



REVIVE

& THRIVE

Gwinnett County GICH

Focus Area Report



College of
Environment + Design
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



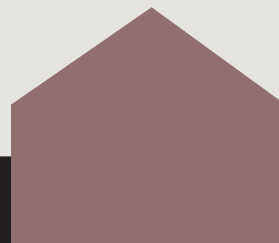
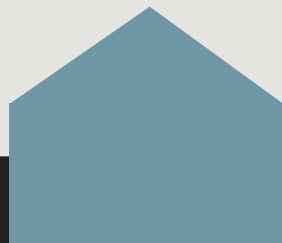
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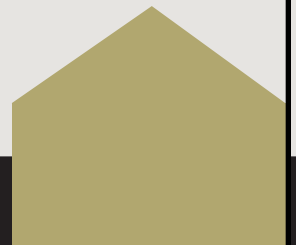
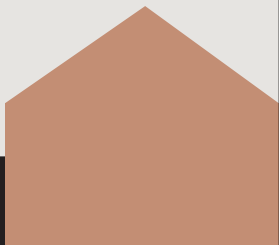


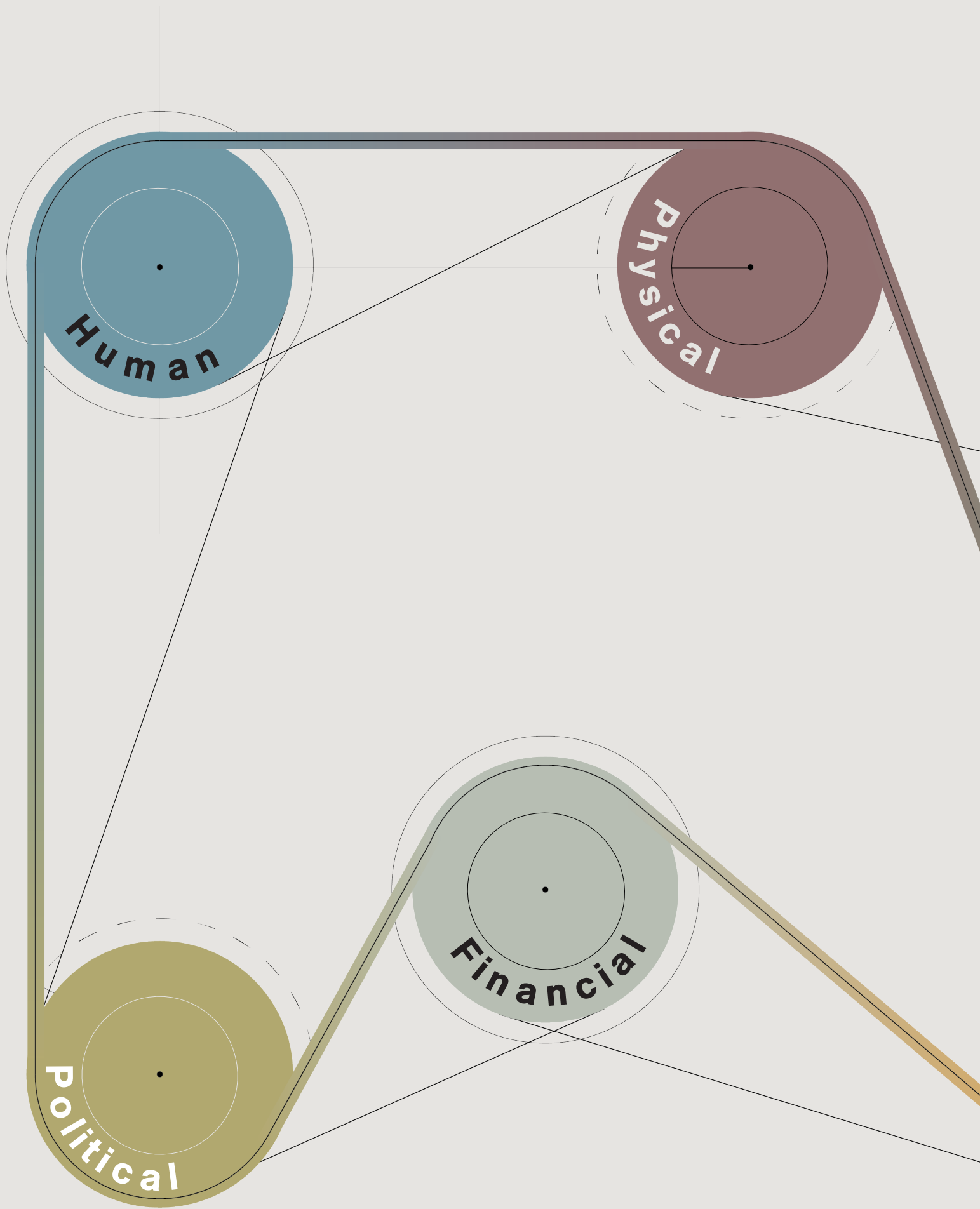
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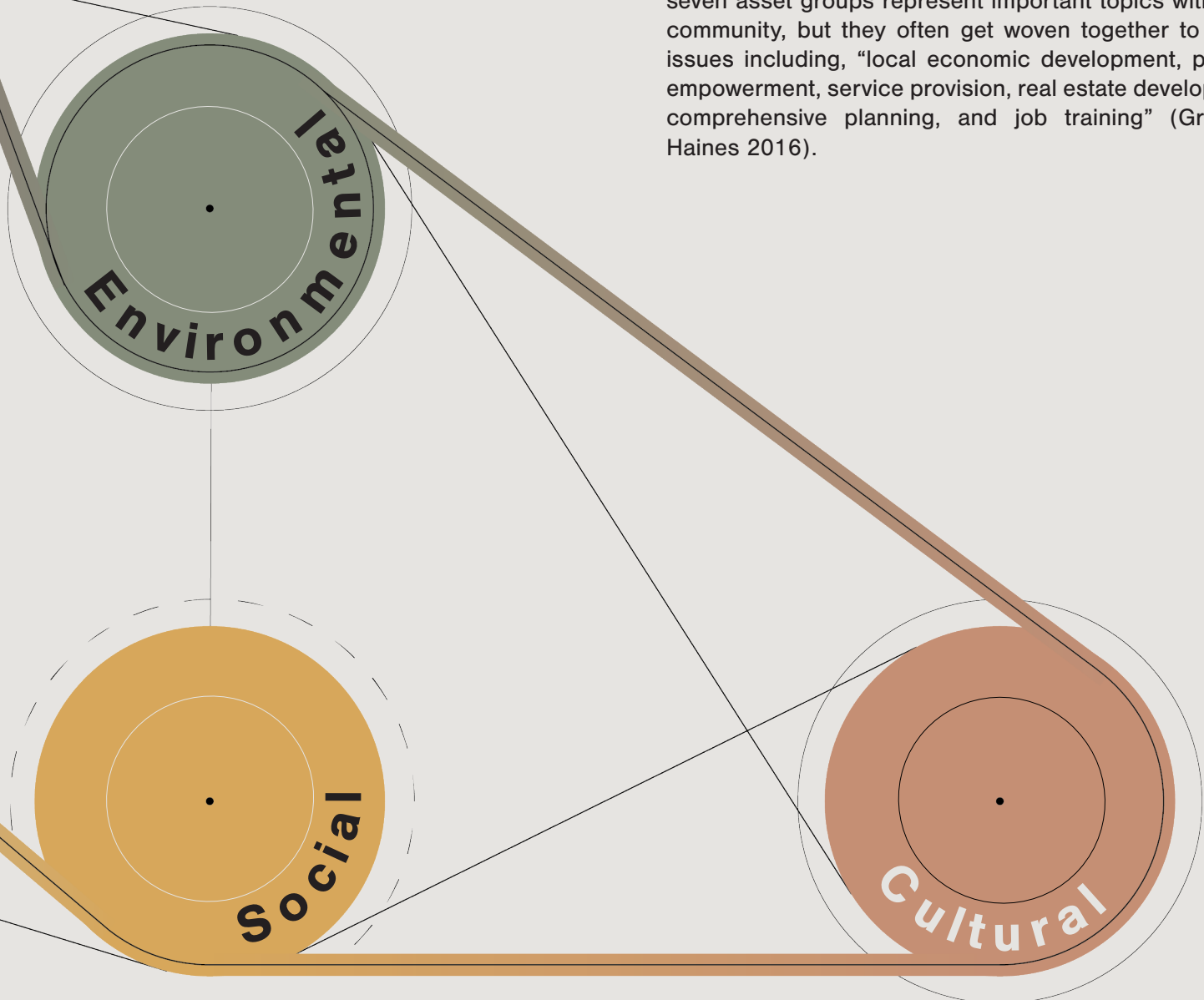




Capital Groups Overview

Guided by the teachings within Green and Haines's book, *The Role of Assets in Community-Based Development*, a team of urban planning students at UGA's College of Environment and Design, address issues in an area of need within Gwinnett County, Georgia. Coordinated with Gwinnett's Housing and Community Division Director, Matt Elder, the team's study area between Lilburn and Norcross was selected for a Georgia Initiative for a Community Housing project location. The team's vision for the study area involves enhancing life in Gwinnett by providing needed resources through the ABCD method (Asset Based Community Development).

ABCD is a planning method that uses asset mapping to ensure a community is building on their existing strengths to promote sustainable development. In the ABCD method, the seven capital assets are introduced as Human, Physical, Environmental, Cultural, Social, Political, and Financial Capital. The building of Human Capital involves development within the area's workforce. Physical Capital's focal point is the physical features of the community, such as the conditions of housing and infrastructure. Similarly, Environmental Capital maintains the natural features of the area, like greenspaces and waterways. The Cultural and Social Capitals explore how people live, work, and play in their environment. Finally, interweaving the Political and Financial Capital Assets into this network is key as it brings accountability to the locale's politicians and financial institutions. The seven asset groups represent important topics within the community, but they often get woven together to tackle issues including, "local economic development, political empowerment, service provision, real estate development, comprehensive planning, and job training" (Green & Haines 2016).



Who are we?



This project was made by University of Georgia undergraduate and graduate students in the EDES4540: Ideas of Community and Place in the fall of 2023.

Students divided into capital groups to provide a comprehensive revival proposal for the GICH focus area of Gwinnett County, Georgia. Working with project partners, we were able to communicate with active community leaders and provide innovative solutions to address key challenges and opportunities in Gwinnett County.

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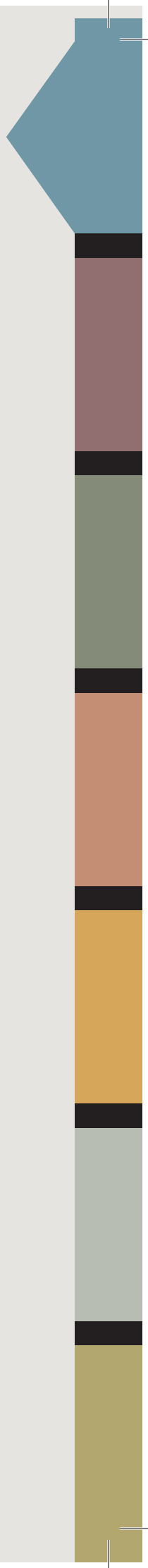
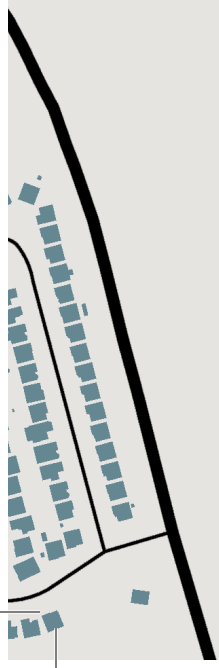
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Human Capital

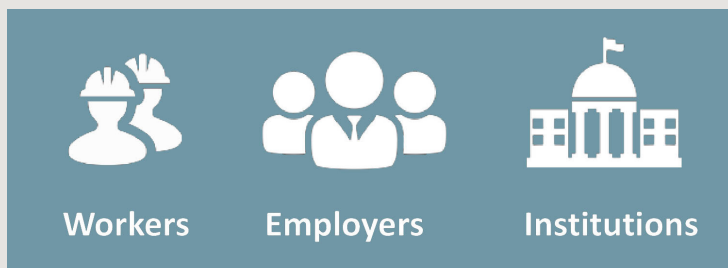
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Human Capital

Overview

The benefits of Human capital go beyond simply getting a high-paying job, with its effects influencing all aspects of quality of life. Human Capital is a community problem or success, not an individual issue. Labor market skills which are essential for building human capital, are developed through networks that integrate workers, employers, and institutions and can be built through community-based organizations (CBOs) using an asset-based approach. Strategies for a strong labor market include improving the capacity of workers that meet the demands of local employers and building on the experiences and interests of the communities to match the local workforce’s needs and opportunities.



Why do communities engage in workforce development?

- To be aware of and understand the changing demands of employers.
- To promote economic development through adequate, skilled, and trained workforce.
- To provide a well-trained local workforce.
- To ensure that the cost of child-care and housing in the community are compatible with the workforce.
- To make the local labor market more transparent and match supply and demand for labor.

Definition of Human Capital

Green and Haines defined Human Capital as an essential community asset that includes general education background, labor market experience, artistic development and appreciation, health, and other skills. Human Capital can also be defined as the skills,

knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization or country (go.alight.com). In simple terms, “Human Capital refers to the economic value of an employee’s skills and experience. This counts things like education, training, intelligence, health, and even qualities like loyalty and punctuality that offer some value to an employer” (Tamplin, 2023). Though Human capital is an intangible asset, there is evidence of relationship between productivity and profitability.

The financial value of Human Capital

The value of labor can be increased through investment in human capital with training programs and education. Productivity is directly related to human capital, with correlations between investments in its employees by companies, and higher profit margins. Another correlation is that increased productivity results in economic growth. Since human capital is a prime way of increasing economic prosperity, communities should consider investing in human capital (Finance Strategist, 2023).

Cost of Human Capital

Like any asset, depreciation will affect human capital over time. Depreciation occurs through unemployment, injury, mental decline, or the inability to keep pace with innovation. Depreciation can be measured through wages or the ability to stay in the workforce (Finance Strategist, 2023).

Human capital is firm specific with productive skills being only valued with the current employer but not necessarily with future employers (Audoly, De Pace, Fella, April 2023).



Human Capital



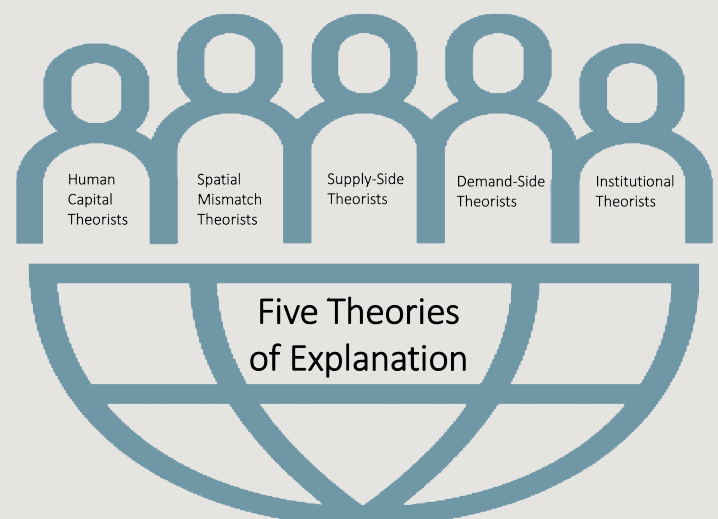
Key Concepts

How can Human Capital be Created?

- Accumulating capital over time through improved education, health care, etc.
- Developing hard skills and soft skills.
- Obtaining higher education and training.
- Developing intelligence and emotional intelligence.
- Developing personality.
- Gaining work experience.
- Improving employee well-being.
- Building loyalty to the company.
- Investing in education, training, and medical care.

Workforce development is “a constellation of activities from orientation to the work world, recruiting, placement, and mentoring to follow-up counseling and crisis intervention” (Harrison and Weiss, 1998). Green and Haines shared five theories for variations in earnings. Each theory is unique and valid.

How Labor Markets Operate



How labor markets operate - Five Theories of Explanation

Human capital theorists argue that earnings differences result from varying abilities and skills, with individuals investing in education and mobility for better opportunities. It places the responsibility on individuals to develop their human capital and reap future rewards.

Spatial mismatch theorists suggest that the location of jobs and the location of workers are not always well-matched. When a mismatch does exist, community-based organizations can play an important role in helping employers, workers, and institutions overcome the problems.

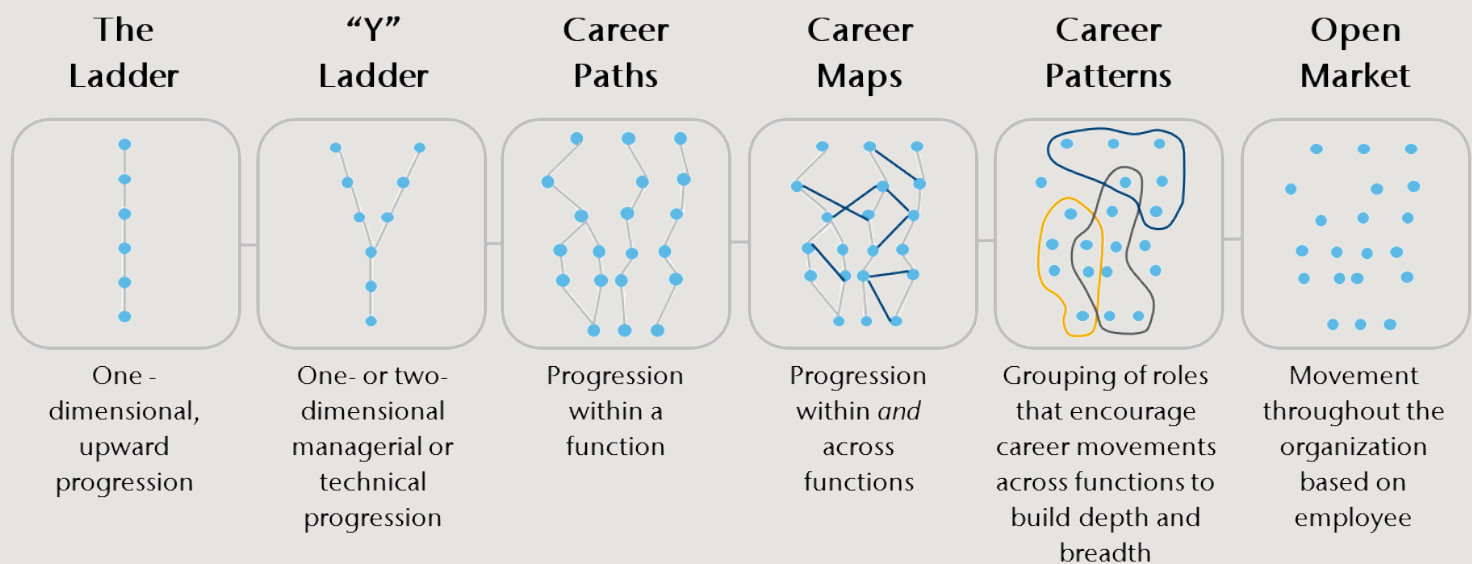
Supply-side theorists emphasize the importance of the number of workers with specific skills at various wage levels as the primary determinants of the functioning of labor markets.

Demand-side theorists emphasize how changes in the structure of occupations, industries, skills, and the location of work shape local opportunities.

Institutional theorists may focus on the organizational support for workers and employers in the region.

Career Ladder and Career growth Approaches

Though the Career Ladder is the traditional approach to career growth, current trends include a multitude of career climbing paths. The Career Ladder leads to one-dimensional, upward progression. Additional career growth paths include current trends include a multitude of career climbing paths: “Y” Ladder, Career Paths, Career Maps, Career Patterns and Open Market.



Discovered Capital

Through our research, we accumulated a list of Human Capital community-based assets that provide resources to develop, increase, and expand human capital. Additionally, we identified Cultural Capital within the study area in the form of community gathering centers, that could be used to host job training and job connection events.

Human Assets ●

Gwinnett Partnership

Gwinnett Care

Gwinnett County Public Library/Norcross

WIOA Career Resource Center

Workplace Centers

Better Work Gwinnett

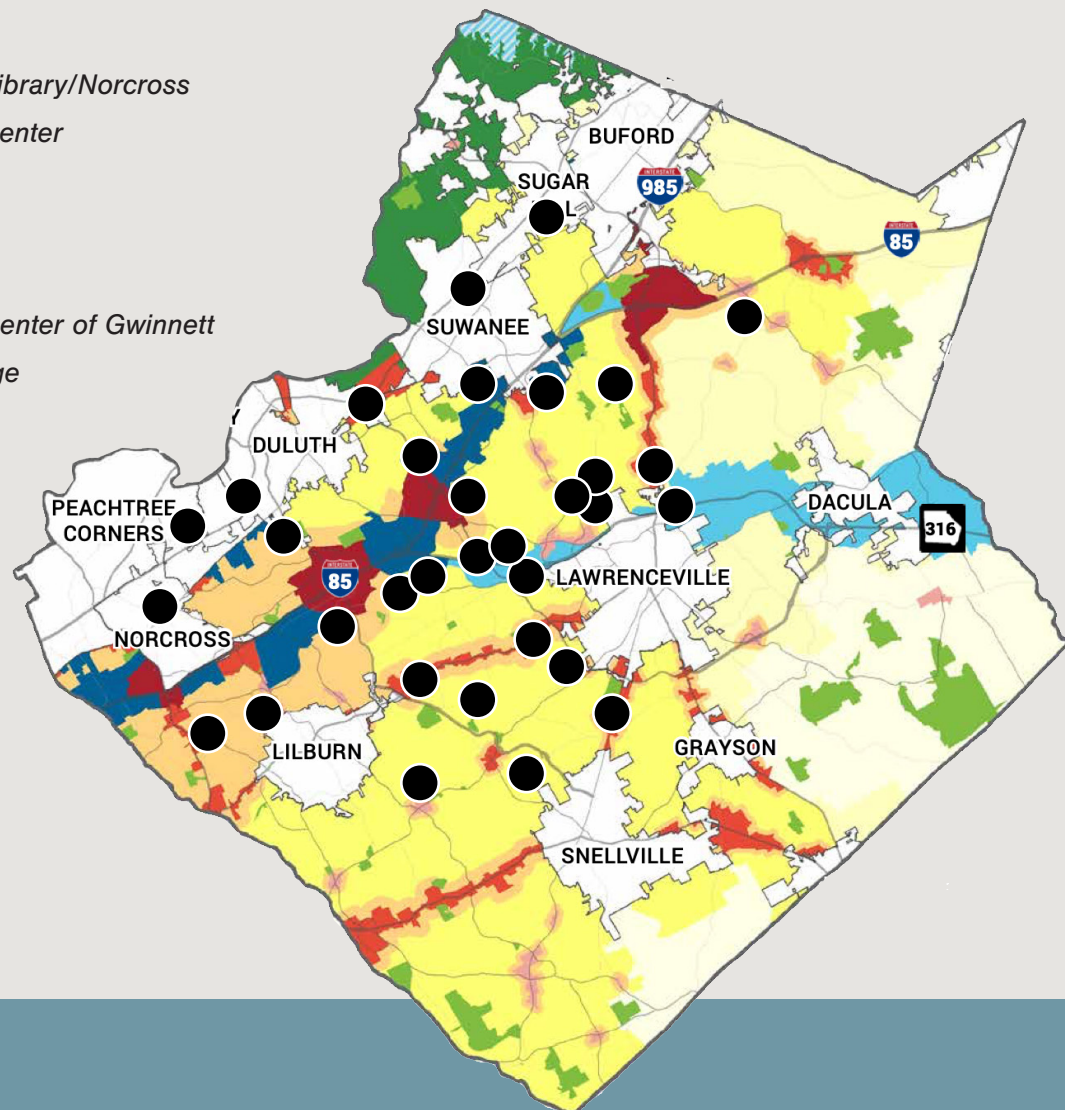
Corner Outreach

Good Samaritan Health Center of Gwinnett

Gwinnett Technical College

Human Capital Assets

We were able to identify a variety of individual human capital assets within Gwinnett County that serve the study area, though none of the assets were physically located within the boundaries of the study area. Assets provided a variety of services that focused on job training, job creation, and job connection. They varied in their origination and included local and regional organizations, county and state agencies, and local and regional non-profit organizations. Services varied from providing information, providing access to resources, workforce development training, certified job training, affordable health care, job matching, and transportation. Due to their locations, access to the resources will require coordination of transportation.



Asset Classification

An asset chart was created to provide profiles on each asset that includes the name of the asset, details of the services provided by the asset, and types of assets. Contact information includes physical address, email, telephone number, and contact person (if available). Within the details section of the charts, attributes and key points of services are recorded. Assets were further classified by dividing them into types, through three classifications: job creation, job training, and job connection.

Job Creation

The process of creating new jobs, especially to provide work for people who are unemployed or inactive (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023).

Job Training

Any type of instruction to an individual who is impoverished that enables him to acquire vocational skills so that he can become employable or able to seek a higher grade of employment.

Job Connection

Is a bridge between an employee or candidate and a position or career (Career Connectors, 2020). There are many human capital resources that serve the study area. These assets provide a well-rounded and diverse opportunity to develop, expand, and enhance human capital. Limitations include knowledge of the resources, lack of transportation to access the resource, and personal, social, and financial limitations.

Study Area Assets: Job Creation, Job Training, & Job Connection

Assets	Details	Type
ATL Metro Chamber	Collaboration between industry and our region’s many post-secondary institutions, from recruiting efforts to internships, research, and more, programs that grow Georgia’s skilled, diverse talent pool and improve economic mobility. Home - Metro Atlanta Chamber	Job Creation
Better Work Gwinnett	They provide guidance and referrals for available resources including training and connection to employers. Better Work Gwinnett is a group of Gwinnett-based organizations and businesses that believe our community is better when everyone has access to the dignity that comes from work. We collaborate with dozens of local resources to provide training, support services, and connections to help you find meaningful work. Provide guidance and referrals for available resources including training and connection to employers. They set up a table in the lobby of ONE STOP Norcross, to provide assistance. BETTER WORK GWINNETT - Better Opportunity	Training/Job Connection/Job Creation
Corner Outreach	WHAT WE OFFER: Jobs that pay self-sustaining wages starting at \$16.00 or more Jobs that promise growth within the company and continuous learning Jobs in companies that celebrate diversity and support their teams Jobs that are not too far from you so that you spend your energy growing at work rather than being stuck in traffic We have jobs in multiple industries! We can get your foot in the door of your dream career or find you a job that helps you reach your goals. Looking for a Job? — Corners Outreach	Job Connection
Georgia DOL	The Georgia Department of Labor provides a wide range of services to job seekers and employers. These include administration of Georgia's unemployment insurance, employment service, provision of workforce information to the public and private sectors, and oversight of child labor issues.	Job Connection
Gwinnett Cares	Gwinnett Cares’ Workforce Development Response Team has been working throughout the pandemic to strategically align our community’s employment partners so we can help Gwinnettians with all backgrounds, skill sets, and career aspirations connect to outstanding job opportunities and get back to work. Whether you are looking for hourly work, a great next career move, or to retool for a career transition. Employment Resources; Gwinnett Cares is not a direct service provider and does not provide relief funds for people in need.	Job Connection

	Our role is to connect you to nonprofit agencies and service providers that specialize in the areas where you need support. Job Search Assistance Georgia Department of Labor	
Gwinnett County Public Library	Resources for finding a job: Adult Digital Resources/ Adult Services & Programs/ Virtual Author & Speaker Series/ GCPL University/ Learning Labs/ Personal Finances. Gwinnett County Public Library (gwinnettpl.org)	Job Connection
Norcross Works	The Norcross Works job portal is open to all employers at no cost to post as many job openings as they wish. Jobs - Norcross Works	Job Connection
Partnership Gwinnett	Partnership Gwinnett is a public-private initiative dedicated to bringing new jobs and capital investment to Gwinnett County, Georgia. Since 2007, Partnership Gwinnett has worked with its local partners to attract and retain jobs, cultivate capital investment, support educational institutions, foster workforce development, and contribute to the exceptional quality of life found in Gwinnett. New Home - Partnership Gwinnett	Job Creation/ Job Training
Wonolo Path Forward	Wonolo's Path Forward program connects individuals with previous justice system involvement with job opportunities posted by businesses that use the Wonolo platform. Path Forward (wonolo.com)	Job Connection

Certified Training Assets

Assets	Details	Type
Atlanta Regional Commission/WIOA Career Resources Center Mobile Career Lab and unit	Mobile Career Lab and unit- Onsite staff assist individuals seeking employment, training, and education services and provide services to businesses seeking a skilled workforce. Businesses may use the mobile lab for recruiting, pre-employment screening, interviewing, and training. Atlanta Regional Commission, Mobile Career Lab - ARC (atlantaregional.org)	Training
First Step Staffing	National, with a nonprofit mission and for-profit expertise. job placement, we provide transportation to and from work, ongoing job coaching, and on-site job management. in-depth evaluation that assesses work history, technical skills, and living situations and identifies other barriers to employment. After an in-person orientation and a one-on-one meeting with a job coach, clients are matched with an employer and placed in a job within 48-72 hours (about 3 days). We provide clients with transportation to and from work through partnerships with public transit and Enterprise Rideshare. The First Step team coordinates closely with other nonprofits to connect clients to resources and services such as housing, healthcare, food, and clothing needs, and more to develop a stable path out of poverty and homelessness. FAQs First Step Staffing	Training/Job Connection
Goodwill of North Georgia	GOODWILL CAREER CENTERS Goodwill provides everything you need for a successful job search. In our career centers throughout North Georgia, you can get access to job boards, resume software, computers, cover letter writing assistance, fax machines, job fairs, and even support from a career coach. We knock down barriers for people struggling with their job search, including those with criminal backgrounds, gaps in their job history, and other challenges. And we can help you with the confidence you need to find a job. The zip code for the study area is 30093. Goodwill of North Georgia - Thrift Stores, Donation & Career Centers (goodwillng.org)	Training/Job Connection
Good Samaritan Health Centers of Gwinnett	Provide quality and affordable primary healthcare. and dental services at our two locations in Norcross and job training in the medical and dental fields. Good Samaritan Health Center of Gwinnett (goodsamgwinnett.org)	Training
Gwinnett Technical College	Real-world job skills – skills that lead to successful careers and skills that employers are looking to grow their companies. Online and weekend college. Contact - Gwinnett Technical College	Job Training

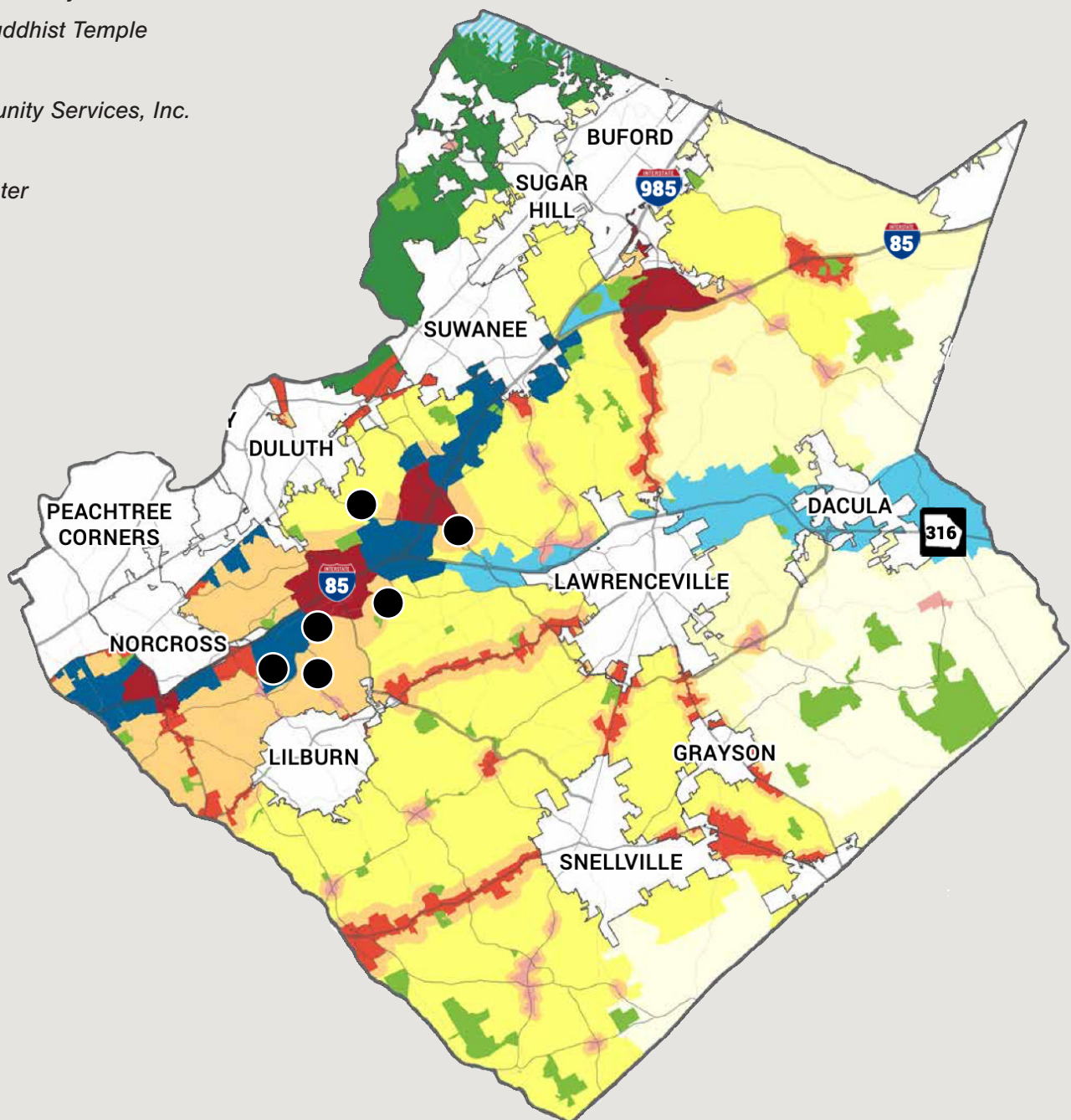
Cultural Capital as Human Capital

We were able to identify six individual cultural capital assets within Gwinnett County that serve and are located within the vicinity of the study area. Due to their location within the study, accessibility becomes more manageable. Assets varied in their origination and included local non-profit organizations, a local church, county community centers, and a park. All cultural

assets possess the potential to serve as a community hub for information, job training, and job connection events. Cultural assets were limited throughout the study area, though for our purposes, the number, diversity, and locations could be advantageous for job training and job connection events.

Cultural Assets ●

- Vietnamese Community of GA Center*
- Jun Dung Sa Buddhist Temple*
- Graves Park*
- Creative Community Services, Inc.*
- Just People Inc.*
- First Senior Center*

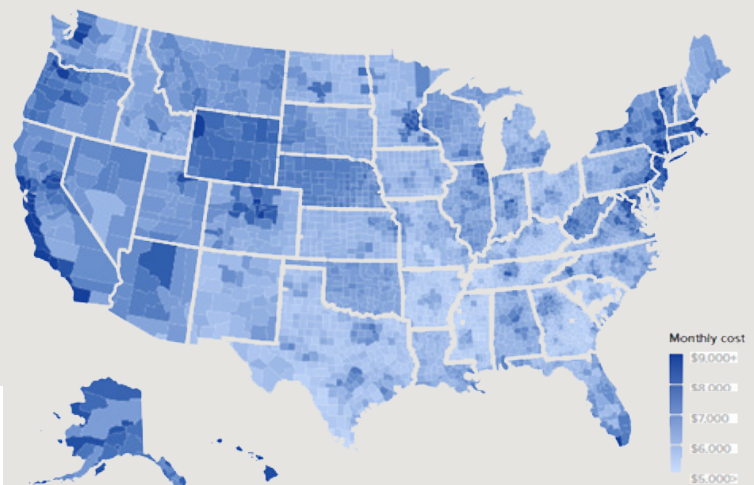


Cultural Asset Table

Asset	Web Address	Contact Information	Details
Vietnamese Community Of Ga Center	vac-ga.org , https://www.facebook.com/cdnvqgga/	(678) 820-8822, info@vac-ga.org	VAC-GA is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit organization, with the mission to preserve the Asian Culture and empowerment.
Jun Dung Sa Buddhist Temple	https://atlantajundungsa.org/contact/e	900 Beaver Ruin Rd NW Lilburn, GA 30047	Established in 1992, JDS has transmitted the teachings of Buddha and supported Korean Buddhist community in the Greater Atlanta under the guidance of the Founder Venerable Seok-Maya, and Head nun, Ven. Soo-in.st
Graves Park	http://bit.ly/GravesPark	1540 Graves Rd, Norcross, GA 30093	Pavilion, restrooms
Creative Community Services, Inc.	ccsgeorgia.org	1650 Oakbrook Drive Suite 445 Norcross, GA 30093	Our Services: Therapeutic Foster Care Developmental Disabilities Teen Parent Connection Kinship Care Adventure Youth Program
JUST PEOPLE, INC	https://www.justpeople.org/	1412 Oakbrook Drive Norcross, Georgia 30093	"Just" People, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit agency that provides a wide variety of support with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, and head injury.
First Senior Center	https://www.firstseniorcenter.com/	5555 Oakbrook Pkwy. Bldg. 500, STE. 500-A Norcross, GA 30093, 470-289-2222, info@firstseniorcenter.com	First Senior Center is an adult day health serving seniors hot meals and activities from 9am to 2pm

A Living Wage

In considering the dimensions of Human Capital for the study area, it is essential to establish how much it costs to live in Gwinnett County. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that for a family of four (two adults and two children), Gwinnett County families need to make \$86,496 per year – \$7,208 per month (Economic Policy Institute, 2022). This sum represents an adequate standard of living, based on 2020-dollar figures.



HOUSING	\$1,111
FOOD	\$259
CHILD CARE	\$0
TRANSPORTATION	\$846
HEALTH CARE	\$419
OTHER NECESSITIES	\$496
TAXES	\$644
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$3,776
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$45,312

HOUSING	\$1,296
FOOD	\$382
CHILD CARE	\$688
TRANSPORTATION	\$952
HEALTH CARE	\$633
OTHER NECESSITIES	\$688
TAXES	\$725
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$5,285
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$63,415

HOUSING	\$1,296
FOOD	\$758
CHILD CARE	\$1,191
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,198
HEALTH CARE	\$1,267
OTHER NECESSITIES	\$741
TAXES	\$864
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$7,208
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$86,500



Top Five Industries

Within the study area, there are a variety of industries that provide work opportunities. Industries were divided into five primary categories, with grouping within the categories (Elder, 2023). The graph displays the study area's primary industries and the internal grouping within categories.



In Demand Jobs

This list serves as a guide for in-demand jobs and is not meant to be an all-inclusive list of acceptable WOIA funded occupational skills training options. There may be additional occupations in which demand occurs based on the job market or specific opportunities within the board spectrum of occupations. This list includes occupations that show a favorable mix of projected long-term job growth, projected annual job openings, and median wages.

Occupational Area	Typical Annual Salary
Management	\$108,765
Business & Financial Operations	\$73,638
Computer & Mathematical	\$106,229
Architecture & Engineering	\$86,064
Life, Physical, & Social Science	\$69,338
Community & Social Service	\$51,378
Legal	\$82,448
Education, Training, & Library	\$60,485
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	\$53,903
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$68,908
Healthcare Support	\$32,194
Protective Service	\$43,297
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$24,631
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	\$31,632
Personal Care & Service	\$26,340
Sales & Related	\$32,084
Office & Administrative Support	\$40,838
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	\$32,668
Construction & Extraction	\$49,691
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	\$51,951
Production	\$40,088
Transportation & Material Moving	\$37,850

Demand Occupation List

Business & Financial Operations Occupations							
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	18,229	\$34.62	21,374	Bachelor's degree	None	None
13-1081	Logisticians	5,644	\$36.39	8,007	Bachelor's degree	None	None
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	15,951	\$51.88	15,920	Bachelor's degree	None	None
13-1111	Management Analysts	21,212	\$53.32	25,188	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	31,600	\$42.55	33,284	Bachelor's degree	None	None
13-2051	Financial and Investment Analysts	6,242	\$47.84	5,940	Bachelor's degree	None	None
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	6,940	\$58.51	6,826	Bachelor's degree	None	Long-term on-the-job training
13-2099	Financial Specialists, All Other	3,159	\$44.90	3,169	Bachelor's degree	None	None

S.W.O.T.

Strengths

- Gwinnett county considers workplace center areas of work in their comprehensive plan.
- Gwinnett Transportation provides funding to improve transportation and ensure efficient accessible transportation for residents.
- Gwinnett's workforce is diverse and abundant.
- The community-based approach of building labor market skills through these assets help to improve the capacity of workers to meet the demands of local employers.
- The focus on matching local workforce needs and opportunities with the experiences and interests of the community can lead to more effective workforce development.

Weaknesses

- Workplace center do not include workforce development.
- The mismatch between the workforce and workforce center happened because the focus of these center are just close to main highway 85
- Multitudes of cultures and languages.
- Diverse language are going to be barrier because of possible miscommunication.
- There could be a lack of effective distribution and sharing the information to match the workforce and jobs.

Opportunities

- Create training to match the jobs.
- There is a chance to connect the central part of Gwinnett, the work force center, and the assets that are close to transportation lanes.
- Gwinnett embraces the diverse community.
- The linkages between workers, employers, and institutions can be examined to identify areas for improvement in workforce development.
- Workforce development networks can play a role in building labor market skills.

Threats

- Employers may not support workforce development.
- By improving transportation, we will have more carbon dioxides and air pollutions.
- Possible lack of communication.
- Lack of effective community based organizations (CBOs).
- Lack of diversity in employment opportunities.

Proposal

Our recommendations are based on research, observation and interviews. We were able to gather extensive information regarding the assets of Human Capital for the study area and Gwinnett County by doing online research through websites, Google Earth, and publications.

We were able to observe the physical environment during our site visit in October 2023. Assessments of the field trip included the presence of environmental, human, and cultural assets and the lack of sidewalks and streetlights.



JOB

- Create job training to match the jobs within study area
- Create a central place for information regarding job creation, training, and connection
- Create a central location(s) and standardized schedule for job training
- Mandate employers to provide job trainings



TRANSPORTATION

- Provide free public bus transportation (work, training, etc.)
- Provide public transportation to ALT Metro area
- Create bike lanes and alternative public transportation options

We were able to contact by phone to a variety of CBO representatives, who shared information regarding their services and made recommendations about other agencies that we should connect with regarding work development resources.

Information was compiled and analyzed, resulting in thirteen recommendations, that are divided into four categories: Job, Transportation, Economics, Education.



ECONOMICS

- Provide low-cost childcare services
- Provide low cost or free childcare while in job training and/or during the first 90 days of work



EDUCATION

- Provide free English classes to eliminate language barriers
- Provide free tuition for vocational training or community college pursuits
- Provide employment coaching to increase job satisfaction and retention

Implementation of our proposal & Strategies

Funding sources for recommendations can be found in a variety of options within the study area including both public and private resources. The current CBOs within the study area are non-profit organizations that receive private funding and public support. Gwinnett County along with state and federal agencies currently provides services to the study area and could provide additional funding to support recommendations. There is also potential funding from current and future employers of Gwinnett County. Employers are benefiting from their location in Gwinnett County. Due to their vested interest in human capital, their investment would benefit their company, their employees, and the community.

Community partnerships and strategic collaboration are possible between all resources, including government agencies, CBOs, and private employers. Though there are partnerships in place, greater organization and coordination between resources would benefit residents of the study area and the community as a whole. Within asset capital, human capital and cultural capital, are likely allies. Human capital events could be held at cultural capital locations including job training, job connections, and childcare. Additionally, environmental capital (parks) locations could also be utilized.

As we plan ahead regarding the implementation of recommendations it is essential to identify best practices for building a local labor force. Authors Greene and Haines suggest five basic goals and specific strategies that communities can adopt. This includes workforce preparation, sustaining the workforce, improving the workforce, and workforce expansion. Authors Greene and Haines believe that “to have a productive workforce and employers that are competitive in the global marketplace, it is essential that workers have the basic skills necessary in the workplace today. This goal may require businesses to become much more involved with schools and to forge productive partnerships with school systems. Some younger workers may need basic skills, such as how to interview for jobs and how to plan their careers” (Green, P., Haines, A., 2017).

Workforce Preparation

- Increase exposure to issues concerning careers and work in or before high school.
- Develop an understanding of all career and postsecondary educational option
- Strengthen career and technical education.
- Invest in preemployment training

Authors Greene and Haines shared that the most common obstacles for sustaining the workforce are related to childcare, housing, or transportation. “To attract and retain qualified workers, communities need to address the obstacles that many workers face in obtaining additional training or searching for jobs” (Green, P., Haines, A., 2017).

Sustaining the Workforce

- Develop partnerships for childcare availability.
- Create family-friendly work environments.
- Increase efforts and assistance to employers to retain employees.
- Develop partnerships for increased training efforts in the workplace.
- Assess and provide resources for transportation availability.
- Provide affordable housing closer to businesses.
- Offer post employment assistance to reduce turnover.
- Advocate for a living wage in the community.

A healthy workforce needs to be continually improving. Education and training improve the productivity of employers and increase the earnings of workers.

Improving the workforce

- Improve the success rate for completing education and training.
- Upgrade the workforce through funding and resource shifts.

Workforce expansion requires the evaluation of the needs of employers and workers. Workers must have skills that match the demands of local employers.

Workforce Expansion

- Develop partnerships that address barriers to expanding the labor pool.
- Expand efforts to attract qualified workers needed to meet employer demands.
- Increase efforts to connect education with the world of work.
- Improve the opportunities for retired and part-time workers.

Conclusion- Review of Main points

Partnership Gwinnett reports that Gwinnett is the second-largest community in the state of Georgia and is expected to exceed one million residents in the next decade.

There are great resources and great opportunities for residents within the study area if proper accessibility and connections are created and maintained. As Gwinnett County evolves it will be essential to consider all members of the community to generate a healthy and productive human capital asset. Consideration must also include workforce preparation, sustaining the workforce, improving the workforce, and workforce expansion, and all the elements that support building a local labor force.

The benefits of human capital go beyond simply getting a high-paying job, with its effects influencing all aspects of quality of life. It is important to remember that human capital is a community problem, not an individual issue. A healthy human capital permeates all aspects of the community.

Takeaways

1. Gwinnett County has a multitude of resources to help develop human capital within the study area, but they need to be connected to support one another and prevent duplication of services.
2. Additional funding will be needed to provide assistants with services that are not being provided (childcare, tuition, and transportation).
3. Transportation is a barrier within the study area. Gwinnett County must find a solution to provide reliable and affordable transportation options within the study area and to the ALT Metro area.
4. Sidewalks and streetlights within the study area will increase personal safety and encourage the use of public transportation.
5. Free or reduced tuition will provide greater access to colleges and educational institutions within the vicinity study area.



LABOR FORCE

2,600,000

Within 60-Minute Drive

NET MIGRATION

5,447

245 Domestic and 5,202 International

STUDENTS ENROLLED

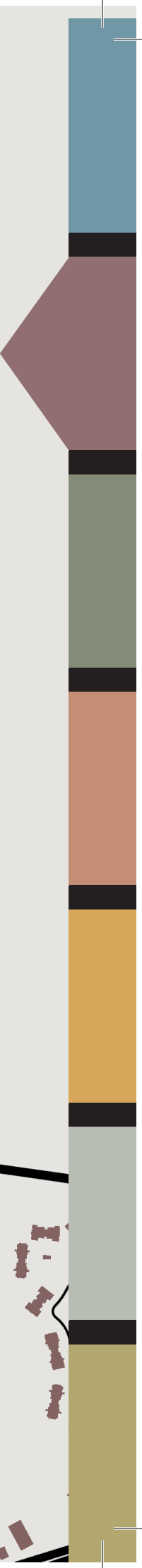
257,000

Kindergarten-PhD



Physical Capital

Anna Wilson
Ash Daniel
Kaylee Major



Physical Capital

Overview

Define

Physical Capital shapes the sense of place. It is the roads, buildings (houses, warehouses, businesses), and other physical features (railroad tracks, bridges, vacant land). Physical capital consists of the tangible elements that create space. In the context of community development, it refers to the stock of buildings and infrastructure in a locality. The main type of physical capital within community development is housing. Transportation and infrastructure are also apart of physical capital. Our focus in this report primarily surrounds the housing portion of physical capital.

The Importance

Physical Capital is important for community development because it makes up the physical attributes of the locality (stock of buildings). It is where people live. Housing is the most important physical capital because it has been one of the main concerns among community-based organizations specifically affordable housing. Housing is also mainly the only category of physical capital that community-based organizations deal with. Physical Capital is rooted in place. It's immobility endures over long periods of time. As stated in Asset Building and Community Development, "Housing is the largest investment people make and comprises a majority of most families net worth."

Housing Issues

Some housing issues concerned with community assets and development are as follows:

- Affordability
- Adequacy
- Availability
- Gentrification
- Residential Segregation
- The Housing Crisis (2008)

Affordability

Housing Affordability refers to the median housing price within a community in relation to household income. The Reagan and Nixon era made affordable housing state and local governments responsibility which is commonly referred to as block grants.

Tax deductions on private homes only benefit homeowners. Because of this, private housing developers unwilling to rehabilitate or construct affordable housing in low-income neighborhoods. There are currently less than 30k affordable housing units produced each year compared to 150k in the 70s.

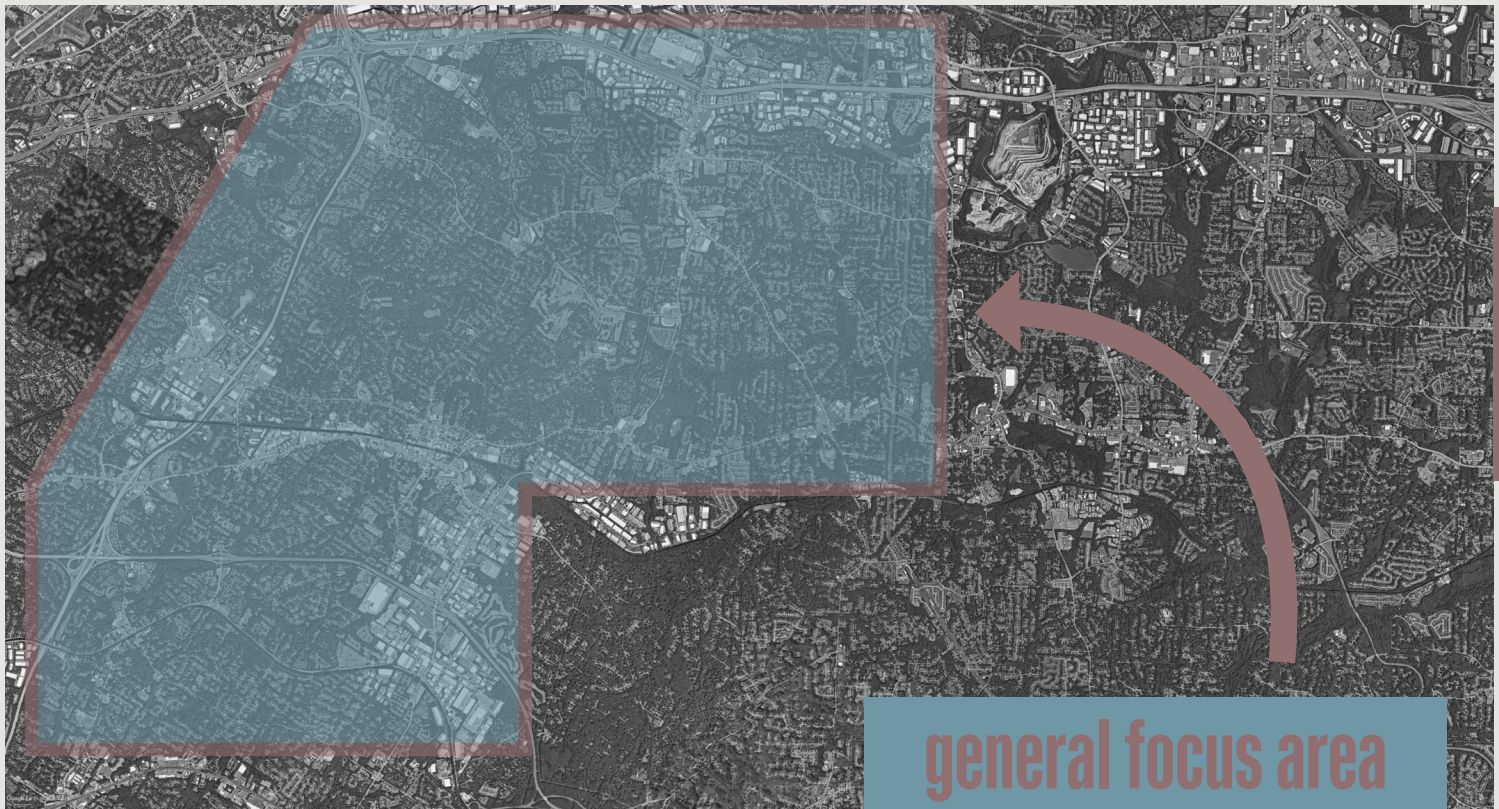
Adequacy

Housing Adequacy consists of the actual physical condition and age of the housing stock in a community. There is currently no preservation of affordable housing because of the lack of capital improvement and investment in affordable housing.

Public housing uses 38% more energy than privately owned housing for the same floor space. Low-income residents also pay more for utilities than the average homeowner or renter.

Availability

Housing availability refers to the distribution of the actual housing stock by type. In the 1960s and 1970s, there were single-room occupancy (SROs) units being built. According to the Asset Building and Community Development text, "Filtering is the process by which high-income households buy and move into new homes, leaving behind a house that is bought by someone of slightly lesser means, who in turn leaves behind a house that is bought by someone of lesser means." Community-based organizations (CBOs) are helping to slow the filtering process. Demand side model means that is assumed there is an adequate supply of housing. However low-income households do not have the adequate income to afford available units. Under the Fair Housing Act, lenders are unable to discriminate based on race, religion, nationality, sex, disability status, and family status.



Community Gentrification

Gentrification is the process when higher-income residents move to previously lower-income areas. The first new residents to the neighborhood are called urban pioneers. Urban pioneers are usually artists or other young professionals. Because of the influx of new wealthier residents, lower income residents are forced out of their homes due to rising housing costs. Additionally, these neighborhoods are predominantly minority and the new residents are majority white. Filtering occurs because of the increased property taxes, rent and tax assessments. With the new residents comes new businesses. These businesses arrive catering to high income residents and previous businesses disappear. The tight housing markets in cities may drive residents to neighborhoods where housing costs are lower. Gentrification usually occurs where the housing stock has high architectural value, there are a large number of renters, and low housing values. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), states and localities must use 25% of received funds to redevelop abandoned or foreclosed properties. Tighter credit for housing Organizations shifting their focus to rentals rather than privately owned homes.

Residential Segregation

Racial discrimination continues to be prevalent in the housing market, lenders and realtor's may hold racial stereotypes. Index of Dissimilarity is the measure of evenness with which two groups are distributed across an area. Social Isolation Measure is the level of social isolation through census tracts. Minorities often lack information on the cost of housing in white neighborhoods. Income Residential Segregation is when income inequality leads to class segregation. Inclusionary zoning requires developers to produce a certain percentage of units considered affordable housing (the Beltline).

Housing Crisis of 2008

The Housing Crisis of 2008 occurred because of the large amount of subprime loans. Subprime loans are high risk loans, based on a lack of capital, a high debt to asset ratio, and a non-desirable credit history. In 2008, there were more than 2.9 million foreclosures. Inner-city neighborhoods experienced an increase in abandonment which decreased the price of surrounding properties. The housing crisis caused tighter credit for housing and organizations to shift their focus to rentals rather than privately owned homes.

SWOT Analysis and Connection to Other Capital Assets

SWOT Analysis

To provide a situational assessment of the focus area, our group performed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. From the findings listed below, we determined a list of general questions in relation to how the physical assets in the area are connected to the other assets categories in this report.

Strengths

Diverse housing stock, opportunities for redevelopment and strong organizational infrastructure are foundational to the strengths that exist within the focus area. Organizations such as Gwinnett Housing Corporation, ATL Neighborhood Development Partnership, HomeFirst and operate as major stakeholders who focus on providing individuals with housing opportunities. At the forefront of organizations working on physical capital issues within the area is GICH (Georgia Initiative for Community Housing). The objective of GICH is to help communities create and launch a locally based plan to meet their housing needs. Fortunately, Gwinnett County has a large amount of already developed land that can be redeveloped into other uses including diverse housing options. With the predicted growth, community economic development is key to creating a thriving future for the area.

Weaknesses

Overall, housing tends to be less affordable in this area because the average household tends to make 29% less than the rest of the county as a whole. A majority of the renter occupied units are not affordable for the residents. Around 60% of these units are higher than the affordable rent determined for the area. This has created a high demand for housing with few options for low income individuals. Older housing stock tends to be the majority of the existing opportunities for individuals in this area, which creates a disparity in the amount of options for younger populations. As a final noted weakness, missing middle housing would improve this situation, but unfortunately, it is not existent in the focus area.

Opportunities

As previously mentioned, incentivizing missing middle housing would be a positive solution for housing issues such as affordability and density. This could be achieved by enhancing the flexibility of residential zoning districts. It is also important to provide a framework that can preserve the organically existing affordable housing.

An additional opportunity related to the physical capital of the study area includes the significant amount of areas available for redevelopment and repurposing. Encouragement of the development of mixed use community centers throughout these redevelopment areas would provide spaces that are accessible to community members.

Threats

As previously mentioned, housing being unaffordable for the current community is a threat in regard to the predicted population increase. This could also involve displacement of current businesses and residents. With the current housing gap, there needs to be over four thousand lower income homes built to meet the current needs of the community. It has been established that the average annual units needs to be 11,531 for the county which is currently unmet.

Physical Capital Assets in Focus Area

- Gwinnett Housing Corporation
- Habitat for Humanity
- Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership
- HomeFirst Gwinnett
- The Resting Spot
- New Division of Housing and Community Development
- Private Developers

**Physical Capital Questions
in Relation to Other Assets**

Food Access: How does the availability of grocery stores and food resources impact the food security of the area? Are there opportunities to improve food access, and how might this relate to housing diversity?

Employment: What are the job opportunities in the area, and how might this affect housing demand? Is there a possibility for housing options close to major employment centers?

Housing Data: What does the existing housing data

reveal about the current state of housing in the area? What are the trends or gaps that need to be addressed to align with the GICH objectives?

Schools: How does the quality of local schools affect housing choices and property values in the area? Are there plans for new schools or improvements to existing ones that could enhance housing opportunities?

Community Assets (parks, libraries, childcare): How do these assets contribute to the overall livability of the area? How might access to parks and libraries influence the demand for housing? Are there plans to expand these community assets?



Asset Maps

Population Density

This map depicts the population density of the focus area. It shows that a majority of the people in this area live in census tract 504.21 and 504.22. A majority of the population tends to live between Lilburn Road and Harbins Road in these census tracts.

Subdivisions

This map depicts the areas within the focus area that are classified as subdivisions. This helps us to understand what kind of housing developments are present within the area. This map shows that there are 33 housing subdivisions that are classified as condos. There are 295 developments classified as just subdivisions. There are 6 classified as townhomes and one development classified as apartments. There are only three classified as other.

County-Owned Property

This depicts the county owned property found in the study area. These areas could be easily redeveloped, conserved, or serve the public interest due to their government ownership. This land should be considered when thinking about land availability for solving the lack of appropriate housing in the area and the rising costs in the entire county as a whole. There are 44 parcels of property owned by the county in this area.

Businesses

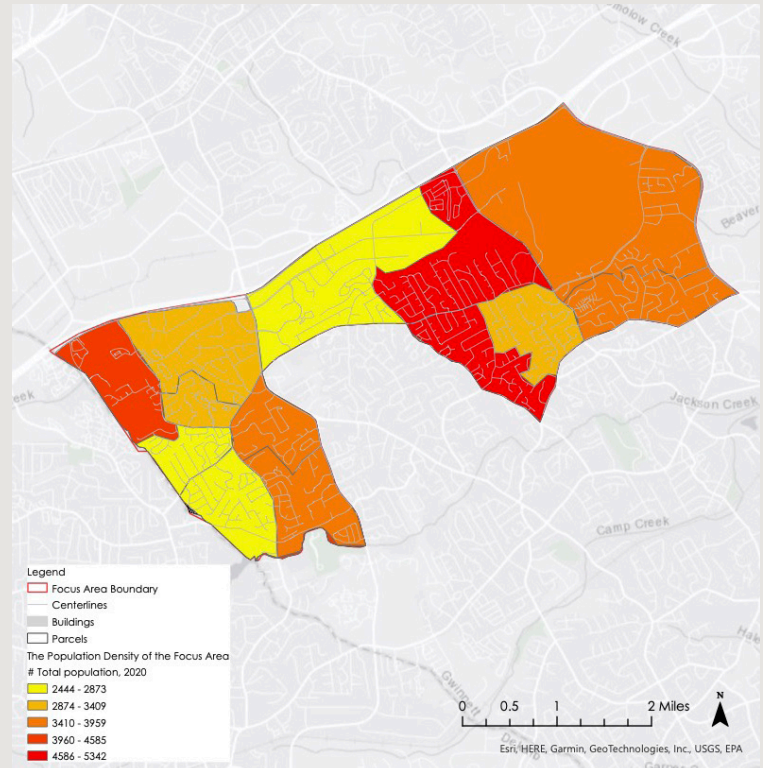
This map depicts the businesses located within the study area. It shows that there are 425 businesses located in the site. Eight of these businesses are women and/or minority owned.

Historic Sites

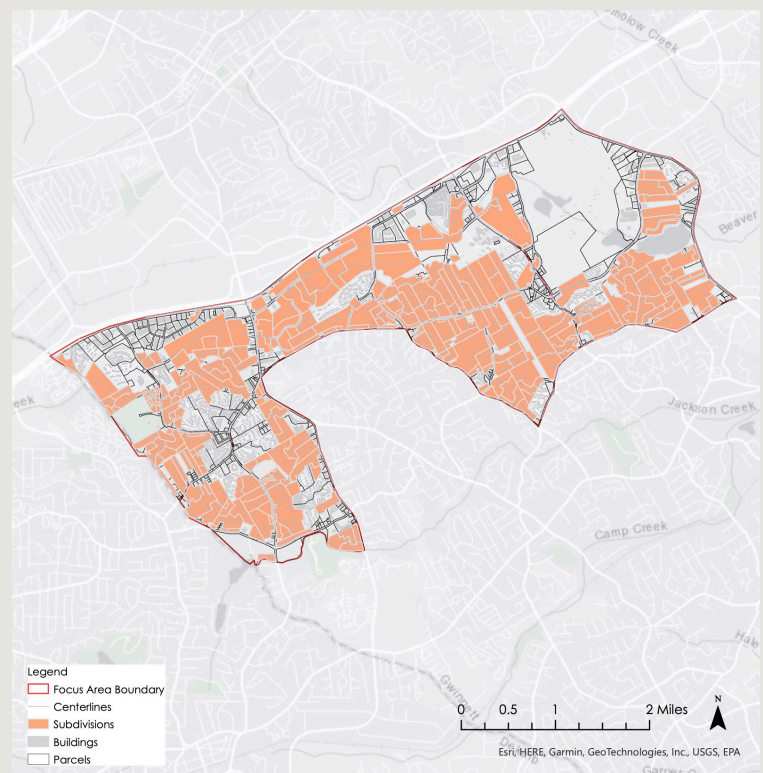
Shown here, are historic sites located surrounding the focus area. It shows that there are no historic sites within our study area. However, there are sites located relatively close to the site. There are three historic buildings that near the focus area: The Wynne-Russel House, The Historic Train Depot, and the Norcross Historic Storefronts.

Recreation Structures

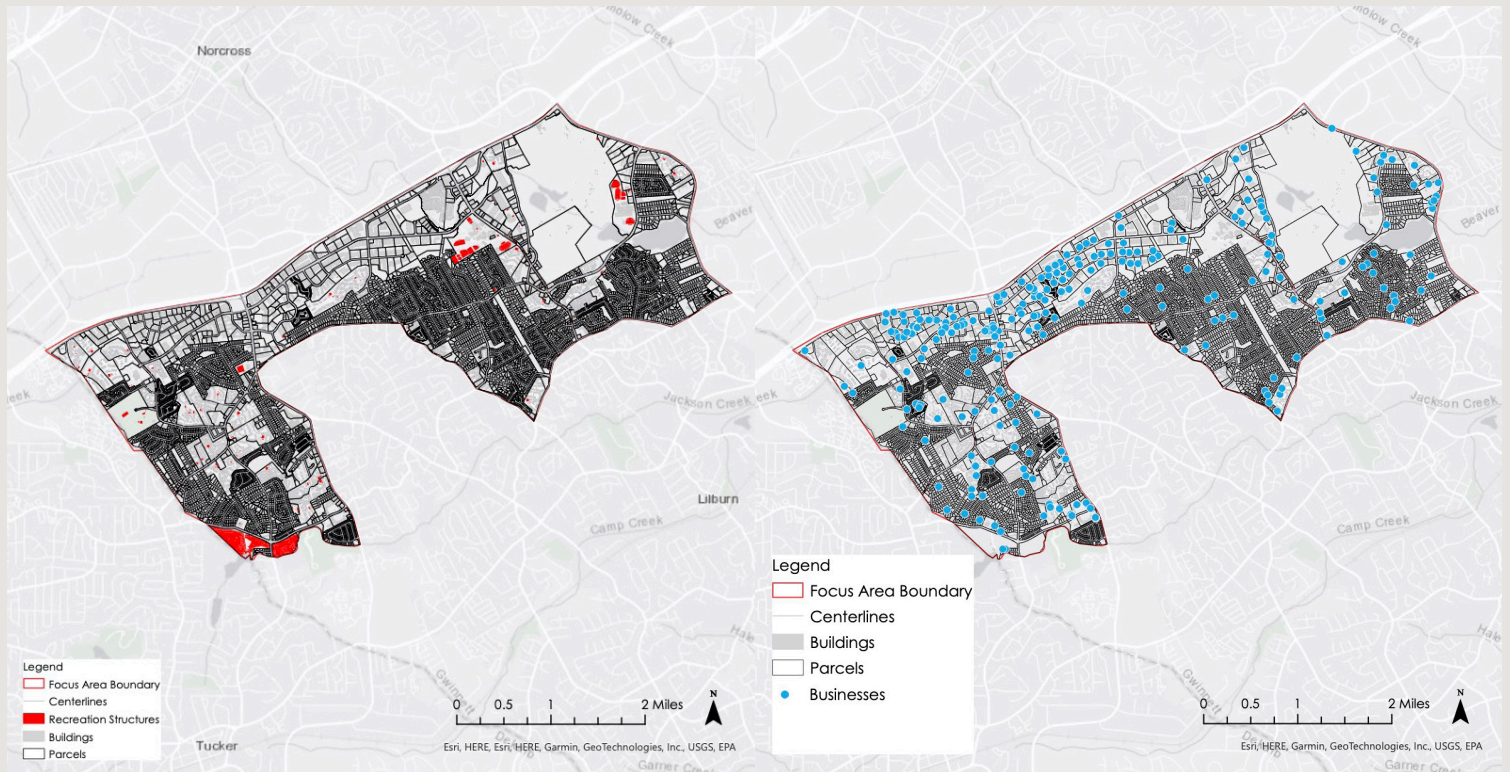
This map depicts the recreation structures that are located within the focus area. It shows that there are 576 recreation structures in this area.



Population Density

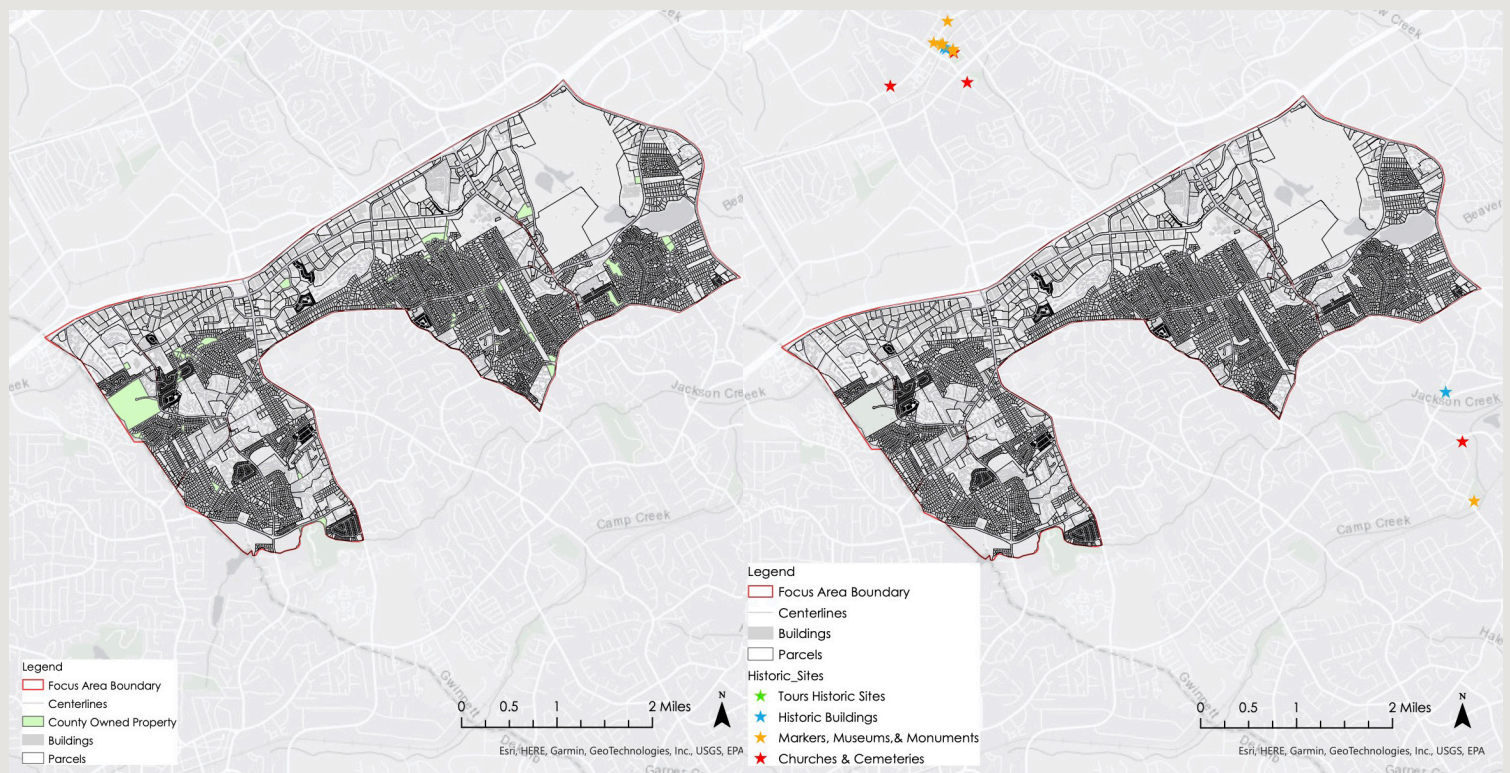


Subdivisions



Recreation Structures

Businesses



County Owned Property

Historic Sites

Areas For Redevelopment



1



2

3

Legend

- 1 Abandoned Warehouse @ 6624 Dawson Boulevard
- 2 Canon Offices @ 5625 Oakbrook Parkway
- 3 Empty Lot @ 5068 Singleton Road

Redevelopment: Dawson Boulevard Warehouses

6624 Dawson Boulevard

The Importance

Repurposing vacant warehouses for housing and community needs is a way to adapt existing structures to meet the evolving demands of urban areas.

Ultimately, the successful transformation of a vacant warehouse into housing and community spaces requires a thoughtful and collaborative approach that considers both the structural aspects of the building and the social dynamics of the community.

The Benefits

- Optimal Use of Infrastructure
- Adaptive Reuse
- Community Facilities
- Affordable Housing Initiatives
- Artistic and Cultural Spaces
- Flexible Spaces
- Commercial Uses
- Community Engagement Opportunities





“collaborative approach that considers both the structural aspects of the building and the social dynamics of the community”

Redevelopment: Cannon Offices

5625 Oakbrook Parkway

The Importance

Remodeling old or underutilized office buildings into mixed-use developments can have various benefits, contributing to urban revitalization, sustainability, and community well-being. This is essential for creating well-integrated urban spaces that meet the diverse needs of communities while preserving historical assets and providing an optimal use of existing infrastructure.

The Benefits

- Urban Revitalization
- Economic Growth
- Preservation of Architectural Assets
- Increased Walkability
- Housing Solutions
- Transportation Efficiency
- Community Interaction
- Adaptation to Changing Needs
- Optimal Use of Infrastructure

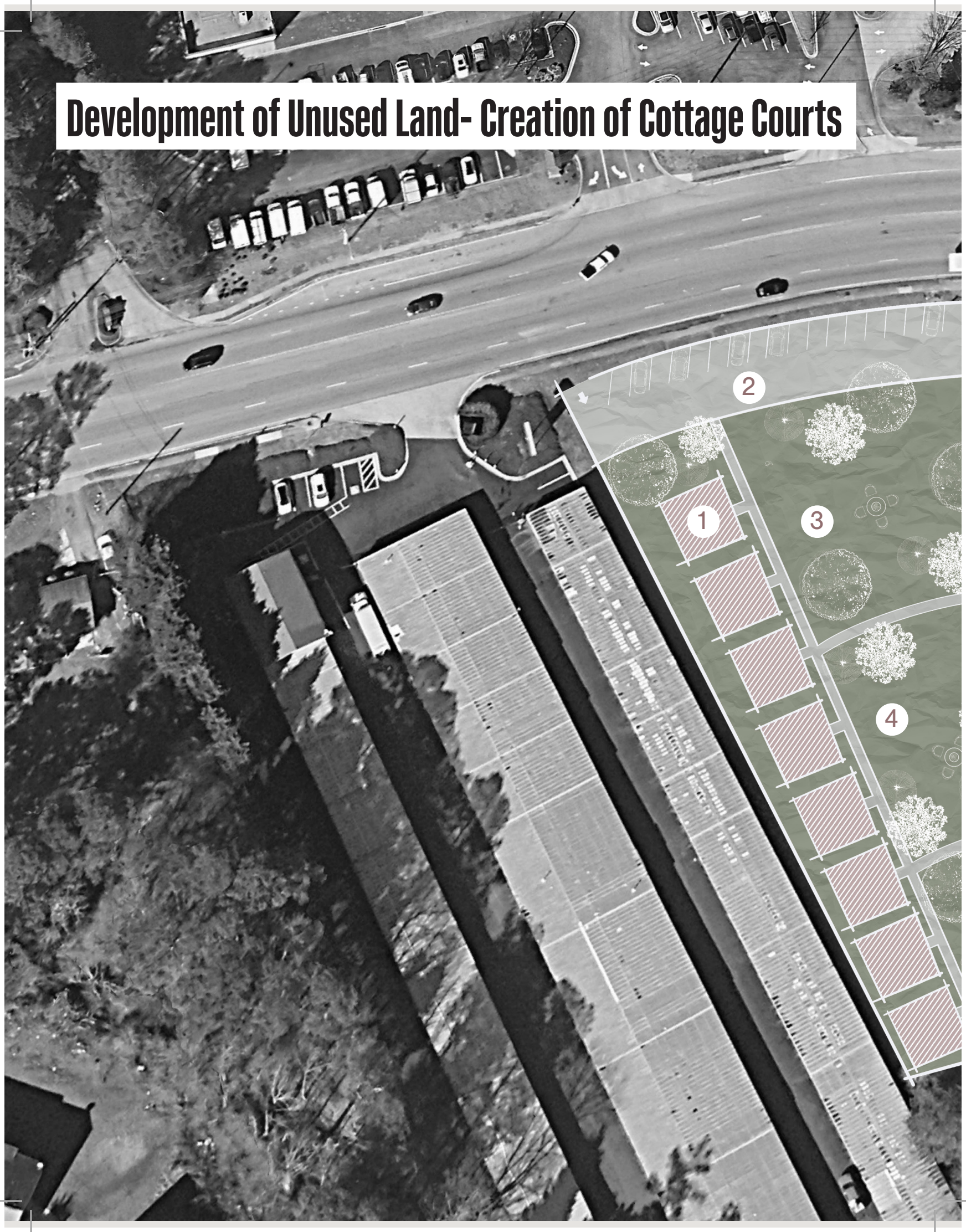




*“preserving
historical assets
and providing
an optimal
use of existing
infrastructure”*



Development of Unused Land- Creation of Cottage Courts





Legend

- ① 16 Two story cottage houses
- ② 20 parking spaces with a one way in and out
- ③ Large greenspace with a firepit and seating
- ④ Medium greenspace with a firepit and seating
- ⑤ Small greenspace with a firepit and seating

Redevelopment: Cottage Courts

5068 Singleton Road

The Importance

Cottage courts, also known as pocket neighborhoods, are small clusters of detached homes or cottages arranged around a central courtyard or green space. Implementing cottage courts in unused or underutilized spaces can offer several benefits. When done effectively, cottage courts can be a valuable and sustainable solution for creating vibrant, affordable, and community-oriented housing developments.

The Benefits

- Efficient Land Use
- Affordable Housing Options
- Community Building
- Preservation of Green Space
- Adaptive Reuse of Unused Space
- Diverse Housing Options
- Incremental Development





*“vibrant, affordable,
and community-
oriented housing
developments.”*



Conclusion

Promoting affordable housing, redeveloping abandoned spaces, and implementing effective zoning solutions require a multifaceted approach involving, policy changes and strategic planning. The success of these initiatives often depends on collaboration between local government, developers, nonprofits, and community members.

Recommendations for Gwinnett:

Affordable Housing:

Implement policies that require developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing units in new developments

Density Bonuses:

Provide incentives or bonuses to developers who include affordable housing units in their projects

Mixed-Income Developments:

Encourage mixed-income developments to create diverse and inclusive spaces

Tax Incentives:

Offer tax incentives to developers or property owners who designate a certain percentage of units as affordable

Public-Private Partnerships:

Foster partnerships between public and private sectors to leverage resources for affordable housing projects

Adaptive Reuse Policies:

Develop policies that promote the adaptive reuse of existing structures for housing purposes and preserving community character

Land Banking:

Establish a land bank to acquire, hold, and repurpose vacant or abandoned properties for community benefit

Form-Based Codes:

Implement form-based codes that focus on the physical form of development, promoting walkability and mixed-use neighborhoods

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):

Adopt zoning regulations that support high-density, mixed-use development around transit hubs to reduce reliance on cars

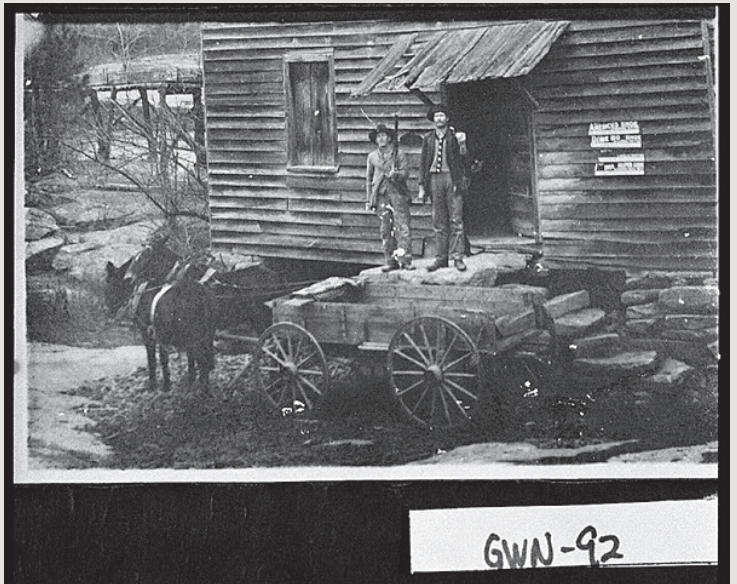
Infill Development:

Implement infill development to make use of vacant or underdeveloped parcels within existing neighborhoods





GWN-288



GWN-92



GWN 292



GWN-338



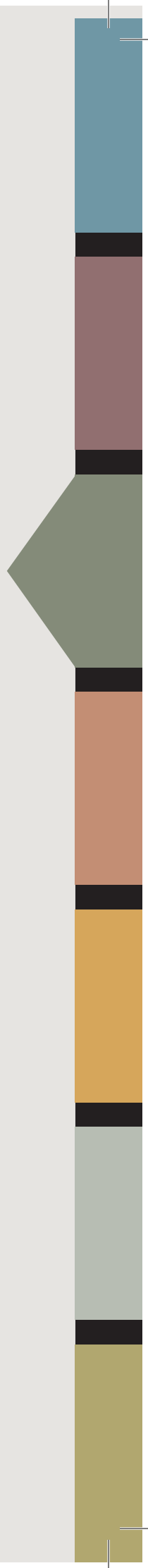
GWN 245





Environmental Capital

Timothy Naff
Mahfujur Rahman



Environmental Capital

Overview

The focus area identified by GICH hosts plentiful forests, streams, ponds in its relatively small region. These are just a few assets of many that fall under the umbrella of environmental capital. While plentiful, they currently serve mostly their natural purpose as a carbon filter, sink, or provide views and aesthetic value, etc. Our goal for this proposal is to increase the benefit they provide, while maintaining the safety and health of the environment using sustainable development practices. Through observation, data points, case study comparisons, and analysis we've developed a practical and effective recommendations to uphold our goal.

What is Environmental Capital?

Environmental capital is the stock of renewable/non-renewable resources and biotic/abiotic elements within a certain space, district, or region. These resources can be used for profit as a marketed output or as an unpriced benefit like recreation or preservation. Other elements include the biodiversity of fauna and flora, air quality, water quality, natural land cover, and mineral and rock deposits. It is important to determine the benefit of a place's environmental capital for long term viability and proper use of resources (Green & Haines, 2017).

Importance and Purpose

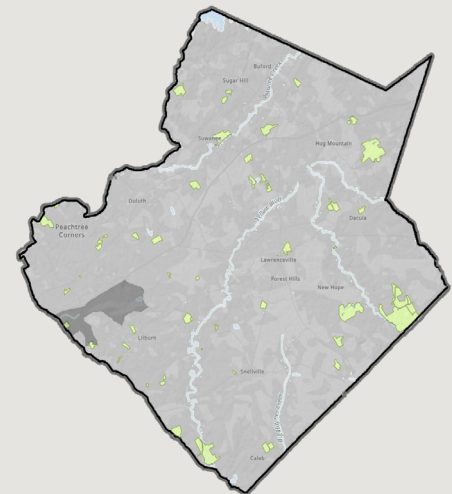
Environmental capital does not only offer natural quality of life that is imperative for a locality such as flood prevention, carbon sinks, and air quality. It also promotes health of the environment and people who reside through opportunities of recreation (running, fishing), or growth (fostering relationships, rise of housing market). Natural spaces can improve physical and mental health as well as represent positive community and health indicators. Environmental capital asset development has the potential to reverse negative environmental trends that have been the result of infrastructure disinvestment. Some examples of this can be improvement in quality of water, air quality, and reduction of severe heat exposure as a result of urban heat islands.

Put into in practice with the right methods they have the potential to transform communities. An example of this could be allowing for higher levels of service on streets and trails for biker and walkers, increasing social interaction and overall health while getting residents to spend time outside to appreciate their environment. Case studies will be discussed to show evidence of the potential value these assets can hold. Our proposal focuses on acknowledging and incorporating both the human and natural aspects, recognizing the significance of environmental capital assets

Visit

Again, our focus area has lot of environmental capital assets in the form of forests and tree cover, wetlands, and streams, but it lacks common place for exercise and natural enjoyment as the only proper park within its boundary is Graves Park, all the way to the eastside.

GWINNETT PARKS



In order for the collection of environmental capital asset information we conducted an in-person scouting and inventory of the focus area in addition to an extensive data assembly through aggregation of public and Gwinnett County GIS data and layers. Also, Google Earth and Google Street view were used to gain insightful observational data of satellite coverage, surface water, road networks, parks, and various other assets. From this we recognized 5 location specific assets as necessary pillars within the study area community to build upon (forested areas were not considered). These are Freeman Lake, Beaver Ruin Creek, Vulcan Norcross Quarry, Graves Parks, and North Fork Peachtree Creek, recognized because of their size, contribution to the community, recreational opportunity, and importance to environmental qualities.



1



2



3



4



5

Pillar Assets - Foundational Pieces

1. NORTH FORK PEACHTREE CREEK

A tributary of the Chattahoochee River, this stream begins in the lower third of the focus area. While only a sliver is in, it offers important neighborhood vegetation. Since 2017 Dekalb County has been constructing a greeway along it which, in time, could be connected up to Gwinnett .

2. FREEMAN LAKE

A large lake in the far west area. It is quite serene, though highly inaccessible (private, between busy roadways), This is a very appealing capital asset in the focus area that can be developed into a recreational area. Currently, it exists as a water basin and is directly next to Meadowcreek High School.

3. GRAVES PARK

A Large park with plentiful recreational spaces designed to cater to the community's leisure and sports activities. These consist of playgrounds, sports fields, and walking trails. The park has undergone a recent redevelopment (2019-2021). However, trails and sidewalks in the vicinity should be improved.

4. BEAVER RUIN CREEK

Acts as a drainage basin for the entire area and is quite pretty. It harbors lots of fauna and flora, however, it is incredibly inaccessible and unsafe. At one point, there was access across the central wetland south of I-85 with evidence of trails to viewpoints/water from matted down grass and eroded dirt. The creek is the destination of pollution from I-85 and the local quarry. A project has been running to make the northside wetland across I-85 a park (Beaver Ruin Wetland Park project, 2008-2024). Gwinnett County has 24,000 acres of floodplain and has one of the highest population growth rates within floodplain areas in the inland U.S. East Coast at 60% in the last 15 years (FEMA, US Census). Beaver Ruin Creek s very crucial to our focus area.

5. VULCAN QUARRY

Nestled in corner of Beaver Ruin Rd and I-85, the quarry has easy access to the interstate. According to neighbors on public forums, lots of occasional and obnoxious rock blasting occur often. It has very large footprint and is source of pollution to its surrounding areas. However, the site is integral to the broader community's economic infrastructure.

Environmental Capital Asset Map



Graves Park

north fork peachtree creek

Oakbrook Lake

Jackson creek

Marett Lake

Lucky Shoals Park

beaver






Vulcan Quarry

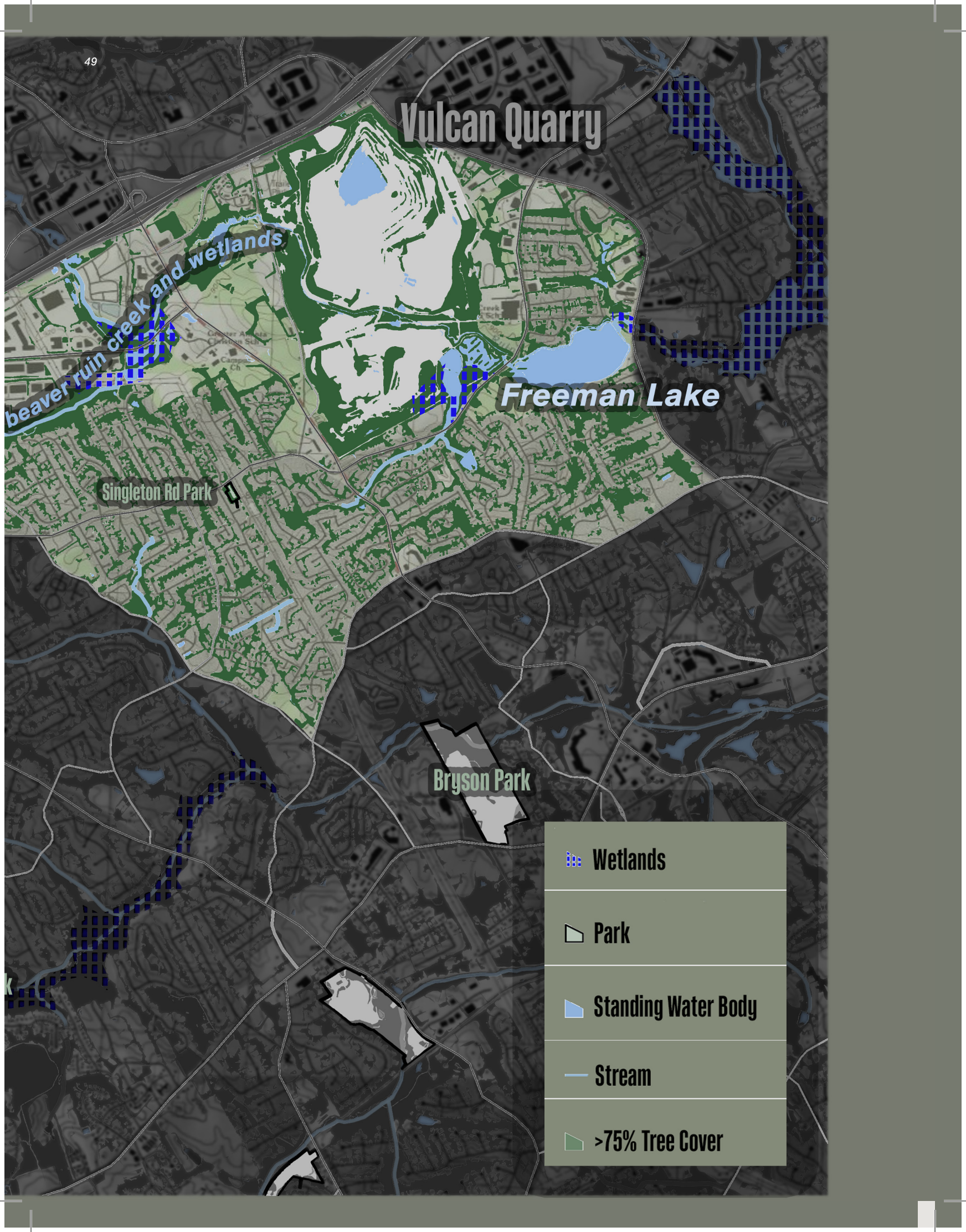
beaver ruin creek and wetlands

Freeman Lake

Singleton Rd Park

Bryson Park

-  **Wetlands**
-  **Park**
-  **Standing Water Body**
-  **Stream**
-  **>75% Tree Cover**



SWOT Analysis

To transition from our study area findings to a concrete assessment for proposal ideas, we conducted a SWOT analysis. This directs our approach by weighing different aspects.



Strengths

The area boasts numerous pocket forests and expanses covered with vegetation, contributing to its ecological richness. Abundant unharnessed streams further enhance the natural landscape. Additionally, the presence of existing water catchment and runoff basins add to the area's environmental resilience. The overall beauty of the natural environment is notable.

Weaknesses

Low park interconnectivity and limited non-car transport options pose obstacles to accessibility. A high percentage of impermeable surfaces in the region, the absence of neighborhood parks, and the lack of local environmental programs are also noteworthy shortcomings, with environmental initiatives primarily concentrated in greater Gwinnett County. The area falls short in comparison to the county average in terms of parks and greenspaces.

Opportunities

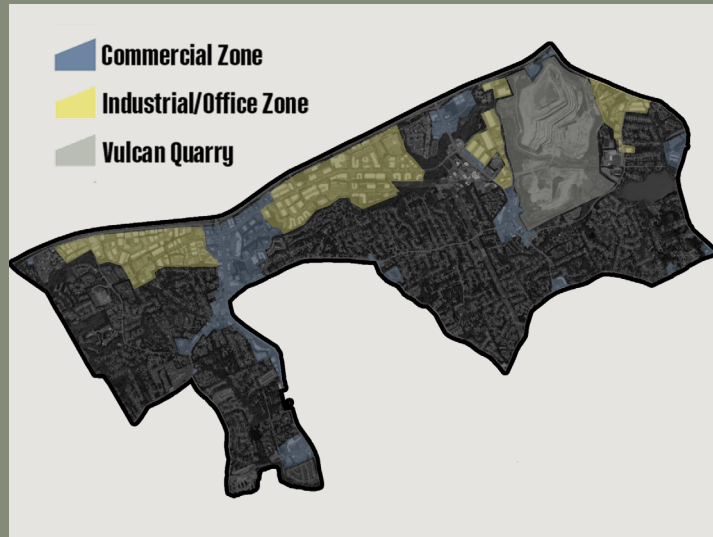
Initiatives could focus on establishing new parks and increasing tree density in specific areas. Redevelopment projects, particularly along Beaver Ruin Creek and Freeman Lake, could create new recreational areas. Repurposing vacant areas and integrating them with or continuing other local/regional projects present additional avenues for positive change. Major collector roads such as Singleton Road also have potential to be reformed with green infrastructure and allow for improved pedestrian service levels.

Threats

Pollution is a significant concern, especially in highly traveled corridors and emanating from the quarry operated by Vulcan Materials. Urbanization and development, if not carefully managed, pose threats such as pollution and habitat destruction. Public safety issues add to the list of potential threats that must be addressed in the planning and development processes.

Impermeable Surfaces

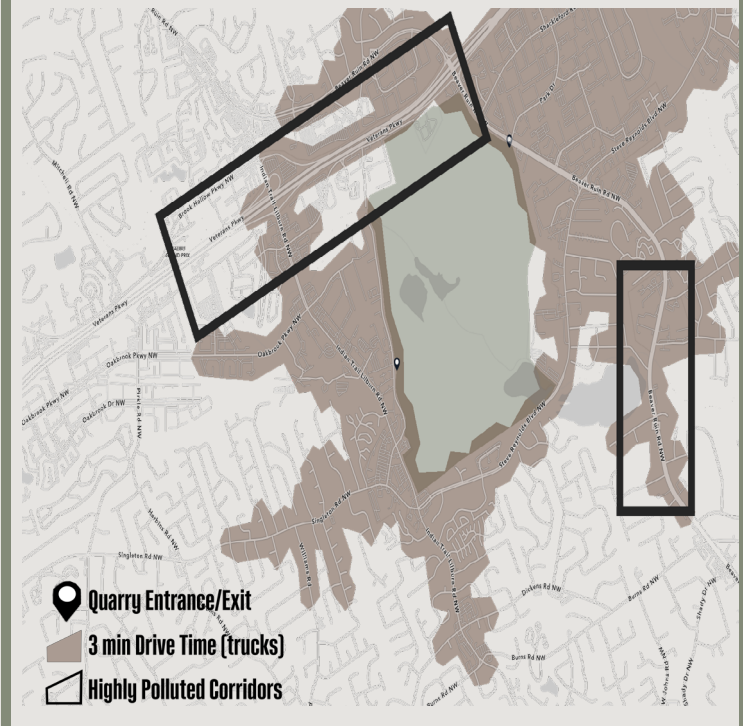
The high percentage of impermeable surfaces in the more urban and commercial areas adjacent to wetlands and forests of the focus area contribute to environmental degradation. These surfaces, like pavement and concrete, hinder water infiltration, leading to increased runoff and altered hydrology. The resulting runoff carries pollutants, impacting water quality and harming aquatic ecosystems. Habitat loss, elevated temperatures, and disrupted natural processes further threaten biodiversity and soil health.



Guiding Objectives

By providing an overall examination of the study area we produced impactful objectives.

1. Interconnectivity and travel options between various neighborhoods, commercial plazas, schools, and parks increased
2. Improve the walkability/bikeability and appeal of collector roads
3. Maintain current vegetation when possible
4. Reduce percentage of impermeable surfaces
5. Build around current assets and proposed trail network from Gwinnett County Master Plan
6. Keep from riparian buffer zones and dense wetlands when possible for developments



Pollution

Pollution is an extreme stressor on environmental health. This encompasses litter, air pollution from industrial and vehicular sources like the quarry, and ground pollution from contaminants. Improper waste disposal, emissions, and chemical pollutants pose risks and impact nearby ecosystems and human well-being. While visiting the focus area two corridors stood out to us having consistently high rates of visible pollution along them.

In order to achieve our overarching objectives, we have developed three recommendations that focus on key areas to address and implement the necessary strategies. These consist of a multi-use trail/greenway, repurposing of parking and office lots, and implementation of green infrastructure at intersections.

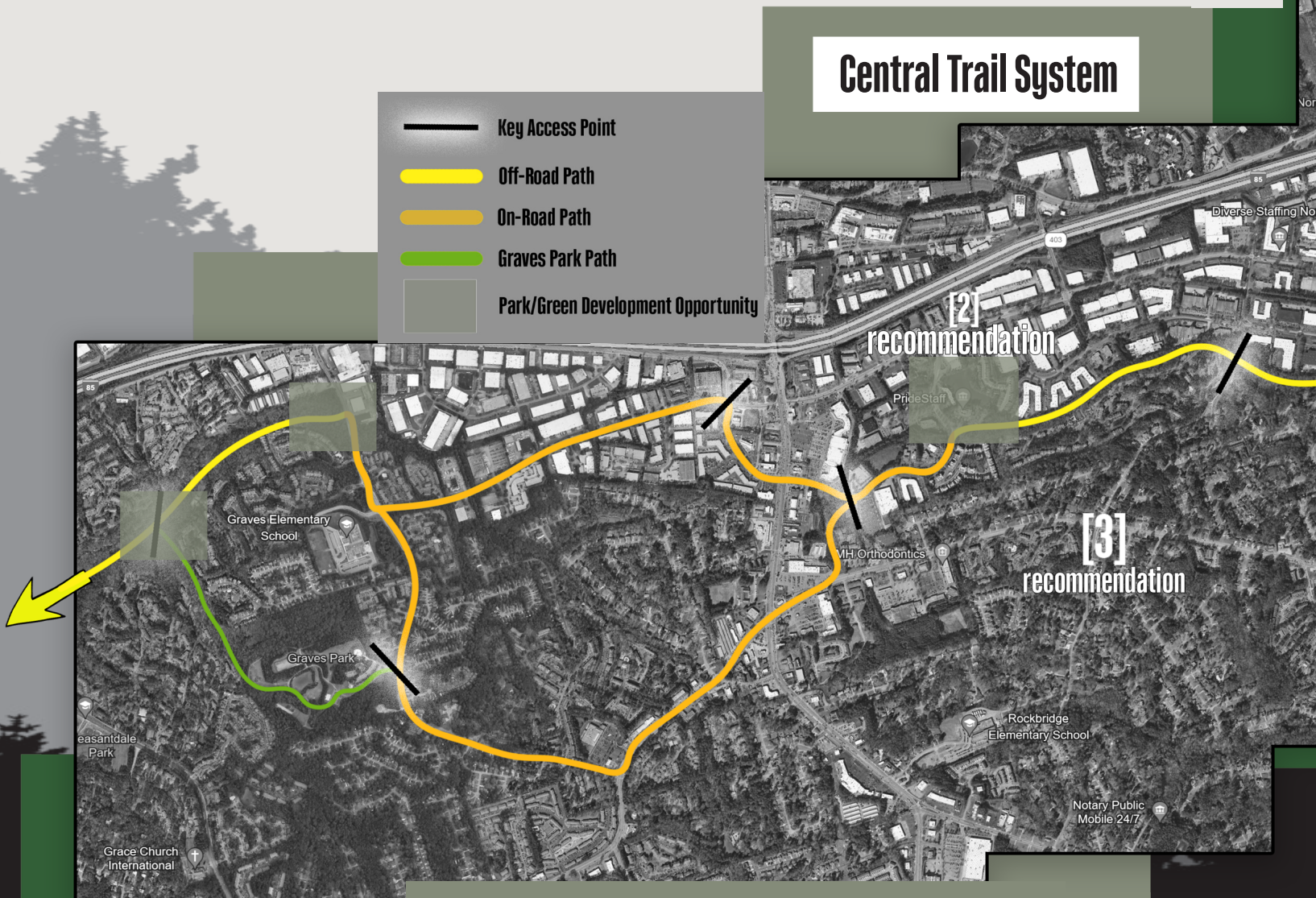
Many municipalities have ongoing projects in line with our recommendations. We introduce three of these completed projects to discuss benefits and offer comparisons. We also take a look at how our proposals could reach similar levels of impact from an environmental standpoint.

[1] Multi-Use Trail

Our first recommendation is to establish a comprehensive trail system connecting different zoning and green spaces within the focus area. Firstly, it aims to increase community access to nature, fostering improved connectivity and facilitating the movement of people. It also offers a transitional zone from residential neighborhoods to office parks and commercial blocks by acting as the dividing line. The trail system will serve as a platform for small-scale developments This aligns with Gwinnett County’s Trails Master Plan, utilizing the proposed Norcross-Lilburn Trail and the other proposed trail along the south of I-85 as the central axis.

Purpose/Benefits

The proposed trail system offers several benefits to the community and the environment. It seeks to improve overall access to nature, promoting a healthier lifestyle and community well-being. Additionally, the integration of small developments along the trail fosters sustainability and ecological resilience. In line with the objectives outlined in Gwinnett County’s Trails Master Plan, addressing the need for enhanced connectivity, alternative transportation modes, increased access to recreation and green spaces, and regional connectivity.



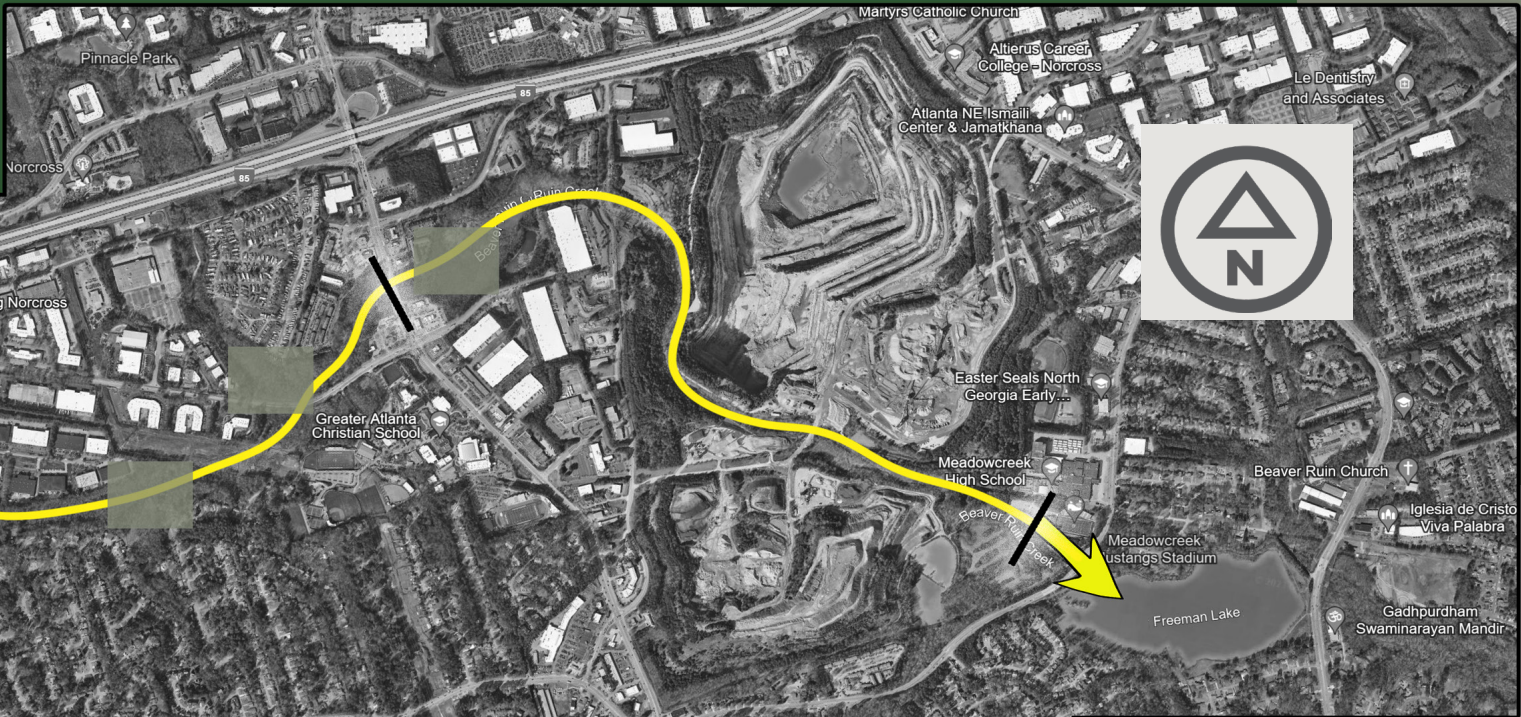
Central Trail System

A trail system that alternates between on-street and off-street sections offers more versatile opportunities between transportation and recreation. It also enhances connectivity by efficiently linking urban areas and natural landscapes.



Development Possibilities

Features can consist of passive green spaces, pond revitalizations, community gardens, and small parks. This trail would promote the creation of vibrant, eco-friendly spaces.



Case Study Atlanta BeltLine



Bike lanes and trail networks are nothing new in major metropolitan areas, and are in fact, becoming commonplace. The Atlanta's BeltLine is a multi-use trail network that circles the beltway. Although on an infinitely larger scale, it also consists of a more comprehensive plan with smaller scale trail and park projects. The BeltLine encourages healthy behaviors through additional transit opportunity with parks and trails for physical activity, social interaction, and commuting. Also noteworthy, the development of the BeltLine relied heavily upon grassroots involvement during construction which immerses the people with the city through community improvement. This is something we hope happens if our recommendation is implemented as community involvement helps to increase the value of local assets. Finally, having more people on trails means less people on the roads, which decreases air pollution at the neighborhood level, and in Atlanta's case, nightmare traffic.

[2] Repurposing Lots

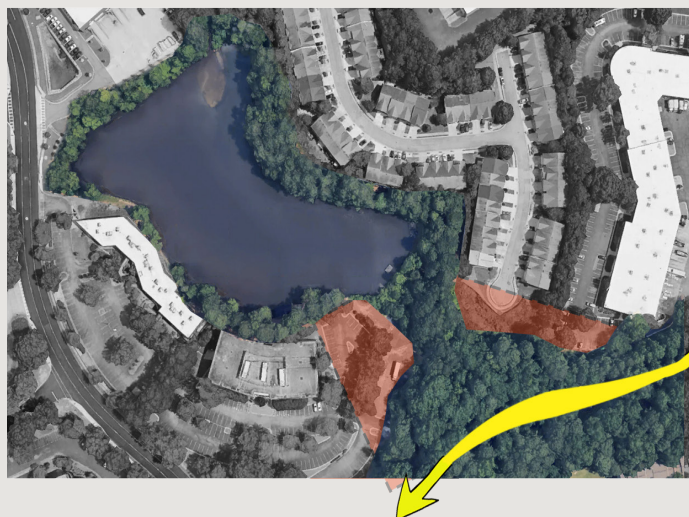
Next, we want to address the issue of the high percentage of impermeable surfaces in commercial and office zones, particularly along the proposed trail line.

Repurposing parking lots, office parks, and loading areas is a highly effective method to reduce impermeability. “The United States has as many as two billion parking spots for about 250 million cars. Donald Shoup, a professor at UCLA’s Department of Urban Planning, notes that the aggregate area of parking per car in the United States is now larger than the area of housing per human” (Hicks, Mush, 2020).

As the amount of people driving continues to decrease among younger ages these areas will slowly become obsolete. This provides an opportunity for nature to reclaim land.

Oakbrook Lake Proposal

Oakbrook Lake is water body surrounded by a small scale office complex on one side and a townhome development opposite. We recommend a small scale green space be implemented on the south end of the lake. Small pavilions, benches, and a small water-edge easement replacing the current parking areas outlined in red along with pollution clean-up efforts can go a long way for this small area.



Case Study: Norcross, GA Pinnacle Park



On the other side of I-85 in Norcross sits almost identical plots of office park blocks as that of our focus area. The City of Norcross acquired a site there as part of their vision to widen access to parks and green space.

The \$2M project, funded through SPLOST, encompasses twelve acres of green space. Part of the project involved restoring the pond shoreline and removing invasive species. Sustainable practices were used throughout construction which is a necessity. This park is exemplary for it’s type with many spaces to play and paths to walk. We want to accomplish this vision on a smaller scale.

Pinnacle Park Layout



Benefits

Creates green space and recreational opportunities in an area between residential and other zoning. Provides local residents and workers in the area with a serene environment for relaxation, picnics, and outdoor activities. The cleansing of a small lake could also attract wildlife, fostering biodiversity and creating a natural habitat for aquatic plants, birds, and other species.

[3] Green Intersections

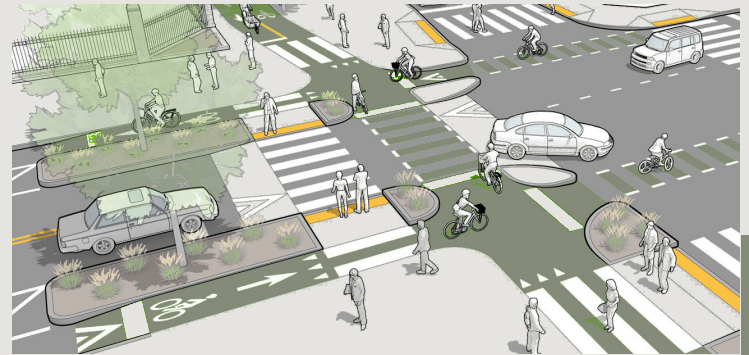
There is a serious lack of walkability, bikeability, and stormwater management along major collector roads. This discourages alternative modes of transportation and exercise along it is uncommon and not suitable. Our last recommendation is the implementation of green infrastructure at intersections, specifically high usage residential roads.

Green Infrastructure

Using green infrastructure like rain gardens or bioswale features can reduce effects of impervious zones to a great degree. Bioswales can be installed alongside roads, parking lots, or in replacement of existing impervious surfaces. Green infrastructure improves the natural ecosystem and reduces harmful pollutants. Vehicles pollute the road surface, a bioswale facility can prevent large amounts of pollution from entering the watershed. Green infrastructure also can consist of bike lanes, crosswalks, sidewalk buffers, and contributions to overall appeal and safety.

Singleton x Harbins Intersection

The intersection between Singleton Road and Harbins Road NW is the most prevalent when looking at residential zones. This intersection is one of many to look at revamping.



Benefits

These measures help capture and treat stormwater runoff, reducing the impact of urban development on water quality. Non-environmental positives include enhancement community and neighborhood livability, aesthetic, public health, noise reduction, property value increases, and improved service levels for walkers and bikers.

Case Study: Portland, OR Green Streets Programs

In 2007, Portland, the largest city in Oregon, implemented the Green Streets Program, which aims to reduce impervious surfaces and improve stormwater management by incorporating green infrastructure into street design. The program seeks to enhance the ecological function of streets by integrating features such as permeable pavements, bioswales, and street trees.

Projects in Portland often have significant collaboration with communities which participate in the design process and take major ownership in the project. An example of this is was the closure of a one Holman Street that emerged as a suggestion from the community involvement process as an enhancement for both bike and pedestrian safety. This is featured in these images on the right.



Implementation and Next

Steps

Should Gwinnett County implement any of proposed ideas of trails, greenspace, and green infrastructure, it would be done best through a community oriented process. The focus area has lots of housing demand for the working class people and with new housing developments incoming using community voices to elevate green infrastructure projects in these new

area would be very positive. Local schools can also benefit from new developments and environmental assets through awareness programs and being closely connected to the surrounding environment, providing educational experience. Local stakeholders should be contacted to help inform about proposals and create volunteer opportunities for planning, construction, and pollution clean-up efforts in specified zones around the focus area. Finally funding opportunities need to be sought out and municipal codes closely monitored.

Capital Group Collaboration

Social Capital: Coordinate on effort to improve parks and parking lots. Engage local communities in environmental stewardship and conservation efforts.

Financial Capital: Implement sustainable practices that benefit the environment and provide long-term cost savings. Explore funding opportunities, grants, and partnerships with private entities interested in environmental projects.

Human Capital: Collaborate with local educational institutions to ensure a skilled workforce. Creation of green jobs will contribute to both human development and environmental well-being.

Cultural Capital: Engage with local communities to understand cultural perspectives on the environment

Physical Capital: Collaborate on integration of green infrastructure planning into physical capital projects. Consider sustainable urban planning and green building standards. Discuss walkability, cycling infrastructure, and access to green spaces.

Political Capital: Ensure that the proposed environmental initiatives align with existing county policies and regulations. Engage with local policymakers to garner support for environmentally friendly policies





Conclusion

A Gwinnett County priority is making it a “greener” county. Building green and sustainable is a must in modern day society. Recognizing this study area as a diverse important growth and development zone is important as it harbors a unique area of zoning, natural features, and diverse demographics. Having the closest proximity to Atlanta in Gwinnett County stresses the importance to secure the smart and sustainable growth of environmental capital assets in the area and to build both around and with them.

Undeveloped land may be easier and cheaper to build on but preserving current green space should have the upper hand when thinking about urban development. Through our recommendations and themes of eliminating impervious surfaces, improving connectivity through trails and green infrastructure, and emphasizing greater maintenance and appreciation of natural areas we hope to improve the health of both the environment and citizens of Gwinnett County.

“The environment is where we all meet; where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share.” - Lady Bird Johnson



Cultural Capital

Allie Chezem
Aisha Iyengar
Bailey Borkat



Cultural Capital

Overview

“Culture is a system of meanings that is learned within a particular group or society” (Green and Haines 2017, 3).

This system of meanings affects how we associate and collaborate with our neighbors. When properly channeled, cultural resources have the ability to bring communities together and promote economic development. Cultural capital is the collection of cultural assets a society has. Historical buildings, archaeological sites, museums, farmers markets, and festivals can all be considered cultural assets. These assets can be classified into one of three states: embodied, institutionalized, or objectified.

“The embodied state of cultural capital refers to legacy, the values and traditions that people inherit or learn from their family and community...the institutionalized state represents the learned form of culture that occurs through academic qualifications...the objectified state is the type of cultural capital that many people probably connect with and understand most readily as culture: cultural goods, such as paintings, books, handicrafts, machines, and other material goods that are produced in a particular time and perhaps a particular place” (Green and Haines 2017, 4).

Many cities use the arts, for example, as a tool to grow the local economy. Art can be embodied or it can be objectified. Infrastructure such as music venues and dance studios allow people to view art in a tangible form and bring people together in a shared space. This not only generates money but encourages the propagation

of ideas between people of different backgrounds thereby furthering the growth of the arts in the community. Ideas brought forth by the “creative class” do more, though, than elicit the production of new art. Every industry benefits from new, diverse, and flexible ways of thinking because adaptability means strength in the face of change.

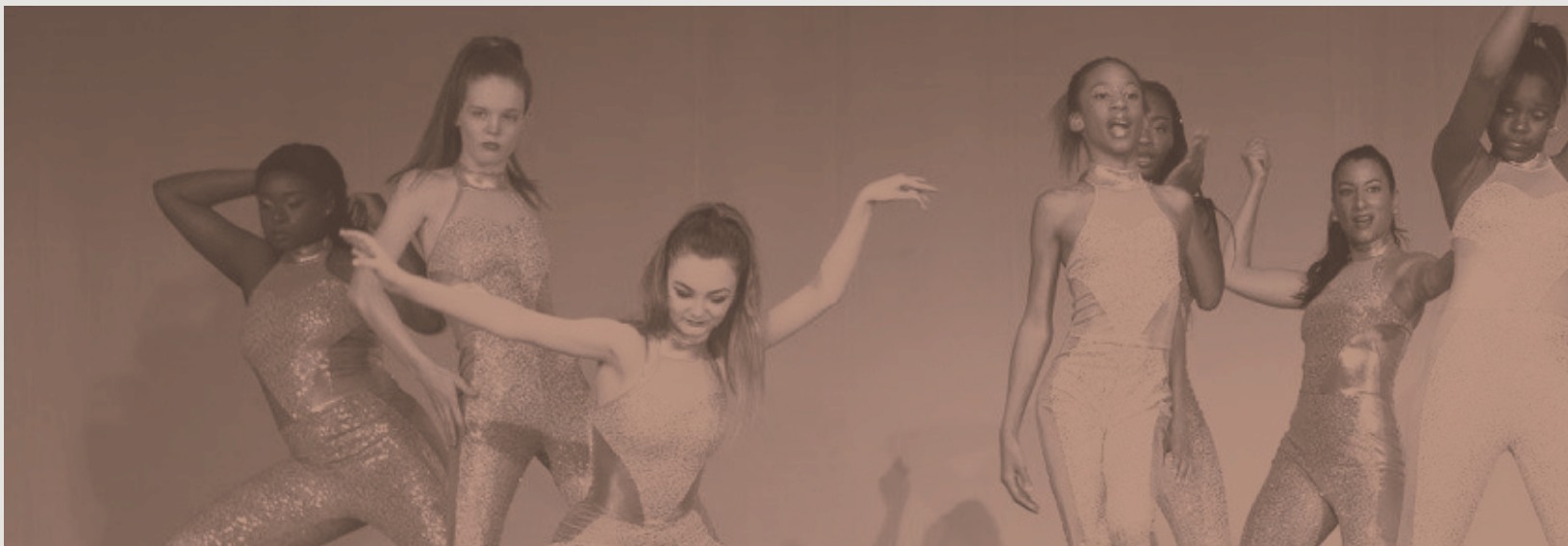
The location of infrastructure is also important in vitalizing cultural capital (and therefore the local economy). Green and Haines use Portland as an example of a culturally diverse city that is thriving in due part to the accessibility of its creative nodes. Most of the city’s creative activity is centrally located. Nonprofits and galleries, for example, are proximal to each other so that walking from one destination to another is easy. Portland also has an efficient multi-modal transportation system making it possible for residents and tourists to reach the city center with or without a private vehicle. The GICH focus area does have a bus system but could benefit from a stronger multi-modal system; the area is currently characterized by sprawling office parks and a high percentage of impervious surfaces. Destination 2050 (Gwinnett County’s 2050 Comprehensive Transportation Plan) and previous transportation plans address this issue through improved connectivity. Densification is another strategy that could be implemented in Gwinnett to reduce the county’s environmental footprint and increase accessibility.

Atlanta International Night Market:

held a zoom meeting to discuss our site and role as well as what they do for the community and the surrounding areas. Located on Indian Trail and Lilburn Road. Multicultural center that holds events to bring multiple cultures together and help out the minority business owners.

First Senior Center:

Vietnamese owned and operated senior daycare center.



Cultural Capital

Assets

Just People, Inc.:

This is a private, not-for-profit agency that provides a variety of support services to adults with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, and head injury

Vietnamese Community of Georgia Center:

Non-profit organization with the mission of preserving vietnamese culture

Graves road park:

Recreation spot of 69 acres offering volleyball & tennis courts. additional amenities include a dog park, playground & paved trail

Jun Dung Sa Buddhist Temple:

Buddhist temple that attracts worshippers from across the southeast

NEP Live Events:

Studio broadcasting and live event productions firm

Gwinnett community band:

Non-profit group of adult musicians from around greater atlanta area

Art is motion:

Diverse modern dance and yoga studio aimed to attract all ages with varied income levels

King David community center:

A unique establishment that offers childcare, home

delivered meals, physical therapy, transportation, and senior day care services. Diverse ethnic meals are made and the staff is multilingual and multicultural. King David prides itself in being a person centered establishment that caters to each senior citizen's cultural interest and needs.

Latin American Association:

A non-profit that serves the needs of Atlanta's Latino immigrants. The LAA has maintained a presence in Gwinnett County for over a decade. Gwinnett has the strongest Latino presence in the state. First in Norcross and now in downtown Lawrenceville, the LAA's Gwinnett Outreach Center provides many services such as family stabilization and well-being, economic empowerment, immigration services, youth services, and civic engagement.

The Family Well-Being department professionals work closely with families to meet their basic needs and assist them in times of crisis so that they can achieve stability and self-sufficiency. The goal of the Family Well-Being focus area is to foster stable, healthy Latino families. This goal is advanced through:

- Direct Services
- Partnerships & Events
- Advocacy

The LAA's advocacy efforts center around building relationships and partnerships, public education and lobbying. The goal of the Culture & Engagement focus area is to connect and empower community members as well as play an important role in shaping policies that affect the lives of Latino immigrants. The work includes promotion of cultural awareness, activities include cultural and large-scale special events such as the annual Latin Fever Ball, Compañeros Awards Luncheon, State of Latinos Conference and Latino Student Art Contest; Hispanic Heritage Month Campaign; Civic Engagement Program; Membership Program; Latino Community Needs Assessment; and LAA app.

The Economic Empowerment focus area includes:

- The Latina Empowerment Program.
- Spanish and English programs.
- ESL program, Computer Courses.
- Translations Services.
- Online Job Bank.
- Latin Women.
- Microloans and special events like Career Expo.
- Corporate Recruitment Events.

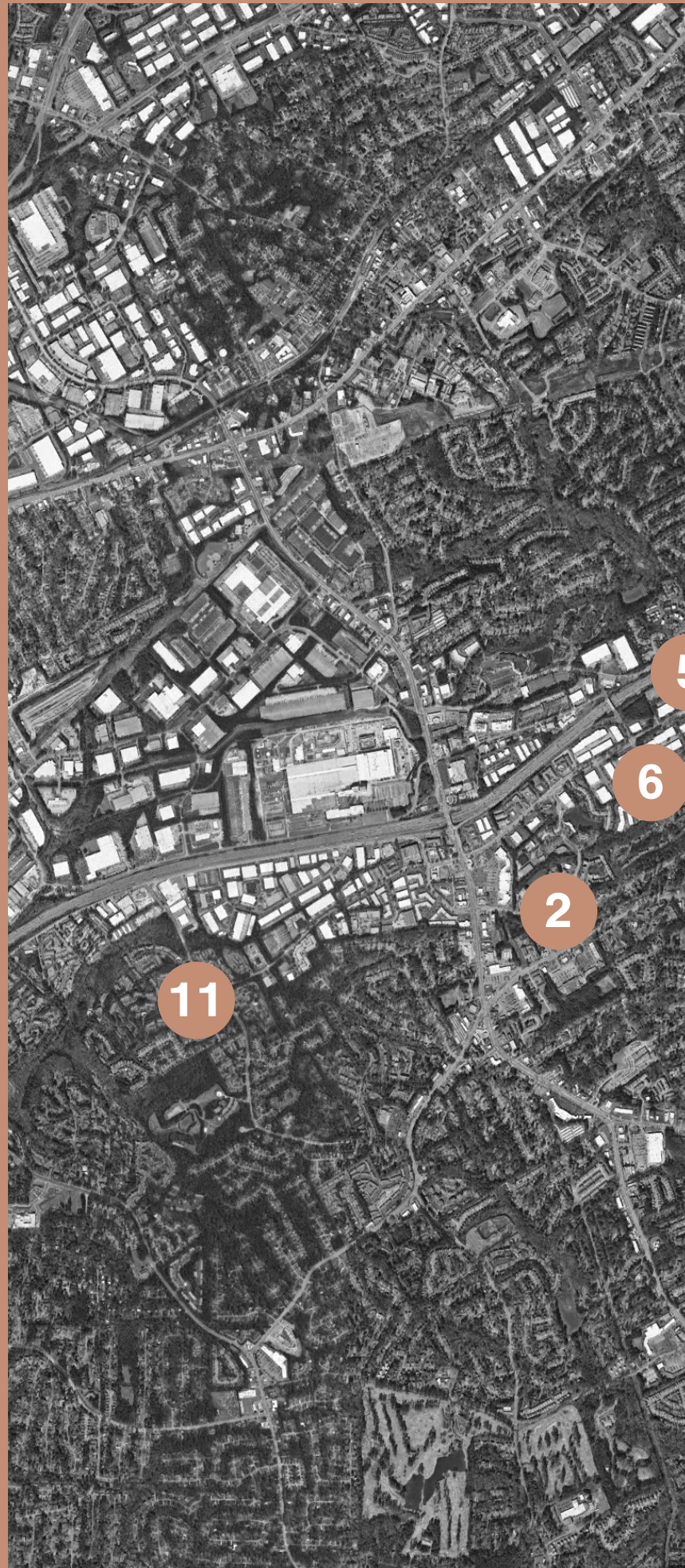


Cultural Capital Asset Map

Legend

- 1) Latin American Association
- 2) Vietnamese Community of GA Center
- 3) Atlanta International Night Market
- 4) Art is Motion
- 5) Automax Inc.,
- 6) NEP Live Events
- 7) Jun Dung Sa Buddhist Temple
- 8) First Senior Center
- 9) King David Community Center
- 10) Gwinnett Community Band
- 11) Graves Road Park

The existing assets with the Gateway 85 focus area shape the cultural capital of the community and help project the capital assets that are still needed.





S.W.O.T

Strengths

- Proximity of site to Highway
- An asset that unifies multiple cultures (AINM)
- Existing diverse ethnic populations offer a wide range of cultural backgrounds
- Few existing active cultural groups set the tone and precedent for creating new programs within the focus area
- Existing grocery stores and restaurants cater to the diverse population
- Strong existing commercial corridor in terms of transportation. A major thoroughfare that receives traffic

Weaknesses

- No diversity in housing
- Sprawled buildings throughout the focus area
- Most developments have large tracts of impervious parking
- Unsafe walking paths along the site's corridor
- Expand connections amongst assets i.e. bring resources together

Opportunities

- Presence of many cultural assets/groups
- Convert existing buildings uses into assets needed within the community
- Infill on existing structures to create higher density development areas
- Developing areas in an aesthetic manner that reflects the existing community

Threats

- Growing populations can lead to a lack of existing resources
- Cultural assets could be viewed as low priority to residents when more dire programs are needed such as access to healthcare or food systems
- Lack of community engagement could lead to the potential failure of programs initiated
- Funding cuts to art programs
- Community funds being allocated to higher priority developments



Sources

To get a better idea of how cultural assets perceive Gwinnett's role in their success, we reached out to several organizations. We wanted to glean insight into what cultural capital improvements could be made in the GICH area so we asked questions about what is currently working for them and what is needed on a countywide basis. Most of these questions were centered around the prospect of infrastructural solutions, but other intangible remedies are necessary for the success of cultural groups in the county. Questions included:

Do you host a majority of your events on-site?

What mode of transportation do most of your guests use when coming to use your services?

Do you believe that transportation constraints affect the efficacy of your mission?

Do you have a strong relationship with residents of Gwinnett?

Do you have strong relationships with other cultural organizations in the county?

Have you heard of the work that the Georgia Initiative of Community Housing is doing in the Gateway85 area?

Is lack of affordable housing an issue in your cultural community?

Do you do any work in the community pertaining to housing access?

Do you feel that excess impervious surface in the area could be better used for other functions?

Atlanta International Night Market

The first organization we spoke to was a Gwinnett based non-profit called the Atlanta International Night Market. The organization was formed in 2015 by a group of first and second generation immigrants who noticed the dissociation between cultural groups in Atlanta. Jeff Kuo, the organization's president, explained to us that Atlanta is very diverse but that the city does not do a good job of bringing people together. Most events seeking to celebrate cultural heritage are mono-cultural; individually, these groups are not large enough to garner attention but when multiple groups are brought together, people begin to take notice. The Atlanta International Night Market hosts multi-cultural events to meet this gap in the market. By recommending a community art district, our

group hopes to amplify the voice of the few through the collaboration of the aggregate.

The top complaint that the Atlanta International Night Market receives when they host events around the metro area is that there is not enough parking. Most guests that attend these events drive their own vehicles. The organization is making a conscious effort to locate functions near existing public transit but the problem is not their own to carry. Although Gwinnett's Destination 2040 plan did not take public input directly from the GICH area, the listed recommendations are relevant to the area:

“foster compact mixed-use development and consider increased densities in activity centers.”

Jeff agreed that having a “critical mass” of cultural resources somewhere in the organization's vicinity would aid in communication between assets. This desire is reflected in our project proposals in the form of a multi-use downtown. Jeff also noted that Gwinnett has been the most welcoming and accepting of their mission. Because other cities have less diversity within their own communities, they are not as supportive of lowering barriers to entry. As long as Gwinnett continues to harness the strengths of its cultural assets, it is on the right track.

King David Community Center

They are a senior care organization specializing in immigrant populations working with NEMT (non-emergency medical transportation) which is offered through medicaid. They have difficulty providing services due to sprawl, restricted travel time, and increasing traffic due to rapid population growth. Due to the fact that they provide medical services, their government funding is limited making it difficult to keep up with the influx of transportation related expenses. Their visions for the future of their center, they have the desire to create a senior village in which their elderly clients can live. They would ideally have access to commercial assets as well as social gathering places. This would significantly cut down on King David Center's cost of providing services.

Proposed Community

Artist District *Recommendation 1*

Our first proposal is an Artist Community Space that involves a series of warehouse-sized buildings, each available for rent or purchase by community members. These spaces would serve as dedicated studios, allowing artists of all ethnicities to engage in their creative processes, thereby enriching the cultural fabric of our community. These spaces would also provide the opportunity for community engagement, including various classes and events held by artists in residence of the space. The design promotes inclusivity, creating an environment where artistic expression is accessible to all community members and is greatly encouraged by infrastructure within the county.

The infrastructure proposed would bring development of higher density to the focus area but allow for a walkable and centralized space within the focus area. This idea is based on many artist communities around the nation, yet primarily on one precedent in Athens, Georgia: Chase Street Warehouses. This precedent repurposed old

warehouse buildings and divided them into spaces for people to engage in local and community-centered art, yoga, dance, children-focused classes, apparel shops, brewery facilities, and coffee.

Key Features:

Diverse Spaces:

The series of warehouses will cater to a variety of artistic practices, accommodating painters, sculptors, photographers, and other creative individuals. Space footprints can range from larger studios to personal offices.

Community Engagement:

The Artist Community Space will host regular community classes and events, providing opportunities for skill development and collaboration of all ages. This inclusivity will encourage cross-cultural exchange which is imperative to our focus area given the diverse amount



of ethnicities in such small geographic area.

Cultural Capital:

By establishing this centralized space, we aim to address the current gap in our country's infrastructure. This space will contribute significantly to the cultural capital of our focus area in an innovative manner

Benefits:

Economic Boost:

The creation of the Artist Community Space will stimulate economic activity by attracting artists, art enthusiasts, and visitors to our community.

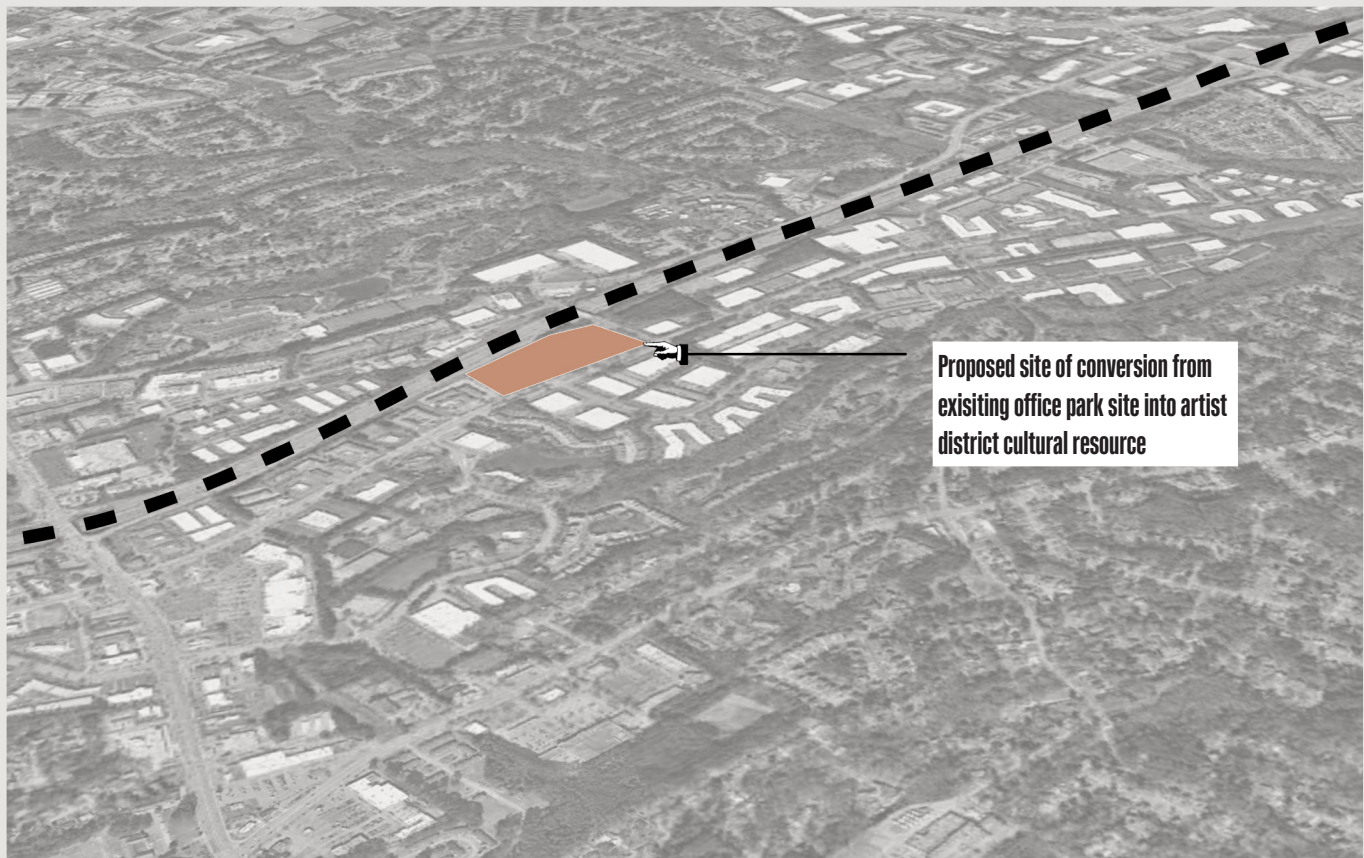
Community Perception:

The space will foster a sense of belonging and community pride, as individuals from different backgrounds come together to celebrate and explore their artistic passions.

Educational Opportunities:

Through workshops, classes, and events, the space will become an educational resource, nurturing the artistic talents of both aspiring and established artists.

The Artist Community Space would not merely be a collection of buildings; it is a testament to Gwinnett's commitment to cultural diversity and artistic expression. This project would refine the communities cultural landscape creating a dynamic and inclusive for artists of all ethnic backgrounds.



Proposed Multi-Use

Downtown *Recommendation 2*

Our second proposal is to incorporate a mixed-use downtown along the McDonough Drive and Oakbrook Parkway corridor. This corridor is the main route through our area of focus and is predominantly composed of single story office buildings with surrounding parking lots.

As was recommended by Green and Haines, Destination 2040, and the Atlanta International Night Market, the densification of existing infrastructure will bring the community closer together while simultaneously reducing the environmental impact of office space in the county. On top of the benefits to cultural capital and the environment, having a multi-use district will bring money into the local economy and provide affordable housing solutions. The authors of Destination 2040 say that

“To support projected residential growth and mitigate subsequent vehicular trips, the County should encourage a mix of uses within existing and future

activity centers. Not only does this nodal approach help build economically sustainable communities, compact mixed-use development provides the opportunity to offer a variety of housing options at a range of price points” (21).

This multi-use corridor will contain retail, restaurants, and recreational activities on the base level to help activate the street. Offices and multi-family residential units will be located on the second and third floors. This combination of uses will provide the necessary resources and residential spaces to begin to fill the housing gap in the community. The Community Artist District will neighbor the multi-use downtown so destinations between become walkable. The Cumming city center is one example of a successful mixed-use downtown district that we would like to emulate.

Cumming City Center:

- Built on undeveloped land: Our proposed

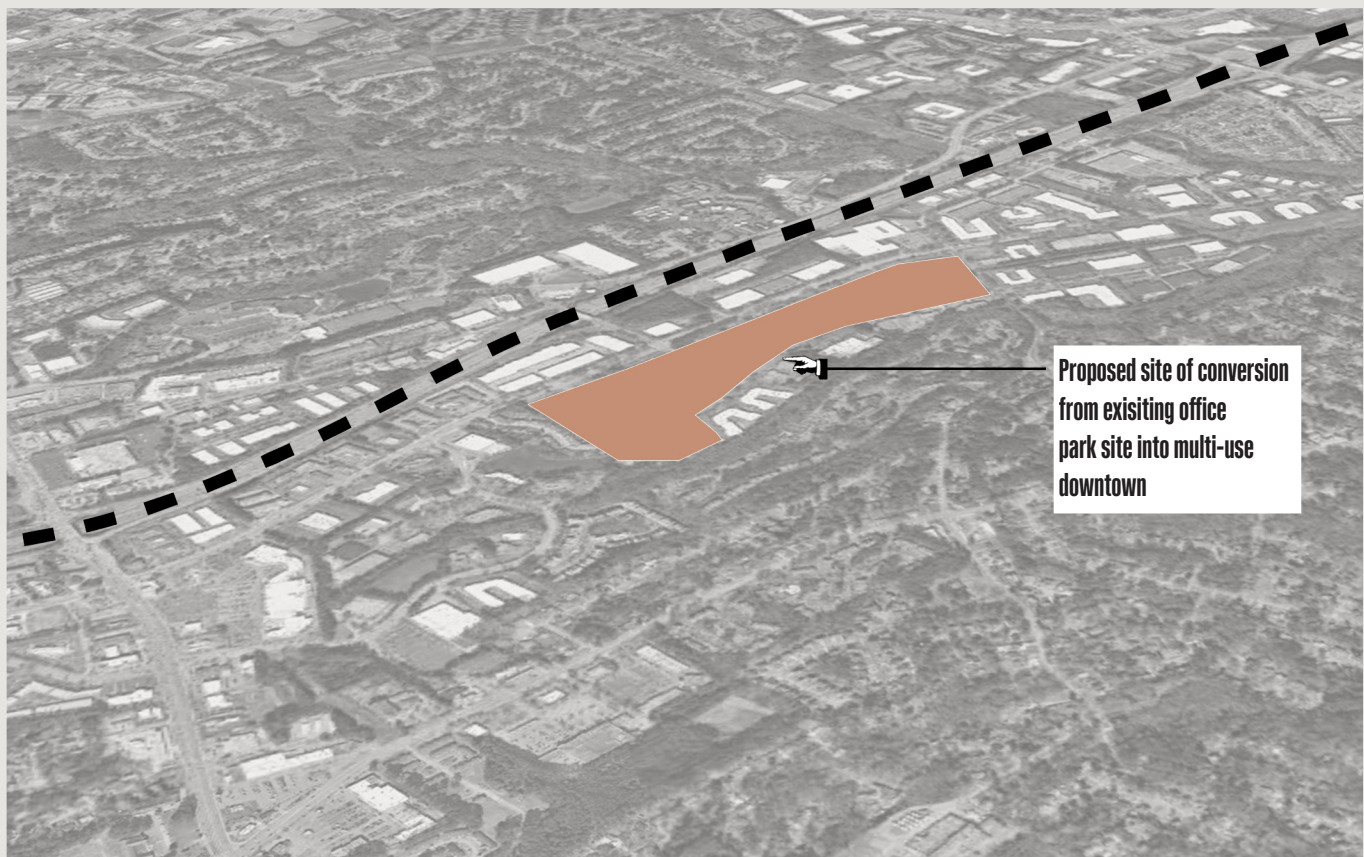


downtown district in Gwinnett would have less of an environmental impact than the Cumming City Center because it will reconfigure existing impervious land

- Mixed-use development: Integrates offices, retail, restaurants, and green space into one cohesive area
- Utilizes existing resources: Preserves existing wetlands and streams by using them as a focal point
- Offers retail space for business of smaller scale that rely on pedestrian traffic
- Design mirrors the culture of the city: Steam Engine Park pays homage to the history of Cumming
- Topography is used on site to accentuate the building footprints and experience of the site
- Changes the character of the existing suburban development giving access to a centralized community space
- Offers large outdoor spaces for events and community gatherings

- Encourages community engagement through spatial design

Although the GICH area is mainly unincorporated, it has a character of its own that can be further established through smart central development. The proposed multi-use downtown would be a great addition to the community; aiding in the development of cultural capital and beginning to bridge the gap in housing opportunities.



Next Steps

Linking Conceptual Ideas to a Tangible Reality

Funds: Allocating funds to support project proposals. Potential avenues include community grants/ incorporation in the next 25 year plan

Design Professionals: Find firms/developers to incorporate these design ideas to fruition in physical plans that can be brought to the planning commission

Education Input: Potential further collaboration with UGA College of Environment and Design Landscape Architecture program. In previous years studios have created design plans for project proposals to be used as design guidelines/ideas for developers

Collaboration: Seek avenues of collaboration with the Atlanta Path foundation to see upcoming trail opportunities to connect resources in the study area

Community Engagement: Get opinions of these development proposals from community residents
Gain support: Once Design proposals have been fitted

to address community needs, share these ideas with community to gain further input/awareness about upcoming projects

Collaboration with Capital Assets

- Financial capital: Integrating with the goals of the financial capital, we can seek funding grants and programs to help support these developments. This could also provide a better timeline for making the developments proposed viable.
- Social Capital: Developments proposed could provide greater job opportunities to local residents. This includes in the physical construction of the developments as well as retaining jobs for supporting businesses upon completion. Non-profit cultural organizations can also aid the portion of the population they serve in searching for employment.
- Political: Identify funding sources for cultural resources such as public art, use political influence to market cultural assets



Conclusion

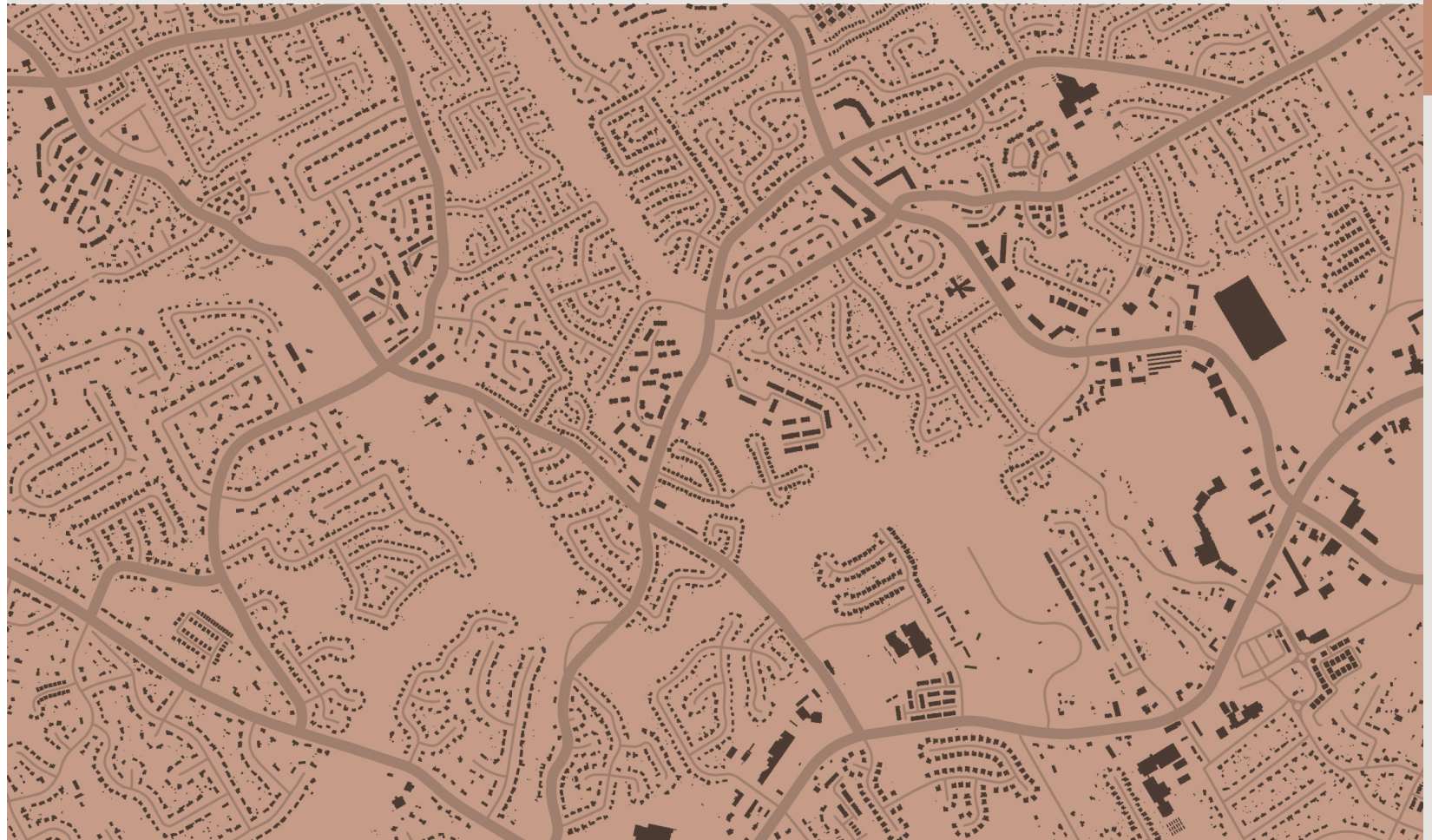
The embodied state of cultural capital refers to legacy, the values, and traditions that people inherit or learn from their family and community. It is important to account for cultural resources in the planning of a community to understand the generational fabric of the local community as well as incorporate communities' intrinsic values. Cultural capital are forms of physical and emotional dimensions that need to be accounted for in the growth of the city.

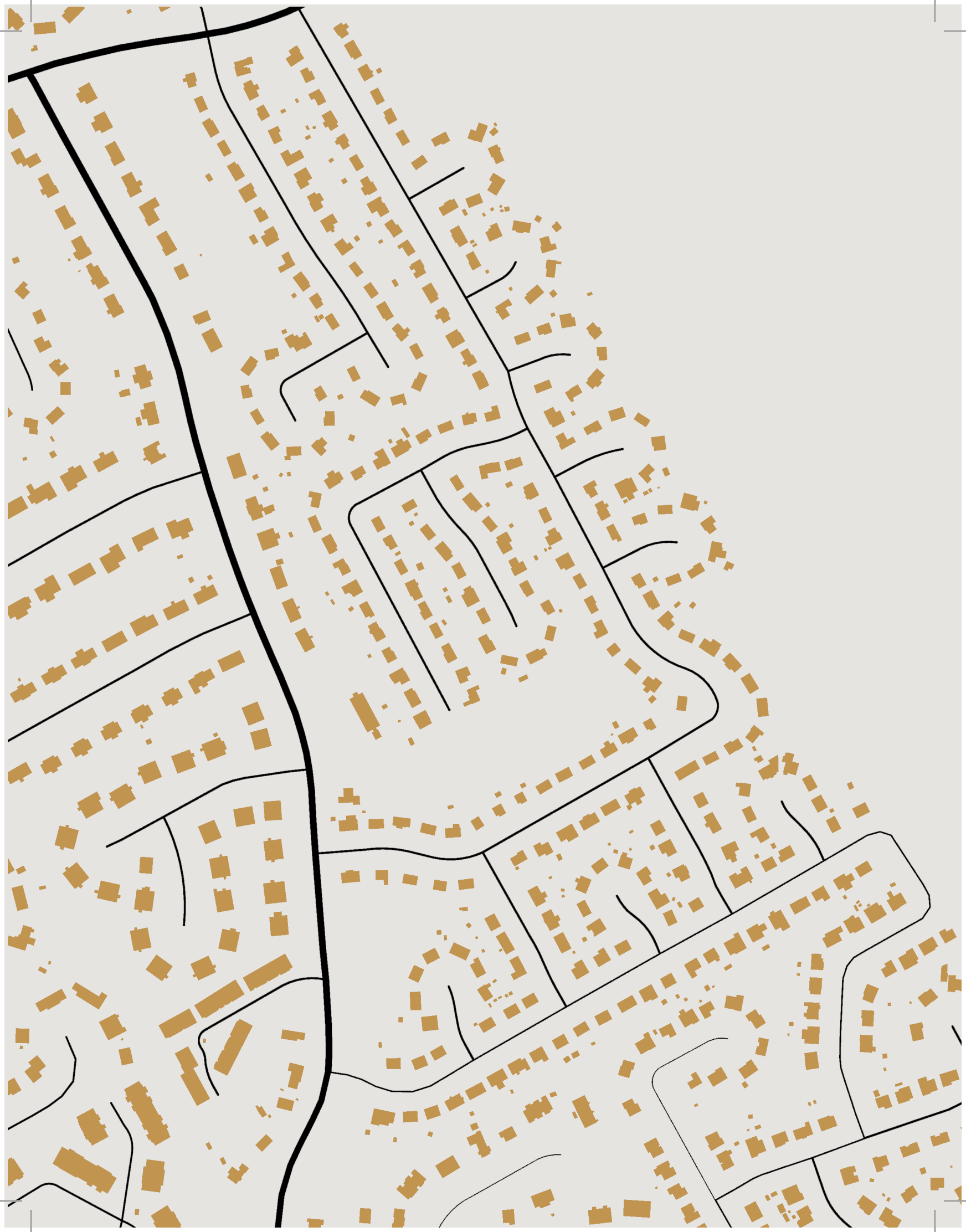
Through addressing the current cultural capital stock within the focus area, we are able to create an inventory of existing infrastructure and address potential gaps the community may be facing. As growth within our focus area has been shown to be increasingly unavoidable our group feels as though these gaps are best addressed by planning strategic developments within the focus area that prioritize the community. These infill and retrofitted spaces become tangible avenues for these cultural assets to continue to grow and come to fruition.

By implementing well-conceived design principles that promote cultural growth, we can preserve the legacy of so many ethnic populations found in Gwinnett county.

The recommendations provided, fall in line with existing cultural assets within the focus area and boost local economic activity as well as ethnic presence. The proposed art district and multi-use downtown will provide the necessary infrastructure to foster greater resources and access to cultural capital. These proposals aim to help alleviate the stark landscape of the central corridor and create spaces Gwinnett County residents are proud to interact with.

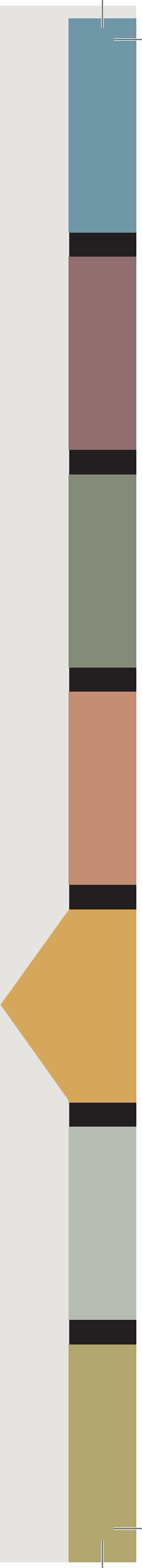
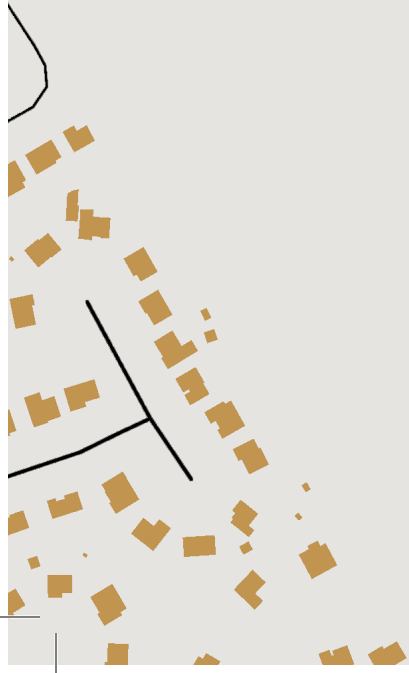
Through strategic initiatives focused on education, the arts, and community engagement, we can witness the gradual emergence of a vibrant cultural ecosystem that not only preserves the rich heritage of the community but also provides its residents with tools to navigate and thrive in the Gwinnett area. As we reflect on the collaborative efforts and the impact of these resources on individuals' lives, it becomes evident that investing in cultural capital is not merely a luxury but an essential in forming the Gwinnett's community identity.





Social Capital

Sam McDonald



Social Capital

Overview

Social capital is the relationships built by the people who live and work in a certain area. Social capital is very important to a society because it allows them access to social benefits through sharing ideas, collaboration, and coming together as a community to better it and themselves. Social capital is key to creating a tight-knit and cohesive community. Strong social capital entices change and representation to the residences/ populations economy and government. There has been a decline in social capital over the years due to increased time pressures, residential mobility, the growth of the welfare state, the growth of suburbs, generational effects, and television.

Social capital can be hard to measure as it deals with one's feelings about their community, but there are some indicators that are monitored. Civic participation can be measured through the community's involvement with local action groups. Social networks and support are used to develop a level and type of contact with friends, family, and neighbors. Social participation can be viewed by the number of social groups that people belong to and how often they participate in these groups. Some examples of social groups are religious organizations, social and business associations, and political and professional organizations. Also, the level of reciprocity and trust can be seen in those who are like and different from you. Lastly, the views of the local area can be taken account with the perceptions of and attachment to the community.

Why Do We Need Social Capital?

Social capital is needed to create a growing, resilient community that is interconnected through trust, cooperation, and well-being. From social capital, networks and relationships can be built. These social networks are valuable because they serve as pathways for sharing information, resources, and opportunities. Trust and cooperation enhance collaboration between community members leading to higher attendance in community meetings, discussions, and decision making.

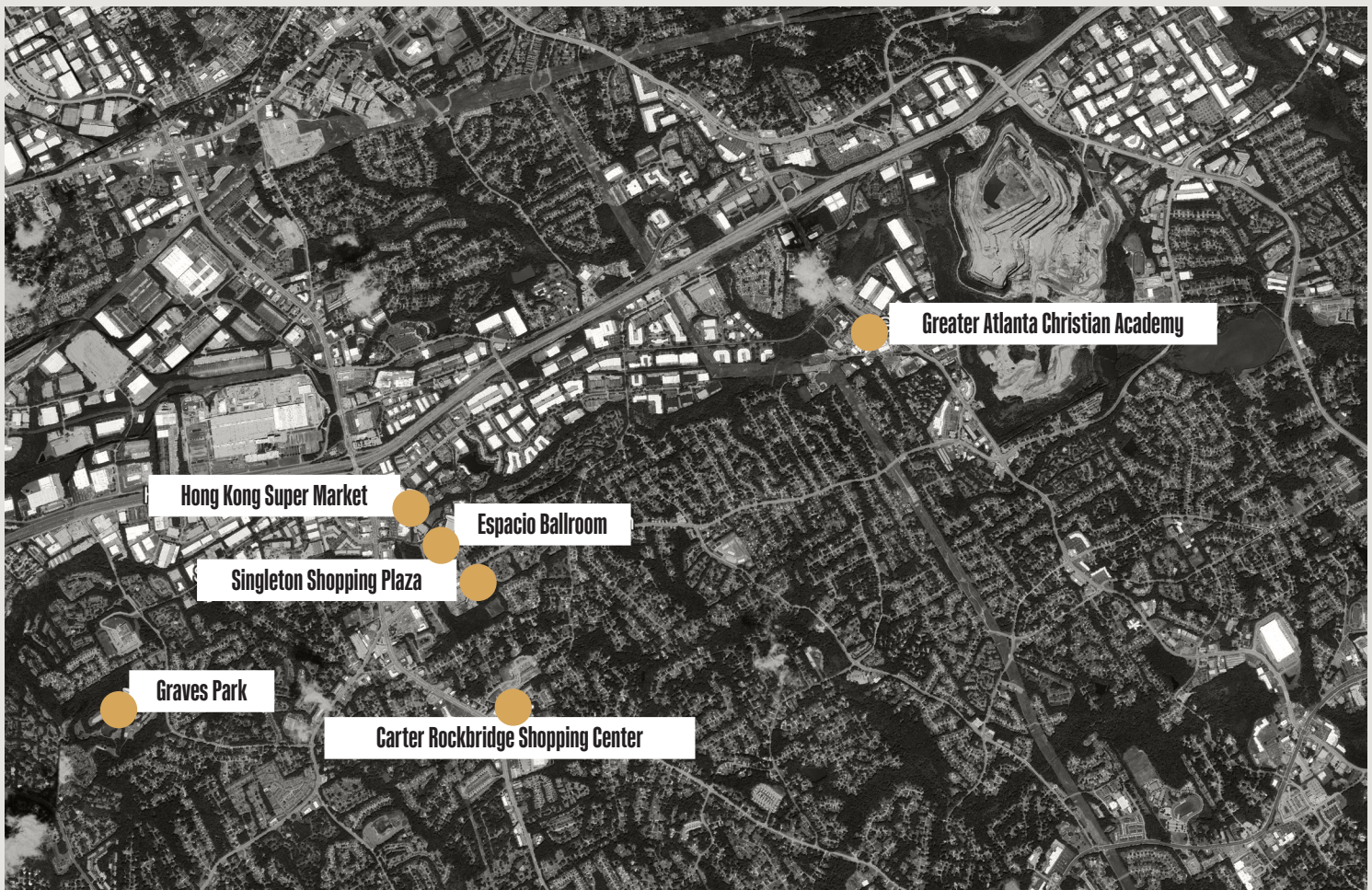
Strong social ties can allow for the advocacy of needed financial and non-financial resources going towards community projects. This happens with people's connection to prospective donors, investors, and businesses that are interested in supporting local

initiatives. Community resilience is enhanced through strong social capital.

These community resources can help to act as a safety net for community members during times of crisis or adversity. Community leadership and empowerment can allow for members to be chosen and trusted with the power to represent their wants and needs. This can be done through city councils, advisory boards, and homeowners associations. A strong community improves overall quality of life by helping those feel like they belong where they reside while living a more fulfilling and meaningful life. Social capital is needed to reduce social inequality by providing access to networks and opportunities and bridging the gap between different social groups. A healthier lifestyle can be attained through the activities shared by those around you and these built connections can also provide emotional support, which helps influence overall well-being.

SWOT Analysis of The Focus Area

The SWOT analysis is very beneficial to social capital because it can help to point out what the community can be actively doing in order to improve the quality of their surroundings. As for the strengths, the focus area has incredible walkability with its excess of sidewalks along most of the roads. There is a very diverse range of local businesses in the area with a lot of community organizations for people to get involved in. Graves Park gives you great access to the largest area of public greenspace in the focus area. A negative of the focus area is the lack of local parks in the area. This will take a slight turn with the reintroduction of Singleton Road Park. The shopping center parking lots in the area tend not to have any tree canopy creating a lack of a sense of place as well as other negative impacts. As for opportunities, Graves Park has a lot of open greenspace with the potential for newly developed amenities. Lastly with threats, we have seen a large decline in social activity due to the covid-19 outbreak. This has affected the community's general engagement with each other bringing local businesses down, as well as the community's health and well-being.



Key Data Points

- “...importance of social capital in addressing common problems that are not easily resolved by individual actions”
- “...social capital is central to building other forms of capital (human, financial, physical, environmental, cultural, and political) because of the limits of individual actions in solving these collective problems.”
- Social capital plays a significant role in enhancing a community’s capacity to identify, mobilize and leverage its assets for positive change and development.
- The focus area has great walkability with many diverse local businesses in the area.
- Graves park is the largest greenspace in the focus area with great amenities and large open fields
- The large open fields can possibly be used for further development to the park.
- The shopping center parking lots in the area tend to lack tree canopy.
- Improvements need to be made to bring the community back together and start gaining social capital after its steep decline.

Parking Lot Tree Canopy

Tree canopy is an important aspect of successful community development in land use as it builds environmental sustainability, public health, and community well-being. Trees can be used to break up the large dominant parking lots, provide a better sense of scale by enclosing an area, muffle noise, provide visual screening, and give shade from canopy cover. Trees and added vegetation along roads can help to control the speed of cars passing through the space and direct traffic flow.

Trees play an important factor in cooling and filtering the air to help counter the urban heat island effect that contributes to smog. Trees can moderate temperatures between 9-27°F. Trees help to facilitate community by providing a comfortable place for people to interact. They can also be used to help filter the water from harmful runoff like automotive fluids, and also stabilize the soil to prevent flooding and erosion. There are a number of positive impacts in which a tree canopy can influence successful land use.

One must also consider the substantial cost of

implementing new trees onto an impervious site. Whether this be through planning, preparing the site, costs of the tree, and maintenance, trees are an investment for development. The part we will want to see is the future of the site with its new trees growing into maturity, which will provide the greatest benefits.

In an article from *Speak For The Trees Boston*, they performed an analysis on a London Planetree in East Boston with a diameter of 24 inches. "According to the US Forest Service, every year this tree conserves 1,843 kWh of energy, filters 3,244 gallons of stormwater, stores 3,145 pounds of carbon dioxide, and removes 3 pounds of air pollutants from the neighborhood. This amounts to a saving of \$117 every year in eco-system benefits only, not to speak of the health and mental benefits. And as this tree grows, so does its contribution to our well-being." Seeing new growth in trees over the impervious lots over time will provide many benefits to the development and those benefits will only increase from the time of planting. Shown below is a helpful infographic explaining again the benefits of tree canopy.



According to the Gwinnett County Code of Ordinances Section 620-30.1 Quantity, Spacing, and Planting Standards, Off-street surface parking lots which are required to contain more than five parking spaces shall contain landscaping and plantings as follows: Trees shall be provided and maintained adjacent to, and in the interior portions of, parking lots in a ratio of one tree for each seven parking spaces. In addition, every parking space shall be within 60 feet of the trunk of a tree. Taking this into account, we can see that there are many parking lots in our focus area that lack meeting these requirements. To visualize, the Singleton Shopping Center has a parking lot with adequate tree plantings that help create a sense of place and with time we will only see more benefits as the trees grow into maturity. Looking into some of the shopping centers along Jimmy Carter Boulevard, we see that there are a number of parking lots with an excess of impervious surface, including Carter Rockbridge Shopping, Hong Kong

Supermarket, the parking lot at the Espacio Ballroom, and as well as the parking lot at the Planet Fitness. These parking lots have slight plantings around the perimeter of the entrances, but lack tree canopy over a vast expanse of parking. An implementation of tree planting will be very beneficial for this area and will allow for a great future improvement of the community development in the area. In conclusion, impervious surfaces can benefit very greatly from a tree canopy because of its filtration of pollution, reduction in the heat island effect, erosion and flooding control, mental health benefits, community engagement, and environmental resilience.

Parking Lots That Would Benefit From Tree Canopy



Graves Park Sports Fields

The implementation of sports fields into a park helps to promote social interaction and community engagement. A designated field allows for those with an interest in a specific sport to all gather together and spend time enjoying what they are passionate about. A park with sports facilities allows for people of all ages to participate in various sports, whether that is in organized sports leagues or just casual play. There are many different physical and mental benefits to the addition of sports facilities.

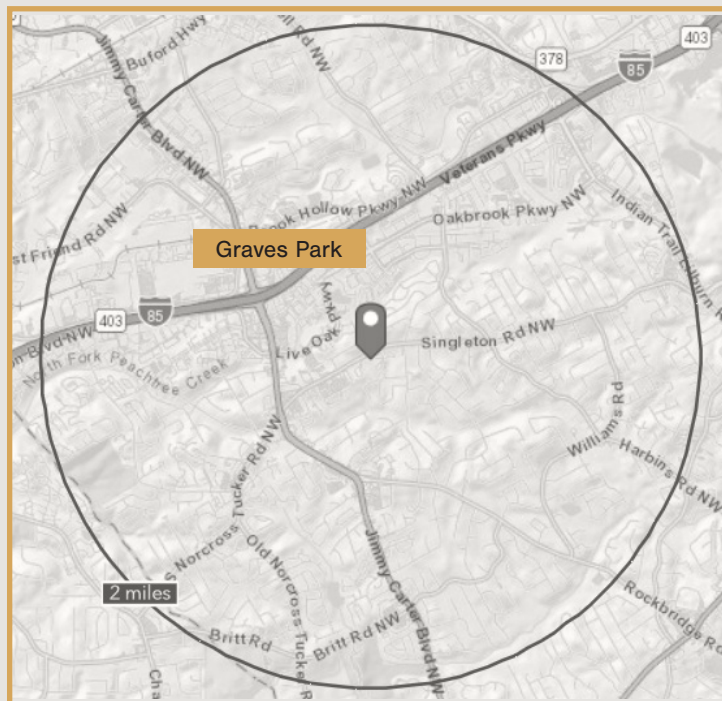
Graves Park is the largest greenspace in the focus area at 70 acres and also the closest public greenspace. Graves Park has a large expanse of flat open fields with a 1.25-mile-long trail system. It also offers one of the largest dog parks in the Gwinnett area. The park has a newly added splash pad right next to the large playground at the entrance of the park. The park also has a large pavilion, two tennis courts, and a sand volleyball court. This park is a great opportunity for people to build community and with the large open spaces, there is plenty of opportunity for new amenity development.

What Can Be Implemented To Meet The Communities Needs

There are no basketball courts at Graves Park, and with this open greenspace, there is a great opportunity for community development to reach a whole other group of people with the implementation of basketball courts on the site. The wants of teens have always been less well served in communities and we see from research taken under Monteith Brown Planning consultants, that they want a place for casual interaction, whether that be active or passive, and also basketball. The demographics for those who play basketball are very high in our area, and the addition of new courts would be greatly appreciated by those in the focus area.

Sports Demographics

An analysis was taken of the focus area to find what people are participating in using Esri ArcGIS Community Analyst. In the graphic to the right, we see that in terms of sports, basketball is the most popular in the community. This is closely followed by bowling, then after is soccer.



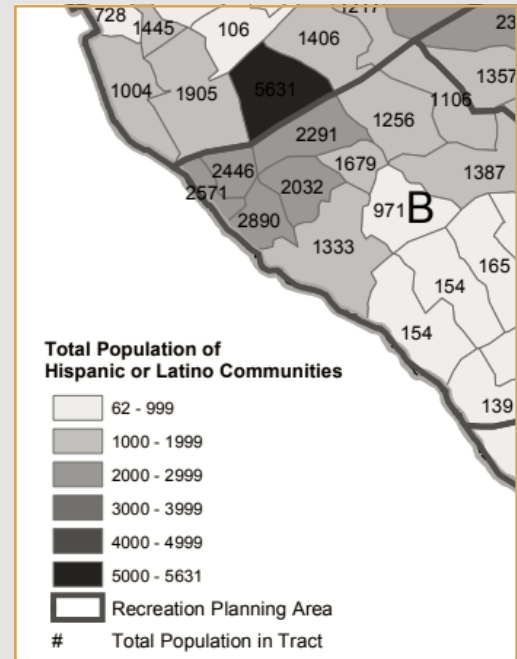
Sports Demographics of Graves Park

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected Number of Adults/HHS	Percent	MPI
Participated in Aerobics/12 Mo	4,112	9.9%	119
Participated in Archery/12 Mo	1,013	2.4%	101
Participated in Backpacking/12 Mo	1,404	3.4%	95
Participated in Baseball/12 Mo	1,361	3.3%	128
Participated in Basketball/12 Mo	3,064	7.4%	129
Participated in Bicycling (Mountain)/12 Mo	1,240	3.0%	84
Participated in Bicycling (Road)/12 Mo	3,526	8.5%	71
Participated in Boating (Power)/12 Mo	1,323	3.2%	67
Participated in Bowling/12 Mo	3,019	7.3%	109
Participated in Canoeing or Kayaking/12 Mo	1,961	4.7%	63
Participated in Fishing (Fresh Water)/12 Mo	2,435	5.9%	56
Participated in Fishing (Salt Water)/12 Mo	1,113	2.7%	78
Participated in Football/12 Mo	1,369	3.3%	139
Participated in Frisbee/12 Mo	1,409	3.4%	99
Participated in Golf/12 Mo	1,911	4.6%	58
Participated in Hiking/12 Mo	5,276	12.8%	67
Participated in Horseback Riding/12 Mo	668	1.6%	84
Participated in Hunting w/Rifle/12 Mo	808	2.0%	58
Participated in Hunting w/Shotgun/12 Mo	479	1.2%	47
Participated in Ice Skating/12 Mo	911	2.2%	99
Participated in Jogging or Running/12 Mo	4,473	10.8%	96
Participated in Motorcycling/12 Mo	851	2.1%	78
Participated in Pilates/12 Mo	1,429	3.5%	123
Participated in Ping Pong/12 Mo	1,362	3.3%	96
Participated in Rock Climbing/12 Mo	1,185	2.9%	185
Participated in Roller Skating/12 Mo	1,323	3.2%	201
Participated in Skiing (Downhill)/12 Mo	959	2.3%	90
Participated in Soccer/12 Mo	2,719	6.6%	209
Participated in Softball/12 Mo	612	1.5%	91
Participated in Swimming/12 Mo	4,751	11.5%	76
Participated in Target Shooting/12 Mo	1,538	3.7%	75
Participated in Tennis/12 Mo	1,519	3.7%	96
Participated in Volleyball/12 Mo	1,477	3.6%	152
Participated in Walking for Exercise/12 Mo	10,661	25.8%	76
Participated in Weight Lifting/12 Mo	5,348	12.9%	92
Participated in Yoga/12 Mo	3,765	9.1%	83
Participated in Zumba/12 Mo	1,911	4.6%	149

This chart shows that basketball and soccer are the most popular group sports played by adults at Graves Park. This data supports reasoning for enhancing the park's design.

In our focus area, we see an increase in the Hispanic and Latino communities. “While certain demographic variables may have more significance in terms of participation (e.g., income and education), sports such as soccer, which is the most popular sport internationally, serve to gain from the trend towards a more ethnically diverse population.” Seeing that this is the only soccer field in our focus area, a possible remodel of this field could be made through the introduction of artificial turf. The low maintenance costs, durability, and consistency of the field would be very beneficial.

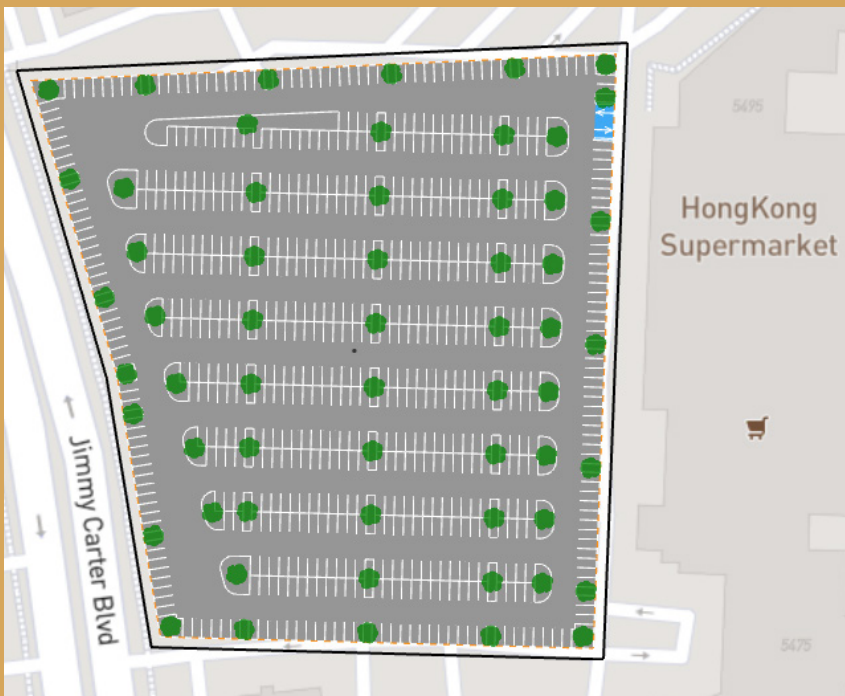
In the images below, you can see the soccer field already in play by an older crowd. Since this is the only area to play, you can see a younger group setting up sticks as goals in the large field next to the game in progress. Also shown is the excess of greenspace next to that which others can use as an informal sports field. An additional field would help to cater to the large demographic of soccer players in our focus area over all age ranges. This could possibly even mean putting additional goals in the open greenspace area to the younger audience and others an opportunity to play soccer in this park. “The Hispanic population of Gwinnett has specified a desire for locations and settings that enhance social interaction for the family as a unit. Park plaza designs, walkways, picnic areas, and informal play fields meet many of the needs of this ethnic community.” This informal playfield would satisfy the needs of the community with the additional access to participate in playing soccer as well as provide a possible informal football field to satisfy the other large demographic that enjoys playing two-hand touch football. This proposal displays options in which you can meet the needs of the community while also using the open land efficiently.



Greater Atlanta Christian Academy Sports Fields

A very large area of greenspace in the focus area comes from the sports facilities around Greater Atlanta Christian Academy’s (GAC) campus. This private school has a very large athletics program in Football, Soccer, Softball, Baseball, Lacrosse, and Track. The school also has a church on site called Campus Church of Christ. GAC is the closest park to the east side of our focus area and consists of a large amount of low-income housing surrounding the campus. For some, Graves Park is too far west and close to Atlanta to travel to. Both the school and the church participate in community service and work to impact those in the area. Collaboration between the school/church is possible to help meet the needs of the community for a closer option for recreational sports. In the times that certain fields are not being used, a programmed recreational sports league can be considered. This act of service from the school would be greatly appreciated and collaboration with the county will make this a viable option. Since this is a private institution, possible incentives can be made for the school and funding can be provided to help make this happen.

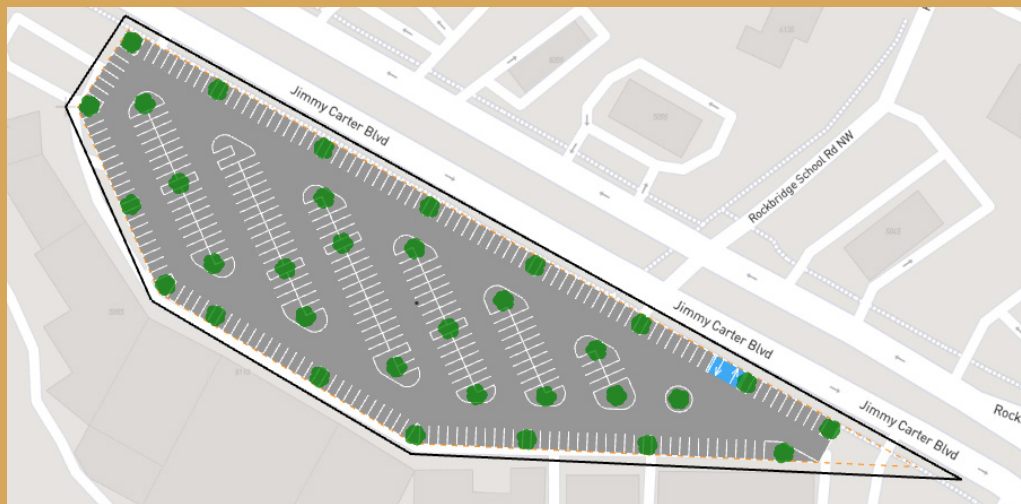
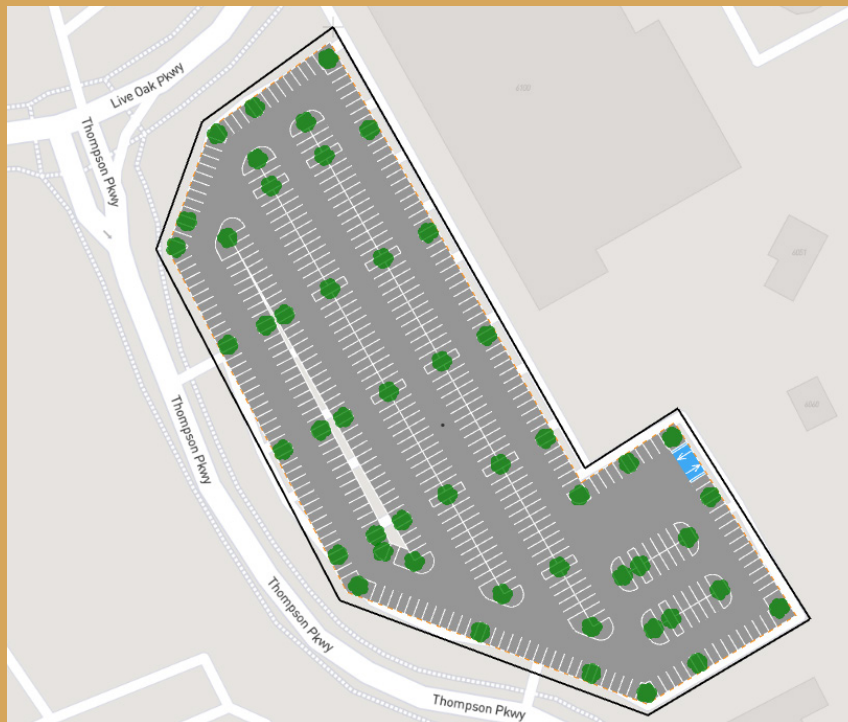




Parking Lot Plantings

To conclude with the parking lot tree canopies, there are a number of future advantages that come from having a tree canopy over your parking lots. Here to the left, we see the three parking lots that were studied and an AI-generated parking lot planting plan using Testfit, which has an adequate amount of tree cover on each of the sites.

- 1. Hong Kong Supermarket**
- 2. Espacio Ballroom Parking Lot**
- 3. Rockbridge Shopping Center**



Graves Park Proposals

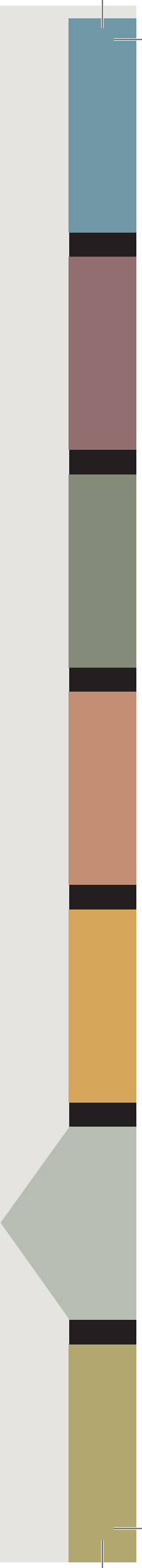
To conclude with Graves Park, the implementation of an artificial turf soccer field would be beneficial with it being the only public-use soccer field in the near area. The use of the large field to the right of the soccer field could be used as a sort of multiuse field with the equipment to play soccer, football, and other field-based sports. Also with the high number of people in the focus area that participate in basketball, seeing the addition of some courts in the park would be very beneficial in reaching a new group of people.





Financial Capital

Adri-Anna Harris
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Financial Capital

Overview

Financial Capital is the way money flows through the community as an asset for furthering development. If the Financial Capital structure is strong, its main goal is to “serve local unmet needs, such as affordable housing, business expansion, or entrepreneurship,” according to Green and Haines’ book, *Asset Building & Community Development (2016)*. This textbook has served as a guidebook for us to analyze and strategize for Gwinnett’s financial future.

Utilizing Financial Capital is a vital step in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) because of the influence finance has on the development of a community. The success of development projects is dependent upon how money, such as a grant or loan, moves through the community. A major challenge city planners must face is the inequity minority populations face regarding monetary help. According to Green and Haines’ *Asset Building & Community Development*, “Poor and minority communities generally lack access to financial capital” (2016). As the focus area within Gwinnett County is inhabited by a diverse community, our main goal for the Financial Capital Asset group is to provide equitable suggestions and recommendations to best serve the neighborhood.

The financial analysis portion of ABCD is a helpful tool as it allows planners to quantify their plans and make realistic and equitable decisions. Monetary planning also overlaps with the other six capital asset groups of ABCD: Human, Social, Environmental, Physical, Cultural, and Political. The Human and Social Capitals depend upon financial planning because of needed access to credit services for underserved communities and public support for employment starts and development projects. Similarly, Environmental and Physical Capitals require financial assistance for affordable housing projects and public and private improvements. The Cultural Capital assets influence finance due to our need to reflect on past barriers to building Financial Capital. Asset planning for Political, which will be explored in the next chapter, and Financial Capital overlap because of the government’s influence on monetary processes, such as taxes, the Community Reinvestment Act of 1978 (CRA), government bailouts, and the issue of redlining. Linking the seven community capitals together so they work together is a successful tactic to use when planning for the needs of a community and a sustainable future.

Site Visit

As mentioned briefly before, there are challenges with building financial capital. Historically, banks have unequally served people of color versus how they served white people. For example, Green and Haines discuss how banks will discriminate against a minority community because they view it as a risk to invest in poor neighborhoods. Another form of discrimination in the banking world takes the form of predatory lending. Privatized banks have been known to give loans with very high interest rates to people who will struggle to pay their debts. To get a better understanding of our focus area’s financial capital, we decided to visit Gwinnett County.

On the site visit, we selected six locations (shown in Figure 1) that may serve as assets to Gwinnett’s residents:

- The Vulcan Materials Quarry
- The Salvation Army
- The Gwinnet Place Mall
- OFS (Optical Fiber Cable)
- The Abandoned Warehouse Site
- Cedar Village Shopping Center

Visiting these sites allowed us to familiarize ourselves with Gwinnett County and the resources offered to their residents. The six locales were selected because they all once, presently, or will one day generate money flow in the community. Prior to visiting this area of Gwinnett, we posed these questions to being analyzing the assets in proximity to the focus area:

- How are these spaces being used, if they are being used at all?
- Do these spaces benefit the community?
- How can Gwinnett gain financially from these spaces?

It was discovered, for the most part, that the six financial capital spaces are in prime location right of the highway. However, four out of the six sites are rarely visited or unused completely. More extensive answers to these questions are explored in the *Key Data Points* section on the next page.

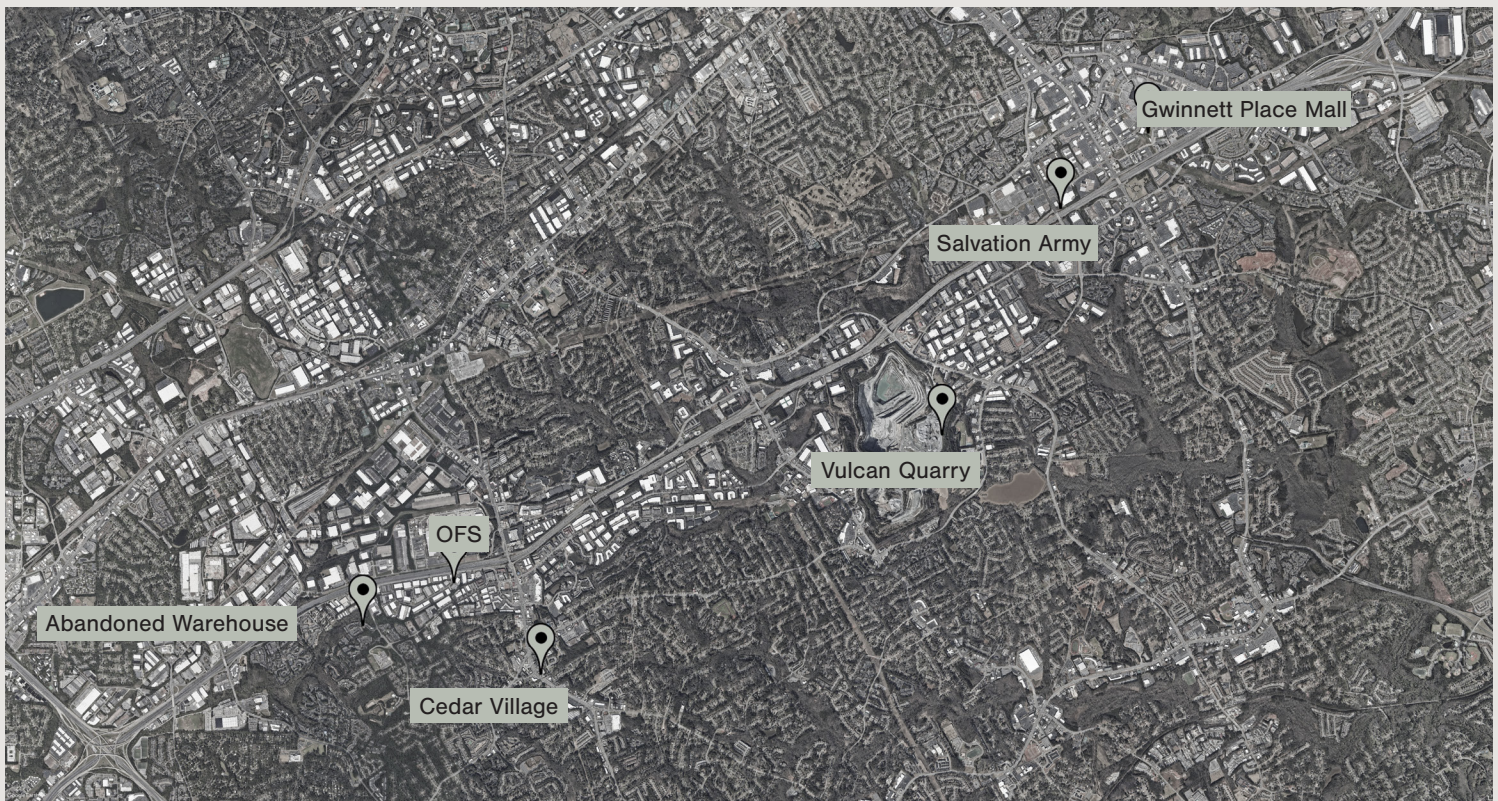


Figure 1: Currently, the Cedar Village Shopping Center and the Salvation Army serve the community in Gwinnett County with uses of grocery, commercial, and other services. Cedar Village has many businesses that cater to the Spanish speaking population. The abandoned warehouse and mall are large vacant buildings that have talks of redevelopment projects. OFS is another large site whose use has changes. This may bring many jobs to Gwinnett. The Vulcan Quarry is a large stakeholder for the county.

Key Data Points : What we learned on the site visit...

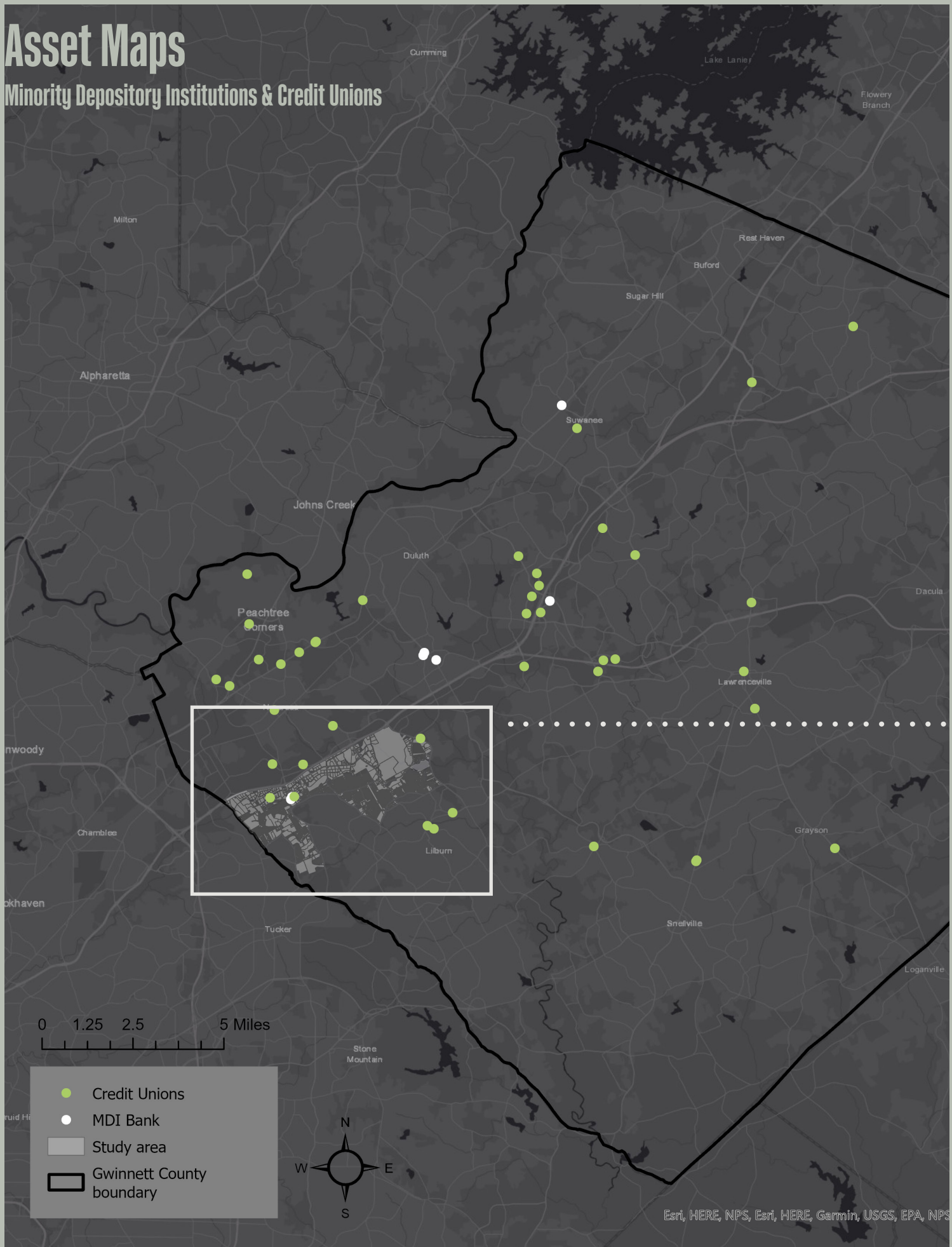


Figure 2: The Abandoned Warehouse is located at 6624 Dawson Drive, Norcross, GA 30093 and would be a great location for redevelopment.

- The Vulcan Material Quarry is a large moneymaker for Gwinnett.
- Salvation Army is a helpful commercial and employment resource.
- The Gwinnett Place Mall's land is widely unused, however, the county has plans to redevelop this space with themes of housing, small businesses, cultural activity center, neighborhood services and jobs (Gwinnett Place Mall Equitable Redevelopment Plan).
- The OFS building, once used for making fiber optic cables, is generating money by leasing out space to businesses and even the film industry (Kass 2021).
- The abandoned warehouse's, shown in Figure 2, location is widely unused and we believe it could serve as an infill or redevelopment opportunity.
- Cedar Village offers many services, like food, retail, gym, laundromat, and more. This center is helpful for the Spanish speaking community.

Asset Maps

Minority Depository Institutions & Credit Unions



After identifying resources on the site visit, we began researching financial assets near the focus area. To avoid the bias and discrimination historically shown by private banks, we mapped Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs) and Credit Unions as financial assets to the focus area. There are five credit unions and six MDIs in close proximity.

CREDIT UNIONS NEAR FOCUS AREA

- Peach State Federal Credit Union
- Georgia United Credit Union
- Associated Credit Union
- Delta Community Credit Union
- Georgia's Own Credit Union

MDIs NEAR FOCUS AREA

- First IC
- Metro City Bank
- PromiseOne Bank
- Loyal Trust Bank
- Embassy National Bank
- Home Trust Bank

There are two Tax Allocated Districts (TADs) that overlap the focus area: Jimmy Carter Boulevard and Indian Trail. Both TADs are in the Gateway85 Community Improvement District (CID) which focuses on enhancements in business, transportation, and connectivity. These are financial capital assets because of they bring money into the area to redevelop spaces that need upgrading.

The first step to utilizing financial capital for this development project is to identify the stakeholders and the financial assets in the focus area and Gwinnett as a whole. The identified financial assets can be categorized as credit unions, Minority Depository Institutions (MDI), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and grants. Each of the listed assets and stakeholders were contacted and researched to identify financial opportunities to support possible housing development projects in the study area. The survey results are discussed in full on the next two pages.

“The bond of our common humanity is stronger than the divisiveness of our fears and prejudices.” — Jimmy Carter



Data Collection and Review

The assets of Gwinnett were contacted with a series of six questions to best discover what they offer the focus area.

- Does your institution offer financial literacy classes? Are they for members only or the local community?
- How would you describe the utilization of your services by the community/what is your most used service (home loans, car loans, personal loans, ect.)?
- (For MDIs) What is your interest in working with the county on redevelopment projects for CRA credits? As an MDI, how do you best serve minorities?
- (For Credit Unions) What projects/grants are you currently working on that you can share with us?
- Do you offer small business loans?
- What other programs do you offer the community?

The Financial Capital group sought to find answers to these questions regarding credit unions, Minority Depository Institutions, Community-Based Organizations, and grants. Though not every institution responded to the survey, several questions were answered and are explored in the following pages.

Credit Unions

1% of credit unions and 3.5% of banks in the county are located in our study area. Credit unions are regulated and insured, typically by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) in the United States. Credit unions operate as financial institutions where members collaboratively own and oversee the institution, providing a diverse range of financial services. Unlike traditional banks, driven by profit-seeking shareholders, credit unions function as nonprofit entities. Eligibility for credit union membership is grounded in a shared connection, whether it stems from employment with the same company, residing in the same community, or affiliating with a specific organization or association. Credit unions offer a range of financial products and services, including savings accounts, checking accounts, loans, credit cards, and more. Interest rates on loans and dividends on savings are typically more favorable compared to traditional banks. They often have a strong focus on serving the needs of their local communities and may provide financial education programs and support community initiatives.

After calling the credit unions, we found they do not fund development projects and are tax exempt. 60% of the credit unions associated in the study area (Peach State Federal Credit Union, Georgia United Credit Union, Associated Credit Union) provide loans for low income holders. Namely Federal Housing Administration loans, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) home loans, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) loans. They also provide Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and low interest rates. 20% of the credit unions provide loans for small businesses. 20% of the credit unions provide financial education course for their members. The Associated Credit Union also has partnered with Credit Union Business Services (CUBS) which is a commercial real estate lending market (CUBS, 2023).

Minority Depository Institutions

An MDI is a federally insured depository institution that qualifies as such: if either (1) more than 50 percent of the voting stock is held by individuals belonging to minority groups, or (2) a majority of the board of directors is composed of minority individuals. The Gwinnett focus area has a predominant minority population. The MDIs in Gwinnett belong to the MDI category which focuses on Asian Americans (FDIC 2022). After getting in contact with 16% of MDIs (Home Trust Bank), it was found MDIs mainly provide services for home loans, home equity loans, vehicle loans, and construction loans. The MDIs also work according to the Community Reinvestment Act to meet the credit needs of the community, though, they do not provide assistance on financial literacy.

Community Based Organizations

A Community-Based Organization (CBO) is characterized by its dependence on community residents. In a CBO, the members of the governing body and staff are mostly local residents and the primary operating offices from the community. The residents identify and define priority issues in the area. The solutions to address the identified issues are formulated in collaboration with residents. Therefore, residents play integral roles in the leadership positions of program design, implementation, and evaluation components.

The Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, sponsored by the County, is a facility that fosters small business startups and assists entrepreneurs. It provides member businesses with guidance, networking opportunities, coworking space, and offices. Moreover, regional entrepreneurs can access the services of classes, workshops, business coaching, and peer learning. (GEC, 2023)

University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is a Public Service and Outreach Extension of The University of Georgia. It is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration. This CBO provides tools, training, and resources to help small businesses grow and succeed. The SBDC also houses a Multicultural Business Division to provide for the needs of underserved markets by conducting workshops, identifying procurement opportunities, and locating sources of capital.



Figure 3: Heading west on the Jimmy Carter Boulevard. This image comes from Elliot Brack's article, *Background on the naming of Jimmy Carter Boulevard*, on Gwinnett Forum (Brack 2023).

Grants

The Gwinnett County currently has \$6,750,616.41 in available HOME funds over multiple grant years which are allocated Program Administration (\$511,033.73), Down Payment Assistance Program (\$827,074.22), Affordable Housing Development (\$4,472,315.44) which further divides into Construction Costs (\$3,072,315.44) and Land Acquisition (\$1,400,000.00). The county also has funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (\$423,851.32) and proposed Affordable Housing Initiative (\$336,804.87).

The Jimmy Carter Boulevard (JCB) TAD is located in the Gateway85 Community Improvement District and next to Norcross. According to the Gwinnett County Financial Services Monthly Financial Status Reports, the JCD TAD will have an appropriation of \$750,000 and IT will have an appropriation of \$175,000 by December 2023.

Gwinnett County also receives CDBG and HOME funds as a qualifying entitlement grantee which comes directly from HUD. Since Gwinnett is a direct recipient from HUD the county is not allowed to apply to the State for additional funding (Gwinnett County Budget Document, 2023).

"These assets need to be mobilized to serve local unmet needs, such as affordable housing, business expansion, or entrepreneurship."

-Green and Haines

S.W.O.T Analysis

“Some people contend that the credit gap is due to discriminatory lending practices of financial institutions. Others argue that the credit gap is due to the risk of investing in these neighborhoods.” - Green and Haines

STRENGTHS

- Indian Trail & Jimmy Carter TADs
- High supply of national banks, local banks, credit unions, and MDIs
- Existing connections to Atlanta as a business hub

OPPORTUNITIES

- Plethora of MDIs serving our area
- Racial and ethnic diversity (minorities account for 83% of the growth in metro areas)

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of financial literacy courses occurring in the focus area can lead to predatory lending by private banking institutions

THREATS

- Increasing land value may lead to gentrification and increased service prices overall
- Our households make 29% less income than the median household income of the whole county



Moving Forward

Recommendations for the Future

After preliminary research, site visiting, pulling of existing conditions, data collecting and reviewing, and analyzing the focus area through a SWOT analysis, we can move forward with recommendations for the future. These suggestions require collaboration between Gwinnett County and the lending institutions. The recommendations are as follows:

- To begin, **Gwinnett County should partner with the various banks in the area to host Financial Literacy courses for the residents of our study area.** This will increase the utilization of the resources offered by various financial institutions, which will benefit the whole community. Literacy courses typically focus on homeownership, responsible credit utilization, and wealth building, which are all things this area could use since it has a high percentage of folks close to, or in, poverty (Lusardi 2019).
- Next, **Gwinnet could utilize places** like Cedar Village, the abandoned warehouse site, and Gwinnett Place Mall, which are located in prime locations, **to engage residents by making improvements to the spaces in order to successfully build community wealth while avoiding displacement.**
- Finally, **we recommend working with more banks to assist them in the usage of their CRA Credits,** as this both benefits the banks and the county. We have observed MDIs and credit unions already engaging with other organizations to develop housing and infrastructure projects, thus, openness to partnerships has been expressed.

Next Steps

The next step to take in building financial capital in Gwinnett is recommended as follows:

- **Identify which institutions would be best to work with.** The Financial Capital group has identified many institutions in this report that would be open to partnerships. We suggest getting in contact with a few resources shared in this report as well.



Figure 4: First IC Bank is an MDI bank in Gwinnett County. The location pictured above is in Norcross but there are branches in Suwanee, Duluth, Doraville, and Johns Creek, Georgia. The image was pulled from First IC Bank's website.

To Conclude

Building financial capital is a mandatory step when redeveloping a city. It is vital for planners to be aware of historic discrimination and bias performed by privatized banks towards minority populations. Gwinnett County is a rapidly growing county and our focus area has much room for growth. The Financial Capital Group's assessment shows that the focus area has several financial opportunities, such as institutions that specialize in helping minorities and underserved individuals. Gwinnett County planners have the opportunity to connect with banks, credit unions, and MDIs to secure loans or grants to fund redevelopment projects. It would also best serve everyone in the community if these institutions offered literacy classes in finance to avoid predatory lending and allow residents to build wealth with their assets. Gwinnett also has access to funds, like HOME and CDBG, and resources like SBDC to further development in affordable housing and small businesses. We believe Gwinnett and its residents have growing options to fund their future.



Political Capital

Thiago Almeida
Joseph Cavanaugh



Political Capital Overview

What is Power?

“Power is the ability to influence others despite resistance.” (Max Weber)

In the Planning context, according to Green and Haines is the influence over major issues affecting the quality of life for residents. Can be exercised by shaping what happens or what does not happen in a community.

What is Political Capital?

The main concept of this capital group is concerning the notion of power. As mentioned by Gary Paul Green and Anna Haines, “understanding how to work within a community’s power structure or how to organize to gain power is critical to the success of community development projects”. According to the Asset Building and Community Development book, Political Capital can be defined as the “ability of a group to influence the distribution of resources within a social unit.”

To clearly understand the complexities of this capital group, one must identify and explore the structures behind the process. There are theorems, regimes, methods, and community collaboration that one must consider in its entirety. With that being said, there are two main branches of political capital: instrumental and structural. Instrumental decisions hinge on the fact that there are resources that actors can use to influence policies in their own interest. Compared to structural decisions hinge on the attributes of the political system that shape participation in decision-making.

Beyond that, there are three main regime types in a political system. The caretaker regime, the corporate regime, and the prevailing coalition regime. The first type tends to be opposed to growth and change, for instance, by keeping taxes and services low while passively promoting growth, most common in small towns and rural/suburban areas. The second type, the corporate regime, is a tendency in the United States, in which government officials work similarly to corporations to achieve their goals, many times benefiting large companies or existing businesses in the process. The third type, the prevailing coalition, is based on progressive policies, with strong neighborhood associations and focused on aspects such as housing and social services for the community.

One aspect that is crucial to the understanding of this

capital group is the involvement of the community. For this project, this political capital team used the reputational and positional methods in order to analyze the power relations in the community. The reputational method is exercised in accordance to seek out the influential people in the community, this was applied to identify most of the stakeholders. The positional method identifies key positions in institutions and is used to evaluate the elected officials and their proposals.

To get the pertinent information, our team reached out to the local representatives to gain a more holistic answer to current conditions. Beyond who has the power and who to seek it out, the political capital group needed to understand how the community interacted with the “powerful” institutions.” The ways that the community will generally interact in this sphere would be the result of individual

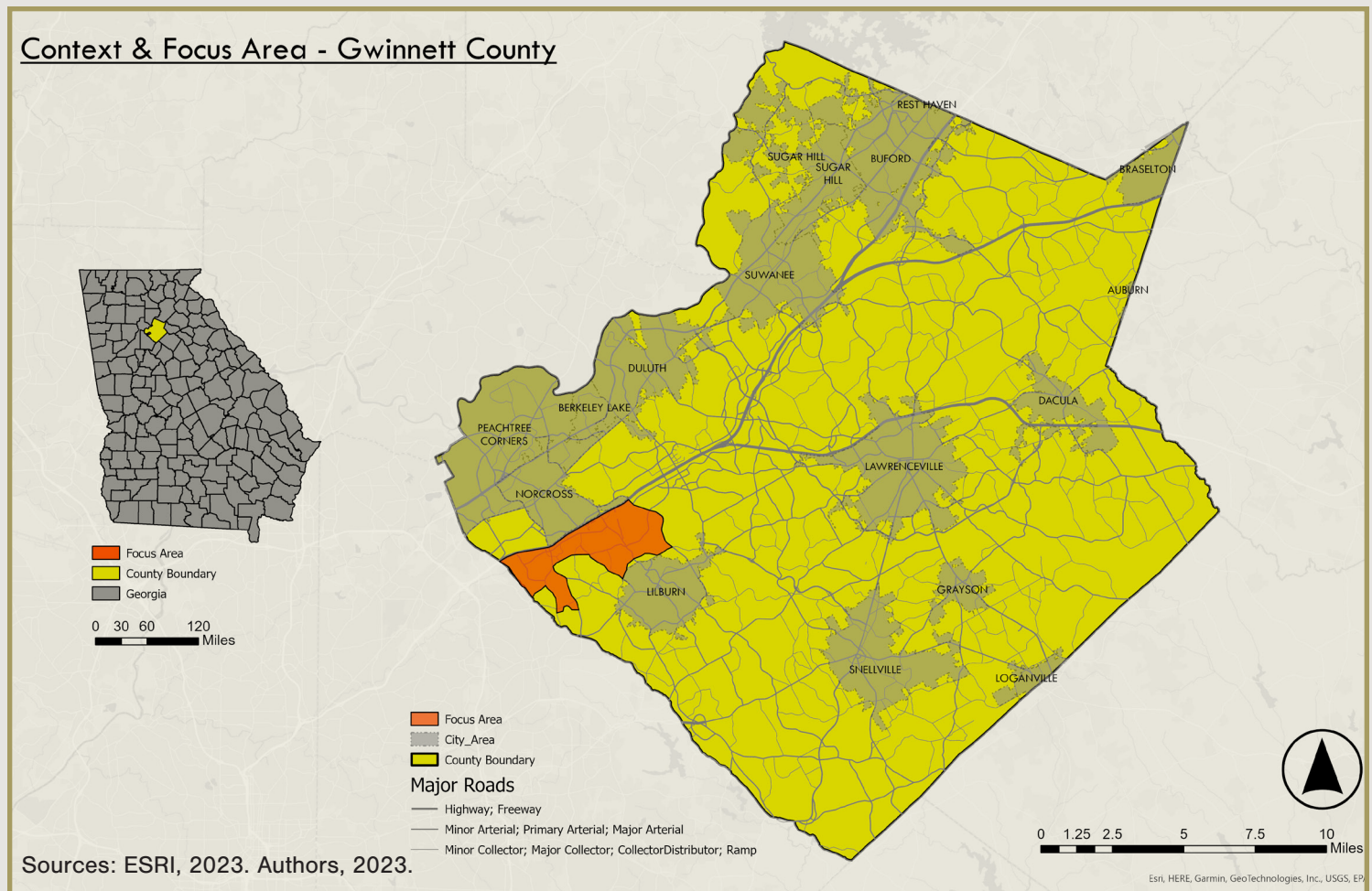
Political Capital in the Context

The political capital group is recognized by the theories in which it derives its influence. Some of these theorems include the urban regime theory which traces the connections between the public, government, and the business. There are others, such as the growth machine theory, which places its emphasis on land ownership and class.

While there are numerous different theorems, there is also a phenomenon of regimes. According to the Asset book, are defined by, “the informal arrangements that support the formal workings of the local government.” With such an eclectic mix of theorems and regimes, there are few that more explain what is going on in the midst of Gwinnett than others.

From the point of view of the different stakeholders, there will be a different idea of how the political capital affects their influential sphere. You could argue that the Gwinnett Planning Commission and Matt Elder are operating in a prevailing coalition sense. This is due to the fact that the GICH that they are heavily endorsing fits in nicely with the goals of a prevailing coalition. How?

According to the book, “Is oriented toward progressive policies that expand social services and housing options to low-income and diverse populations. In addition to these ideals, prevailing coalitions have been noted as often pushing for no-growth or stringent environmental policies that limit the activities of corporations or



developers.” In the focus area, there is a large quarry (Image). The quarry is an economic driving force for the area.

The regime theory offers insight into the relationship between the quarry and the government. According to Green and Haines, the vast tendency in the United States is through the corporate regime, this is where the corporations would engage in ‘logrolling’ with the government to act in a partnership. This can be seen in the focus study area, on what refers to the quarry and to the land ownership. Some elites are influential and have direct political interests in the area.

Moreover, according to Mr. Elder, the area presents, in some spots, a scarcity of jobs, food, public transportation, and other services. Essentially due to the fact that it is an unincorporated area, as well as, because of the interstate highway that cuts the study area. This lack of services has a role in the planning decisions. This area has issues of attracting employees,

due to the heavy car reliance. When meeting with Gwinnett, they would tend to talk in terms of building the transit network to attract a large employer, instead of advocating for the local businesses or the promotion of education and employment from and for the existing community, generally excluding vulnerable populations. That unfortunately is a characteristic of the corporate regime.

Assets and Stakeholders

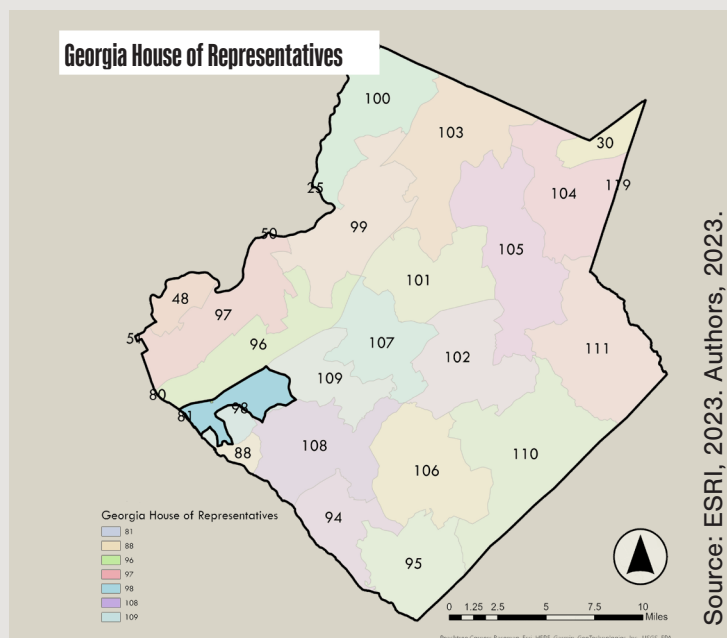
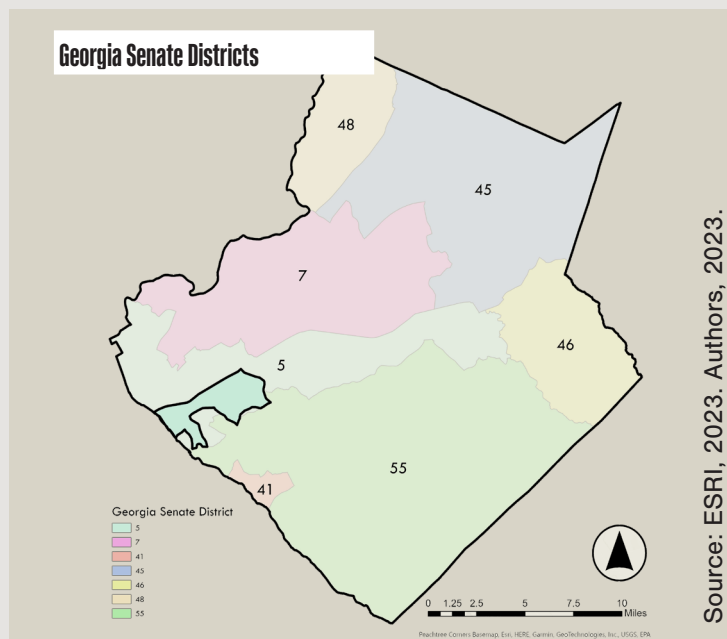
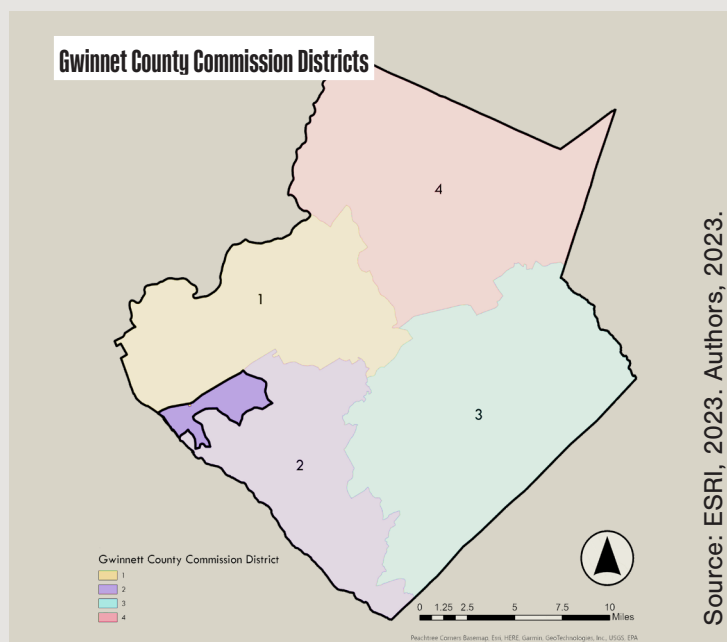
Identified Assets and Stakeholders

For the Gwinnett GICH study area, there are a plethora of factors that contribute to the power spheres in the area. This area is characterized by a lower-wage workforce than the rest of the county. The area needs special consideration to make sure the vulnerable populations have equitable access to community services and programs that are afforded to the more affluent areas of the county/region. Some of the organizations identified in the area that advocate for housing and social services for these vulnerable populations are the following: Community Associations (Latin American Association, Asian Association, Neighborhood Associations, etc.); Habitat for Humanity; Salvation Army; Gwinnett Housing Authority/Lawrenceville Housing Authority; Department of the Housing and Urban Development.

With this being said, the majority of the stakeholders are clustered around the quarry, the highway I-85, and the Gwinnett Village. Our group identified a few different groups that the stakeholders would belong to. There are a couple examples of school zones, (Graves Elementary School and Meadow Creek Elementary School), in addition, there are some stakeholders that are concerned with the economic output of the area. The economically zoned stakeholders are: The owners of big lots such as the abandoned warehouse and similar, which would be a good fit for redevelopment; the various employers at the strip malls and warehouses; and the community services center which are both organized through the Chamber of Commerce.

The last big stakeholder group for this area would be concerned with the housing and they are: Jones RV Park, various homeowners, and tenants through apartments and community associations. Also about housing, The Department of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants funds in partnership with local nonprofit groups (eg. Habitat for Humanity) to fund a wide range of activities, including building, buying, and rehabilitation affordable housing for rent or homeownership and providing direct rental assistance to low-income households. All of these stakeholders exert their influence over the region and create a viable set of proposals. The Political Capital Group has to tie the ideas to balance the wishes of the stakeholders. In this sense, the Political Capital is strongly related to the Financial, Physical and Social Capitals.

In addition to the stakeholders that exercise power in



the area. This report also looked into the interests and activities of the various different representatives for this area. The representatives include: Commissioner Ben Ku (2nd Commission of Gwinnett); Representative of the 98th District Marvin Lim; and the final representative that covers Georgia's 5th Senate District, and the Georgia State Senator that represents this area is Representative Sheikh Rahman. It is important to identify who the representatives are. The most obvious reason is that they could be a tremendous advocate or detriment depending on their official stances. When we make our proposals, we should target transportation issues. Two out of the three representatives have a statement on how they want to improve transportation in this area.

Out of all the people that we contacted, we were only able to get in touch with Representative Marvin Lim. He was very knowledgeable about the district. From his point of view, housing and transportation were the biggest issues. According to him, If there was the

opportunity for a higher concentration of mixed-use developments and a conjunction of smaller lot sizes would help to attract more people to the area. For the transportation section, Mr. Lim believes that the improvements made to public transportation would make the area become more of a desirable location, mainly by connecting to better job opportunities in the Atlanta metropolitan area.

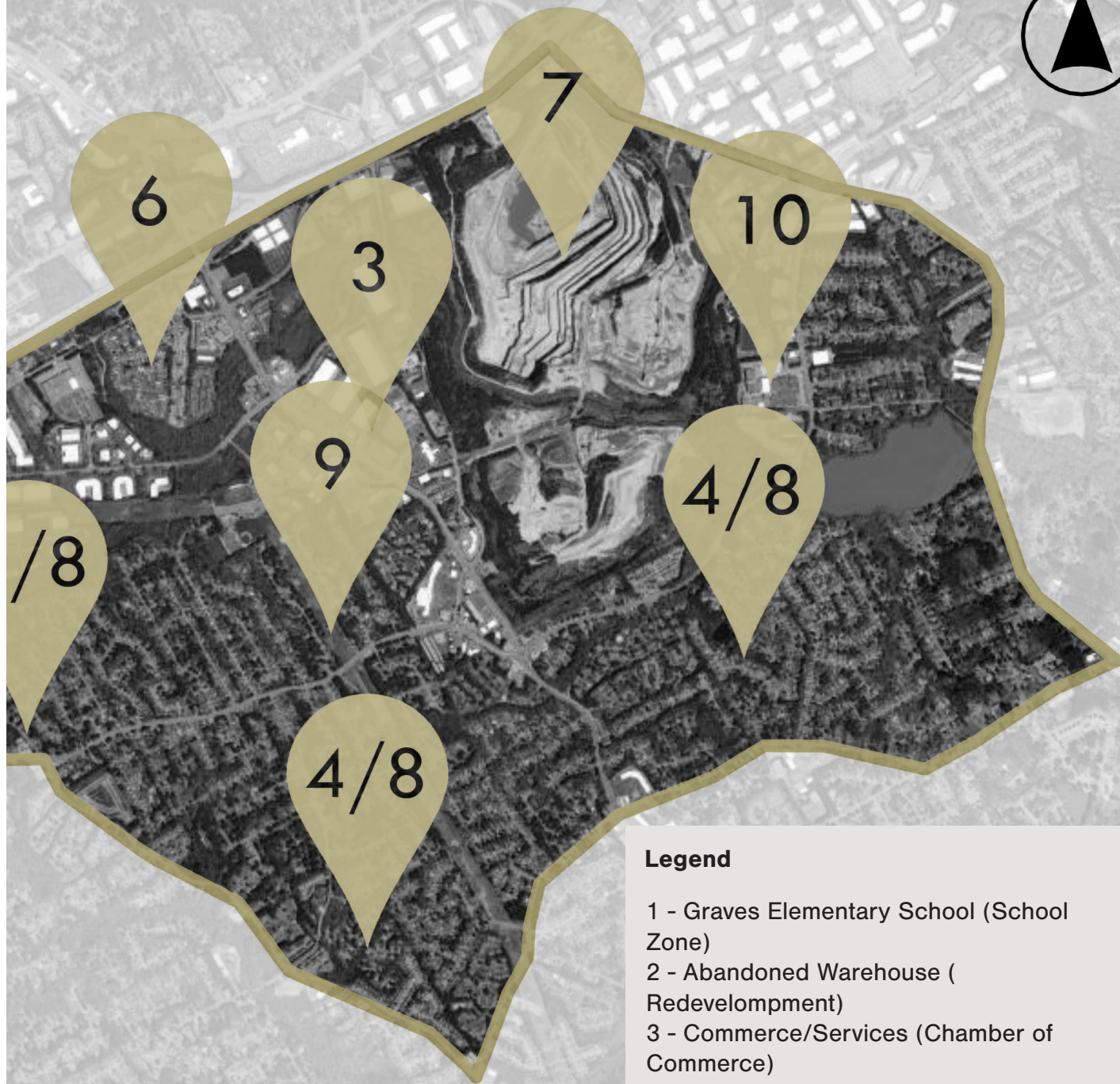
Transportation goes hand in hand with employment and housing. Also according to Marvin, there are a few affordable housing advocates in the area. The Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Gwinnett Housing Partnership, and Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity, were the organizations mentioned by the representative.



Stakeholders Map

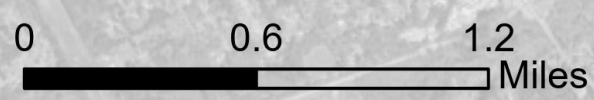
This maps is an attempt to Spatialize the Stakeholders that have the most political power.





Legend

- 1 - Graves Elementary School (School Zone)
- 2 - Abandoned Warehouse (Redevelopment)
- 3 - Commerce/Services (Chamber of Commerce)
- 4 - Homeowners (Real State Value)
- 5 - Employers (Chamber of Commerce)
- 6 - Opportunity Land Owners (Eg. Jones RV Park)
- 7 - Vulcan Quarry (Land/Employment)
- 8 - Tenants (Community Associations)
- 9 - Georgia Power (Power Lines)
- 10 - Meadow Creek School (School Zone)



Source: Gwinnett County GIS, ESRI, Site Visit.
Joseph Cavanaugh & Thiago Almeida

Political Capital SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- GICH - State Support
- Strong Community/Ethnic Groups
- Active Chamber of Commerce
- Organizations Advocating for Housing (Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Gwinnett Housing Partnership, and Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity)
- The Planning Department is interested in addressing the needs of the community
- Politicians advocating for housing, transportation, and employment opportunities
- Opportunity zones in the surroundings of the focus area (State and Federal)

Weaknesses

- High Rental Prices (owners are an elite)
- Old Housing Stock
- Some Blighted areas
- Vulcan Quarry area is undevelopable for indeterminate time
- Low income - how to increase wages without gentrifying?

Opportunities

- Infill development opportunities
- Improve Housing Conditions
- Improve Transportation and Infrastructure Conditions
- Gain trust from the community by implementing designs
- Increase density and get more tax revenue from new buildings
- Increase Home Ownership
- Rehabilitation of the housing and buildings
- Work with more housing advocacy groups/affordable developers
- Strengthen the multi-modal transportation opportunities and make the employment an anchor site for the county

Threats

- Developers not willing to build affordable housing
- Gentrification
- High Rent Prices
- High Property Prices
- Land Ownership is Concentrated in the hands of little
- Conflict between stakeholders (dispute of interest)
- Serious lack of affordable developers in the area/county

Political Capital Proposals

Recommendations for the study area

After observing the collected information and carefully analyzing the area with a SWOT analysis it was possible to identify the most important aspects of the Political Capital in the area. The recommendations below intend to propel the identified opportunities:

- Implement higher-density zones for housing. Incentivizing the creation of smaller lots, and a variety of multifamily housing options (Missing Middle Housing). Promote the implementation of Accessory Dwelling Units on the Single Family districts.
- Propose multifamily housing to replace the mobile home park. Not to displace these residents, but to provide them with the opportunity to live in better housing conditions with proper infrastructure.
- Propose for Lilburn to incorporate the whole or part of the focus area into their municipality, since it is already part of the planning area. This measure would benefit the municipality with tax income, and would benefit the area with better management and services.
- This area has a large foreign-born population. Promoting a diverse community without segregation could be beneficial for the area.
- Propose the expansion of MARTA towards the center of the county. Improve transit options from the more dense housing area (GICH) to the existing MARTA Station. Take advantage of the political wishes and momentum to make improvements in transportation (Bus and MARTA).
- Propose projects to use the income from taxes originating from the new developments. (Sidewalks, Transit, Homeless Shelters, Schools, etc). Via SPLOST, TSPLOST and ESPLOST. Include Housing in the SPLOST budget. Use tax resources to promote walkability and cyclability, especially in the residential areas close to employment.
- Use the state and federal Opportunity Zones within the area and the surroundings to promote sustainable growth by providing job opportunities.
- Increase the public participation opportunities (Increase public meetings frequency and make them more accessible) ie change location around the county.

Next Steps & Relationship with Other Capital Groups

The next steps in this context would be to compare and identify the opportunities from the other capital groups, mainly Financial, Physical, and Social. Select the opportunities and proposals that better align and find the funding sources to implement them. It is also important to engage the stakeholders in the process, in this process the local government should assume a leading role and manage the implementation of the proposals, always paying attention to the regional, state, and federal opportunities.

Social Capital could be considered the framework behind the power relations. The social sphere is where people interact on a daily basis. The Financial and Physical Capital, expressed by funds and land, on the other hand, are the resources that make the power relationships viable. Promoting equitable ownership opportunities is one way to retain the community in the area and create a balanced political environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the focus area has the potential to positively change in the next few years. The fact that the place is included in the GICH program, added to the existence of Opportunity Zones, the approval of the extension of SPLOST, the possibility of implementing TSPLOST in the coming years, the apparent political will to address housing and transportation needs in the area, and a strong community engagement via several organizations are elements that could support such positive change. If the local government and the stakeholders act jointly, with aligned interests, and using the available resources, it's likely that the focus area will be able to reach better housing, transportation, and employment conditions in the future.

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