



CITY OF STONECREST

STONECREST 2038

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE





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Source: Prepared by Sizemore Group in association with Kimley-Horn and Sycamore Consulting.
Source: Unless otherwise specified, all images are provided by the consultant team or courtesy of the City of Stonecrest.



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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT STONECREST

In November 2016, the City of Stonecrest was established by the Georgia General Assembly, granting it distinct executive and legislative powers. Stonecrest is situated in DeKalb County, Georgia, primarily in the southeastern corner, with a smaller portion extending north of Interstate 20. It shares borders with Lithonia, Rockdale, and Henry counties. With a population of roughly 59,000 spread across thirty-two square miles, Stonecrest is a bustling community encompassing various businesses and residential areas along I-20. It's iconic rock geology has served as natural backdrop and economic windfall for the area. Major corridors include Panola Road, Evans Mill Road, and Browns Mill Road, and Covington Highway. The Stonecrest Mall has served as a regional retail outlet for nearly twenty years. Located roughly eleven miles east of Atlanta, Stonecrest is strategically positioned to be the regional epicenter of growth, employment, and entertainment.

The city is home to rock quarries, natural attractions, rivers, heavy transportation warehousing, industrial centers, and a portion of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area is one of the 49 National Heritage Areas designated by Congress where history, culture, and nature converge in nationally significant landscapes. It started approximately 400 years ago when geologic forces began to create what is known today as Arabia Mountain. This rock is where nature thrives and generations of Georgians have made their marks.



Caption: *The City of Stonecrest and its context in DeKalb County and adjacent counties*

In July 2017, the city opened its doors for business; Stonecrest is the 12th municipality of DeKalb. The area is home to the Mall at Stonecrest, the Davidson-Arabia Nature Preserve, and the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. Stonecrest is highlighted for having one of the top EIC (Environment as an Integrating Context for learning) Model Schools in the state, providing an Environmental, Energy and Engineering Magnet Program for grades 9-12.

Breathtaking monadnocks are the cornerstones of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area (AMNHA), which serves to celebrate these otherworldly rock outcrops and the surrounding region as a recreational wonder and cultural treasure. Lying east of Atlanta, the AMNHA includes pristine natural areas, former quarry and agricultural sites, spiritual centers, historic communities and buildings. This patchwork of wilderness and former farmland began with the formation of the monadnocks, Arabia and Panola Mountains, about 400 million years ago.

Quarries at and around Arabia Mountain extracted granite for construction and chicken feed well into the 20th century. Lithonia, meaning “city of stone” in Greek, grew into a bustling quarry town, with Lithonia granite sent off to build structures such as the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Operating in southeast DeKalb County, the Davidson Minerals Company was once the largest granite producer in the world. In 1972, Davidson Minerals donated nearly 500 acres to DeKalb County - thus beginning the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve. The preserve, now 2,500 acres, and includes hiking and biking trails, a visitor’s center, and as its centerpiece – Arabia Mountain.

Connected to the rest of the AMNHA by the South River, the Monastery of the Holy Spirit provides a place for peace and reflection in the midst of 400 million years of history.

Vaughters’ Barn is an iconic remnant of DeKalb County’s rural past and a part of Panola Mountain State Park. DeKalb County was at one point the biggest dairy producer in the state of Georgia. Vaughters’ Farm was part of that patchwork of agriculture, and S. B. Vaughters was one of the most successful dairy farmers in the area. As urban sprawl inched out of Atlanta over the course of the 20th century, Mr. Vaughters sought a different future for his land: “I didn’t want that here,” he said. He sold his land to the state in 2002. Today, Vaughters’ farm is part of Panola Mountain and offers visitors a glimpse of the county’s rural past.



Caption: View of Stonecrest City Hall

Flat Rock

Flat Rock Archive, INC., nestled in Stonecrest, Georgia, embodies the enduring spirit of the African American community. As one of the oldest settlements in DeKalb County, Flat Rock’s roots trace back to the early 19th century—a crossroads of indigenous cultures and natural resources. Today, it stands as a living repository of stories, traditions, and memories, bridging generations. The Flat Rock Historical Cemetery, weathered gravestones etched with resilience, serves as a poignant reminder of the Flat Rock heritage.

The Flat Rock Archive, INC.’s commitment extends beyond maintenance of the properties, but also includes storytelling, education, and stewardship. Flat Rock transcends racial boundaries, symbolizing justice, equality, and unity. The rich legacy of the Flat Rock community will be continuously celebrated and safeguarded, ensuring its lessons resonate across time.

The South River and Everett Park

The City previously accepted a \$190,663 grant obtained by the South River Watershed Alliance to facilitate park upgrades at its June 29, 2022 Council meeting.

Everett Park stands as a hidden treasure, inviting kayakers and paddlers to discover the serene beauty of Stonecrest’s riverside. Through this joint investment, Everett Park is poised to become a thriving outdoor haven, uniting the community with nature trails and access to the scenic South River. This transformation promises to elevate Everett Park into a beloved destination, fostering connections among residents while providing ample opportunities for outdoor recreation along the river’s banks.

The project is designed to enhance the overall quality of life in Stonecrest. The upgrades will maintain visitors’ access to the river near Klondike Road’s bridge crossing and improve drainage at Everett Park’s parking lot. The parking lot’s dimensions will not increase with the buildout.



Caption: View of the Sandy Beach of Everett Park along the South River in Stonecrest, GA

Arabia Mountain Path

The Arabia-Mountain Path is a multi-use trail that winds throughout Stonecrest and will take path-goers by the Davidson-Arabia Mountain, Vaughters Farm, Flat Rock Archives, and the AWARE Animal Rescue Sanctuary. Beyond Stonecrest, the path also passes by the Monastery of the Holy Spirit (home of the Trappist Monks), the Panola Mountain State Park, and historic downtown Lithonia. With over 30 miles of paved and unpaved surfaces, there are several historic sites and natural gems to see along the Arabia Mountain Path.

Even though Arabia Mountain has bare rock, little soil, limited moisture and extreme temperature changes, the area has beautiful foliage. The mountain is populated with various lichen, diamorph or elf-orphine, hairy lipferns, glade rushfoil, hairy spiderwort, and all kinds of grasses.



Caption: *View of Arabia Mountain*

Dairy Heritage

In the early 1920's, the agricultural landscape of DeKalb County changed as fields full of cotton began to disappear. Cotton was the state's main money making crop, but the arrival of the boll weevil along with other factors forced farmers to change how they used their land. Some moved to the city for factory jobs while others cultivated new crops and raised livestock. In DeKalb County many farmers filled their fields with dairy cows with the hope that dairy would sustain life on the farm. Milk production was changing too. For decades individual families produced their own milk or relied on small, hometown dairies to produce, package and deliver milk. The rise of automobile and mechanized farm equipment transformed local dairy production and distribution into a huge commercial industry in Georgia.

Silvey Brice "S.B." Vaughters was a prolific educator and farmer. He taught vocational agriculture at a nearby school after graduating from the University of Georgia. He bought 144 acres in 1946 to realize his dream of owning a dairy farm. He began selling milk in 1948 with two purebred Jersey cows and five heifers. He began selling to a local dairy plant, but eventually sold his milk to Atlanta Dairies, a large processing and distribution plant that served the entire Atlanta area. Mr. Vaughters ran a successful dairy farm in what would become Stonecrest for 20 years. Mr. Vaughters led the DeKalb Farm Bureau in 1948 and again in 1999 – at the age of 88 years old. Vaughters was also a community leader who left an enduring legacy in DeKalb County. His motto "Learning to Do; Doing to Earn; Earning to Live; Living to Serve" was evident in his life and legacy. He sold his land to the state of Georgia in 2002 so that a piece of DeKalb County history would be preserved for future generations. Today, the dairy barn and stone farmhouse are the last remaining buildings on the farm. During his farming days, the farmhouse was a place to store equipment and house animals. The landscape of the 144 acres serve as a reminder to the area's agricultural past. It is also an excellent habitat for animals like deer, turkeys, and songbirds.



Caption: *View of Vaughters Farm dairy barn*

WHY WE PLAN

The Georgia Planning Act mandates local jurisdictions to craft and uphold Comprehensive Plans that guide long-term development. Stonecrest’s qualified local government (QLG) status is contingent on maintaining this foundational document. These plans adhere rigorously to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ (DCA) Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, encompassing elements such as land use, economics, housing, and transportation.

The City of Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan 2038 guides sustainable growth by providing a transparent roadmap for future development. It prioritizes residents’ quality of life, ensuring access to public services and economic opportunities while honoring the city’s cultural heritage, unique natural environment, and historical charm. Stonecrest embraces future opportunities while maintaining its distinct identity, striving for a prosperous and inclusive future.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a blueprint for building stronger, more vibrant communities that contribute to Georgia’s overall prosperity and competitiveness by aligning with the state’s fundamental interests of promoting of thriving, healthy municipalities, and counties.

By fostering collaboration and synchronization among governmental entities, the City of Stonecrest Comprehensive Planning initiative nurtures a unified approach to development. This ensures that the concerns of all stakeholders are carefully weighed, enabling well-informed decisions that harmonize economic growth, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. Through thoughtful and progressive planning, Stonecrest can perpetuate its evolution as a paradigm of prosperity and vitality.

A primary focus of this document is on catalyzing a downtown “heart” of the City, creating a space for large, regional activity, and leveraging the cultural, environmental and historical elements of the burgeoning City. This approach artfully blends necessary Civic Services, Commercial Activity and Public Gathering Spaces that positions Stonecrest as major hub of harmonious urban development in East DeKalb.

Similarly, the Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan represents a five-year update to the its long-range development blueprint, building upon previous initiatives like the 2018 Comprehensive Housing Strategy, the 2024 Economic Development Study, the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve Master Plan, MARTA’s I-20 East TOD Community Plan, Emory’s Community Health Needs Assessment, and HouseATL’s Recommendations to Advance Affordable Housing in the Atlanta Region. This Comprehensive Plan serves as a foundational document for Stonecrest’s growth, delineating the city’s objectives, and providing a roadmap for decision-makers to address essential questions about the city’s status and its envisioned future.



Caption: Community meeting held at Dope Coffee

WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS?

The Stonecrest 2038 Comprehensive Plan Update process is a collaborative effort involving residents, business owners, and elected officials to shape the future growth and development of the city. It entails a thorough analysis of the community’s physical, economic, social, and political factors, with robust public engagement to gather input and insights from stakeholders.

Comprehensive plans are designed to cover a long-range period and establish guiding principles for a community’s growth and development. In the case of the City of Stonecrest, this plan update will serve as a blueprint for the city’s trajectory over the next decade and it will be regularly updated to ensure that the city’s vision for the future remains relevant and achievable in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities.

By involving diverse voices and perspectives in the planning process, the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update aims to reflect the collective aspirations and priorities of the Stonecrest community. Through strategic planning and informed decision-making, the plan will help shape a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future for all residents of the city.

In the comprehensive planning process, the city meets the requirements set by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, which include:

- A physical, economic, social, and political analysis
- Public engagement
- Guiding principles for community growth
- Five-year reassessment



Caption: View of vision and goals boards during a community meeting

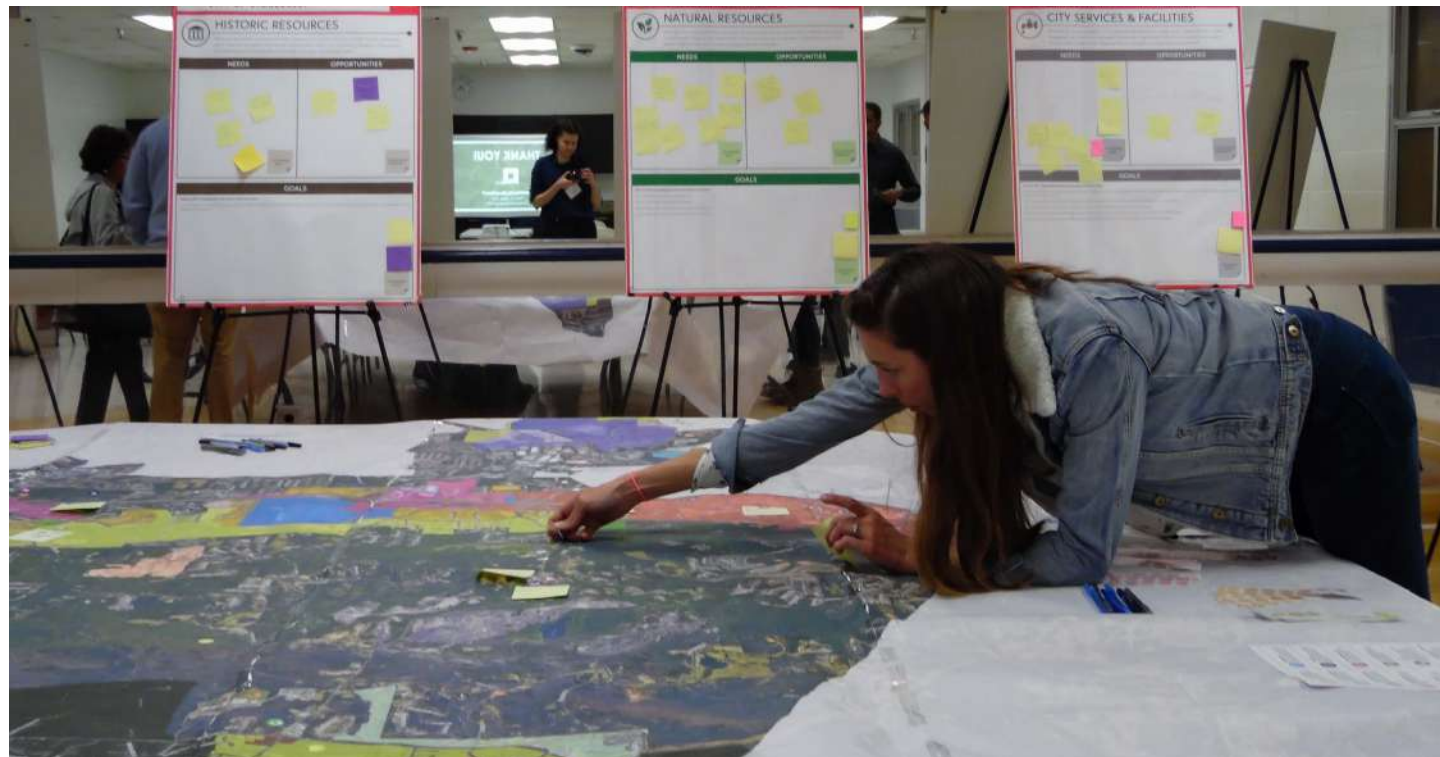
Source: Paul D McPherson Jr Photography

THE BENEFITS OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The planning process for the community yields several benefits that positively impact the entire community:

1. **Quality-of-life improvement:** Through thoughtful planning, the community can maintain and enhance its quality of life, ensuring that residents have access to essential services, recreational opportunities, and a safe and healthy environment.
2. **Shared vision:** The planning process fosters a shared vision for the future of the community, where residents, businesses, and stakeholders collaborate to articulate common goals and aspirations.
3. **Protection of property rights:** The planning process safeguards private property rights while promoting responsible development that respects the rights and interests of property owners.
4. **Encouragement of economic development:** Comprehensive planning encourages and supports economic development initiatives that stimulate job creation, investment, and prosperity within the community.
5. **Guidance for development:** The planning process outlines clear guidelines for where, how, and when development will occur, as well as strategies for managing associated costs. This ensures that development aligns with community values and priorities.
6. **Creation of community spaces:** Comprehensive plans guide the creation of vibrant and functional community places and spaces that foster social interaction, recreation, and cultural enrichment.

By engaging residents, planning experts, city staff, and elected officials in discussions about land development, transportation, economic development, and other objectives, the planning process enables the community to make informed decisions that promote long-term sustainability and well-being.



Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting

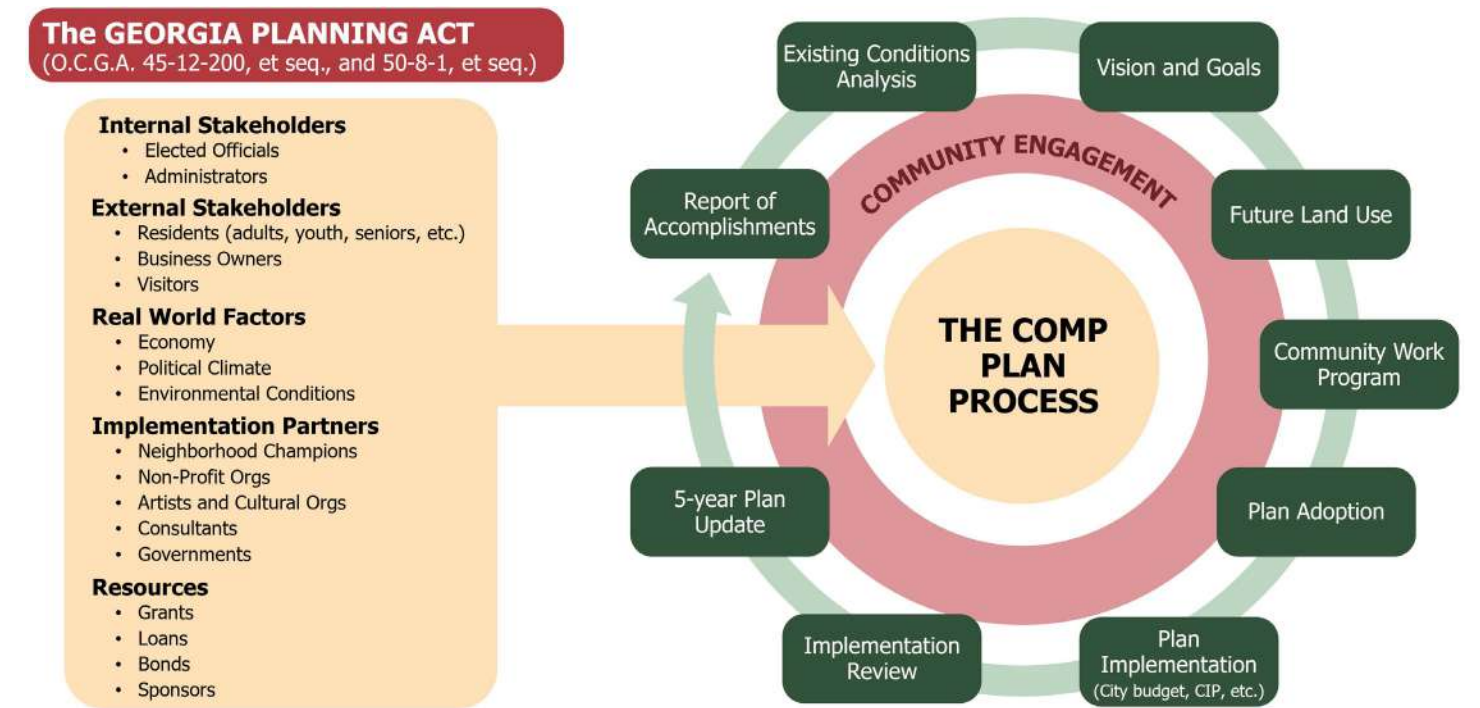
HOW TO USE THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The State of Georgia’s Department of Community Affairs (DCA) mandates the Comprehensive Plan as a crucial tool to guide regional development, blending local community input with professional planning expertise. After a thorough nine-month revision process, the Plan is poised to steer the City of Stonecrest’s growth over the next five years until its next comprehensive update, in line with Georgia’s municipal planning cycle.

During this period, the Plan’s policies and recommendations will shape the Stonecrest’s governance, informing key decisions such as annual budgets and capital improvements. The Community Work Program (CWP) will serve as a blueprint, directing community-vetted actions deemed essential for the city’s progress. Furthermore, the Future Land Uses outlined in the Plan will guide the conservation efforts and development activities within Stonecrest.

Community engagement has been a foundational element in the development of this planning process. As the city transitions from planning to implementation, maintaining effective engagement and communication with the local stakeholders remains essential. Stonecrest’s residents and business owners are urged to utilize this plan to advocate for issues concerning land use and development – thereby, holding the city accountable.

Acknowledging external influences, the Comprehensive Plan remains adaptable to unforeseen challenges and opportunities and provides a clear path forward. The updated Comprehensive Plan recognizes the collaborative efforts of internal and external stakeholders necessary for its success and highlights available resources that, if coordinated effectively, will epitomize the desired City of Stonecrest – *where community, commerce, and culture work together as a world-class city.*



Caption: A diagram of the comprehensive plan process

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since its inception, the City of Stonecrest has been steadfastly pursuing essential enhancements for its residents and businesses.

In 2024 alone, significant investments were approved to fortify transportation infrastructure. The city allocated \$6M for street resurfacing and paving, along with an additional \$100K for traffic signal maintenance, with the aim of optimizing car navigation. Furthermore, \$300K was earmarked for sidewalk construction along Covington Highway, underscoring the city’s commitment to pedestrian safety and accessibility.

Prioritizing community well-being, the city greenlit nearly \$2M for park and playground upgrades, promoting healthier recreational spaces. Moreover, over \$1M was designated for signage and monuments, solidifying Stonecrest’s unique identity in its surroundings. Additionally, the groundwork is being laid for expansive projects like a botanical garden, a downtown civic center, and a regional entertainment district.

Despite being relatively new, having recently developed its inaugural comprehensive plan, Stonecrest has made rapid progress. Drawing on past experiences and best practices in urban planning, the city has initiated various strategic plans, including the Panola Road Study, Bicycle Pedestrian and Trail Plan (2023), Economic Development Strategy (2024), Public Works Study (2024), Freight Cluster Plan (2024), and Film, Music, and Digital Entertainment Strategic Plan, among others.

Guided by a dedicated leadership team, burgeoning departments, and an unwavering commitment to excellence and accountability, the City of Stonecrest remains resolute in its mission to propel forward in the right direction, attuned to the needs and aspirations of its citizens.

The Report of Accomplishments is an account and explanation of all the projects listed in the Community Work Program from the previous Comprehensive Plan. The projects are identified with the following terminology:

Items labeled “**Completed**” have been finished within the five-year reporting period.

Items labeled “**Ongoing**” have been initiated or have made partial progress as of the end of the five-year reporting period. They have been carried over into the new five-year reporting period for the next five-year work program.

Items labeled “**No Longer Relevant**” have been deemed to no longer be relevant to the city and will not be carried over into the next five-year work program.

Goal: Historic Preservation			
#	Description	Status	Notes
HP-1	Develop historic guidelines for historic resources that include historic and archaeological resource surveys	Ongoing	
HP-2	Collaborate with Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation to preserve the integrity of historic resources	Ongoing	
HP-3	Establish a Stonecrest Historic Commission for conservation and preservation activities	Ongoing	

Goal: Natural and Cultural Resources			
#	Description	Status	Notes
NC-1	Identify and map significant wetland resources, both on public and private land	Completed	Engineering, GIS
NC-2	Adopt and enforce the Department of Natural Resources Protection Standards for Wetlands	Completed	Engineering
NC-3	Modify Subdivision regulations to require set-aside of Wetlands	Ongoing	Engineering, Community Development
NC-4	Update development codes to promote green infrastructure, low impact development techniques and environmentally-sensitive site design to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces in a development	Ongoing	Engineering, Community Development
NC-5	Develop greenways plan to improve access to rivers and streams	Ongoing	Engineering, Community Development
NC-5	Develop Watershed Improvement Plan for all w	Ongoing	Engineering, Community Development
NC-6	Create a dedicated funding source for stormwater management	Ongoing	Engineering, Community Development

Goal: City Services and Facilities			
#	Description	Status	Notes
CS-1	Collaborate with DeKalb County regarding water and sewer capacity needs to meet City’s future land use plan	Completed	Engineering
CS-2	Create policies for burying utilities along specific corridors	Ongoing	Engineering
CS-3	Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Completed	Completed in 2020
CS-4	Develop Neighborhood Watch Programs that meet regularly with the Police Department to discuss the issues and solutions	Ongoing	Stonecrest Public Safety Liaison, DeKalb County Police
CS-5	Initiate a feasibility study to explore and establish a city Public Safety Department	Completed	Completed in 2019
CS-6	Document Historic Resources by undertaking a historic and resource survey	Ongoing	
CS-7	Undertake an evaluation to ensure access to emergency services	Ongoing	Stonecrest Public Safety Liaison, DeKalb County Police, City Manager, Mayor’s Office

Goal: Economic Development			
#	Description	Status	Notes
ED-1	Create an Economic Development Plan and Market Strategy to execute The City of Innovation and Excellence	Completed	Completed in 2024
ED-2	Adopt & implement a Tax Allocation District (TAD)	Ongoing	
ED-3	Implement a marketing plan	Completed	
ED-4	Adopt and implement an Opportunity Zone	Ongoing	
ED-5	Develop a business retention and expansion program along major corridors, and commercial and industrial areas	Ongoing	
ED-6	Develop a relationship with Stonecrest's business community	Ongoing	
ED-7	Maintain a database of the City's available real estate portfolio	Completed	
ED-8	Partner with local business leaders and economic development partners to identify funding for economic development initiatives	Completed	Recurring task
ED-9	Create an Incentive Plan to attract businesses. Incentives may include TADs and Public/Private Partnerships	Completed	The Stonecrest Development Authority has been established that has an incentive program
ED-10	Promote the growth of small businesses by providing information to help businesses have access to capital, identify public and private resources, opportunities for networking, so businesses can aid one another	Ongoing	
ED-11	Develop an Economic Development website with GIS capabilities. Also, develop printed materials (e.g. maps, brochures) for commercial and industrial inquires about the City of Stonecrest	Ongoing	
ED-12	Create a Community Improvement District to brand and assist in the development of infrastructure improvements	Completed	A committee was formed to evaluate the need to activate a Stonecrest CID. The ED Plan recommends that the city wait to establish a CID, but should be more involved with the existing East Metro CID Department update: City Council, Econ Dev, Community Development

Goal: Economic Development (continued)			
#	Description	Status	Notes
ED-13	Conduct a residential market study on Transit Oriented Development to understand the market impact of the mall area development	Ongoing	Will start in 2024 Department update: Econ Dev, Community Development
ED-14	Develop a Master Plan for a Town Center to include Stonecrest's long-term City Hall and civic needs	Ongoing	
ED-15	Inventory available sites for Town Center	Ongoing	
ED-16	Secure sites for Town Center	Ongoing	
ED-17	Establish customer service training program with assistance from Stonecrest Business Alliance (SBA)	Ongoing	Will start in 2024, but not solely partnered with the SBA
ED-18	Promote a strategy to identify and address vacancies at the Mall at Stonecrest and along the city's main commercial corridors.	Ongoing	

Goal: Quality of Life			
#	Description	Status	Notes
Q-1	Promote opportunities for community involvement on boards and commission by creating an application process	Completed	Recurring: City Council, Community Engagement, Community Development
Q-2	Enhance the City's communication with the public by holding public forums to learn about government services	Ongoing	Recurring task Department update: City Council, Community Engagement
Q-3	Establish an annual City Magazine	Ongoing	Will begin in 2024; the city has not yet created a City Magazine, but uses the CVB Magazine and the Mayor sends out a weekly e-blast
Q-4	Create and implement a public art program	Ongoing	The city has incorporated art programming within our parks & recs programs. Department update: Parks & Recs, Community Engagement
Q-5	Create an information dashboard	Ongoing	The city is currently using the city website to serve in this role
Q-6	Host community health fair and Farmers Market	Completed	Recurring Community Engagement

Goal: Transportation			
#	Description	Status	Notes
T-1	Define City’s limits by establishing gateway monument program	Ongoing	Department update: Engineering
T-2	Undertake a strategic wayfinding and branding study that includes signage, landscaping, lighting standards for major Stonecrest corridors	Ongoing	Department update: Engineering, Community Development, Economic Development, Parks
T-3	Develop a strategic plan for Transit-Oriented Development in Interstate-20 East corridor	Ongoing	Will start in 2024 Department update Engineering, Community Development, Economic Development
T-4	Create a citywide streetscape and street enhancement plan	Ongoing	Department update Engineering, Economic Development
T-5	Continue repaving and road repairs	Completed	Recurring task; Started in 2019 Department update: Engineering
T-6	Develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan of City to include bike and pedestrian infrastructure	Completed	Completed in 2020 Department update: Engineering
T-7	Implement streetscape improvements	Ongoing	Department update: Engineering

Goal: Housing			
#	Description	Status	Notes
H-1	Enforce the housing code for apartment structures which are substandard and use the police power to upgrade and comply with building code	Completed	Recurring task
H-2	Undertake a block-by-block strategic approach in inspecting and enforcement services throughout the City	Ongoing	
H-3	Blank		
H-4	Create architectural design standards to encourage development of appropriate size and scale, quality, and appropriateness, while encouraging innovative design and a variety of housing types and styles based on community conservation and character areas	Ongoing	Department update: Econ Dev, Community Development
H-5	Develop a housing needs assessment and affordable housing implementation plan to address housing affordability in the City	Completed	Department update: Econ Dev, Community Development

Goal: Land Use			
#	Description	Status	Notes
LU-1	Revise Zoning Ordinance to align with Comp Plan 2038	Completed	In progress, Community Development
LU-2	Establish streetscape standards for major roads within the city’s department codes based on Complete Street Standards	Ongoing	Department update: Engineering, Community Development
LU-3	Revise the Stonecrest Overlay District	Ongoing	Will start in 2024
LU-4	Revise the Interstate-20 Overlay District	Ongoing	Will start in 2024
LU-5	Establish Architectural Design Standards	Ongoing	Will start in 2024 Department update: Community Development, Economic Development
LU-6	Update Stonecrest Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study	Ongoing	Department update: Community Development, Economic Development
LU-7	Define City’s limits by establishing a gateway monument program	Ongoing	Department update: Community Development, Economic Development
LU-8	Draft small area plans for Industrial, Regional, Town, Neighborhood Centers	Ongoing	Department update: Community Development, Economic Development

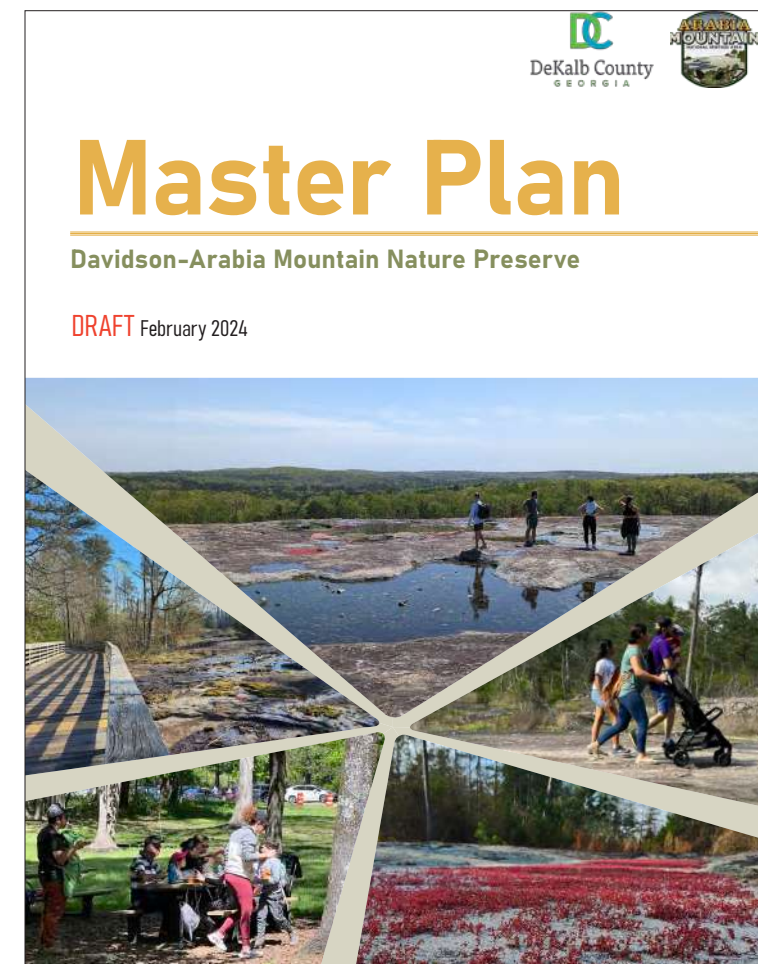


EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following section summarizes existing conditions in the City of Stonecrest specific to DCA required elements: Existing Studies and Plans, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Broadband Services, Regional Water Plan, and Land Use.

EXISTING STUDIES AND PLANS

The drafting of this Comprehensive Plan included analysis of additional local small area plans that were utilized to aide in addressing issues and policy statements identified in these earlier plans. Significant community input was utilized during many of the plan developments. These plans include the DeKalb County 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the Stonecrest Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI), and the I-20 (Interstate-20) East Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Plan. The plans referenced were adopted and managed under the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners prior to the incorporation of the City of Stonecrest. Many of the findings and recommendations of the plans and studies provide context, as well as a valuable background on existing policies.



Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve Master Plan (Draft, 2024)

The Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve (DAMNP) is valued as a significant historical and cultural greenspace in DeKalb County. The most recent master plan regarding the DAMNP proposed three main values: fostering a healthy and balanced lifestyle, actively engaging in local outreach initiatives, and maintaining the preserve as an important local and regional asset. Key elements of the preserve, such as the Nature Center, the Stonecrest Library Trailhead, and Vaughters Farm, are located within Stonecrest-owned lands and are integral parts of the city's landscape.

An evaluation of management and programming by key partners—including the City of Stonecrest, DeKalb County, the Arabia Alliance, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources—revealed positive collaboration, but emphasized the need for more formal agreements to enhance internal communication and engagement with residents and users. The DAMNP is renegotiating management and maintenance of Vaughters Farm, which is currently

under a lease agreement between Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Arabia Alliance. The plan outlines a series of goals, one of which specifically called for the establishment of a 'Working Group' for better communication between DeKalb Parks, The City of Stonecrest, GA State Parks, and the Arabia Alliance. As both the Alliance and the DAMNP are located within Stonecrest city limits, the maintenance of a cooperative management structure is imperative to the success, preservation, and expansion of these natural, historic, and cultural resources.

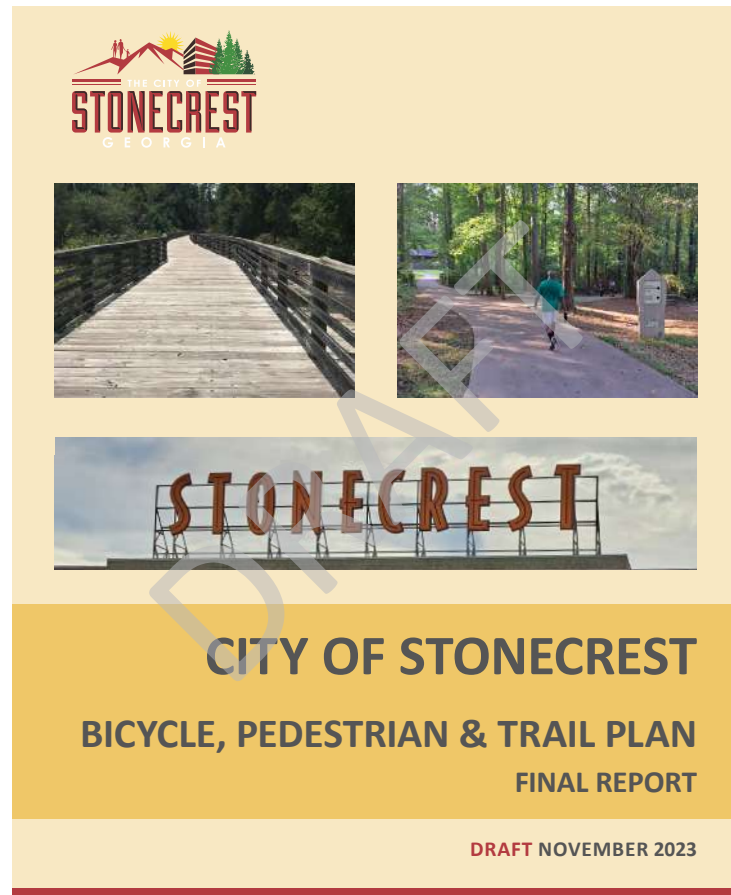


Path Forward: City of Stonecrest Economic Development Plan (2024)

Path Forward is the city’s concerted effort to foster economic opportunities in alignment with its aspirations, existing assets, and development objectives. The vision of the plan sets to establish a robust organizational framework which would support and enhance residents’ well-being, increase the tax base, generate high-quality employment opportunities, and attract high-value businesses and services to the city. The plan outlines five key priority areas: organizational infrastructure, marketing, land development, targeted economic sectors, and workforce infrastructure. In conjunction with these focuses, the plan highlights the need for improved government processes, including optimization, increased transparency, and greater communication and collaboration between departments, local and regional bodies, and with business and residential communities. The plan integrates actionable recommendations alongside a timeline delineating prioritized projects and partnerships with key organizations in order to realize these objectives.

Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian & Trail Plan (Draft, 2023)

The goal of the Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian & Trail Plan is to provide the city - and its residents - with a safe, connected, and integrated network of pedestrian, bicycle, and multipurpose trail facilities. This network will serve both destinations within the City and connect to a regional network in DeKalb County and beyond. This comprehensive plan outlines a series of recommendations and a prioritized implementation strategy structured into three tiers, alongside provisions for securing project funding. Ten corridors were targeted for improvements: Browns Mill Road (SR 212), Covington Highway (US 278/SR 12), Evans Mill Road, Fairington Road, Hillandale Drive, Klondike Road, Lithonia Industrial Boulevard, Mall Parkway/Iris Drive, Panola Road, and Turner Hill Road. By addressing key issues such as missing sidewalks, inadequate connections to bus stops, insufficient roadway crossings, and opportunities to enhance trail connectivity and pedestrian safety, the plan aims to enhance the urban fabric and promote active transportation modes.



HouseATL Recommendations (2023)

HouseATL is a coalition of various community members and professionals committed to addressing the issue of housing affordability in the region through a series of guiding principles and recommendations. The 2023 document update included twenty-three total recommendations in the following eight categories: homebuyers, homeownership preservation, community retention, public resources, multi-family housing preservation, under 50% area median income (AMI), private resources, and resilience. This list was selected based on a criteria of impact, interest, and feasibility, and was further prioritized through member voting. The plan included a implementation timeline through the year 2026, as well as identifying critical elements such as potential key partners, key metrics, HouseATL’s role in implementation, and estimated budgetary allocations. Ensuring the provision of high-quality and affordable housing is a crucial component of this comprehensive plan, and the recommendations within this update have been aligned to HouseATL’s recommendations accordingly.



Stonecrest Film, Music, & Digital Entertainment Strategic Plan (2023)

Leveraging Georgia’s increasing prominence in film production and entertainment, the City of Stonecrest took a proactive step in establishing the Film and Entertainment Commission in 2018, with the aim of positioning Stonecrest as a regional destination of creative expression and cultural enrichment. The commission’s strategic plan inventoried and evaluated the existing entertainment industry landscape, identifying areas where the city could provide enhancement and support. Proposed efforts included additional licensing and permitting, expansion of educational and marketing resources, and increasing community awareness and engagement. The plan outlined a series of recommendations and implementable actions, all supporting the overall conclusion that the film, music, and digital entertainment industries were viable and well worth strategic and financial investments in the city.

Panola Road Scoping Study (2023)

In August 2023, the Stonecrest City Council adopted the Panola Road Scoping Study, a comprehensive assessment which identified essential safety and operational enhancements along a 2.2-mile stretch of the Panola Road corridor, spanning from Browns Mill Road to Minola Drive/Fairington Road. Components of the study included conceptual plans, a benefit/cost analysis, and prioritization of recommended improvements. Notable recommendations include implementing various intersection enhancements like roundabouts, mini-roundabouts, and turn lane improvements, as well as establishing a continuous sidewalk and shared-use path throughout the corridor. In pursuing these recommendations, Stonecrest demonstrates its commitment to fostering safer, more efficient transportation infrastructure, enhancing connectivity, and promoting pedestrian and cyclist-friendly design principles along the Panola Road corridor.



Stonecrest Freight Cluster Plan (2023)

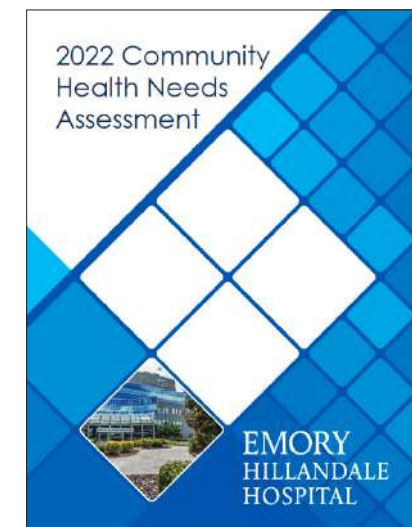
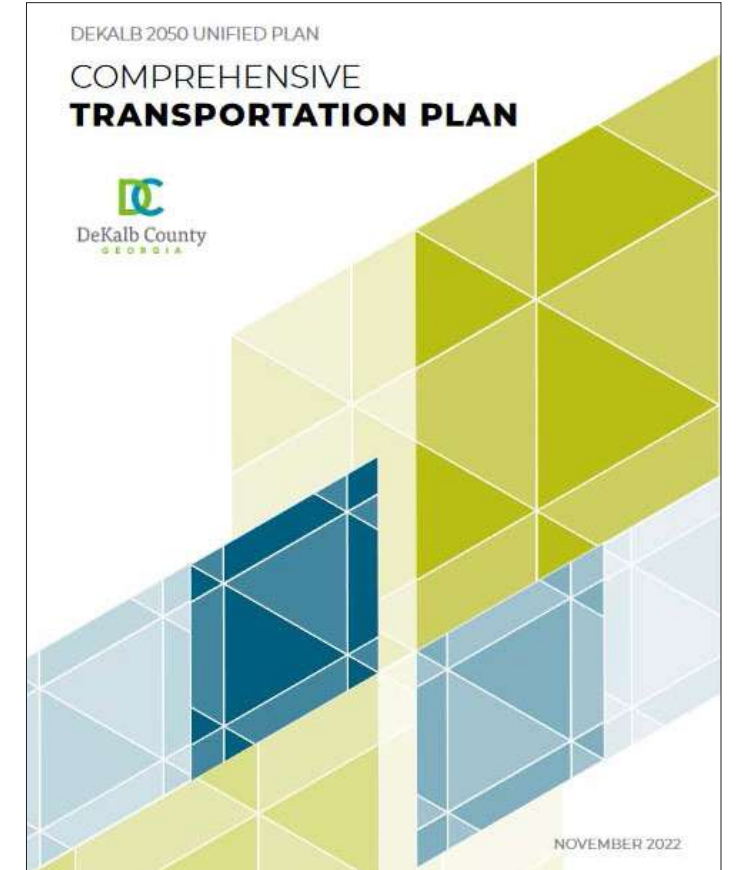
In collaboration with ARC, the City of Stonecrest has developed a comprehensive freight cluster plan aimed at fostering a secure, well-balanced transportation system conducive to freight and multimodal travel. Central to this initiative was the promotion of economic growth and the establishment of a cost-effective, strategically aligned work program which would coordinate both current and future projects. The Lithonia Industrial Park and Park Central/Panola Road Corridor were determined to be focus areas and pivotal zones for development. The plan emphasized the need for more effective coordination among various planning initiatives to optimize the potential for future multimodal connectivity. By unifying these efforts, Stonecrest aims to optimize its transportation infrastructure, bolster economic vitality, and cultivate a more vibrant and interconnected urban landscape.

DeKalb 2050 Unified Plan Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2022)

The DeKalb County 2050 Unified Plan consolidates two vital long-term strategies: the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, which outlined priority transportation projects and policy directives, and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which set a framework for future growth and development. Recognizing the intrinsic link between transportation and land use, this unified approach promoted a cohesive, synchronized strategy which addresses a spectrum of factors, including arts and culture, housing, health and wellness, public safety, sustainability, retail, and annexation.

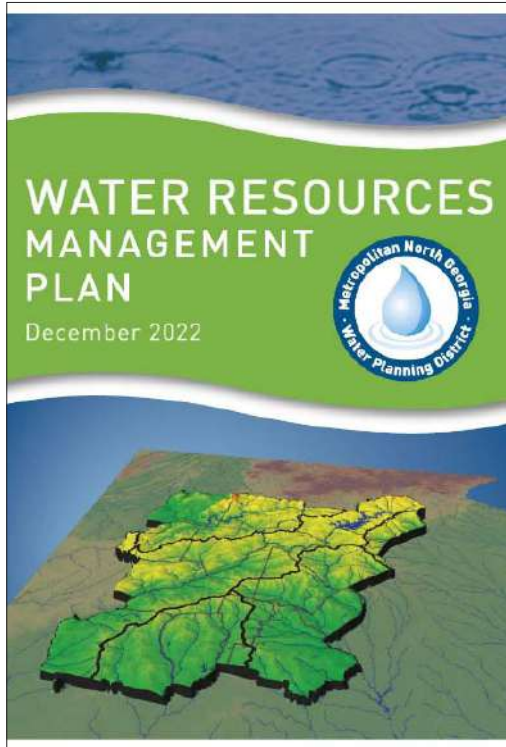
Key priorities outlined within the Comprehensive Transportation Plan include enhancing transportation options by fostering connectivity across various modes; prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; promoting active living to enhance community well-being; and the equitable incorporation of safety improvements for all users, especially in under-served communities.

The DeKalb County Unified Plan encompasses county-wide recommendations which overlap with various municipality systems, such as truck route networks and restrictions, high-capacity transit, mobility hub improvements, signal improvements, and trail connections. The resulting recommendations and priority projects from this planning initiative encourage DeKalb County leadership to make informed decisions regarding transportation projects, leveraging both local and external funding opportunities. The plan also offers guidance for growth and development within DeKalb activity centers, aligning with emerging market trends and evolving community needs.



Emory Hillandale Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment (2022)

The Emory Hillandale Hospital (EHH) Community Health Needs Assessment evaluates the shortcomings and opportunities of EHH’s primary service area, spanning eight ZIP codes within DeKalb County. Emory Healthcare undertook comprehensive community health needs assessments (CHNAs) to gain insights into the health challenges, followed by subsequent review and adoption by associated boards and governing bodies in the summer of 2022. Each hospital within Emory Healthcare developed three-year implementation plans, which were subject to further approval and final adoption in the fall of 2022. In addition to health concerns and lack of access to resources, key feedback from the community and stakeholders noted that a major issue in Stonecrest was the lack of sidewalks and transportation accessibility, as MARTA has not extended its east rail to the city.



Water Resources Management Plan (2022)

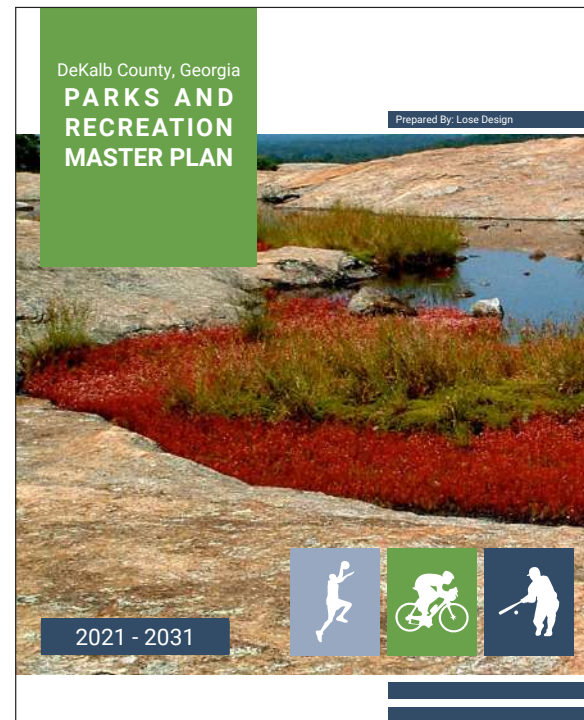
This Water Resources Management Plan is a data-driven approach to water resources management for the 15-county Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. It consolidates plans for Water Supply and Conservation, Wastewater Management, and Watershed Management into a larger approach, providing an overview of current conditions and future projections for water resources and infrastructure in the region and offering management strategies that balance economic, environmental, and social considerations for overall well-being of the region.

As it relates to Stonecrest, the plan outlines strategies and recommendations for managing stormwater, protecting water quality, and enhancing watershed resilience. Local measures include implementing ordinances for post-development stormwater management, floodplain regulation, stream buffer protection, and comprehensive land use planning. Additionally, initiatives such as green infrastructure, education programs, and watershed improvement projects are highlighted to support sustainable water management practices at the local level.

DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2021)

The DeKalb County Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Affairs (RPCA) conducted a comprehensive assessment of the county’s public parks and recreation system, resulting in a thorough overview of existing facilities and actionable recommendations. Guided by a mission to enrich the lives of DeKalb County residents by facilitating access to outstanding parks, recreational venues, and inclusive programs promoting active lifestyles, the master plan provided a strategic framework for park development and recreational initiatives over the next decade. Through the master planning process, the department identified community recreational needs, anticipated future demand, and proposed operational enhancements addressing budgetary, staffing, and programmatic considerations.

Recognizing Arabia Mountain as a valuable asset, the plan highlights concerns such as increased visitor traffic, potentially disruptive developments, and ecological challenges like invasive species. The plan includes a thorough facilities assessment, forecasts trends in parks and recreation, explores potential partnerships (including with the City of Stonecrest parks and recreation agencies), and evaluates strategies for cost recovery.



City of Stonecrest Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2020)

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan serves to guide the City of Stonecrest in its strategic vision for parks and recreation development over the next five to ten years and exists in alignment with the aforementioned DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan inventoried approximately 349.5 acres of parks and facilities across eight locations, which were evaluated to optimize the park and recreation system and better align it with the evolving needs of residents and the city’s growth trajectory. Key focuses included the maintenance of current facilities, strategic expansion of new ones, the introduction of innovative programs, and the enhancement of service delivery. The plan set forth four major goals, each accompanied by specific objectives, actionable items, and designated timeframes:

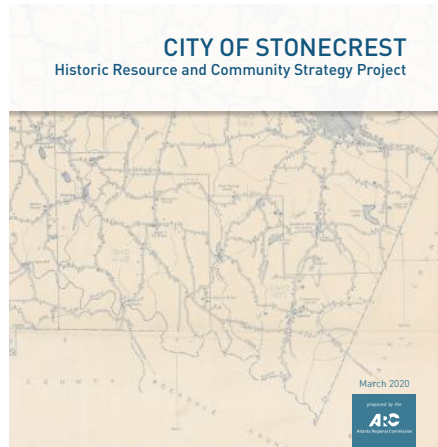
- Continuing to enhance events, programs, and service delivery.
- Improving existing facilities and amenities.
- Enhancing organizational efficiencies.
- Expanding financial opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

By pursuing these goals, Stonecrest endeavors to create vibrant, accessible, and inclusive spaces which enrich the quality of life for residents while also fostering a strong sense of community identity.



City of Stonecrest Transportation Master Plan (2020)

The City of Stonecrest’s Transportation Master Plan (TMP) serves as a strategic blueprint to steer transportation investment decisions across the next thirty years. Tailored to enhance mobility for motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users, the TMP delineates a hierarchy of priority transportation improvement projects spanning short-term, intermediate, and long-term timeframes to address the city’s evolving transportation landscape. Framed by four overarching goals for the next three decades—improving connectivity for live, work, and play; alleviating traffic congestion; enhancing biking and walking accessibility; and enhancing travel safety—the plan articulates a focused vision for advancing the city’s transportation infrastructure. The TMP also identified viable funding sources to support the realization of key projects, ensuring the plan’s feasibility and efficacy in shaping a more connected, sustainable, and resilient transportation network.



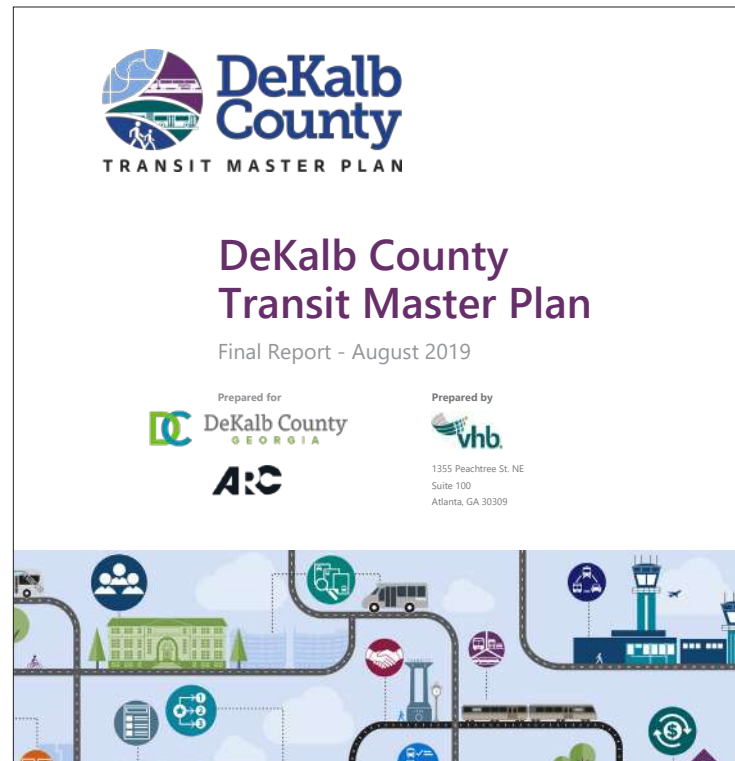
City of Stonecrest Historic Resource and Community Strategy Project (2020)

Through collaboration with the city and the Arabia Alliance, ARC conducted a comprehensive inventory of historic resources within the City of Stonecrest and formulated policy recommendations to better protect and preserve Stonecrest’s rich historical heritage. Key objectives included educating city officials, staff, and residents about the historical significance of identified crossroads, subdivisions, and sites; fostering enthusiasm among residents for maintaining homes within these areas using prescribed techniques; and establishing regulations that strike a balance between the preservation desires of city officials, staff, and affected residents, ensuring the protection for homes within the identified subdivisions.

DeKalb County Transit Master Plan (2019)

The Transit Master Plan (TMP) is a follow-up to a prior conditions assessment report and includes an overall vision through four goals: live, work, play and use transit; ensure that the transit vision is affordable and effective; make sure thriving and emerging areas have transit service; make sure transit is available for everyone.

In alignment with this vision, the plan delineated transit service enhancements for present needs while also identifying expansion opportunities to meet future demands. With a forward-looking perspective, the plan outlined a 30-year, financial strategy for transit investments in DeKalb County. By addressing the county’s mobility challenges, the plan not only supports future development opportunities but also enhances the overall quality of life across DeKalb County’s diverse cities and unincorporated communities.



The report documented technical processes and the extensive public and stakeholder engagement efforts. Key outcomes of the TMP include the development of a comprehensive inventory of transit project concepts, the evaluation of these concepts to define four distinct transit investment scenarios, financial planning and modeling for each scenario, and ultimately, the formulation of final recommendations and actionable steps towards implementation.

I-20 East Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Community Plan (2019)

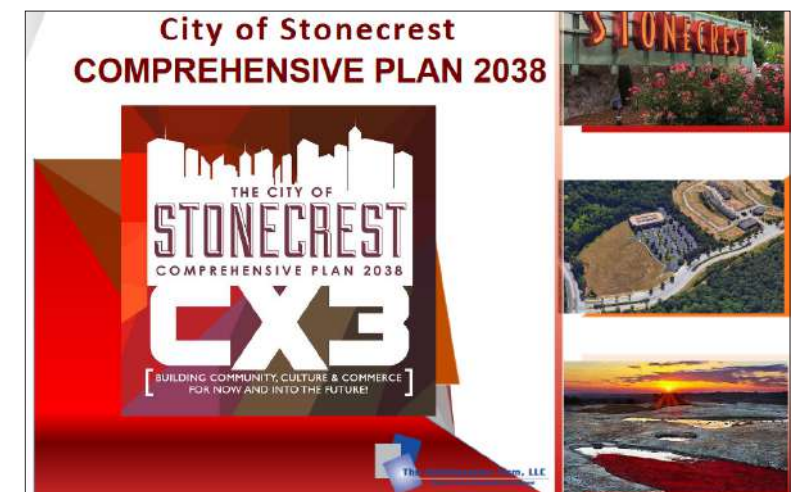
The TOD Community Plan set forth a vision for the I-20 East High-Capacity Transit Corridor (I-20 East Corridor) which would spur equitable economic development and create more livable communities around quality transit. Funded through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) TOD Pilot Program, supplemented by contributions from the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) and DeKalb County, this plan was designed to capitalize on the potential of quality transit infrastructure.

With a focus on enhancing community livability, walkability, and transit accessibility, the plan outlined four primary objectives: establishing frameworks for transforming neighborhoods into vibrant, transit-friendly environments; developing a corridor-wide TOD strategy; promoting economic development through the implementation of equitable TOD programs and policies; and delineating how a new high-quality transit service could link job opportunities to anchor institutions, fostering economic growth while leveraging existing resources. In addition to a market study and equitable TOD assessment, a series of recommendations were put forth, accompanied by projected development capacities for each station area improvement, guiding the implementation of the plan’s objectives.

City of Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan 2038 (2019)

The City of Stonecrest adopted its first comprehensive plan in 2019, establishing goals and policies in the following categories: population, economic development, housing, natural resources, historic resources, city services and facilities, land use, and transportation. Beyond these core objectives, the plan also prioritized the establishment of community identities, the identification of area needs and opportunities, the development of zoning frameworks, and the delineation of priority projects. Key priorities highlighted in the plan included:

- Creating multimodal connections between transit stops and vital roadway corridors such as Panola Road, Lithonia Industrial Boulevard, and Klondike Road.
- Expanding the multi-use trail system along waterways to enhance connectivity throughout the city.
- Exploring opportunities to link existing and emerging neighborhood centers with the Arabia Mountain PATH through bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



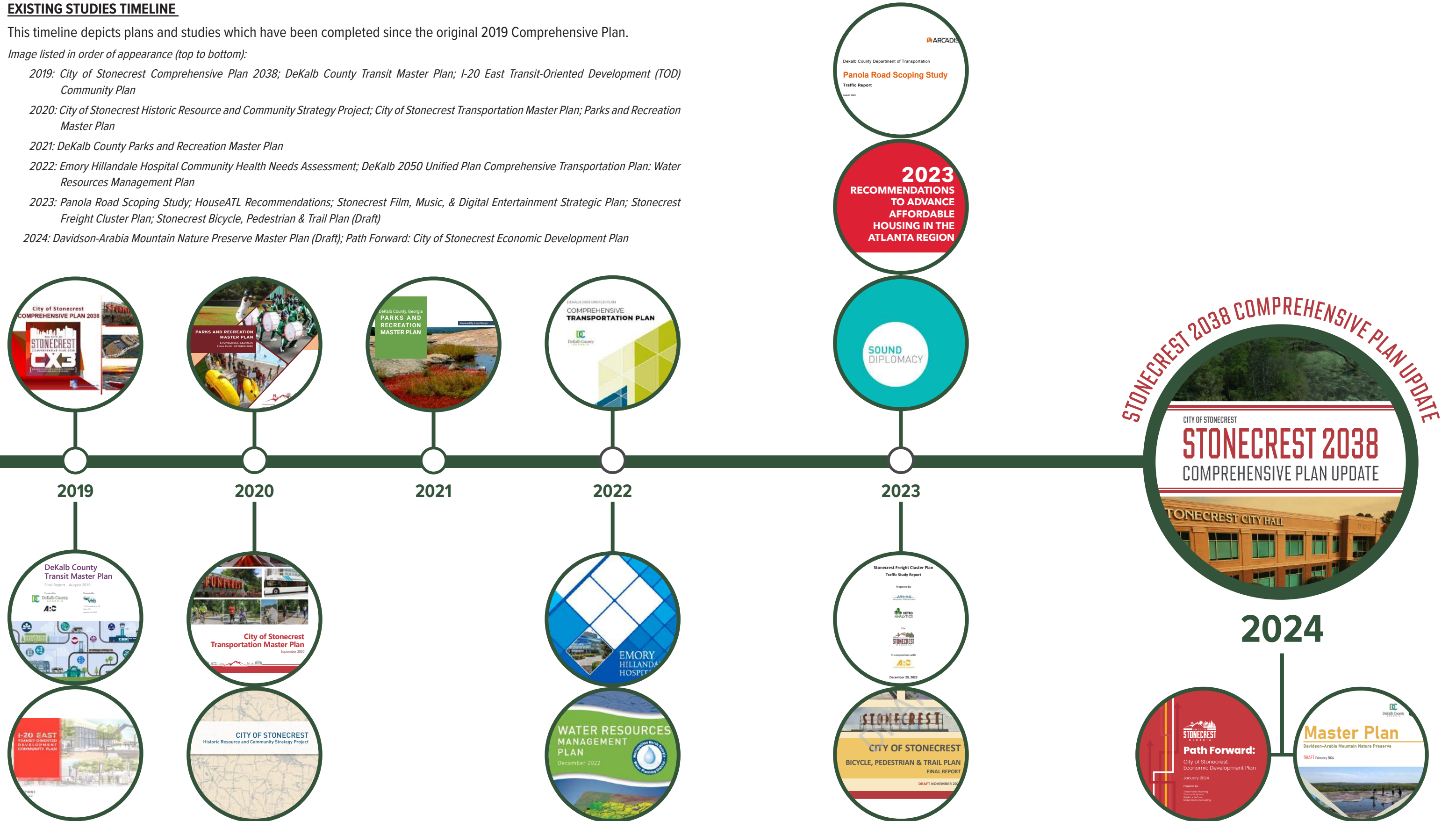
The 2024 update of this comprehensive plan is a direct continuation and evolution of its predecessor, incorporating past action items while expanding and refining the overarching vision and goals. This iterative approach ensures that Stonecrest’s planning efforts remain dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs and aspirations of its residents and stakeholders.

EXISTING STUDIES TIMELINE

This timeline depicts plans and studies which have been completed since the original 2019 Comprehensive Plan.



Image listed in order of appearance (top to bottom):



- 2019: City of Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan 2038; DeKalb County Transit Master Plan; I-20 East Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Community Plan
- 2020: City of Stonecrest Historic Resource and Community Strategy Project; City of Stonecrest Transportation Master Plan; Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 2021: DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- 2022: Emory Hillandale Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment; DeKalb 2050 Unified Plan Comprehensive Transportation Plan: Water Resources Management Plan
- 2023: Panola Road Scoping Study; HouseATL Recommendations; Stonecrest Film, Music, & Digital Entertainment Strategic Plan; Stonecrest Freight Cluster Plan; Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian & Trail Plan (Draft)
- 2024: Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve Master Plan (Draft); Path Forward: City of Stonecrest Economic Development Plan





2019 GOALS SWOT ANALYSIS



The consultant team assessed the primary Issues and Opportunities in Stonecrest during community engagement events. These issues were examined in relation to the city’s original goal categories outlined in the 2038 Comprehensive Development Plan. The aim was to gauge community sentiment towards the original goals set forth in the 2019 plan. Below is a summary of the feedback received for each goal category.



 Transportation 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of bike and pedestrian infrastructure Inadequate roadway lighting Signalization challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian Safety Plan Multi-use trails Enhancing MARTA Bus/Train Services



 Economic Development 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many low paying, “low value” businesses Lack of diversity of jobs, businesses, employment opportunities Small business support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce development and vocational training in schools Agribusiness/Agritourism More development incentives



 Population 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of family-oriented amenities/programs Rising cost of living Senior displacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract new residents Develop new Live-Work-Play centers

 Historic Resources 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived lack of character Lack of historical and cultural programs/initiatives Too few historical markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop historical/cultural programs, tours, and initiatives Create historic walkways/markers

 Housing 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of diverse housing types Decreasing affordability Incompatible housing types Physically accessible housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-Use developments Increasing density in key areas Renovating older, underutilized buildings Innovative housing programs and initiatives

 City Services and Facilities 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadband reliability Water/Sewage Services Youth recreation (beyond sports) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public water/sewer lines Public safety investments Better medical services for vulnerable populations Provide more recreational opportunities Post Office

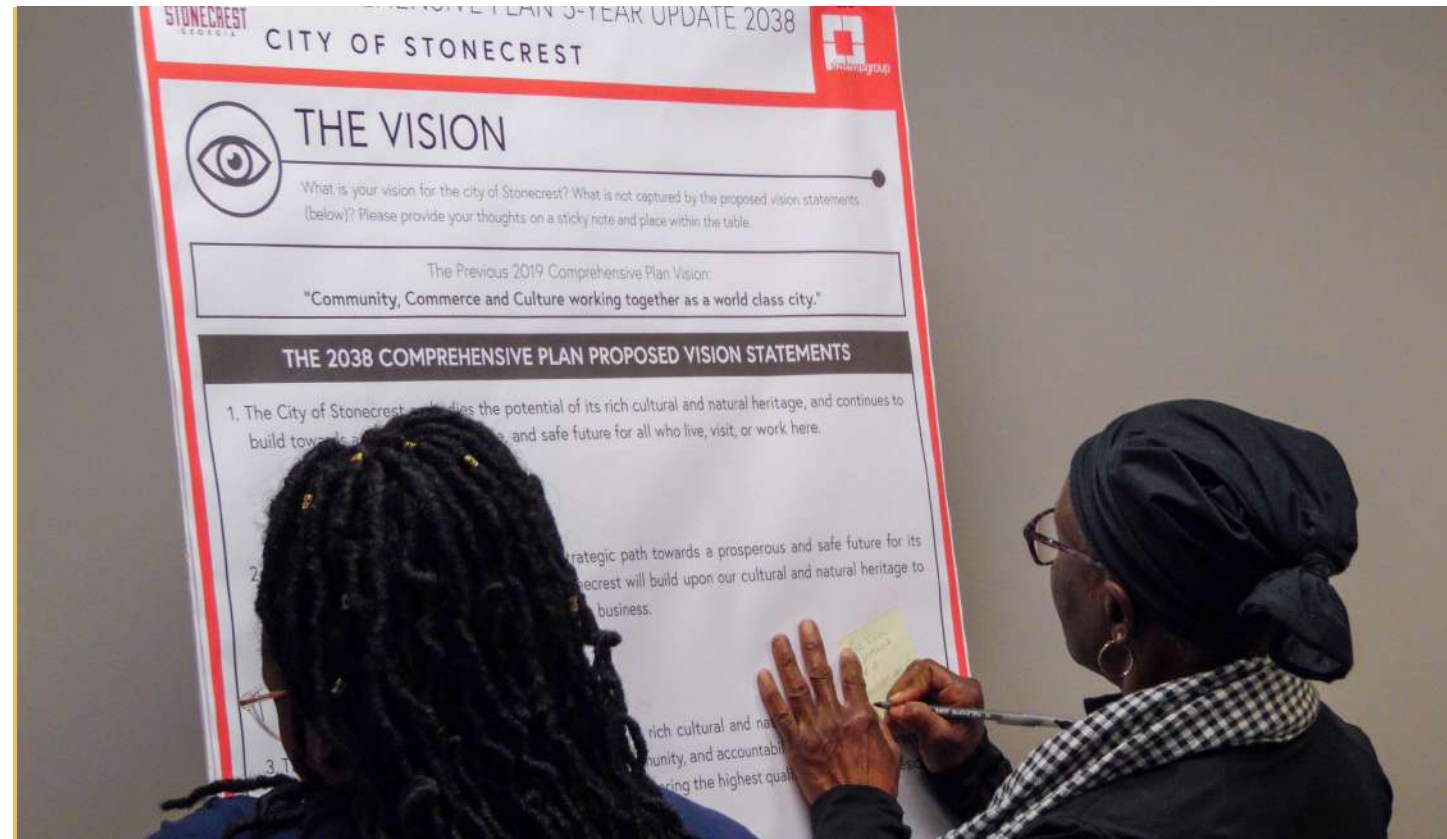
 Land Use 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incompatible land uses Development encroachment Residential units are disconnected from desired amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased density around the Mall at Stonecrest More conservation land uses Greenspace and commercial connectivity to residential areas

 Natural Resources 	
Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to natural amenities Environmental impact of new development Many local citizens remain unaware of the natural resources and greenspaces in Stonecrest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation and use of South River Arabia Mountain trails beautification Create additional parks/greenspaces Protection of existing greenspaces and natural amenities

Vision

The community was also asked to share their opinion on the overarching vision for the City of Stonecrest. A list of their common ideas is below.

- A safe city that can provide for the public needs of its residents
- Use the Strategic Plan to guide the work of all Departments and to make a clear alignment with goal, objectives, and action
- An accountable City: comprehensive plan and related documents should be published and publicly available so that citizens can see and understand progress



Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting

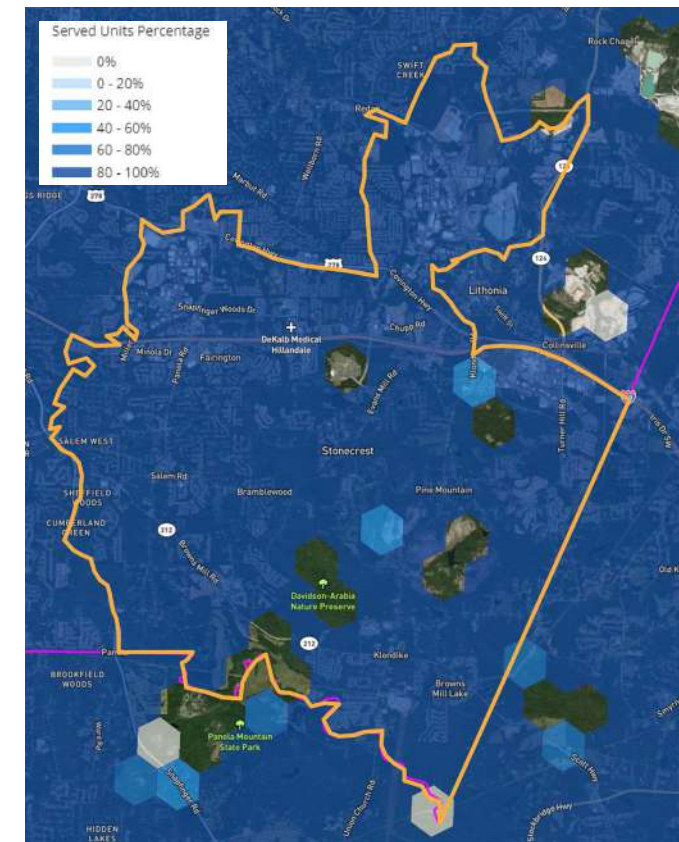
BROADBAND ANALYSIS

Under the DCA Rules for Local Comprehensive Planning, a Broadband Services Element is now mandatory in the Comprehensive Plan of local jurisdictions. Although updates are discretionary, this legislation, known as the “Broadband Strategy for All of Georgia Act,” establishes a voluntary certification program for local governments as “Broadband Ready Communities” through the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Providers expanding networks in such communities can receive exemptions from the state’s sales and use tax on construction equipment if they offer minimum download speeds of 10 megabits per second.

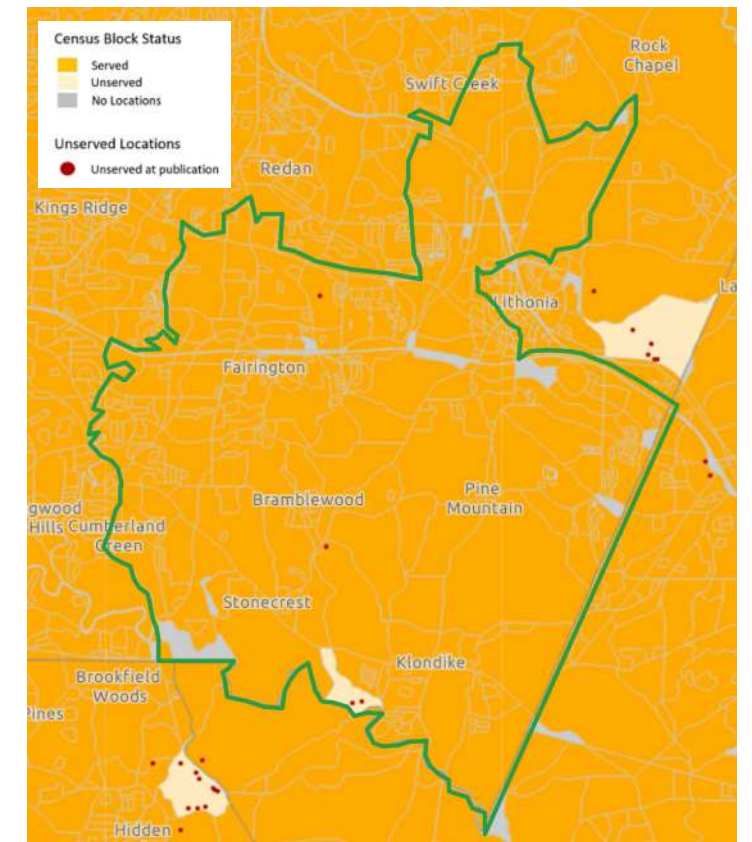
The Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Connect America program targets census tracts lacking broadband coverage. Eligible blocks are grouped for bidding in the Connect America Fund Phase II Auction, aiming to bridge connectivity gaps as high-speed internet has become vital for economic and social participation.

With the exception of the Pole Bridge Creek area, the City of Stonecrest has closed its digital divide to ensure access to fast, reliable, and affordable broadband service for its citizens and business partners. The Pole Bridge Creek is the only area in Stonecrest “unserved” with broadband internet connectivity. This area borders the South River and contains the Sewage Treatment Plant Facility. There are no businesses or residential units in this region.

While maps show limited broadband gaps in Stonecrest, testimonials reveal the important concerns of inconsistent connectivity and higher rates compared to similar municipalities. To address this, the City of Stonecrest should adopt policies ensuring access to reliable high-speed internet at competitive rates, meeting DCA standards.



Caption: Stonecrest Broadband Percent Units Served
Source: Federal Communications Commission (FCC) National Broadband Map



Caption: Stonecrest Broadband Served Locations
Source: 2023 Georgia Broadband Availability Map

Key Broadband Takeaways

- The City of Stonecrest should continue its efforts to ensure that its residents and business owners have access to reliable and affordable broadband internet service.
- Although there is coverage throughout the City, resident complaints about occasional internet outages and increased broadband rates in Stonecrest should be investigated and mitigated as necessary.

WATER PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs Minimum Planning Standards mandate that the City of Stonecrest review the plans of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (Metro Water District) covering its area, along with the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria. This review ensures adaptation of local implementation practices or development regulations to safeguard vital resources. The city’s area is encompassed by Regional Water Plans outlined in the DeKalb County Water Supply Conservation Management Plan, Watershed Management Plan, and Wastewater Management Plan, all established by the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District.

As DeKalb County oversees water resources for Stonecrest through an intergovernmental service agreement, the plan addresses existing water supply and treatment facilities, water demand forecasts, conservation analysis, supply sources, facilities, reuse, local planning recommendations, issues, policy recommendations, education, implementation, and future evaluation.

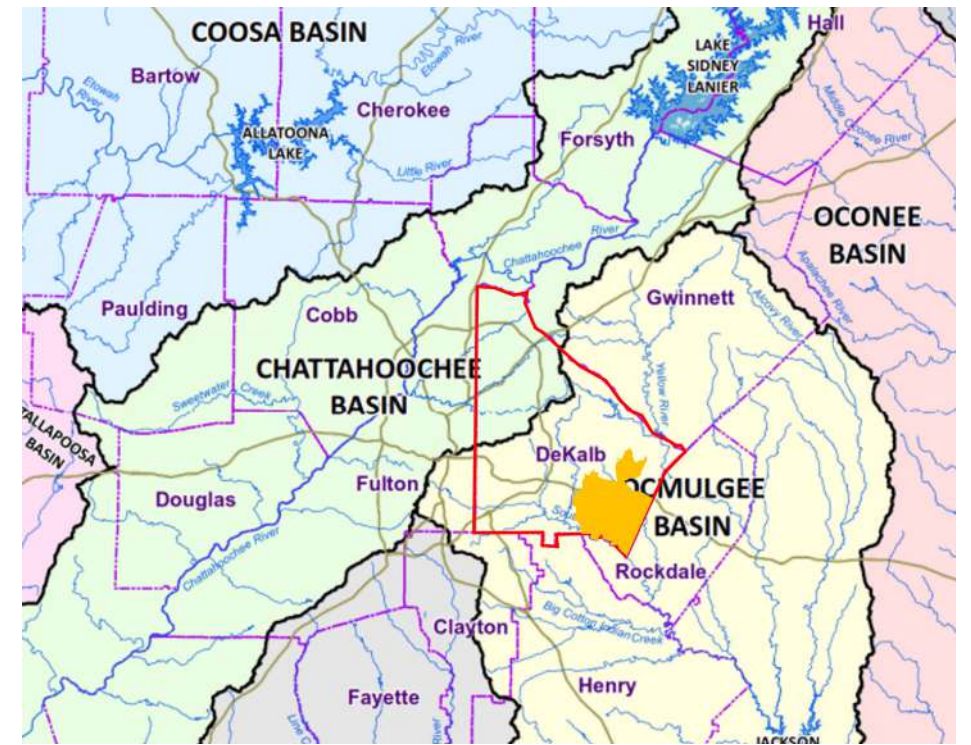
Specific action items from the local water planning section include local water waste plans, emergency water plans, watershed protection, and asset management.

Stonecrest lies within the Upper Ocmulgee Watershed (03070103). The Watershed Management Plan offers strategies and recommendations for watershed and stormwater management, as well as water quality protection. Local management measures include ordinances for post-development stormwater management, floodplain management, stream buffer protection, illicit discharge, illegal connections, litter control, comprehensive land use planning, sewer coordination, greenspace, green infrastructure tools, stormwater management standards, education, and watershed improvement projects.

The South River flows through the southern regions of the City of Stonecrest, serving as a significant boundary between DeKalb and Rockdale counties. It holds

the distinction of being one of only two urban-origin rivers in Georgia. Its expansive watershed covers around 544 square miles, encompassing numerous creeks and streams that drain vast areas of Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton, Henry, Rockdale, Newton, and Butts Counties.

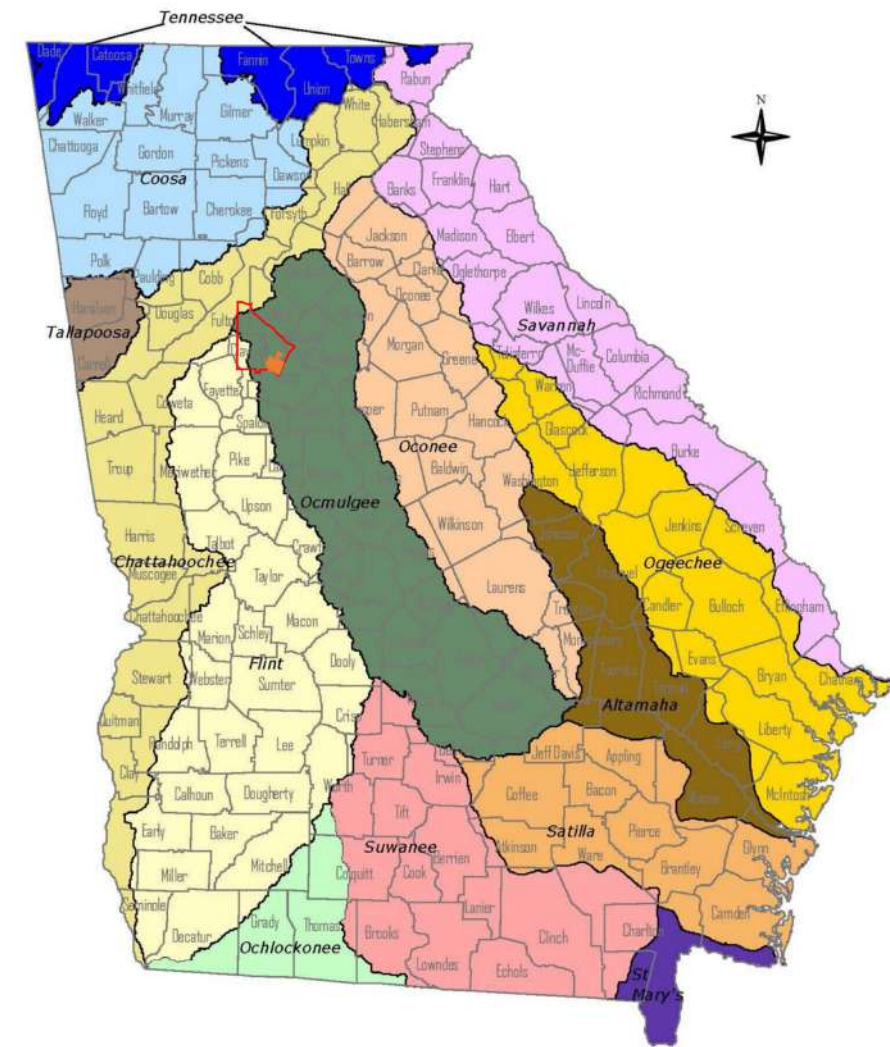
As a headwater of Georgia’s largest freshwater system, the Ocmulgee and Altamaha River basins, the South River plays a crucial role in feeding into the Atlantic Ocean. Its presence not only provides essential water resources but also contributes to the ecological balance and overall environmental health of the region.



Caption: Close up of Georgia major river basins with DeKalb County and Stonecrest overlays
Source: Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District’s Water Resources Management Plan

Key Water Planning Takeaways

- The City of Stonecrest should continue to work with DeKalb County to ensure that the supply, stormwater management and its sewer systems specially in those areas likely to receive more intense development activity in the near future.
- The City should also continue to enforce the standards to maintain a healthy South River, as this body of water serves as a valued environmental amenity for many residents and visitors or Stonecrest.



Caption: Georgia river basins with DeKalb County and Stonecrest overlays
Source: South River Watershed Alliance

FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2019)

The original land use policies of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan were primarily inherited from when the area was part of unincorporated DeKalb County. During the city’s establishment, it largely adopted the future land use and zoning categories set forth by the former government.

Interstate 20 serves as a dividing line within the city, separating it into northern and southern regions. Historically, the northern area was heavily industrialized, with a concentration of quarries and stone shipping operations. Today, this region remains vital for quarrying, warehousing, and logistics.

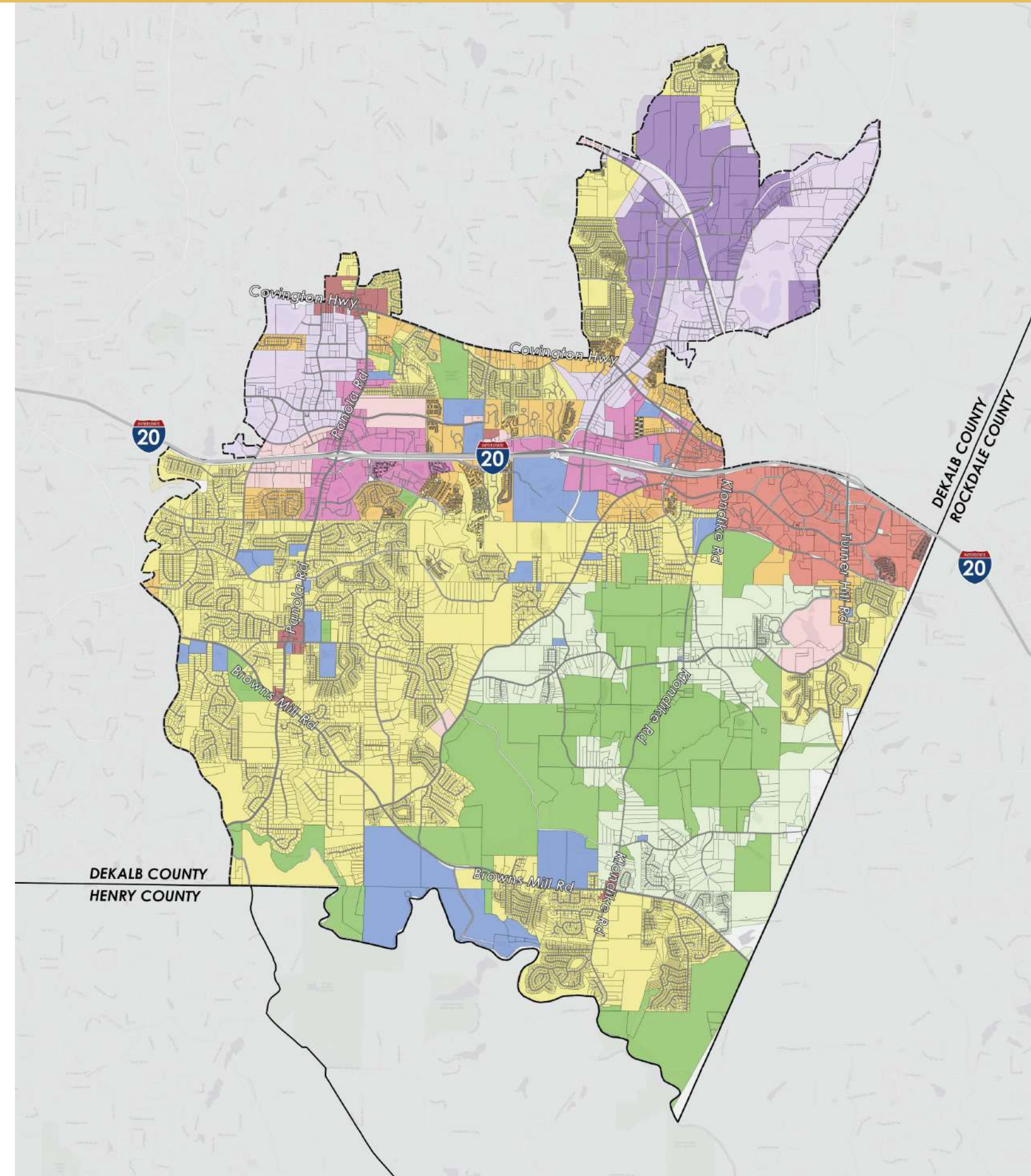
In contrast, the southern part of Stonecrest is predominantly residential, with many former farmlands now developed into suburban neighborhoods. The commercial and dense development focus lies along Interstate 20, where the Mall at Stonecrest, hotels, big-box retailers, and apartment communities are located.

Arabia Mountain, along with the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve and the protective conservation areas, constitute a significant portion of the land use in southern Stonecrest. These areas are renowned for their ecological significance, featuring unique geological formations known as monadnocks, as well as distinctive flora such as yellow daisies and red diamorphas.

Designated as part of the larger National Heritage Area, these protected areas impose limitations on development opportunities within southern Stonecrest. This conservation status underscores the importance of preserving the natural beauty and ecological diversity of the region for future generations.

Future Land Use Map (2019) Legend

	Proposed FLU Category	Area (acres)	% of Area
	Conservation/Open space	3,915	18%
	Institutional	1,268	6%
	Rural Residential	2,296	10%
	Suburban Neighborhood	8,017	36%
	Urban Neighborhood	1,076	5%
	Neighborhood Center	151	1%
	City Center	745	3%
	Regional Center	994	5%
	Office Professional	467	2%
	Light Industrial	1,925	9%
	Heavy Industrial	1,137	5%
	Grand Total	21,992	100%



Zoning Classifications Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| C-1: Local Commercial | MU-1: Mixed-use Low Density | R-60: Residential Medium Lot-60 |
| C-2 General Commercial | MU-2: Mixed-use Low-Medium Density | R-75: Residential Medium Lot-85 |
| HR-1: High-density Residential 1 | MU-3: Mixed-use Medium Density | R-85: Residential Medium Lot-85 |
| HR-1: High-density Residential 2 | MU-4: Mixed-use High Density | R-100: Residential Medium Lot-100 |
| HR-1: High-density Residential 3 | MU-5: Mixed-use Very High Density | RE: Residential Estate |
| M: Light Industrial | NS: Neighborhood Shopping | RLG: Residential Large Lot |
| M-2 Heavy Industrial | OD: Office-distribution | RNC: Residential Neighborhood Conservation |
| MR-1: Medium-density Residential 1 | OI: Office-Institutional | RSM: Small Lot Residential Mix |
| MR-2: Medium-density Residential 2 | OIT: Office-Institutional Transitional | |

Land Use Designations

Conservation/Public Land Uses



Caption: Trailhead of Vaughters Farm, an Open Space Land Use in Stonecrest, GA

Conservation/Open Space (COS): The Conservation and Open Space Character Area preserves areas in the city with significant natural and ecological features, as well as environmentally sensitive recreational facilities for public enjoyment. These areas consist of undeveloped natural lands, environmentally sensitive and conservation areas that are not suitable for development. It also includes land used for active recreational purposes that provide for a wide range of activities with some land designated for cultural and historic preservation.

Use Descriptions: Passive Parks, Nature trails; Flood plains, Wetlands, Watersheds; Golf Courses; Athletic Fields; Amphitheaters

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: n/a

Permitted Districts: All



Caption: Image of Emory at Hillandale in Stonecrest, GA, an example of Institutional/Public Land Use

Institutional/Public (IP): The Institutional/Public Character Area designates specific areas that provide institutional and public services. These areas consist of large areas used for religious, civic, educational, and governmental facilities. These areas are integrated into the rural, suburban, and traditional neighborhood character areas as secondary uses and are considered residential support uses.

Use Descriptions: Schools, Colleges, Hospitals, City Community and Recreation Centers, Public Cemeteries, City Hall, and Post Offices, Public & Civic Facilities and Public Parks, Places of Worship

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: Up to 8 dwelling units (du)/ac

Permitted Districts: All

Residential Land Uses



Caption: An example of Rural Residential Land Use in Stonecrest, GA

Rural Residential (RR): The Rural Residential category provides for areas that are suitable for low-density housing with maximum densities of up to four (4) dwelling units per acre. Single-family detached housing is the most appropriate type of development for this district. Stable Low-Density Residential Districts should be protected from encroachment of higher density or intensity uses.

Use Descriptions: Low-density single family detached; Tiny Homes, Agricultural related; Cultural and Historic; Institutional

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: Up to 4 du/ac

Permitted Districts: NS, RE, RLG, R100, RNC, MHP



Caption: An example Suburban Neighborhood Land Use in Stonecrest, GA

Suburban Neighborhood (SN): The Suburban Neighborhood area recognizes those areas of the city that have developed in traditional suburban land use patterns while encouraging new development to have increased connectivity and accessibility. These areas include those already developed and those under development pressures. Suburban Neighborhood areas are characterized by low-pedestrian orientation, limited transit access, scattered civic buildings, and curvilinear street patterns. The desired density for areas of this type is from 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre.

Use Descriptions: SF detached; Townhomes; Assisted Living facilities; Neighborhood Retail; Schools; Libraries; Parks and Related; Health Care, Civic

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: 4 to 8 du/ac

Permitted Districts: OI, OIT, NS, RSM, R100, R85, R75, R60, RNC



Caption: An example of Urban Neighborhood Land Use in Stonecrest, GA

Urban Neighborhood (UN): The Urban Neighborhood land use districts establish and preserve compact pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and communities. The characteristics include higher pedestrian orientation, sidewalks, and more grid-like street patterns. This district may have on-street parking, small lots, and buildings closer to the front property line. These areas may have alleys and neighborhood-scale commercial scattered throughout. Microhousing units are permitted in this land use. The proposed density for areas of this type is from 6 to 12 dwelling units per acre.

Use Descriptions: Townhomes; Multi-family; Neighborhood Rentals; Small Scale Retail/Commercial

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: 6 to 12; up to 30 dwelling units per acre w/ density bonuses

Permitted Districts: MU1-3, C1, C2, RSM, R100-85, R75-60, MR1-2, HR-1-2-3

Commercial Land Uses



Caption: Example of Neighborhood Center in Stonecrest, GA

Neighborhood Center (NC): The Neighborhood Center land use primarily provides for the everyday commercial goods and services for neighborhoods. These areas shall complement the character of surrounding neighborhoods and have locations that promote walkability, reduce automobile travel, and increase transit usage. These areas should consist of a neighborhood focal point with a concentration of activities such as general retail, neighborhood services, professional offices, transit, and appropriate public open spaces that are easily accessible by pedestrians. The proposed density for the Neighborhood Center Character Area is between 10 to 24 dwelling units per acre.

Use Descriptions: Local Retail and Commercial; Office; Park & Rec; Institutional; Civic; Townhomes; Condominiums; Apartments

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: 1-3 stories; 10 to 24 du/ac

Permitted Districts: MU 1-2-3, MR-1-2, NS, C1, OI, OIT, RSM



Caption: Example of City Center with festival

City Center (CC): The City Center land use creates a downtown district by concentrating specifically a relatively high-density of public services, office, services and employment. The areas should be a focal point for the City with a variety of activities such as general retail, higher-education, commercial, professional offices, high-density housing, entertainment, transit and recreational uses, along with appropriate public open spaces that are easily accessible by pedestrians. The preferred density for areas of this type is from 20 to 40 dwelling units per acre.

Use Descriptions: Condominiums; Apartments; Retail and Commercial; Office; Park & Rec; Institutional; Civic; Entertainment & Cultural; Health Care

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: 3-5 stories; 20 to 40 du/ac

Permitted Districts: MU 1-2-3-4-5, MR-1-2, C1, C2, OI, OIT, RSM

Commercial Land Uses



Caption: Example of Regional Center Land Use in Stonecrest, GA

Regional Center (RC): The intent of the Regional Center is to promote the concentration of regional service and employment activities to a centralized location that allows for a variety of uses while reducing automobile travel, promoting walkability, and increasing transit usage. These areas consist of a high intensity of regional commercial, office, employment areas, high-density residential, higher-education and transit facilities. These areas are characterized by high vehicular traffic and high transit use, including stops, shelters, and transfer points. The proposed density for areas of this type allows up to 120 dwelling units per acre.

Use Descriptions: Townhomes; Condominiums; Apartments; Retail and commercial; Office; Park & Rec; Institutional; Civic; Entertainment & Cultural; Health Care, Technology Centers

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: 3-12 stories; 40 to 120 du/ac

Permitted Districts: MU 1-2-3-4-5, HR 1-2-3, C1, C2, OI, OIT



Caption: Example of Suburban Office-Professional Land use

Office Professional (OP): The Office Professional Character Area primarily promotes the development of office parks and mid- to high-rise office buildings to provide a transitional land use between development nodes or other high-intensity uses and the surrounding residential communities. These districts could also support multi-family uses in a mixed-use environment as well as supporting commercial uses. The locations are characterized by ornate landscaping and public open spaces for employees and patrons. They are often located in close proximity to highly classified traffic arteries with access to public transit as well as on-site parking.

Use Descriptions: Business Parks; Research and Development; Mixed-Use Structure, Self-storage units, Technology Centers and Corporate Headquarters

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: n/a

Permitted Districts: MU 1-2-3, NS, C1, OI, OIT

Industrial Land Uses



Caption: A logistics distribution center located in Stonecrest, GA

Light Industrial (M-LI): The intent of the Light Industrial Character Area is to identify areas that are appropriate for industrial-type uses. The location of these areas shall preserve the appeal and appearance of residential and commercial areas from the prospective intrusion of light industrial land uses. These areas consist of areas used in low-intensity manufacturing, including wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, vibration, air pollution, or other nuisance characteristics.

Use Descriptions: Warehouse Distribution; Wholesale/Trade; Automotive

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: n/a

Permitted Districts: OD, C2, MU 4-5, M



Caption: An example of Heavy Industrial activity located in Stonecrest, GA

Heavy Industrial (M-HI): The intent of the Industrial Character Area is to identify areas that are appropriate for more intense land uses that are industrial-related. This designation consists of heavy and light industrial classifications. These uses shall be located to protect residential and commercial areas from potential disturbances generated by industrial land uses. This designation would consist of land used for warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, assembly, and processing. Where these types of uses generate odors, noise, vibration, air pollution, or other nuisances, the Heavy Industrial Land Use Designation would be appropriate.

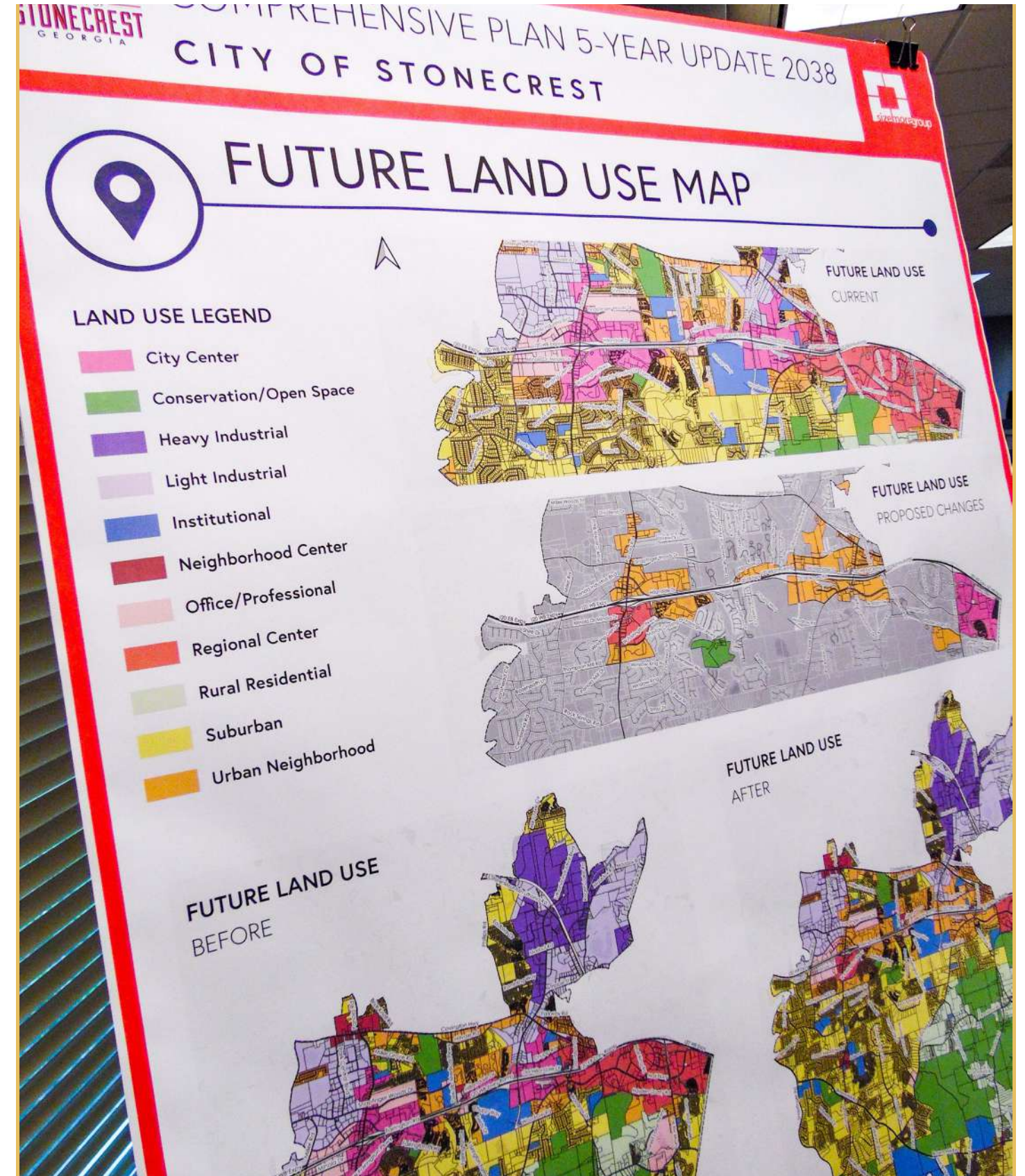
Use Descriptions: Manufacturing; Warehouse Distribution; Wholesale/Trade; Automotive

Maximum Density, Units/Acre: n/a

Permitted Districts: OD, C2, M, M2

Key Land Use Takeaways

- The City of Stonecrest is bifurcated by Interstate 20. North of I-20 are the majority of light and heavy industrial activity in the city. This area not only has kept the long-running rock quarry industry in the area, but has also attracted transportation and warehouse facilities to East DeKalb County. The industrial land uses are important for the City of Stonecrest’s job and tax base.
- South of I-20 are the majority of residential and retail centers and nationally-recognized natural resources in Stonecrest. The majority of the City wants to retain its natural amenities and relative low-density while creating opportunities for mixed-use activities at key intersections. The opportunities for the most dense, multi-use and regionally impactful developments are along the I-20 spine.



Caption: View of a future land use board at a community meeting

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

City of Stonecrest, with an estimated population of 59,445, has experienced a growth rate of 11.3% since 2017. The population of DeKalb County has grown by 3.4% during the same period, reaching a total of just over 760,000. The median age in the City of Stonecrest is 34.5, slightly younger than the County median age of 36.3. In terms of average household size, the City of Stonecrest surpasses DeKalb, with 2.90 compared to 2.63. Additionally, around half of the City of Stonecrest households own their homes they reside in, in contrast to the County where over 57.9% of households are homeowners. Lastly, the median household income of \$63,438 in the City of Stonecrest is slightly below the County \$76,044

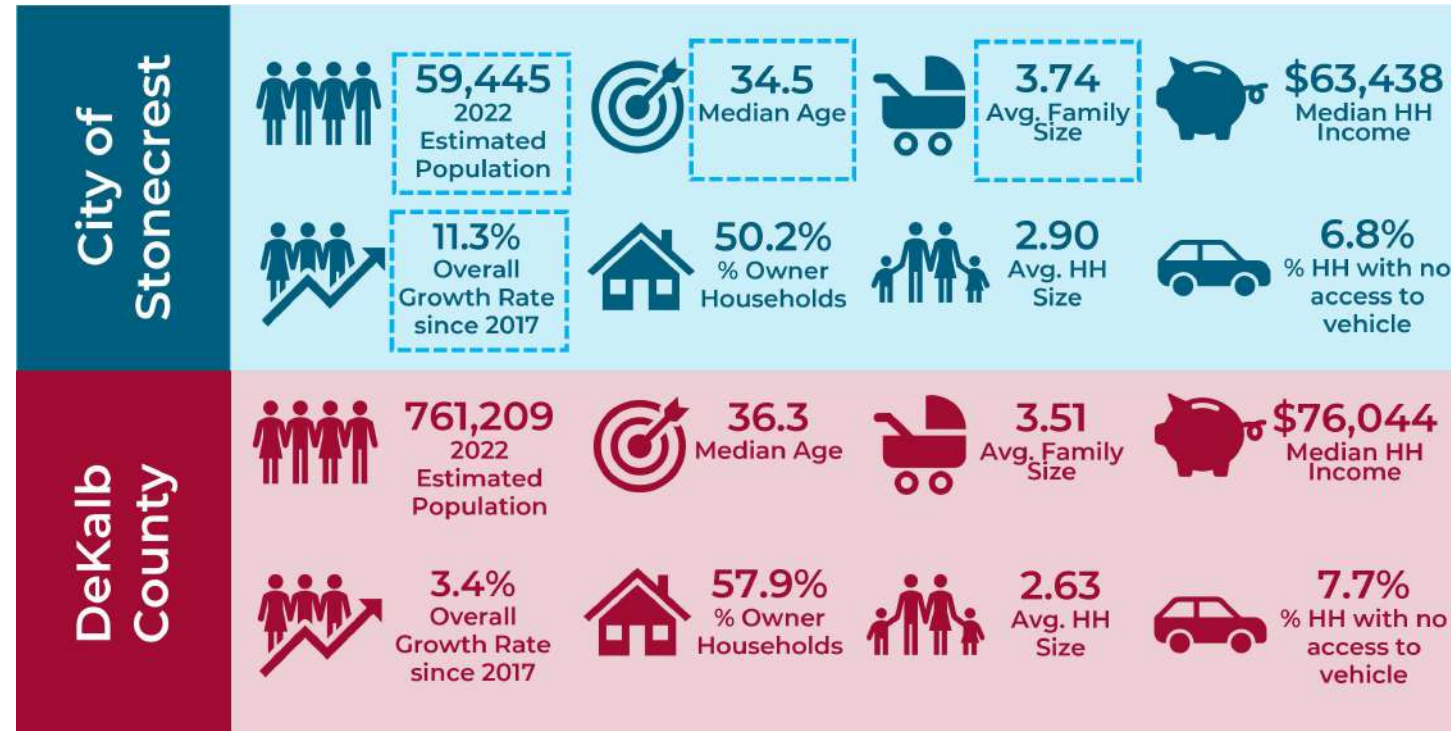


Figure 1. Demographic overview of Stonecrest and DeKalb County
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

Population Characteristics

Over the past five years, the City of Stonecrest has experienced a notable 11.3% growth, reaching a total population of approximately 59,445 in 2022, and maintaining a compound annual growth rate of 2.2%. The median age in Stonecrest stands at 34.5, with 62.2% of residents being under the age of 34. Stonecrest attracts a considerable number of young families, as evidenced by its average family size of 3.74 and the predominant age group being children under 14. In comparison to DeKalb, Stonecrest has lower percentages of residents aged 55 and above.

Area	Total Population		Annual Growth Rate	2022 Median Age
	2017	2022		
City of Stonecrest	53,420	59,445	11.3%	34.5
DeKalb County	736,066	761,209	3.4%	36.3
Atlanta MSA	5,700,990	6,094,752	6.9%	36.9

Figure 2. Population and Age Comparison
Source: ACS 5-Year 2017 & 2022

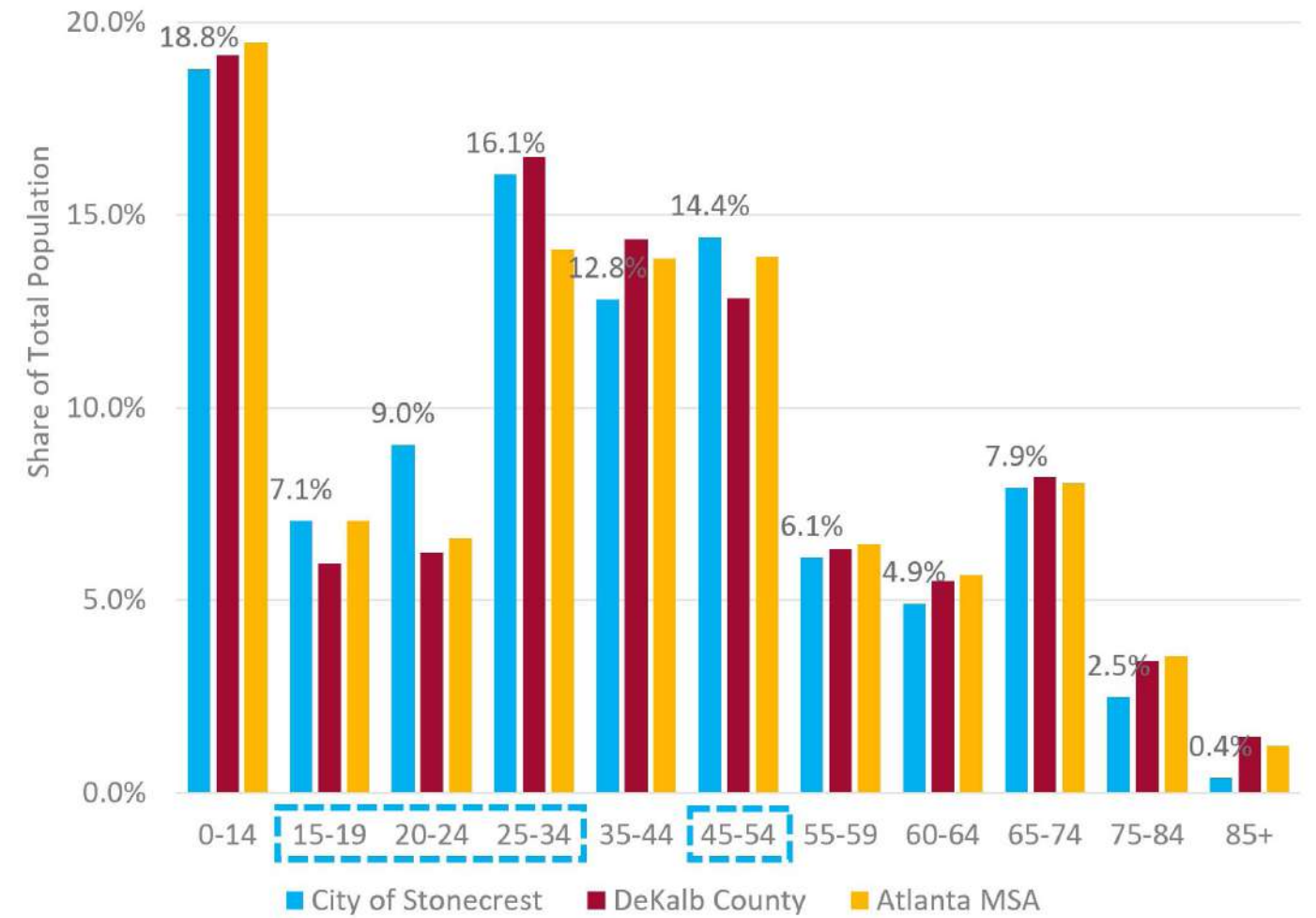


Figure 3. Comparison of Age Cohorts, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

The City of Stonecrest is characterized as a minority-majority community, with a racial distribution of 90.9% Black, 2.8% White, 0.1% American Indian, 0.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.7% Two or More Races, and 11% Other Race. In comparison, DeKalb County exhibits a racial composition of 31.9% White, 52.8% Black, 0.7% American Indian, 6.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.8% Two or More Races, and 2.5% Other Race. Within Stonecrest, only 2.7% of residents identify as Hispanic, a considerably lower percentage than the 8.5% observed at the County level.

A total of 27.6% of Stonecrest residents aged 25 and above hold a college degree or higher, in contrast to DeKalb County, where 46.6% of the population has attained an advanced degree. 36.4% of Stonecrest residents have completed only a high school diploma or have educational attainment below that level, compared to 29.2% of DeKalb residents

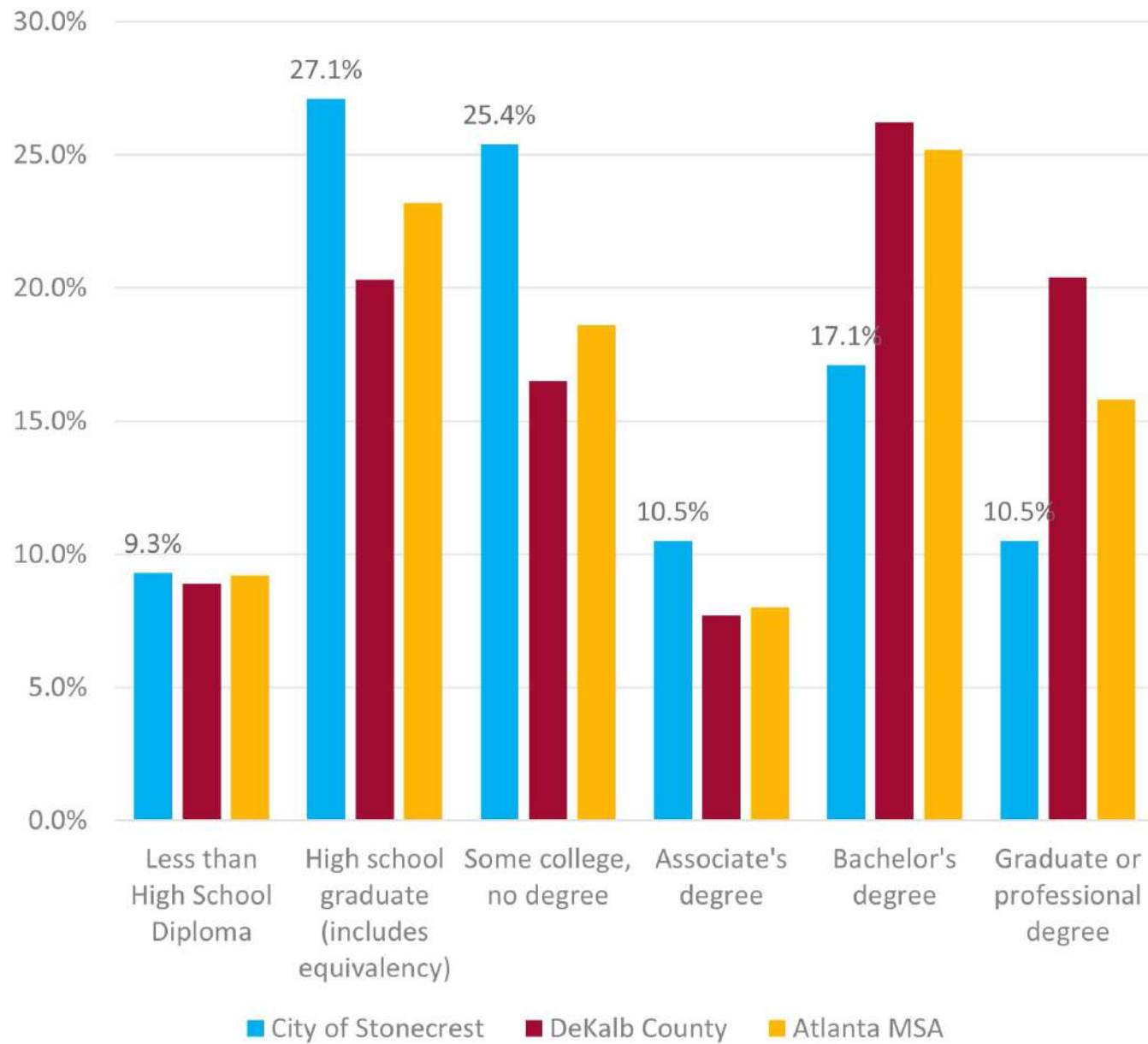
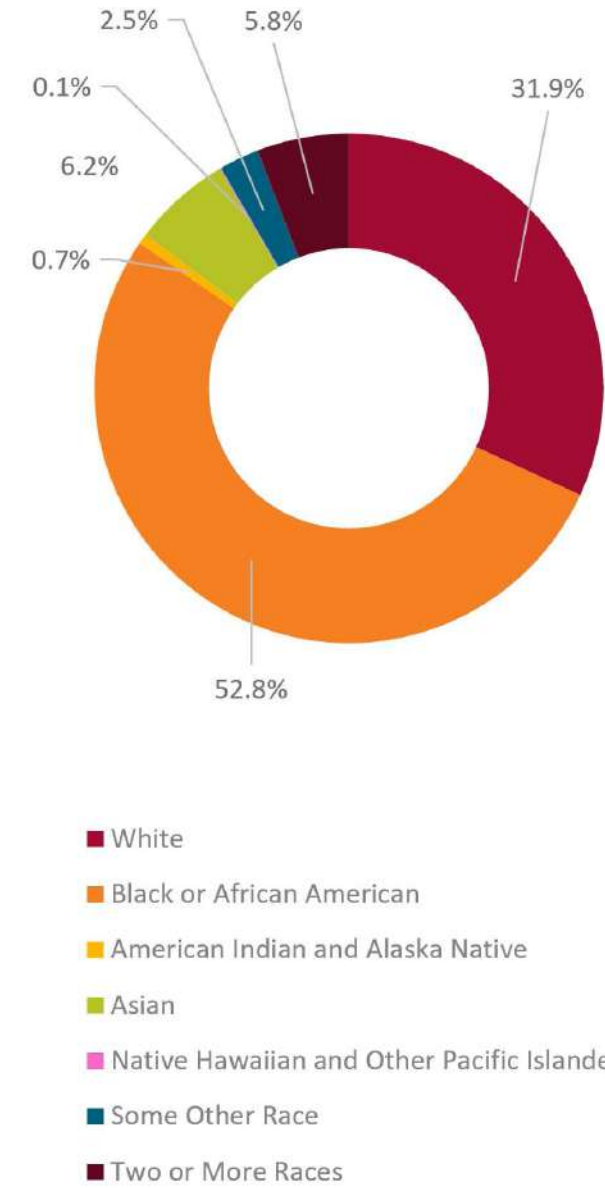


Figure 4. Comparison of Educational Attainment, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

DeKalb County



City of Stonecrest

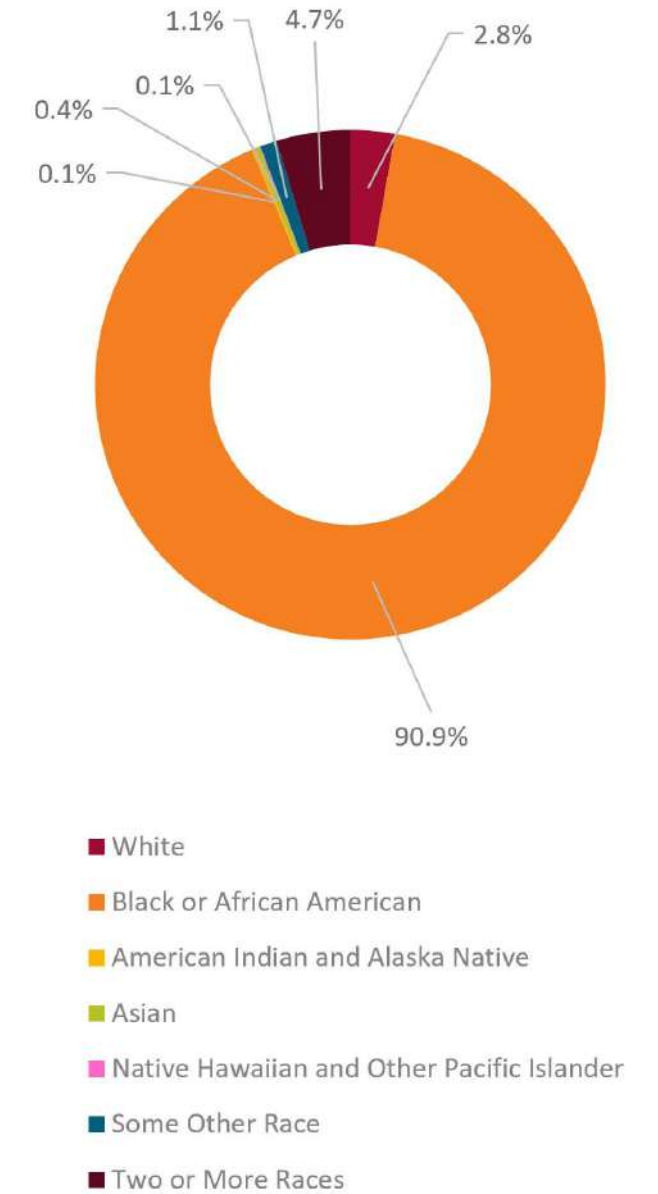


Figure 5. Racial Make-up in DeKalb County and Stonecrest, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

Stonecrest Tapestry Segmentation

Developed by ESRI, Tapestry Segmentation classifies households based on 67 distinct classifications that mirror national trends in housing preferences, spending habits, and participation in the labor force. Typically, smaller areas are more uniform, featuring fewer represented segments, while larger areas display a greater number of segments at varying percentages, showcasing a spectrum of diverse households.

Stonecrest is characterized by twelve tapestry segments. There are four segments surpassing the 10% threshold, **Metro Fusion**, **Up and Coming Families**, **Young and Restless**, and **Family Foundations**. This pattern is often observed in smaller geographic areas with more uniform household compositions.

Metro Fusion, the most prominent tapestry segment in the county, represents non-native English speakers in single-parent or single-person households. Members of this segment are diligent professionals focused on advancing their careers and social status.

The second-largest segment, **Up and Coming Families**, are predominately new families in new suburban housing subdivisions who are seeking affordable housing. This group is extremely ambitious and hardworking, with a high labor force participation (71%) and careful shoppers, aware of prices, willing to shop around for the best deals and open to influence by others' opinions.

Young and Restless tapestry represents 14.9% of households, featuring well-educated young workers either living alone or in shared non-family dwellings. This highly mobile market, just beginning their careers, tends to relocate frequently. They are avid internet users and discerning shoppers.

Family Foundations consist of well-educated mix of married couples, single parents, grandparents, and children (young and adults). This group is known for their strong focus on religion and character, as well as style and appearance.

Lastly, **Home Improvements** households, constituting 6.9% of households, are mostly married-couples who own their homes in the suburbs, creating long commutes to work. This group is classified as cautious consumers who do research before buying, and spend heavily on eating out due to their long commutes and busy lives.

The additional segmentations include:

- Home Improvement – 6.9%
- City Strivers – 6.3%
- Workday Drive – 6.2%
- Bright Young Professionals – 5.7%
- Comfortable Empty Nesters – 1.7%
- Modest Income Homes – 1.5%
- Urban Edge Families – 0.6%
- Down the Road – 0.1%



Figure 6. Stonecrest Tapestry Segments
Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Key Demographic Takeaways

- From 2017 to 2022, the City of Stonecrest experienced a 11.3% growth rate, significantly higher than DeKalb growth rate of 3.4%
- The median age in the City of Stonecrest is 34.5, slightly younger than the County median age of 36.3.
- Stonecrest has a smaller percentage of residents with a college degree or higher compared to DeKalb.
- The City of Stonecrest has an average household size of 2.90, compared to 2.63 for DeKalb County.
- Around half of the City of Stonecrest households own their homes they reside in, in contrast to the County where 57.9% of households are homeowners.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

The City of Stonecrest median household income is \$63,438, which is a lower than DeKalb (\$76,044) and the Atlanta MSA (\$82,625) median household income. In Stonecrest, 58.6% of households earn less than \$75,000. The largest concentration of households in Stonecrest earn \$50,000-74,999, accounting for 19%. 50.5% of DeKalb households and 54% of Atlanta MSA households earn more than \$75,000.



Figure 7. Median Household Income, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

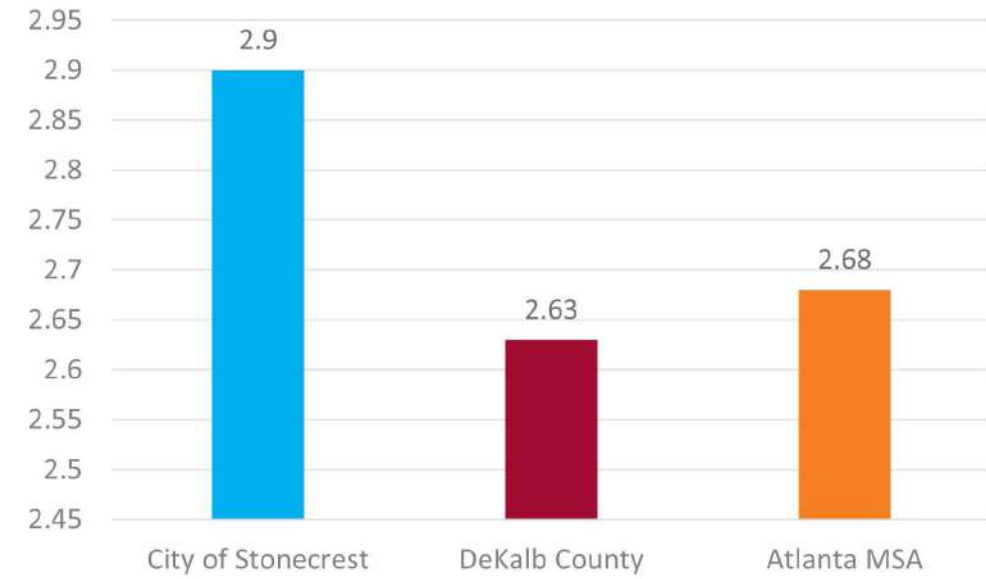


Figure 8. Household Size Comparison, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

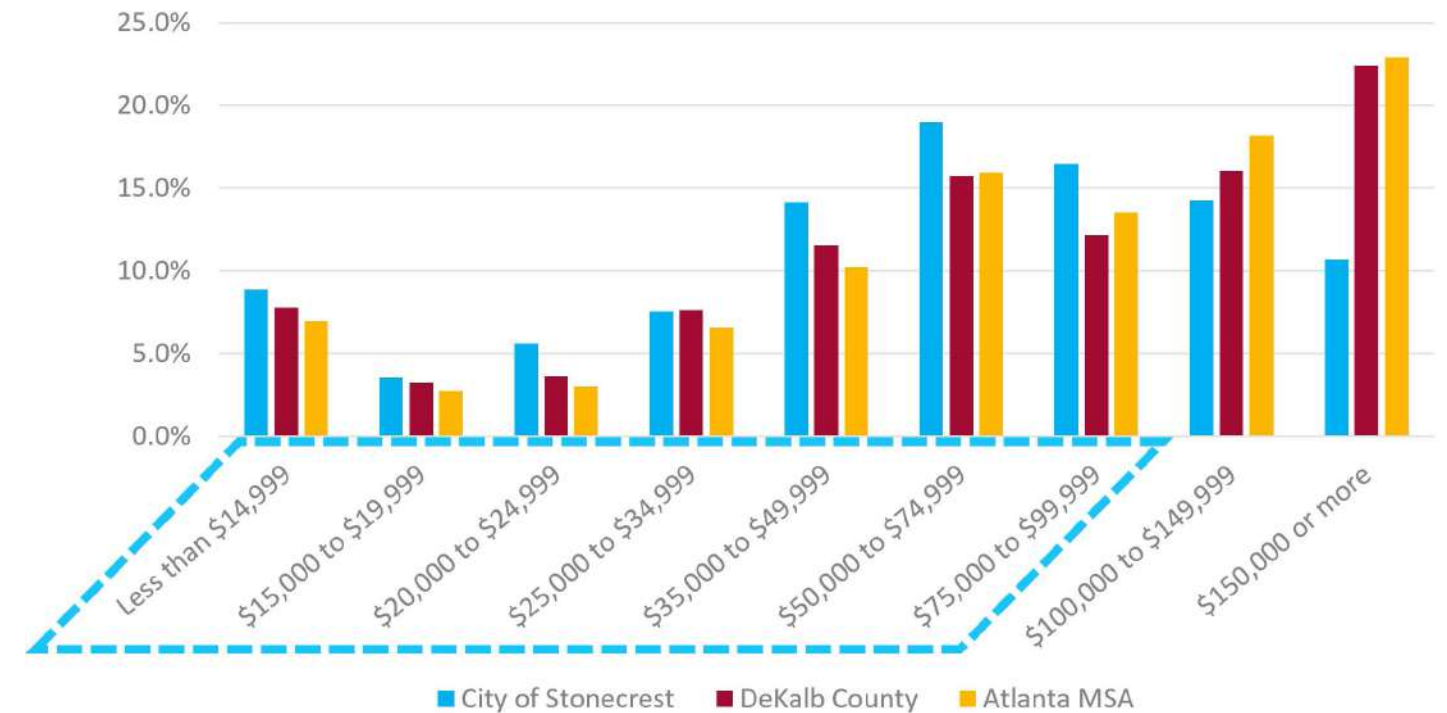


Figure 9. Household Income, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

The composition of Stonecrest housing inventory by unit closely mirrors that of DeKalb, with single-family homes comprising the largest segment. The majority of Stonecrest housing stock was built from 1980 to 2010. Whereas, DeKalb has a higher share of housing constructed during the 1960s and 1970s compared to the Stonecrest, slightly aging its housing inventory. Stonecrest maintains an almost equal distribution between owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, in contrast to the County and MSA, which exhibit higher rates of homeownership.

2022	City of Stonecrest	DeKalb County	Atlanta MSA
Owner-Occupied	50.2%	57.9%	65.3%
Renter-Occupied	49.8%	42.1%	34.7%
Median Home Sale Price (2020)	\$156,681	\$250,000	\$216,000

Figure 10. Housing Summary Facts
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022, ARC Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy 2020

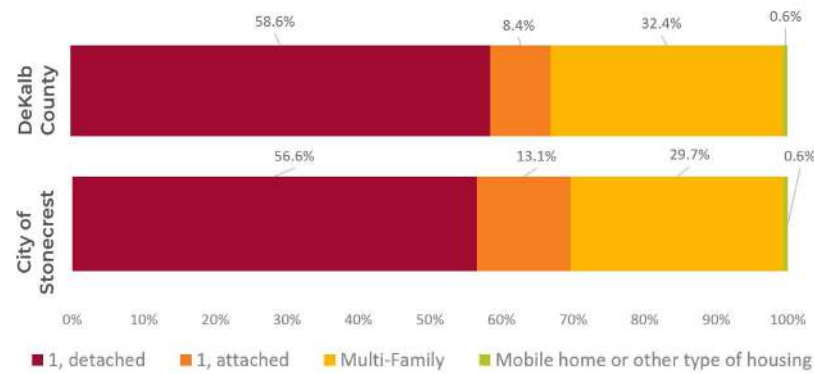


Figure 12. Housing Units by Type, 2022
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

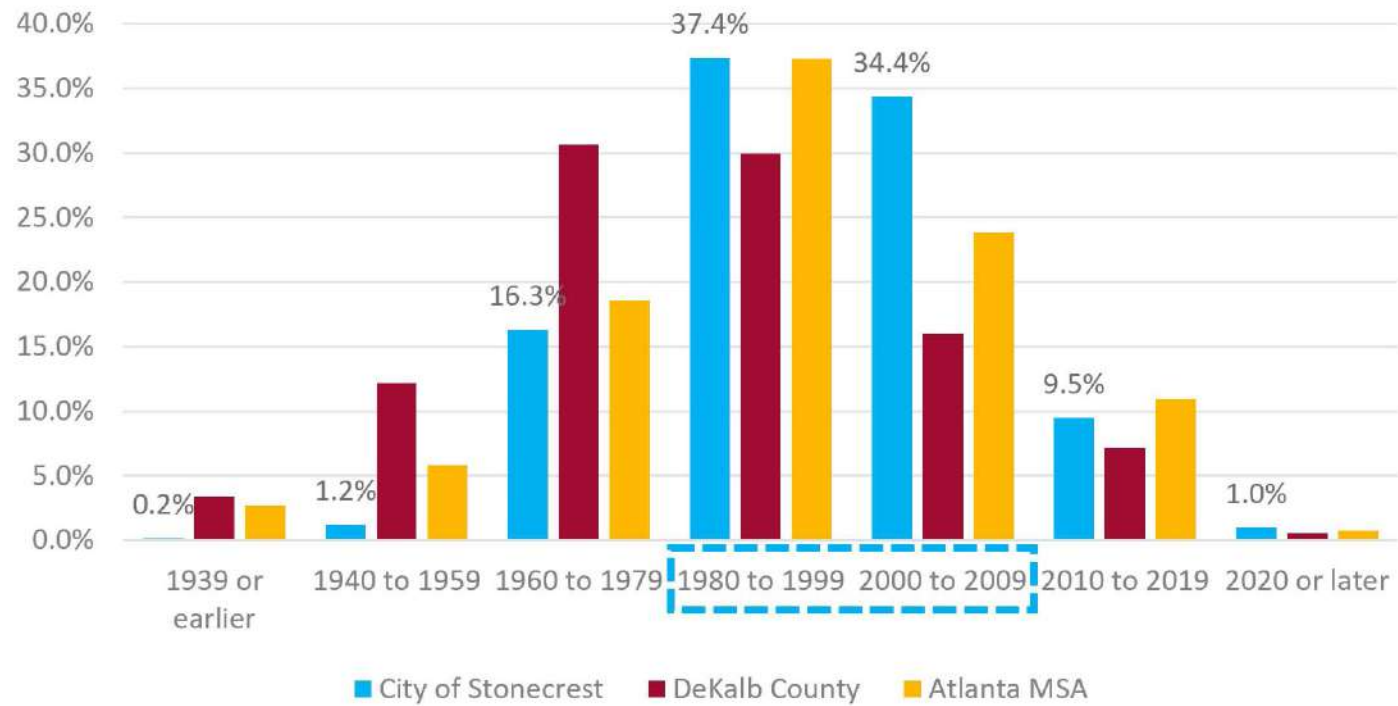
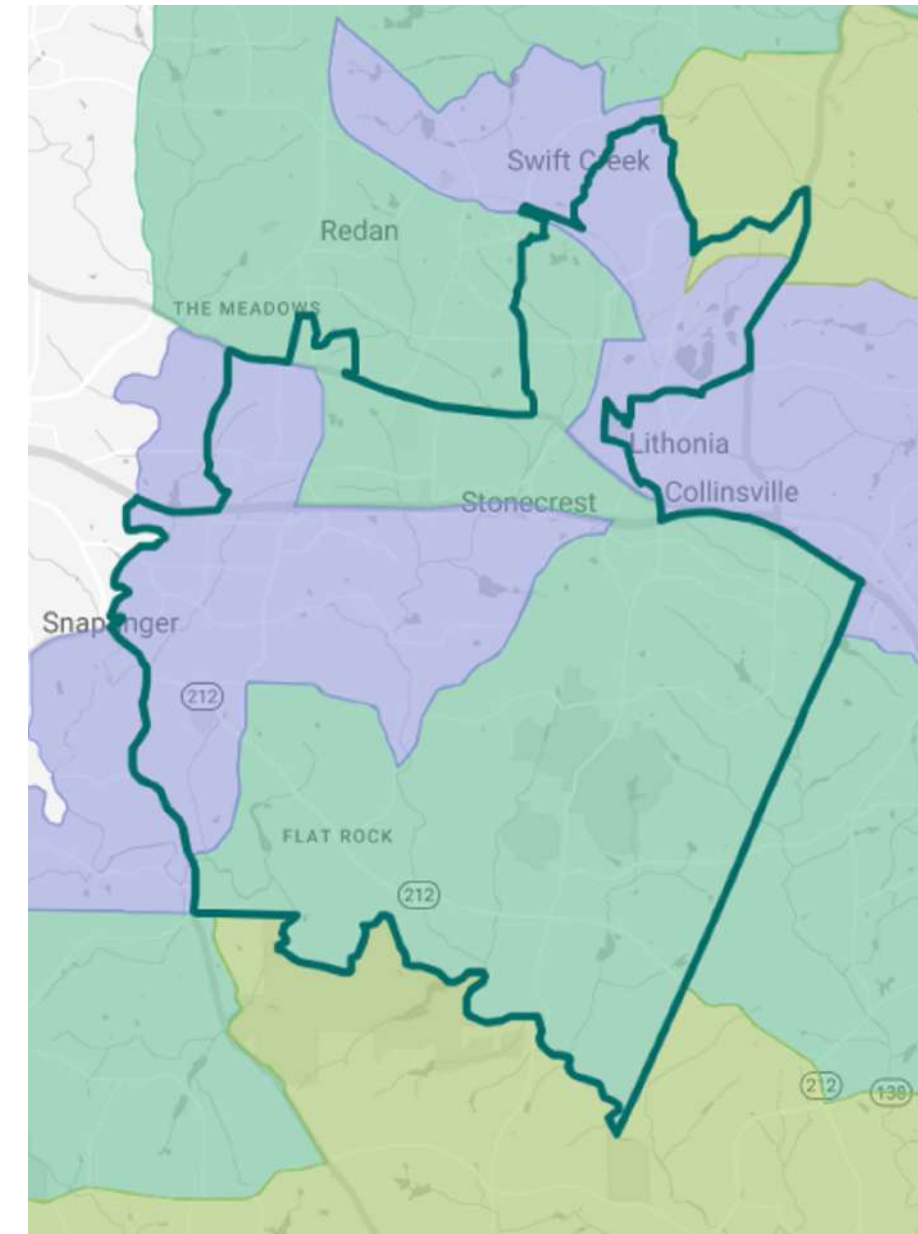


Figure 11. Share Housing Units by Decade Completed
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy

The Atlanta Regional Commission developed the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy that provides housing market data and information, as well as potential implementation strategies, for cities and counties throughout the ARC 10 County Region. Stonecrest comprises three submarkets, with the majority featuring suburban neighborhoods offering housing at lower-to-moderate prices. Between 2013 and 2020, there has been a substantial 130% increase in the median home sale price and a significant 90% growth in the price per square foot of homes. As of 2020, the median home sale price stands at \$156,681, with a median building area of 1,628 sq ft.



- Stonecrest**
- 64% SUBMARKET 7**
Suburban neighborhoods with lower-to-moderate-priced housing, biggest increase in renters
 - 35% SUBMARKET 8**
Suburban neighborhoods with lowest-priced single-family homes, mix of renters and owners
 - 1% SUBMARKET 9**
Lower-priced rural areas

CITY SNAPSHOT	
Median Home Sale Price (2020)	\$156,681
Change in Median Home Sale Price (2013-20)	+130%
Home Sale Price Per Sq Ft (2020)	\$85.00 sq ft
Percent Change in Home Sale Price Per Sq Ft (2013-20)	+90%
Median Building Area of Home Sales (2020)	1,628 sq ft

Data source: ARC analysis of Zillow's ZTRAX home sale transactions, 2013 & 2020. Explore this data further in the [DATA EXPLORER](#)

Figure 13. Stonecrest Snapshot and Subarea map
Source: ARC, Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy

Housing Key Takeaways

- Stonecrest median household income is \$63,438, compared to DeKalb median household income of \$76,044 and the Atlanta MSA of \$82,625.
- Stonecrest has a slightly newer housing stock than DeKalb County and has a lower median home sale price.
- Stonecrest maintains an almost equal distribution between owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, in contrast to the County and MSA, which exhibit higher rates of homeownership.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Evaluating the economic statistics for the City, the largest industrial sector is Manufacturing, accounting for 17.2% of jobs. DeKalb largest job sector is Health Care and Social Assistance, accounting for 16.7% of jobs. Just above a quarter of Stonecrest residents have at least a Bachelor degree, which is lower than the percentage for DeKalb.

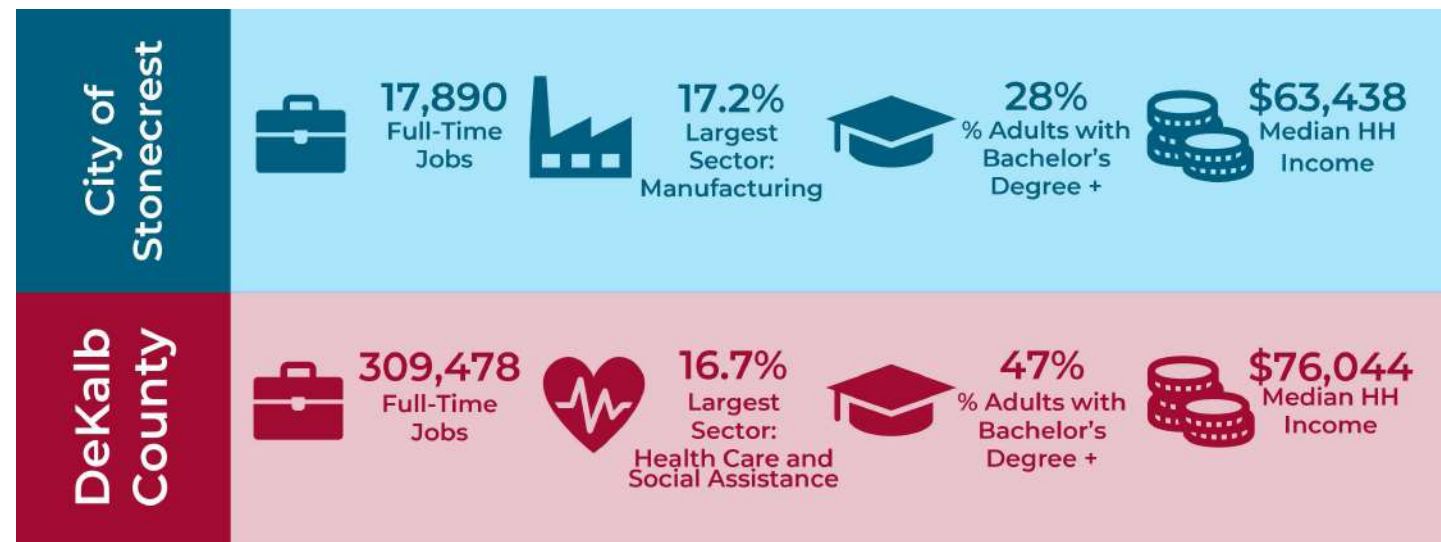


Figure 14. Economic overview of Stonecrest and DeKalb County
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022

Employment Growth

The City of Stonecrest has seen an average annual job growth of 196 positions. During the Great Recession, disruptions mirrored national patterns. Surprisingly, while the pandemic led to job losses nationally, Stonecrest experienced an increase in employment opportunities.

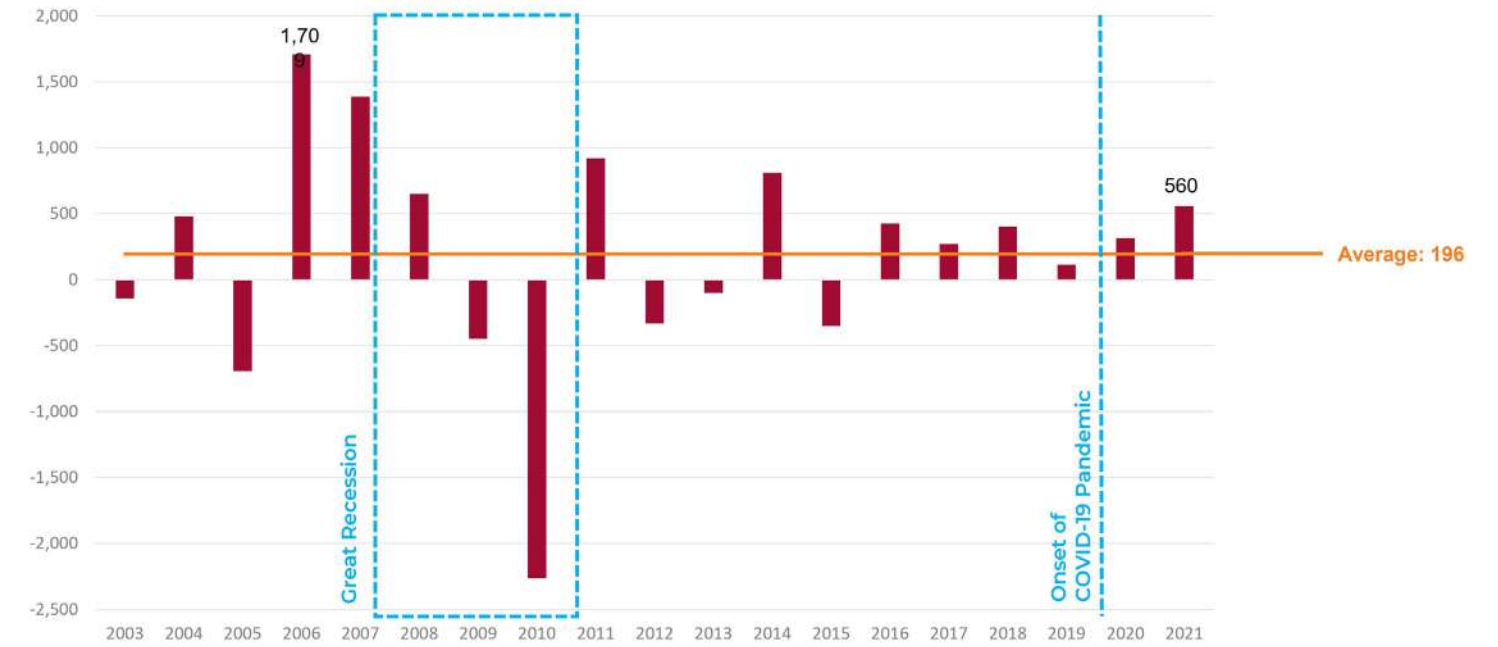


Figure 15. Annualized Job Growth in Stonecrest
Source: ACS 5-Year 2022 and LEHD on the Map

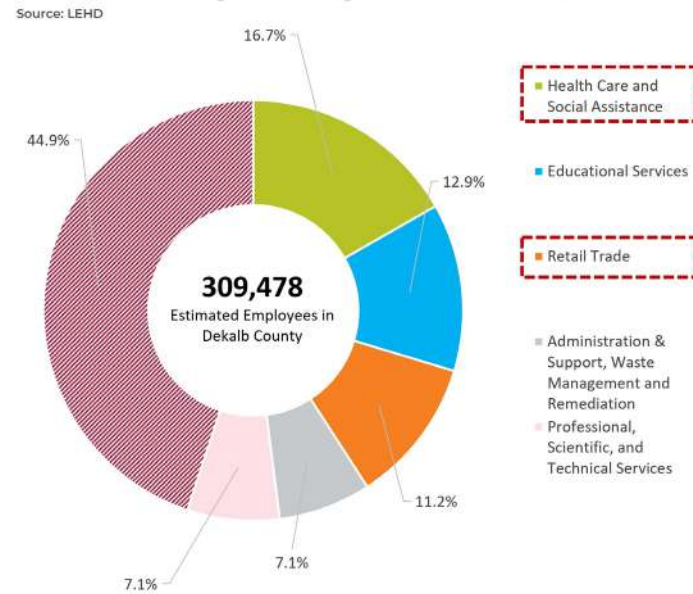
Employment Characteristics

In Stonecrest, the top industry is manufacturing, representing 3,083 positions (17.2% of total jobs). Additionally, DeKalb primary industry is healthcare and social assistance, with 51,813 jobs (16.7% of total employment). In the figures below, red boxes emphasize the commonality of the top industries in both Stonecrest and DeKalb County, including manufacturing and healthcare and social assistance.

DeKalb County Top Three Industries	2021
Health Care and Social Assistance	51,813 (16.7%)
Educational Services	39,958 (12.9%)
Retail Trade	34,648 (11.2%)

City of Stonecrest Top Three Industries	2021
Manufacturing	3,083 (17.2%)
Retail Trade	3,022 (16.9%)
Transportation and Warehousing	2,530 (14.1%)

DeKalb County Industry Classification, 2021



City of Stonecrest Industry Classification, 2021

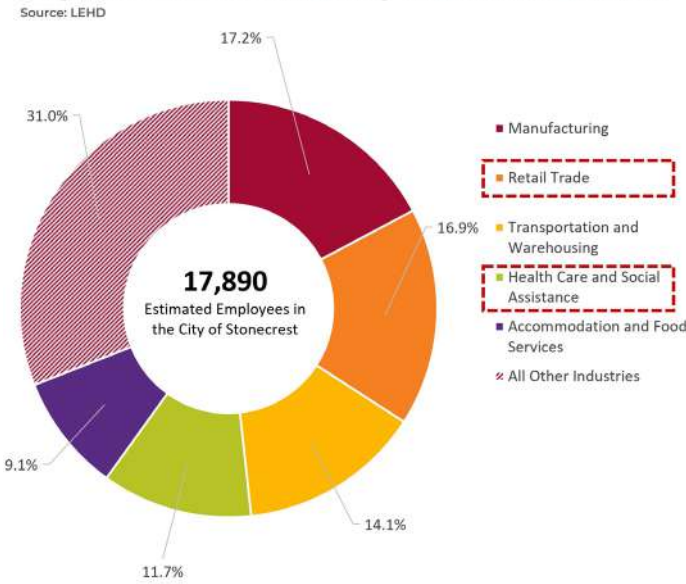


Figure 16. DeKalb County and Stonecrest Industry Classification, 2021
Source: LEHD on the Map

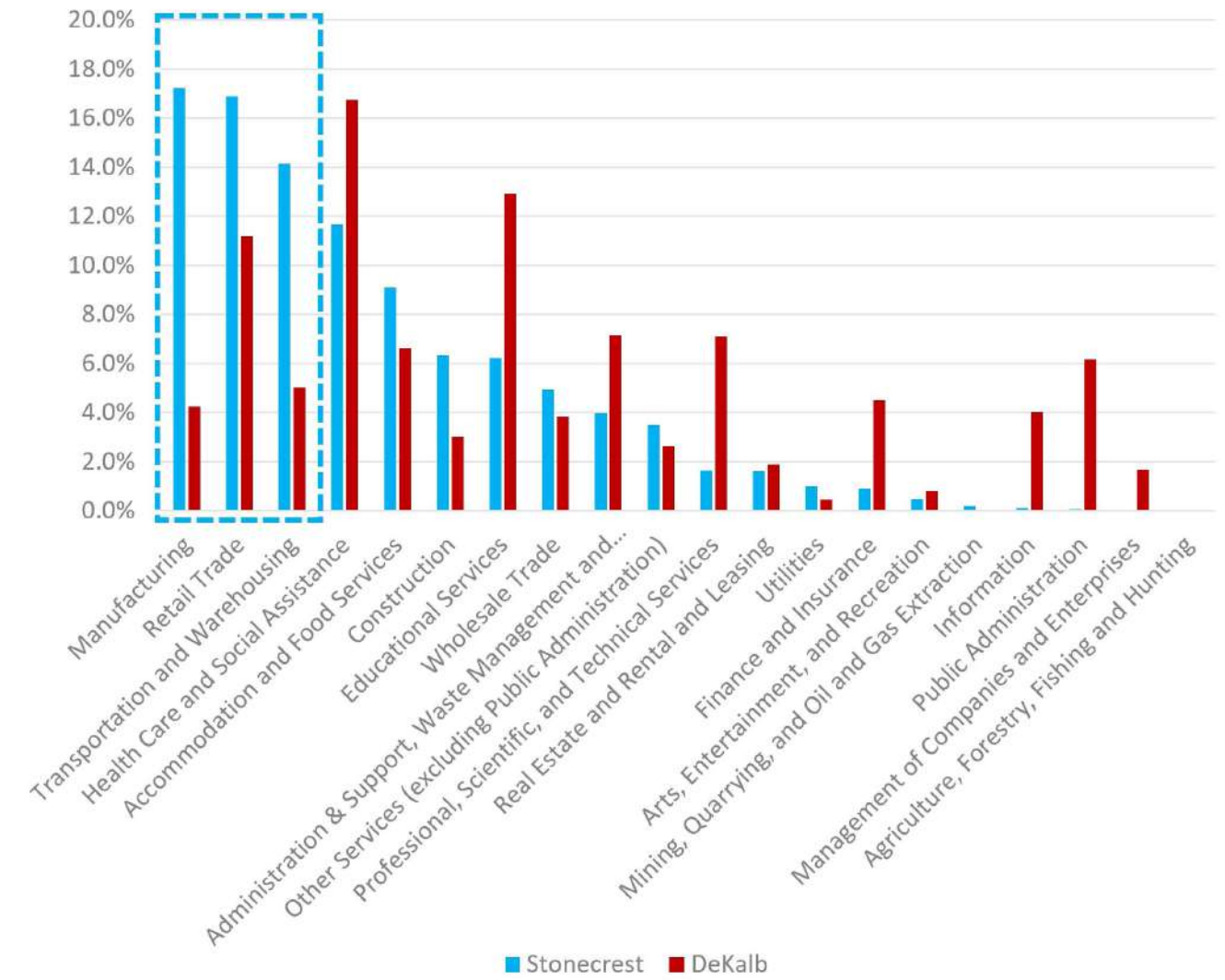


Figure 17. Comparison of Jobs by Industry, 2021
Source: LEHD on the Map

Job Density

The job density maps illustrate the distribution of employment within the City across its five primary industry sectors. A significant portion of employment opportunities in the City are concentrated around I-20 and major arterials, such as Lithonia Industrial Boulevard, Turner Hill Road, Covington Highway, and Stone Mountain Lithonia Road. Manufacturing and transportation and warehousing is primarily situated in the western and northern portions of the City, whereas retail trade, health care and social assistance, and accommodation and food services are predominantly clustered along I-20.

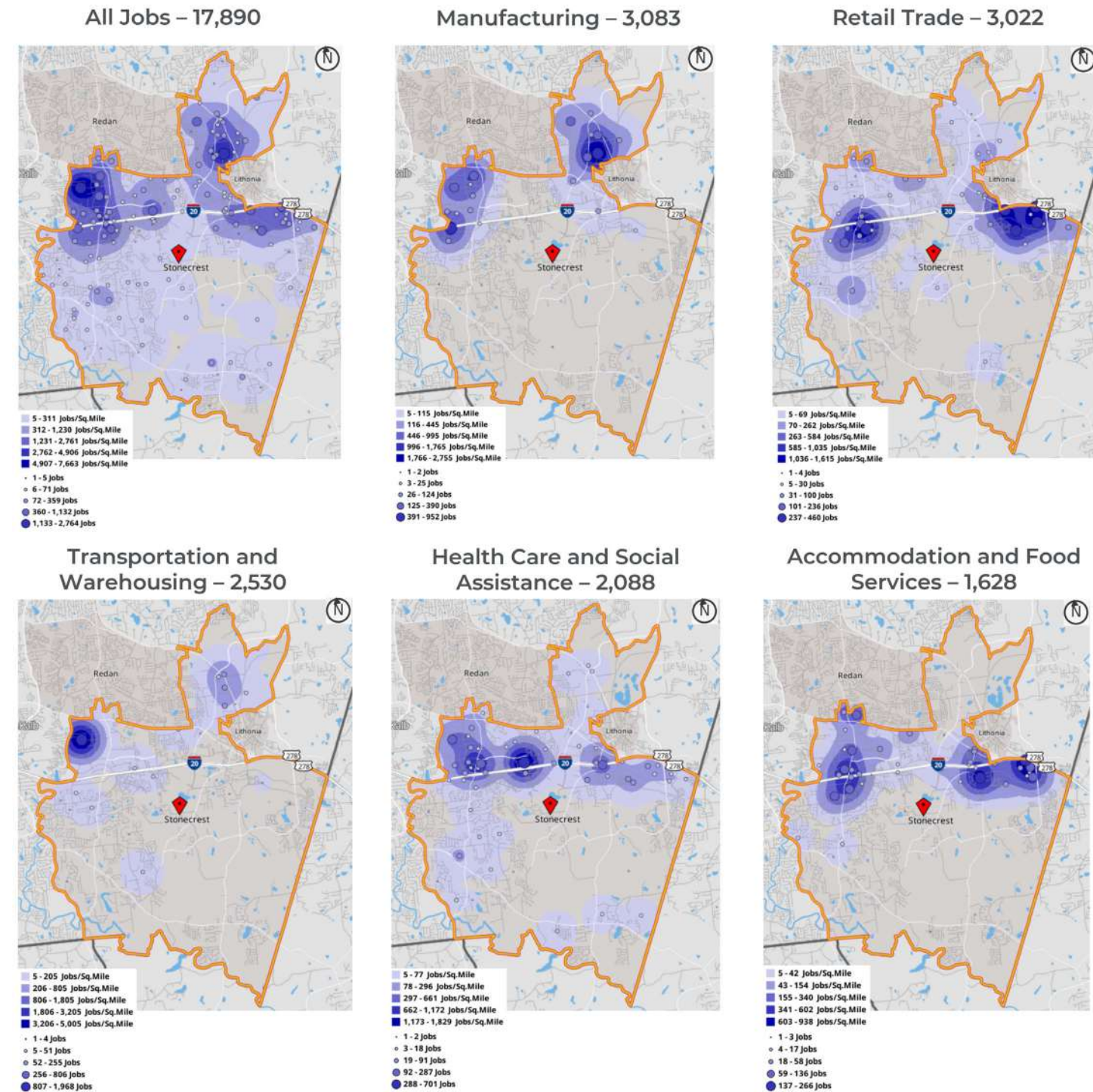


Figure 18. Job density maps
Source: LEHD on the Map

Vehicle Trips

Among its population of commuters, 16,776 individuals journey into Stonecrest daily, 1,114 residents contribute to the local workforce, while 21,261 people commute out of the city for their employment.

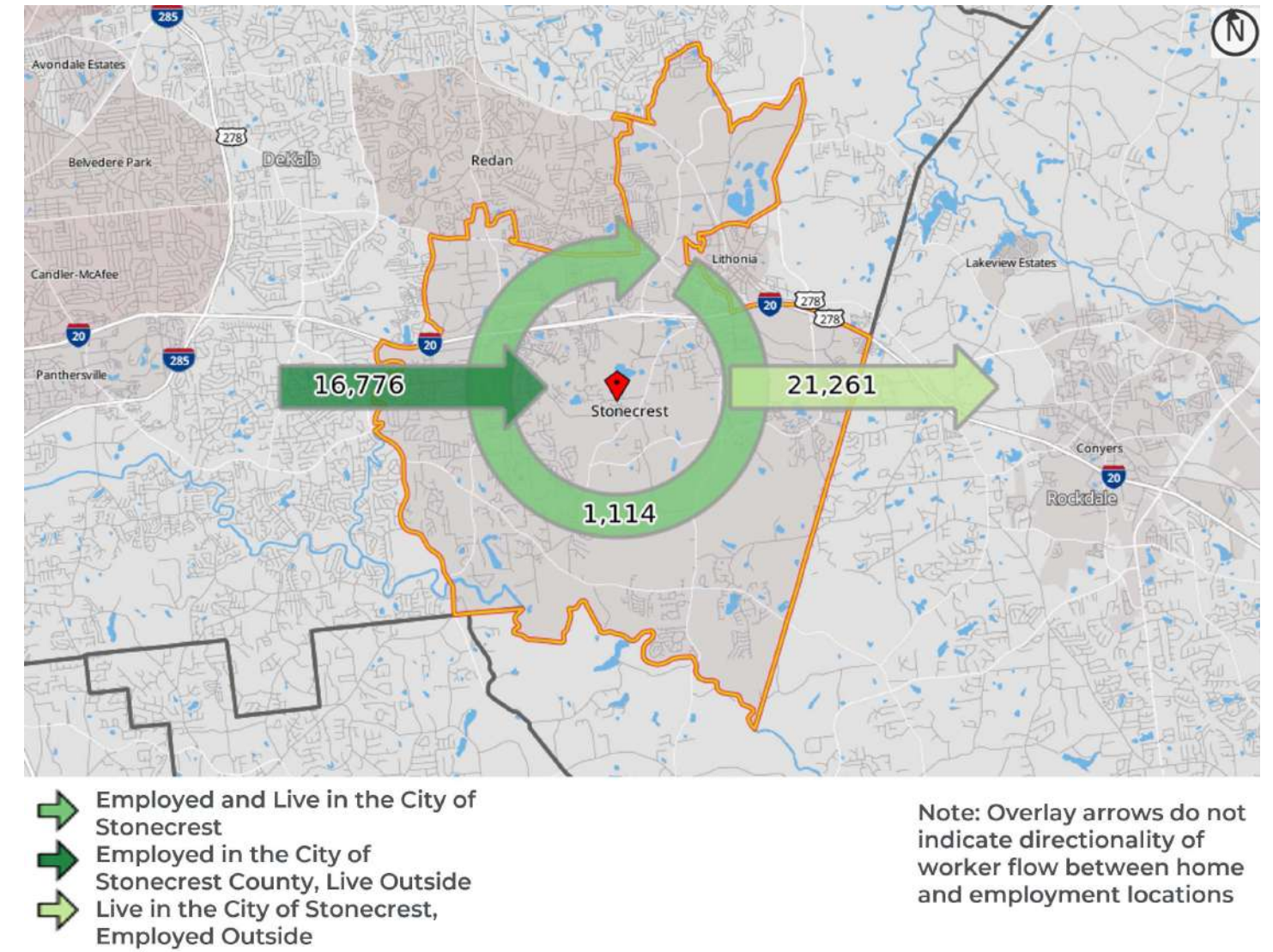


Figure 19. Employment Inflow-Outflow Map, 2021
Source: LEHD on the Map

Where Workers Live Who are Employed in Stonecrest

For the 16,776 individuals commuting into Stonecrest primarily originate from Fulton County (31.6%), DeKalb County (28.2%), and Gwinnett County (9.7%).

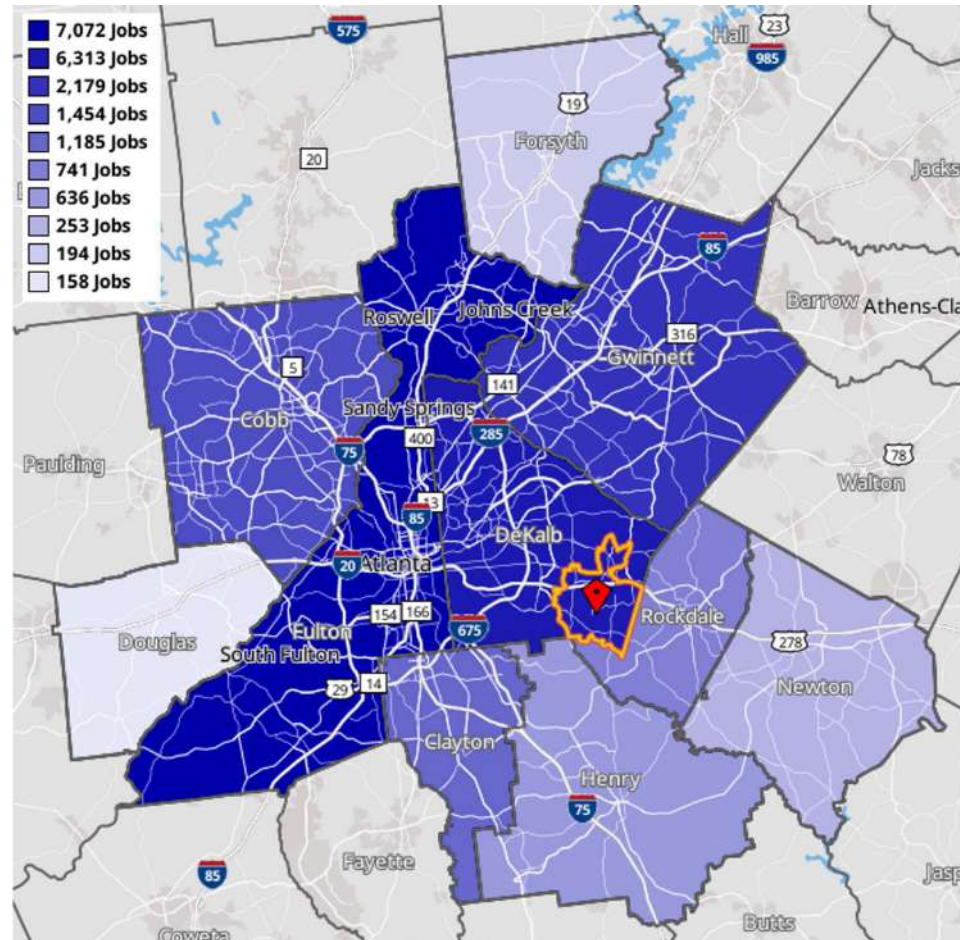
For the 1,114 residents who live and work within Stonecrest, their internal employment is distributed across various sectors. The majority, comprising 52.7%, find employment in all other services, while 23.9% are employed in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector, and 23.4% are employed in the Goods Producing industries.

Job Counts by Counties Where Workers Live

	2021	
	Count	Share
Fulton County	7,072	31.6%
DeKalb County	6,313	28.2%
Gwinnett County	2,179	9.7%
All Other Locations	6,811	30.4%

Figure 20. Job Counts by Counties Where Workers Live

Source: LEHD on the Map



Where People Who Live in Stonecrest are Commuting to for Work

For the 21,261 residents commuting out of the City of Stonecrest for work predominantly head northwest, seeking opportunities in other areas of DeKalb and Fulton County.

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2021 All Workers

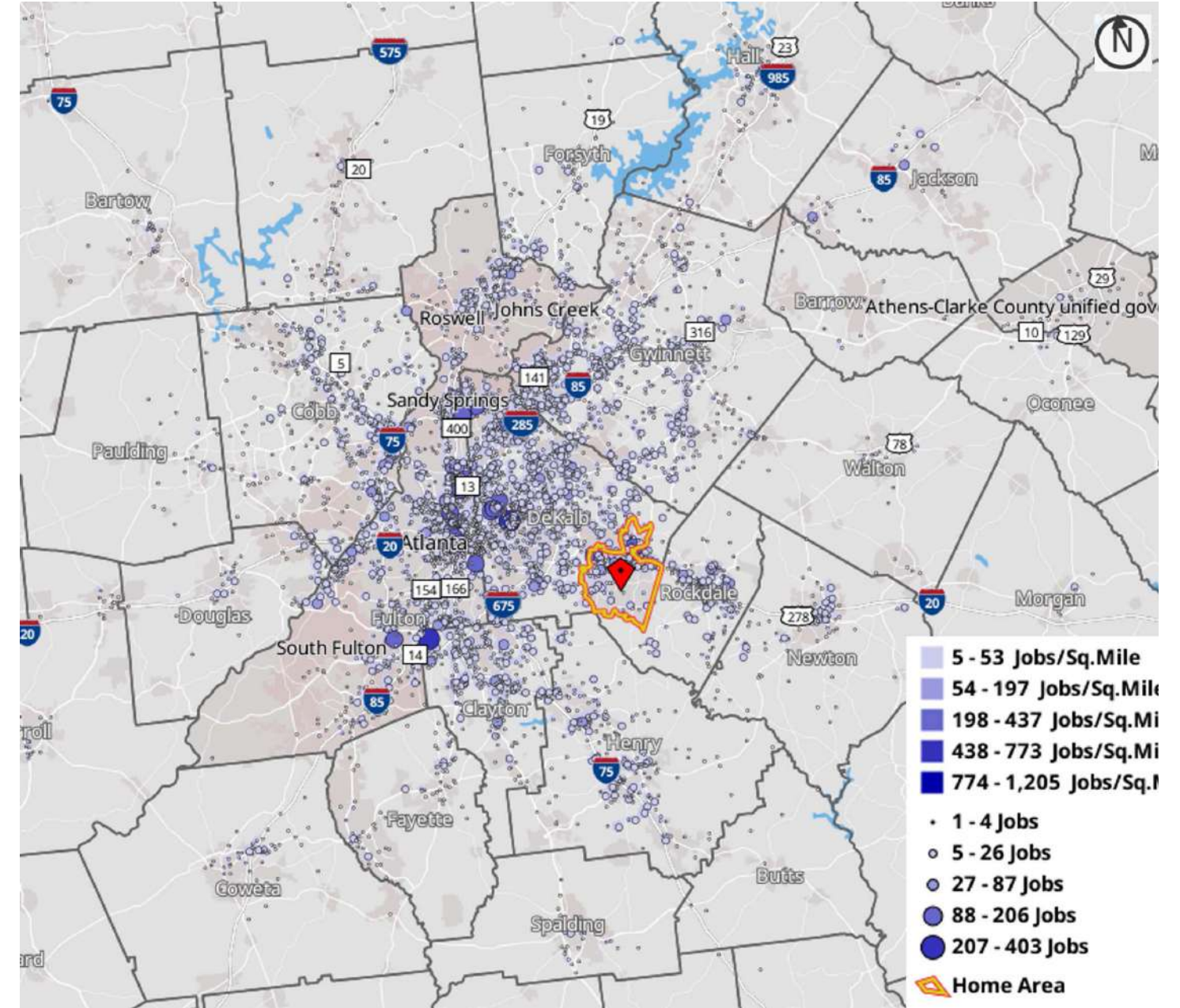
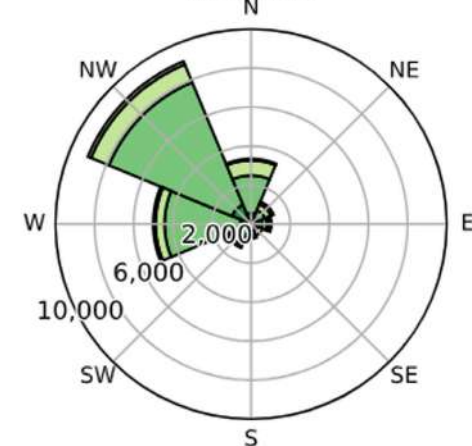


Figure 21. Where people who live in stonecrest are commuting to

Source: LEHD on the Map

Economic Strategy from Path Forward: City of Stonecrest Economic Development Plan, 2024

The City of Stonecrest Economic Development Plan, 2024, identified goals and initiatives to foster economic growth throughout the City. The plan includes recommendations derived from existing and future conditions, community input, stakeholder outreach, and previous planning efforts. As it relates to this comprehensive plan update, notable priority areas and relevant recommendations are included across the following categories: organizational infrastructure, marketing, land development, targeted economic sectors and industries, and workforce infrastructure.

The recommendations for organizational infrastructure encompass a proposal to create additional staff positions geared towards business attraction, recruitment, marketing, and organizing special events. The plan recommends leveraging the Stonecrest Development Authority to aid in desired development and redevelopment efforts, as well as establishing robust relationships with state and regional economic development agencies and organizations to foster collaboration and support. Additionally, there is an emphasis on collaborating with local entities such as the Stonecrest Chamber, Stonecrest Business Alliance, and educational institutions to bolster community engagement and partnerships. Furthermore, coordination with departments responsible for Planning and Zoning, as well as Finance, is recommended to ensure streamlined processes. The plan also explores the possibility of creating a Community Improvement District (CID) or Tax Allocation District (TAD) to further enhance economic development initiatives within the city.

Marketing recommendations include increasing engagement of the Communications Department to better incorporate the overall economic development vision into all marketing materials and developing marketing materials which showcase available programs and inventory.

Land development recommendations encourage the development of a City Center Master Plan, the establishment of a strong sense of identity, and a review of zoning districts to better accommodate desired development. The plan encourages higher density developments which address affordability and increase market demand for retail. The plan also suggests the creation of temporary public places or activities through tactical urbanism strategies.

Targeted economic sectors and industries called out in the plan focus on professional services, health care, film and entertainment, transportation and logistics, light manufacturing, retail, and the tourist trail.

Workforce infrastructure recommendations include collaboration with the Planning Department to preserve industrial areas and land designated for conservation, as well as conducting a survey of businesses and local employees to understand their housing concerns and preferences.

Additionally, alongside the Path Forward, the City of Stonecrest has developed an Economic Strategy derived from Stonecrest’s Film, Music, and Digital Entertainment Strategic Plan. This initiative aims to attract and retain film, music, and digital entertainment companies, reflecting the rapid expansion of this sector in Georgia and along the I-20 Corridor. Key strategies include aligning existing and future initiatives with the Stonecrest Film and Entertainment Commission, establishing an Entertainment District, developing a One-Stop Shop for entertainment-related licensing and regulations, and fostering partnerships with local creative industries, Arabia Mountain Alliance, and other relevant organizations.

Economic Key Takeaways

- Manufacturing represents the largest industry in Stonecrest constituting 17.2% of jobs.
- The majority of existing employment within the City is situated along Interstate 20 and other nearby roadways.
- There is a higher number of individuals commuting out of the City for work compared to those traveling into the City.
- The majority of those commuting to the City are from Fulton, DeKalb, and Gwinnett Counties.
- Those commuting out of the City are primarily traveling northwest to the region’s center and northern employment centers.



Caption: *View of Arabia Mountain*

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Roadway Functional Classification

Roadways are divided into categories based on the mobility and accessibility the roadway provides. The categories, depicted on the map on the following page, are:

- Interstates: highest classification, long distance travel, and high speeds
- Principal Arterial: serve major centers of metropolitan areas
- Minor Arterial: connected to principal arterials and provide connectivity to smaller geographical areas
- Major Collector: move traffic through residential, commercial, and industrial areas
- Local Road: direct access to abutting land at lower speeds

Within City of Stonecrest, Interstate 20 runs through the Northern portion of the City, and there is one principal arterial, Snapfinger Rd. Stonecrest has eight minor arterials, including: Browns Mill Rd, Evans Mill Rd, Panola Rd, Covington Hwy, Klondike Rd, Rockland Rd/Turner Hill Rd, Lithonia Industrial Blvd, and S Stone Mountain Lithonia Rd.

Level of Service

Level of Service (LOS) grades how close a roadway is to allowing free flow of traffic. LOS A-D are usually considered acceptable in urban areas. The maps below display level of service throughout the city at rush hour in the morning and evening.

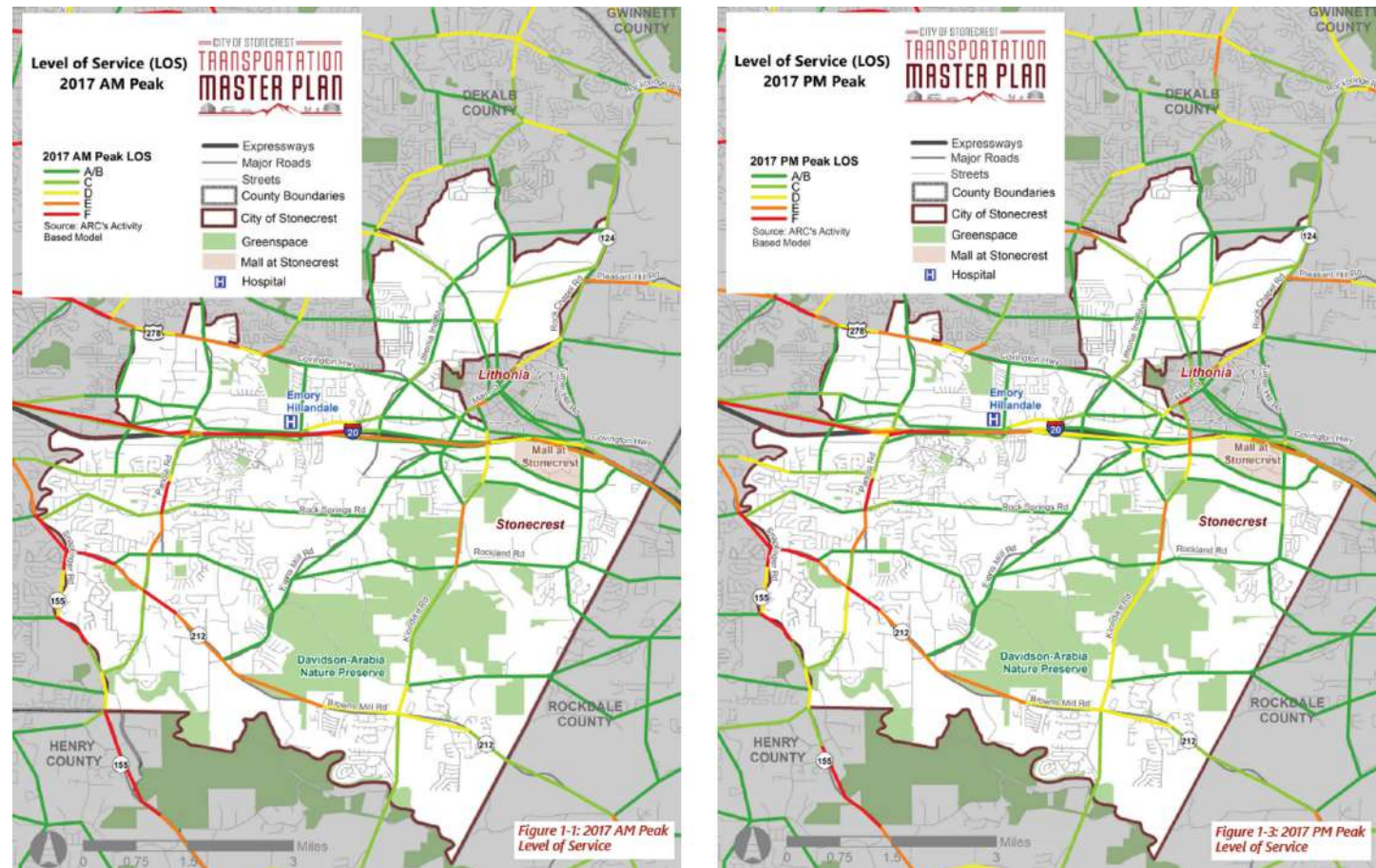


Figure 22. Level of Service AM and PM, 2017
Source: Stonecrest Transportation Master Plan

Roadway Functional Classification Map

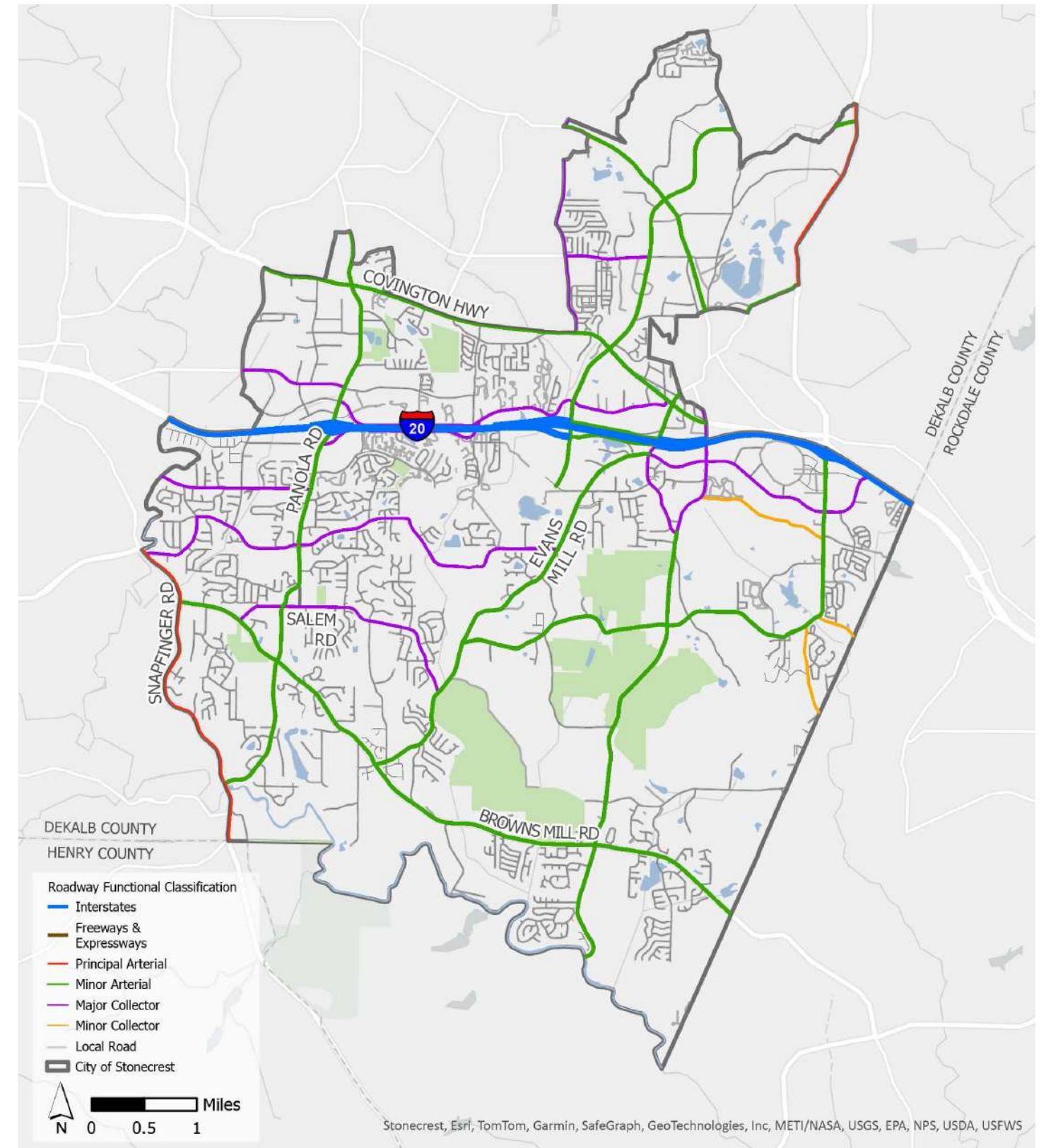


Figure 23. Roadway Functional Classification
Source: GDOT, ESRI, FHWA

Existing Transit Routes

MARTA and Xpress provide transit service throughout Stonecrest as shown in the map. MARTA runs a total of 5 local routes, while Xpress has three commuter routes.

MARTA Bus Routes (5):

- Route 86 – Fairington Road
- Route 111 – Snapfinger Woods
- Route 115 – Covington Highway
- Route 116 – Redan Road
- Route 117 – Rockbridge Road/Panola Road

Xpress Bus (3)

- Route 423 – E Conyer/W Conyer/Panola - MT
- Route 426 – E Conyer/W Conyer/Panola - DT
- Route 428 – W Conyers/Panola – Perimeter

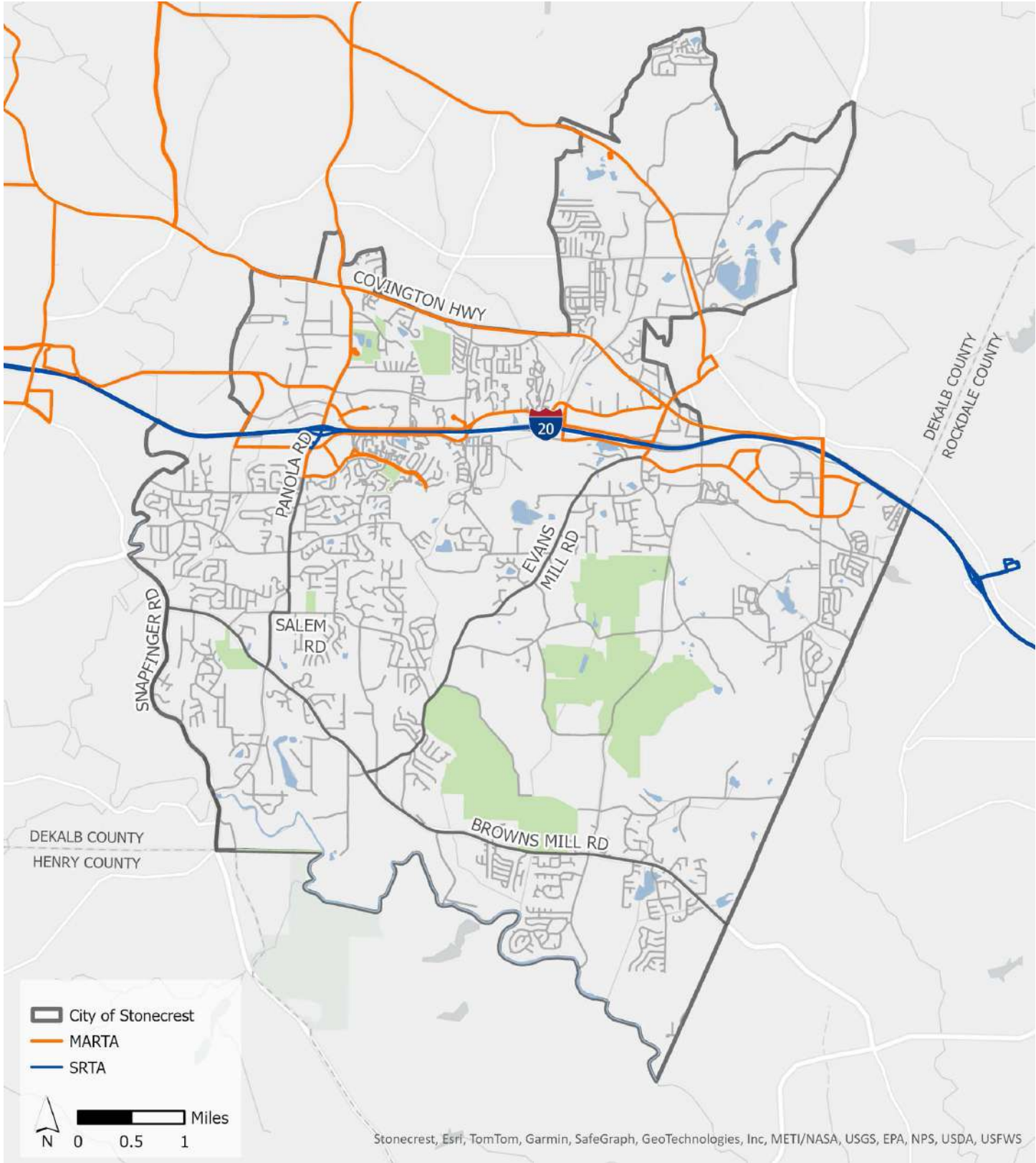


Figure 24. Existing transit routes
Source: GDOT, ESRI, FHWA

Transit Ridership

The Mall at Stonecrest stop sees more than 15 times as much total ridership as any other stop in the city. Covington Highway also sees significant ridership.

Top 10 stops by total boarding (on)/alighting (off)

(Dec 2022 – Apr 2023)

1. Mall at Stonecrest (1,037)
2. Fairington Road/Chupp Way, Route 86 WB (63)
3. Covington Highway/DeKalb Medical Parkway (62)
4. Hillandale Drive/Hillandale Park Drive (57)
5. Covington Highway/Panola Road, Route 115 WB (53)
6. Covington Highway/Phillips Road, Route 115 WB (50)
7. Fairington Road/Walmart Drive (49)
8. Covington Highway/Panola Road, Route 115 EB (48)
9. Covington Highway/Phillips Road, Route 115 EB (45)
10. Fairington Road/Chupp Way, Route 86 EB (41)

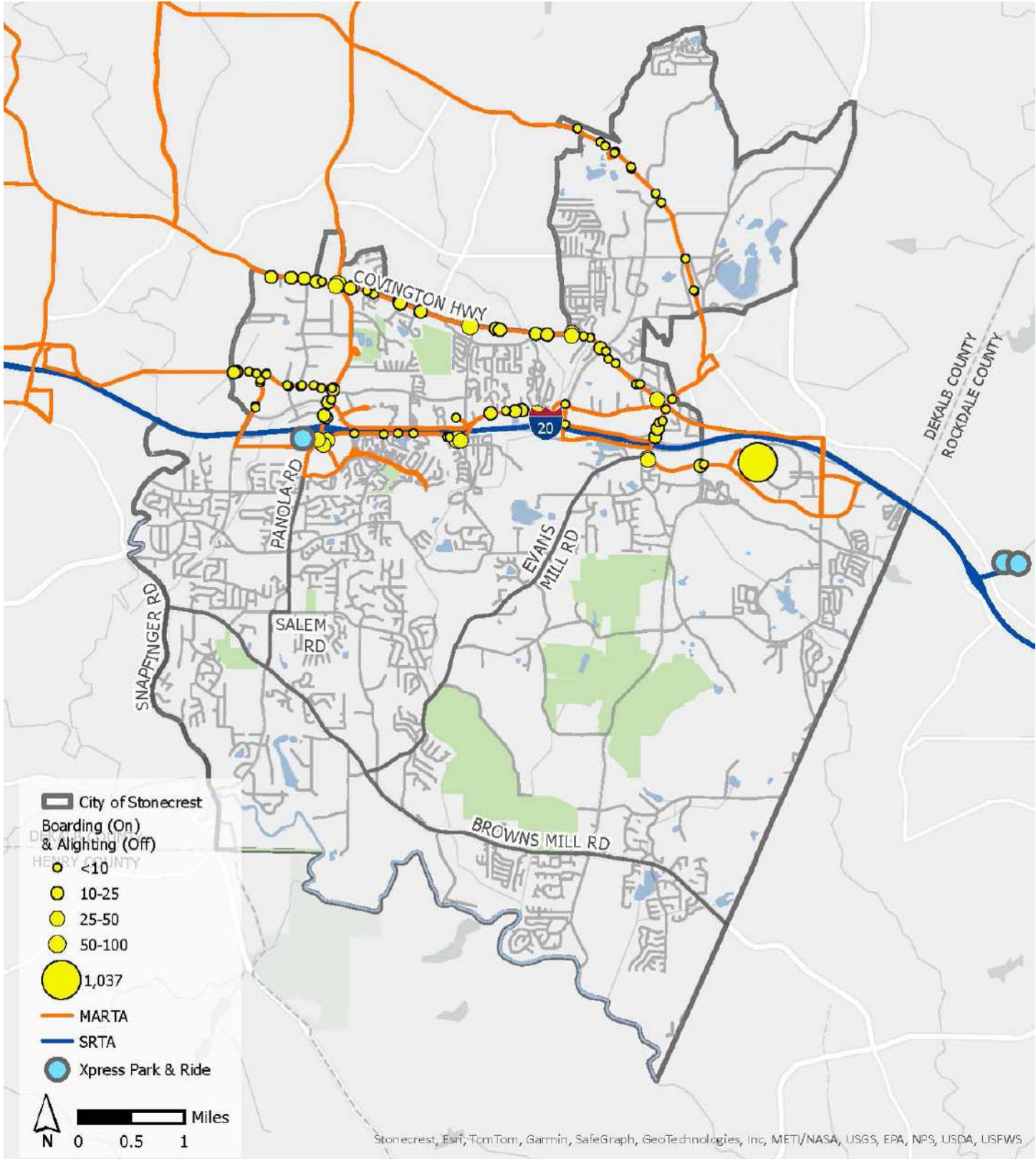


Figure 25. Transit Ridership
Source: GDOT, ESRI, FHWA

All Crash Data

Top 10 Intersections:

1. Phillip Bradley Dr and Fairington Parkway
2. Easterly Place and Panola Industrial Boulevard
3. Hillvale Road and DeKalb Medical Parkway
4. Covington Highway and Panola Road
5. Covington Highway and Lithonia Industrial Boulevard
6. Panola Road and Walden Brook Drive
7. Snapfinger Woods Drive and Snapfinger Woods Drive
8. Fairington Parkway and Fairington Parkway
9. Covington Highway and DeKalb Medical Parkway
10. Evans Mill Road and Mall Parkway

Crashes Involving Freight:

- 8% of all crashes
- 10% of all fatal and serious injury crashes

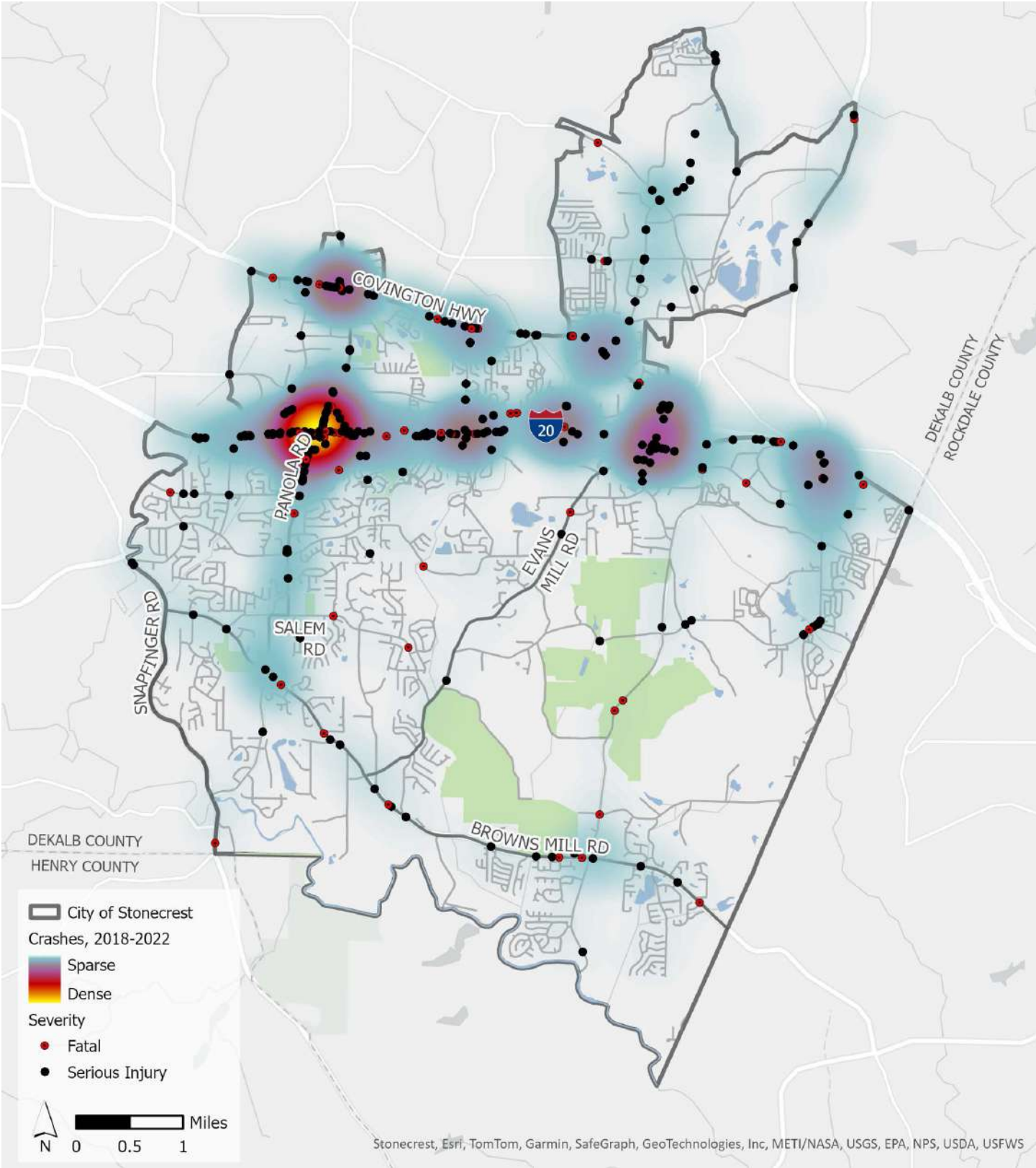


Figure 26. All Crashes in Stonecrest
Source: AASHTOWare, 2018 – 2022

Bicycle/Pedestrian Crash Data

Bicycle/pedestrian crashes are focused along Panola Boulevard, Covington Highway, and at major intersections across the city. Though only 1% of crashes involve pedestrians, 14% of fatal crashes involve them. There were 183 pedestrian crashes (49 fatal or serious injury/353 total), and 15 bicycle crashes (2 fatal or serious injury/353 total).

Top Intersections for Bicycle/Pedestrian Crashes:

1. Covington Highway at Panola Road (15 crashes, 2 fatal)
2. Chupp Way at Fairington Road (5 crashes)
3. Evans Mill Road at Hillandale Drive/Davidson Drive (5 crashes)
4. Chupp Road/Covington Highway/Evans Mill Road (5 crashes)
5. DeKalb Medical Parkway at Covington Highway (6 crashes, 1 fatal)

Crashes Involving Bicyclists/Pedestrians accounts for:

- 1% of all crashes
- 14% of all fatal and serious injury crashes

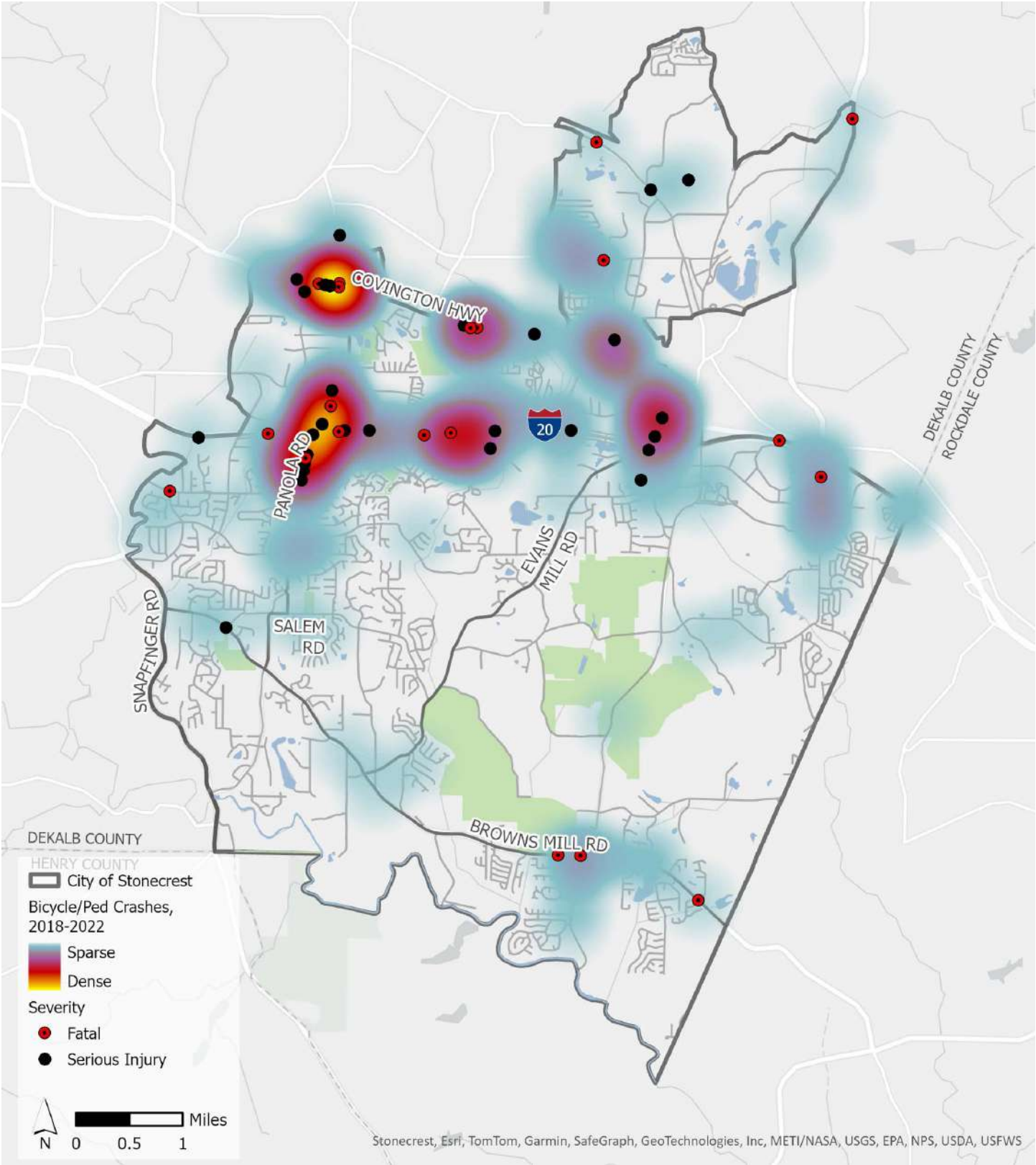


Figure 27. Bike and Pedestrian Crashes
 Source: AASHTOWare, 2018 – 2022

Bicycle and Trail Master Plan

The City of Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Plan consists of 76 bicycle and trail projects, including:

- Shared-Use Paths
- Neighborhood Greenways
- Sharrows
- Protected Bicycle Lanes
- Cul-de-Sac Connectors/New Connections

The map includes existing trails, bikeways, and soft trails throughout the City as well. Beyond internal connections to key points of interest within the City, the planned trails and paths also connect to trails in neighboring jurisdictions. This includes Rockdale County to the east, linking additional portions of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area and Stone Mountain to the north. These new trail connections will support improvement quality of life within Stone Crest, offering additional recreational and connectivity options for the community.

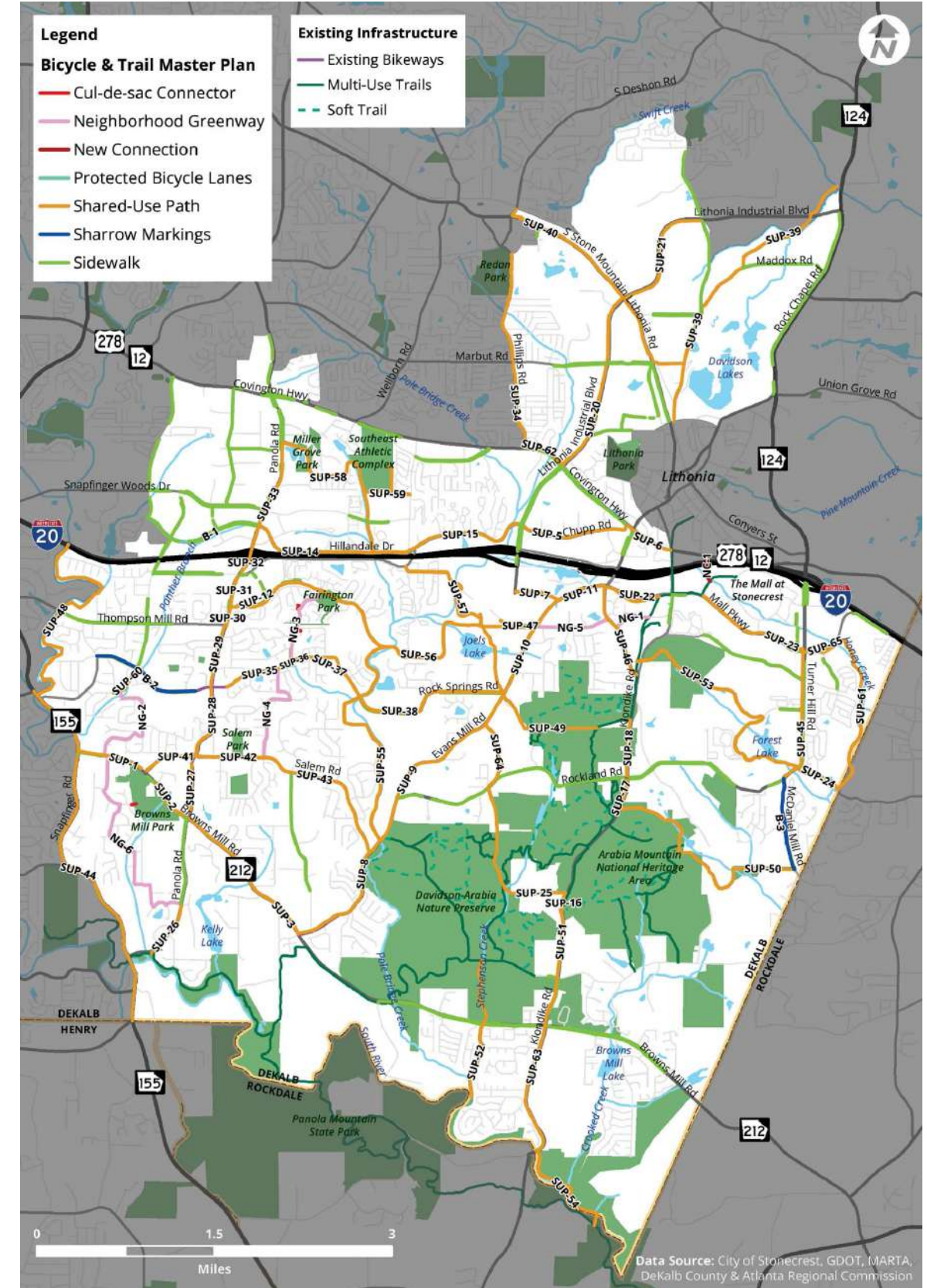


Figure 28. Existing and proposed bike and trail connections
 Source: City of Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Plan

Sidewalk Master Plan

The Sidewalk Master Plan expands on proposed trails, existing trails, and existing sidewalks to develop citywide connectivity for pedestrians. It consists of 75 projects spanning 41 miles.

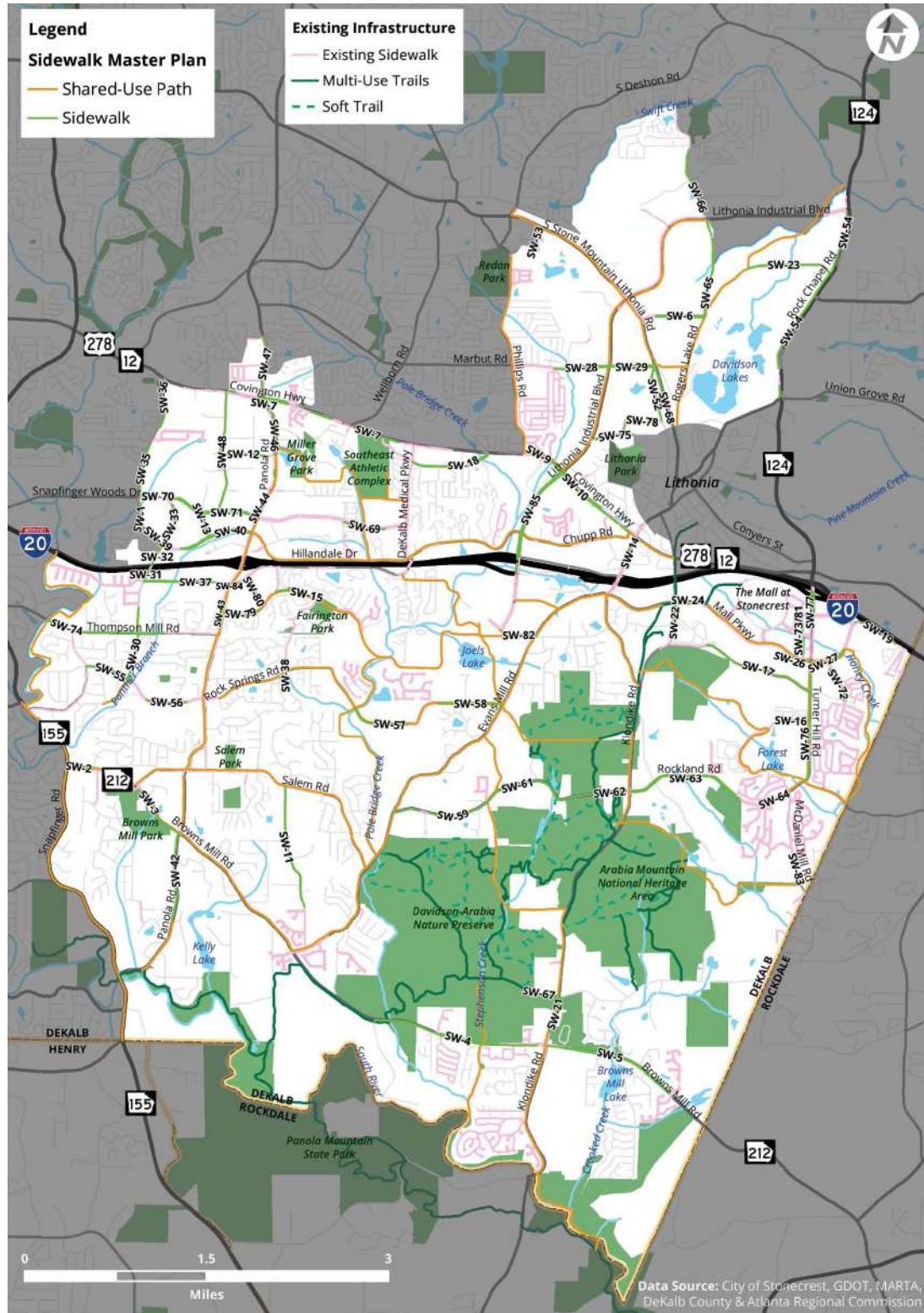


Figure 29. Sidewalk Master Plan
Source: City of Stonecrest Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Plan



Caption: View of a cyclist in front of Vaughters Farm

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public involvement is a key component of any planning effort and is critical for successfully understanding the community's vision, goals, and needs. As such, this process utilized a variety of techniques and levels of involvement to gain a complete understanding of existing conditions, community goals and values, needs and opportunities, and desires for the future. A range of tools and techniques were used in the planning process, including traditional community meetings and presentations, as well as online, digital engagement. These opportunities allowed for broad public involvement and promoted inclusion, ensuring that the community's voice was heard and incorporated into the plan.

As detailed below, this process included both traditional and non-traditional techniques to reach broad and diverse audiences. Additionally, a variety of means were used to promote and encourage engagement including:

- Distribution of press releases the City of Stonecrest Communications Department.
- Distribution of announcements via the City of Stonecrest social media channels.
- Distribution of information by the City of Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee members.
- Distribution of information by Stonecrest City Council members.
- Distribution of flyers to city spaces and community facilities.
- Outreach to principals and counselors at all middle schools within the city boundaries.
- Distribution of weekly email campaign to outreach database.
- Outreach to principals, counselors, and parent/student liaisons at all high schools within the city boundaries.
- Posting of planning process information on City of Stonecrest website.
- Posting of all meeting announcements and summaries on the project website.
- Targeted emails to U.S. and state level elected officials.
- Targeted Facebook campaigns to all Stonecrest residents.
- Targeted Facebook campaigns to Stonecrest residents specifically ages 18 – 35 years old.

This section expands on the various engagement tools, techniques, and methods that were used throughout the planning process.



Caption: Project Manager Randy G. Gibbs presenting the comprehensive plan process during a community meeting

Source: Paul D McPherson Jr Photography

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS AND OPEN HOUSES

A total of seven public workshops and open houses were hosted between January and April 2024. These public workshops and open houses were hosted at key stages in the planning process to educate and gain feedback from stakeholders in and around the City. Each meeting series prioritized different aspects of the comprehensive planning process, and exercises were developed and available at the events to provide attendees with knowledge about the project and encourage active participation in the process.

Community Kick Off

The first public meeting was hosted at the Browns Mill Recreation Center on January 25, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM and officially kicked off the project, introducing the project’s intent, process and schedule. A total of 32 individuals signed into this meeting. It was also an opportunity to collect input on existing conditions and the previous Comprehensive Plan’s strategies, as well as launch the project website (stonecrest2038.com) and its associated community survey and interactive map. A presentation was delivered to the public followed by an interactive workshop with ten activity boards. For eight of the activity boards, each participant was given sticky notes and directed to write down different needs and opportunities they support and want prioritized within the following nine goal categories displayed on the board. Participants could also respond to the goals identified in the 2019 comprehensive plan to determine if they were still relevant:

- **Economic Development:** What are the current conditions of economic well-being and prosperity (i.e. workforce development, business attraction, educational services, etc.)?
- **Housing:** What are the current conditions and quality of housing (i.e. renter vs owner-occupied balance, housing type diversity and distribution, etc.)?
- **Historic Resources:** What are the current conditions of historic resources (i.e. historic structures, historic homes, cemeteries, etc.)?
- **Natural Resources:** What are the current conditions and quality of natural resources (i.e. parks, trails, wetlands, etc.)?
- **Population:** What are the conditions of the city’s current and future population (i.e. anticipated growth, diversity, distribution, etc.)?
- **Land Use:** What are the current conditions of land use (i.e. mix of uses, amenity and resource accessibility, sense of identity and place, etc.)?
- **Transportation:** What are the current conditions of transportation (i.e. transit accessibility, walkability and pedestrian safety, connectivity, etc.)?
- **City Services & Facilities:** What are the current conditions of city services and facilities (i.e. public works, waste collection, water management, etc.)?



Caption: Community members participating during a Stonecrest community meeting
Source: Paul D McPherson Jr Photography

Participants were given dot stickers and asked to indicate locations where they would like to see more development. Participants placed colored dots on the designated locations on the study area map provided on the presentation board with the prompt:

- Where are the development opportunities (i.e. land use, transportation, housing, economic development, nature, historic preservation, etc.)?



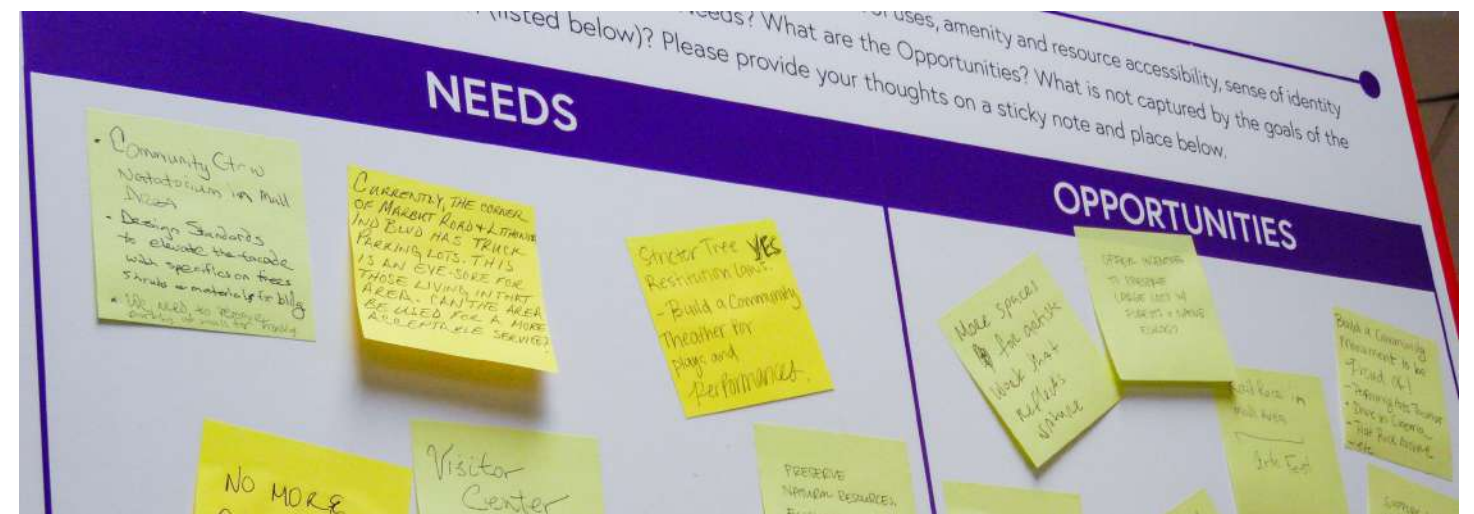
Caption: View of development opportunity comments left by participants at a community engagement event



Caption: View of transportation opportunity comments left by participants at a community engagement event

Participants were also given sticky notes and asked to provide their thoughts on the focus of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Participants wrote down their responses to the following prompt:

- What is your vision for the City of Stonecrest? What is not captured by the previous vision statement (below)? Please provide your thoughts on a sticky note and place below.
 - o The 2019 Comprehensive Plan Vision: “Community, Commerce and Culture working together as a world class city.”



Caption: View of comments left on a goal board at a community meeting

Public Meeting Series

The Public Meeting Series consisted of five sessions, one in each City council district, as follows:

- Meeting #1: Dope Coffee Brewery & Roastery (February 8, 2024)
- Meeting #2: Stonecrest Public Library (February 20, 2024)
- Meeting #3: Fairington Elementary School (February 22, 2024)
- Meeting #4: Browns Mill Recreation Center (February 27, 2024)
- Meeting #5: New Birth Missionary Baptist Church (February 29, 2024)

A total of 95 people signed into all of the meetings, collectively. The purpose of this series of public meetings was to get more detailed input from the community on the previous plan’s goals and strategies, and to identify areas of challenge and opportunity in regard to land use and transportation. Each meeting began with a presentation followed by an interactive workshop with the same needs and opportunities boards presented at the first meeting for input on the Comprehensive Plan elements and vision statement. Two large maps were also presented to the community. One map displayed Stonecrest’s current future land use map (FLUM) and highlighted areas where potential FLUM changes would be recommended. Participants were given sticky notes and asked to provide their thoughts on these highlighted areas and indicate other potential development nodes. The other map displayed the City’s road network. Participants were asked to provide their thoughts on mobility challenges throughout the city.

The boards and maps served as a SWOT Analysis, asking for public input on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats within the city. The input received at this juncture not only provided a framework for understanding the current state of the community, but also provided critical input into the development of the goals-centric plan update and new community work program items.



Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting

Draft Plan Open House

The Draft Plan Open House was hosted at Stonecrest City Hall on April 4, 2024, and also streamed live via the City’s YouTube channel. A total of 20 individuals signed into this meeting. The purpose of the Draft Plan Open House was to review the draft vision statements, future land use map changes, and new goals/comprehensive plan elements proposed by the project team. The community could also provide more detailed input about potential community work program items. This session began with a presentation followed by an open house period, allowing the public to review and react to the display boards.

Pop-Up Event

In an effort to reach a younger demographic (ages 18 – 35) as well as residents who do not traditionally participate in public planning processes, a pop up event was staged at the Mall at Stonecrest Food Court on April 11, 2024. A total of 15 individuals stopped to provide feedback and ask questions during this outreach opportunity. Presentation boards shown at the Draft Plan Open House were displayed and visitors were engaged in conversations about the information shown. As many of the attendees were new to the comprehensive planning process, this pop up provided the perfect venue for educating the community.



Caption: View of Mayor Cobble presenting at a community meeting



Caption: Pop-event held at Stonecrest Mall

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interviews help to further an understanding of the needs that are most important to the community and the opportunities that may exist. They also helped to validate and clarify findings by serving as an outlet for more focused conversations. Interviews were hosted throughout the Community Assessment and Needs and Opportunities phases. A total of twelve stakeholders were consulted between February and March 2024. This feedback was crucial to help guide the Comprehensive Plan in reflecting a wide and representative variety of wants, needs, and desires within the City of Stonecrest.

Below is the list of key stakeholder interviewees:

- Hon. Jazzmin Cobble, Mayor of Stonecrest
- Hon. George Turner, Mayor Pro Tem
- Council Members
- Shawanna Qawiy, Planning and Zoning Director
- Christian Green, Economic Development Director
- Hari Karikaran, City Engineer and Public Works
- Property Owners
- Small Business Owners
- DeKalb County Police Department
- DeKalb County Watershed Management
- Arabia Mountain Alliance
- Atlanta Regional Commission



Caption: View of community meeting held at Dope Coffee

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Stonecrest Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was comprised of city staff members, elected officials, and key community stakeholders who provided guidance, input, and feedback during the planning process. The project team hosted three meetings with the Steering Committee, who provided a wide range of perspectives and offered a broad outlook on the overall development of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The meetings took place in December of 2023 and February and April of 2024. Below is the list of the steering committee members:

- Hon. Jazzmin Cobble, Mayor of Stonecrest
- Hon. George Turner, Mayor Pro Tem
- Alan Burnette, Community Representative
- Martha Carter, District #3 Representative
- Revonda Cosby, Arabia Mountain Alliance
- Antonio Davis, District #1 Representative
- Eric Hubbard, Planning Commission Chairperson
- Shelbia Jackson, Decide DeKalb
- Dave Marcus, Community Representative
- Jen Schuck, Emory DeKalb Hospital-Emory Hillandale Hospital
- Aundre Stanton, District #5 Representative
- Erica Williams, Planning Commission District #1



Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Online engagement provides a convenient way to engage with the public and to share information. During the first phase of engagement a project website (stonecrest2038.com) was launched as an online hub and central location for project information including an overview and schedule, outreach event announcements, and a robust document library. The site also hosted several engagement activities – a community needs survey, interactive map, community forum, and vision and goals survey – as a convenient way to engage with the public and collect feedback on issues that could influence the comprehensive plan’s visions and goals. Additionally, timely and strategic content was posted on the City’s social media channels as calls to action for engagement opportunities and events.

Online Community Needs Survey and Interactive Map

An online survey and interactive map were launched to collect feedback on issues relating to the City of Stonecrest. Both the survey and the map remained available for feedback from January 22, 2024 until March 15, 2024; each received 161 and 90 responses, respectively. The results from these activities were incorporated into the updated vision and goals for the plan.

Stakeholders and the general public were encouraged to access the community survey through the project website. The community survey was divided into sections based on the major topic areas identified in the previous comprehensive plan (housing, transportation, economic development, and land use). Each section began by presenting a preselected list of priorities derived from the previous comprehensive plan and asked respondents to rank those priorities on a scale from one (low priority) to five (high priority). Respondents then had an opportunity to identify their top priority in a few words before continuing to the remainder of the section-specific questions. Respondents were also asked about their demographic information at the end of the survey.

Similarly, the community contributed to the interactive map by leaving a comment and sharing their thoughts about the City of Stonecrest across six categories (Destinations/Hotspots; Development Concerns; Mobility Issues; Parks and Greenspace; Safety Concerns; Other Ideas and Suggestion). They accomplished this by zooming the map to the area of concern, clicking “Add Comment” at the top of the webpage, deciding which pin category most closely aligned with their comment or concern, and then dragging that pin to the location and dropping it. After placing the pin, they added comments to provide more information and had the option to upload a photo to support the comment or provide an example of a good solution.



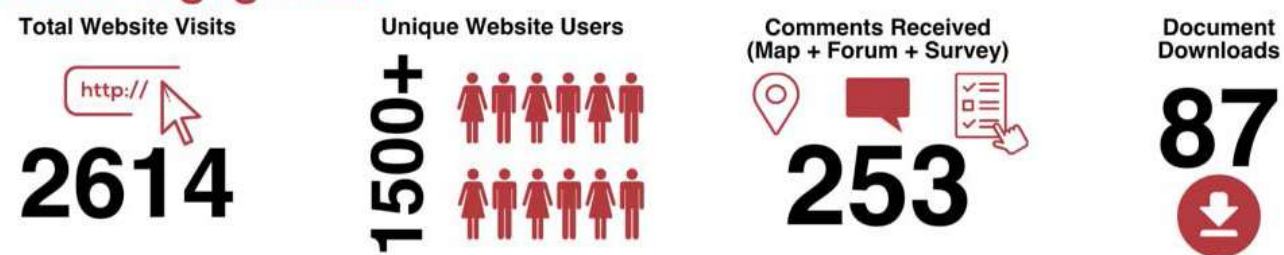
Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting



Caption: Vision of Stonecrest word cloud from digital engagement

Online Engagement Summary

Website Engagement



Targeted Outreach Methods

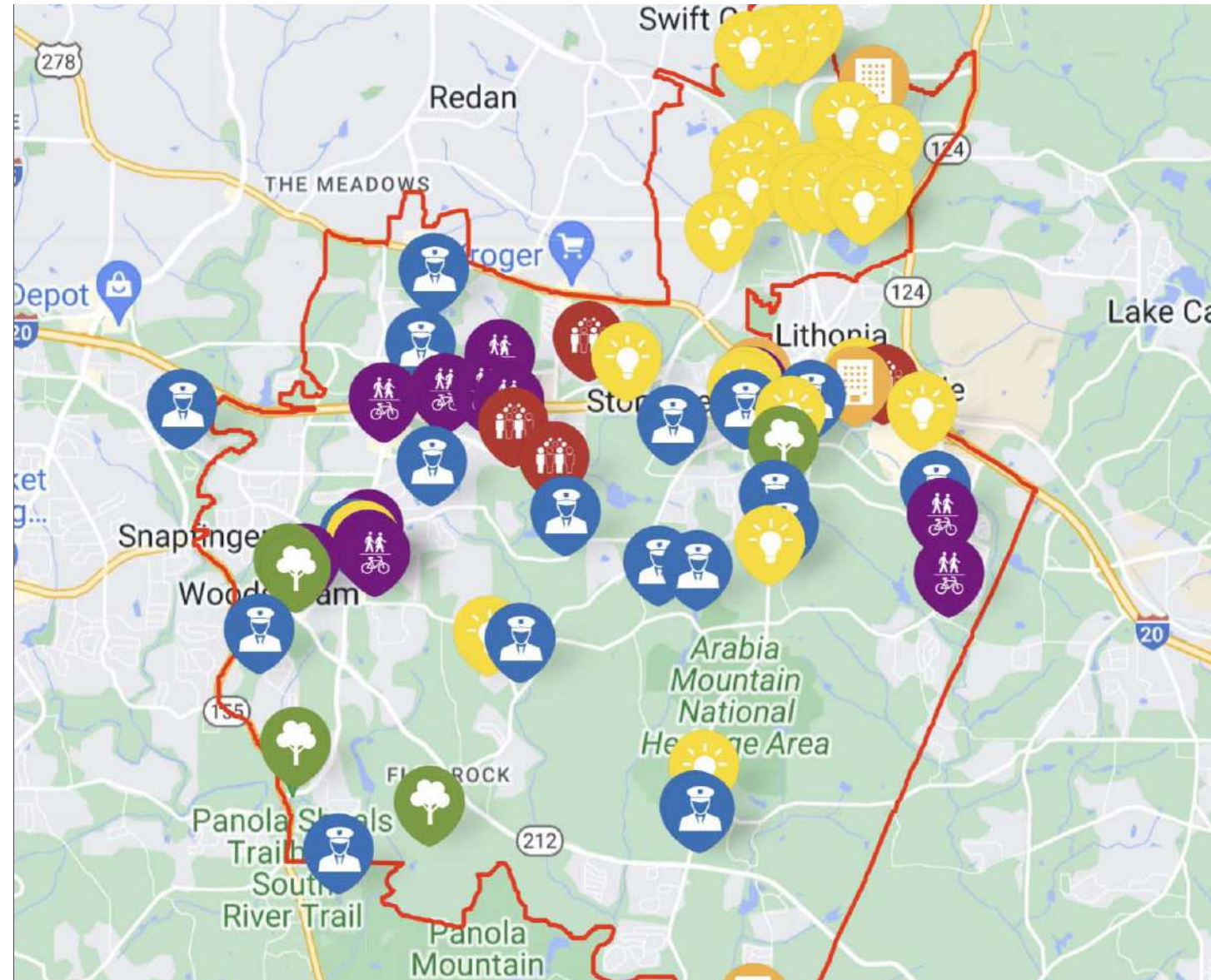


Community Forum

An online community forum was established to collect feedback on the issues and opportunities for housing, population, economic development, transportation, land use, city services and facilities, historic resources, and natural and cultural resources. This information was identical to the display boards shown at the first public meeting and provided a place for users to leave comments and read comments left by other participants. The forum remained available for feedback from February 26, 2024, until March 15, 2024. Collected comments were incorporated into the updated vision and goals for the plan.

Online Vision and Goals Survey

A second online survey was launched to collect feedback on the draft mission, vision and goals statements. This survey remained available for feedback from April 9, 2024 until April 30, 2024. Collected comments were incorporated into the updated vision and goals for the plan.



Caption: SocialPinPoint mapping exercise results

CITY OF STONECREST MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

This Comprehensive Plan update process began with an initial presentation to the Planning Commission on January 2, 2024 and a formal presentation to the Stonecrest City Council by way of Public Hearing on January 22, 2024. These municipal meetings served as the official kick-off to the planning process with the public.

After the Draft Plan Open House and Mall at Stonecrest Pop Up events, a series of adoption hearings was hosted to provide additional opportunities for public input:

- Plan Adoption Hearing #1: Community Planning Information Meeting (May 9, 2024)
- Plan Adoption Hearing #2: Planning Commission Meeting (June 4, 2024)
- Plan Adoption Hearing #3: Transportation, Infrastructure, Parks, SPLOST Committee (June 12, 2024)

Finally, the plan was presented to the Stonecrest City Council at the June 26, 2024 meeting for final adoption.



Caption: View of Project Manager Randy G. Gibbs presenting at a community meeting

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

From the community meetings, stakeholder interviews, pop-events, and online survey efforts, Stonecrest's residents, business owners, and interested parties of the City of Stonecrest provided their voice to the process. Here are some of the common refrains from what the consultant team heard during the plan development process.

STONECREST NEEDS TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH ITSELF AS A CITY OF THE FUTURE AND ONE THAT TAKES SUSTAINABILITY SERIOUSLY.

CITY NEEDS TO LOOK GOOD FROM THE INTERSTATE.

CITY NEEDS MORE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND BETTER STREETS MORE ACTIVITIES.

STONECREST NEEDS "A HEART", AN ICONIC DOWNTOWN SPACE FOR THE CITY.

WE NEED LIVE, WORK, PLAY COMMUNITIES WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

I SINCERELY PRAY THAT STONECREST BECOMES THE WORLD CLASS CITY THAT HAS BEEN SPOKEN OF FOR SO LONG. WE AS RESIDENTS, BUSINESS OWNERS, AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS DESERVE QUALITY LIFE AND AMENITIES IN A THRIVING, SAFE COMMUNITY.

WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO TRACK THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND CONTINUED INCLUSION OF THE CITY'S PLANNING PROCESS.

STONECREST NEEDS MORE RESTAURANTS, FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT VENUES, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND THINGS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO DO.

KEEP DENSITY AND MULTI-USE BY I-20. ARABIA MOUNTAIN AND SOUTH RIVER AREAS SHOULD REMAIN UNDEVELOPED.

WE NEED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN SO WE DON'T HAVE TO TRAVEL FAR FROM OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

PROTECT ARABIA MOUNTAIN AND THE SOUTH RIVER.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AGRITOURISM AND WAYS TO ENJOY NATURAL LANDSCAPE.

WE WANT TO ATTRACT HIGHER QUALITY BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY/RETAIL SHOPPING IN OUR AREA.

MORE MARTA AVAILABILITY. INCREASE LOCAL SHUTTLES.

Community Engagement Key Takeaways

Throughout the course of the community engagement opportunities, several common themes rose to the top as key community concerns, needs, and opportunities. These key community engagement takeaways, combined with data collected during the existing conditions analysis and community input regarding the needs and opportunities in the City of Stonecrest help to inform the community work program, which is at the core of the Comprehensive Plan. The following key takeaways are based on the summary of community input provided during the planning process.

- **Strategic Planning and Accountability:** There is a strong emphasis on developing and adhering to a strategic plan for the growth and development of Stonecrest. This includes aligning departmental work with clear goals, objectives, and activities, and ensuring accountability through tracking progress.
- **Quality of Life and Community Enhancement:** Residents are interested in improving the quality of life in Stonecrest by prioritizing sustainability, beauty, and growth. This includes initiatives such as increasing green spaces, developing parks and trails, creating entertainment options, and fostering a sense of community through events and activities.
- **Transportation and Infrastructure Improvement:** Residents would like to see a focus on enhancing transportation infrastructure, including expanding MARTA public transit options, improving sidewalks and bike lanes for safety and accessibility, and addressing road maintenance issues like potholes and widening roads as needed.
- **Housing Diversity and Affordability:** Concerns and opportunities related to housing include promoting mixed-use developments, increasing affordable housing options, and supporting home ownership initiatives. Neighbors would like to see intentional steps to ensure that older residents have the opportunity to age in place so that they can remain in Stonecrest when their abilities and housing needs change.
- **Economic Development and Diversification:** While the Mall at Stonecrest serves as a retail and entertainment anchor of sorts for the city, residents want to attract a diverse range of businesses, including high-quality restaurants and entertainment venues that are more fitting to the needs and lifestyle of city residents. There is also interest in workforce development programs, supporting local businesses, and revitalizing commercial areas to create a vibrant economic environment.
- **Create a Heart:** Many Stonecrest residents acknowledge the fact that there is a prime opportunity to position Stonecrest as a new and thriving destination east of metro Atlanta. By establishing a central “core” in Stonecrest, this will not only create a stronger sense of place for the city’s residents but will also be a draw for those in adjacent areas not wishing to venture to Atlanta or Decatur for services, goods, and entertainment.
- **Preservation of Natural and Cultural Resources:** Residents express a desire to preserve and enhance the city’s natural and cultural resources, including Arabia Mountain, the Flat Rock Archives, and Vaughter’s Farm. There is also a focus on sustainability, conservation, and the promotion of environmental and agricultural based tourism.



Caption: Land use discussions during a community meeting

Needs and Opportunities

The following needs and opportunities are a direct result of the community feedback and various analyses conducted during this planning process.

Needs

- There’s a strong need for a downtown in Stonecrest. Common refrain is that Stonecrest needs a “heart” to better establish itself within DeKalb County and the East Metro.
- Need for consistent, reliable broadband service citywide
- Improved sense of public safety
 - Concerns regarding response times of emergency services
 - Desire for police precinct/station within city limits
 - Improved pedestrian safety desired along major corridors within the city
- Greater governmental transparency and accountability is desired by Stonecrest residents.
- Stonecrest’s Zoning, Overlays and Future Land Use maps need consistent alignment – particularly along the I-20 corridor.
- The City of Stonecrest needs greater mix of local jobs. More than 21,000 residents find work outside of city’s limits – as many Stonecrest workers travel east towards Atlanta for employment. Stonecrest’s local employment base is made up of the following industries: Manufacturing, Retailing, Transportation and Warehousing

Opportunities

- There is strong potential for mixed-use and high-density, high-intensity potential along the I-20 corridor.
- Several opportunities exist to leverage the unique natural resources within the city’s limits to include Arabia Mountain National Heritage Preserve, Davidson-Arabia Mountain, the South River, and the Arabia Mountain PATH Trail, and the AWARE Wildlife Center.
- There is an opportunity to also leverage the cultural heritage in Stonecrest, to include the Flat Rock Archives and Vaughter’s Farm.
- The Mall at Stonecrest has tremendous potential to become a major, regional center for retail, business and entertainment – especially East of Decatur.
- Since 2017, the City of Stonecrest’s population has increased by 11.3% which outpaces all of DeKalb County at only 3.4%.
- With the extensive number of plans and studies recently completed, the City of Stonecrest is positioning itself to receive federal and regional funding through the ARC’s Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds to expedite the implementation of the recommendations from these plans.
- City has made strategic acquisitions and/or entered into partnerships to facilitate the development of catalytic sites throughout the city.



Caption: View of Project Manager Randy G. Gibbs presenting at a community meeting

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION

New Vision and Goal Setting

Through engagements and stakeholder interviews, it became evident that there is a strong sense of passion for the city among its citizens and business community. They expressed a collective desire for Stonecrest to achieve its vision of “Community, commerce, and culture working together as a world-class city.”

In crafting a compelling vision for the City’s comprehensive plan, a holistic approach was used to realize its ambition of becoming a world-class city. This involved considering the city’s key assets and resources, while also addressing the persistent challenges that have hindered its progress towards reaching its full potential. Accordingly, the recommended vision this plan is as follows:

“The City of Stonecrest aims to propel its community into a world-class city through strategic initiatives and innovative developments intended to celebrate its cultural heritage and elevate its natural resources, foster economic growth, create new recreational experiences, and enhance its urban environment. As we embark on this journey, Stonecrest reaffirms its commitment to the safety, prosperity, and well-being of all its residents, visitors, and business owners. By providing responsible and transparent leadership, we strive to maintain a city where people feel proud to live, work, and do business, ensuring a bright and promising future for generations to come.”

To align with this vision, overarching goal statements were developed rather than isolated categories. This approach aims to foster greater cooperation among the City’s elected and administrative officials and enhance the transparency between the City’s leaders and their constituents. Overarching goal statements will also increase the likelihood of achieving the desired outcomes by promoting a unified focus on shared objectives.



Caption: View of a participant engaging at a community meeting

VISION

"The City of Stonecrest aims to propel its community into a world-class city through strategic initiatives and innovative developments intended to celebrate its cultural heritage and elevate its natural resources, foster economic growth, create new recreational experiences, and enhance its urban environment. As we embark on this journey, Stonecrest reaffirms its commitment to the safety, prosperity, and well-being of all its residents, visitors, and business owners. By providing responsible and transparent leadership, we strive to maintain a city where people feel proud to live, work, and do business, ensuring a bright and promising future for generations to come."

GOALS



Invest in Stonecrest City Center

Stonecrest requires a "heart" or focal point—a shared space where residents can gather and fulfill their essential civic needs. This would encompass public services such as a Police Station/Precinct (for non-emergencies), Post Office, and incorporate a public park.



Create a "Sense of Place" for the Entire City

Stonecrest needs to market/brand itself in such a manner that people know where they are in Stonecrest or when they are passing through Stonecrest.



Bolster and Expand the Economic Base and Local Business Community

Cities need to boost, expand, and retain businesses to stimulate economic growth, create job opportunities, increase tax revenue, and enhance community prosperity. A thriving business environment attracts investment, improves infrastructure, and cultivates a vibrant ecosystem that benefits residents and businesses alike.



Promote Natural Resources and Recreational Amenities for Economic Development

The Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, Everette Park, Vaughters Farm, Atlanta Wildlife Animal Rescue Effort (AWARE), etc. are iconic places within the City of Stonecrest and should be prominently featured to residents and visitors alike.



Prioritize Public Safety I: Policing

Create a safe and protected environment in Stonecrest, whether for residents or visitors, involves implementing comprehensive strategies that address various aspects of safety and security.



Prioritize Public Safety II: Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Drivers

Allow residents and visitors to feel safe as they travel throughout Stonecrest – on by foot, bicycle, or vehicle.



Ensure High-Quality, Affordable, and Accessible Housing for Residents

Provide safe, clean dwellings for residents at a variety of price points and suitable for the variety of life conditions and stages.



Invest in Stonecrest City Center

Stonecrest requires a “heart” or focal point—a shared space where residents can gather and fulfill their essential civic needs. This would encompass public services such as a Police Station/Precinct (for non-emergencies), Post Office, and incorporate a public park.

Policy Recommendations

- **1.1 - Smart Growth Principles:** Cities embrace smart growth principles such as compact development, infill development, and sustainable land use patterns to promote efficient land use and transportation, reduce sprawl, and preserve open space. These principles guide downtown development policies to create resilient, equitable, and environmentally sustainable urban centers.
- **1.2 - Public Realm Enhancements:** Cities invest in public realm enhancements such as streetscape improvements, pedestrian plazas, parks, and public art installations to enhance the attractiveness and usability of downtown spaces. These enhancements create inviting gathering places for residents, workers, and visitors, contributing to a vibrant urban experience.
- **1.3 - Urban Design Guidelines:** Cities establish urban design guidelines and architectural standards to ensure that downtown development projects contribute to the overall aesthetic quality and urban fabric of the area. These guidelines address issues such as building height, setback, facade design, and public space amenities to create attractive and pedestrian-friendly environments. Stonecrest leaders shall minimize inefficient land consumption and encourage more compact urban development in order to preserve green open space and natural resource areas.
- **1.4 - Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** Cities prioritize transit-oriented development around major transportation hubs such as bus stations, light rail stations, and subway stops. TOD policies encourage higher-density, mixed-use development with easy access to public transportation, reducing congestion and promoting sustainable urban growth.
- **1.5 - Incentives for Development:** Cities offer financial incentives, tax breaks, and regulatory assistance to encourage private investment in downtown development projects. These incentives may include tax abatements, grants, low-interest loans, and streamlined permitting processes to attract developers and stimulate economic activity.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery of a vibrant city center*
 Source: *Generated by Midjourney*



Create a “Sense of Place” for the Entire City

Stonecrest needs to market/brand itself in such a manner that people know where they are in Stonecrest or when they are passing through Stonecrest.

Policy Recommendations

- **2.1 - Community Engagement:** Cities prioritize community engagement and participation in the planning, design, and management of public spaces. This involves soliciting input from residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to ensure that placemaking efforts reflect local aspirations, values, and cultural heritage.
- **2.2 - Complete Streets:** Cities adopt Complete Streets policies that prioritize the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users alongside vehicular traffic. Complete Streets feature elements such as wider sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, transit shelters, and street furniture that enhance safety, accessibility, and comfort for all users.
- **2.3 - Public Art and Cultural Expression:** Cities integrate public art and cultural expression into public spaces to enrich the urban environment and celebrate local identity. This can involve commissioning permanent artworks, facilitating community art projects, and incorporating cultural elements into streetscapes and plazas.
- **2.4 - Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Design:** Cities incorporate green infrastructure and sustainable design principles into placemaking projects to enhance environmental quality and resilience. This can include rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, permeable pavement, and native landscaping that improve stormwater management, air quality, and biodiversity in public spaces.
- **2.5 - Maintenance and Management:** Cities develop comprehensive maintenance and management plans for public spaces to ensure their long-term sustainability and vitality. This includes regular upkeep, cleaning, landscaping, and security measures, as well as partnerships with community groups and volunteers to steward public spaces.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery of placemaking and city character*
 Source: *Generated by Midjourney*



Bolster and Expand the Economic Base and Local Business Community

Cities need to boost, expand, and retain businesses to stimulate economic growth, create job opportunities, increase tax revenue, and enhance community prosperity. A thriving business environment attracts investment, improves infrastructure, and cultivates a vibrant ecosystem that benefits residents and businesses alike.

Policy Recommendations

- **3.1 - Business Incentives:** Mid-size cities offer various incentives to attract businesses, such as tax breaks, grants, low-interest loans, and fee waivers. These incentives are often targeted towards industries that align with the city's economic strengths and development goals.
- **3.2 - Entrepreneurship Support:** Cities provide support for entrepreneurs and small businesses through programs such as business incubators, accelerators, and co-working spaces. These initiatives offer mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to resources to help startups grow and thrive.
- **3.3 - Workforce Development:** Mid-size cities invest in workforce development programs to ensure that residents have the skills and training needed to fill available job opportunities. This may involve partnerships with educational institutions, vocational training programs, and job placement services.
- **3.4 - Infrastructure Investment:** Cities invest in infrastructure projects to enhance connectivity, accessibility, and quality of life, which can attract businesses and support economic growth. This may include investments in transportation (roads, bridges, public transit), utilities (water, sewer, broadband), and public amenities (parks, cultural facilities).
- **3.5 - Downtown Revitalization:** Mid-size cities focus on revitalizing downtown areas as vibrant hubs of economic activity and cultural vitality. This may involve mixed-use development, historic preservation, streetscape improvements, and public space enhancements to attract residents, visitors, and businesses.
- **3.6 - Tourism Promotion:** Mid-size cities leverage their cultural, natural, and recreational assets to attract tourists and stimulate economic activity in the hospitality, retail, and entertainment sectors. This may involve marketing campaigns, events, festivals, and investments in tourism infrastructure and amenities.
- **3.7 - Business Retention and Expansion:** Cities focus on retaining and expanding existing businesses by providing support services, addressing regulatory barriers, and facilitating access to financing and markets. Building strong relationships with local businesses and understanding their needs is key to retaining and growing the local economic base.
- **3.8 - Sustainability and Resilience:** Mid-size cities integrate principles of sustainability and resilience into economic development policies to promote long-term viability and competitiveness. This may include green building standards, renewable energy incentives, climate adaptation strategies, and initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact. Stonecrest leaders will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations in order to protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources from encroachment.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery of prosperous and diverse businesses*

Source: *Generated by Midjourney*

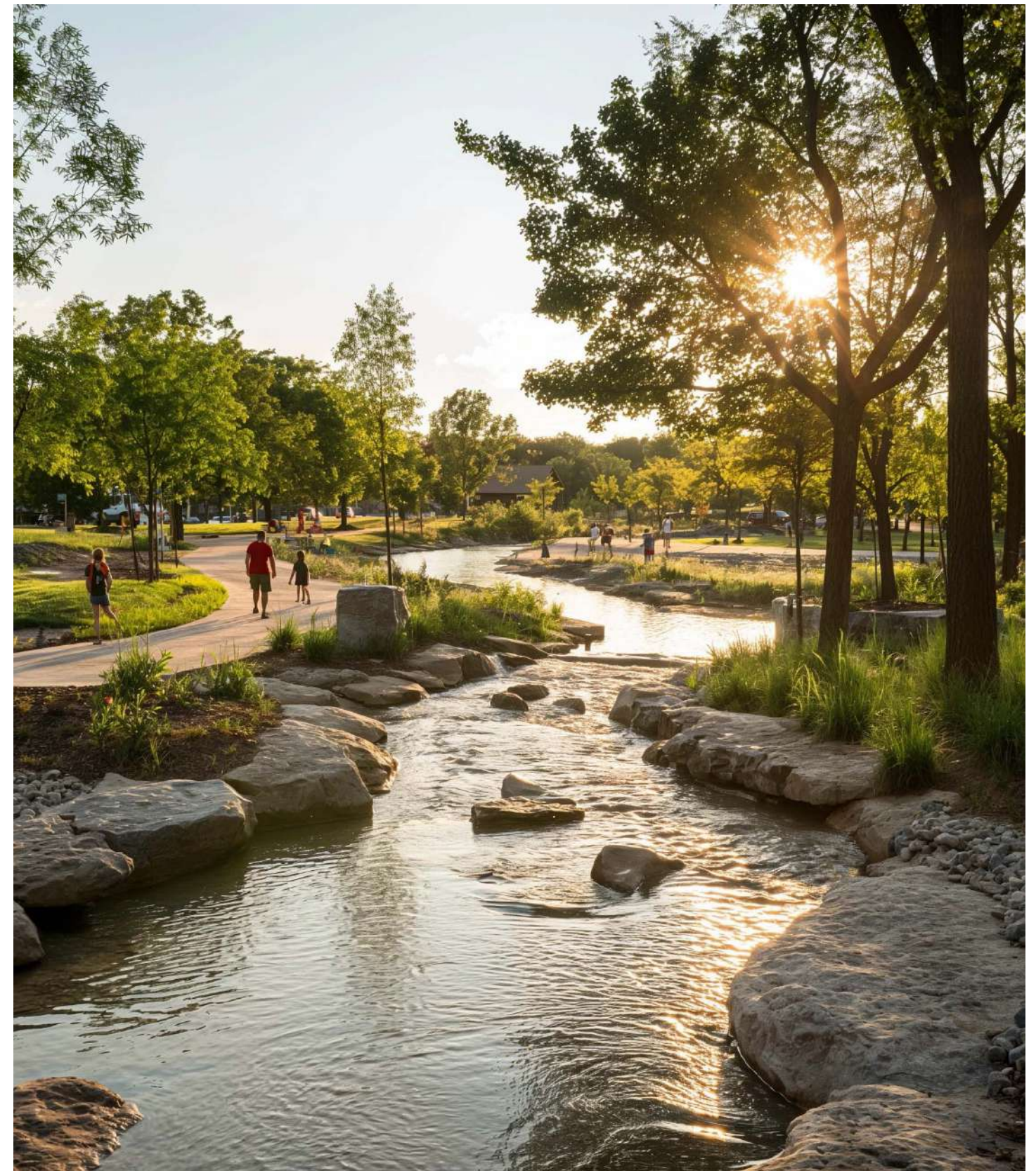


Protect and Promote Natural Resources and Recreational Amenities

The Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, Everett Park, Vaughters Farm, Atlanta Wildlife Animal Rescue Effort (AWARE), etc. are iconic places within the City of Stonecrest and should be prominently featured to residents and visitors alike. The protection and conservation of Stonecrest's natural resources will play an important role in the decision-making process when making decisions about future growth and development.

Policy Recommendations

- **4.1 - Parks and Open Space Preservation:** Cities prioritize the preservation and creation of parks, green spaces, and natural areas to provide residents with places for recreation, relaxation, and connection with nature. This can involve acquiring land for parks, maintaining existing green spaces, and implementing zoning regulations to protect the open spaces including the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve and the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area. Stonecrest's leaders shall promote low impact development that preserves the natural topography and existing vegetation of development sites.
- **4.2 - Protect Natural Environment:** By protecting the natural environment, cities improve its air and water quality for residents; thus creating a healthier place to prosper. In addition to people, native plants and animals also benefit from applied environmental protections. Stonecrest leaders should factor potential impacts on air and water quality in making decisions on new developments and transportation improvements. Infrastructure networks will be developed to steer new development away from sensitive natural resource areas.
- **4.3 - Trail Systems and Greenways:** Cities develop networks of trails, bike paths, and greenways to promote active transportation and outdoor recreation. These corridors often follow natural features such as rivers, coastlines, and ridgelines, providing opportunities for hiking, biking, jogging, and other activities.
- **4.4 - Waterfront Development and Access:** Cities focus on protecting and enhancing access to waterfront areas such as rivers, lakes, and coastlines for recreational purposes. This may involve creating public parks, promenades, docks, and kayak launches, well as improving water quality and habitat restoration efforts.
- **4.5 - Wetlands Preservation:** Cities should preserve wetlands where they exist. At a minimum, if wetlands cannot be preserved on -site, cities should mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e. Wetland Banking).
- **4.6 - Environmental Education and Outreach:** Cities engage residents in environmental education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about conservation issues and encourage sustainable behaviors. This can include environmental education programs in schools, community workshops, and volunteer opportunities for environmental stewardship.
- **4.7 - Public-Private Partnerships:** Cities collaborate with nonprofit organizations, businesses, and community groups to leverage resources and expertise for natural resource conservation and recreational enhancement projects. These partnerships can help to maximize the impact of limited public funding and foster a sense of ownership and stewardship among residents.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery and preserved and enhanced natural resources*

Source: *Generated by Midjourney*

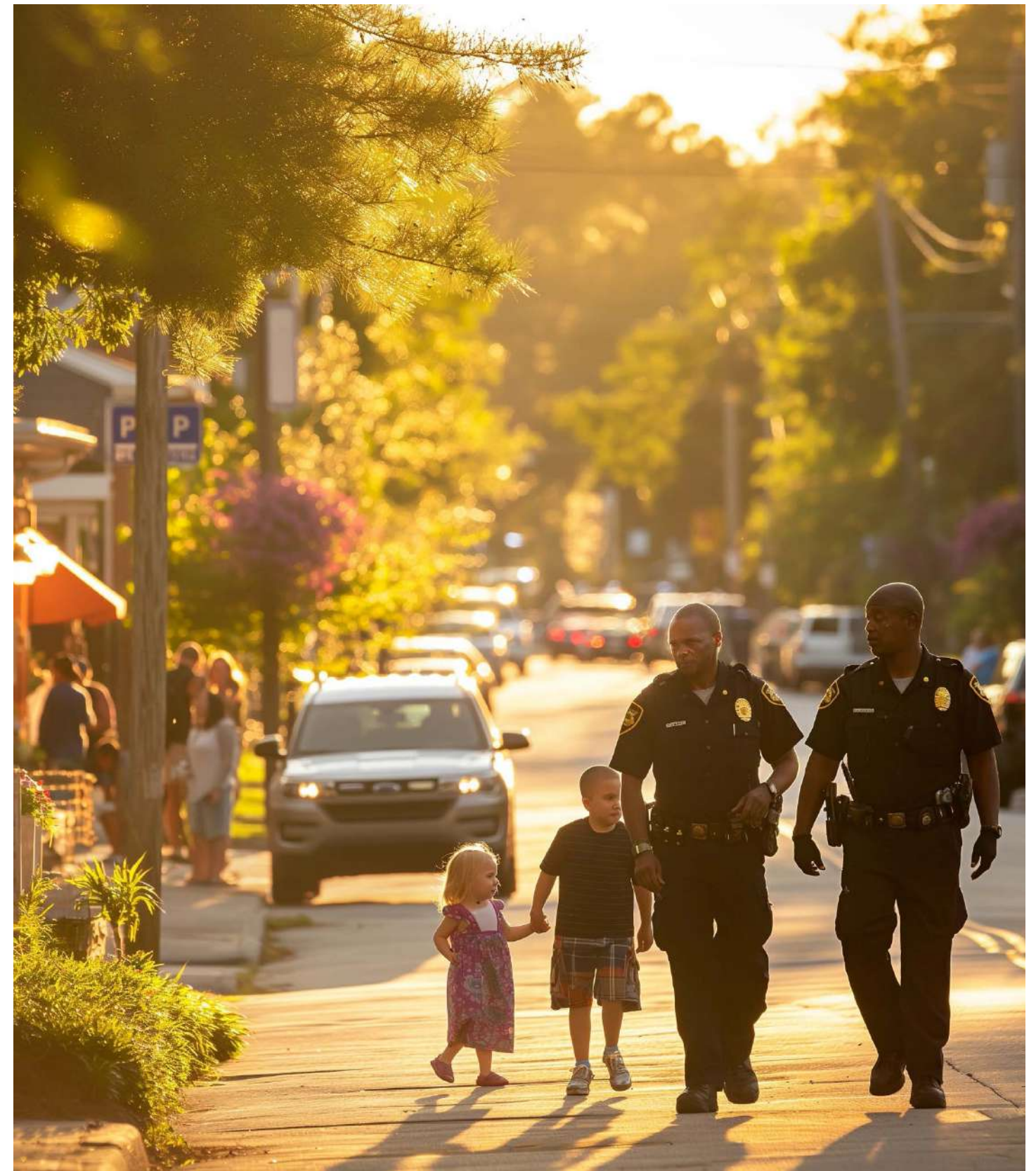


Prioritize Public Safety I: Policing

Create a safe and protected environment in Stonecrest, whether for residents or visitors, involves implementing comprehensive strategies that address various aspects of safety and security.

Policy Recommendations

- **5.1 - Maintain Relations with Dekalb County Police Department:** The citizens of Stonecrest have expressed an urgent need for improved policing and law enforcement. City leaders should maintain an ongoing conversation with the Dekalb County Police Department regarding current public safety concerns, criminal data analysis, response times, and identify solutions.
- **5.2 - Assess Feasibility of Stonecrest Police Department:** While improving the quality of the service delivery by the Dekalb County Police Department, Stonecrest's city leaders should explore the feasibility of establishing a Stonecrest Police Department.
- **5.3 - Community Policing:** This approach emphasizes building strong relationships between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. It often involves regular patrols, community engagement events, and partnerships with local organizations to address crime and safety concerns.
- **5.4 - Crime Prevention Programs:** These initiatives focus on deterring criminal activity through various means such as neighborhood watch programs, educational workshops on crime prevention, and the installation of security cameras in public spaces.
- **5.5 - Traffic Safety Enforcement:** Cities often have policies in place to promote road safety and reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities. This can include enforcement of speed limits, drunk driving laws, and initiatives to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- **5.6 - Emergency Preparedness and Response:** Cities develop plans and protocols to respond effectively to emergencies such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and public health crises. This may involve training emergency responders, conducting drills and exercises, and coordinating with other agencies at the local, state/provincial, and federal levels.
- **5.7 - Youth Violence Prevention:** Cities often have programs aimed at addressing the root causes of youth violence and providing support and opportunities for at-risk youth. This can include after-school programs, mentoring initiatives, and efforts to improve access to education and employment opportunities.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery of a safe community*

Source: *Generated by Midjourney*

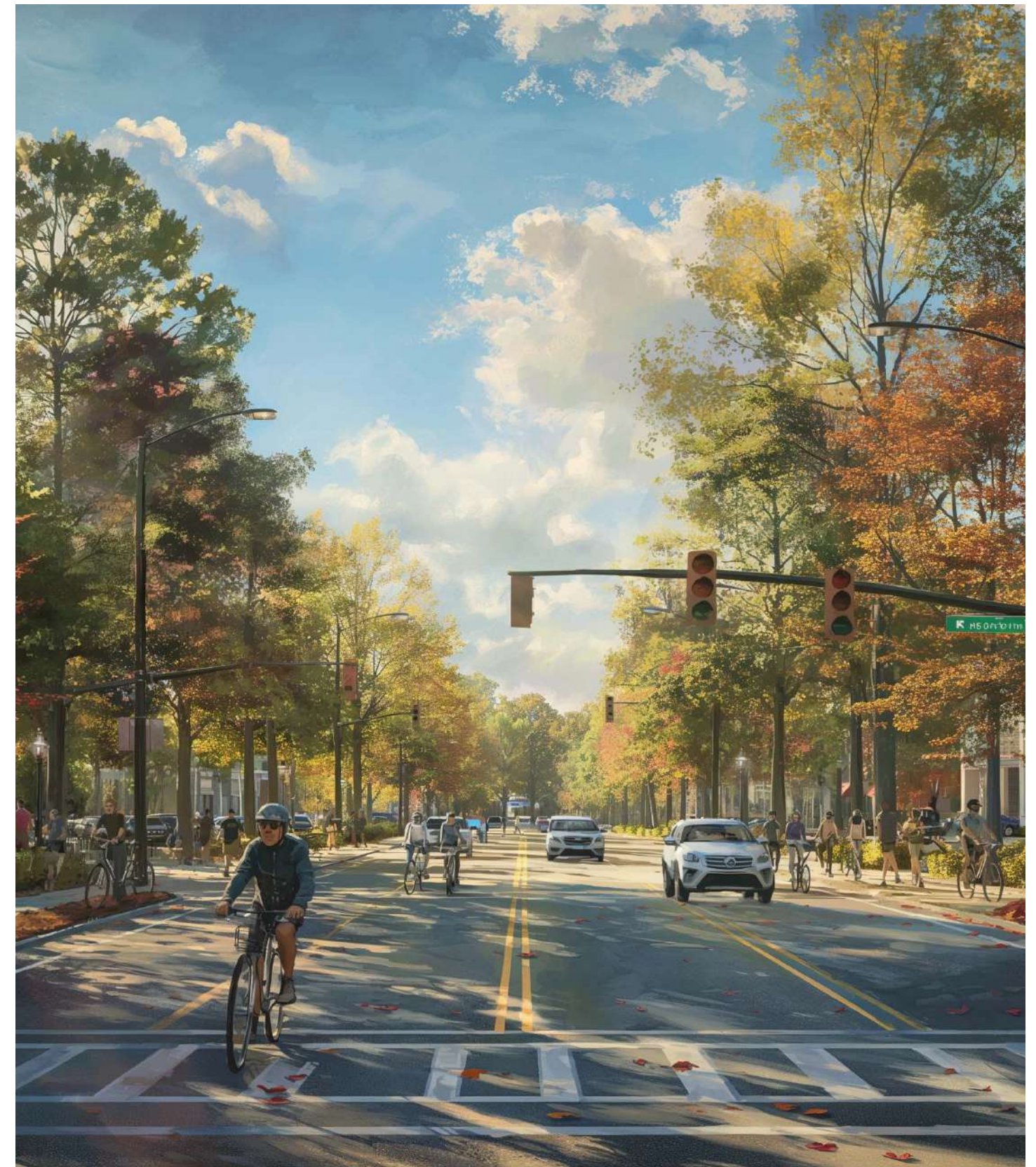


Prioritize Public Safety II: Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Drivers

Allow residents and visitors to feel safe as they travel throughout Stonecrest – on by foot, bicycle, or vehicle.

Policy Recommendations

- **6.1 - Complete Streets:** Implementing complete streets policies ensures that roadways are designed and built to accommodate all users, including pedestrians. This involves providing sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, pedestrian signals, and other amenities to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility
- **6.2 - Sidewalk Maintenance:** Ensuring that sidewalks are well-maintained and free of obstacles such as debris, snow, and ice is essential for pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- **6.3 - Safe Routes to School:** Implementing safe routes to school programs promotes walking and biking among students by improving infrastructure and safety measures around schools, such as crosswalks, signage, and traffic calming measures.
- **6.4 - Traffic Enforcement:** Implementing traffic enforcement measures such as speed enforcement, red-light cameras, and DUI checkpoints can deter unsafe driving behaviors and reduce traffic violations.
- **6.5 - Bike Infrastructure:** Investing in bike infrastructure such as bike lanes, protected bike lanes, bike boulevards, and multi-use paths can encourage cycling as a safe and convenient mode of transportation.
- **6.6 - Bike Share Programs:** Implementing bike share programs provides residents and visitors with access to bicycles for short trips, reducing reliance on cars and promoting active transportation.
- **6.7 - Cyclist Education:** Offering cyclist education programs on topics such as safe riding practices, traffic laws, and bike maintenance can help improve cyclist safety and confidence on the road.



Caption: *Inspirational imagery of safe travel and beautiful streetscapes*
 Source: *Generated by Midjourney*



Ensure High-Quality, Affordable, and Accessible Housing for Residents

Provide safe, clean dwellings for residents at a variety of price points and suitable for the variety of life conditions and stages.

Policy Recommendations

- **7.1 - Preservation of Existing Affordable Housing:** Developing strategies to preserve existing affordable housing stock, such as acquiring properties at risk of being converted to market-rate housing, rehabilitating aging affordable housing units, and providing financial assistance to landlords to maintain affordability.
- **7.2 - Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborating with private developers, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders to leverage resources and expertise for affordable housing development projects. Public-private partnerships can help maximize the impact of limited public funding and facilitate the creation of mixed-income communities
- **7.3 - Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** Promoting transit-oriented development around public transportation hubs, which can increase access to affordable housing for residents who rely on public transit and reduce transportation costs for low-income households.
- **7.4 - Mixed-Income Housing Development:** Encouraging the development of mixed-income housing projects that integrate affordable units with market-rate units. This promotes socio-economic diversity within neighborhoods and prevents the concentration of poverty in certain areas.
- **7.5 - Land Use Policies:** Adopting land use policies that support the development of affordable housing, such as density bonuses, reduced parking requirements, and streamlined permitting processes for affordable housing projects. These policies reduce development costs and barriers, making it more financially feasible to build affordable housing.
- **7.6 - Affordable Housing Requirements:** Many cities require developers to include a percentage of affordable housing units in downtown residential projects or contribute to affordable housing funds. These requirements help to address housing affordability challenges and promote socio-economic diversity in downtown neighborhoods.



Caption: *Inspirational housing imagery*
Source: *Generated by Midjourney*

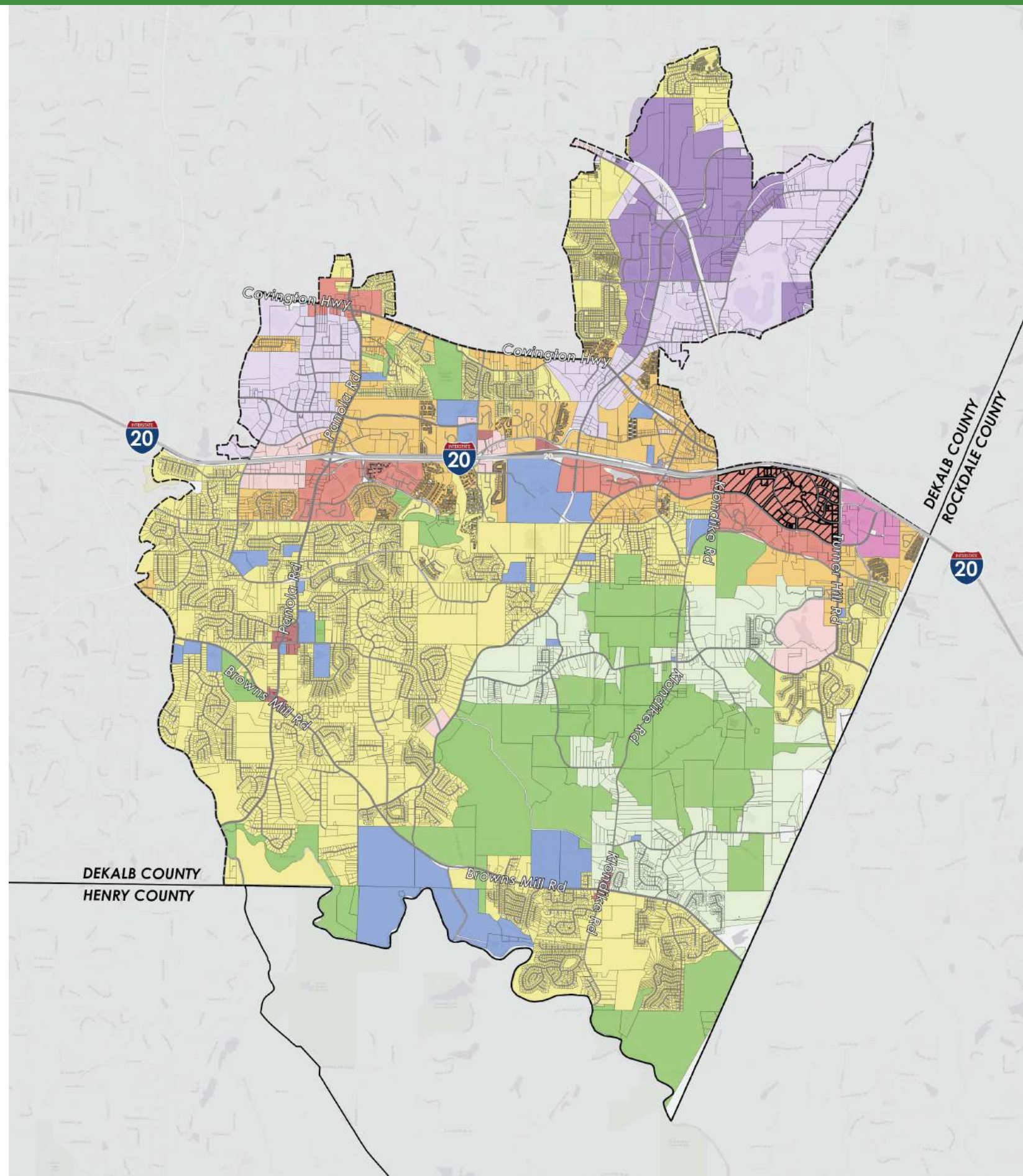
FUTURE LAND USE MAP (2038)

Improving safety for both residents and visitors is a top priority for Stonecrest’s leaders. They are collaborating closely with the DeKalb County Police Department to enhance law enforcement presence and response times within the city’s boundaries. Safety enhancements along major and minor roadways are also being prioritized, with a particular focus on improving the pedestrian and cyclist experience throughout Stonecrest.

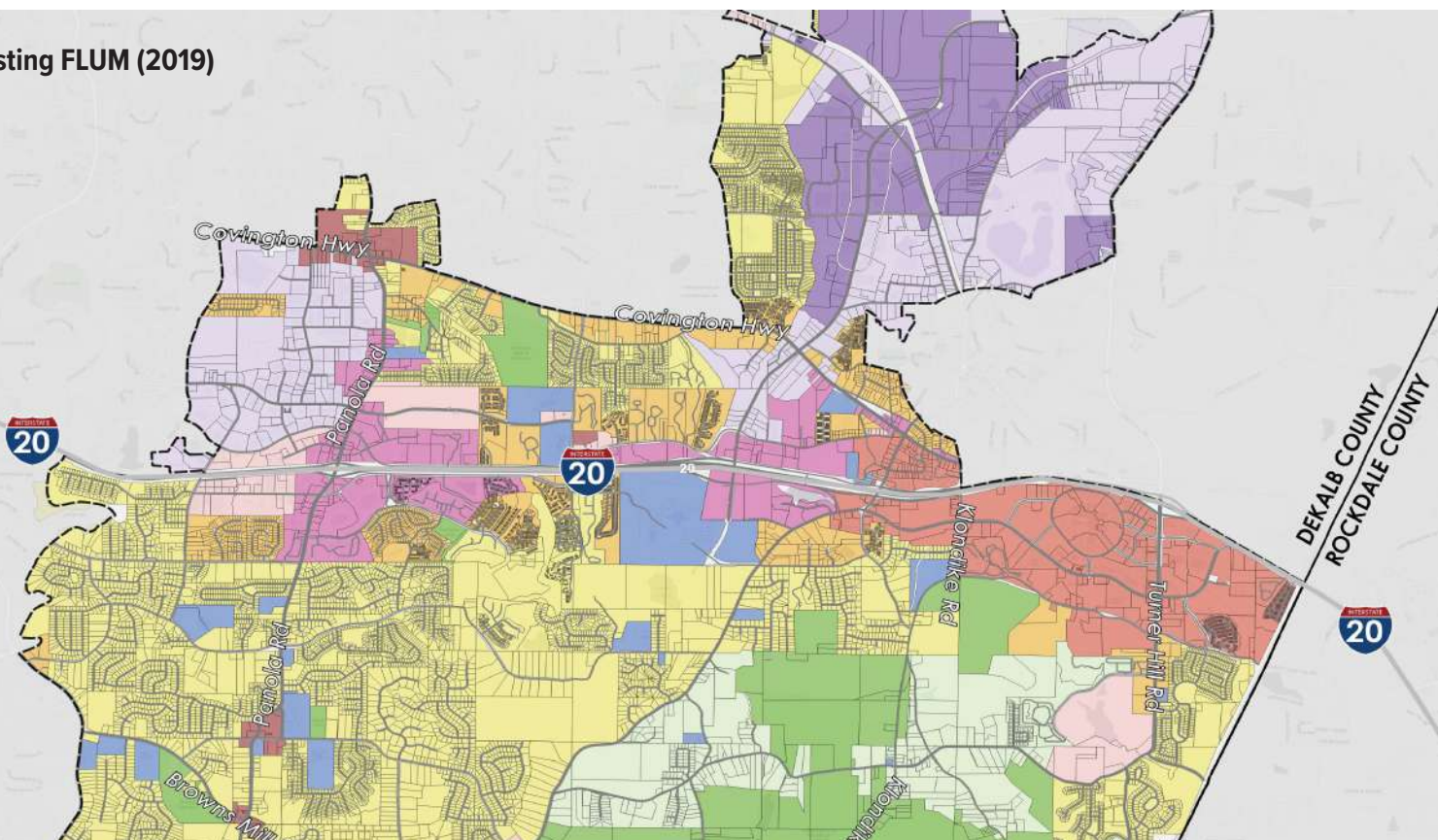
The city remains dedicated to highlighting its unique scenery and landscape, with a special emphasis on promoting Arabia Mountain as a key tourist attraction. This commitment not only reinforces existing environmental protections but also holds significant potential for bolstering the city’s economy.

Future Land Use Map (2038) Legend

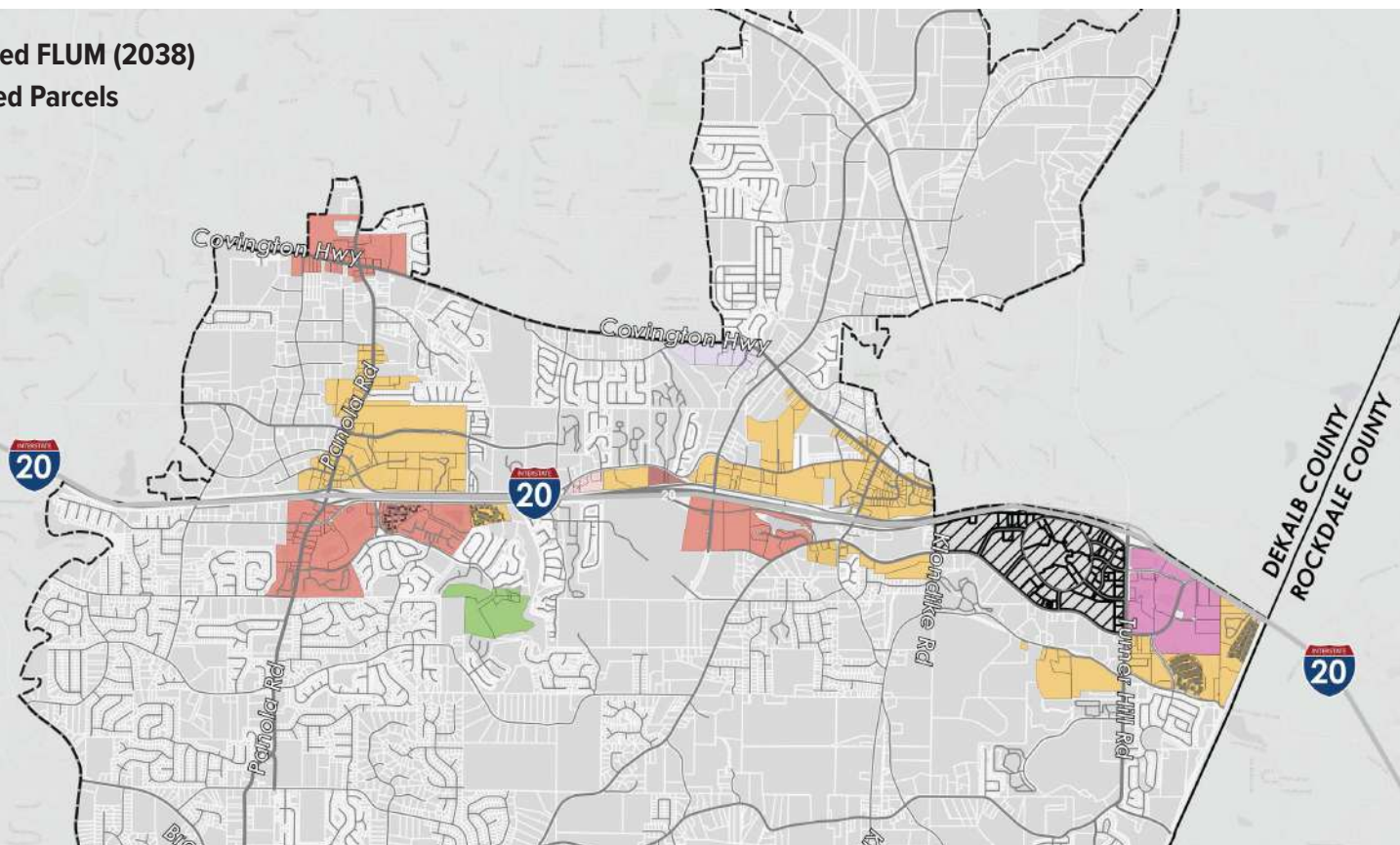
	Proposed FLU Category	Area (acres)	% of Area
	Conservation/Open Space	3,984	18.06%
	Institutional	1,268	5.75%
	Rural Residential	2,296	10.40%
	Suburban Neighborhood	7,947	36.01%
	Urban Neighborhood	1,920	8.70%
	Neighborhood Center	66	0.30%
	City Center	151	0.68%
	Regional Center	959	4.35%
	Office Professional	378	1.71%
	Light Industrial	1,961	8.89%
	Heavy Industrial	1,137	5.15%
	Entertainment District Overlay	n/a	n/a
	Grand Total	22,067	100%



Existing FLUM (2019)



Proposed FLUM (2038)
Changed Parcels



Stonecrest aims to increase commercial and residential density along the I-20 corridor. Additionally, it seeks to revitalize the area surrounding Stonecrest Mall into a lively tourist and entertainment hub. Regional-scale development and attractions will be concentrated on the south side of I-20, while the north side will continue to support industrial activities.

Furthermore, Stonecrest plans to establish a dedicated City Hall and Civic Center east of Mall at Stonecrest, serving as a central hub for the community. This initiative aims to create a “heart” for Stonecrest, providing residents and visitors with a space for administrative tasks, potential police stations, post offices, and other public services. The main street area will also be transformed into a modern, walkable mixed-use focal point, intended for residents to gather and socialize.

	FLU Category	% of Area 2019 FLU	% of Area 2038 FLU	% change
	Conservation/Open Space	17.80%	18.06%	0.32%
	Institutional	5.77%	5.75%	0.00%
	Rural Residential	10.44%	10.40%	0.00%
	Suburban Neighborhood	36.45%	36.01%	-0.32%
	Urban Neighborhood	4.89%	8.70%	3.81%
	Neighborhood Center	0.69%	0.30%	-0.39%
	City Center	3.39%	0.68%	-2.70%
	Regional Center	4.52%	4.35%	-0.16%
	Office Professional	2.12%	1.71%	0.41%
	Light Industrial	8.75%	8.89%	0.16%
	Heavy Industrial	5.17%	5.15%	0.00%
	Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	



Caption: View of participants engaging at a community meeting

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

G1: Invest in Stonecrest City Center – Stonecrest requires a “heart” or focal point—a shared space where residents can gather and fulfill their essential civic needs. This would encompass public services such as a Police Station/Precinct (for non-emergencies), Post Office, and incorporate public park. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
*G1-1	Develop master plan for the City Hall complex, and pursue next steps such as a City Hall site and program feasibility study; community survey for program and design. (ED-14, 15, 16)	x	x				Office of the Mayor, Economic Development	General Funds; LCI Grants	\$200K
G1-2	Establish City Design Guidelines that include signage, street furniture, landscaping, streetscapes, gateway signage, etc. - especially for the future City Center area. Consider green infrastructure in landscape standards.	x					Planning and Zoning	General Funds	\$150K
*G1-3	Update Stonecrest's Zoning and Overlay Districts ordinances to reflect desired density, intensity, and use for parcels citywide. (LU-3, 4; NC-3)		x	x			Planning and Zoning	General Funds	\$200K
G1-4	Conduct an ADA/ Accessibility Assessment Study to identify barriers and solutions to enhance accessible for all.		x	x			Planning and Zoning, Engineering	General Funds	\$100K
G1-5	Complete small area studies to enhance planning efforts at key nodes (especially near I-20) (i.e. near Botanical Gardens).			x	x		Planning and Zoning, ARC	General Funds, ARC LCI	\$150K
G1-6	Closely coordinate with DeKalb County Stormwater Management on the intended increase of commercial and residential activity along the I-20 corridor.	x	x				Public Works and Engineering, Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time.

G1: Invest in Stonecrest City Center – Stonecrest requires a “heart” or focal point—a shared space where residents can gather and fulfill their essential civic needs. This would encompass public services such as a Police Station/Precinct (for non-emergencies), Post Office, and incorporate public park. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
*G1-7	Identify and address vacancies at the Mall at Stonecrest and along the city’s main commercial corridors. (ED-18)	x	x				Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
*G1-8	Develop strategic plan for Transit Oriented Development along I-20 corridor near the Mall at Stonecrest (T-3)		x	x			Office of the Mayor, Economic Development	General Funds	\$200k

*G1-1 : This goal encapsulates multiple tasks associated with developing a town center for stonecrest. Stonecrest has made progress in Identifying its preferred location for its town center - to include acquiring some properties and developing some masterplans. Thus, this goal encompasses the following tasks from the previous CWP: ED-14, ED-15, and ED-16.

*G1-3: This Goal Seeks to align the future land use and zoning regulations, as the current zoning conflicts with some of the desired land uses. Thus, this goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: LU-3, LU-4, NC-3.

*G1-7: This task is a continuation of Item ED-18 from the previous CWP.

*G1-8: This task is a continuation of item T-3 from the previous CWP.

G2: Create a “Sense of Place” for the Entire City – Stonecrest must establish a strong presence in the east metro-Atlanta submarket, fostering a sense of pride among residents while also enticing visitors to explore further. It’s essential to provide clear and attractive markers that effectively communicate Stonecrest’s location, whether individuals are passing through or specifically traveling to the city. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
*G2-1	Implement public art installations, community gardens, pocket parks and other place-making projects to create vibrant and inviting spaces that reflect the unique character of the city. (H-4, Q-4, T-1, LU-7)	x	x	x	x	x	Planning and Zoning, Economic Development, Partners	General Funds, ARC LCI, Grant Sources, Non-Profits	\$75K
G2-2	Preserve and celebrate the city's history and heritage through promotion of landmarks and cultural sites in City promotional material.		x	x			Planning and Zoning, Economic Development, South River Watershed Alliance, Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, Discover DeKalb	General Funds, Federal and State Grants, Non-profits	Staff Time
*G2-3	Improve pedestrian infrastructure, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes, to make it easier for residents to navigate the city as pedestrian or cyclist. (T-4, T-7, LU-2)	x	x	x			Public Works and Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
*G2-4	Create a strong sense of locality and identity. With the rebranding effort, install common and clear signage that designates the City of Stonecrest throughout the City. (LU-5, T-2)	x	x	x			Economic Development, Planning and Zoning, Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G2-5	Publish annual calendar of city's cultural events, festivals, and performances that celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of the community.	x	x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Economic Development, Discover DeKalb	General Funds	Staff Time
G2-6	Promote local businesses and markets to create economic opportunities and contribute to the city's unique identity and character.	x	x	x			Economic Development, Decide DeKalb	General Funds, Partnerships	Staff Time

G2: Create a “Sense of Place” for the Entire City – Stonecrest must establish a strong presence in the east metro-Atlanta submarket, fostering a sense of pride among residents while also enticing visitors to explore further. It’s essential to provide clear and attractive markers that effectively communicate Stonecrest’s location, whether individuals are passing through or specifically traveling to the city. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G2-7	Launch campaigns and initiatives that promote civic pride and encourage Stonecrest residents to take ownership of city's identity and future.	x	x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Economic Development, Discover DeKalb	General Funds	Staff Time
G2-8	Establish Stonecrest "Zip Code" to ensure majority of residents within the City have a Stonecrest address	x	x				Mayor's Office, US Postal Service	General Funds	Staff Time
*G2-9	Draft small area plans for identified key nodes and corridors in Stonecrest. (LU-6, 8)	x	x	x			Economic Development	LCI Grants, General Funds	\$200K
*G2-10	Identify opportunities to bury utility lines and enhance visual appeal of the City. (CS-2)	x	x				Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time

*G2-1 : This goal encapsulates multiple tasks associated with developing an effective placemaking and public art program in Stonecrest. Stonecrest has made progress in developing both citywide and gateway signage standards. This goal seeks to consolidate the related activities. Thus, this goal encompasses the following tasks from the previous CWP: H-4, Q-4, T-1, LU-7.

*G2-3: This goal consolidates the related tasks pertaining to sidewalks, streetscaping, and pedestrian-oriented street enhancements. Thus, this goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: T-4, T-7, LU-2.

*G2-4: This goal consolidates the related tasks pertaining to branding, wayfinding and architectural design standards. Stonecrest has made progress in developing citywide signage standards. Thus, this goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: T-2, LU-5.

*G2-9: This goal combines multiple tasks pertaining to the development of small area plans at catalytic locations within the City of Stonecrest. Thus, this goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: LU-6, LU-8.

*G2-10: This goal is a continuation of item CS-2 of the previous CWP.

G3: Bolster and Expand the Economic Base and Local Business Community – Cities need to boost, expand, and retain businesses to stimulate economic growth, create job opportunities, increase tax revenue, and enhance community prosperity. A thriving business environment attracts investment, improves infrastructure, and cultivates a vibrant ecosystem that benefits residents and businesses alike. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G3-1	Implement Recommendations items as identified in Economic Development Study.	x	x				Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
*G3-2	Convene regularly with local, regional, and state Economic Development agencies to include Stonecrest Business Alliance, Stonecrest Development Authority, Decide DeKalb, East Metro CID, Georgia EDA. (ED-6)	x	x	x	x	x	Economic Development	General Funds	\$50K
*G3-3	Send out quarterly newsletters apprising the City businesses and residents of economic development activities, new businesses, maps, regulations, and resources. (Q-3; ED-11)	x	x	x	x	x	Economic Development, Discover DeKalb	General Funds	
G3-4	Partner with Discover DeKalb and Decide DeKalb to capitalize on Stonecrest's natural and cultural attractions to boost tourism, supporting local businesses in the hospitality, retail, and entertainment sectors.	x	x	x			Economic Development, Discover DeKalb, Decide DeKalb	General Funds	Staff Time
G3-5	Re-establish relationship with the East Metro Community Improvement Districts (CID) and opportunities for partnership on future projects.		x	x			Economic Development	General Funds	\$100K
G3-6	Identify key industries that align with the city's strengths and assets, such as technology, healthcare, or logistics, and actively recruit businesses in these sectors.	x					Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time

G3: Bolster and Expand the Economic Base and Local Business Community – Cities need to boost, expand, and retain businesses to stimulate economic growth, create job opportunities, increase tax revenue, and enhance community prosperity. A thriving business environment attracts investment, improves infrastructure, and cultivates a vibrant ecosystem that benefits residents and businesses alike. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
*G3-7	Provide resources and incentives for small businesses to start and grow, including access to funding, mentorship programs, and streamlined permitting processes. (ED-5, 10, 17)		x	x			Economic Development	Grants, Low-Interest Loans	Variable
G3-8	Collaborate with local educational (DeKalb County School District) and training programs (WorkSource DeKalb) to develop pipeline of a young (18-35 y/o), skilled, relevant workforce that meets the needs of businesses desired for the area.		x	x			Economic Development, Discover DeKalb, Decide DeKalb, WorkSource DeKalb	General Funds	Staff Time
*G3-9	Identify, adopt and implement Tax Allocation District and Opportunity Zones. (ED-2, 4)		x	x			Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
*G3-10	Identify dedicated funding source for stormwater management (NC-5)	x	x	x			Public Works, Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time

*G3-2 : This goal is an expansion of item ED-6 from the previous CWP. Its intent is to ensure that the Economic Development office establishes and maintains an functional, ongoing relationship between the various entities and organizations.

*G3-3: This goal seeks to align the future land use and zoning regulations, as the current zoning conflicts with some of the desired land uses. Thus, this goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: LU-3, LU-4, NC-3.

*G3-7: This goal seeks to consolidate the small business support elements tasks in Stonecrest. This includes the development of business retention and expansion programs, incentives, and mentorship programs. This goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: ED-5, ED-10, ED-17.

*G3-9: This goal is a consolidation of potential funding mechanisms associated with property tax revenues. This goal reflects the intent of the following tasks from the previous CWP: ED-2, ED-4.

*G3-10: This goal seeks to create a dedicated funding source for stormwater management. This is a continuation of NC-5 from the previous CWP.

G4: Protect and Promote Natural Resources and Recreational Amenities for Economic Development – The Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, Everette Park, Vaughters Farm, Atlanta Wildlife Animal Rescue Effort (AWARE), etc. are iconic places within the City of Stonecrest and should be prominently featured to residents and visitors alike. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G4-1	Prominently feature and celebrate the Davidson-Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, the Arabia Mountain PATH, Vaughters Farm, Flat Rock Archive, the South River and the other distinct elements of the City in promotional materials and marketing packages.	x	x				Economic Development, Discover DeKalb	General Funds	Staff Time
G4-2	Promote and facilitate agritourism through activities such as farm tours, pick-your-own produce, and seasonal events like pumpkin patches and corn mazes.		x	x			Economic Development, Stonecrest Business Alliance, Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time
G4-3	Explore feasibility of Local Farmer’s Market, Food Truck, and Pop-Up events to generate sustainable economic interests and activity at catalytic sites.		x	x			Economic Development Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time
*G4-4	Update development codes to promote greenspace infrastructure and low-impact development techniques, and environmentally-sensitive design. (NC-4)	x	x					General Funds	\$150K
*G4-5	Develop Watershed Improvement Plan and develop Greenway Plan to protect access to Stonecrest’s rivers and streams. (NC-5, 6)	x	x					General Funds	\$50K
*G4-6	Establish Historic Commission to develop historic guidelines for historic resources available in Stonecrest. (HP-1, 2, 3; CS-6)		x	x			Mayor’s Office, Planning and Zoning	General Funds	
G4-7	Evaluate the adequacy of Sec. 14-509, Article VI. - Tree Protection to formally consider efforts to expand and enhance Stonecrest’s tree canopy.	x					Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time

G4: Protect and Promote Natural Resources and Recreational Amenities for Economic Development – The Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, Everette Park, Vaughters Farm, Atlanta Wildlife Animal Rescue Effort (AWARE), etc. are iconic places within the City of Stonecrest and should be prominently featured to residents and visitors alike. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G4-8	Identify where wetlands, floodways, and floodplains exist in the City and set targets for conserving them.	x	x				Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time
G4-9	Identify and adopt regulations that promote and encourage the use of Green Infrastructure in development regulations	s	x				Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time

*G4-4: This is a continuation for item NC-4 of the previous CWP.

*G4-5: This is a continuation of items NC-5 and NC-6 of the previous CWP.

*G4-6: This goal is a consolidation of the tasks pertaining to the establishment and enforcement of a Historic Commission in the City of Stonecrest. It combines the intent of the following items from the previous CWP: HP-1, HP-2, HP-3, CS-6.

G5: Prioritize Public Safety I: Policing – Create a safe and protected environment in Stonecrest, whether for residents or visitors, involves implementing comprehensive strategies that address various aspects of safety and security. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G5-1	Establish the new location of the DeKalb County Police Precinct to be in Stonecrest.	x	x				Mayor's Office, DeKalb County Police	General Funds	Staff Time
G5-2	Increase visibility in identified areas that are known safety concerns for patrons, visitors, and travelers (especially pedestrians).		x	x			Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G5-3	Install surveillance cameras in key locations can help monitor activities, deter crime, and provide valuable evidence in case of incidents.		x	x			Economic Development, Mayor's Office	General Funds	Staff Time
*G5-4	Develop and regularly update emergency response plans ensures that authorities are prepared to handle various situations effectively, including natural disasters and public safety emergencies. (CS-7)	x	x				Mayor's Office	General Funds	Staff Time
*G5-5	Enhance accountability reporting mechanism from City to citizens. (Q-2, 5)	x	x				Mayor's Office	General Funds	\$30K
*G5-6	Develop Neighborhood Watch Programs to meet regularly with DeKalb County Police Department (CS-4)	x	x				Mayor's Office	General Funds	\$10K
*G5-7	Establish a “block-by-block” strategic approach to address code enforcement services citywide (H-2)	x	x				Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G5-8	Conduct formal feasibility analysis to establish City of Stonecrest Police Department		x	x			Mayor's Office	General Funds	\$200K

*G5-4: The goal of this item is to ensure that the City of Stonecrest has the appropriate amount of emergency services covering its citizens and territory. This task is both an expansion and continuation of Item CS-7 from the previous CWP.

*G5-5: This goal is both an expansion and continuation of items Q-2 and Q-5 from the previous CWP. The intent is to facilitate communication and transparency between the leaders of Stonecrest and its citizens and stakeholders.

*G5-6: This goal is a continuation of item CS-4 from the previous CWP.

*G5-7: This goal is a continuation of item H-2 from the previous CWP.

G6: Prioritize Public Safety II: Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Drivers – Ensuring safety for residents and visitors in Stonecrest, regardless of their mode of transportation, is crucial for fostering a vibrant and thriving community. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G6-1	Implement action items as identified in the 2020 Transportation Master Plan, ARC's Regional Transportation Plan, Freight Cluster Plan.	x	x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G6-2	Implement the Tier 1 Group of bicycle and trail projects as identified by the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trail Plan (2023)	x	x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Public Works and Engineering	General Funds	\$71M
G6-3	Work closely with transportation agencies to coordinate efforts and implement safety measures that prioritize the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in transportation planning and infrastructure projects.	x	x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G6-4	Develop and regularly update emergency response plans ensures that authorities are prepared to handle various situations effectively, including natural disasters and public safety emergencies.	x	x				Mayor's Office, Engineering	General Funds	Staff Time
G6-5	Conduct traffic study along Covington Highway, Panola Road, Evans Mill		x	x			Engineering, ARC	ARC's Transportation LCI, Adjacent Jurisdictions	\$200K

G7: Ensure High-Quality, Affordable, and Accessible Housing for Residents – Every community in metro-Atlanta is facing affordable housing challenges – to include Stonecrest. Ensuring that residents have access to safe, clean dwellings at various price points and suited to different life conditions and stages is essential for fostering a diverse and inclusive community. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G7-1	Review and where appropriate implement recommendations from HouseATL to increase availability of affordable housing stock.	x	x				Planning and Zoning, Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-2	Identify developers interested in horizontal and vertical mixed-use projects to support the Urban Neighborhood and City Center concepts.	x	x				Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-3	Offer financial incentives, such as tax breaks, density bonuses, or reduced permitting fees, to developers.		x	x	x	x	Planning and Zoning, Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-4	Encourage mixed-income developments where affordable units are integrated with market-rate units.		x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Economic Development, Planning and Zoning	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-5	Encourage mixed-use, walkable developments where affordable units are integrated with market-rate units.		x	x	x	x	Mayor's Office, Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-6	Foster collaborations between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private developers to pool resources and expertise in developing affordable housing projects.		x				Mayor's Office, Economic Development	General Funds, Private Interests, Private Funds, DDA	Staff Time

G7: Ensure High-Quality, Affordable, and Accessible Housing for Residents – Every community in metro-Atlanta is facing affordable housing challenges – to include Stonecrest. Ensuring that residents have access to safe, clean dwellings at various price points and suited to different life conditions and stages is essential for fostering a diverse and inclusive community. Indicators identified in bold refer to ongoing action items identified in the previous Community Work Program.

#	Activity	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Funding Source	Estimated Cost (2024 Dollars)
		'24	'25	'26	'27	'28			
G7-7	Implement and execute policies to preserve existing affordable housing stock, such as providing financial assistance for property rehabilitation and offering incentives for landlords to maintain affordable rents.		x	x			Mayor's Office, Planning and Zoning, Economic Development	General Funds	Staff Time
G7-8	Strengthen tenant protections, such as rent stabilization measures and eviction prevention programs, to ensure housing stability for low-income residents.		x	x			Mayor's Office	General Funds	Staff Time
*G7-9	Conduct residential market study for Transit-Oriented Development near Mall at Stonecrest (ED-13)		x	x			Mayor's Office, Planning and Zoning, Economic Development	General Funds, LCI Grant	\$50k

*G7-9: This is a continuation for item ED-13 of the previous CWP.

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