



2020

Braselton

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DRAFT

MAY 15, 2020

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Contents



Existing
Conditions

8



Public
Engagement

66



Community
Vision

82



Implementation

130



Appendix

148



Introduction

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

This comprehensive plan envisions the long-term future of the Town of Braselton and outlines its implementation. Over time, this plan will serve as a guide for cooperation and coordination between the Town, its service providers, partners, and current and future property owners. The goals and strategies contained in this plan have been carefully crafted to support new development and redevelopment that is beneficial to the community and maintains its vision. The plan should be used to support decisions regarding growth management, transportation, housing, economic development, and quality of life over the next few decades. Furthermore, this plan fulfills Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)'s requirements for local comprehensive planning and the requirements to maintain the Town of Braselton's status as a Qualified Local Government.

ABOUT BRASELTON

Located 53 miles northeast from downtown Atlanta, Braselton, Georgia is a growing town with rich heritage and a revitalizing downtown. Covering around 34 square miles, Braselton is unique in that it is located in four counties: Barrow, Gwinnett, Hall, and Jackson Counties (see pages 6-7 for the town limits). The town is served by Interstate 85, and two major state routes, Highway 53 and Highway 211, which provide residents, employees, and visitors easy access to and from the town. Braselton is best known for being the home of Chateau Elan Winery & Resort and Road Atlanta.

The town is named for the Braselton family, who first settled in the area when William Harrison Braselton of Hall County purchased approximately 800 acres of land in what is now known as the Town of Braselton in 1876. The area quickly grew to become a center for agriculture and commerce. In 1887, John Oliver Braselton, then eight years old, decided to start his own country store. After a horse and buggy accident destroyed his original building, his two brothers, Green

and William Henry, joined in his investment, and with their father's encouragement, the store turned into a thriving business along the railroad tracks that ran through the family's property. Their enterprise became known as the Braselton Brothers Department Store, with the motto "Dealers in Everything." The store, with its fourth iteration constructed in 1904, sold groceries, dry goods, notions, shoes, and millinery and clothing.

In 1916, the Town of Braselton became incorporated. William Henry Braselton was the first mayor. In the early 1980s, the Chateau Elan Winery & Resort was established, bringing many visitors into the area for years to come. Braselton continued to expand its boundaries and has attracted major companies, turning the small town into a booming residential and manufacturing area. Many of the structures from the late 1800's and early 1900's (including the Braselton Brothers' store) still stand in the town and continue to be used to house businesses that serve the local residents and visitors to the town. The Town Hall was built in 1909 and was later restored in the late 1990s. The Braselton-Stover House, originally built by Green Braselton in 1918, has been renovated and is a popular site for weddings and events.

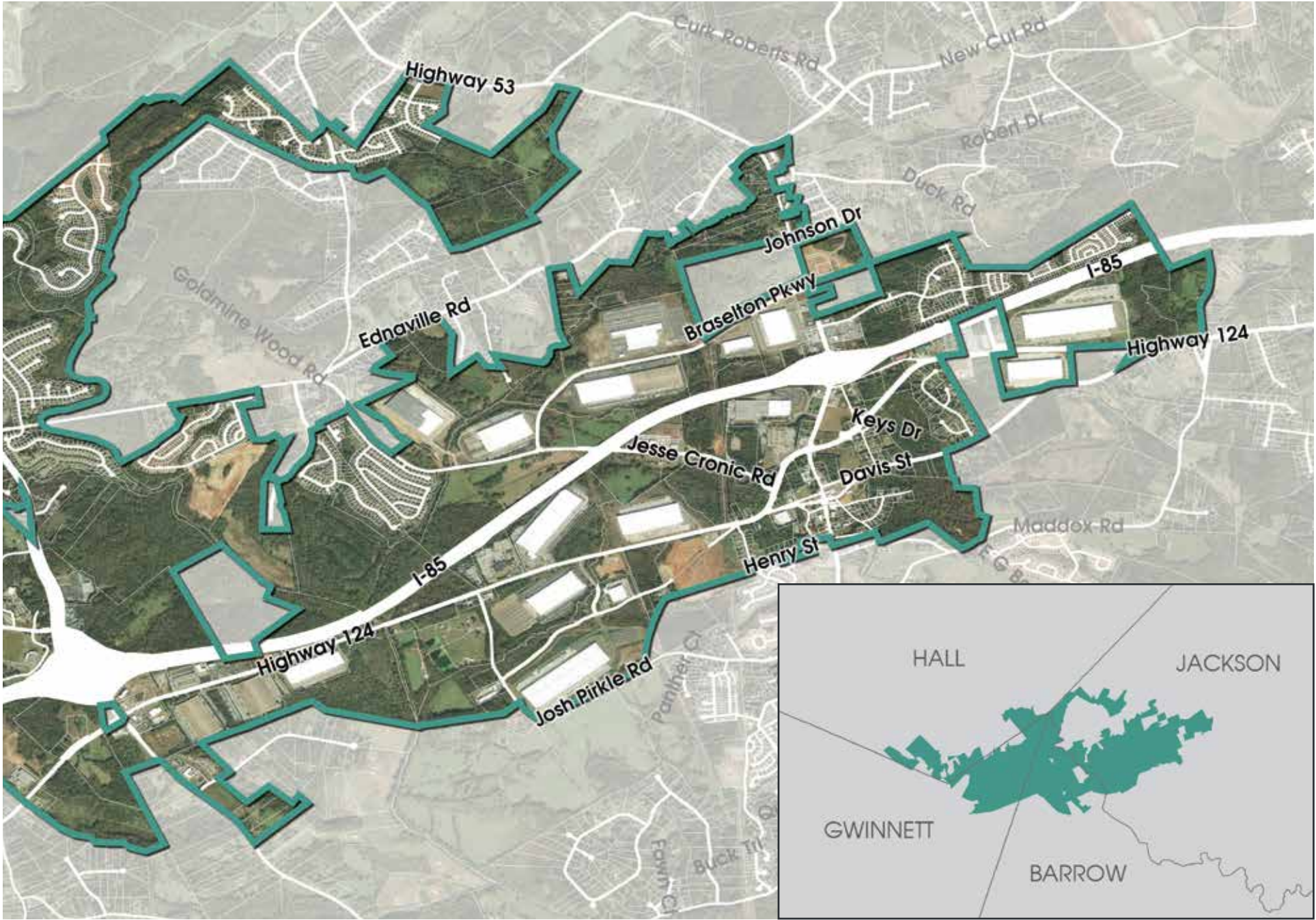
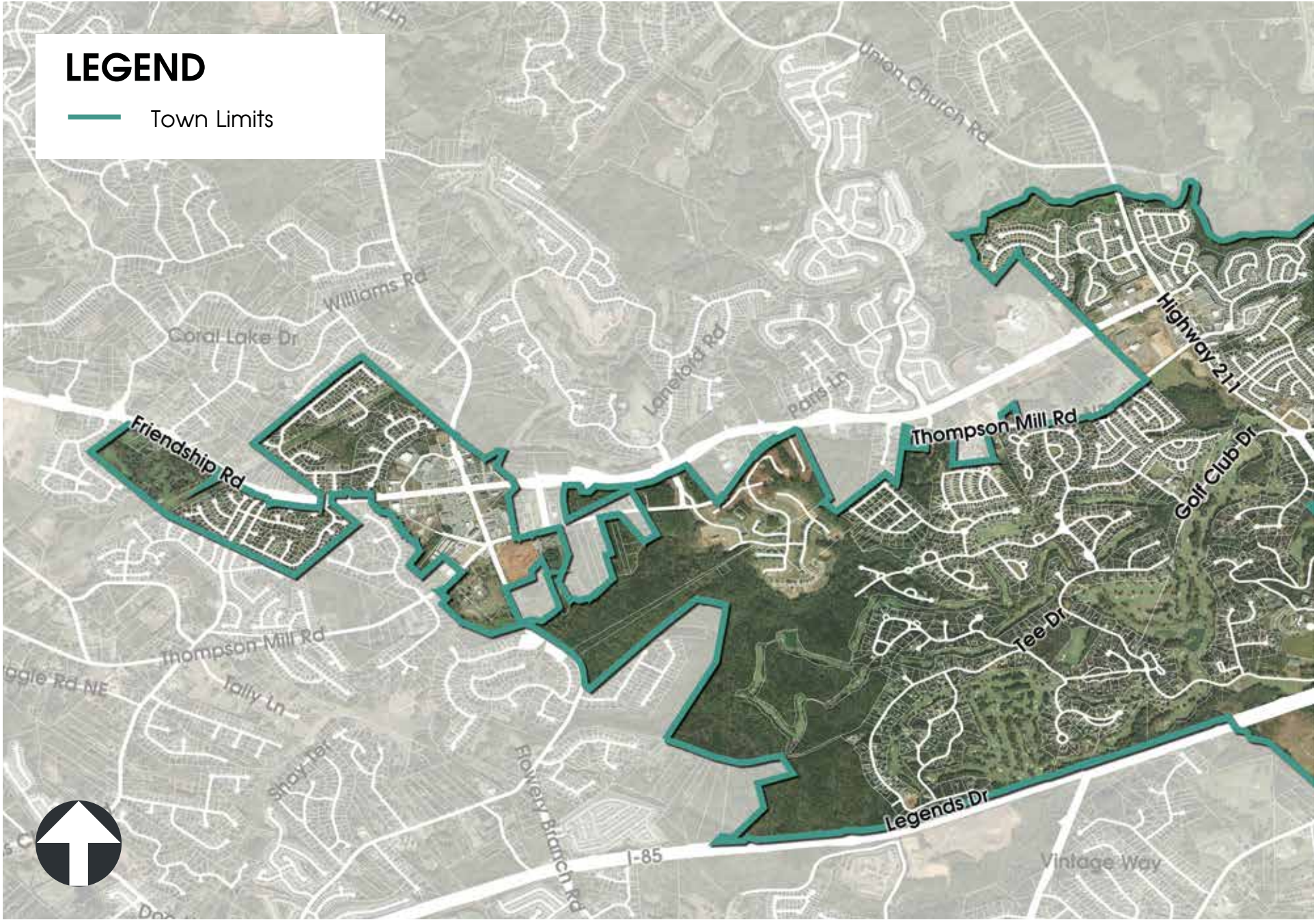
Sources: Georgia Encyclopedia (www.georgiaencyclopedia.org), www.downtownbraselton.com



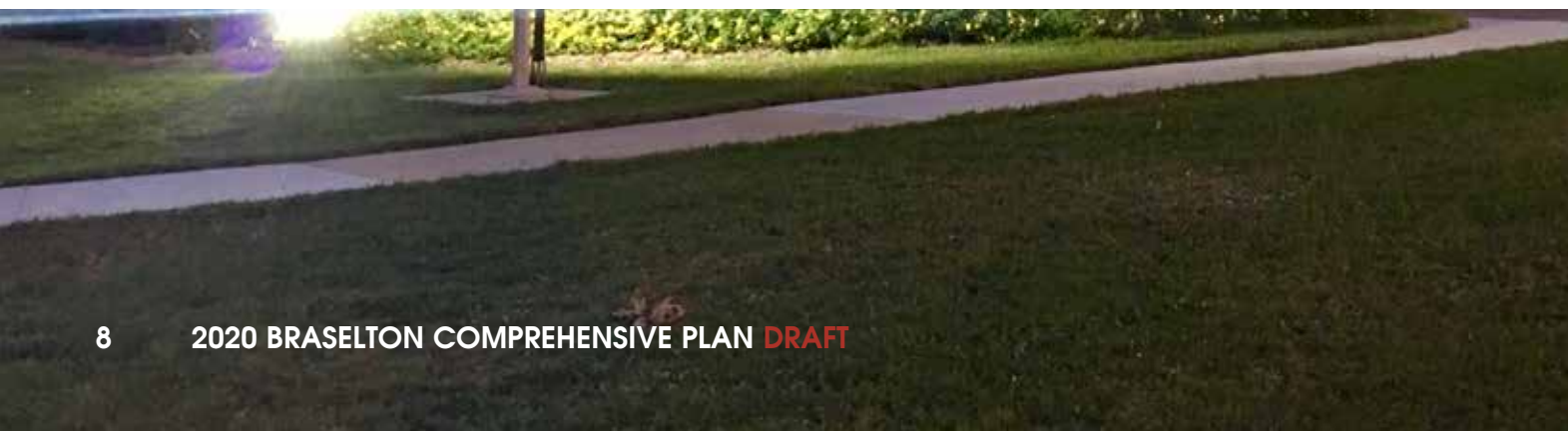
Above Photo: *The Braselton Brothers Department Store building, date unknown.*

Below Photo: *The Braselton Brothers Department Store building today. It now houses the Braselton Antique Mall among other local businesses.*





1



Existing Conditions

Previous Plans | Population & Demographics |
Land Use | Transportation |
Housing & Economic Development |
Natural & Cultural Resources |
Summary Conclusions



Previous Plans

Plans Reviewed

Comprehensive Plan (2015)
Downtown Master Plan (2003)
Urban Redevelopment Plans (2005, 2009)
Jackson County Transportation Plan (2019)
Gainesville-Hall Regional Transportation Plan (2020)
Braselton Tourism Report (2019)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | 2015

The Town of Braselton’s latest comprehensive plan update was adopted in 2015. It currently serves as a guide for the Town’s local government officials and community leaders for decision making, including the assessment of development proposals, rezoning applications, and redevelopment plans.

As previously mentioned in the Introduction, this plan seeks to advance the parts of the 2015 plan update that are still relevant to Braselton today, while making new recommendations that account for the changes the town has experienced. The following summary highlights the plan’s basis and recommendations.

>> Primary Needs & Opportunities

As part of the planning process, the following items were assessed as Braselton’s most important **needs**:

- A desire for more diversified goods and services, particularly with dining and entertainment options.
- The town needs more variety of housing types to meet demand from the aging population and young professionals, as well as more diversity in pricing.
- New sidewalks and other alternative modes of transportation are needed, and might help lessen congestion through the town.
- The town’s existing sidewalk network needs additional connections to fill in gaps.

- Traffic congestion is a major issue, especially at the interstate interchanges.

The following items were assessed as Braselton’s most important **opportunities**:

- Recent investments in Downtown Braselton provide an opportunity for new businesses to locate there.
- Regional attractions, like Chateau Elan and Road Atlanta, draw visitors to the town.
- Braselton’s growth has been driven largely by residential development, setting the stage for more growth in the commercial, industrial, and retail sectors.
- The opening of the Northeast Georgia Medical Center offers significant opportunity to develop a node of complementary uses.
- The area around downtown offers the opportunity to develop or redevelop residential uses at a greater density.
- A larger, more diverse population along with those wishing to age in place will create a market for residential and other development that is denser, more walkable, and lower maintenance.
- The LifePath should continue to be built out to provide more connections between neighborhoods and destinations.
- The Town should continue to invest in quality of life enhancements such as recreational trails, parks, and community gathering spaces or centers.
- A multi-jurisdictional approach to addressing common transportation issues could serve as a catalyst for collaboration in other areas.

>> Guiding Principles

The previous plan also established a series of guiding principles for the future growth and development throughout Braselton:

- Focus commercial development in key activity centers/nodes to reduce sprawling development patterns.
- Encourage a greater jobs-to-housing balance, greater employment opportunities, and more housing units commensurate with employment opportunities and wages within the town.
- Aggressively preserve open spaces and pursue creation of new parks, trails and greenways.
- Establish clear design character expectations in priority areas Improve the quality of key corridors linking existing and future centers.
- Maintain rural/suburban character of single-family detached residential.

>> Key Policy Recommendations

- Work with housing developers to integrate a variety of residential types within future residential development projects.
- Along scenic corridors such as Highway 53, Highway 211, Thompson Mill Road and Spout Springs Road, institute landscape/natural buffers between roadways and future development sites to help preserve rural heritage of area.
- Reduce corridor “sprawl” along Highway 53 by establishing land use and zoning controls to create commercial “nodes” at key intersections.
- Promote inter-parcel connectivity between future developments.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN | 2003

In 2003, a group of Braselton citizens, businesses, and land owners worked together with a consultant team to formulate a plan to revitalize the downtown. In the years leading to the plan's creation, Downtown Braselton had been suffering from empty neglected buildings and no new development, even as the rest of the town thrived.

>> Key Issues

Stakeholders identified the following as constraints for Downtown Braselton:

- Poor traffic circulation;
- Truck traffic that wreaks havoc with local motorists;
- No identity;
- The danger of losing valuable historic buildings; and
- Lack of development regulations.

>> Recommendations

The plan recommended the following to improve Downtown Braselton:

- The establishment of a Braselton Development Authority.
- Acquisition of property to create a Town Green.
- Extension of Braselton Parkway to create a frontage road that connects Highway 53 and Highway 211.
- Design provisions that include 12- to 15-foot sidewalks and bringing structures as close to the sidewalks as possible.
- A mixed-use town center to include office, retail, and residences of different types and densities.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLANS | 2005, 2009

In the years following the 2003 Downtown Master Plan, the Town of Braselton created two urban redevelopment plans for the downtown area. The intent of these plans was to refine the 2003's vision and identify specific projects for implementation and funding.

>> 2005 Projects

The Town's first urban redevelopment plan proposed the following based on further analysis:

- Construction of a new library facility.
- Construction of a new police and court facility.

>> 2009 Projects

The latest urban redevelopment plan indicated in its analyses that approximately 70% of the land in Downtown Braselton was vacant or undeveloped. Other findings included the need for additional public facilities to accommodate population growth and the need for alternative modes of transportation to encourage more pedestrian activity. Projects from this plan included the following:

- Realignment of Highway 53 and Highway 124.
- Construction of the Town Green and amphitheater.
- Streetscape projects that would include on-street parking and wider sidewalks.

The master plan and subsequent urban redevelopment plans helped to kick off revitalization efforts for downtown through the Town Green, the adaptive reuse of historic structures, new businesses, and key transportation improvements.



JACKSON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN | 2019

Jackson County, which makes up a significant part of Braselton, updated its county-wide transportation plan in 2019. Since 2000, Jackson County has experienced tremendous population growth — nearly 22,000 residents were added between 2000 and 2015. Additionally, there was a lot of growth in its industrial employment sectors during this same time. Analyses forecasted that between 2015 and 2050, Jackson County’s population would further increase by approximately 52,000 (effectively doubling the population), and nearly 8,700 jobs would be added, prompting a need to reassess the county’s transportation network.

>> Key Recommendations & Projects

The following are recommendations and projects that relate to Braselton:

- Feasibility study for the Braselton/Hoschton Bypass.
- Repair or replacement of the Liberty Church Road/Thompson Mill Road bridge at the Mulberry River.
- Jesse Cronic Road and Thompson Mill Road intersection improvement.
- Widening of Jesse Cronic Road and Thompson Mill Road (from 2 lanes to 4 lanes).
- Braselton Parkway extension.
- Roundabout at Highway 53 at New Cut Road/Ednaville Road (GDOT).
- Widening of Highway 53 from Interstate 85 to Highway 211 (GDOT).
- Widening of Highway 124 from Josh Pirkle Road to Highway 11 (GDOT).

GAINESVILLE-HALL REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN | 2020

At the time of this plan, the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) was in the process of updating its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that covers all of Hall County and the western portion of Jackson County. The RTP update will cover a 30-year period from 2020 to 2050. This update will provide a “roadmap” for GHMPO’s transportation investments by prioritizing needs across the planning boundary.

>> Goals of the Plan

The following are the major goals of the plan from the 2015 RTP:

1. **Coordination & Outreach.** Develop a financially feasible plan that will increase the likelihood of successful implementation through agency, stakeholder, and public coordination.
2. **Multimodal Connectivity.** Provide a more integrated multimodal and intermodal transportation system that includes increased travel options by prioritizing transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel throughout the region.
3. **Safety/Security.** Maintain and improve transportation system safety and security for motorists, transit riders, pedestrian, and bicyclists.
4. **System Preservation & Maintenance.** Take steps to continually monitor and maintain the transportation system.

5. **Environment.** Develop a transportation system that conserves energy, promotes the attainment of air quality standards, protects the natural environment, and minimizes adverse impacts.
6. **Mobility & Economic Vitality.** Provide a transportation system that provides for the movement of people and goods safely and efficiently and advances the region’s economic competitiveness.
7. **Land Use Integration.** Develop a transportation system that is efficient by integrating transportation planning with land use decisions and other comprehensive planning tools.

>> Key Recommendations & Projects

The following are recommendations and projects that relate to Braselton:

- Widening of I-85 from I-985 to north of Highway 53/Green Street (GDOT).
- Widening of I-85 from north of Highway 53/Green Street to north of Highway 11/US Highway 129 (GDOT).
- Widening of Highway 53 from I-85 to Highway 211 (GDOT).
- Widening of Highway 53/Green Street from Interstate 85 to Tapp Wood Road (GDOT).
- Widening of Highway 211 from Highway 124/Barrow County line to Friendship Road/Hall County line.
- Widening of Highway 211 from Highway 53 to Friendship Road.

BRASELTON TOURISM REPORT | 2019

In 2019, the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s Tourism Product Development (TPD) team made a series of visits to Braselton to assess the town’s existing inventory of tourism destinations, create recommendations to expand the town’s tourism opportunities, and provide resources to help further tourism in Braselton.

>> Key Recommendations

- Solidify the Braselton brand across the geographical area.
- Offer outdoor experiences with and monitor lodging.
- Use arts as a solution to activate new areas.
- Activate a walkable bustling downtown with a welcome center hub.
- Finesse a slate of festivals/events to keep visitors coming.

As a result of this visit, the Town of Braselton is now eligible for funding assistance from the TPD to implement the strategies outlined within the report, including but not limited to agritourism, arts and culture, downtown development, historic preservation, and outdoor recreation.

Population & Demographics



POPULATION GROWTH

In 2000, Braselton had a population of 3,650 people and 1,176 households. Recent estimates show that the town has a population of 11,395 people with 3,723 households. In less than 20 years, Braselton has more than tripled in population. Braselton has continued to grow at a faster pace than the four counties since 2000. During this same period, Braselton's share of growth between the four counties has increased by a full half of a percentage point, showing signs of a competitive small town within this geographical area.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

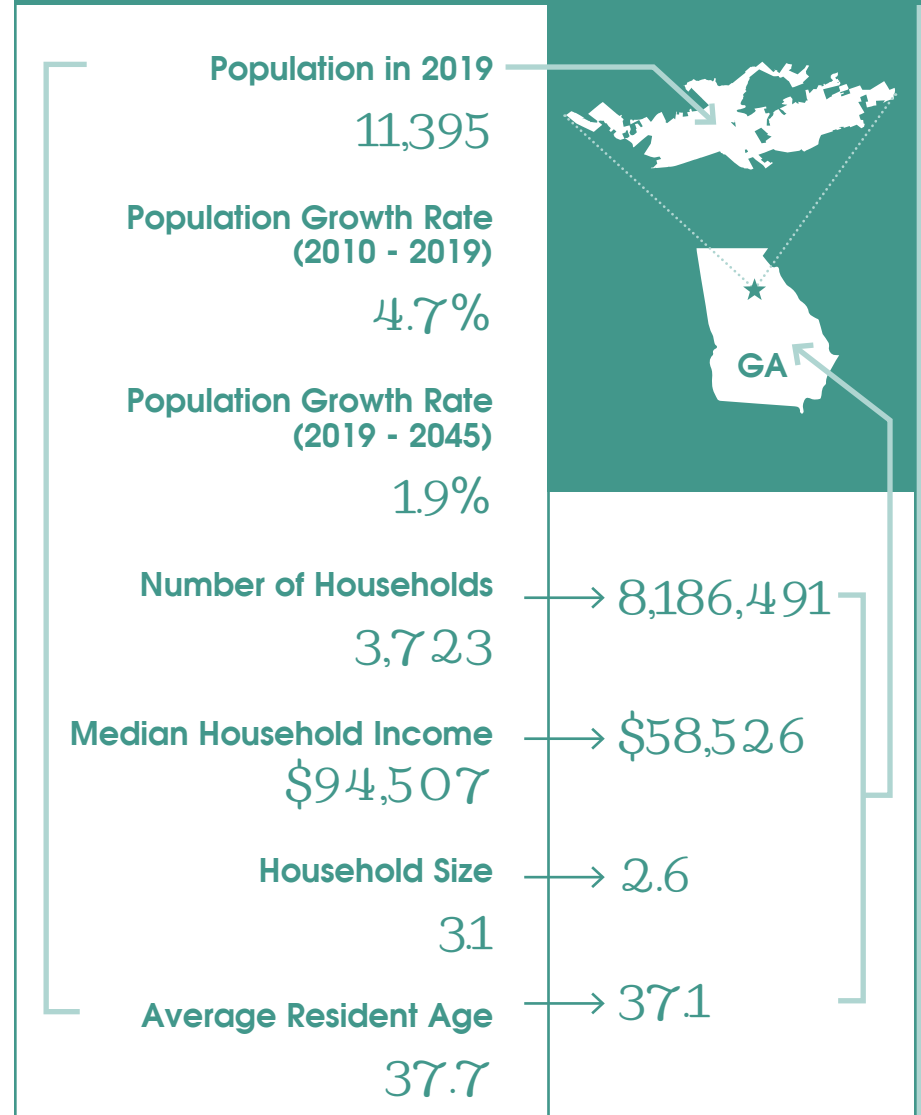
Braselton is expected to grow from 11,395 people and 3,723 households in 2019 to 18,959 and 6,032, respectively in 2045. This equates to a net increase of 7,564 new people and 2,309 new households, or **roughly 303 new residents annually**. From 2000 to 2010, the town's population grew at an impressive 7.5%, but slowed to 4.7% between 2010 and 2019. Using a conservative growth rate, it's predicted that Braselton

will grow at a steady annual average of 1.9% to get to 2045's projected population and household total.

The fastest growing age group within the four counties between now and 2045 is expected to be seniors (age 74 years old and over) at an average annual growth rate of 3.8%. The gap between seniors and the next closest age group in terms of fastest growing is quite significant. Those between 23 and 38 years old are projected to grow by 2.2%, 7 to 22 years old by 2%, 55 to 73 years old by 1.8%, and lastly persons age 39 to 54 years old by an estimated 1.7% on an average annual basis. Between now and 2029, the growth of seniors will skyrocket to an average annual rate of 5.2% but will gradually decline until 2045.

Population	Town of Braselton	Four Counties	State of Georgia
2000 Census	3,650	815,481	8,186,491
2010 Census	7,511	1,114,857	9,687,653
2019 Estimate	11,395	1,298,776	10,593,771
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2000-2019	6.2%	2.5%	1.4%
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2000-2010	7.5%	3.2%	1.7%
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2010-2019	4.7%	1.7%	1.0%

>> Braselton By The Numbers



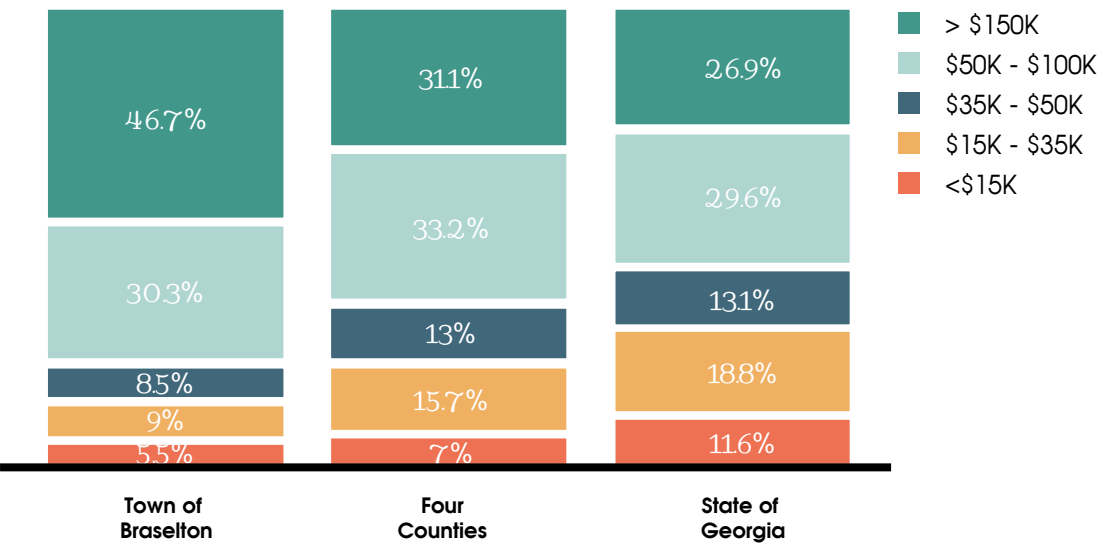
HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

Braselton has a larger average household size (3.1) than both the four (2.9) and state (2.6). This can be attributed to the fact that Braselton has a higher percentage of households with children. Braselton also a lower percentage of non-family/single-person households than the four counties and state.

DEMOGRAPHICS

>> Age

Generation X residents (born between 1965 and 1980) make up the largest concentration of Braselton’s residents. The average age of residents (37.7) is higher than the average of the four counties (36.9), and the state (37.1). This disparity makes sense, as the next largest concentration of residents in Braselton are between the ages of 7 and 22, likely indicating the presence of more families than singles.



Household Characteristics	Town of Braselton	Four Counties	State of Georgia
Est. Households	3,723	430,651	3,940,078
Small Households (1 or 2 people)	1,675	203,296	2,246,806
Medium Households (3-4 people)	1,439	154,065	1,239,881
Large Households (5+ people)	609	73,290	453,391
Households with Children	47%	44%	37%
Households without Children	53%	56%	63%
Non-Family Households	620	104,322	1,242,055
2019 Est. Average Household Size	3.1	2.9	2.6

>> Income

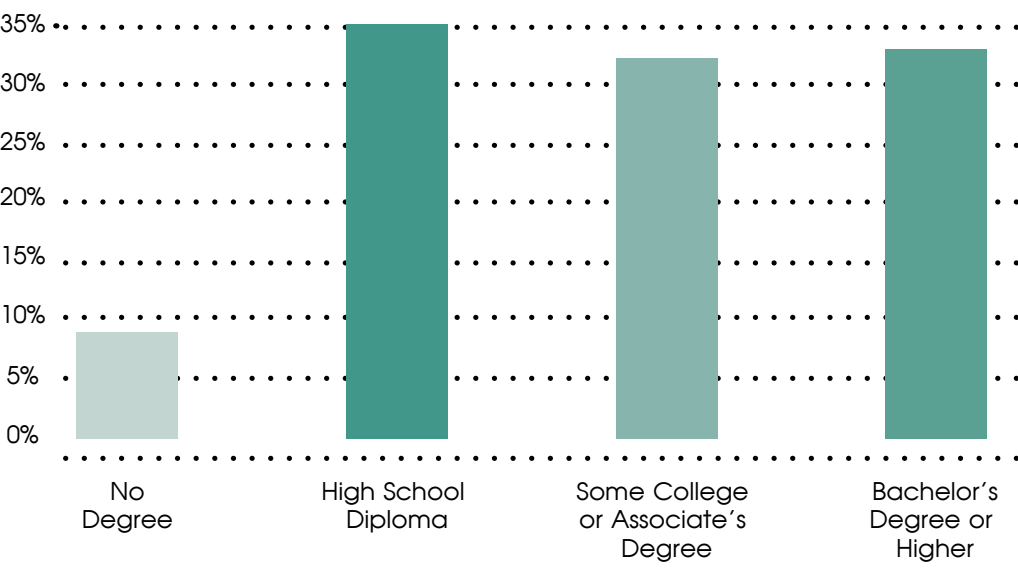
The median household income in Braselton (\$94,507) is very strong and substantially more than the four surrounding counties (\$60,592) and the state (\$58,526). Nearly 50% of Braselton residents earn over \$100,000 which is about 15% more than the four counties and 20% more than the state. Also noteworthy is the relatively small percentage of households earning an income less than \$35,000 in comparison to the surrounding counties and state. In Braselton, this group accounts for only 14.5% of the population.

>> Race & Ethnicity

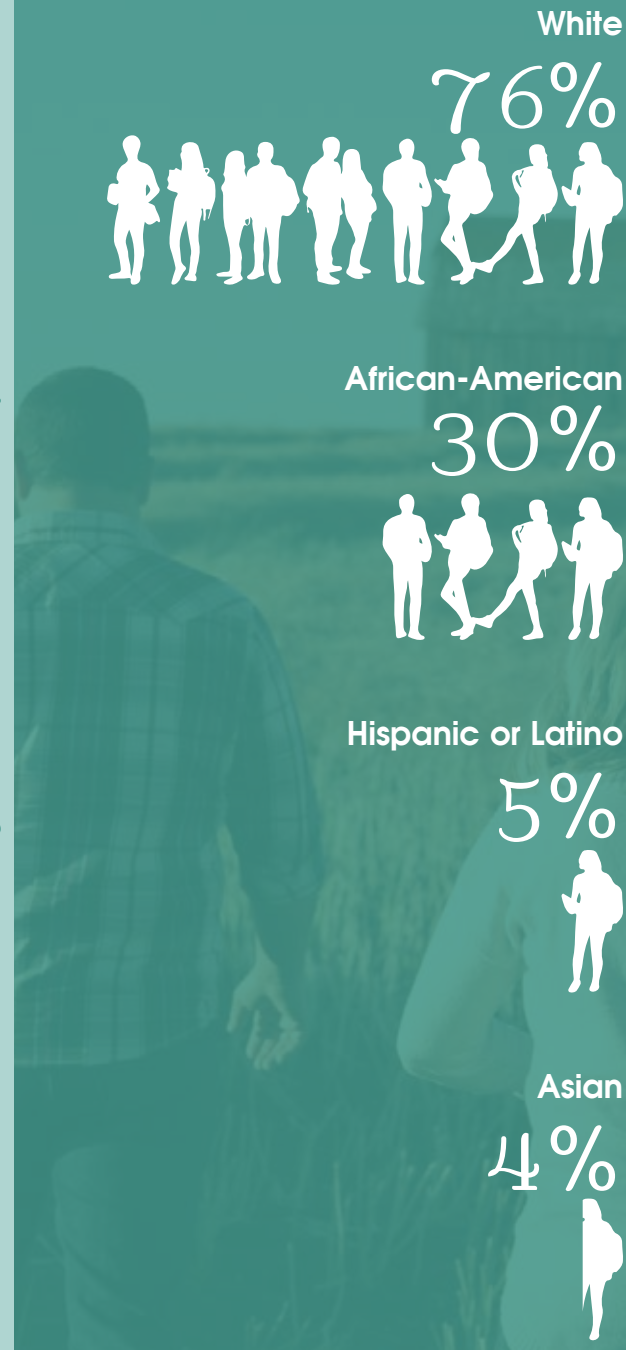
As 76% of the population, Braselton is predominately White. African-Americans are the second largest population group in the town at approximately 30% of the total population. Asians make up a small, but notable, portion of the population at about 4%. People of Hispanic or Latino origin comprise about 5% of the entire population.

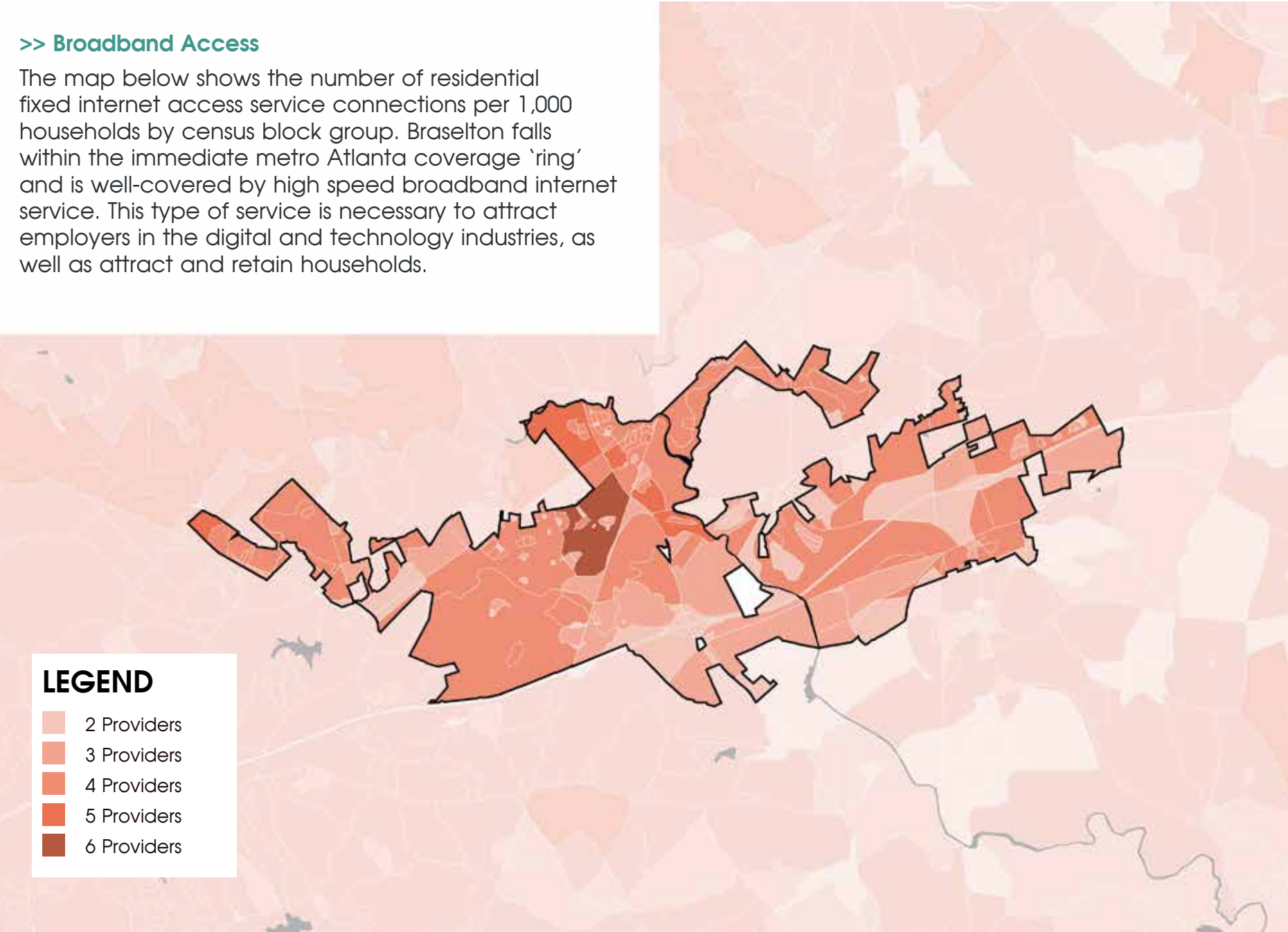
>> Educational Attainment

As shown in the chart below, about 35% of Braselton residents have a high school diploma or less education. Those with some college and/or an Associate’s degree account for 32% of the population. Those with at least a Bachelor’s degree make up approximately 33% of the population. Overall, the town compares to the counties and state relatively well in terms of educational attainment. Those with less than a high school diploma only make up 9.2% of the population, compared to 14% in the four counties and 14% in the entire state.



>> Race & Ethnicity in the Town of Braselton





EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT

>> Total Employment

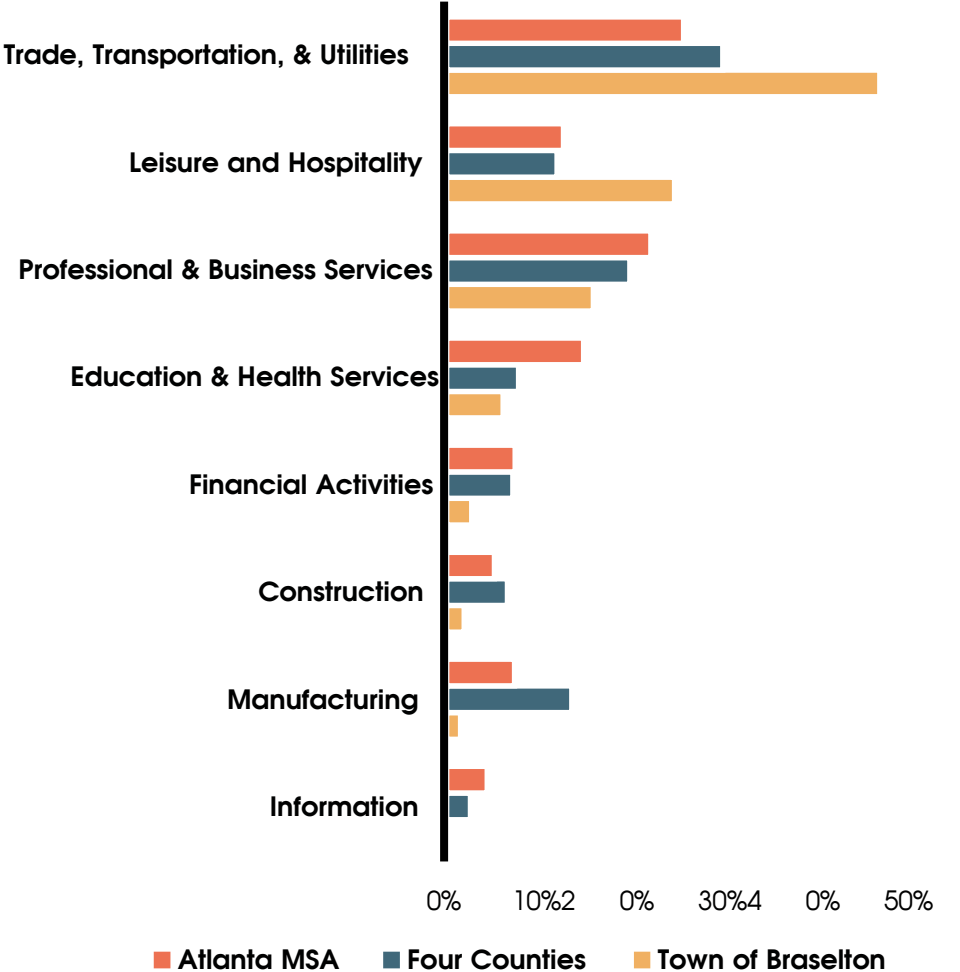
The town lost 10% of its employees during the global economic downturn. However, over the last ten years, Braselton doubled its total workforce – from 3,372 employees in 2007 to 6,758 employees in 2017. The counties' total employment grew at an average annual growth rate of 7.2% from 2007 to 2017.

>> Employment by Sector

While overall employment numbers are important economic and social indicators, the types and nature of jobs vary greatly between different regions and also within regional economies. This distinction is evidenced by the adjacent chart in which the town, the four counties, and the Atlanta MSA both share and have various traits in economic bases.

As expected, the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities sector dominates all three geographies due to the region's logistical strengths. However, the location advantage is much more apparent in Braselton as 47% of all employment is in this sector. The Information sector, although one of the fastest growing in Braselton, has the least concentration of employees within all three geographies.

Unlike the four counties and the Atlanta MSA, the Leisure & Hospitality sector represents a full quarter of all employment within the town. This clustering of employment can be attributed to Braselton's strong focus on lodging, attractions, and entertainment that stretch beyond economic drivers such as Chateau Elan and Road Atlanta.

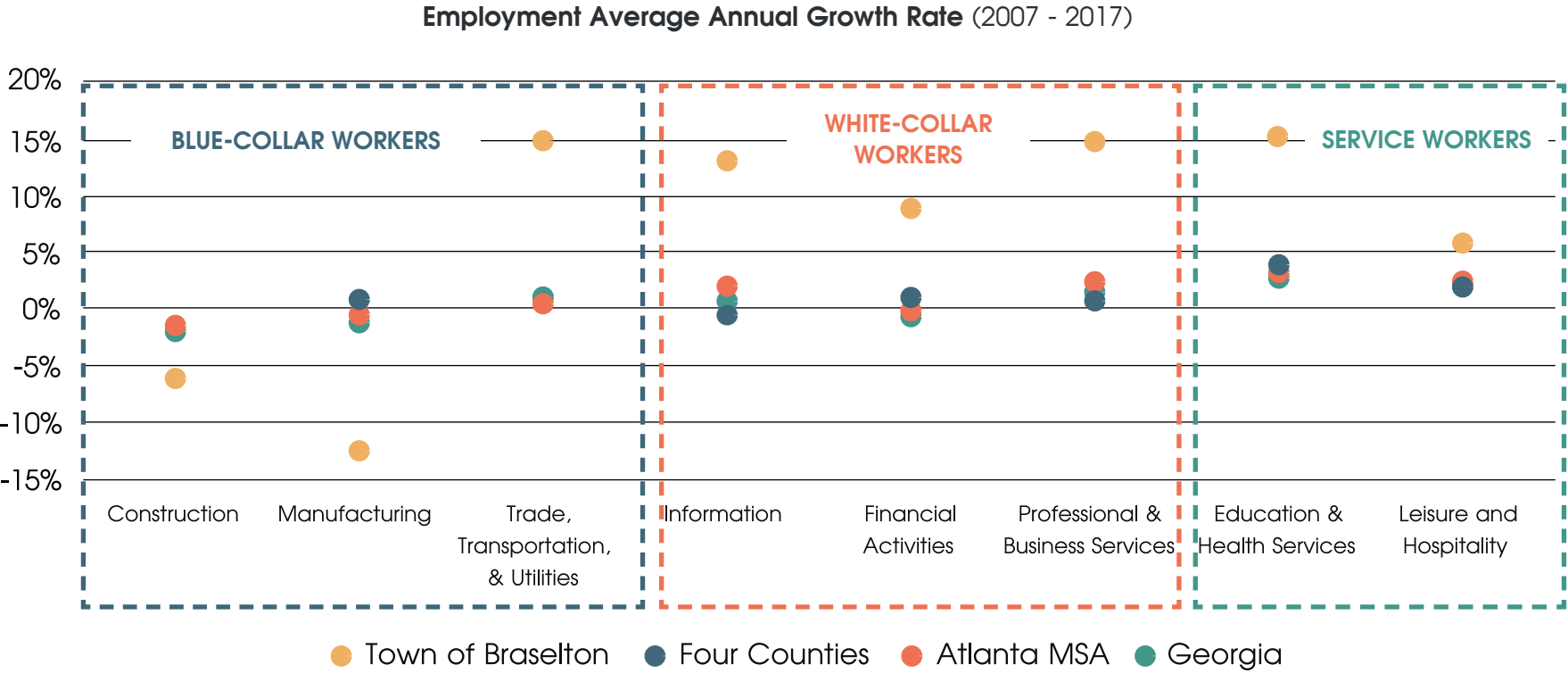


>> Employment Growth by Sector

Braselton’s drastic growth rates are an effect of its relatively small employment base. Nevertheless, between 2007 and 2017, the town outpaced both the four counties and the Atlanta MSA in terms of attracting jobs in the following sectors: Trade, Transportation, & Utilities; Information; Financial Activities; Professional & Business Services; and Leisure & Hospitality. The fastest growing sector was Education & Health Services while Trade, Transportation, & Utilities saw the largest overall increase in total employment.

During this same period, the Manufacturing & Construction sectors saw a substantial decline in jobs unlike what was experienced in the four counties and the Atlanta MSA.

50% of all Braselton employment is “blue-collar,” which mirrors the four combined counties, but is significantly out of touch with the Atlanta MSA’s concentration of 38%. On the other hand, white-collar jobs represent 19% of Braselton’s economic base, 30% of the four counties’, and nearly 35% of the Atlanta MSA’s.

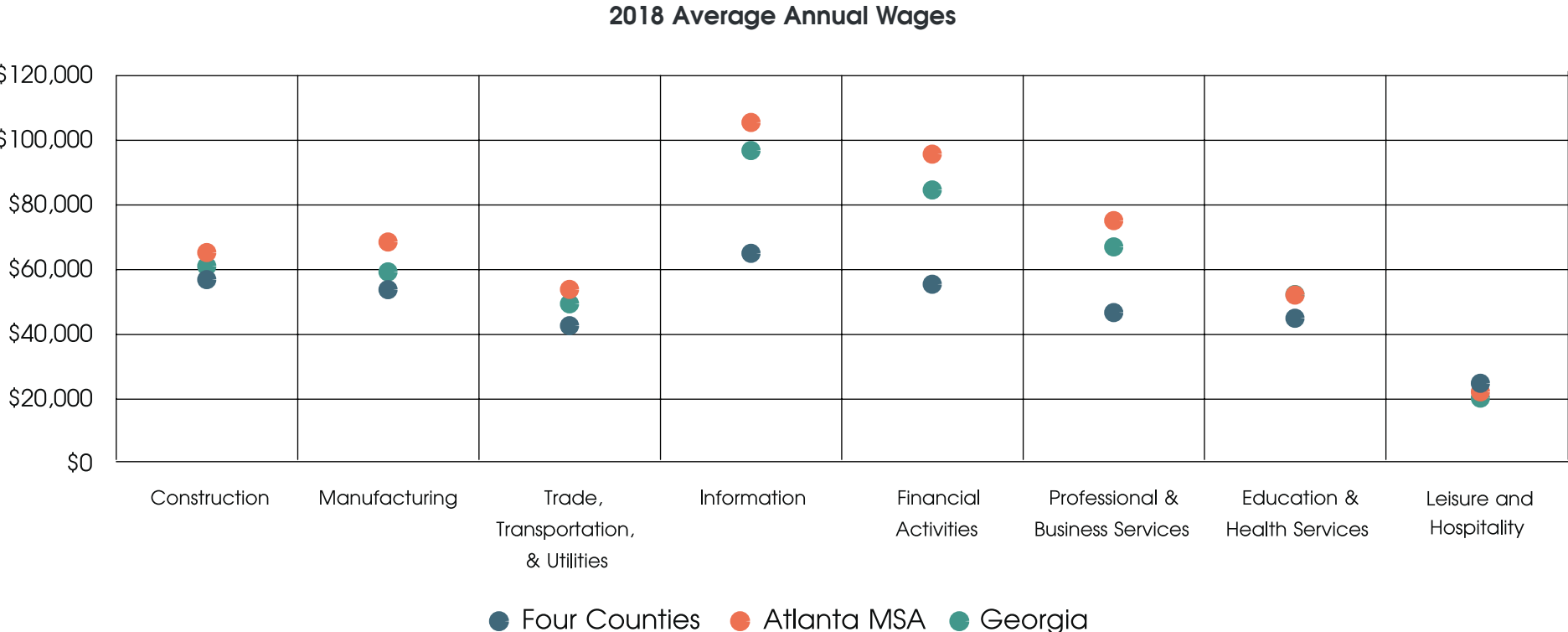


>> Average Salaries

Across an array of skilled, high-demand job fields from software developer to auto mechanic, average wages for workers in the four counties lag what’s paid in the Atlanta MSA and state.

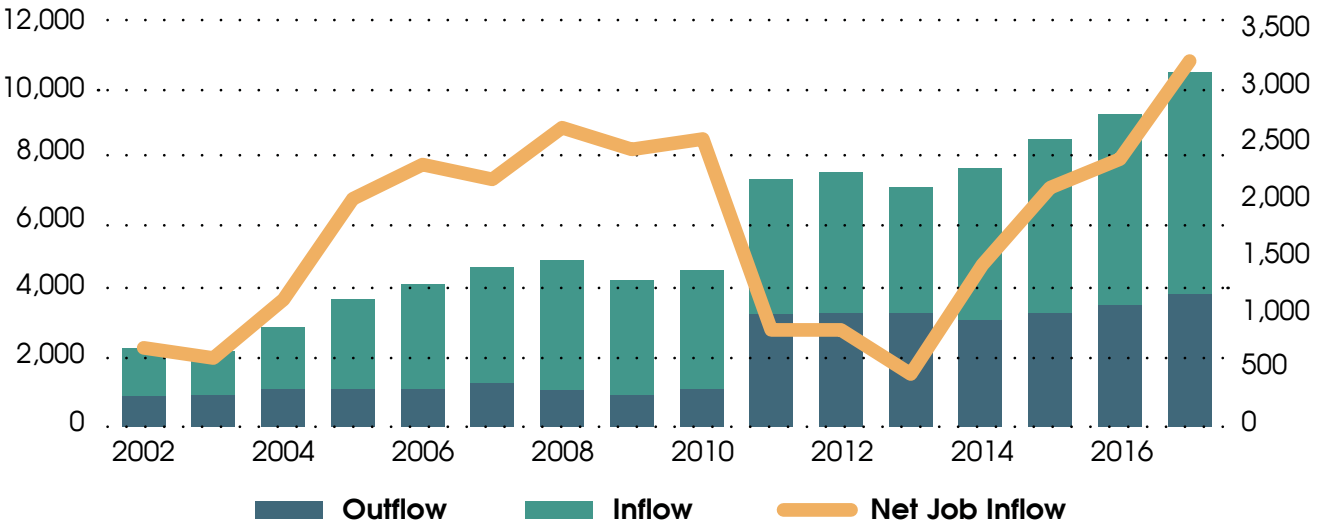
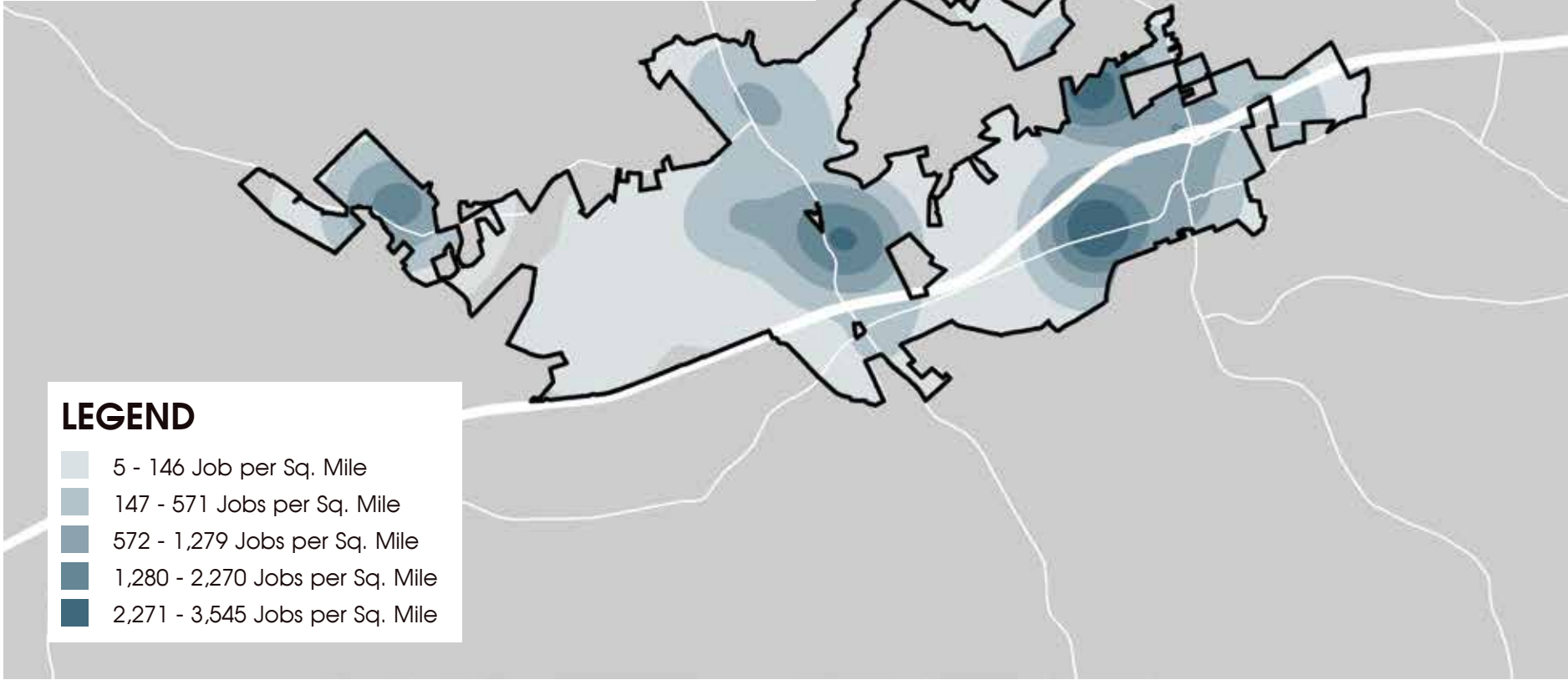
Excluding government workers, the four counties have an average weekly wage of \$937, which is significantly

lower than that of the Atlanta MSA (\$1,271) and State (\$1,138). Average wages in the four counties has increased by an average of 28% since 2008, compared to 26% in the MSA and 30% at the state level during the same period. On average, the Information (\$65,008) and Construction (\$56,857) sectors produce the highest annual salaries in the four counties.



>> Employment Density

This map estimates jobs per acre within the Town of Braselton. Employment is clustered near and along three main arterial roads – Braselton Parkway, Jesse Cronic Road, and Highway 124. Braselton’s accessibility has led to the construction of massive warehouses and distribution/logistics centers. To-date, this includes 15 buildings comprising of at least 150,000 square feet of industrial uses. There is also significant employment density in the center of town near the Highway 211 interchange. This area includes both Chateau Elan and a neighborhood activity center with various retail uses.



>> Employee Inflow/Outflow

In 2017, there were 6,758 employees in Braselton. Of those employees, nearly 97% or 6,560 commuted inside the county (inflow) for work. Between 2002 and 2017, the net job inflow of employees commuting to Braselton for work increased on an average annual basis of 11%. During that same period, the amount of people commuting outside the county (outflow) for work increased by 10%.

>> Commuting Patterns

Where employees live: top cities/places

- Braselton (2.9%)
- Winder (2.7%)
- Athens-Clarke County (2.4%)
- Atlanta (2.0%)
- Gainesville (1.5%)

Where residents work: top cities/places

- Gainesville (8.2%)
- Braselton (5.4%)
- Buford (4.6%)
- Atlanta (4.4%)



More
Fewer

Land Use

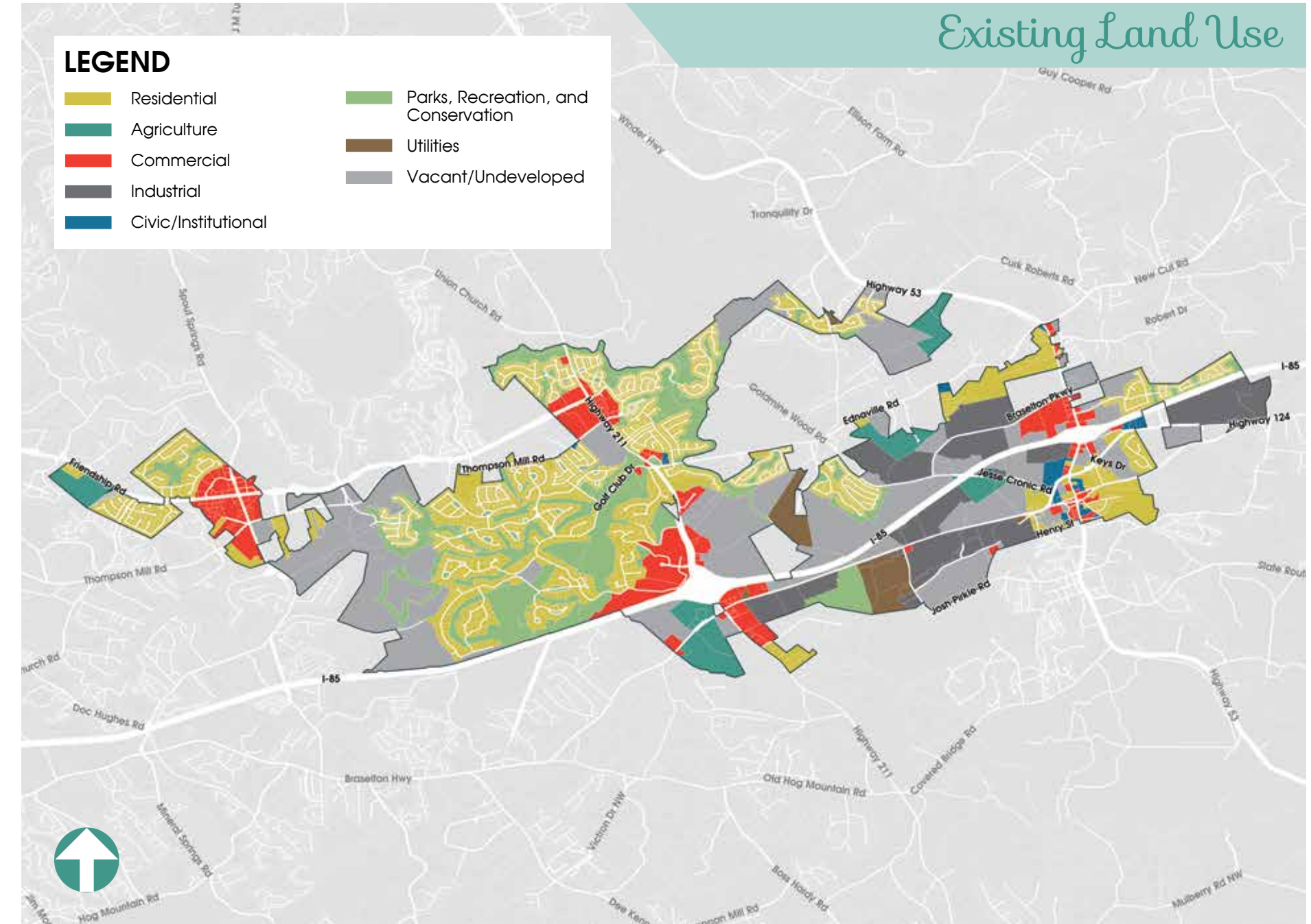
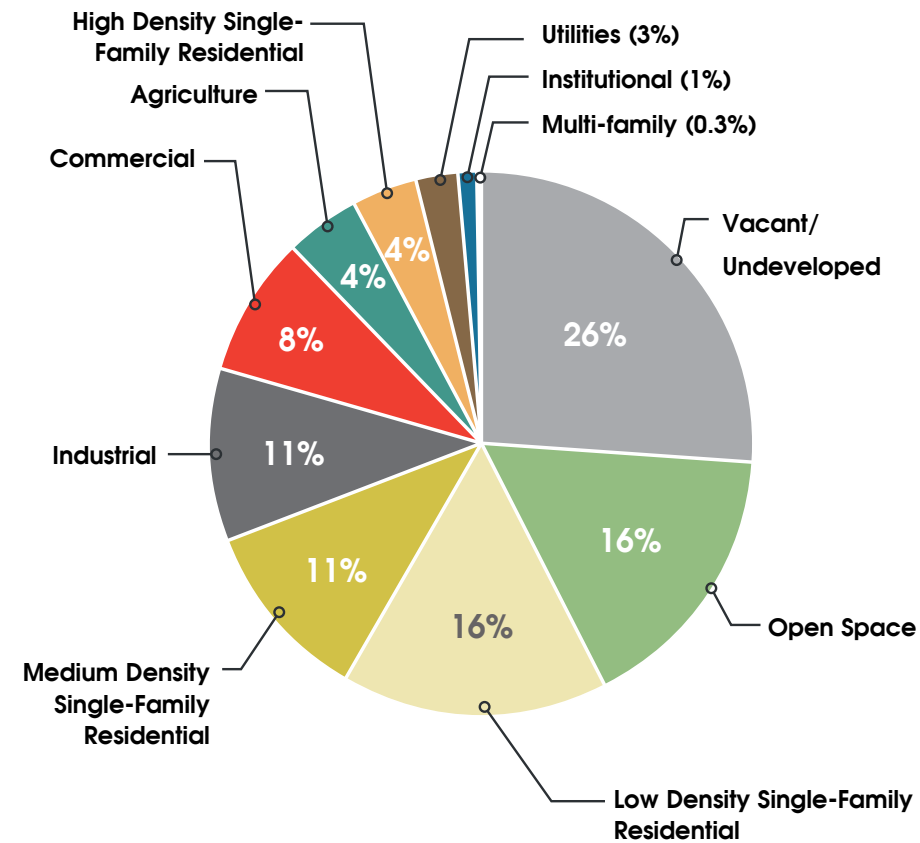
EXISTING LAND USE

>> Residential

Braselton's most prevalent land use (approximately 31% of all land) is single-family residential. Low-density single-family residential uses, defined as up to 2 units per acre, make up about 16% of land. Medium-density single-family (2-6 units per acre) and high-density single-family residential (over 6 units per acre) make up an additional 15% of the town's land. Most of the single-family residential lands in the town are grouped in subdivisions. Multi-family makes up less than 1% of total land (see pages 42-43 for more information).

>> Commercial

Approximately 8% of the town's land is commercial, which is comprised of mostly retail and office. These uses are all located near major intersections and road corridors, such as the Duncan Corners shopping center at the intersection of Friendship Road and Spout Springs Road, the Highway 211 shopping centers, Chateau Elan at the intersection of Interstate 85 and Highway 211, Downtown Braselton, and along Highway 53.





>> Industrial

Industry, specifically warehousing and distribution centers, has become a big part of Braselton's economy. Land devoted to industry makes up 11% of the town.

>> All Other Uses

Utilities comprise only 3% of Braselton's land. The town has about 1,200 acres (16% of all land) of parks and recreation facilities, both privately owned and publicly owned by the Town of Braselton, and conservation lands. Most of this is located at the Chateau Elan Golf Club and in conservation subdivisions near the Mulberry River. A very small portion of land (1%) is devoted to public and institutional uses, primarily churches and civic facilities. Lastly, a large part (26%) of the town's land is undeveloped land, however, a lot of this land has active development plans.

ZONING

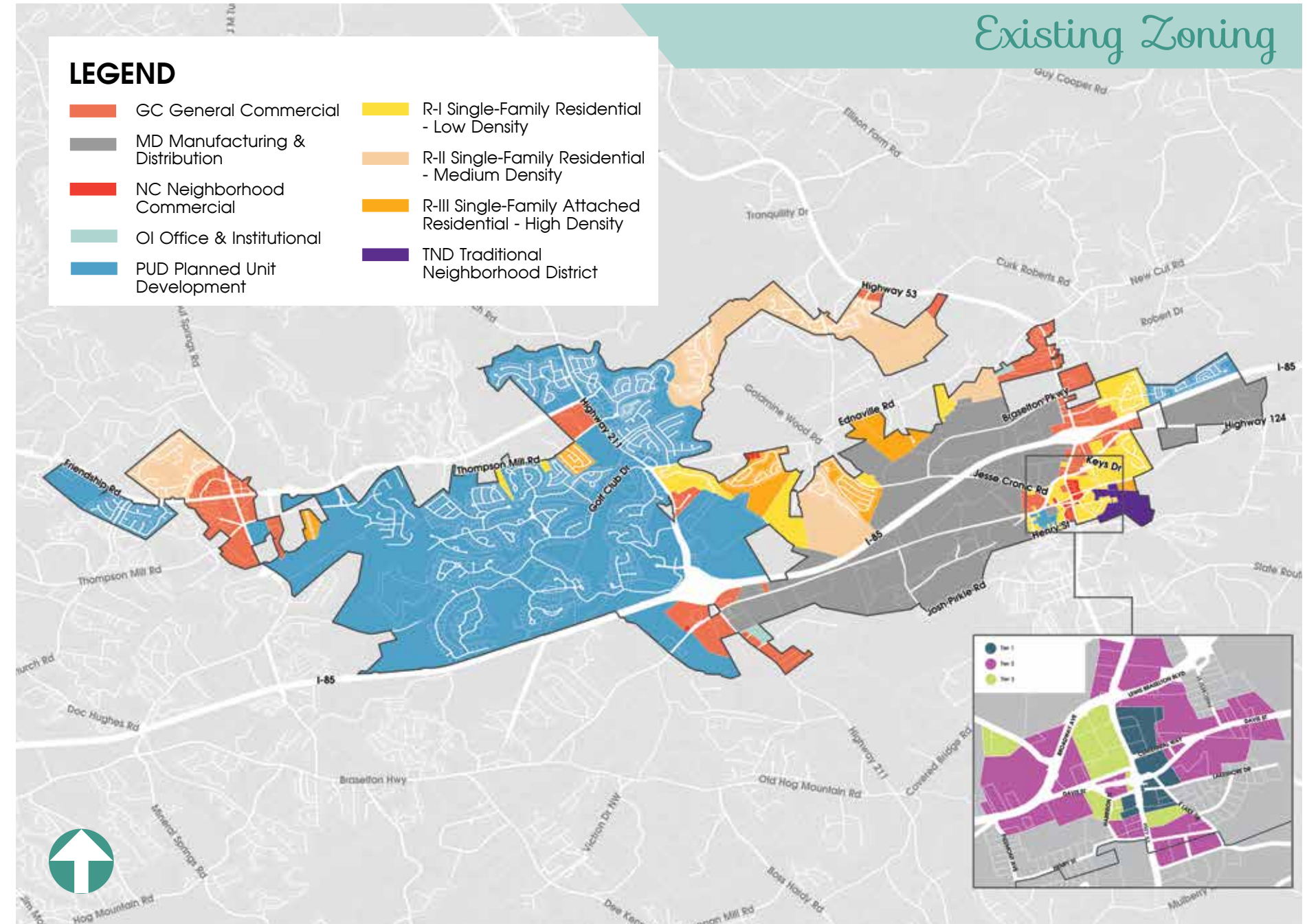
The Town of Braselton's zoning is regulated through their Development Code. The town is divided into 14 zoning districts. The most prevalent is the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Zoning District, followed by the Manufacturing and Distribution (MD) Zoning District.

>> Planned Unit Development (PUD)

The PUD District, highlighted in blue on the facing map, is the largest portion of the town. It is intended to establish truly unique developments in which conventional design requirements and districts cannot accommodate. The PUD District provides more flexibility with regard to design and uses and the blending of the two. This district also allows for more mixed-use developments rather than a conventional residential subdivision with a commercial component or office/industrial development. PUD developments may contain residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational components. Chateau Elan is the largest PUD in the town.

>> Manufacturing and Distribution (MD)

The second largest portion of the town, which is highlighted in dark gray on the facing map, is zoned as Manufacturing and Distribution (MD). The purpose of this zone is to allow for the development of business parks, the manufacturing of products, storage, and the limited sales of products. The MD zone should be considered where appropriate transportation infrastructure is available and where transition uses between commercial and business/industrial is logical and needed.



>> Residential Districts

Braselton has five residential zoning categories in the Development Code: R-I (Single-Family Residential District - Low Density), R-II (Single-Family Residential District - Medium Density), R-III (Single-Family Attached Residential District - High Density), R-M (Residential Multi-family), and MHD (Manufactured Housing District). Only the first three are shown on the Town’s zoning map. The residential zoning categories distinguish primarily the densities of residential development as well as the type of dwelling unit.

>> Traditional Neighborhood District (TND)

The purpose of the Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) to create a residential zoning classification that encourages a pattern of neighborhood development that will be consistent with the traditional qualities of the historic downtown area while being compatible with surrounding residential areas of the town limits. Similar to a PUD, the TND District occurs through a unified plan for a neighborhood, but includes a diversity of housing types and lot sizes to accommodate a diverse group of people in pedestrian-oriented setting.

>> Commercial Districts

Braselton has five commercial zoning categories in the Development Code: O-I (Office and Institutional District), N-C (Neighborhood Commercial District), G-C (General Commercial District), D-D (Downtown District), and B-P (Business Park District). Only the first three are shown on Braselton’s zoning map. The commercial zoning districts are to accommodate the non-residential land uses and are distinguished by the intensity and relative impact to residential districts.

>> Zoning Overlays & Other Districts

In addition to their 14 base zoning districts, the Town of Braselton has two overlay districts: the Downtown Overlay District and the Highway 211 Corridor Overlay District. The purpose of the Downtown Overlay District is to encourage appropriate development and design guidelines for the downtown area, encourage infill development, and create a balance of uses. The overlay district is divided into three tiers that have standards: Tier 1 (Downtown Core), Tier 2 (Downtown Transition), and Tier 3 (Downtown Conservation). The inset on the map on the previous page shows the Downtown Overlay District and its three tiers. The Highway 211 Corridor Overlay District, which includes property within 750 feet of the road centerline, was created to promote a sense of place along Highway 211, establish consistent and harmonious design standards and unify the area, and encourage innovating development.

>> Zoning Issues

All new development in Braselton is regulated under the Town’s Development Code. The code has undergone changes in recent years in the form of new zoning districts and overlays.

Braselton has experienced some difficulties with the Development Code. One of the biggest indicators of such issues is the high number of variances granted to landowners looking to rezone or redevelop property, and the other is the number of conditions the Town will place on those landowners. The other problems with the existing Development Code are listed on the next page.

Planning Considerations

- The overlays are not shown on the official zoning map.
- No language about non-conforming structures and the regulations they must follow.
- Some uses are not mentioned or addressed, such as microbreweries, places that sell local wine, etc. Mixed use developments are only mentioned in the PUD district and Downtown Overlay. If the Town wants to encourage the creation and regulate mixed use development, it needs to be a permitted use in more zoning districts.
- The minimum house sizes and two-car garage requirement are outdated, as is the requirement that each house have a curb cut.
- The design guidelines could use some work — they are very stringent in some regard but silent on some things that would make a big impact (limit or regulate drive-throughs, etc.). They are also very similar between districts.
- The minimum 2-story height requirement for the Downtown District may limit development.
- The 8 dwelling unit/acre maximum for Downtown should be revised, since small downtown buildings with only 1 or 2 dwelling units would exceed this.
- The maximum floor-to-area ratio (FAR) for the Downtown Overlay would prohibit any traditional downtown development, since those buildings are always denser than one would believe.
- The Downtown Overlay requires 12-14 foot wide travel lanes and a 35 mph design speed — this is contradictory. Slower design speeds require narrower travel lanes.

- The TND District is good, but perhaps too prescriptive with regard to the mix of lot sizes and housing types.
- The SR 211 overlay should probably apply to major external renovations and not just interior renovations or building expansions.
- The minimum requirement for 4 foot wide new sidewalks in subdivisions is narrow.

Technical Considerations

- “Group residence” as a use is not well defined.
- Requiring houses, townhouses, and multifamily to be owned rather than rented in R-III may pose legal challenges.
- There are some content regulations related to signs that should be removed or updated.
- Update The references to the official zoning map should be updated to allow for GIS and electronic copies.

Organizational & Formatting Considerations

- The whole code should be reorganized for clarity and to put similar regulations together.
- Regulations that are repeated over and over again throughout the code should be consolidated, and contradictions should be removed.
- There are a lot of items that are duplicated in the text and in tables that should be removed.
- The uses could probably be consolidated into use groups to make things simpler for the user.
- Additional graphics would be helpful in a number of places, and the existing graphics should be updated.

Transportation

OVERVIEW

In order to determine Braselton's transportation needs for the future, the existing vehicular and non-vehicular networks warranted studying. By examining the existing roadway classifications, traffic counts, crash data, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and transit, recommendations were able to be made to improve transportation throughout the town.

VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

>> Roadway Classifications

The roads in the Town of Braselton fall under three roadway classifications. These classifications include:

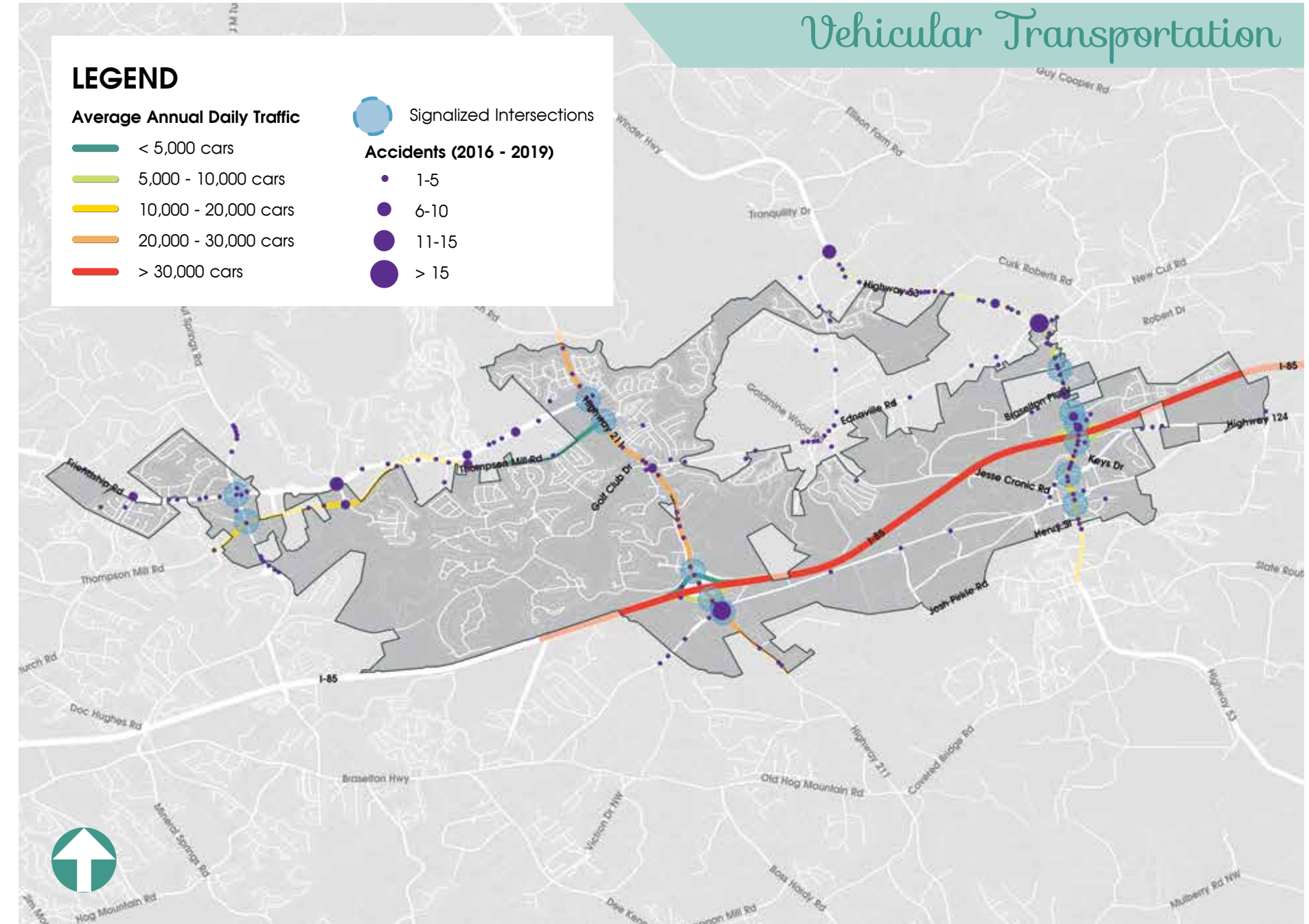
- 1. Arterials.** Roadways that provide mobility to allow traffic to move from one place to another quickly and safely.
 - Higher mobility
 - Low degree of access

- 2. Collectors.** Roadways that link arterials and local roads and perform some of the duties of each.
 - Balance between mobility and access
- 3. Local.** Roadways that provide access to homes, businesses, and other properties.
 - Lower mobility
 - High degree of access

Three of the four state routes in the town remain minor arterials along their entire stretch of roadway in the town, but Highway 124 changes from an arterial to a collector after it crosses from Barrow County to Jackson County. The remaining roadways fall into the classification of collector or local.

>> Traffic Counts

Traffic data from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)'s website was used to determine the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) along the town's roadways. AADT is determined by dividing the total number of vehicles on a roadway in a year by 365 days. Residents reported congestion on Highway 211,





Above Photo: The LifePath along Friendship Road attracts and accommodates pedestrians, runners, cyclists, and golf cart users.

Below Photo: The Mulberry Riverwalk currently provides 2.5 miles of trails. There are plans to extend the Riverwalk.



and the data backs these observations. With an AADT ranging from 20,000 to 30,000 cars, Highway 211 has the highest traffic volumes in town.

>> Crash Data

Crash data was collected from July of 2016 to July of 2019 in order to have a better understanding of which areas had the greatest need for safety improvements. With approximately 70 collisions reported in this time frame, Highway 53 proved to be an area of concern moving forward, especially near its intersections at New Cut Road and Chardonnay Trace.

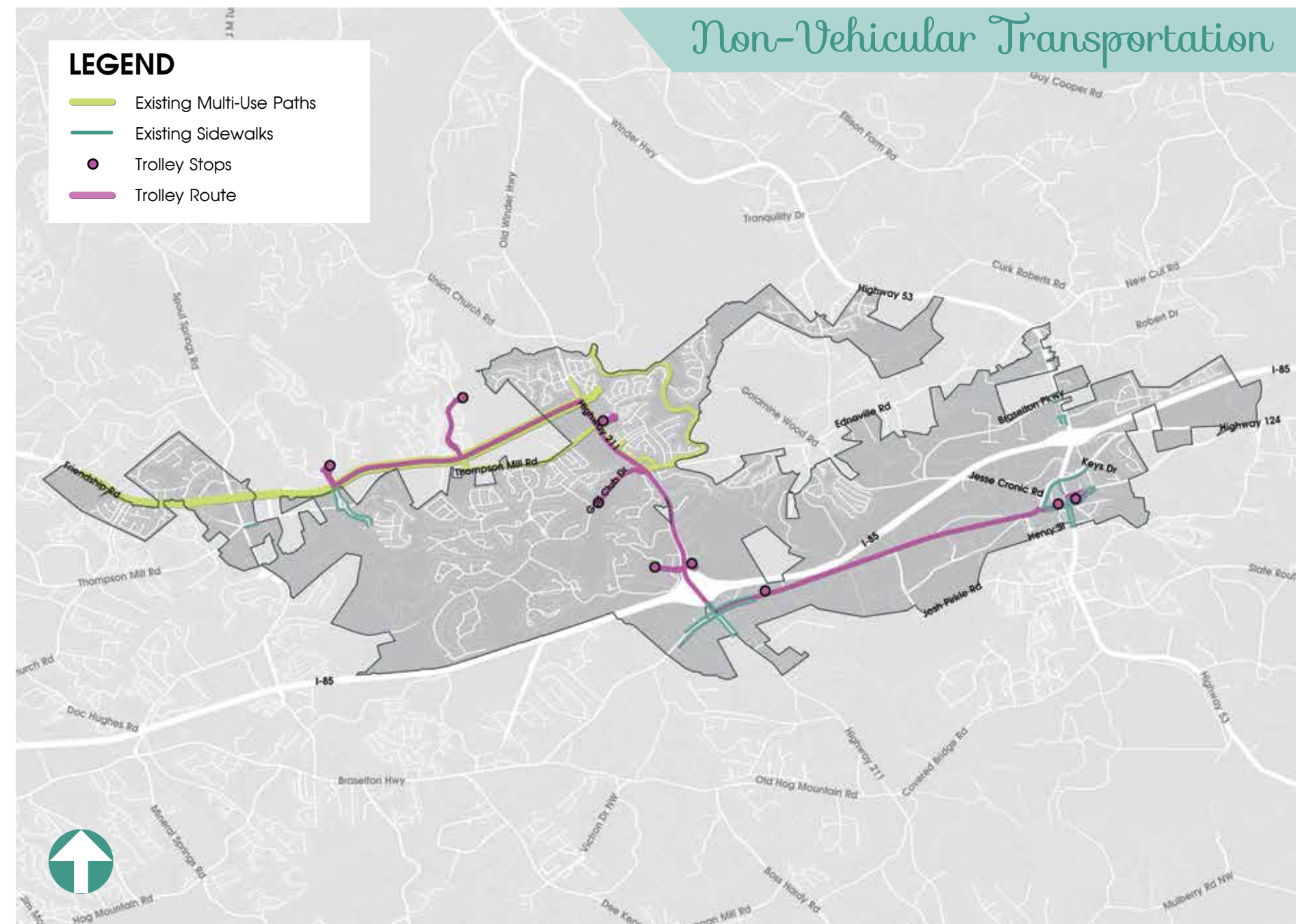
NON-VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

>> Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The LifePath along Friendship Road and Highway 211 contributes approximately 3 miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within Braselton's town limits. The multi-use path continues outside the town along Friendship Road through Braselton West. In addition to the LifePath, the town has approximately 3.5 miles of sidewalk along the town's arterials and collectors, and 2.5 miles of trails along the Mulberry Riverwalk. Most of these pedestrian facilities are along the Highway 211 corridor north of Golf Club Drive, and along Highway 53.


>> Public Transit

Braselton has a trolley service that connects downtown to the Highway 211 corridor. The Braselton Trolley runs Friday and Saturday from 12pm to 10pm, and Sunday from 2pm to 8pm. The trolley stops at the Braselton Brothers Department Store, the Braselton Library, Country Inn & Suites, Baymont Inn, Mulberry Walk, the Village at Deaton Creek Clubhouse, Reunion Hall, the Chateau Elan Golf Club, and the Chateau Elan Winery & Resort.



STREET SECTIONS

1



Highway 211 (Arterial)

(varies - approximately 60 ft ROW)

- No sidewalks
- 2 travel lanes
- Turn lanes
- Painted median

3




Friendship Road (Arterial)

(varies - approximately 120 ft ROW)

- Large sidewalks (approx. 10 ft.)
- 4 travel lanes
- Concrete median
- Turn lanes

2




Highway 124 (Collector)

(varies - approximately 30 ft ROW)

- No sidewalks
- 2 travel lanes
- Turn lane

4



Highway 53 (Arterial)

(varies - approximately 70 ft ROW)

- Larger sidewalks
- 2 travel lanes
- Painted median
- Intermittent trees

5

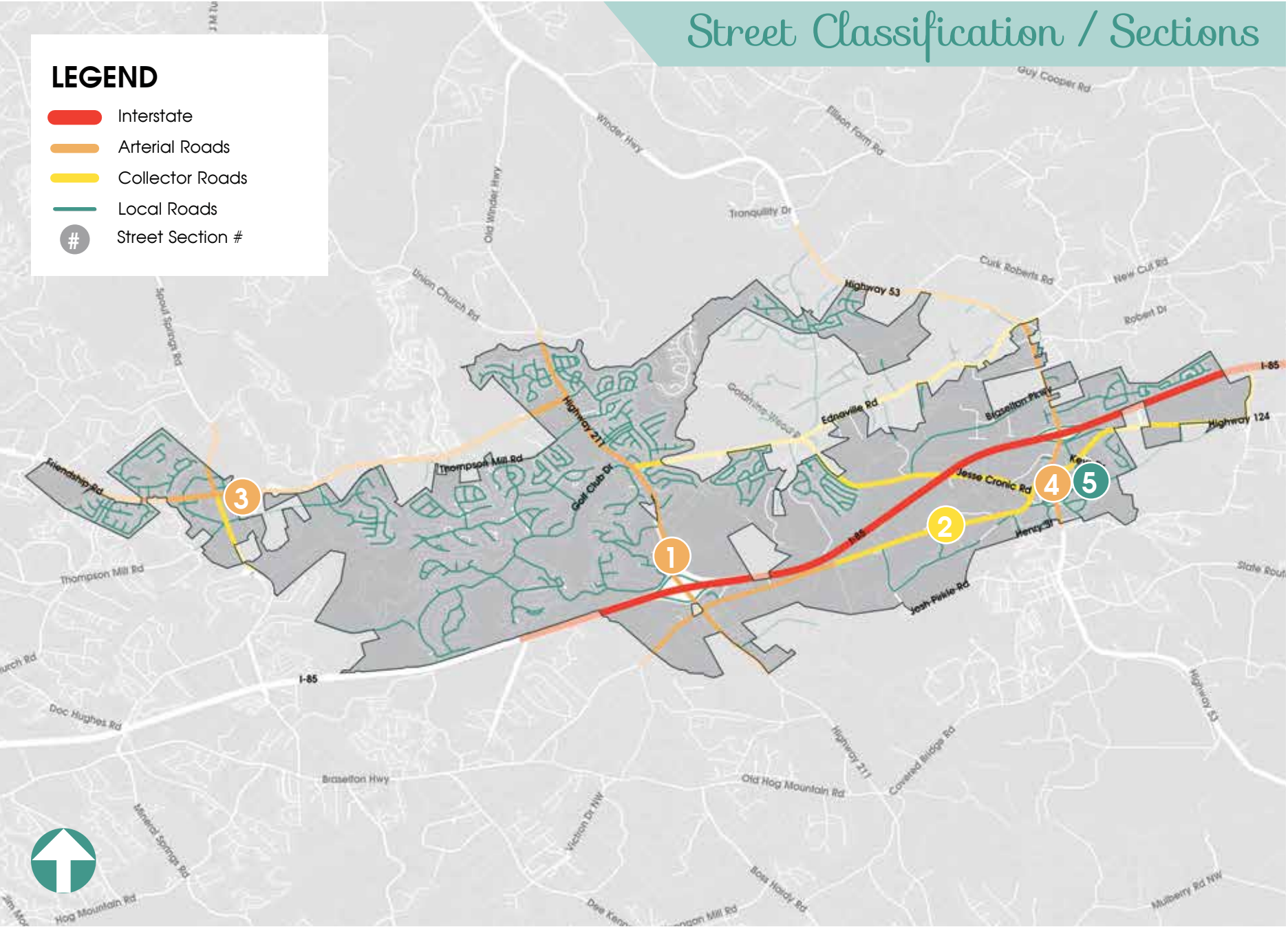


Davis Street (Local)

(varies - approximately 70 ft ROW)

- Sidewalks
- 2 travel lanes
- Painted median and crosswalk
- Landscaped
- Parallel parking

Each street section above correlates to street designation by color on the map at right





Housing & Market Study



To determine which components of future economic demand Braselton could capture, these analyses include a detailed accounting of the economic, demographic, and real estate characteristics of the town, as well as the four counties.

Braselton is strategically located at the 'heart' of four northeast Georgia counties – Gwinnett, Barrow, Hall, and Jackson. Due to a robust economy and folks seeking a sizable buffer from urban centers such as Atlanta, there is a re-emergence of residential and commercial trends in Braselton.

HOUSING ASSESSMENT

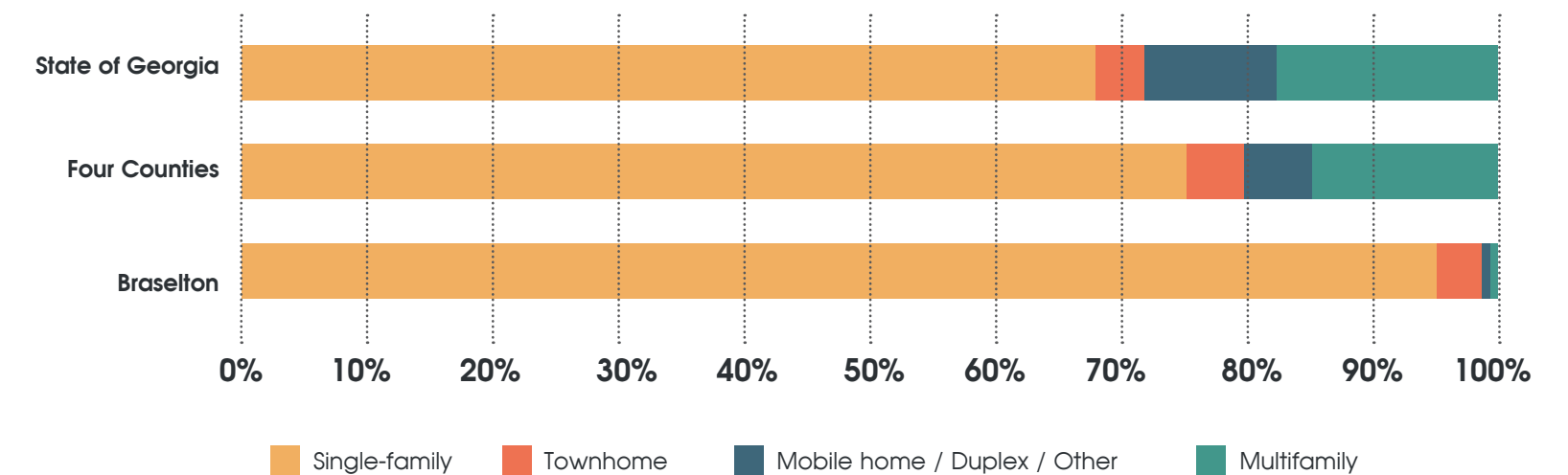
>> Housing Mix & Tenure

Braselton has an extremely homogeneous housing stock. Most occupied housing types in the town, surrounding counties, and the state are single-family detached, accounting for 95% of the housing stock in Braselton, 75% in the four counties, and 68% amongst the entire state. Multi-family inventory in Braselton is slim, but it represents 15% of the housing stock in the four counties and 18% in the state. As such, most of Braselton's housing units are owner-occupied (85%). Braselton has the highest proportion of single-family housing and least diverse housing stock compared to the four counties and state. The lack of housing diversity in Braselton means that thousands of those that work in the town limits must commute from locations with more housing options; more variety in attached and multi-family housing product can attract households with an array of incomes, particularly those supported by jobs in the area. Nearly 90% of all renter-occupied housing units are single-family detached houses and townhomes. Detached single-family dwellings represent 75% of all housing units within the four counties, 40% of all renter occupied

OCCUPIED HOUSING UNIT TENURE Braselton



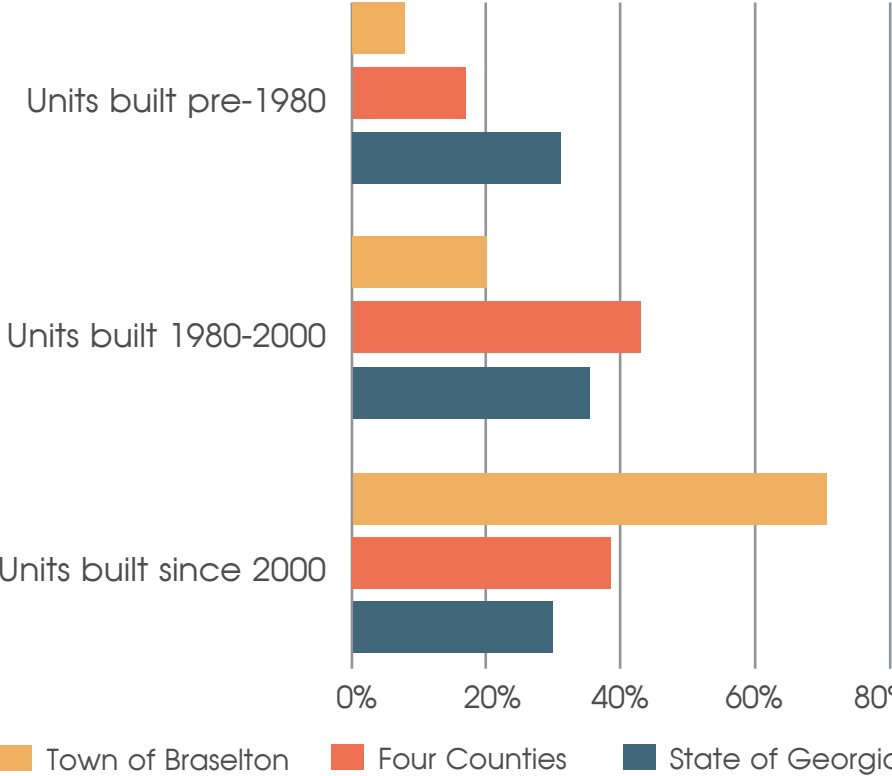
OCCUPIED HOUSING UNIT TYPE



housing units, and 92% of all owner-occupied housing units. 17% all housing units within the four counties are multi-family, and 50% of all renter-occupied housing units are multi-family. As parts of the state outside of the Atlanta Region are more rural, the prevalence of renters and owners occupying mobile homes increases substantially.

>> Housing Age

The housing stock in Braselton is relatively newer with 70% of all housing units built in the last 20 years. The housing stock in the four counties and the state are significantly older, with 70% of all housing units throughout Georgia built before 2000, and 60% in the four counties.



Braselton	% of all housing units	% of all renter-occupied units	% of all owner-occupied units
Single-family detached	95.0%	79.5%	97.7%
Townhomes	3.5%	10.0%	2.3%
Subtotal	98.4%	89.5%	100%
Duplex	0.9%	6.3%	0.0%
3 or 4 units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
5 to 5 units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10 or more units	0.6%	4.2%	0.0%
Subtotal	1.6%	10.5%	0.0%
Mobile home or other type	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Four Counties	% of all housing units	% of all renter-occupied units	% of all owner-occupied units
Single-family detached	75.0%	39.8%	91.8%
Townhomes	4.6%	5.7%	4.1%
Subtotal	79.6%	45.5%	95.9%
Duplex	1.4%	3.9%	0.2%
3 or 4 units	1.8%	5.1%	0.2%
5 to 5 units	4.1%	12.2%	0.2%
10 or more units	9.3%	28.2%	0.2%
Subtotal	16.5%	49.3%	0.8%
Mobile home or other type	3.8%	5.2%	3.2%

>> Housing Value

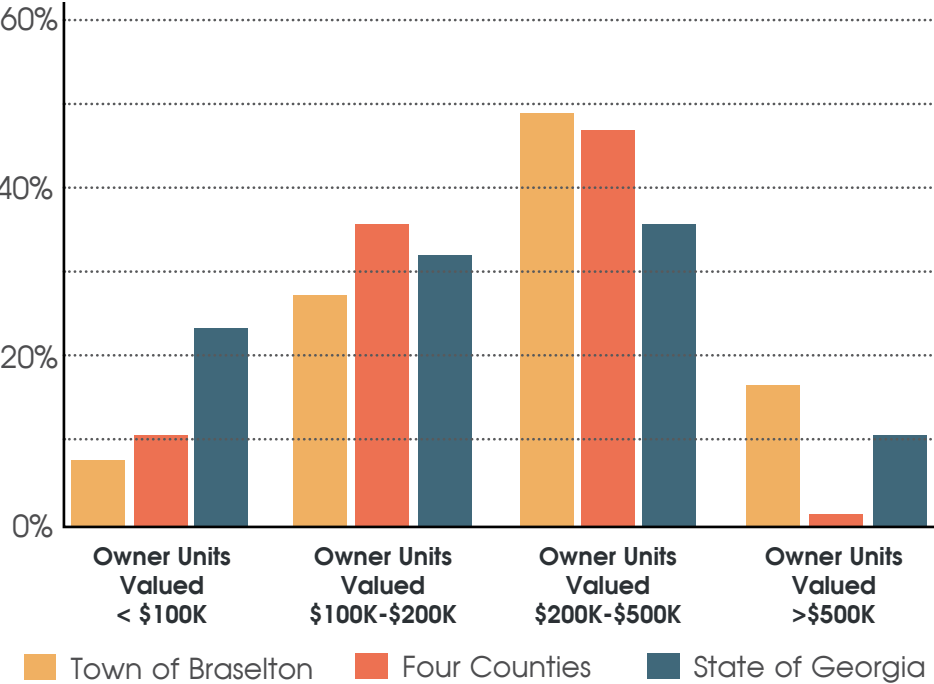
17% of all owner-occupied homes within Braselton are valued over \$500,000, compared to just 1% in the four counties and 10% in the state. This substantial share of expensive homes has led to a median housing value of \$258,356, which is roughly 40% more than homes located in both the four counties and state.

>> Building Permits

Building permit issuance within the four counties is steadily increasing for both single-family and multi-family construction, but is still below the pre-recession peaks of 2006. Combined, the four counties issued a total of 6,026 permits for single-family and multi-family construction in 2018, and is currently on pace to surpass that level at the end of this year. Since 2012, 85% of all permits were for single-family residential construction.



Braselton Area
Total New Home Sales



>> New Home Sales

The average home sales price in the 30517, 30548, and 30542 ZIP codes has risen nearly 20% since 2013 to \$356,515. Most new homes sold are currently single-family detached houses (98%), while the share of attached homes has only increased by 3% since 2016. The number of homes sold in the lower price band of less than \$250,000 has decreased since 2016, however, homes valued over \$300,000 have steadily increased during that same time period. In comparison, the average new home sales price within the four counties has risen nearly 14% in the past 12 months, to a new high of \$354,656. The number of homes sold in the lower price band of \$150,000-\$200,000 has decreased since 2016, however homes valued over \$300,000 has steadily increased during that same time period.

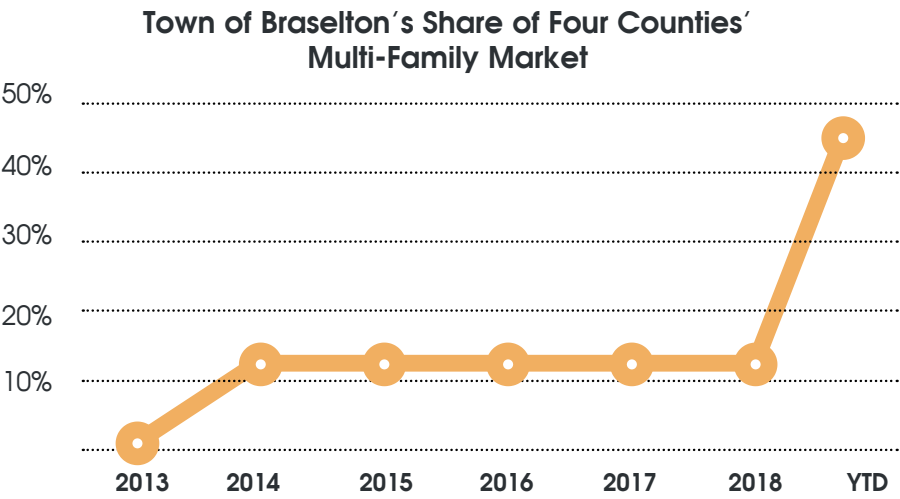
Since 2012, three major multi-family developments have been built including the Oaks at Braselton in 2012, Main Street Braselton in 2014, and Noble Vines at Braselton in 2019.



>> Apartment Market

Although the actual town limits of Braselton only received its first ever multi-family project in 2014, the second project recently delivered in mid-September of 2019, and a third project was going through the Town’s public review process as of October 2019. The opening of the latest multi-family project explains the low occupancy rates within the town. This current up-tick in residential development can be attributed to consistent job growth and pent-up demand for rental housing. Braselton’s fair share of the four counties’ multi-family market has been nominal.

Multi-family	Town of Braselton	Four Counties
Existing Units	328	73,654
Occupancy	31.3%	94.5%
Avg. SF/Unit	1,048	1,028
Avg. Rent/Unit	\$1,369	\$928
Avg. Rent/SF	\$1.24	\$0.94



Noble Vines at Braselton *(Luxury, all ages)*
1500 Noble Vines Drive

Year Built:	September 2019
Total Units:	248
Avg. Rent/Unit:	\$1,406
Avg. Rent/SF:	\$1.28



Oaks at Braselton
(Assisted Living & Memory Care)
5373 Thompson Mill Road

Year Built:	2012
Total Units:	86
Avg. Rent/Unit:	\$2,865-\$5,730

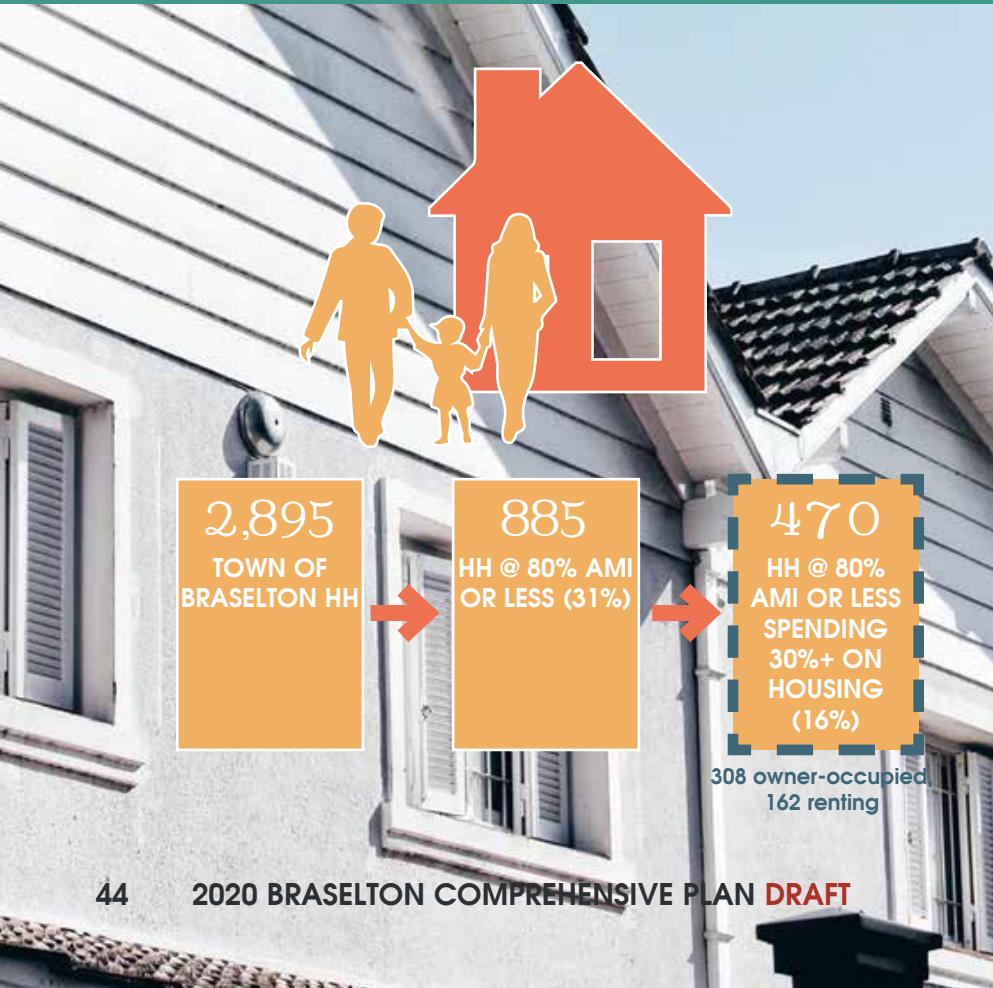


Main Street Braselton *(Active Adult)*
1911 Highway 211 NW

Year Built:	2014
Total Units:	80
Avg. Rent/Unit:	\$1,262
Avg. Rent/SF:	\$1.42

KEY TERMS

- **Area Median Income (AMI)** - A benchmark that divides income distribution in a given area into two equal parts: one half earn above this amount and one half below.
- The “area” for this analysis is the Atlanta MSA.
- **Affordable Housing programs typically target 30 to 80% AMI**
- **80-120% AMI is sometimes termed Workforce Housing.**



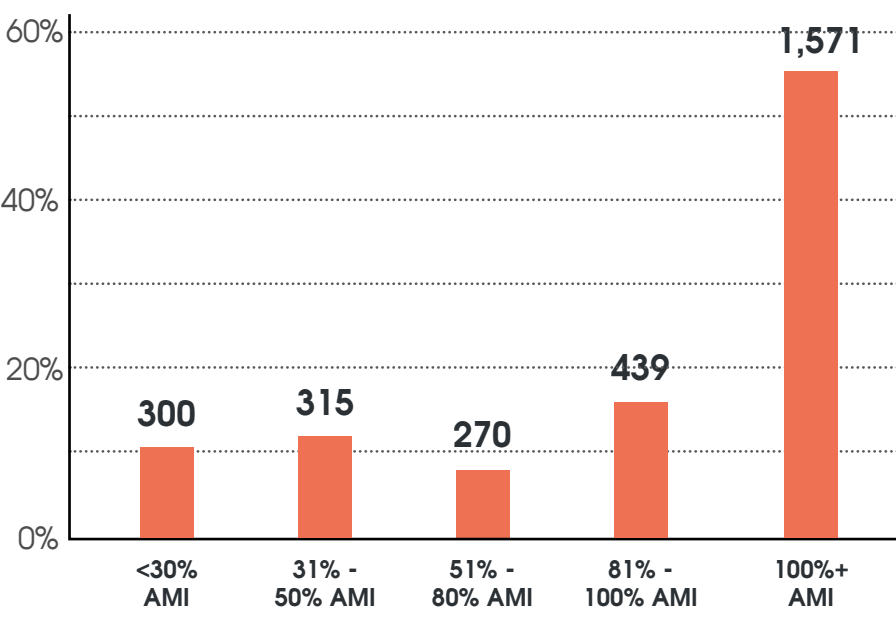
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

>> Affordable Versus Cost-Burdened

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing as *affordable* if the occupants pay no more than 30% of their income for gross housing costs, including utilities. If a household pays more than 30% of income on housing costs, they are considered to be *cost burdened*. In Braselton, this is how it breaks down:

- 100% AMI:**
\$1,850/month rent + utilities OR +/- \$325,000 mortgage
- 80% AMI:**
\$1,450/month rent + utilities OR +/- \$250,000 mortgage
- 60% AMI:**
\$1,050/month rent + utilities OR +/- \$180,000 mortgage

*Calculated for a household of 3 persons



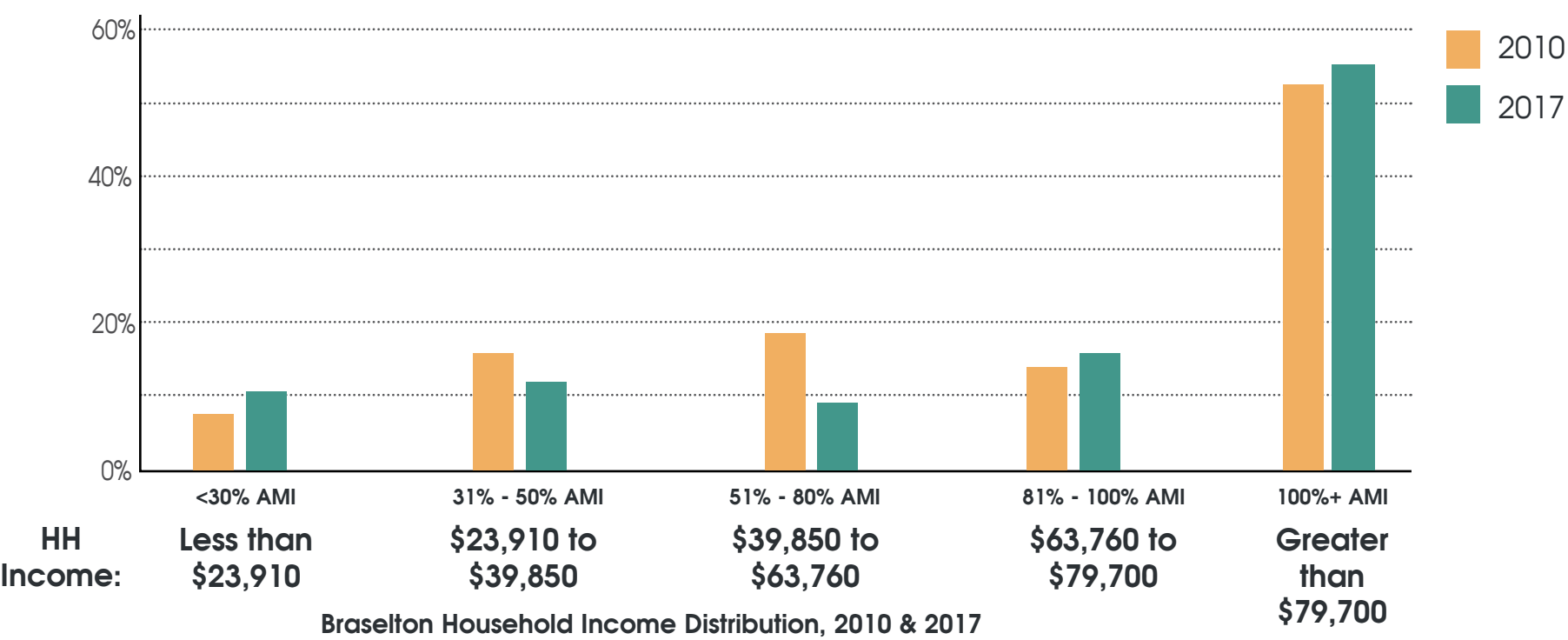
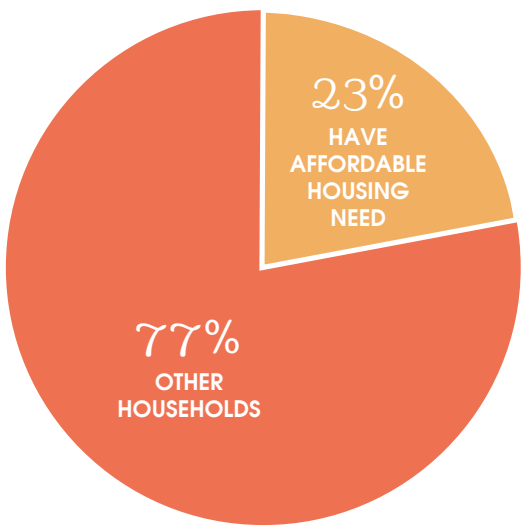
Braselton Household by Income Band, 2017

>> Household Affordability Distribution

Approximately 23% of all Braselton households are spending 30% or more of their income on shelter. The proportion of affordable housing need for owners contrasts with that of renters. 20% of owner-occupied households are spending 30% or more on housing, while 44% of renter-occupied households are spending at least 30% of their income on housing.

In 2017, over half of all Braselton households earned more than 100% AMI, an increase of 12% since 2010. This is the largest change among income distributions during that period. The number of households earning between 31% AMI and 80% declined between 2010 and 2017, while households earning up to 30% AMI experienced a slight uptick.

Braselton Affordable Housing Need, 2017



Braselton Household Income Distribution, 2010 & 2017

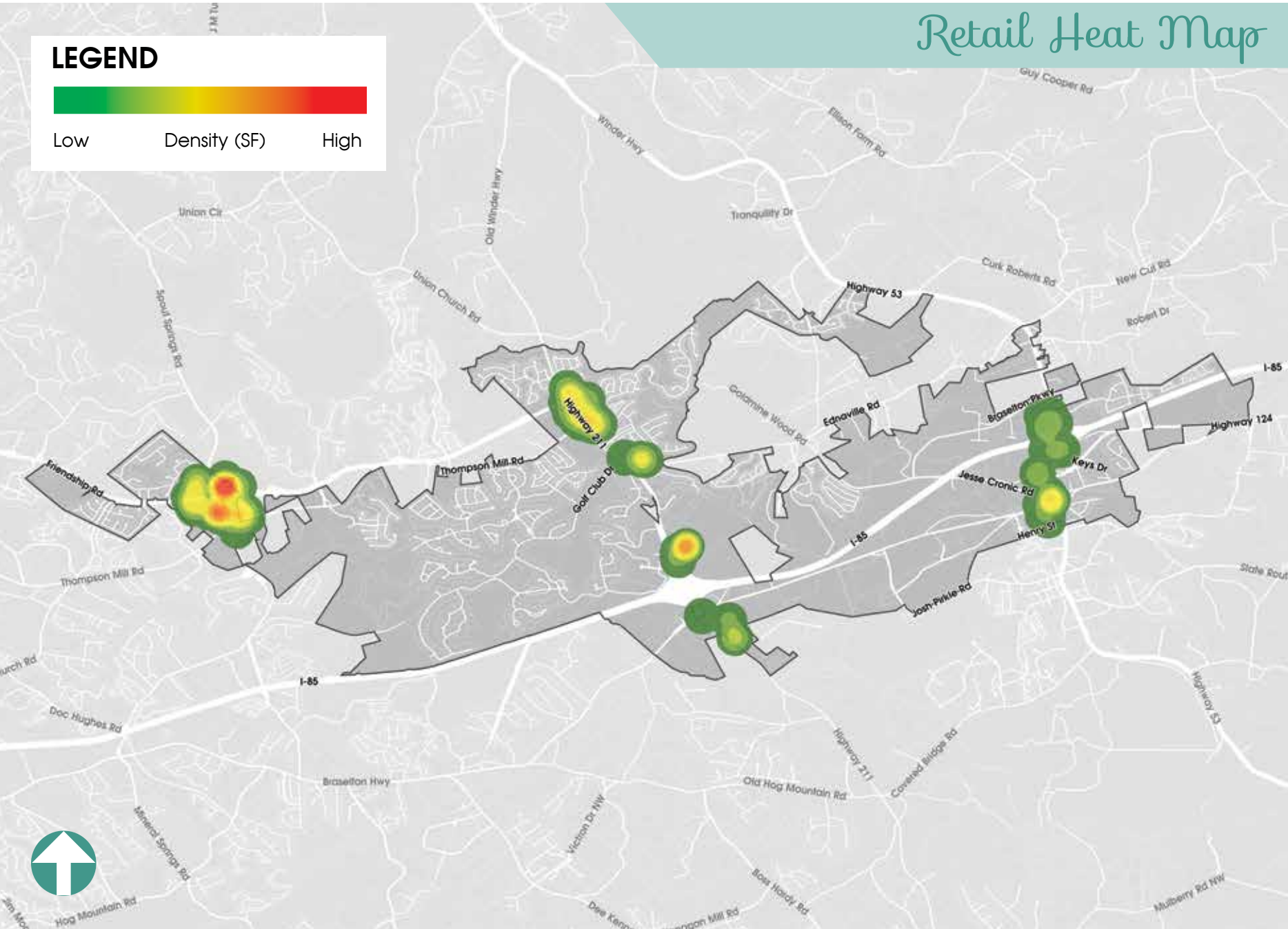
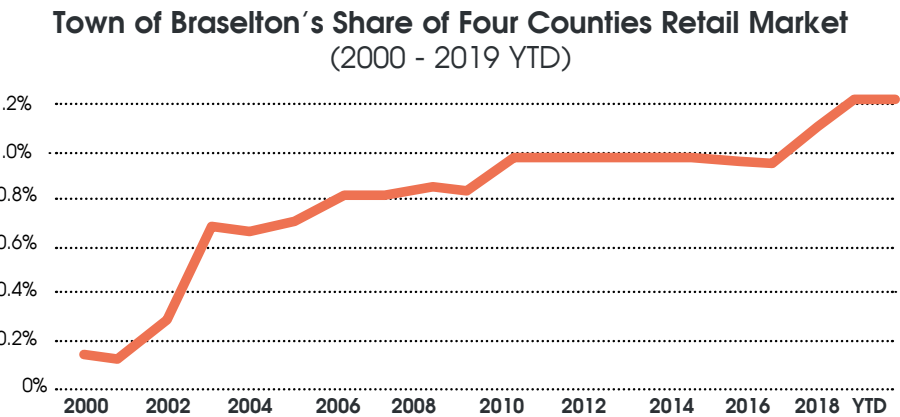
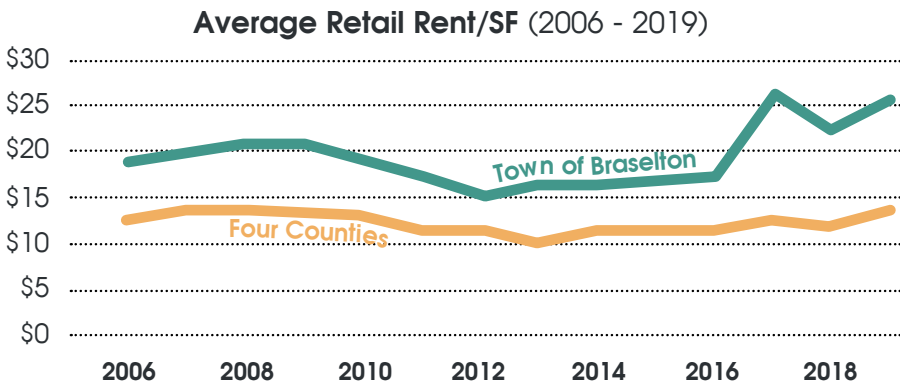
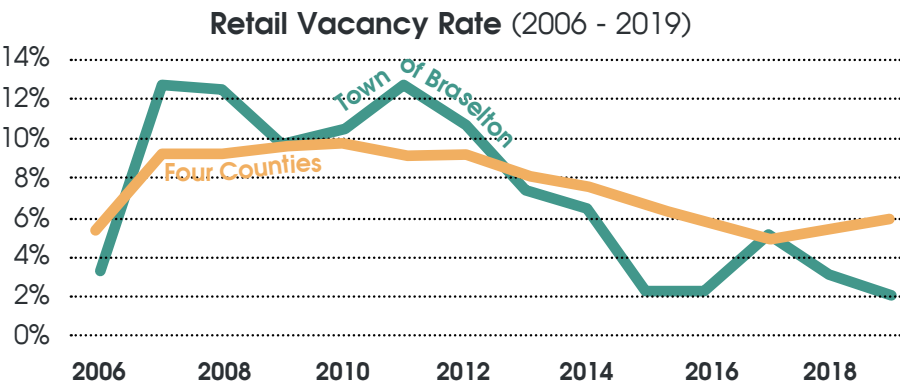
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT

>> Retail Market

There is just under 1 million square feet of retail space in the town limits of Braselton, making up less than 2% of all the retail space in the four counties. Retail spaces are heavily concentrated in and around the Duncan Corners shopping center, along Highway 211 and near downtown. Average retail rents in Braselton (\$25.77/ SF) are more than double the overall average for the 4 counties (\$13.34/SF). Retail vacancy in the town (2%) is substantially lower.

Due to only 7,500 square feet of new deliveries in Braselton between the years 2010 and 2015, as well as steady absorption by new tenants, vacancy rates went from its highest point (13%) in twenty years to it’s lowest (2%) during that five year span. Average retail rents in Braselton have always tracked higher than the four counties, however, since 2006, rents in town have increased over 35% compared to an average increase of just 8% within the four counties. The combination of rising rents and low vacancy potentially suggest the presence of unmet demand for additional retail development.

Retail	Town of Braselton	Four Counties
Existing Buildings	82	5,374
Existing SF	935,707 SF	77,061,156 SF
Vacancy	2.0%	5.8%
Avg. Rent/SF	\$25.77	\$13.34



>> Retail Spending Assessment

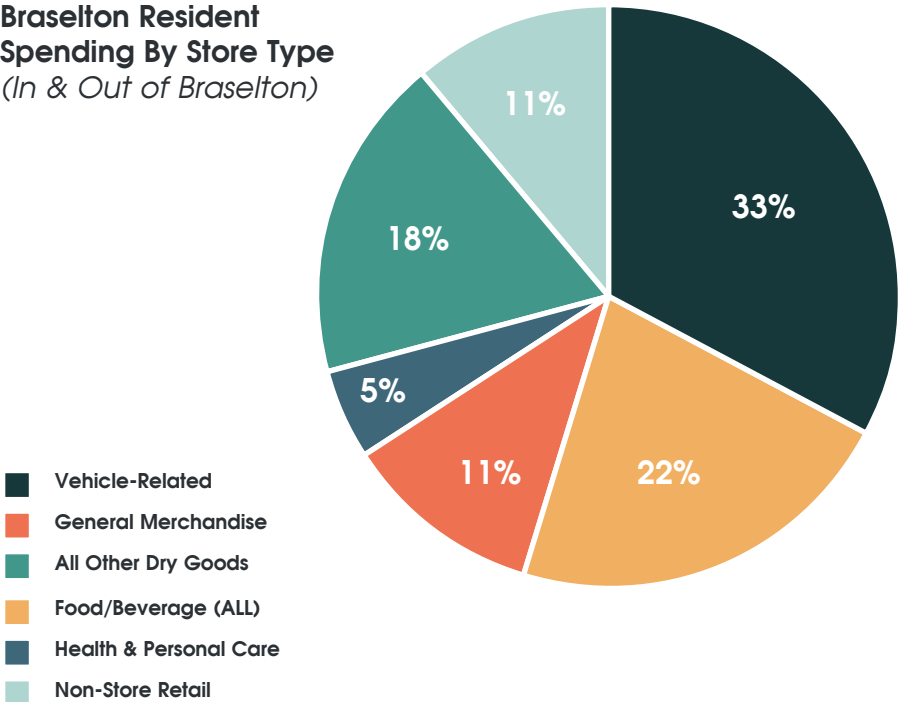
Shown at right is a summary of an analysis of retail spending by Braselton residents and at locations within Braselton.

One-third of Braselton resident spending (both in and outside of Braselton) is on automobile related goods, include fuel and maintenance.

Food and beverage spending (both eating at home and away from home) comprises 22% of resident spending.

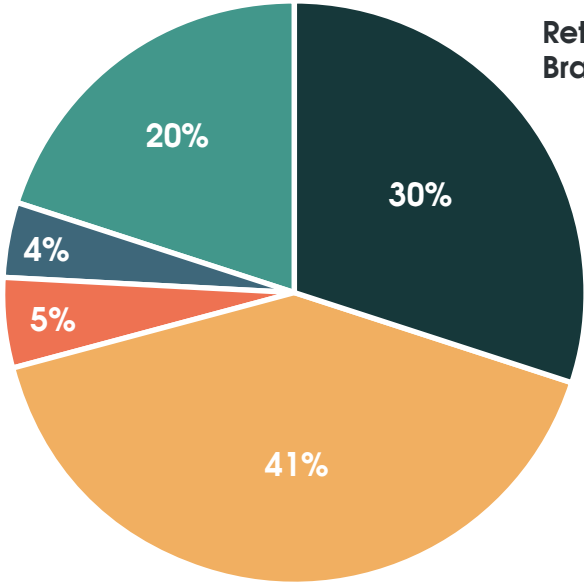


Braselton Resident Spending By Store Type
(In & Out of Braselton)



- Vehicle-Related
- General Merchandise
- All Other Dry Goods
- Food/Beverage (ALL)
- Health & Personal Care
- Non-Store Retail

Retail Spending at Braselton Locations



In total, Braselton residents spend over \$242.3 million annually on retail goods and services. This level of spending supports approximately 390,000 square feet of retail space, both in and outside of Braselton.

Within Braselton, over 40% of the spending (by residents and non-residents) goes toward food at restaurants and at stores. Another 30% of goes toward automobiles.

In total, 976,000 square feet of Braselton retail space supports \$109 million in spending, or approximately \$112/SF, which is below the overall average spending per square foot nationally, of approximately \$300/SF.

Shown at right is the difference between demand and supply for retail by store type in Braselton.

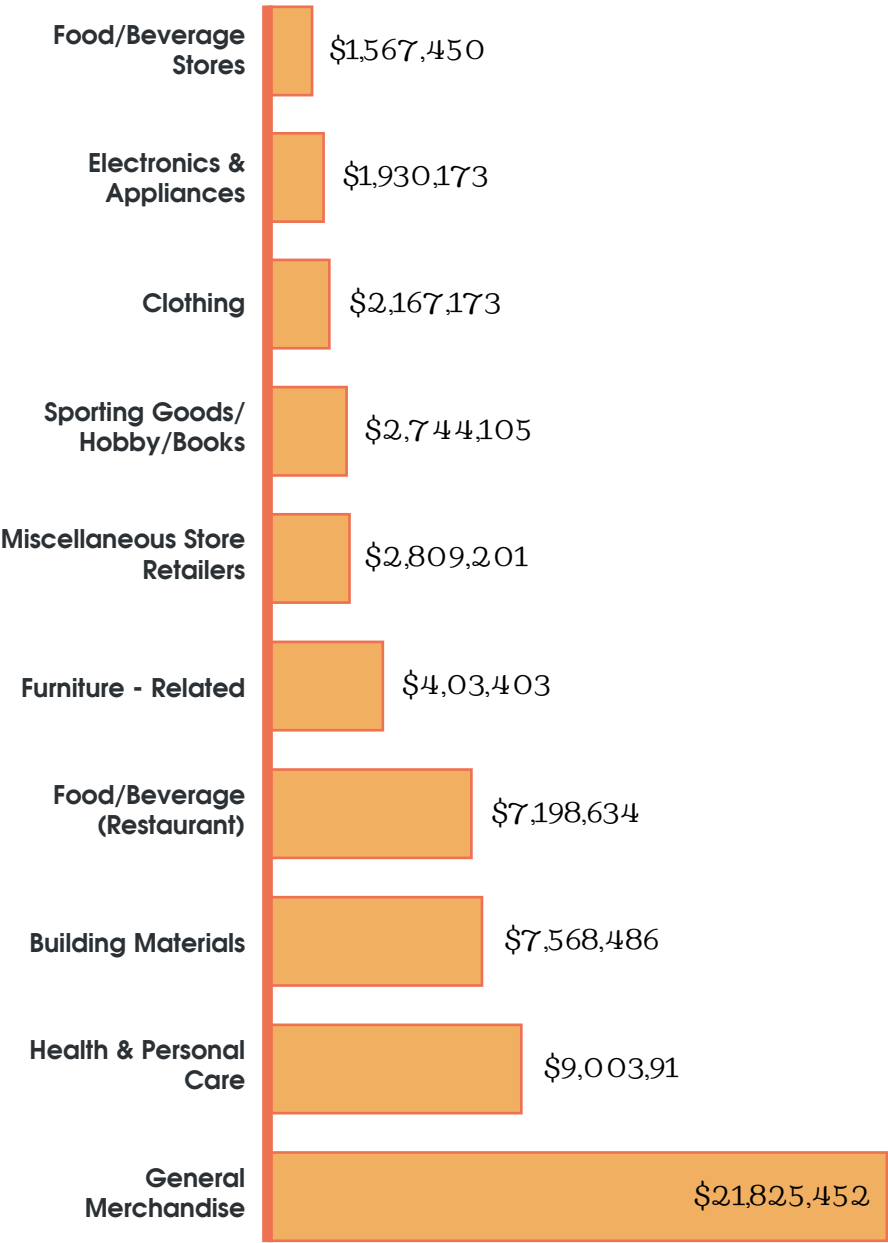
A positive value signifies an opportunity gap (“leakage”), while a negative value signifies a surplus.

The fact that all store types show an opportunity gap means that, in those store types, there are fewer sales (supply) in the area than spending (demand) from households who reside in the same area.

This general retail leakage points to the fact that local households spend money outside of the area and additional retail offerings in Braselton could gain their support.

However, additional retail in Braselton would still need support from spending by those who live elsewhere.

Braselton Spending Opportunity Gap

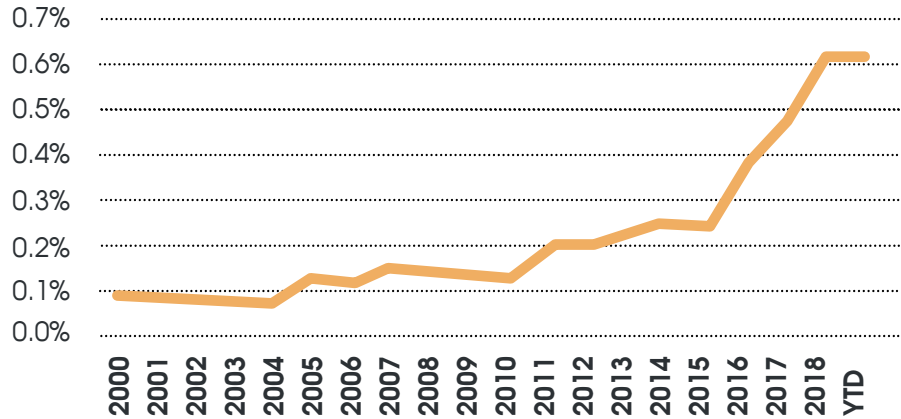


>> Office Market

Over half of the 26 existing offices in Braselton are relatively new office buildings (equating to about 260,000 square feet) inside the town limits were built after 2004. Seven of these office spaces were dedicated to medical use, and five of those buildings were completed after the Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) opened in 2015. The hospital has helped spur commercial and medical office growth in the area. The town’s share of the office market has increased by 0.5% since 2000 – however, its most drastic growth has come in recent years.

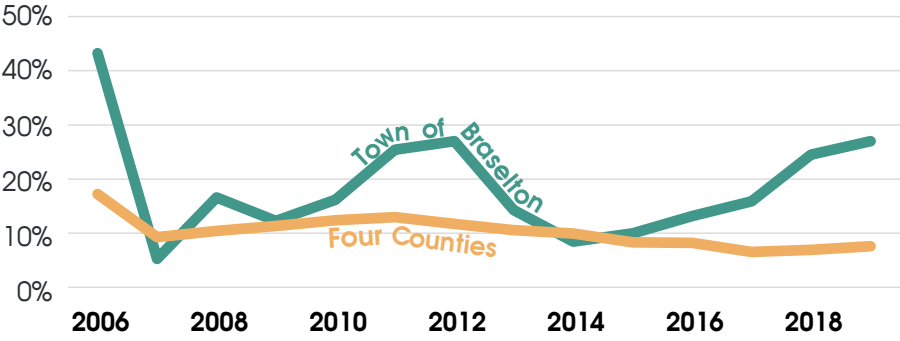
Office	Town of Braselton	Four Counties
Existing Buildings	26	3,412
Existing SF	259,977 SF	41,225,476 SF
Vacancy	27.0%	7.2%
Avg. Rent/SF	\$27.44	\$17.02

Town of Braselton’s Share of Four Combined Counties Office Market (2000 - 2019 YTD)

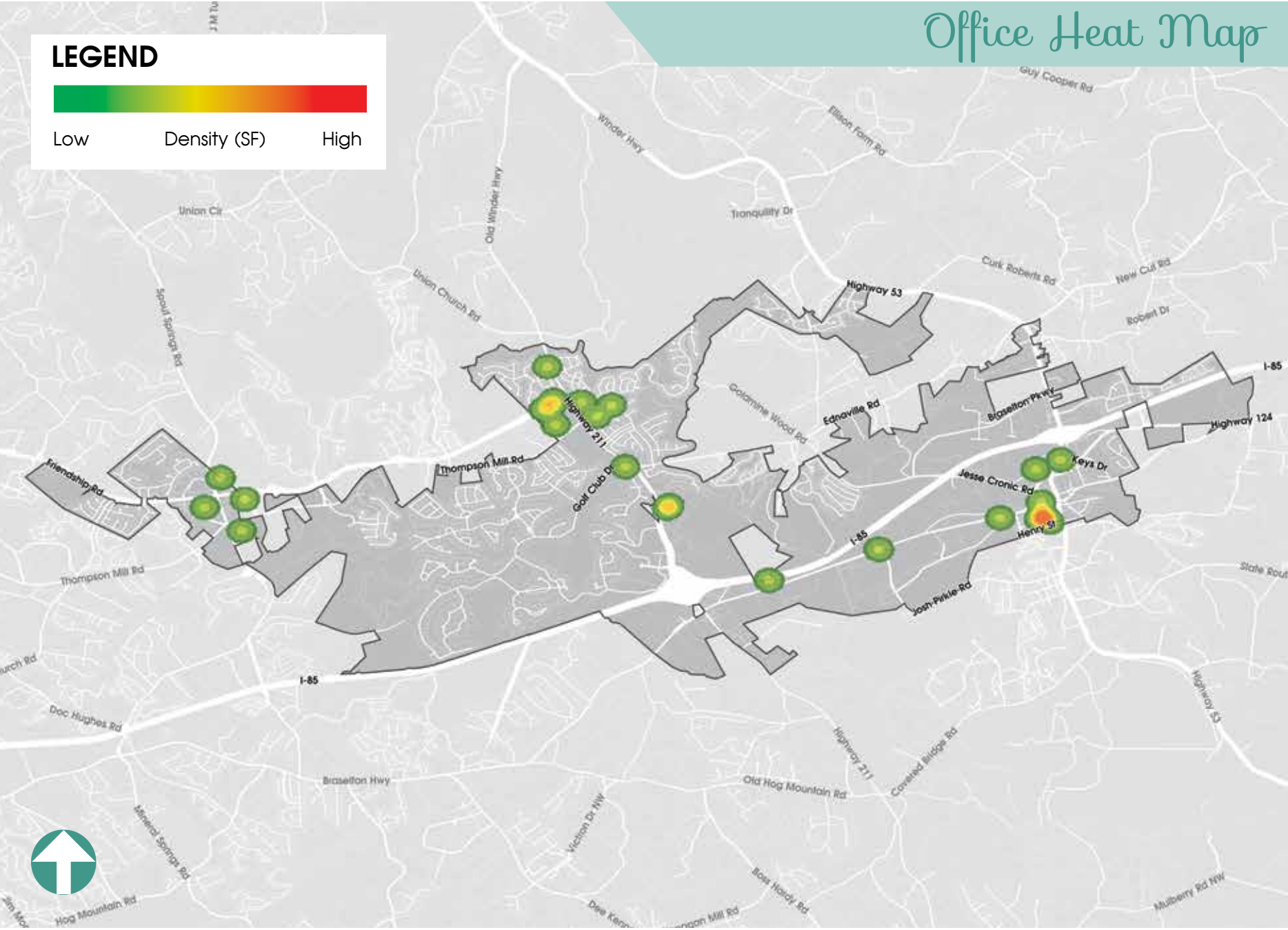
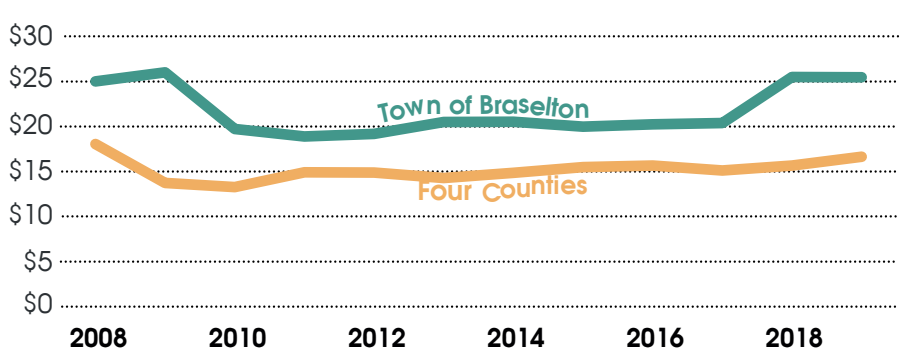


Due to recent office construction, the vacancy rate has steadily increased from 2014 to its current rate of 27%. Additionally, newer office buildings being constructed in Braselton are much larger than what was previously seen. Since 2017, eight office buildings totaling over 168,000 square feet were completed, compared to the previous count of 92,000 square feet of office space across 18 properties. Average gross rents in Braselton have inched up a bit since the recession by less than 2%, while the four combined counties saw a decrease of nearly 8%.

Office Vacancy Rate (2006 - 2019)



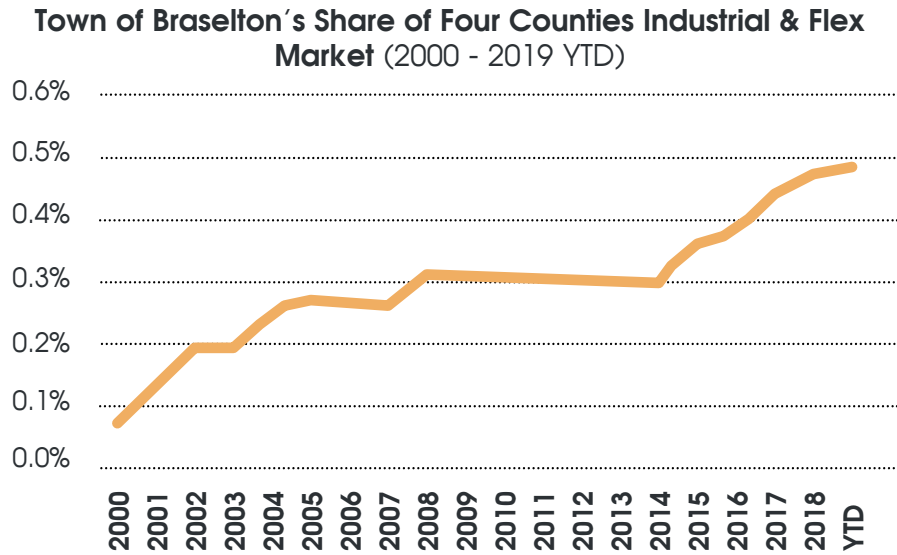
Average Office Rent/SF (2008 - 2019)



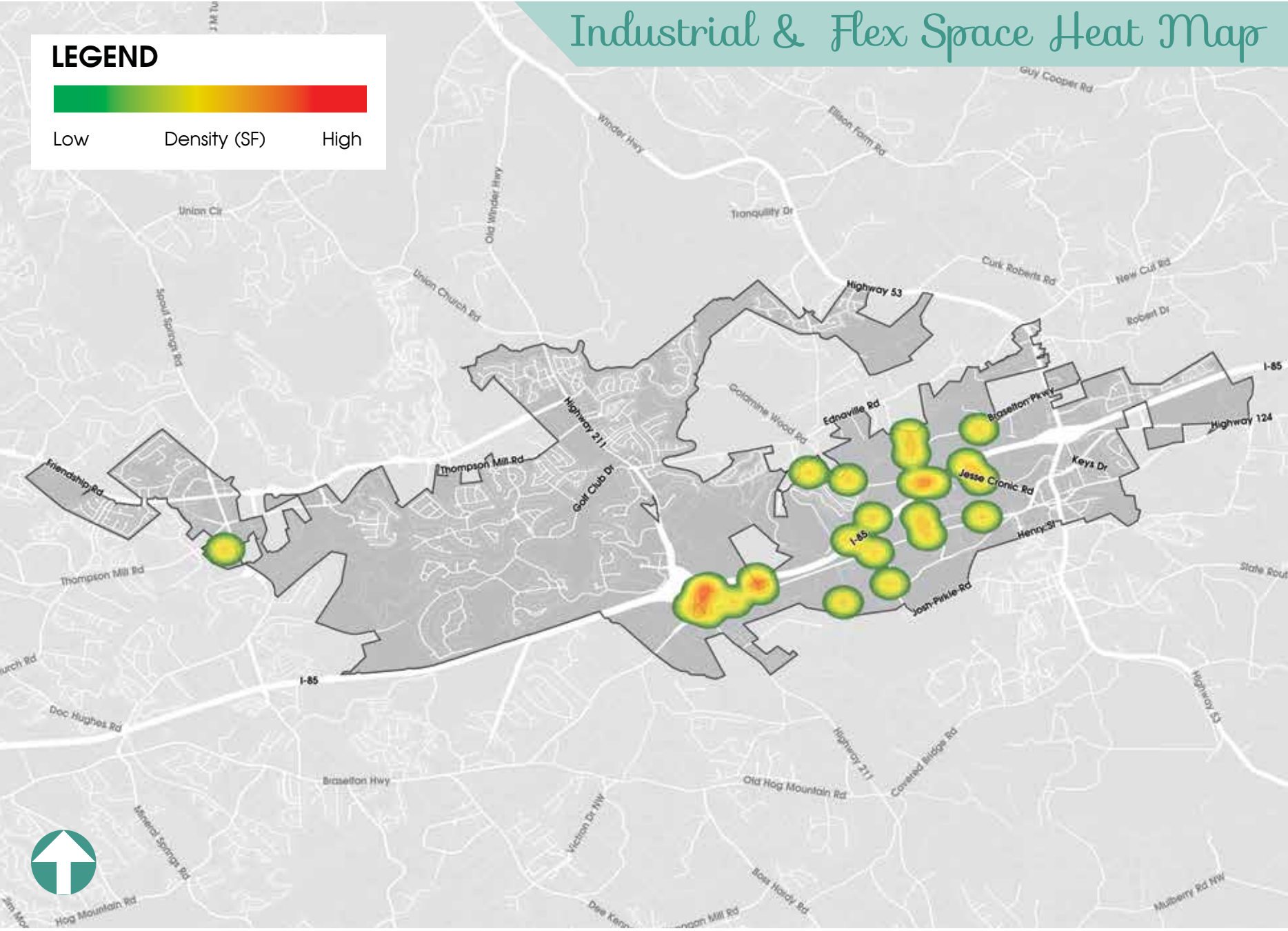
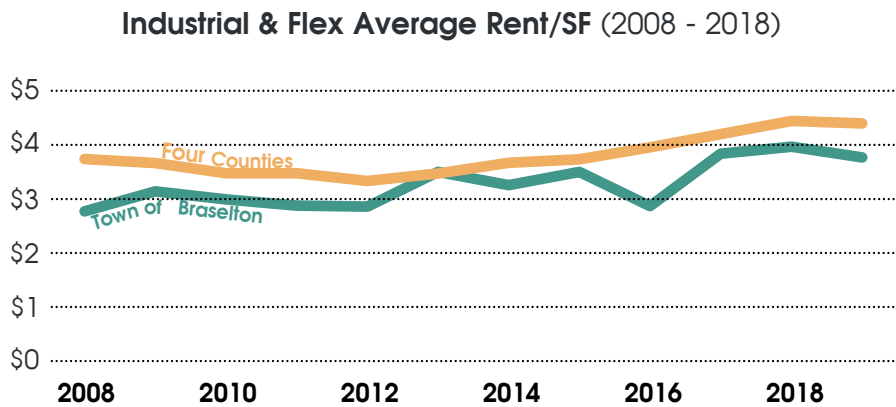
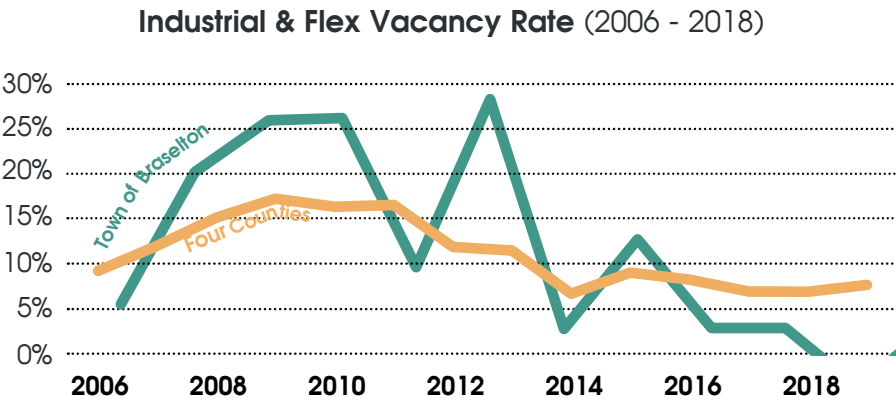
>> Industrial & Flex Space

Braselton’s highest market share of the four counties belongs to the industrial and flex market at an impressive 4.8%. For context, the town’s 12.5 square miles represents less than 1% of the combined counties’ total area. Nearly 8.5 million square feet of industrial and flex space in Braselton is clustered in the southeast portion of the town near major thoroughfares such as Interstate 85 and Highways 124 and 53. These areas are attractive logistically due to high accessibility, making it easier for transport trucks to drop off and pick up items more efficiently.

Industrial & Flex	Town of Braselton	Four Counties
Existing Buildings	28	4,271
Existing SF	9,878,479 SF	206,407,006 SF
Vacancy	14.9%	8.2%
Avg. Rent/SF	\$3.82	\$4.54



It should be noted that Braselton has a higher average vacancy rate, yet lower average rents than the surrounding counties. As a result of constant new construction of industrial and flex space and increased absorption over the past 13 years, vacancy rates in Braselton have fluctuated. The current rate (17%) is its highest since 2013, however, between 2000 and 2012, the median vacancy rate was roughly at 24.3%. Since 2008, rent per square foot for industrial and flex space has increased faster in Braselton (30%) than the four counties (22%).



EDUCATION

>> Public County Schools

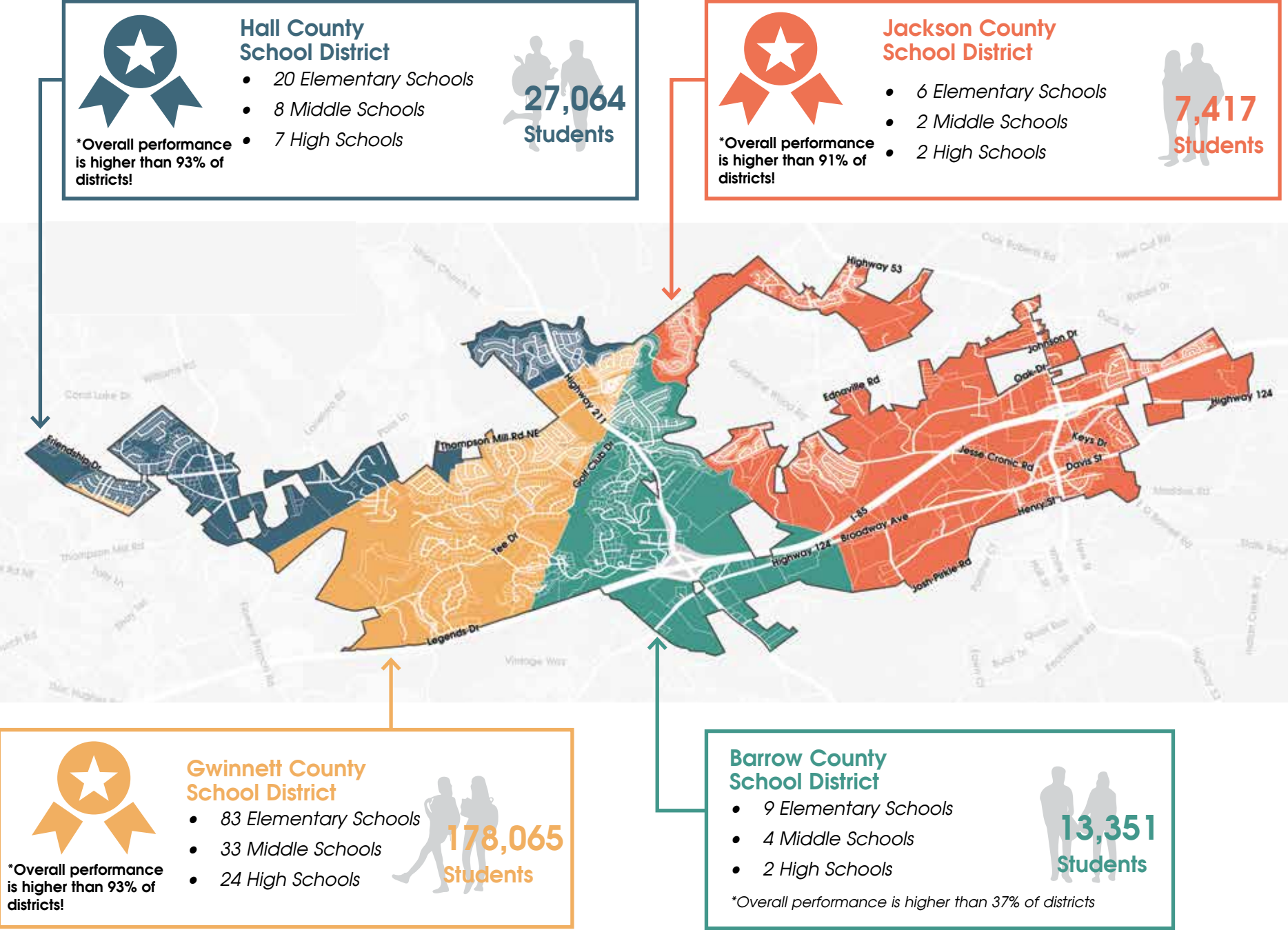
Braselton’s unique geographic boundary allows children in one area to go to a completely different school district than children who may live nearby. The Town operates in four different independent public school districts — Jackson County, Barrow County, Gwinnett County, and Hall County. The information on the following pages describes each school district, and performance information from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement.

Between the four school districts, there are 15 schools that Braselton’s school-age children could possibly attend based on where they live — five elementary schools, five middle schools, and five high schools. The data on the next page shows that out of the four school districts represented in Braselton, two school systems rate higher (Gwinnett and Jackson), one is average (Hall), and one is not performing as well (Barrow).

Overall, the individual schools attended by Braselton’s children are average, most ranking a B or C according to the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement. What this data tells us is that Braselton students receive an education that is typical of Georgia schoolchildren, and that school performance may drive where families settle in Braselton.

>> Higher Education

In 2012, Brenau University (located in Gainesville, Georgia) expanded its nationally recognized BULLI (Brenau University Learning and Leisure Institute) to Braselton. The program is administered by Brenau’s Center for Lifetime Study and offers a wide range of courses in each of the following categories — academics, the arts, self-improvement, and health and wellness. The evening as well as daytime classes are held in various locations throughout the town and promote the growth of local adults in their intellectual, social, and psychological development.





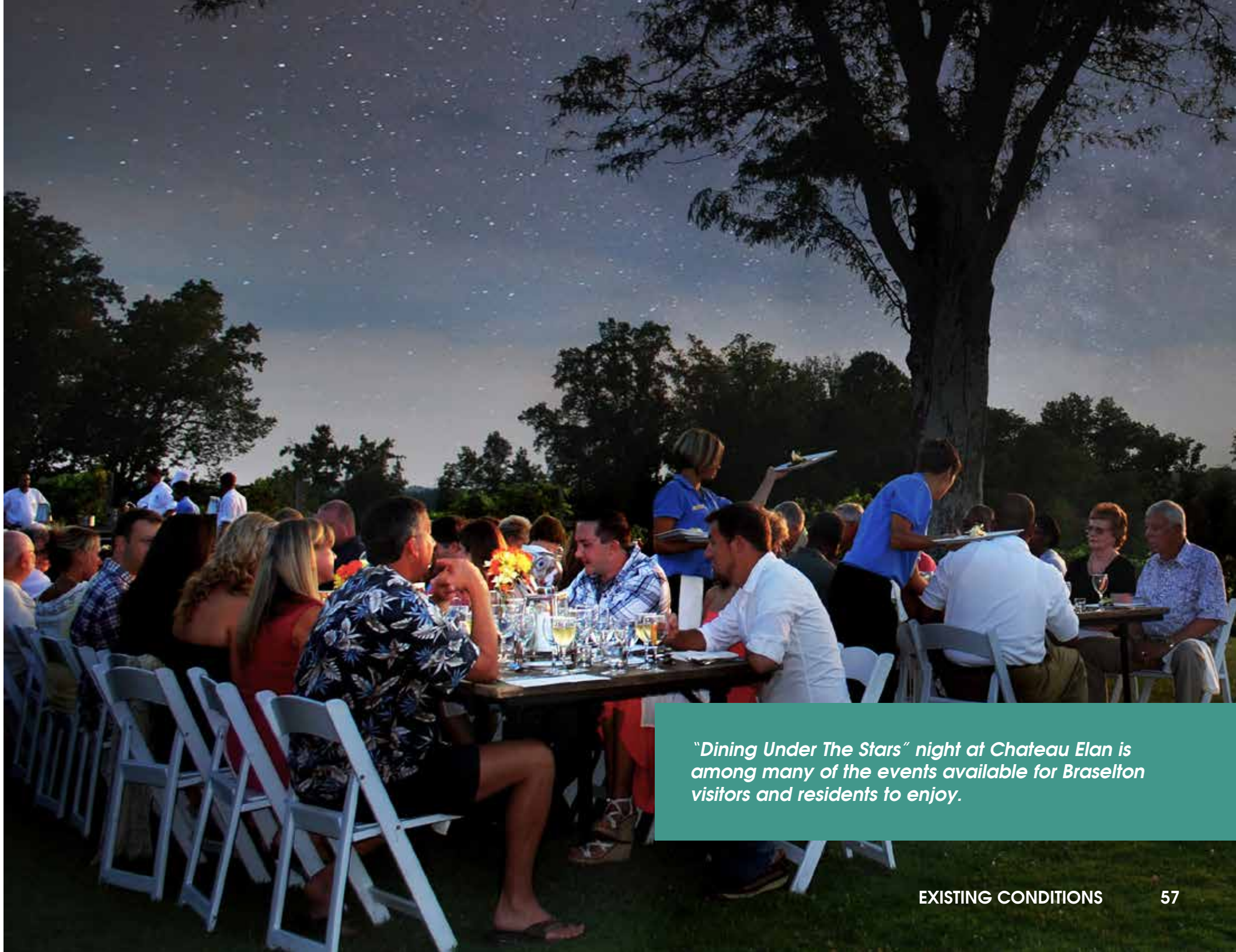
ECONOMIC DRIVERS

>> Chateau Elan Winery & Resort

Chateau Elan Winery & Resort is a luxury resort on 3,500 acres and includes amenities such as a spa, golf course, winery, tennis courts, and conference spaces. At the writing of this plan, it was undergoing a \$25 million renovation with an expected completion date of November 2019. The upgrade includes new paint, windows, carpeting, bathrooms, as well as a revamped lobby with new eateries, such as a coffee and wine bar. Annually, it attracts more than 500,000 guests to Braselton. Besides being a major tourist destination, it serves as the bedrock of various adjacent upscale residential communities.

>> Road Atlanta

Located outside of town limits, Road Atlanta is a multi-purpose motor sports facility situated on 750 acres, including a racetrack recognized as one of the best in the world. Road Atlanta recently expanded an existing partnership with Michelin North American, marking the first time the Fortune 500 tire manufacturer lent its name to a racetrack. Construction is nearly complete for a new state-of-the-art four-story tower. The new building will include a 300-person event space, media center and broadcast booth, hospitality suites, and a rooftop viewing deck.



“Dining Under The Stars” night at Chateau Elan is among many of the events available for Braselton visitors and residents to enjoy.



Natural & Cultural Resources

NATURAL RESOURCES

>> Watershed

Braselton is located in the Upper Oconee watershed, part of the Oconee River basin. Of the 143 miles of assessed streams within or straddling the river basin, only 18% is designated for drinking water (the rest is designated for fishing). The Town purchases its water from Barrow County, who gets their water from the Bear Creek reservoir in Jackson County. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) determined in 2014 that 67% of the river basin's 143 stream miles do not meet state water quality standards. Among those in Braselton town limits are the Mulberry River and Wheeler Creek.

>> Groundwater Recharge Areas

There are no groundwater recharge areas in Braselton.

>> Protected Mountains

Braselton does not contain any protected mountains.

>> Protected River Corridors

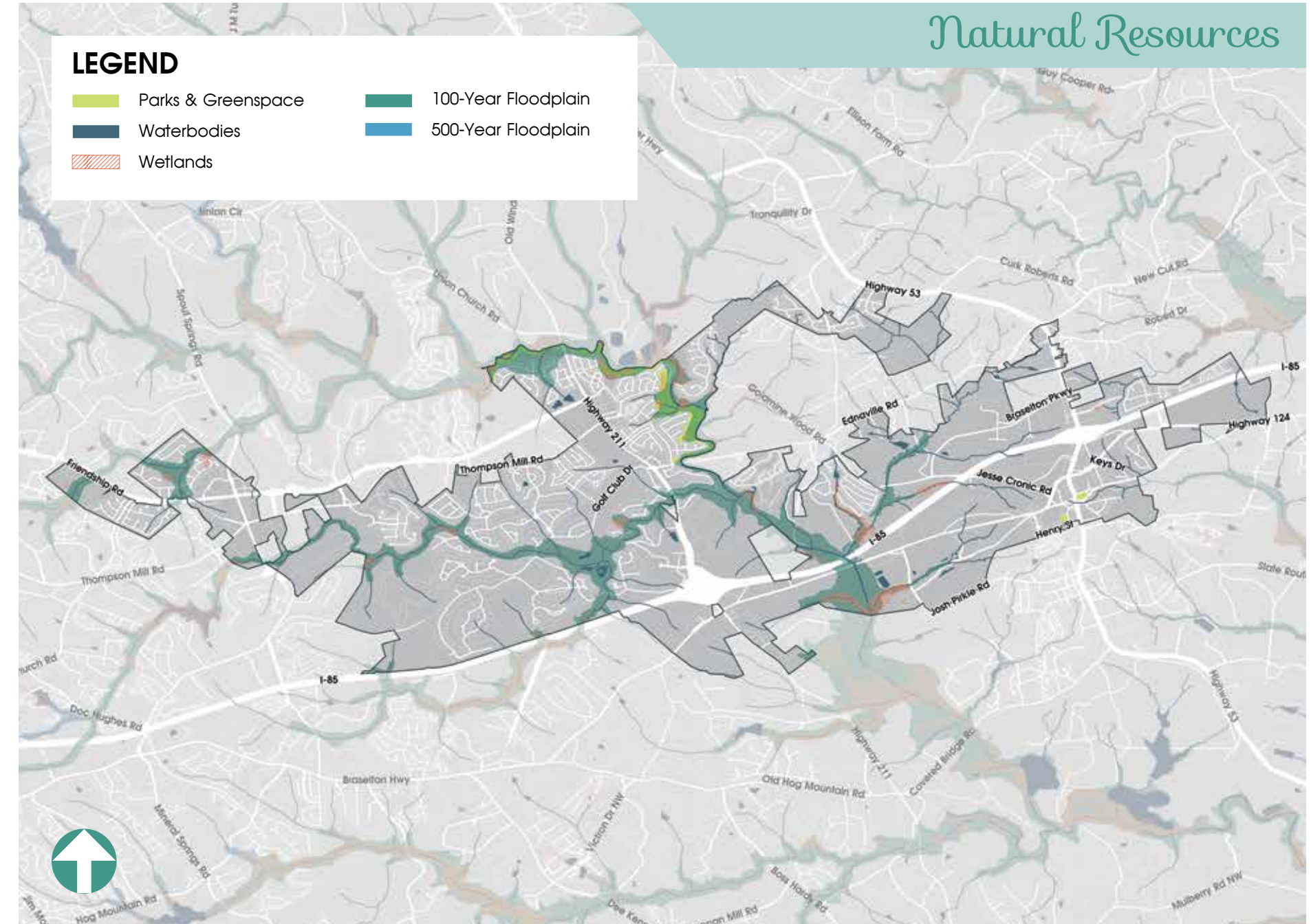
There are no protected river corridors in Braselton.

>> Wetlands

According to data compiled through the National Wetlands Inventory, there are wetlands centered around the Mulberry River and Duncan Creek. While wetlands aren't a big concern for the town, there are FEMA 100-year flood zones that may impact future development.

>> Greenspaces & Floodplains

Braselton has two main parks: Braselton Park downtown that has a playground, splashpad, and tennis courts; and the Town Green which has an amphitheater and hosts many town events. The Town is currently developing a 71 acre park along Highway 124, and creating greenspace along the Mulberry Trail via the Riverwalk. Floodplains are plentiful throughout the town, and are centered along the Mulberry River corridor and its streams.





“Where French Country meets the Georgia Mountains”

- Quote from Visit Braselton

The Town of Braselton has a rich heritage and is home to the world-class amenity Chateau Elan Winery & Resort, which attracts more than a million visitors a year.

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Braselton includes many important community resources, which are defined as places where people can gather or public amenities that serve the entire community (government facilities, schools, libraries, parks, etc.).

>> Parks & Plazas

Aside from Chateau Elan, there are a few other parks and plaza spaces in the Town including the Braselton Town Green, Braselton Park, and Legends Golf Course. The Braselton Park offers residents a place for recreational activities such as tennis and soccer. The Braselton Town Green is located in the middle of downtown making it a prime location for town festivals.

>> Needed Services

Civic services for the town are primarily located within the Historic District Boundary (outlined in purple on the facing map). These include the Braselton Town Hall, Police and Fire Department, Library, Post Office, etc.

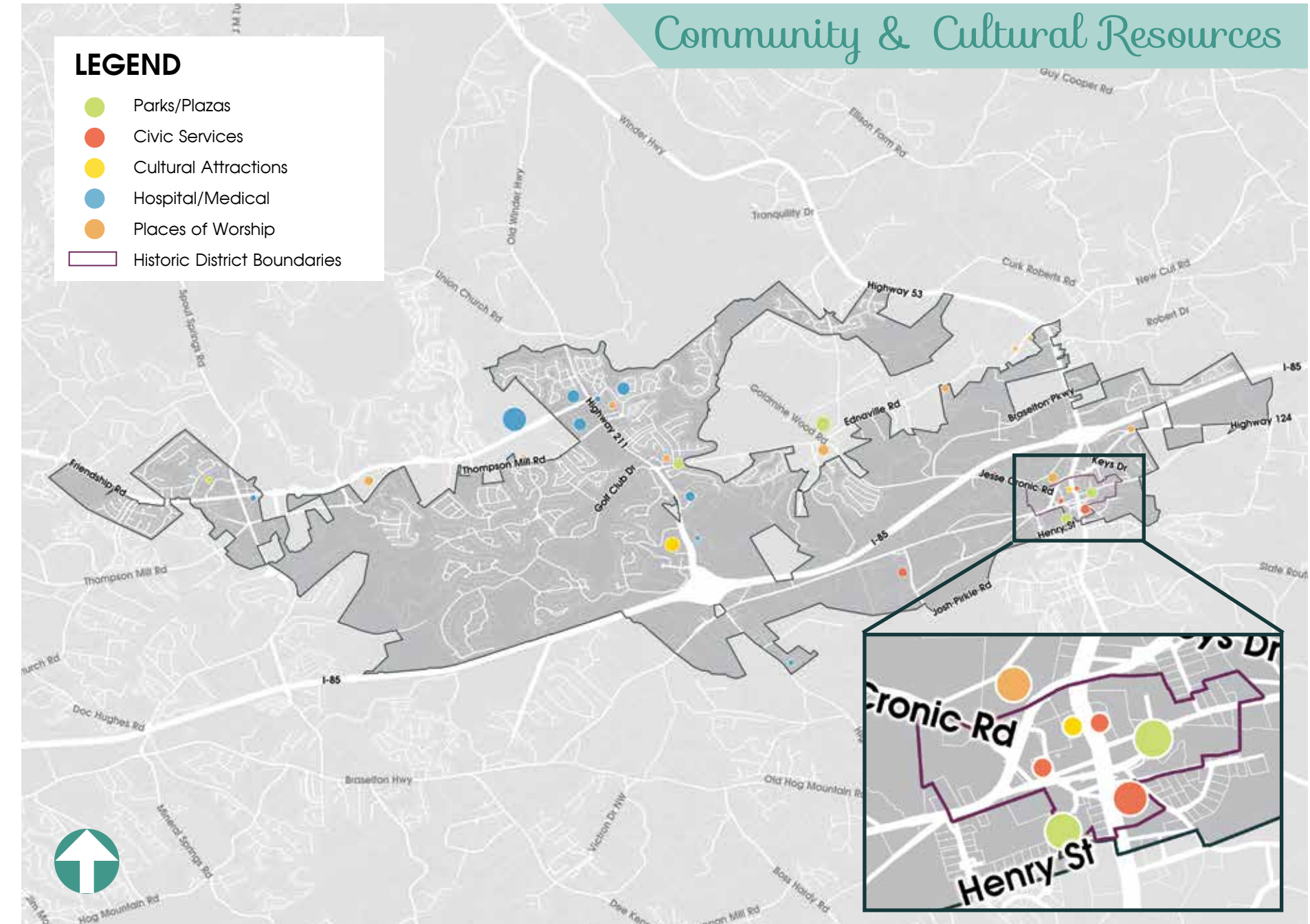
Needed services such as the Northeast Georgia Medical Center is located just outside the town limits along Friendship Road.

>> Cultural Attractions

Braselton’s main cultural attractions and largest in the town, are the Chateau Elan Winery & Resort and Chateau Elan Golf Club. These attractions alone attract more than a million visitors a year according to the Visit Braselton website. Also included are the many local businesses and restaurants in the town, such as the Braselton Brewing Company, Blake’s of Braselton, and Paddy’s Irish Pub.

>> Community Programming

The Town of Braselton programs events for downtown throughout the year. Most notable is the Braselton Farmers Market, the Holiday Festival & Parade, Pooches in the Park, the Antique & Artisan Festival, Chocolate Walk, Beach Bash, Movies Under the Stars, the 4th of July Festival & Parade, the Braselton Zombie Run, and the Paddy’s Day PathFest.





Summary Conclusions

This chapter has made a detailed analysis of Braselton today in 2020, looking at the town from all angles and perspectives. Below is a summary of the conclusions that these analyses have drawn.

POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

- Braselton's population has tripled since 2000 but growth is expected to slow somewhat, similar to projected trends in the four surrounding counties.
- Once rural and secluded, Braselton's consistent and robust growth over the past 20 years has led to a surge of residential, commercial, and industrial development.
- Braselton has a significantly higher median housing value and median household income than the region.
- The Braselton area is at the beginning stage of a notable shift toward a more aged population by 2040.

LAND USE

- Over a quarter of the town's acreage is currently vacant or underdeveloped. While some of these parcels already have development plans in progress, this demonstrates that Braselton is still a long time from being considered at full "build-out."
- Even though the town has a lot of vacant land that could be developed, great care needs to be made to ensure that infrastructure (roads, sewer, stormwater, etc) can keep up with the pressures that new development will bring.
- The Town's Unified Development Code (UDC) is will need to be rewritten to modernize outdated regulations and fix gaps that are prohibiting development, make necessary clarifications, and make edits that would otherwise improve its readability and comprehension.

TRANSPORTATION

- Despite Braselton having four state highways and Interstate 85, residents have expressed concerns over the town not feeling connected from one end to the other.
- With heavy congestion on roads such as Highway 211 and Highway 53, and only 6.5 miles of sidewalk and multi-use paths, the town could benefit from expanding their existing non-vehicular network to give residents more alternative modes of transportation.

HOUSING & REAL ESTATE

- Most of the town's housing stock is comprised of single-family detached residences that were built after 2000.
- The town's housing stock is beginning to diversify with recently completed multi-family projects and independent living facilities, as well as a pipeline full of both apartment units and attached homes.
- The small percentage of renters that call Braselton home are typically by "choice" and earn substantially more than the area median income.
- The average home sales price in and around Braselton has rapidly increased over the past few years as the number of lesser value home sales has decreased while more expensive home sales has increased.
- The majority of Braselton's housing stock is valued between \$200,000 and \$500,000.

- Building permit issuance within the four counties is steadily increasing for both single-family and multi-family construction but is still below the pre-recession peaks of 2006.
- Although still nominal, Braselton's market share of the four counties commercial real estate has steadily increased over the past 20 years and an active pipeline suggests that growth will continue.
- Although somewhat limited, the retail market in Braselton is strong with low vacancy rates. In addition, the residential and job growth on the town's horizon will continue to be a catalyst for new and improved retail development.
- Braselton's high office vacancy rates can be attributed to the increased development impact of the Northeast Georgia's Medical Center and the lag in lease up of new space; however this situation should be closely monitored to avoid overbuilding while ensuring new tenants are absorbing the abundance of space already in place.
- Due to technological advances, the continued boom of e-commerce, and Braselton's accessibility, the pace of distribution and warehouse developments has led to significant growth that outpaces both the surrounding counties and broader region.

ECONOMICS

- The characteristics of Braselton that have attracted residential growth in the past, and particularly over the last 20 years, will continue to be assets for the town in the future. In turn, the number of jobs will likely continue to grow, based on the increases in residential population and continued economic development that draws employment to the area.
- Unlike many small towns in Georgia, Braselton is more than just a place to sleep, as the daytime population increases instead of declining. The town’s net job inflow is a testament of its growing base population of workers.
- Although the four surrounding counties have very different economies, there are some clear trends that can be seen regarding sector wages. Across the four counties, wages tend to be low paying when compared to the region and state.
- Now realizing their catalytic development potential, Chateau Elan and Road Atlanta are becoming economic drivers for the town of Braselton. Their continued growth and improvement will prove beneficial to Braselton’s tourism economy.
- Braselton’s location at the crossroads of several transportation routes and distance between metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, Athens, and Greenville has proven to be a logistical advantage for companies in the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities sector.
- With direct access to the Interstate 85 corridor, Braselton has attracted a high concentrations of industrial warehouses of major companies, proving thousands of jobs.

- Although Leisure & Hospitality is the other economic base of the town, this has been the slowest growing sector recently.
- Nevertheless, future economic opportunities in tourism will likely exist with coordinated efforts.

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Braselton has a lot of water bodies (ponds, rivers, streams, etc) and floodplains/wetlands that may affect future development.
- The Mulberry River and Wheeler Creek have been identified by the Georgia EPD as streams that are currently not meeting the state’s water quality standards. Future development near these areas should take care to not further exacerbate these issues.
- Braselton has a wealth of community and cultural resources that contribute to both resident quality of life, but also attract visitors, including the Town Green, Chateau Elan, the Braselton Brewing Company, and the Riverwalk. The Town also holds many events throughout the year that attract both residents and visitors.
- Historic Downtown Braselton is a big cultural asset for the Town. It features many historic buildings, including Town Hall, the Braselton Brothers Department Store, and the Braselton Event Center. The downtown area also has a lot of local restaurants and shops, but has potential to add even more businesses and even some residential development.



Braselton Park is in the heart of Downtown Braselton. It offers a pavilion with picnic tables, a playground, tennis courts, and a splash pad.