



# CITY OF DAWSONVILLE

## COMPREHENSIVE DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

### PUBLIC KICK-OFF MEETING

SEPTEMBER 7TH, 2023

# INTRODUCTIONS

## CITY OF DAWSONVILLE

### TSW

Land Use, Zoning, Transportation, Placemaking,  
Urban Design, Design Guidelines



Adam Williamson,  
PLA, AICP



Beverly Bell



Nick Johnson,  
AICP

### KB ADVISORY GROUP

Real Estate Market Analysis and  
Recommendations



Geoff Koski



Tate Davis



Gabrielle Oliverio

# AGENDA

Introductions

Project Overview

Downtown Dawsonville: A Closer Look

- Land use analysis and infill opportunities
- Real estate/market analysis

Input Activities

Next Steps



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

---



# PROJECT TASKS

## Task 1: Initiate + Understand

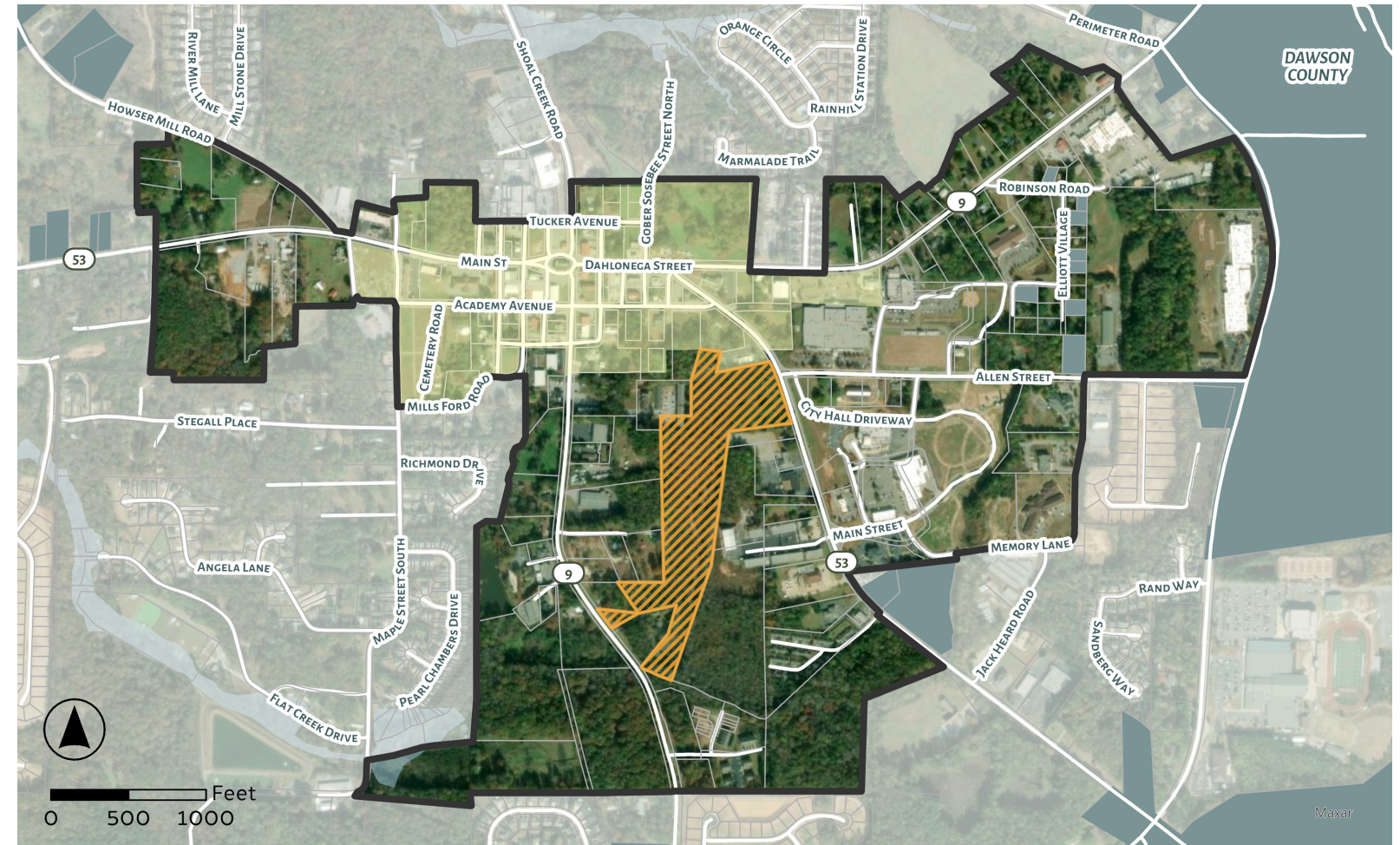
- Analyze existing codes, planning studies, land use, zoning, and transportation.
- Prepare real estate market analysis

## Task 2: Engage + Discover





- Collect community throughout the planning process with three public meetings.

## Task 3: Guide the Future

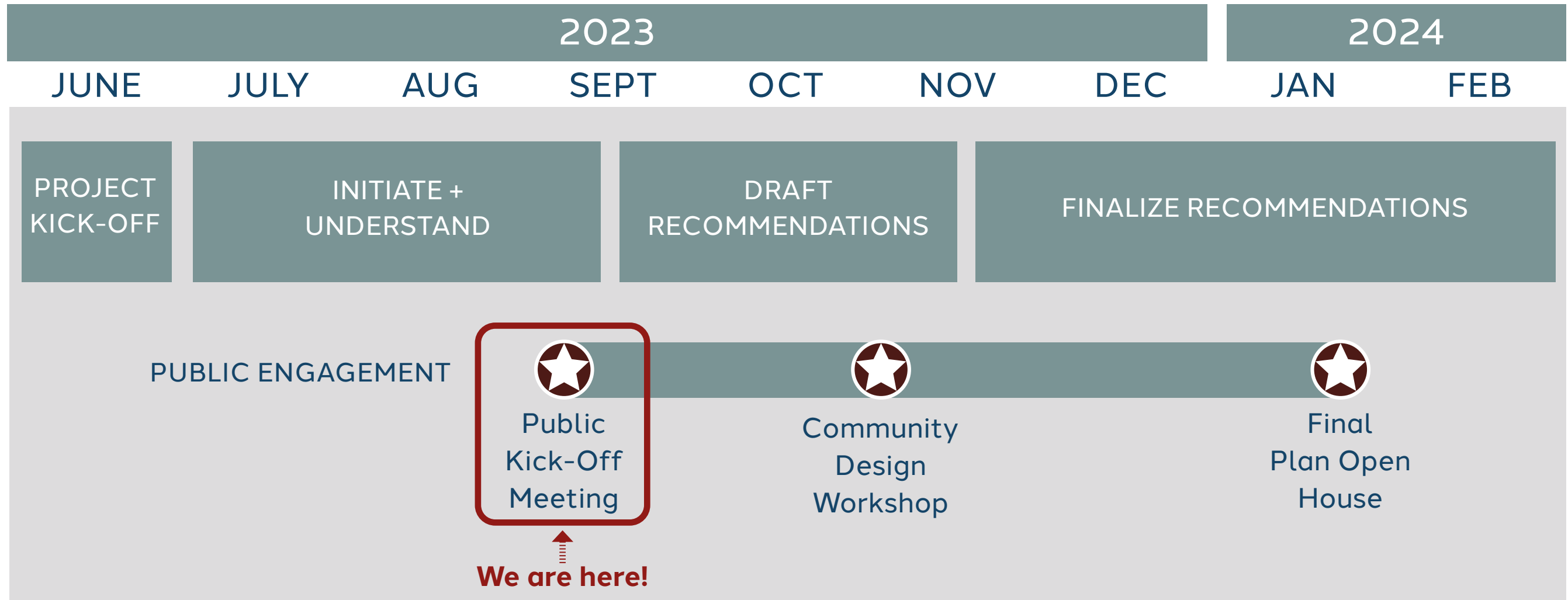
- Develop a community transformation strategy for downtown.
- Produce an implementation and action plan.
- Create design guidelines.



**DOWNTOWN DAWSONVILLE // BASE MAP**

-  17-ACRE CATALYTIC SITE
-  HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  FLOOD ZONES
-  UNINCORPORATED DAWSON COUNTY

# PROJECT TIMELINE



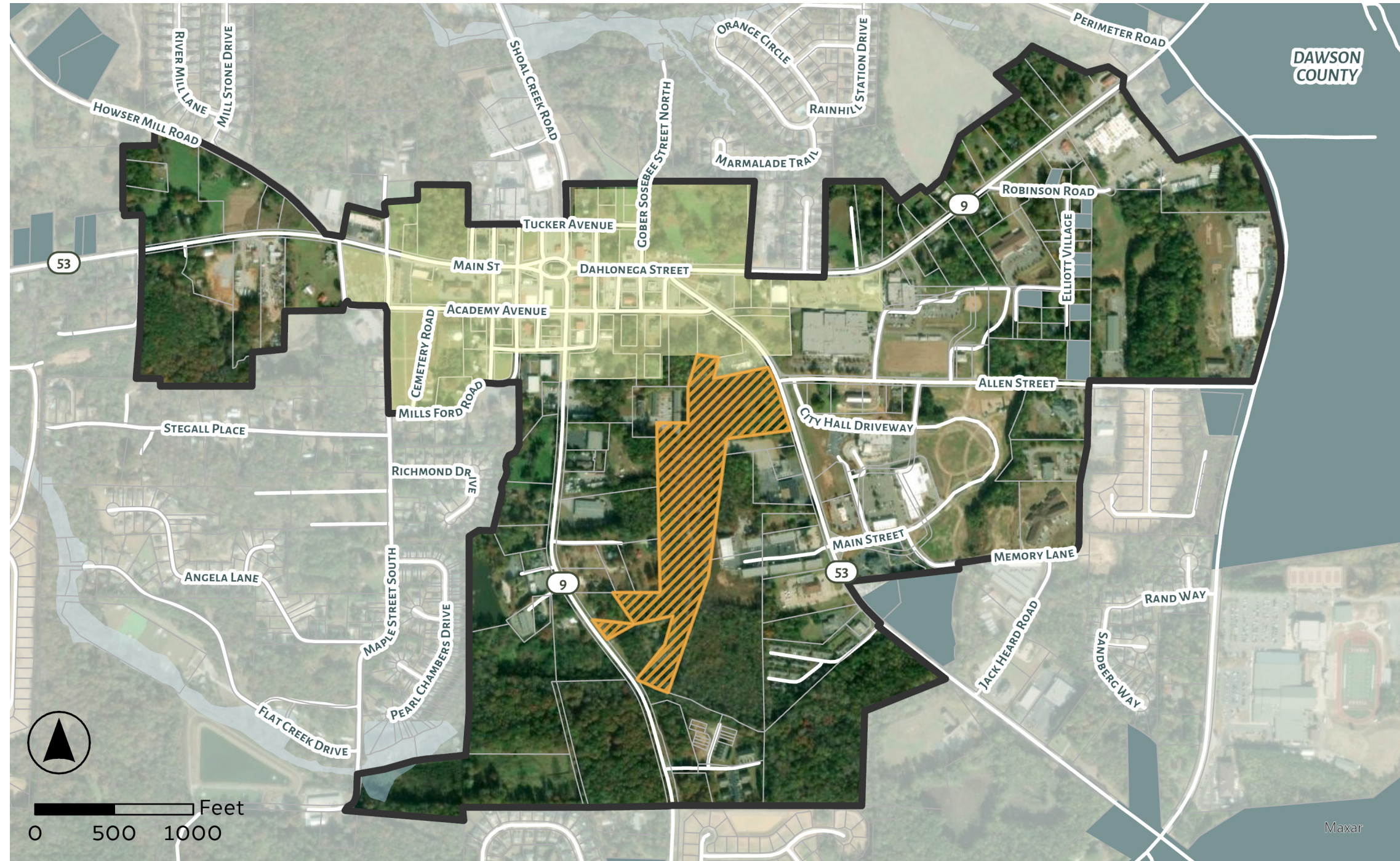
# ANALYSIS TO DATE



# STUDY AREA

Determined by:

- Existing historic district
- Infill opportunities
- Historic resources
- Other civic resources

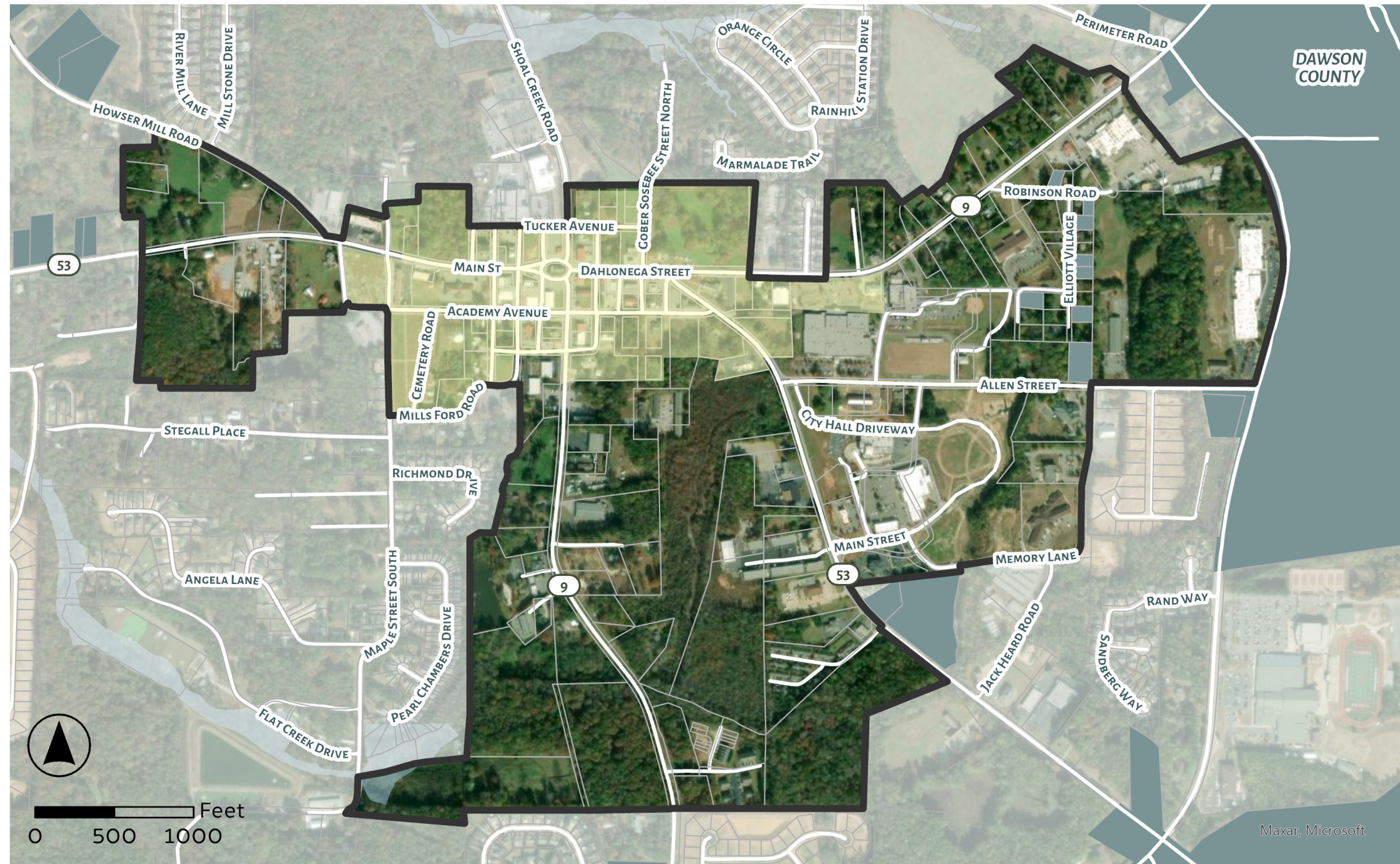




# STUDY AREA

Determined by:

- **Existing historic district**
- Infill opportunities
- Historic resources
- Other civic resources





# STUDY AREA

Determined by:

- Existing historic district
- ***Infill opportunities***
- Historic resources
- Other civic resources

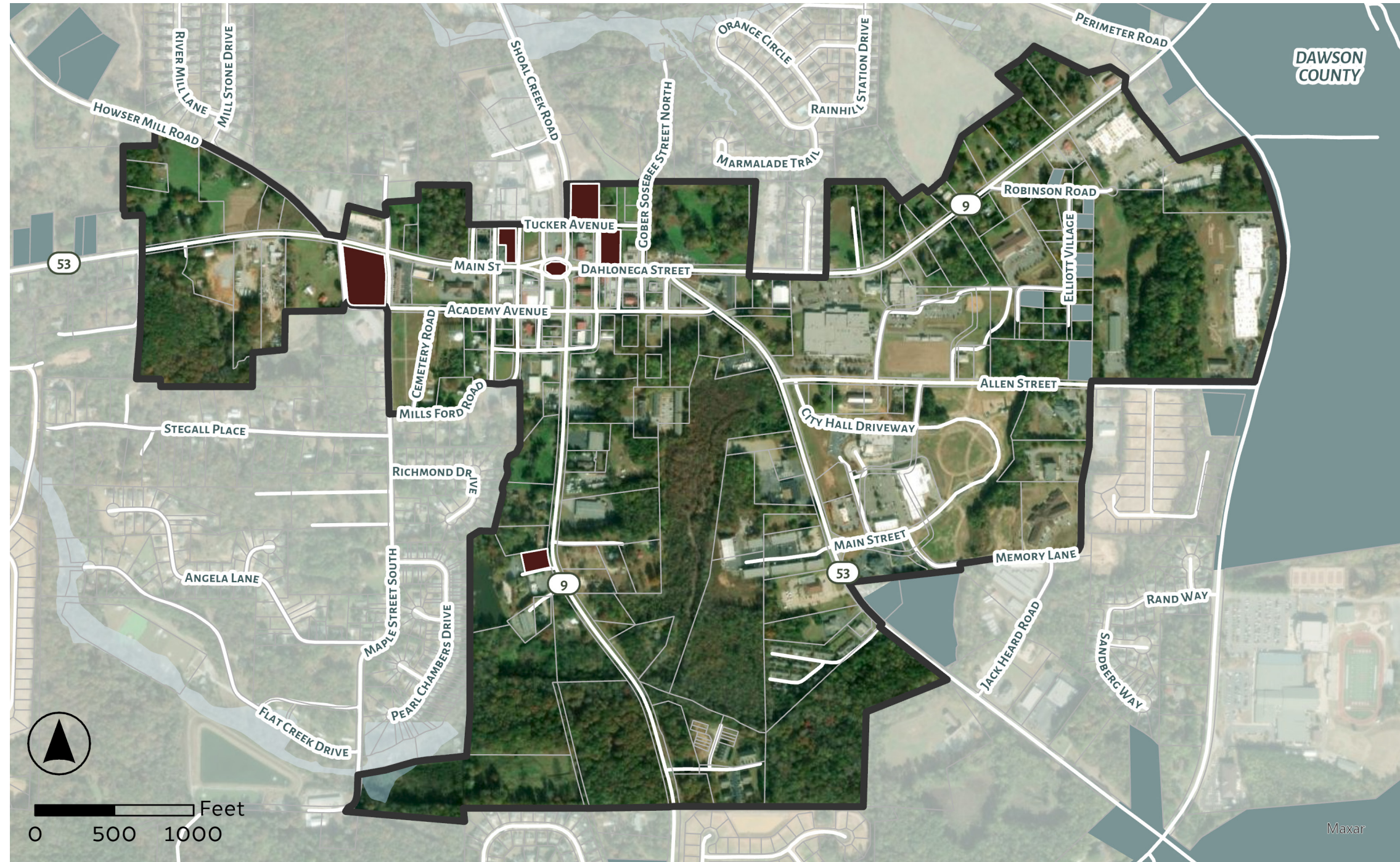




# STUDY AREA

Determined by:

- Existing historic district
- Infill opportunities
- **Historic resources**
- Other civic resources

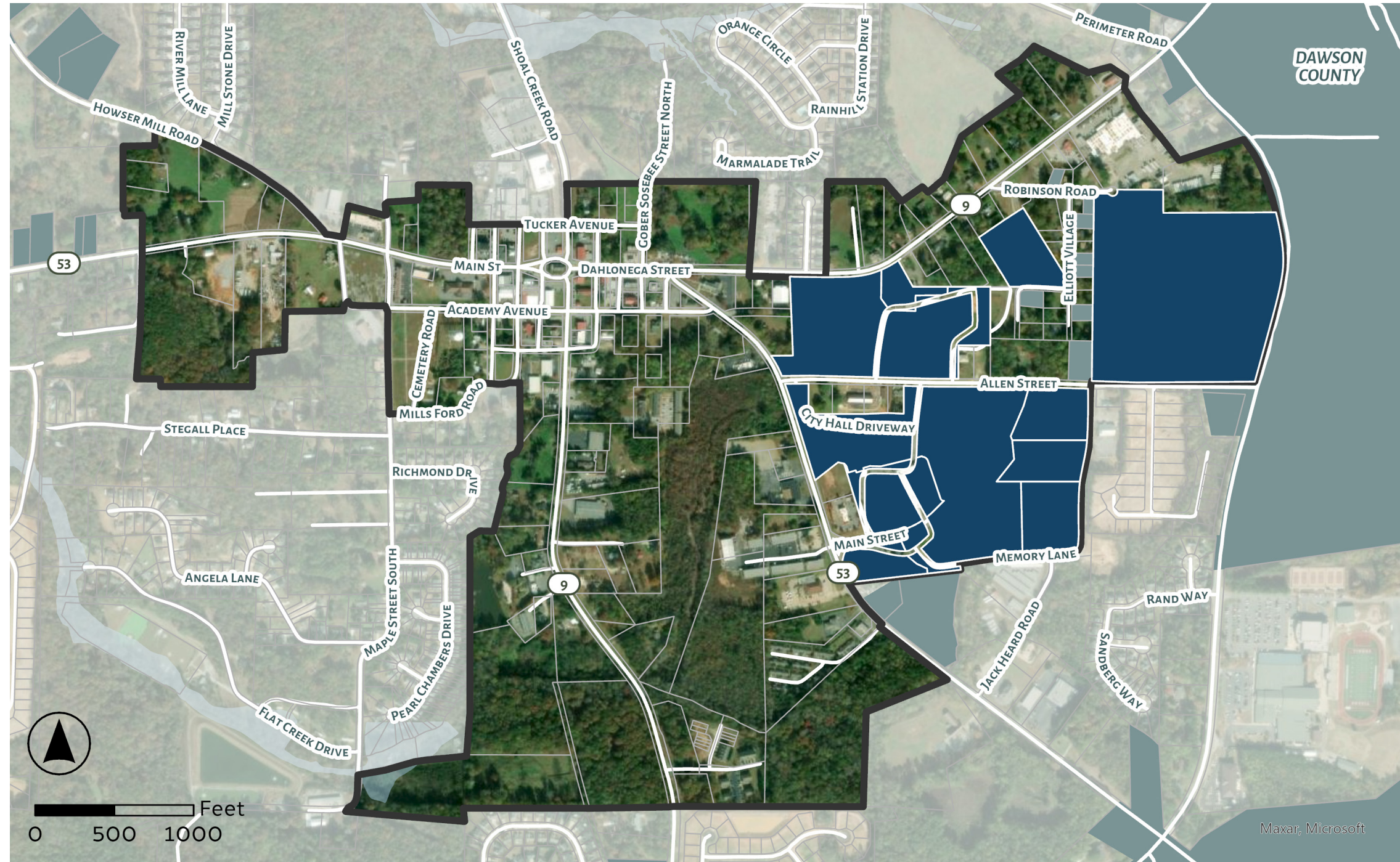




# STUDY AREA

Determined by:

- Existing historic district
- Infill opportunities
- Historic resources
- ***Other civic resources***





# PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

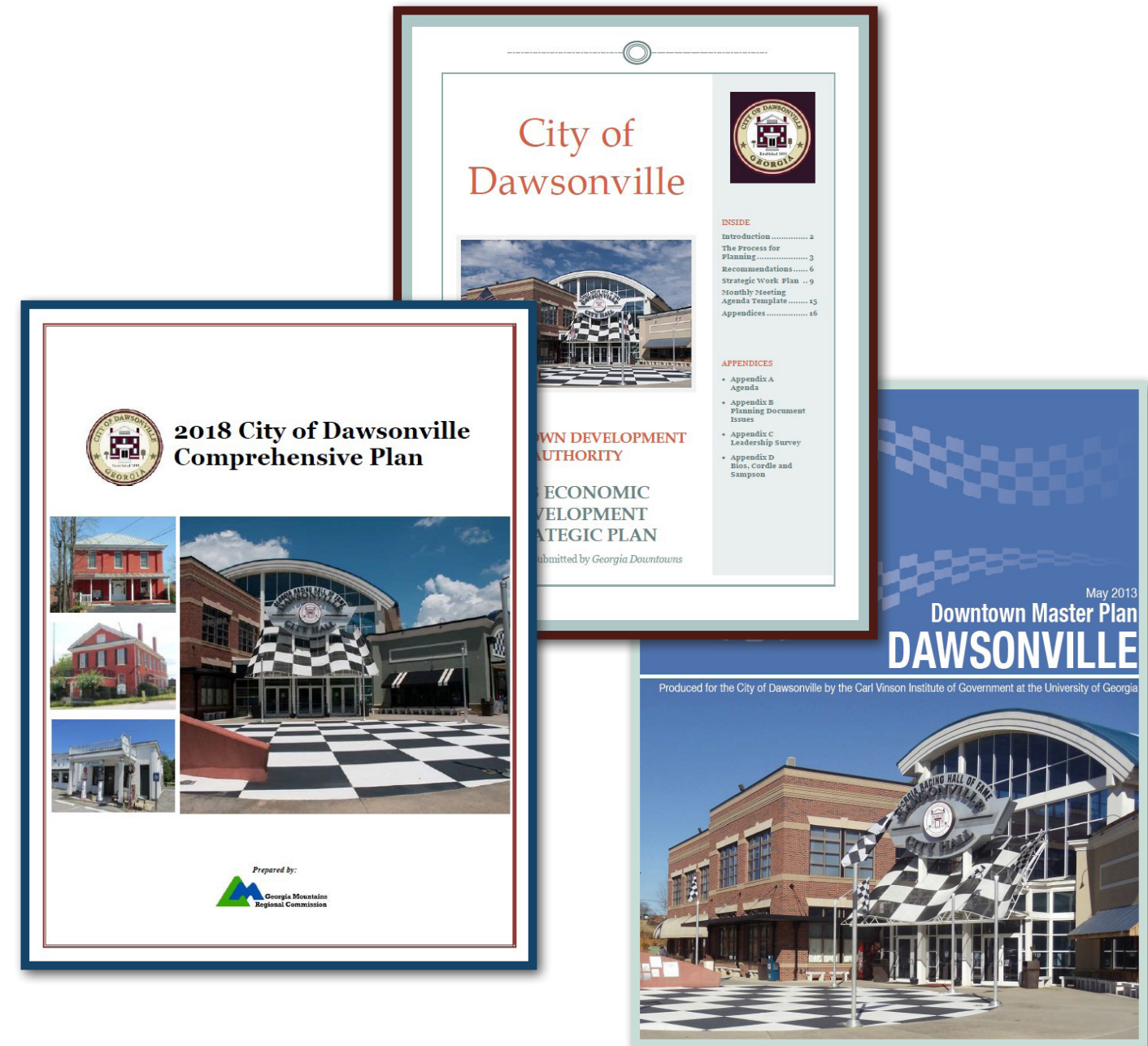
## REVIEWED:

City of Dawsonville Comprehensive Plan (2018)

Economic Development Strategic Plan (2018)

Dawsonville Downtown Master Plan (2013)

Historic District Guidelines (2007)



# PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

## SYNTHESIZED NEEDS/ OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOWNTOWN:

- Concentrated reinvestment in downtown area, including capital improvements and infill
- Adaptive reuse of existing structures
- Creative solutions for housing, walkability, and economic development that integrates together
- Better environment for retail/programming that encourages activity

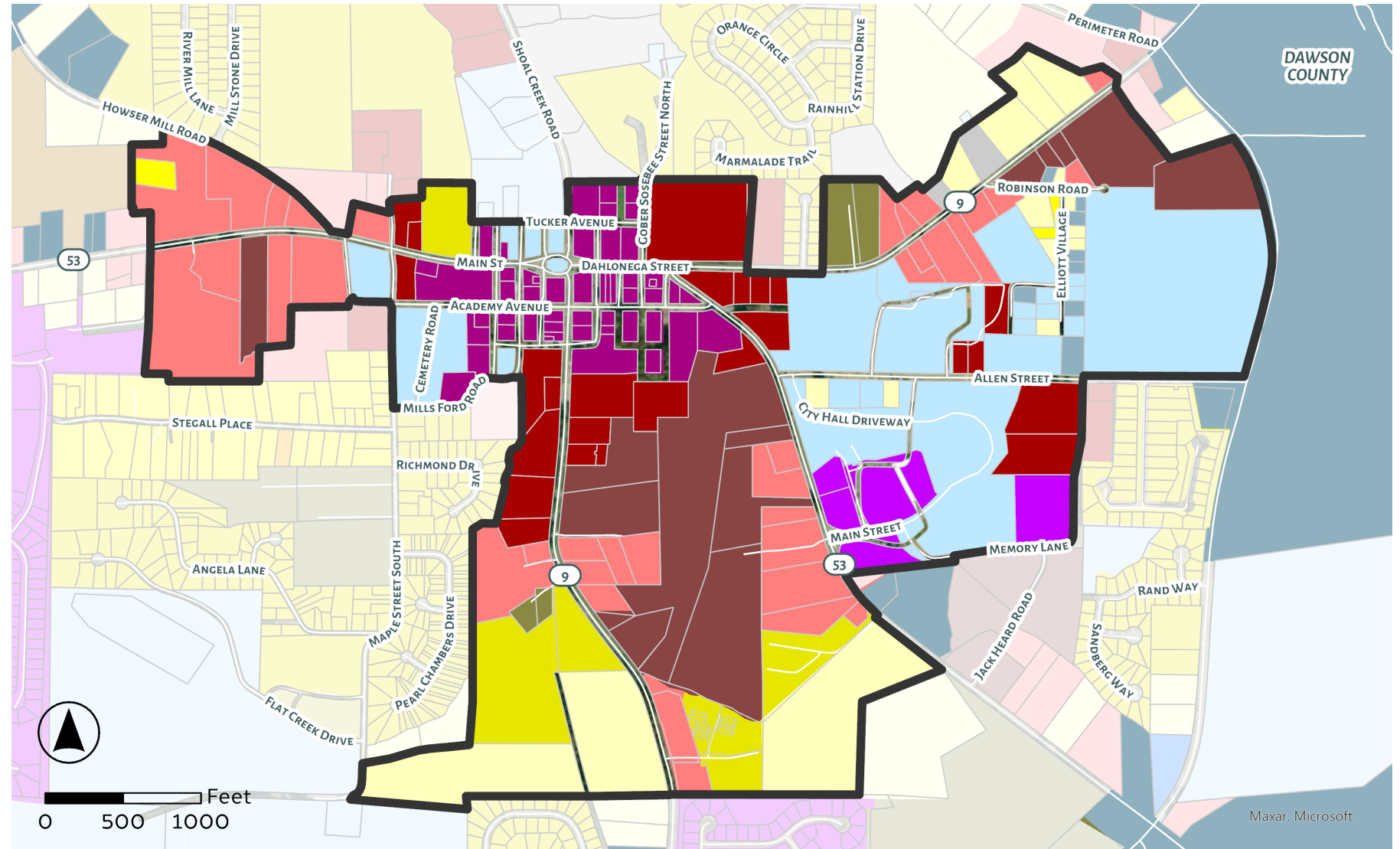
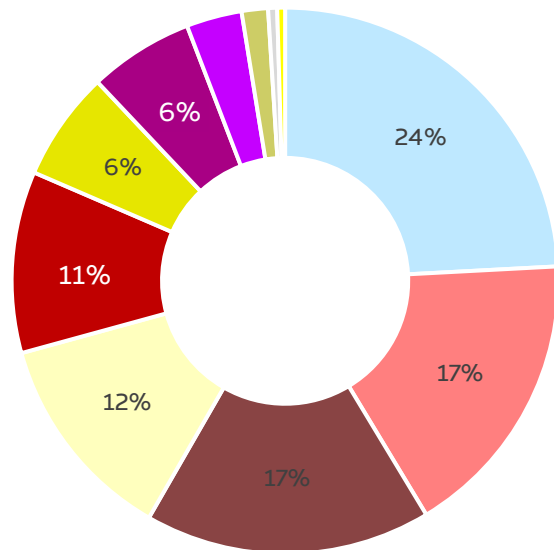




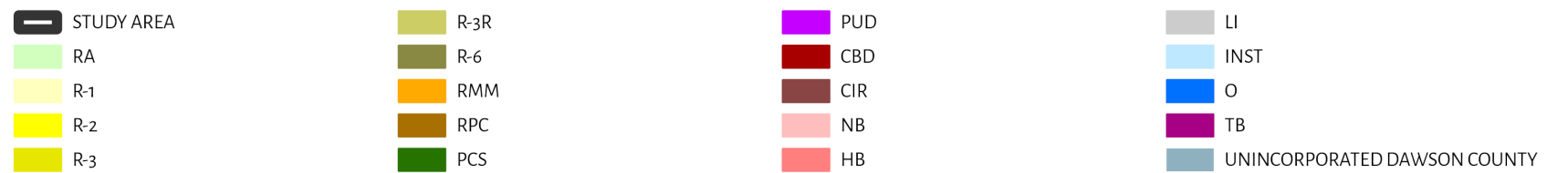
# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## LAND USE & ZONING ANALYSIS

- Zoning extents
- Future land use patterns



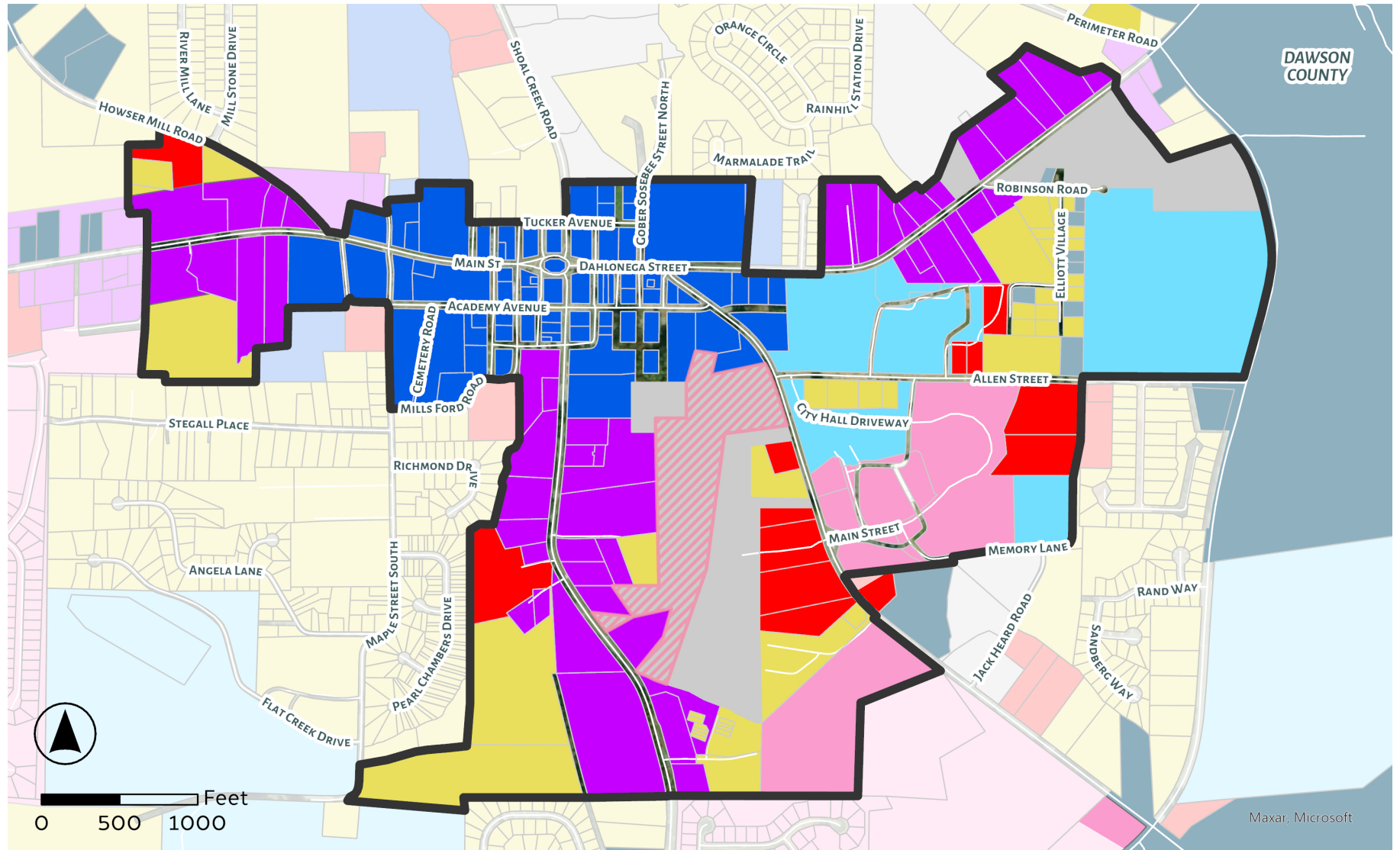
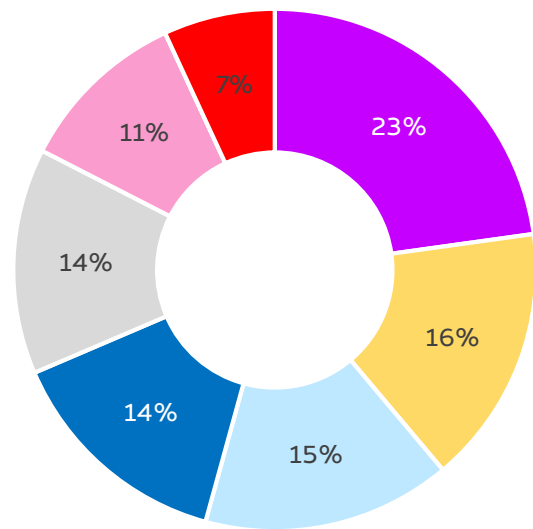
### DOWNTOWN DAWSONVILLE // ZONING DISTRICTS



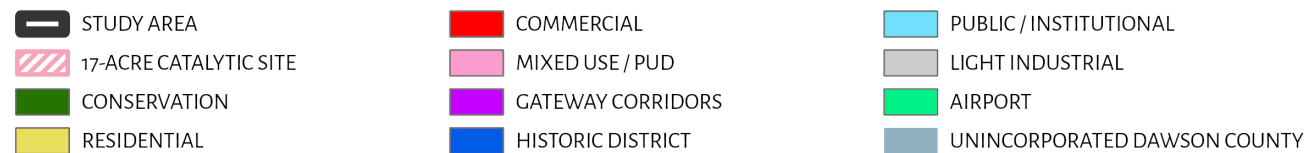
# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## LAND USE & ZONING ANALYSIS

- Zoning extents
- *Future land use designations*



### DOWNTOWN DAWSONVILLE // FUTURE LAND USE





# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## ZONING ALLOWANCES

- Several zoning districts that permit multiple housing types
- Mostly clustered in core grid within historic district, with some to the south along Highway 9
- 19% of study area currently zoned for all types

Type	R-1	R-2, R-3	R-6	PUD	NB	HB	TB	CBD
Single-Family	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Single-Family Attached			X				X	X
Duplexes			X				X	X
Townhomes			X				X	X
Condominiums			X				X	X
Apartments			X				X	X

# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## POLICY TAKEAWAYS

### #1: Most zoning/future land use designations in alignment

- Only 2 cases where future land use vision is restricted by current zoning
- Recommendations should consider adjusting zoning (i.e. rezoning, overlay district) for major redevelopment sites depending on need

- Parcel #093 067  
Zoned: R-1  
FLU: Mixed Use
- Parcels #D04 020 004 & 005  
(Food Lion & other parcels)  
Zoned: INST & PUD  
FLU: Mixed Use

### #2: Some areas within 15-minute walkshed could benefit from more permissive zoning

- Proliferation of “Highway Business” categories along major corridors

### #3: “Low-hanging fruit” infill opportunities within downtown core

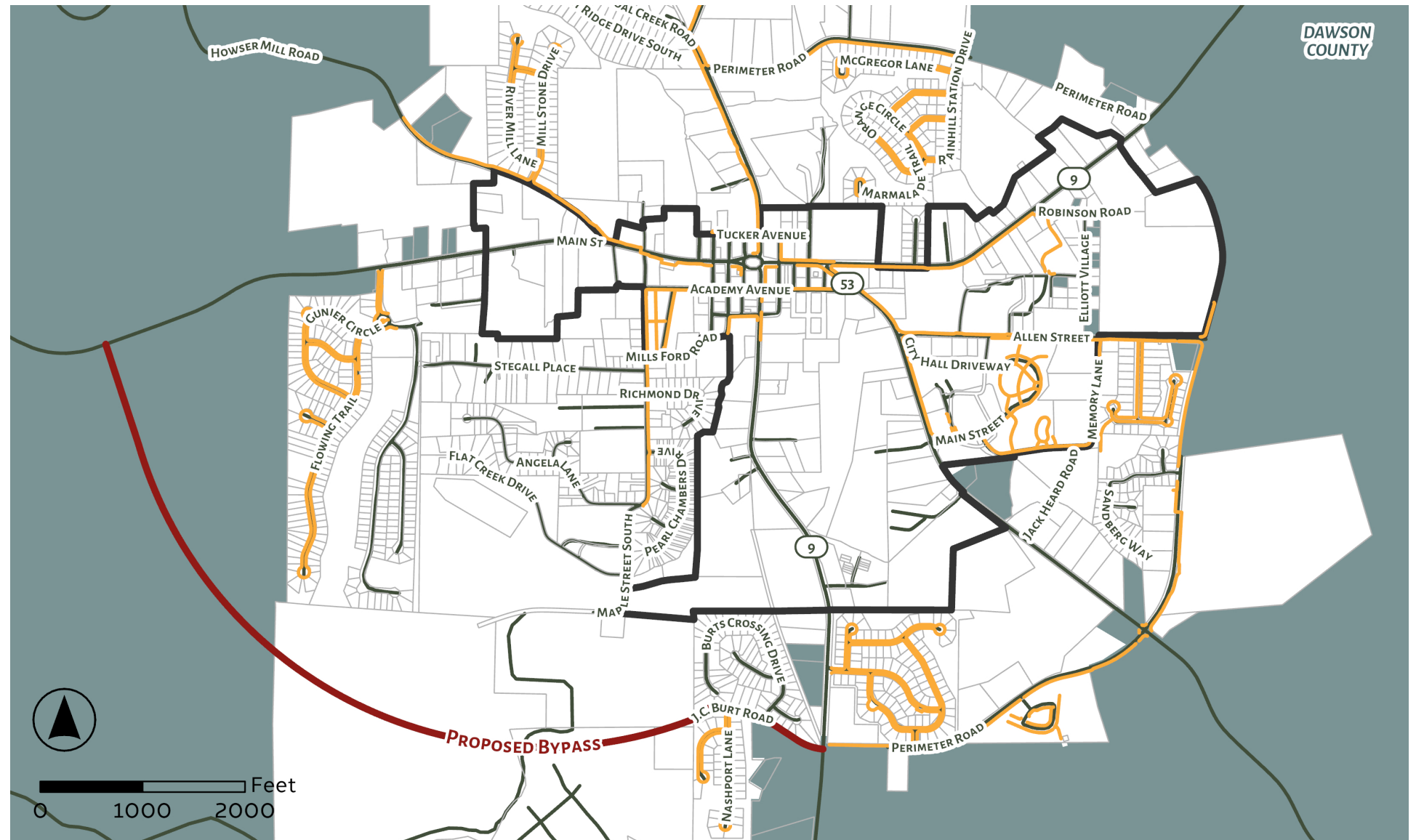
# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## CONNECTIVITY

### Inventory:

- Highway: 2.4 mi
- Total streets: 8.1 mi
- Sidewalks/trails: 4.4 mi

Proposed bypass route to join Hwy 53 & Hwy 9



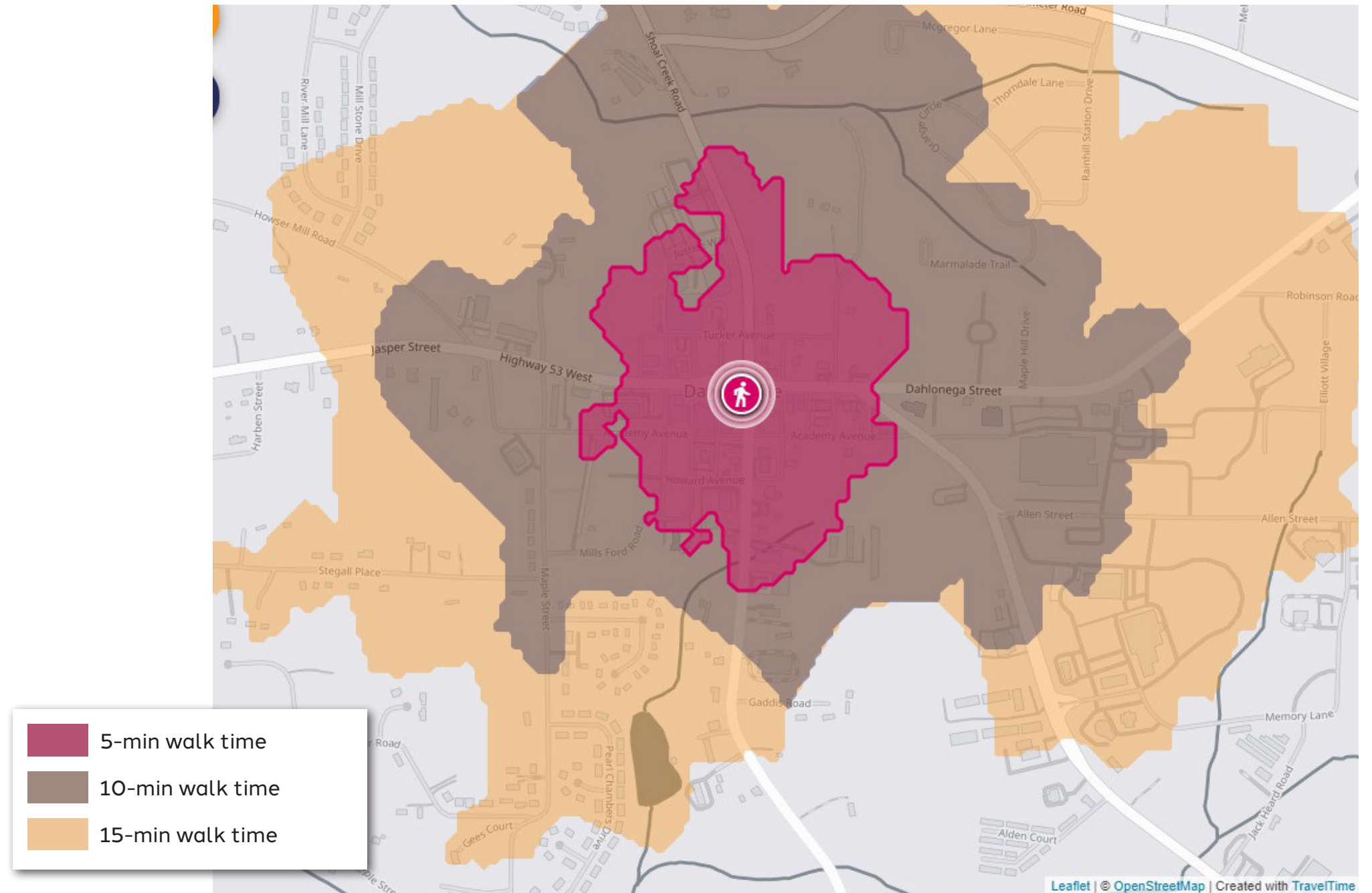
### DOWNTOWN DAWSONVILLE // CONNECTIVITY

- ▭ STUDY AREA
- ROADS
- SIDEWALKS
- UNINCORPORATED DAWSON COUNTY

# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- *Existing grid is supportive of short pedestrian trips*

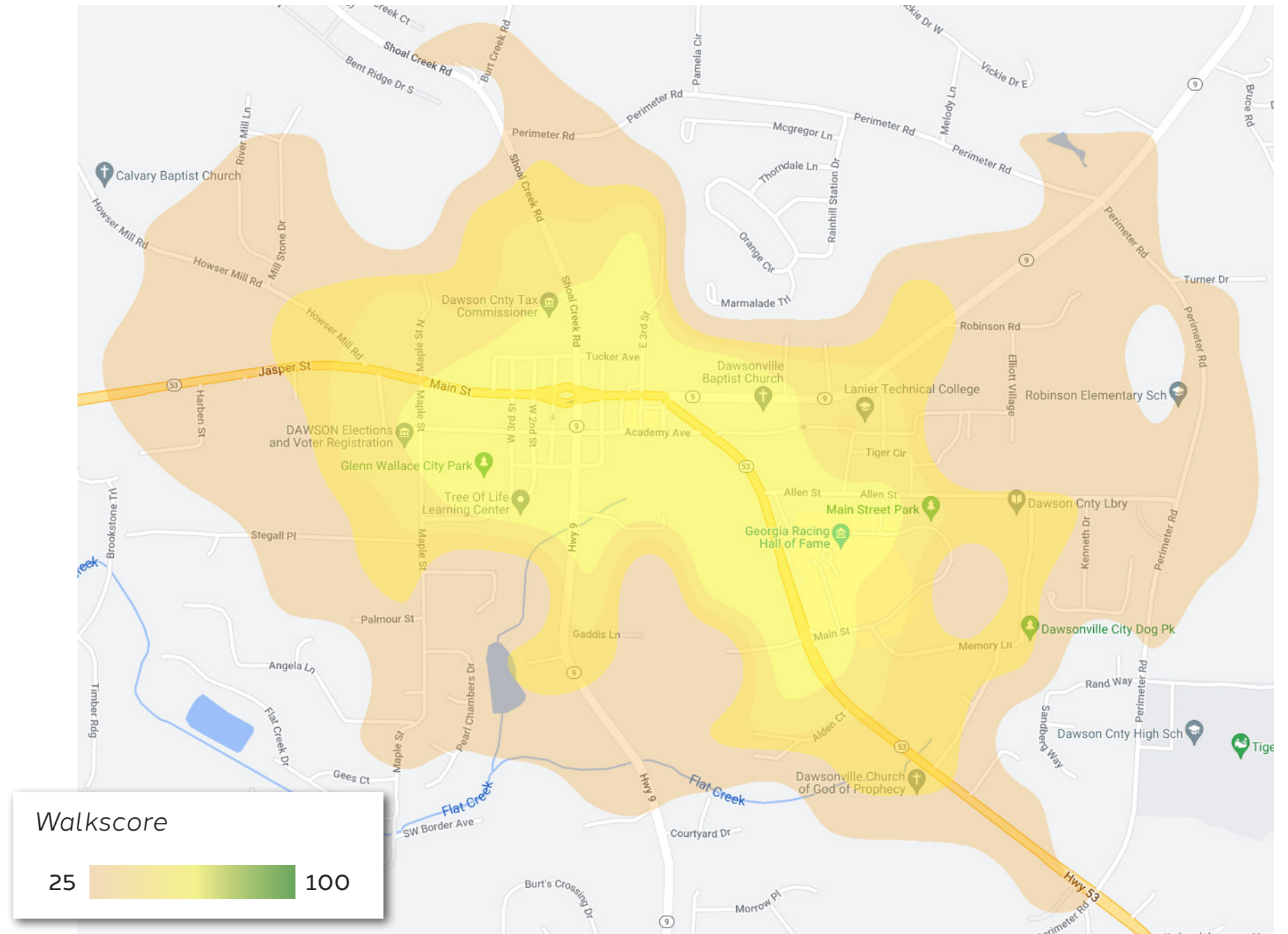




# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

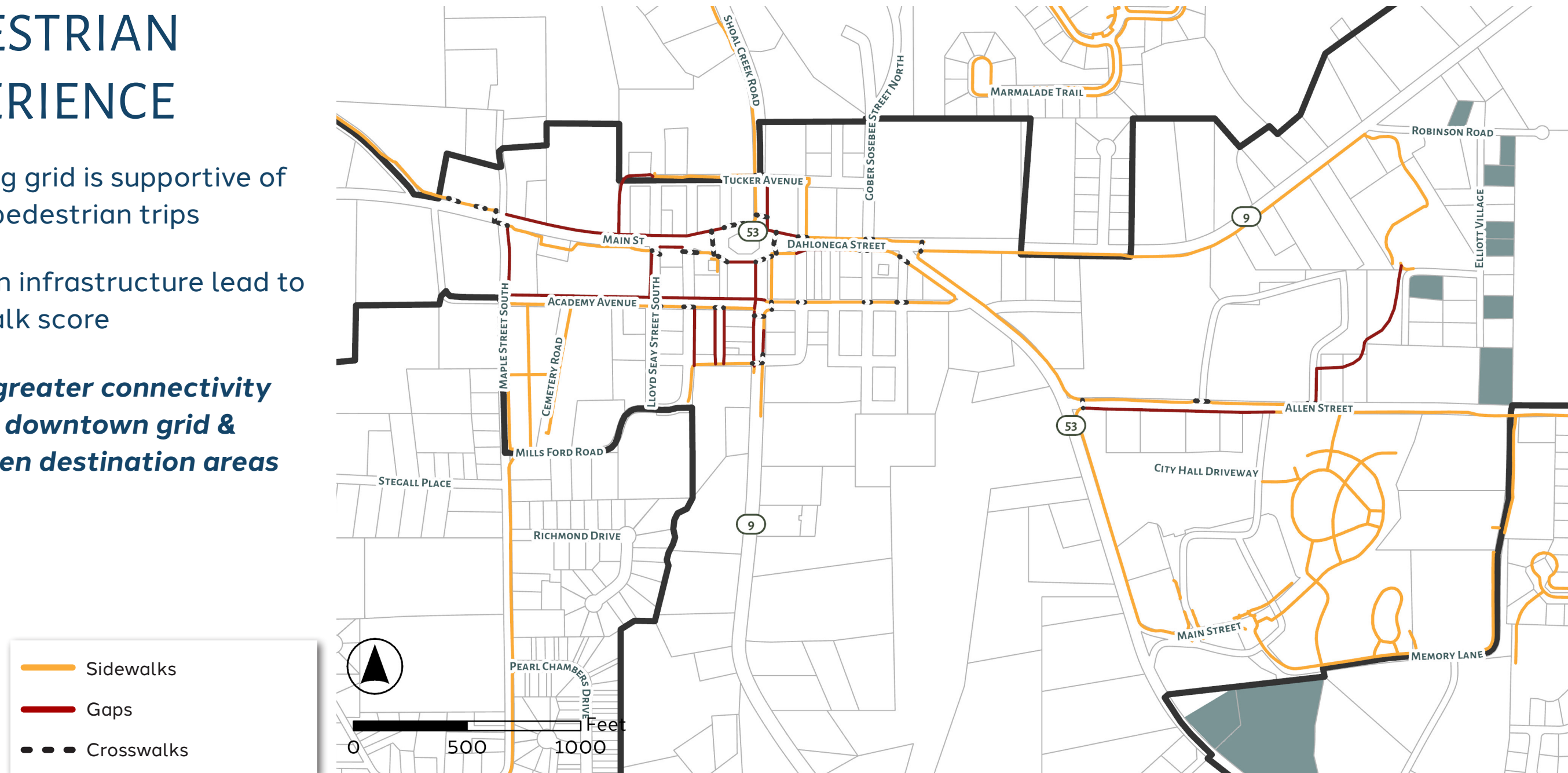
- Existing grid is supportive of short pedestrian trips
- **Gaps in infrastructure lead to low walk score**



# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- Existing grid is supportive of short pedestrian trips
- Gaps in infrastructure lead to low walk score
- ***Need greater connectivity within downtown grid & between destination areas***





# ANALYSIS TO DATE

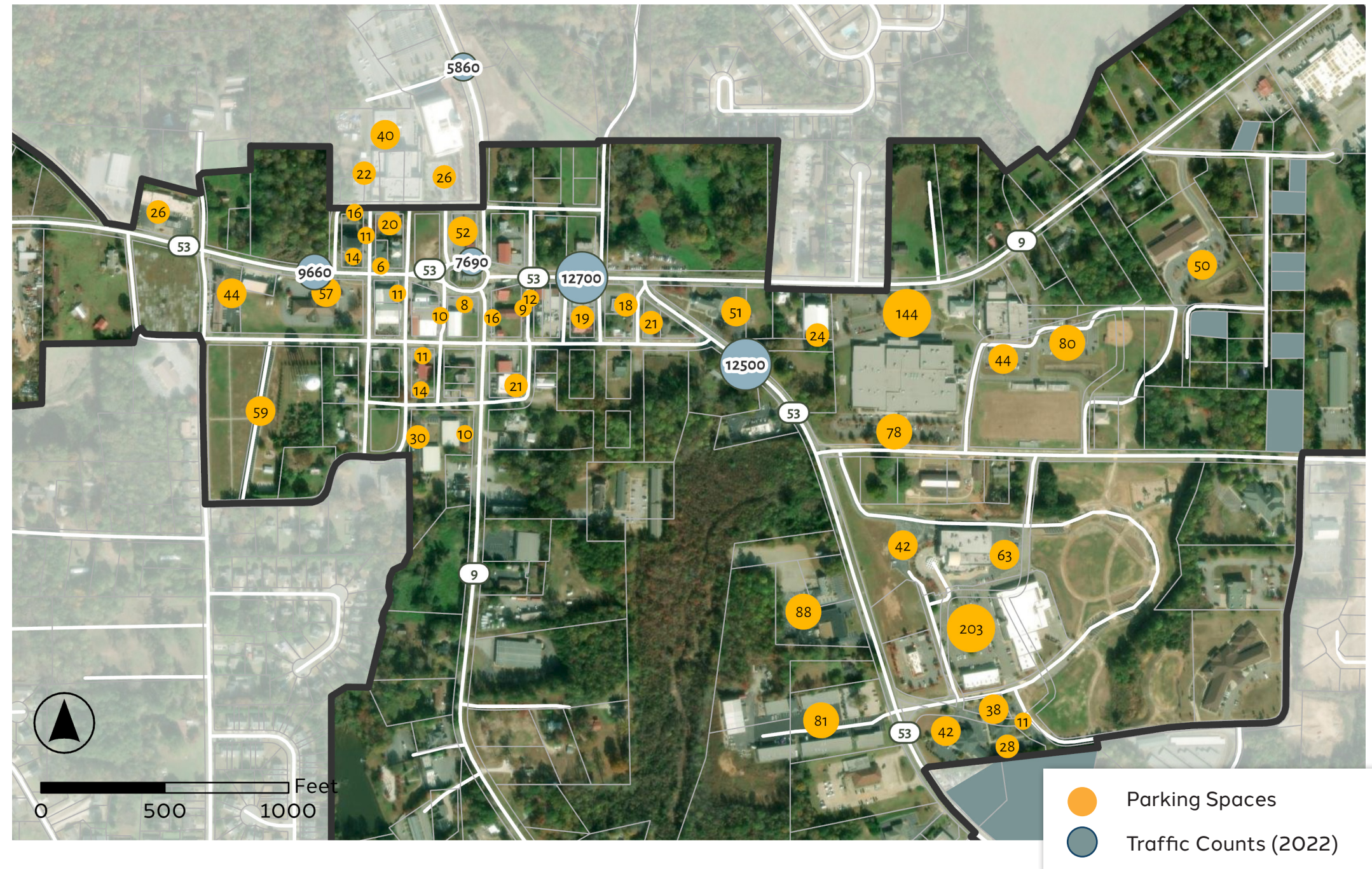
## TRAFFIC & PARKING

Parking inventory: 1,670 spaces

- Most in private lots, with some street parking

Traffic counts:

- Bulk of traffic comes from southeast along Hwy 53
- About 7-12% truck traffic

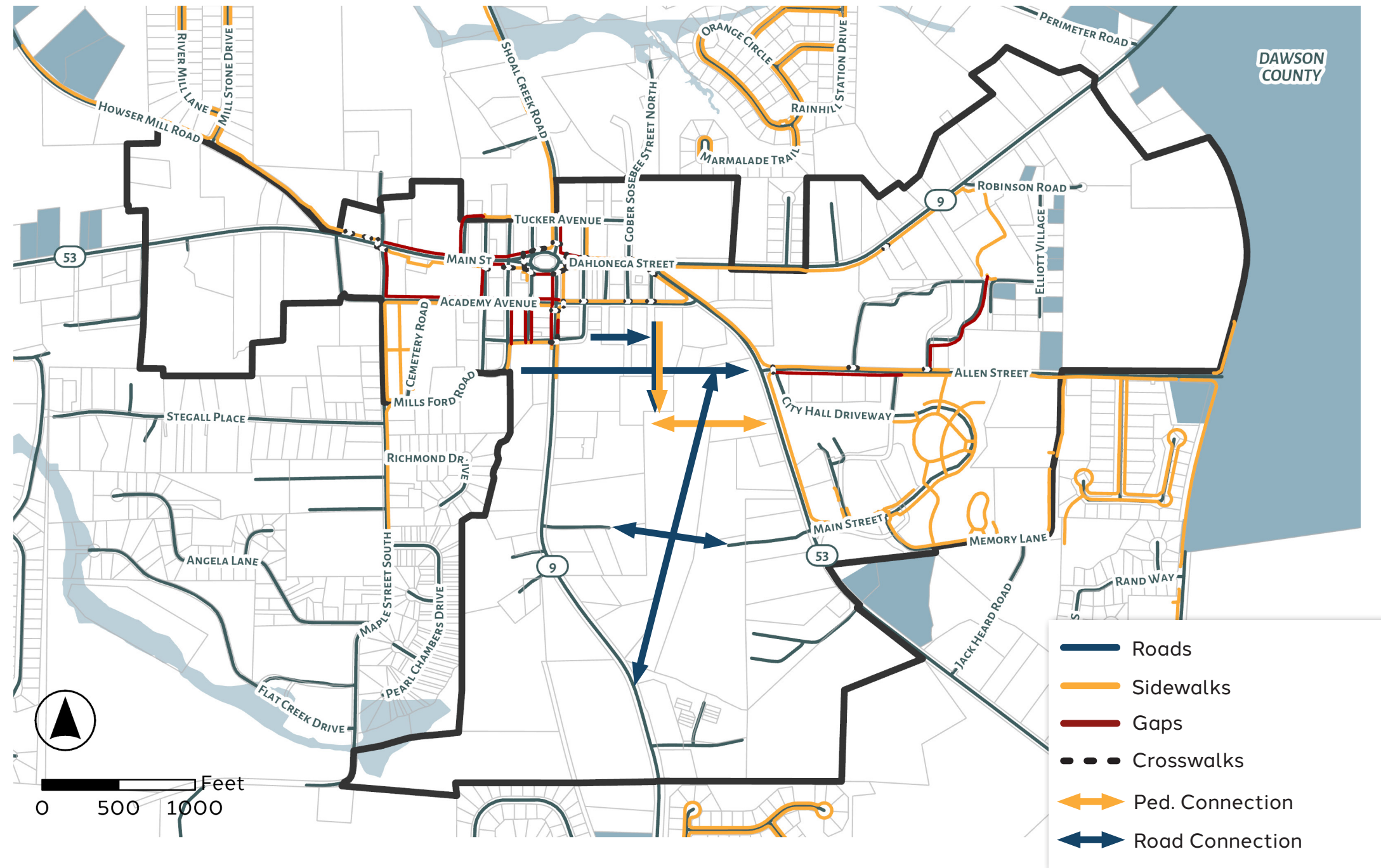




# ANALYSIS TO DATE

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Greater E-W connectivity between two major thoroughfares
- Utilize infill to drive public improvements
- Unite dead-ends
- Include pedestrian/bicycle amenities



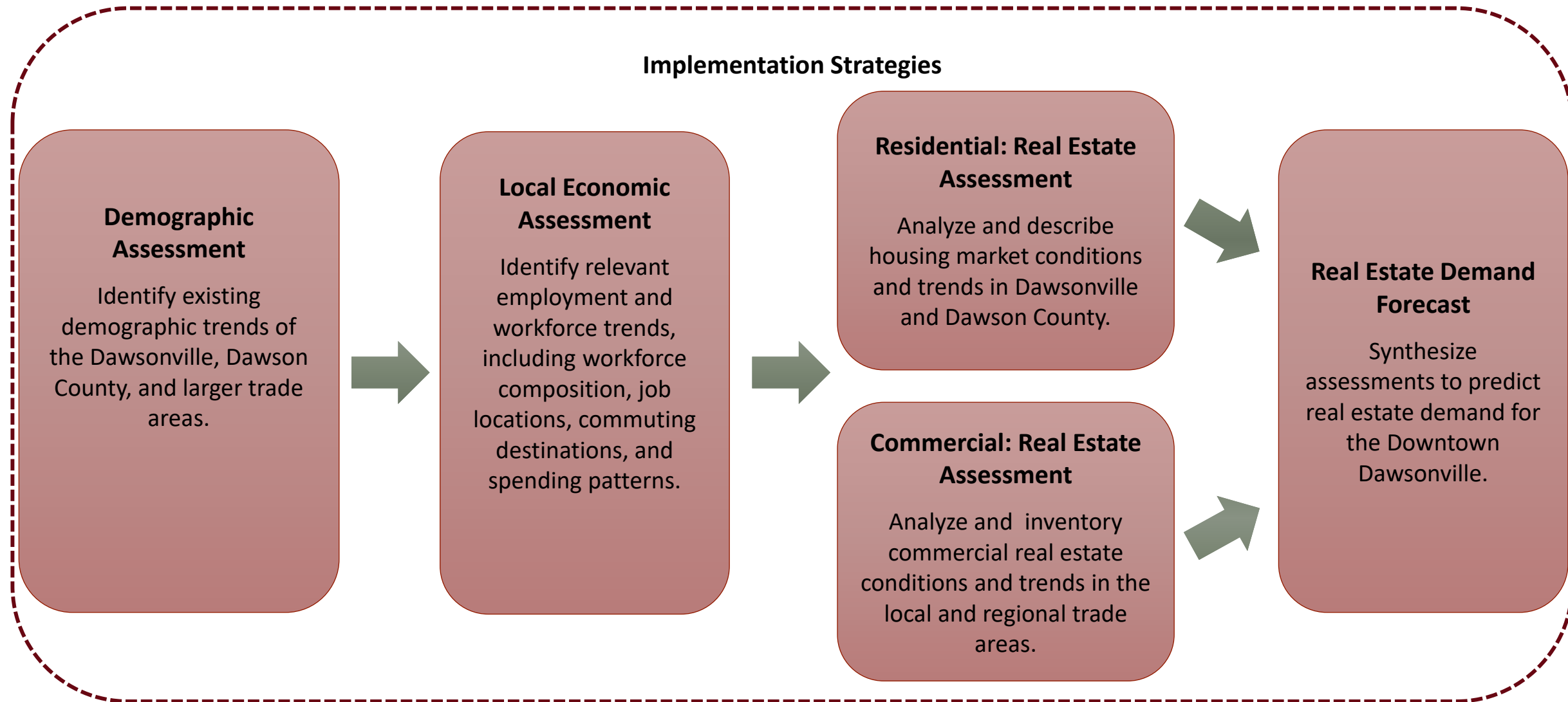
# MARKET ANALYSIS

---

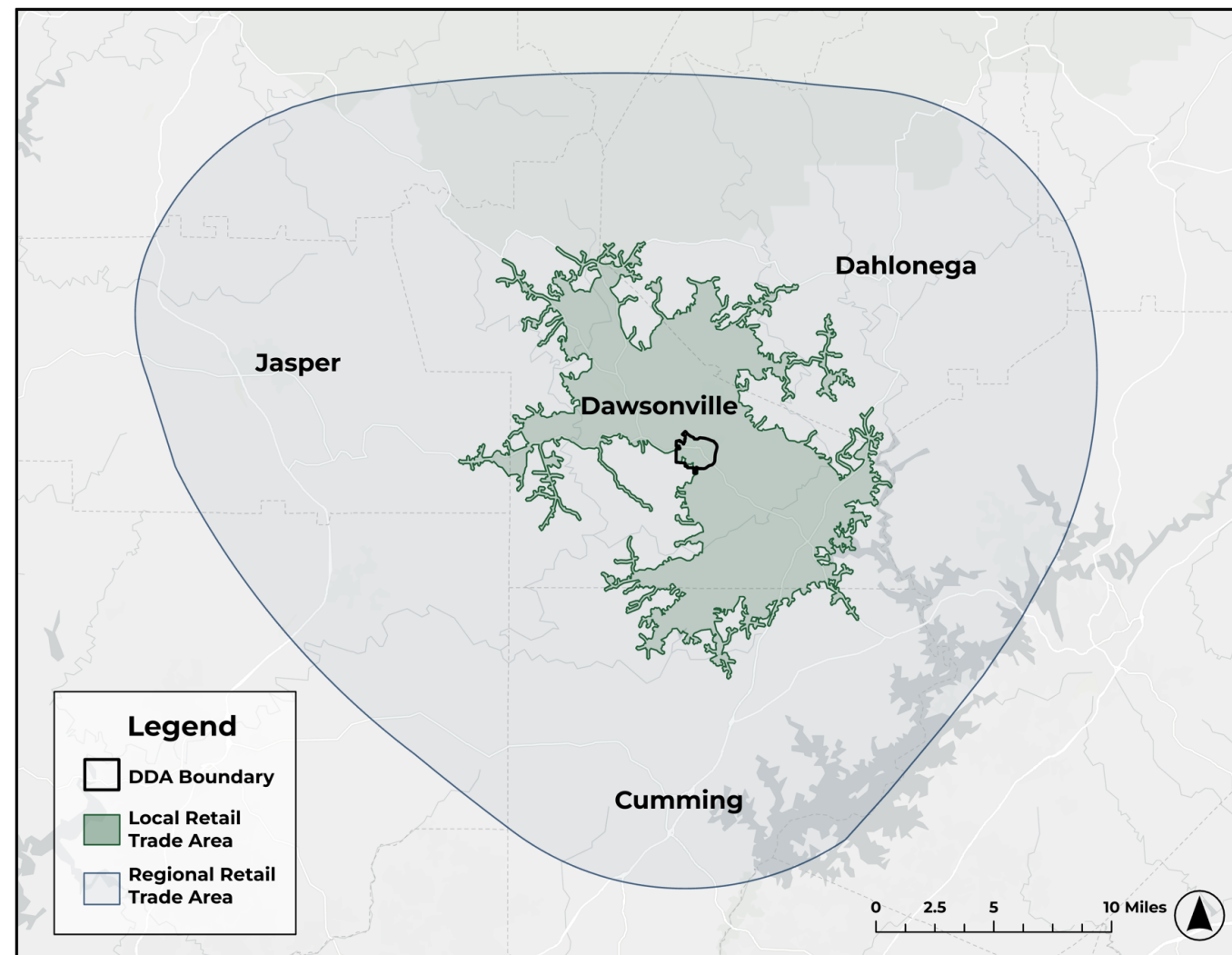
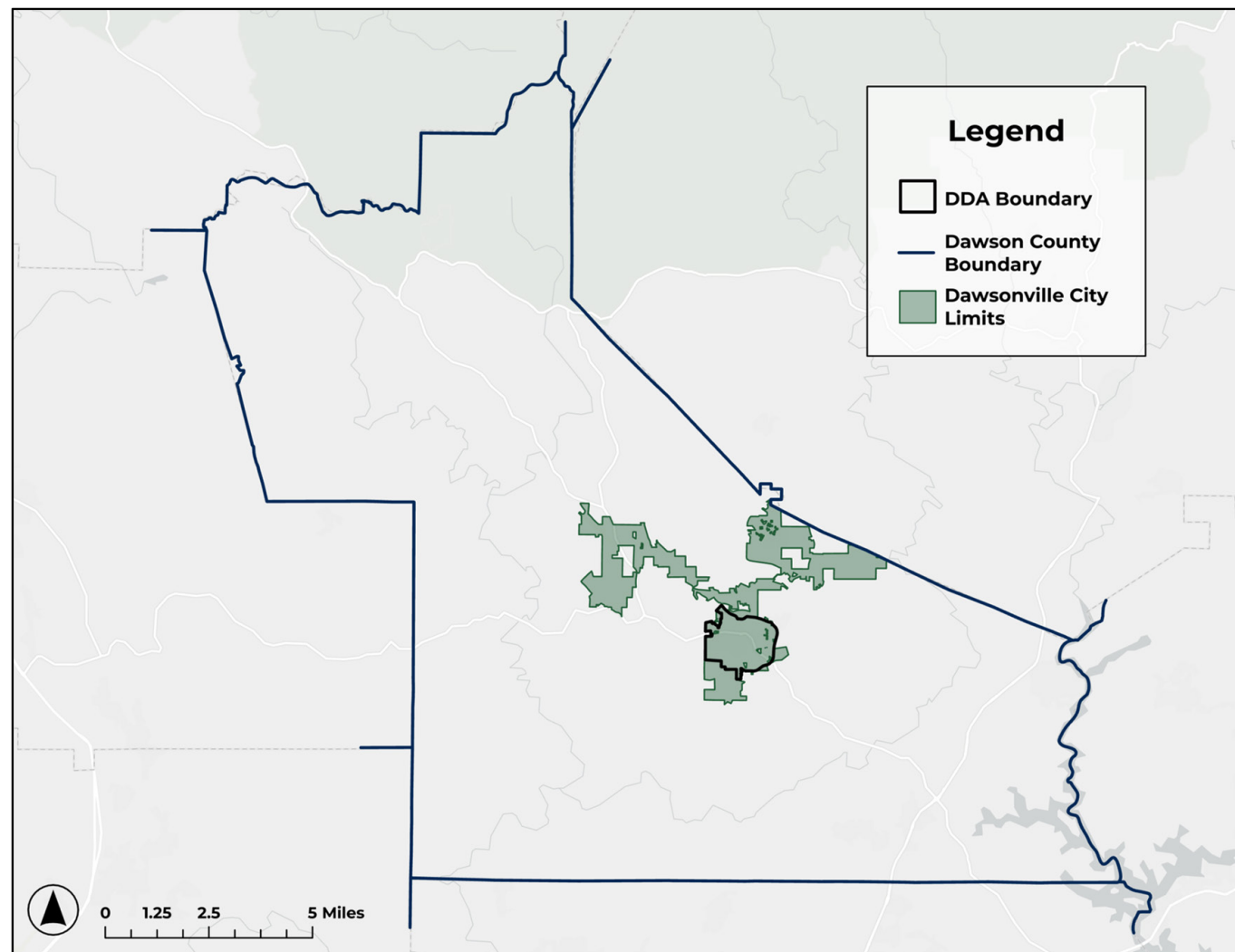


# APPROACH

## Market Analysis Approach



# STUDY AREA CONTEXT





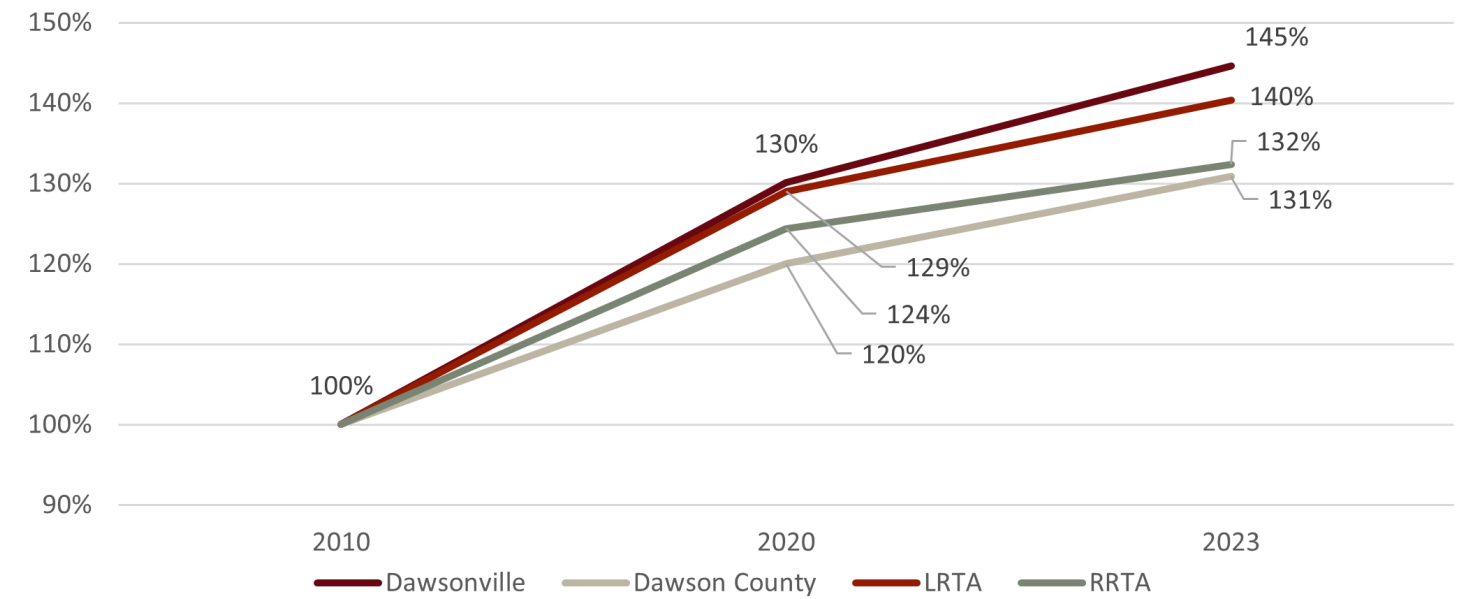
# DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

## POPULATION

Current estimated population of the Local Retail Trade Area: **26,973**

- The City of Dawsonville has seen the greatest population growth of these geographies, followed by the Local Retail Trade Area.
- The estimated growth rates for all geographies from 2023 to 2028 are lower than the growth rates from previous years with Dawsonville expected to grow over 2% through 2028.

Relative Growth, 2010-2023



Population Growth, 2023-2028

	Dawsonville	Dawson County	LRTA	RRTA
2010 Census	2,860	22,330	19,220	236,716
2020 Census	3,720	26,798	24,796	294,442
2023 Estimate	4,135	29,222	26,973	313,342
2028 Forecast	4,602	31,853	29,576	338,941
Growth Rate 2010-2020	2.7%	1.8%	2.6%	2.2%
Growth Rate 2010-2023	2.9%	2.1%	2.6%	2.2%
Est. Growth Rate 2023-2028	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%	1.6%

# DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

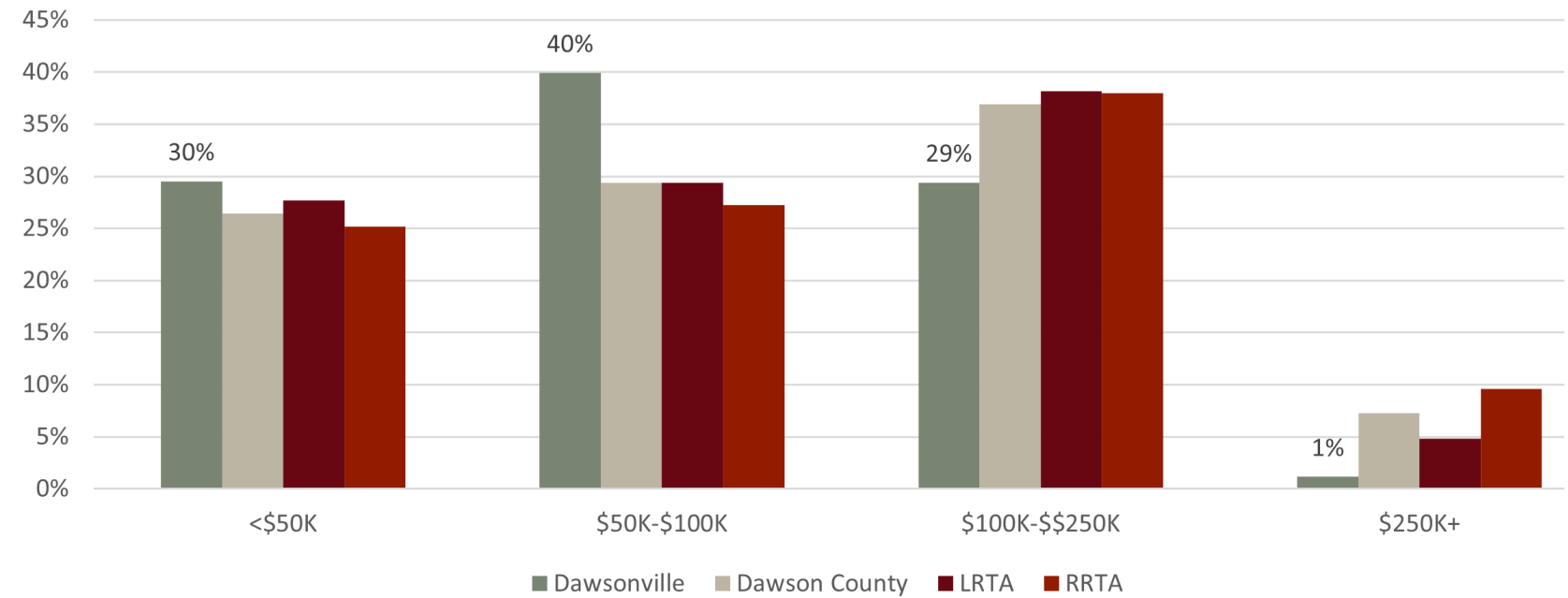
## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median household income in

Dawsonville: **\$72,334**

- This is less than that of the county and both trade areas.
- Nearly 10% of households within the RRTA earn more than \$250K, representing an opportunity to attract higher-earning households to future retail destinations Downtown Dawsonville.

Household Income Distribution, 2023



Household Income	Dawsonville	Dawson County	LRTA	RRTA
<35K	19%	15%	18%	16%
\$35K - \$50K	11%	11%	10%	9%
\$50K - \$100K	40%	29%	29%	27%
\$100K - \$250K	29%	37%	38%	38%
\$250K - \$500K	1%	5%	4%	6%
\$500K+	0%	2%	1%	3%



# DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

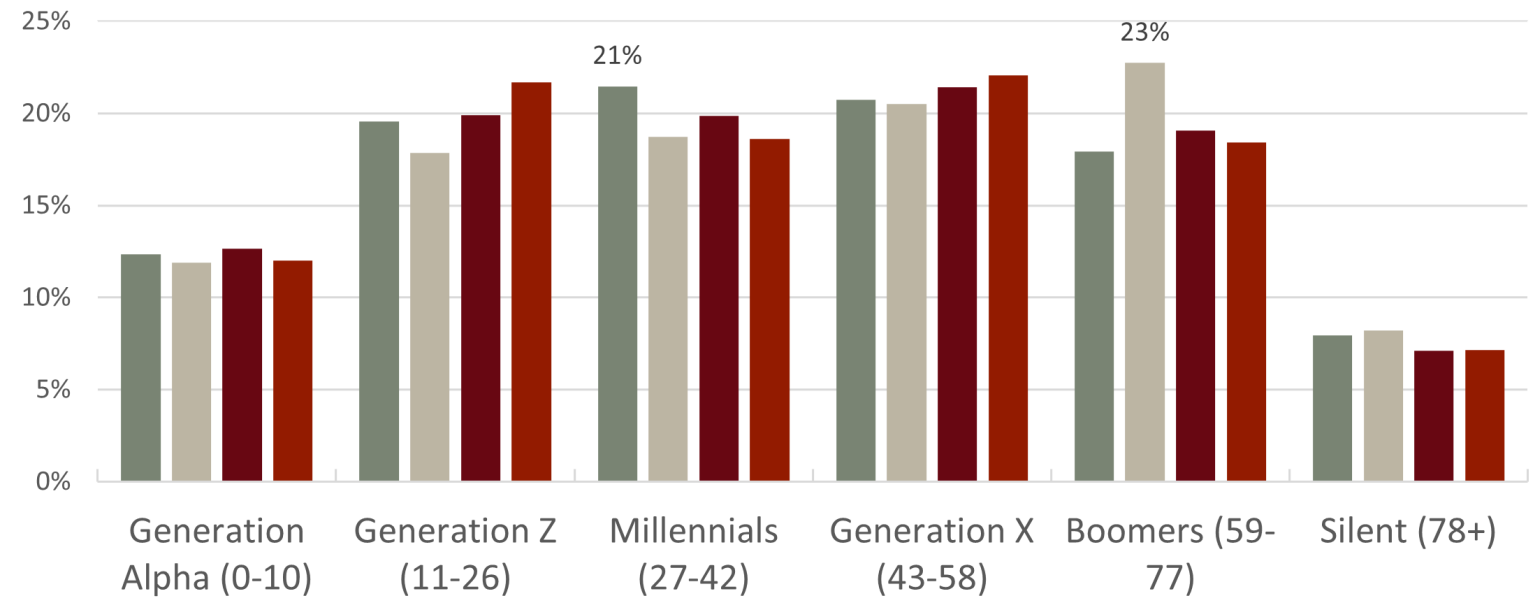
## AGE COHORTS

Median age of residents in Dawsonville:

**41**

- Considering the share of population by generation, the distribution is generally cohesive throughout the region.
- Dawson County has the largest share of (22%) of seniors contributing to an older median age. Conversely, Dawsonville has the largest share of children under 17 at nearly a quarter of the population.

Est. Population by Age & Generational Cohort 2023



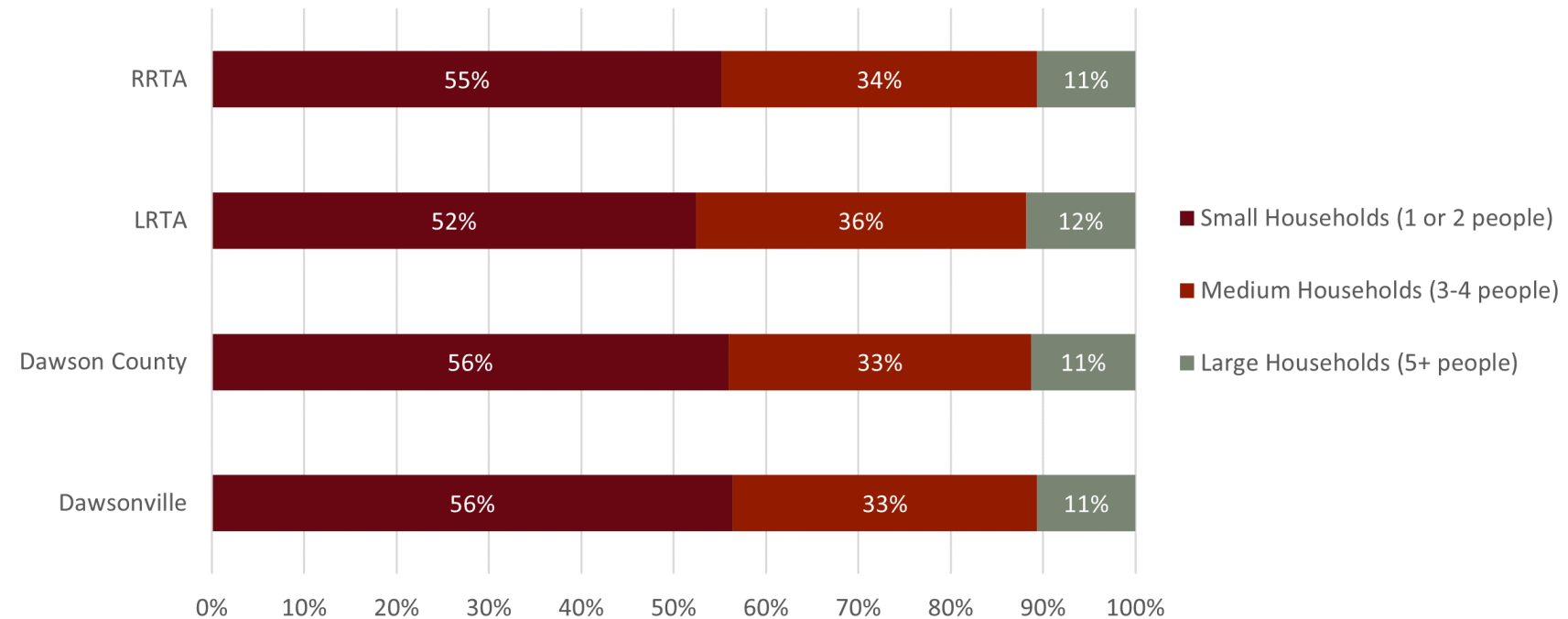
Age & Generational Cohorts, 2023				
	Dawsonville	Dawson County	LRTA	RRRTA
Est. Population by Age & Generational Cohort 2023				
Generation Alpha (0-10)	12%	12%	13%	12%
Generation Z (11-26)	20%	18%	20%	22%
Millennials (27-42)	21%	19%	20%	19%
Generation X (43-58)	21%	21%	21%	22%
Boomers (59-77)	18%	23%	19%	18%
Silent (78+)	8%	8%	7%	7%
Children and Senior Population, 2023				
Children (0-17)	24.4%	20%	21.6%	21.5%
Seniors (65+)	18.5%	22%	18.1%	17.6%
Median Age	40.6	44.3	41.2	41.3

# DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

- Households in Dawsonville and the region tend to be small, with over half being 2 people or less.
- Additionally, most households in Dawsonville (66%) do not have children present, and almost a third are non-family households (likely unrelated roommates).
- Generally, household type and size is consistent at all geographies with slight differences in the presence of children.

Share of Households by Size



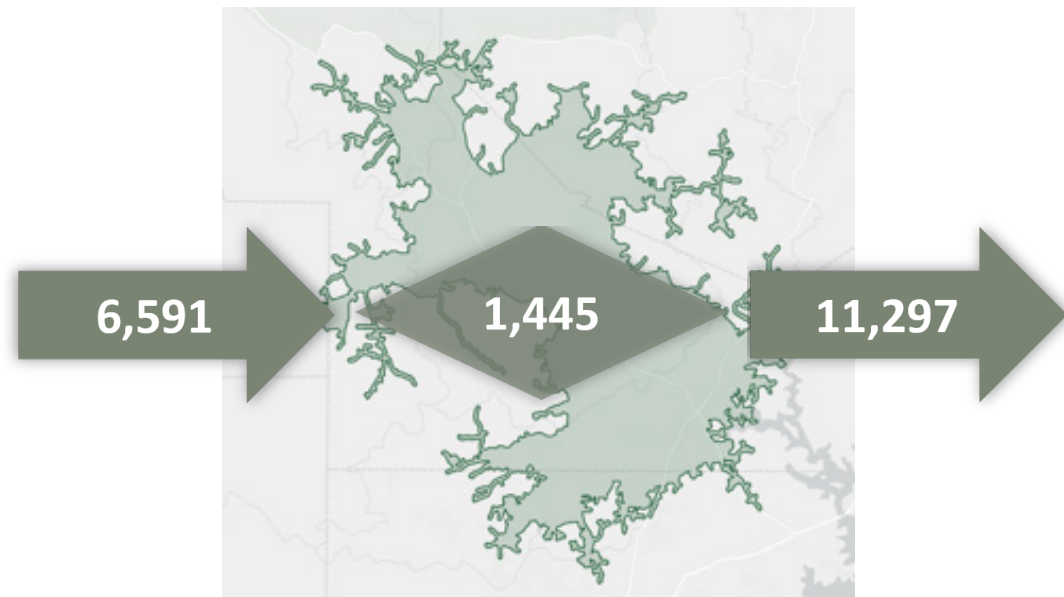
Household Characteristics	Dawsonville	Dawson County	LRTA	RRTA
Small Households (1 or 2 people)	56%	56%	52%	55%
Medium Households (3-4 people)	33%	33%	36%	34%
Large Households (5+ people)	11%	11%	12%	11%
Households with Children	34%	33%	37%	39%
Households without Children	66%	67%	63%	61%
Non-Family Households	28%	24%	24%	23%



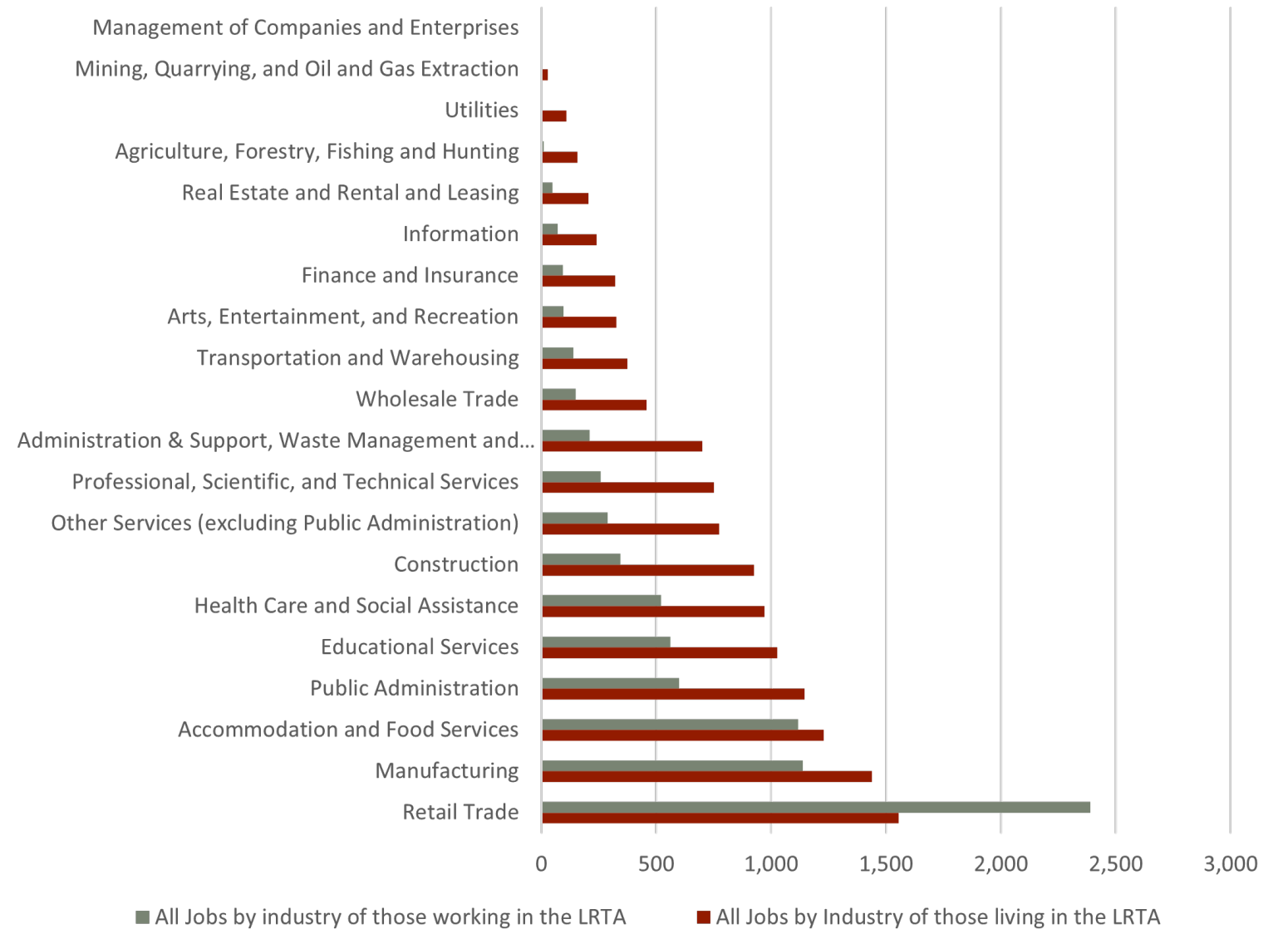
# EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE

## LOCAL RETAIL TRADE AREA

- More workers commute out of the Local Retail Trade Area than commute in, and just 1,445 both work and live within the area.
- Retail represents the largest industry of those employed in or living within the LRTA, though retail trade represents a significantly larger proportion of jobs (30%) than there are residents employed in retail (12%).



Total Jobs by Industry by Home and Work Location, LRTA, 2020

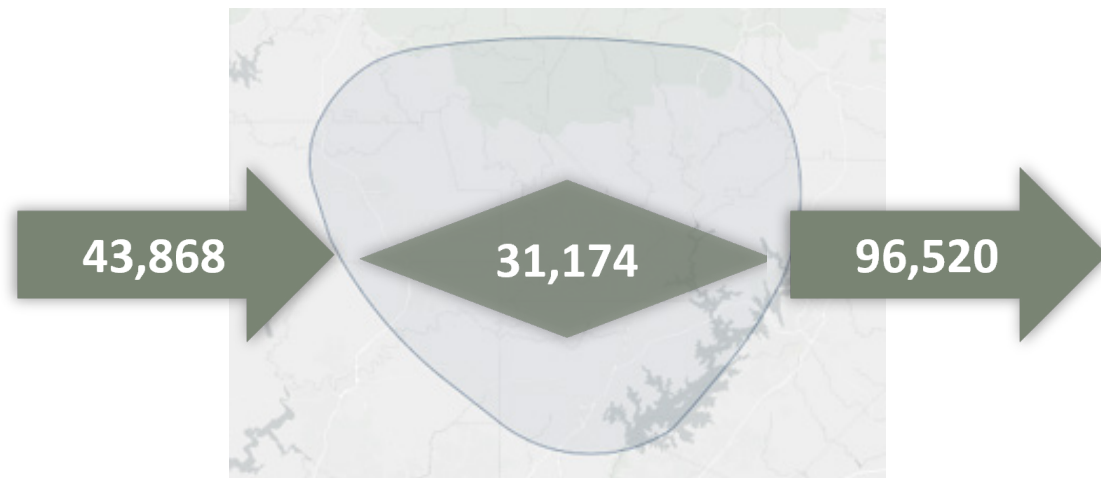


Source: KB Advisory based on data from Census, 2020

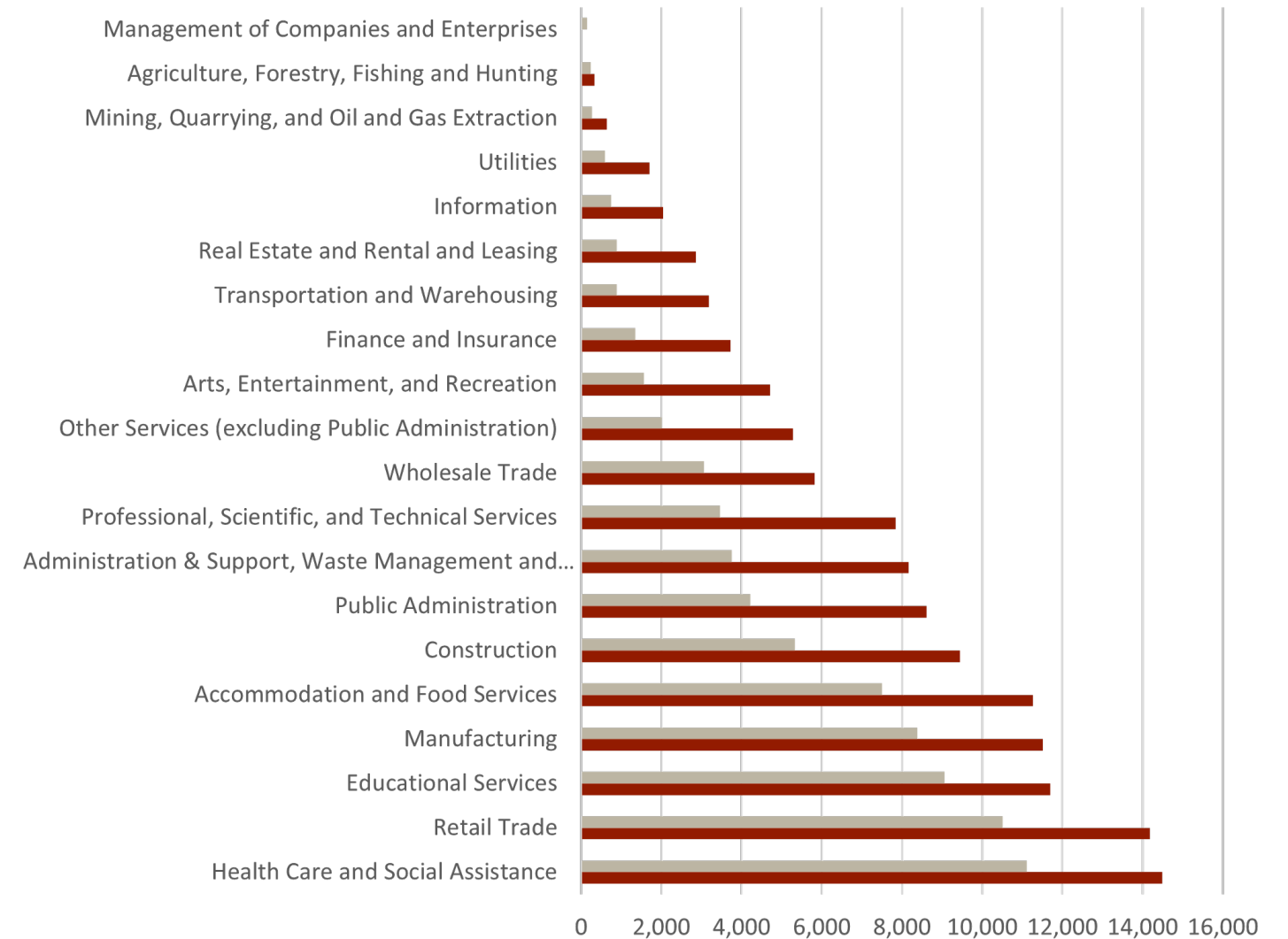
# EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE

## REGIONAL RETAIL TRADE AREA

- Nearly twice as many workers commute out of the region for work than commute into the RRTA. In comparison to the local trade area, Health Care in the leading employment industry with retail trailing closely behind.
- At the regional level, Educational Services also represents a larger employment industry, slightly exceeding Manufacturing.



Total Jobs by Industry by Home and Work Location, RRTA, 2020





# RESIDENT SPENDING: DAWSONVILLE

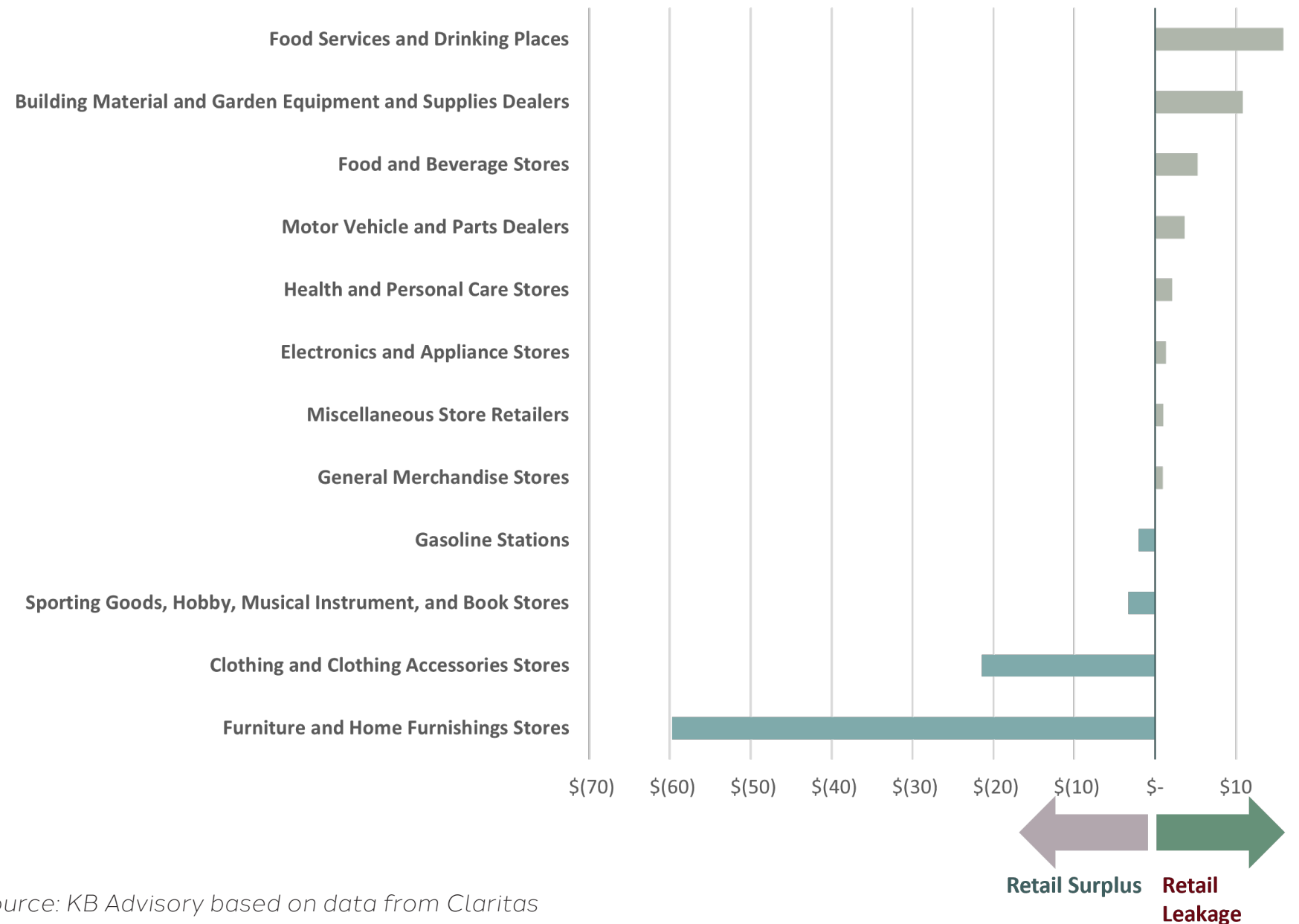
The total amount of retail supply in Dawsonville exceeds local area demand by over one and a half times.

- Overall, Dawsonville's largest retail surplus (where supply exceeds local demand) is in furniture and home furnishing stores. It's largest retail leakage (where there is unmet local demand) is in food service and drinking places.

Annual Retail Spending (demand):  
**\$75,288,986**

Annual Retail Spending (supply):  
**\$119,597,508**

Dawsonville Retail Gap Analysis 2023 est.  
(\$ millions)



Source: KB Advisory based on data from Claritas

# RESIDENT SPENDING: LRTA

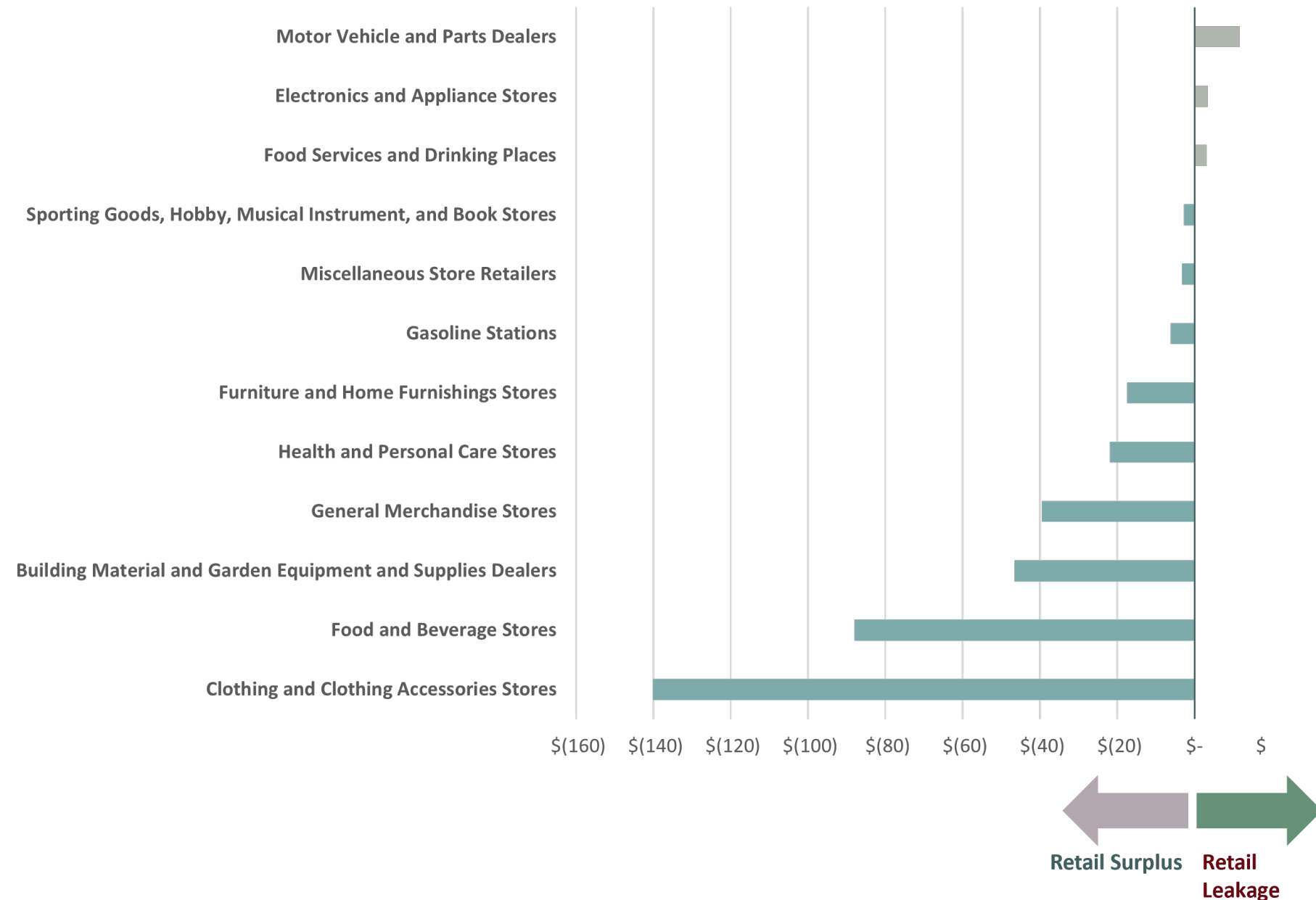
The LRTA has a retail surplus in most major retail categories.

- The largest retail surpluses (where supply exceeds local demand) are in clothing-related stores as well as in food and beverage (such as a grocery or specialty food store). Its largest retail leakage (where there is unmet local demand) is in auto-related retail.

Annual Retail Spending (demand):  
**\$539.9 million**

Annual Retail Spending (supply):  
**\$825.7 million**

LRTA Retail Gap Analysis 2023 est.  
(\$ millions)





# RESIDENT SPENDING: RRTA

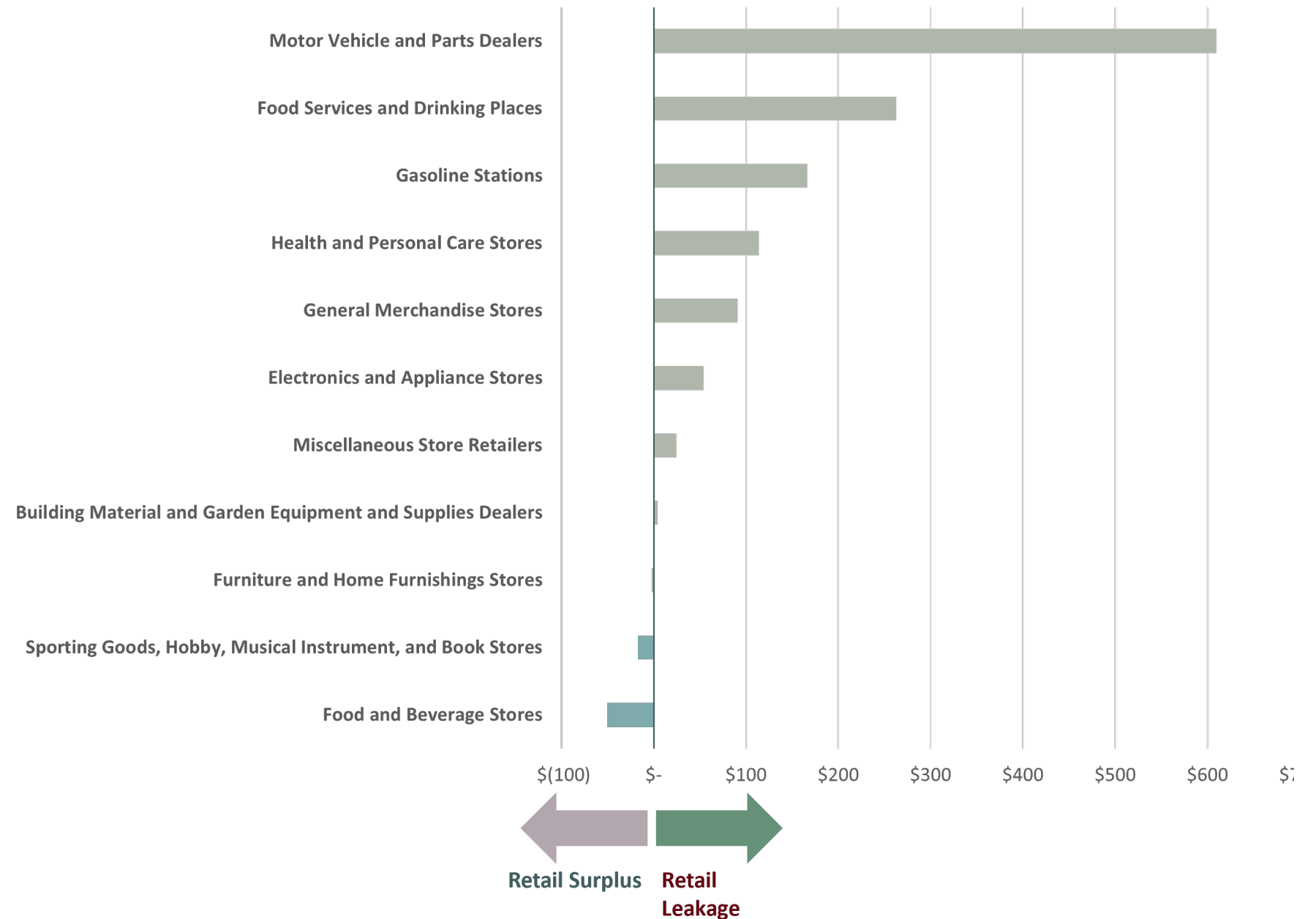
Unlike Dawsonville and the LRTA, the RRTA has an overall retail opportunity gap.

- The only major retail categories where there is a retail surplus (where supply exceeds local demand) is in food and beverage stores (such as a grocery or specialty food store) and in recreational/hobby retailers.

Annual Retail Spending  
(demand):  
**\$6.88 billion**

Annual Retail Spending  
(supply):  
**\$5.05 billion**

RRTA Retail Gap Analysis 2023 est.  
(\$ millions)

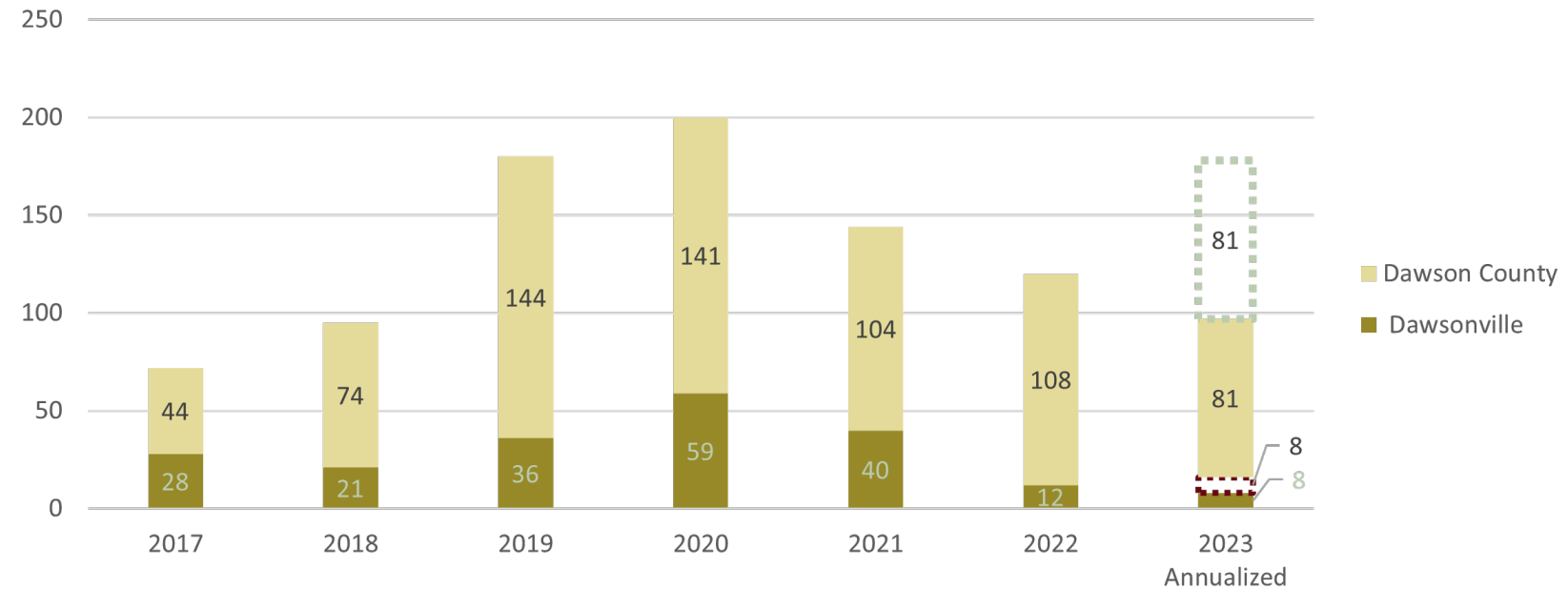


# CITY & COUNTY NEW HOME SALES

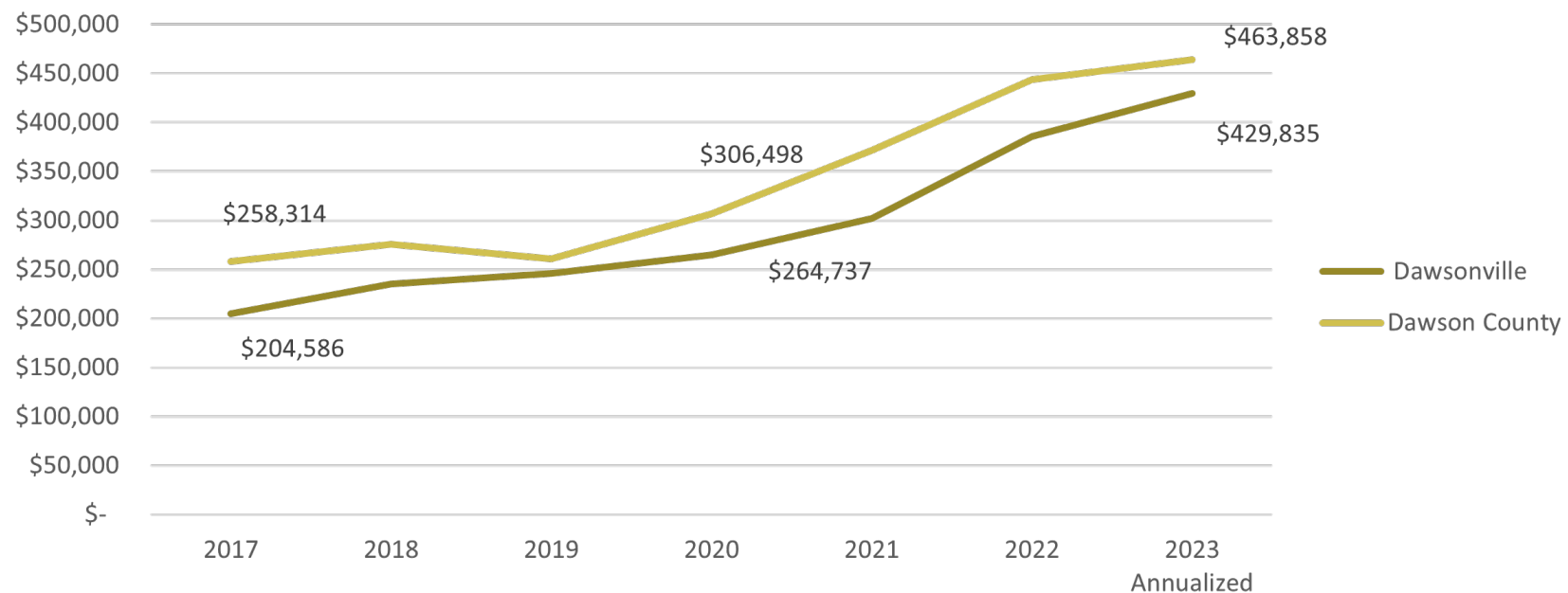
New home sales in Dawsonville and the county peaked in 2020, and sales within the city represented a 42% share of the county.

- Since 2017, no new attached homes have been sold within the city. Since 2021, 41 new townhome sales have occurred in the county.
- The sales price of all homes in Dawson County has steadily increased since 2017 with the County sales demonstrating an 80% increase compared to a 110% increase within the City of Dawsonville.
- Of note, annualized 2023 data represent estimates based on data through June 2023 and may not reflect current trends.

Dawsonville and Dawson County New Home Sales



Dawsonville and Dawson County New Home Sales



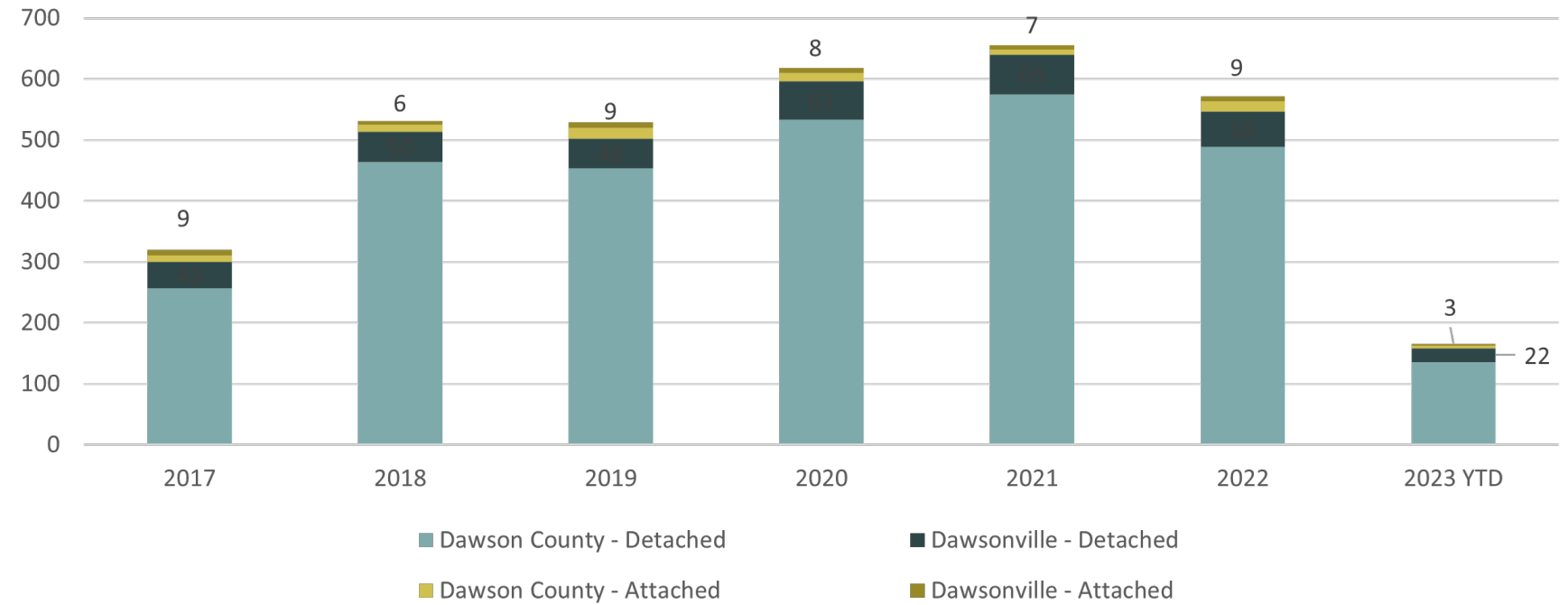


# CITY & COUNTY RESALE HOME SALES

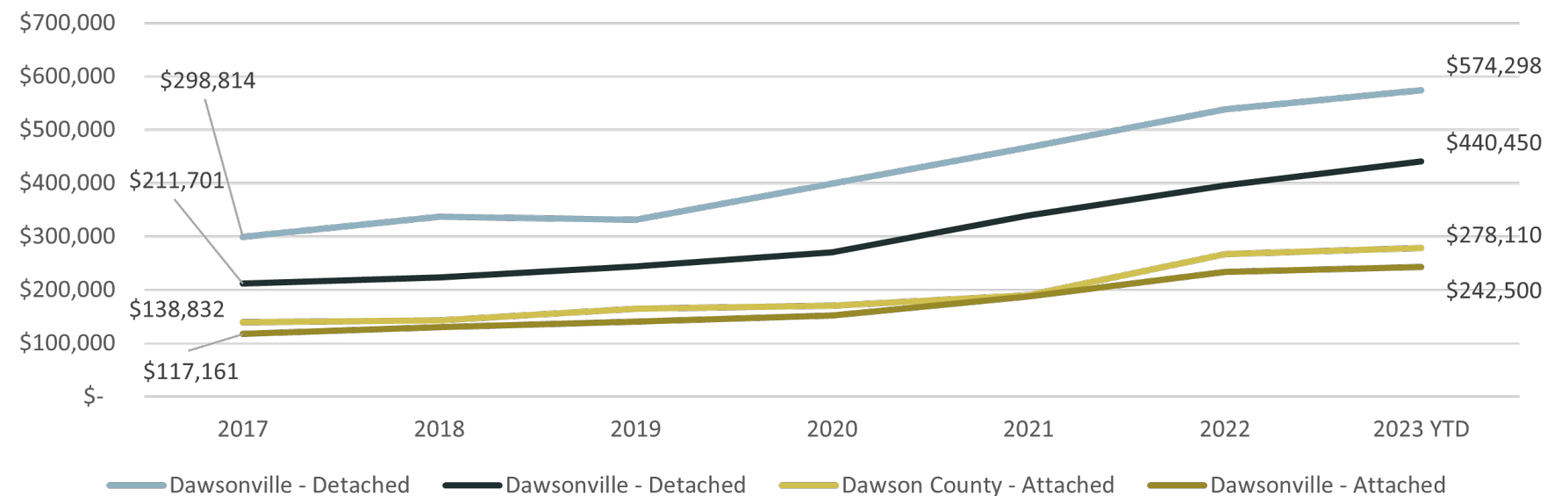
Resale homes within the city comprised an average of 14% of all resales within the county since 2017 with most sales being detached homes.

- Since 2017, the average price of resale homes increased 113% within the city compared to 93% within the County.

Dawsonville and Dawson County Resale Homes



Dawsonville and Dawson County Resale Homes



Source: KB Advisory Group, based on data from smartRE.

# REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT: COMMERCIAL

## Retail within the Downtown Development

Authority (DDA) area follows similar trends to retail in the region at large.

- Retail vacancy rates within the DDA area are relatively lower and average rent/sf are marginally higher than the region.
- On a square foot basis, retail space within the DDA boundary represents only 8% of retail in the LRTA.
- Hospitality occupancy is higher than the regional average however the average daily room rate within the DDA area is half the regional average.

	DDA	LRTA	RRTA
<b>Multifamily</b>			
Existing Buildings	7	20	101
Existing Units	63	1,596	6,469
Vacancy %	6%	11%	9%
Avg. Asking Rent/Unit	-	\$1,463	\$1,355
<b>Retail</b>			
Existing Buildings	39	234	1254
Existing SF	268,387	3,207,190	13,793,896
Vacancy %	1%	2%	2%
Avg. Rent / SF	\$18.86	\$20.21	\$18.78
<b>Hospitality</b>			
Existing Buildings	1	6	40
Existing Rooms	18	485	2152
Occupancy %	67%	62%	62%
Avg. ADR	\$65	\$128	\$135

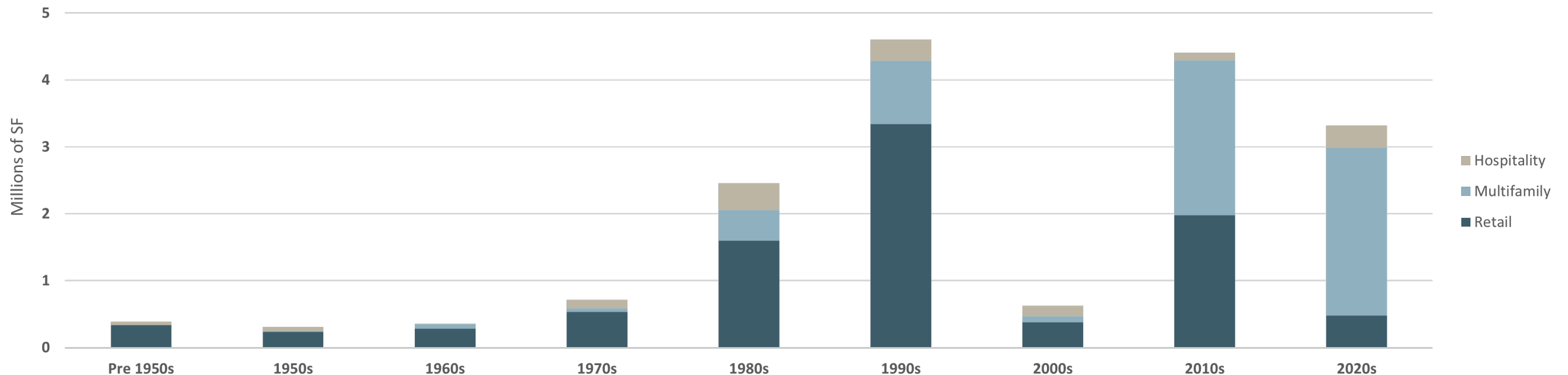


# REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT: COMMERCIAL

Over the past two decades, multifamily has dominated new commercial square footage deliveries in the region.

- Inclusive of the current pipeline, over 60% of new commercial real estate square footage has been dedicated to multifamily.
- Despite representing 50% of the region's delivery of new multifamily square footage in the 2000s, the DDA area has had little to no new deliveries since then.

New Commercial Development within the RRTA by Decade



# INPUT ACTIVITIES

---



# What are the strengths of Downtown Dawsonville today?

40 Responses

Strong heritage and culture

The small town feel. Racing museum. Opportunity for growth.

Sense of community

lot of room available for extensions

Strong community

Strong historical values and small town feel

Heritage and history

History, convenience to attractions.

Historic look.

4



25



# What are the strengths of Downtown Dawsonville today?

40 Responses

Commercial/retail led growth

Small town feel

Opportunities for growth

Small town feel

Engaged community members

Opportunity for growth

Small town feel  
Historical museum

The park behind Food Lion  
Strong history

Bowen center for the arts

4



25



# What are the strengths of Downtown Dawsonville today?

40 Responses

Small town feeling

Small town feel

Well-maintained park

Main street park

Proximity to other tourism

Place making, and historical structures

Natural beauty

Historic museum  
Art center

A central downtown square. Proximity to the racing park. Access to hiking trails, waterfalls and nature areas.

4



25





# What are the strengths of Downtown Dawsonville today?

40 Responses

Farmers Market

Lots of potential

A good place to expand the town heritage from (racing museum) and a good area to go out and be amongst the community (the park). Also proximity to Amicalola.

Main Street Park

Friendly. Beautiful pink old farmhouse that should be left alone.

Historical, community, small town feel, bowen center walking park, farmers market

:)

Green spaces

Walkable access

4



25



# What are the strengths of Downtown Dawsonville today?

40 Responses

Restaurants, walkable, winery

Historic plaques

Coffee shop

Brewery

4



25



# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

More restaurants

A mixed-use downtown

Innovative design

The proposed bypass is built

Non-chain restaurants

Restaurant space..

That there could be shaded gathering places

We can build a walkable downtown where landscaping makes an attractive place to walk with friends and family

Local restaurants

5



23





# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

Better walkability

More activities

Walking accesses and connectivity.

Green infrastructure

more local retail business

Connectivity

Safe walkways

They attract interesting businesses and make the downtown layout make sense.

You keep it simple....RestaurantsSmall shopsWinery

5



23



# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

Downtown bypass

More dining options

Green spaces for activities.

Expanded age ranges brought in. (Mainly Young professionals)

More restrssunts but not more pizza/italian

Get rid of that smell by the school. Ew. :/

Parking, and wide beautiful sidewalks.

Appealing outdoor space for restaurants, retail and activities

Walk ability

5



23





# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

Continuity of the look of the buildings

More mom and pop businesses

Better roadways to grow with the rapid and planned growth

Walking spaces

Pretty landscaping. Bypass needed

Retail stores

Proposed bypass Restaurants

Family oriented activities, festivals and events. Redirect the tractor trailers. Multi family units downtown. Live, work, play focus.

Contiguous sidewalks and buildings

5



23





# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

Greenways, walking and hiking trails, support natural landscape and environment

Coffee Shop

Tree lined streets

Fun entertainment, and active centers

Bring back the moonshine! 🍷

Bypass for tractor trailers

Walking

East/West corridors are expanded. Hey 53 and 136

Pretty

5



23



# In the future, Downtown Dawsonville will be successful if...

46 Responses

Live work

5



23



# TODAY'S ACTIVITIES

Check out the activity boards around the room and vote on the **GOALS** and **PLANNING ELEMENTS** what you want to see for the following categories:

- Public Space
- Recreation
- Streetscape
- Bike / Pedestrian
- Sustainability
- Residential
- Downtown Attractions
- Wayfinding
- Mixed-Use
- Public Art

**WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN?**  
PLACE A GREEN STICKER IF YOU **LIKE** THE GOAL OR A RED STICKER IF YOU **DISLIKE** THE GOAL.

**GOAL #1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Attract new businesses and development to revitalize downtown and provide a range of economic opportunities that encourage future generations to stay local.

**GOAL #2: CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY**  
Improve connectivity and accessibility throughout downtown by expanding multi-modal facilities and safely linking vehicular routes.

Other ideas or comments on Goal #1? Add a post-it note here!

Other ideas or comments on Goal #2? Add a post-it note here!

Other ideas or comments on Goal #3? Add a post-it note here!

**WHAT RECREATION ELEMENTS ARE NEEDED THE MOST IN DOWNTOWN?**  
PLACE A STICKER BELOW THE TOP 2 MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS YOU WANT TO SEE.

 Adventure Activities	 Open Lawn	 Nature Playground	 Splashpad
 Fountain	 Stream Restoration and Overlooks	 Pump Track	Other ideas or comments? Add a post-it note here!



# NEXT STEPS

- The planning team will consolidate the feedback from this event and develop draft recommendations.
- The next public meeting will be on Thursday, November 2nd to review draft ideas and collect more community input before finalizing the plan.
- If you have any follow up questions or comments please email:
  - Beverly Bell, TSW: [bbell@tsw-design.com](mailto:bbell@tsw-design.com)
  - Amanda Edmondson: [downtowndevelopment@dawsonville-ga.gov](mailto:downtowndevelopment@dawsonville-ga.gov)