



Rural Renaissance

Attracting Quality Workforce Housing to Rural Communities



Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute
Center for Economic
Development Research

Presenters



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Agenda

- CEDR Background + Work
- Defining Rural
- Case Studies
- Major Takeaways



Center for Economic Development Research

Engineering your economic development success



Economic and Fiscal Impact Assessments



Housing Market and Needs Analyses



Strategic Planning: City, County, Regional, State



Downtown Development and Real Estate
Redevelopment



Labor Market Analysis and Workforce
Development



Basic Economic Development Course, IEDC



Cost of Community Services



Research Assistance Grants, EDRP



Economic Recovery and Resilience



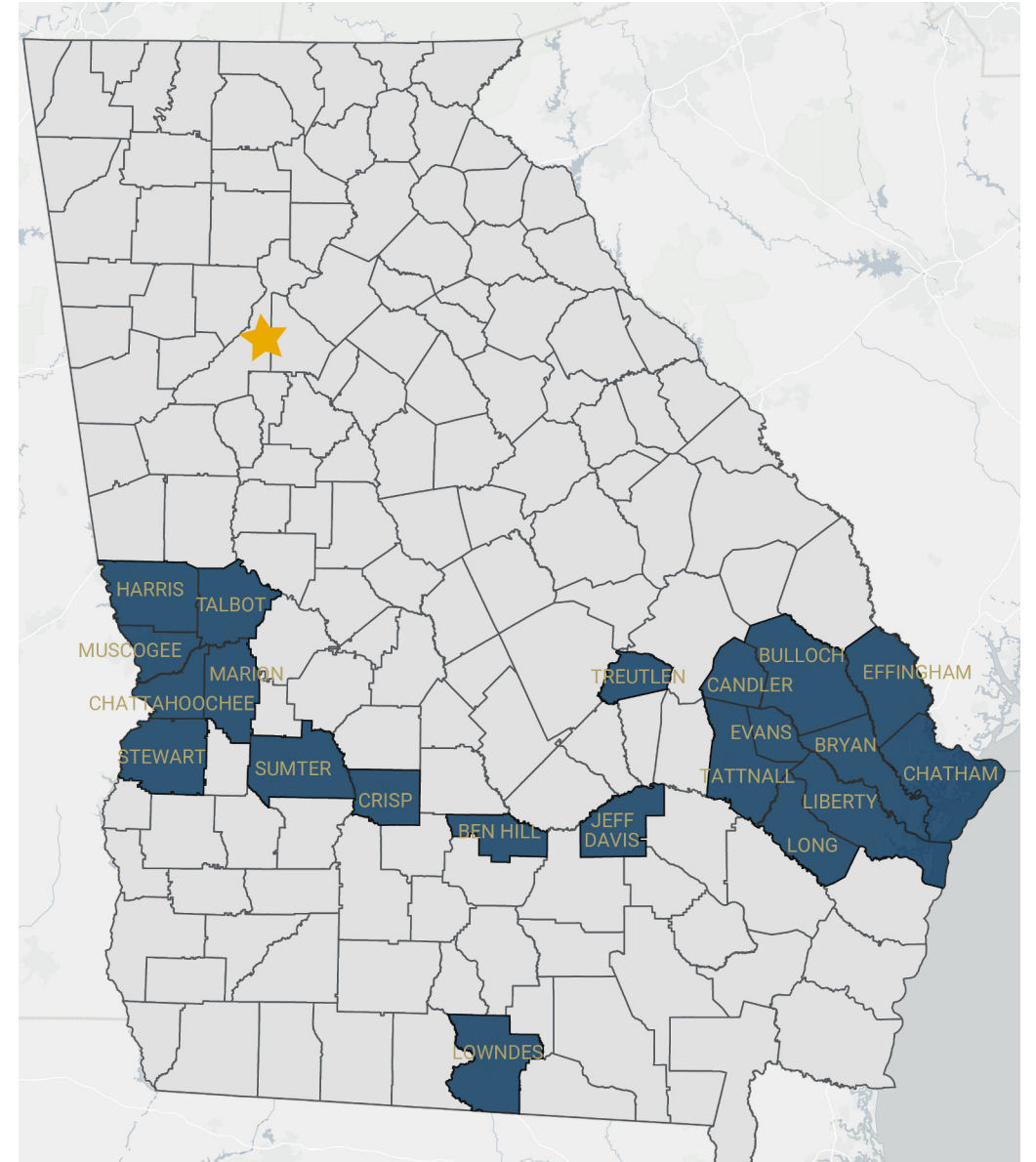
Georgia Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing
(Georgia AIM)



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Current CEDR Housing Work

- Focused in South Georgia
- Housing Study Types
 - Neighborhood Plans
 - Technical Reports
 - County Comprehensive Analysis
 - Regional Studies



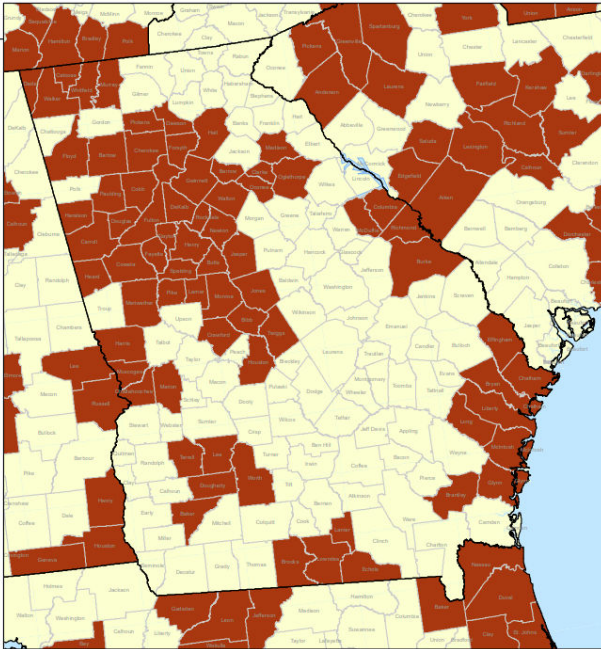
What is Rural?

- Rural can mean population size, proximity to urban cores, or even cultural and historical characteristics.
- Community Progress
 - Total population <50,000
 - Score of 4 (non-metro) or higher on the USDA Rural-Urban Continuum

Georgia

Rural definition based on Office of Management and Budget (OMB) metro counties

■ Rural: Nonmetro county
■ Urban: OMB metro county

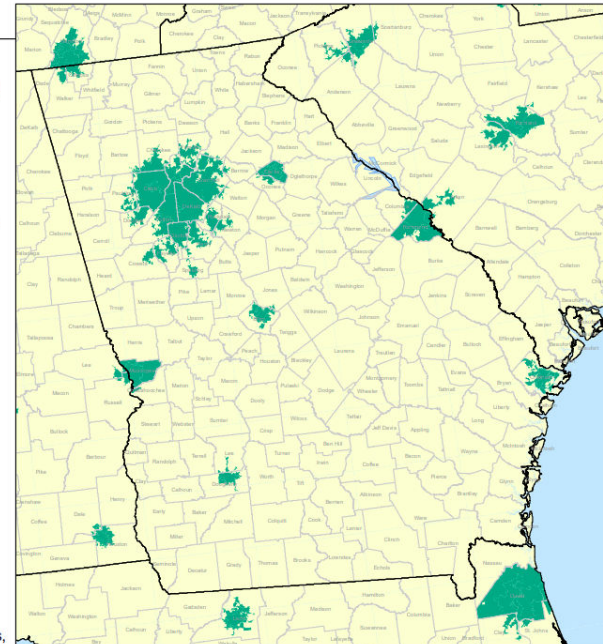


For more information on definitions, see documentation

Georgia

The USDA Business and Industry ineligible locations are Census Places greater than 50,000 people and their adjacent and contiguous Urbanized Areas

■ Rural
■ Urban: USDA B&I ineligible locations



For more information on definitions, see documentation



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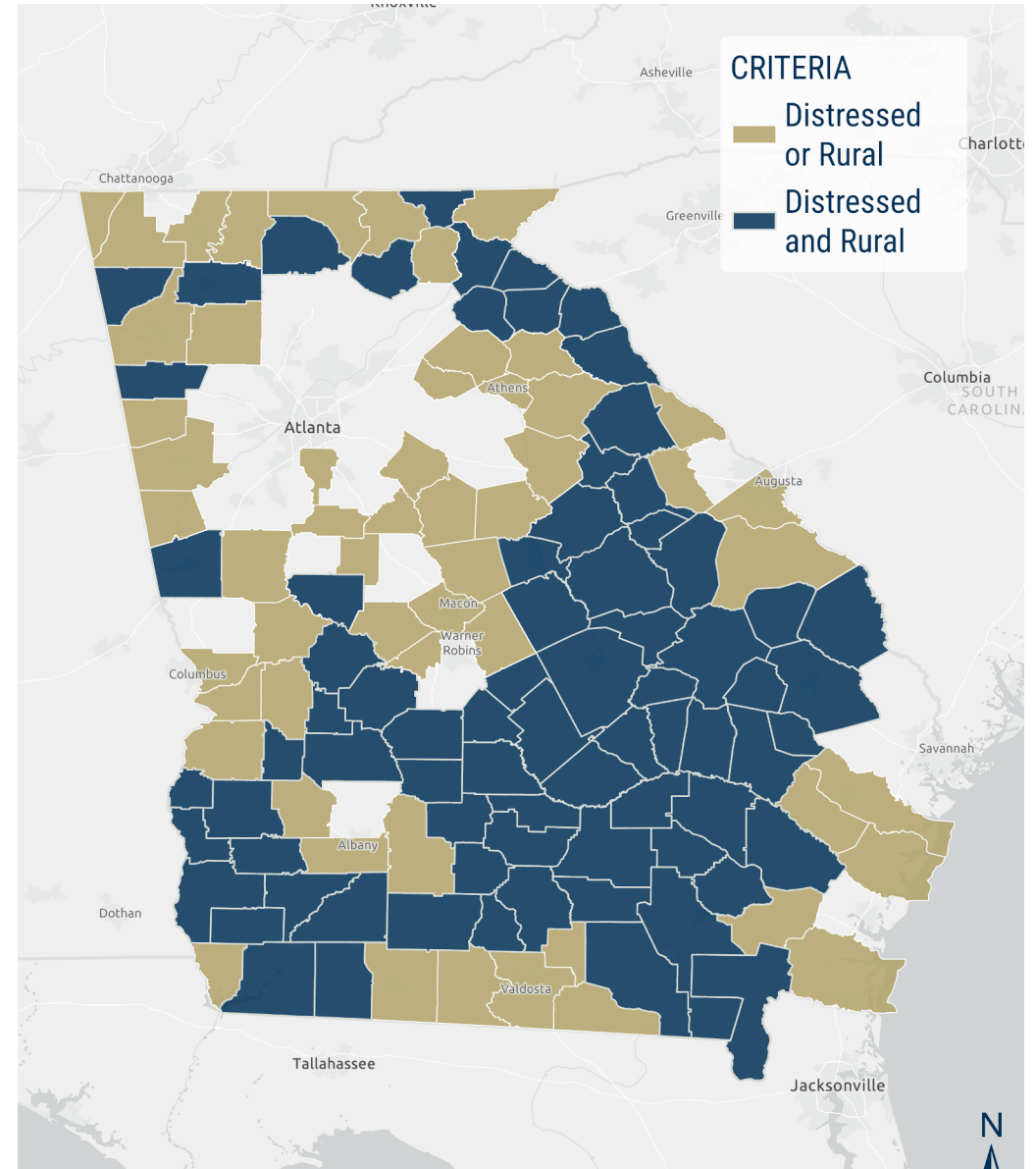
Rural According to OneGeorgia

- Rural Workforce Housing Grant
 - All eligible and conditionally eligible counties can apply
 - Support land and infrastructure development
- Housing Prices
 - For Sale: \$125,000-\$290,000
 - Rental: affordable to 100% AMI



Rural According to EDA

- Economic Development Research Program
 - Rural/Distressed counties are eligible
 - Provides affordable economic development & policy research
- EDRP Housing Studies
 - Completed six studies
 - Three have been complemented with EDRP funds



Housing Studies Summary

Housing Needs Technical Report

- Meets requirement for Rural Workforce Housing Grant application
- Existing Market Overview
- Limited Demographic Analysis
- No Community Engagement Element

Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment

- Includes all elements in Technical Report
- Full Demographic Analysis
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Market Surveys

Neighborhood Redevelopment Plans

- Small Area Mapping
- Housing Market Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Development Recommendations
- Design Guideline & Regulation Assessments



Certified Economic Development Ready Communities (CEDRC™)

Workforce Housing & Infrastructure Planning Program





Case Studies

Americus/Sumter, Cordele/Crisp, Coastal Counties



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Sumter Housing Needs Assessment

Project Summary



Initially, a technical housing study to support a Rural Workforce Housing Grant and EDRP funding allows us to complete a more comprehensive report.



Feedback from a cross-section of stakeholders to understand current housing needs and challenges.



Provided a data analysis highlighting trends in population, housing, wages and job growth.

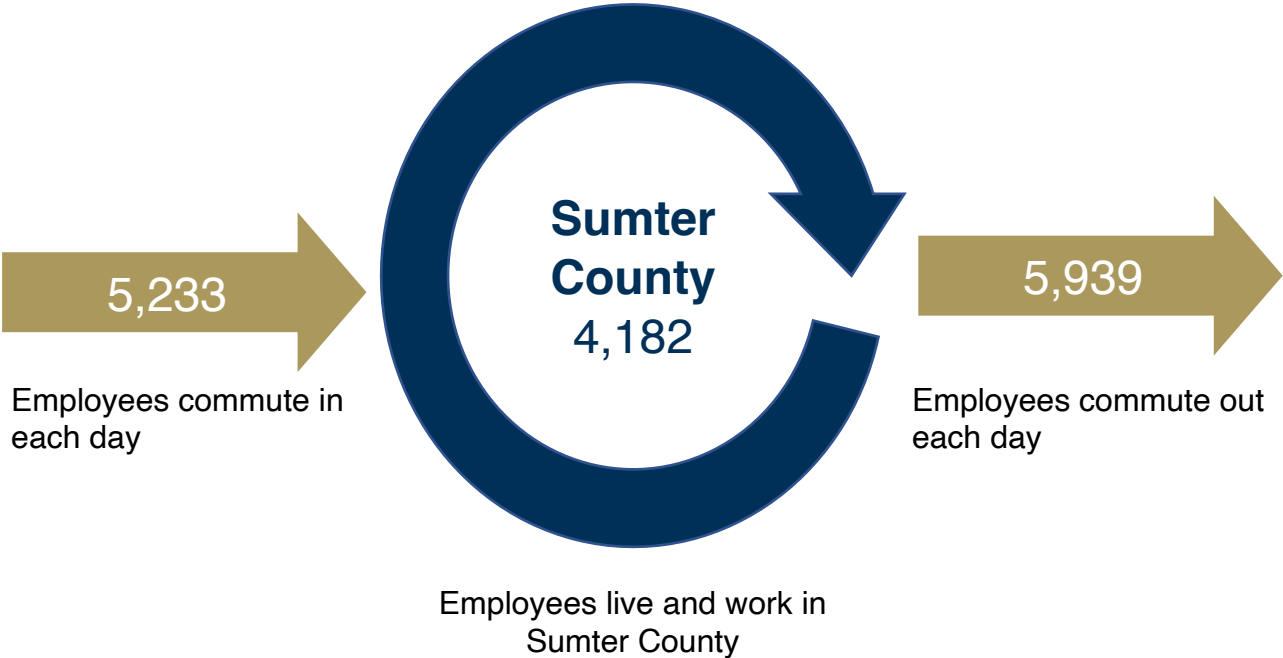


Created a detailed implementation table.



Commuting Patterns

SUMTER COUNTY WORKER INFLOW/OUTFLOW, 2021



Source: 2021 On The Map

Housing Tenure

Rental Rate

58%
Americus

36%
Georgia

41%
Sumter

Homeownership Rate

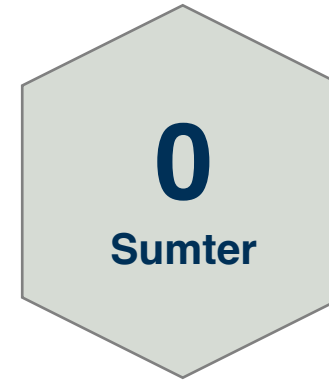
42%
Americus

65%
Georgia

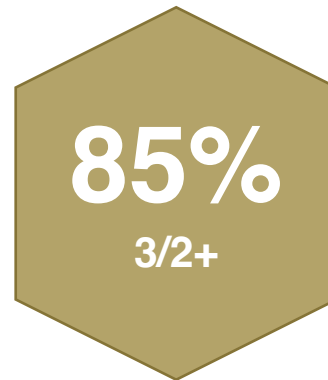
59%
Sumter

Housing Availability

Rental



For Sale



Industry Data

SUMTER COUNTY EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR & WAGE

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	TOTAL EMPLOYEE COUNT	AVG WAGE/ SALARY
Government	2,412	\$58,773
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,729	\$52,783
Manufacturing	1,417	\$86,667
Retail Trade	1,340	\$35,631
Accommodation and Food Services	1,057	\$22,439
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	855	\$39,331

- Manufacturing jobs grew 14% between 2013 and 2023.
- Affordable price points range from \$68,000 to \$260,000.
- Affordable monthly rents range from \$560 to \$2,166



Stakeholder Feedback

Strengths & Weaknesses

Hospital
Low County Crime
New Jobs
Local University
New Businesses

Quality of Life Amenities
Blight
Maintenance of Rental Property
Lack of New Development
Limited Available Housing Stock
City Crime



Stakeholder Feedback

Opportunities & Threats

Live Work and Play
Increase Housing Types
Loft Units Downtown
Infill Development
Residential Growth
Zoning Updates

Lack of Inventory
Heris Property
Long Commutes
Affordability for Families
ADU Regulation
Population Loss



Major Takeaways



Americus and Sumter County can support additional housing units within the target sales price.



Limited existing rental and for sale housing availability, with little development over the last five years.



Consistent manufacturing investment and job growth over the last decade.



Concern about attracting and maintaining families in the city and county.





Cordele Housing Needs Assessment

Project Summary



Initially, a technical housing study to support a Rural Workforce Housing Grant and EDRP funding allows us to complete a more comprehensive report.



Feedback from a cross-section of stakeholders to understand current housing needs and challenges.



Provided a data analysis highlighting trends in population, housing, wages and job growth.

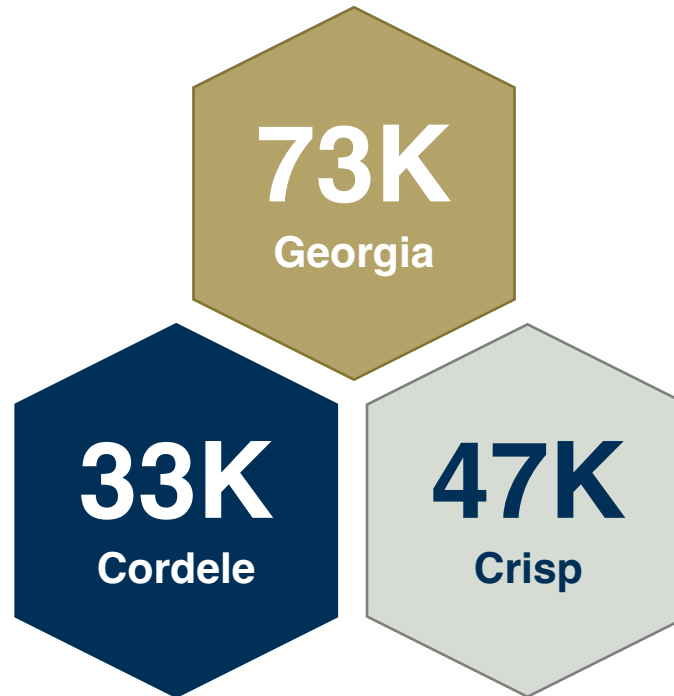


Created a detailed implementation table.



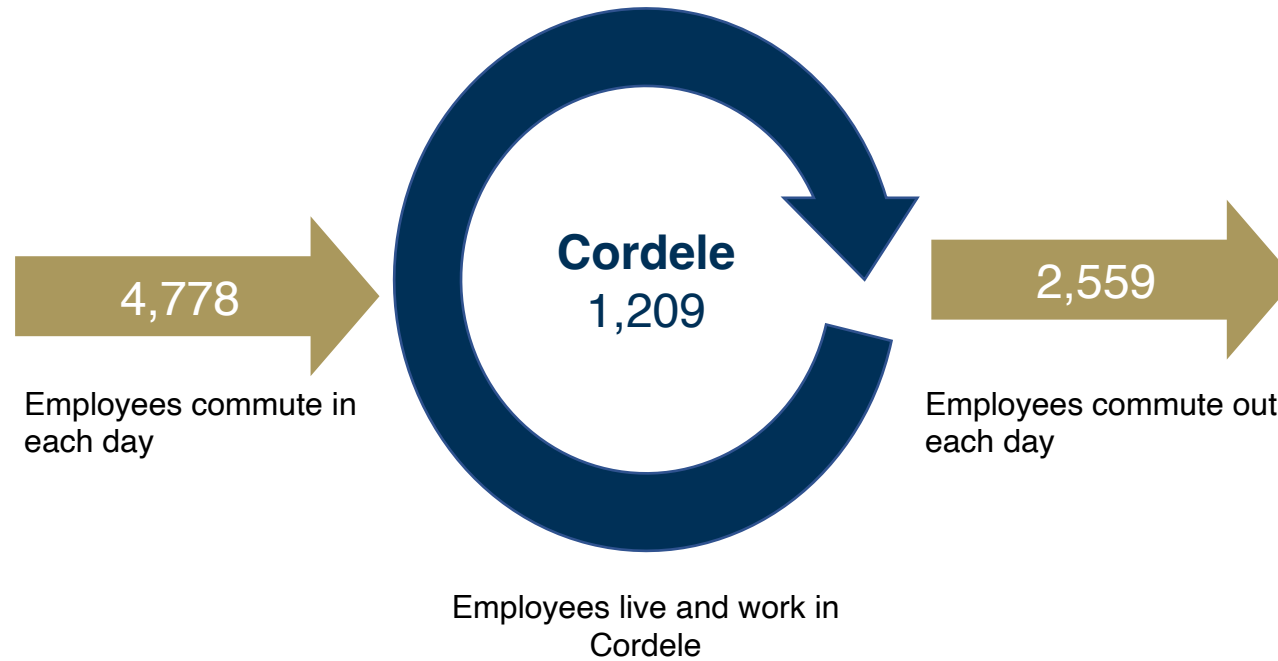
Population

Median Household Income



Commuting Patterns

CORDELE WORKER INFLOW/OUTFLOW, 2021



Housing Tenure

Rental Rate

60%
Cordele

35%
Georgia

46%
Crisp

Homeownership Rate

40%
Cordele

65%
Georgia

54%
Crisp



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Home Value

Source: Zillow 2024



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Building Permits

Housing Availability

For Sale

27

Listings

8%

Less than
list price

132

Days on the
market



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Industry Data

CRISP COUNTY EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR &

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	TOTAL EMPLOYEE COUNT	AVG WAGE/SALARY
Government	1,381	\$41,577
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,373	\$50,428
Retail Trade	1,326	\$32,186
Manufacturing	1,310	\$46,513
Accommodation and Food Services	991	\$18,214
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	504	\$28,777
Wholesale Trade	417	\$79,230
Other Services (except Public Administration)	355	\$28,051
Transportation and Warehousing	335	\$55,704
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	324	\$31,569

- Government employment comprises the largest group of employees in Crisp County
- Highest wages are paid to employees in the Wholesale Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors



Stakeholder Feedback

Strengths & Weaknesses

A word cloud where the size of the text represents its frequency. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape. The most prominent words are in blue, while others are in gold.

Cordele Railway Park
Lake Blackshear
Crisp Regional
Proximity to I-75
Albany State University Cordele Center
City Infrastructure
Job Growth
Existing Historic Districts

A word cloud where the size of the text represents its frequency. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape. The most prominent words are in blue, while others are in gold.

Youth Retention
Vacancy
Low Median Income
Blight
Housing Stock
Population Loss
Heir Property



Stakeholder Feedback

Opportunities & Threats

Creating Housing Diversity
Entry Level Housing
Home Rehabilitation
Cordele's 25 by 25 Program
Land Bank
Infill Development
Short Term Rental for Nurses/Residents
Quality Rental Housing

Limited New Development
Blight
No County Infrastructure
Long Term Vacancy
Lack of Quality Apartments
Finding Contractors
Attracting Residential Developers



Major Takeaways



Cordele and Crisp County can support additional housing units within the target sales price.



Investment in the historic downtown is important, as retail follows rooftops.



Diversifying the city's housing mix is extremely important in attracting and retaining a quality workforce (i.e., hospital employees).



New city leadership and land bank will be instrumental in offering housing solutions.



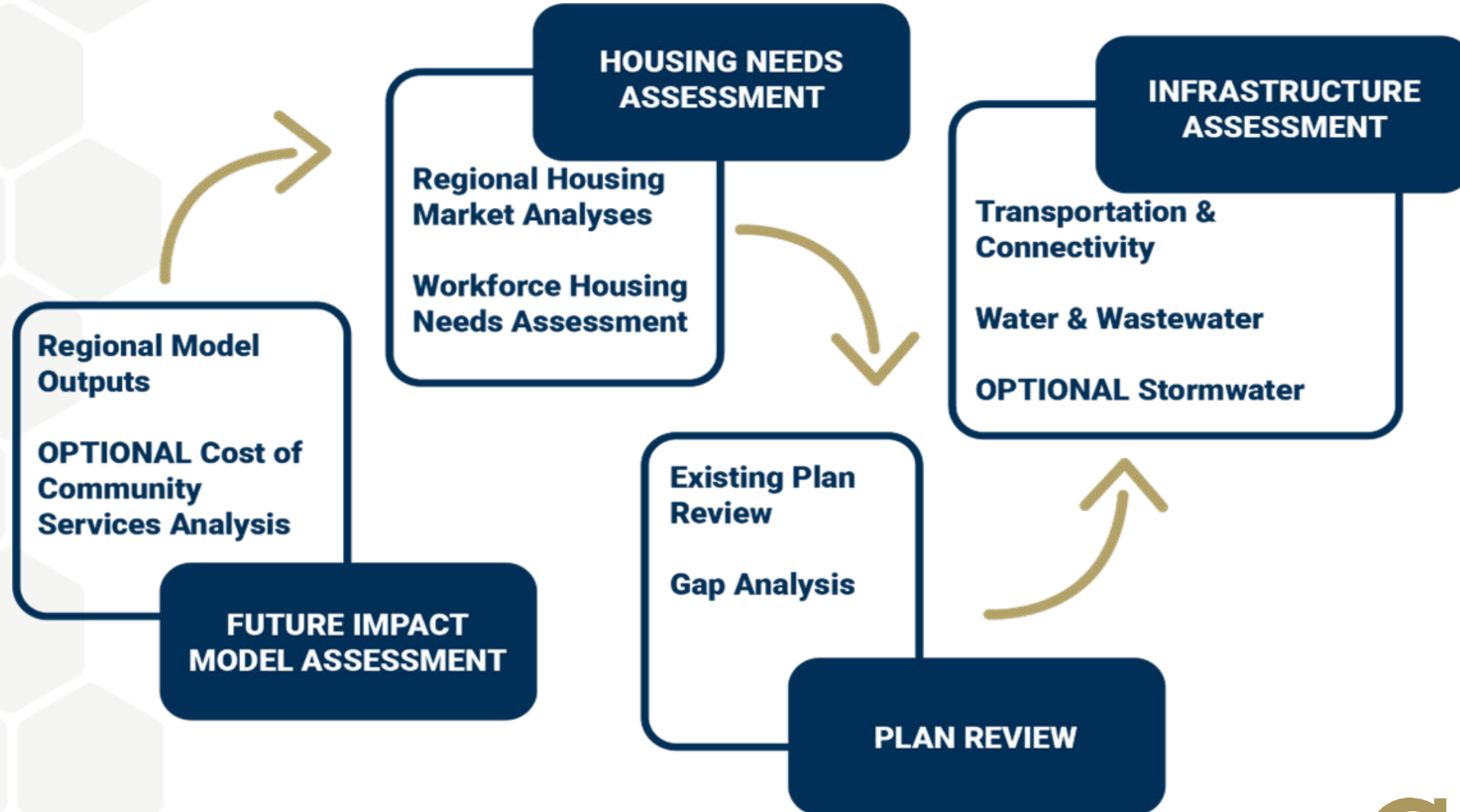


The Coastal Housing Crunch

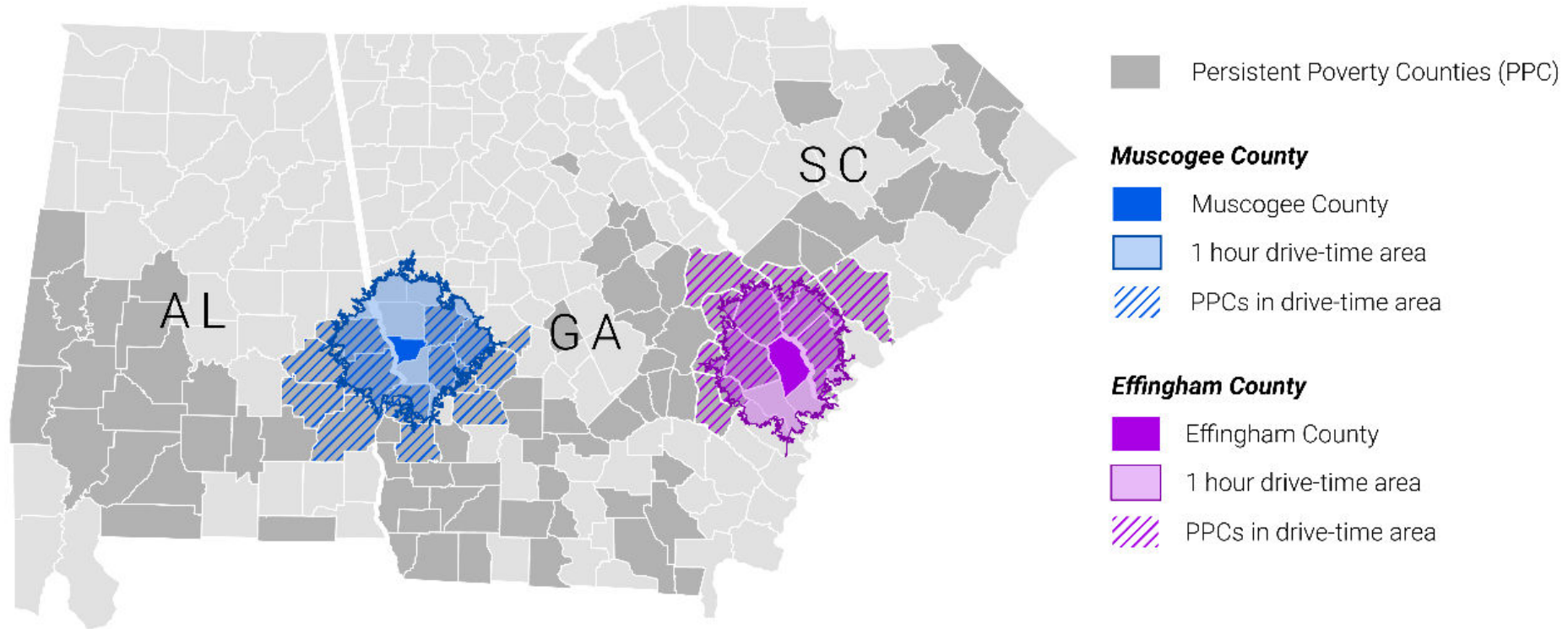


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Coastal Housing Needs Assessment + Planning Review

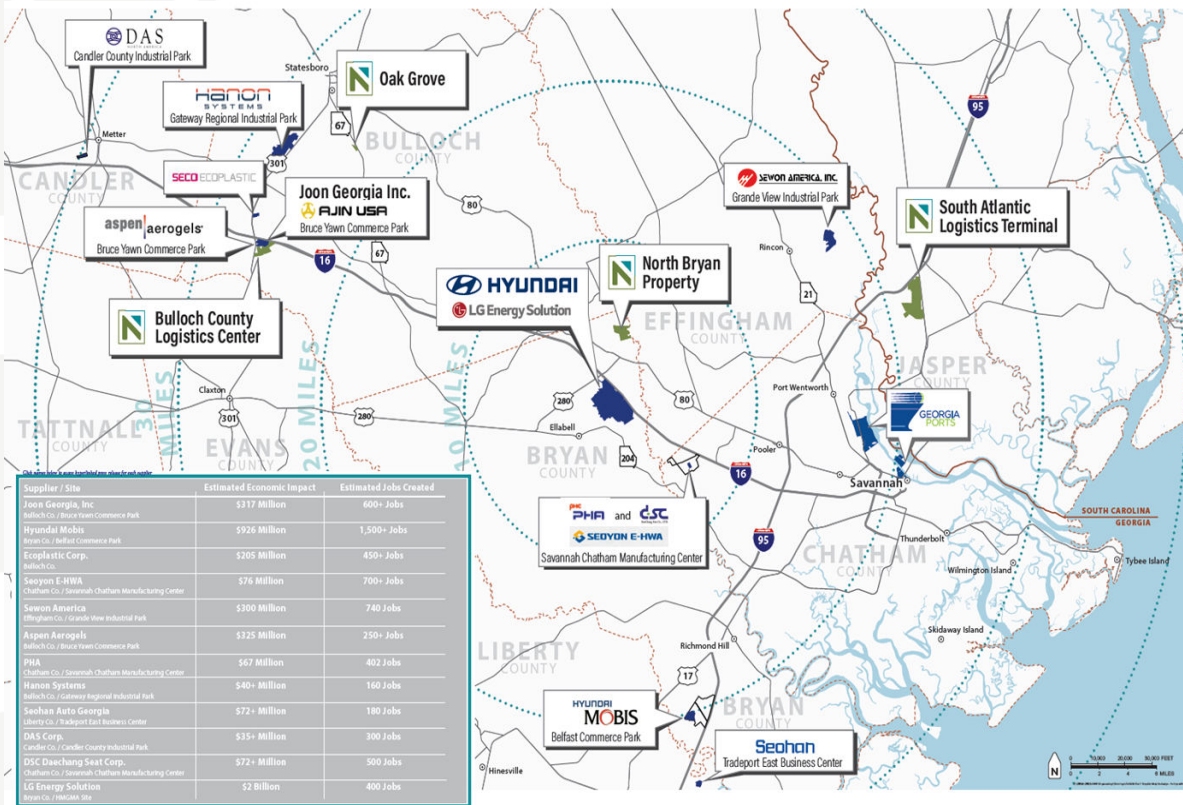


Future Impact Simulation (FIS) Model Development

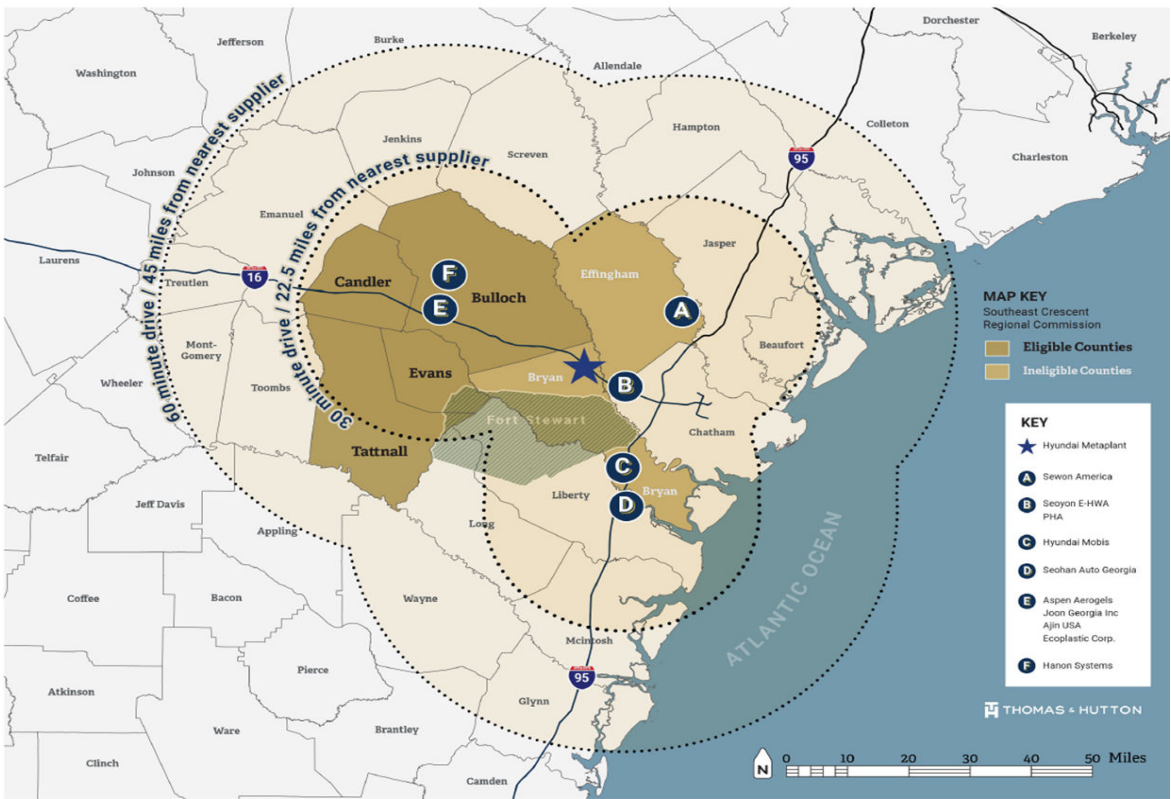


Regional Context

HMGMA Regional Supplier Ecosystem

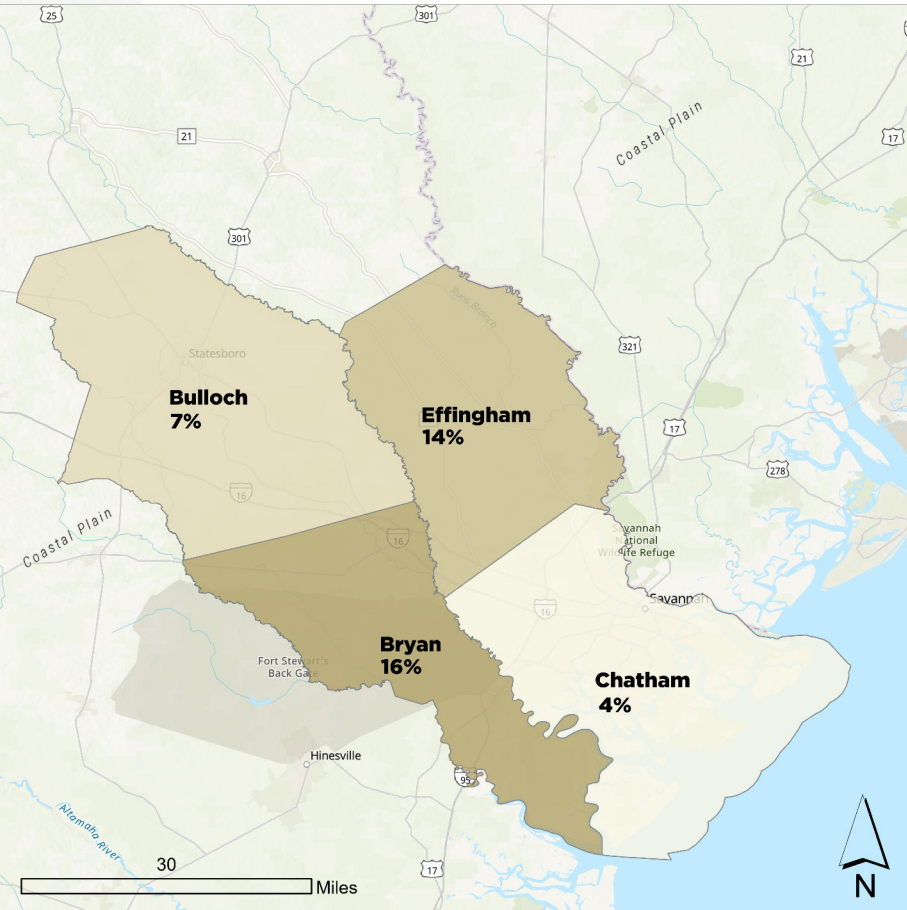


Drive Times

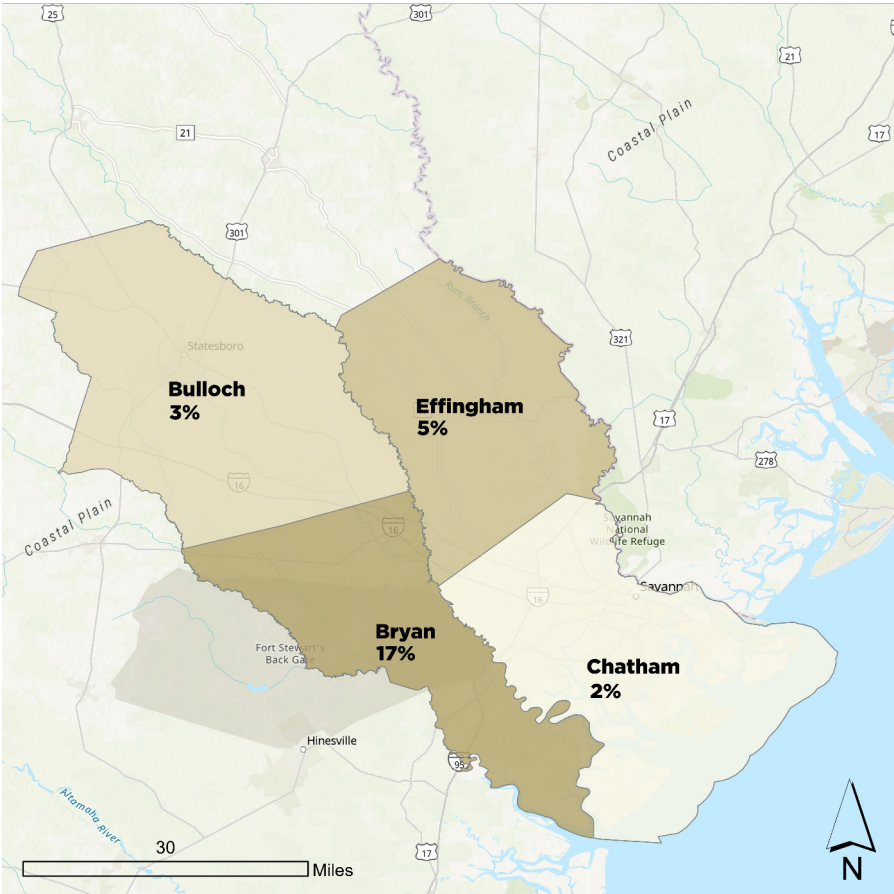


Strong Organic Population Growth

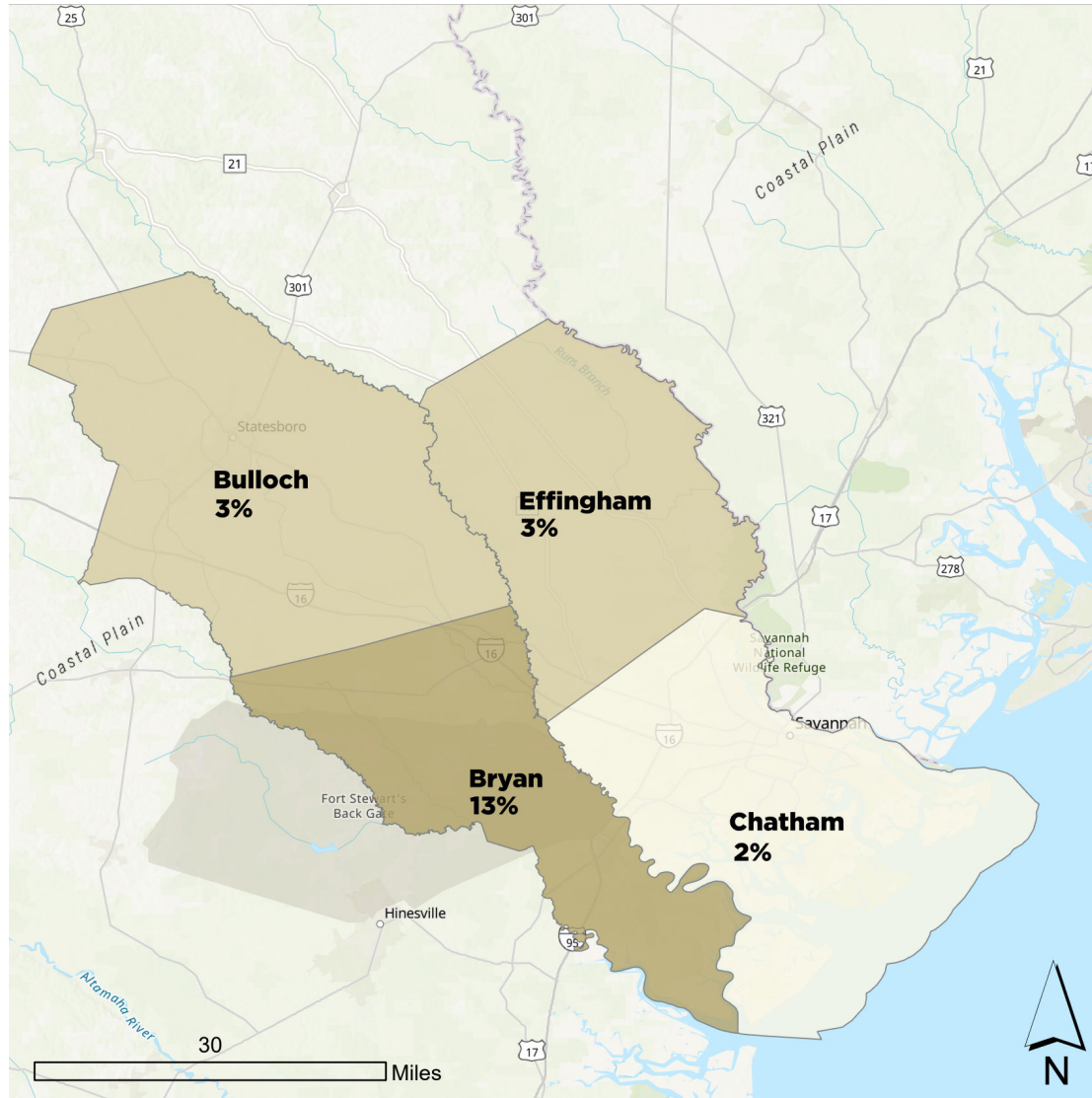
2015 - 2020 Population Increase



2020 – 2022 Population Increase

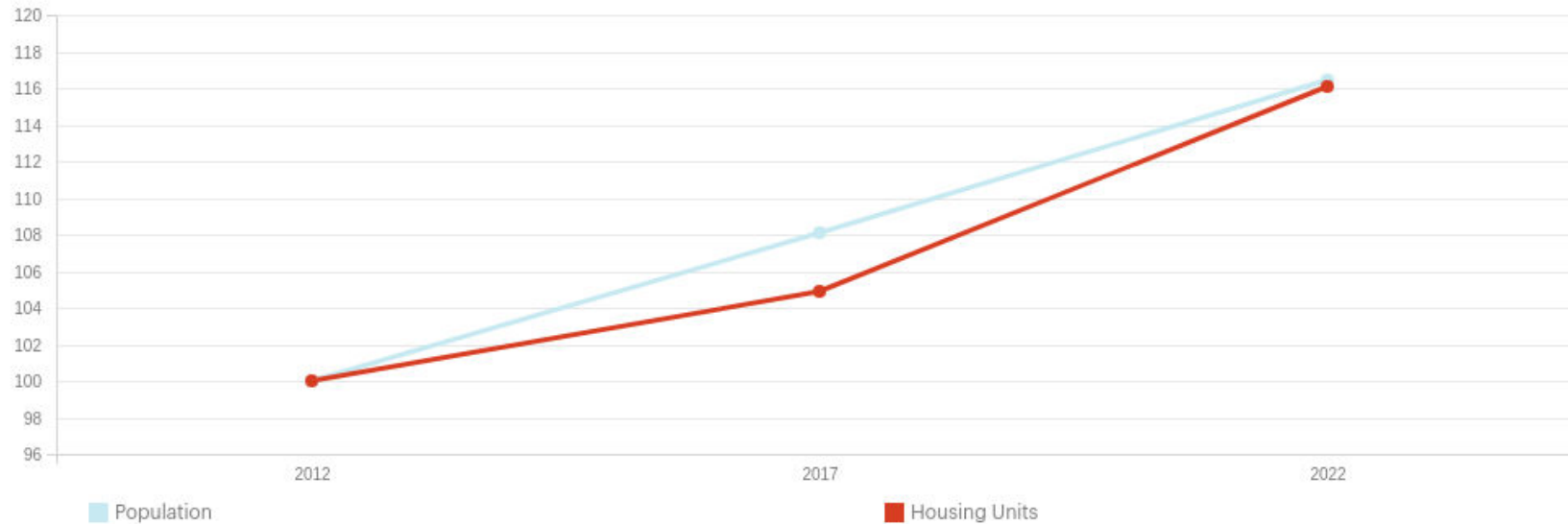


Future Impact Simulation™ (FIS) Projections



Population Growth v Housing Stock

Savannah Metro Area (Bryan, Chatham, Effingham)



Note: Large variations over time may be due to small population groups.

Source: [Census, LEHD](#) ⓘ

2008-2012 - 2018-2022 Data Contains: 1 Metro Area ([show](#))

2011 - 2021 Data Contains: 1 Metro Area ([show](#))

POLICYMAP



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Future Impact Simulation™ Forecast

BRYAN COUNTY

6,408

ADDITIONAL POPULATION

2,381

NEW HOUSEHOLDS

1,547

NEW K-12 STUDENTS

BULLOCH COUNTY

2,174

ADDITIONAL POPULATION

895

NEW HOUSEHOLDS

582

NEW K-12 STUDENTS

CHATHAM COUNTY

5,179

ADDITIONAL POPULATION

2,367

NEW HOUSEHOLDS

1,538

NEW K-12 STUDENTS

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

2,263

ADDITIONAL POPULATION

852

NEW HOUSEHOLDS

554

NEW K-12 STUDENTS



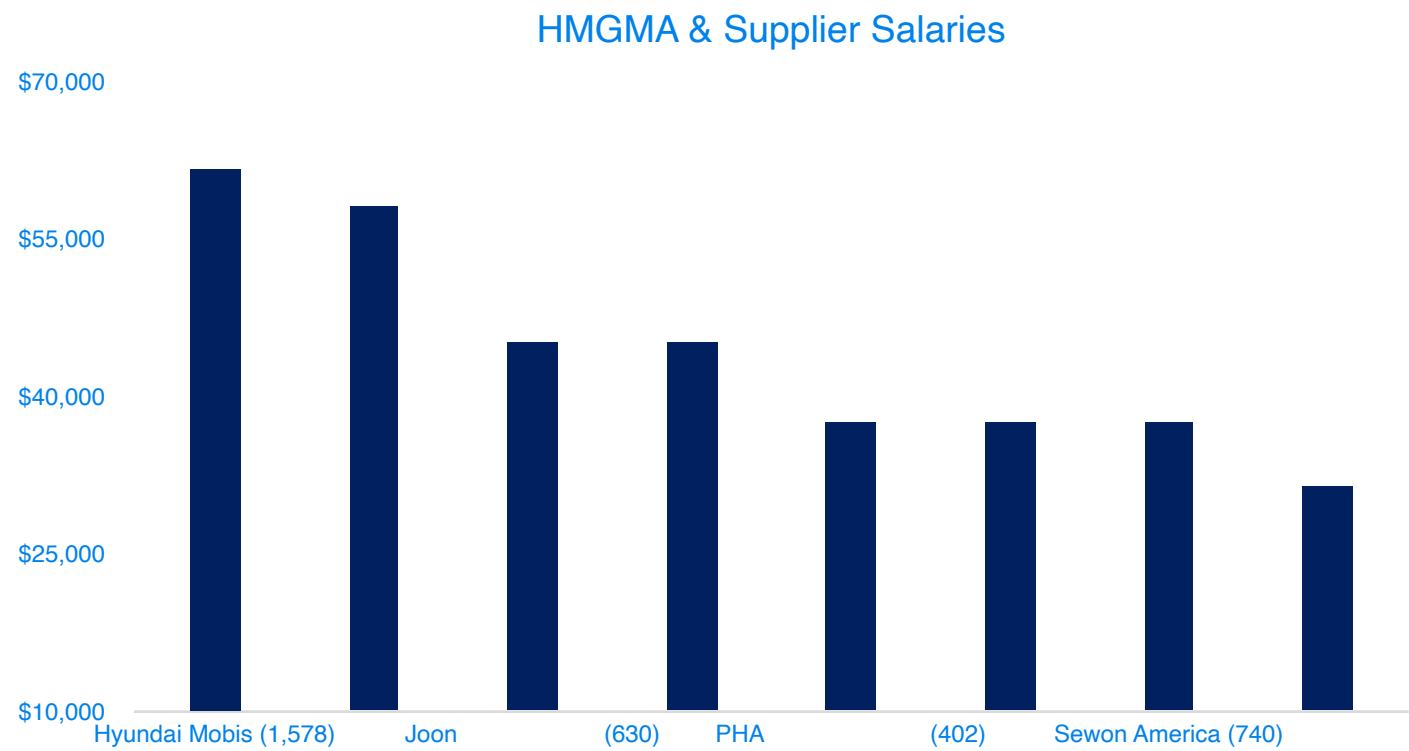
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Regional Housing Demand

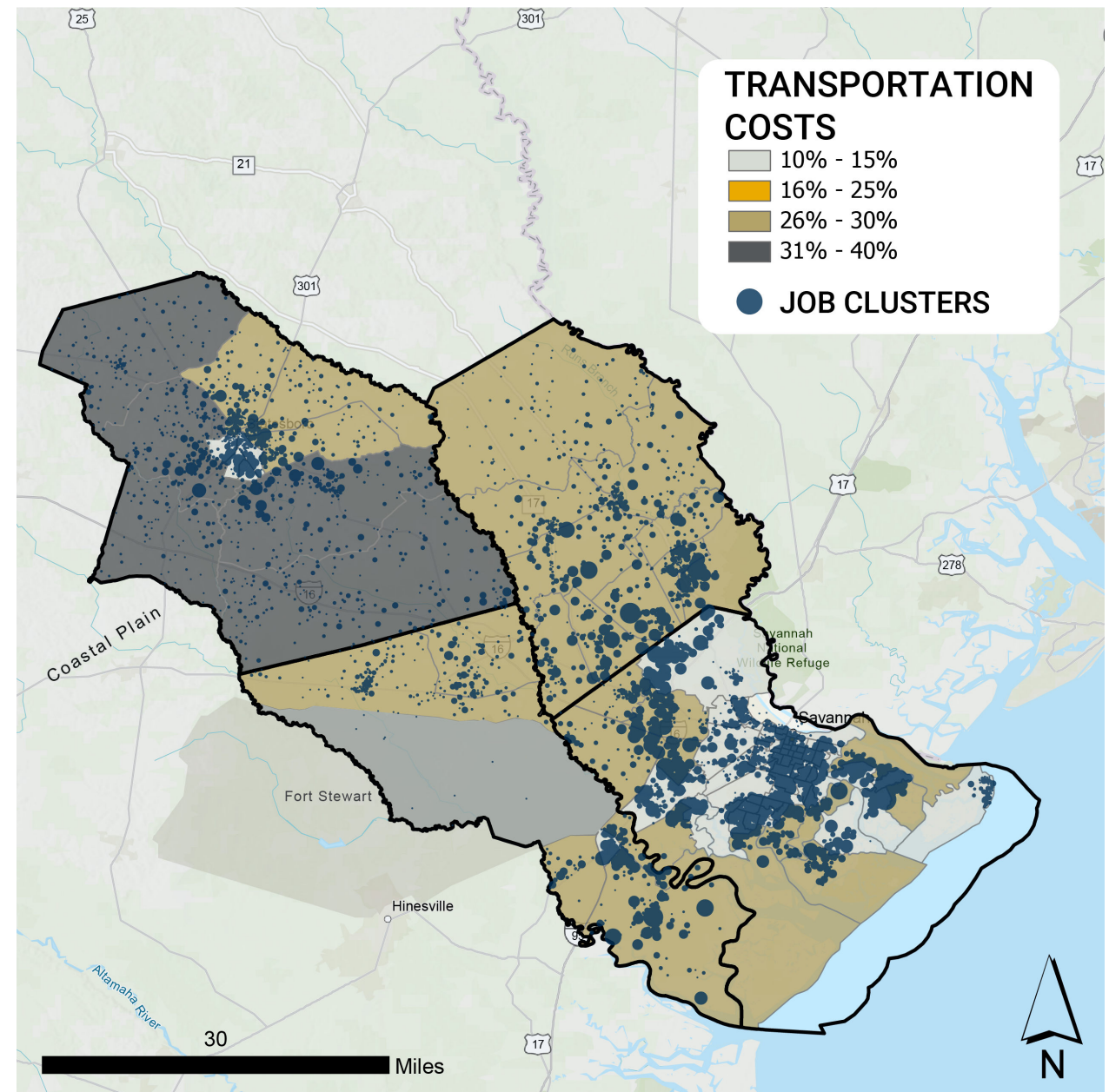
PROJECTED COMMUNITY HOUSING DEMAND	BRYAN	BULLOCH	CHATHAM*	SAVANNAH	EFFINGHAM
8 Year Unit Deficit	6,620	7,815	17,626	3,711	5,198
Annual Unit Projection Targets	828	977	2,203	464	650



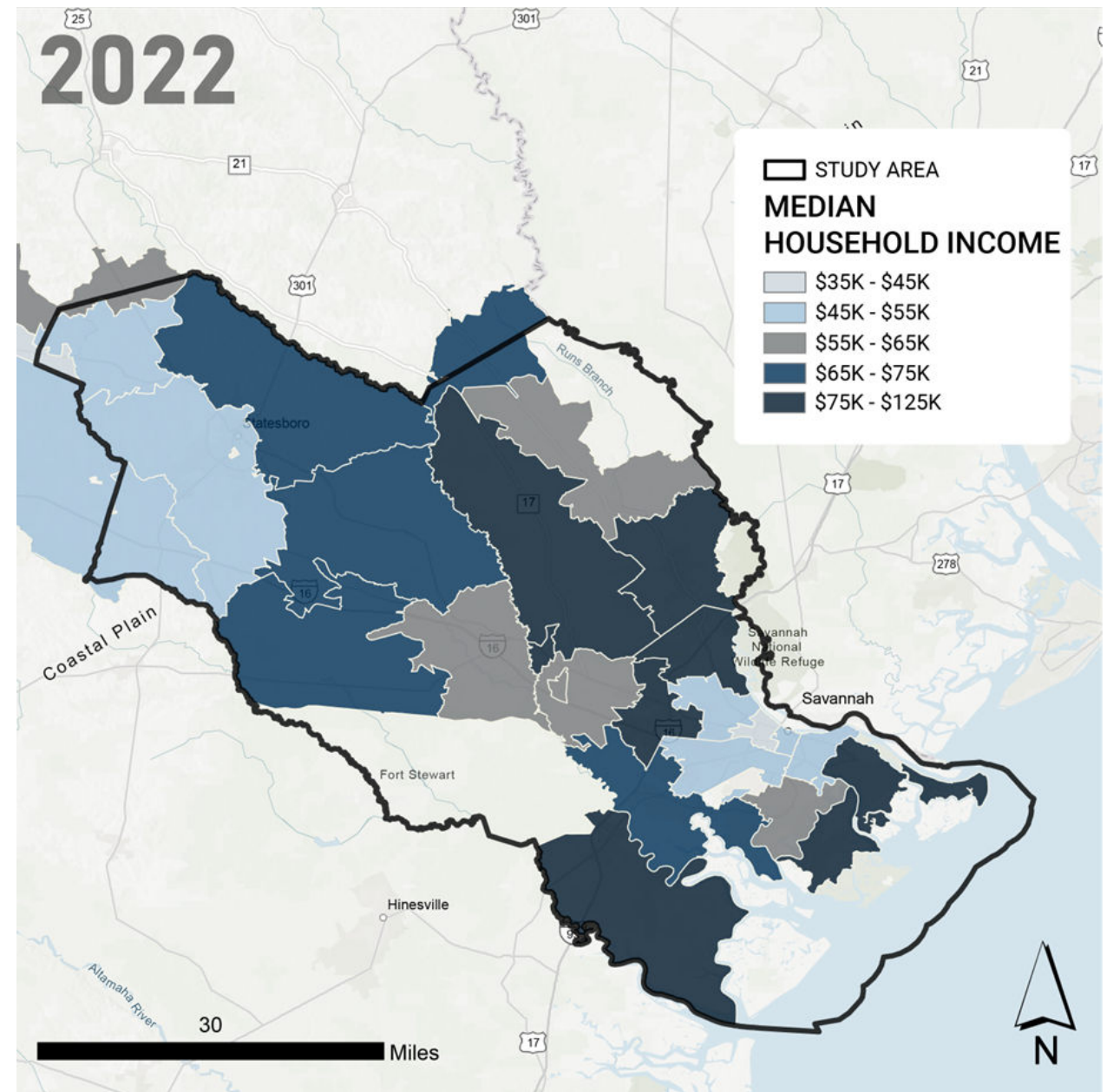
Announced Salaries



Regional Jobs + Transportation Costs



Regional Median Household Incomes



Home Ownership Affordability

\$66,171

Median Household
Income

53

Average Days on
Market

-48%

Change in Days on
Market

\$204,995

Affordable Home
Price

2

Average Months
Supply Inventory

\$315,581

Average Home
Value

(Chatham Tax Assessor)



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Moving Towards Solutions



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Looking Towards Solutions

- Rural Workforce Housing Grant
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Code Review
- Site Identification and Evaluation
- Mobile Home Redevelopment
- Infrastructure Review and Coordination
- Georgia Initiative for Community Housing
- Address Heirs Property
- Establish a Land Bank
- Establish a Land Trust
- Consistent Permit Tracking
- Redevelopment of Excess Public Property
- Historic District Designation





Site Identification and Evaluation



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Site Identification + Evaluation



Identifying and prioritizing sites for housing development in partnership with partners can prepare a community to address housing needs.



Infill Redevelopment

Statesboro, Georgia

- January 2008 – Single Family Home (poor condition)
- September 2012 – Vacant Lot
- January 2025 – 7-unit cottage court style development



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Gentle Density



Development costs and sales prices for townhomes and condominiums

	One-family detached	Townhomes	Condo bldg
Acquisition	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Construction costs			
Demolition:		\$100,000	\$100,000
Hard cost total		\$1,140,000	\$1,476,000
Construction costs (\$/sq ft)		\$190	\$205
Sq ft of new structure		6,000	7,200
Soft Cost total		\$124,000	\$157,600
Soft costs (% of demo + hard costs)		10%	10%
Financing Costs		\$62,000	\$78,800
Finance costs (% of demo + hard costs)		5%	5%
Developer Fee:		\$181,950	\$210,930
Developer fee (% of total project cost)		7.5%	7.5%
Total development costs		\$2,607,950	\$3,023,330
Construction Interest:		\$172,125	\$199,540
Loan-to-cost		60%	60%
Interest rate (annual)		5.50%	5.50%
Project time (yrs)		2	2
Equity Return:		\$219,068	\$253,960
Equity contribution (% of total dev costs)		40%	40%
Equity IRR		10%	10%
Total cost/resale price:	1,000,000	\$2,999,143	\$3,476,830
Resale price per unit:	1,000,000	\$999,714	\$579,472

Source: Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings



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Stakeholder Engagement



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Stakeholder Coordination



**Economic
Developers**

**County
Planners**

**Permit
Department**

Sharing information between stakeholders within the county and with surrounding counties can help paint a clear picture of the housing landscape in the county and the region.



Realtors

Developers

**Local
non-profits**



Georgia Heirs Property Law Center



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**Building Generational Wealth and Strengthening
Communities by Securing and Preserving Property Rights**

What We Do



Legal Support



Land Loss Prevention



Asset Education



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