

DATE: October 18, 2022

TO: Mayor Ollie Clemons Jr., City of Austell
ATTN TO: Christine Dobbs, Asst. Director Community Affairs Dept., City of Austell
FROM: Mike Alexander, Director, ARC Center for Livable Communities

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has received the following proposal and is initiating a regional review to seek comments from potentially impacted jurisdictions and agencies. The ARC requests your comments related to the proposal not addressed by the Commission's regional plans and policies.

Name of Proposal: 2022 City of Austell Comprehensive Plan Update

Description: A regional review of the draft 2022 City of Austell Comprehensive Plan Update.

Submitting Local Government: City of Austell

Action Under Consideration: Approval

Date Opened: October 18, 2022

Deadline for Comments: November 8, 2022

THE FOLLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES ARE RECEIVING NOTICE OF THIS REVIEW:

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY
CITY OF SMYRNA
CITY OF SOUTH FULTON

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE
GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
CITY OF POWDER SPRINGS
CITY OF DOUGLASVILLE
PAULDING COUNTY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
COBB COUNTY
DOUGLAS COUNTY

Review information is attached.

For questions, please contact Donald Shockey at dshockey@atlantaregional.org or 470-378-1531. If ARC staff do not receive comments from you on or before **Tuesday November 8, 2022**, we will assume that your agency has no comments and will close the review. Comments via e-mail are strongly encouraged. **The ARC review website is located at <https://atlantaregional.org/community-development/comprehensive-planning/plan-reviews/>.**

OLLIE B. CLEMONS, JR.
MAYOR

September 13, 2022

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree Street NE
Suite 100
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

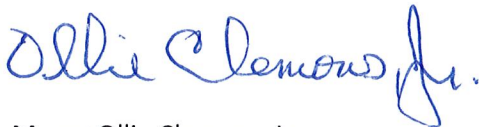
The City of Austell has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and have taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Christine Dobbs at 770-944-4309 or cdobbs@austellga.gov.

Sincerely,



Mayor Ollie Clemons, Jr.
City of Austell

Enclosures



CITY OF AUSTELL

2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



THE CITY OF
Austell
GEORGIA

DRAFT
DATE

prepared by the

ARC

Atlanta Regional Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Steering Committee

Derek Caffé - Resident, Real Estate Developer, & Austell Business Association Member (Economic Development Practitioner Representative)
Ollie Clemons, Jr. - Resident and Mayor (Governing Authority Representative)
Natalie Coleman - Resident
Christine Dobbs - Assistant Director of Community Affairs
Malcom Lewis – Business Owner (Economic Development Practitioner Representative)
Andrew Lundstrom - Business Owner (Economic Development Practitioner Representative)
Rob Register - General Manager of Austell Gas System
Margaret Schwenke - Resident and Business Owner (Economic Development Practitioner Representative)
Sarah Shurden - Resident, Realtor, Planning & Zoning Commissioner, & Austell Business Association Member (Economic Development Practitioner Representative)
Darrell Weaver - Director of Community Affairs

City of Austell Staff

Christine Dobbs - Assistant Director of Community Affairs
Darrell Weaver - Director of Community Affairs

Atlanta Regional Commission Staff

Mollie Bogle - Project Manager
Bonnie Lapwood
Tanning Nyman
Ryan Schlom



This document was prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos were taken by City of Austell staff.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

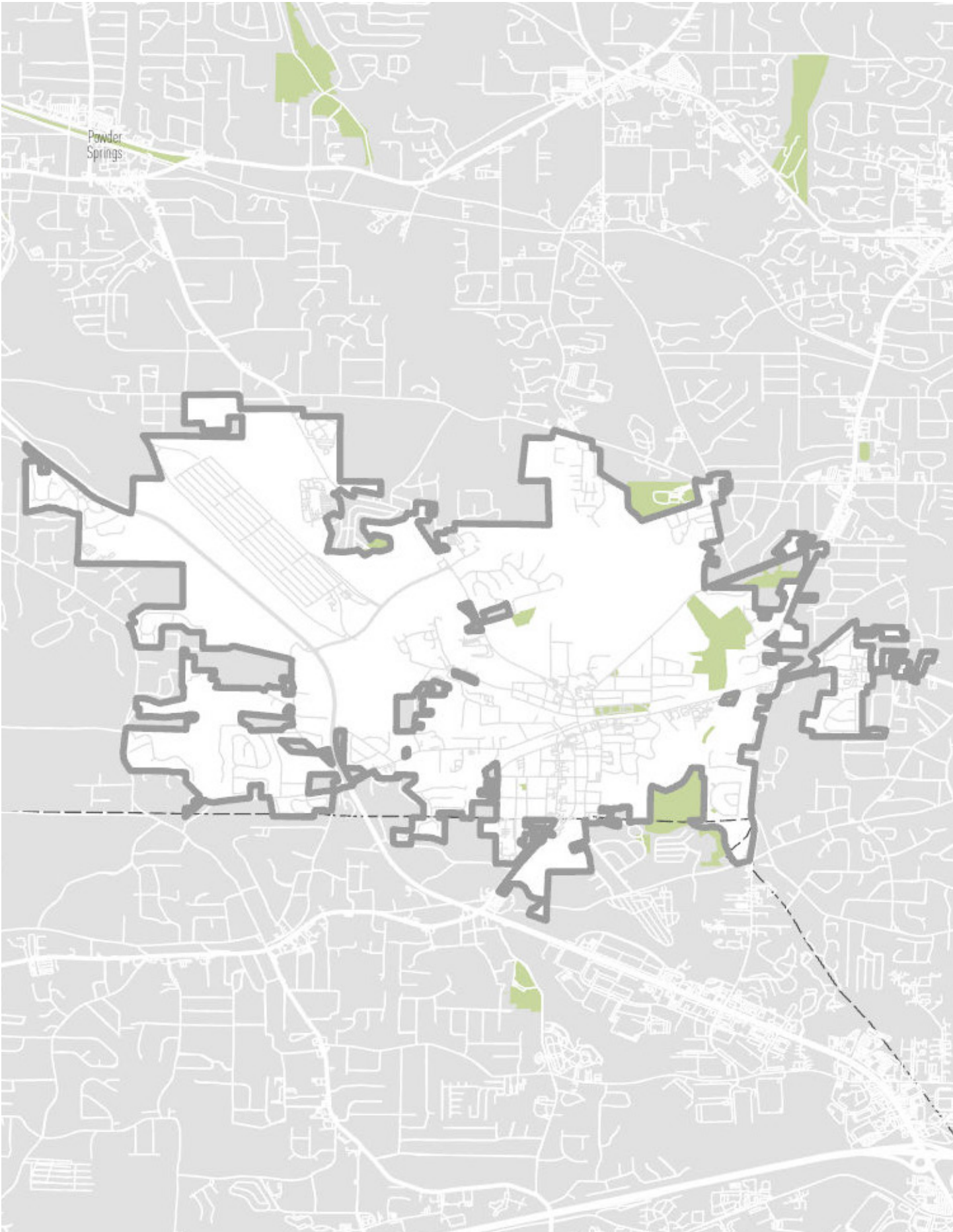
Designed to guide the future actions of a community, a Comprehensive Plan presents a vision for progress and provides a framework for the execution of the vision. The Comprehensive Plan is aimed at guiding the city on investment planning and organization to promote quality of life to the citizens by provision of adequate infrastructure and amenities. Also acknowledged as the master plan, the document highlights issues, needs and opportunities of a community, and provides long-range goals and objectives. This development agenda focusses on providing viable goals, timelines, and estimated costs for ensuring an economically resilient, strong, and salubrious community.



Austell embraces innovation, opportunity, and New Urbanism and strives to be a city of opportunity with dynamic communities and a small-town atmosphere. Austell aims to revitalize itself by creating attractions and bringing growth prospects for businesses and citizens.

The most recent Comprehensive Plan for the City of Austell was adopted in 2017 and ranged for the years 2017-2021. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs mandates every city to provide an update to the Comprehensive Plan every five years to maintain the Qualified Local Government (QLG) status of the city and continue to receive funding for projects within the city.

This document has been shaped by combined efforts of the City Council, Austell Department of Community Affairs, Stakeholders and active public participation and delves into the current advancement of the City and makes efforts to yield prospective opportunities for the City.



CHAPTER 1

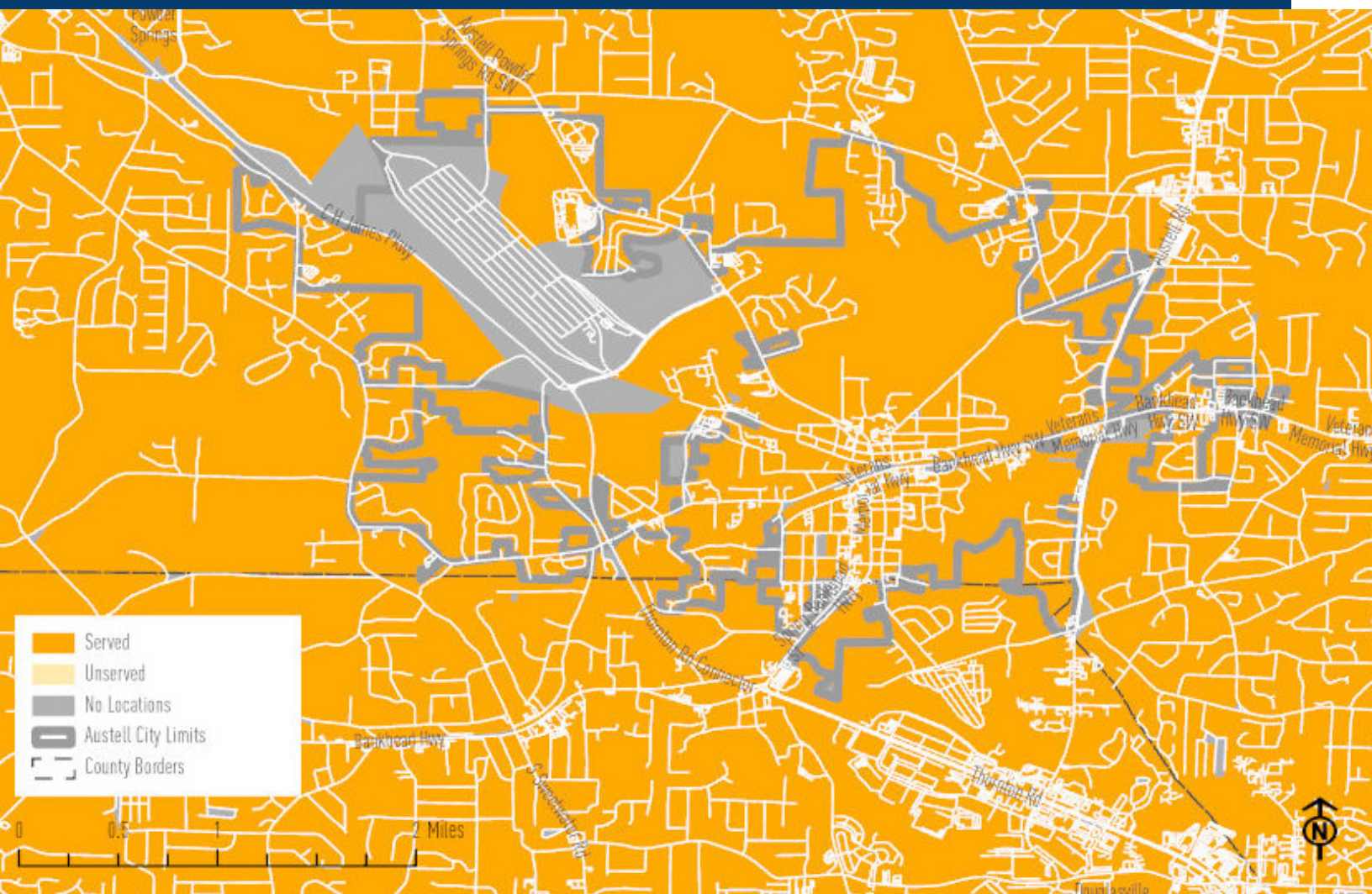
DATA & DEMOGRAPHICS

BROADBAND ACCESS

According to the most recent available data from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Georgia Broadband Center, <1% of households and businesses in Cobb County were unserved by broadband as of 2021. The visual below illustrates that the majority of Austell is served by broadband. Unserved pockets may be representative of extensive surface parking, undeveloped lots, or simply older developments [Map 1. Broadband Access]. *Note: Statistics are based on a fixed, terrestrial broadband definition of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up, and where the broadband service is available to more than 80% of locations in a census block. Census blocks that did not meet this definition are delineated as 'Unserved.'*

City officials should also consider pursuing state certification as a Broadband Ready Community or designation of facilities and developments as Georgia Broadband Ready Community Sites. Broadband Ready Community Designation demonstrates that a local unit of government has taken steps to reduce obstacles to broadband infrastructure investment by amending their comprehensive plan to include the promotion of the deployment broadband services and adopting a broadband model ordinance. Any facility or development in Georgia that offers broadband services at a rate of not less than 1 gigabit per second in the download stream to end users is eligible for the Broadband Ready Site Designation.

MAP 1. BROADBAND ACCESS

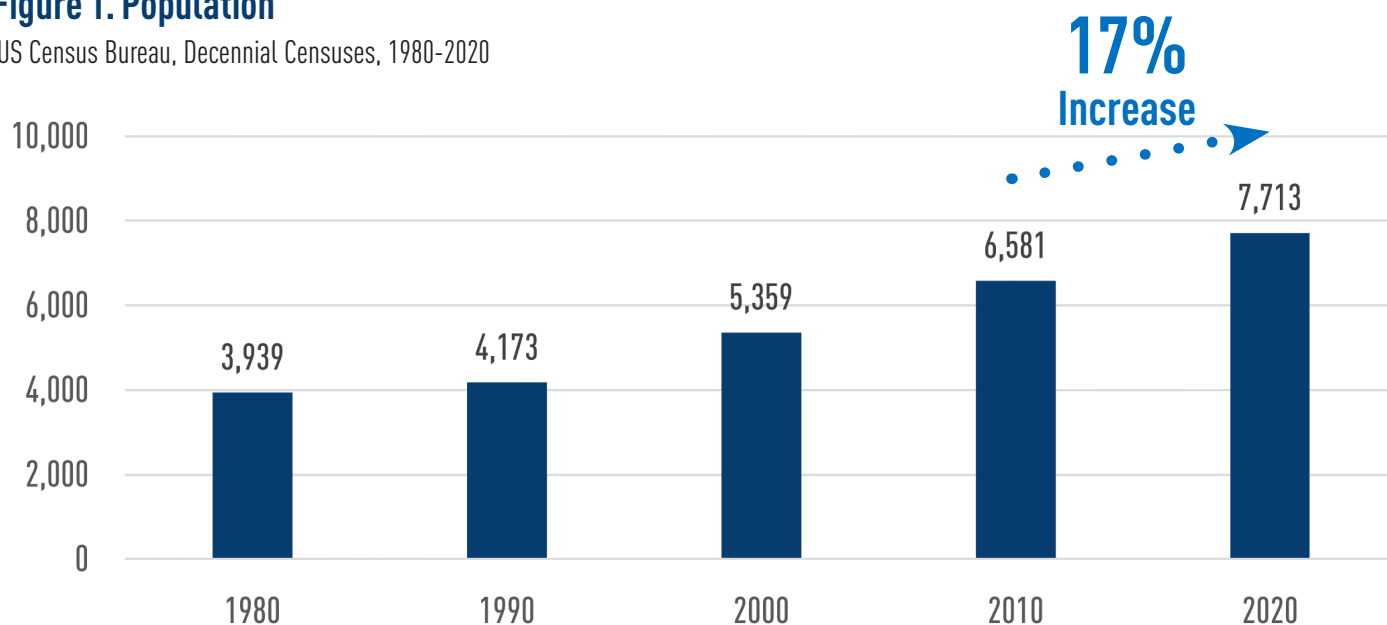


DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Austell is continuing to see population growth with a 17% increase between 2010 and 2020 adding over 1,100 new residents for a total of 7,713 residents [Figure 1. Population Change]. While Austell's population has grown moderately, some nearby cities have grown considerably [Figure 2. Population Comparison]. The city's median age of 32.9 is a little lower than Cobb County's at 37.3 [Figure 3. Age Distribution].

Figure 1. Population

US Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses, 1980-2020



**AUSTELL'S POPULATION GREW BY OVER 1,100 NEW RESIDENTS
BETWEEN 2010 AND 2020.**

Figure 2. Population Comparison

US Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses, 2000-2019

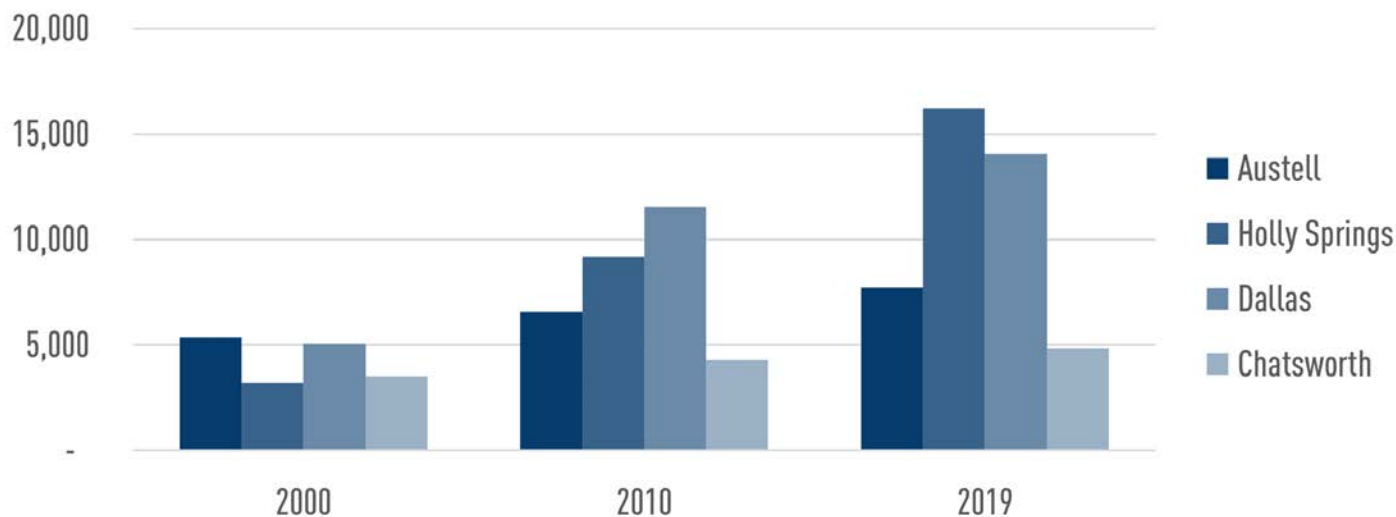
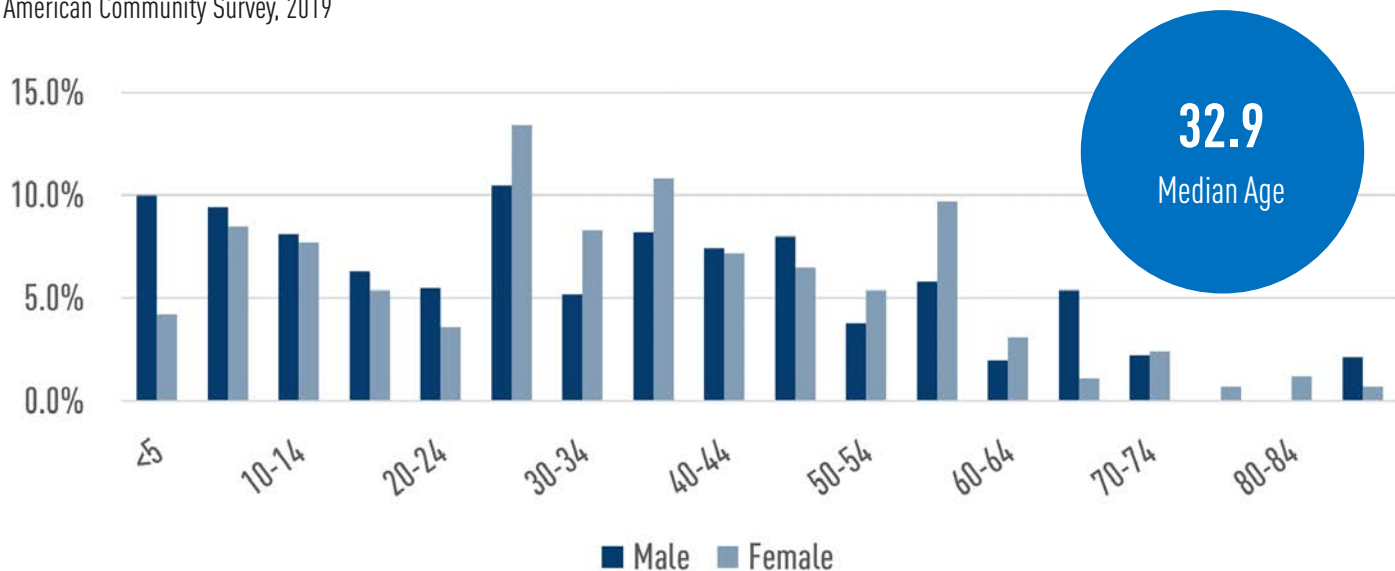


Figure 3. Age Distribution

American Community Survey, 2019

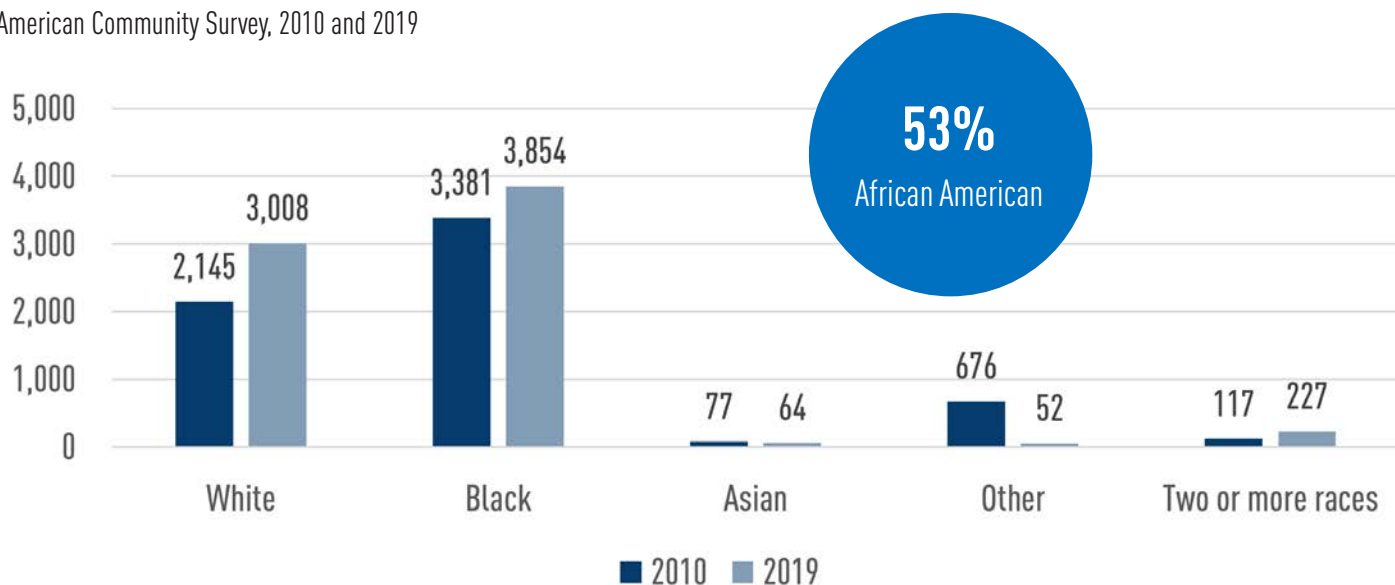


Between 2010 and 2019, Austell's racial composition made a few notable changes [Figure 4. Racial Composition]. The proportion of White residents increased by over 8% from 33.5% in 2010 to 41.7% in 2019 while the population not identifying as White, Black, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Native American decreased almost 10% from 10.6% in 2010 to 0.7% in 2019. In addition, the percentage of residents of any race identified as Latinx or Hispanic also decreased by over 2% from 14.4% in 2010 to 12.2% in 2019.

Austell's racial composition is fairly similar to that of the 11-county region as a whole. Notably, the City is home to a larger proportion of Black residents (53%) than the region (28%). In addition, the region is roughly 11.7% Latinx or Hispanic, while Austell's population is roughly 12.2% Hispanic.

Figure 4. Racial Composition

American Community Survey, 2010 and 2019



HOUSING TRENDS

Austell's tenure and occupancy rates have risen steadily with a 17.6% increase in owner-occupied rates, a 31.6% increase in rental rates, and a 44.6% increase in vacancy rates between 2010 and 2019 [Figure 5. Housing Tenure]. There is a 76% difference between the number of family households (1,519) and nonfamily households (679) in 1-unit structures [Figure 6. Household Composition]. The same household compositions in 2-or-more-unit structures and mobile homes and all other types of units is relatively similar.

Figure 5. Housing Tenure

American Community Survey, 2010 and 2019

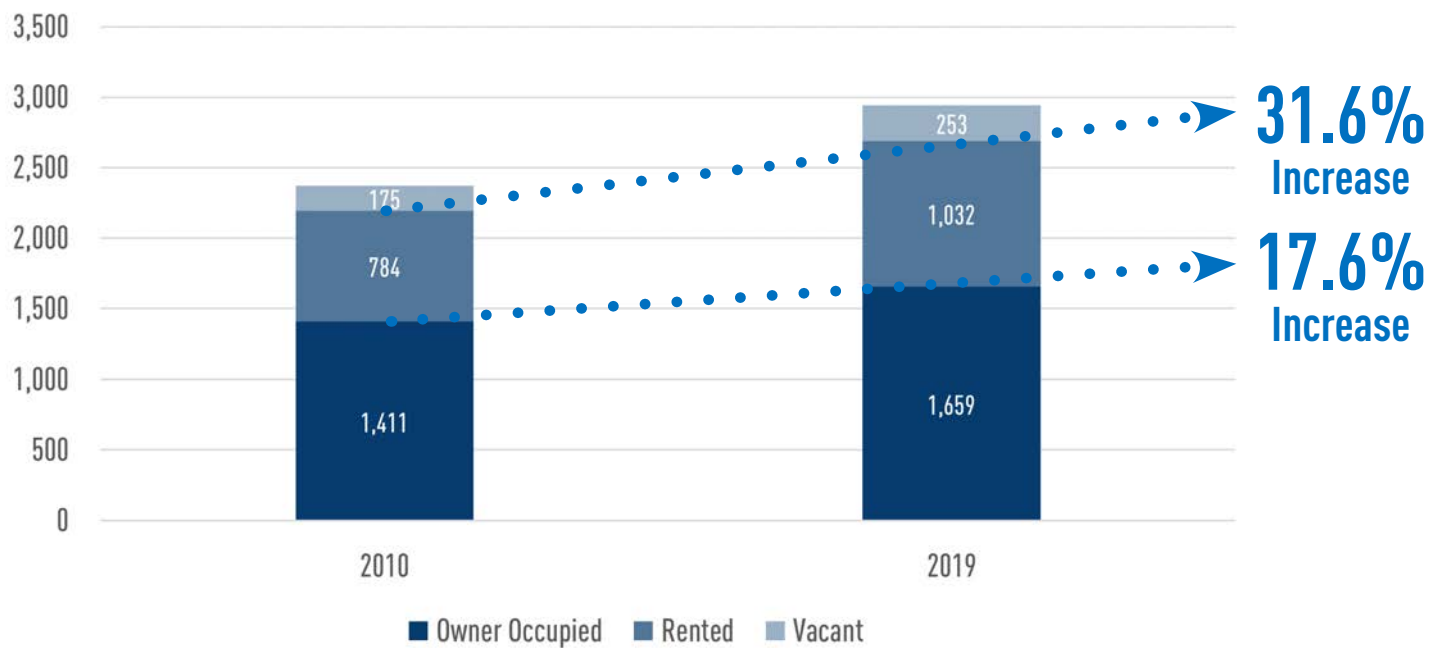
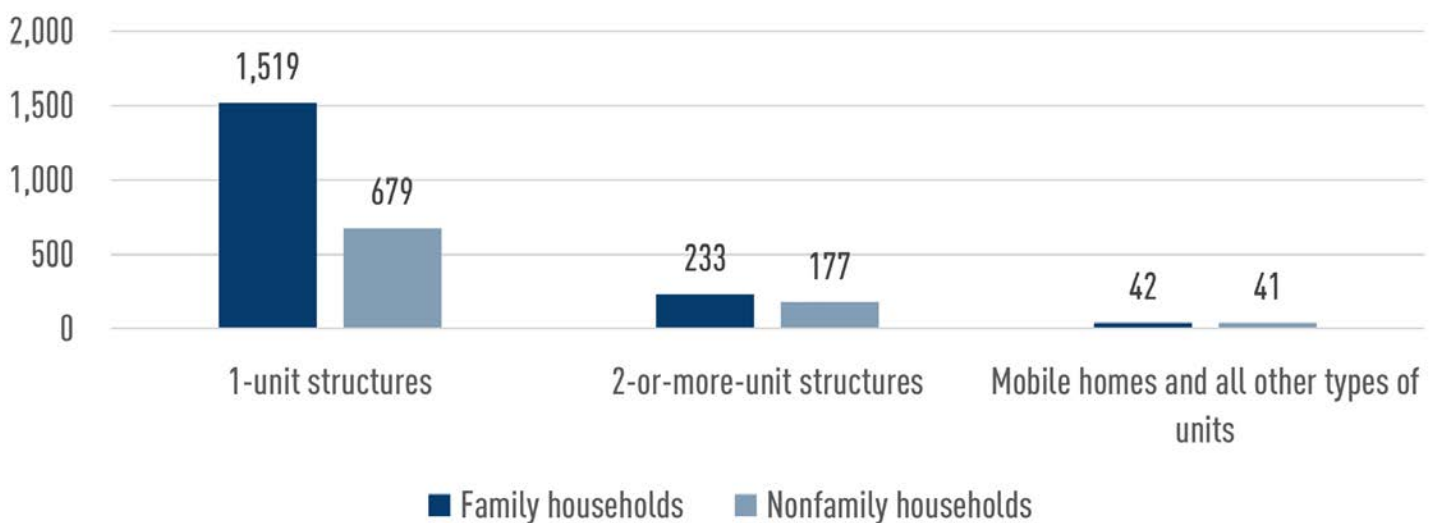


Figure 6. Household Composition

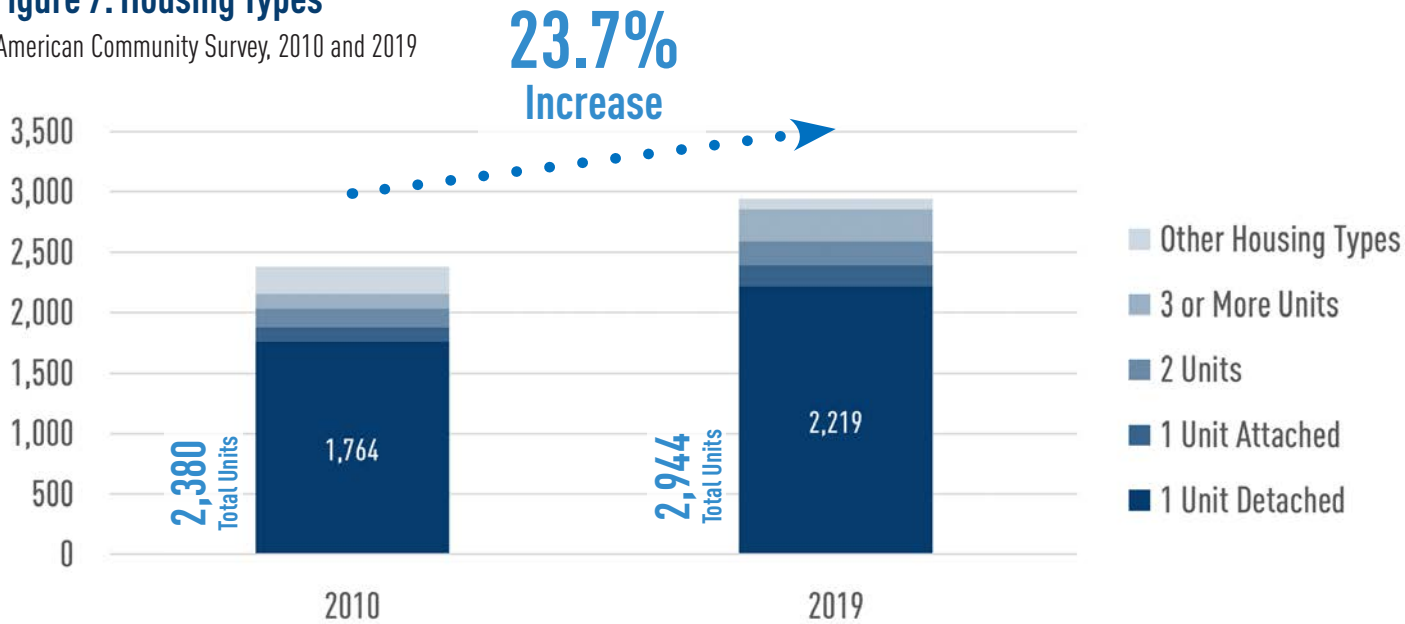
American Community Survey, 2010 and 2019



Austell has increased its housing stock by 23.7% or 564 units since 2010 [Figure 7. Housing Types]. *Note: Due to sample sizes, the breakdown of housing units by structure type should be considered rough estimates.*

Figure 7. Housing Types

American Community Survey, 2010 and 2019

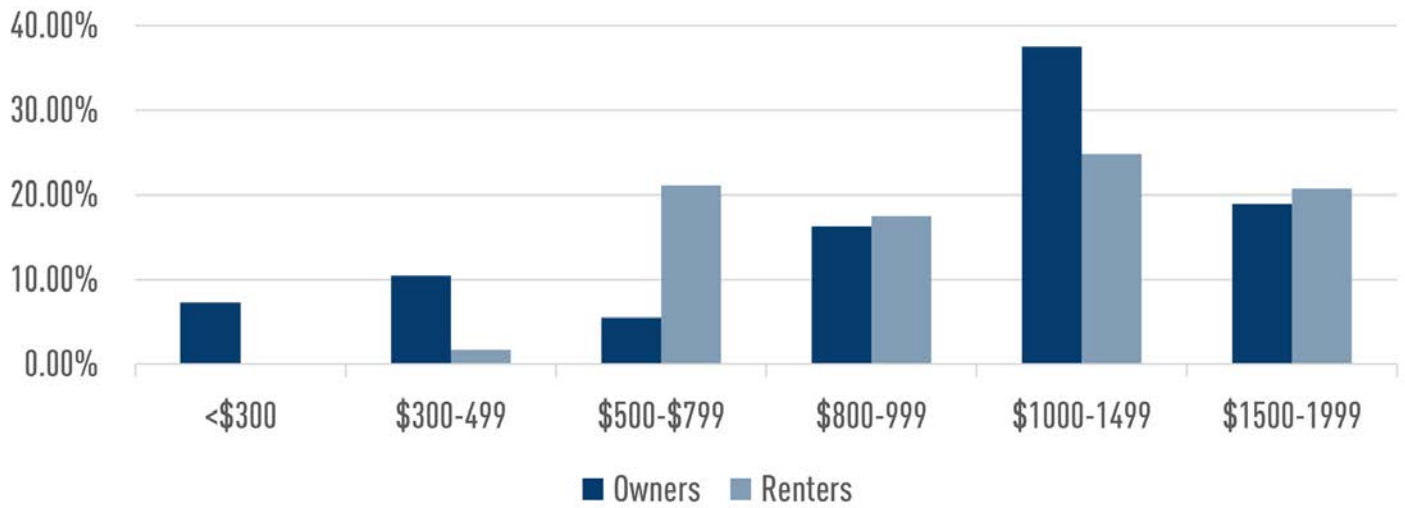


The median income of renters (\$57,007) is less than 50% the median income for owners (\$122,643). However, the largest percentage of owners (29.4%) and renters (30.8%) both make between \$25,000 and \$49,999 [Figure 8. Household Income Distribution].

**THE MEDIAN INCOME OF RENTERS (\$57,007) IS LESS THAN 50%
THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR OWNERS (\$122,643).**

Figure 8. Household Income Distribution

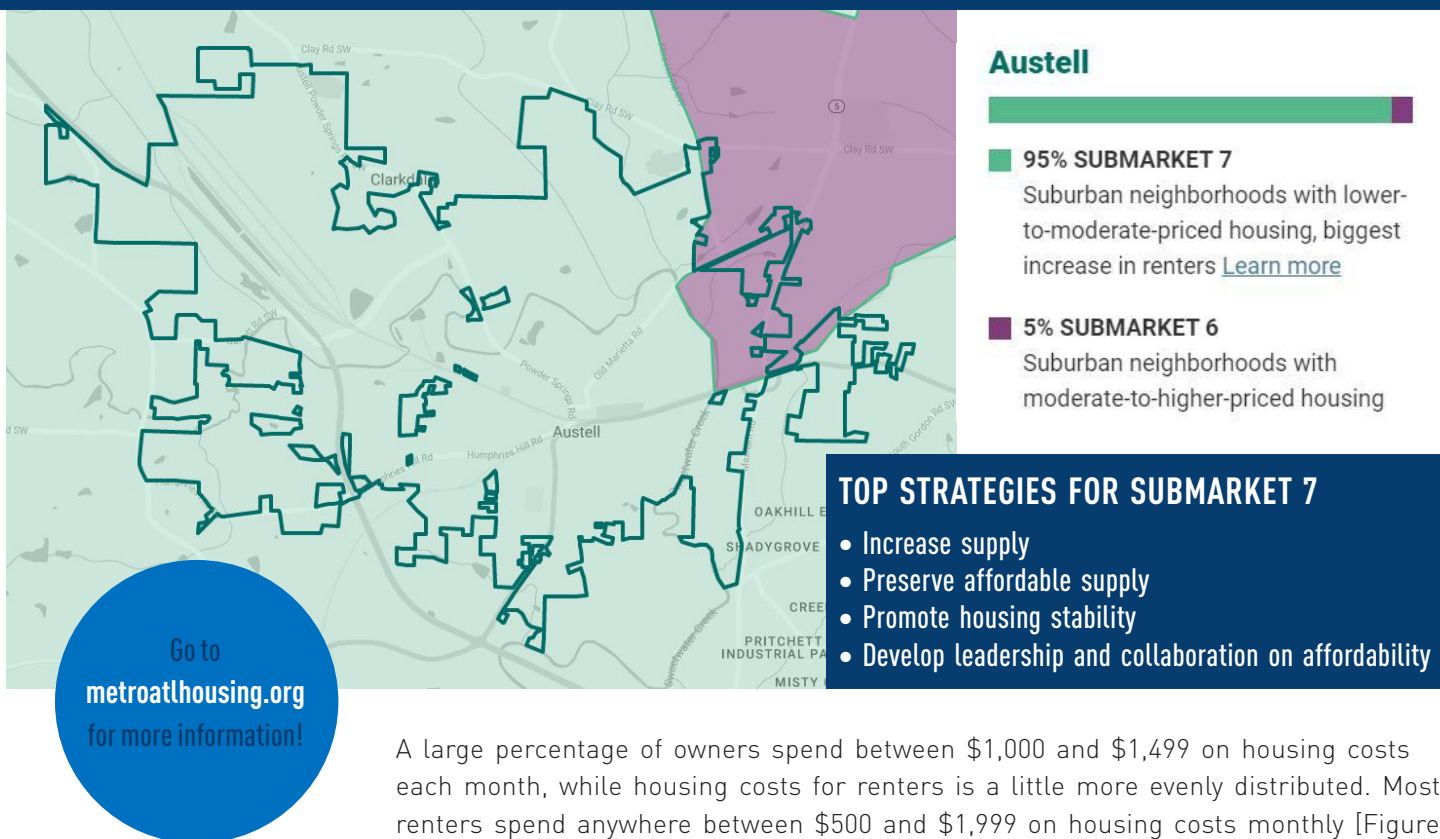
American Community Survey, 2019



HOUSING TRENDS

ARC developed the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy (MAHS) in 2019 to identify regional housing issues and provide a roadmap for communities to address their housing needs. The MAHS categorizes most of Austell as Submarket 7, or suburban neighborhoods with lower-to-moderate-priced housing, biggest increase in renters. Zillow data supports this conclusion, revealing a median home sale price of \$198,000 in 2020. Submarket 6, or suburban neighborhoods with moderate-to-higher-priced housing, covers a small area at the eastern edge of the city, north of Veterans Memorial Highway and east of Sweetwater Creek.

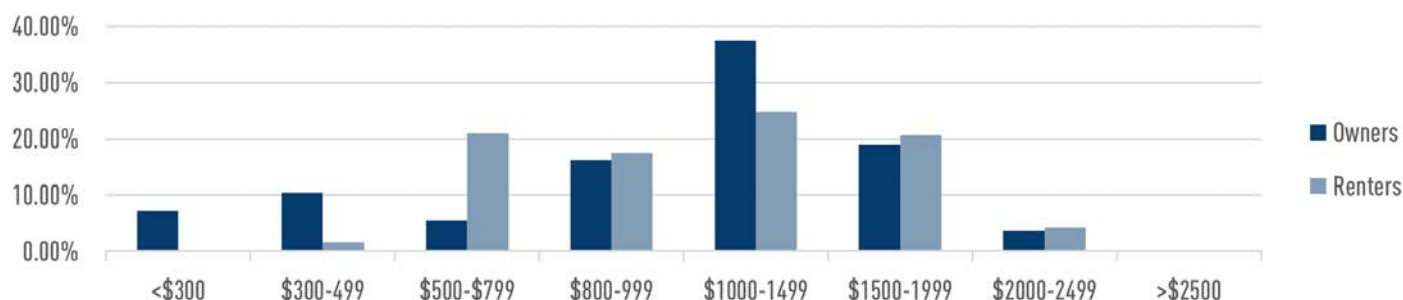
MAP 2. METRO ATLANTA HOUSING STRATEGY SUB-AREA MAP



A large percentage of owners spend between \$1,000 and \$1,499 on housing costs each month, while housing costs for renters is a little more evenly distributed. Most renters spend anywhere between \$500 and \$1,999 on housing costs monthly [Figure 9. Monthly Housing Costs].

Figure 9. Monthly Housing Costs

American Community Survey, 2019



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ECONOMIC TRENDS

Austell's median household income has risen by 20% from \$44,583 in 2010 to \$53,551 in 2019 [Figure 10. Median Household Income]. By comparison, the median household income of Cobb County was \$79,601 in 2019. Incomes are relatively evenly distributed between all income brackets, though the largest percentage (30%) makes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 [Figure 11. Income Distribution].

Figure 10. Median Household Income

American Community Survey, 2010 and 2019

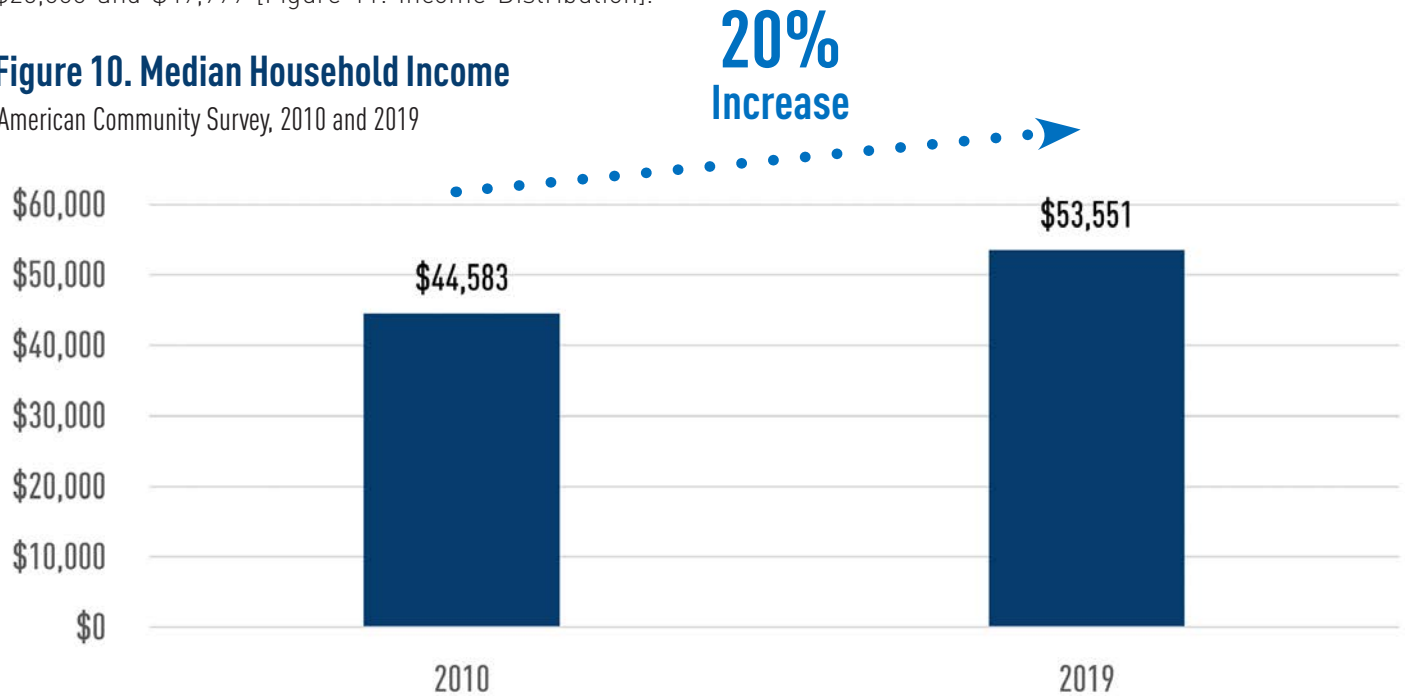
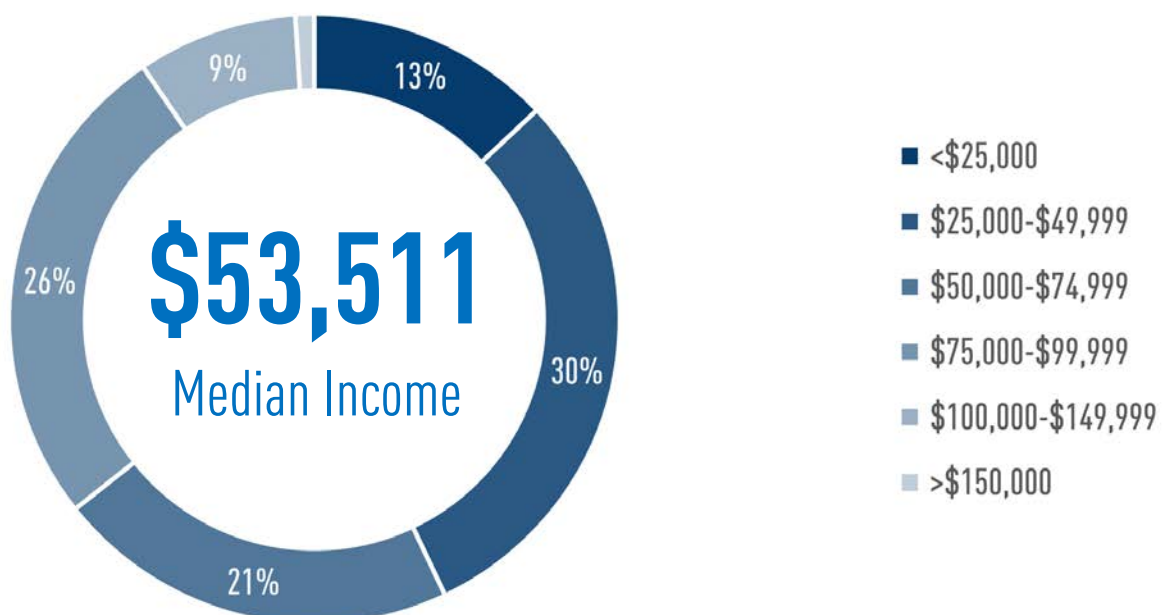


Figure 11. Income Distribution

American Community Survey, 2018



The largest industry in Austell - Manufacturing – provides almost a third of Austell’s jobs or 464 positions [Table 1. Workplace Area Characteristics]. The largest industry among the city’s residents is Health Care and Social Assistance, followed by Retail Trade [Table 2. Resident Area Characteristics].

TABLE 1. WORKPLACE AREA CHARACTERISTICS

LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics

NAICS Industry	# of Jobs	# of Total Jobs
1. Manufacturing	464	29%
2. Retail Trade	309	19%
3. Wholesale Trade	173	11%
4. Construction	123	8%
5. Accommodation and Food Services	113	7%
6. Administration & Support, Waste Management, and Remediation	99	6%
7. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	73	5%
8. Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	56	3%
9. Health Care and Social Assistance	54	3%
10. Utilities	50	3%

TABLE 2. RESIDENT AREA CHARACTERISTICS

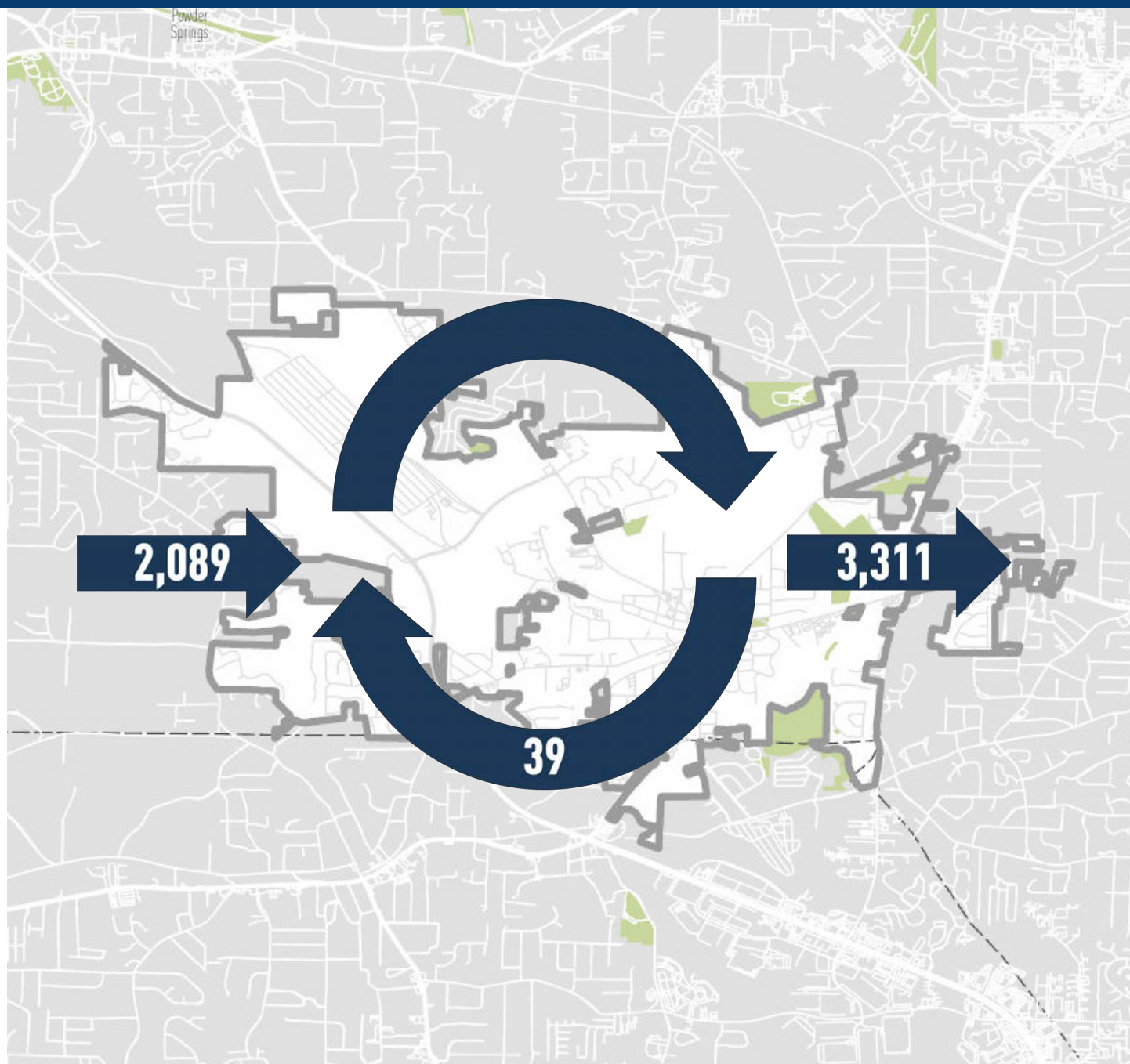
LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics

NAICS Industry	# of Jobs	# of Total Jobs
1. Health Care and Social Assistance	419	13%
2. Retail Trade	360	11%
3. Administration & Support, Waste Management, and Remediation	331	10%
4. Accommodation and Food Services	292	9%
5. Educational Services	262	8%
6. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	240	7%
7. Manufacturing	211	6%
8. Transportation and Warehousing	209	6%
9. Wholesale Trade	167	5%
10. Construction	164	5%

TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

Over 3,000 residents commute outside the city for work, primarily northeast and southeast, while almost 40 residents live and work in the city [Map 3. Traffic Flows and Map 4. Where Residents of Austell Work]. As of 2021, Austell's daytime population reached 6,619 [Data Source: Esri's Business Analyst Online, 2021]. 90% of residents use a car to get to work each day. The majority of those drive alone, while about 17% carpool. Few residents use public transportation, and 6% worked from home [Figure 12. Mode of Transportation]. The highest percentage of residents (33%) travel 15-29 minutes to get to work [Figure 13. Commute Time]. *Note: This data does not reflect the influence of the pandemic on transportation.*

MAP 3. TRAFFIC FLOWS



Over 2,000 people commute into the city for work [Map 2. Traffic Flows]. These individuals primarily live near city limits in all directions [Map 5. Where People Working in Austell Live].

Figure 12. Mode of Transportation

American Community Survey, 2019

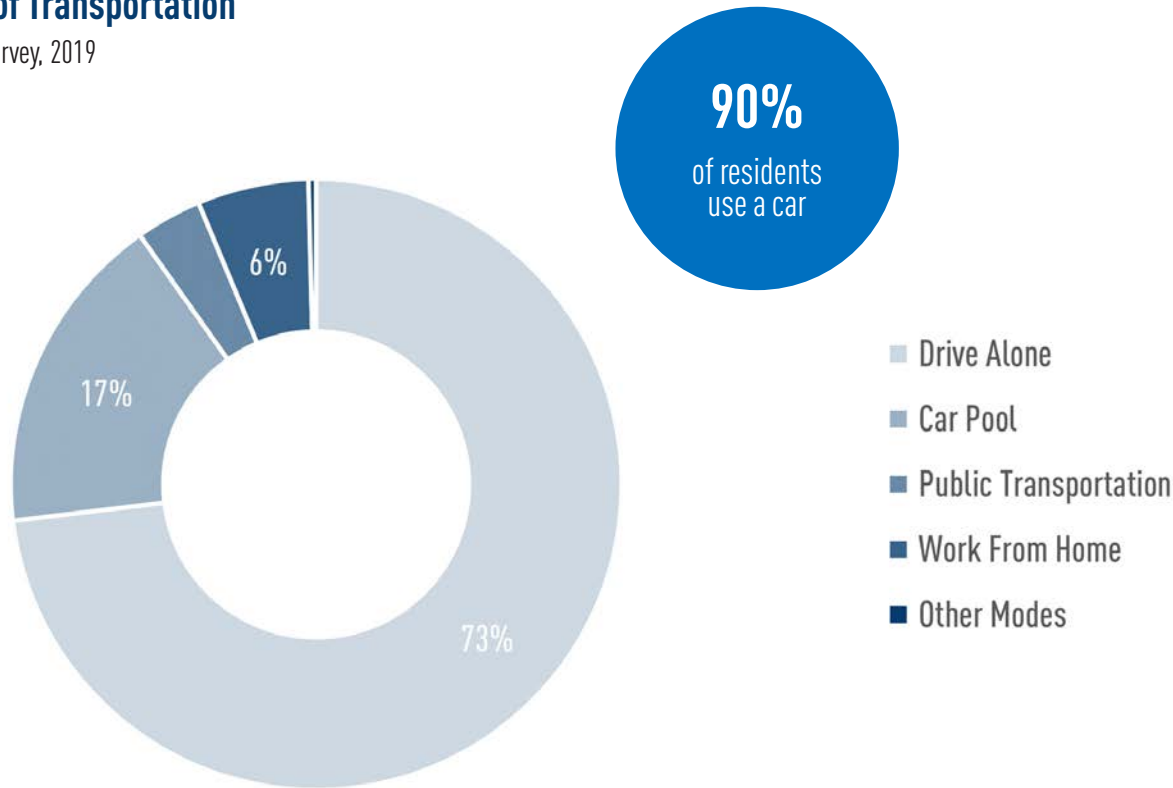
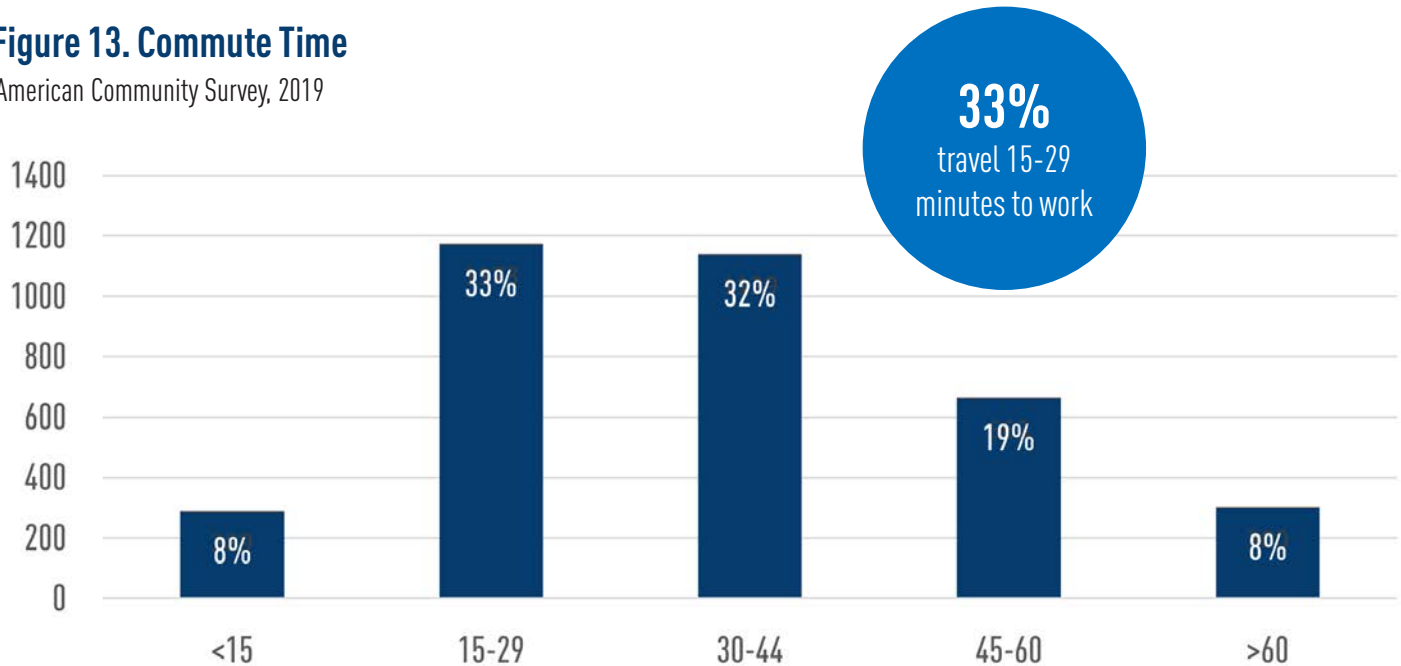
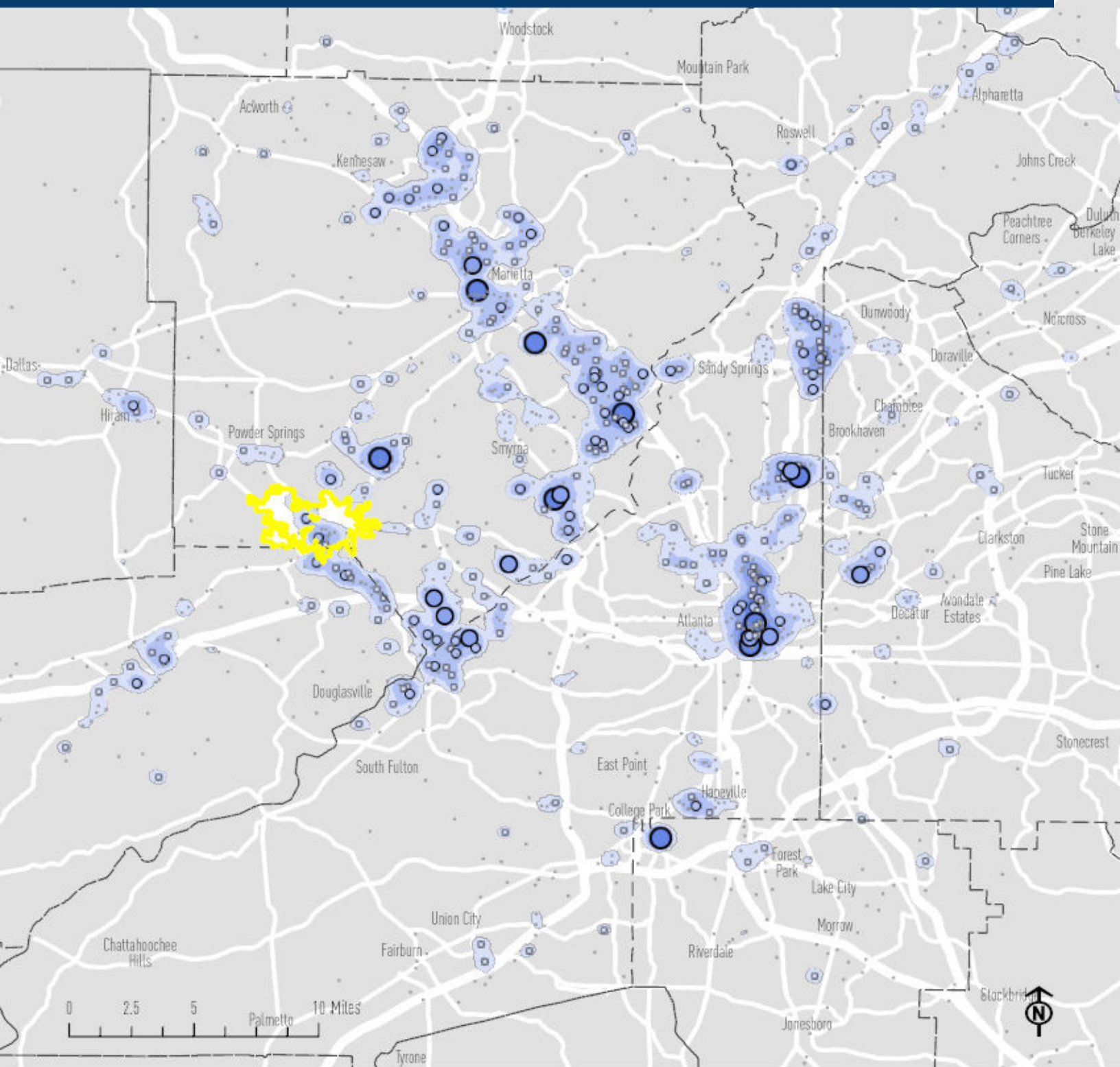


Figure 13. Commute Time

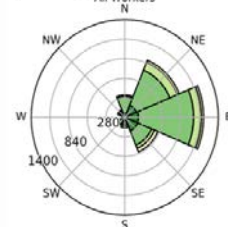
American Community Survey, 2019



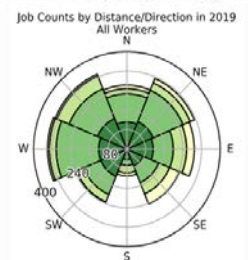
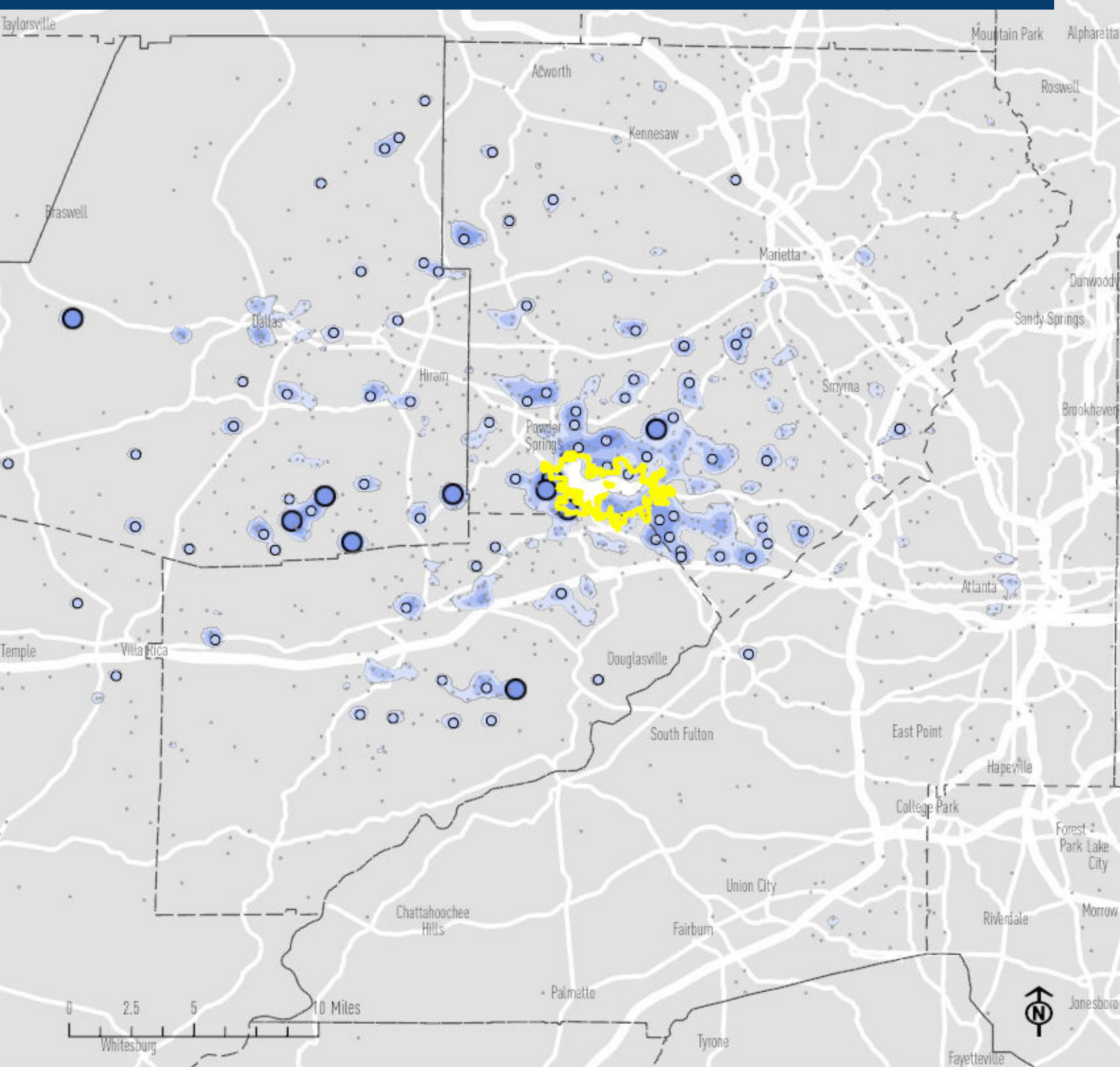
MAP 4. WHERE RESIDENTS OF AUSTELL WORK



Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019
All Workers



MAP 5. WHERE PEOPLE WORKING IN AUSTELL LIVE



CHAPTER 2

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES



VISION

Austell embraces innovation, opportunity, and New Urbanism and strives to be a city of opportunity with dynamic communities and a small-town atmosphere. Austell aims to revitalize itself by creating attractions and bringing growth prospects for businesses and citizens.

PARTICIPATION

Between November 2021 and April 2022, a survey was provided through Austell's PublicInput webpage which included a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) Analysis of a wide range of topics from natural and environmental resources to housing. Over **110 people** responded in total – the majority of respondents were 30-49 years old (55%), white (58%), female (60%) homeowners (81%). While respondents described Austell as a



NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

TOP 5

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES	GOAL
1. Encourage redevelopment of derelict, vacant, or underutilized property	4
2. Encourage more diverse retail options	3
3. Encourage increased civic engagement	1
4. Increase multimodal transportation options	5
5. Encourage high quality development and redevelopment	4

family-friendly small town with potential, only 11% of respondents rated their quality of life in Austell as “High,” with 60% rating is as “Average” and 29% rating is as “Low.” Several respondents also remarked that there are many vacant or underutilized buildings throughout the city in need of redevelopment. A **quaint downtown** and its **ample recreational and natural resources including Suggs Park and Sweetwater Creek** were cited as Austell’s top assets while **high rates of derelict, vacant, or underutilized property**, as well as a **lack of diverse retail options and civic engagement**, were listed as the most pressing challenges.

A community engagement event was held in March 2022 at Austell’s inaugural Spring Fling to discuss the city’s housing development and recreational resources in greater detail. Over **50 people** provided insight into desired trail extensions and potential locations for multi-family housing. Overwhelmingly, Austell’s desire to **expand upon its existing recreational and natural resources was shared**.

Finally, a 10-member steering committee comprised of residents, business owners, and elected and volunteer

officials was convened, and meetings held in December 2021 and February and April 2022. A SWOT Analysis was conducted during which the committee was asked to identify the city’s primary assets and challenges. The committee also reviewed and made amendments to the 2017 vision and goal statements and provided insight into the city’s housing and recreational needs.

Natural & Environmental Resources

Unsurprisingly, **Sweetwater Creek** was identified as one of the most significant natural and environmental resources. Respondents indicated a desire to see existing and future greenspaces within the city connected to the **Silver Comet Trail** and **Sweetwater Creek State Park**. Finally, **Legion Field** and **Louise Suggs Memorial Park** were identified and a desire to see Legion Field used more frequently through the construction of sports fields (i.e., baseball, football, and soccer) shared.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Downtown was identified as having some of the most significant historic and cultural resources within the

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

city. A desire to see the historic resources preserved and family-friendly attractions added was shared. Finally, **Louise Suggs Memorial Park** and the **Threadmill Complex** was identified as significant to Austell's history.

Future Development

Respondents indicated a desire to see the majority of future development occur along three major thoroughfares: **Austell Powder Springs Road, Mulberry Street/Old Marietta Road/Perkinson Mill Road**, and **Veterans Memorial Highway**. A desire to see Veterans Memorial Highway developed as Austell's "front door" was shared. Finally, respondents indicated investments in **downtown** should be made to attract quality businesses and young, high-earning families.

Economic Development

45% of respondents visit downtown to patronize restaurants – the remaining 55% are divided between Other (20%), Government Services (13%), Parks/Greenspace (11%), Business/Banking (6%), Shopping (4%), and Entertainment/Nightlife (1%). Respondents identified **increased outdoor seating and event space**, a **diversity of retail and restaurant options**, and **greenspace improvements** as the primary improvements that need to be made to enhance downtown. Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated a need for **enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure**.

Transportation

The majority of respondents ranked pedestrian and bicycle safety (64%) as "Poor" or "Below Average," road conditions (59%) as "Below Average" or "Adequate," and traffic safety (54%) and traffic congestion (72%) but were ultimately split (Poor: 27%; Below Average: 18%; Adequate: 24%; Good: 4%; No Opinion: 27%) on the issue of public transportation. Numerous areas throughout the city were identified as dangerous for pedestrians and/or bicyclists, including **downtown** and **Veterans Memorial Highway**, as well as **Broad, Love, and Pratt streets** and **Joe Jerkins Boulevard**. Finally, respondents noted **vehicular speeding** and a **lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure** as the chief reasons for these unsafe conditions.

Housing

Respondents were ultimately split between the need for more **affordable housing**, **senior housing**, and **mixed-income housing** – 40% of respondents indicated the need for more while 43% indicated enough already existed within city limits. When asked to identify Austell's most important housing need, a number of respondents indicated a desire to see **more housing options for medium-to-high income families**. However, many respondents also indicated a desire to see **housing options for families at varying income levels**.



Spring Fling at Legion Field

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY GOALS



GOAL 1

To encourage community building and participation by engaging in physical, mental, and social needs of the community.

Objective 1.1: Create additional public spaces and encourage city events for community building

Objective 1.2: Endorse physical and mental wellbeing among the youth

Objective 1.3: Promote art and culture in the city

Objective 1.4: Provide technology in public spaces

GOAL 2

To assure safety amongst citizens by maintaining the low crime rates in the city and reinforcing trust in the public safety system.

Objective 2.1: Foster a liaison between citizens and safety officials

GOAL 3

To stimulate economic growth and development in the city by providing zoning flexibility and revitalizing the historic downtown area to attract, retain, and grow sustainable mixed-use developments.

Objective 3.1: Provide zoning flexibility to encourage economic development

Objective 3.2: Stimulate development of the downtown area

Objective 3.3: Expand intergovernmental relations to collaborate for development

GOAL 4

To promote and create a visually aesthetic, well-designed community. To enhance the character and create an identity and sense of place of the city.

GOAL 5

To promote transportation safety, connectivity, and accessibility by expanding multimodal opportunities throughout the city including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.

Objective 5.1: Promote enhanced public transit within the city through coordination with CobbLinc

Objective 5.2: Advocate safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks in the city

Objective 5.3: Promote multi-use trails in the city

Objective 5.4: Enhance transportation safety in the city

GOAL 6

To improve, maintain, and preserve historic structures and the railroad in the city and create measures to promote attractions. To preserve greenspace and maintain them as high-quality active and passive recreation spaces.

Objective 6.1: Preserve and revitalize historic properties that add cultural value to the city

Objective 6.2: Revitalize the railroad to preserve its character and promote adjacent and nearby development

Objective 6.3: Maintain the natural character of conservation areas and greenspace and minimize the impact of any new developments

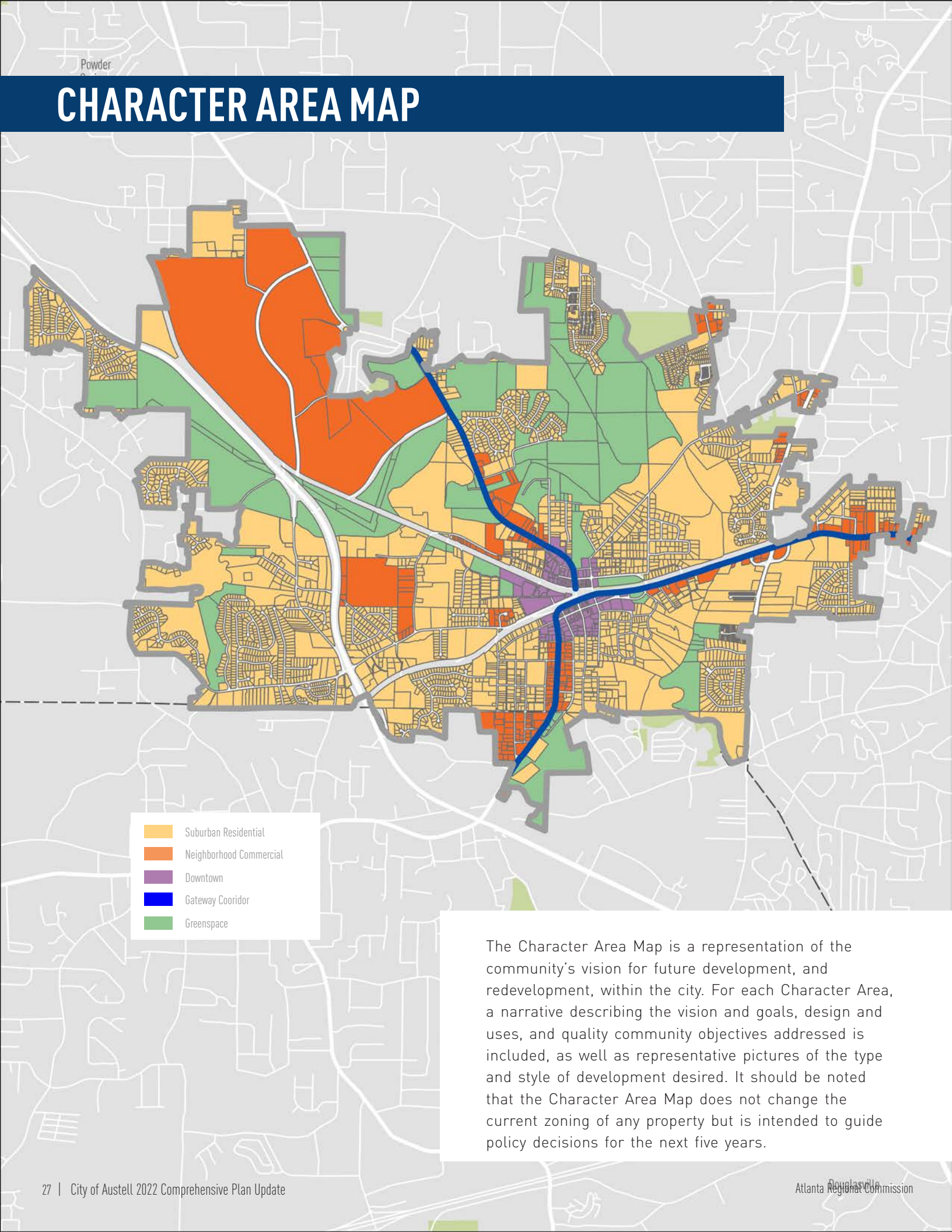


CHAPTER 4

CHARACTER AREAS



CHARACTER AREA MAP

- 
- The map displays the city of Austell, Georgia, with various areas color-coded to represent different development character areas. A large orange area is in the northwest, a green area is in the north-central part, and a purple area is in the central-eastern part. A blue line runs through the center, and a yellow area covers the southern and eastern parts. The map is overlaid on a street grid.
- Suburban Residential
 - Neighborhood Commercial
 - Downtown
 - Gateway Corridor
 - Greenspace

The Character Area Map is a representation of the community's vision for future development, and redevelopment, within the city. For each Character Area, a narrative describing the vision and goals, design and uses, and quality community objectives addressed is included, as well as representative pictures of the type and style of development desired. It should be noted that the Character Area Map does not change the current zoning of any property but is intended to guide policy decisions for the next five years.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Austell has not experienced the growth in residential development that has been exhibited by other cities in Cobb County. To promote the full gamut of housing opportunities from starter homes to active senior living, the city should engage in a study for providing economic incentives for promoting new residential construction.

VISION & GOALS

The City of Austell intends to nurture a stable and established suburban neighborhood in the future, building on the existing mix and creating newer housing types. The neighborhoods will be a mix of single-family neighborhoods, town homes, and apartment buildings, with a focus on pedestrian activity and transit supportive communities. The city will protect existing historic housing and will create design regulations to control transitions.

- The city shall promote moderate density, traditional neighborhood development (TND) style residential subdivisions.
- New residential improvements should be master planned allowing for mixed-use activity, blending housing development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses, and services.
- The city should promote Lifelong Communities and Senior Housing options must be considered.
- Strong connectivity between each master planned development should be promoted.
- The city should ensure good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to services.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN & USES

- Single-Family Residential Units
- Townhomes
- Mixed-Use Residential Units
- Multifamily Attached Housing

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

- Infill Development
- Open Space
- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives

AREAS INCLUDED: Residential Districts



NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

The neighborhood commercial areas in Austell have developed along the major roadways such as Veterans Memorial Highway and Austell Powder Springs Road. One effort to improve the viability of these areas is to update policies and zoning requirements that allow a mix of business activities. Another effort to better serve the residents that are in proximity to these neighborhood centers is to continue sidewalk construction to promote walking and cycling to the centers as opposed to driving.

VISION & GOALS

Every neighborhood needs a focal point with a concentration of activities such as general retail, service commercial, professional office, and appropriate public and open space uses easily accessible by pedestrians. The city should focus on developing the Threadmill Complex and Clarkdale and any other areas identified in these neighborhood centers.

- The city should include a mix of retail, services, and offices to serve neighborhood residents' day-to-day needs.
- The city should design for each center to be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- The city should provide neighborhood amenities, such as libraries, neighborhood centers, and health facilities, in the area and enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment of the area.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN & USES

- General Retail
- Service Commercial
- Professional Office
- Outdoor and Indoor Activity and Recreation Space
- Local Café and Food Court

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

- Sense of Place
- Social and Economic Development: Growth Preparedness

AREAS INCLUDED: Threadmill Complex & Clarkdale



DOWNTOWN

The greatest potential for economic development and redevelopment in the City of Austell is the downtown area, specifically on the south side off the railroad tracks. Recent activities have created a momentum that has stimulated interest in establishing new business within vacant buildings. To build on this energy in a positive way, there are two activities that the city can undertake. The first is the re-establishment of the Downtown Development Authority to provide financial assistance. The second is implementation of an Architectural Review Board to maintain the historic and small-town aesthetics that are part of Austell's charm.

VISION & GOALS

The downtown area is currently an underdeveloped area that is fragmented by a very active railroad line. The city will focus on redevelopment of the area, while maintaining the historic structures and character of the area. The active railroad should be considered a focal point and efforts should be made to promote the area. The city will focus on bringing in retail activities and restaurants to create unique and active public spaces.

- The city should include a mix of retail, services, and offices to serve a regional market area.
- Design should be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- Connectivity to the greenspace and trail networks must be promoted
- Connectivity to the area using different modes of transportation must be encouraged.
- The city should focus on bringing in magnet developments in the area to act as attraction centers.
- The city should create an independent Downtown Development Authority to promote redevelopment in the area. The authority will focus on the appropriate mix of businesses and an architectural style in the area to create a unique sense of place

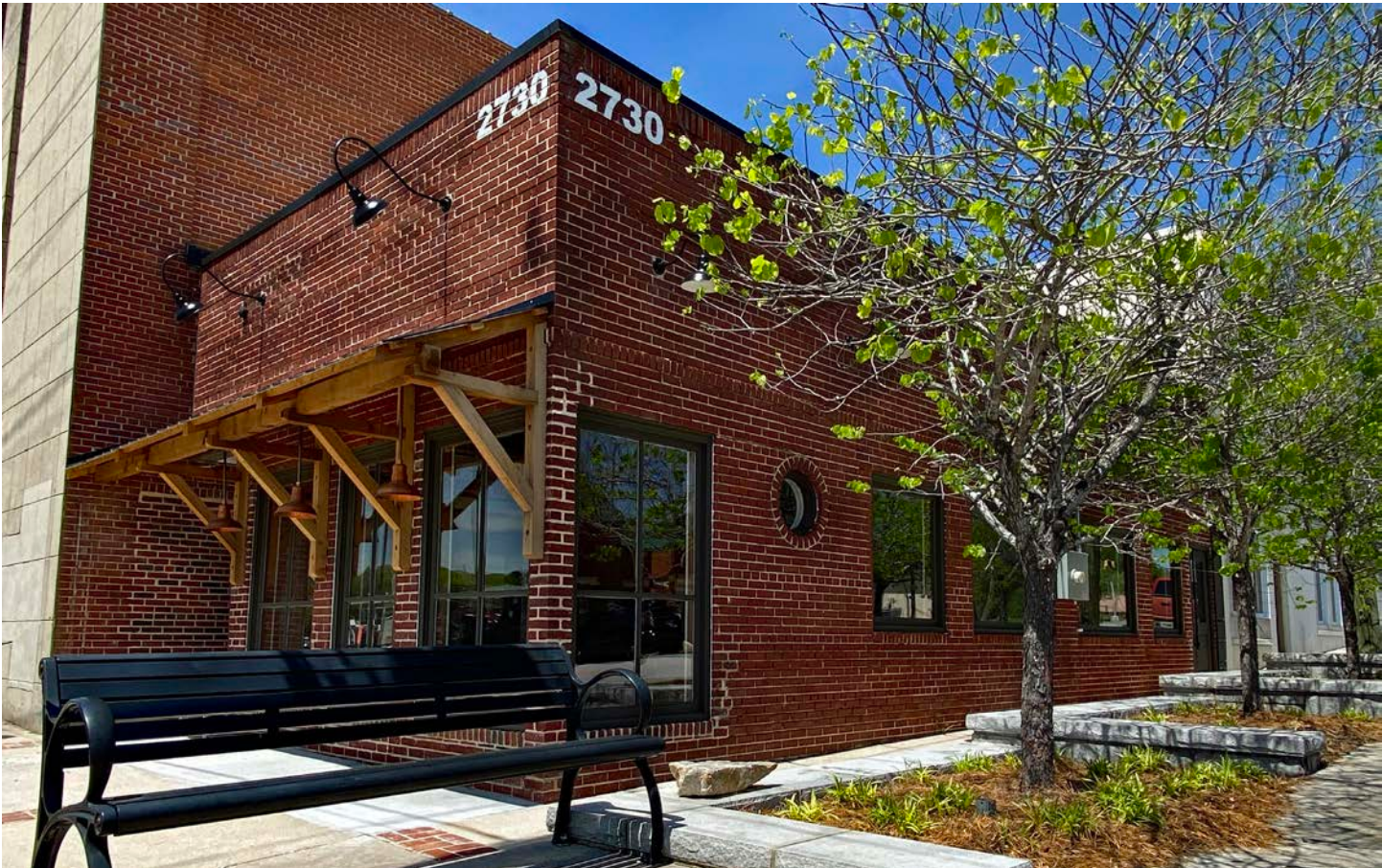
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN & USES

- General Retail
- Service Commercial
- Professional Office
- Outdoor and Indoor Activity and Recreation Space
- Local Café and Food Court

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

- Sense of Place
- Social and Economic Development: Growth Preparedness
- Infill Development
- Regional Identity

AREAS INCLUDED: Historic Downtown



GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Large undeveloped tracts of land abut Austell Powder Springs Road while Veterans Memorial Highway (US Highways 278 and 78 and State Route 8) sits between Norfolk Southern tracks to the north and a majority of auto-centric businesses to the south. Austell is desirous of presenting visually appealing, multi-modal corridors and having more diverse business opportunities available. The city should re-evaluate zoning flexibility and/or form-based zoning, consider assistance from the Downtown Development Authority, and collaborate with the Georgia Department of Transportation for infrastructure improvements to reimagine this gateway. Large undeveloped tracts of land abutting Austell Powder Springs Road should be developed with a vision to promote sustainable, mixed-use development.

VISION & GOALS

Austell Powder Springs Road and Veterans Memorial Highway are major thoroughfares that serve as important entrances to the community. The city should establish a gateway along both corridors to mark the arrival into the City of Austell. All infill development and redevelopment should be designed to complement the character of the city. The corridor should be well lit, and regulations should encourage flexibility of uses to promote economic development in the area. New construction along the corridors should encourage the development of active, human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly corridors of mixed-use developments with an adjoining multi-use trail.

- The city should focus on creating a hierarchy of traffic along the corridor that encourages pedestrian activity and capitalizes on the urban fabric of the neighborhood.
- The city should focus on pedestrian safety and comfort in commercial retail areas and public spaces along the corridor.
- The city should focus on visual aesthetics and appearance of the corridor with appropriate signage, landscaping, and other beautification measures.
- The city should focus on retrofitting existing developments to promote visual appeal and complement the character of the city.
- The city should promote a diverse mix of businesses along the corridor to appeal to a broader cross section of citizens.
- The city should consider establishing on-street parking along the highway during non-commuting hours.

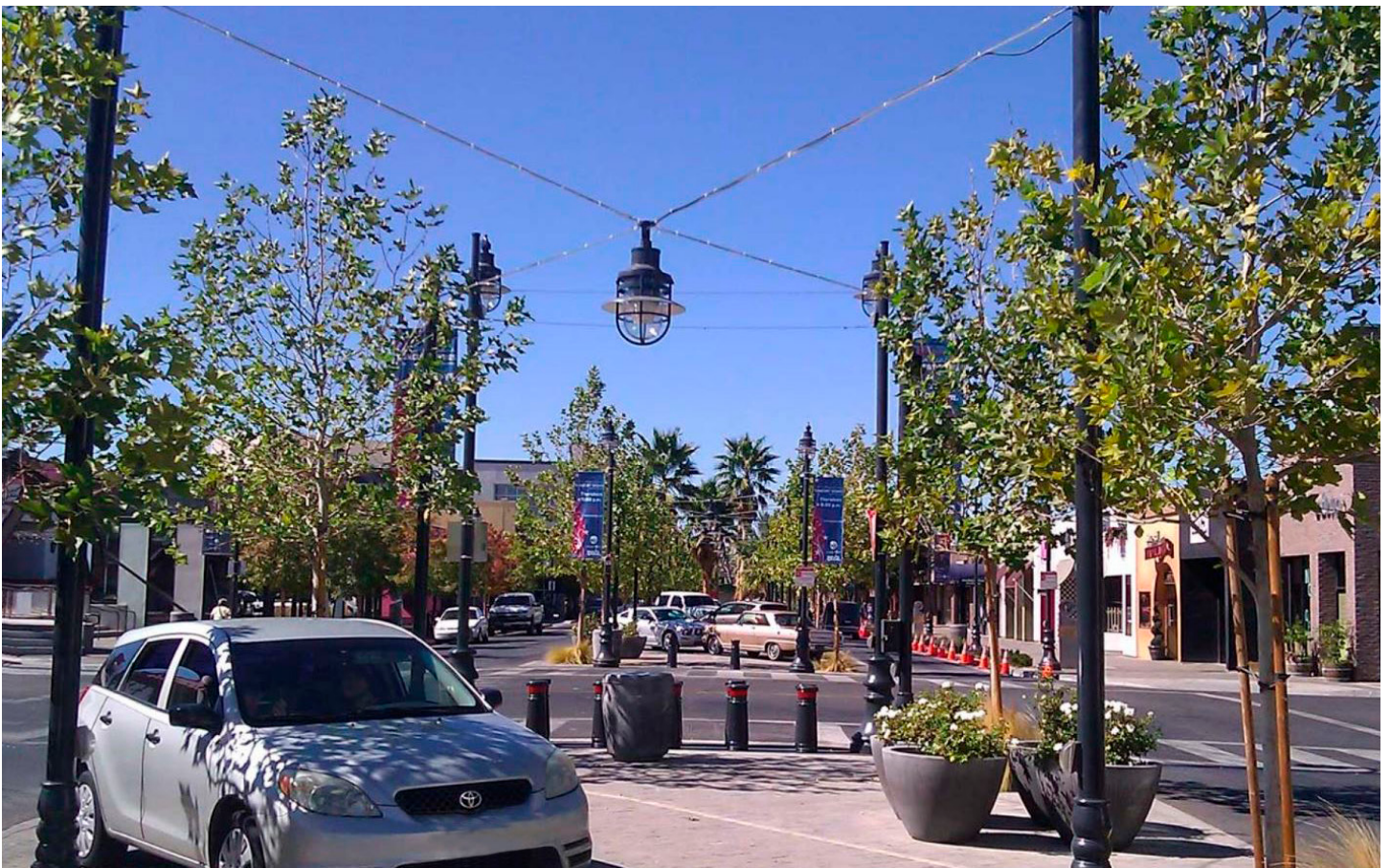
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN & USES

- Mixed-Use Development
- Commercial Retail
- Residential Development
- High Quality Signage and Streetscape
- Development Orientation Towards the Street with no Parking Lots Lining the Corridor
- Landscaped Raised Medians
- Pedestrian Buffers

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

- Development Pattern
- Business Appropriateness
- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives

AREAS INCLUDED: Austell Powder Springs Road & Veterans Memorial Highway (US Highways 278 and 78 and State Route 8)



GREENSPACE

The primary conservation or greenspace areas within the city are at the Threadmill Complex and Louise Suggs Park. The other greenspace areas are a combination of organized sporting fields (i.e., tennis courts, baseball fields, etc.) at city- and county-maintained parks and wetlands at Sweetwater Creek. To promote quality recreational opportunities the city should evaluate redeveloping Legion Field as a multi-functional park with expanded greenspace and a natural amphitheater and to convert portions of the Threadmill Complex as community gathering spaces.

VISION & GOALS

The city's park system and other greenspace areas contribute to the character of the city. The city will continue to preserve and expand these areas and will work at making these spaces high quality, active and passive recreation spaces.

- The city should maintain the natural character of designated greenspaces.
- The city should enforce conservation easements to restrict any new developments in the area.
- The city should encourage the use of these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.
- The city should explore further opportunities to provide access to the parks via walking or cycling trails.
- The city should conduct studies to consider the provision of greenways as safe, efficient pedestrian linkages and at the same time give users a nature friendly, recreational experience.
- Explore opportunities to capture the water features of the Sweetwater Creek to make it a community asset

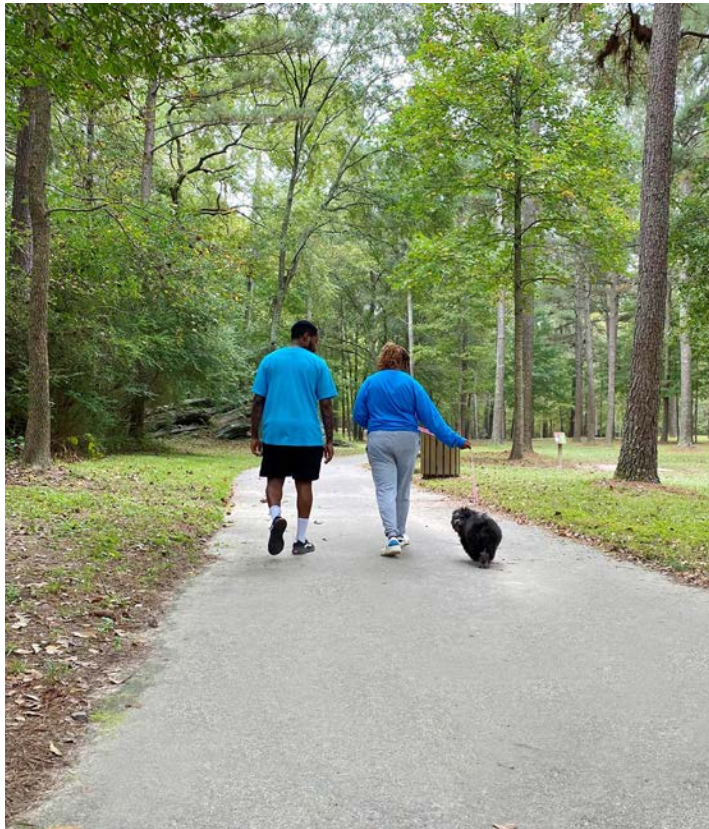
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN & USES

- Trails
- Parks
- Passive recreation & tourism
- Multi-use trails

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED

- Environmental Protection
- Open Space Preservation

AREAS INCLUDED: Greenspace along Austell Powder Springs Road or any other dedicated conservation zones; 91-acre city park system; 3 community parks (Collar Park, Legion Park, Louise Suggs Park); 4 neighborhood parks (Berry Park, George E. Beavers Park, Pine Street Park, Stephens Park); County parks; Clarkdale Park; Sweetwater Creek Area; Cato Environmental Education Center





CHAPTER 5

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017-2022

#	Project	Status	Notes
CREATE PUBLIC SPACES AND ENCOURAGE CITY EVENTS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING			
1	Create And Promote City Directory Of Public Spaces	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #1.
2	Initiate Public Events Or Activities To Be Scheduled For The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #2.
3	Place Kiosks And Signboards Indicating Upcoming Public Events	CANCELED	
4	Consider Adding Indoor And Outdoor Public Spaces To Reform Threadmill Complex As The Neighborhood Center	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #3.
PROMOTE ART AND CULTURE IN THE CITY			
5	Identify And Organize Art Events And Exhibitions To Promote Art And Culture In The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #4.
6	Identify A Suitable Theme That Depicts The Character Of The City (e.g., Railroad) To Create Sculptures And Artifacts To Attract Citizens To The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #5.
7	Undertake Improvements to the tennis courts	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #6.
ENDORSE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING AMONG CITIZENS			
8	Create Youth Zones Which Conduct Family-Based Activities	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #7.
9	Make Available Non-Organization Based Recreational Facilities That Promote Activities For All Income Groups	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #8.
10	Explore The Options Of Converting Legion Field Into A Multi-Use Park (e.g., Greenspace, Natural Amphitheater)	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #9.
PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY IN PUBLIC SPACES			
11	Identify Public Spaces In The City Which Can Be Accessible To Networks And Technology	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #10.
PROMOTE MULTI-USE TRAILS IN THE CITY			
12	Create A Bike-Ped Trails Master Plan To Promote Walkability	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #11.
13	Construct Multi-Use Trail On Austell-Powder Springs Road	UNDERWAY	Currently in active planning phase with Powder Springs and Cobb County. See Community Work Program Item #12.
ADVOCATE EFFICIENT PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORKS IN THE CITY			
14	Create Safe And Efficient Pedestrian Access Across The Railroad	UNDERWAY	Currently meeting with Norfolk Southern on safe railroad crossings (pedestrian and vehicular). See Community Work Program Item #13.
15	Generate Pedestrian Friendly Spaces By Identifying Grade Separation Measures	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #14.
16	Provide Sidewalk Connectivity On All Roads	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #15.
17	Provide Landscaping, Pedestrian Buffers, And Street Furniture To Create Urban Walkable Spaces	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #16.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017-2022

#	Project	Status	Notes
ENDORSE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING AMONG CITIZENS			
18	Provide Street Lights, Stop Signs, And Speed Signs In Necessary Areas (e.g., School Zones)	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #17.
19	Protect Access Points To Neighborhood Services And Local Businesses	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #18.
20	Initiate Programs For Regular Updates Of Signage In All Areas To Promote Traffic Safety	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #19.
PROMOTE PUBLIC TRANSIT WITHIN THE CITY			
21	Identify And Create City Transit Routes To Expand Accessibility	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #20.
22	Increase Frequency Of Bus Service And Introduce New Routes	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #21.
23	Ensure Safety And Access To Public Transit Depots And Bus Stops	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #22.
PROVIDE ZONING FLEXIBILITY TO ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
24	Promote Case Specific Flexibility In Zoning That Permits Minor Adjustments	UNDERWAY	Code amended to allow staff flexibility expanding administrative variances case by case. See Community Work Program Item #23.
25	Conduct Feasibility Studies To Create A Capital Improvements Plan (Impact Fee Analysis)	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #24.
STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA			
26	Conduct Market Studies To Identify Measures To Revitalize And Redevelop The Downtown	UNDERWAY	LCI downtown redevelopment plan has been completed. See Community Work Program Item #25.
27	Create A Downtown Development Authority To Take A Lead Role In Promoting Growth In The Area	UNDERWAY	LCI downtown redevelopment plan has been completed. See Community Work Program Item #26.
28	Conduct Studies To Identify Possible Magnet Development Centers In The City	COMPLETE	LCI downtown redevelopment plan has been completed.
PROMOTE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT			
29	Encourage Conversations To Build Mutually Beneficial Relations Between Surrounding Cities, Counties, And Organizations Like The South Cobb Redevelopment Authority To Promote Growth Strategies	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #27.
PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE A GOOD MIX OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE CITY			
30	Create Flexible Policies That Promote Small Business In The City And Ensure That A Good Proportion Of Varying Industry Is Present In The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #28.
PROMOTE USAGE OF THE THREADMILL COMPLEX AS A NEIGHBORHOOD TOWN CENTER			
31	Encourage Retail And Restaurant Opportunities To Promote Usage Of The Complex	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #29.

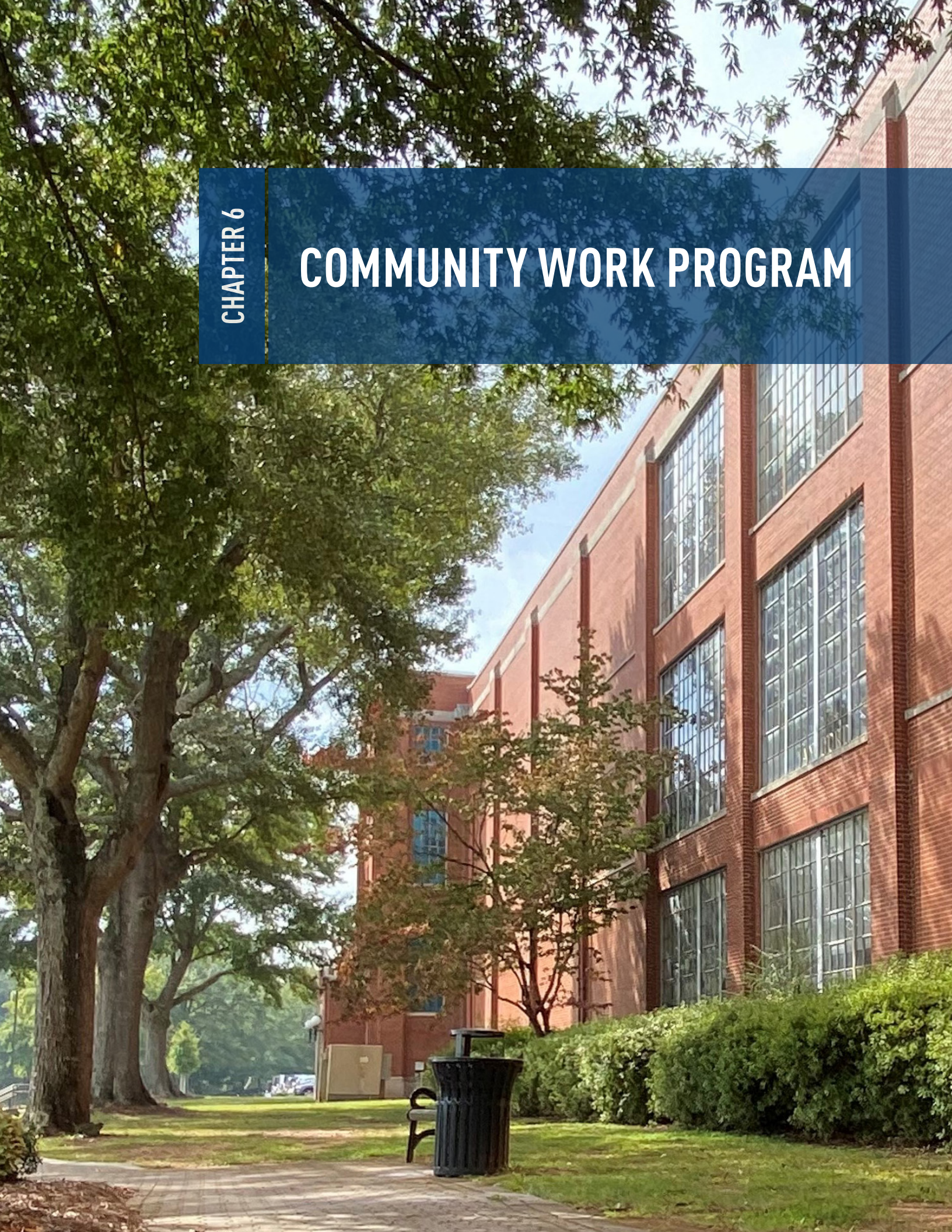
REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017-2022

#	Project	Status	Notes
PROMOTE USAGE OF THE THREADMILL COMPLEX AS A NEIGHBORHOOD TOWN CENTER (CONTINUED)			
32	Create Outdoor And Indoor Public Spaces In The Complex To Create Public Attraction	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #30.
FOSTER A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND SAFETY OFFICIALS			
33	Continue Public Safety Day Events	COMPLETE	
34	Arrange Monthly Or Quarterly Meetings To Encourage Conversations Between Public Safety Officials And Citizens	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #31.
PRESERVE AND REVITALIZE HISTORICAL PROPERTIES THAT ADD CULTURAL VALUE TO THE CITY			
35	Identify Historical Properties That Can Be Revitalized And Preserved	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #33.
36	Preserve Historic Neighborhoods And Small Homes That Add Simplicity And Character To The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #34.
REVITALIZE THE RAILROAD TO PRESERVE IT'S CHARACTER AND PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT AROUND IT			
37	Conduct Feasibility Studies To Identify Measures To Create Public Spaces Around The Railroad	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #35.
MAINTAIN THE NATURAL CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS AND GREENSPACE			
38	Expand Conservation Easements To Restrict Any New Developments	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #36.
39	Promote Passive-Use Tourism And Recreation	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #37.
40	Conduct Studies To Explore Opportunities To Capture The Water Features Of The Sweetwater Creek To Make It A Community Asset	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #38.
41	Promote Use Of Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Developments	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #39.
UNIFY THE PARK SYSTEM TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES			
42	Create A Parks Master Plan To Unify The System And Create Opportunities	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #40.
43	Create Greenways And Trails To Ensure Connectivity To And From All Parks	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #41.
CREATE UNIFORM ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND CHARACTER IN THE CITY			
44	Recognize An Architecture Design Review Board To Regulate Form Based Codes In The City	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #42.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2017-2022

#	Project	Status	Notes
CREATE SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND PLEASING PUBLIC SPACES			
44	Reinforce Guidelines That Include Height Restrictions, Pedestrian And Biking Facilities, Streetscapes, Landscaping And Street Furniture To Ensure A Humane Scale Comfort And Create Uniformity Whilst Maintaining Individuality	UNDERWAY	See Community Work Program Item #43.

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A photograph of a campus scene. On the right, a multi-story red brick building with large, multi-paned windows. On the left, large green trees with thick canopies. In the foreground, a paved path leads towards the building, flanked by green grass and a black trash can. A blue semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the top half of the image, containing the chapter title.

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2023-2027

GF = General Fund
RR = Railroad

#	Project	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Responsible Party	Cost	Funding Source
CREATE PUBLIC SPACES AND ENCOURAGE CITY EVENTS FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING									
1	Create Methods Of Promoting City Spaces And Events		X	X			Community Affairs	\$30,000	GF
2	Initiate Public Events Or Activities To Be Scheduled For The City	X					Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	\$25,000	GF
3	Consider Adding Indoor And Outdoor Public Spaces To Reform Threadmill Complex As The Neighborhood Center					X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	\$65,000	GF
PROMOTE ART AND CULTURE IN THE CITY									
4	Identify And Organize Art Events And Exhibitions To Promote Art And Culture In The City	X					Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	\$25,000	GF
5	Identify A Suitable Theme That Depicts The Character Of The City (e.g., Railroad) To Create Sculptures And Artifacts To Attract Citizens To The City					X	Community Affairs, Administration	\$20,000	GF
6	Conduct Branding Studies That Re-Create The Image Of Austell		X				Community Affairs, Administration	\$25,000	GF
ENDORSE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING AMONG CITIZENS									
7	Create Youth Zones Which Conduct Family-Based Activities				X		Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	NA	GF, SPLOST, CDBG
8	Make Available Non-Organization Based Recreational Facilities That Promote Activities For All Income Groups				X		Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	NA	GF, SPLOST, CDBG
9	Explore The Options Of Converting Legion Field Into A Multi-Use Park (e.g., Greenspace, Natural Amphitheater)			X			Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	\$65,000	GF, SPLOST, CDBG
PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY IN PUBLIC SPACES									
10	Identify Public Spaces In The City Which Can Be Accessible To Networks And Technology		X				Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	NA	GF
PROMOTE MULTI-USE TRAILS IN THE CITY									
11	Create A Bike-Ped Trails Master Plan To Promote Walkability		X				Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	\$65,000	GF, SPLOST
12	Construct Multi-Use Trail On Austell Powder Springs Road				X		Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	\$755,000	GF, SPLOST, Shared Costs (Powder Springs and Cobb County)
ADVOCATE EFFICIENT PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORKS IN THE CITY									
13	Create Safe And Efficient Pedestrian Access Across The Railroad			X			Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT, Norfolk Southern	\$55,000	GF, SPLOST, Federal Funding, Private RR Funding

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2023-2027

GF = General Fund
RR = Railroad

#	Project	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Responsible Pary	Cost	Funding Source
14	Generate Pedestrian Friendly Spaces By Identifying Grade Separation Measures					X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT, Norfolk Southern	NA	GF, SPLOST, Federal Funding, Private RR Funding
15	Provide Sidewalk Connectivity On All Roads	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	NA	GF, SPLOST
16	Provide Landscaping, Pedestrian Buffers, And Street Furniture To Create Urban Walkable Spaces	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	\$105,000	GF, SPLOST
ENDORSE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING AMONG CITIZENS									
17	Provide Street Lights, Stop Signs, And Speed Signs In Necessary Areas (e.g., School Zones)	X	X	X	X	X	Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT	\$55,000	GF, SPLOST
18	Protect Access Points To Neighborhood Services And Local Businesses	X	X	X	X	X	Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT	NA	GF, SPLOST
19	Initiate Programs For Regular Updates Of Signage In All Areas To Promote Traffic Safety	X	X	X	X	X	Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT	NA	GF, SPLOST
PROMOTE PUBLIC TRANSIT WITHIN THE CITY									
20	Identify And Create City Transit Routes To Expand Accessibility	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Public Works, Cobb DOT	NA	GF, SPLOST
21	Increase Frequency Of Bus Service And Introduce New Routes			X			Community Affairs, Public Works, Cobb DOT	NA	GF, SPLOST
22	Ensure Safety And Access To Public Transit Depots And Bus Stops			X			Community Affairs, Public Works, Cobb DOT	NA	GF, SPLOST
PROVIDE ZONING FLEXIBILITY TO ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
23	Promote Case Specific Flexibility In Zoning That Permits Minor Adjustments	X					Community Affairs, Administration	NA	GF
24	Conduct Feasibility Studies To Create A Capital Improvements Plan (Impact Fee Analysis)				X	X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Administration, Fire, Police, Finance	\$55,000	GF

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2023-2027

GF = General Fund
RR = Railroad

#	Project	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Responsible Party	Cost	Funding Source
STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA									
25	Conduct Market Studies To Identify Measures To Revitalize And Redevelop The Downtown		X				Community Affairs, Public Works, Administration	\$25,000	GF
26	Re-establish The Downtown Development Authority To Take A Lead Role In Promoting Growth In The Area			X			Community Affairs, Administration	NA	GF
PROMOTE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT									
27	Encourage Conversations To Build Mutually Beneficial Relations Between Surrounding Cities, Counties, And Organizations Like The South Cobb Redevelopment Authority To Promote Growth Strategies	X					Community Affairs, Administration	NA	GF
PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE A GOOD MIX OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE CITY									
28	Create Flexible Policies That Promote Small Business In The City And Ensure That A Good Proportion Of Varying Industry Is Present In The City		X				Community Affairs, Administration	NA	GF
PROMOTE USAGE OF THE THREADMILL COMPLEX AS A NEIGHBORHOOD TOWN CENTER									
29	Encourage Retail And Restaurant Opportunities To Promote Usage Of The Complex			X			Community Affairs	NA	GF
30	Create Outdoor And Indoor Public Spaces In The Complex To Create Public Attraction				X		Community Affairs	\$35,000	GF
FOSTER A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND SAFETY OFFICIALS									
31	Arrange Monthly Or Quarterly Meetings To Encourage Conversations Between Public Safety Officials And Citizens	X					Community Affairs, Police, Fire	NA	GF
32	Establish a Community Outreach Position Within The Police Department For Continued Community Engagement						Police, Administration	TBD	GF
PRESERVE AND REVITALIZE HISTORICAL PROPERTIES THAT ADD CULTURAL VALUE TO THE CITY									
33	Identify Historical Properties That Can Be Revitalized And Preserved				X		Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation	NA	GF
34	Preserve Historic Neighborhoods And Small Homes That Add Simplicity And Character To The City					X	Community Affairs	NA	GF

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2023-2027

GF = General Fund
RR = Railroad

#	Project	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Responsible Party	Cost	Funding Source
REVITALIZE THE RAILROAD TO PRESERVE IT'S CHARACTER AND PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT AROUND IT									
35	Conduct Feasibility Studies To Identify Measures To Create Public Spaces Around The Railroad			X			Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Cobb DOT, Georgia DOT, Norfolk Southern	\$25,000	GF, SPLOST, Federal Funding, Private RR Funding
MAINTAIN THE NATURAL CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS AND GREENSPACE									
36	Expand Conservation Easements To Restrict Any New Developments	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	NA	GF
37	Promote Passive-Use Tourism And Recreation		X				Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	NA	GF
38	Conduct Studies To Explore Opportunities To Capture The Water Features Of The Sweetwater Creek To Make It A Community Asset	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	\$45,000	GF
39	Promote Use Of Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Developments	X	X	X	X	X	Community Affairs, Administration	NA	GF
UNIFY THE PARK SYSTEM TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES									
40	Create A Parks Master Plan To Unify The System And Create Opportunities	X					Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	NA	GF
41	Create Greenways And Trails To Ensure Connectivity To And From All Parks			X			Community Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Works	NA	GF
CREATE UNIFORM ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND CHARACTER IN THE CITY									
42	Recognize An Architecture Design Review Board To Regulate Form Based Codes In The City			X			Community Affairs, Administration, Fire	NA	GF
CREATE SAFE, COMFORTABLE, AND PLEASING PUBLIC SPACES									
43	Reinforce Guidelines That Include Height Restrictions, Pedestrian And Biking Facilities, Streetscapes, Landscaping And Street Furniture To Ensure A Humane Scale Comfort And Create Uniformity Whilst Maintaining Individuality				X		Community Affairs, Public Works, Administration	NA	GF

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APPENDIX

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ADVERTISEMENTS

Website



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The following pages include the direct responses from the survey posted on the PublicInput page. Where possible, PublicInput generates charts and graphs. User information for the website is below.

6/14/22, 10:09 AM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

City of Austell 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update Copy

Project Engagement

VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS
822	112
RESPONSES	COMMENTS
1,612	118
SUBSCRIBERS	
22	

What's one word or phrase you would use to describe Austell to someone unfamiliar with the community?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Small town that needs a lot of updating

4 months ago

[44 Agree](#)

Small town, charming bones but abandoned pass-through

5 months ago

[35 Agree](#)

a family friendly small town with lots of opportunity for growth

5 months ago

[35 Agree](#)

Small town with a charming old town appearance. A lot of abandoned or dilapidated buildings. A few nice parks for kids. Needs some updates, and a cut back on the amount of truck traffic through the residential areas.

4 months ago

[23 Agree](#)

Small town with lots of potential. Country feel. Not very modern. Nice people.

4 months ago

[16 Agree](#)

Has potential to be a great city. Maybe look at Cartersville or Smyrna for inspiration

4 months ago

[15 Agree](#)

all buildings in downtown area need updating

4 months ago

[14 Agree](#)

Great small town to live in. Close enough to the big city but small enough to be comfortable in. I love it.

4 months ago

[12 Agree](#)

Autostall: just call Austell Autostall because the only business there are car parts, car repairs, towing, and used car lots

4 months ago

[11 Agree](#)

Great small town to grow up in back in the 60's/70's. It's now looking run down, with too many empty and dilapidated buildings. It's got potential, but we need leaders to take action to assure the community that they care!

4 months ago

[11 Agree](#)

Small town charm, with local flair.

5 months ago

[11 Agree](#)

Not enough...restaurants, things to do, sense of community. There are enough grocery stores. Also, the businesses we do have seem to not keep up. I find myself going to other areas for better selections.

4 months ago

[10 Agree](#)

Austell is a small town, family oriented community with rich history and close access to abundant natural resources.

6 months ago

[8 Agree](#)

Austell is a unique city surrounding itself with many opportunities for living a bigger life style while enjoying the small town feel. Growth is an element newcomers will have the benefit of being a part of.

4 months ago

[6 Agree](#)

Not an area for young home owners trying to make it unfortunately

4 months ago

[6 Agree](#)

SURVEY RESPONSES

Small town with a lot of potential.

3 months ago

[+ 3 Agree](#)

I live in Austell. Its nothing special. People aren't friendly. They don't care about you or anything.. I had to live here but when I get a chance I want be here. Lithia springs is nice. Smyrna

4 months ago

[+ 3 Agree](#)

Rural and Industrial Mix, Unattended to, Unwelcoming of new people. Threatened and angered by diversity. Little sense of neighborhood pride. Great opportunity to create a new sense of community and cohesiveness.

4 months ago

[+ 3 Agree](#)

I consider Austell a perfect candidate for a fixer upper. Good bones, and tons of potential, just needs the right people and resources to activate it. Due to decades of stagnation the city's experienced, the actions and ideas we implement today need to be thinking 20 - 30 years from today. If we only look at the current progress of surrounding cities as the benchmark by the time we catch up, we're already behind.

I've purchased several buildings in and around downtown Austell which I either have updated, am currently updating, or plan to update to help bring this vision forward. And with the help of other forward thinking citizens, stakeholders, elected officials, and investors I know the next 5 - 10 years of the city's history will be much brighter than the past recent decades.

3 months ago

[+ 2 Agree](#)

Not as nice as surrounding areas, aging population, businesses are all run down mom and pop locations. BUT very excited for the LCI project and looking forward to investing alongside the city of Austell to change Down town and make it as attractive as other areas like Smyrna, Woodstock, Kennesaw, Sandy Springs, MARIETTA.

3 months ago

[+ 2 Agree](#)

Home away from Home - Family & community oriented and business potential!

4 months ago

[+ 2 Agree](#)

Great to live

4 months ago

[+ 2 Agree](#)

Small quaint city that has a lot of potential. For younger families the city does not have much to offer. The parks/playgrounds need updating & more restaurant options to eliminate the desire to drive to other nearby cities. The city of Austell needs a grocery store as well. The schools need better funding & resources for all our kids to succeed academically. Me & my family are excited about the LCI and the future of Austell & what's in-store for the residents. It'll be nice to see things shaken up a little vs what's been traditionally done in the past.

Sidenote: It would be great if the city would upgrade their utility payment option to an app (more convenient for some) vs the two current options (mail or online with a preassigned account# & pin#).

3 months ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

LAWERANCE MOBILE home park is run by slumlords they only care about the money they steal from the people who live here they do nothing but try to get 1000 or 1500 for rent from 10-20 year old mobile homes no heat CAROL thinks she can do what ever she has to do to get illegal people to move in so they can take more and more money SLUMLORDS

3 months ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

Small town that is growing residentially only!!! Unfortunately as the City grows our first responders departments do not!! The City is in need of communication between all business and also including CITY employed departments.

4 months ago

[+ 1 Agree](#)

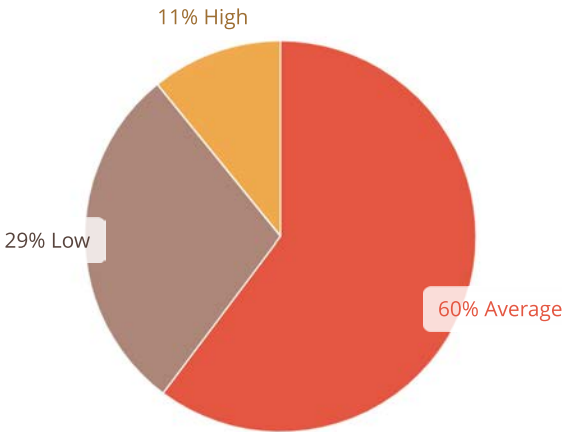
More police patrol and too many stray dogs it's getting scary to for a walk

3 months ago

Small town with potential for downtown apartment/condo living but the middle aged night life attractions are missing. Area is good for walking from place to place suchas bars, restaurants, shops, etc.....

3 months ago

How would you rate Austell's quality of life?



83 respondents

SURVEY RESPONSES

What is Austell's strongest **asset**?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Small town, authentic feel with immense opportunity and timing to be an up and coming expansive community.

6 months ago

⬆️ [35 Agree](#)

lots of space to grow

5 months ago

⬆️ [17 Agree](#)

Quiet downtown area and small town feel

4 months ago

⬆️ [14 Agree](#)

The downtown area and Suggs Park

5 months ago

⬆️ [8 Agree](#)

Quaint old fashioned downtown space within walking distance from several homes

4 months ago

⬆️ [6 Agree](#)

It's old town feel

4 months ago

⬆️ [4 Agree](#)

Parks and Sweetwater Creek just waiting to link from the Silver Comet to Sweetwater Creek State conservation park

4 months ago

⬆️ [3 Agree](#)

The only direction left for the city to head is up. Continue investing in Downtown Austell and attracting developers, restaurants, bakeries, boutiques, brewery, etc. Make it walkable and increase everyone's home values. Offer to buy homeowners houses with property and turn it into parks.

3 months ago

⬆️ [2 Agree](#)

The best asset Austell has is the people I've met within the city (including myself) who are blazing a new path for the city. This includes residents, elected officials, business owners, investors, city staff, and other stakeholders who are pushing daily for the advancement of the city. They are doing this through civic engagement, private investment, advocacy, and public policy. This collective of people through daily small efforts are acting as the biggest asset the city has. Connecting these change makers, and getting out of their way is where the true assets lie.

3 months ago

⬆️ [1 Agree](#)

Space to grow, updated downtown space - lots of potential! Involve the city more and incorporate youth sports!

3 months ago

⬆️ [1 Agree](#)

There is a large footprint that can be changed easily due to the size of the city and the pass through traffic.

3 months ago

⬆️ [1 Agree](#)

Silver comet trail and potential to be better

4 months ago

⬆️ [1 Agree](#)

For now, the asset is the quick with the short mileage that first responders have to travel. That asset will become the weakest as the City grows with no future action being spoken of to increase the amount of staff within the City.

4 months ago

⬆️ [1 Agree](#)

A small town with big vibes

4 months ago [👍 1 Agree](#)

Small town feel

3 months ago

Potential for growth

3 months ago

The potential and a lot of history.

3 months ago

Has lots of sidewalks making in walkable/runnable.

4 months ago

The old town feel is great. Trying to bring more people in will ruin it.

4 months ago

SURVEY RESPONSES

What is Austell's primary **challenge**?

SURVEY RESPONSES

Upgrading some of the more dilapidated areas.

4 months ago

[33 Agree](#)

Not many businesses that invite families to spend more time than necessary in the community. Neighbors are interested in supporting local businesses/events, but don't know how. Notifications of events are often received with utility bills after the event has already happened.

5 months ago

[30 Agree](#)

Too many tire and car businesses close together that doesn't make the area look appealing. No businesses that are appealing to young/middle aged families.

4 months ago

[29 Agree](#)

Updating or repairing the dilapidated buildings instead of adding new homes and buildings. Focus on the current community and people instead of trying to bring more residents. Focus on the people there first.

4 months ago

[16 Agree](#)

Support, need more business', community events & engagement

4 months ago

[13 Agree](#)

Lack of sidewalks in certain areas.

Needs more activities around the silver comet trail to invite families to come out and enjoy nature. Trash everywhere you look on the side of the roads. Look at Anderson Mill Road, around Sanders Elementary.

4 months ago

[9 Agree](#)

I see communication as a challenge, but that could just be my limited view of what's already happening. My question... How do we get more participation, energy and interest? New ways to reach out and engage with the community.

6 months ago

[8 Agree](#)

Limited civic pride, no focus on high quality development patterns

5 months ago

[7 Agree](#)

There seems to be alot of commercial industrial businesses rather than attractive businesses that allow for the nightlife and family environment.

3 months ago

[4 Agree](#)

Austell has a lot of great charm and is close to the city without being too close. Austell lacks more trails and access to the trails. The sidewalks and roads have definitely been neglected and need updating. It would be nice to invest in current restaurants while also looking at bringing other healthy food options to the town.

3 months ago

[4 Agree](#)

Updated playgrounds and more activities for kids through park and rec.
Update business buildings.

4 months ago

[3 Agree](#)

Austell needs to attract more businesses to Austell. That would help to make Austell an enterprising city that is able to grow and flourish.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

SURVEY RESPONSES

Not having a good downtown area. Too many run down businesses and not enough things to do for people to even want to consider moving here.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

Model Downtown development after Marietta Square, attract businesses that have fresh and healthy food, make it walkable, get rid of the eye sore businesses. Attract high income young families to the area which in turn will have enough income to support these businesses.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

There is alot of clean up that needs to happen. It seems businesses come to Austell b/c it is easily a place to keep junk lots and not keep up the appearance of their business whatever the business is.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

Convincing the middle aged, working class that Austell is a place you want to visit, live and can enjoy the ammenities it has to offer. Families want a place to take their kids, outdoor activity areas, restaurants, bars, music. B3 does not count.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

A palpable sense of us vs them. More community initiative that invite neighbors from all walks of life and backgrounds, working together on shared goals

4 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

More businesses that bring people to town

3 months ago

The city's history is a big challenge, because once an area garners a reputation whether good or bad, it tends to stick. As the city puts forth a new vision for itself, there will be pushback from both internal and external sources.

A vocal, but minority of current residents will push back due to a fear of change. And residents advocating for the city's future will receive pushback from those in other parts of the metro area, because they have their own perception of the city which doesn't match to this proposed future vision of Austell. So changing the narrative around what Austell is and isn't will be a challenge.

3 months ago

Too many businesses in area are unkept, there are a few exceptions but city/county needs to hold business owners responsible for keeping area clean and tidy.

3 months ago

Model Downtown development after Marietta Square, attract businesses that have fresh and healthy food, make it walkable, get rid of the eye sore businesses. Attract high income young families to the area which in turn will have enough income to support these businesses.

3 months ago

More community involvement

3 months ago

To many businesses/residence who refuses to communicate within one another.

4 months ago

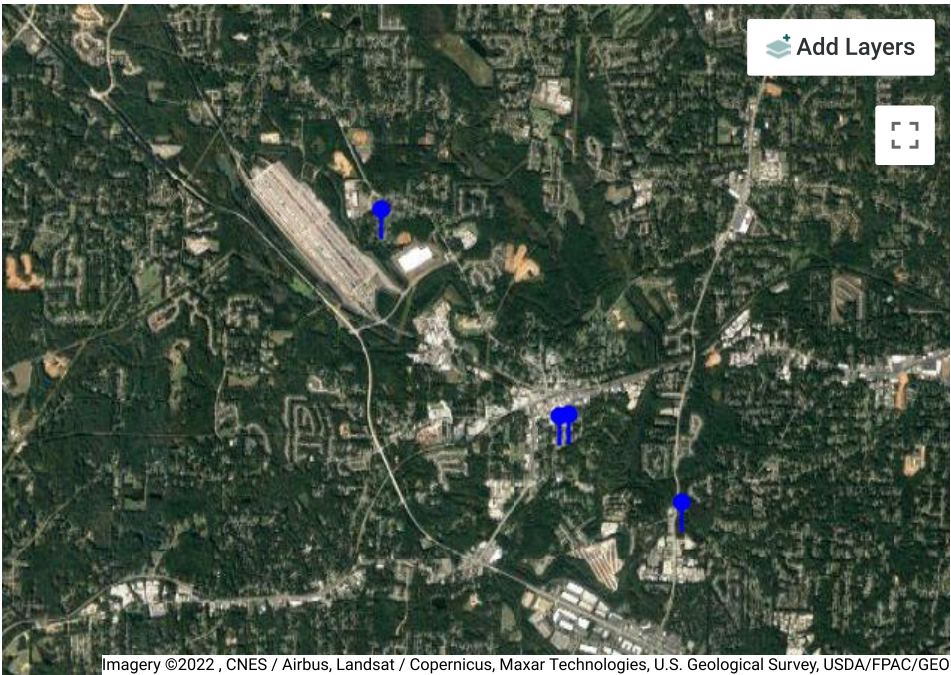
Not enough parking. Buildings need to be taxed until they sell instead of shut up waiting for a sucker to pay what nobody is going to pay
Enforce littering laws.

4 months ago

What are Austell's most significant natural and environmental resources? What role should the City play in helping to preserve and protect these?

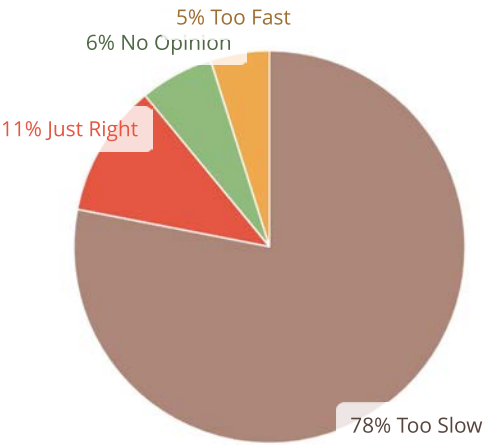


What are Austell's most significant historic and cultural resources? What role should the City play in helping to preserve and protect these?



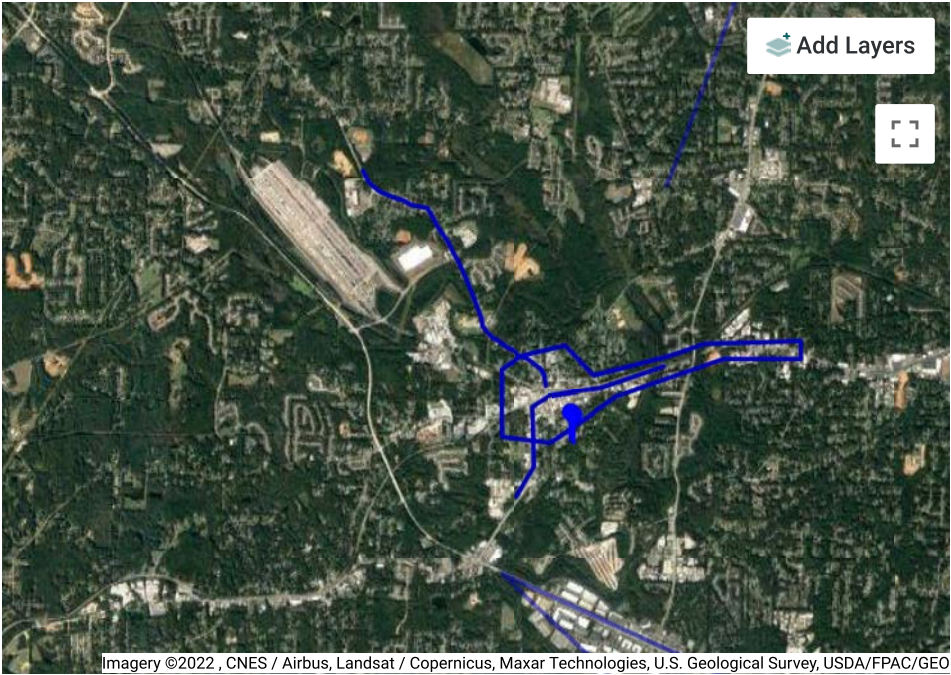
SURVEY RESPONSES

How would you characterize Austell's pace of development in recent years?



82 respondents

Where would you like to see future development focused?



How would you rank Austell's housing needs?

	Need More	Right Amount	Need Less
Affordable Housing	35% Need More	40% Right Amount	25% Need Less
Senior Housing	42% Need More	49% Right Amount	8% Need Less
Density	30% Need More	56% Right Amount	14% Need Less
Mixed-Income Housing	43% Need More	39% Right Amount	19% Need Less

SURVEY RESPONSES

What would you describe as Austell's most important housing need? What role should the City play in helping to support this development?

I'm not informed on Austell's CURRENT demographic housing needs, but with consideration of future growth and attracting people that can spend money in the city of Austell, I would think that more attention should be given to creating medium to higher income housing.

6 months ago

[31 Agree](#)

I am not educated on the current mix of housing based on income. I believe we need more opportunities for a variety of income levels to prevent gentrification of our community.

5 months ago

[22 Agree](#)

Stop developing so much and focus on repairs and upgrades to the historic areas.

4 months ago

[19 Agree](#)

Austell needs to take advantage of its prime location, adding more density

5 months ago

[16 Agree](#)

I leave Austell to spend money for lack of choices. Bring businesses and people will follow

4 months ago

[4 Agree](#)

The level of what is available - causes many to shop outside of the area. Up and diversify the kinds of experiences people can have here in Austell and it will attract more business and residents with disposable income.

4 months ago

[4 Agree](#)

Baby land needs to be torn out and rebuilt as a prime living location

4 months ago

[3 Agree](#)

Invest in down town as planned, this in turn will allow people the equity to improve their homes, move out to make room for high income earners thus resulting in organic growth of rising home values. Almost 2/3 of downtown austell homes need major renovations and repairs. Push for higher priced homes/developments near down town. Allowing developers to develop homes in the 200K range near down town is not great for home values.

3 months ago

[2 Agree](#)

Condos/apartments above the business/restaurant spaces.

3 months ago

[2 Agree](#)

SURVEY RESPONSES

SURVEY RESPONSES

Austell, particularly the downtown and surrounding area, needs a better diversity of housing options. This includes apartments (5 - 100+ units), accessory dwelling units (ADU's), garage conversions, conversions of large homes into multi-units, duplexes through quadplexes, mixed used homes, cottage courts, etc.

The role the city should play is substantial in this regard. Most of the housing types mentioned exist in Austell, but due to current zoning laws they are unable to be built again. And the reason zoning was changed was not due to the unsafe or hazardous conditions posed by these types of housing, but as a tool in institutional racism as described in the book "Color of Law". This has hurt both black and white residents of this city allowing only the development of single family homes.

The city could change the zoning to allow these types of housing to be built again. This can be done in phases depending on the intensity of development. With the first phase allowing accessory dwelling units, garage conversions, smaller lot sizes for infill development, and single family conversions. The second phase allowing duplexes - quadplexes, small - medium scale mixed use housing, and small apartment buildings up to 16 - 20 units. The third phase allowing all types of development.

This way instead of the city waiting for a large developer coming in to upgrade things, it allows the residents of the city the opportunity to develop the city themselves and provide incremental improvement that will attract larger developers. With this approach it provides the residents an opportunity to build wealth and doesn't leave the entire city dependent on the efforts of one to three large scale developers for its future growth.

The city has the power to get this started today if it so chose to. Examples of these types of zoning reforms already exist across the country and are getting more popular by the day.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

Bring in some actual good businesses that will make people want to travel to Austell. We leave Austell to find better businesses instead of spending money within the town. Bring in a business that people want to spend money at. Like a brewery or winery. Bringing in more likeable businesses will bring people in. Also building more expensive homes in the area to increase property value. However, you can't build bigger and better homes with the current businesses in the area.

3 months ago

[1 Agree](#)

Less low income housing will bring more income to the city and

3 months ago

Until Cobb County dies more with the poor performing schools that serve Austell, young families are not going to move here. Unfortunately Garrett Middle School has a bad reputation & the issues with that school are totally overlooked by the county.

3 months ago

We are a flood zone most of Austell is.

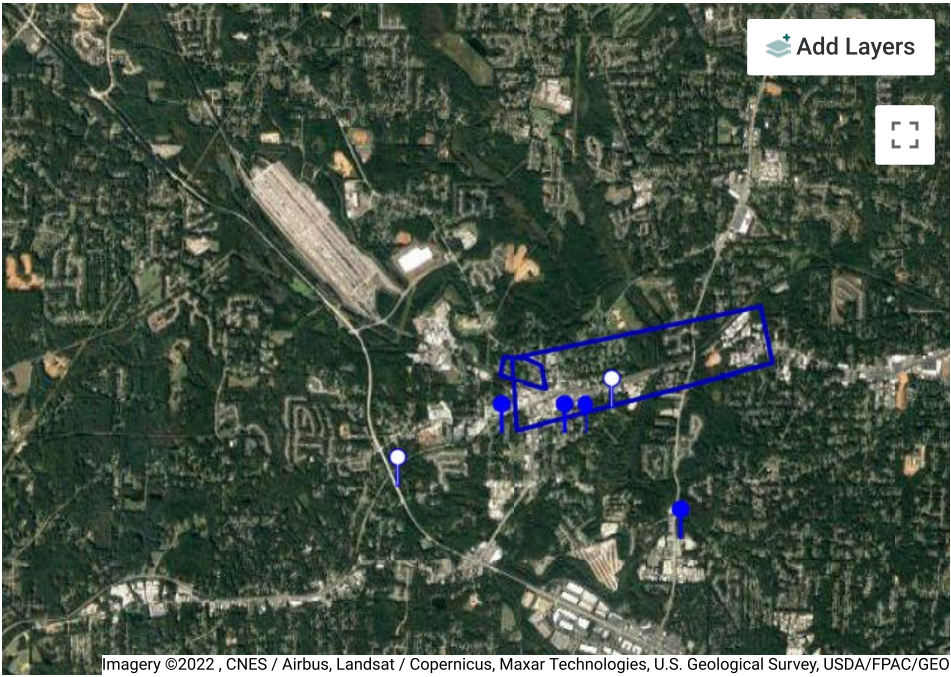
4 months ago

How would you rank your satisfaction with Austell's transportation system?

	Poor	Below Average	Adequate	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
Traffic Safety	14% Poor	20% Below Average	34% Adequate	22% Good	1% Excellent	9% No Opinion
Traffic Congestion	10% Poor	22% Below Average	50% Adequate	12% Good	2% Excellent	4% No Opinion
Road Conditions	14% Poor	31% Below Average	28% Adequate	21% Good	4% Excellent	2% No Opinion
Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety	34% Poor	22% Below Average	27% Adequate	8% Good	3% Excellent	8% No Opinion
Public Transportation	27% Poor	18% Below Average	24% Adequate	4% Good	- Excellent	27% No Opinion

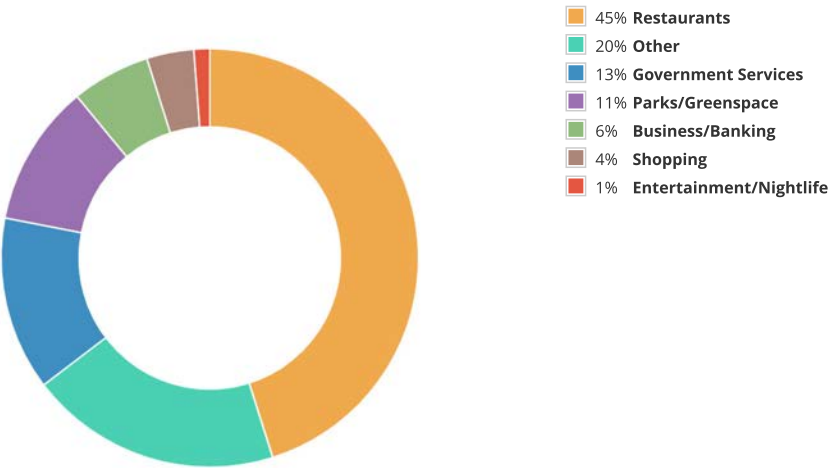
82 respondents

Are there any areas in Austell you feel are particularly dangerous for pedestrians or bicyclists?



SURVEY RESPONSES

What is your primary reason for visiting Downtown Austell?



82 respondents

SURVEY RESPONSES

What kind of improvements should be considered to enhance Downtown Austell?

sidewalks for the neighborhood residents to walk from their home to downtown safely, increased outdoor seating/event areas, playground, grocery store, leisure type businesses (brewery, restaurants, ice cream parlor, etc) to attract families to hang out

5 months ago

45 Agree

Small independently owned businesses with anchor stores that make sense to the quality of life we are wanting to maintain. Walkability, safety, lighting, park beautification central to the downtown area.

6 months ago

25 Agree

Tunnel/Breezeway under the railroad to help patrons safely cross from broad street to downtown

4 months ago

14 Agree

Sidewalks and bike facilities to encourage surrounding neighborhood residents to come into Downtown. Safety and traffic calming measures, particularly on VMH where Douglas/Paulding and truck traffic speeds through.

5 months ago

14 Agree

nightlife and entertainment for the business working, middle aged citizens

3 months ago

4 Agree

Small business opportunities

3 months ago

1 Agree

Better social events

3 months ago

1 Agree

More arts and intertainment

3 months ago

Convert the two traffic lights that go to the Jefferson street bypass into a traffic circle joining all into a true round about.

Provide instructions at the Love and Jefferson street four way stop because some people think that it's a traffic circle.

Provide a Love Street pedestrian entrance to Suggs park.

Put a recording traffic camera in at the high crash intersections like Love/Austell Powder Springs Road and VMH

4 months ago

Need more parking to accommodate events and growth

4 months ago

SURVEY RESPONSES

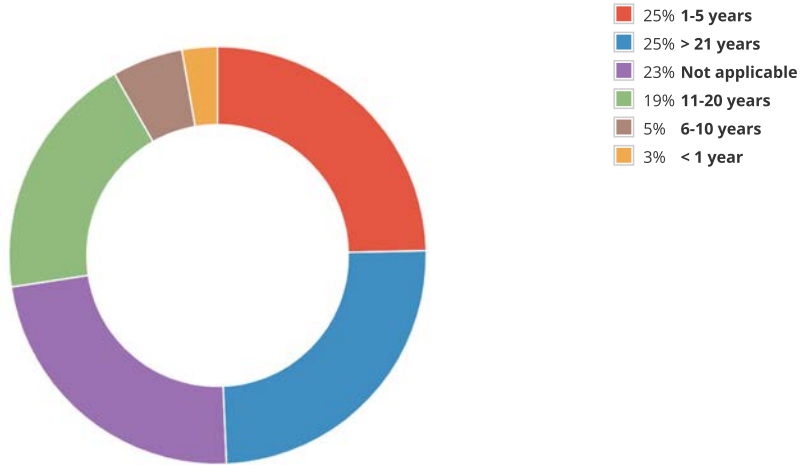
SURVEY RESPONSES

Which of the following statements apply to you (select all that apply)?

65%	I am a resident of Austell	45 ✓
36%	I work in Austell	25 ✓
13%	I own a business located in Austell	9 ✓
7%	Other	5 ✓

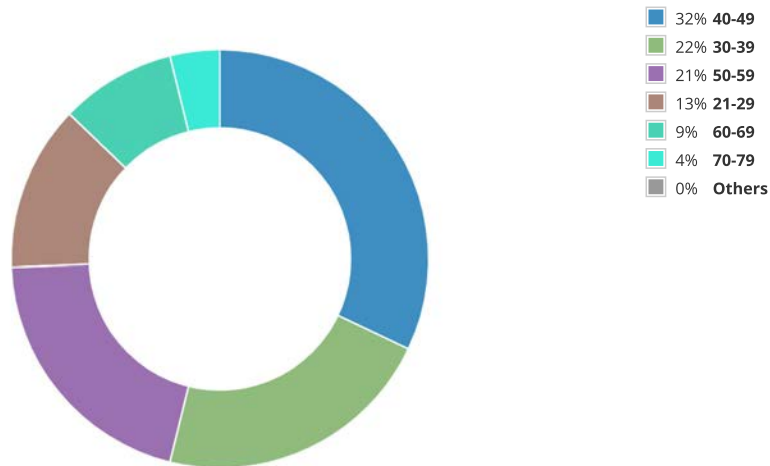
69 Respondents

How long have you lived in Austell?



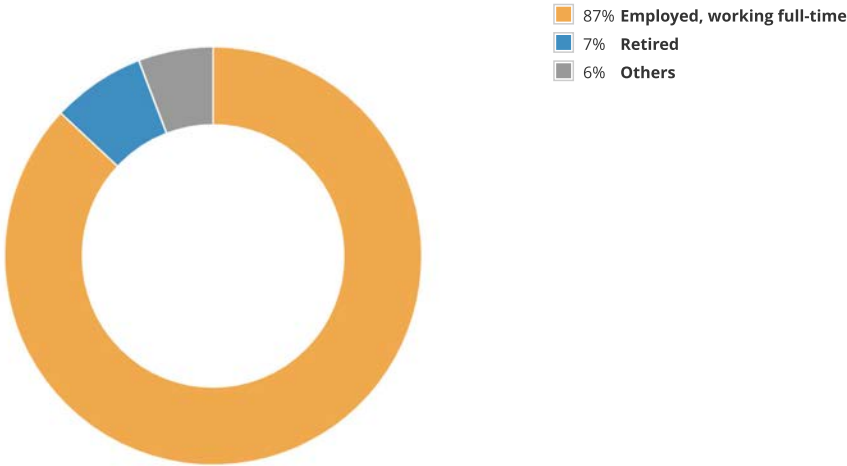
73 respondents

What is your age?



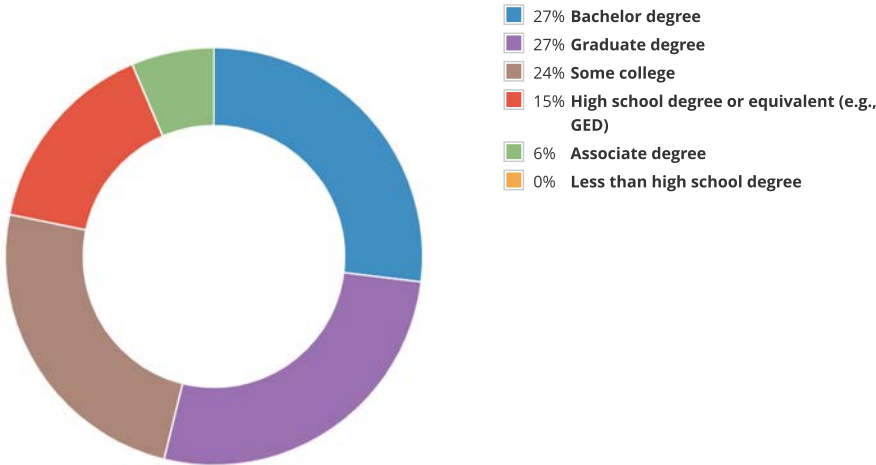
78 respondents

Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?



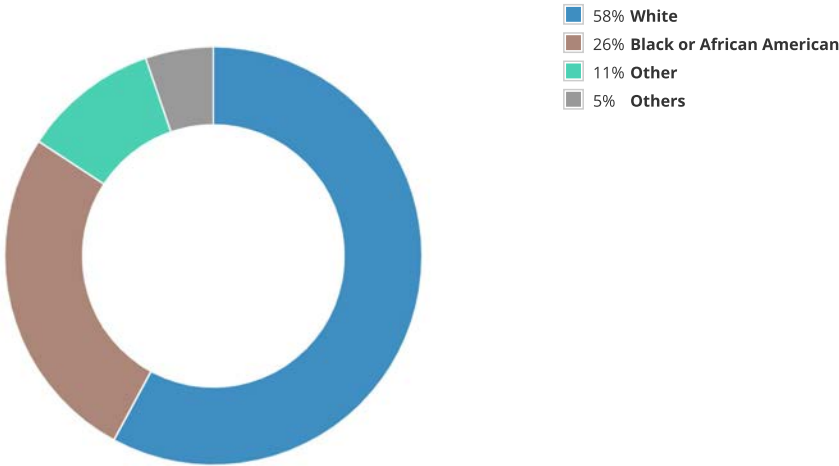
69 respondents

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?



78 respondents

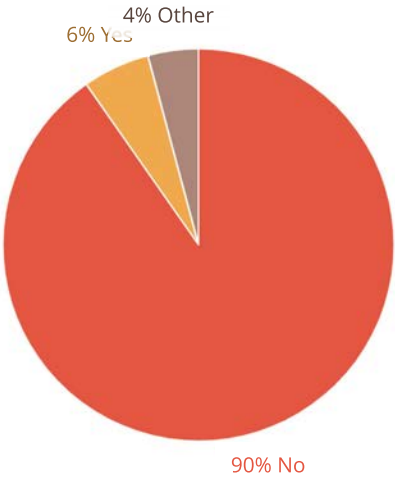
With which race do you identify?



76 respondents

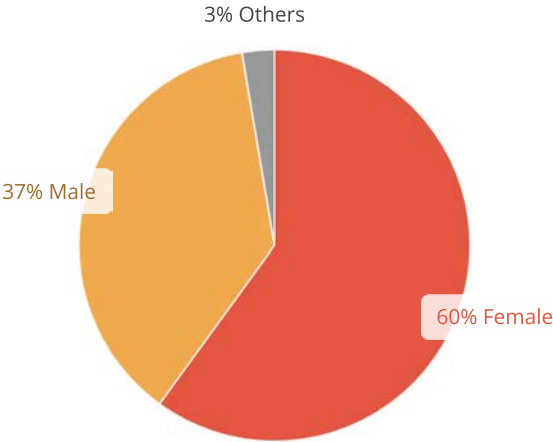
SURVEY RESPONSES

Do you identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish?



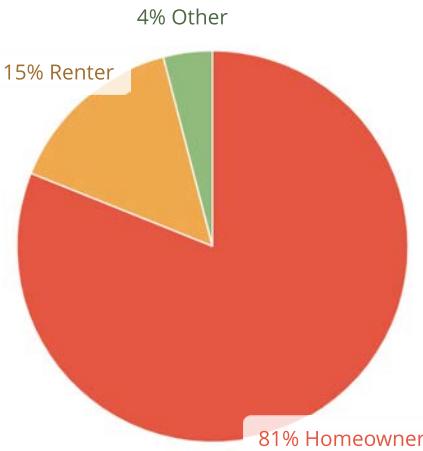
72 respondents

What is your gender identity?



75 respondents

What best describes your housing status?



74 respondents

SURVEY RESPONSES

Subscribe now to get updates on upcoming engagement opportunities!

No data to display...

Comments: City of Austell 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update | Steering Committee Meeting #1

Small town, charming bones but abandoned pass-through

5 months ago

[35 Agree](#)

Austell needs to take advantage of its prime location, adding more density

5 months ago

[16 Agree](#)

Sidewalks and bike facilities to encourage surrounding neighborhood residents to come into Downtown. Safety and traffic calming measures, particularly on VMH where Douglas/Paulding and truck traffic speeds through.

5 months ago

[14 Agree](#)

Limited civic pride, no focus on high quality development patterns

5 months ago

[7 Agree](#)

Downtown and Veterans Memorial corridor do not have adequate safety measures in place for bikes or walkers.

5 months ago

Austell has a great downtown area that needs to be capitalized on. Austell should also focus on Veterans Memorial corridor, as that is the "front door" to the city and is not inviting at all.

5 months ago

Loading more report objects...

SURVEY RESPONSES

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Atlanta Regional Commission