

# Town of Franklin Comprehensive Land Use Plan



Steering  
Committee #2  
May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019



STEWART



# Agenda

- **Introductions / Announcements**
- **Plan Process**
- **What we heard**
  - SWOT Results
  - Team observations
  - Stakeholder Interviews
- **Existing Conditions and Plans Analysis**
  - Land Supply
  - Parks and Greenways
  - Transportation
  - Economy
- **Next Steps- Public Involvement Overview**





# Introductions

- **Stewart Team**
  - Elizabeth and Will, Stewart
  - Stacy, Stacy J Guffey & Associates
  - Kristy and Rachael, Traffic Planning & Design Inc.
- **Town Staff**
  - Justin Setser
- **Steering Committee**









# Steering Committee meeting #1

- **Steady Housing Growth**
  - .7% population annual growth rate
  - 1.7% housing annual growth rate
  - Growth in seasonally occupied units
- **Aging Population**
  - 22% increase in people 65-74 years old between 2010-2017
  - Slight decrease in 20-44 year olds between 2010-2017
  - Median age has remained static
- **Franklin is a Regional Center**
  - Over 4900 jobs in Franklin and ETJ
  - Most workers commute from surrounding areas
- **Poverty is an Issue**
  - 30% of renters are cost burdened (35%+)
  - Unemployment low (3.3%)/poverty high (30.1%)
- **Natural and Cultural Assets**
  - Key contributions to economy, tourism and quality of life





# SWOT Results





# SWOT Results: Strengths

- Location / Geography
- Regional center
- **Natural resources (river, mountains, waterfalls)**
- **Recreation (hiking, greenway)**
- Education system
- Engaged citizens / Year-round community
- **Downtown**
- Farmer's Market
- Infrastructure





# Strength: Little Tennessee River Greenway





# Strength: Downtown Franklin





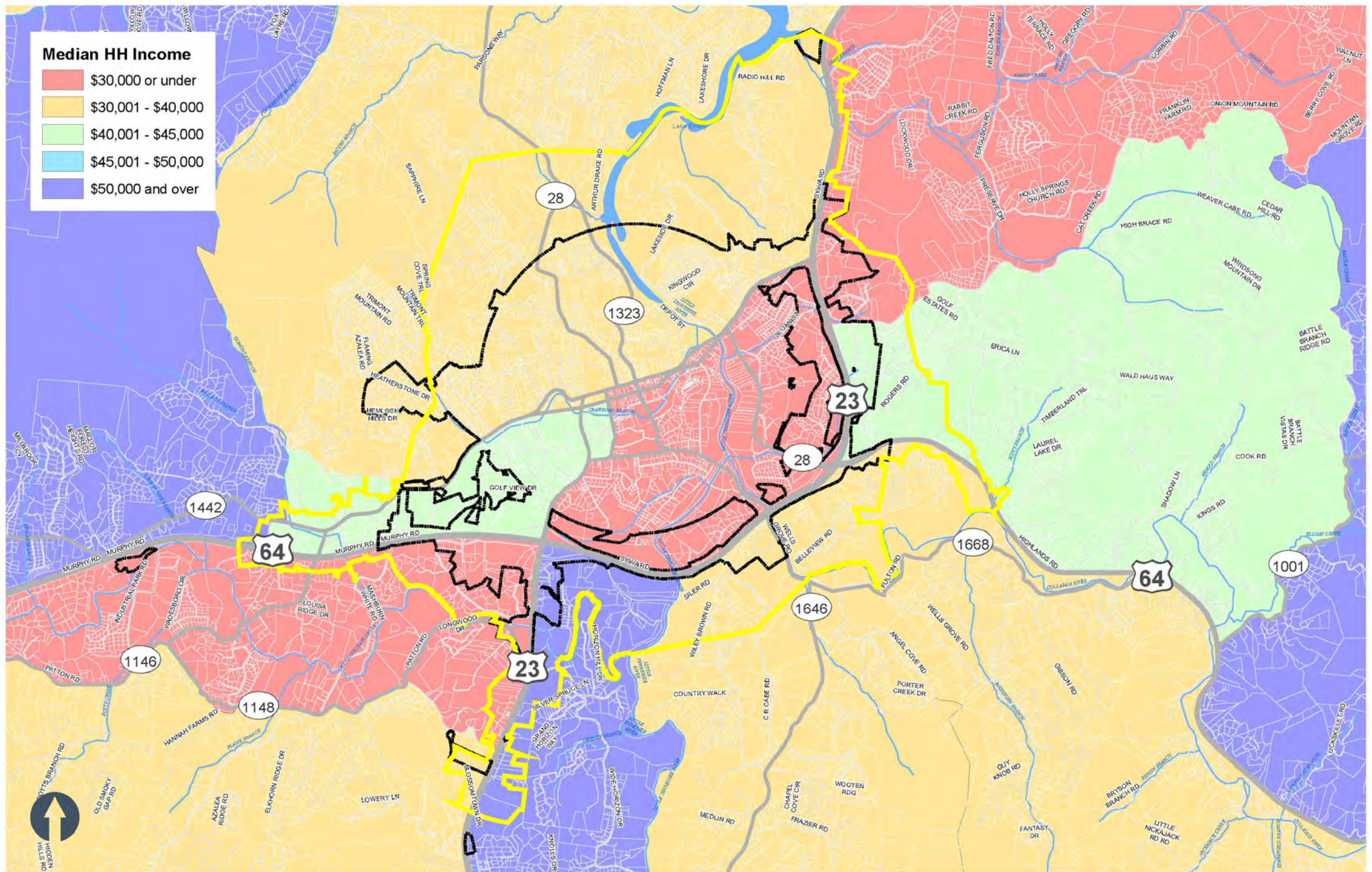
# SWOT Results: Weaknesses

- Proximity to other shopping destinations
  - “You have to drive to Asheville to buy fennel”
- Decline in 20-40 year olds
  - Need jobs & Focus on their needs, not just retirees
- Poverty
- Business growth / entrepreneurship
- Sprawl (What are benefits for living in town vs. county?)
- Downtown
  - Alcohol restrictions
  - Parking
  - Limited business hours
- Development constraints (topography, floodplain)
- Infrastructure > Internet issues





### Median HH Income

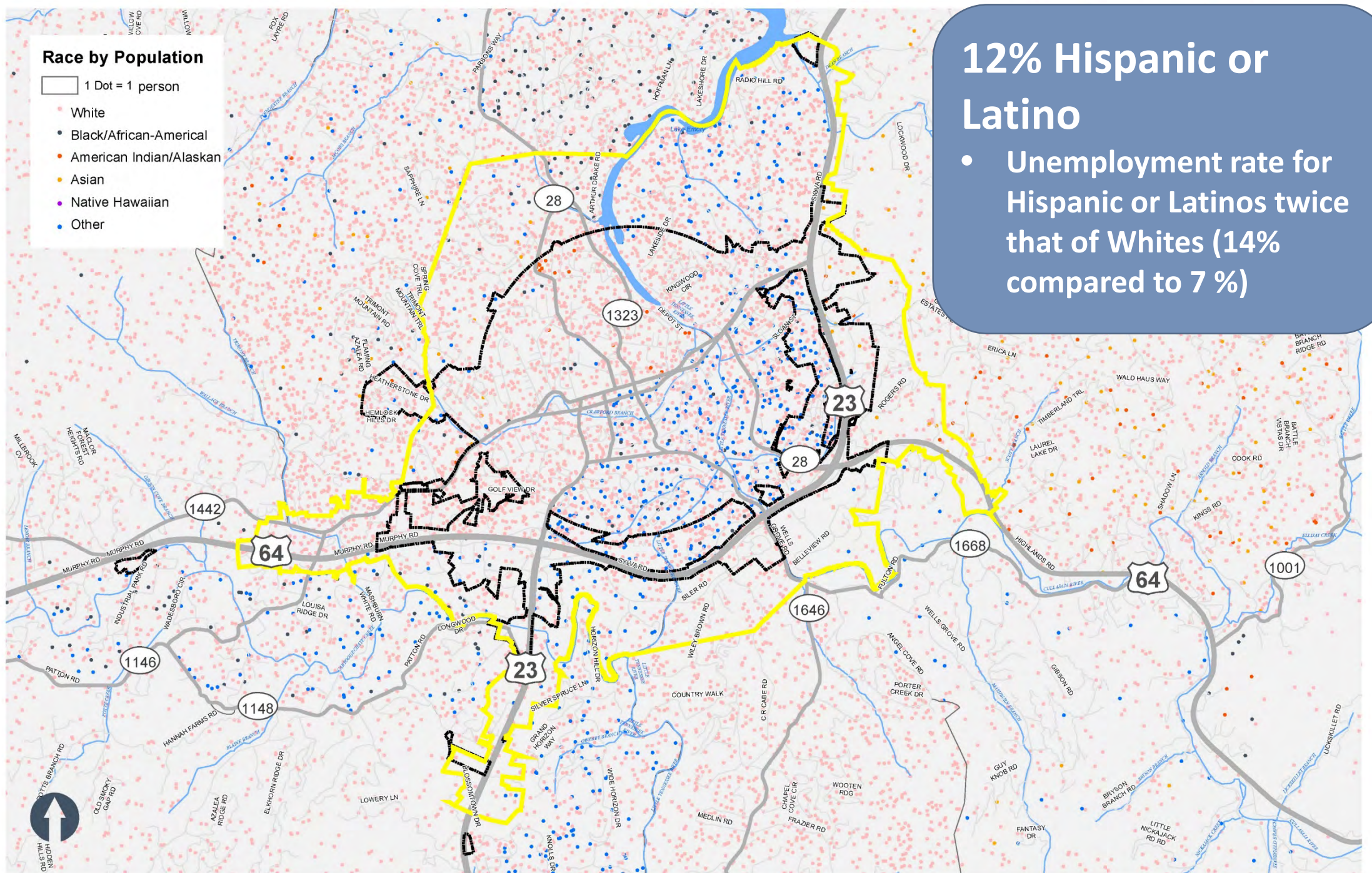




### Race by Population

1 Dot = 1 person

- White
- Black/African-American
- American Indian/Alaskan
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian
- Other



## 12% Hispanic or Latino

- Unemployment rate for Hispanic or Latinos twice that of Whites (14% compared to 7 %)



# SWOT Results: Opportunities

- Expand beyond retirees
- Expand farmers market offerings and marketing
- Upper floor activity downtown
- Educate/incentivize downtown business owners to stay open longer
- Improvements to airport
  - Could become more regional
  - Community College is starting ground school
- Signage to downtown from 441





# Opportunity: Activate Upper Floors of Downtown



*Left: View from Old Franklin Hotel Building*



# Precedent: Clayton, GA

## Activate Upper Floors of Downtown

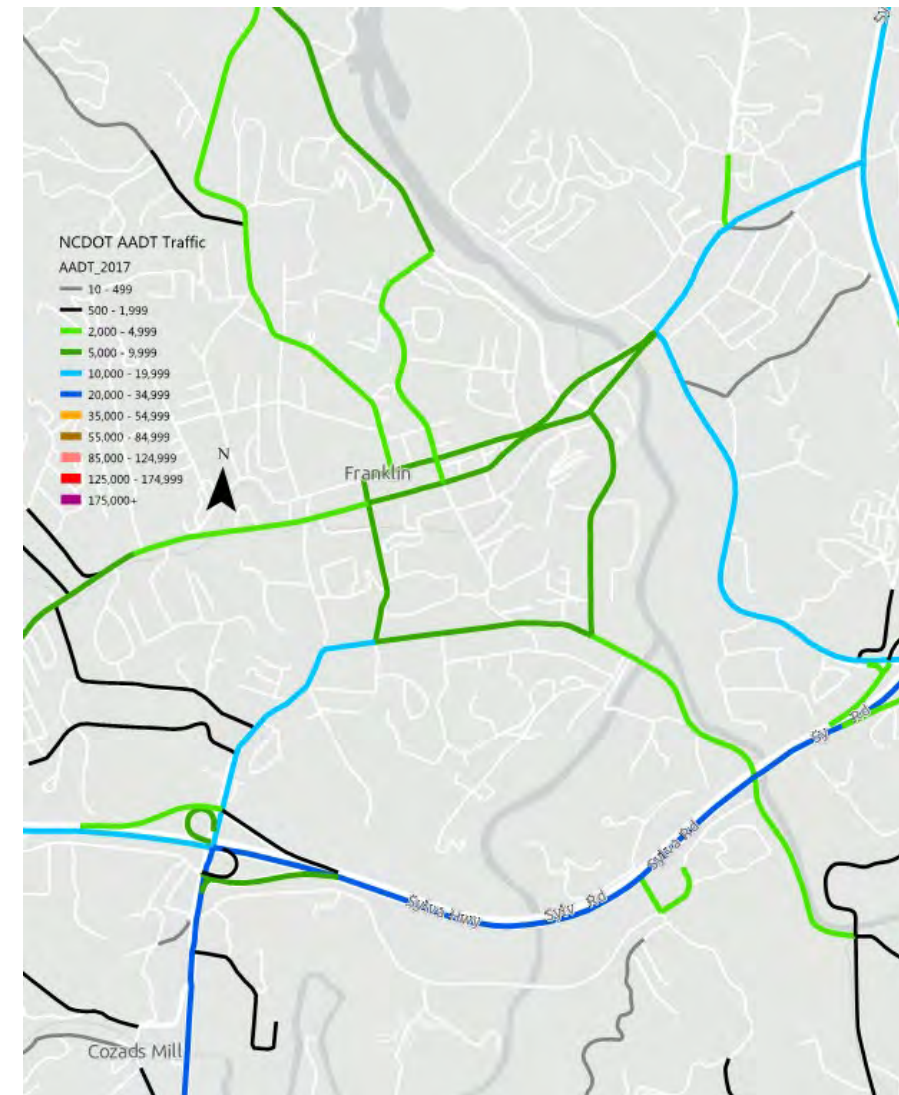


- Top “O” The Town: Upper story rentals in Downtown Clayton, GA



# SWOT Results: Threats

- Traffic Congestion / Travel Patterns
- Falling behind on infrastructure
  - Especially internet
- Potential loss of anchors (i.e. hospital, bank)
- Competition (from county, other towns)



NCDOT 2017 AADT Traffic





# Team Observations

- **Shifting Anchors**
  - Hospital potentially moving
  - Bank merging
  - Retail shifting (types / locations)
- **Active industrial** along one side of river
- **Opportunities**
  - Community College
  - Infill sites
  - River District
  - Nikwasi Mound
- **Great greenways** and connections to open space
- Solid In-town and **downtown character**





# Stakeholder Interviews

## What we heard

- Family oriented community

- Ideal location

- Need for workforce housing (and well-paying jobs!)

- Take Downtown to the next level

- Substance abuse challenges

- Mobility needs- sidewalks, transit, connections







# Additional Analysis



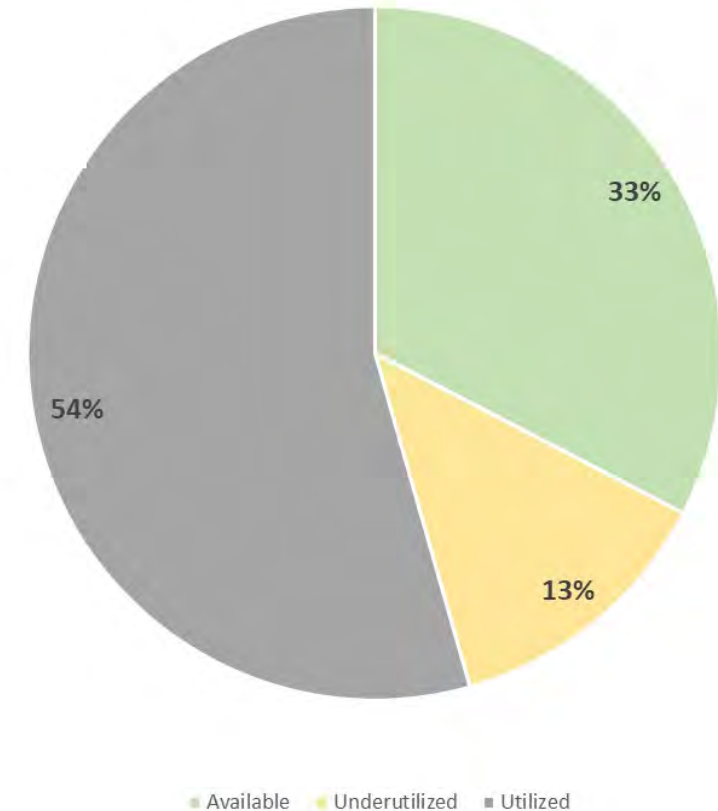
Land Use Plan



# Land Supply

- Land analyzed based on building/land value ratio and summarized as either:
  - **Available** (*vacant land, farmland*)
  - **Underutilized** (*usually low-value developed areas of any land use type other than utilized lands*)
  - **Utilized** (*institutional uses, parks, cemeteries*)
- Approximately 54 percent of land within the Franklin study area is Utilized
- Does not take into account environmentally constrained land (floodplain, steep slopes, important wildlife habitat)

Land Supply Summary



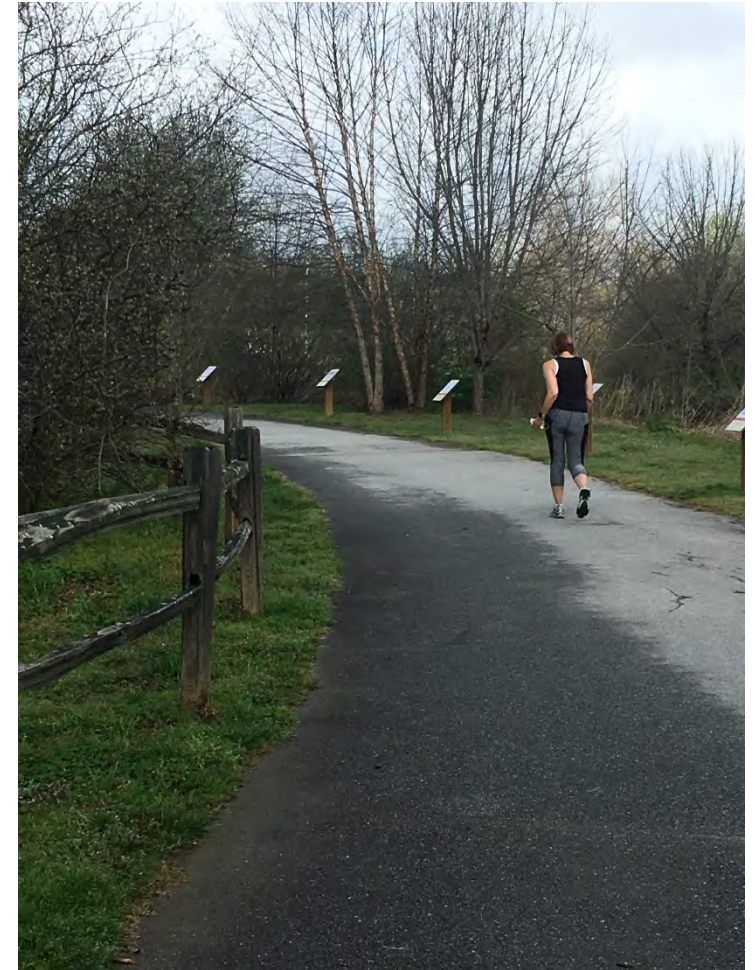






# Parks and Natural Resources

- Parks and Natural Resources
  - Existing parks
    - Big Bear Park / Wesley's Park
    - Cullasaja Park
    - Macon County Recreation Park
  - Existing greenways and connections
    - Little Tennessee Greenway
    - Connection under Main Street
    - Extension from western terminus to Macon County Recreation Park
- Macon County Recreation Master Plan
  - Many accomplishments (Macon County Rec Park Improvements, Catoogechaye Park (Parker Meadows Complex))
  - Next phases of Greenway Master Plan





**Environmental Constraints**

**Flood Zones and Steep Slopes**

- SFHA/100 YEAR
- 0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE

**Steep Slopes**

- Slope Under 15%
- Slope 15-20%
- Slope 20% and Over

The map displays the city of Macon, Georgia, with various environmental constraints highlighted. Flood zones are shown in purple (SFHA/100 YEAR) and blue (0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE). Steep slopes are indicated by orange shading (Slope 15-20%) and yellow shading (Slope 20% and Over). The map includes major roads (US-23, US-64, US-1001, GA-142, GA-1146, GA-1148, GA-1646, GA-1668) and local roads. Key locations marked include East Franklin Elementary, Franklin High, Macon Early College High School, Mountain View Intermediate, and Macon Middle School. The map also shows the Macon River and its tributaries, as well as various parks and recreational areas. A north arrow is located in the bottom left corner.

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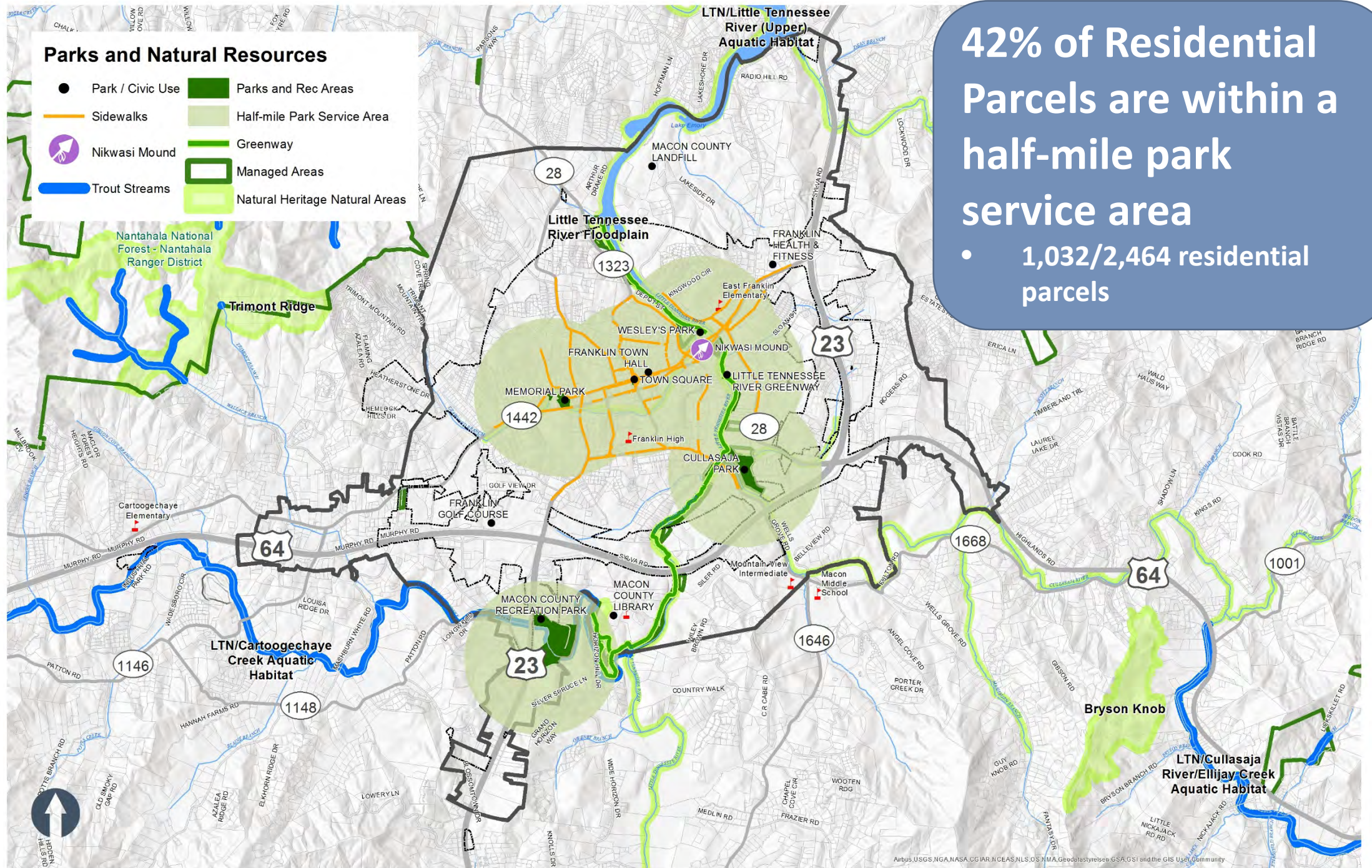
The map displays environmental constraints across a geographic area. It features several major roads labeled with route numbers: 64, 28, 1323, 1442, 1146, 1148, 23, 1646, 1668, and 1001. Key locations marked include East Franklin Elementary, Franklin High, Macon Early College High School, Mountain View Intermediate, and Macon Middle School. The map uses color coding to represent different types of environmental constraints: purple for SFHA/100 Year flood zones, blue dots for 0.2 Percent Annual Chance flood zones, and shades of orange/yellow for steep slopes (under 15%, 15-20%, and 20% or over). A north arrow is located in the bottom left corner.

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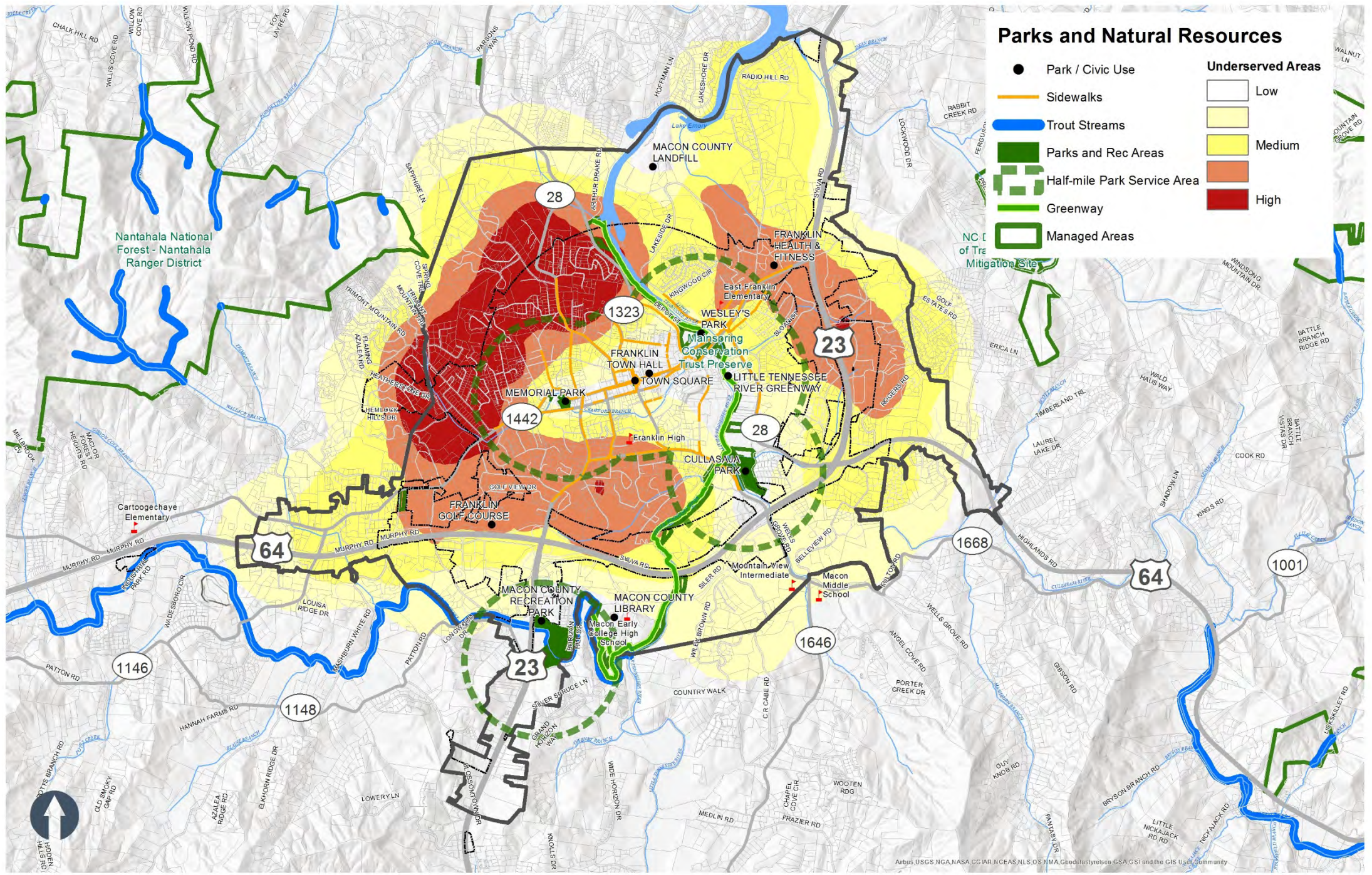


## Parks and Natural Resources

- Park / Civic Use
- Sidewalks
- 📍 Nikwasi Mound
- Trout Streams
- Parks and Rec Areas
- Half-mile Park Service Area
- Greenway
- Managed Areas
- Natural Heritage Natural Areas





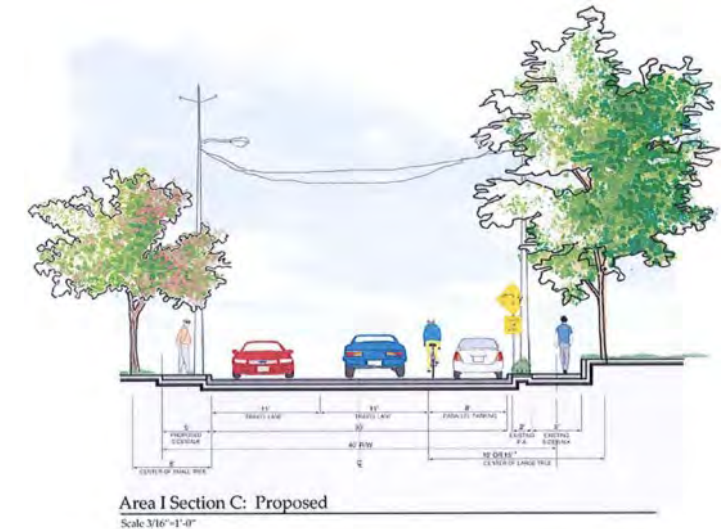
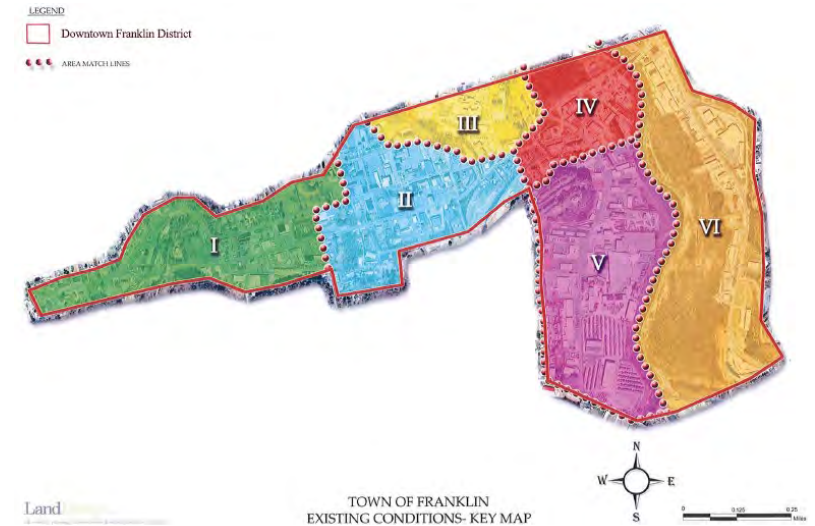


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# Transportation

- Downtown Franklin Master Plan (2008)
  - 6 sub-districts with network and multimodal improvements
  - No implementation plan
- Franklin Parking Analysis (2017)
  - Increase supply and ADA parking
  - Install curb extensions
- Bike Walk Franklin (2017)
  - Identify resurfacing opportunities
  - Create Advisory Committee
  - Develop Complete Streets Strategy
  - Address Sidewalk Gaps
  - Greenway Extension + New Connections

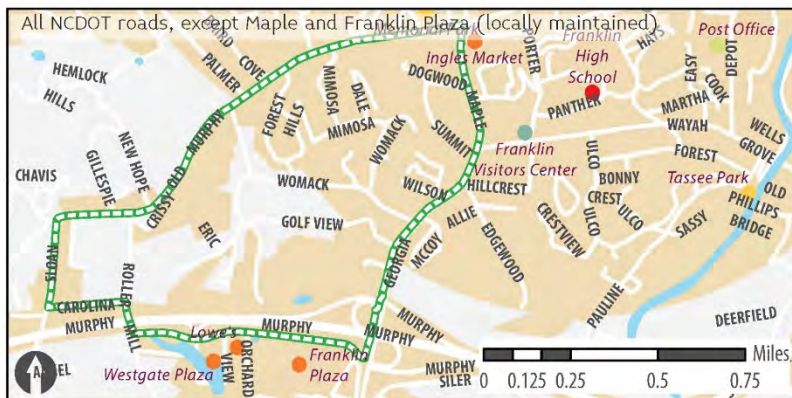






#1

## The Southwest Loop Trail



### INFLUENCES:

- Suburban commercial/retail
- Residential
- Grocery & Downtown

### CONNECTIONS:

The completion of this loop would connect nearly every destination in southwest Franklin and link downtown to suburban retail

### INTERSECTIONS:

- Crossing of on- and off- ramps at US 64 Interchange w/ Georgia Road, US 23-441
- Crossing Roller Mill Road at Carolina Drive
- Numerous driveway and street crossings

**CHALLENGES:** This large project will likely require construction in phases due to cost, and right-of-way acquisitions.

**OPPORTUNITY:** Coordination with NCDOT STIP #U-5604, which includes intersection improvements along trail route.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A multi-use path for both bicyclists and pedestrians on a facility separated from motor vehicles. Markings and in some cases signs are used to identify intersections and driveways that cross the trail, and the trail will be located on the same side of the road as any existing sidewalks or where feasible. WALK / DON'T WALK signals would be added to signalized intersections through which the trail passes. This loop would serve many commercial, institutional, retail and residential destinations, connect them to town, and serve a recreational function.

**COST ESTIMATE**  
**\$4 million**

**LENGTH**  
**3.7 miles**



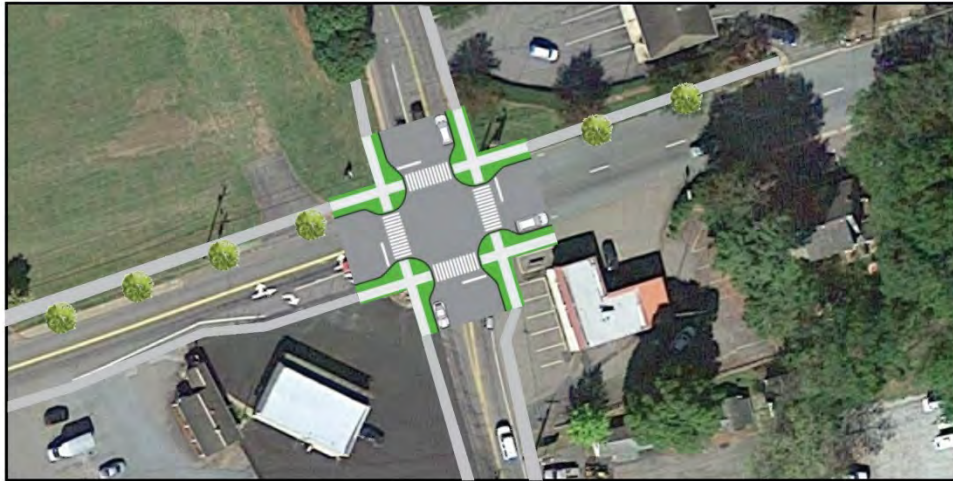
Signs can promote the health aspects of the Southwest Loop Trail, with potential for partners and sponsorships.

Source: 2011 Press-Register



#2

## Intersection of Palmer St & Porter St



### MAKING IT HEALTHIER

Currently, pedestrians do not have a sidewalk to stand on, crosswalks, or signalized assistance. This intersection is hazardous to anyone attempting to cross either road, so this project would enable all users and connect to existing pedestrian infrastructure.

#3

## Highlands Road Sidewalk Extension (West Side)



### MAKING IT HEALTHIER

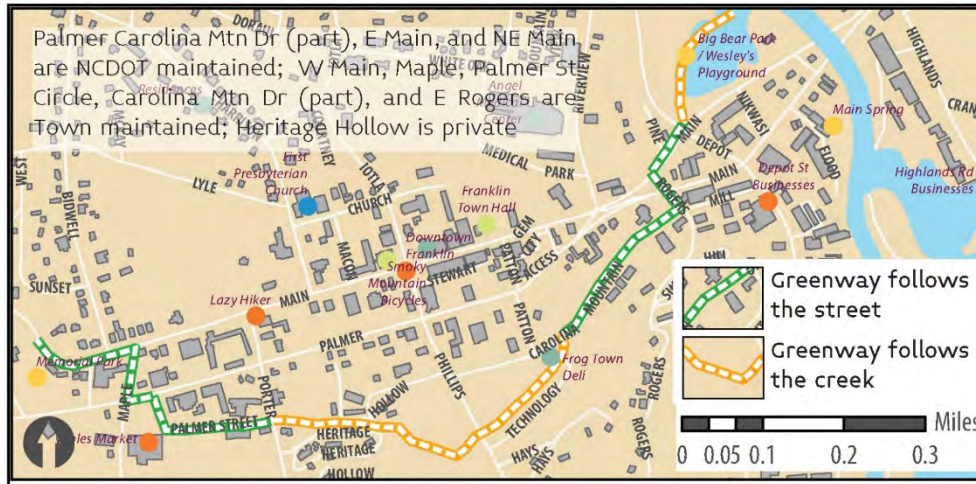
The many businesses along this corridor would benefit from increased foot traffic, while pedestrians who are already walking to the restaurants, barbershops, plumbers, and clothes stores would benefit from the added comfort and safety provided by a complete length of sidewalk.





#9

## The Crawford Branch Greenway



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

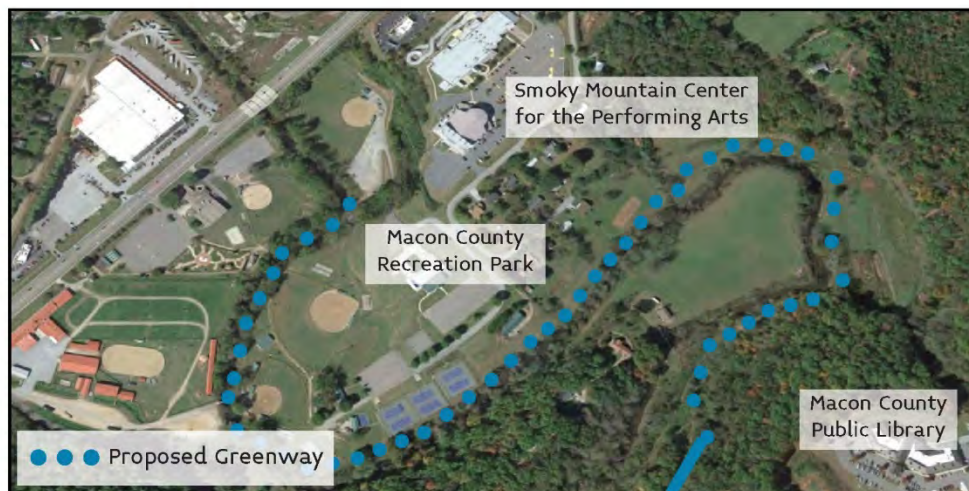
This downtown greenway would criss-cross existing walking and biking facilities, connecting multiple destinations and creating a myriad path network.

Mixing facility types, the greenway would connect the west side of town to the east side, and Memorial Park to Big Bear Park. This Greenway would be as much a recreational attraction as a transportation facility and significantly boost Franklin's standing as a bicycling and walking destination.



#19

## Little Tenn. River Greenway Extension



### MAKING IT HEALTHIER

This long-desired project would turn the Little Tennessee River Greenway from a dead-end trail into a connector to the largest and most used recreation facility in Macon County. A facility dedicated to physical health would become accessible by means of physically active transportation.



Land Use Plan



# Multimodal Transportation

- Southern Blue Ridge Bicycle Plan (2018)
  - Little Tennessee River Greenway Ext.
  - Bike Racks & Fix-It Stations
  - Programmatic recommendations
- Macon County Transit
  - Existing service: deviated fixed route, demand response
  - Statewide Locally Coordinated Plan recommendations: service expansion, coordination and communications
- NCDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Crashes (2007-16)
  - 22 reported pedestrian crashes (9 in parking lot)
  - 1 reported bicycle crash





# Transportation Projects

- CTP – Being updated:  
[maconmoves.metroquest.com](http://maconmoves.metroquest.com)
- STIP
- SPOT 5.0
  - Submitted for 5.0
    - SR 1324 (Lakeside Dr) Sidewalk
    - US 441 (Sylva Road) Upgrade Roadway
    - US 441 Bus Upgrade Roadway
    - SR 1667 (Wayah Street) Modernize Roadway
    - SR 1660 (Siler Road) Modernize Roadway
  - Draft Division Funded
    - E Main St/US 441 Bus Construct Sidewalk Loop

30 Year  
Horizon

Macon CTP

10 Year  
Horizon

NCDOT State  
Transportation  
Improvement

5 Year  
Horizon

NCDOT STIP

1-2  
Process

SPOT, Local Prioritization  
Process





# Economy

- Cherokee Cultural Corridor/  
Nikwasi Initiative
- Regional economy
- Downtown
- Tax value shift
- Retail demand and leakage







**KITUHWA MOUND AND GOVERNORS ISLAND:**  
ANI-KITUHWA ANCIENT HISTORY, IDENTITY, AND CREATION; BIRTH OF EBCI NATION  
TOTAL LAND INVESTMENT: \$3,500,000

**NEEDMORE PROPERTIES:**  
EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SETTLEMENTS, TRAIL OF TEARS, HISTORIC FARMSTEAD LANDSCAPE AND STRUCTURES, AND RECREATION SITES  
TOTAL LAND INVESTMENT: \$19,000,000

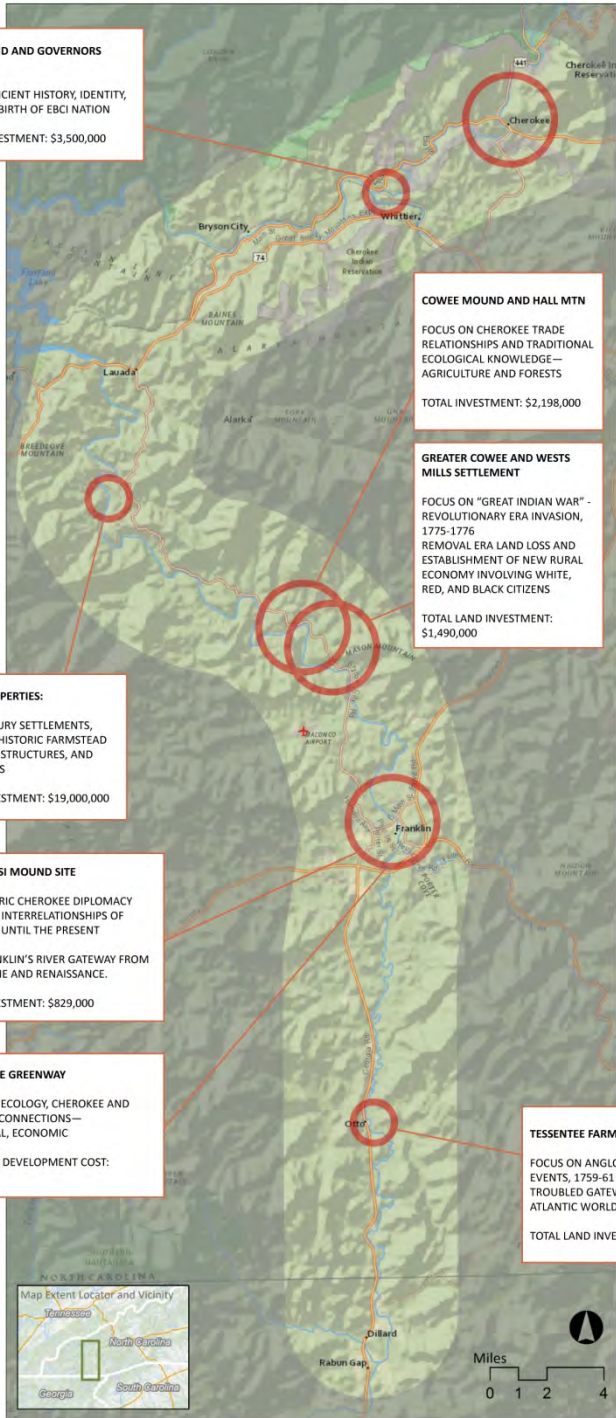
**GREATER NIKWASI MOUND SITE**  
FOCUS ON HISTORIC CHEROKEE DIPLOMACY WITH CAROLINA; INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF NEWCOMERS UP UNTIL THE PRESENT  
HISTORY OF FRANKLIN'S RIVER GATEWAY FROM BOOM TO DECLINE AND RENAISSANCE.  
TOTAL LAND INVESTMENT: \$829,000

**LITTLE TENNESSEE GREENWAY**  
FOCUS ON RIVER ECOLOGY, CHEROKEE AND SETTLERS' RIVER CONNECTIONS—CULTURAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC  
TOTAL LAND AND DEVELOPMENT COST: \$4,000,000

**COWEE MOUND AND HALL MTN**  
FOCUS ON CHEROKEE TRADE RELATIONSHIPS AND TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE—AGRICULTURE AND FORESTS  
TOTAL INVESTMENT: \$2,198,000

**GREATER COWEE AND WESTS MILLS SETTLEMENT**  
FOCUS ON "GREAT INDIAN WAR" - REVOLUTIONARY ERA INVASION, 1775-1776  
REMOVAL ERA LAND LOSS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW RURAL ECONOMY INVOLVING WHITE, RED, AND BLACK CITIZENS  
TOTAL LAND INVESTMENT: \$1,490,000

**TESSENTEE FARM AND COWEETA**  
FOCUS ON ANGLO-CHEROKEE WAR EVENTS, 1759-61  
TROUBLED GATEWAY TO COLONIAL ATLANTIC WORLD  
TOTAL LAND INVESTMENT: \$865,000



# Nikwasi-Cherokee Cultural and Heritage Corridor





# Regional Plans

- Mountain Landscapes Initiative
- Opt-In Regional Vision
- Region A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy





# Downtown Renovations





# Tax Value

## 2019 VALUATION BY TOWNSHIPS

G R O S S  V A L U E S	Totals by Township					
		Taxable Parcels	2015 taxable	2019 taxable	\$ Diff	% change
	Burningtown	1,281	\$ 129,479,880	\$ 123,687,420	\$ (5,792,460)	-4.47%
	Cartoogechaye	3,168	\$ 376,514,410	\$ 361,192,950	\$ (15,321,460)	-4.07%
	Cowee	3,745	\$ 321,940,160	\$ 315,380,030	\$ (6,560,130)	-2.04%
	Ellijay	3,207	\$ 303,486,430	\$ 287,326,580	\$ (16,159,850)	-5.32%
	Flats	1,190	\$ 236,193,130	\$ 245,094,400	\$ 8,901,270	3.77%
	Franklin	8,266	\$ 937,529,840	\$ 936,015,860	\$ (1,513,980)	-0.16%
	Franklin City	2,529	\$ 611,696,010	\$ 619,022,300	\$ 7,326,290	1.20%
	Highlands	4,005	\$ 1,702,031,650	\$ 1,703,554,740	\$ 1,523,090	0.09%
	Highlands City	2,903	\$ 1,665,398,600	\$ 1,769,123,230	\$ 103,724,630	6.23%
	Millshoal	3,692	\$ 308,115,100	\$ 305,531,680	\$ (2,583,420)	-0.84%
	Nantahala	2,545	\$ 320,561,600	\$ 292,574,335	\$ (27,987,265)	-8.73%
	Smithbridge	4,470	\$ 467,862,330	\$ 447,852,740	\$ (20,009,590)	-4.28%
	Sugarfork	1,517	\$ 174,457,720	\$ 180,867,510	\$ 6,409,790	3.67%
		42,518	7,555,266,860	7,587,223,775	31,956,915	0.42%
						100.00%

Total Values Do Not Include Utilities,  
Personal Property & Motor Vehicle  
Values

Courtesy of the Macon County Tax Collector

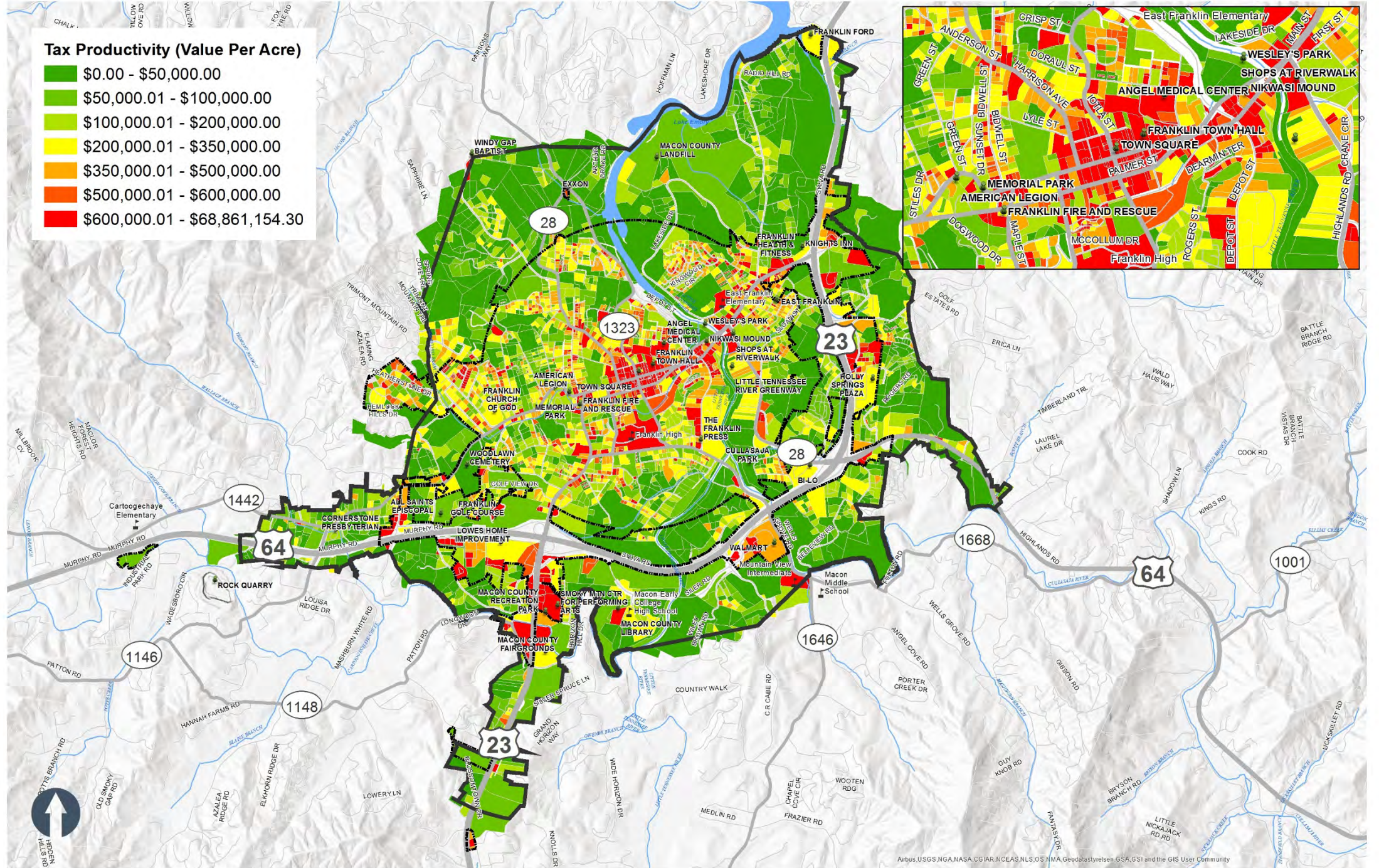


Land Use Plan



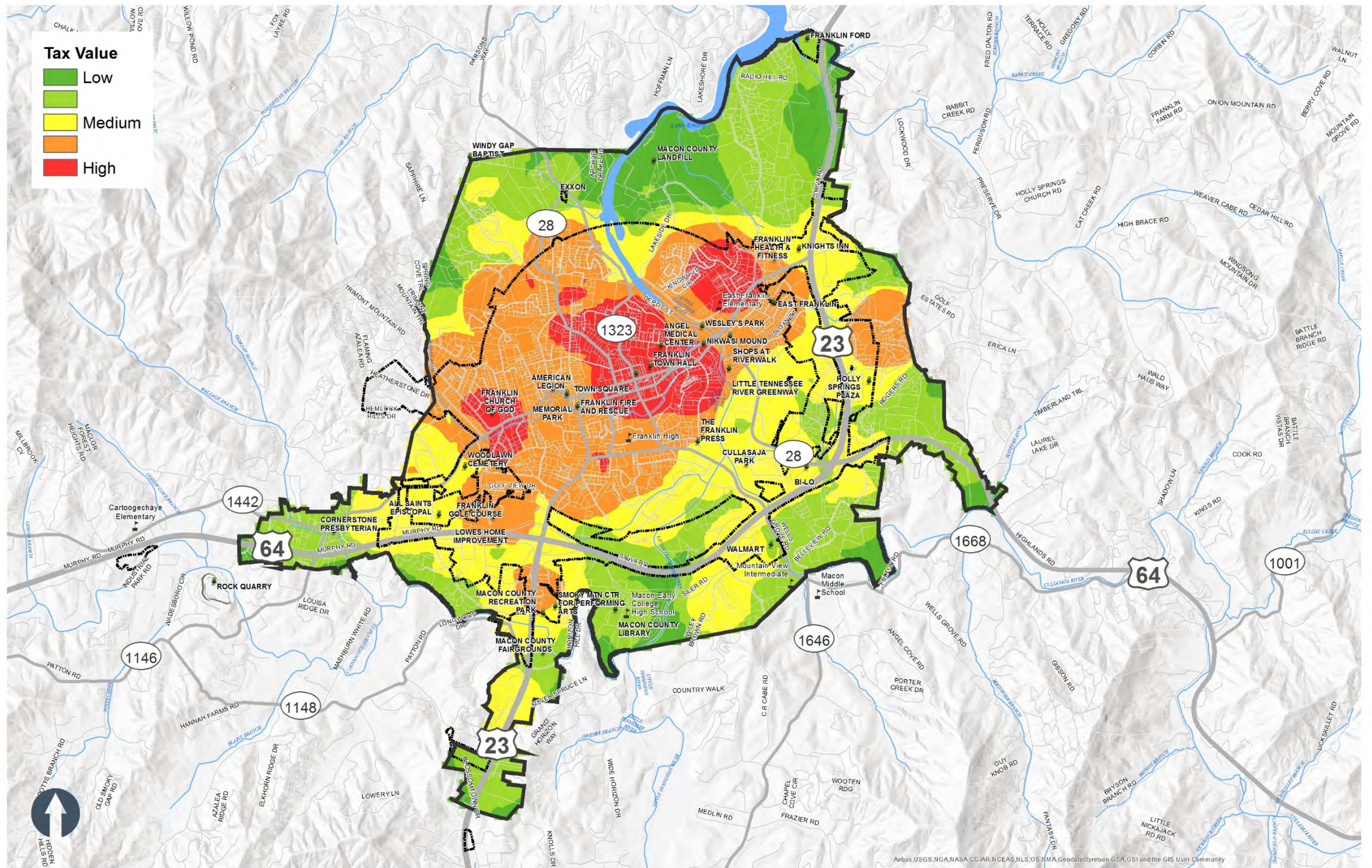
# Tax Productivity (Value Per Acre)

- \$0.00 - \$50,000.00
- \$50,000.01 - \$100,000.00
- \$100,000.01 - \$200,000.00
- \$200,000.01 - \$350,000.00
- \$350,000.01 - \$500,000.00
- \$500,000.01 - \$600,000.00
- \$600,000.01 - \$68,861,154.30





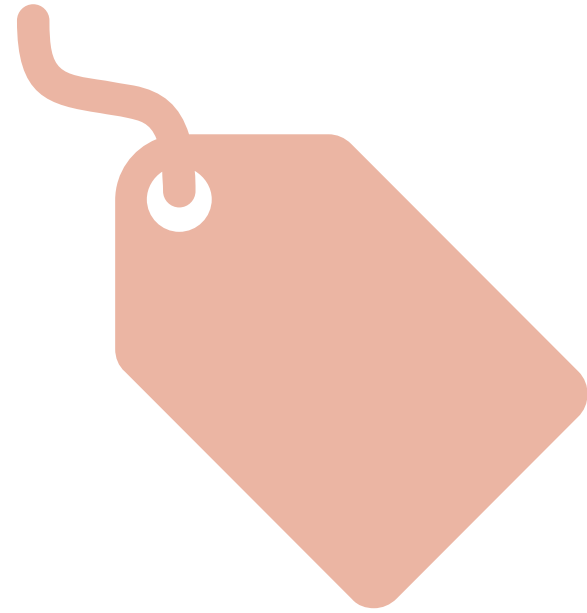
**Tax Value**





# Retail Trends

- Very little retail leakage from Town and ETJ
  - Shoe stores
  - Office supply and gift stores
- Franklin is a shopping destination for surrounding communities
- Majority of retail sales are food and beverage stores (29.5%)







# Public Engagement



Land Use Plan



# Public Engagement

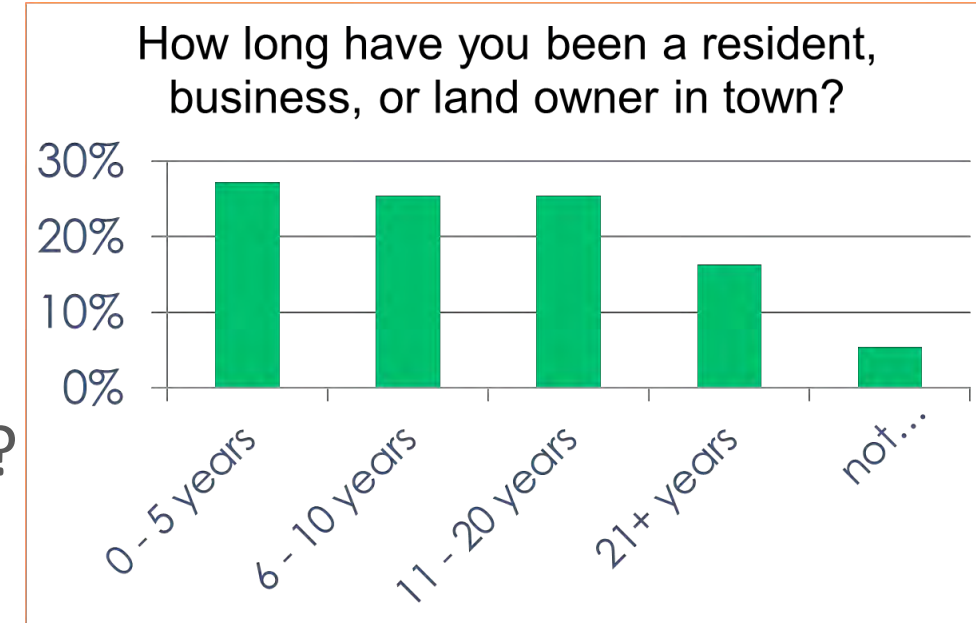
- Website- live
- Steering Committee
- Online Survey
- Social Media Outreach
- Charette (multi-day workshop)
- Pop-Up Meetings
- Community Meeting
- Public Hearing





# Online Survey

- Demographics
  - Age
  - Live/Work/Play
  - Tenure
- Goals/Values/Concerns
  - What factors are important to you?
  - Most pressing issues
  - Importance of amenities and services
- Development Character
- Open ended questions
- Other ideas?





# Draft Charette Schedule

Day 1 – Visioning Wednesday July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Day 2-Plan Development Thursday July 18 <sup>th</sup>	Day 3-Debrief Friday July 19 <sup>th</sup>
<b>1:00 pm: Walking Tour</b>  <b>2:30-4:30 pm: Open Studio</b>  5:00-6:00 pm: Steering Committee and Elected Official Preview  <b>6:00-8:00 pm: Public Visioning Session</b>	9:00-10:00: Staff Meetings  <b>10:00-12:00: Open Studio</b>  12:00-1:00: Lunch  1:00-3:00: Closed Studio and Stakeholder Meetings  <b>4:00-5:30: Steering Committee Meeting</b>  <b>6:00 – 7:30: Open House</b>	<b>8:00-10:00: Coffee Talk with Pin up of concepts and recommendations</b>  10:30-11:30: Staff Debrief and Work Session



## Next Steps

### July

- Charrette (Public Meetings)
- July 17-19<sup>th</sup>

### August

- Next Steering Committee meeting

## Contacts

### Justin Setser

Town Planner/Land Use Administrator  
Town of Franklin

[jsetser@franklinnc.com](mailto:jsetser@franklinnc.com)

### Jake Petrosky

Project Manager  
Stewart

[jpetrosky@stewartinc.com](mailto:jpetrosky@stewartinc.com)

