

DATE: February 3, 2023

TO: Mayor Pro Tem Tracey Messick, City of Jonesboro
ATTN TO: David Allen, Director of Community Development, City of Jonesboro
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: 2021 City of Jonesboro Comprehensive Plan Update

Description: A regional review of the 2021 City of Jonesboro Comprehensive Plan Update.

Submitting Local Government: City of Jonesboro

Action Under Consideration: Approval

Date Opened: February 3, 2023

Deadline for Comments: February 24, 2023

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

ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GEORGIA CONSERVANCY
CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE
CITY OF MORROW
CITY OF LOVEJOY

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE
GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY
CITY OF RIVERDALE
CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
CLAYTON COUNTY
CITY OF FOREST PARK
HENRY COUNTY

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 **February 24, 2023**, 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/>

JONESBORO CITY COUNCIL

TRACEY MESSICK, MAYOR PRO TEM
BOBBY LESTER, COUNCIL MEMBER
BILLY POWELL, COUNCIL MEMBER
DR. DONYA SARTOR, COUNCIL MEMBER
PATRICIA SEBO-HAND, COUNCIL MEMBER
ED WISE, COUNCIL MEMBER



January 31, 2023

**Donald Shockey
Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30303**

Re: Review of City of Jonesboro 2021 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mr. Shockey:

This letter serves as the City of Jonesboro's official transmittal request for the 2021 Jonesboro Comprehensive Plan to be forwarded to and reviewed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for final approval. On the evening of November 14, 2022, the Comprehensive Plan Update final draft was presented to the City Council, and the final public hearing was conducted. A Transmittal Resolution was also approved.

Please review the enclosed plan as soon as your schedule permits. We are excited about all of the positive change within the City of Jonesboro, and we look forward to using the latest version of the Comprehensive Plan as a vital tool to guide future growth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tracey Messick", is written over a faint, larger blue ink signature that appears to read "Mr. J. Shockey".

Tracey Messick, Mayor Pro Tem
City of Jonesboro



2021 City of Jonesboro Comprehensive Plan



NOVEMBER
2022

prepared by the



Atlanta Regional Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor & Council

Mayor Joy B. Day
Tracey Messick, Mayor Pro Tem
Donya L. Sartor, PhD
Bobby Lester
Pat Sebo-Hand
Billy Powell
Ed Wise

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Executive Summary



Overview

The City of Jonesboro, Georgia has completed the state-mandated update of its Comprehensive Plan. The planning and engagement process was managed with the guidance and involvement of a Steering Committee, City planning staff, and residents of Jonesboro who participated by way of internet survey and an in-person open house held May 24, 2022.

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

- It is long-range, looking ahead at least 5 years
- It is comprehensive, looking across many different facets of what the City does
- It is deliberative, looking within to understand the needs and desires of the City

The City of Jonesboro last updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2015. This document is an update to that plan with updated policies, data, and work program. This document affirms the city's big picture vision developed during the last iteration of its Plan, updates goals, and lays out a task list for city leaders, staff, and residents to address issues and leverage Jonesboro's assets.

The City of Jonesboro's government has a key role to play through these implementation tools:

- Regulations
- Capital spending
- Programs and staffing

The success of the goals of this plan requires tapping into the many voices in the City of Jonesboro, to weave their ideas, viewpoints, and thoughts into a common vision. Engagement and feedback were crucial in developing a broad consensus of the diverse population who live and work in the City.

Meeting 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, which would form the backbone of this plan.

A steering committee was convened to oversee the process and act as an instrument to guide the development of the plan. Steering committee members were appointed from the business community, residents, city staff, and elected officials.

The May 24th open house was held to allow for people to drop in to learn about the planning process and contribute their vision. The open house was held at the Arts Clayton Gallery, which allowed for visitors to make a short stop to give valuable feedback to the planning team and steering committee.

The plan focuses on elements to improve the City of Jonesboro with targeted policies to enhance its assets and address known issues. This plan looks different from previous Comprehensive Plans in Jonesboro, as the format has been updated to reflect 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.

This plan is required to be an easy-to-use document that can be amended at any time, as needed, to respond to changes within the City of Jonesboro. We have divided this document into five, interrelated sections:

- Jonesboro Yesterday and Today: history and data
- What We Heard: community engagement
- Focusing on the Future: articulation of vision
- Our Future Growth: future land use and regulations
- Plan Implementation: report of accomplishments and community work program

Who is this plan for?

As the state-approved Comprehensive Plan for the City of Jonesboro, this plan plays a role in the operations of the city. The plan will be used by the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager to advance policies and implement strategies to achieve the city's vision. It will be used

by the Community Development Department 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.

Jonesboro Forward 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 Jonesboro. 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 diverse city, the residents of Jonesboro have had very different experiences. These different experiences shape residents' perspectives about the city's future.

The planning process used both data and community feedback to understand the conditions within the City of Jonesboro 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 Jonesboro.

Jonesboro Forward | Goals

Through this planning process, the City of Jonesboro has reaffirmed the Community Goals developed in its previous Comprehensive Plan. They are as follows:

1. *A Reenergized, Bustling Main Street District*

Main Street, while not the main employment hub for the City, will become the primary destination for residents and visitors.

2. *Remarkable Places Throughout the City*

The City will work with property owners to refresh and redevelop aging retail and office property to make Jonesboro an attractive destination, with Tara Boulevard becoming an attractive gateway into the City.

3. *A Strong Economy as the Seat of Clayton County*

Jonesboro will capitalize on its regional location within the Atlanta Aerotropolis area, and as a local tourism destination.

4. *A Connected City with High Quality Amenities*

Jonesboro will link its neighborhoods and connect to the region via high-quality transportation options that distinguish it as the hub of Clayton County. It will have a network of high-quality parks and trails to promote a strong quality of life.

Building on Past Work

This Comprehensive Plan builds upon the great planning work that the City of Jonesboro has undertaken since 2017. The City has updated *Blueprint Jonesboro* and has invested in new civic spaces that were identified in previous plans.

Jonesboro: Yesterday & Today



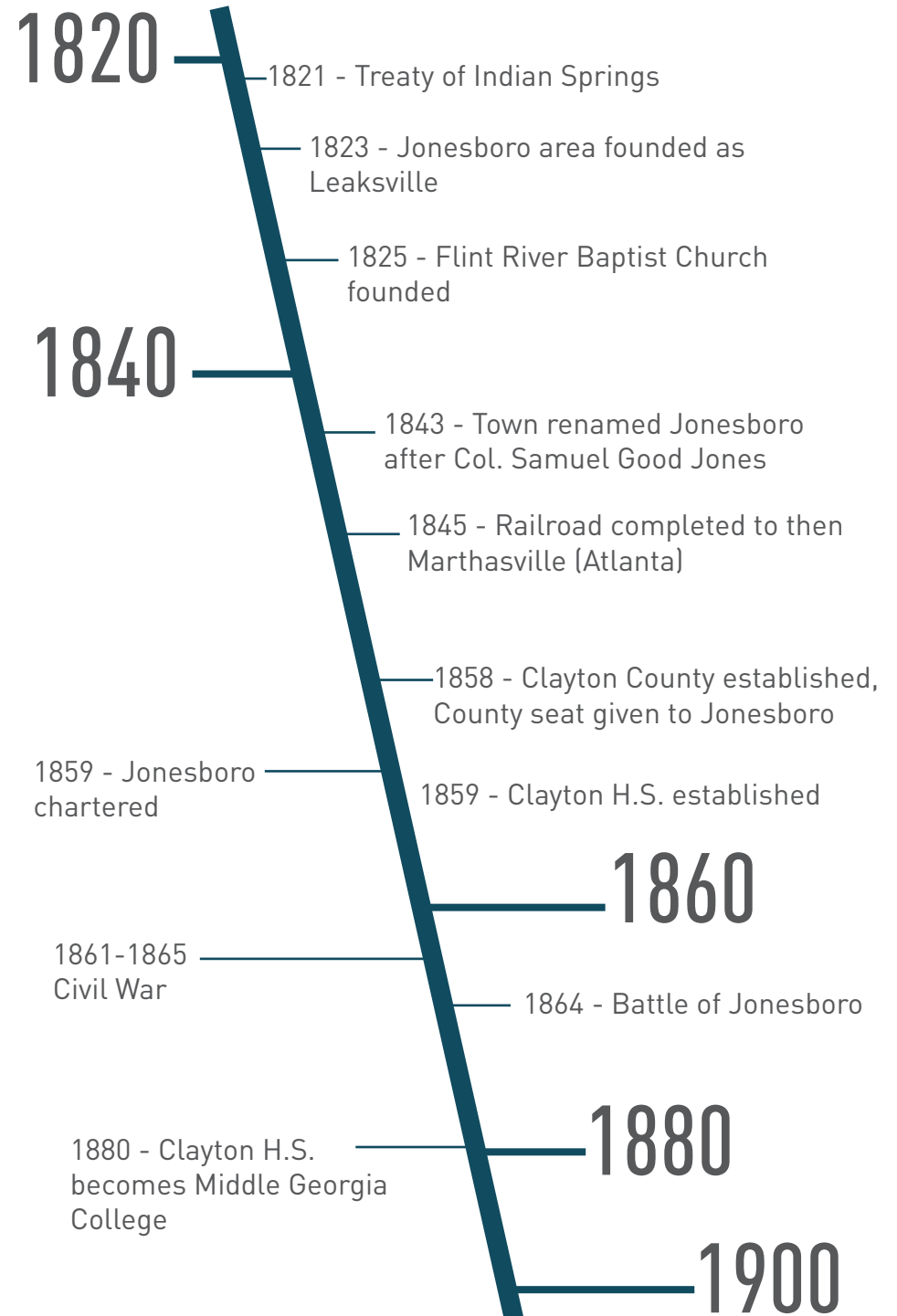
A Brief History of Jonesboro

Prior to 1821, the area of land currently recognized as Jonesboro Georgia was inhabited by the Coweta tribe of the Creek Indian Confederation. Upon passage of the treaty of Indian Springs, this land was opened to settlement by white immigrants, and the small town of Leaksville, Georgia was founded about 20 miles from what would one day be Atlanta.

Leaksville was founded at the intersection of two travelways; running north to south was White Hall Wagon Road or Griffin Road, depending on direction, and coming from the southwest headed toward Stone Mountain was the Strawn Trail, a stagecoach trail and former Native American trail that now follows SR-54/Hwy 138 through Jonesboro. The town attracted the attention of the old Monroe Railroad Company because of this location, and a railroad was extended through the town by 1843.

When Monroe Railroad became bankrupt in 1844 the company and the tracks through Leaksville were reorganized and emerged under the ownership of the Macon and Western Railroad and Banking Company. During this reorganization, one of the Railroad's principal engineers, Colonel Samuel Greene Jones took interest in the small town of Leaksville and re-engineered the city as a 2,000 ft by 2,400 ft city, centered on the railroad

Up to this point, Jonesboro lay just inside the western border of Fayette County, on the Henry County line. However, in 1858, Clayton County was created and Jonesboro received its official charter to become the



1920

1920 - Jonesboro deeply affected by Depression

1936 - Margaret Mitchell publishes *Gone with the Wind*

1940

1950s - Highway 19-41 opens

1960

1969 - I-75 is completed

1971- Jonesboro establishes a historic district

1980

City of Jonesboro. Its economy comprised mainly of the commercial activity the railroads and surrounding plantations generated, aided by the successful Clayton High School that had been established in 1825 as an academy school. The economy continued to grow and thrive throughout this time as evinced by the large plantation homes, up until the beginning of the Civil War.

Jonesboro played a pivotal role in the Civil War, not only providing most of its population of young men, but also serving as the site of the last major battle of the war - one that resulted in the fire that would burn nearly two-thirds of the town, and lead to the fall of Atlanta. Following the war Jonesboro focused on reconstruction, striving for the growing economy that had characterized the antebellum town.

Education remained key to Jonesboro's economy, and the former Clayton High School was chartered as Middle Georgia College in 1880. Growth continued through the end of the century and into the 20th, but Jonesboro took another hit when the Great Depression left it struggling alongside many other, similar cities in the South. It wasn't until Margaret Mitchell published *Gone With the Wind*, said to be set in a fictional rendition of Jonesboro, that the city regained favorable publicity and began to rebuild.

Today, Jonesboro continues to operate a museum dedicated to the book and the film industry as a whole, and retains a charming small-town aesthetic. Establishing the Jonesboro Historic District in 1971

recognized this character and the town’s significance in hopes of preserving some of its historic charm and incorporating the old-town feel into plans for the future.

Who We Are

Since 1970, the City of Jonesboro’s population has hovered between 4,000 - 5,000 people. The City saw a slight population decline between 1980 and 1990, but with the region’s rapid population growth in the 1990s and 2000s, Jonesboro’s population increased again, to 4,725 in 2010. It is currently around 5,000, a slight increase since 2010.

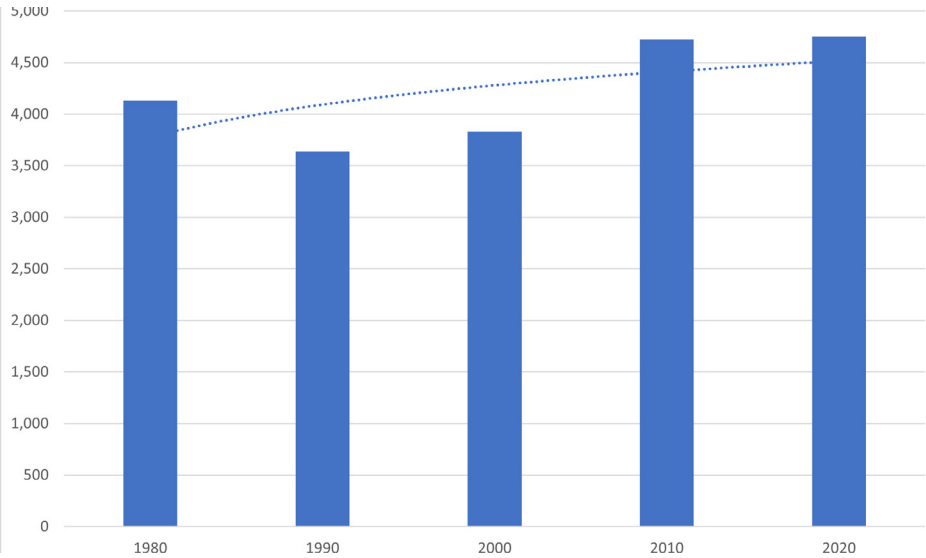
While Jonesboro is Clayton County’s seat, it is one of the County’s smallest cities, larger only than Lake City (Population: 2,952) in the 2020 Census.

Jonesboro experienced significant demographic shifts in the 21st century. Between 2000 and 2010, the city shifted from a majority white population to majority-minority. Between 2010 and 2020, however, the City’s racial composition experienced modest change.

The proportion of Black and White residents each decreased slightly, while the proportion of other races, especially Asian residents and people who identified as a race not included in the Census Bureau Surveys increased substantially.

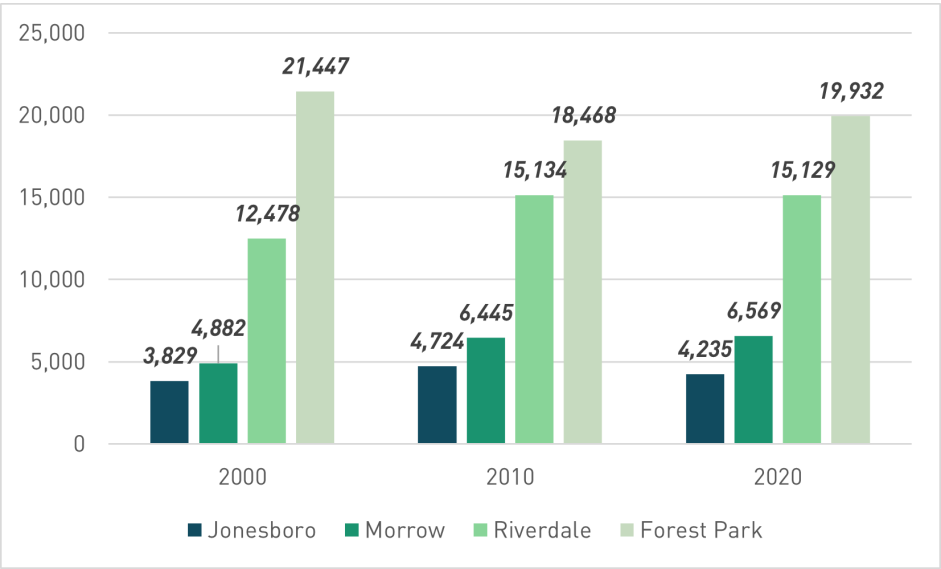
Today, Jonesboro’s population is 58% Black and 26% White, with the Asian population and people of two or more and other races comprising the remaining 16%.

Population Growth



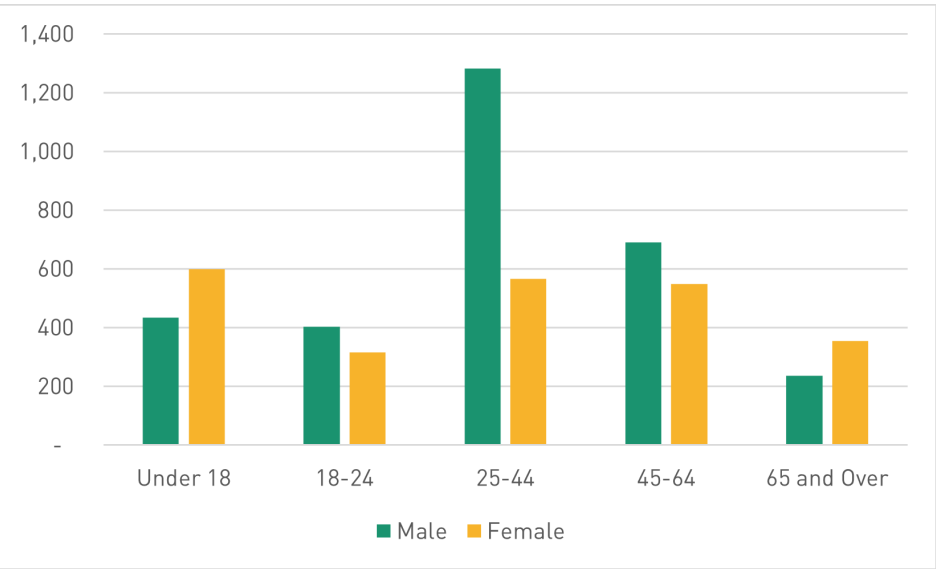
Data Sources: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census; Census Resolution 2020 PCGQR Case Number 004_Jonesboro_PL1342604

Population Comparison



Data Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census

Age Distribution

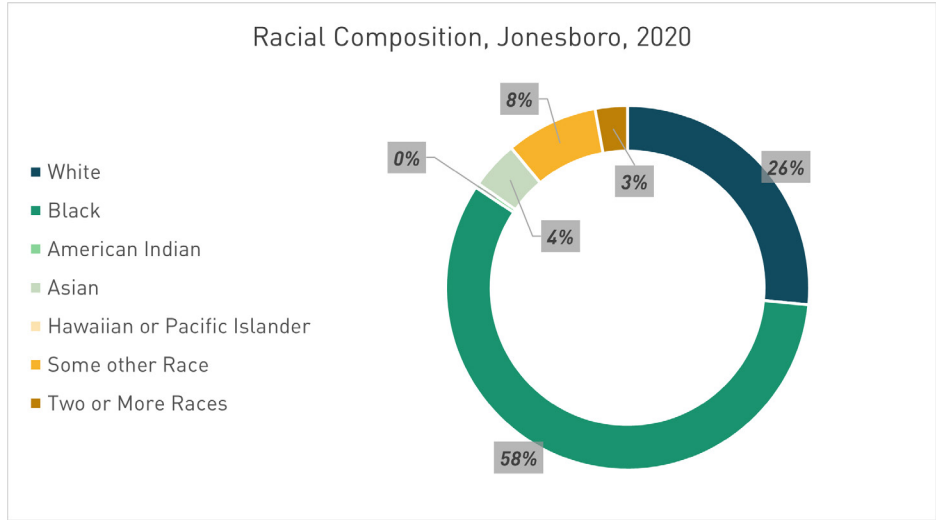


Data Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census

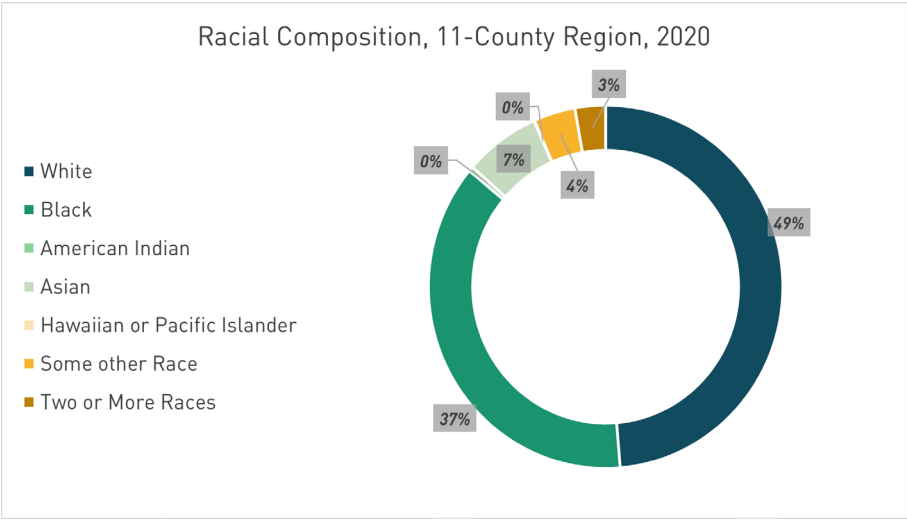
The City has a comparatively large male population, with a sex ratio (the number of males per 100 females) of 128. This disparity is captured especially in the 25- to 44-year-old cohort, in which there are nearly 800 more males than females. On the other hand, Jonesboro’s under-18 and over-65 population has a greater proportion of females.

Jonesboro’s racial composition is similar to that of the 11-County Region’s; however, the City’s population is distinctly more Black and less White than the region’s. 13.7% of Jonesboro’s population is Hispanic, a rate 3.5% higher than that of the 11-County Region.

Racial Composition Comparison



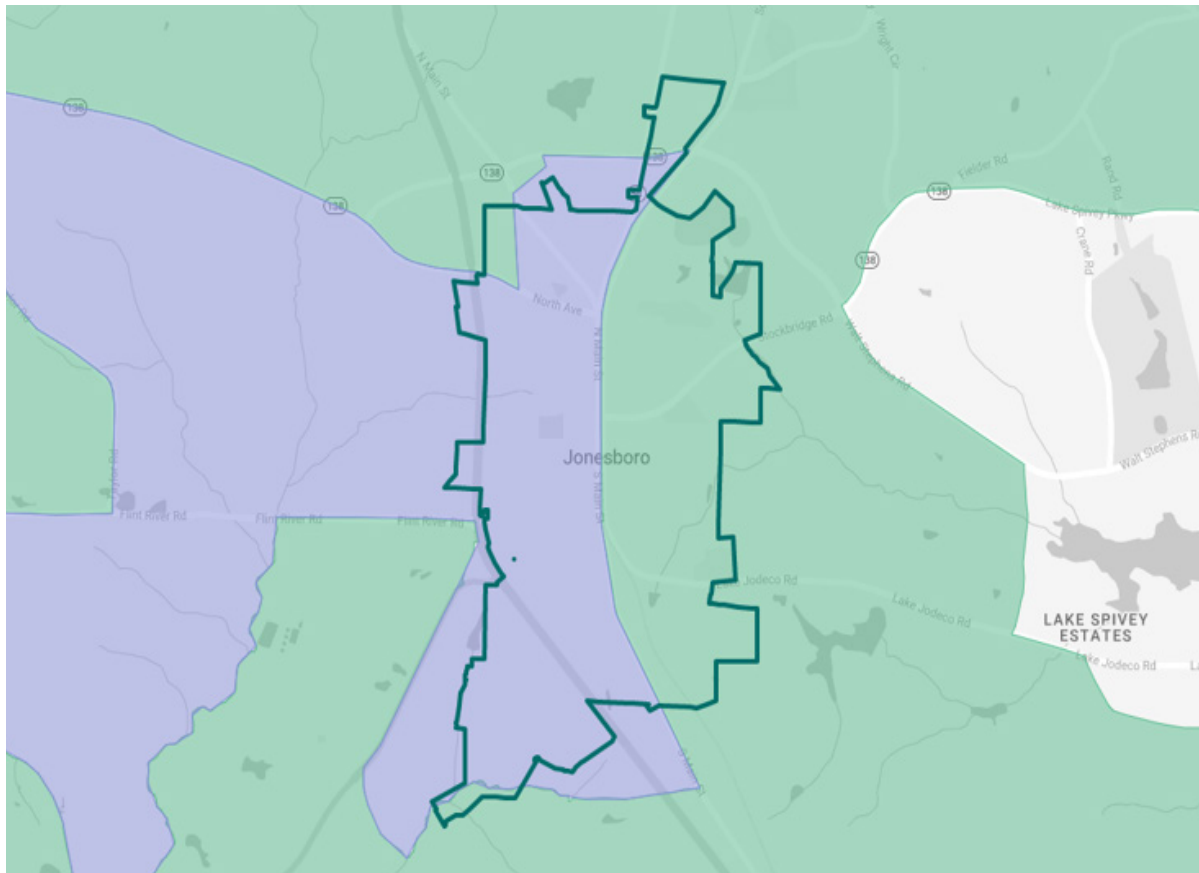
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey



Home Sweet Home

Jonesboro's housing market falls squarely into Submarkets 7 and 8 of the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy. These are suburban neighborhoods characterized by low- to moderate-priced single-family homes, with significant increase in renters. In 2020, the City's median home sale price was \$110,000, up 200% from 2013. According to Zillow, a typical home in Jonesboro was estimated to be worth \$179,000 in 2021, as home prices have skyrocketed across the country in the last couple years.

The composition of Jonesboro's housing stock reflects the



Data Source: metroathhousing.org

CITY SNAPSHOT

Median Home Sale Price (2020) **\$110,000**

Change in Median Home Sale Price (2013-20) **+201%**

Home Sale Price Per Sq Ft (2020) **\$85.00 sq ft**

Percent Change in Home Sale Price Per Sq Ft (2013-20) **+181%**

Median Building Area of Home Sales (2020) **1,113 sq ft**

Data source: ARC analysis of Zillow's ZTRAX home sale transactions, 2013 & 2020. Explore this data further in the [DATA EXPLORER](#)

Jonesboro



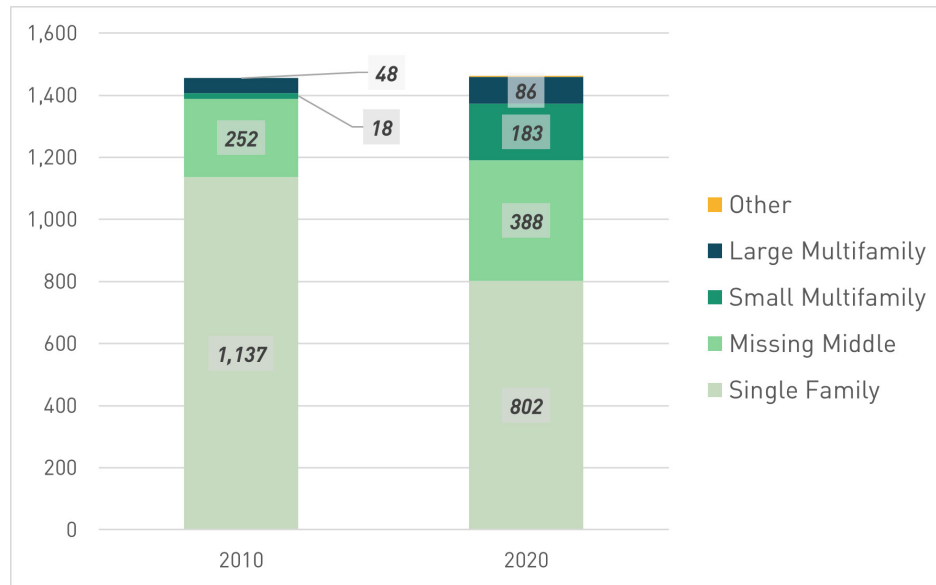
52% SUBMARKET 8

Suburban neighborhoods with lowest-priced single-family homes, mix of renters and owners [Learn more](#)

48% SUBMARKET 7

Suburban neighborhoods with lower-to-moderate-priced housing, biggest increase in renters [Learn more](#)

Housing Types

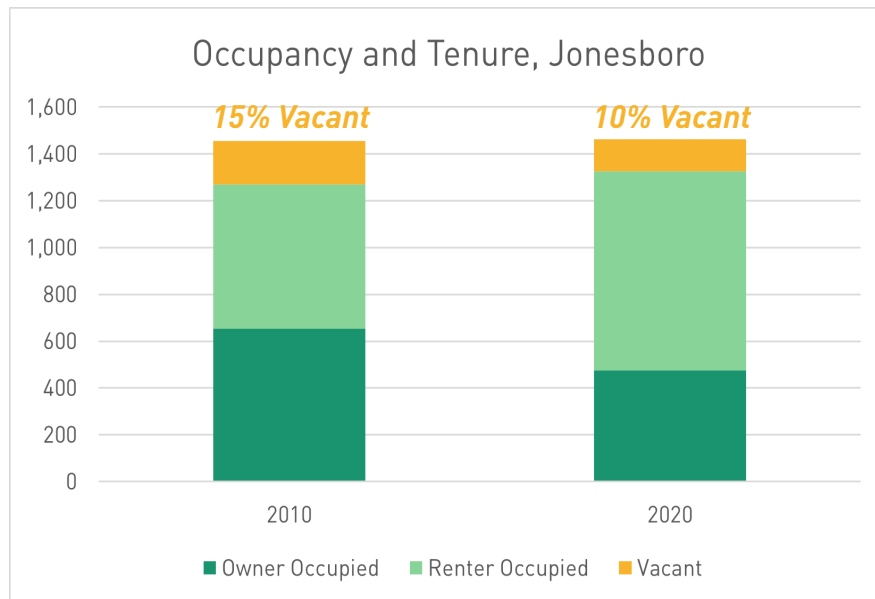


Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

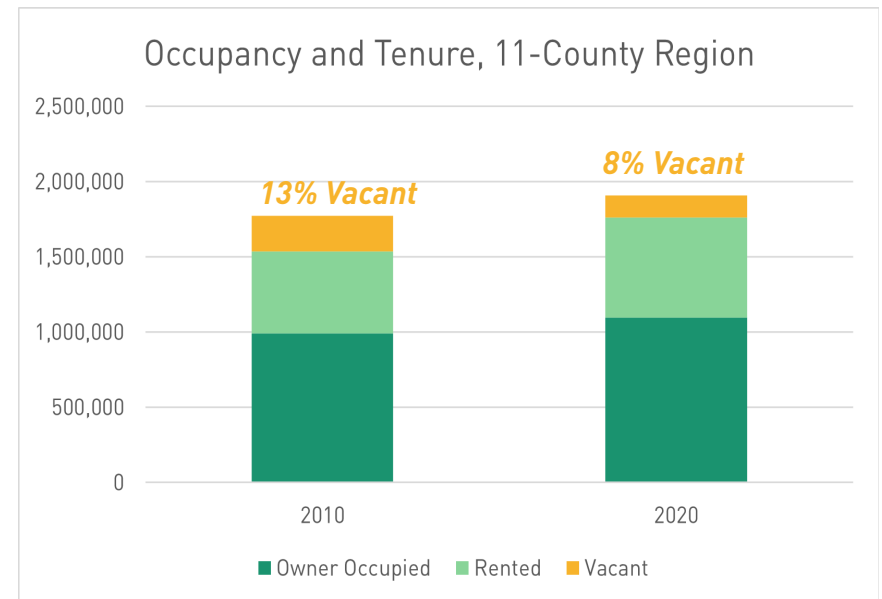
characterization of its submarkets in the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy. Most of the City's housing is single-family, with a growing portion of its housing stock being missing middle or multi-family. Since 2010, the City has seen growth among multi-family housing types amid a decrease in the single-family housing stock; this trend may be partially attributable to sampling errors in ACS data.

At the same time, vacancy rates have fallen and the rate of renting has increased – a phenomenon experienced nationwide following the Great Recession. Since 2010, occupied housing units have shifted from 48% renter occupied to 64% renter occupied. Jonesboro is generally an affordable place to live within the Atlanta region; however, about half of the City's

Housing Occupancy and Tenure



Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey



residents are considered cost-burdened, paying over 30% of their monthly income toward housing costs. Renters experience cost burden at a higher rate (62%) than do homeowners (25%) by a wide margin.

While renters experience cost burden at higher rates than homeowners, the two groups also have dissimilar monthly housing costs. About 25% of renters and homeowners spend between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month on housing, but a much greater proportion of homeowners spend less than \$500 per month. Almost all renters spend between \$500 and \$1,999 per month on housing.

At the same time renters tend to have higher housing costs, they also have significantly lower average incomes, which explains the higher rate of cost burden among renters than homeowners. The median income of a renting household is \$55,098, about \$20,000 lower than the median homeownership household income (\$75,385).

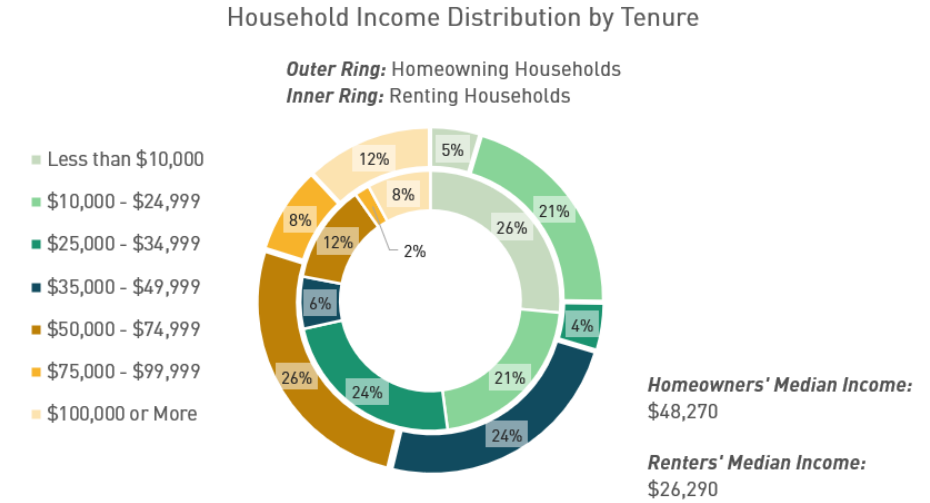
Currently, there are several housing developments, both in the planning stages and already under construction, to bring more multi-family housing stock to the residents of Jonesboro.

Monthly Housing Costs by Tenure



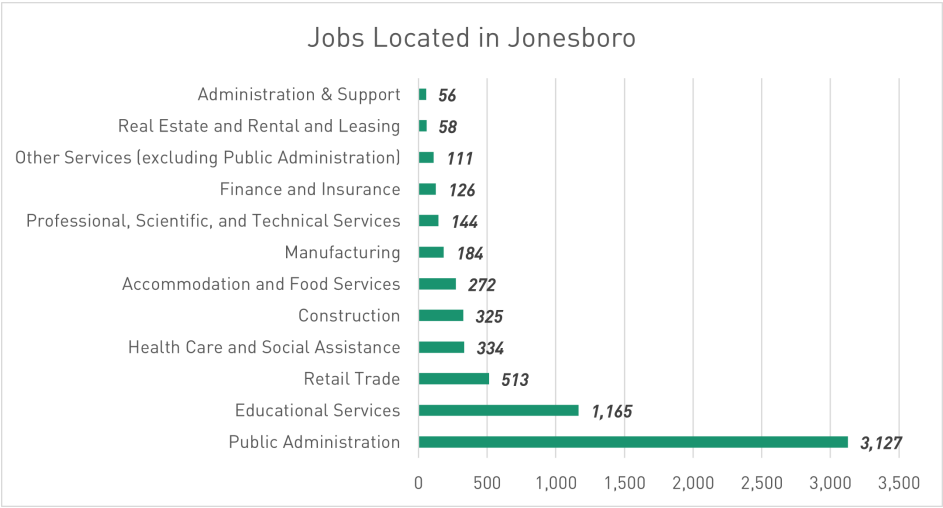
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Household Income Distribution by Tenure



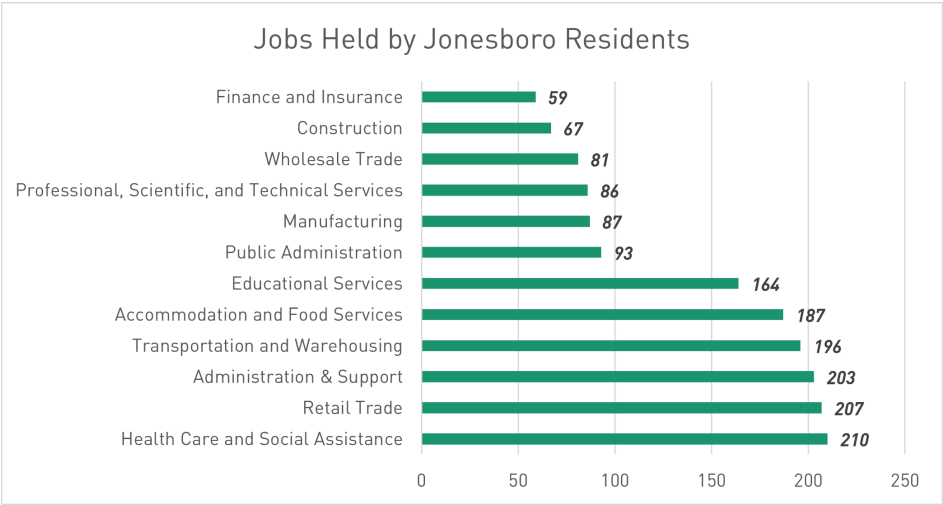
Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Workplace Area Characteristics



Data Source: LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics

Resident Area Characteristics



Data Source: LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics

What We Do

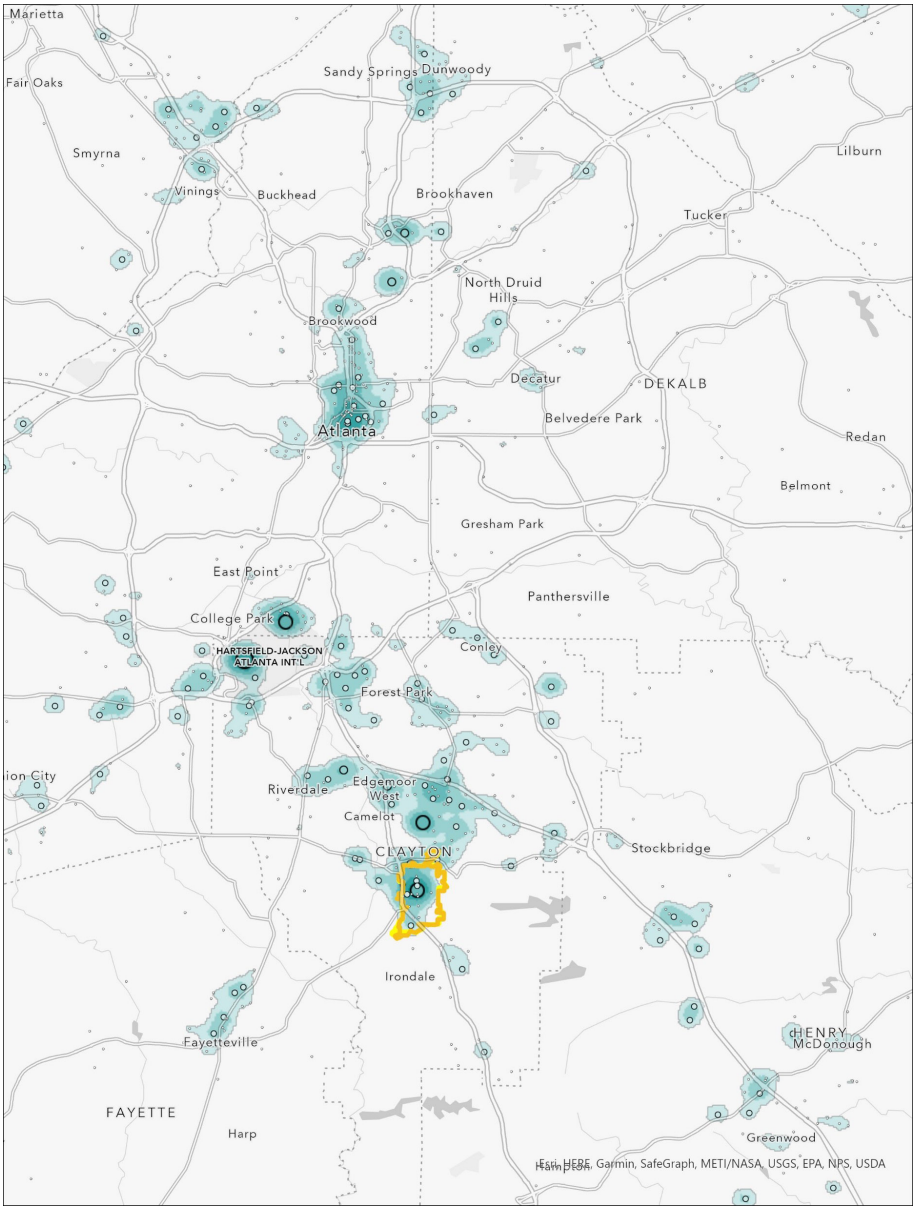
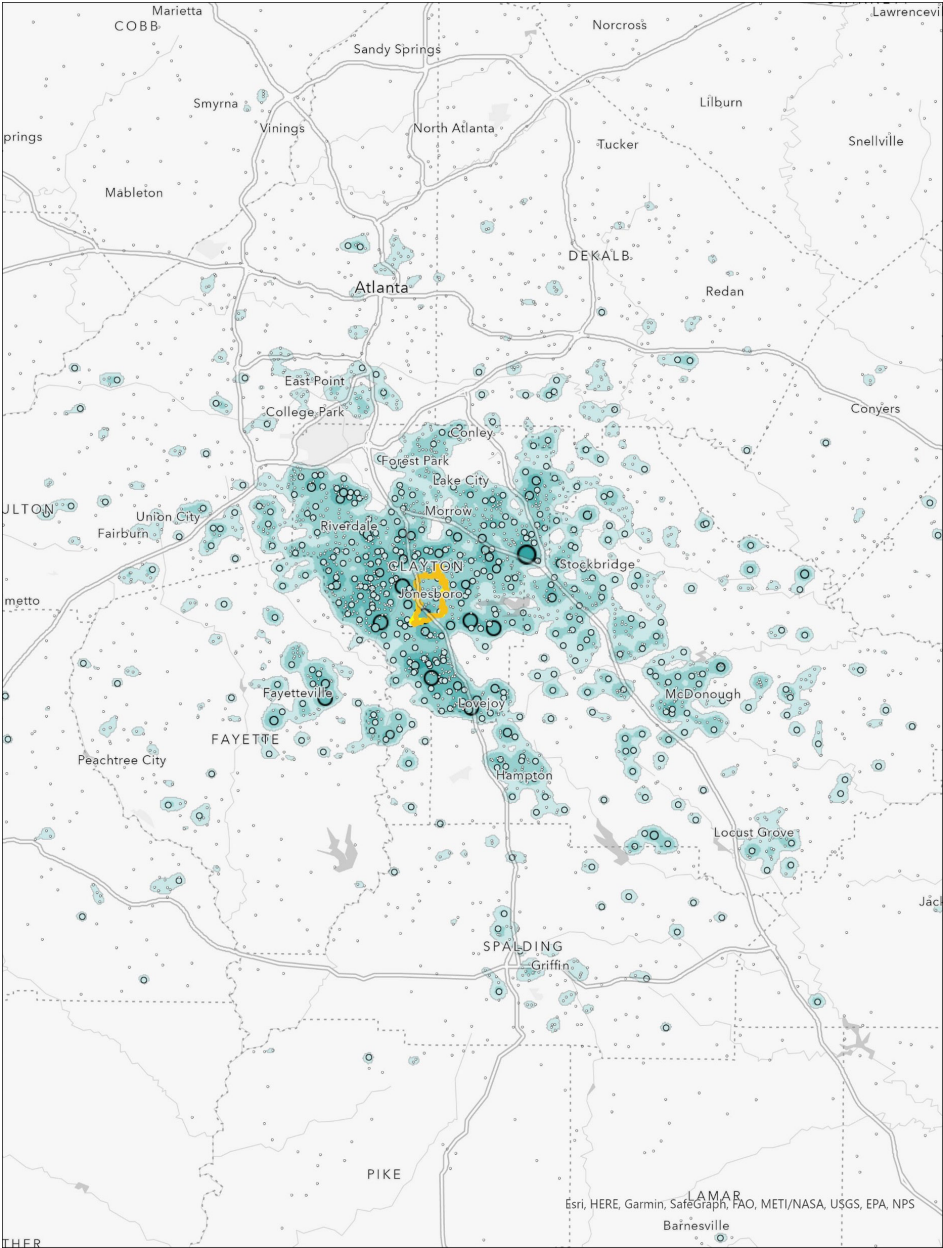
By a significant margin, the largest employment sector within the City of Jonesboro is Public Administration, followed by Educational Services and Retail Trade. The largest employment sector for residents of Jonesboro are Health Care and Social Assistance, followed closely by Retail Trade, and Administration & Support jobs.

Residents of Jonesboro primarily work in the City or north of it, traveling up Tara Boulevard to where it provides access to I-75N. Many residents work near home, at or around Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. Other employment hubs drawing residents from Jonesboro include Downtown Atlanta, Buckhead, and the Perimeter in Cobb and North Fulton. A few residents travel to Fayette and Henry County.

Most people working within the City of Jonesboro live in the City or the County. Employment in Jonesboro draws people from all directions, though most people employed in the city come from Clayton or its neighboring Counties.

Where Workers in the City of Jonesboro Live

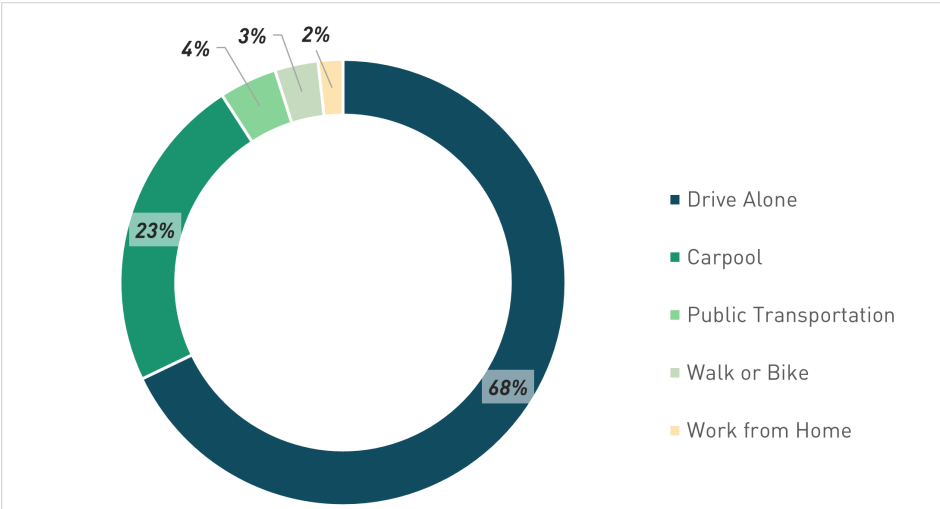
Source: Census on the Map



Where Residents in the City of Jonesboro Work

Source: Census on the Map

Mode of Transportation to Work



Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Traffic Flows



Data Source: LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics

How We Move

Each day, 1,794 people commute out of Jonesboro for work, while another, 6,445 people commute into the city. Just 63 people live and work in Jonesboro.

91% of employed Jonesboro residents use a car to get to work each day. The majority of those drive alone, while about 23% carpool. Less than 5% of residents used public transportation and 2% worked from home (prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic). Most Jonesboro residents have a commute of 15-44 minutes (61%), with a 19% of residents traveling more than 45 minutes and 20% traveling less than 15 minutes to work daily.

Commute Time



Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Education

Jonesboro is a part of the Clayton County School System, which operates three elementary schools and one middle school within the city's boundaries, and an additional middle school and one high school in the unincorporated city. The closest college is Clayton State University, located just north of Jonesboro.

Natural Resources

Currently, park maintenance and facility upkeep are managed by the City of Jonesboro, which manages four parks within its city limits as well as other facilities including a walking trail, recreation and fitness centers, a tennis center, and a water park. Clayton International Park, located just to the east of Jonesboro's borders, includes a pool and waterpark, special event pavillions, a senior center, volleyball courts, a stadium complex, bike paths, snack bar, and tennis center. International Park was the site of the beach volleyball event during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Jonesboro's primary source of water is not located within the County, but comes from the Little Cotton Indian Creek and Cotton Indian Creek in Henry County to the east, which is treated at the J.W. Smith Water Treatment Plant. Clayton County Also purchases treated water from the City of Atlanta. The City of Jonesboro lies partially on the Middle Flint Watershed and contains no wetlands, floodplains, or protected rivers within its borders.

There are three major soil types within Jonesboro: Urban Land, Cecil-Applying-Pacolet, and Gwinnett-Cecil. Of the three, Urban Land is the most altered from its original composition and the most suitable for development. Cecil-Applying-Pacolet to the north is also highly suitable for development due to its gentle slope, and the Gwinnett-Cecil soil is mainly appropriate for cultivated crops, pasture, and subdivisions.

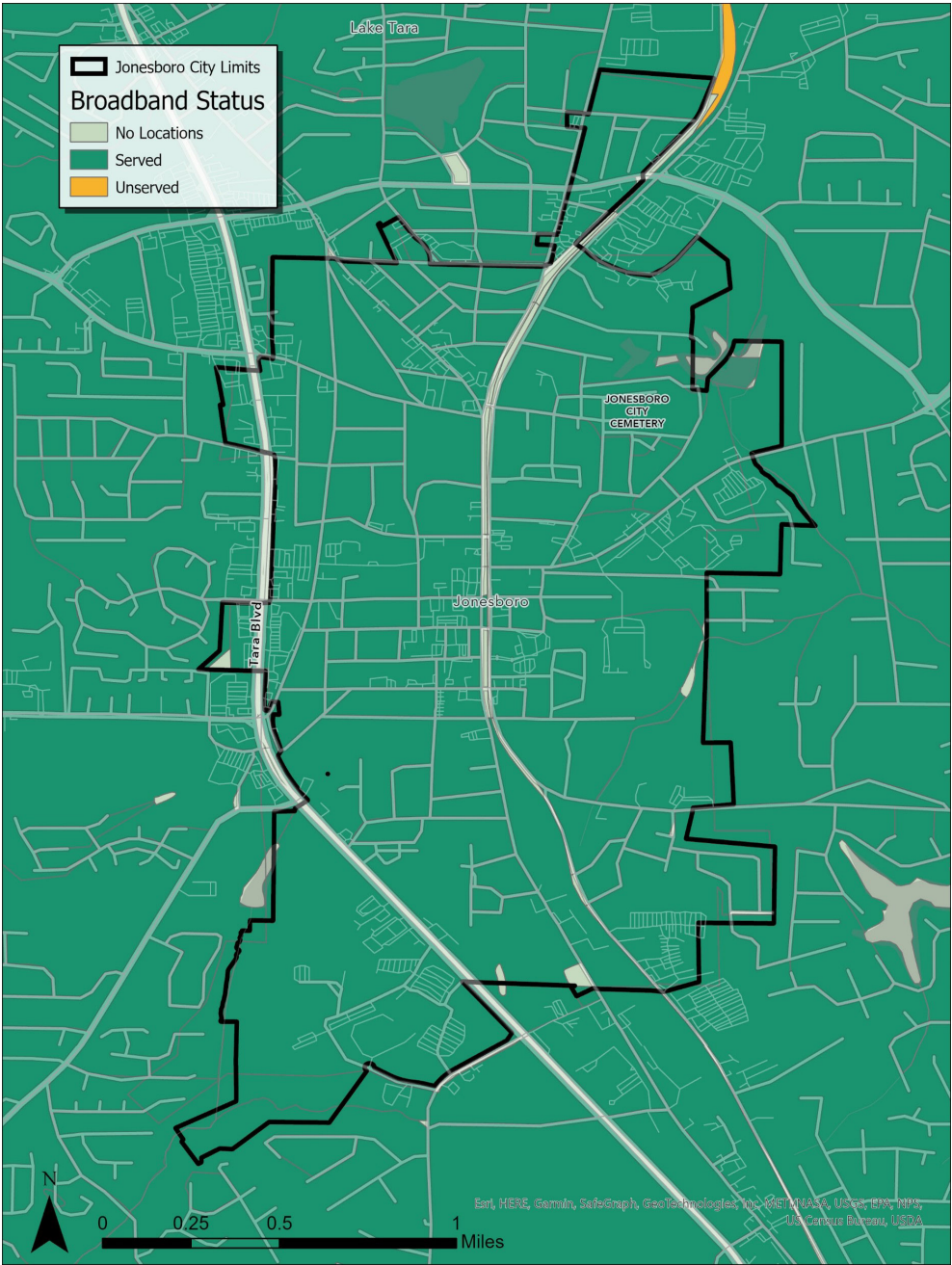
How We Connect

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Georgia Broadband Program tracks access to broadband for homes and businesses across the state. According to data from DCA and the Federal Communications Commission, 100% of locations in Jonesboro had access to broadband provider service as of 2021 and are considered "served."

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."

Broadband Access Map

Data Source: Georgia Broadband Center and Federal Communications Commission, 2021



What We Heard

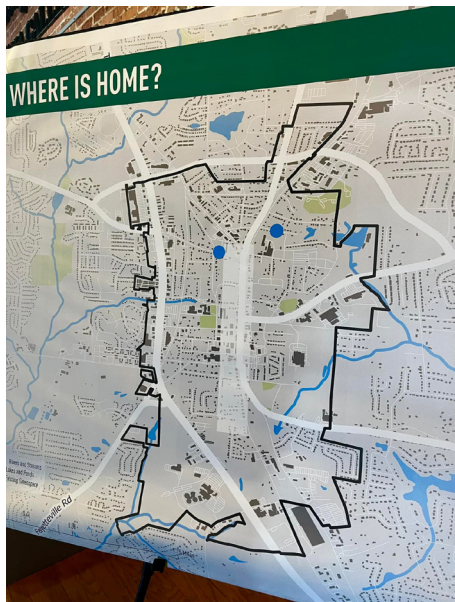


Planning Process

Plans need to reflect the values of those who live and work in a place. For this reason, an extensive public process was designed for this Comprehensive Plan. The process tapped the knowledge of a local expert steering committee, which met twice - in November of 2021 and April of 2022. The steering committee provided ground truthing and further insights for results garnered from two public surveys administered to solicit feedback from the broader population. An Open House was held on May 24th, 2022, to build on contributions from all previous engagement efforts.

Plan Open House

The public open house for this Comprehensive Plan was held on May 24th, 2022, at Arts Clayton Gallery. Seventeen residents attended.



Collaborative Activities

Residents were invited to review the previous Comprehensive Plan's 4 key goals. They were provided an opportunity to approve or disapprove of each goal and leave comments as they saw fit. Between input from Open House attendees and steering committee meetings, all goals from the previous plan were sustained as relevant by the community.

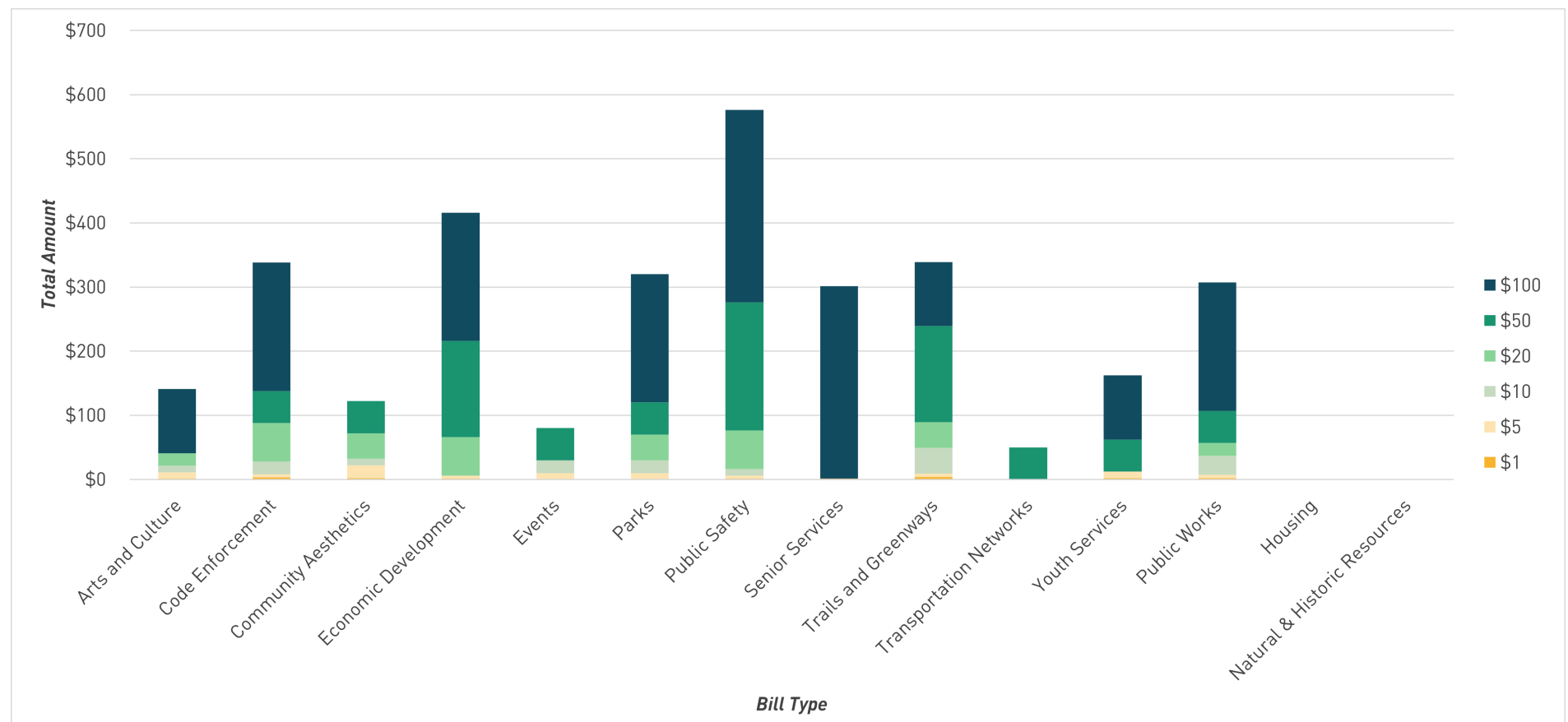
Residents were also provided visual preference surveys for commercial/retail offerings, downtown development patterns, and housing choices. Popular choices are highlighted on the next pages.



DIY (Do-It-Yourself) City Budgeting

Participants prioritized where they would like to see the City of Jonesboro make investments in the future. Each participant was given a pack of “planning money” to spend on 14 different priorities, ranging from public safety to senior services to community aesthetics. Each money packet included one bill each in six different denominations: \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100, which totals to \$186.

Consistent with feedback received through online surveys, Public Safety received the largest share of money at \$576, followed by Economic Development at \$416. These were followed by Code Enforcement and Trails and Greenways, which came in a dollar apart, at \$338 and \$339 respectively. No planning money was allocated to Housing or Natural & Historic Resources, despite survey engagement suggesting those areas should be prioritized by the City.



Development Visual Preference

Residents were also asked to identify their preferred development styles for three potential development areas: residential neighborhoods, along Tara Blvd, and Downtown. Downtown, residents marked their preferences for townhouse residential and mixed use options, with office or residential over commercial. For Tara Blvd, participants indicated a preference for commercial and foodservice options pictured on the next page. And in traditional, single-family neighborhoods, residents preferred homes as pictured on page 23.



Downtown



Tara Boulevard



Traditional Neighborhoods, Residential



Online Survey

Two online surveys were made available for residents using the PublicInput platform between October and April. A total of 53 participants engaged in the surveys, which allowed residents to identify challenges and opportunities presented to Jonesboro. Participants also weighed in on how and where the City should focus development. A similar visual preference survey offered to Open House attendees was offered to survey respondents and each group’s feedback corroborated the others. Online responses were used in conjunction with feedback from the public open house and steering committee to inform this Comprehensive Plan.

Community Input Opportunities

Monday July 12 Kickoff Hearing	Friday October 15 First Online Survey Launched	Tuesday November 30 Steering Committee Mtg 1	Tuesday February 22 Second Online Survey Launched	Wednesday April 20 Steering Committee Mtg 2	Tuesday May 24 Public Open House	Tuesday November 14 Transmittal Hearing
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Future Assets & Challenges



Based on feedback from community engagement and steering committee meetings, the following have been identified as Jonesboro's key assets and challenges. A SWOT analysis follows, which was performed to fine-tune goals and inform the comprehensive plan's work program.

Assets

To ensure the long-term success of the City, the following assets are to be accentuated and improved on over time:

Location

Tara Boulevard and State Route 54 connect the city to the region. Not only do these routes connect the city to the region, but they are major regional transportation corridors as well. These transportation connections provide residents and businesses with in the city easy access the Atlanta region and the world.

Jonesboro is fortunate to be within 20 minutes of Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport (HJIA). HJIA provides Jonesboro residents and employers access to over 230 destinations and 80 percent of the United States is within a two-hour flight.

Historic Character

Jonesboro has over 20 historic sites located within City limits and contains a National Register Historic District for their downtown area. This historic character and its ties to *Gone with the Wind* help drive tourism to the City.

Stately Oaks is an 1839 Greek Revival planter's home that has been preserved as a historic home. The plantation grounds include the main house, Juddy's County Store, a one-room school house, cook house, and a tenant home.

Also as part of the Historic Character is Arts Clayton, which provides both educational opportunities and a Gallery within Downtown Jonesboro. The Arts Clayton Gallery, with its prominent four-panel street mural, exhibits both professional and emerging artists. The Gallery works with community leaders to address opportunities and challenges as the south metro area faces high growth and changing demographics.

Development Potential

As the City is mostly built out, new development will primarily be redevelopment of existing property. There is an opportunity for redevelopment with the downtown area, areas north of downtown, and the recent LCI study area.

The city is investing in making these areas attractive for reinvestment and should continue to follow their local plans.

County Seat

As the county seat, the City of Jonesboro has a large workforce tied to Clayton County. This workforce, as well as visitors to the county government center and the new Jonesboro City Center, provide a large downtown daytime population.

Challenges

Challenges are to be addressed and monitored over time, to ensure the continued long-term success of Jonesboro.

Economic Development

The top issue identified by residents and the stakeholders during the previous comprehensive plan update was the need for economic development that is appropriate for the City. Residents and stakeholders are still seeking small business, entertainment and expanded restaurant options. The downtown is a key focus area for this development.

Jonesboro is competing against smaller cities within the region; therefore, the continued investment into economic development is necessary. Improving the downtown area in accordance with the recent LCI study's recommendations and attracting small, appropriate business will expand the tax base, which will aid in achieving all the City's goals.

Housing

Residents, steering committee members, and City staff have identified the need to expand housing options within the city. They also identified the prevalence of aging housing stock and the need for some of it to be rehabilitated. In the downtown area, there is an appetite for gentle densification of the City's housing stock in the way of townhomes or condos and other "missing middle"

housing, but more community engagement is necessary to more fully understand which housing options residents of Jonesboro will find palatable, and where.

Residents and steering committee members also expressed concerns about investor buy-out of single-family housing and the implications thereof for access to homeownership and housing costs in Jonesboro.

Community Integration

Throughout the planning process, the public expressed a few ideas related to the sense of community within Jonesboro. Specifically, survey respondents and steering committee members noted that the City needs more resident volunteers and that the City needs to either host or attract more events that can be attended and enjoyed by residents of and visitors to Jonesboro.

SWOT Analysis

To ensure a systematic analysis of conditions in the city would be used to inform the Comprehensive Plan's goals, the planning team and steering committee conducted a SWOT analysis. The forces articulated in the SWOT analysis directly influence actions contained in the Community Work Program.

Strengths

- Charm, small-town feel
- Historical aspects
- County seat
- Walkability
- Welcoming, friendly
- Encapsulated
- Sense of place
- Inviting
- Financially Stable
- Responsive government
- Progressive, seeking new opportunities
- Cost of living
- Location

Weaknesses

- Limited land
- Limited commercial area and services
- More shops/restaurants
- Old housing stock and rehabs
- School district
- Lack of diversity in leadership
- Lingering reputation
- Redevelopment
- Poverty and income
- Identity
- Not consistent feel of the city

Opportunities

- Redevelopment
- Workforce housing for new housing
- Leverage the Arts community
- New economic development expert
- City-Owned land for development
- Community involvement

Threats

- Investor-owned housing
- Crime outside of the City
- Perception of Tara Blvd and traffic on it
- Vacant businesses/storefronts

Community Goals

As the City of Jonesboro moves forward in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, these goals should serve as an administrative guide and should be continually monitored to ensure that future planning aligns with the goals and vision of the community.

Jonesboro is a diverse and forward-looking community, actively engaged in shaping its own future. The people of Jonesboro are working to capitalize on the City's qualities and values to make it successful.

In 2035, Jonesboro will have:

1. A Reenergized, Bustling Main Street

Main Street, while not the main employment hub for the city, will become the primary destination for residents and visitors.

2. Remarkable Places throughout the City

The City will work with property owners to refresh and redevelop aging retail and office properties to make the city an attractive destination. Tara Blvd will become an attractive gateway into Jonesboro.

3. A Strong Economy as the County Seat of Clayton County

The City of Jonesboro will capitalize on its regional location within the Atlanta Aerotropolis area, and as a local tourism destination.

4. Great Connectivity and High-Quality Amenities

Jonesboro will link its neighborhoods and connect to the region via high-quality transportation options that distinguish it as the hub of the County.

As the City moves forward in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, these goals should be monitored to ensure that they remain relevant.

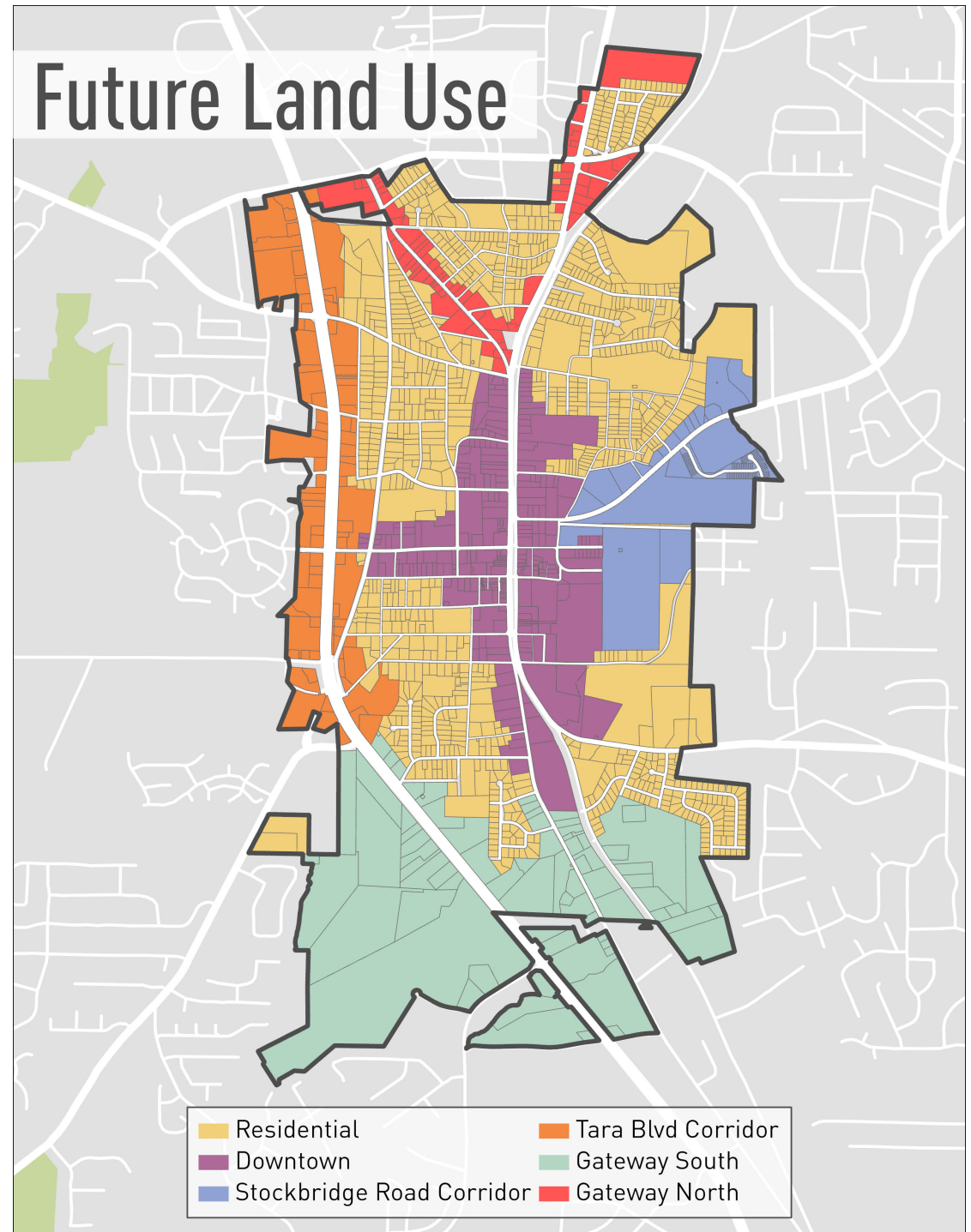
Future Land Use



Future Land Use

As an important first step in creating an appropriate redevelopment atmosphere, the city has updated its Future Land Use Map, dividing the city into *Character Areas*. These updated Character Areas are intended to ensure compatible and unified development within specified areas of the city, and acknowledge the changing dynamics within the city over the last several years.

As described over the next few pages, these Character Areas guide land use characteristics and development standards. They influence development through guidelines for standards such as density and land use policies. Permissible land uses and compatible implementation measures are outlined in each section.



Tara Boulevard Corridor

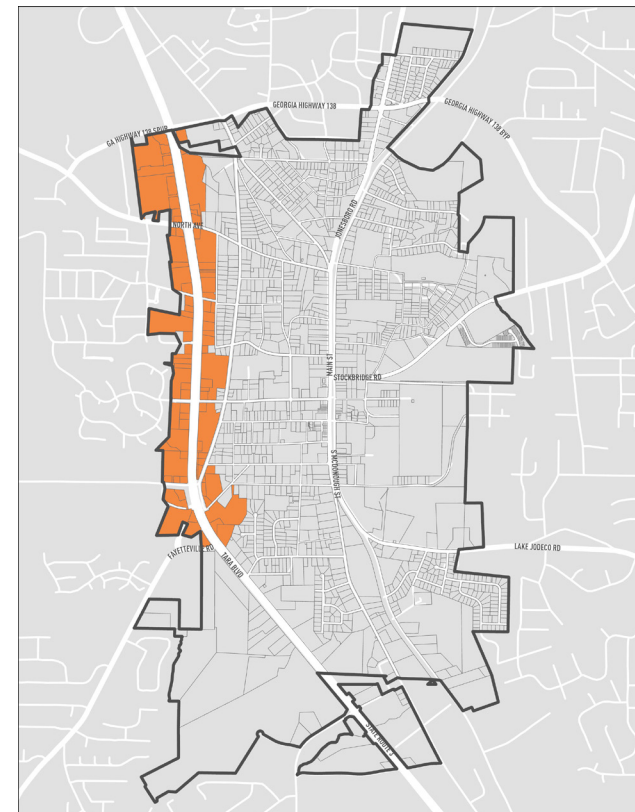
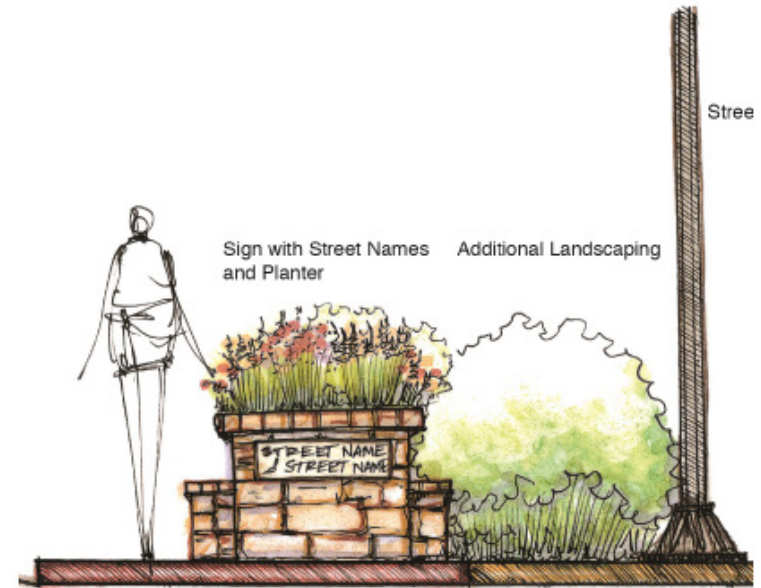
The Tara Boulevard corridor is the main commercial corridor within Clayton County. It contains many commercial and government uses. While this area is only partially within Jonesboro, many people associate it with the City and they view it as the main commercial thoroughfare within the city.

Uses:

- Commercial/Retail
- Office/Institutional
- Government
- Light Industrial

Implementation Measures:

- All development should be well-connected by access roads, interparcel connections, and shared drives.
- Complete and integrate pedestrian improvements and crosswalks throughout the corridor.
- Promote high standards of architecture, landscaping, and sign controls to improve corridor appearance and maintain traffic speeds and capacity through access management and inter-parcel access.
- Discourage additional curb cuts onto Tara Boulevard.
- Connection to the future MARTA Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alternative along State Route 54 Corridor must be considered.



Residential

The City's residential areas are a mixture of historic residences and more modern updates to the general housing stock. The City shall thoughtfully consider placement of future, more diversified housing types adjacent to areas of more traditional neighborhoods.

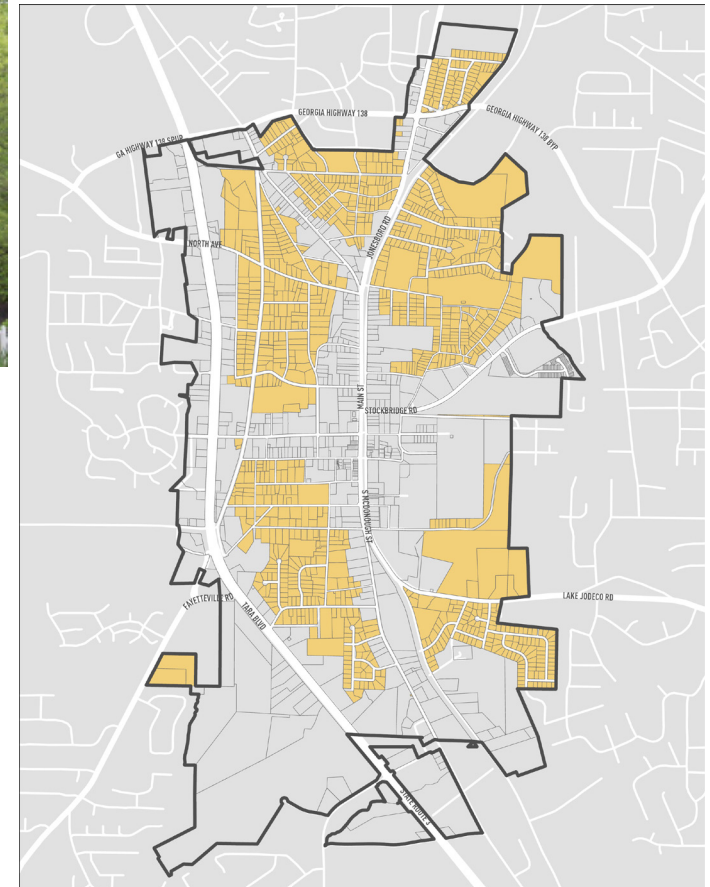
Possible Uses, Where Appropriate:

- Single-family detached residential
- Townhomes
- Condominiums
- Duplexes and Triplexes
- Multi-family



Implementation Measures:

- Promote new developments that emulate the positive aspects of historic Jonesboro's architecture, where relevant.
- Promote new developments that diversify the City's housing stock with thoughtful planning and high quality architecture.
- Promote vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points.



Downtown

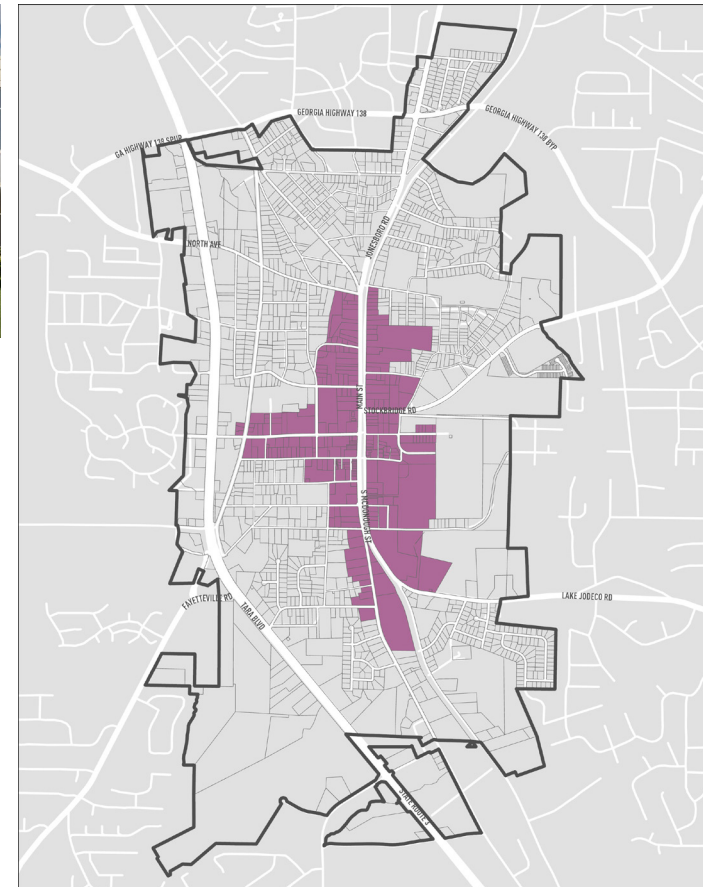
This is the core commercial and office development center of Jonesboro. The area also includes residential to office conversions and vice versa. This is the area that the city would most like to see reinvestment and development, and there is potential for Transit Oriented Development within the Downtown with the expansion of MARTA bus lines. The Jonesboro LCI Study's City Center Mixed Use District, Arts and Entertainment District, and its Historic District should be used as guidance within this area.

Uses:

- Office
- Residential
- Institutional
- Arts and Entertainment District
- Retail, Including Restaurants
- Historic District

Implementation Measures:

- The Downtown should include a viable mixture of retail, office, services, and residential.
- Design should be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to enighboring communities and major destinations, such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, parks, and schools.
- High standards of architecture and landscaping.



Gateway North

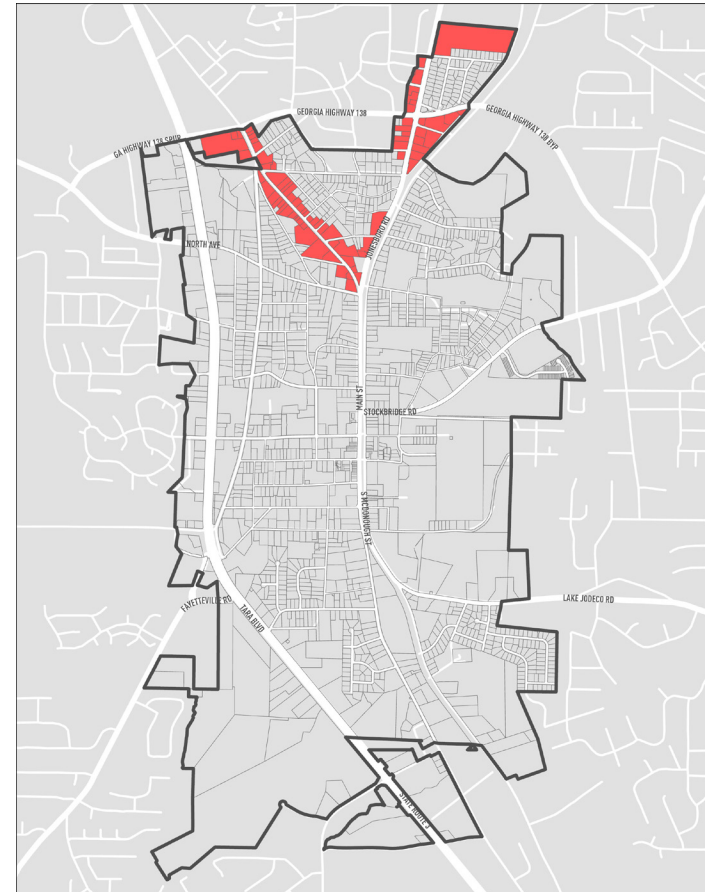
This is the North Main and Jonesboro Road corridors located north of Downtown. This area is the main gateway into the city from the north and is many visitors' first impression of the city. This is also an area targeted for redevelopment and reinvestment.

Uses:

- Office/Institutional
- Commercial/Retail

Implementation Measures:

- Design should be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to neighboring communities and major destinations, such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, parks, and schools.
- Screen truck docks and waste handling areas from public view.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas and buffer surrounding neighborhoods.
- Connection to the future MARTA BRT alternative along State Route 54 must be considered.



Gateway South

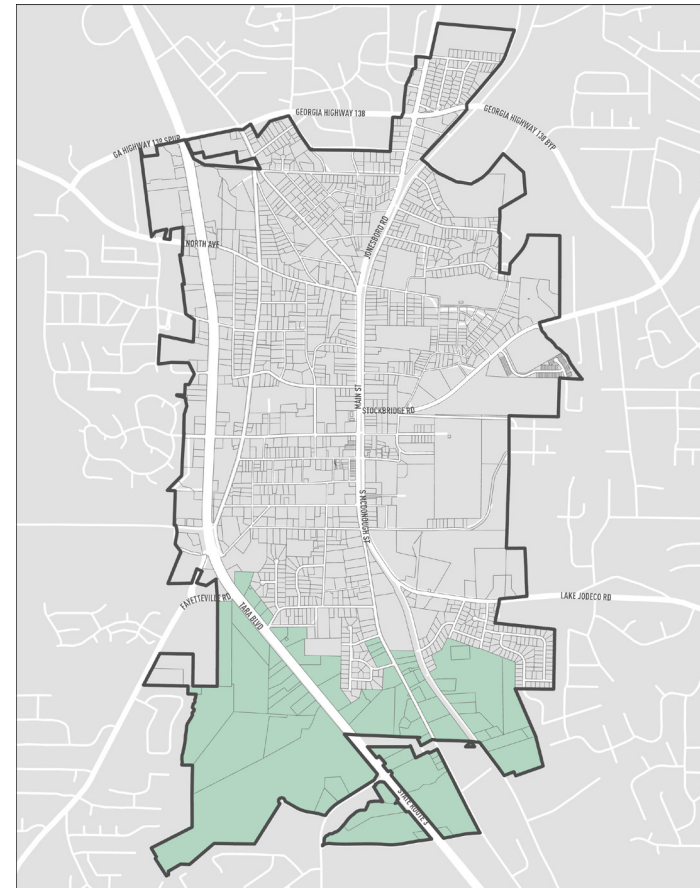
The aim with this character area is to give the city's southern limits a new vitality and identity. Gateway South will be a vibrant area with an intelligent mix of land uses that, through thoughtful planning and design guidelines, will improve the viability of this strategic area of the City.

Uses:

- Office
- Commercial
- Planned Residential Communities
- Light Industrial
- Institutional

Implementation Measures:

- Design should be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.
- The residential component will help develop a more diverse range of quality housing to supplement the City's aging housing stock, including options for the 55-year-old-plus, active living demographic.
- Close proximity of housing, new businesses, and offices will embody the City's "live, work, play here" philosophy.
- Land uses and design guidelines here are superior to and independent of the Tara Boulevard character area; they focus on the thoughtful reinvigoration of the area.



Stockbridge Road Corridor

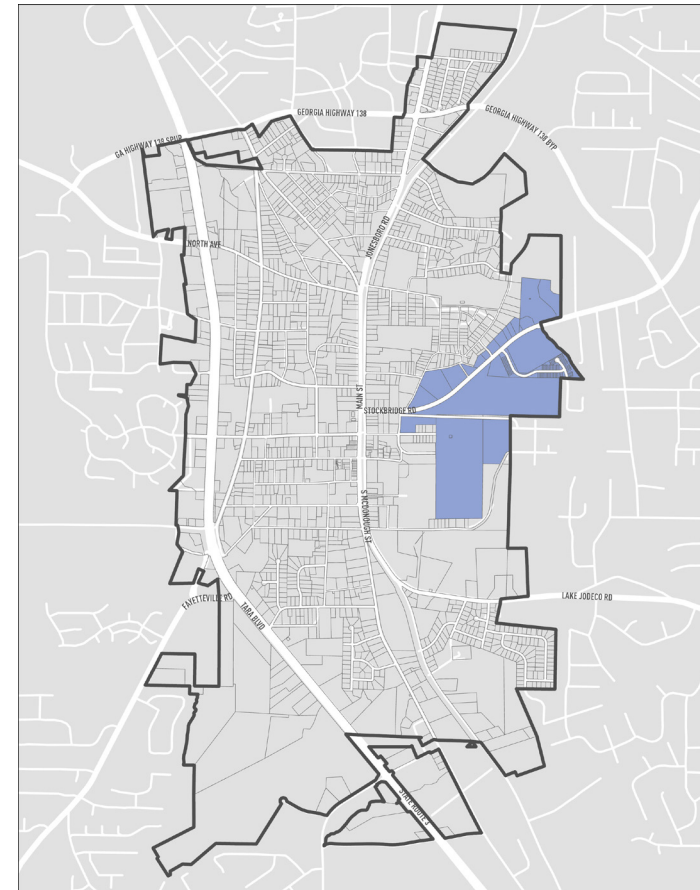
This area is the primary eastern gateway into Jonesboro, characterized by a mix of schools, older commercial development, and residential (mostly multifamily) land uses. Thoughtful reinvestment could bring a greater diversity of housing types to the city and new vitality to the area.

Uses:

- Institutional (schools)
- Commercial/Retail
- Residential (primarily multifamily)

Implementation Measures:

- Design should be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses, providing safe access to and from schools.
- Encourage a mix of housing types in this area.
- Complete and integrate pedestrian improvements and crosswalks throughout the corridor.
- Close proximity of housing, new businesses, and offices will embody the City's "live, work, play here" philosophy.
- Promote high standards of architecture, landscaping, and signage.



Plan Implementation



Community Work Program

The Community Work Program lists all proposed projects along with timelines, parties responsible for implementation, and cost estimates. The matrix is intended to serve as a blueprint for achieving the community's vision for the future and should be updated every five years. As the year 2021 is passed, it is not included in the implementation matrix for this document.

Project Number	Project	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibility	Funding and Cost
1	Conduct a code audit to compare plans with codes and make recommended zoning changes		X			City Staff	Staff Time
2	Develop an economic development package for new and existing businesses	X	X	X	X	City Staff	Staff Time
3	Develop an economic development website		X	X		City Staff	Staff Time
4	Apply for GDOT Roadside Enhancement funds for State Routes within the City		X	X	X	City Staff	GDOT, SPLOST
5	Improve the Battleground Park to include Open Field, Nature Walk, Nature Preserve			X	X	City Staff	SPLOST
6	Perform housing assessment/study of existing housing stock within the City	X	X			City Staff	Staff Time
7	Apply for grants or other funding for sidewalks along the North Main Street corridor		X	X		City Staff	Staff Time
8	North Main Street streetscape improvements			X	X	City	Grants, SPLOST
9	Establish design standards for the North Main Street corridor		X	X		City Staff	Staff Time
10	Create more facilitation between City and Co. Trails Program to create more outdoor trails		X	X	X	City Staff	Staff Time
11	Obtain Ga Outdoor Stewardship Program grant for more sidewalks in the downtown		X	X	X	City Staff	Staff Time
12	Integrate City's Tara Boulevard Overlay design standards with County Overlay		X	X		City / Co. Staff	Staff Time
13	Finalize citywide architectural standards in a standalone document		X			City Staff	Staff Time
14	Develop City-owned properties to diversify housing stock and improve economic viability		X	X	X	Private	Private
15	Provide entrance signage designs for certain entry points within City		X	X		City Staff	Staff Time
16	Provide signage or other means of labeling (curb painting, streetlight flags, etc.) to better identify blocks that lie within the Historic Dist. and Historic Residential Overlay			X	X	City	Grants?
17	Demarcate the Arts & Entertainment Dist. with creative crosswalks at the edges of the District and art pieces (especially local art) within the Downtown			X	X	City	Grants?
18	Connect features in the City (hist. points, murals, art pieces, etc.) with wayfinding devices			X	X	City	Grants?

Report of Accomplishments

The Report of Accomplishments tracks progress on the previous Comprehensive Plan's Community Work Program. It also serves to help reassess priorities and identify the City's capacity for work within the present planning cycle.

Project Number	Project	Status	Notes
1	Examine opportunities for annexations	Complete	
2	Work with MARTA on station locations within the City	Ongoing	New bus stops in City - more planned
3	Achieve compliance with ARC's LCI program	Complete	
4	Update LCI Plan	Complete	
5	Conduct a code audit to compare plans with codes and make recommended zoning changes	Ongoing	To be completed in 2023
6	Develop an economic development package for new and existing businesses	Ongoing	Updated periodically
7	Develop an economic development website	Postponed	
8	Apply for GDOT Roadside Enhancement funds for State Routes within the City	Postponed	
9	Develop signage, landmarks, crosswalks for walking tour of Downtown Jonesboro	Postponed	Planned in update of LCI project
10	Design and construct an addition to the Police Station to create a City Municipal Complex	Complete	
11	Construct Broad Street Plaza/Park	Complete	
12	Smith Street streetscape improvements	Complete	Rolling over/expanding
13	Nort Main Street streetscape improvements	Postponed	Design standards and funding source(s) TBD
14	Improve the Battleground Park to include Open Field, Nature Walk, Nature Preserve	Ongoing	

Appendix



Legal Notice of First Public Hearing

Clayton News Daily - June 14, 2022

City of Jonesboro NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The City of Jonesboro Mayor & Council will hold an initial public hearing regarding the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update in the chambers of the Jonesboro Municipal Court Facility, 170 South Main Street, on July 12, 2021 at 6:00 PM.

The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan, opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and to obtain input on the proposed planning process.

All interested should attend. Questions should be directed to David Allen, Director of the Community Development Department at 770-478-3800 or dallen@jonesboroga.com.

Legal Notice of Second Public Hearing

Clayton News Daily - October 26, 2022

City of Jonesboro NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The City of Jonesboro Mayor Pro Tem & Council will hold a public hearing regarding the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update in the chambers of the Jonesboro Municipal Court Facility, 1859 City Center Way, on November 14, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process used to complete the plan update, and to present the completed plan to the Mayor Pro Tem and Council for adoption.

All interested should attend. Questions should be directed to David Allen, Director of the Community Development Department at 770-478-3800 or dallen@jonesboroga.com.

Survey 1 Results

8/25/22, 11:48 AM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

2021 Jonesboro Forward

Project Engagement

VIEWS

379

RESPONSES

305

SUBSCRIBERS

56

PARTICIPANTS

40

COMMENTS

57

MOVE +

TOGGLE COMMENTS
Sign up for updates:

OPTIONS

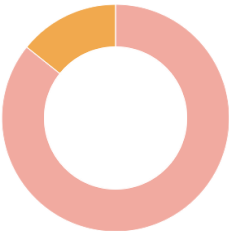
No data to display...

Give us your initial thoughts on the direction Jonesboro is headed-

Sign up for updates about Jonesboro Forward

No data to display...

What is your gender?



28 respondents

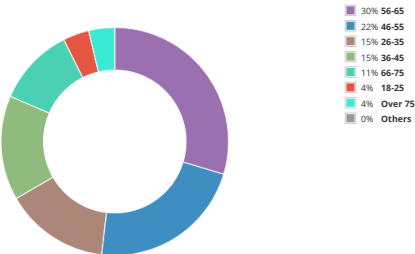
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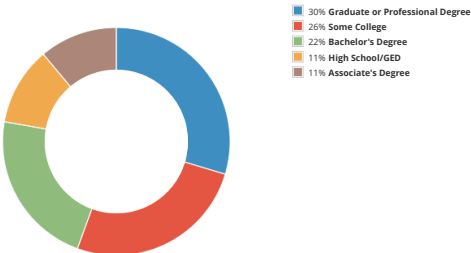
Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

What is your age?



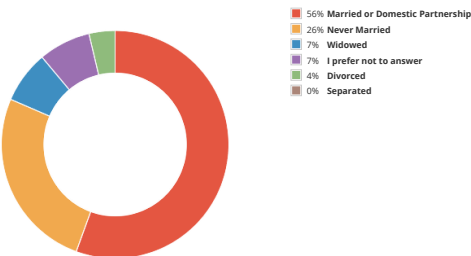
27 respondents

What is your highest formal education level?



27 respondents

What is your marital status?



27 respondents

<https://publicinput.com/Reporting/ReportPreview/15995>

2/9

8/25/22, 11:48 AM

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Which of the following best describe(s) your racial identity? (Choose all that apply.)

54%	Black/African-American	14 ✓
42%	White/Caucasian	11 ✓
4%	Asian	1 ✓
0%	Hispanic or Latino/a	0 ✓
0%	Other (feel free to self-identify in the comments box)	0 ✓

26 Respondents

I would love to see more business in Downtown. The ability to walk around and shop like the areas around Senoia and Newnan. It would be nice to have a variety of options when eating as well as places to park

10 months ago

What is your current employment status? Please select all that apply.

58%	Employed full-time (40 or more hours per week)	15 ✓
23%	Retired	6 ✓
12%	Employed part-time (up to 39 hours per week)	3 ✓
12%	Self-employed	3 ✓
0%	Student	0 ✓
0%	Unemployed and currently looking for work	0 ✓
0%	Unemployed and not currently looking for work	0 ✓
0%	Homemaker	0 ✓
0%	Unable to work	0 ✓

26 Respondents

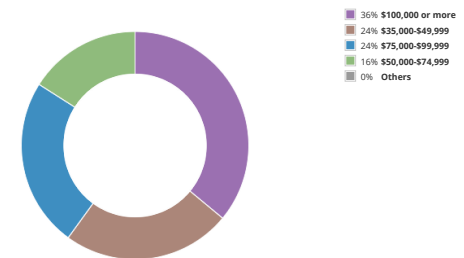
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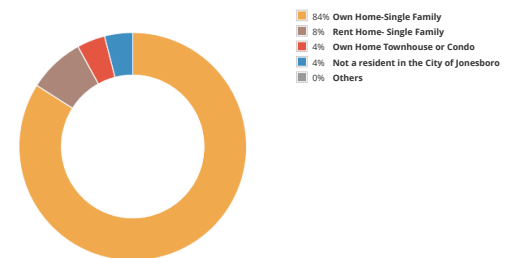
Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

What is your approximate household income, after taxes?



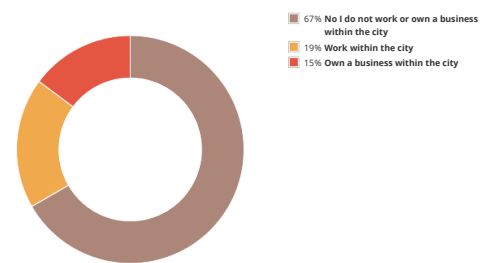
25 respondents

Do you Own or Rent your home?



25 respondents

Do you work or own a business in the City of Jonesboro?



27 respondents

<https://publicinput.com/Reporting/ReportPreview/15995>

4/9

What is one issue or challenge that the City of Jonesboro is facing?

We need more options for goods and services (retail, dining, entertainment, etc.)
11 months ago [12 Agree](#)

Need to have more place like shops and boutiques in the core of downtown. Also more nice restaurnats to eat in the core of downtown.
10 months ago [8 Agree](#)

Need more better places to eat
11 months ago [7 Agree](#)

There isn't much to do or see in the downtown area. It is not inviting to stroll around because there is nowhere to go.
10 months ago [6 Agree](#)

Would love to have more restaurants and shops in downtown
10 months ago [5 Agree](#)

What is one issue or challenge that the City of Jonesboro is facing?

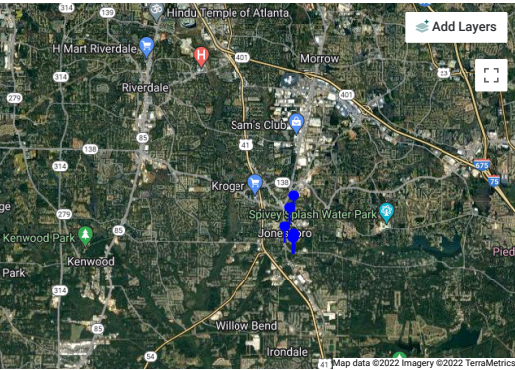
Need better places to eat more restaurants
11 months ago [4 Agree](#)

We need more employment opportunities within the city. It would also be nice to have more resources and shopping, so that we can recycle our dollars locally, to grow and sustain our community.
11 months ago [3 Agree](#)

Not enough restaurants
3 months ago

It would be nice to have more affordable but nice housing in the city and more activities that in which local citizens can participate, i.e. pop up markets, art shows, hot-dog eating contests, ice cream shops, etc.
9 months ago

What are some areas that the City of Jonesboro should focus on over the next 5 years?



Main Street stretch near the post office
10 months ago [2 Agree](#)

Overhead Bridge to allow resident from N McDonough street to go to Lee Park
7 months ago [1 Agree](#)

Need bridge to allow folks on Mc Donough Street to walk to Main Street without having to jump over the railway line
7 months ago [1 Agree](#)

Mix in more/better retail & restaurant options
9 months ago

North Main Street, north of North Avenue, doesn't even look like part of the City. Needs sidewalks to join with other sidewalks to make it more cohesive.
10 months ago

more shops
10 months ago

more shops
10 months ago

8/25/22, 11:48 AM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

Jonesboro should bring back Confederate history and uniforms to the museum. All of American history is important and Civil War history is very important and interesting. Jonesboro should not be afraid of history and we should not persecute long dead Civil War soldiers who were asked to serve their states and did so. And how does having a Confederate uniform in a museum hurt anybody? Taking away from one group to make another happy is NOT Americanism. In the USA we all should be able to have our history and the freedom to explore it and study it fully. Jonesboro needs to be enthusiastic about its Civil War history, its music history (including the fact that a Lynyrd Skynyrd album cover was photographed on Main Street). So many people come here just to have their pic taken on Main Street where that photo was taken and we don't even have a marker for it that I know of. The Civil War, Smokey and The Bandit, etc., are things Jonesboro should use to bring in tourism money and stuff like that.

11 months ago

Camp Ave and Jodeco too busy

11 months ago

In one word, describe Jonesboro today?

Changing

3 months ago

Moving!!

9 months ago

Changing

10 months ago

Questionable

10 months ago

making an effort to evolve

10 months ago

Progressive

10 months ago

Nice

10 months ago

Evolving

11 months ago

crappy (due to crime you can't really enjoy a lot of the nice things like the parks, it is not safe for females and our library has been closed way too long. I have to go to Fayetteville for a full service library)

11 months ago

8/25/22, 11:48 AM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

In one word, describe Jonesboro in 2040?

Different

3 months ago

Bustling!

9 months ago

???

10 months ago

Unrecognizable

10 months ago

Exciting

10 months ago

Diverse

11 months ago

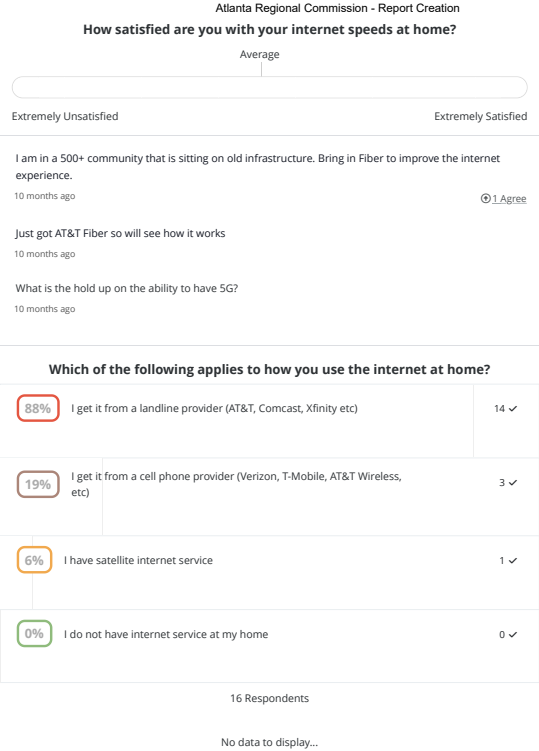
dead (if it doesn't change to less crime and embrace its history and present, we need more long term residents as in home owners and need to be a city that fully embraces freedom for all and doesn't feel the need to take away from one group to make another happy)

11 months ago

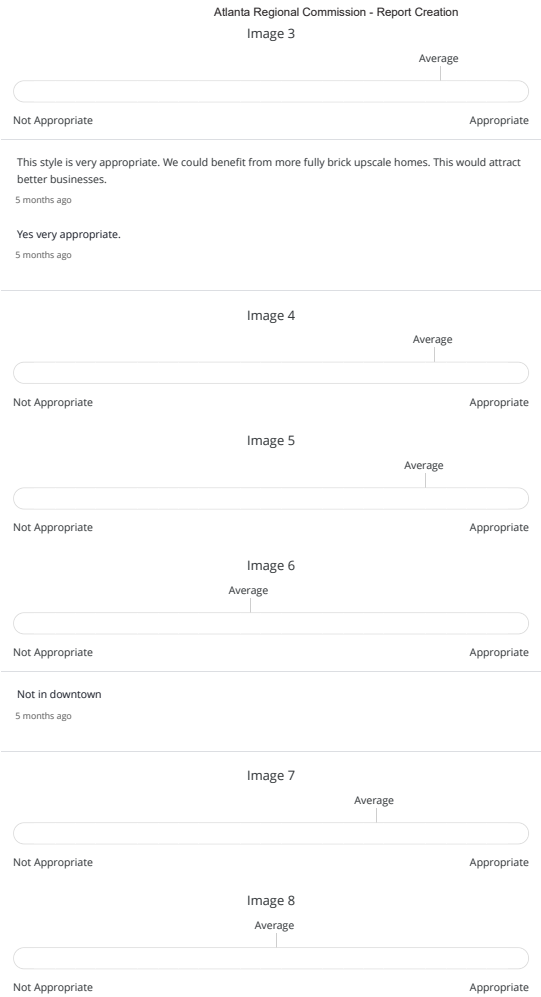
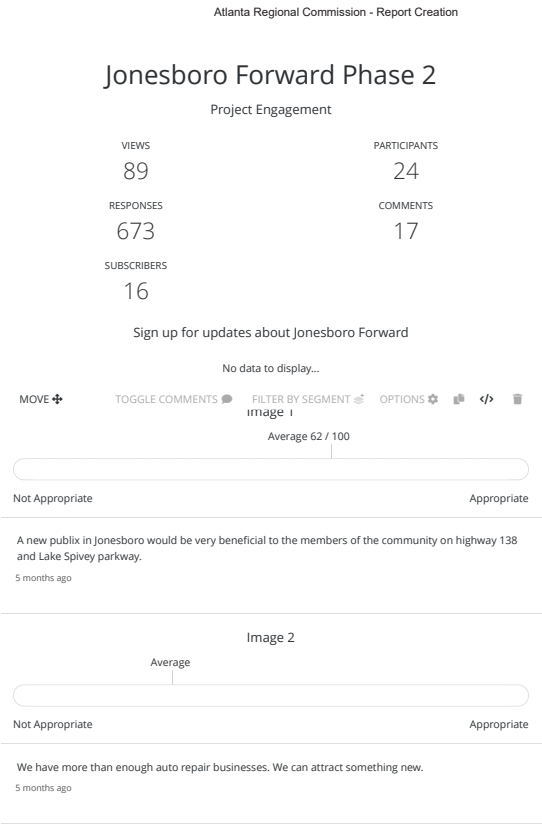
Rank the City of Jonesboro's housing challenges?

83%	Too much rental	Rank: 2.70	10 ✓
50%	Lack of Senior Housing	Rank: 2.83	6 ✓
42%	Not enough housing types and size options for home ownership	Rank: 3.20	5 ✓
42%	Lack of affordable housing options	Rank: 3.20	5 ✓
50%	Lack of different price points	Rank: 3.50	6 ✓
33%	Not enough housing types and size options for renting	Rank: 4.25	4 ✓
33%	Foreclosures and evictions	Rank: 4.25	4 ✓

12 Respondents

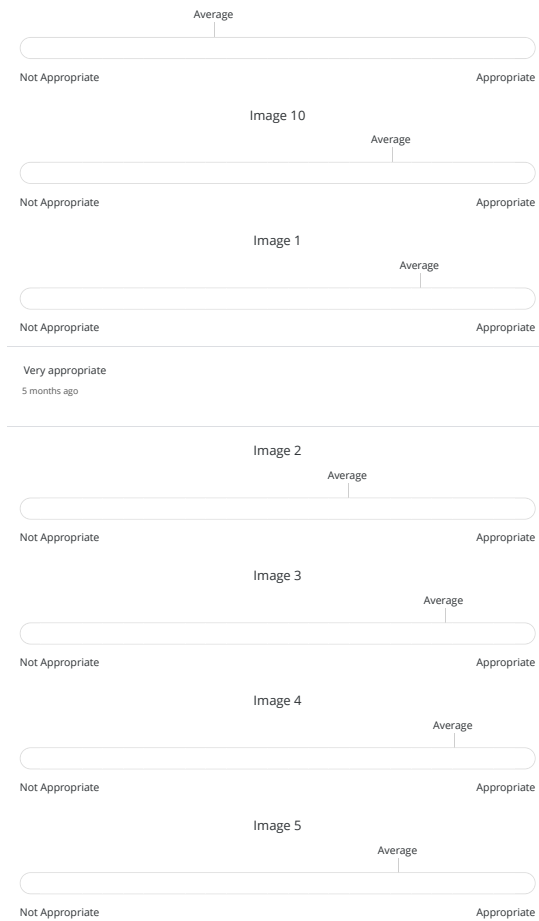


Survey 2 Results



7/25/22, 2:04 PM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation
Image 9



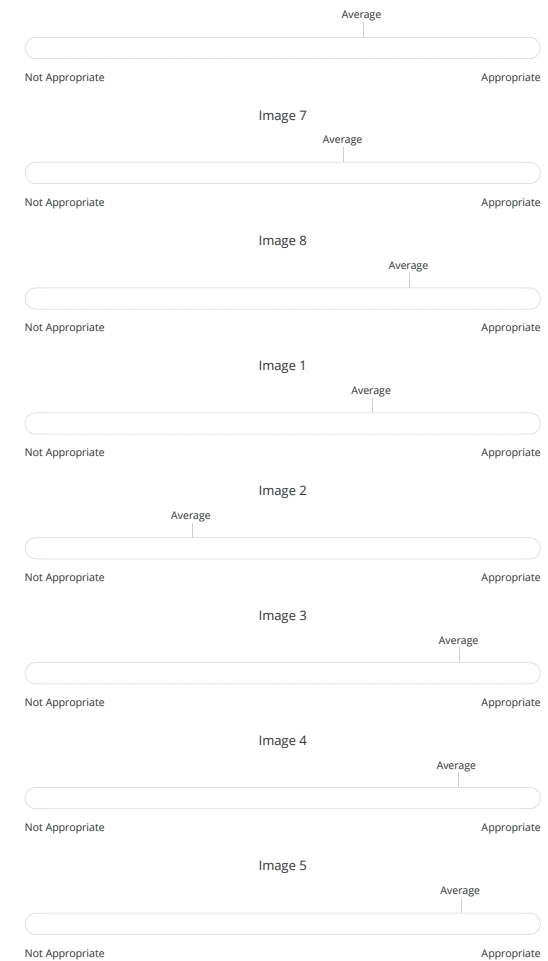
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3/8

7/25/22, 2:04 PM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation

Image 6



<https://publicinput.com/report?id=13749>

4/8

7/25/22, 2:04 PM

Atlanta Regional Commission - Report Creation
Image 6



Image 7



Yes. We need more fully brick homes.
5 months ago

Image 8



Image 9

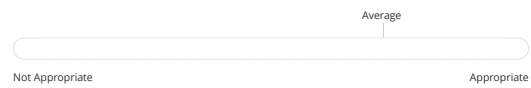


Image 1

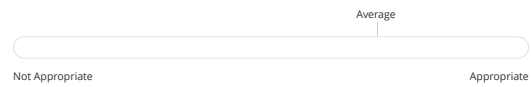


Image 2

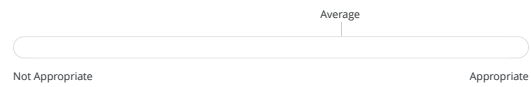
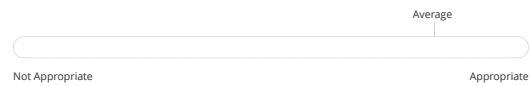


Image 3



<https://publicinput.com/report?id=13749>

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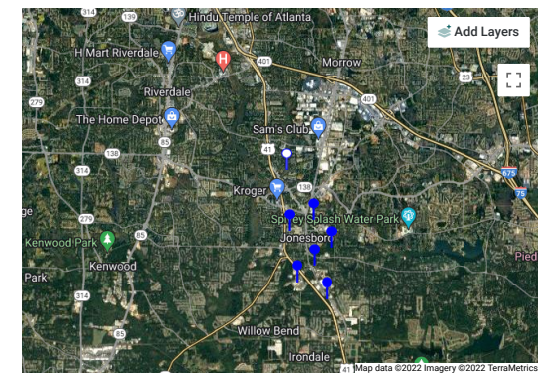
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Image 4



Image 5



What are some areas that the City of Jonesboro should focus on over the next 5 years?



North Main Street

5 months ago @ 2 Agree

Tara Blvd. Corridor, add g restaurants other than fast foods and sports bars and no more liquor stores, dollar stores or beauty supply

5 months ago

@ 2 Agree

Stockbridge Road area

5 months ago @ 1 Agree

South Tara Blvd area

5 months ago @ 1 Agree

Show all comments

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Image 6

Average



What is your gender?

No data to display...

Rank the City of Jonesboro's housing challenges?

No data to display...

How satisfied are you with your internet speeds at home?

Average



Which of the following applies to how you use the internet at home?

No data to display...

What is your age?

No data to display...

What is your highest formal education level?

No data to display...

What is your marital status?

No data to display...

Which of the following best describe(s) your racial identity? (Choose all that apply.)

No data to display...

What is your current employment status? Please select all that apply.

No data to display...

Do you work or own a business in the City of Jonesboro?

No data to display...

What is your approximate household income, after taxes?

No data to display...

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Do you Own or Rent your home?

No data to display...

Loading more report objects...

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