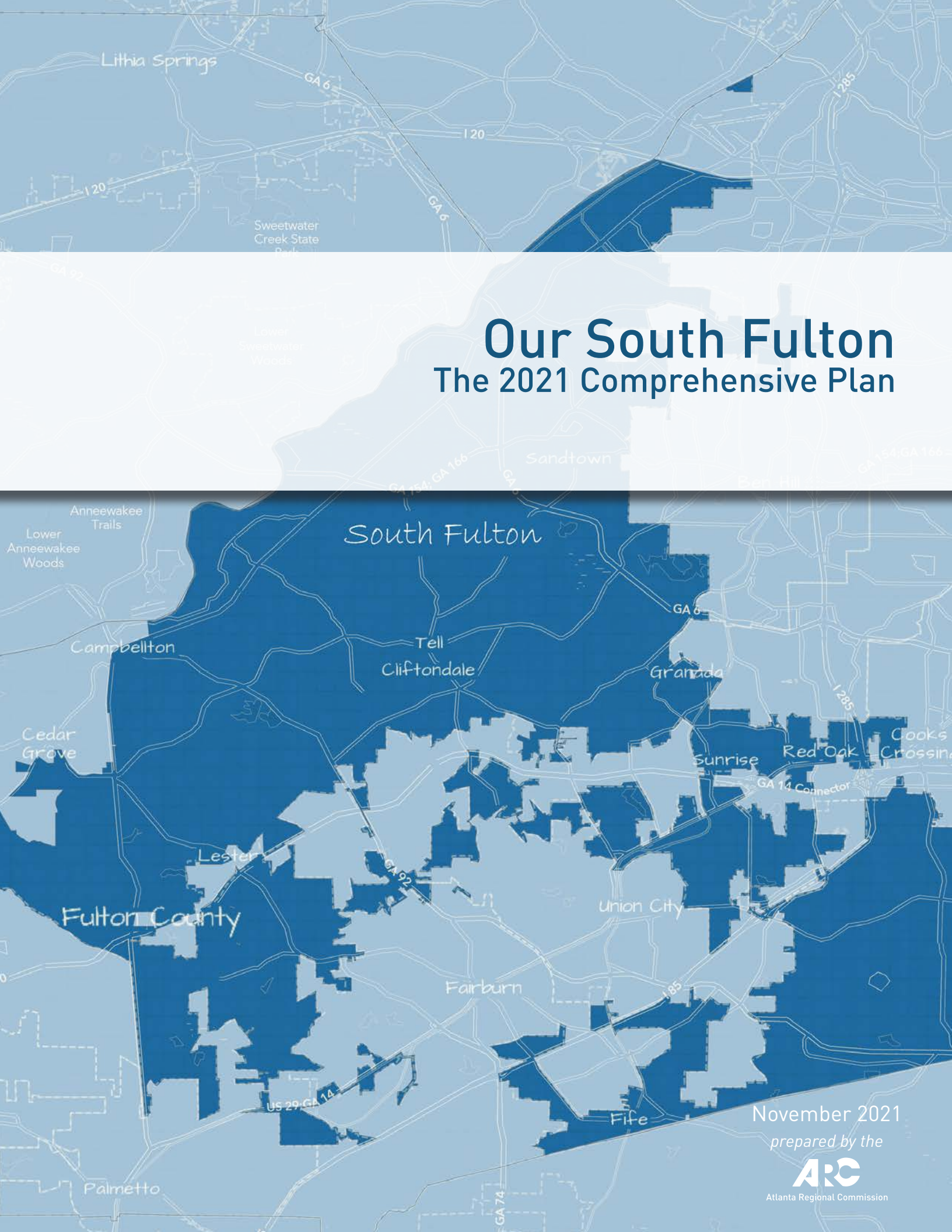


A map of the South Fulton area in Atlanta, Georgia. The map shows various neighborhoods including Lithia Springs, Sweetwater Creek State Park, Lower Sweetwater Woods, Sandtown, Ben Hill, Anneewakee Trails, Lower Anneewakee Woods, Campbellton, Tell Cliftondale, Granada, Sunrise, Red Oak, Cooks Crossing, Cedar Grove, Lester, Union City, Fairburn, Fife, and Palmetto. Major roads like I-20, I-285, GA-6, GA-166, GA-14, and US-29 are labeled. The area is shaded in different tones of blue and grey to represent different land use or planning zones. The title 'Our South Fulton' is prominently displayed in the upper right, with the subtitle 'The 2021 Comprehensive Plan' below it.

Our South Fulton

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan

South Fulton

Fulton County

November 2021

prepared by the



Atlanta Regional Commission

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Table of Contents

Contents	
Introduction	1
What We Heard	5
Our Story...So Far	11
Community Vision and Goals	21
Building an Equitable South Fulton	24
Making South Fulton a Great Place	41
Community Work Program	68

CHAPTER 1

Introduction



Introduction

This is an exciting time for the City of South Fulton. It is a highly desirable place to be in the Atlanta region and at the same time, it is looking forward to a future of continued growth and change.

Broadly speaking, a comprehensive plan is a way to guide investment, development, and the allocation of services within a jurisdiction. But cities are complicated places, and they make decisions about the future every day in response to new opportunities or unexpected problems. The City of South Fulton's Comprehensive Plan is one tool for helping to guide these decisions, with three distinctive features:

- It is long-range, looking ahead to the future
- It is comprehensive, looking across many different facets of what the City of South Fulton does
- It is deliberative, looking within to understand the needs and desires of the City of South Fulton's community.

This is the first Comprehensive Plan that has been created since the city's formation on May 1, 2017. This document affirms the city's big picture vision, defines goals, and lays out a task list for city leaders, staff, and citizens to address issues and to position the City of South Fulton to be a leader within metro Atlanta.

Most of the work of shaping the city will be done by the residents, businesses, and nonprofits. The City of South Fulton plays a key role in these implementation tools:

- Regulations
- Capital spending
- Programs and staffing

The success of the goals of this plan depends on being able to tap into the many voices of the City of South Fulton and weave their ideas, viewpoints, and thoughts into a common vision. Engagement and feedback were critical to reach a broad consensus of the diverse



people who live and work in the City of South Fulton. To meet the goal of an inclusive process meant creating multiple opportunities to get involved. The planning team developed several communication tools and forums to ensure meaningful community involvement that would form the backbone of the plan. This was challenging as the region and city are limited for in-person public engagement activities due to COVID-19 and the need to protect residents and staff.

A Project Team was convened to oversee the process and act as an instrument to guide the development of the plan. Project Team Members were made up of city and Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) staff.

A public engagement website was established to provide feedback opportunities from community members with similar activities that could occur in an In-Person Open House. This project website allowed for longer periods of feedback from community members versus a traditional process that would have one public meeting. Three phases of engagement were conducted virtually with opportunities to submit direct comments to the Project Team throughout the process.

A Steering Committee was formed of residents, community leaders, economic development professionals, and an elected official to provide direction, feedback and serve as ambassadors of the planning process.

The feedback and direction from the engagement allow the plan to focus on the elements to improve the City of South Fulton with targeted policies to enhance the assets and address the issues within the city.

This plan looks different from previous Comprehensive Plans as the format has been updated to reflect the requirements in the State of Georgia's Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Plans from 2017, to recognize that:

- Assets can be accentuated and improved;
 - Liabilities can be mitigated and changed over time;
- and

- Potential can be sought after and developed.
- In addition, the plan is required to be in an easy-to-use document. This plan can be amended at any time when appropriate to respond to changes within the City of South Fulton.

Who is this Plan for?

As the state-approved Comprehensive Plan for the City of South Fulton, this plan plays a role in the operations of the city. The plan will be used by the Mayor and City Council to advance policies and implement strategies to achieve the city's vision. It will be used by the Planning Commission to inform zoning and other land-use decisions and it will be used by city departments to assist in programming and budgeting.

It will also be used by the city's residents and business owners to understand the city's vision and strategies for the future and to see how they best can support it.

The City of South Fulton Comprehensive Plan builds upon other existing plans and provides a framework for understanding what needs to be done to improve the quality of life within the City of South Fulton. While this plan provides direction and priorities it should be constantly evaluated to make sure that the strategies and projects meet the current needs of the residents and businesses within the city.

As a young city, the residents of South Fulton have had very different experiences. These different experiences shape the perspectives about the city's future.

Some perspectives want to focus on the community's strengths and assets, while others believe that progress will only be possible when the community's problems are addressed head-on. Both of these approaches are needed.



The planning process used both data and community feedback to understand the conditions within the City of South Fulton to develop the interconnected list of community assets and challenges. These community assets and challenges form the foundation of the plan with corresponding strategies. While there is no silver bullet that can address the range of challenges facing the City of South Fulton.

Previous Plans

This Comprehensive Plan builds upon the great planning work that the City of South Fulton has undertaken since its creation in 2017. The city has completed an Economic Development Strategy, A City Strategic Plan, a Consolidated Plan, and participated in the Southern Fulton County Transportation Plan.

Those plans and other plans and resources are linked with an orange mouse button throughout this plan.

LEARN MORE:

City of South Fulton Strategic Plan

The City of South Fulton's Strategic Plan was a process in 2018, 2019, and 2020 to develop some guidance for the City of South Fulton. With over 1,000 residents participating in the process, the plan developed a Community Vision and early action steps for the operations of the City of South Fulton.

LEARN MORE:

City of South Fulton Consolidated Plan

The City of South Fulton's Consolidated Plan serves as a strategic road map for community development investments and highlights the City's overall housing and community development needs. This plan identifies broad activities the City plans to undertake in a given year using federal funds.

LEARN MORE:

Southern Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The Southern Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan evaluated current and future transportation conditions in Southern Fulton County and determined transportation needs, across all modes, through the year 2050. The outcome is a recommended list of transportation projects to be implemented in the near-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (11+ years) for the entire Southern Fulton region, as well as by City, based on anticipated revenues.



LEARN MORE:

City of South Fulton Economic Strategy

Economic Development Strategic Plan provides an action plan for the economic development of the city of South Fulton. The approach was to developing recommendations involving both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This report is organized into three main sections. The first section details the existing demographic, economic and real estate market conditions in city of South Fulton and provides projections for future growth. The second section provides the analysis of the multi-faceted approach to community input, including a summary of a resident survey, a business survey, business interviews as well as focus group and 'SWOT' analysis sessions with community members.

Findings from the analysis of the data describing existing conditions and trends and the analysis of community input serves as the basis of the action plan, which is the third and final section of the report.

"Attract, and partner with, businesses that support and the City of South Fulton vision."
-Public Comment



CHAPTER 2

What We Heard

What We Heard

Plans need to reflect the values of those who live and work within the community. For this reason, a public process was designed to gather feedback from the community to develop this plan.

Due to concerns and restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, most engagements were done virtually using virtual meetings and an online public involvement website. The website allowed the planning team to conduct similar activities that would have occurred during a traditional open house, and it allowed community members to participate at a time of their choosing. This also allowed the Planning Team to gather feedback with multiple phases. A map of participants is located on the next page.

This process tapped the knowledge of a local expert steering committee but also encouraged new voices to participate.

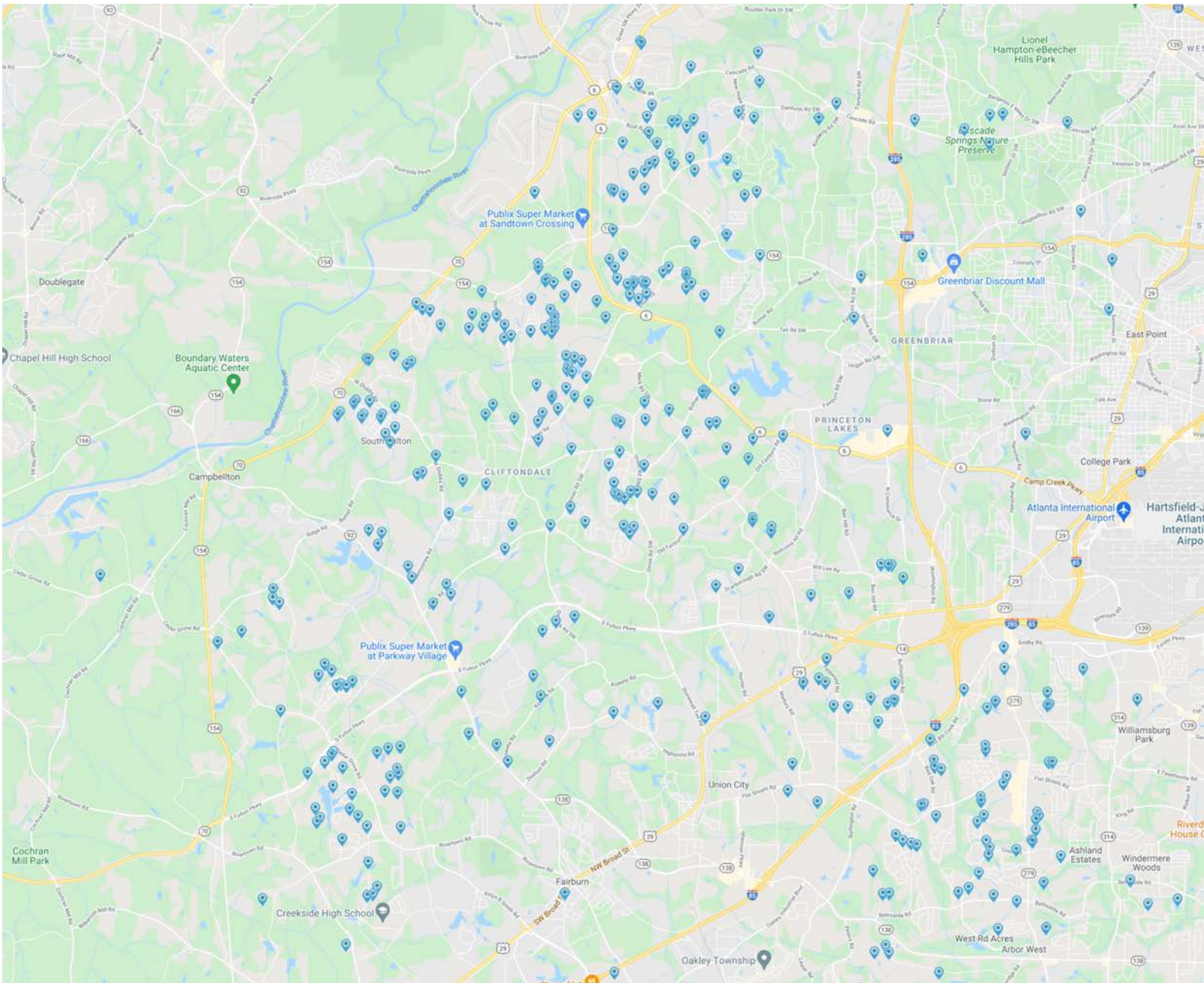
Schedule of Engagement

February 23rd, 2021	1st Public Hearing
March 11th, 2021	Phase 1 of Public Input Launched
April 14th, 2021	City Council Presentation
April 22nd, 2021	1st Steering Committee Meeting
April 30th, 2021	City Council Retreat
May 18th, 2021	Online Public Meeting
May 28th, 2021	2nd Steering Committee Meeting
June 9th, 2021	Phase 2 of Public Input Launched
June 16th, 2021	Public Online Briefing
June 28th, 2021	District 3 Briefing
July 21st, 2021	3rd Steering Committee Meeting
September 24th, 2021	2nd Public Hearing
October 2021	Citywide Meetings



Online Engagement Summary

The first phase was having the Planning Team listen to concerns from the community, steering committee, and the City Council. In later phases, the Planning Team gathered feedback on goals, strategies, development styles, and implementation activities. The full Public Engagement results are located within the Appendix and a summary is provided on the following pages. Questions related to topics later in the plan also are provided.



Phase 1 Public Input

The first activity was examining the 2016 strategies from the Comprehensive Plan. Most respondents agreed with the strategies but also realized those strategies need to be revised.

In the first phase of engagement over 132 comments were received. The Planning Team examined those comments and organized them into categories.

Over 20 comments were related to Economic Development within the City of South Fulton. Ten were related to Parks and 10 were related to Infrastructure, especially transportation. The other top category was related to Quality Design in areas of the city.

Respondents were also asked to identify areas of the city that need improvement. Those responses are located in the map below.

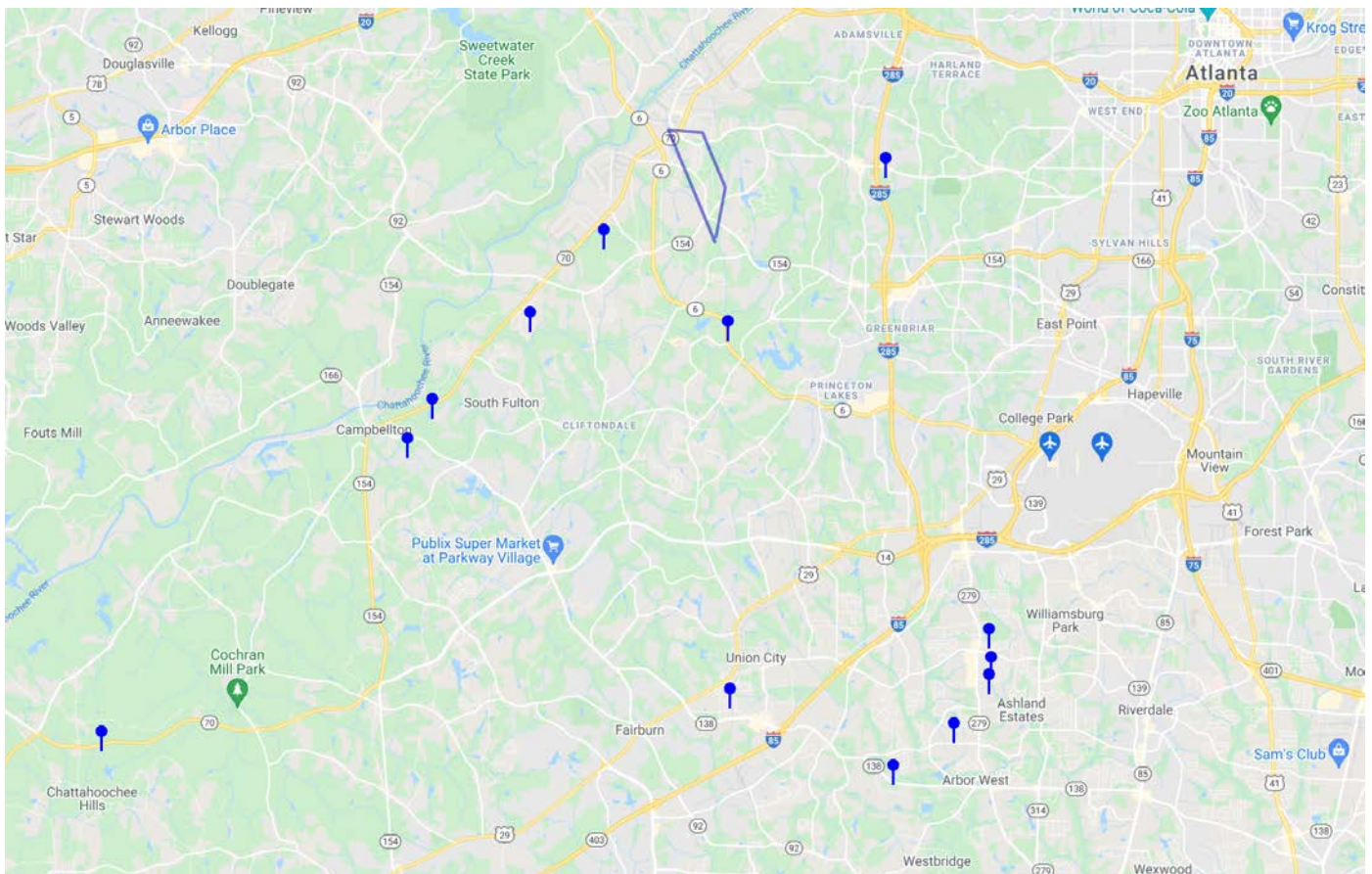
The full Phase 1 report is located in the Appendix.

Phase 2 Public Input

Phase 2 of the Engagement focuses on Community Strategies, Development Styles, and Broadband Service.

Just over half of the respondents were satisfied with Internet Speeds at home. Some respondents had good 1 GB service, while others have no options or providers.

Cellular service had a lower satisfaction score of 49%. This is also common with other communities near Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, as the airport limits towers near the flight paths. In addition, the rural nature of the western edge may limit service. Further analysis by communication engineers should be conducted.



Responses of Areas of Improvement

TOP COMMUNITY IMAGES

All of the proposed Community Strategies received strong community support. All community strategies received strong support. The most popular strategies were, developing homeownership programs, access to MARTA, and developing a wider array of housing types. Those strategies were further refined by the Steering Committee.

A digital Visual Preference Survey was conducted for different proposed areas on the Future Development Map, to provide guidance for future development styles for the development community, and city staff and officials. The results are located on this page.

While future development may not match exactly these styles, these results should influence the creation of overlay districts and design guidelines.



Top: Regional Live-Work
Bottom: Community Live-Work



Top: Regional Live-Work
Bottom: Community Live-Work



Top: Commercial Development
Bottom: Community Live-Work



Residential

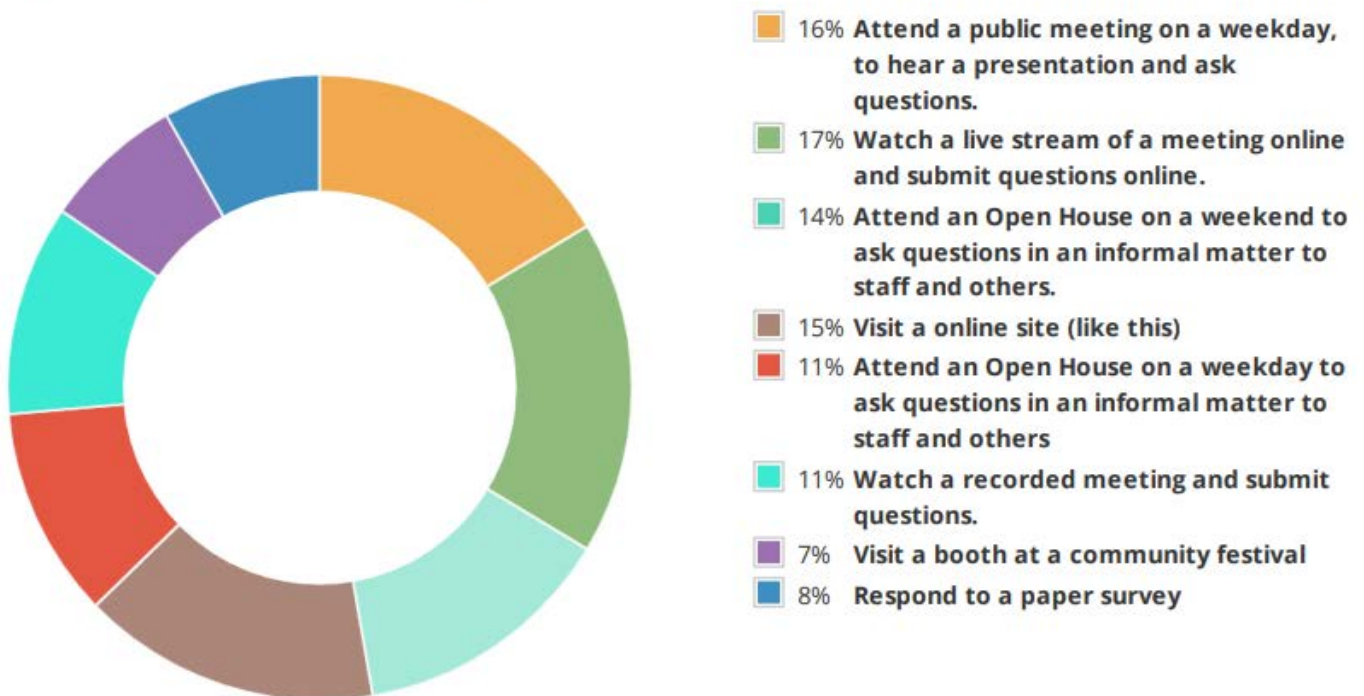
Phase 3

Phase 3 of Community Engagement focused on the Community Work Program and also how the community would like to be engaged in the future.

Respondents were asked to identify their top choice of projects by community goal. The responses then allow the city staff to prioritize projects in the Community Work Program later in the document.

The participant were also asked how they would like to be engaged for future projects and developments. The results of the survey are outlined below.

Thinking about attending meetings to learn about a planning study, rank the options in the order that you would be most likely to participate in.



Our Story...So Far

Owl Rock Church was founded in 1828 by Richmond Barge and other members of the Mutual Rights faction that withdrew from the Mount Gilead Methodist Episcopal Church. The church is named for an eight foot natural rock closely resembling an owl which is to the rear of the building.

This church has taken part in four distinct phases of Methodism in Georgia: as an Associated Methodist Church, 1828-1830; as a Methodist Protestant Church, 1830-1916; as a Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1916-1939; and, since 1939, as a Methodist Church. The Annual Conference session of the Methodist Protestant Church was held here in the year 1900.

During the Battle of Atlanta many skirmishes were fought in the area and the church is mentioned frequently in the OFFICIAL RECORDS. Following the War Between the States the church sponsored an elementary public school. In 1921 the Sandtown School was created as a consolidation of the Owl Rock, Boat Rock, and Sandtown schools.

GEORGIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

060 - 189

1950

Our Story...So Far

Located in Southern Fulton County, the City of South Fulton is the 8th largest city in Georgia. At approximately 100 square miles, it is one of the largest cities in Metro Atlanta by land area. Bounded approximately by I-20 to the north, the Chattahoochee River to the west, I-85 to the south, and I-285 to the east, the City of South Fulton is well connected to the regional transportation network.

The city was created in 2017 from the hard work of community members over the past 11 years to establish a City of South Fulton to directly control their community in the South Fulton area. In November 2018, the city transitioned all city services from Fulton County to the City of South Fulton.

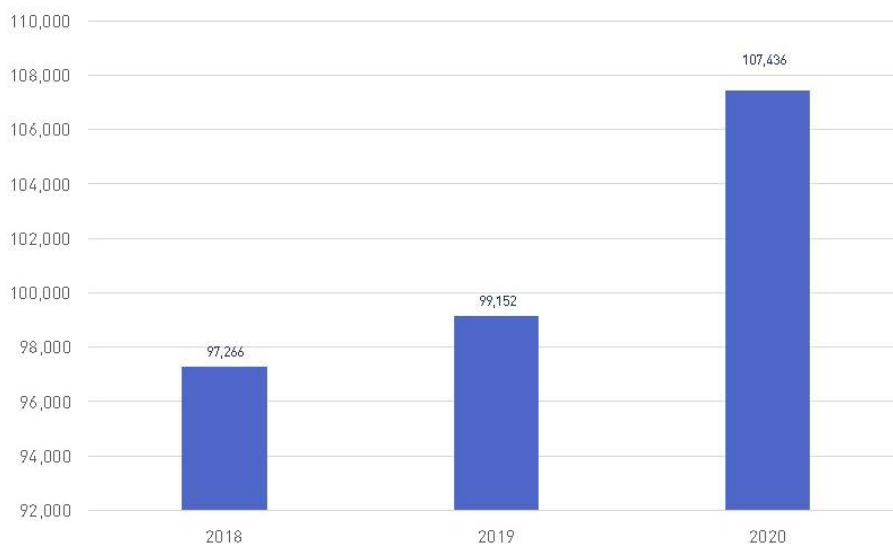
Because of the nature of the formation of the City of South Fulton, there is not an established main street or downtown that is South Fulton, rather there are a collection of small retail clusters located throughout the city.

A recent addition to the City of South Fulton was in July of 2021. The Fulton Industrial District was annexed into the City of South Fulton. This annexation led to the addition of over 28,000 employees to the City of South Fulton and has provided more access to the Chattahoochee River. In addition, the annexation dispute with the City of Atlanta regarding the Loch Lomond Estates was resolved.

Being a young city, accurate historical data, and information about the recently annexed Fulton Industrial Corridor is limited.

However, using Geographic Information System (GIS) tools, data can be developed for the City of South Fulton, and the full results of the 2020 Census will provide more detail for the city.

Population Growth in the City of South Fulton



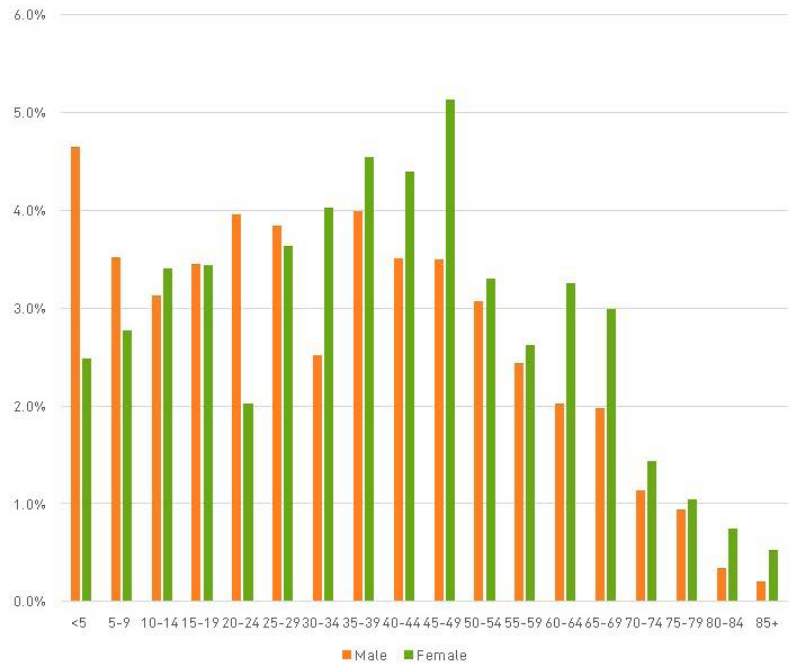
Data Source: US Census Bureau; Population and Housing Estimates, 2019, 2020 Census Redistricting File



From 2018 to 2020, the City of South Fulton's population grew 9.5% to 107,436. This makes South Fulton the largest City in Southern Fulton County. The median age is 37, slightly older than Fulton County at 35.5, with a large share of the population in the City of South Fulton under the age of 50.

The Median Household income is \$65,919, and 42% of the city's households make over \$75,000 per year.

Population by Age and Sex



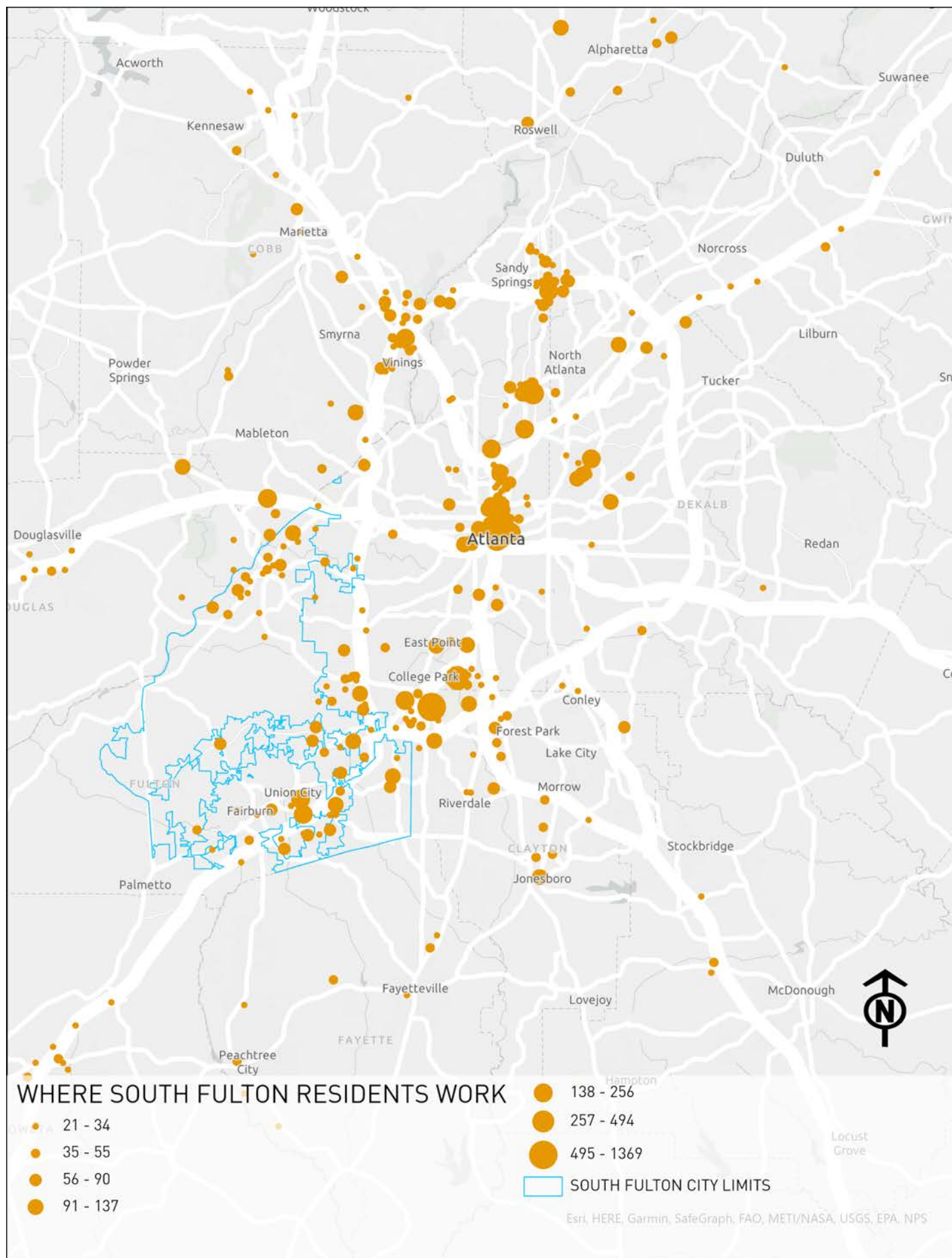
Data Source: American Community Survey, 2019

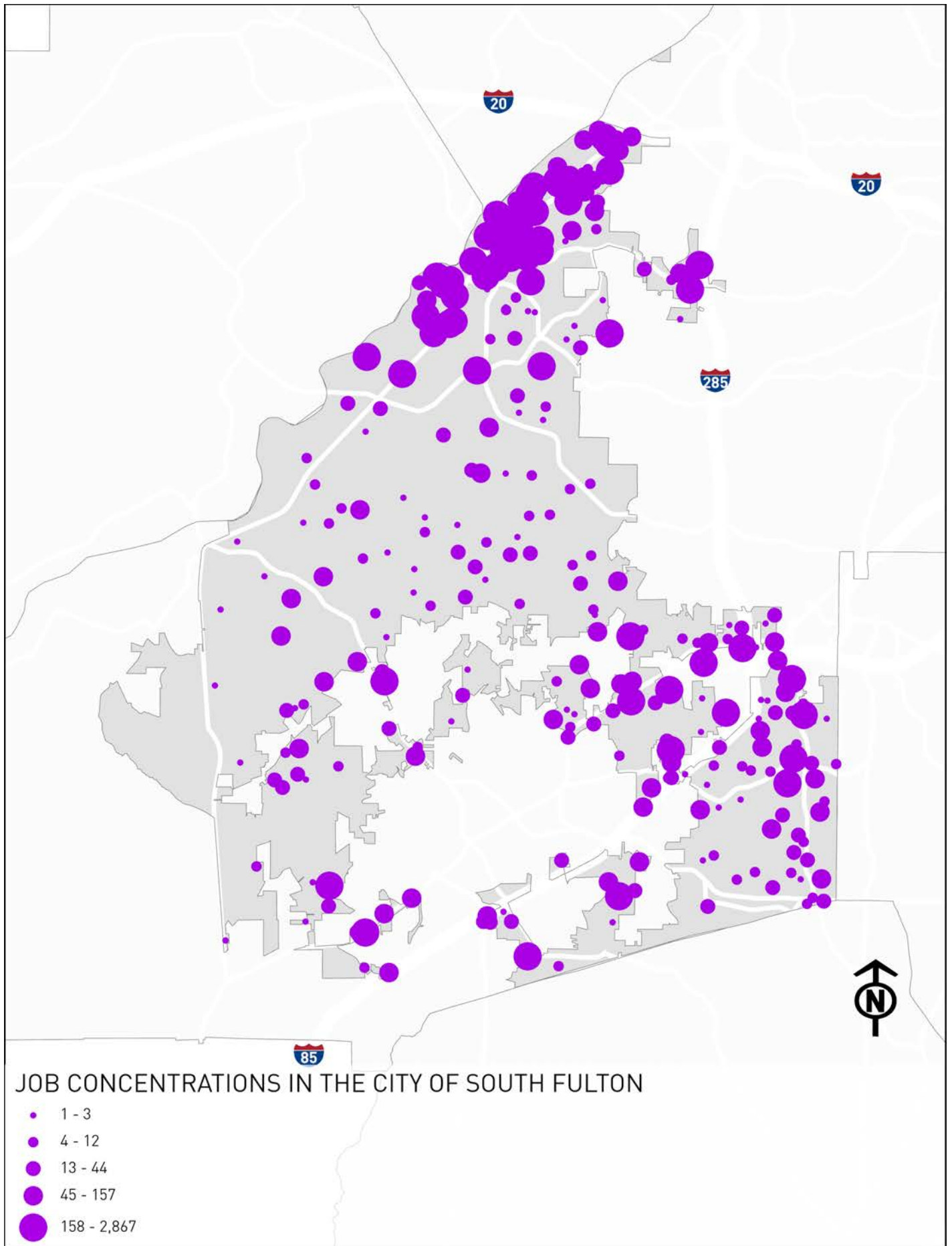
37
Median Age
South Fulton

35.5
Median Age
Fulton County

This age-sex population graph illustrates the distribution of age groups in South Fulton. The squared left-hand side of the structure with a bulge toward the middle ages reflects the city's large economically active age group







Over 40,000 people commute out of the City of South Fulton each day, and over 34,000 commuting into the city each day with the majority commuting into the Fulton Industrial Business District. Only 2,225 people live and work in South Fulton. Commuters travel to the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Downtown and Midtown Atlanta, Emory, Buckhead, Perimeter, and Cumberland areas. Other locations include Old National Highway, East Point, and the Camp Creek area.

Pre-Pandemic, approximately 80% of the residents commuted by car alone each day to work, and 6.1% use public transit to get to work. The majority of residents commute less than 45 minutes to work.

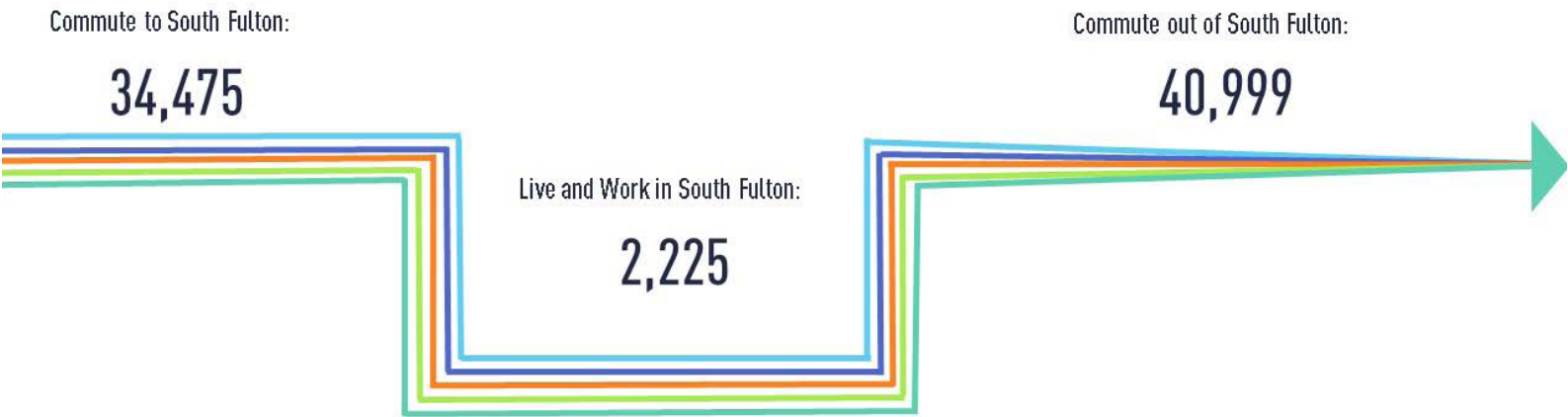
Of the approximately 36,000 workers in the City of South Fulton, the largest sector is in Transportation and Warehousing, followed by Manufacturing, and Wholesale Trade. This is not surprising, as the Fulton Industrial District is one of the largest industrial districts in the country. Other top sectors include Administration and Support, Education, and Retail Trade.

The over 43,000 employed residents work in a variety of sectors throughout the region. Health Care is the highest sector, followed by Administration and Support, then Transportation and Warehousing, and lastly Accommodation and Food Services. Approximately 59% of residents within the City of South Fulton earn less than 3,333 a month, per job, which is less than \$40,000 per year.

LEARN MORE:
[City of South Fulton Economic Strategy](#)

Resident Job Count By Earnings		
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	42,698	100%
1,250 per month or less	10,709	25.1%
1,251 to 3,333 per month	14,589	34.2%
More than 3,333 per month	17,400	40.8%

Data Source: LEHD 2018, US Census



Data Source: LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics, 2018



The City of South Fulton has a diverse ecosystem with varied terrain and unique natural resources including waterways, rich soils, and scenic byways. Currently, there are a variety of local and state regulations in place to preserve the integrity of the environment. A review of policies, procedures, and regulations is needed to ensure that the city is up to date with industry best practices regarding resource management and protections.

The City of South Fulton has several streams and small water supply watersheds that are protected through ordinances adopted by both the City of South Fulton and the State of Georgia. The Northwestern portion of the city also abuts the Chattahoochee River. This area of the city is protected through the Chattahoochee River Corridor Plan which requires that development proposals are viewed by ARC and the local jurisdiction to prevent pollution and hazardous materials from entering the river.

As weather patterns continue to change and flooding becomes more common wetland and flood plain management will be essential in keeping people safe and potable water supplies clean. Currently, the city does this through buffer and setback requirements for streams and by prohibiting development in the flood plain.

Stormwater and sedimentation can also negatively impact the quality of topsoil if adequate erosion control measures are not taken. As new developments and redevelopments are happening every day in South Fulton, it is important that every effort is made to manage runoff. The removal of natural vegetation including trees, shrubs, moss, and other natural ground coverings leave soil the more susceptible to run off. The city's environmental ordinance adopted in November 2018 provided development guidelines for runoff and erosion control measures.

When discussing environmental planning, it is also important to take steep slopes into consideration. Steep slopes can lead to incidences of erosion or slippage creating a hazard for the community. Steep slopes are concentrated around the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries. Steep slopes are considered those with a grade change higher than 33%, and development on a

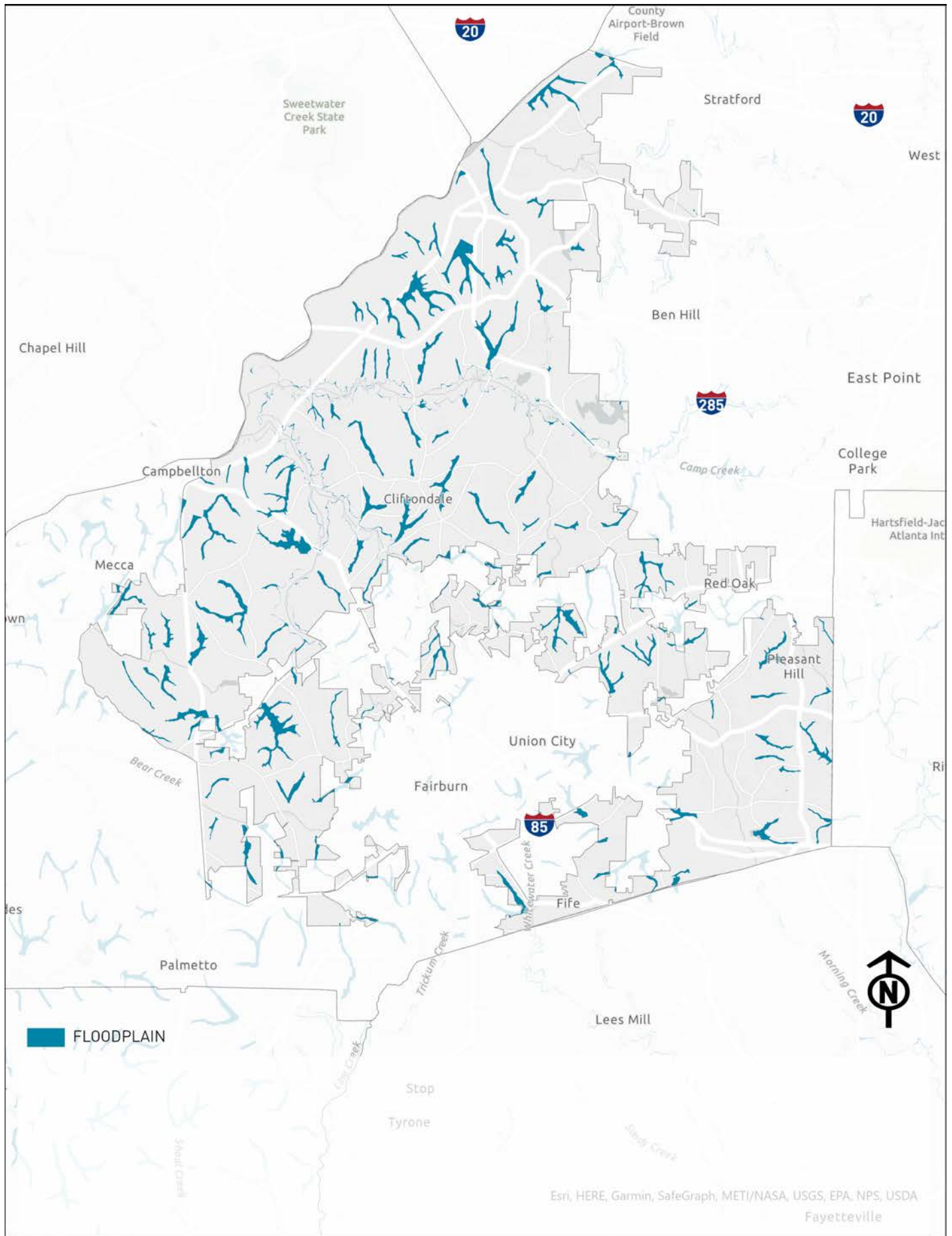
slope higher than 40% requires a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

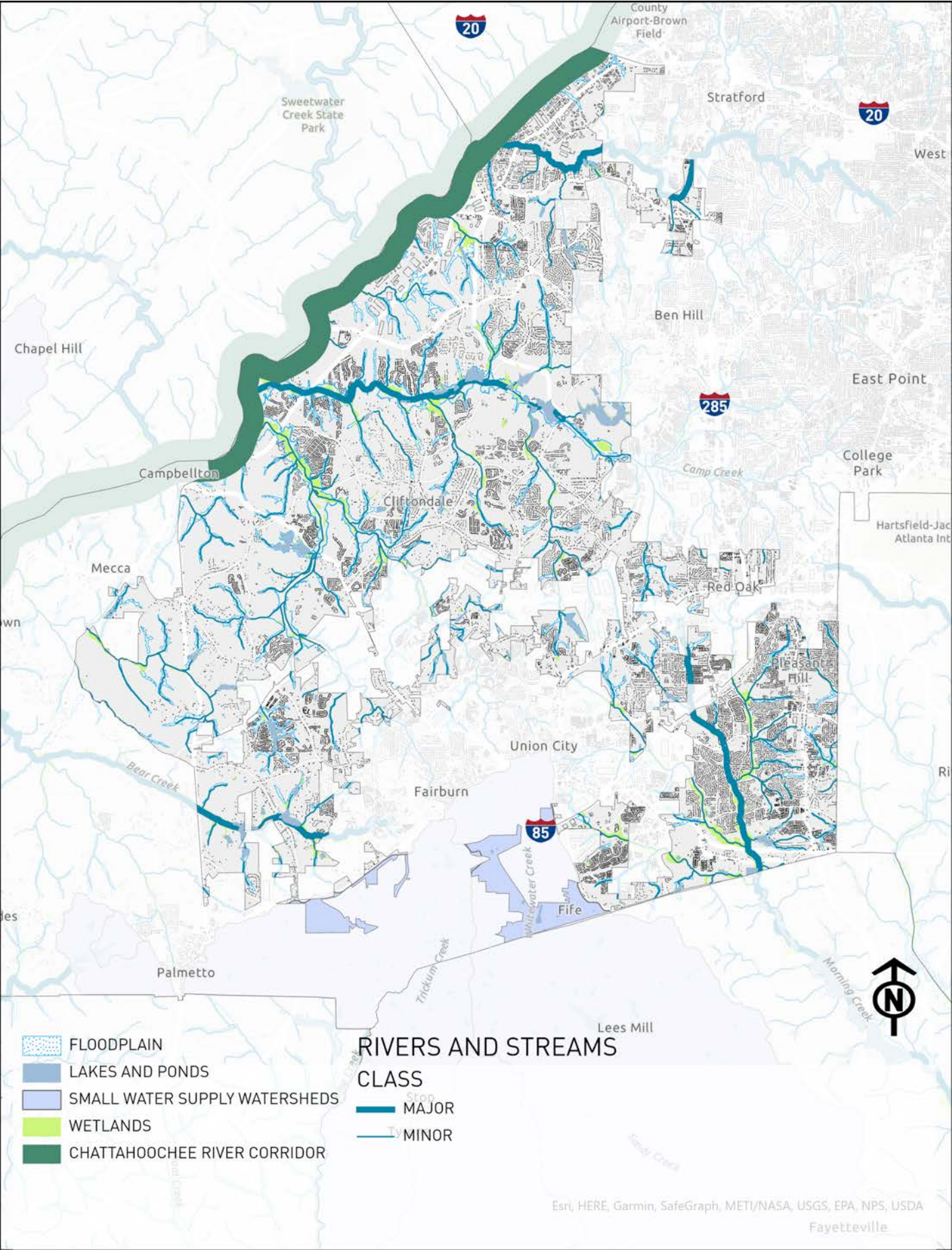
During public engagement activities, many respondents expressed interest in preserving the City's tree canopy. One particularly cherished area was recognized by the Georgia Scenic Byway Program. The Northern portion of the 29-mile path is in South Fulton, and it is a popular touring location for cyclist and drivers. The route uses Cochran Mill Rd., Hutcheson Mill Rd., and GA Hwy. 70.

Future environmental initiatives might include community education programs so that the public is informed about the city's environmental resources and can aid in protection measures. Additional research on innovation and best practices for environmental conservation can aid the city in staying prepared for a healthy future.

"The city should embrace it's unique attributes as well as preserve it's natural beauty and history. It's a balance that must be maintained in order to further protect our quality of life."

-Public Comment





Although incorporated in 2017, South Fulton has a rich cultural history that dates back centuries to include historic structures and communities. Fulton County conducted a historic resources survey in 1998. Out of the 900-sites identified, 375 were within what is now the City of South Fulton. While many of the sites were single family dwelling units, other uses included churches, cemeteries, schools, commercial businesses, civic uses, industrial sites, transportation resources, health care facilities, and agricultural related structures. The historic resources survey conducted by Fulton County is over two decades old. The city is in dire need of a new survey that is specific to South Fulton and incorporates the properties that recently made the historic designation age of 50 years old.

Initial development was sparked in a handful of historic communities. Fife, Stonewall, and Red Oak developed as railroad communities to service the commercial and industrial needs of rail passengers and their cargo. Sandtown developed as a river crossing for agricultural

developments along the Chattahoochee River. Bethlehem, Cliftondale, Friendship, and Ono developed as social centers at road intersections. Rivertown, Rico, and Redwine developed as Ferry crossings. All these small developments have grown over decades and centuries to become interconnected and make up the jurisdiction of South Fulton that know today.

Currently, the story of the city's cultural legacy is in the hands of the Historic and Cultural Landmarks Commission (HCLC). The HCLC is an eight-member citizen board charged with identifying, preserving, and revitalizing the City's Historic and Cultural resources. The board is collecting stories and photos to tell the story of South Fulton and preserve South Fulton's history to inspire future generations.



Industrial Development was identified by the community as the top threat to the City of South Fulton

SWOT Analysis

Based upon the data analysis and community stakeholder feedback the following Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats were identified.

Strengths

- New City and staff and funding focused on South Fulton
- Strong homeownership levels
- Near regional employment centers
- Natural beauty in areas including the Chattahoochee River

Weaknesses

- Lack of access to basic services and amenities located in the City
- Outdated/ stressed infrastructure and the need for reinvestment
- Lack of Identity and sense of place of the City of South Fulton

Opportunities

- New tools for reinvestment
- Continue reinvestment in Fulton Industrial Area
- Creating a sense of place and identity and becoming a regional destination.
- Areas that can be developed/redeveloped

Threats

- Neighboring jurisdictions land use changes and development impacts
- Lack of Trust and Communication
- Real Estate Market Demand and costs

These statements were then used to develop Community Strategies and Goals.

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a park. In the foreground, there are two large, vertical, rusted metal pillars standing on a paved walkway. The pillars have a textured, orange-brown patina. Behind them, a paved path leads into a grassy area with trees and a building in the distance. The sky is blue with some clouds.

CHAPTER 4

Community Vision and Goals

Community Vision and Goals

The City of South Fulton's 2020 Strategic Plan adopted a vision based upon a community outreach process of over 1,000 residents held in 2019. The vision below was the foundation of this plan update.

City of South Fulton will be an innovative, diverse community that is safe, environmentally conscious, healthy, transparent and financially sustainable for all its citizens and visitors.

➤ **LEARN MORE:**
[City of South Fulton Strategic Plan](#)

Using that overall vision, the Planning Team used feedback and the SWOT analysis to develop the following Community Goals to implement the vision. These goals provide the framework for the strategies of the plan in the following chapters.

- Ensure Stable Housing for All
- Building Trust within the Community
- Creating an Economic Engine for the South Side
- Develop a Unique South Fulton
- Develop a Strong Community for South Fulton



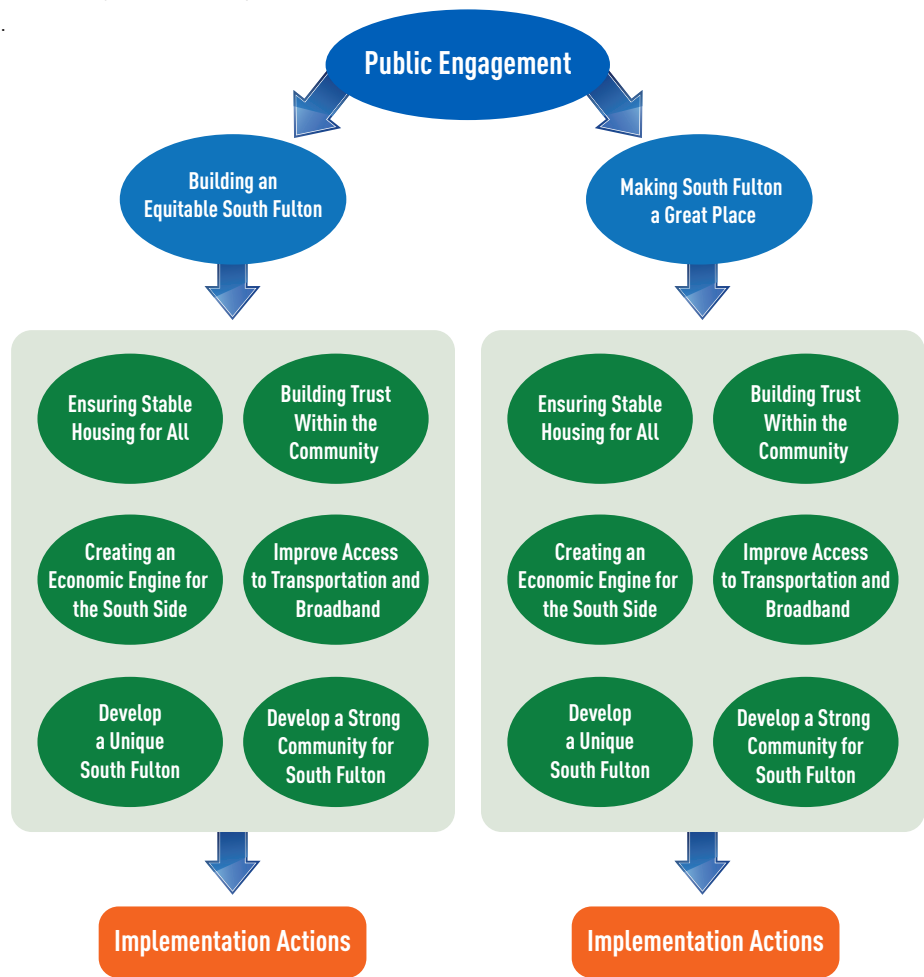
Wolf Creek Trail

How to Use this Plan

There are many users of this plan and ways to use this plan. The Mayor, City Council, City Staff, City Boards and Commissions, and community members should use the Comprehensive Plan. It is a guide decision-making processes, budget and capital spending, and programs and policies. The two implementation sections are organized around the two main themes heard from public engagement - Building an Equitable South Fulton and Making South Fulton a Great Place. Each Theme contains the community goals that were developed to address the City of South's Fulton' Issues and Opportunities, and under each goal are strategies to implement the goals.

The strategies are ideas and best practices brought forward and vetted through the Community Engagement Process. Each Goal also contains implementation projects for the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program is a required element that contains projects that the City of South Fulton will undertake over the next five years to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

The strategies and implementation are not meant to be exhaustive. Many of the routine functions of the City of South Fulton will continue, but rather they are designed to be concrete actions to address the City of South Fulton Issues and Opportunities. The Mayor, City Council, and city staff should regularly refer to the Community Work Program and revise it to address current issues facing the City of South Fulton.



CHAPTER 5

Building an Equitable South Fulton

Building an Equitable South Fulton

Equity is when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive. Where there is equity, a person's identity does not determine their outcome. Equitable, inclusive communities are places of value that provide access to resources and opportunities for all people to improve the quality of their life. The City of South Fulton advances equity by serving individuals, families, and communities in a manner that reduces or eliminates persistent institutional biases and barriers based on race, ability, income, gender identity and sexual orientation, age, and other factors.

In the City of South Fulton, some neighborhoods do not have access to basic amenities and opportunities including parks, healthy food, affordable transportation options, and other neighborhood amenities. Residents in these areas tend to have more health problems and lower incomes as a result of fewer opportunities. These inequities conflict with the values of fairness and providing everyone an equitable opportunity to succeed. They mean that residents are not able to access the resources needed to improve their quality of life. Some South Fulton residents are less likely to build wealth and stability, making them more vulnerable to involuntary displacement, and many of these residents live in neighborhoods that were historically marginalized.

Equitable development is an approach to meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies and programs that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant. Truly equitable development leads to greater choice and opportunities and improves everyone's quality of life.

The creation of the City of South Fulton will lead to more resources for the historically marginalized communities of Southern Fulton County, however building an equitable South Fulton will require consistent monitoring, engagement, and investments by city staff and officials.

Observations and Overview

As a city that is over 90% Black, the City of South Fulton has one of the largest shares of population of Black or African American in the State of Georgia. However, an equity lens needs to be applied at the neighborhood level because city-level statistics rarely tell the whole story.

The median household income in the City of South Fulton is \$65,919. However, over 36% of households in South Fulton have a median household income under \$50,000 per year. In addition, 40% of renters and 21% of homeowners are spending more than 36% of their income on housing costs. While household incomes are high in areas of the city of South Fulton there are pockets of lower income.

Another equity indicator is transportation. As public transportation options are limited in the City of South Fulton, having reliable transportation is important to access services and employment. Approximately 10% of renter households within the City of South Fulton do not have a vehicle available to them compared to 1.2% of home owned households.

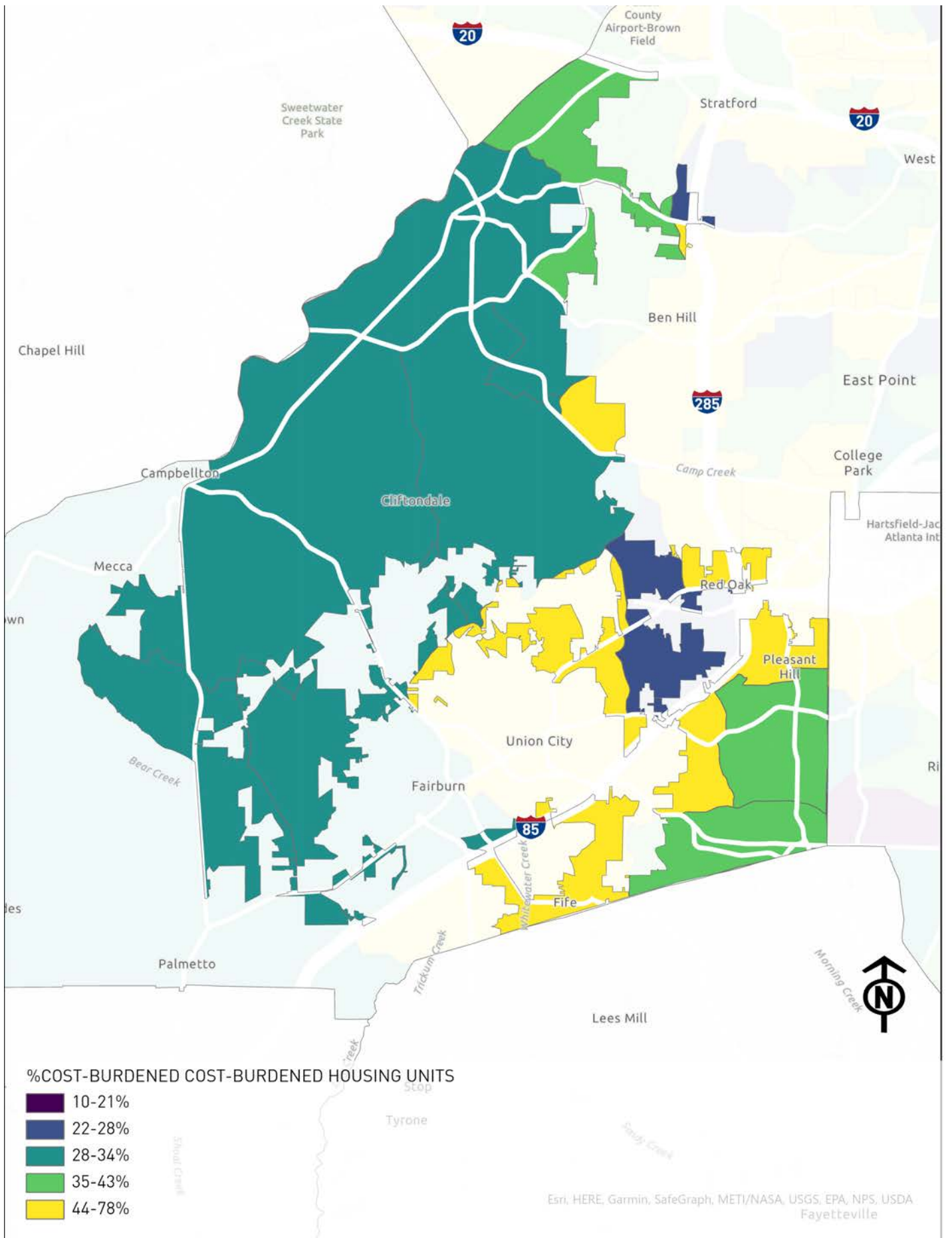
Before 2020, 6.4% of residents in South Fulton used public transit as their primary means of travel to work, and 44% of those were homeowners.

A reoccurring comment heard within the comprehensive plan process the need for information and a feedback loop of continual public engagement after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Before the creation of the City of South Fulton, community members felt that projects were approved without their input and were planned for versus planned with.

Ensuring that community members have accurate, available information about the development process, projects and providing educational resources about zoning, land use and density will promote a culture of trust between city officials and community members. Residents play an important role as well, by volunteering for city boards and commissions and actively participating in training and meetings as members. Those members of city boards and commissions should act as ambassadors of the city, regularly seeking input and educating their neighbors.



Southwest Art Center



Ensure Stable Housing for All

The City of South Fulton's strength is in its residents and quality neighborhoods. Continuing that strength will require focus on creating strong neighborhoods to ensure a high quality of life, and to provide for generational wealth to break poverty cycles.

The strategies and projects listed here can help to ensure that housing in the City of South Fulton is available to all residents.

Create pathways to homeownership for residents to encourage generational wealth.

Homeownership can be an important source of neighborhood stability. Homeowners have greater control of the maintenance and conditions of their homes than renters, whose landlords may be located outside of the City of South Fulton.

Connecting prospective buyers to existing and future resources to prepare for and enter homeownership for the first time is key. Resources such as financial counseling, credit repair, and first-time homebuyer loans can prepare residents for the homeownership experience.

Homeownership also can build generational wealth for families. A home is an asset that can be used for building wealth and increasing residents' net worth, which can be passed down for generations.

According to Census data analyzed by ARC, in the 10-county Atlanta region, 47% of Black residents are homeowners compared to 72% white residents.

Create opportunities to become a Lifelong Community for all South Fulton Residents.

While the City of South Fulton is currently relatively young, putting into place Lifelong Community Principles will develop the City of South Fulton into a place where people of all ages and abilities can live as long as they like. Lifelong Communities provide an array of housing types that appeal to individuals young and old to provide for housing and transportation options, encouraging healthy lifestyles and expanding access to services.

A Lifelong community incorporates elements into building construction, housing types, and policies to allow for residents to age in place in their community, rather than residents having to find new homes and communities, as their needs change. Outside of individual units, having a variety of housing types, supportive housing, and skilled nursing care ensures that the residents of South Fulton can remain in the city on as their needs change.

➤ **LEARN MORE:**
[City of South Fulton Consolidated Plan](#)

➤ **LEARN MORE:**
[Lifelong Communities](#)

➤ **LEARN MORE:**
[Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy](#)

Building Trust within the Community

Community members play a role in community development and redevelopment. They can inform city staff, Mayor, and Council, and developers about community issues. They can also offer creative solutions and highlight the need for community amenities that can benefit not only the community but the development.

Trust also comes from providing education about planning issues, and proactively reaching out to neighborhood leaders to build community capacity. Investments in neighborhood leadership will build a strong relationship between the City of South Fulton and its community members.

The strategies and projects listed here provide ways to ensure that development decisions are transparent and clear.

Provide training and leadership opportunities for neighborhood leaders.

Building the capacity of neighborhood leaders is important to ensure that the next generation of leaders within the City of South Fulton understands the issues, processes, and vision of South Fulton. Capacity building also fosters a stronger understanding of city processes, and foster trust between residents and city officials.

Training of homeowners associations board members will develop well-managed homeowners associations within the City of South Fulton and build relationships between the City of South Fulton and those associations.

Develop, and actively use, a feedback loop with residents (kind of like this!)
-Public Comment

Ensure that residents and small/local developers have easy access to information about development proposals, plans, processes, project statuses.

Providing a portal on the City of South Fulton's website can be an easy and effective way to share information about local development proposals, and where projects are occurring within the City of South Fulton, and where projects may be occurring in neighboring jurisdictions.

Information on the proposed use of land, the potential use of incentives, and the timing of the regulatory review process will allow community members to be informed and engaged throughout the development process. The City of South Fulton should also continue to review its development processes and requirements to ensure they are accessible to small and local developers, rather than only larger developers.

An information portal is a one-stop location for information about development and allows community members to understand what is happening with the City of South Fulton easily and quickly without reaching out to city staff.

Creating an Economic Engine for the South Side

Creating South Fulton as the Economic Engine for the south side is about supporting the building blocks of the City of South Fulton's economy, by leveraging the existing investments that community members, business owners, and employees to build a strong economy and workforce in the City of South Fulton.

Retain and support long-standing and emerging small businesses within the City of South Fulton.

The small business ecosystem within the City of South Fulton is important to provide the neighborhood services and amenities that the community members need. There are existing partnerships and programs that the City of South Fulton has formed to assist small businesses, such as partnering with the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance, and creating Main Street Programs for the Red Oak area and Old National Highway. The City of South Fulton should work with existing small business owners to help brand and market the city and provide space for start-ups.

The City of South Fulton already has a resource center called CollabSouth. CollabSouth provides business planning, expansion coaching, counseling, technical support, affordable office space, and an entrepreneurial environment for clients. With 90 square miles in the City of South Fulton, the city should look to expand this resource into other areas, with the Fulton Industrial District being a priority.

Create training and education opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Another aspect of creating and retaining locally-grown businesses is ensuring that financial and technical assistance is available to those who want to start or expand a business. The City of South Fulton should provide information and training to entrepreneurs and develop communication materials for entrepreneurs to start a business in the City of South Fulton.

Leverage low-cost commercial space to support startups and the arts community.

The City of South Fulton should actively partner with philanthropic organizations, community partners, and property owners to leverage underutilized and low-cost vacant commercial space to support startups and the local arts community. This form of assistance can generate rental revenue for owners of vacant properties, demonstrate the market potential of vacant buildings along corridors and provide otherwise inaccessible space to local, emerging and creative talent.



Develop a Unique South Fulton

As a city that has seen the majority of its growth since 2000, there are limited commercial retail services in Southern Fulton County. While commercial development is occurring, community members expressed the need for more fresh food offerings, restaurants, and other local retail.

Identify and target local serving retail, including grocery stores to develop in walkable nodes within the City of South Fulton

Ensuring that residents within the City of South Fulton have easy access to services and fresh food is essential to create an equitable community. Many respondents in the Public Meeting and the public engagement website requested more local serving retail and grocery stores within the City of South Fulton instead of driving to other locations.

While the City of South Fulton is limited in building sites, it can develop incentives to promote walkable developments that contain grocery stores to reduce the development risk of those sites. The City of South Fulton should look to partner with organizations to develop farmers markets in Red Oak and Old National Areas and other areas in the city. Creating a Community Agriculture Plan for the city should be developed to develop a sustainable food system within the City of South Fulton.

Within City Council District 4, an outline was created to guide land preservation, agricultural education and community activation. This outline and the Community Agriculture Plan can serve as a template for future citywide agriculture planning.

To build community, a food truck night in various locations in the city should be explored. This will show the demand to potential restaurant operators with the added benefits of having community events.

Project Example

What is a Community Agriculture Plan?

A Community Agriculture Plan is a roadmap for a community to achieve its vision of creating a vibrant and sustainable community food system over the next 5-10 years. A community food system refers to the place-based relationships between producers, processors, distributors, consumers, and postconsumer waste disposal of food. In contrast to conventional food systems, a community food system makes these ties visible and integrates them to enhance the environmental, economic, social, and nutritional health of a community and its residents.

Community Agriculture Plans are developed using a consensus-based and community-led process that brought together urban growers, residents, and officials to identify community priorities. It also identifies strategies to achieve community food system priorities as well as prioritize implementation over time. Community Agriculture Plans are not meant to be a stand-alone document but is meant to identify ways in which local food can be integrated into plans and programs.

Develop a Unique South Fulton

Protect existing undeveloped land by limiting development in undeveloped areas and encouraging redevelopment in built-up areas.

South Fulton that has experienced rapid growth and is expecting new growth. Encouraging redevelopment will spur reinvestment within the City of South Fulton in existing commercial areas and limit new infrastructure costs. In addition, this will encourage the expansion of neighborhood services near existing residential developments.

This will also preserve the rural character in areas of the city which provides for a variety of housing densities and opportunities, and limit infrastructure costs by serving new undeveloped areas.

*Innovative/ Environmentally Conscious - The City of South Fulton has two valuable resources: land and trees. Rather than overbuild, let's think of innovative ways to maintain our natural beauty and place it at the forefront. Start by rebranding the city with this emphasis (i.e. - Greentree, Magnolia, Dogwood, Greenview) Rather than ending up with a shortage of greenspace, let's be known as the green jewel
-Public Comment*



Old National Highway is a focus area of redevelopment.

Develop a Strong Community for South Fulton

The experience of place taps into the social and emotional attachments people have to their community. Creating safe, inviting, and dynamic places are important for a city to attract and retain residents, businesses, and visitors. As a new city with no distinct places that are “South Fulton” the city has an opportunity to develop a community of South Fulton that is separate from the other cities within Southern Fulton County.

As a large city of almost 100,000 people, the City of South Fulton has a great opportunity to create a unique sense of place driven by unrealized community goals.

Identify and expand park space within the City of South Fulton to ensure that all residents are within 10 minutes of a park.

Currently, the City of South Fulton has 10 parks and recreation facilities, excluding Wolf Creek Amphitheater and the Tom Lowe Shooting Grounds. As of the Fall of 2021, the City of South Fulton is finalizing and Parks and Recreation Master Plan to help guide investments and programming. Building a more complete network of trails, parks and other green infrastructure will enhance the quality of life for all neighborhoods. This is essential to improving health inequities within the City of South Fulton and advancing environmental justice.

Currently, there are protected greenspaces located within the City of South Fulton. Identifying a long-term management plan for those areas would expand recreation and greenspace opportunities within the City of South Fulton.

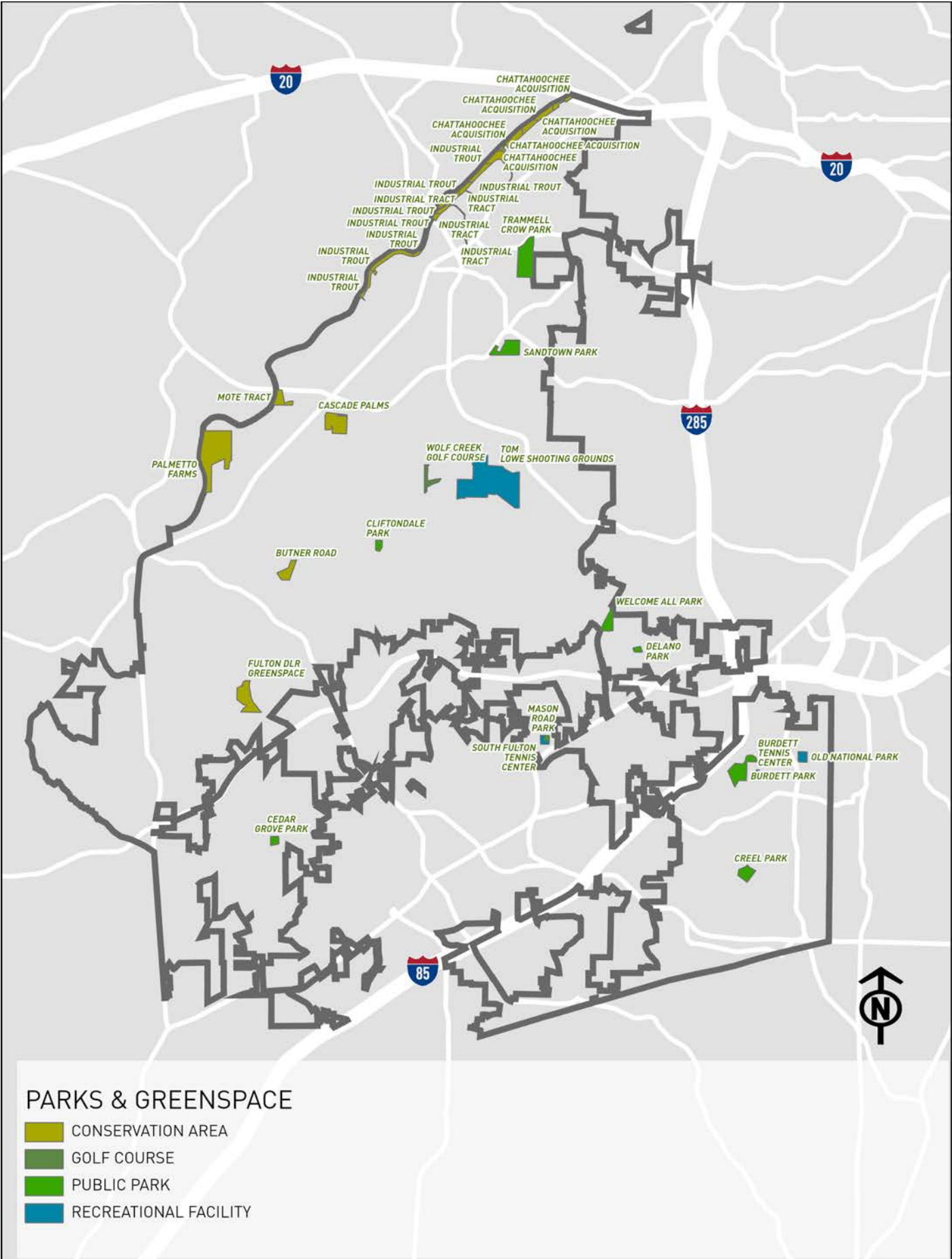


Celebrate and strengthen the City of South Fulton’s vibrant artist community.

One element often found in successful places in the Atlanta region is public art. Done well and collaboratively, public art reflects the heart of a community and is a way to unify people around a shared vision.

Public art becomes part of a community’s identity and an expression of that identity to the rest of the world. The City of South Fulton should seek to partner with arts organizations within Southern Fulton County to partner in creating quality, vibrant places throughout the city. This could be done by developing guidelines for public art and incorporating public art into city projects to encourage the City of South Fulton’s art and culture.

I would like to see more outdoor recreation opportunities in this community i.e. Beltline or bike/hike trail
-Public Comment



Improve Access to Transportation and Broadband

As with all places, transportation and broadband access directly impacts resident's quality of life in the City of South Fulton. Reliable, safe transportation to employment provides for strong, resilient workers, and having access to quality high-speed broadband allows for residents and businesses to prosper in the 21st century.

The Strategies listed here will ensure that all residents and community members have appropriate infrastructure.

Identify needs and improve local infrastructure to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

As a city transitioning from a rural/suburban development pattern to more of a suburban development pattern, ensuring that the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure meets the needs of the community is important. Many roads and streets in the City of South Fulton do not have sidewalks or safe bicycling routes, and areas that contain sidewalks are

located in sporadic locations within new residential developments or along major roadways. Identifying needs and standards for new projects and develop a program to implement sidewalks throughout the city will enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety.

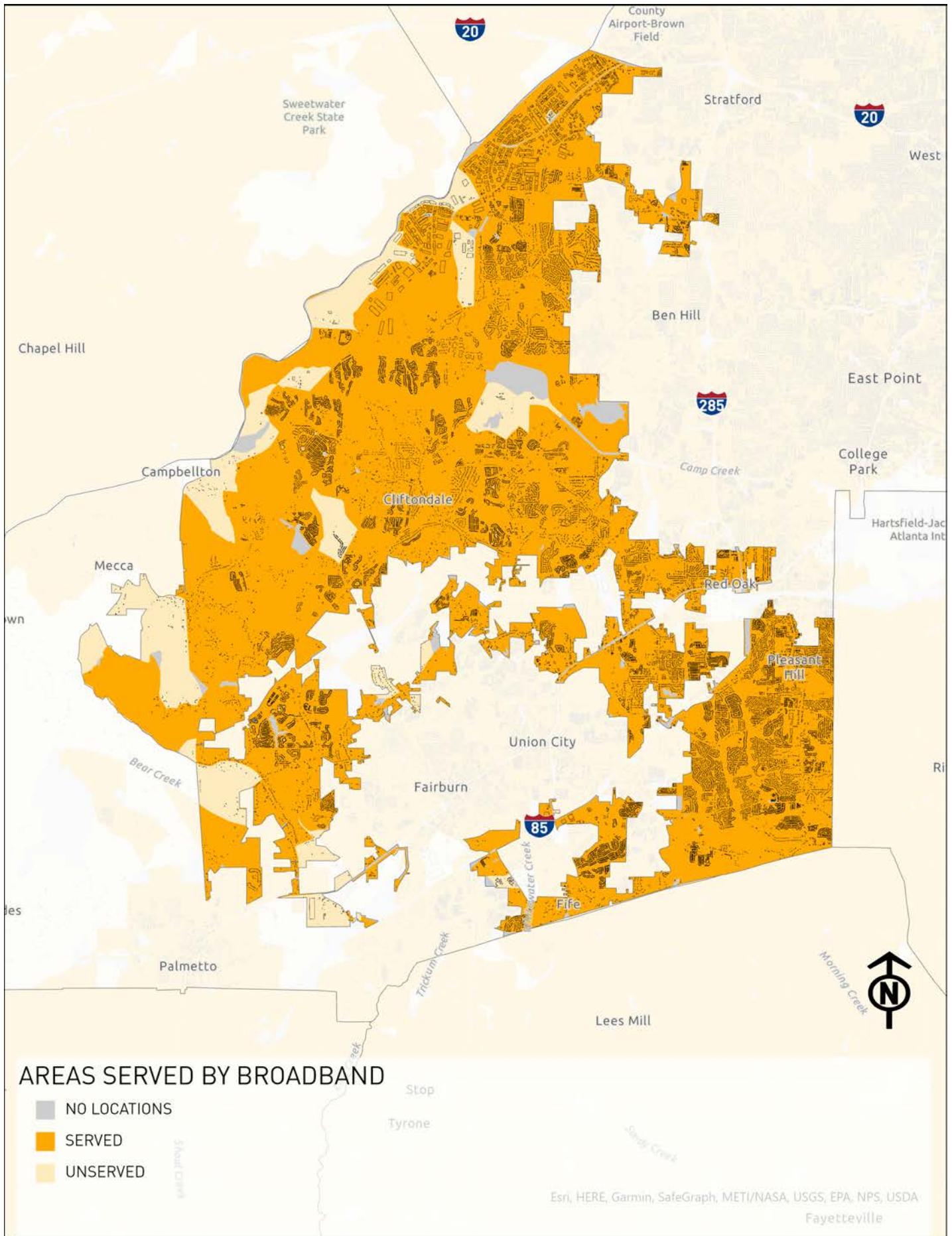
This will be a long-term project as the City of South Fulton is over 90 square miles and has over 208 miles of major roads (not including local streets and roads).

Work with partners to improve the Broadband service and speeds throughout the City of South Fulton.

The digital divide became a key issue in 2020. As students and workers transitioned to be at home, having reliable broadband service became even more important to ensure that workers, residents, and students could communicate with their colleagues, families, and teachers. While most areas of the City of South Fulton have broadband service, access is limited in the more rural parts of the city. Ensuring quality and affordable service is important to the city's commitment to social and economic equity



In 2020, The City of South Fulton and ARC completed a Pedestrian Study on Washington Road



Improve Access to Transportation and Broadband

Partner with MARTA to improve connections to the regional transit network.

MARTA is the transit service provider in the City of South Fulton. While there is transit in the City of South Fulton, it is limited to the more eastern side of the city or along Roosevelt Highway, or Old National Highway. Areas in the western part of the City of South Fulton have no transit services.

This also impacts the Marta Mobility service. MARTA Mobility is a service that provides ADA Complementary Paratransit Service to anyone unable to ride or disembark from our regular MARTA transit service. However, MARTA Mobility is restricted to provide service only within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to existing MARTA service, therefore paratransit service is also limited within the City of South Fulton, and it limits the opportunity for persons who have limited mobility to access transit



Environmental Justice Policies

Environmental Justice means the fair treatment of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws and policies and their meaningful involvement in the decision-making process of the government.

-U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) definition

The City of South Fulton has been committed to Environmental Justice and maintaining a high quality of life for residents since its incorporation in 2017. Still, continued planning efforts are needed to ensure that waste, pollution, and environmentally adverse uses are handled with sensitivity. An environmental justice assessment is needed to evaluate the prevalence and the impact of brownfields, grey fields, and environmentally adverse uses like landfills. The study would then create recommendations on additional policies and procedures to reduce the impact of environmentally adverse uses on the community.

Additional research is also needed on water quality and waste management including an assessment of infrastructure updates needed to support future growth. An environmental justice study can also identify the best location for future treatment plants and landfills so they have the least impact on the community, and keep even the minority and low-income residents informed and protected.

A holistic environmental justice strategy should include:

- Decision making based on research to understand the demographics and needs of community members (age, income level, employment statistics, level of education, incidences of chronic illnesses and other health indicators, travel modes, and housing condition)
- An understanding of community culture
- An understanding of critical race theory and how historical events and policies affect conditions today
- Location and accessibility of healthy food, grocery stores, and farmer's markets
- The implementation of public engagement programs and policies that educate community members on planning and environmental justice topics so they can fully participate in the planning process
- Candid benefit vs. burden analysis to assess disproportionate impacts to minority and low-income residents.

Implementation Actions to Build an Equitable South Fulton

- ❑ Promote homeownership opportunities with city resources
- ❑ Explore exemptions for property tax for certain residents.
- ❑ Develop Farmers Markets in Red Oak and Old National Areas or within Community Parks
- ❑ Create a Community Agriculture Plan
- ❑ Participate in the Georgia Initiative in Community Housing
- ❑ Develop business incubator space
- ❑ Implement and coordinate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the Comprehensive Plan
- ❑ Incorporate public art into projects and the new Town Center
- ❑ Partner with organizations to promote arts and placemaking.
- ❑ Create a brownfield/greyfield program
- ❑ Develop a City Housing Strategy
- ❑ Create a housing inventory
- ❑ Develop a Pedestrian Safety Plan and Street Standards including Complete Streets Standards
- ❑ Develop a creative bus shelter program for major transit routes
- ❑ Continue South Fulton University and examine ways to incorporate the Comprehensive Plan into the curriculum
- ❑ Develop a Community Engagement Playbook that standardizes Community Engagement for Plans and Projects
- ❑ Develop an online development projects map.
- ❑ Create an South Fulton Environmental Justice Plan

CHAPTER 6

Making South Fulton a Great Place

Making South Fulton a Great Place

Managing development and the future land use map is what most people think the role of a Comprehensive Plan is. While that is a core component, the strategies within the comprehensive plan shape and attract the development.

Having access to services, recreation, and opportunity make a great community. With the large size of the City of South Fulton, ensuring that all residents have access to services and recreation within a 15-minute drive is an overall strategy of making South Fulton a great place.

The concept of a 15 minute city within the City of South Fulton means that residents have access to services within 15 minutes by car. Within mixed use developments that residents should have access to services within 5 minutes by walking or biking. This promotes shorter trips to services and alternatives to driving. This is done by doing long-range planning and visioning and using those plans as a work program to implement.

Ensuring that these places are designed for and with people versus for cars will make great livable places within South Fulton and position the City of South Fulton as a great, vibrant, place within Southern Fulton County.

A tool for implementation is the City's Future Development Map. The City of South Fulton is divided into Character Areas. Each Character Area provides recommended land uses, zoning, and density. The Future Development Map is not a zoning map but it is referred during the rezoning process to ensure that the

proposed rezoning is consistent with the community vision expressed within the Future Development Map.

The Future Development Map expresses the City of South Fulton's vision of where growth should occur and where growth should be limited. It identifies priorities within the City of South Fulton for growth and redevelopment within centers, and it gives residents and developers an understanding of if a development type is appropriate within areas of the city.

Observations and Overview

Development in the City of South Fulton has mostly been residential. Before the annexation of the Fulton Industrial District in July 2021, the City of South Fulton's land use was 84% residential or agricultural land use. With almost half the housing built in the City of South Fulton since 2000, the infrastructure and supporting services, such as healthcare and neighborhood retail is a need that the community desired.

While development in appropriate areas is encouraged, there are natural and agricultural areas that the City of South Fulton is seeking to preserve. The City of South Fulton is unique in metro Atlanta in that it was a variety of densities for residents.

A key concern from residents was quality development standards. Overlays, design guidelines, and small area plans are tools that can assist the city staff, elected officials, community members, and developers to understand what the vision is for certain areas within

the city, and to ensure consistent quality development. This Comprehensive Plan guides future actions, and as new small area plans are developed by the City of South Fulton, those plans should be incorporated within the Comprehensive Plan.

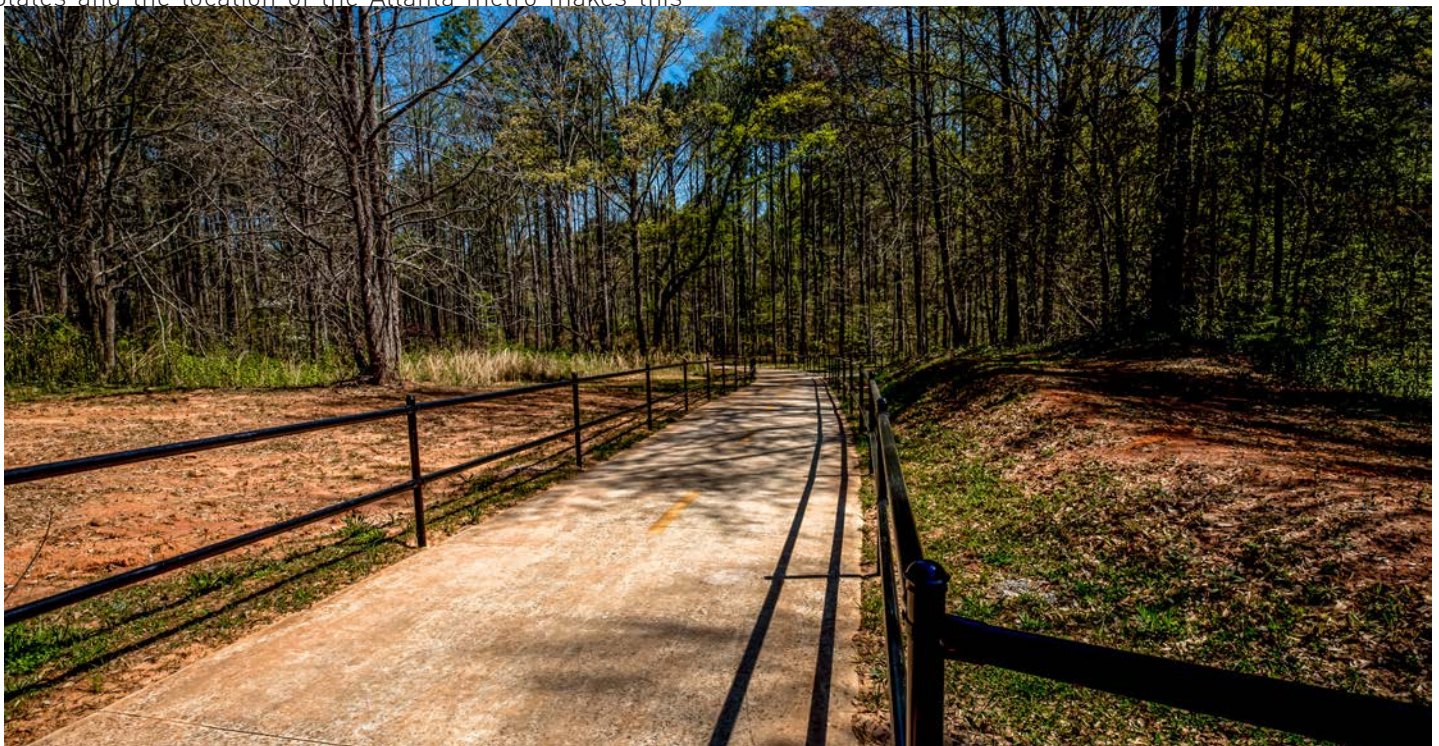
Neighboring cities impact development and the quality of life within the City of South Fulton. Many comments received during the planning process were regarding the development of warehouses in Southern Fulton County, especially along South Fulton Parkway. According to data analysis by the ARC, from 2015-2020, approximately 35 million square feet of industrial space, was built, is currently under construction, or is proposed in the cities of East Point, College Park, Fairburn, Palmetto, South Fulton, and Union City.

Most of the industrial projects permitted within the City of South Fulton were permitted before the City of South Fulton was established. While the industrial growth is visible along South Fulton Parkway, it is also occurring near US 29 in Palmetto, near the Fairburn Railyard and near Oakley Industrial Boulevard.

The changing nature of commerce flows in the United States and the location of the Atlanta metro makes this

area attractive to warehouse development. While the City of South Fulton has limited remedies for other jurisdiction's actions, proactive coordination at the city staff level should be encouraged to ensure any mitigation measures can be incorporated within the project.

With the annexation of the Fulton Industrial District, working with the Fulton Industrial Community Improvement District is another area of coordination. Updating the Fulton Industrial Study, with design guidelines, and community development strategies will further integrate the district into the City of South Fulton.



Ensure Stable Housing for All

Homes are the foundation for a community. Homes are where families are raised, memories are made, and where connections are made with neighbors. Housing and neighborhoods shape the City of South Fulton's identity. Having attractive housing options attract and retains residents and contribute to the pride of a city.

The Strategies listed here will ensure that housing is available for all residents.

In appropriate areas, encourage and allow a broad range of housing typologies for all residents.

While there are many great subdivisions within the City of South Fulton, there is an opportunity to allow a variety of housing types in Regional, Village and Community Live-Work areas. This could include "Missing Middle" Housing types. Missing Middle Housing is range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. The recently completed Campbellton Community Master

Plan identified housing types and styles that could be implemented in other Community Live Work Areas. As other small area master plans are developed, incorporating new housing types in those plans will promote new housing types that are supported by the community.

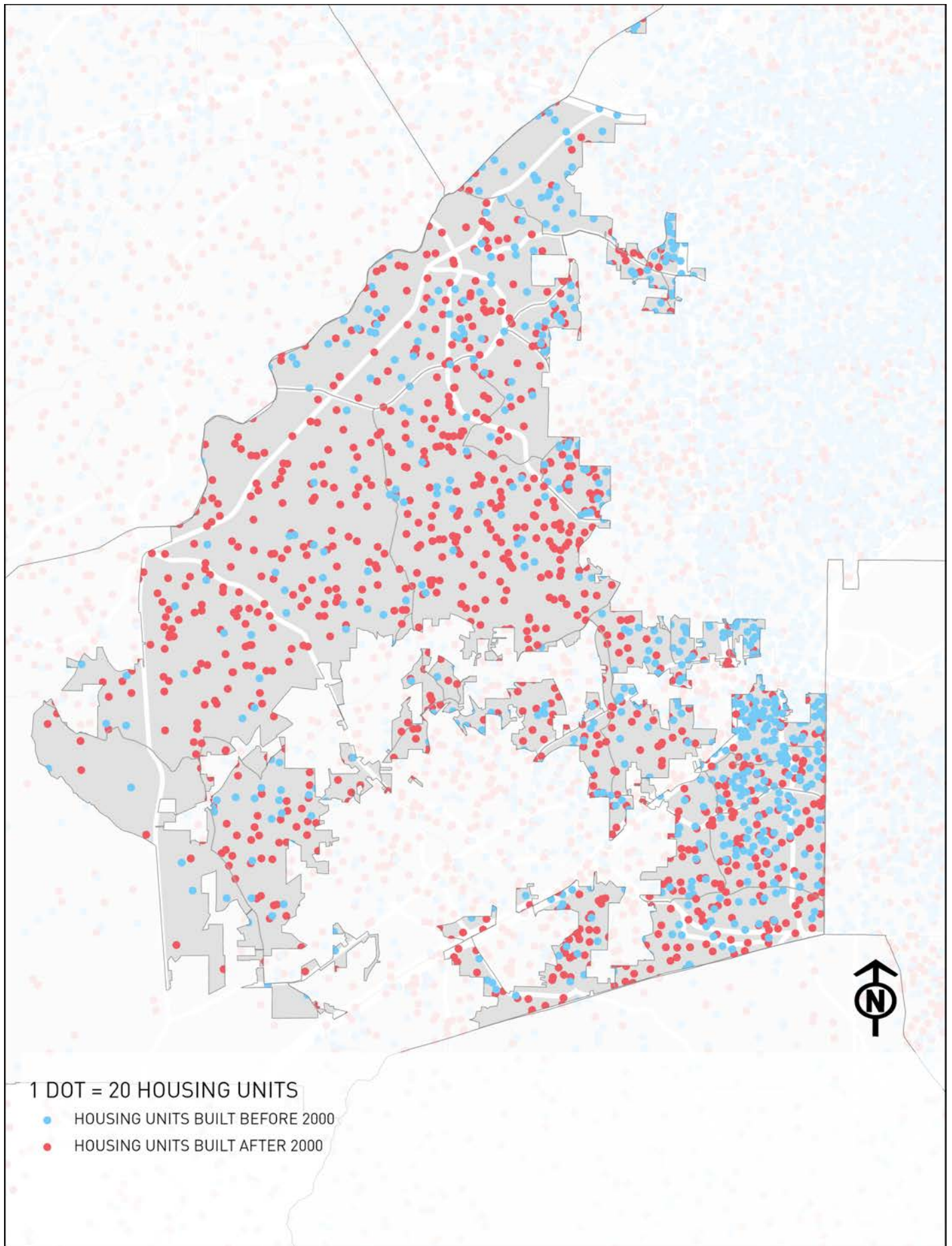
Encourage and support a high standard of property maintenance.

Ensuring a high standard of property maintenance promotes quality housing and a strong sense of community. While proactive Code Enforcement is essential, providing resources, training, and support is also essential. Developing a community tool bank, that rents or provides equipment for homeowners and business and provide homeowner education as a resource could be a future project that the City of South Fulton undertakes.

Develop programs for property improvements for low-income residents
-Public Comment



A duplex like this, fits within a neighborhood. This would be appropriate within certian areas of the city.



Building Trust within the Community

Decisions about the built environment impacts everyone and many people feel like plans happen to them, versus plans are for them. Having an understanding of the issues facing Southern Fulton County and the City of South Fulton allows community members, staff, and elected officials to best voice concerns.

Build capacity about planning and development issues facing Southern Fulton County on the Planning Commission and other local boards.

Ensure that local voices are heard in the development/redevelopment decisions for their area.
-Public Comment

Planning challenges have gotten increasingly complex in recent years. Smart Cities, Missing Middle, Complete Streets, Green Infrastructure, and Community Benefits Agreements are all planning terms and concepts that are being used more and more that can be complex to implement in a community. Building capacity of staff, elected officials, and board and commission members will allow those groups to work better together.



Creating an Economic Engine for the South Side

Economic Development is one of the main comments received by the community. The implementation of all of the plan's strategies will lead to increased economic development.

Market opportunities for investment in South Fulton

Marketing areas of investment within the City of South Fulton and aligning the zoning to visions will attract investment. Also, actively engaging the leasing agents for commercial property within the City of South Fulton on the city's plan and visions for areas to allow those agents to become ambassadors for the city so they can attract the right tenants to these areas.

The City of South Fulton has a variety of tools for development, including Tax Allocation Districts, (TADs). Providing information about where these areas are, resources available can assist in business and development recruitment.

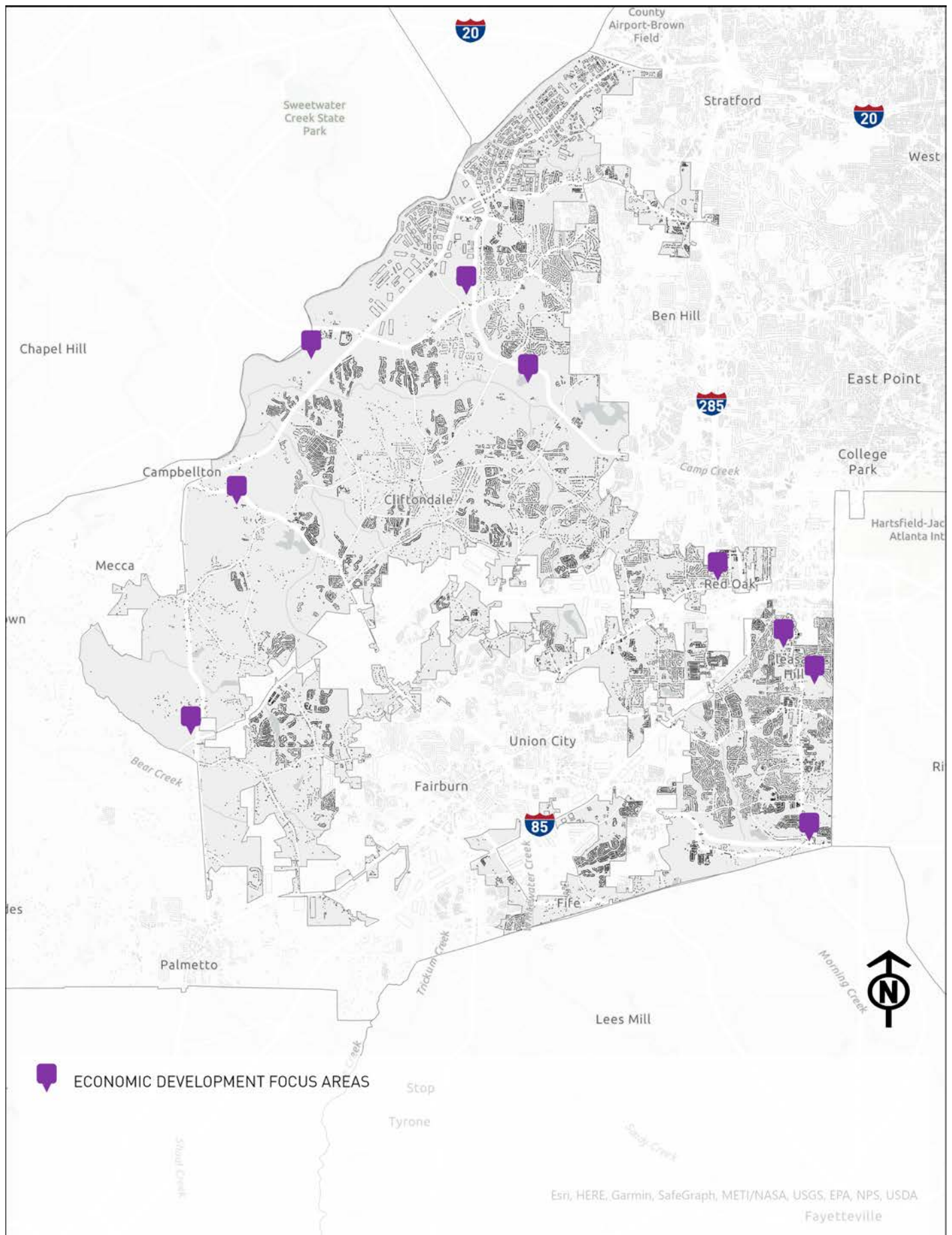
Create a targeted campaign for younger workers and employers to attract them to the City of South Fulton.

While South Fulton is a relatively young city compared to other cities in Metro Atlanta, attracting workers, innovators, and artists to the areas within the city that are appropriate for their business, and residence will attract and increase the vibrancy of the City of South Fulton. With the City of South Fulton's strong African American Heritage, aligning this marketing to highlight resources and opportunities for young Black creatives will increase the vibrancy of the city.

 **LEARN MORE:**

[City of South Fulton Economic Strategy](#)

*Find a specific identity...brand for the City
to encourage diverse economic and lifestyle
businesses. What makes the City a destination?
What natural resources can we identify as specific
to the City? What is unique about doing business
in the City?
-Public Comment*



Develop a Unique South Fulton

Developing a Unique South Fulton is about creating the building physical form of the city, that meets the needs of current and existing residents and businesses. Making quality places does not happen by happenstance, but by consistent implementation. The implementation has a lasting benefit on the quality of life for the City of South Fulton and makes it unique in Southern Fulton County.

Ensure that the City of South Fulton’s development codes focuses on the creation of quality corridors throughout the city that reflects the planned character of the area.

The city’s policies and development codes have a profound impact on the development of quality places within the City of South Fulton. This includes the development of overlays and design guidelines that are grounded in a community-based vision. The City of South Fulton is currently working on creating new zoning overlays and revising existing ones.

Ensure that development protects the existing tree canopy

Trees provide numerous environmental benefits to the community. Trees prevent or reduce flooding. Trees also provide shade and beauty in the city and the City of South Fulton has a tree ordinance that promotes the tree canopy. Incorporating new trees in existing subdivisions, parking lots and commercial developments as well as preserving existing trees as feasible in new developments will ensure that the existing tree canopy is maintained and improved.

Promote and incentivize potential redevelopment sites within the City of South Fulton to become mixed-use walkable developments.

The City of South Fulton has identified nine economic development focus areas that are planned for development, redevelopment, and/or revitalization.

Each of these areas has small areas plans or is planned to have a small area plan shortly. Developing incentives for proposed developments that promote the visions identified in the small area plans will increase the likelihood that the development meets the community vision

Promote a mix of institutional, entertainment, residential, and retail along the Old National Corridor.

Three of the economic development focus areas are along Old National Highway. Attracting a mixture of uses along the corridor that are developed in a walkable integrated manner will change the character of the corridor. While the corridor is auto-oriented, redeveloping the corridor with a walkable mixture of uses along the corridor will help create an increased level of activity which will lead to greater energy and activity.

Designate an entertainment district with high-rise, loft and other non-traditional housing options for Creatives.

-Public Comment

Develop a Strong Community for South Fulton

Creating quality places, create well-maintained neighborhoods promote which leads to increased property values and neighborhood stability. Vibrant commercial districts promote foot traffic and encourage increased shopping as people want to spend more time in the space. Entrepreneurs and artists thrive in dynamic places where energy and creativity promote interaction and the exchange of ideas. In places that integrate nature and recreation into the fabric, the space supports active, healthy living. And places that are more walkable and accessible are safer and more welcoming for people of all ages and abilities.

Identify and celebrate the neighborhoods of the City of South Fulton

Successful neighborhoods have a unified unique vision. Success happens when that identity is celebrated and promoted and installing a sense of pride. Because of South Fulton's unique boundaries and creation, many community members do not know what part of Southern Fulton County is within the City of South Fulton or neighboring cities. This leads to confusion about responsibility for decisions within the community and who to contact about issues facing the community.

Developing a sense of community at the neighborhood level within the City of South Fulton will lead to a sense of pride and ownership at the city level.

Investing and promoting the historic resources within the City of South Fulton will celebrate and promote neighborhoods within the city. The city's Historic & Cultural Landmarks Commission (HCLC) is dedicated to:

- identifying, preserving, and revitalizing the City's historic districts and landmarks;
- fostering civic pride in the past;
- promoting the use of historic districts and landmarks for the enrichment of the community;
- encouraging preservation of historic integrity in land use and development planning; and
- providing citizenry education to encourage preservation.

Develop Old National Corridor into a unique place in the region to draw both residents and visitors with investments in the public space, and marketing strategies.

Throughout this process, participants expressed a desire for quality places, to shop, dine, and for entertainment that is developed for them.

The Old National Corridor represents an opportunity to create a place that is inviting, vibrant, and integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods to promote reinvestment in that area in the City of South Fulton.

The City of South Fulton is starting a planning process to start process of updating the Old National Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study. The LCI will provide a vision for the corridor that determines the best mix of uses, and strategies for partnership with community organizations. The outcome of the LCI study will be a both long-term and short-term projects that will make the Old National Corridor a signature street in the City of South Fulton.

*Old National should be the downtown/entertainment/live work play district,
-Public Comment*

Improve Access to Transportation and Broadband

Quality places need great infrastructure to support them. Good designed trails, roads, streets, sidewalks, bike lanes and streetscapes, illustrate that this is a great place. When the transportation network functions, it provides mobility options for all community members, and a well intergrated network provides connections to places and opportunity.

Continue to build out trails and partner with neighboring local governments to develop a trail network within Southern Fulton County.

Trails are becoming a must-have community amenity in the Atlanta region that provides a sense of community, recreation, and mobility. There has been a variety of plans that have proposed trail segments within the City of South Fulton and Southern Fulton County. A true network requires working with neighboring jurisdictions to develop trails that connect residents with destinations.

Trails can be funded, locally, with assistance from ARC, and potentially by the development community as new developments or redevelopment occur.

Work to create a Capital Improvement Plan and dedicated funding sources.

Understanding all the capital needs, funding sources, and schedules for capital projects in an accessible easy to understand format allows community members to understand what projects are occurring within their community. Identifying funding sources and what projects best align with those sources will assist in developing projects and schedules.

Many respondents discussed the need to develop impact fees in the City of South Fulton. Impact fees are one tool to fund infrastructure needs for new development. However, it requires more analysis to determine the existing levels of service, a discussion of what activities could be funded through Impact fees and new rates.

We need to develop a river walk with parks, dining, and entertainment - similar to the river walk in Columbus, GA and Chattanooga, TN
-Public Comment

 **LEARN MORE: About the city's implementation of Trails**

Project Example

South Fulton Model Mile

The South Fulton Model Mile trail project was a feasibility study conducted by the City of South Fulton and the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance. This project looked at developing a trail segment from the Shops at Camp Creek, connecting the Wolf Creek Amphitheater, to Enon Road. It developed trail standards and concepts that can be applied to other trails being planned in the City of South Fulton.

Roads and Streets

The City of South Fulton has an extensive roadway system, connecting to a number of major regional interstate arterials. This roadway system is comprised of interstate arterial, arterials, and collectors. Interstate Arterials are designed as major interstates, such as I-20, I-285, and I-85.

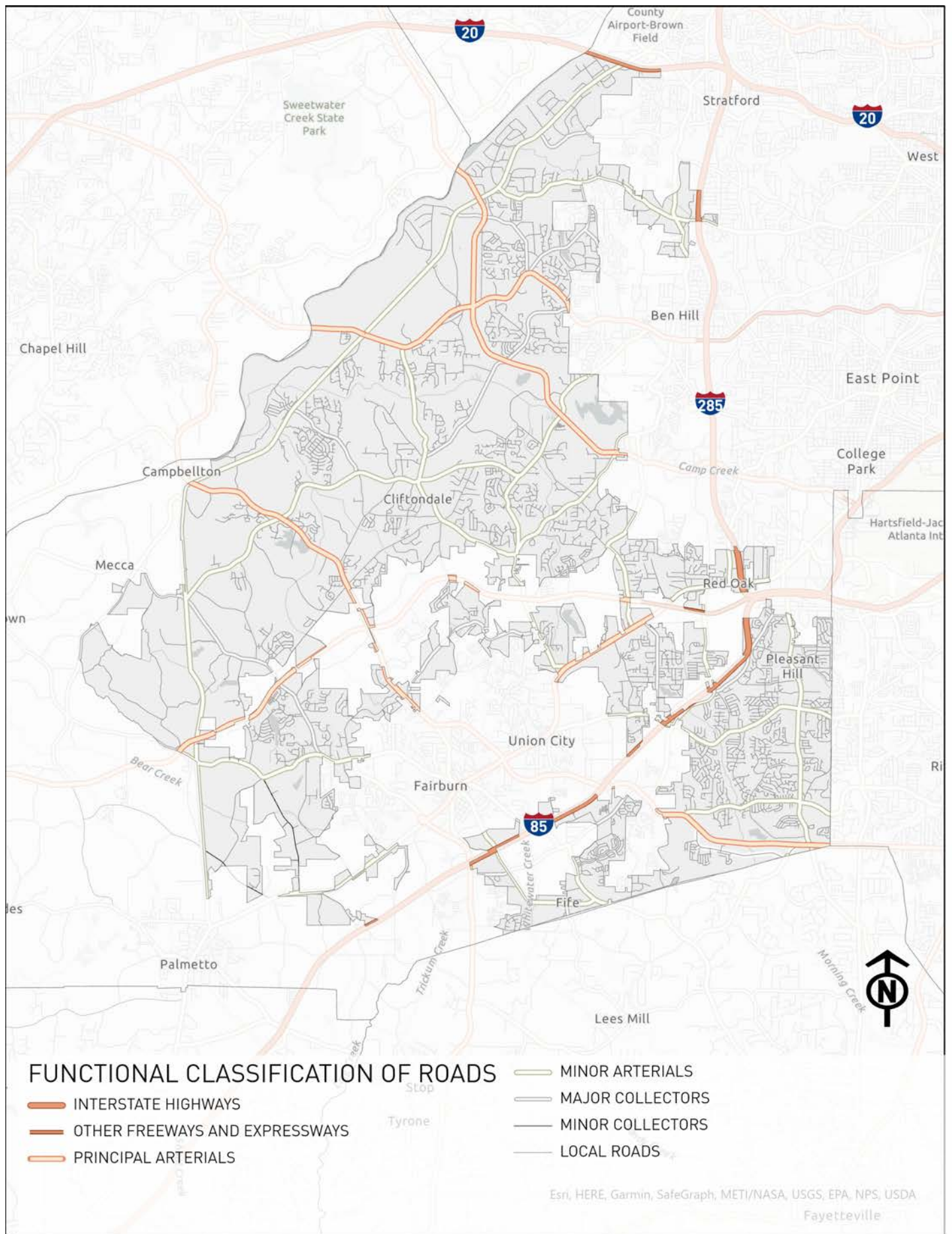
Arterials are defined as streets that interconnect and complement the interstate arterial system and/or serve trips of moderate length, often providing service

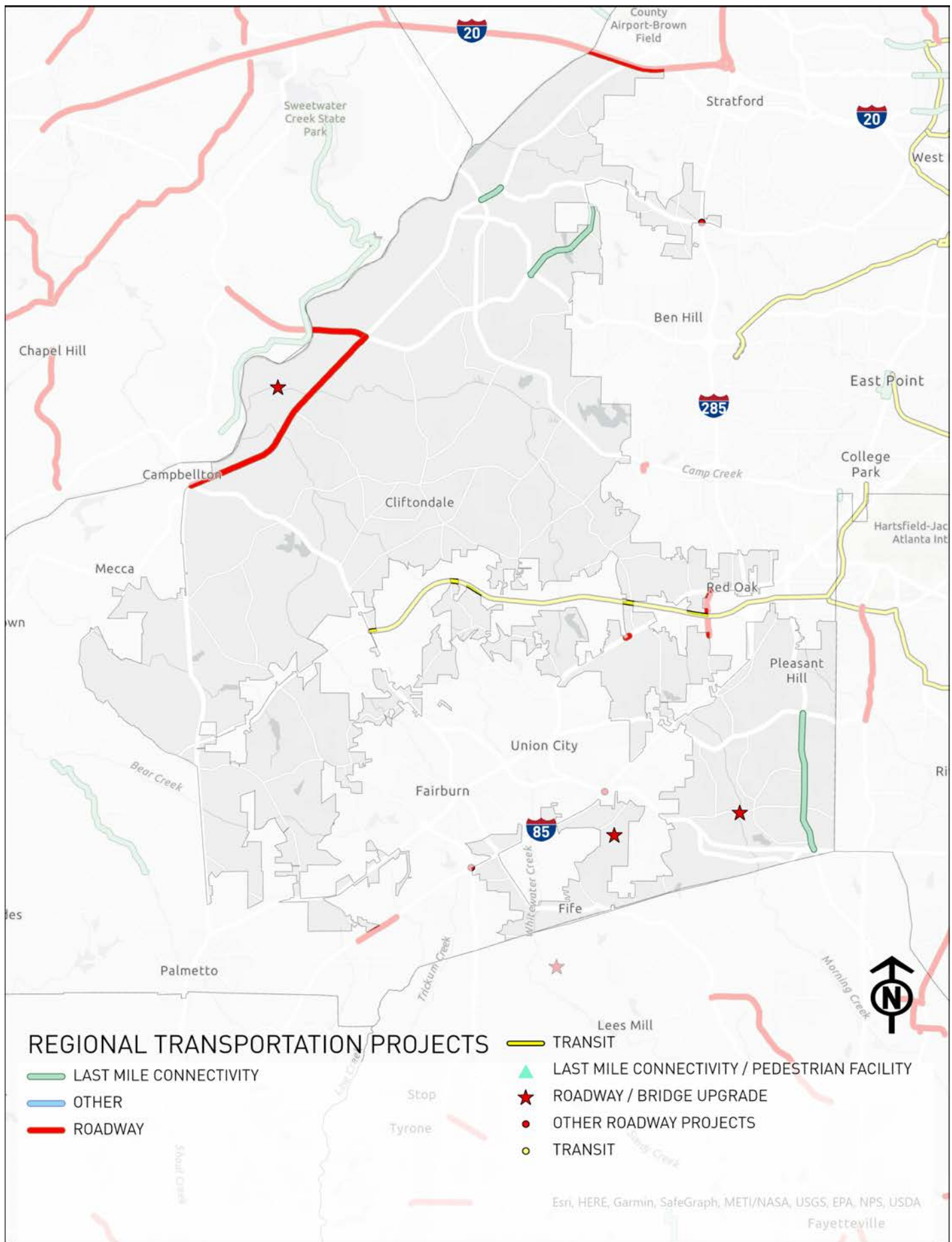
between urban areas and small geographic areas.

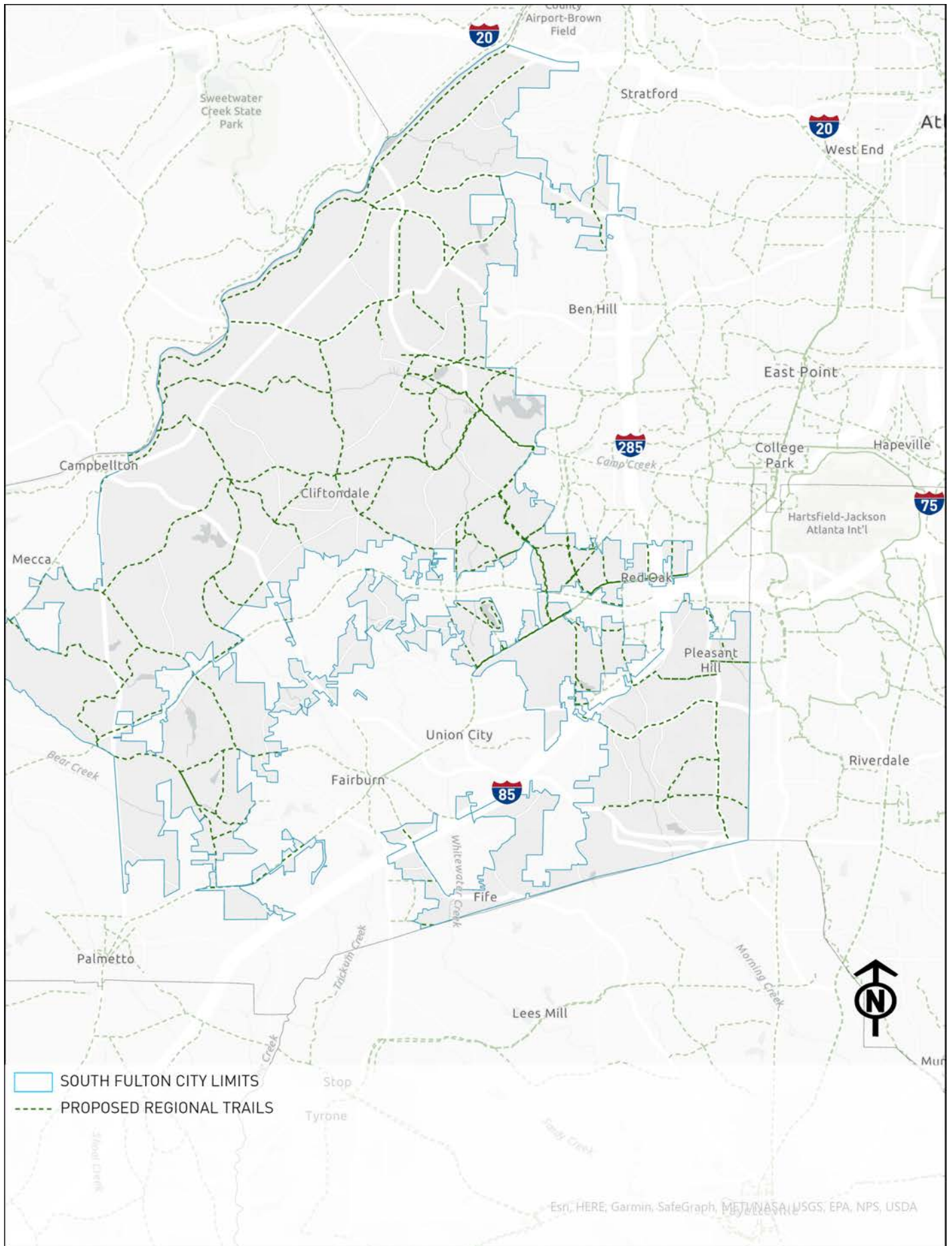
There are approximately 96 miles of arterials. Collectors link the arterial system to the trip origins and destinations. This connection allows for a steady traffic flow and circulation. There are 561 lane miles of functional roads in the City of South Fulton.

The chart below and the map on the following page provide information about the road types for plan review

Name	Classification	Road Type
Bakers Ferry Rd	Collector Street	Local
Cedar Grove Rd	Collector Street	Local
Cochran Mill Rd	Collector Street	Local
Koweta Rd	Collector Street	Local
New Hope Rd	Collector Street	Local
I-20	Interstate Arterial	State
I-285	Interstate Arterial	State
I-285/I-85	Interstate Arterial	State
I-85	Interstate Arterial	State
Rivertown Rd	Major Collector	Local
Bethsaida Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Buffington Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Butner Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Campbellton Fairburn Rd	Minor Arterial	State
Campbellton Rd	Minor Arterial	State
Cascade Palmetto Hwy	Minor Arterial	State
Cascade Rd	Minor Arterial	State
Fairburn Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Fayetteville Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Flat Shoals Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Fulton Industrial Blvd	Minor Arterial	State
Old Fairburn Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Old National Hwy	Minor Arterial	State
Ridge Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Roosevelt Hwy	Minor Arterial	State
Stonewall Tell Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Spence Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Union Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Washington Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Welcome All Rd	Minor Arterial	Local
Wilkerson Mill Rd	Minor Collector	Local
Camp Creek Pkwy	Principal Arterial	State
Jonesboro Rd	Principal Arterial	State
South Fulton Pkwy	Principal Arterial	State







Implementation Actions to Make South Fulton a Great Place

- ❑ Develop a logo for City Street signs or sign toppers that reflect neighborhoods and places
- ❑ Examine Zoning Code for new housing types and styles
- ❑ Host 2-3 business networking events each year with at least one focuses on under 35 workers
- ❑ Develop a commercial property inventory
- ❑ Participate and complete the Georgia Main Street Start-Up Program
- ❑ Partner with organizations to promote South Fulton
- ❑ Develop an Impact Fee Program
- ❑ Implement the model mile trail plan and identify trails opportunities in future development
- ❑ Develop training on planning issues for boards and committees
- ❑ Develop a marketing site to promote economic development sites.
- ❑ Create overlays for key areas within the city including major corridors.
- ❑ Update zoning code to allow for conservation subdivisions,
- ❑ Complete small area plans at activity nodes, including the Fulton Industrial Area.
- ❑ Limit new industrial zones to existing areas
- ❑ Develop a specific Distribution Center zoning category
- ❑ Develop Industrial Development Design Guidelines
- ❑ Continue to monitor neighboring jurisdictions land use plans and seek ways to work together
- ❑ Develop a Grown in South Fulton Label
- ❑ Develop a Façade Improvement Program
- ❑ Introduce lessons on water system and protection acts at South Fulton University
- ❑ Research best practices in environmental conservations strategies and propose new ordinances and policies as needed.
- ❑ Create a city campaign against littering and promoting environmental awareness
- ❑ Add a Historic and Cultural Resources layer to the City's GIS database
- ❑ Evaluate Transportation needs in the 9 Economic Development nodes

Future Land Use

As a first step in creating an appropriate development atmosphere, the City of South Fulton has developed “Character Areas.” These “Character Areas” are intended to ensure compatible and unified development within specified areas of the city.

As described over the next few pages, these Character Areas define the overall land use characteristics in generalized areas of the city, such as density and land-use zoning. A matrix of projects that could be implemented in each character is located at the end of the section.

The Future Land Use Map on the next page guides where each character area is located within the City of South Fulton. Future zoning and development decisions will use the guidance in each character area to determine the appropriateness of the development.

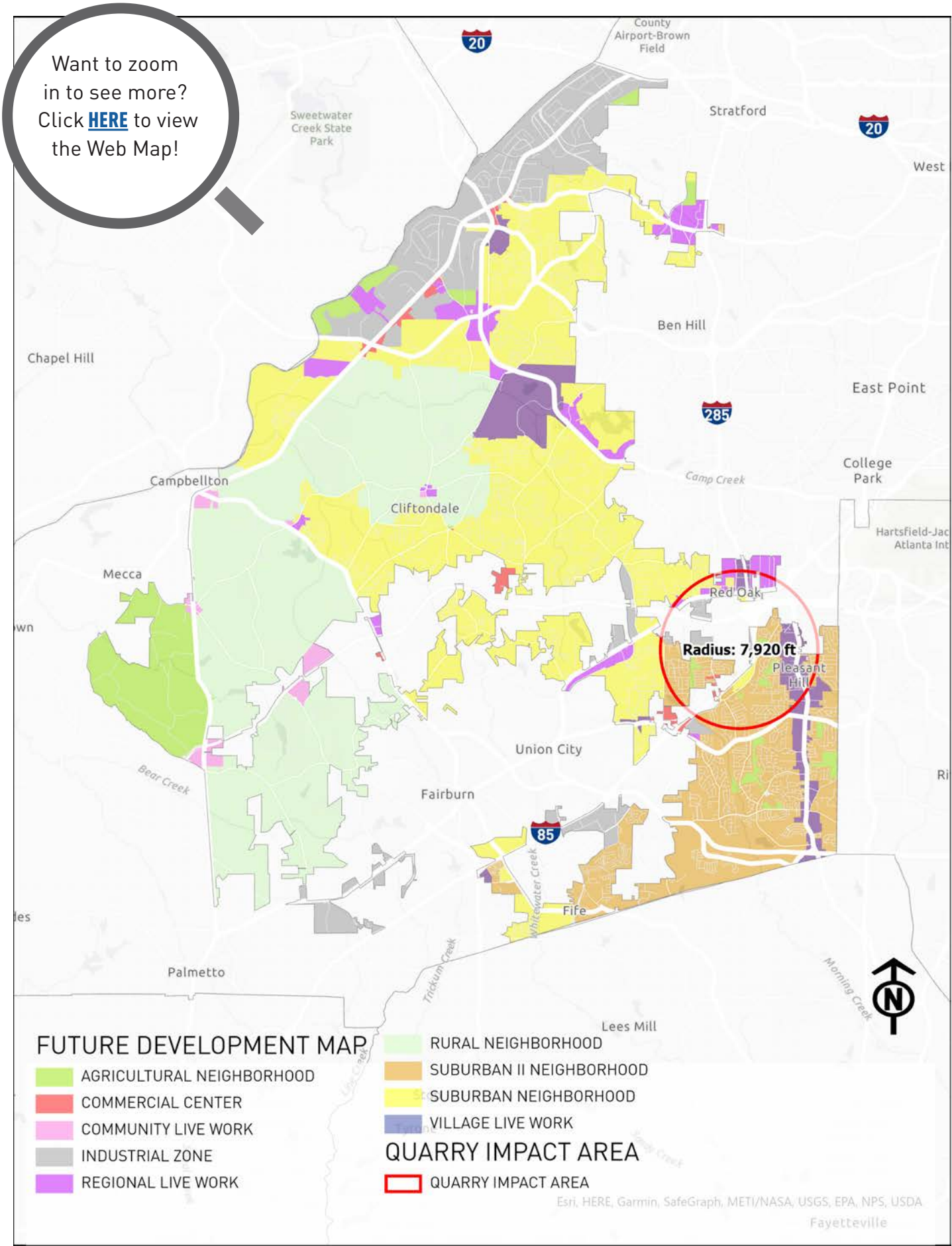
As the City of South Fulton updates its zoning ordinance, this recommendations in the plan should be revised.

South Fulton is growing quite fast. We need to ensure that development is intentional and designed well.

-Public Comment



Want to zoom in to see more?
Click [HERE](#) to view the Web Map!



Agricultural Neighborhood

In the City of South Fulton, the Agricultural Neighborhood Character Area preserves its natural features and bucolic qualities by limiting land disturbances and utilizing conservation development.

The Agricultural Neighborhood Character Area represents the rural land in the City of South Fulton that is defined by agricultural uses and very low-density residential. This area is bounded to the west by the Chattahoochee River, to the south by the city of Chattahoochee Hills, and the east by Cascade-Palmetto Highway. This character area is further defined by the Cedar Grove Agricultural Overlay District. These areas could also be used as future park space within the City of South Fulton.

This area of South Fulton is the furthest from the urbanized area, with property ownership characterized by large acreages. The Agricultural Neighborhood area is also currently without sewer connectivity, which prevents large-scale development from moving into the

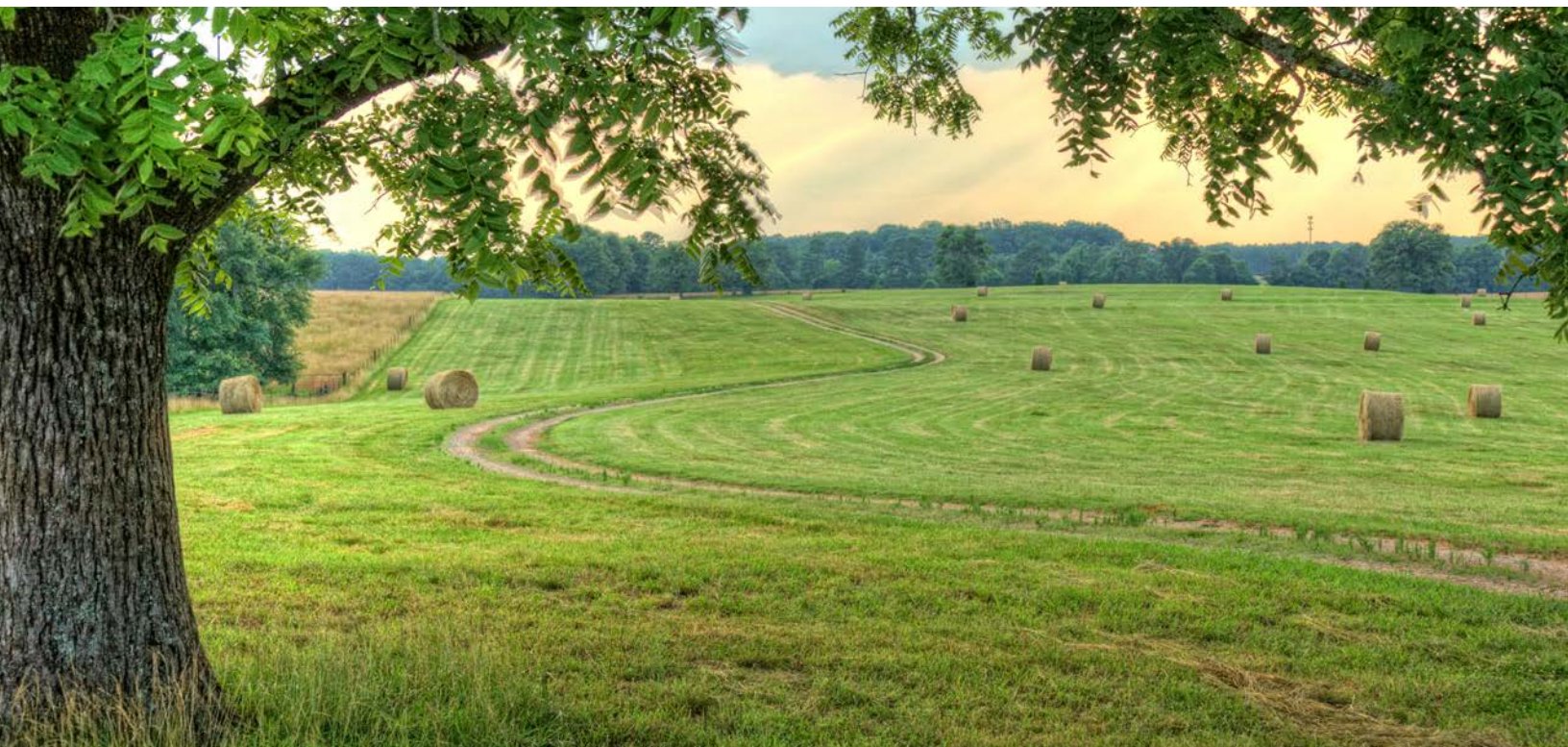
area. The residential character of the area is defined by single-family homes located on individual lots along existing streets. Estate conservation subdivisions are appropriate.

Commercial uses in the Agricultural Neighborhood area consist of largely open land-intensive farming practices that are consistent with its character. The active agricultural uses include horse farms, timber farms, and open pasture. The development of civic uses such as schools and places of worship is appropriate in the Agricultural Neighborhood Character Area provided the necessary public infrastructure is available and in place.



Gross Density
1 Unit or Less per acre

Zoning
AG-1, R-1, R-2, CUP, SH



Rural Neighborhood

The Rural Neighborhood Character Area intends to preserve the primarily rural residential character of City of South Fulton. This area represents a transition between the Agricultural and Suburban Neighborhood Character Areas.

This along with the Suburban Neighborhood Character Area is the majority of character areas in the City of South Fulton. This character area includes the community of Cedar Grove and portions of Clifftondale.

The Rural Neighborhood Character area is characterized by low to medium density residential houses, with established single-family homes on large lots and newer traditional style subdivisions with larger lots. Estate conservation subdivisions are appropriate. Public infrastructure is available, but service may not be extended to all properties.

This Character Area intends to protect the existing natural features by conservation subdivision

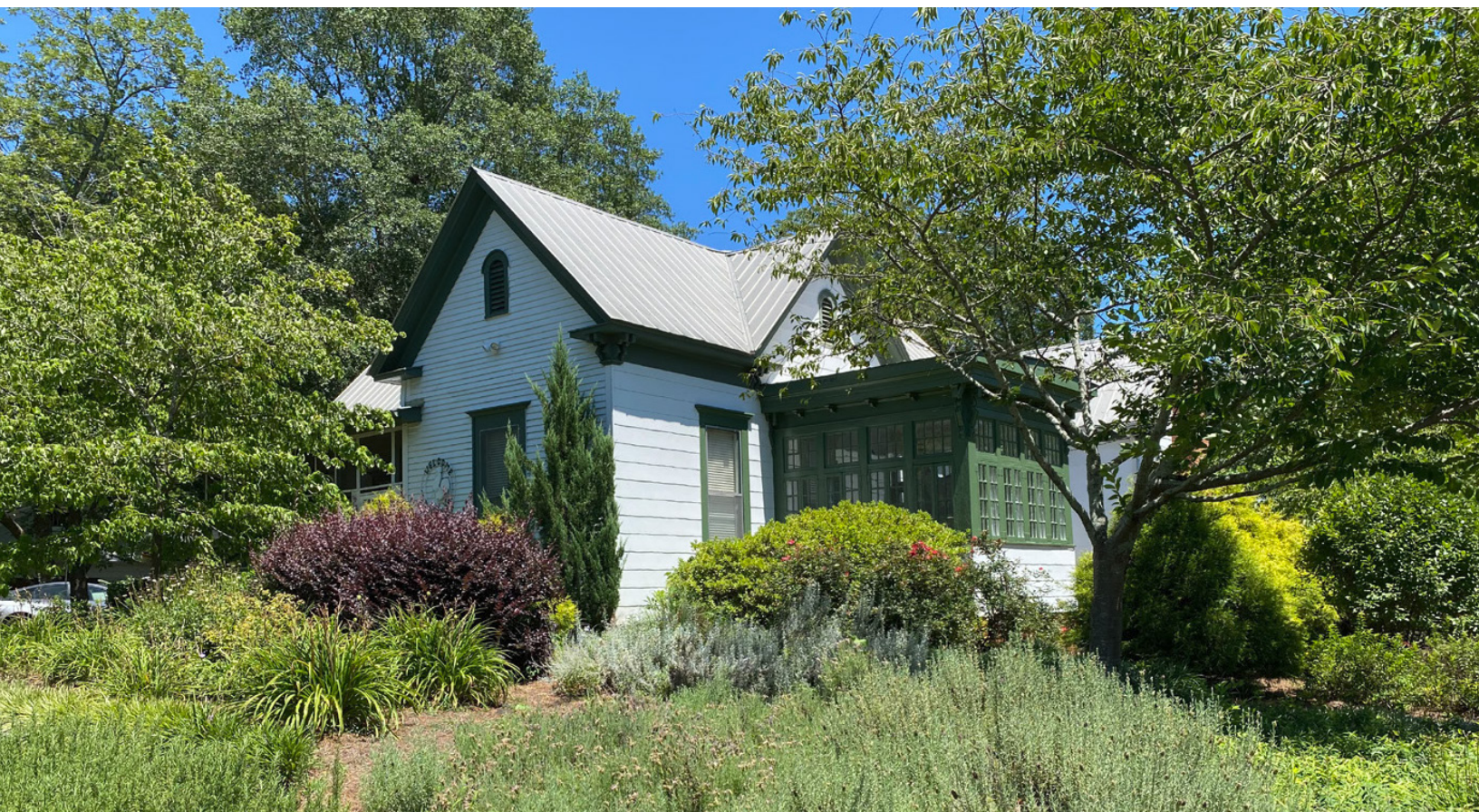
development. Low to medium residential development that maintains the rural character in scale and design is appropriate.

Other types of development allowed in the Rural Neighborhood include civic uses such as schools, places of worship, community centers, and facilities existing streets.



Gross Density
1-2 Units or Less per acre

Zoning
R-2A, CUP, NUP, SH



Suburban Neighborhood

The Suburban Neighborhood Character Area intends to provide a wide diversity of housing types and affordability in the City of South Fulton while preserving the surrounding natural, agricultural, and rural areas. The area is further subdivided into two levels, Suburban I and Suburban II, which represent a transitional density from the less intense uses near rural areas to the more intensive suburban uses that are older and have a higher density.

The Suburban Neighborhoods are located closest to urbanized areas and are comprised of medium-density residential housing. Included in this area are the communities of Sandtown, Cascade, Old National, and portions of Cliftondale. Public infrastructure is available. This Character Area has the highest percentage of existing developed land.

Other types of development allowed in Suburban Neighborhood include civic uses such as schools, places of worship, community centers, and facilities. Within the Suburban II Neighborhood, Character mixed-use developments may be allowed to encourage redevelopment of older areas. I



Gross Density
Suburban I
Up to 3 Units per acre
Suburban II
Up to 8 Units per acre

Zoning
Suburban I
R-3,R-3A,R-4A, CUP, NUP, SH

Suburban II
R-3,R-3A,R-4, R-4A, R-5.R-5A,TR, MIX, NUP



Village Live-Work

The Village Live-Work Character Area is to provide a balanced mix of commercial, office, and residential uses at intersections and along corridors within rural South Fulton. The designated areas are along crossroads of major roads in the Rural Neighborhood or Agricultural Neighborhood Character Areas. A mix of uses is allowed within this area. The Village Live-Work Character Area is on the size and scale of South Fulton's historic communities, including the historic community of Campbellton.

Within the Village-Live Work Character Areas, vertical and horizontal mixing of uses is appropriate, including medium density residential housing, small scale commercial services such as banks, drug stores, and small multi-tenant shopping centers. Structures within the local designation can also be repurposed as office, commercial spaces or single and multi-family housing.



**Gross Density
Residential
Up to 6 units per acre**



**Commercial
Up to 11,000 square feet
per tenant**

**Zoning
MIX**



The Campbellton Crossroads Plan provides recommendations for future styles that are applicable to other Village Live-Work Areas

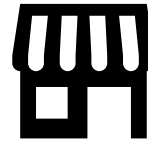
Community Live-Work

The Community Live-Work Character Area provides opportunities within the City of South Fulton to provide areas of mixed uses bto provide services within the Suburban Charecter Area. Located at major intersections, these areas are the focus areas for small area plans.

Within the Community Live Work Character Areas, vertical and horizontal mixing of uses is appropriate, which includes medium and high-density residential housing such as duplexes, and townhomes. Commercial services such as banks, drug stores, offices, and multi-tenant shopping centers are also appropriate types of development. Structures within the Community Live Work designation can also be repurposed as office, commercial spaces, or single and multi-family housing.



**Gross Density
Residential
Up to 12 units per acre**



**Commercial
Up to 40,000 square feet
per tenant**

**Zoning
MIX, C-1, C-2, O-I, SH**



Regional Live-Work

The Regional Live-Work Character Area provides a balanced mix of uses along Old National Highway, and other key areas within the City of South Fulton. The Regional Live Work Character Areas contain the areas of highest density within the City of South Fulton.

Within the Regional Live-Work Character Areas, vertical and horizontal mixed-use is appropriate and is strongly encouraged. This includes high-density housing options, Commercial shopping that is developed in a walkable nature is encouraged. Office uses are also encouraged.

Within these areas, the City of South Fulton will develop small area plans to further guide development that establishes recommendations for the character and vision for each Regional Live-Work Character Area.



**Gross Density
Residential
Up to 20 units per acre**



**Commercial
Up to 100,000 square feet
per tenant**

**Zoning
MIX, C-1, C-2, O-1, SH**



Commercial Center

The Commercial Center Character Area provides opportunities for commercial development in areas that should not contain residential uses which would be recommended in the Live-Work Character areas. The Commercial Center Character Area is designed to be used as a buffer between residential and industrial uses. These areas should also provide neighborhood services such as health care, banks, and small shopping centers, including grocery stores.

New developments within the Commercial Center Character Area should be designed in a walkable nature with shared parking, and streetscapes, with multi-modal transportation options.



Density
Residential
Not Allowed

Zoning
C-1, C-2, O-I



Industrial Zone

The purpose of the Industrial Zone Character Area is to preserve the integrity of industrial areas in the City of South Fulton and the impact on surrounding neighborhoods. These areas have the highest intensity of industrial uses which require the most stringent regulations and site control. Most industrial uses require large, landscaped buffers, and separation from incompatible uses. New Industrial development should have high-quality design standards to enhance the area and lessen the impact of the development.

Industrial parks and stand-alone industrial developments, and supportive commercial services are the typical types of development allowed in the Industrial Zone Character Area. The uses can include wholesale trade distribution centers, manufacturing, and large-scale distribution centers. Maintaining the integrity of industrial areas is important to the City of South Fulton while balancing the impact on surrounding uses.



**Density
Residential
Not Allowed**

**Zoning
O-I, M-1, M-2**



Quarry Impact Area Overlay

The current City of South Fulton Zoning Code states that no portion of a proposed residentially zoned or used property shall be located within a 1½ mile radius of the property line of an existing active quarry. A variance is required for any proposed residential zoning within the 1½ mile radius.

The 1½ mile radius has been overlaid on the Future Development Map for the active quarry on Buffington Road. Within the 1½ radius area large sections have been developed and/or suggested for residential use by past and current Land Use Plan Maps and policies. In order to stabilize the existing residential neighborhoods within the 1½ mile radius, residential development consistent with the suggestion of the Plan Map is encouraged with an approved variance to provided plans for new residential construction meet the following guidelines:

- Within ¼ mile of an active quarry no new residential development is appropriate.
- Between ¼ to ½ mile of an active quarry: no new residential development is appropriate without documented scientific data that clearly indicates that there will be no negative impacts on residential properties from quarry blasting and digging operations.
- Between ¾ miles and 1½ miles of an active quarry: residential construction plans are to required to mitigate any anticipated negative impacts from quarry blasting and digging operations and be certified by a certified structural engineer.

A person is rock climbing a large, light-colored rock face. The climber is wearing a blue t-shirt, dark shorts, and black and orange climbing shoes. They are positioned on the left side of the rock face, with their hands and feet visible. The background is a dense forest with green trees and a large tree trunk on the left. The overall scene is outdoors and appears to be a natural rock climbing area.

CHAPTER 7

Community Work Program

Community Work Program

The purpose of the community work program is to outline actionable steps the city can take to implement the comprehensive plan. The goals and projects identified in the section, Building an Equitable South Fulton and Making South Fulton a Great Place, and other city initiatives are listed in with a proposed implementation schedule and estimated costs

Project	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost
Develop a logo for City Street signs or sign toppers			X	X		Public Works	\$5,000 and Annual Maintenance Local Funds
Examine Zoning Code for new housing types and styles	X	X	X			CDRA	Staff Time
Host 2-3 business networking events each year with at least one focuses on under 35 workers		X	X	X		Economic Development	Staff Time
Develop a commercial property inventory			X			CDRA and Economic Development	Staff Time
Participate and complete the Georgia Main Street Start-Up Program	X	X	X			Economic Development	Staff Time
Partner with organizations to promote South Fulton	X	X	X	X		Economic Development	Staff Time
Develop an Impact Fee Program	X	X				CDRA	\$100,000 Local Funds
Implement the model mile trail plan and identify trails opportunities in future development		X				Public Works and CDRA	\$5 million Local Funds TSPL0ST ARC-TAP
Develop training on planning issues for boards and committees	X	X				CDRA	Staff Time
Develop a marketing site to promote economic development sites.		X				Economic Development	Staff Time
Create overlays for key areas within the city including major corridors.	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	\$100,000 Local Funds and ARC

Project	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost
Update zoning code to allow for conservation subdivisions,		X				CDRA	Staff Time
Complete small area plans at activity nodes, including the Fulton Industrial Area.	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	\$175,000 per area Local Funds and ARC
Limit new industrial zones to existing areas	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Develop a specific Distribution Center zoning category	X	X				CDRA	Staff Time
Develop Industrial Development Design Guidelines		X				CDRA	\$75,000 Local Funds
Continue to monitor neighboring jurisdictions land use plans and seek ways to work together	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Develop a Grown in South Fulton Label			X			CDRA and Economic Development	Staff Time
Develop a Façade Improvement Program				X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Promote homeownership opportunities with city resources		X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Explore exemptions for property tax for certain residents.			X		X	City Manager	Staff Time
Develop a City of South Fulton Transportation Plan			X			Public Works	\$500,000

Project	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost
Develop Farmers Markets in Red Oak and Old National Areas or within Community Parks			X	X		CDRA and Economic Development	Staff Time
Create a Community Agriculture Plan	X	X				CDRA	\$50,000 Local Funds & Grants
Participate in the Georgia Initiative in Community Housing		X	X	X		CDRA	Staff Time
Develop business incubator space	X	X				Economic Development	Staff Time
Complete an updated Historic resources Survey specific to South Fulton			X			CDRA	Staff Time
Add a Historic and Cultural Resources layer to the City's GIS database				X		CDRA	Staff Time
Collect photos and stories to save in archives for future generations	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Implement and coordinate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the Comprehensive Plan	X	X	X			CDRA	Staff Time
Incorporate public art into projects and the new Town Center		X	X			CDRA and Economic Development	Staff Time
Partner with organizations to promote arts and placemaking.		X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Create a brownfield/ greyfield program			X	X		CDRA	Staff Time

Project	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost
Develop a City Housing Strategy			X	X		CDRA	\$200,000, Local Funds and ARC
Create a housing inventory		X	X			CDRA	Staff Time
Develop a Pedestrian Safety Plan and Street Standards including Complete Streets Standards		X	X			CDRA	\$150,000 Local and ARC
Develop a creative bus shelter program for major transit routes			X	X		CDRA and Public Works	\$10,000 per shelter Local Funds
Continue South Fulton University and examine ways to incorporate the Comprehensive Plan into the curriculum	X	X	X	X	X	CDRA	Staff Time
Develop a Community Engagement Playbook that standardizes Community Engagement for Plans and Projects	X	X				CDRA	Staff Time
Develop an online development projects map.		X				CDRA and GIS	\$12,000 Local Funds
Conduct an environmental assessment study to locate environmentally adverse items in the community and develop mitigation strategies.		X				CDRA	Staff Time
Create a city campaign against littering and promoting environmental awareness			X			CDRA	Staff Time
Introduce lessons on water system and protection acts at South Fulton University and consider presentations at council work sessions to promote awareness.	X					CDRA	Staff Time
Research best practices in environmental conservations strategies and propose new ordinances and policies as needed.	X	X	X			CDRA	Staff Time

Images

Unless cited all images were from ARC or the City of South Fulton