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

Chapter 1 Overview



Plan Purpose.

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

1. Where do we want to go?

2. How do we get there?

3. How will we unify the policies of



land use,



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



parks and open spaces,



economic development, and



housing

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

How to Use this Document.

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

OVERVIEW

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

RESEARCH AND TRENDS

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

OUR VISION

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

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

IMPLEMENTATION

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

Background.

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

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

Gwinnett County
Consolidated Plan

Destination2040

Gwinnett's Comprehensive Transportation Plan



Gwinnett 2040

UNIFIED PLAN



**Gwinnett
TRAILS**



SEWER MASTER PLAN 2050



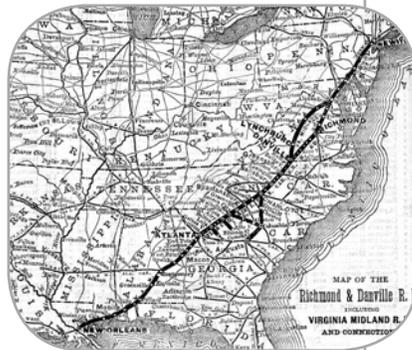
Gwinnett
Water Resources

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

Gwinnett County Population and Historic Events

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

1885 Historic Gwinnett County courthouse constructed



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

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

1850
Population: 11,257

1861-1865
American Civil War

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

1900 Population: 25,585

2040 Population estimates range from 1.29 to 1.56 million

2018 Gwinnett County celebrates its bicentennial



2009 Gwinnett Stadium (now Coolray Field) opens



2003 Gwinnett Arena (now Infinite Energy Arena) opens



2001 Discovery Mills (now Sugarloaf Mills) opens

2001 Gwinnett County Transit begins operations



2017 Population: 920,260

2010 Population: 808,719

2007 First iPhone Released

1999 Mall of Georgia opens



2000 Population: 588,448

1996 Atlanta and Georgia host the Centennial Summer Olympics



Atlanta 1996

1984 Gwinnett Place Mall opens



1990 Population: 352,910

1988 Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center opens

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



1963 Kennedy assassination

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

1941 Pearl Harbor attacked, USA enters WWII

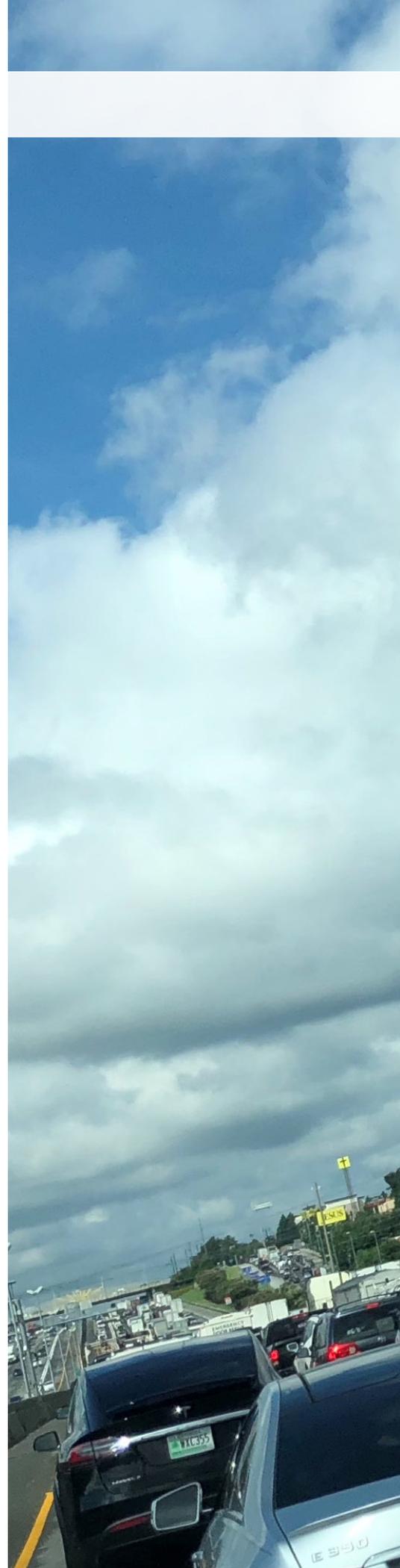
1986-1988 Gwinnett County is the fastest growing county in the United States with a population over 100,000

1980 Population: 166,903

1970 Population: 72,349

1960 Population: 43,541

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



A typical morning on I-85 headed southbound



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





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

How the Plan Was Put Together.

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

Research

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

Vision

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

Develop

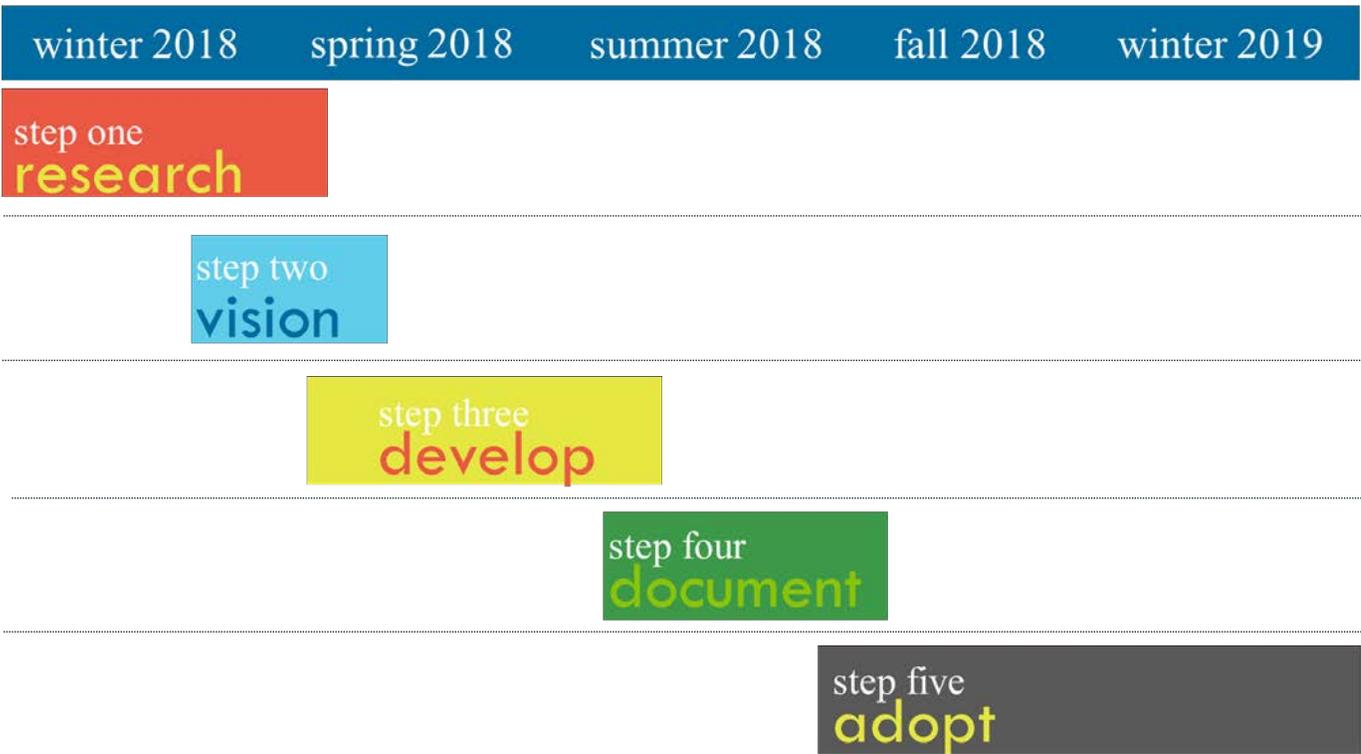
In the develop phase, the planning team drew from the vision of the community and a series of technical analyses to identify initiatives to achieve that vision. The centerpiece of this part of the process was a series of techniques referred to as the “Opportunity for Change” analysis to identify where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

Document

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

Adopt

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

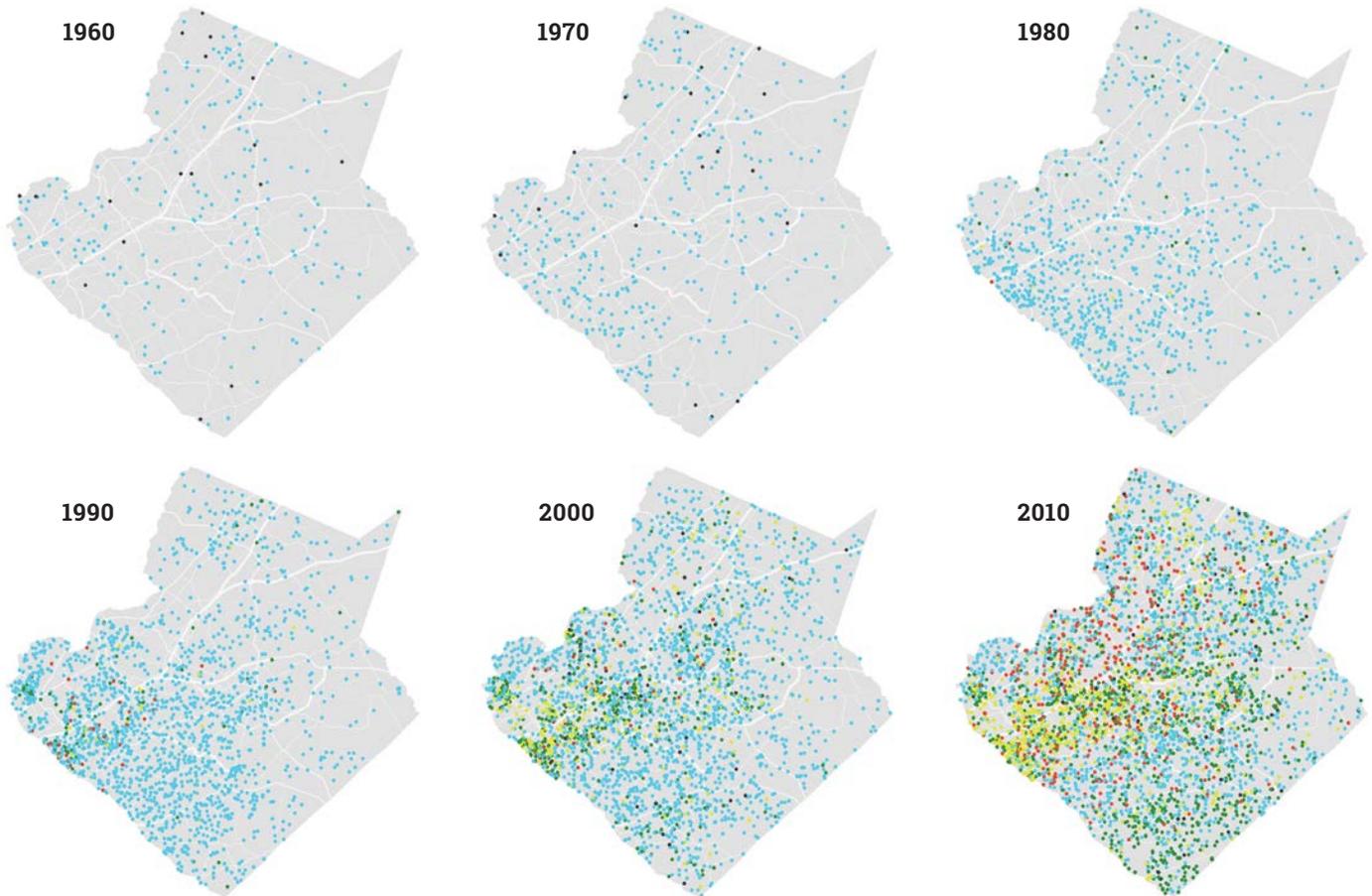


RESEARCH

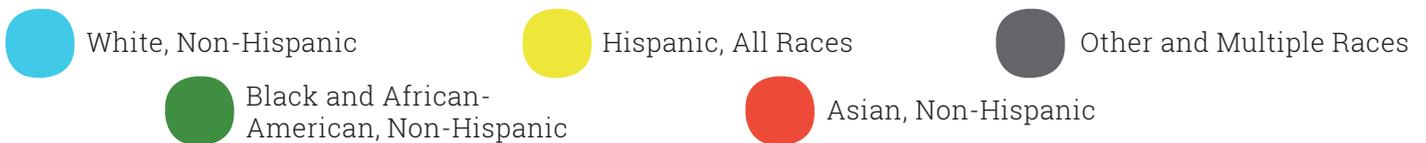
In the research phase, our planning team was ultimately trying to address fundamental questions about who we are and where we are going. What is unique about Gwinnett County and what are the trends that have shaped who we have become?

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

Population Density and Diversity (1960-2010)



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

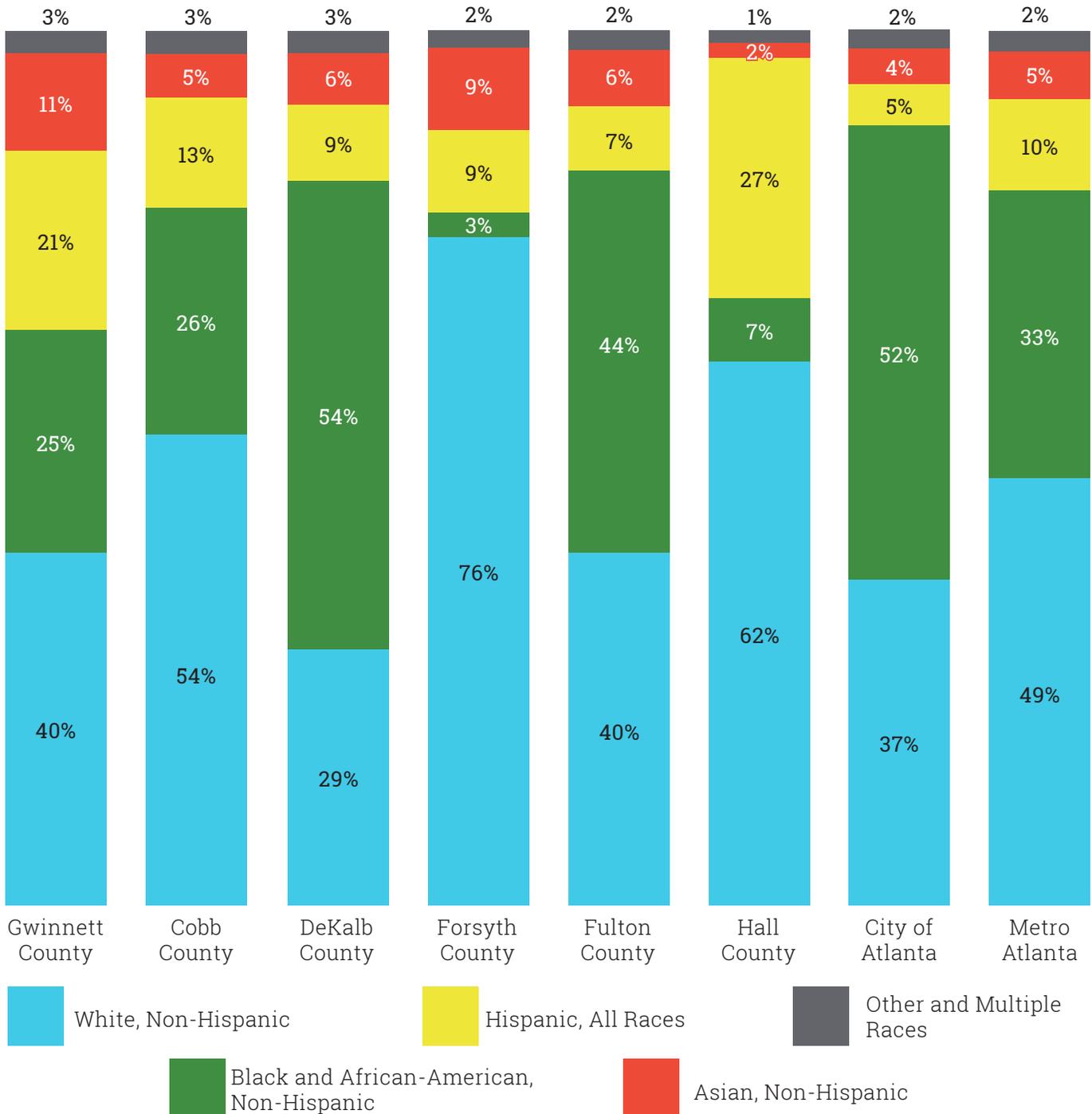


Source US Decennial Census

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

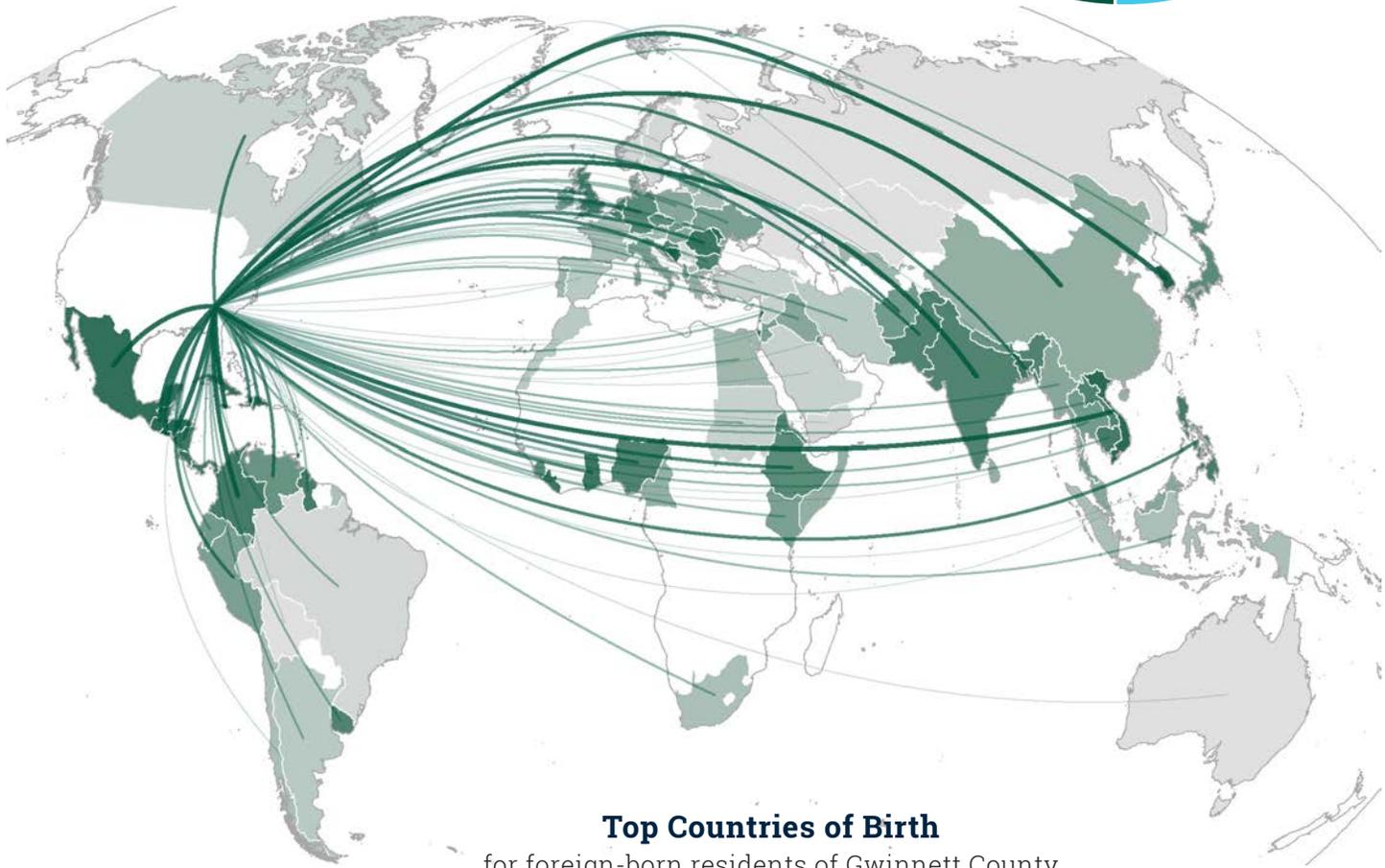
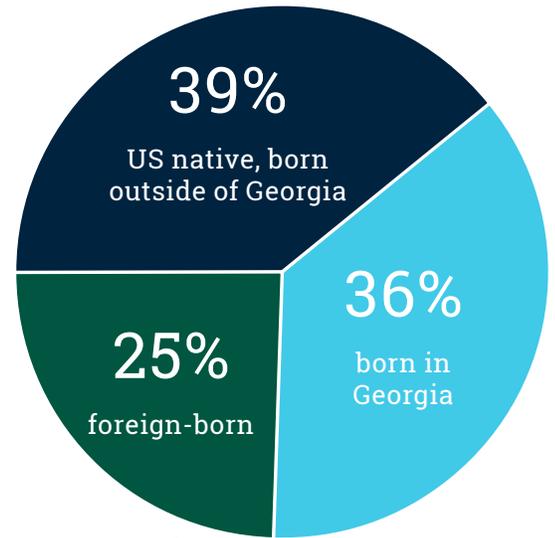
Similarly, while the Gwinnett County of 1980 was mostly white, by 1990 the first outward signs of the diversity to come can be seen with some small pockets of non-white population in the extreme western parts of the County. In 2000, that diversity is clearer and anchored by the I-85 corridor, and starkly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

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



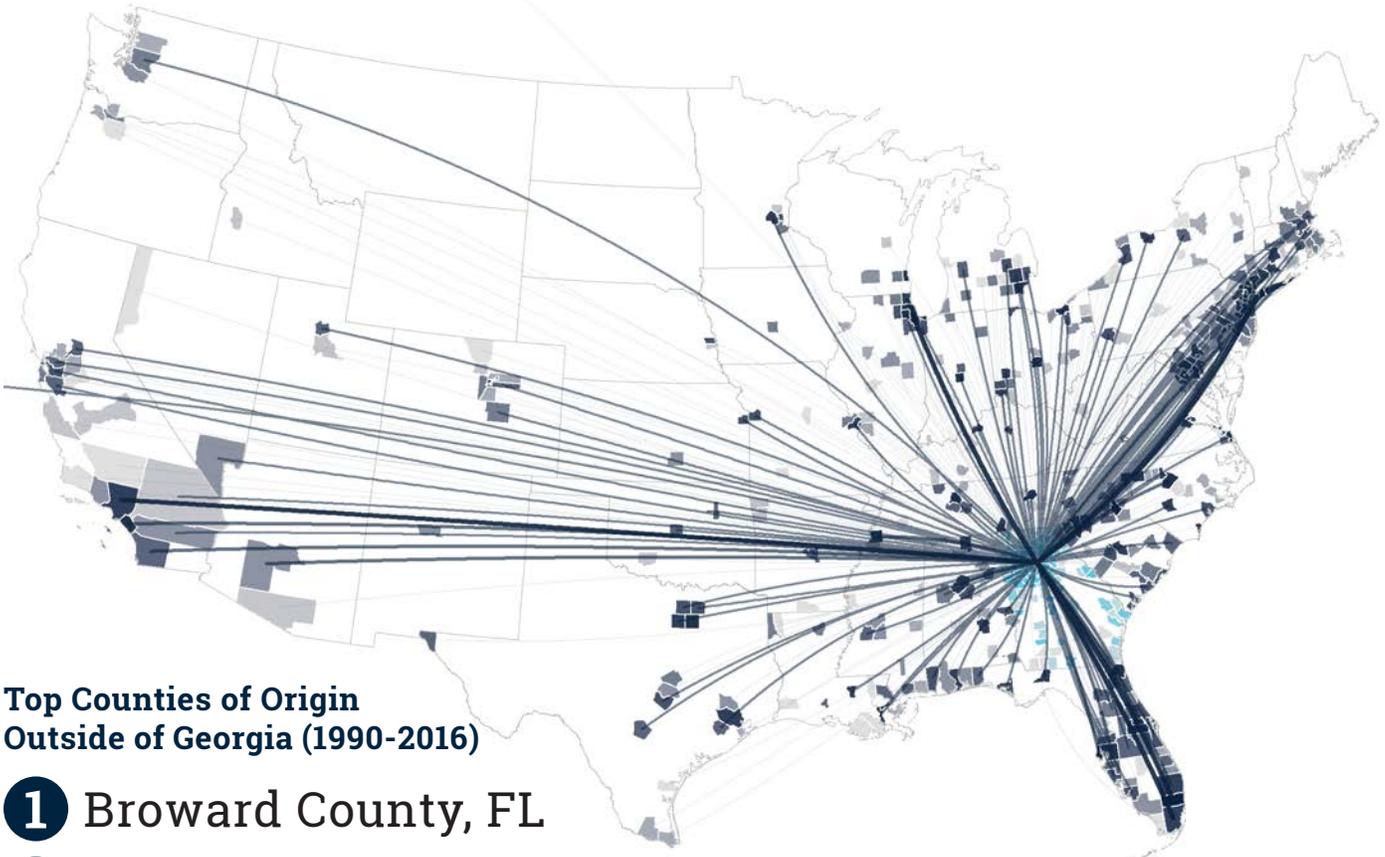
Source US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016

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



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

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

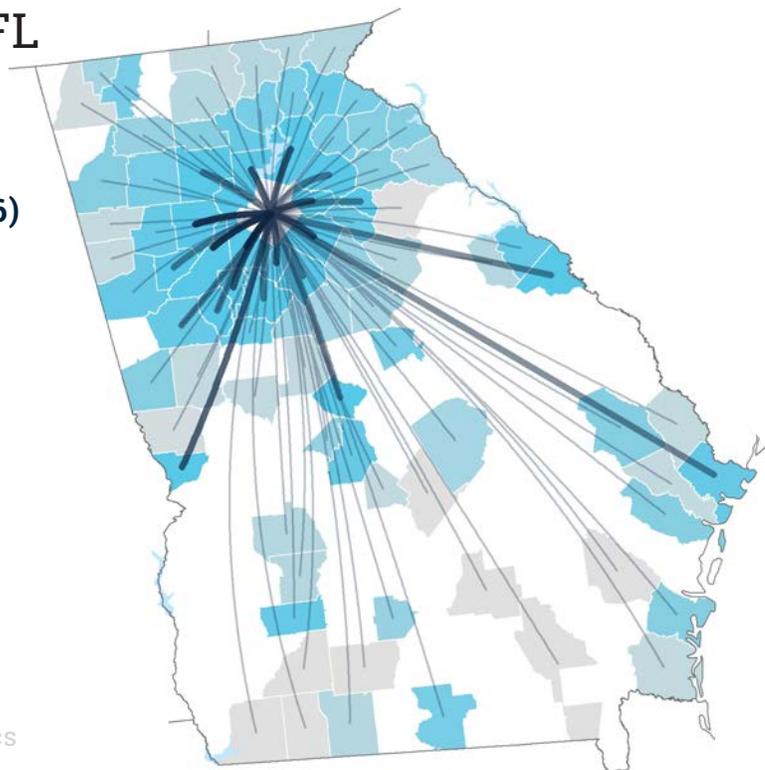


**Top Counties of Origin
Outside of Georgia (1990-2016)**

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

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

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



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

VISION

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

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

Traditional Outreach Methods

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

Non-Traditional Outreach Methods

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

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

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



16,228
online survey comments

1,165
online survey respondents

59
intercept interviews
around Gwinnett County

20%
of intercept interviews
conducted in Spanish

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



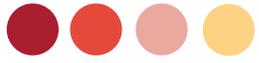
THE FIVE THEMES

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

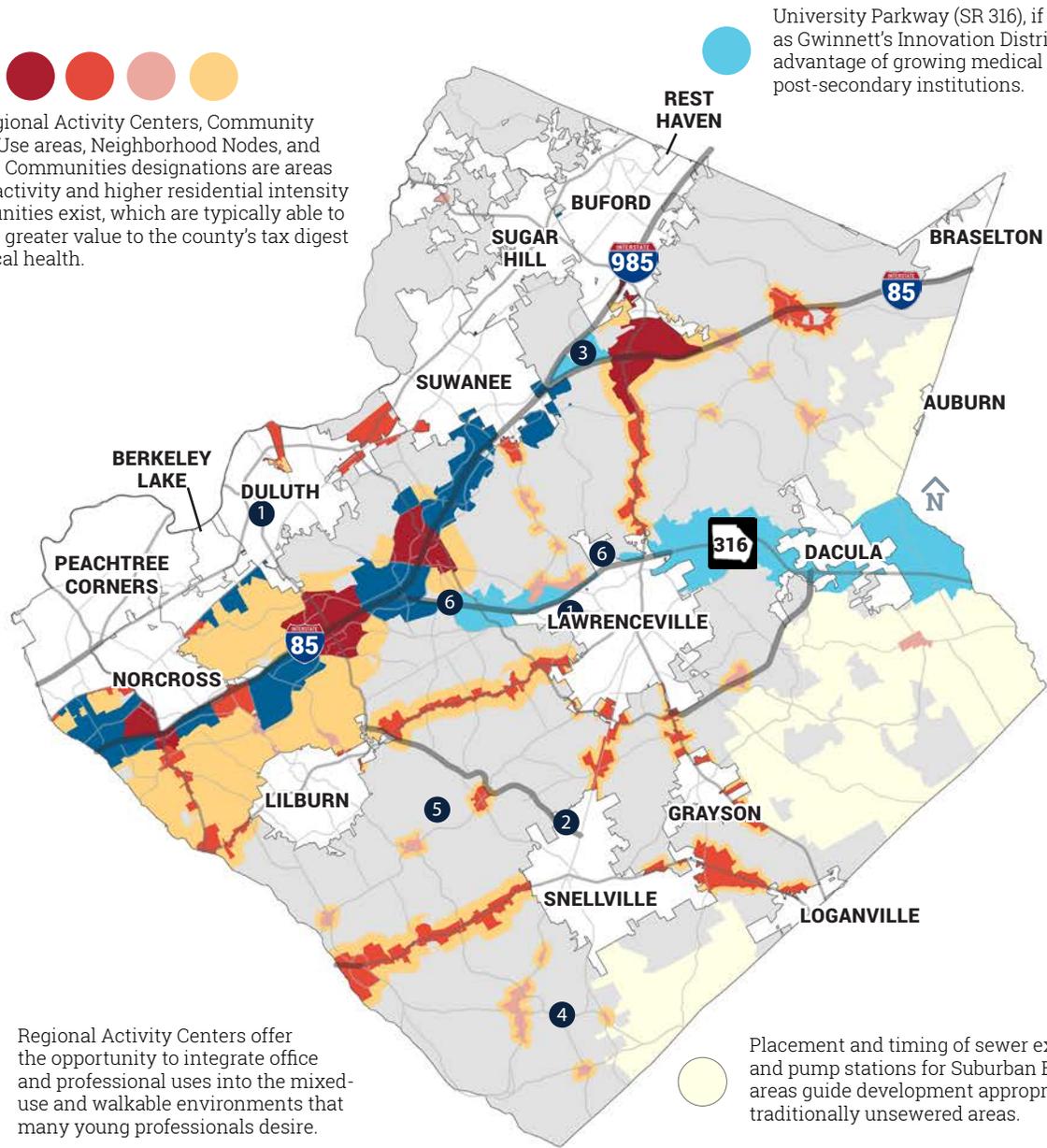
Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health

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

Theme 1: Maintain Economic Development and Fiscal Health



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



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

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

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

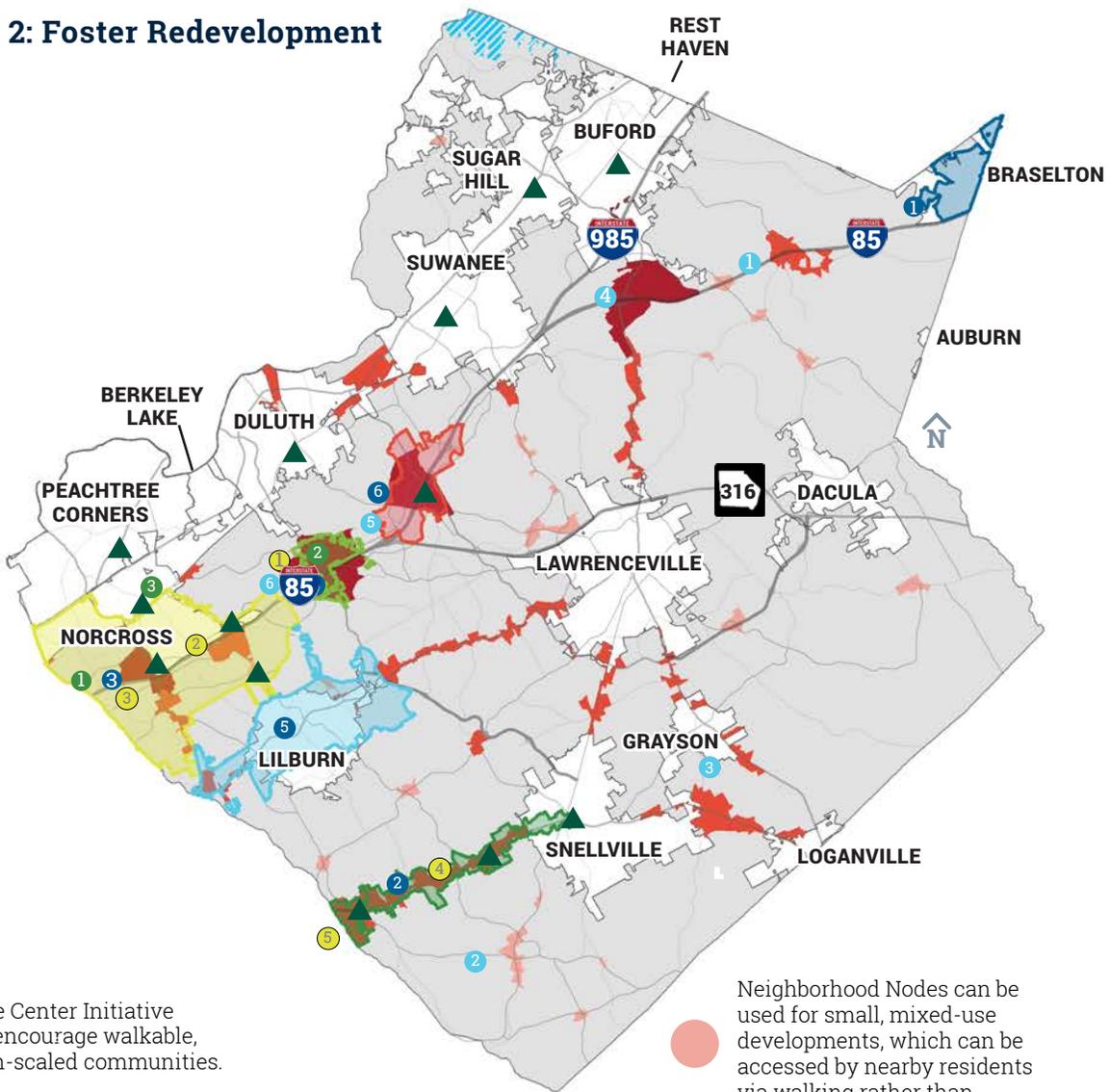
Placement and timing of sewer extensions and pump stations for Suburban Estate Living areas guide development appropriately in traditionally unsewered areas.

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

Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment

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

Theme 2: Foster Redevelopment



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



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



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



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

Community Improvement Districts (CIDs)

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

County Overlay Districts

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

County Tax Allocation Districts (TADs)

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

Opportunity Zones

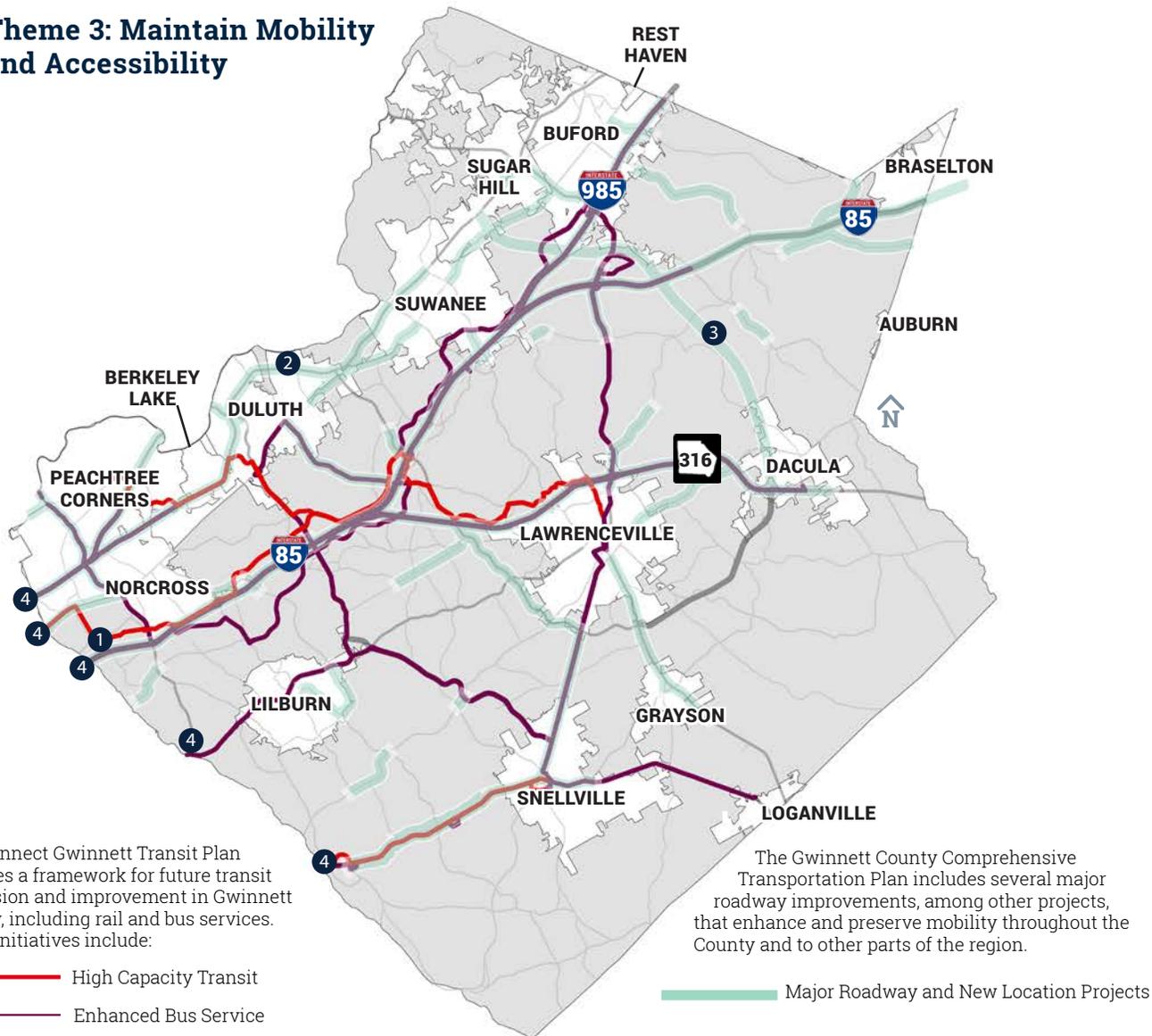
- 1 Gateway 85
- 2 Gwinnett Place
- 3 Norcross

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

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility

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

Theme 3: Maintain Mobility and Accessibility



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

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

- High Capacity Transit
- Enhanced Bus Service

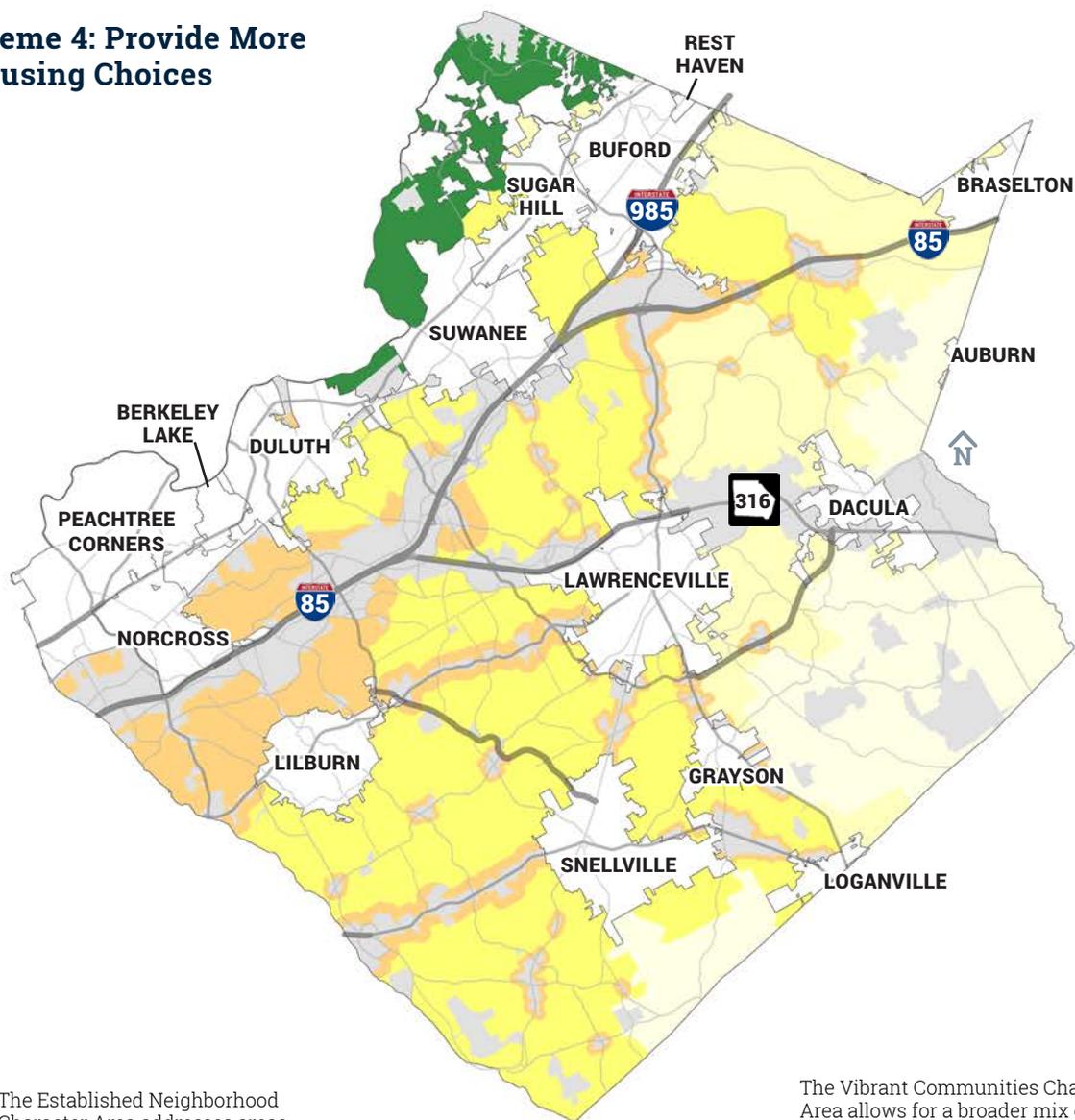
— Major Roadway and New Location Projects

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

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices

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

Theme 4: Provide More Housing Choices



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



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



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

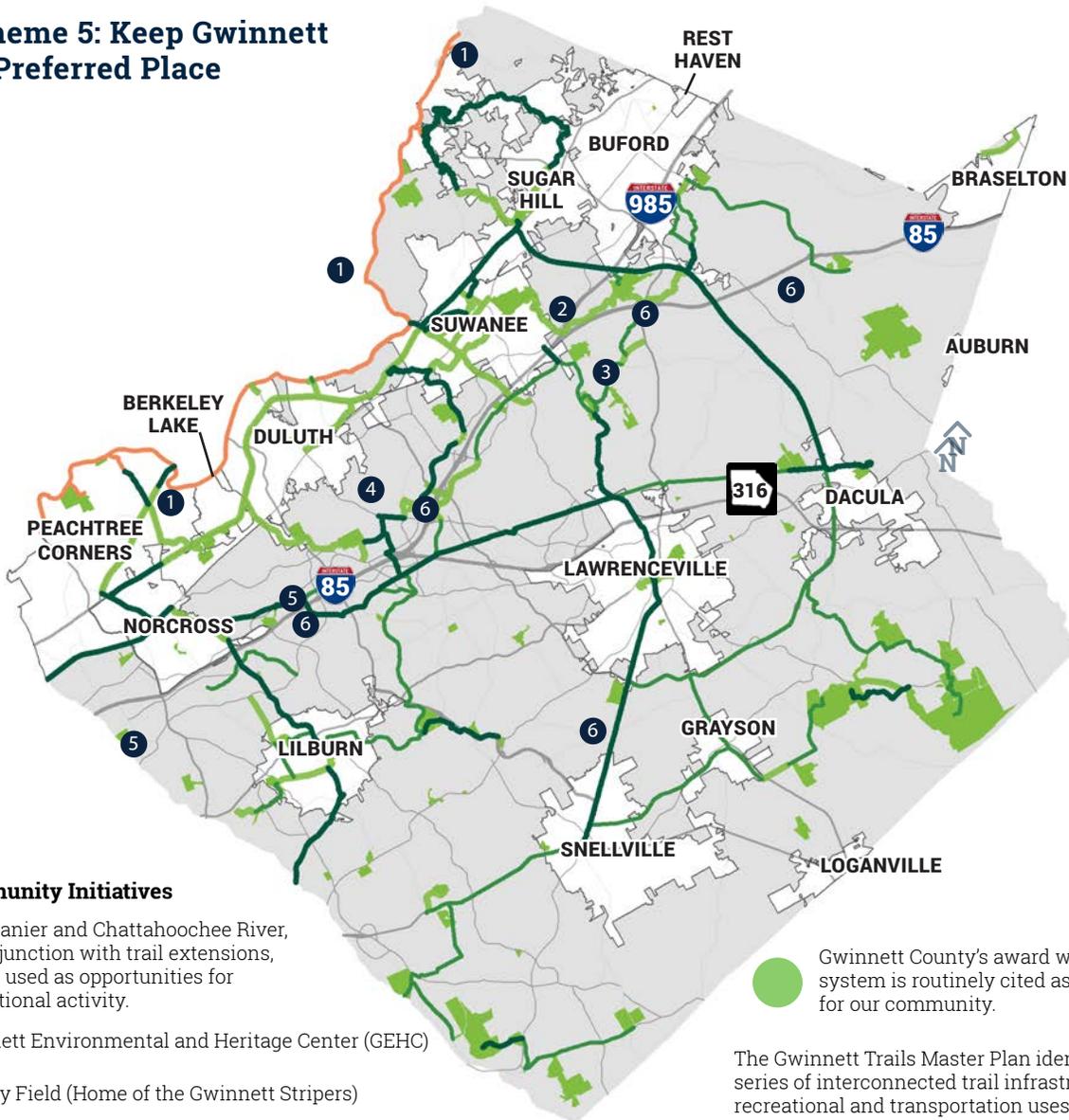


Executive housing areas on and along Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River.

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place

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

Theme 5: Keep Gwinnett a Preferred Place



Community Initiatives

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

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

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

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

DEVELOP

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

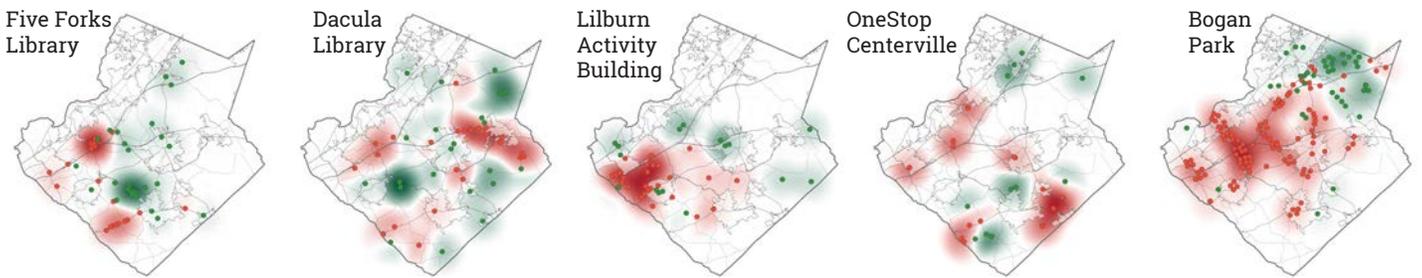
In the 'Plan Development' chapter, there are individual explorations of how these elements work interdependently, often building off of separate and distinct planning efforts. Therefore, the centerpiece of this 2040 Unified Plan focuses on how these components work together and interface with the overall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

Opportunity for Change

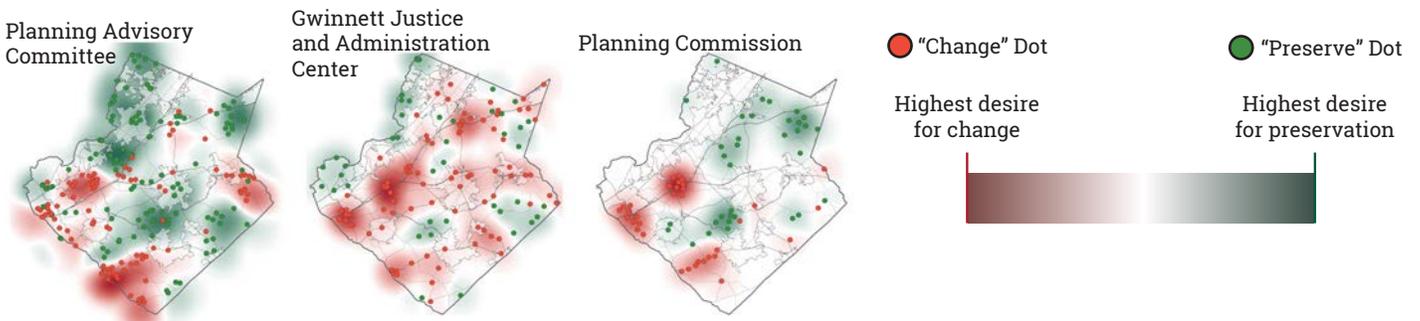
Change and Preserve Preferences

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

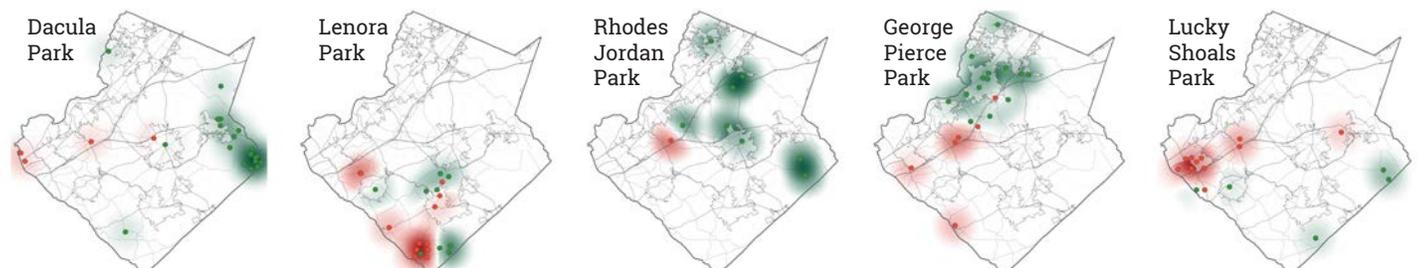
Community Open Houses Round 1



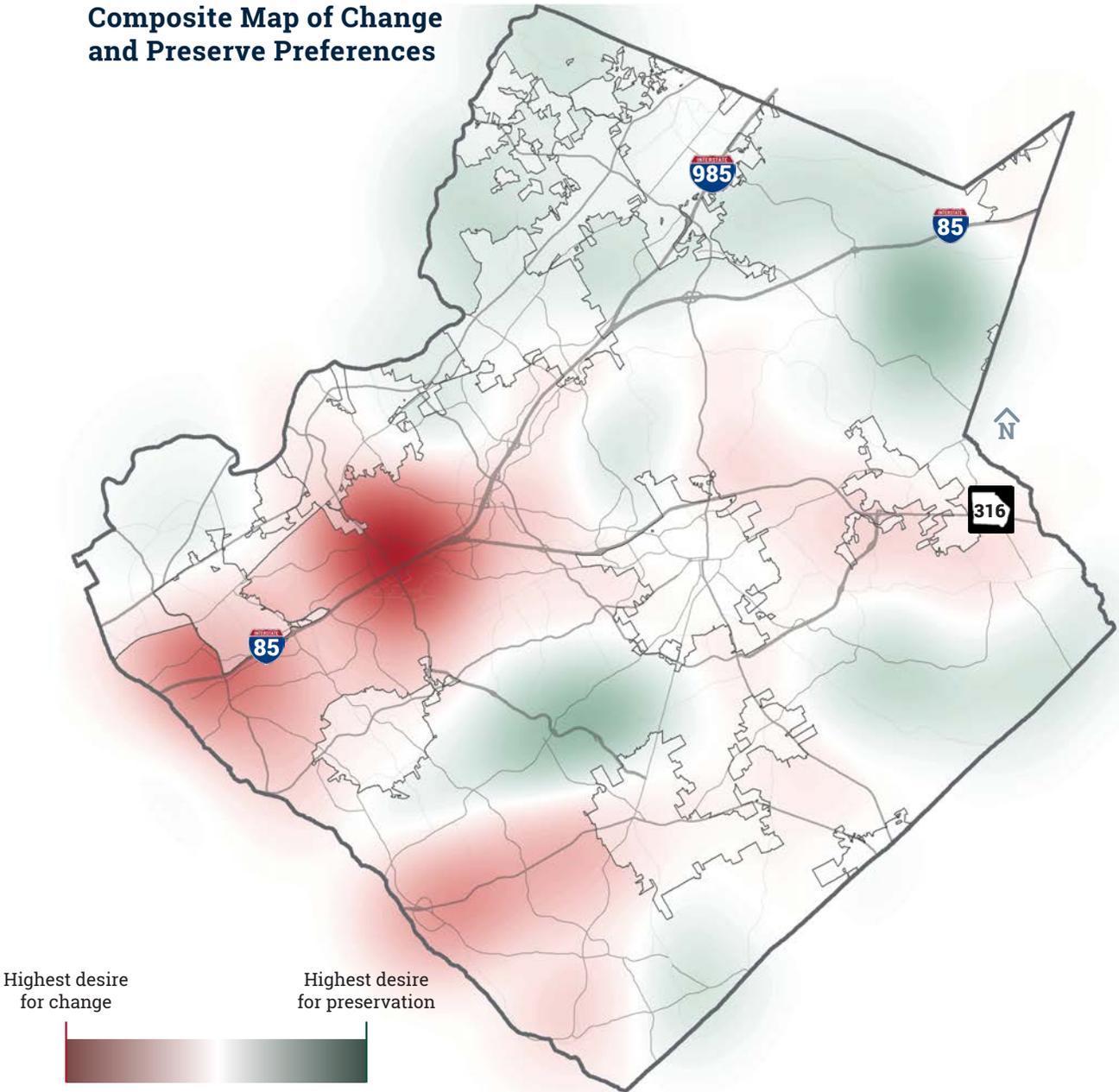
Other Target Groups



Community Open Houses Round 2



Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences



Highest desire for change

Highest desire for preservation

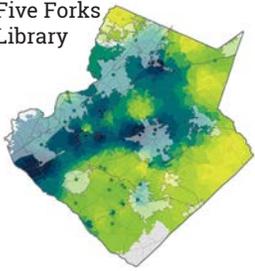


Urban Scale Preferences

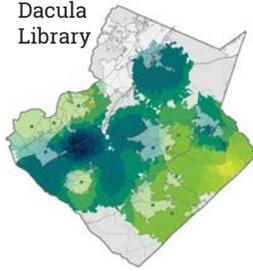
The second component is called “urban scale preferences” and was a companion exercise designed to understand what types of development and intensity the community felt appropriate. Using a scale from undeveloped areas to suburban areas to urban areas, community outreach participants used colored dots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

Community Open Houses Round 1

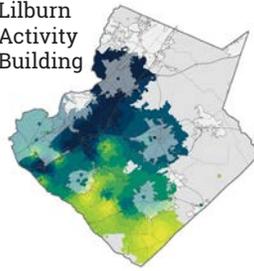
Five Forks Library



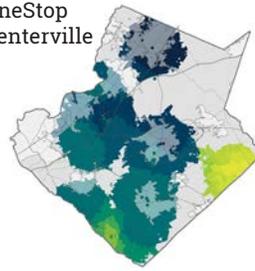
Dacula Library



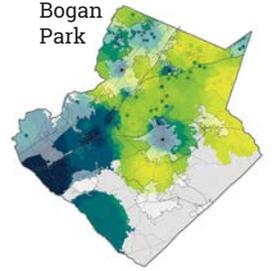
Lilburn Activity Building



OneStop Centerville

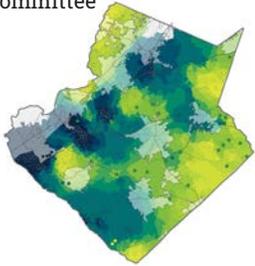


Bogan Park

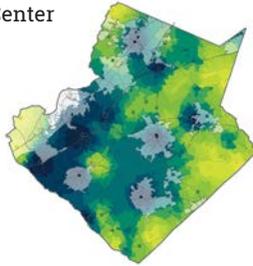


Other Target Groups

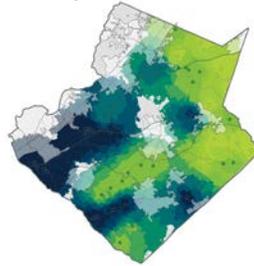
Planning Advisory Committee



Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center



Planning Commission

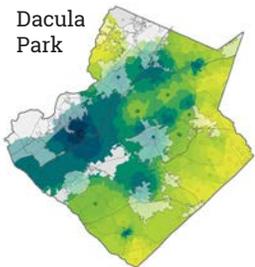


Open Space

Urban Center

Community Open Houses Round 2

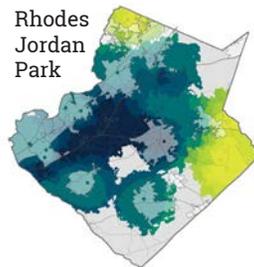
Dacula Park



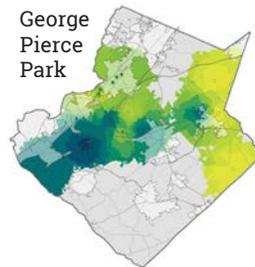
Lenora Park



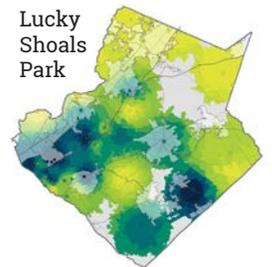
Rhodes Jordan Park



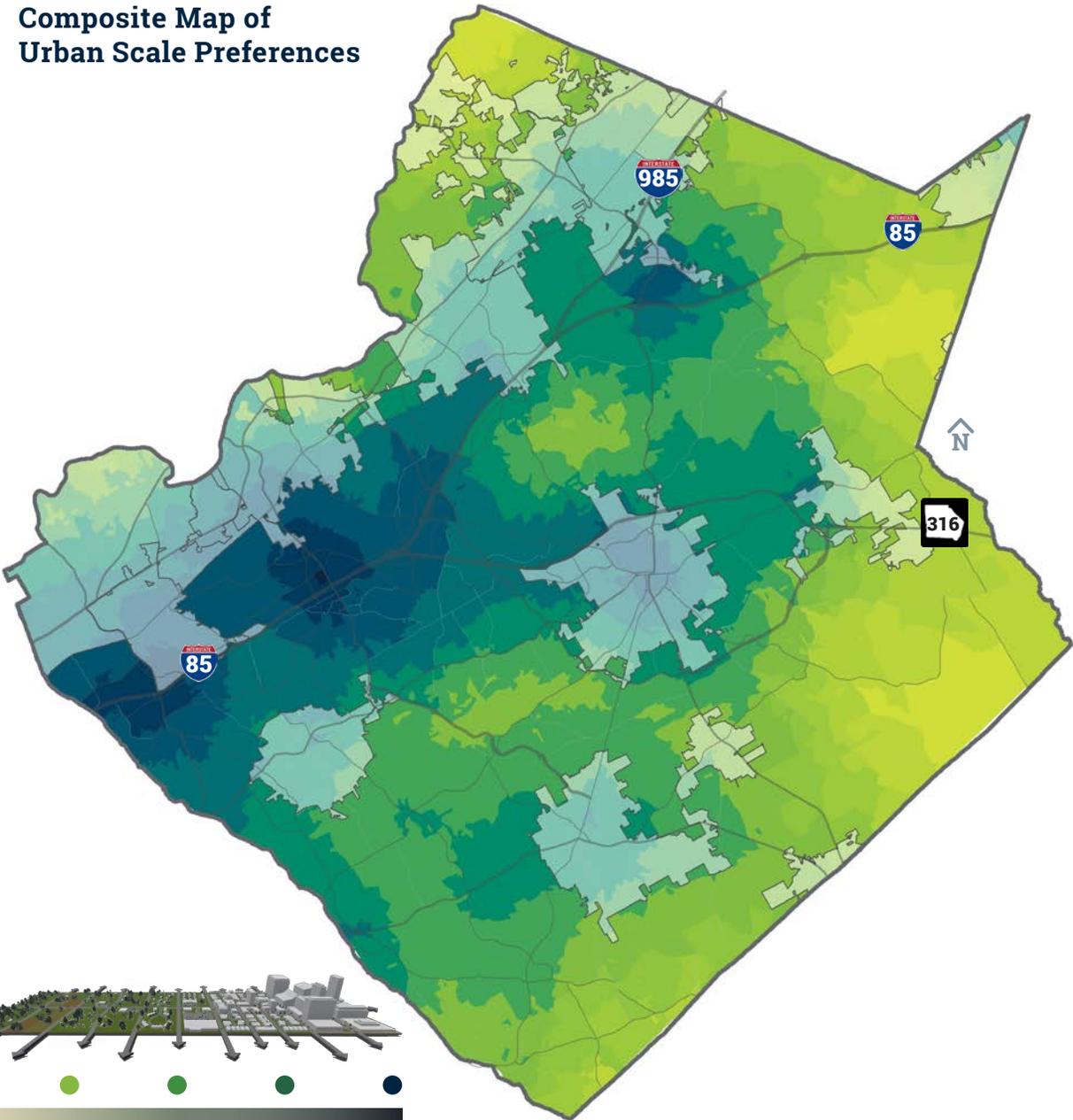
George Pierce Park



Lucky Shoals Park



Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences



Open Space

Urban Center

Change and Preserve Likelihood

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

Infrastructure Assessment Factors

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

Economic Development Factors

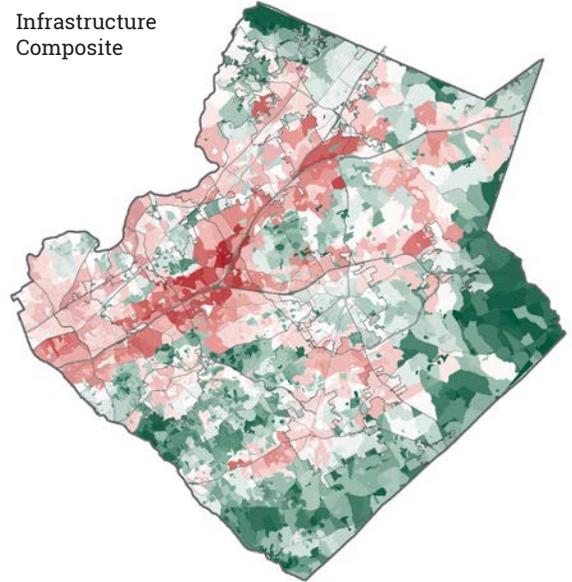
- Land Value (source: Tax Assessor data)
- Improvement to Land Value Ratio (source: Tax Assessor data)
- Development Interest (source: land use and rezoning data)

Land Use & Housing Factors

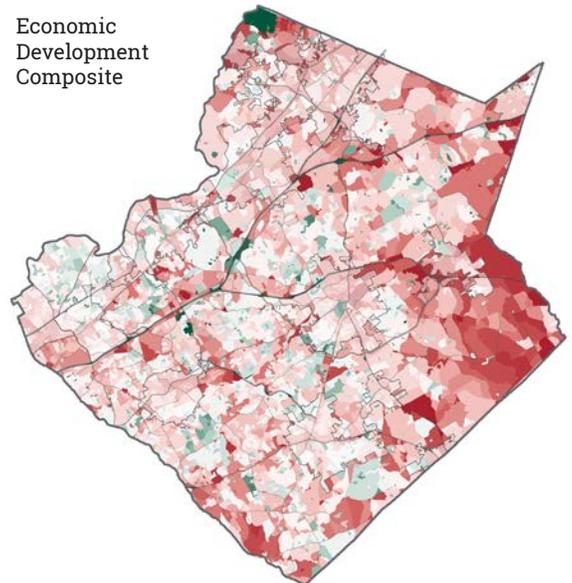
- Concentrations of Retail (source: land use data)
- Owner Occupancy of Housing Units (source: US Census)
- Urbanity Scores (source: ESRI Tapestry Data, which reflects inherent consumer values, and were correlated to understand where changes to a more urban environment would be more likely to be welcomed)

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

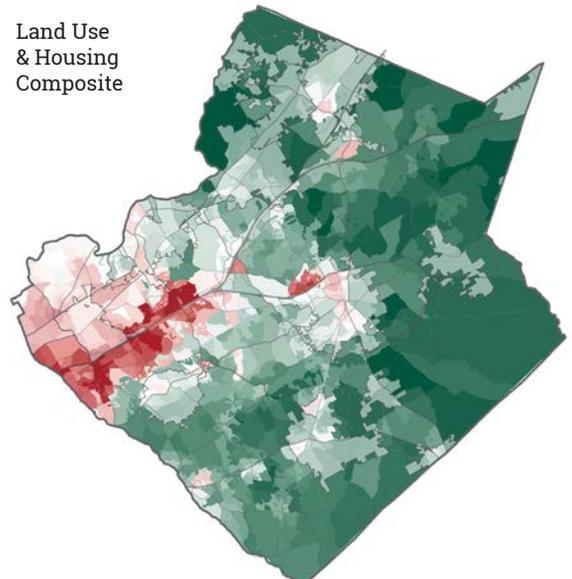
Infrastructure Composite



Economic Development Composite



Land Use & Housing Composite

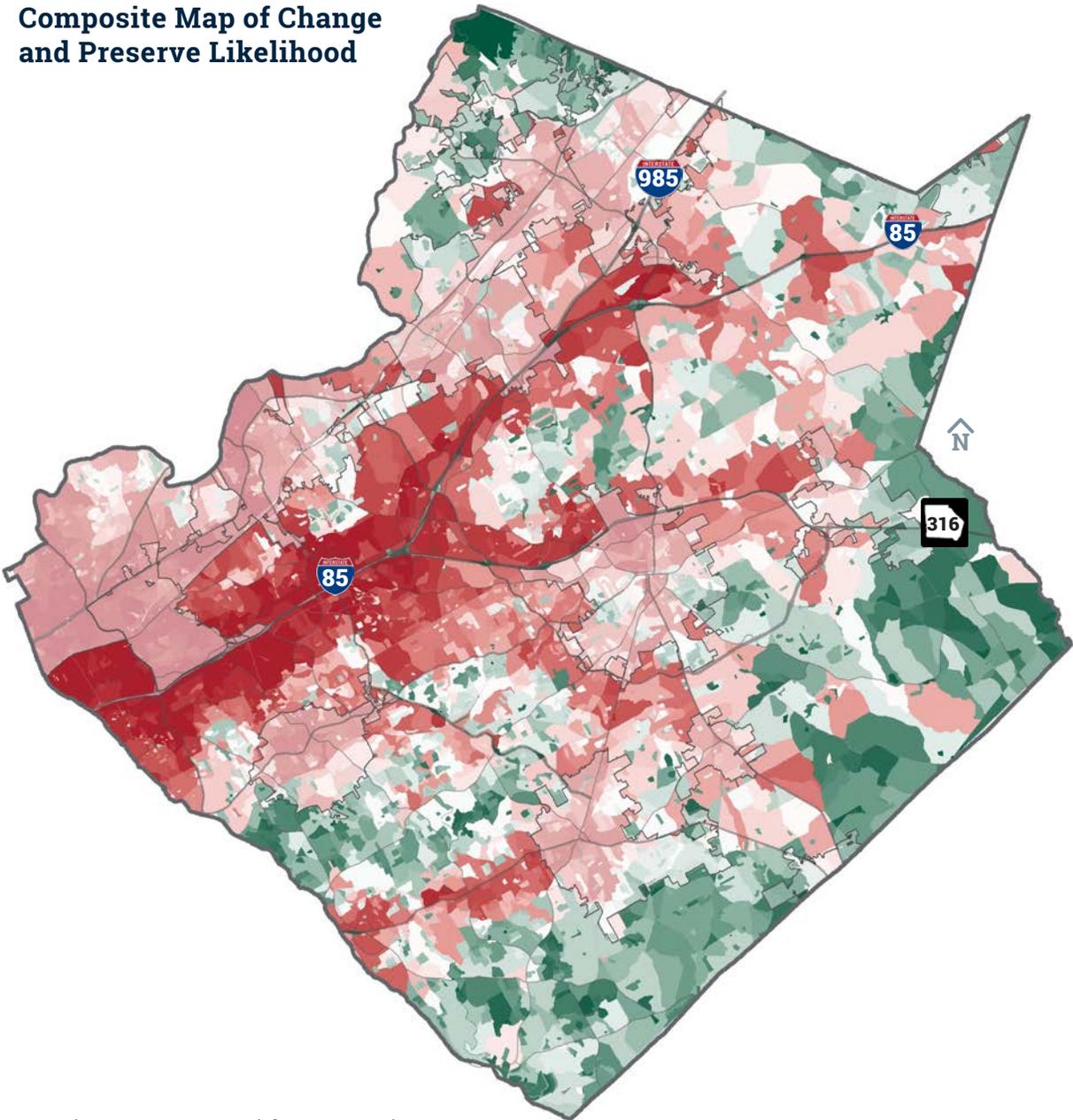


Highest propensity
for change



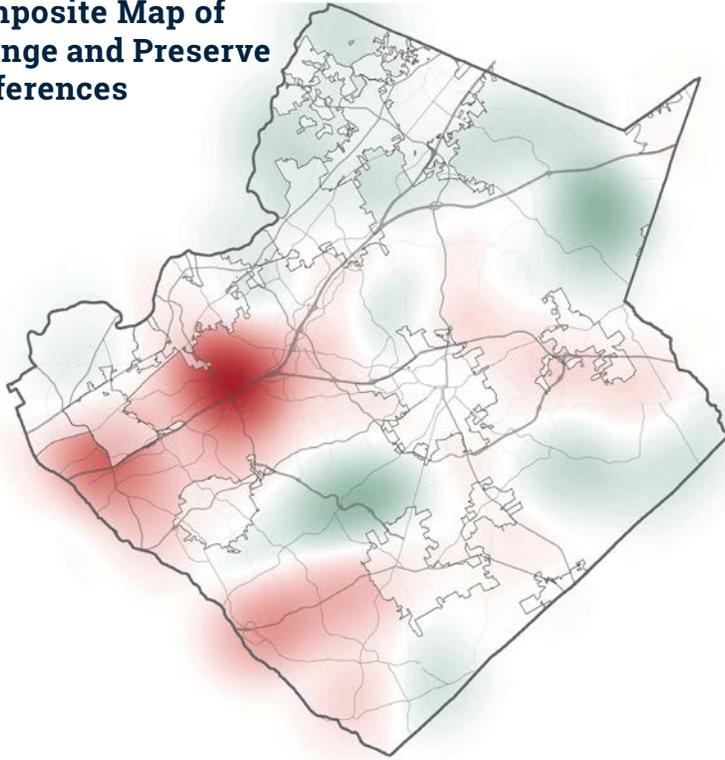
Highest propensity
for preservation

Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood



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

Composite Map of Change and Preserve Preferences

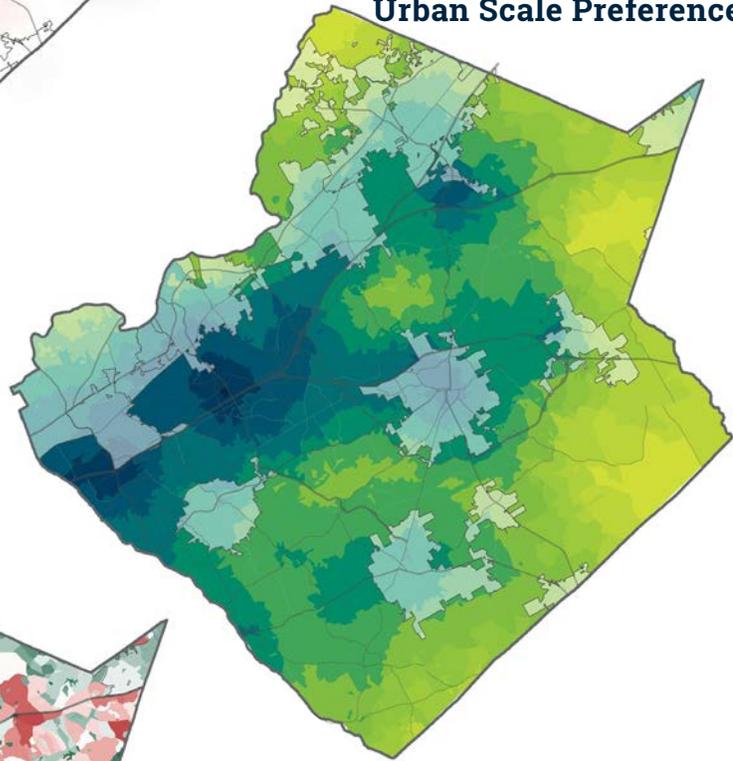


Highest desire for change

Highest desire for preservation



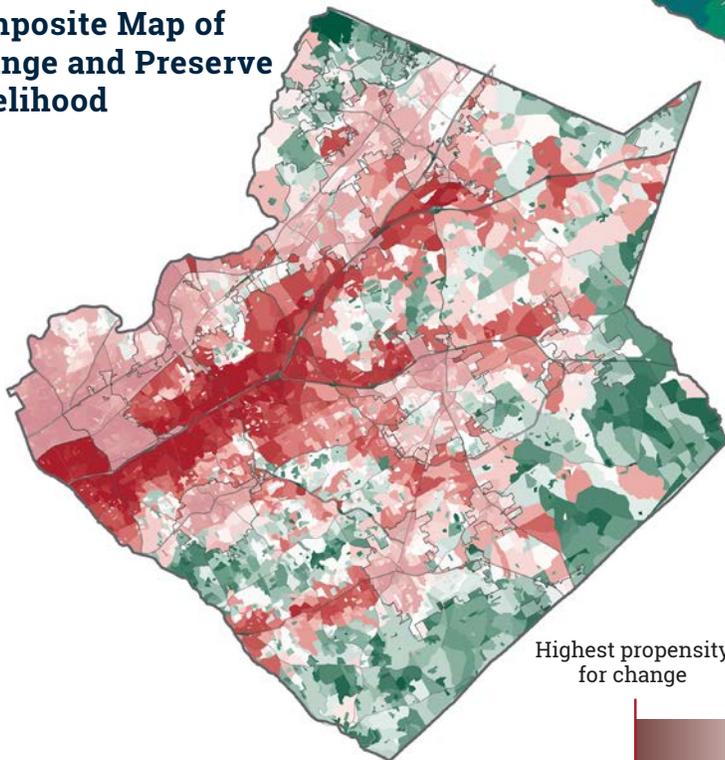
Composite Map of Urban Scale Preferences



Open Space

Urban Center

Composite Map of Change and Preserve Likelihood



Highest propensity for change

Highest propensity for preservation



Guiding Philosophies

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

Use Character Areas to Establish Transitional Areas

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



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

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



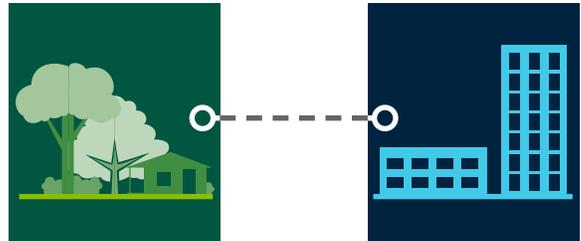
Preserve the Character of Areas That Are Still Relatively Undeveloped

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



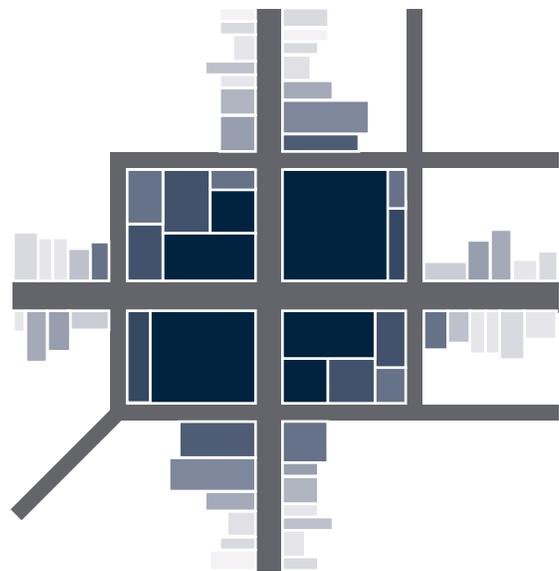
Use Urban Scale to Communicate and Articulate Implied Densities and Character

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



Encourage Development to Be More Nodal Than Linear

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



Incorporate and Integrate Office Areas Into Mixed-Used Districts

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

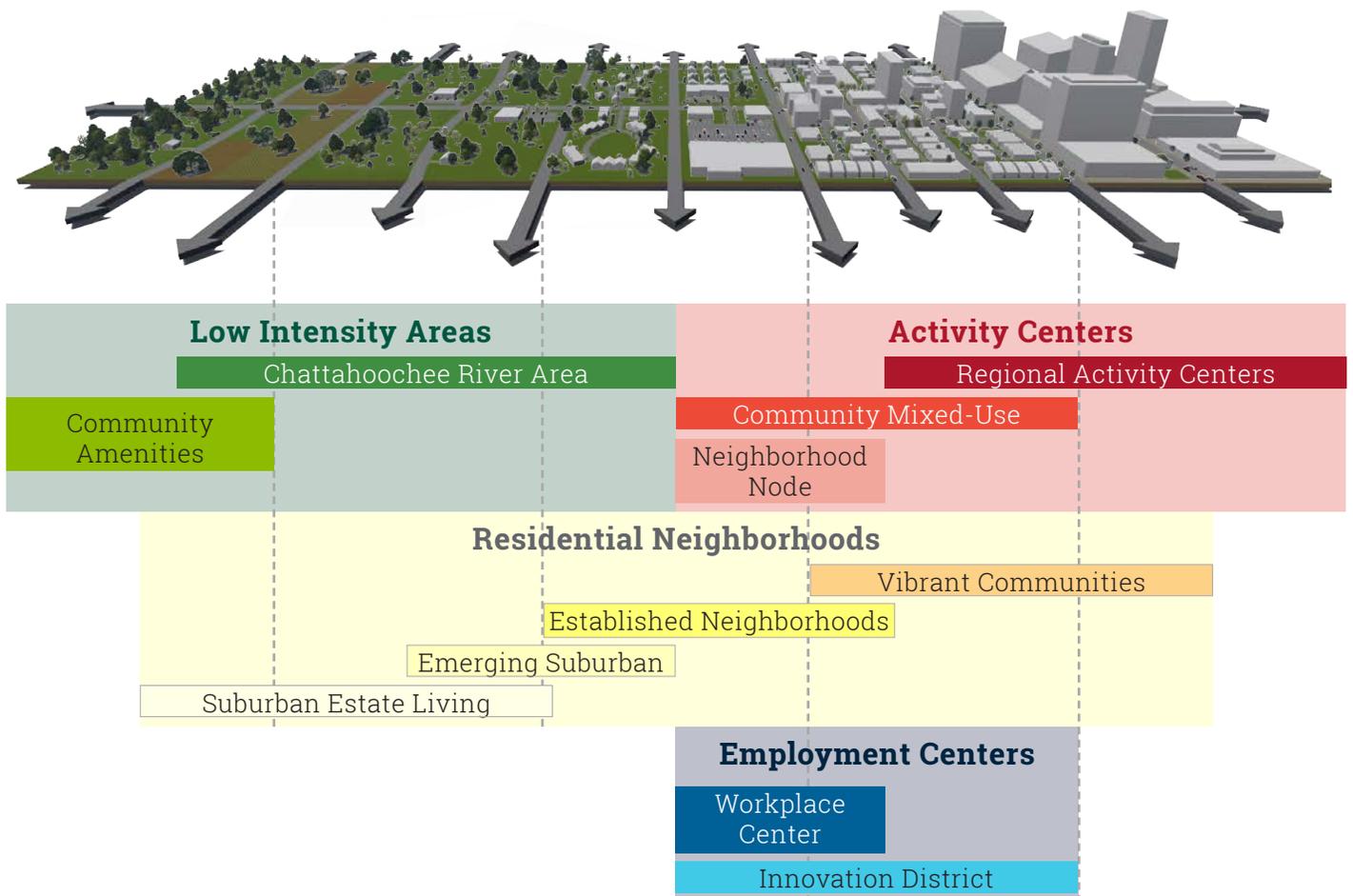


DOCUMENT

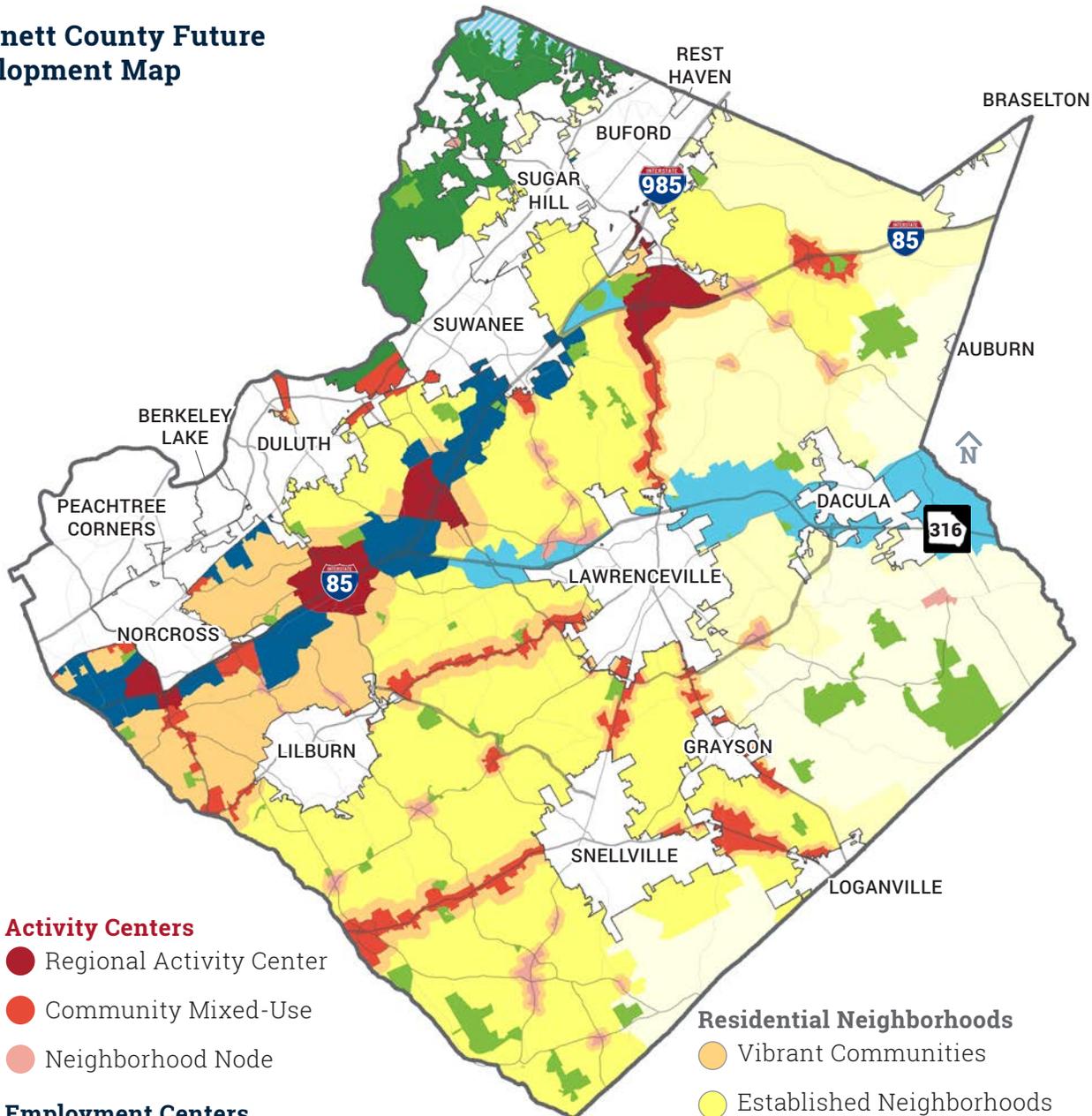
While the Unified Plan incorporates and considers many subjects, its focus is the relationship to land use and development, which is discussed in detail through the 'Implementation' chapter of this report. The overall mechanism for the implementation of this plan are the ideas documented through what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

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

Interface of Urban Scale and Character Areas



Gwinnett County Future Development Map



Activity Centers

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

Employment Centers

- Workplace Center
- Innovation District

Other

- Municipalities
- Lake Lanier

Residential Neighborhoods

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

Low Intensity Areas

- Chattahoochee River Area
- Community Amenities

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

Activity Centers

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

Regional Activity Center

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

Community Mixed-Use

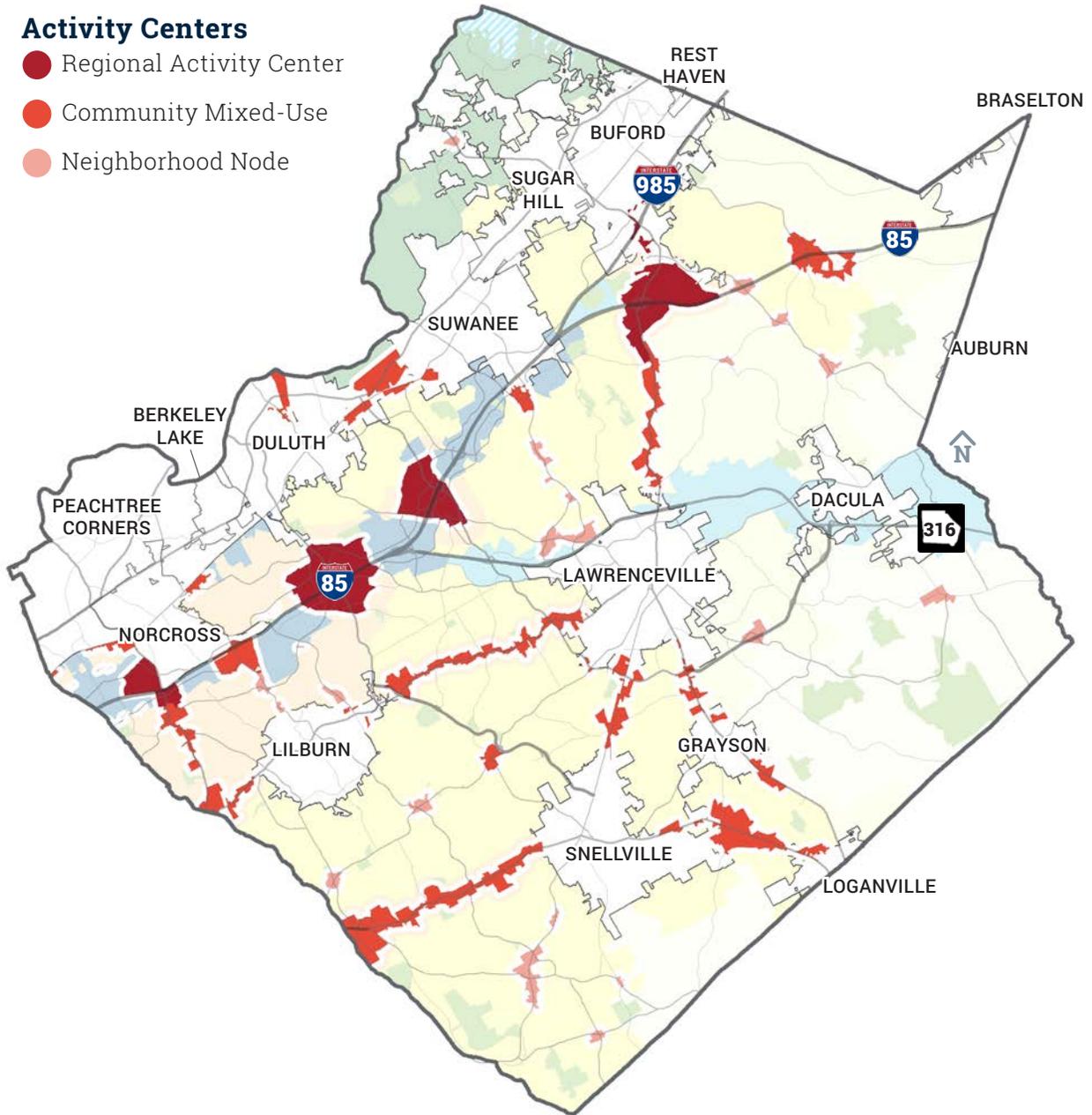
The Community Mixed-Use Character Area is intended for activity nodes and connecting areas located along major corridors including Jimmy Carter Boulevard, Lawrenceville Highway (US Highway 29), Scenic Highway (State Route 124), Stone Mountain Freeway/Athens Highway (US Highway 78), Buford Drive/Grayson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

Neighborhood Node

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

Activity Centers

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



Employment Centers

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

Workplace Center

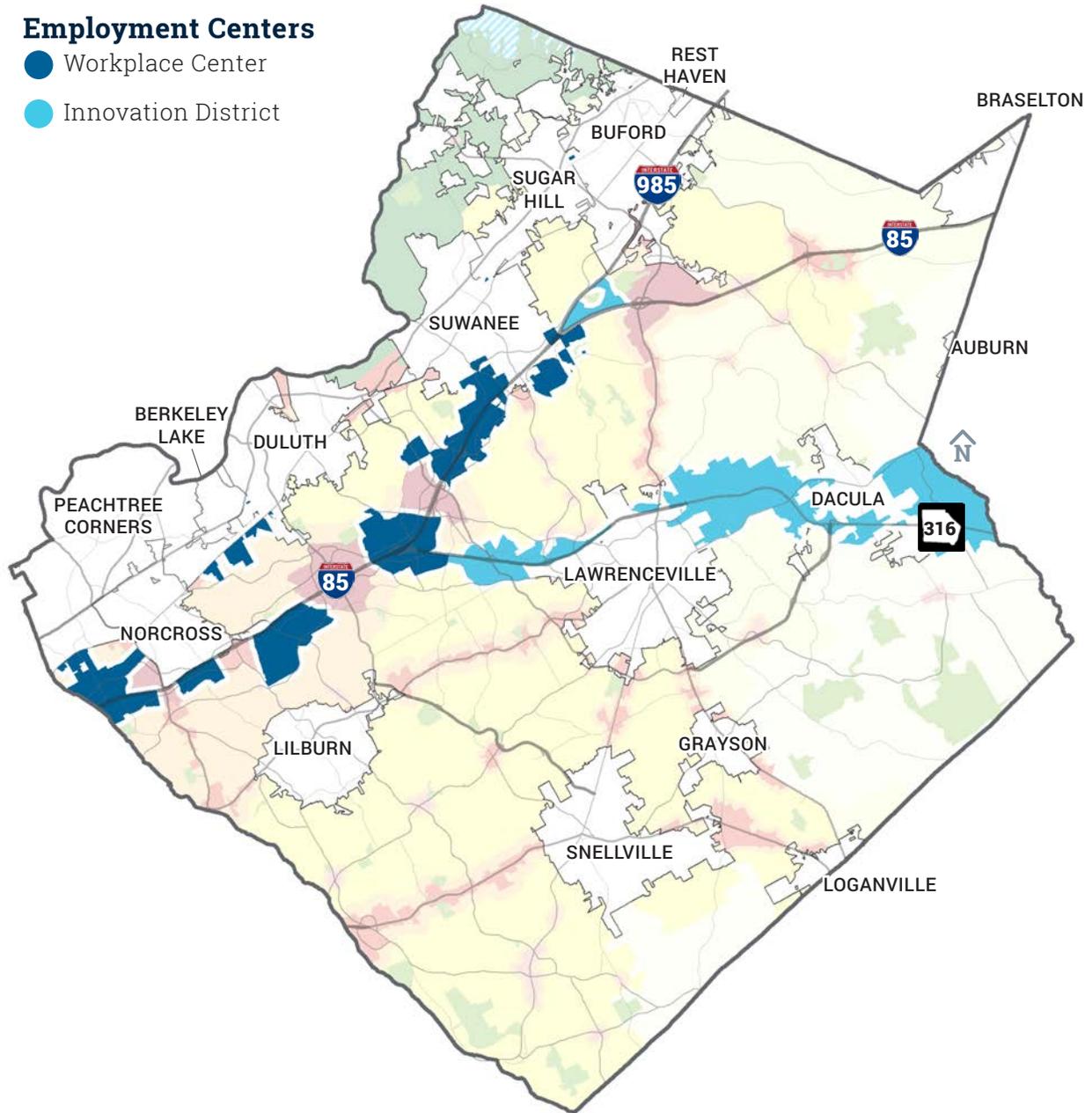
The Workplace Center Character Area is for predominantly employment-oriented uses and includes office parks, industrial parks, and locations for freight oriented and logistic uses. However, focus should be put on attracting a larger share of the region's service employment in these areas to offset anticipated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

Innovation District

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

Employment Centers

- Workplace Center
- Innovation District



Residential Neighborhoods

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

Vibrant Communities

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

Established Neighborhoods

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

Emerging Suburban

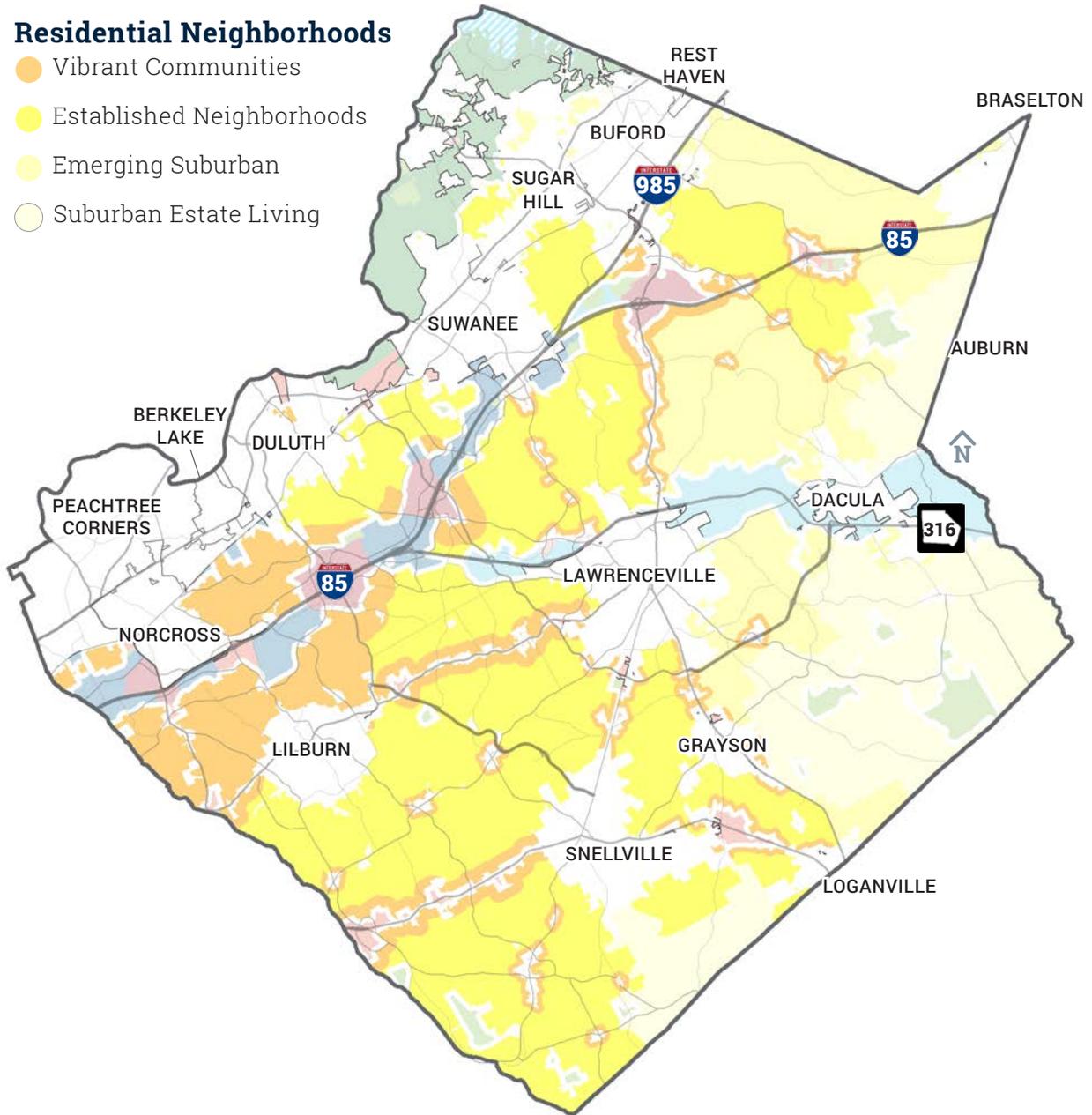
The Emerging Suburban Character Area designates areas that are currently, mainly residential, but have not yet matured into established communities due to relatively large amounts of remaining, undeveloped land. They are expected to experience new development during the 20-year planning period contemplated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

Suburban Estate Living

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

Residential Neighborhoods

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



Low Intensity Areas

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

Chattahoochee River Area

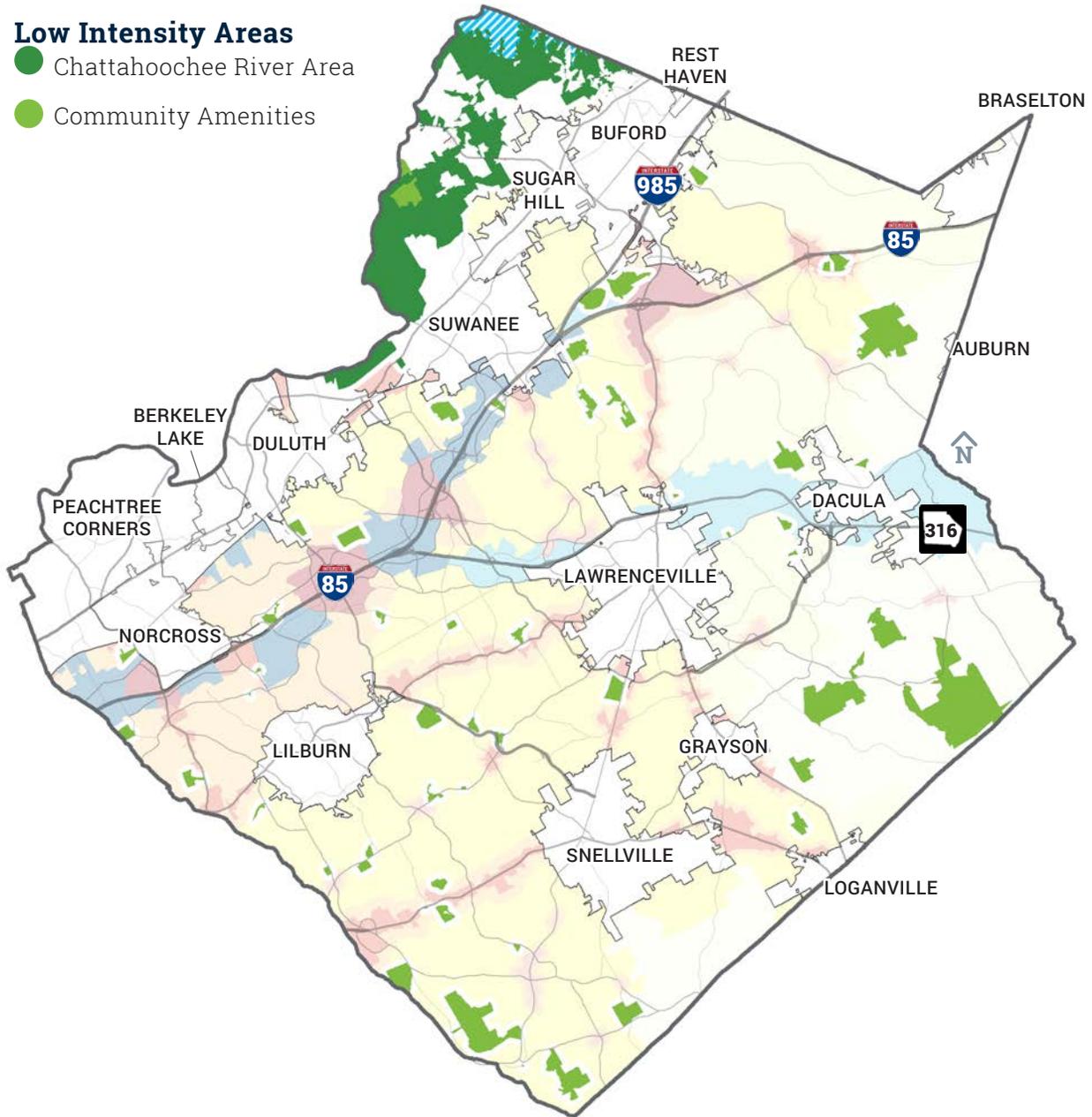
The Chattahoochee River Area is the designation used for unincorporated areas along the Chattahoochee River and Lake Lanier. Due to its location along the river and its natural landscape, development in this area should remain as low density residential to protect the water quality and environmental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

Community Amenities

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

Low Intensity Areas

- Chattahoochee River Area
- Community Amenities



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

ADOPT

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

Planning Commission Public Hearing – October 2, 2018

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

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

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

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

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





GWINNETT JUSTICE AND ADMINISTRAT

NOTICE
No Smoking, No Alcohol
No Pets, No Weapons
No Food or Drink
No Pets, No Weapons
No Food or Drink