing. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. As parking is handled on a district level, off-street parking for individual commercial development is not intended. Parking structures with commercial uses on the street-level frontage are encouraged rather than surface parking lots. This area 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.

## Mixed Density Residential

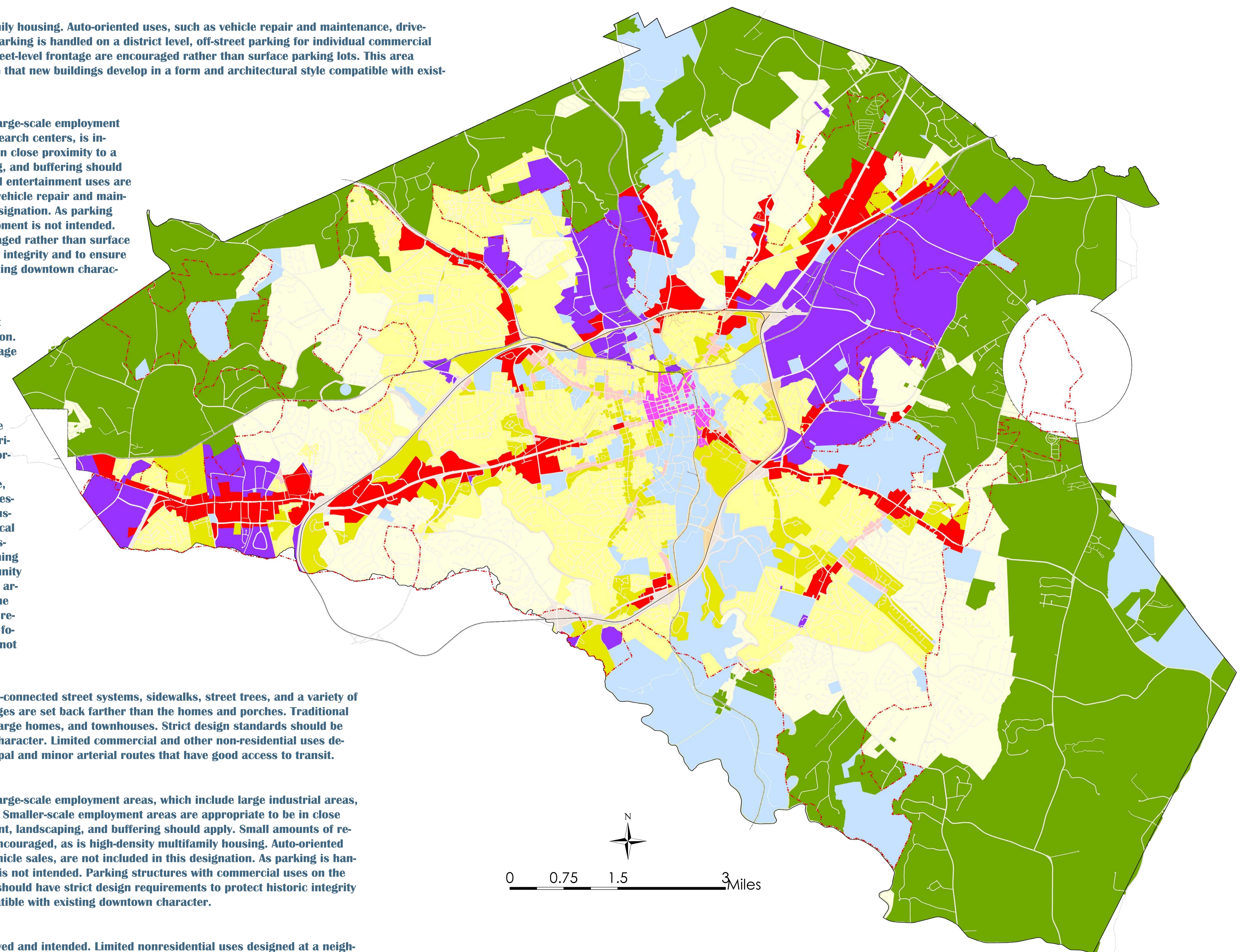
These are residential areas where higher density residential development is allowed and intended. Limited nonresidential uses designed at a neighborhood scale may be incorporated into these areas (e.g. churches, schools, daycare facilities, small businesses and offices). Buildings should be oriented 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.

## Rural

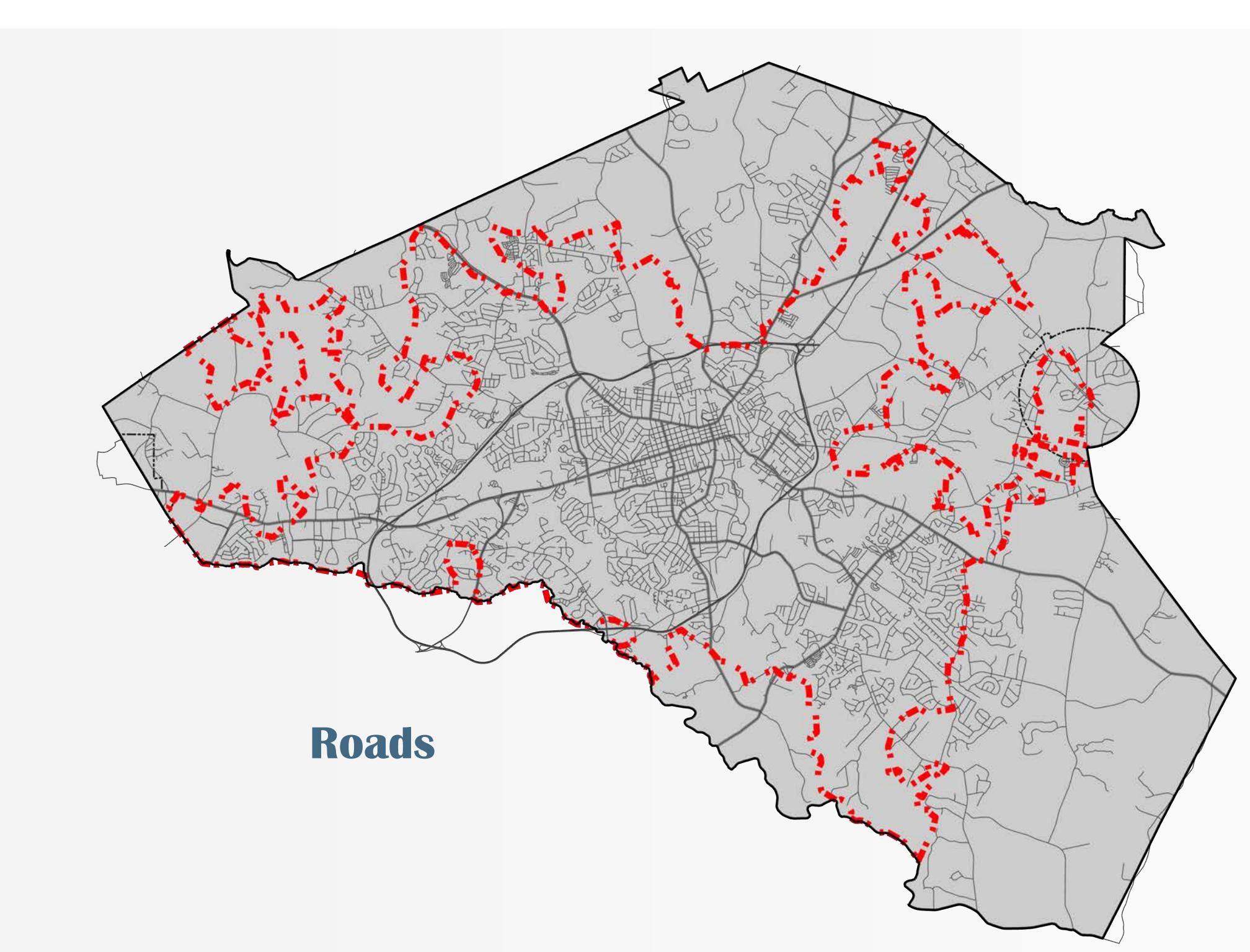
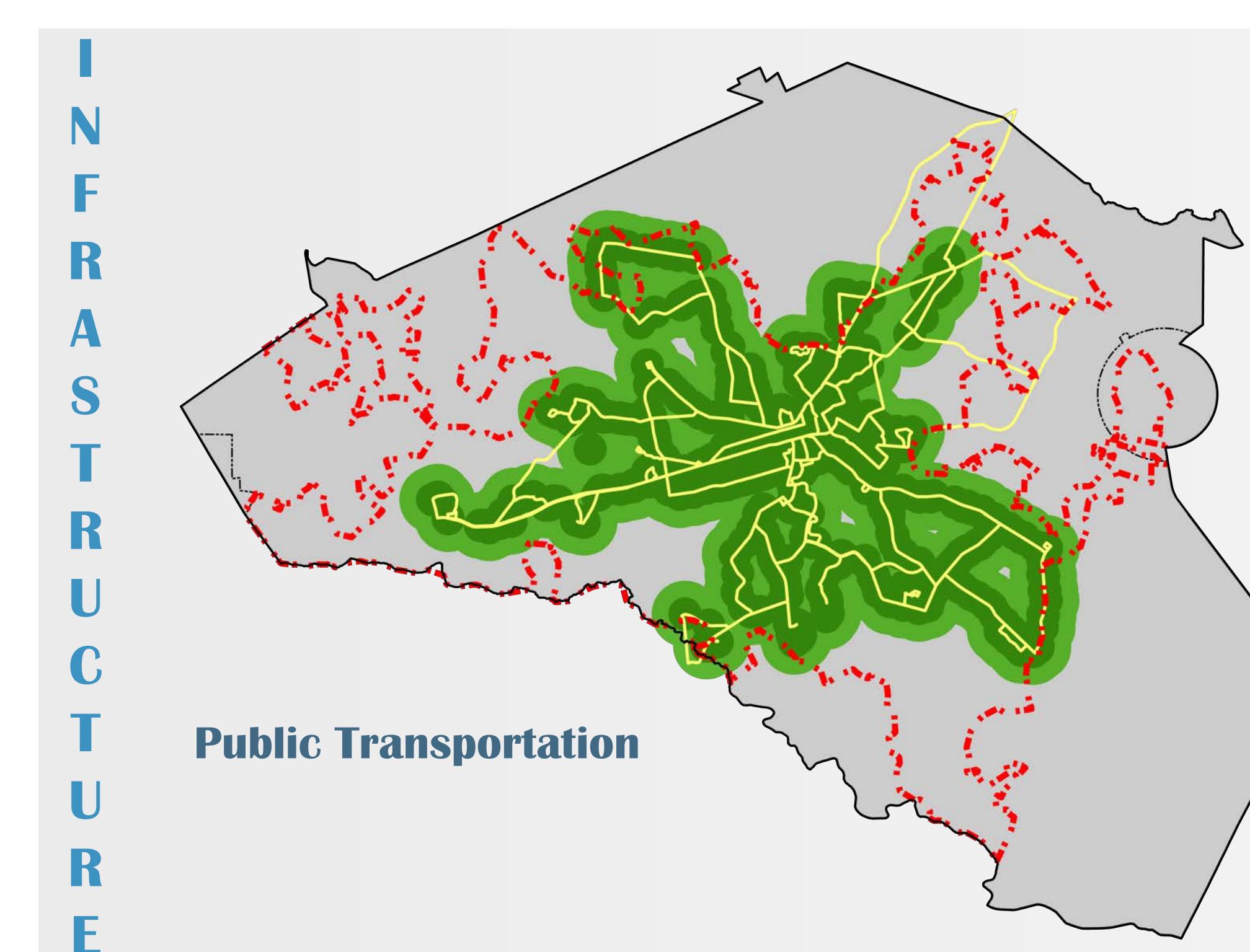
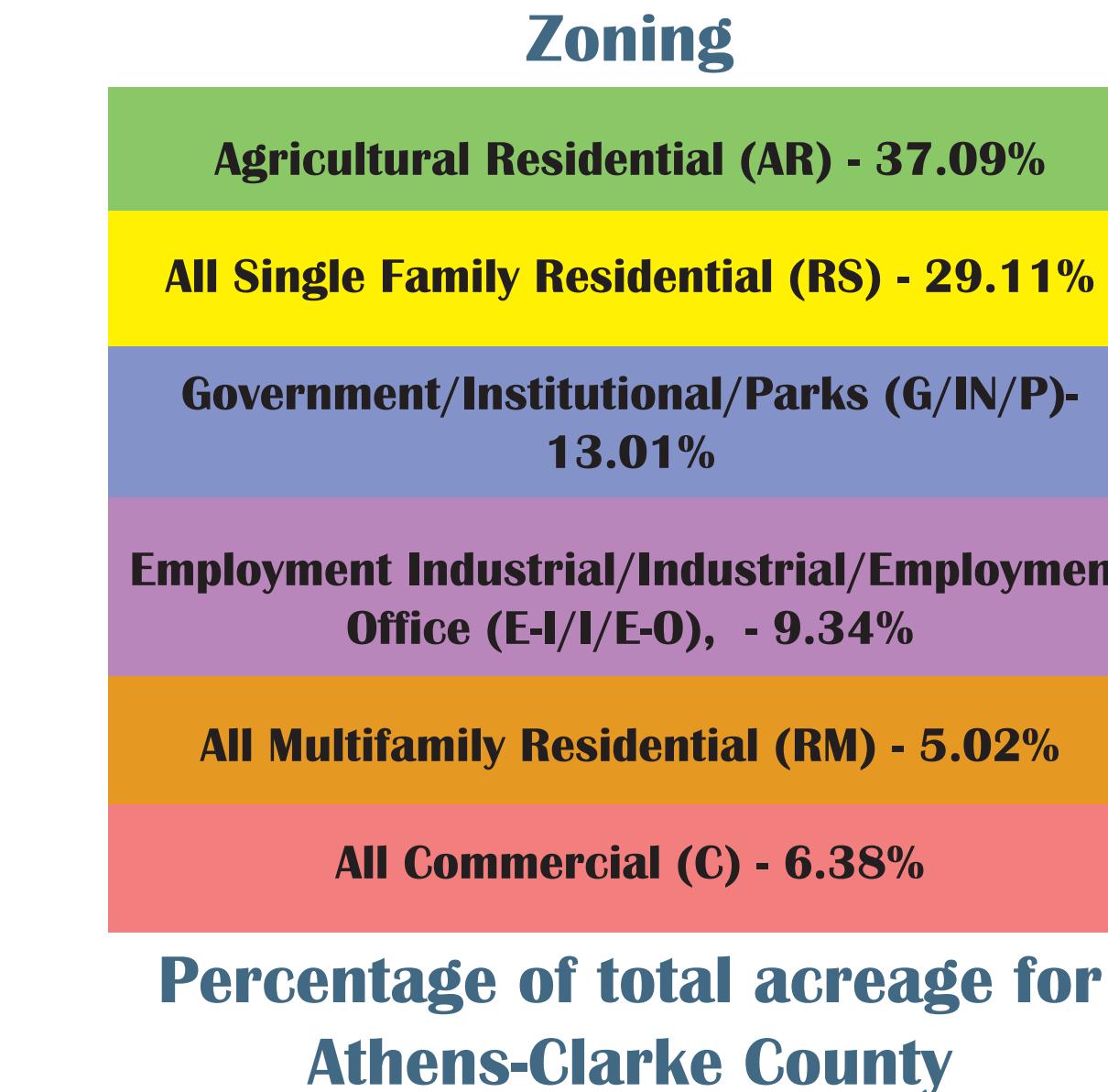
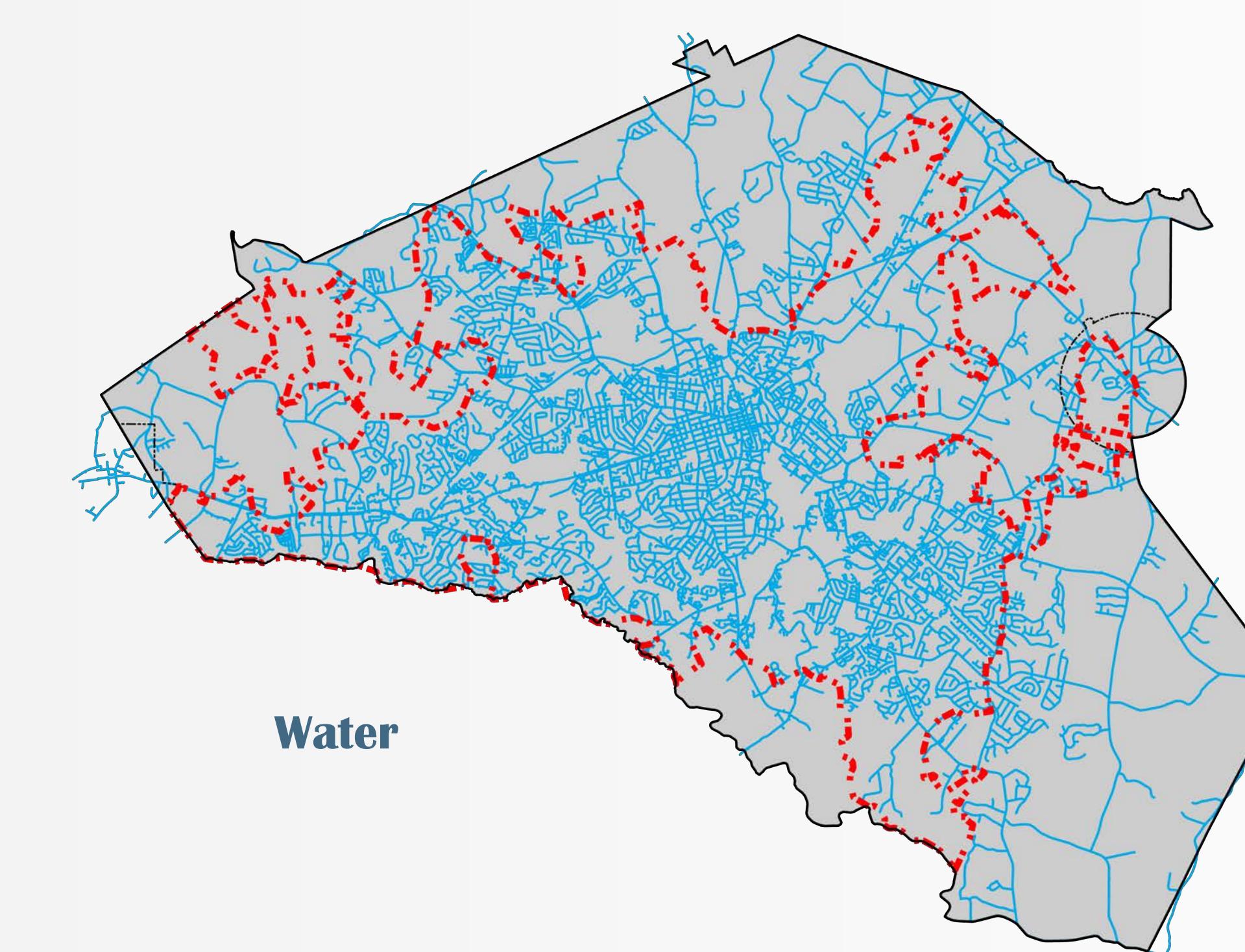
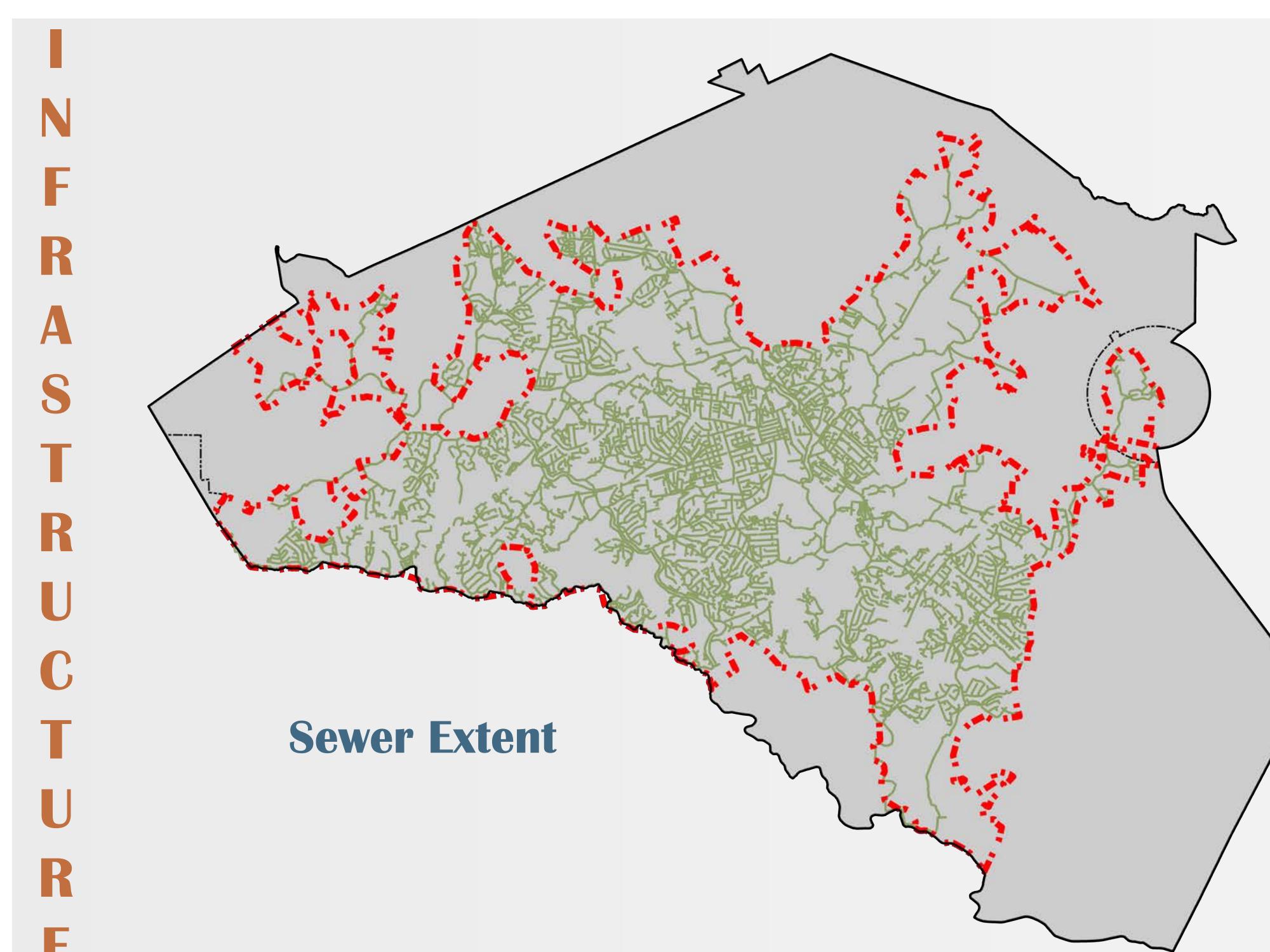
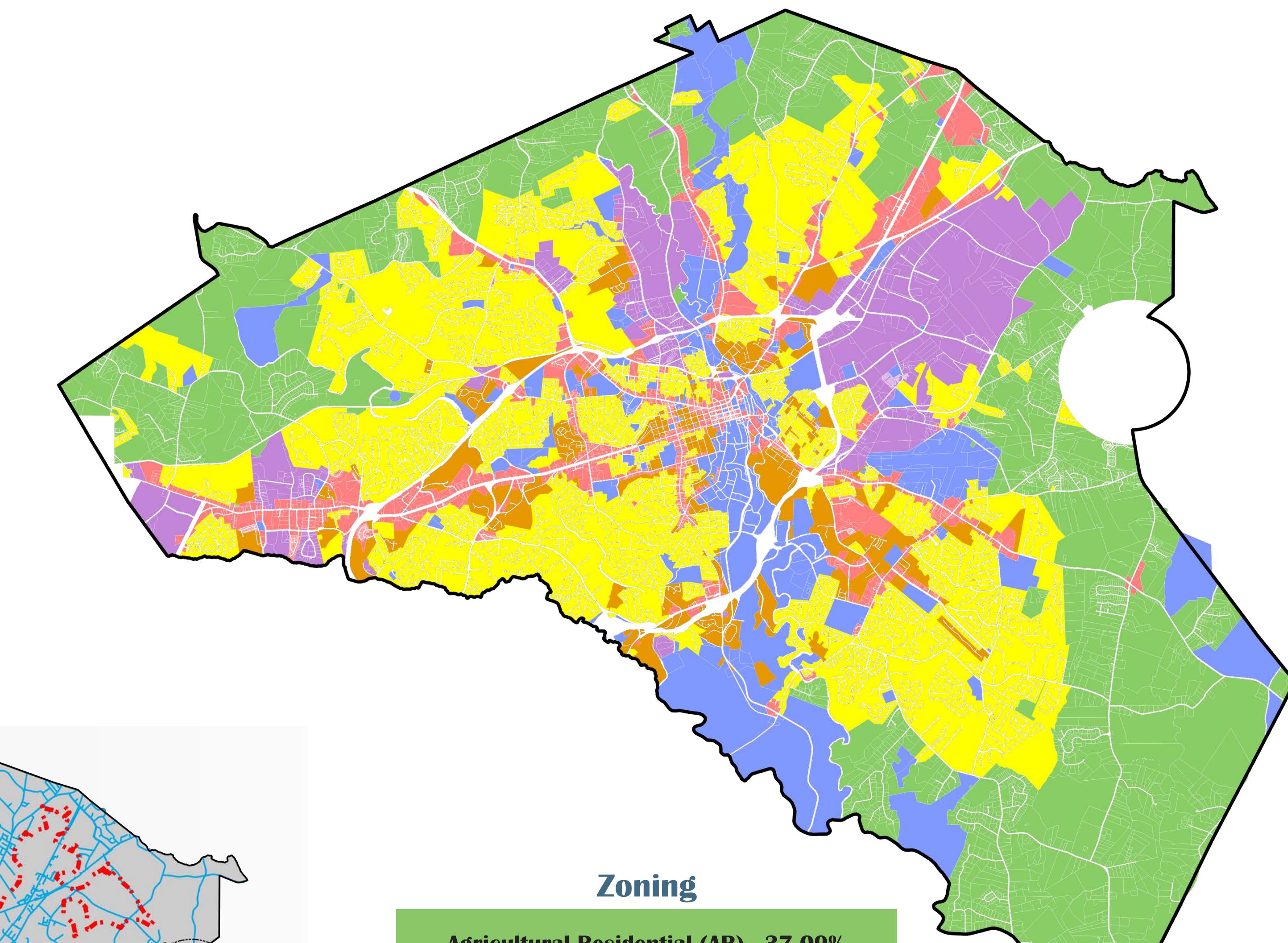
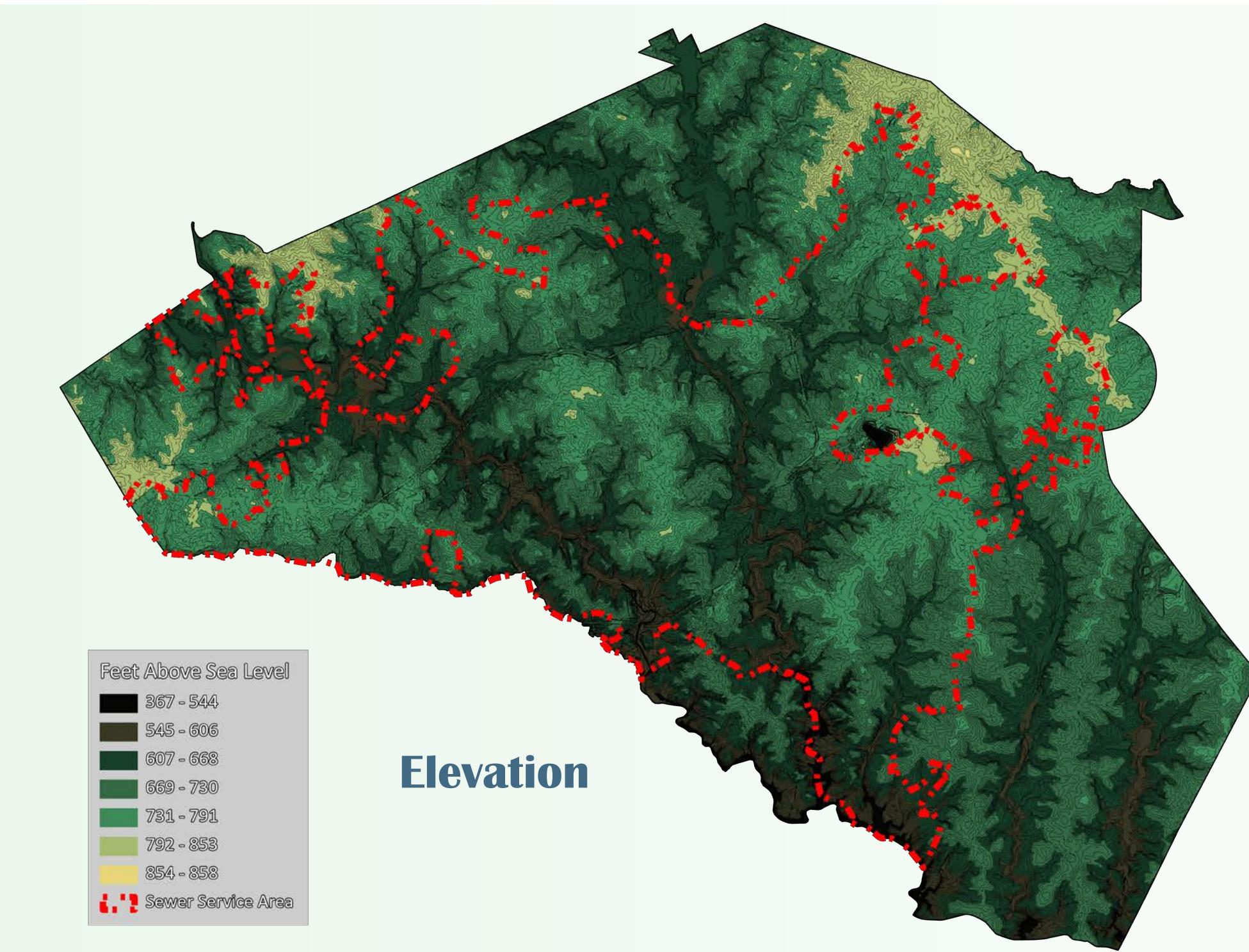
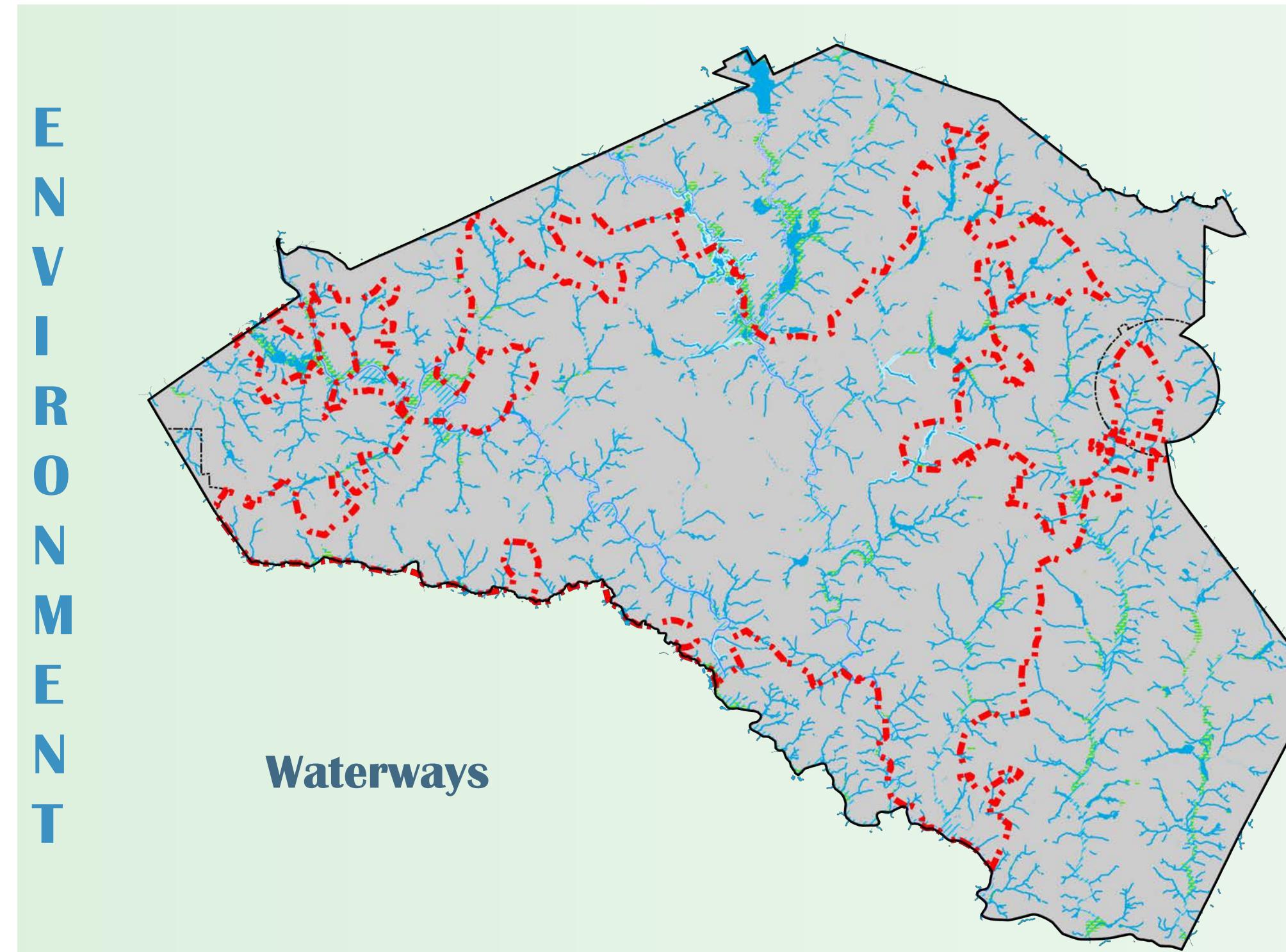
Rural lands are intended to have very low residential density. To maintain open space, clustering of dwellings is encouraged with common open spaces protected by conservation easements. Agricultural functions are encouraged, as well as other compatible uses, such as limited low-impact commercial uses, equestrian facilities and other animal boarding uses.

## 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).



# Where We Are: Environment + Infrastructure = Financial Sustainability



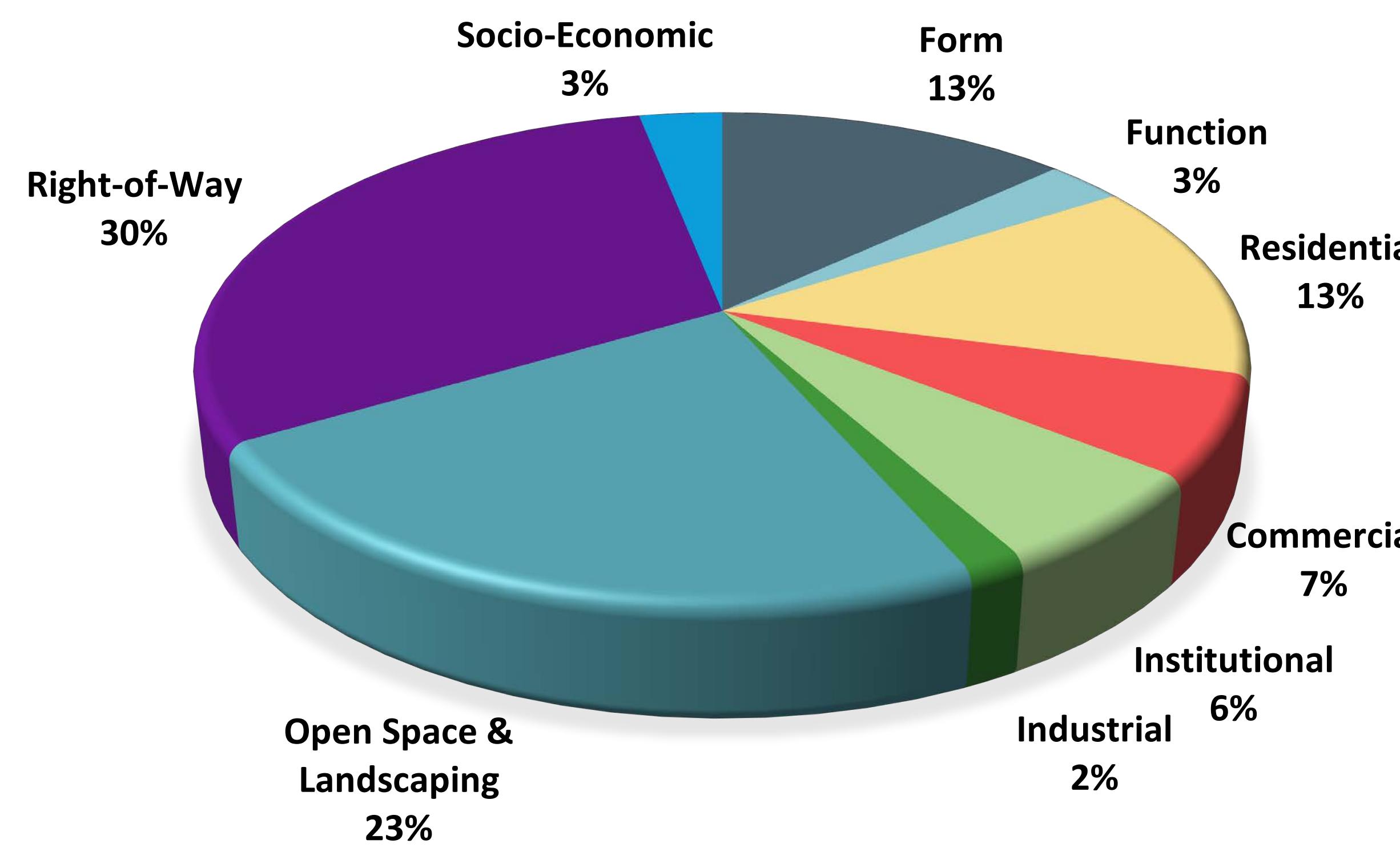
You can see the underlying conditions of life in ACC through the layers on this page. The Future Land Use Mapping effort seeks to work off those guides and then create code and policies that assist in bringing people together.

# What We Heard:

## Growth Concept General Input

Throughout the fall of 2023 we engaged residents via 26 public events and received thousands of comments. We categorized them (see below) 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. As we dig into Future Land Use, we hope to hear more about how Athens Clarke County can grow for the benefit of residents, businesses and Institutions.



Input Type	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
Total	204	45	205	103	97	24	360	475	48



## Guiding Principles

Derived from Fall 2023 input

- 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 destinations (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 Financially sustainable growth**



# Are We Hearing You?

## Growth Concept Map



Legend

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

### Urban Center

**Major mixed-use node(s), supporting regional attractions, commercial or offices on multiple stories, institutional or government facilities and transit hubs. They also include the highest residential densities, sidewalk connections, lively streetscapes and activity throughout the day.**



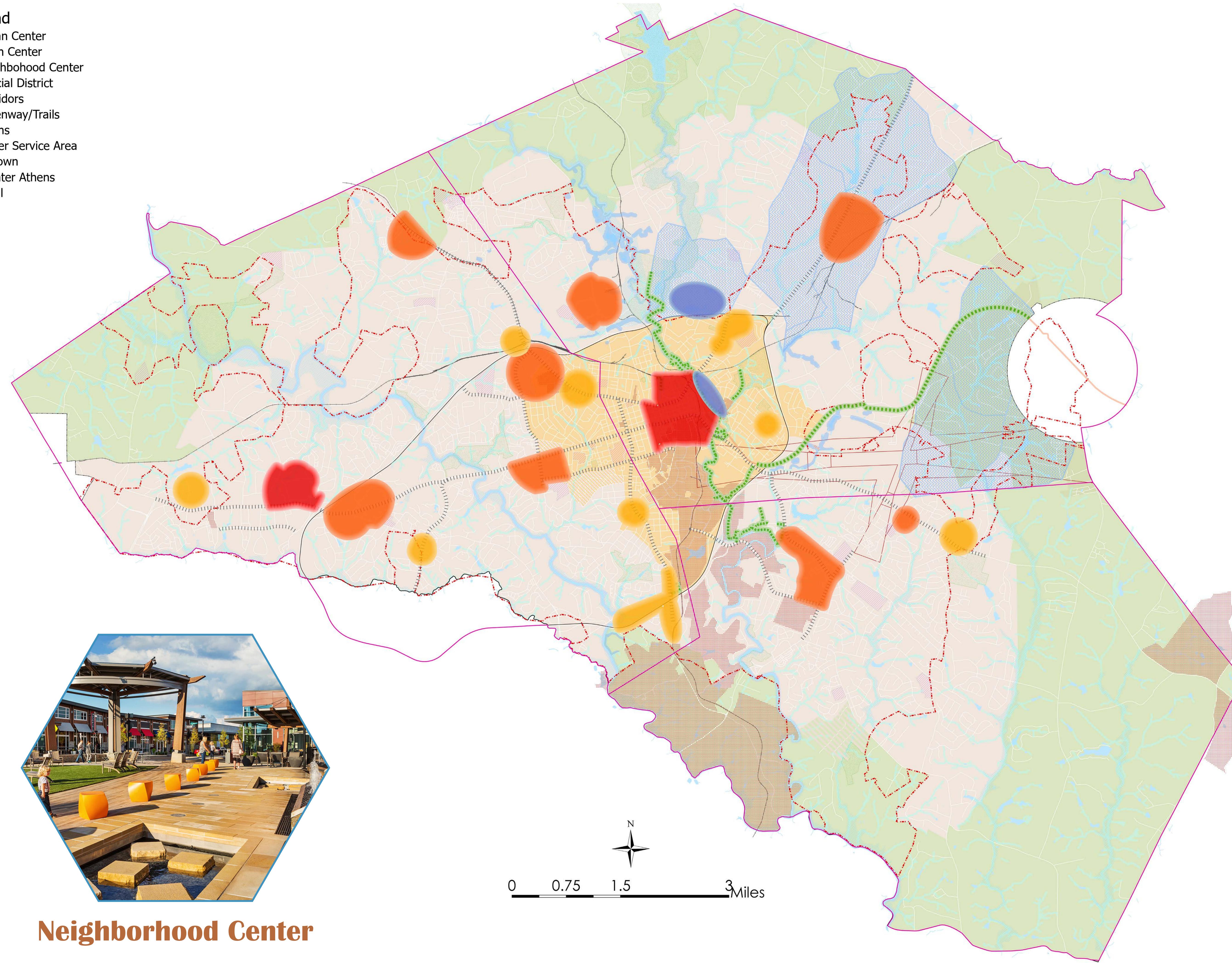
### Town Center

**Mid-sized mixed-use node(s), supporting daily needs, ground floor commercial and offices, community facilities and served by public transit. They also include mid-level residential densities in a variety of forms, sidewalk connections, lively streetscapes on main corridors and activity beyond the 9-5 schedule.**



### Neighborhood Center

**Mid to moderate mixed-use node(s) of small-scale commercial and/or offices served by public transit. They also include mid-level densities in a variety of forms often connected to single-family neighborhoods. These are arranged along a main corridor with a lively streetscape.**



# Pathway Forward:

## Nodes

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.

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.

### Urban Center

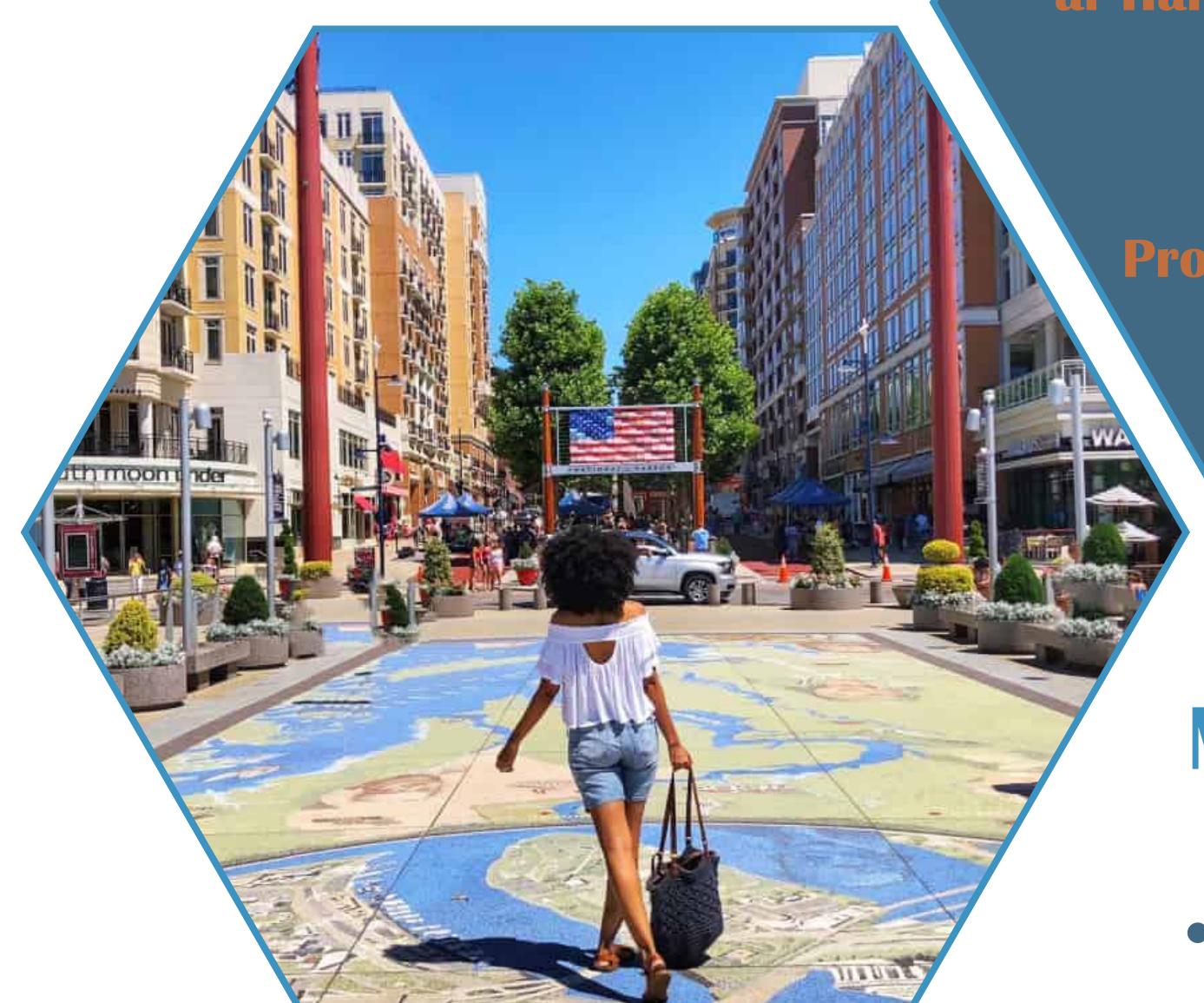
Major mixed-use node(s), supporting regional attractions, commercial or offices on multiple stories, institutional or government facilities and transit hubs. They also include the highest residential densities, sidewalk connections, lively streetscapes and activity throughout the day.



#### Examples:

Current – Downtown Athens, National Harbor, Maryland, Gregor Square, Denver, Colorado

Proposed – Mall Redevelopment



#### Main Standards:

- No setbacks
- Buildings up to 10 stories
- Pedestrian/Bike focused
- Parking decks
- On-street parking
- Shade trees along streets
- Up to 200 beds per acre



### Town Center

Mid-sized mixed-use node(s), supporting daily needs, ground floor commercial and offices, community facilities and served by public transit. They also include mid-level residential densities in a variety of forms, sidewalk connections, lively streetscapes on main corridors and activity beyond the 9-5 schedule.

#### Main Standards:

- Buildings pulled up to front setbacks
- Buildings 6 stories or under
- Alleys for service
- Pedestrian/Bike focused
- A few parking decks
- On-street parking
- Shade trees along streets
- Up to 75 beds per acre

#### Examples:

Current – Eastside Publix/Kroger, Decatur GA

Potential Locations: Homewood Hills, Macon Highway/Lower South Milledge



### Neighborhood Center

Mid to moderate mixed-use node(s) of small-scale commercial and/or offices served by public transit. They also include mid-level densities in a variety of forms often connected to single-family neighborhoods. These are arranged along a main corridor with a lively streetscape.

#### Main Standards:

- Buildings pulled up to front setbacks on main corridor
- Buildings no more than 3 stories
- Alleys for service, small commercial or residential
- Pedestrian/Bike accommodations
- A parking deck
- On-street parking, limited surface lot parking
- Horizontal or vertical mixed-use
- Shade trees along streets
- Up to 36 beds per acre

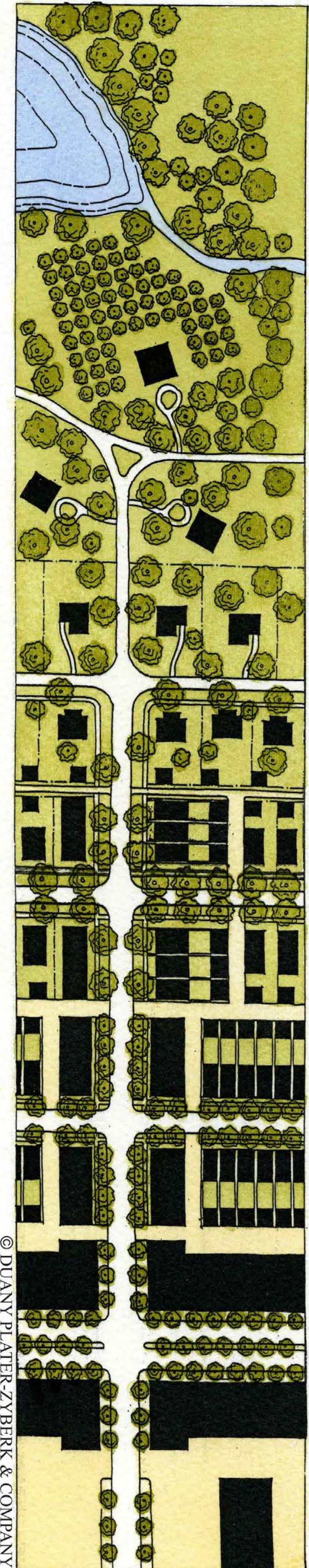
# Pathway Forward:

## Transects & Corridors

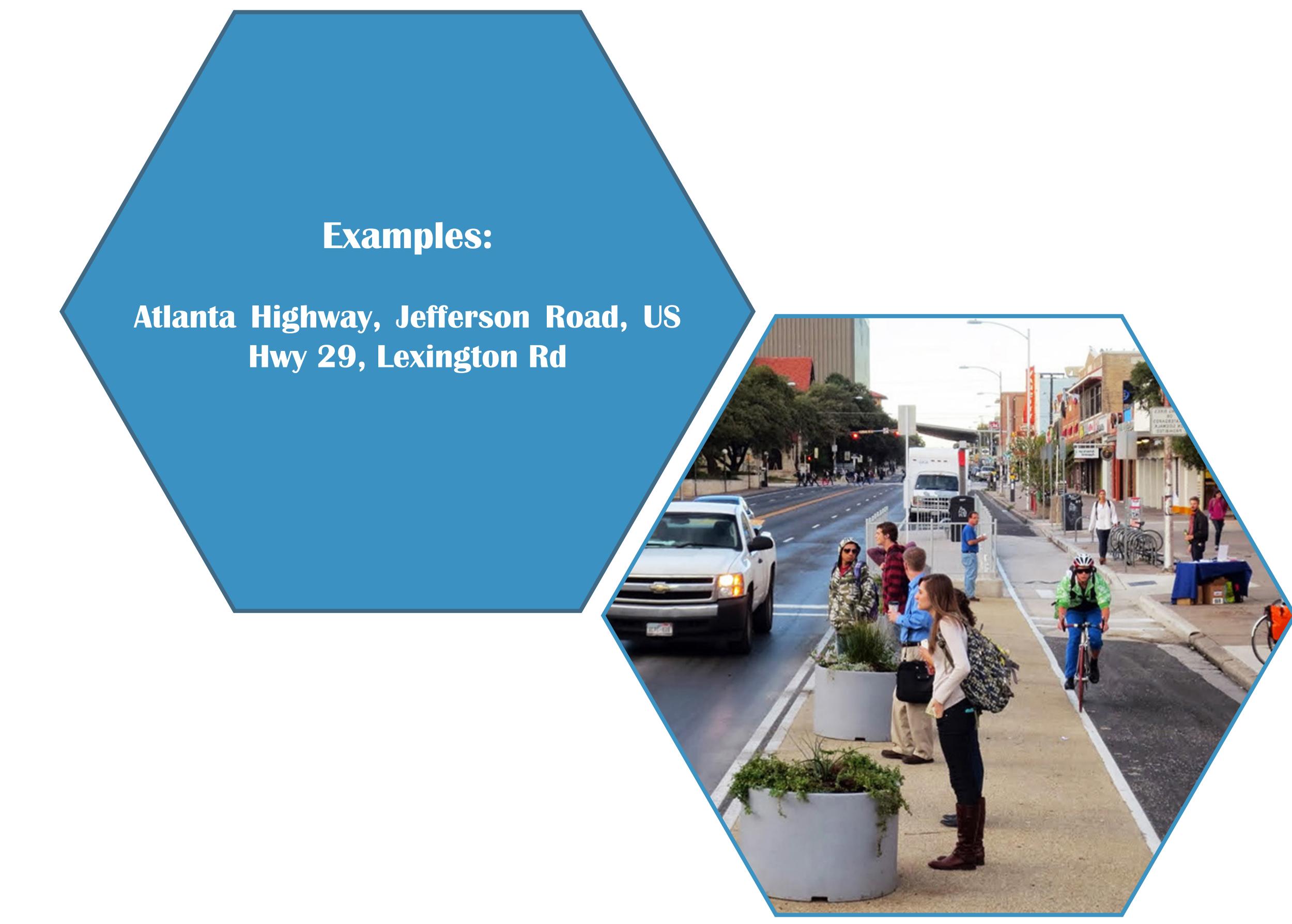
### What Is A Transect?

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

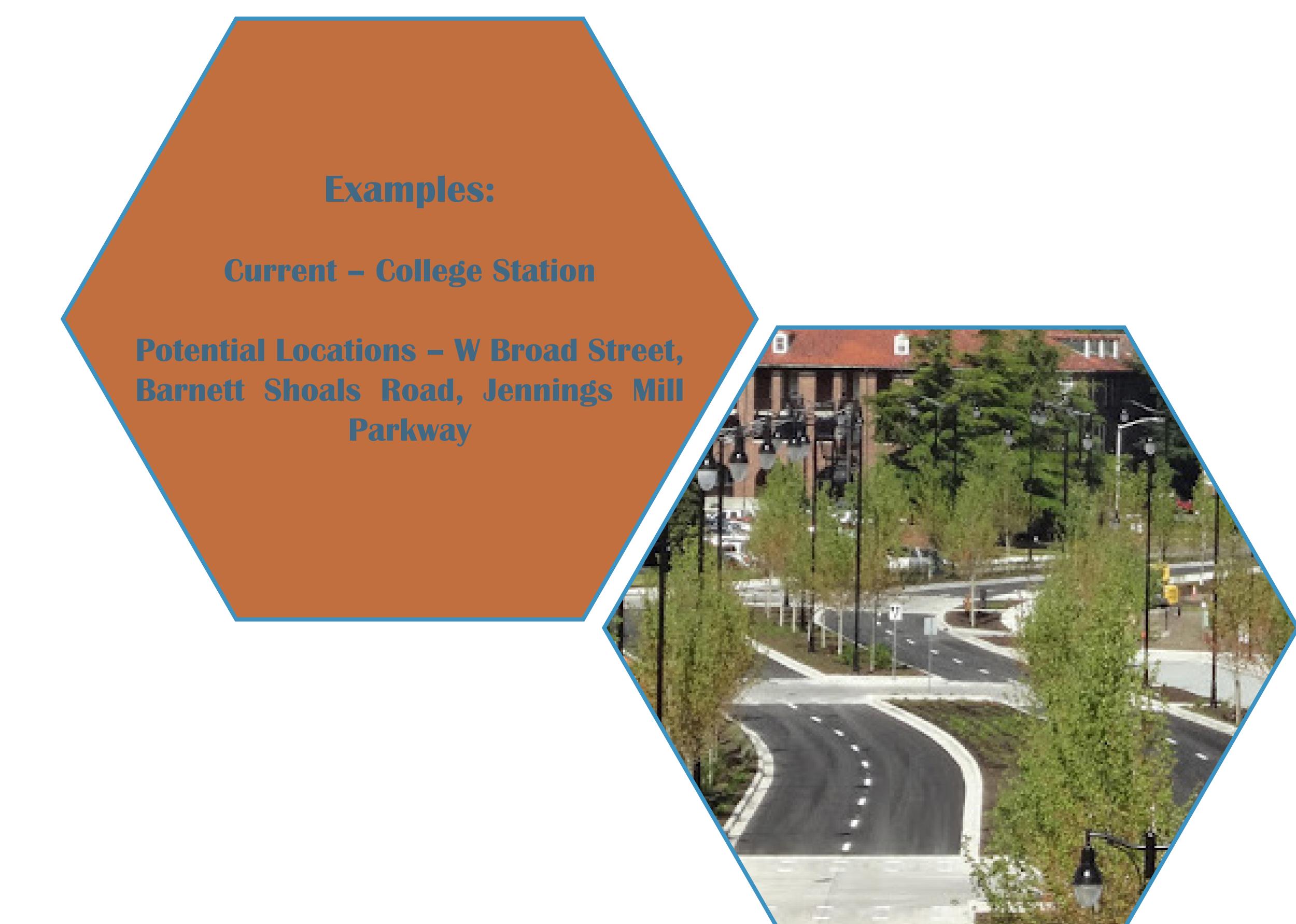


### Primary Corridors



These are areas along primary, linear transit roads and may have a multitude of low-, mid- and high-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. Front setbacks have historically been larger but should be pulled forward on future development. Street trees are mandatory. Road re-alignment should be considered. Public Transit should be along these streets, alternative transportation should also be included. The use of roundabouts is encouraged.

### Boulevards



Boulevards are typically a broad avenue with trees along the sides and median with the primary purpose of breaking up very large streets into more manageable realms. Multi-use lanes are typical for the length of the street, including dedicated and separate, bus, bike, and pedestrian lanes. Residential and commercial buildings may have a multitude of low-, mid- and high-rise buildings. Front setbacks should be minimal to zero. The use of roundabouts is encouraged.

# Are We Hearing You?

## Development Pattern

Urban

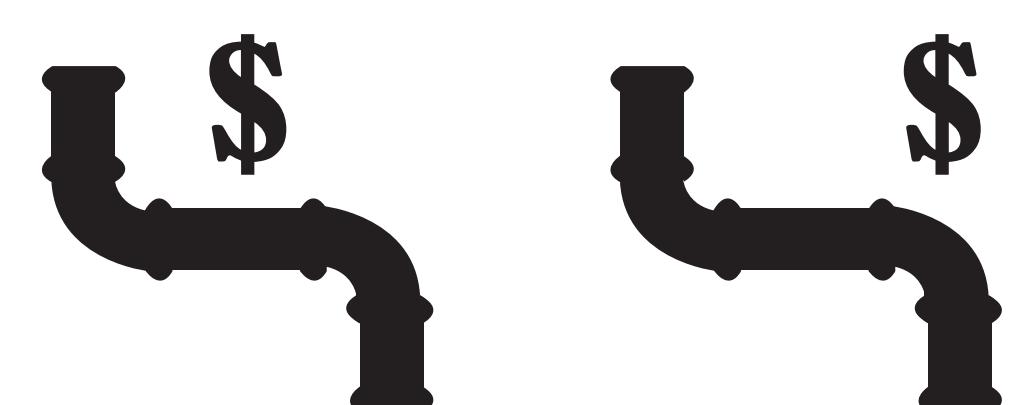


Population

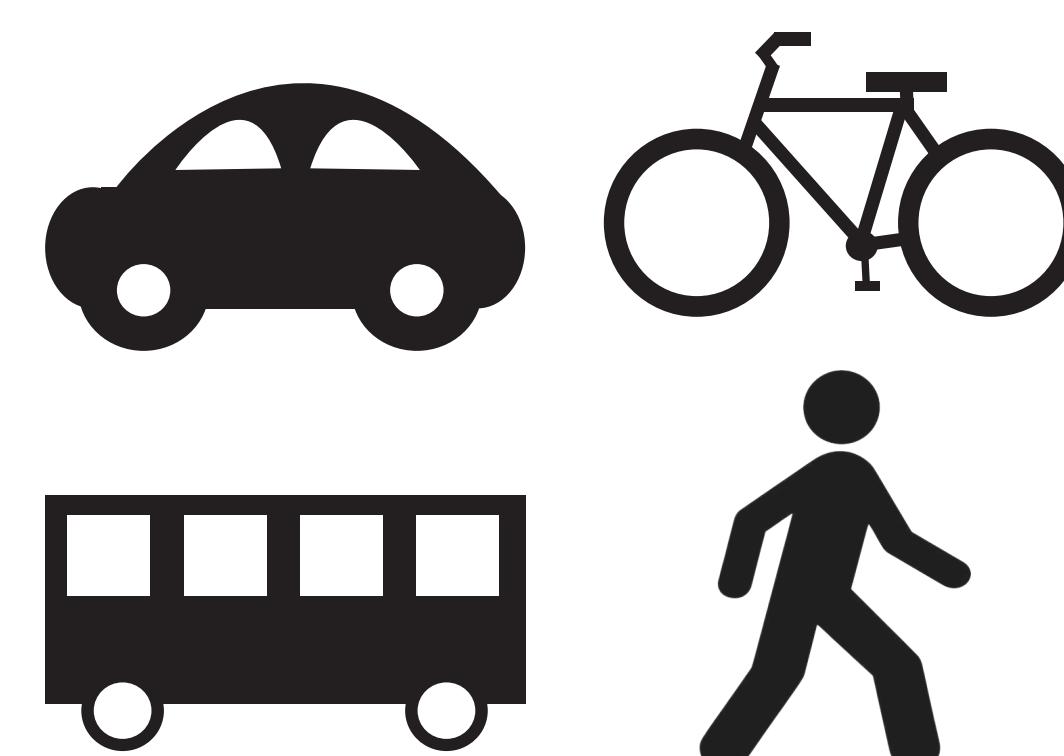
Suburban



Housing Choice



Infrastructure Cost



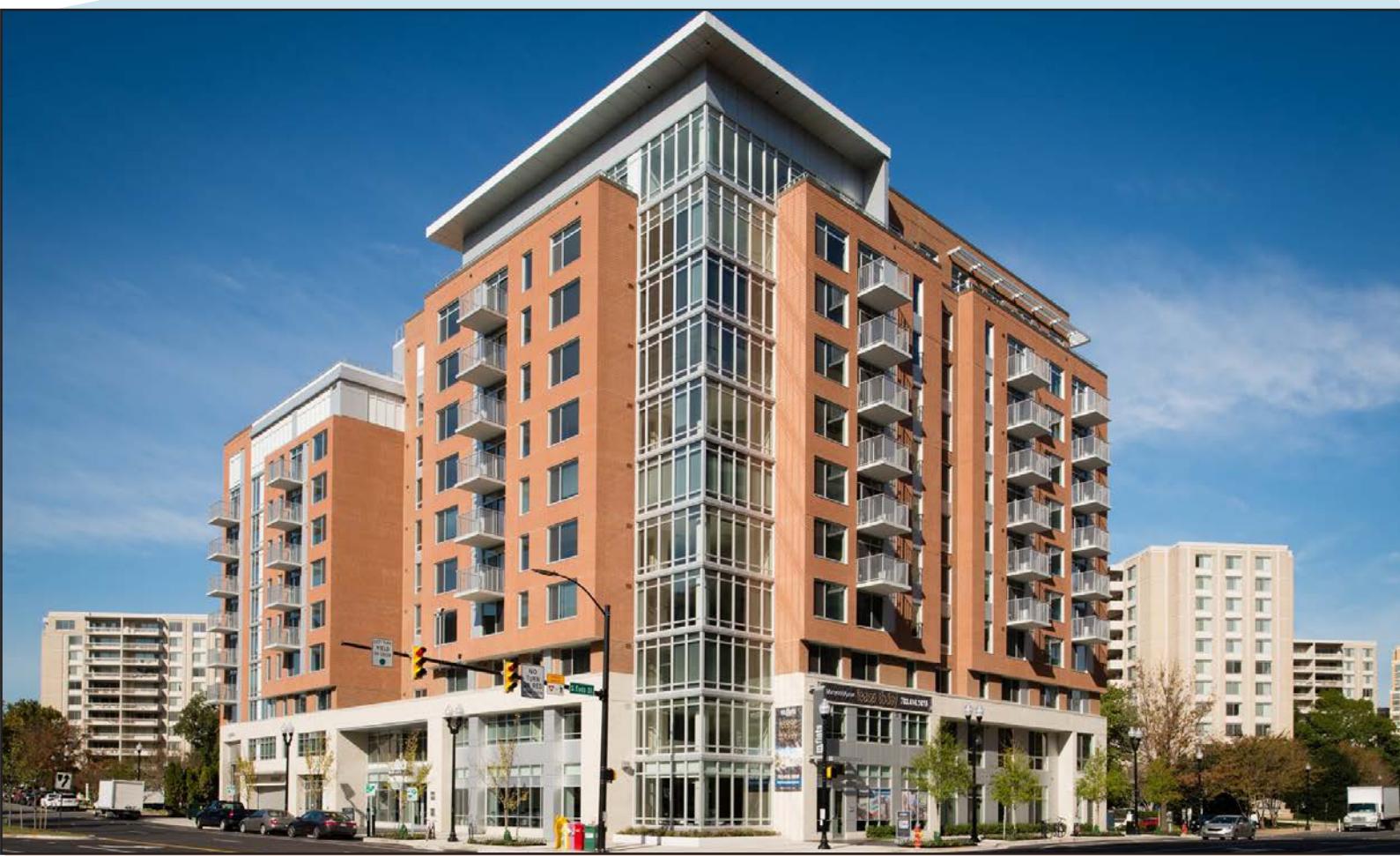
Transportation  
Choice



# Are We Hearing You?

## Housing

Which of the following housing types would be acceptable in my neighborhood?



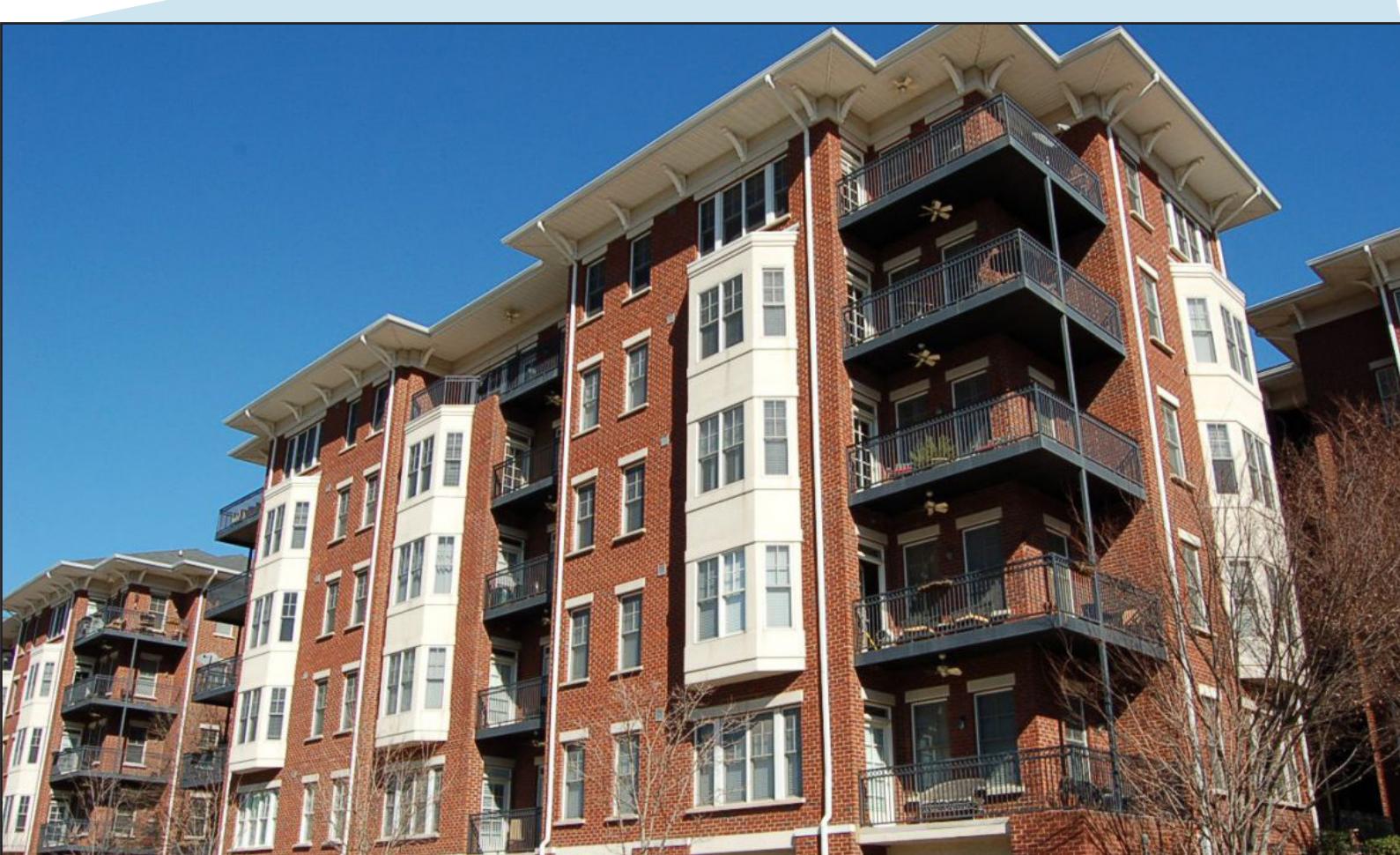
High Rise



Multiplex



Duplex



Mid Rise



Quadplex



Cottage Court



Townhouses



Triplex



Accessory  
Dwelling Unit