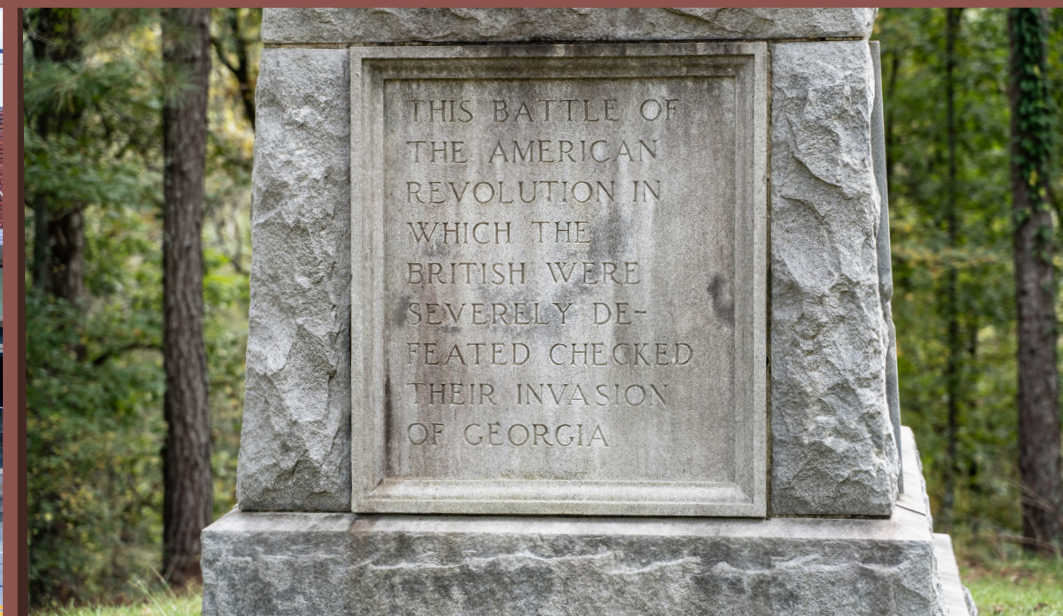




WILKES COUNTY

Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024 - 2029





This document was prepared jointly with the cooperation
of the following local governments:

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Adopted: June --, 2024

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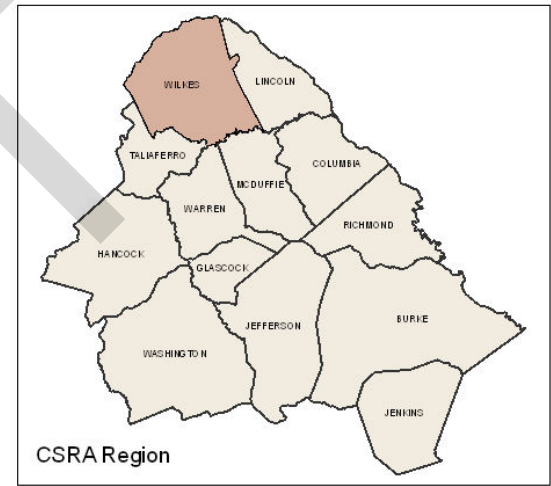
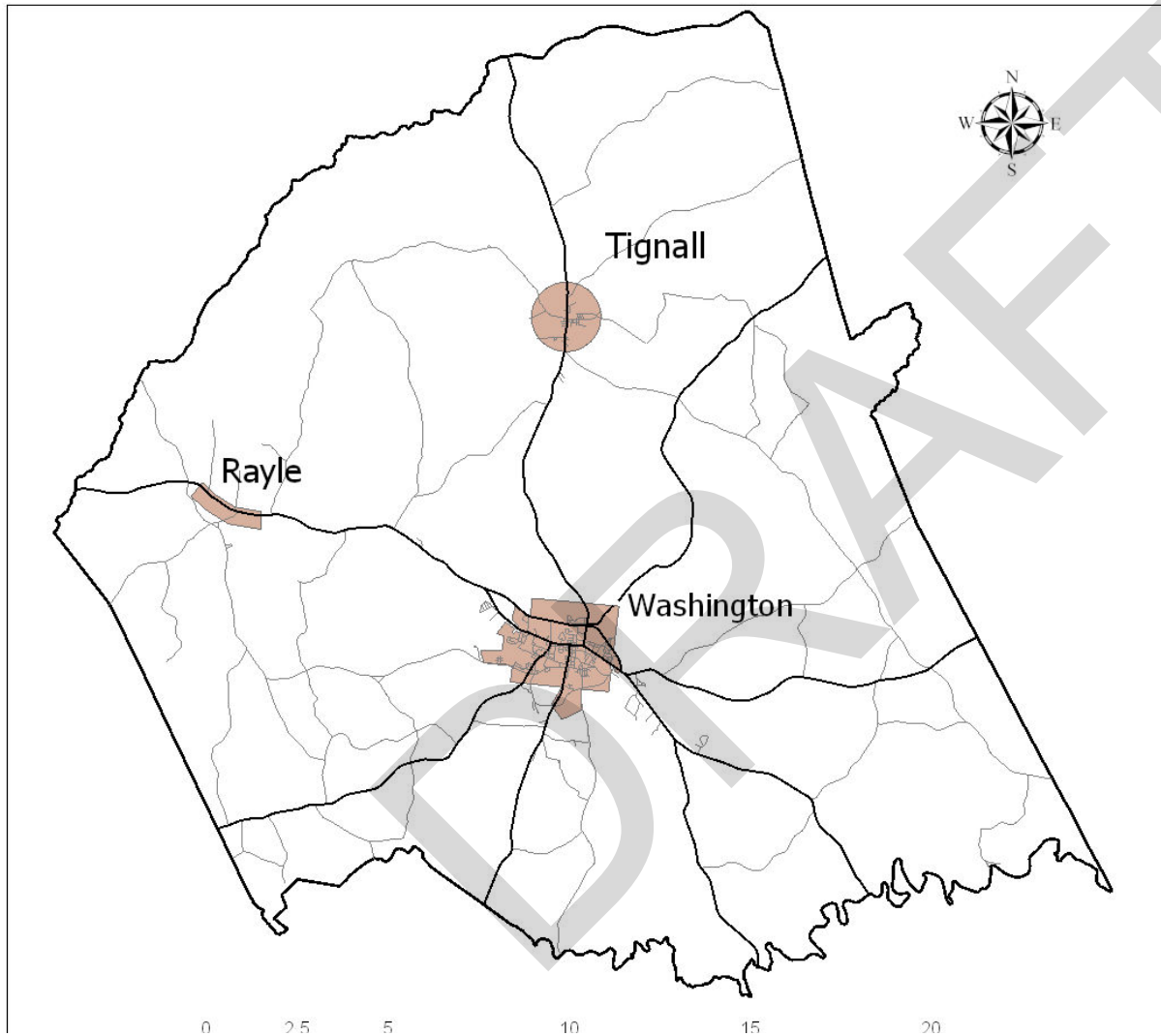




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Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The 2024-2029 Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan provides residents, local officials and other stakeholders with a road map toward achieving their vision of a county where residents and visitors alike experience a better place to live, work, and play.

Quality community growth, however, can only begin with a locally generated vision and well-structured plan of implementation that has the ability to unite varied segments of society with, often, competing interests.



This comprehensive plan is intended to serve the following functions:

- lay out a desired future;
- guide how that future is to be realized;
- formulate a coordinated, short to medium-term planning program.

The plan document also addresses issues regarding housing, economic development, land use, community facilities, and cultural resources in a coordinated manner, and serves as a guide for how:

- land should be developed;
- local housing conditions will be improved;
- existing businesses should be supported and new economic growth achieved.

In conjunction with the county's Service Delivery Strategy, the comprehensive plan document becomes a powerful resource for elected and appointed officials as they deliberate development issues and appropriate policy responses.



*Planning Process &
Community Involvement*

The Comprehensive Plan and Planning Process

Many government agencies make plans for their own programs or facilities, but the Comprehensive Plan (Plan) is one of the few documents that considers the programs and priorities of many agencies with varied objectives, and accounts for the activities on all land in a given area, both public and private. As the Department of Community Affairs’ (DCA) minimum standards for local comprehensive planning state, “the highest and best use of comprehensive planning for local governments is to show important relationships between community issues.” Done well, the planning process serves to enhance the efficiency and productivity of coordinated government efforts on all levels.

A comprehensive plan should be developed and structured to realize the shared vision, goals and objectives for all communities involved in the process. DCA’s minimum standards for local comprehensive planning require the planning process to follow a standardized set of procedures to ensure that the public has the opportunity to provide input and review the comprehensive plan document as it is created. Consistent public input is a necessary component for the creation of this Plan.

Components of the Comprehensive Plan

DCAs minimum planning standards stipulate which plan components are required or optional for counties and municipalities depending on size, needs, goals and other factors.

Plan Component	Required	Optional
Community Goals	Required for all local governments	X
Needs and Opportunities	Required for all local governments; includes required community involvement component	X
Community Work Program	Required for all local governments	X
Broadband Services	Required for all local governments	X
Economic Development	Required; Job Tax Credit Tier 1	X
Land Use	Required; some Wilkes jurisdictions enforce zoning	X
Housing	X	Optional, but encouraged due to housing quality, affordability and jobs/housing imbalance
Natural and Cultural Resources	X	Optional; Contains required regional water plan and environmental planning criteria considerations
Community Facilities	X	Optional

Public Participation

This section of the Plan focuses on its development at the local level. It details the agencies responsible, the steps taken, and provides documentation of the outcomes of public participation in the process. The public participated in the planning process through the following outreach methods:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Public hearings
- Survey
- Social media posts

Stakeholder Committee

A Stakeholder Committee comprised of one or more representatives from each jurisdiction was appointed to lead the planning process. The primary purpose of this committee was assuring that CSRA-RC staff reflect the aforementioned shared vision, goals, and objectives of the community. Representatives included mayors, commissioners, administrators, and other municipal staff. Following is a list of members of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee:

Wilkes County

Sam Moore, Chairman of the Wilkes County Commission
Karen Burton, Clerk of the Wilkes County Commission
Brittany Buttrey, President, Chamber of Commerce
Janet Parker, Economic Development Director
Dann Standard, Board of Education Chairman
Dan Wright, EMS Director

City of Washington

Bill DeGolian, Mayor (Term ended 2023)
Bruce Bailey (Term started 2023)
Jerri deBin, City Administrator
Wanda Dingler, Clerk (Resigned 2024)
Debbie Bazemore, Clerk (Started 2024)
Joselyn Torres, Community Development Director (Resigned 2024)

City of Rayle

Jake Buff, Mayor of the Town of Rayle
Linda Buff, Clerk

City of Tignall

Henry Brown, Mayor of the Town of Tignall
Holley Kangeter, Clerk of the City of Tignall



Above: Stakeholder Committee Meeting #1, December 4, 2023



Right: Stakeholder Committee Meeting #2, January 24, 2024

Stakeholder Meetings

A joint Stakeholder Committee kickoff meeting was held on December 04, 2023 with topics covering items such as the purpose and goals of comprehensive planning, components of the plan document, the timeline for plan development and submittal, recent demographic and economic trends, and completion of a S.W.O.T (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) exercise.

The second Stakeholder Committee meeting was held on January 24, 2024. At this meeting, topics discussed included: needs and opportunities, community goals, and potential policies. Each representative was provided with The Community Work Program from the previous Comprehensive Plan and asked to provide feedback regarding the status of the projects that were identified as priorities for that five-year period. Representatives were also asked to discuss new projects for the upcoming five-year Work Program period.

A third Stakeholder Committee meeting was held March 6, 2024 to discuss character areas and land use maps.

Public Hearings

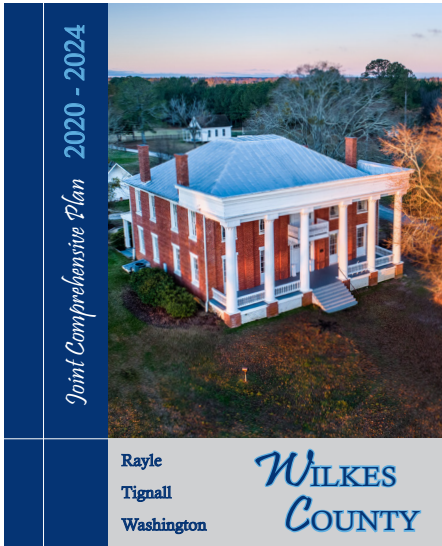
A joint public hearing was held October 30, 2023 to formally announce the initiation of the comprehensive planning process. A second public hearing was held on April 29, 2024 to solicit public feedback on the contents of the draft document.



Public Hearing #1 , October 30, 2023



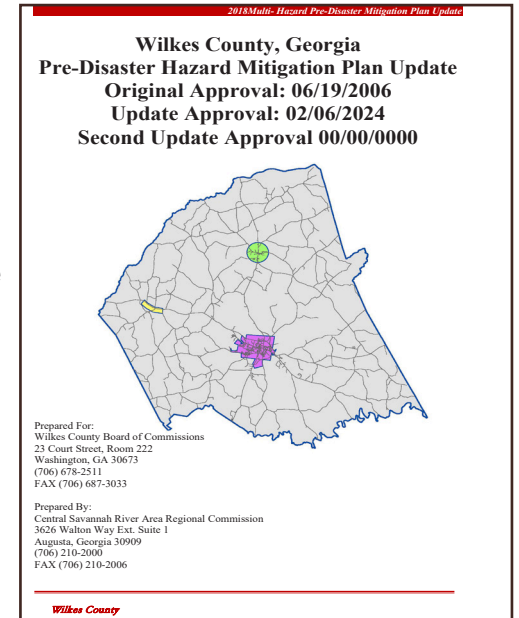
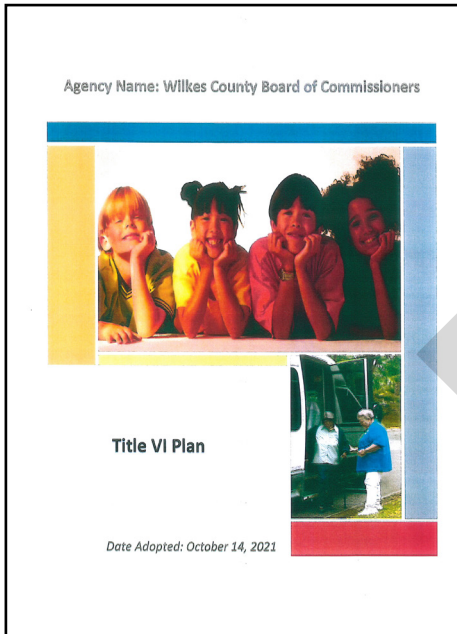
Public Hearing #2 ,April 29, 2024



Past Planning Initiatives

A comprehensive plan is a dynamic document which should be altered as community conditions change. Updates of these documents are required to ensure community needs are met. Prior versions of the Wilkes County's Comprehensive Plan have diminished in relevance as implementation recommendations have been completed or, due to the passage of time, have been found to be no longer a community priority. This allows the new plan to address relative community changes since the prior plan was adopted. This new comprehensive plan document addresses relative community changes since the 2019 plan was adopted.

The City of Washington's designation as a PlanFirst Community by DCA in 2018 further speaks to this community's commitment and effectiveness in strategic use of its local assets to realize the ideals of Planning for its citizens.



DRAFT

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SWOT Analysis

As part of the planning process, the Stakeholder Committee was asked to complete a 'SWOT' Analysis. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Members of the Committee were charged with providing their view on the assets and liabilities of their respective jurisdictions, and reasonable near-term possibilities for growth with thoughtful use of available resources. The information provided the basis for subsequent assessments of needs, opportunities, and, ultimately, formulation of goals and policies.

Citizens and community leaders of Wilkes County offered their input in the planning process. The results of the SWOT Analysis are summarized on the next page.

Strengths

- Community services
- Cost of living and quality of life
- Vibrant Downtown Washington
- Manufacturers
- Rich history and community
- Proximity to Augusta and Athens
- Broadband coverage
- Rural and Agricultural Character
- Sense of Community
- Road infrastructure

Weaknesses

- Aging infrastructure
- Wastewater treatment capacity
- No growth in local housing market
- Housing affordability and variety
- Lack of retail options
- Workforce preparedness
- Lack of diversity of local economic base
- Lack of bike and pedestrian infrastructure

Opportunities

- New housing developments
- Greenspace
- Potential for more businesses
- Partnerships with local schools and employees
- Kettle Creek Battlefield

Threats

- Lack of rediness for aging population
- Public perception of crime
- Declining commercial and industrial base
- Declining population - particularly young people and families
- Unknown impact of Artificial Intelligence on low-skill workforce

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

STRENGTHS

Peaceful
Faith and hope
Awareness and appreciation of history
our town is beautiful
Sense of community & heritage
The closeness and friendliness
Citizen involvement
Small town
Sense of community & coming together in times of great neex
School system
Closeness
History and tourism
None
N/a
Sense of community
People are still mostly kind to one another r
The small community aspect
Location
rural and quiet
Cost of living
Beauty

WEAKNESSES

Government does not support all
Utilities cost
Parks are in disrepair
Roads outside of town are trashy.
Poor economic outlook
lack of affordable, low cost senior housing
Division in city government
lack of community activities geared towards youth
Our children are lacking in resources to support their development and safety in schools
Communication
Lack of economic & job options
Divided efforts
Division
No industry
Racial Divide
'Elites' thinking they're better
Dr Sessom's home needs to be a museum
Not addressing the needsfor the black community
Divided
Lack of grocery stores
The division that is creeping in from every direction
Limited shopping options
People who divide us based on race

The CSRA RC gathered these results via a survey posted to surveymonkey.com from October 30, 2023 to January 31, 2024.

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

Monthly events, food trucks, family events.
Building low cost senior housing
Good schools, but need to expand college options
empty building opportunities to grow
Dedication to growth
N/A
We have the power to unite our community.
Growth possibilities
Unity
Small business opportunities
Attract more employers
Empty manufacturing buildings. Need businesses to fill them
Farming
N/a
Homes to purchase at affordable prices
People who love this community still want to serve it
Great location for small business opportunities
Small business opportunities
development of entrepreneurial, technical and medical jobs for young people
More big business; YMCA, grocery store, walmart, etc
Potential tourism
Activities for youth
Building up city and county relations

Developers
Not valuing the concerned citizens
jobs
Lack of employment
gangs
The rising crime and infiltration of violence into our community
Jobs
National influencers creating division
Waste dumping from sludge trucks
Growth
Gang activity
Corporatization of health and other services
Drugs
Gangs
Gun violence
Drugs
People moving in with the intention to divide
Truck traffic through town
selfish business practices and contracts which benefit a small circle of people
Crime
Inflation
Gun violence
Washington Wilkes Informer
City Historic Codes are NOT being enforced

*The CSRA RC gathered these results via a survey posted to surveymonkey.com from October 30, 2023 to January 31, 2024.
The full results are listed in the Plan's appendix.*

Needs & Opportunities

From the SWOT exercise and resident surveys, a list of relatively short-term needs and opportunities focused around the core planning components was developed. The community will take intentional and coordinated action to address these items in the coming five-year work program.

Broadband

Needs

- Promote digital literacy to increase broadband adoption among segments of the population that are typically averse to the use of technology.

Opportunities

- Actively seek opportunities to utilize available broadband infrastructure to improve primary and secondary level educational outcomes.
- Actively seek opportunities to utilize available broadband infrastructure to support workforce development, and to promote local economic development.

Economic Development

Needs

- Raise the quality of the Wilkes County workforce.
- Decrease inventory of idling brownfield sites.
- Upgrade local wastewater treatment infrastructure to enable future industrial growth.
- Increase utilities activity to all industrial sites in County.

Opportunities

- Actively seek opportunities to utilize available broadband infrastructure to support workforce development, and to promote local economic development.
- Explore productive uses for abundance of fallow agricultural lands.
- Capitalize on the growing heritage tourism trend through enhancement of Downtown Washington and county-wide coordinated marketing.
- Seek funding to replace aging infrastructure.

Housing

Needs

- Increase the quantity and quality of workforce and affordable housing in Wilkes County.
- Seek opportunities to place workforce and affordable housing in closer proximity to major Wilkes County employers.

Opportunities

- Continue to look for opportunities to recruit private sector workforce housing.
- Encourage residential use of multi-story commercial buildings in Downtown Washington.

Land Use

Needs

- Protect local historic assets through design guidelines and other land use regulations.
- Assess the impact of development of agricultural and industrial activity on environmentally sensitive lands within the county, especially ground water recharge areas.
- Focus on utilizing public green space and improving public recreation areas.

Opportunities

- Explore the development of design guidelines that ensure new development is complimentary to the existing historic character.
- Protect Wilkes County's critical environmental assets and promote active lifestyles through continued implementation of the Multi-use Trails Plan.
- Fully utilize development of two splashpads and dogpark.
- Update playground equipment and walking and bike trails.
- Require that new development connect to the proposed bike and pedestrian system where practicable.

Community Facilities

Needs

- Upgrade aging water and sewer infrastructure.
- Increase water and wastewater treatment capacity.
- Continued public employee access to training opportunities and improved technology.
- Maintain public safety equipment.
- Maintain county roads and bridges.

Opportunities

- Utilize available technical assistance to seek funding for critical infrastructure improvements.
- Actively seek opportunities to utilize available broadband infrastructure to support public employee training and professional development.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Needs

- Protect local historic assets through design guidelines and other land use regulations.
- Assess the impact of development and industrial activity on environmentally sensitive lands within the county, especially ground water recharge areas.
- Continue to expand public outdoor recreation opportunities .

Opportunities

- Protect Wilkes County's critical environmental assets and promote active lifestyles through continued implementation of the Multi-use Trails Plan.
- Explore policies to reduce local solid waste generation and reliance on landfills.

Community Goals & Policies

A community reaches its goals through the establishment of and adherence to supporting policies. The next section details Wilkes County's goals and policies.

Broadband

Goals:

- Promote digital literacy among Wilkes County residents of all ages.
- Actively support Wilkes County's integration into the innovation economy.

Policies:

- Market Wilkes County's broadband infrastructure in furtherance of economic development efforts.
- Continue to support community entrepreneurial investments.

Economic Development

Goals:

- Develop of an educated, motivated workforce, prepared for the challenges of an evolving global economy.
- Expand workforce housing to expand workforce growth.

Policies:

- Support partnerships for the delivery of training programs and other professional development in furtherance of workforce preparedness.
- Recruit clean, responsible industry to appropriate sites in Wilkes County and its contained jurisdictions.
- Undertake a targeted industry analysis and develop an industry recruitment strategy centered on industries most appropriate for Wilkes County's workforce and assets.
- Actively market Wilkes County's cultural and architectural heritage sites and districts to promote economic development through tourism.
- Strengthen the lines of communication with local employers regarding workforce and infrastructure needs through an improved business retention and expansion program.
- Support tourism to County.

Housing

Goals:

- Create safe, efficient workforce and affordable housing for Wilkes County residents.
- Enhance the vibrancy of Downtown Washington by increasing residential use.
- Support the restoration and maintenance of Washington's historic housing stock.

Policies:

- Expand opportunities for home ownership in Washington-Wilkes.
- Ensure housing maintenance initiatives remain a key component of Washington's community redevelopment efforts.
- Encourage the development of contemporary market-rate housing to diversify the available housing stock.
- Discourage deferred maintenance of historically and architecturally relevant homes.
- Encourage residential use of the upper floors in downtown commercial buildings.

Land Use

Goals:

- Maintain the rural and historic character of Wilkes County.
- Ensure the county's natural resources and critical environmental assets are protected from unintended consequences of

Policies:

- Make land use and development decisions that are consistent with the policies of the Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan.
- Review and amended land use and development ordinances to create new development that is consistent with Wilkes County's

Community Facilities

Goals:

- Maintain all community facilities and capital assets in working order and at capacity to support the needs of Wilkes County.
- Provide a full range of services that meet the needs of the Wilkes County's changing demographic base.

Policies:

- Maintain and improve local water and wastewater handling systems and infrastructure.
- Continually assess, maintain and replace public safety equipment as needed.
- Continually assess recreational facilities and programs to improve accessibility and use.
- Continually assess solid waste management services and facilities to ensure effective long-term service delivery.
- Continually assess aging services to determine ways in which service delivery can be enhanced.

Community Facilities (Transportation)

Goals:

- Maintain all community facilities and capital assets in working order and at capacity to support the needs of Wilkes County residents.
- Provide a full range of services that meet the needs of the Wilkes County's changing demographic base.

Policies:

- Designate local transportation funds for system maintenance.
- Pursue capacity improvements and improved traffic flow through access management features rather than roadway widening.
- Apply character district street standards to more City of Washington roads, where appropriate.
- Prioritize expansion of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and pursue development of new bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure when possible.
- Pursue development of identified corridors as multi-use paths in accordance with locally-adopted trails and bicycle/pedestrian plans.
- Continue investing to maintain critical links to the nation's air and rail transportation systems.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Goals:

- Ensure the county's natural resources and critical environmental assets are protected from unintended consequences of development.
- Maintain the rural and historic character of Wilkes County.

Policies:

- Support ongoing development of recommendations from the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan.
- Actively market Wilkes County's cultural and architectural heritage sites and districts to promote tourism.
- Improve local historic district regulations and guidelines to better preserve and enhance Wilkes County's historic heritage, and to encourage private investment in historic properties.
- Review and amended land use and development ordinances to promote new development that is consistent with Washington-Wilkes historic character.
- Review and amended land use and development ordinances to ensure the protection of Wilkes County and regional water resources.
- Actively participate in regional water resource planning efforts.
- Regularly reassess solid waste management facility siting parameters to ensure natural and cultural resources are protected.
- Monitor local development activity to ensure that environmentally sensitive lands and other natural resources are protected from degradation.
- Seek development of passive recreation facilities that enable access to Washington-Wilkes rural ambiance.

Demographic Overview

The demographic overview aims to provide an understanding of who Wilkes County's residents are, and how the population is changing. An analysis of demographic trends can provide valuable perspective on the programs and services that the County or City's changing demographics may currently require, or that may be needed in the near future. The review relies largely on data provided by the Census Bureau, either through the decennial Census or the American Community Survey.

Local Population Trend

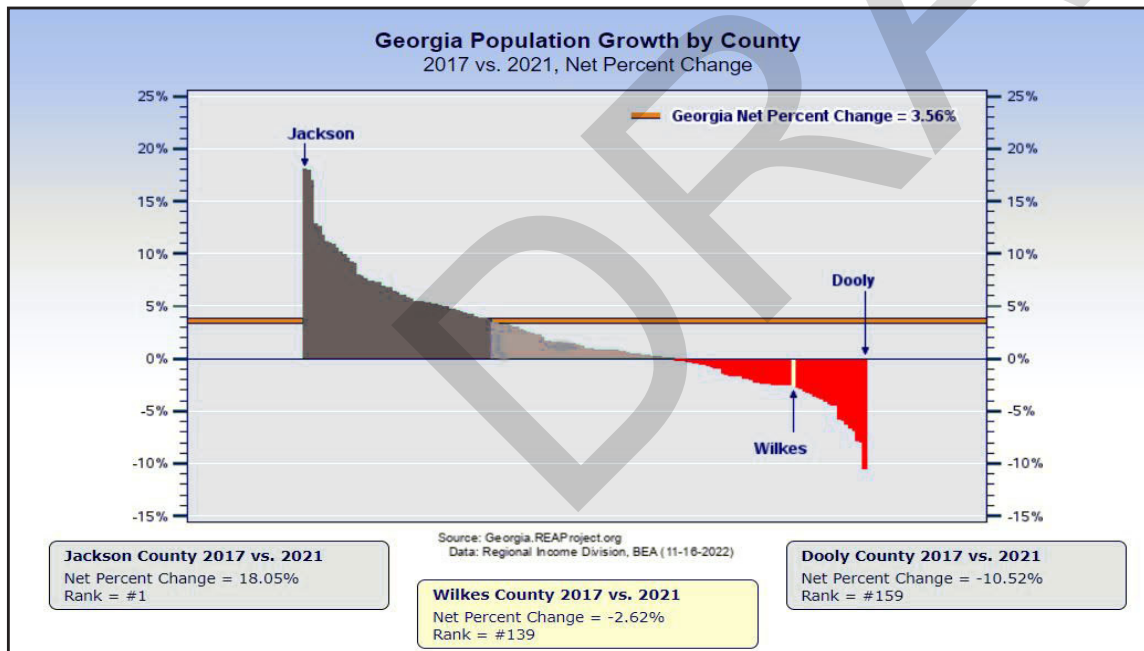
Though the accuracy of data from national sources is often disputed for rural communities, these sources do provide a valuable baseline for understanding rural population dynamics. The Census Bureau and other generators of data and analysis commonly utilize statistical methods to produce projections based on trends. These measures are typically offered with a margin of error or confidence interval, and a disclaimer acknowledging that the measures are samples or projections.

Wilkes County has continued to experience slow population decline since 2000, though the pace has quickened since 2010. The chart below indicates a clear downward population trend in much of the incorporated county since 2000. Rayle and Tignall, however, see an increase from 2017 - 2020.

	2000	2010	2017	2020	Trend
Wilkes County	10,687	10,593	9,905	9,797	
Unincorporated	5,600	5,714	5,347	5,167	
Rayle	139	199	186	198	
Tignall	653	546	402	485	
Washington	4,295	4,134	3,970	3,947	

Wilkes County and Contained Municipalities Local Population Trend

Source:
American FactFinder
Census 2000,
Census 2010,
American Community Survey 2020



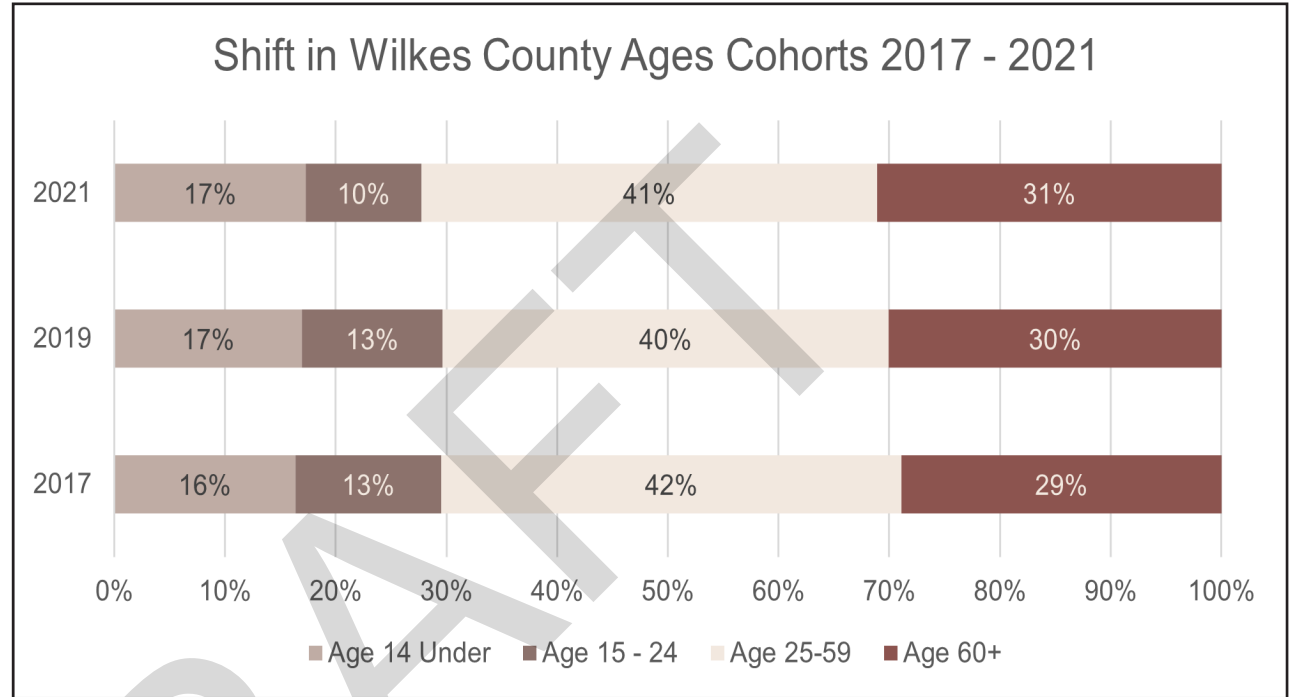
This chart ranks Georgia's counties by the degree of population change in the period from 2017 to 2021. Of 159 counties, Wilkes ranked #139, indicating that 138 counties either gained more population or lost less than Wilkes for this time period. The county's net loss was 2.62%. The State's net percent change was 3.56%.

Source:
Georgia Regional Economic Analysis Project; data - Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Demographics

Another noticeable trend is the loss of working-age population within the County. The chart below groups the population into four (4) categories: children under 14, adolescents and young adults age 15 to 24, working-age population 25 to 59, and those at or nearing retirement age.

Though subtle, the data reveals an increase in the proportion of those at or nearing retirement, and a slight decrease in working-age population 25 to 59. Despite previous local trends, the population 14 and under is slowly increasing.



Source: American FactFinder. American Community Survey 2017-2021

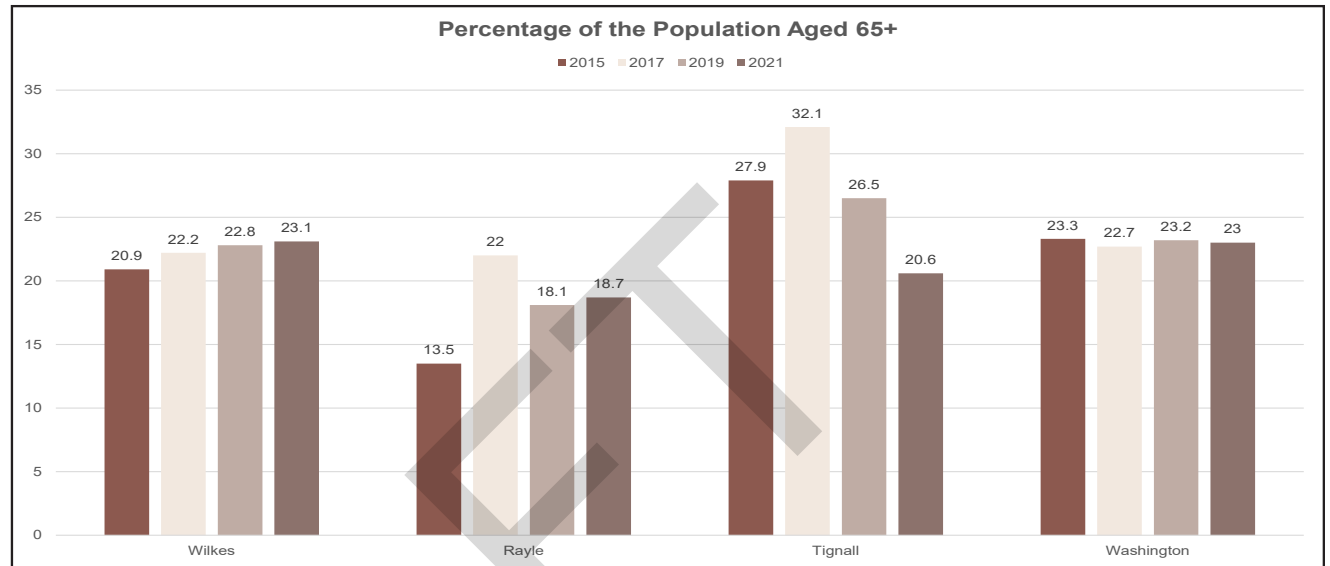


Aging Population

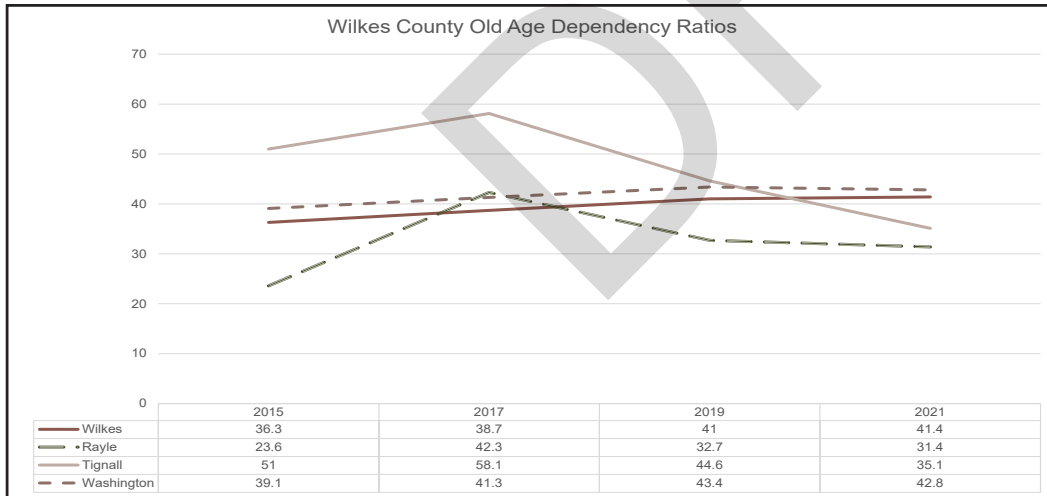
A closer look at the proportion of population aged 65 years and older reveals that Wilkes County's population has been aging for some time. In fact, of 13 counties in the CSRA region, only 3 have a similarly high proportion of population aged 65 and older: Taliaferro, Lincoln and Warren. These 4 counties all have an average 25%, while the regional average is approximately 14.7%.

The aging of America's population is a phenomenon that the Planning field has anticipated for many years as the Baby Boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964, edged toward retirement. Now, as this group enters its twilight years, many communities are faced with the task of ensuring adequate facilities and services are in place to care for the growing senior population and their unique needs. Often limited in income, limited in mobility and having a relatively high dependence on health and other social services, this population will require an increasing share of local attention and resources in the coming years.

The following chart illustrates the rate at which Wilkes County's demographic gap is widening. The Old-Age Dependency Ratio is a measure that looks at the population aged 65 and older as a proportion of the working-age population, aged 18-64. Essentially, it is a metric reflecting the number of residents 65 and older supported by younger, working-age residents.



Source: American FactFinder; American Community Survey 2015 - 2021



A hiring sign hanging in an empty Tignall storefront in October 2023 stands as a testament to the increased need for care of the aging population.

Source: American FactFinder; Census 2020, ACS 2015 - 2021

Households

	2010	%	2017	%	2021	%
Total Households	3,999	100	3,971	100	3,988	100
Family Households	2,495	62	2,456	62	2,373	60
<i>Family Household w/ Children</i>	8.28	21%	755	19	793	20
<i>Married Couple</i>	1,496	37	1,638	41	1,703	43
<i>Married Couple w/ Children</i>	379	9	374	9	422	11
Nonfamily Household	1504	38	1515	38	1,621	41
<i>Household Living Alone</i>	1323	33	1404	35	1,489	37

As previously alluded, Wilkes County has seen a decline in family households, particularly those with children. Alternatively, there has been a rise in non family households. However, 92% of the County's non family households are actually householders living alone. Further, in 2021, 56% of householders living alone were aged 65 or older.

Source: American FactFinder. Census 2020, American Community Survey 2010, 2017 & 2021

Educational Attainment

The proportion of population ages 18 to 24 with less than a high school diploma has been decreasing in recent years. This particular metric, which was just over 34% in 2014, has fallen by 32% in just five years. The rate decreased most dramatically from 2019 to 2020, falling 57% in just a year. This data follows an upward trend of young college graduates in the County rising from 2016.

Educational outcomes for the population ages 25 years and older have maintained. The share of those with less than a high school diploma has continued to drop, and the share of the population with some college or an associates degree is on an upward trend, despite dropping slightly from 2020-2021. Programs aimed at increasing digital literacy and increasing the exposure of pupils to workforce technologies should have a positive impact on retention, graduation and work force at all levels.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Trend
Age 18-24							
Less than a High School Diploma	34.7	37	32.5	34.8	19.9	11.7	
High School Diploma or Equivalency	40.8	38.4	37.9	33.3	44.2	44.5	
Some College or Associates	22.8	21.3	26.6	29	32.9	39.2	
Bachelors or Higher	1.7	3.3	3	2.8	3	4.7	
Age 25+							
Less than a High School Diploma	22.1	21.4	11.2	10.3	12.6	13.1	
High School Diploma or Equivalency	42	41.6	44.8	44	45.4	45.6	
Some College	17.9	17.1	17.5	18.6	18.2	17.5	
Associates Degree	4.3	5.7	5.6	7.3	6.2	5.7	
Bachelors or Higher	13.8	14.4	6.6	8	6.4	9	

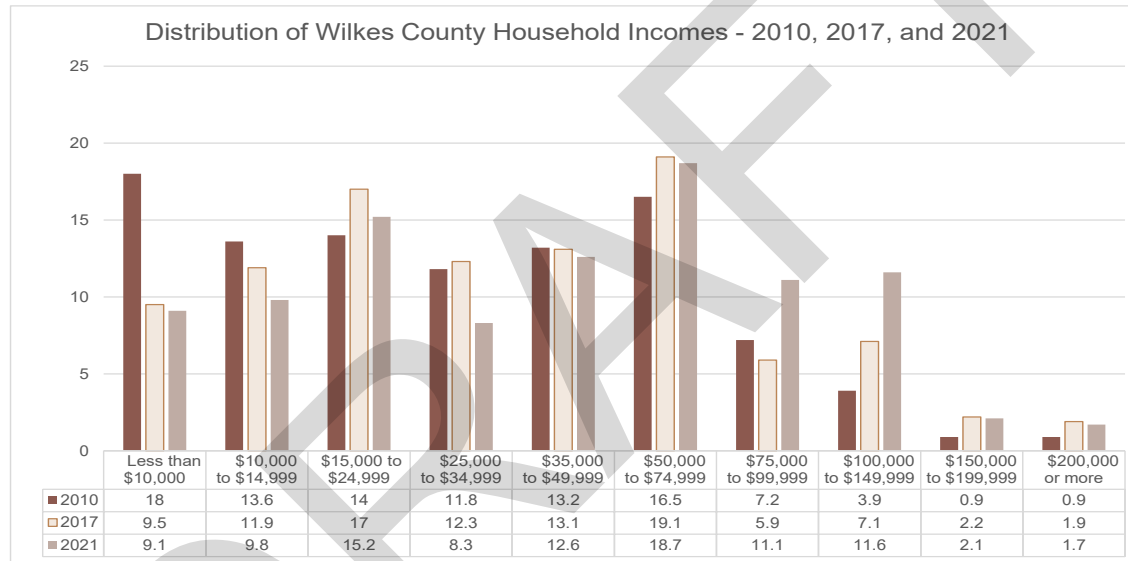
Source: American FactFinder. Census 2020, American Community Survey 2016 - 2021

Household Incomes

Wilkes County household incomes have increased since 2010. The effect of the economic downturn is evident here, though. While some increase is due to rising wages, in other cases, it is likely associated with the departure of some residents in search of more hopeful economic circumstances.

There has been a sharp decline in the number of households earning less than \$10,000 annually since 2010. Alternatively, many higher income groups, those earning \$35,000 or more, have maintained their 2010 levels or experienced a very slight decline.

The \$75,000- \$99,999 and \$100,000 to \$149,999 groups seem to have seen the sharpest increase since 2017 when compared to the other groups.



Source: American FactFinder, Census 2020, American Community Survey 2010 - 2021

Cost-Burdened Households

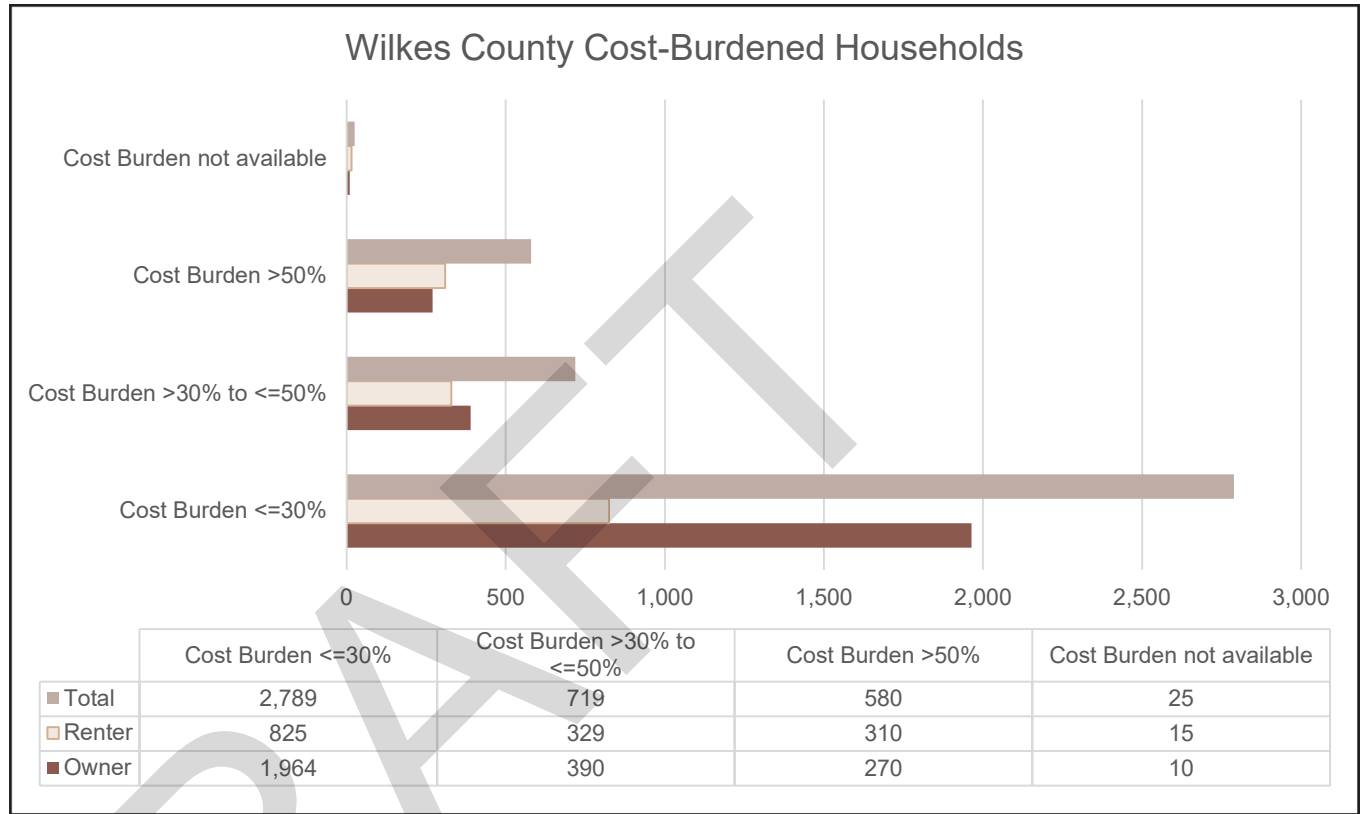
Despite rising incomes, some Wilkes County residents still find it difficult to make ends meet. According to HUD housing affordability data (CHAS), at least 17.5% of Wilkes County households spend more than 30% (but less than 50%) of their monthly income on housing costs. HUD defines this as being “housing cost burdened.” The proportion of renters struggling with this cost burden is higher than the proportion of home owners.

Additionally, 19.3% of households are considered to be severely cost burdened, spending in excess of 50% of monthly income on housing. Again, the share of renters is higher than the share of home owners in this 19%. These families or householders most certainly have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation or medical care.

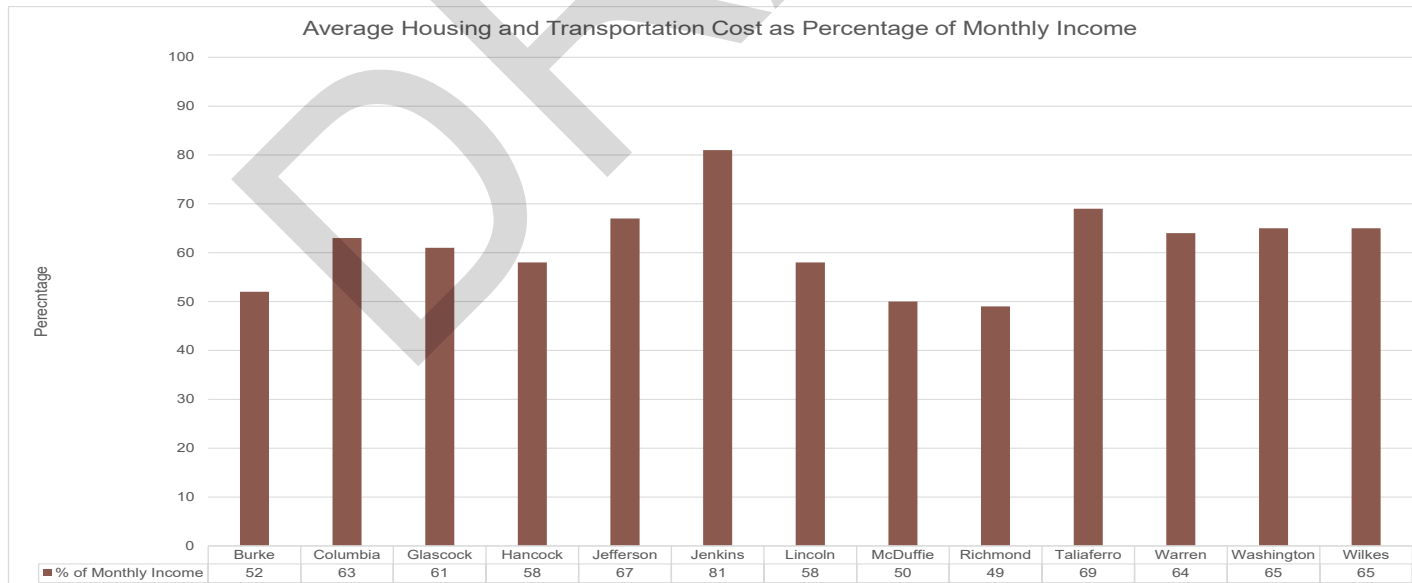
Cost Burdened Households (Continued)

In a 2022 review of housing and transportation affordability, Wilkes County was found to have the 4th highest combined cost of housing and transportation in the CSRA. It was one of the 8 counties with a percentage in excess of 60.

In 2022, Wilkes County residents spent an average of 65% of their monthly income on accommodation and transportation. Such a high proportion leaves little income for other necessities like food or clothing, and discretionary expenses like entertainment.



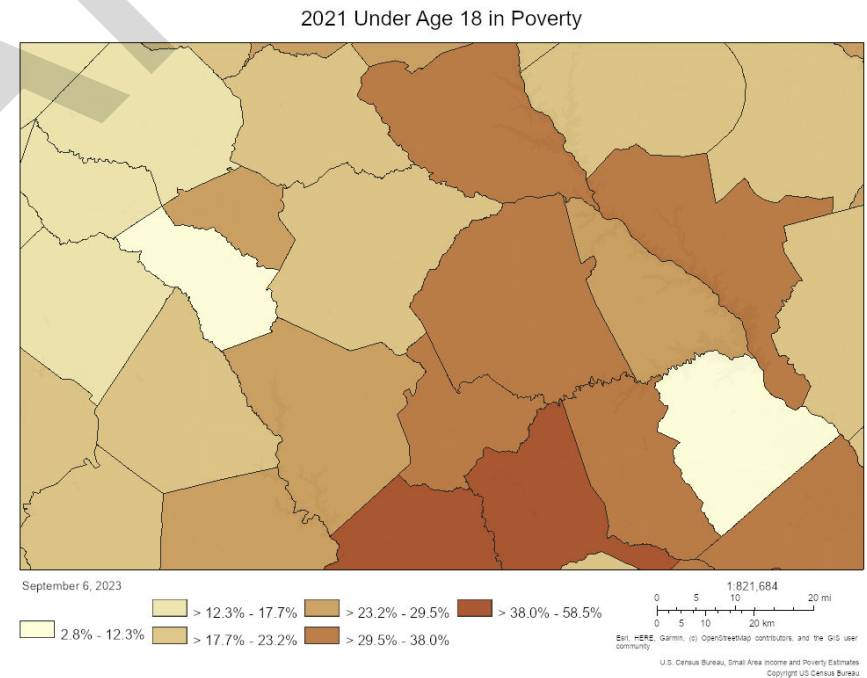
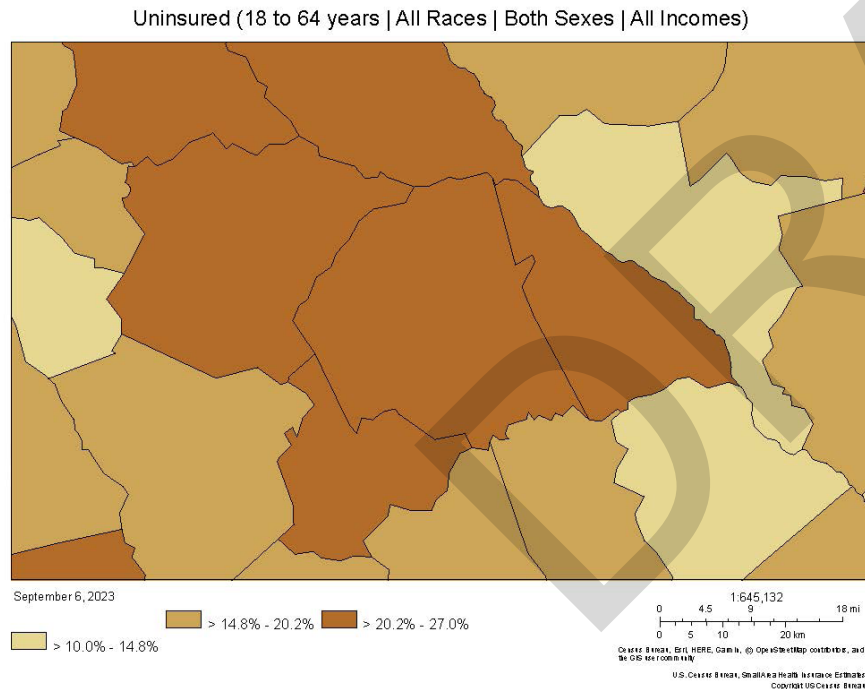
Source: HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research, 2016 - 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Cost-Burdened Households (continued)

That many residents experience cost burden is further confirmed by metrics like the poverty rate and medical insurance coverage. According to 2021 Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), 34% of Wilkes residents under the age of 18 live in a household with an income that is beneath the corresponding poverty threshold. Further, 22.2% of the Wilkes County population between the ages of 18 and 64 lacks medical insurance coverage.

While local governments may not be best situated to alleviate all of the aforementioned issues, the comprehensive planning process is designed to offer municipalities an understanding of the needs and challenges faced by those living within their bounds. The Plan, as a fact-based resource, can situate local governments to effectively prioritize needs and identify measures through the coordinated efforts of government at all levels that will have the greatest impact on improving the lives of residents and stakeholders.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates



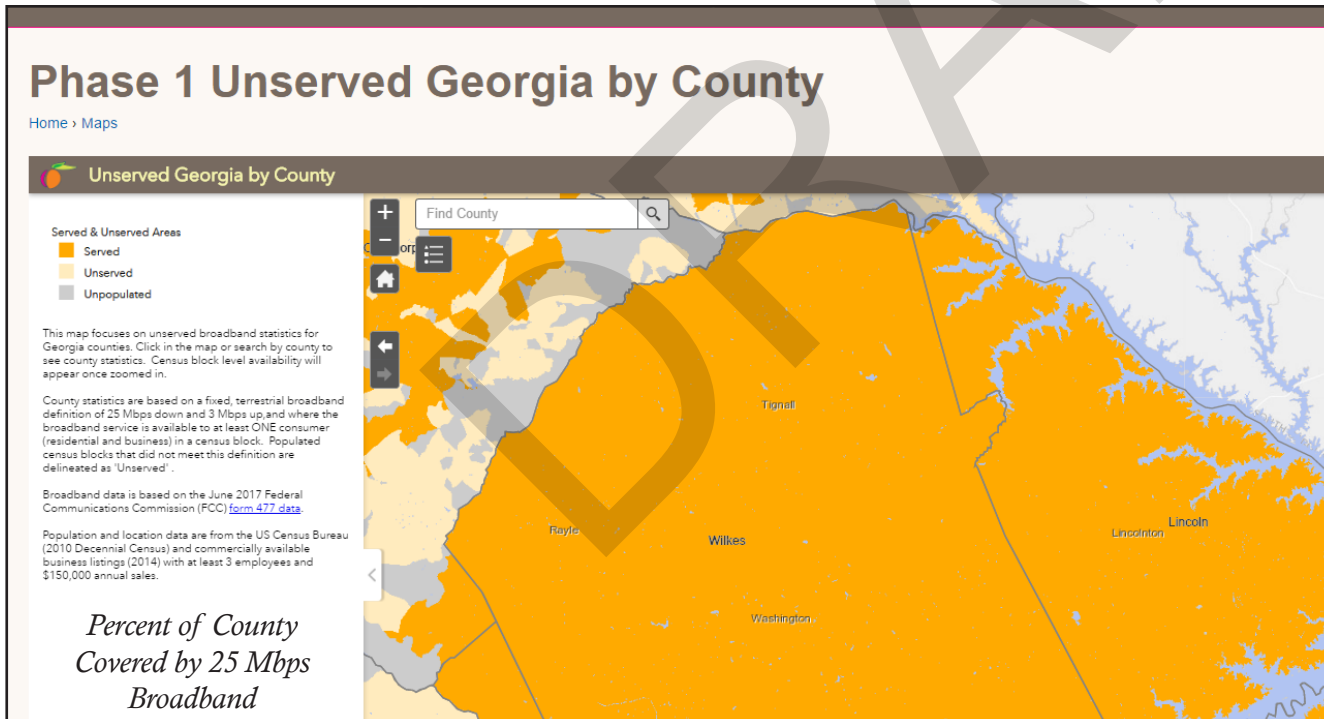
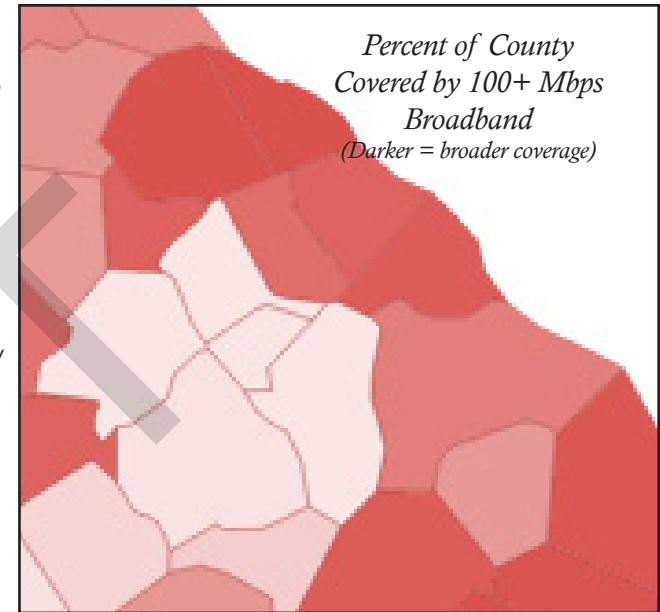
*Broadband
Services*

Significance of Broadband

The internet has fundamentally changed the way we live our lives. From the way we communicate, shop, and even work – no sphere of life remains untouched by this pervasive medium. Unfortunately, however, access to the internet, like most other things in life, is uneven across segments of society. The ‘digital divide’ is the term coined to describe this uneven geographic and socioeconomic access to information and communications technologies many in our society now experience. Beyond the inability to simply shop online, stream entertainment, or engage social media platforms, not being ‘connected’ has deeper implications for communities with specific regard to optimal economic, educational and social outcomes of their citizens. As the internet increasingly becomes the primary platform for the conduct of our daily affairs, a reliable means of connecting has become nearly as essential as basic utilities like water and electricity.

BroadbandNow.com assembles publicly available information about broadband infrastructure and service. It provides a wealth of analysis about broadband service provider coverage area, transmission method, speed, and, often, price of services.

The image above indicates the proportion of each county with access to 100+Mbps broadband speeds. Wilkes County has 100% coverage. This level of download speed is 4x faster than the current State standard for connections regarded as “broadband-speed.”



This screenshot from DCA's Broadband Deployment mapping tool indicates that as of October 2023 all of Wilkes County, Lincoln County and most of Taliaferro County were considered to be “served” by broadband-speed internet service. The map also shows that several neighboring jurisdictions to Wilkes are not fully served. At this point, Wilkes County’s broadband coverage remains a significant competitive advantage with regard to potential economic development and educational opportunities.



The Georgia Department of Community Affairs updated its minimum planning standards for local governments in 2018 to include the requirement that each jurisdiction prepare an action plan for the promotion and deployment of broadband internet services within its bounds. The Department suggests that local comprehensive plans should ultimately contemplate the implementation of broadband plans in a manner that recognizes the vital necessity of this now basic utility.

Vast regional and intra-regional disparities exist in the availability of broadband-speed internet services across the State. While several CSRA counties enjoy almost 100% broadband coverage, others are among those least covered. Wilkes County is among those with complete broadband-speed coverage.

What is Broadband?

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines 'broadband' as high-speed internet that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access. The term includes several high-speed transmission technologies such as DSL (digital subscriber line), cable modem, fiber, wireless, and satellite. Regardless of its method of transmission, a connection is considered to be broadband only if its minimum download speed is 25 Mbps, and minimum upload speed is 3 Mbps.

Provider	Speeds Up To	Plans Starting At	Connection	Availability	Contact
Viasat	30 Mbps	\$64.99	Satellite	100%	(877) 356-2894
HughesNet	25 Mbps	\$49.99	Satellite	100%	(844) 902-3107
Starlink	50 - 220 Mbps	\$90	Satellite	100%	
Relyant	1 Gbps	\$59.99	Fiber	99.9%	(706) 678-2121

Wilkes County residents have access to the internet via multiple providers and transmission methods. Two providers offer a satellite connection, advertising 25 to 30 Mbps download speeds. One provider offers access to business consumers via fixed wireless transmission with download speeds of up to 100 Mbps. Finally, one provider offers residential consumers access via DSL at up to 1.5 Mbps and, for a higher price, connection via fiber at up to 1 Gbps.

The number of providers operating within a particular jurisdiction has strong implications for the potential affordability of broadband services. Many different factors differentiate the price a customer ultimately pays: speed, reliability, limitations on throughput (data caps), and length of service agreement. If customers are able to acquire reliable access via a comparable connection method at a lower price, providers will be incentivized to reduce prices to remain competitive.

Source: BroadbandNow.com

Maximizing Coverage and Infrastructure

Wilkes County has an amazing advantage in its robust broadband infrastructure. The potential benefits of this strong, reliable connection are clear for all residents and stakeholders. Among them are improved educational, employment and healthcare options for citizens, increased productivity and more efficient operations for businesses, and the potential for competitive new entrepreneurial ventures. To maximize Wilkes County's broadband infrastructure, the County must pursue broadband-related projects that advance these key objectives.

The coming five-year work program will include projects that seek to increase community access to available high-speed internet through establishment of public wi-fi hotspots and connected community centers. The plan will also work to overcome impediments to broadband adoption by promoting digital literacy and the benefits of connectedness for residents, businesses and other stakeholders.

Funding Sources

The Biden Administration announced in May 2023 that Georgia will receive \$1.3 billion out of a \$42 billion nationwide federal investment in broadband expansion. The funding, which comes from the bipartisan infrastructure spending bill Congress passed in 2021, will expand broadband and strengthen access to affordable, high-speed internet across the state, particularly for the estimated 15% of Georgians who currently lack reliable broadband access.

DRAFT



*Economic
Development*

Wilkes County's Economy

Wilkes County has a vibrant economy with the potential to expand in the next five years. With an estimated 3,596 skilled individuals employed in fields such as retail, manufacturing/construction, healthcare, and agriculture, the county plans to utilize local assets to attract increase the size and quality of its workforce.

Expanding and retaining the county's growing workforce is paramount among its economic development goals. As part of this effort, local leaders recognize the need to increase workforce housing inventory to accommodate more workers.

As part of an effort to attract more visitors to the area, the county plans to bolster its economy through ecotourism by expanding recreation opportunities and encouraging the use of public green space.



Retail trade and service industry jobs, like The Nest coffee shop in Washington (pictured above), have outpaced the local manufacturing industry in terms of residential employment. The healthcare and educational organizations comprise the third largest share of local jobs.

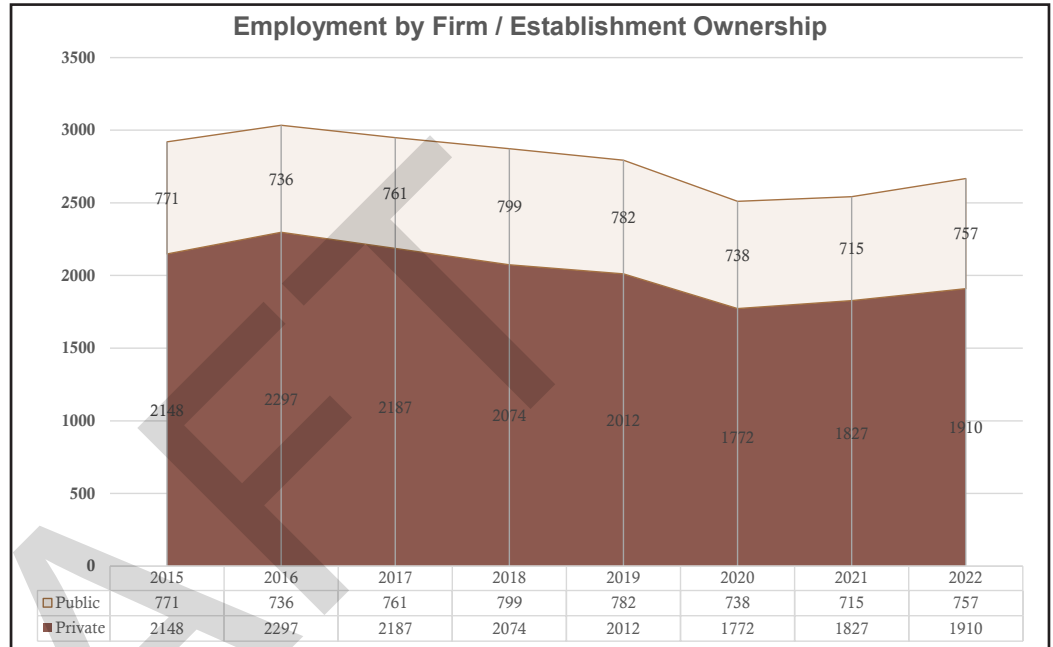


Firms Operating in Wilkes County

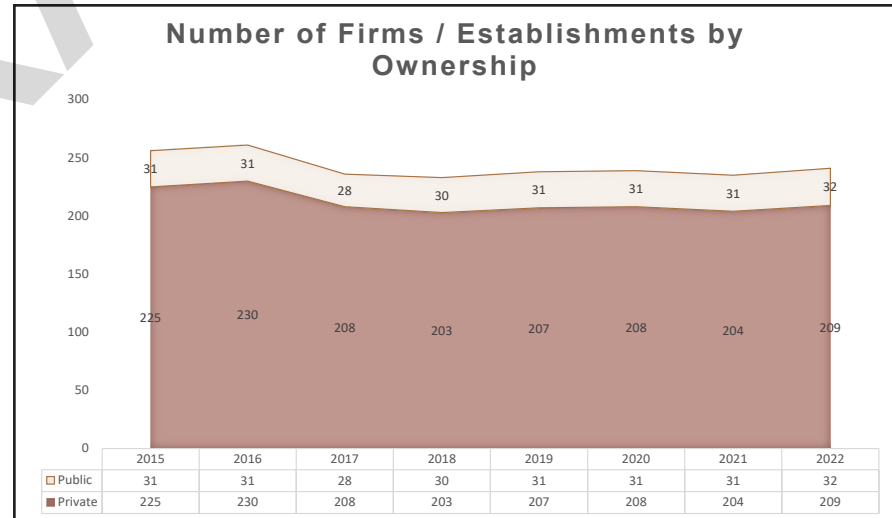
Employment has remained relatively steady in Wilkes County, with a small net decrease in the period from 2015 to 2023. Public employment has declined in this period, with this sector ultimately composing a smaller proportion of local offerings overall. This is due in part to a reduction in Federal and State presence. Local government employment has declined to a lesser extent. Private sector employment, however, experienced an increase from 2015 into 2016 before declining slightly in 2017 and increasing from 2020 to 2022.

Bureau of Labor Statistics data reveals that the opening of several new private firms between 2015 and 2016 was likely responsible for the added employment opportunities. These gains were quickly reversed, though, with an immediate and significant drop in the average number of private firms operating between 2016 and 2017. Where in 2016 there was a reported average of 230 privately owned firms operating in the County, by 2018 this number had dropped to 203, its lowest point in the 2013 to 2022 observation period. The average number of public sector establishments lingered in the low thirties before also declining to 28 in 2017.

Economic Developers understand well the cost of recruiting new business versus expanding an existing business. Having taken a survey of industries presently operating locally, their contributions to the economy, and their state of health, development of an existing industry program, or business retention and expansion program (BREP), is an identified DCA Best Practice under the Quality Community Objective of Economic Prosperity. Existing firms are a reliable source of new jobs. Every effort should be made to support and enhance existing local industries.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) 2015 - 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) 2015 - 2022

Employment By Sector

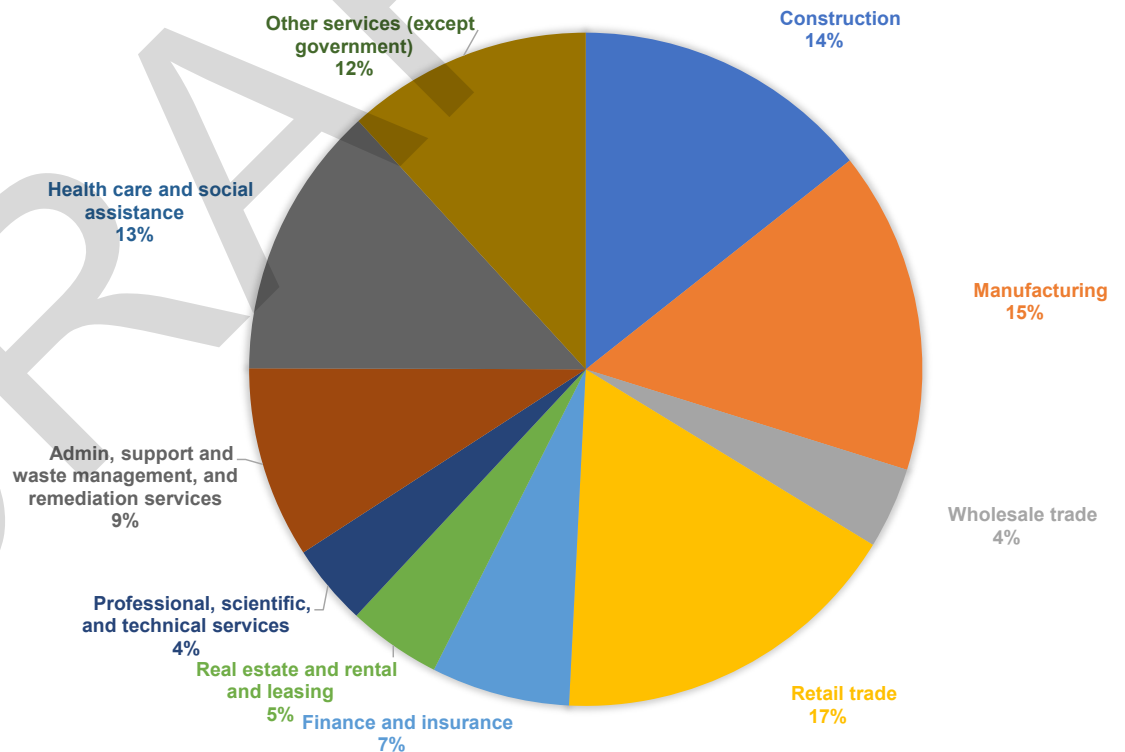
The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) offers a limited, but insightful, view of the specific industries in which firms within the County are involved. Due to the small size of the local economy and limited number of firms in some categories, data is suppressed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of firms. Suppressed data accounts for approximately 24% of the reported 3,184 private sector jobs reported by the BLS for Wilkes County in 2021. Data is limited for industries such as Agriculture and Forestry, Mining and Extraction, Utilities, Transportation and Warehousing, and Arts and Entertainment.

The chart below summarizes data for the remaining jobs offered by firms in Wilkes County. The greatest share of local employment is provided by retailers at 17% with 441 in 2021. Manufacturing firms comprise the second greatest market share at 15%, or a reported average of 400 jobs in 2021. This industry experienced the most noticeable decrease in percentage, falling 26.5% from 616 jobs in 2017. Other sectors include construction at 14% and healthcare and social assistance firms at 13%.



Burdette Mill & Gin, Inc. has been operating in Washington for 65 years. The company is one of several manufacturing firms in the area.

Wilkes Co. Employment by Sector (2021)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)

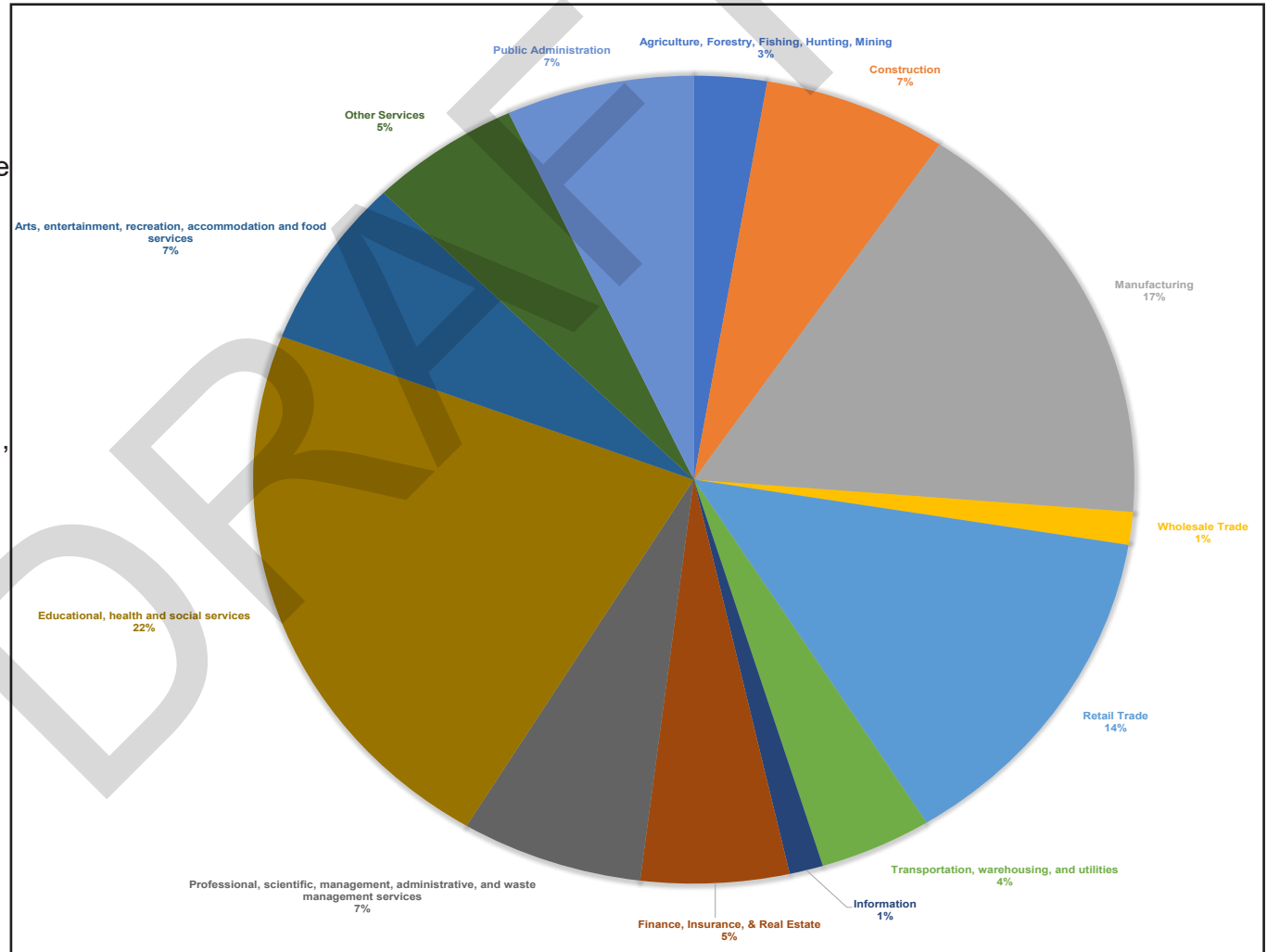
Where Wilkes County Residents Work

Complex, interwoven social and economic realities underlie the spatial imbalance of jobs and housing. For some, where to live is a choice, while for others, their place of residence is a matter of economic constraint. The US Census Bureau, through the American Community Survey (ACS), offers a look at the work done by Wilkes County residents. As a significant proportion of the County’s residents are employed outside the County, these numbers are more so a reflection of regional economic activity.

The data reveals similarities in that a large amount of the population is employed in the same key industries: manufacturing, education, health and social services, and retail trade. Being a largely rural and agrarian region, Agriculture, Forestry and Mining play a key role, additionally, Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities, and also Professional, Scientific, Administrative and Waste Management Services. With the arrival of cyber-related businesses and skilled-labor, the share of those employed in Information, Finance, Insurance and Real Estate, and even Arts, Entertainment and Recreation can be expected to increase in the coming years.

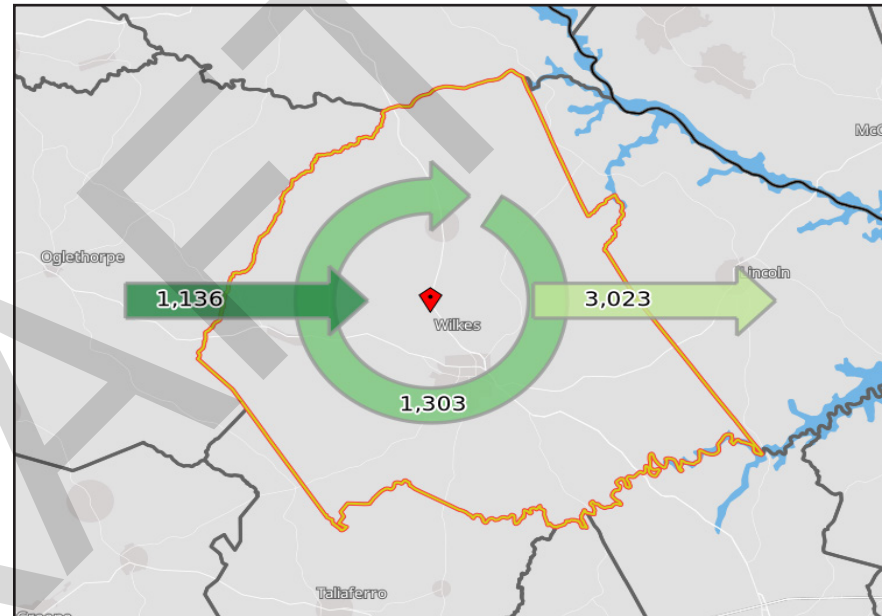
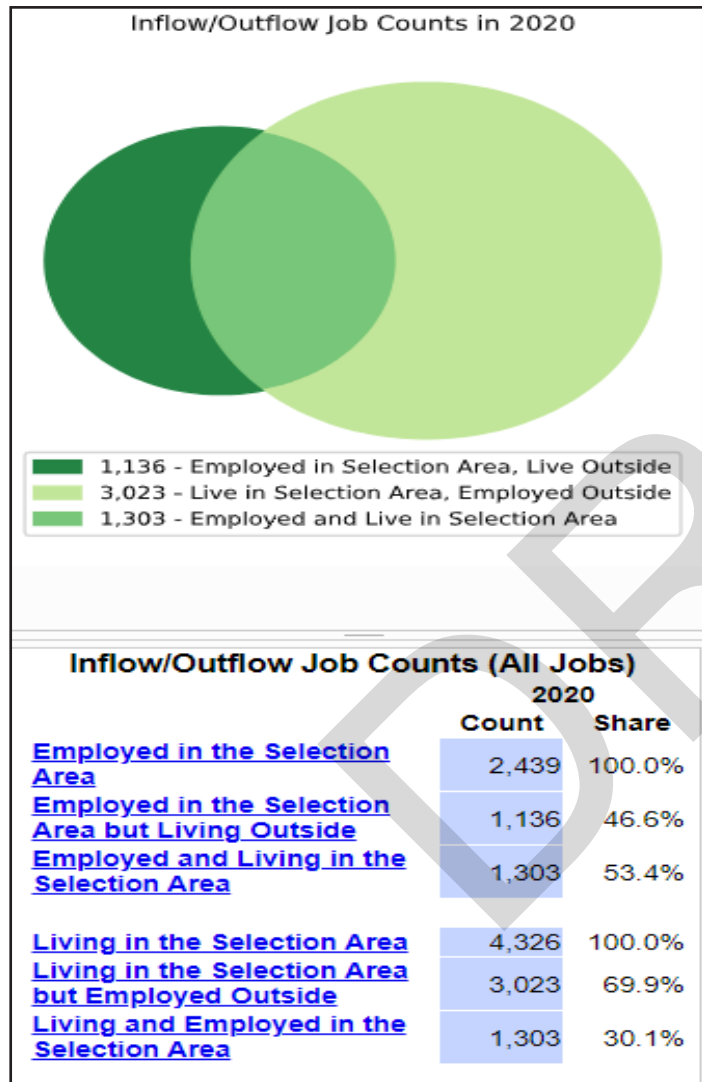
Also, from this perspective, we truly see the broader influence of education, health and social services in the region. Though declining in Wilkes County, this industry still employs many in the region. In fact, looking at Census reports of employment in the period from 2017 to 2021, Wilkes County residents reported a net increase of 11.2% in employment in a field classified as education, health and social services, and a net decline of 11.1% in manufacturing for the same period

Source: American Factfinder;
American Community Survey 2021



Jobs - Housing Imbalance

While the following chart utilizes 2020 data, it demonstrates the fluid nature of labor across municipal boundaries. According to the Census Bureau, local employers reported 2,439 jobs in Wilkes County (across all employers). This number corresponds roughly with the BLS reported average of 2,919 for 2015. Only approximately 53% (1,303) of Wilkes County jobs in 2020 were filled by a Wilkes County resident. Viewed another way, nearly 70% (3,023) of the employed working age population that called Wilkes County home at the time, went to work in another county.



Among its numerous and varied data products, the U.S. Census Bureau offers a mapping tool called “On The Map.” This tool analyzes the inflow and outflow of residents to their place of employment. Ultimately, it provides a view of how many residents of a given county are locally employed, and how many travel outside the county in which they reside for the purpose of employment. The venn diagram indicates clearly that many more people live in Wilkes County than are employed in Wilkes County.

At the top of the following page, is another output from the On The Map tool that displays the density of jobs within the County. While some employers are in the rural areas, most are concentrated in and around the City of Washington and Town of Tignall.

Source: Census On The Map; U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

Wages and Salaries

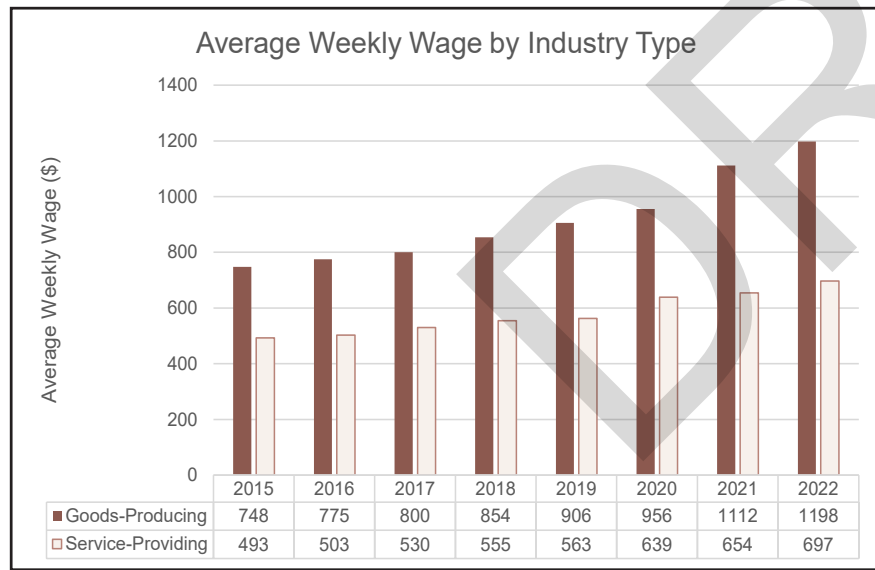
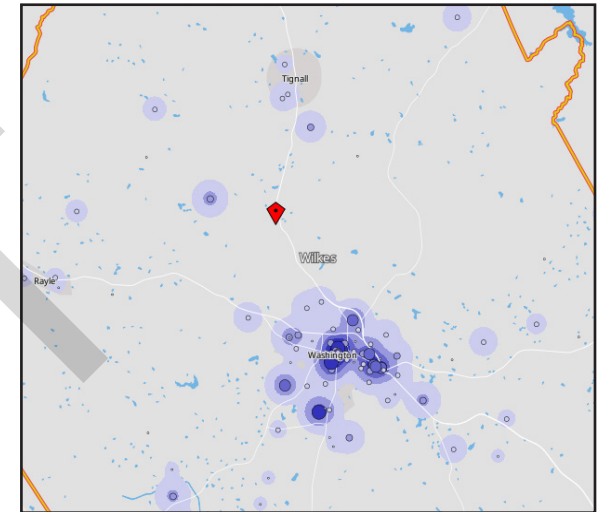
Consistent with national economic trends, the CSRA region is gradually shifting more so toward service provision than production of goods. The following chart indicates that through the period of the present work program, the industries anticipated to experience the greatest growth are service-oriented.

The significance of goods-producing employers to a local economy can readily be seen in a comparison of wages. Fortunately, recent history suggests Wilkes County could buck the regional trend of manufacturing decline. Although, this should not come at the expense of lost service-providing jobs

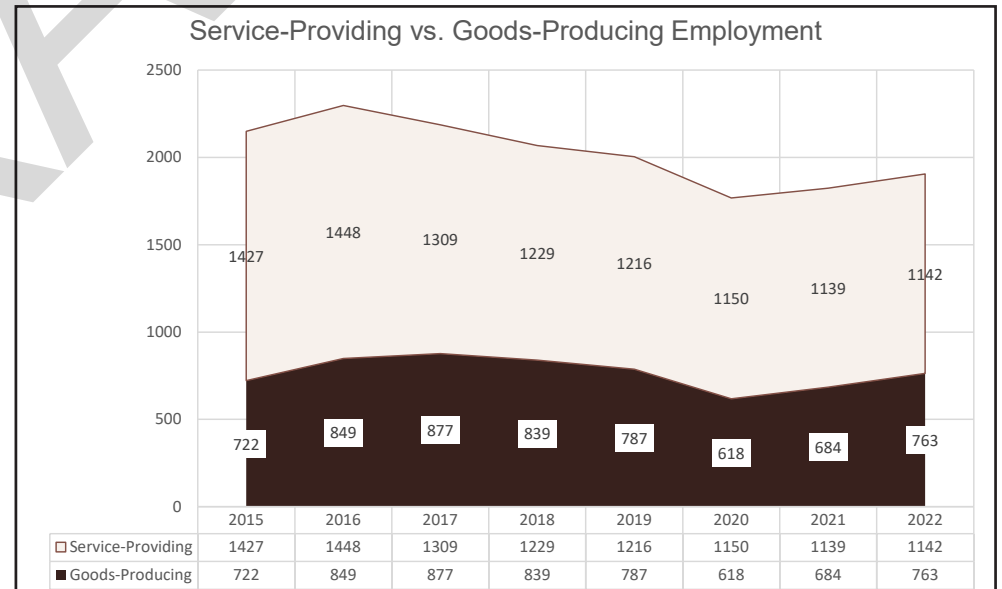
Though average weekly wages have consistently improved for both goods-producing and service-providing employees, there remains a significant difference between the two. Wages for goods producers are far higher and have increased at a far more rapid pace than service providers in the period from 2015 to 2022.

Source: Census On The Map
U.S. Census Bureau
Center for Economic Studies,

- 5 - 69 Jobs/Sq.Mile
- 70 - 262 Jobs/Sq.Mile
- 263 - 583 Jobs/Sq.Mile
- 584 - 1,034 Jobs/Sq.Mile
- 1,035 - 1,613 Jobs/Sq.Mile
- 1 - 3 Jobs
- 4 - 17 Jobs
- 18 - 58 Jobs
- 59 - 136 Jobs
- 137 - 265 Jobs
- Work Area



Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Industry Mix, 2015 - 2022



Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Industry Mix, 2015 - 2022

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Housing

Housing Unit Types

Housing in Wilkes County consists predominately of single-family detached units. While the total number of housing units has not remained stable, the proportion of single-family detached housing in particular has slightly decreased in the period from 2010 to 2021. Aside from site-built single-family homes, the only other housing type prevalent is mobile or manufactured homes.

Wilkes County	2010	%	2017	%	2021	%
Total Housing Units	5,169	100	5,171	100	5,166	100
Single Units (Detached)	3,699	71.6	3,700	71.6	3,443	66.6
Single Units (Attached)	95	1.8	59	1.1	21	0.4
Double Units	171	3.3	237	4.6	271	5.2
3 to 9 Units	104	2	112	2.2	126	2.4
10 to 19 Units	39	0.8	9	0.2	44	0.9
20 or More Units	15	0.3	23	0.4	16	0.3
Mobile Homes , Trailers or Other	1,046	20.2	1,031	19.9	1,128	21.8

Source: American Community Survey 2021



Mobile homes comprise the second largest portion of the county's housing stock



Single family detached units comprise the majority of Wilkes County's housing inventory

Permitting Activity

The construction of new homes has declined significantly since 2010, according to The Census Bureau. More than 400 new single-family homes were added in the period between 2000 and 2010, but nearly no additional units appeared in the following seven years. Permit data suggests that building activity that did occur was likely replacement of previously existing structures, as the overall inventory of housing units only increased by seven as of 2020. Even since 2017, the county has only seen a 10% of that of 2000-2010.

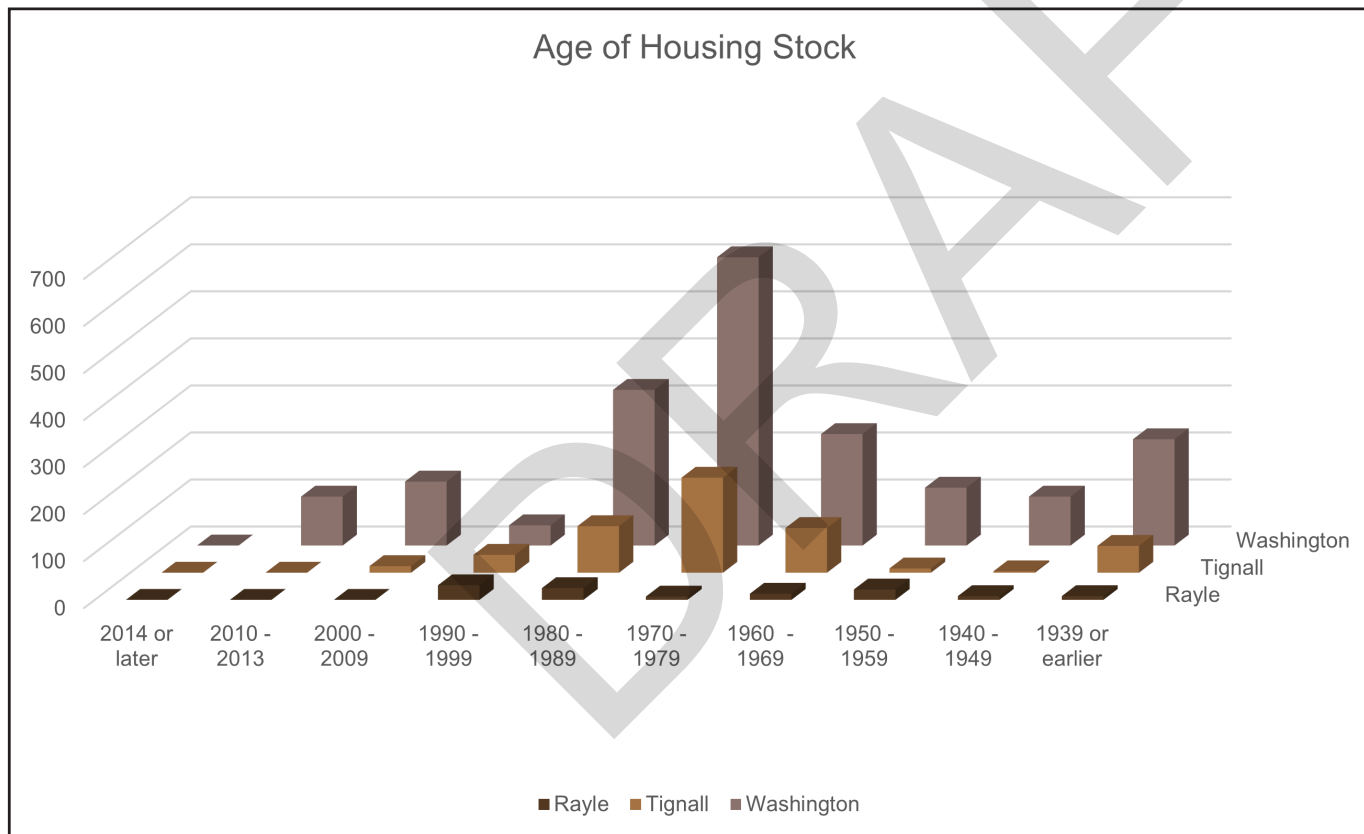
Age of Housing

Wilkes County's housing stock is aging. All Wilkes jurisdictions saw a spike in development in the 60's leading to a boom in the decade from 1970 to 1980. Activity continued, though at a less vigorous pace, in the 1980's. More than half (54%) of the current housing stock appeared during this 30-year cycle.

Another notable shift happened between 1990 and 1999, mostly in the unincorporated County, followed by a drop in the early 2000s. Nearly no new housing has been constructed since 2010. Any construction that has occurred since 2010 has appeared mainly in unincorporated areas of the county.



ABOVE:
This is one of several houses constructed during the 1970's, when Wilkes County saw it's largest expansion of houses in single decade.

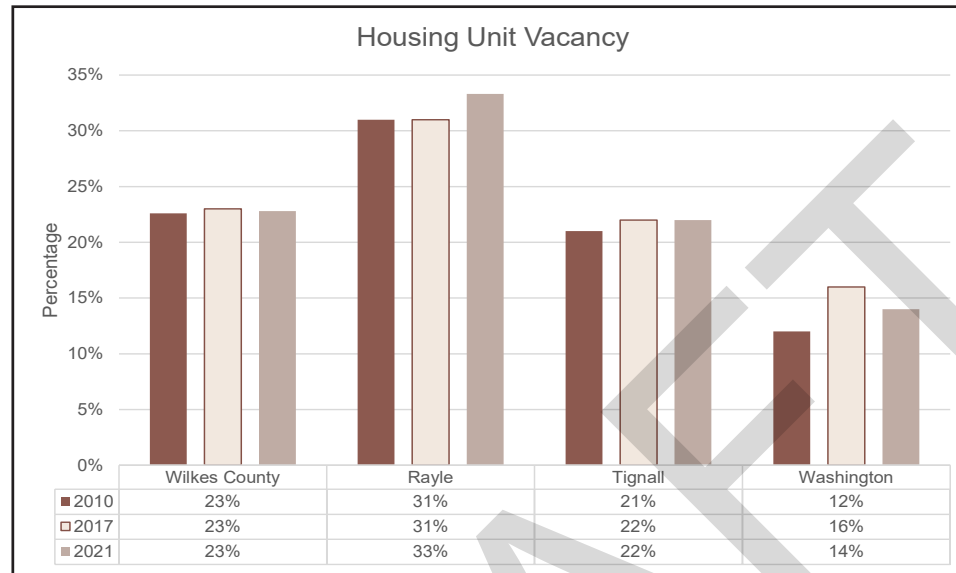


LEFT:
The legacy of Wilkes County's prominence as home to significant political figures and successful planters remains in the number of antebellum homes that can be found here. In fact, the County boasts the most antebellum homes per capita in the state of Georgia, with more than 100 that have maintained their structural and stylistic integrity.

Source: American FactFinder; American Community Survey 2021

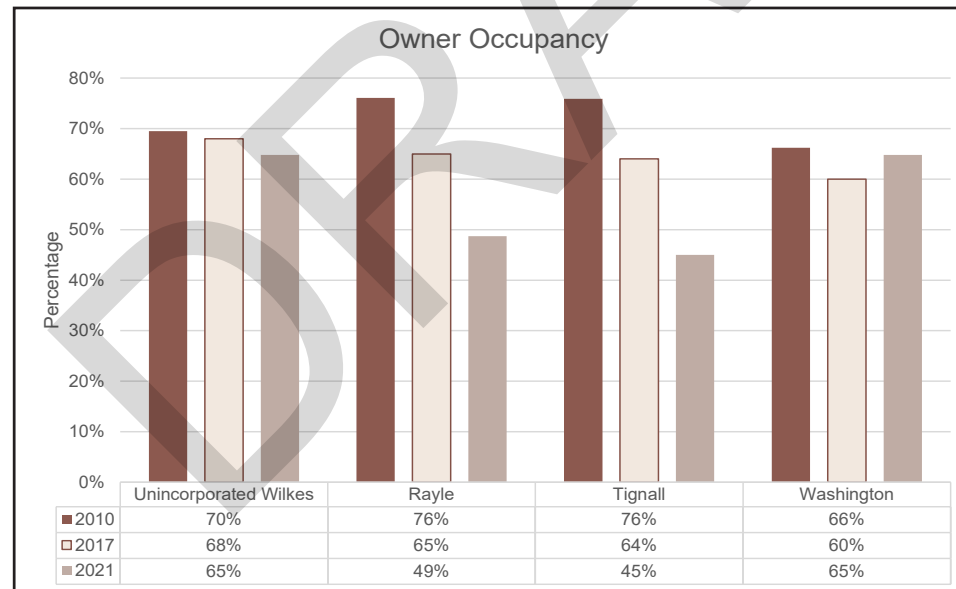
Housing Unit Vacancy and Tenure

Housing unit vacancy appears to have continued to increase in the period from 2017 to 2021. The number of vacant units has increased most significantly in the City of Washington and the unincorporated County. The Towns of Rayle and Tignall have maintained a consistent level of vacancy for this time period.

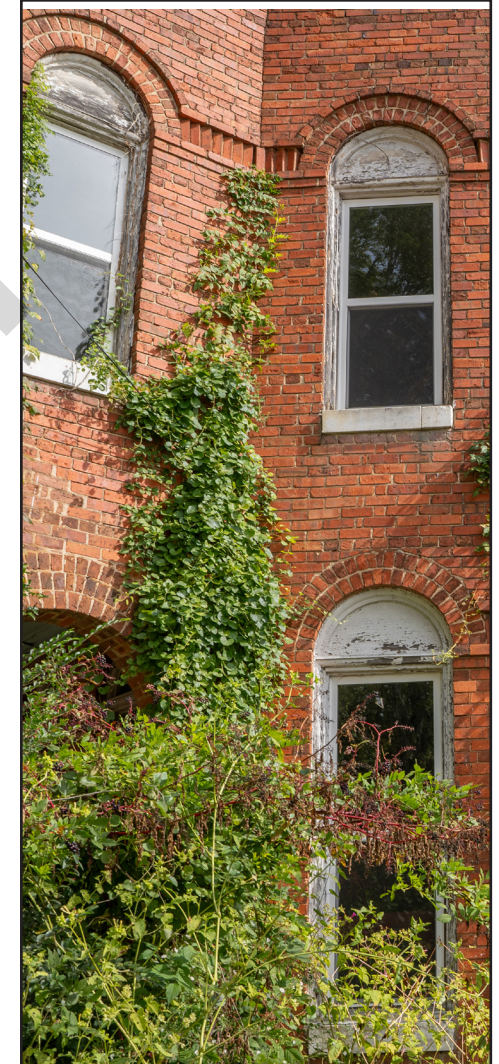


Source: American FactFinder; Census 2010, 2017; ACS 2021

Similarly, the rate of owner occupancy has declined across all areas of the county. This decline is most exaggerated in the incorporated areas. Rayle in particular has seen the greatest exodus of owners over the eleven-year period since 2010. The unincorporated County, however, has also seen a slow and significant rise in renter occupancy.



Source: ACS 5-Year Projection 2010, 2017, and 2021



Vegetation grows up the exterior of The Barrows Hotel Building in Washington. The building opened as a hotel in 1988, but has since been turned into apartments, which sit vacant on Depot Street.

Efforts to Expand and Diversify Housing Inventory

Urban Redevelopment Plan

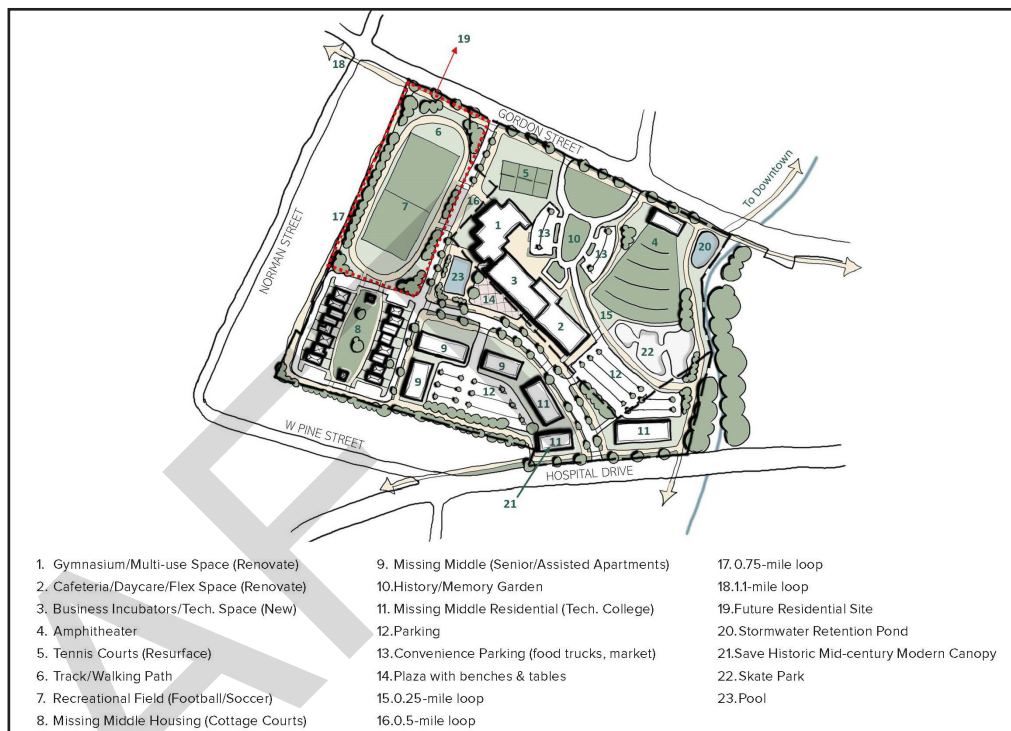
The City of Washington is working to combat the issue of substandard housing conditions for lower-income residents. In 2005, the City collaborated with the CSRA Regional Commission on the development and implementation of the Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP). Since the plan's inception, several new houses have been constructed on Rusher Street with three lots under construction at the writing of this comprehensive plan.

Workforce Housing

As part of Washington's effort to diversify and expand its workforce housing inventory, a new subdivision is underway with market rate houses on Ashley Drive. The project, set to start in 2024 and finish in 2025 or 2026, will feature single units and townhouses.

Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH)

The city of Washington is also working on its recertification with GICH to apply for low income tax housing in the urban redevelopment area behind the Gordon street



This diagram outlines the redevelopment plan for the area of the former Gordon Street School.

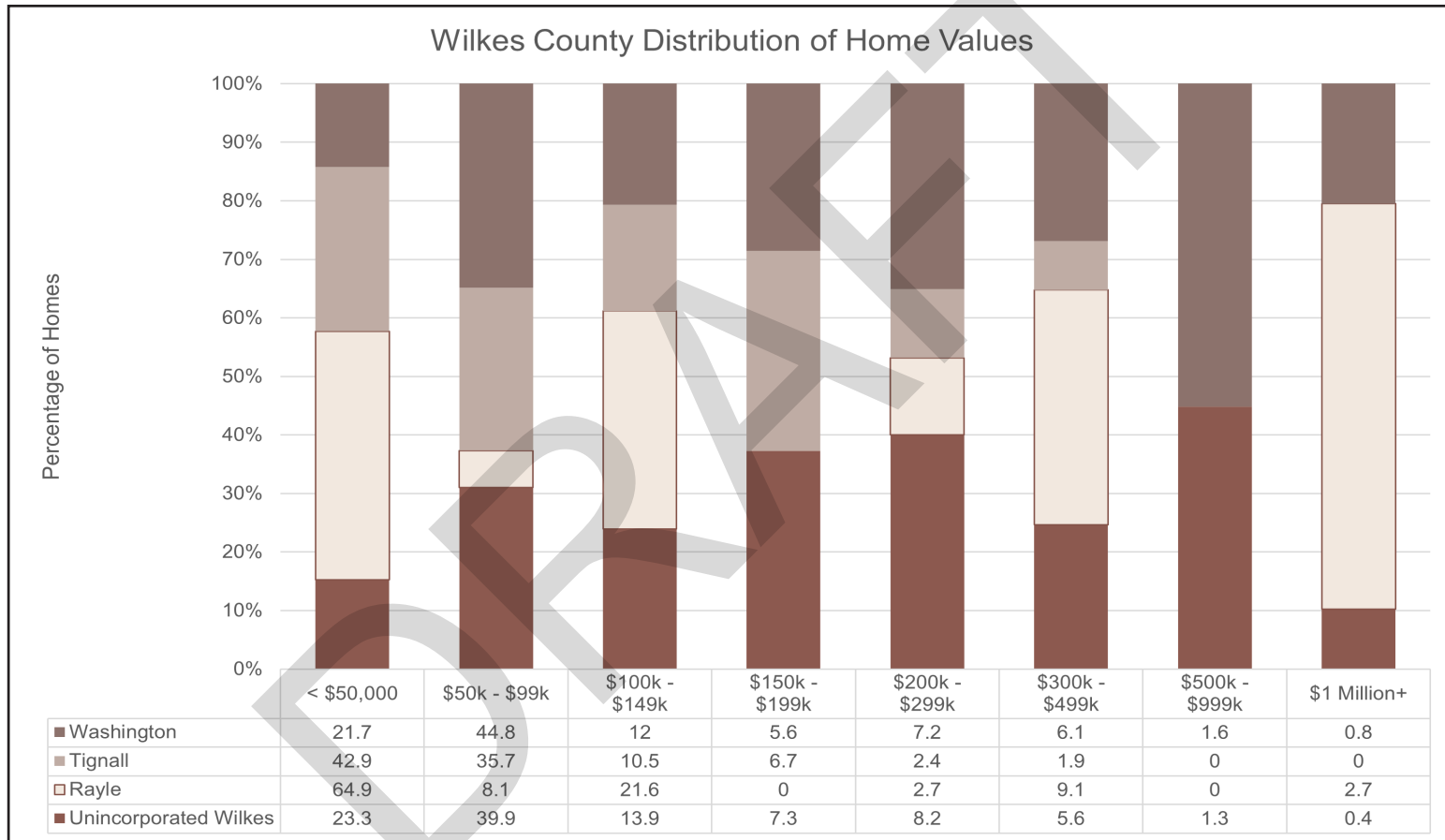


A new subdivision is under construction on Ashley Drive.

Home Values

Approximately 60% of homes in all Wilkes County jurisdictions are valued at \$100,000 or less; this number rises to greater than 78% in Tignall. Though the majority of housing is under \$100,000 the age of the County’s housing stock could prove high enough to compromise the overall value. Nonetheless, there are, high value homes in each community, some of which are of historic significance.

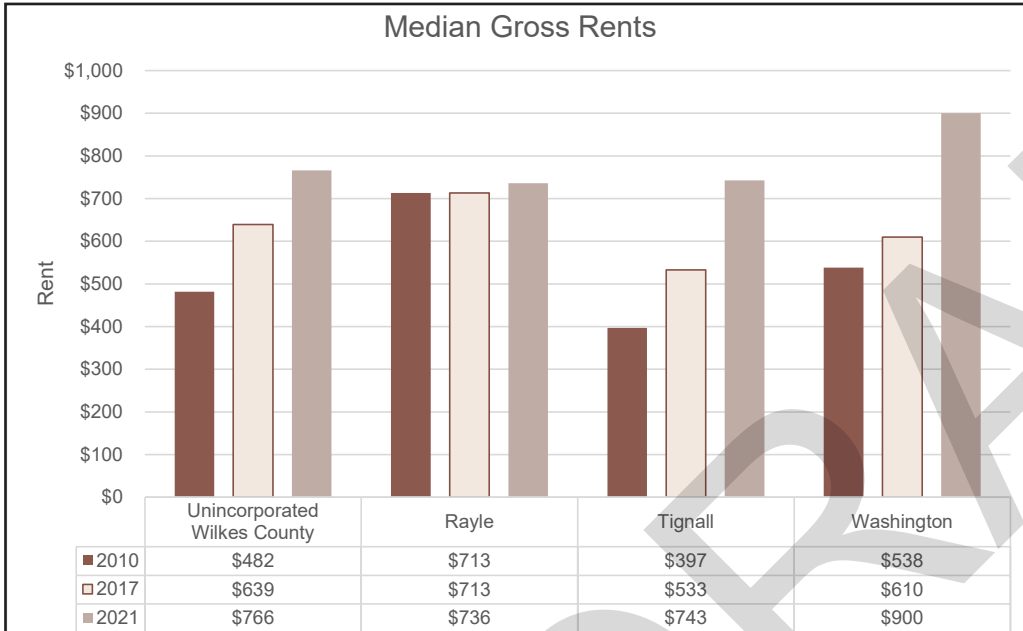
The country has been experience a major issue with affordable housing stock and Wilkes County is no exception.



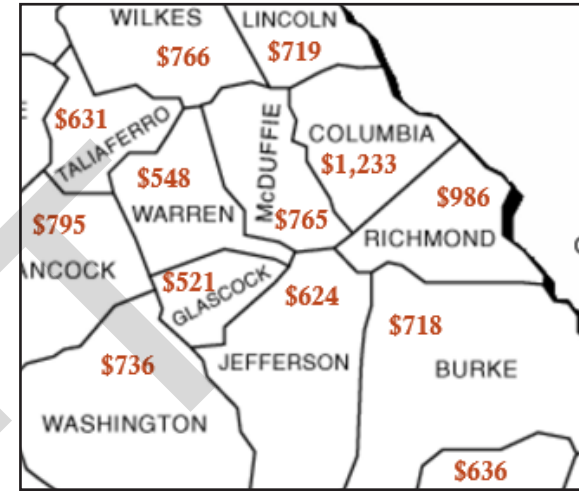
Source: American Community Survey 2021

Median Rents

Minimal development has served to keep the local housing market affordable. While rents have steadily increased in the period from 2010 to 2021, they have not reached the levels of some neighboring counties. The Town of Rayle is the outlier in this regard, in that its median rents reached an area high of \$713 in 2010 and only saw a \$30 increase through 2021.



Unincorporated Wilkes County and Contained Jurisdictions Median Gross Rents
Source: American FactFinder; ACS 2021



CSRA Region Median Rents

Source: American FactFinder;
ACS 2021



A "For Rent" sign hangs on the gates of the Old Wilkes County Jail. The building has been converted into a space for apartments.

Future Housing Goals

While progress has been made in addressing housing quality in some of the most distressed areas, Wilkes County still lacks the variety of housing options needed to accommodate its population. Demographic data has also shown that many households are cost-burdened when the cost of housing and transportation to work are considered.

To begin alleviating these concerns, the coming five year work program will include projects that seek to promote the development of quality workforce housing options and continue local efforts to eliminate barriers to home ownership for low-to-moderate income households.



Several 1930's-era houses sit on N Allison Street in Washington.



*Natural &
Cultural Resources*

Natural Resources - Environmental Planning Criteria

Source: 2023 Savannah Upper Ogeechee Regional Water Plan

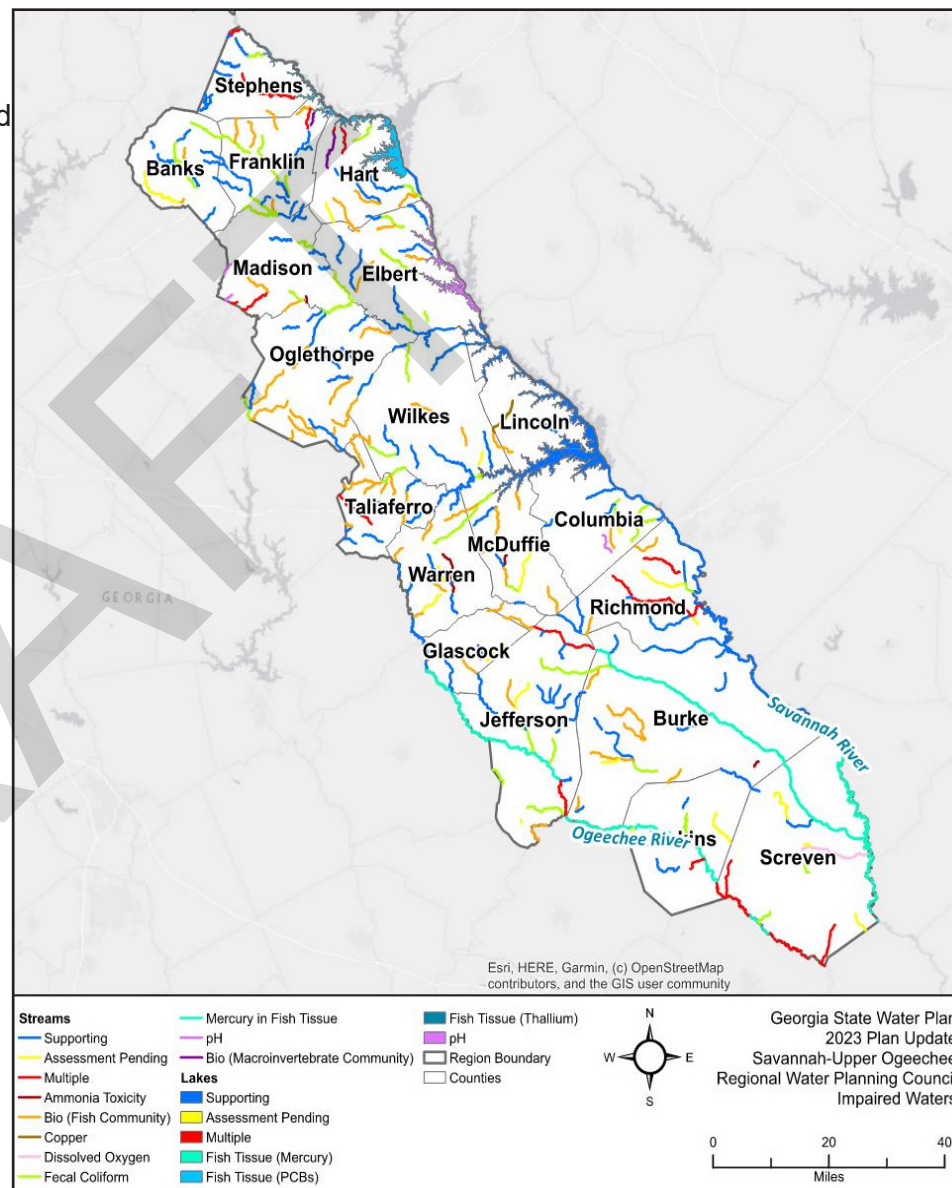
The State of Georgia's *Environmental Planning Criteria* recognize the inherent need of balancing human development activity with the protection of the natural environment. This recognition is represented by minimum planning criteria established by the state and implemented by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the protection of: water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and river corridors.

The locations of three (3) of these critical environmental areas in Wilkes county (groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and river corridors) are illustrated on the maps below. Wilkes County and the City of Washington have adopted regulations to ensure local activities do not harm these assets.

Water Supply Watershed

Wilkes County is located within the Savannah River drainage basin. Within this basin, portions of three major watersheds can be found: the Broad River Watershed across the northern third of the county, the Upper Savannah Watershed in the central and eastern portion of the county, and the Little River Watershed across the county's southern third.

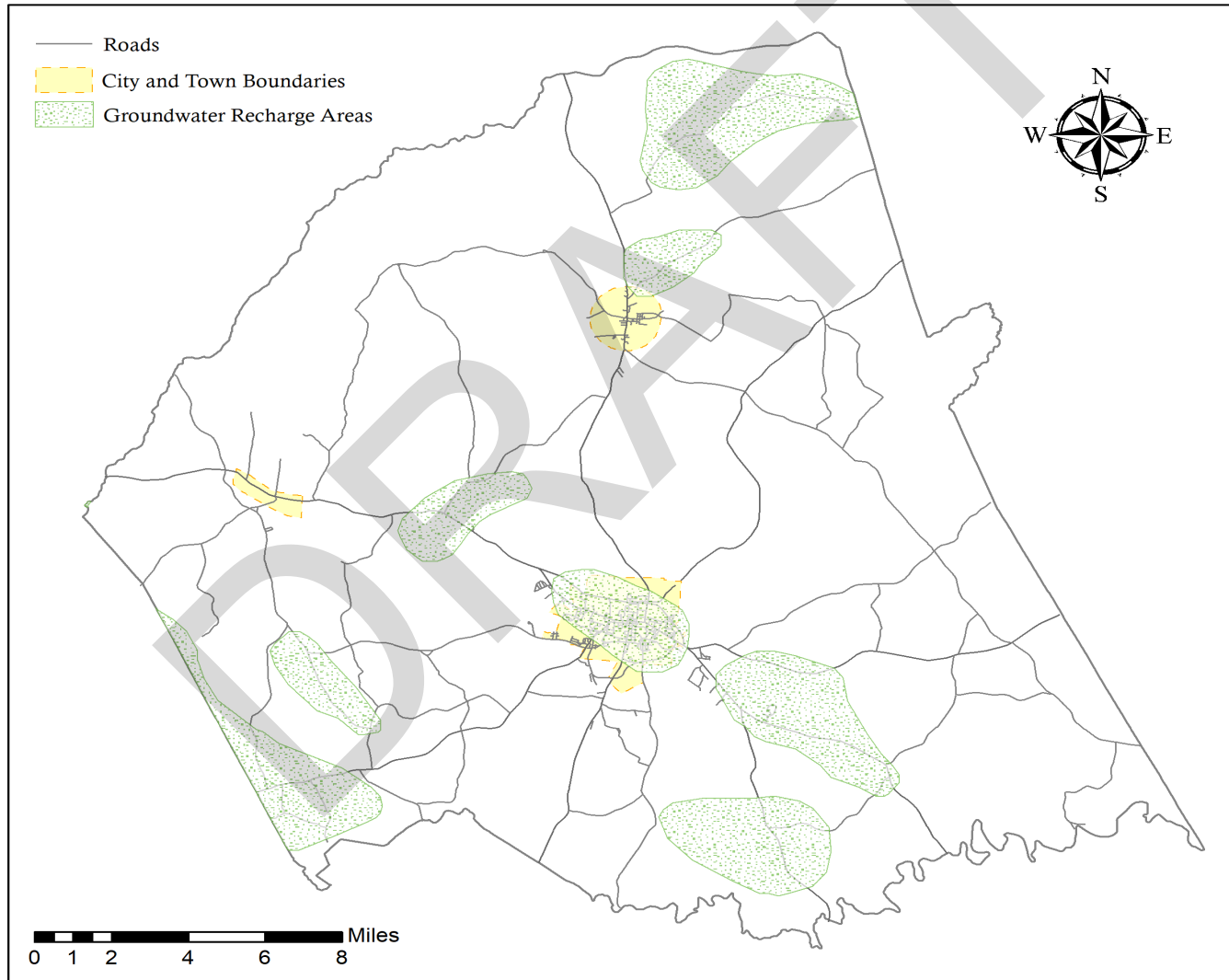
DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria define a water supply watershed as an area of land upstream from a governmentally owned public drinking water intake. Wilkes County lies entirely within the Augusta Canal and Abercorn Creek water supply watersheds. In addition, the smaller Lake Boline (Beaverdam Creek) and Lake Wall (Little Beaverdam Creek) water supply watersheds are located between Rayle and Washington and provide the City of Washington with a significant portion of its public drinking water supply. All water supply watersheds in Wilkes County are subject to DNR's Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds.



The City of Washington is the only Wilkes County jurisdiction that operates a public water supply system that is drawn from surface water sources. Washington's water system not only supplies roughly half of the residents of Washington-Wilkes with drinking water, it serves as the principal provider for water designated to non-residential uses – and is thus a great catalyst for economic development in the county.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Groundwater recharge areas are portions of the earth's surface where water infiltrates the ground to replenish an aquifer, which is any stratum or zone of rock beneath the surface of the earth capable of containing or producing water from a well. In order to avoid toxic and hazardous waste contamination to drinking water supplies, groundwater or aquifer recharge areas must be protected. While recharge takes place throughout almost all of Georgia's land area, the rate or amount of recharge reaching underground aquifers varies from place to place depending on geologic conditions.

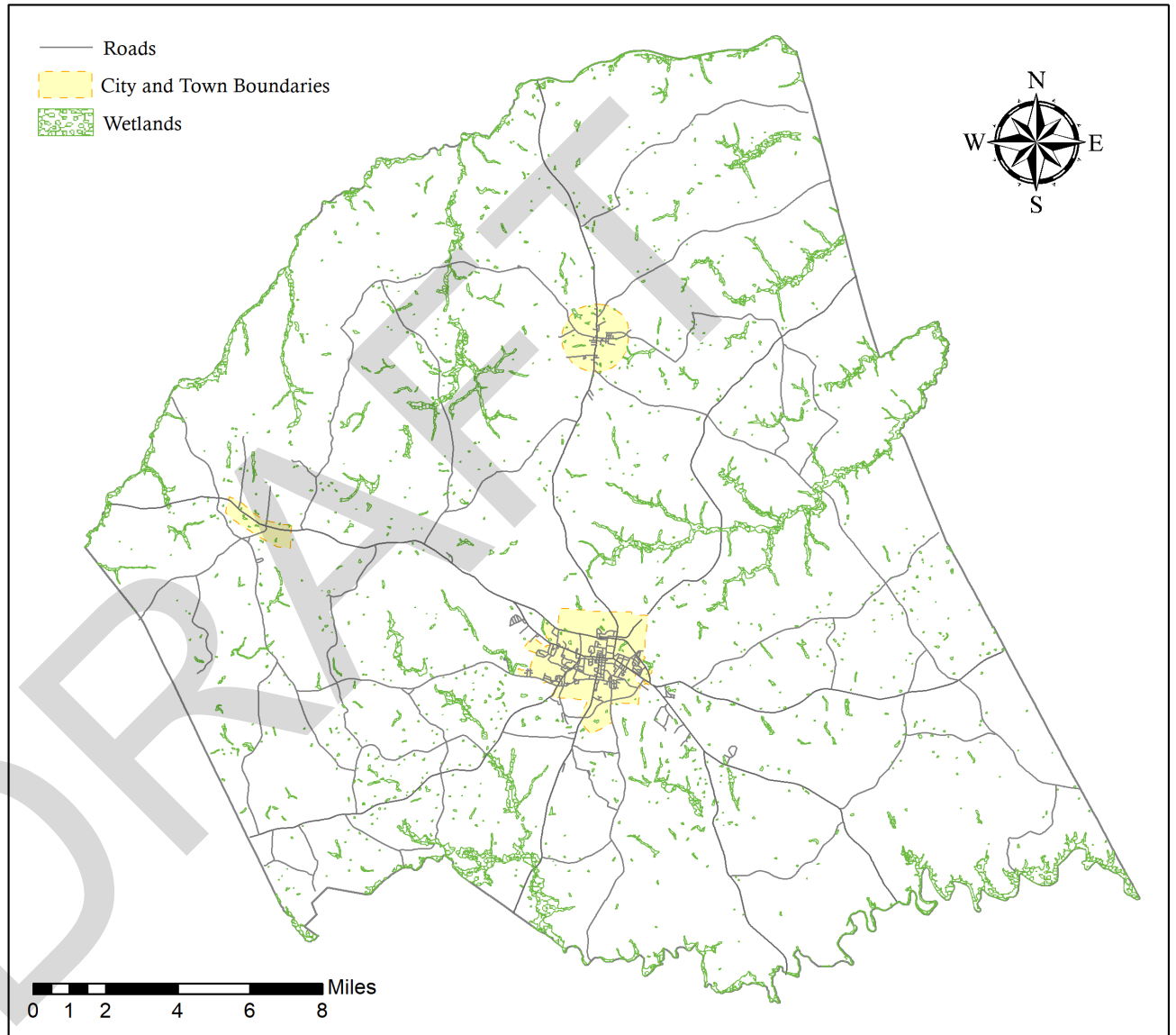


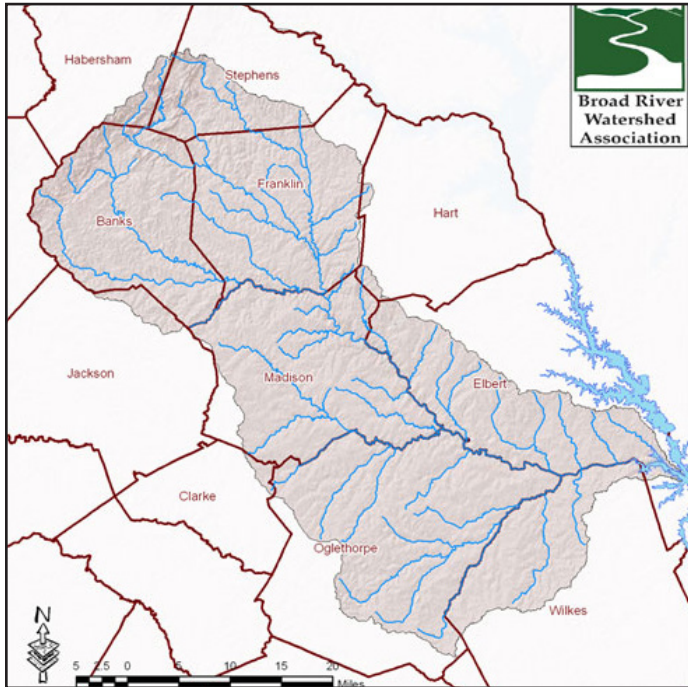
Wetlands

Federal law defines freshwater wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.

The vast majority of Wilkes County’s wetlands lie within or in close proximity to floodplains. A thorough review of existing floodplain, storm water, and erosion and sedimentation control standards and ordinances should take place by each jurisdiction. Additional wetlands protections – referencing DNR’s Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria – should be considered to provide additional protection to sensitive wetland habitats.

Preservation of wetlands is vital because of the many important functions they serve. They are among the world’s most biologically productive ecosystems and serve as crucial habitats for wildlife. Wetlands can help maintain water quality or improve degraded water by performing functions similar to a waste-water treatment plant, filtering sediment, toxic substances and nutrients. Wetland vegetation filters and retains sediments which otherwise enter lakes, streams and reservoirs often necessitating costly maintenance associated with dredging activities. Wetlands are also important for flood protection, as they act as water storage areas, significantly reducing peak flows downstream; and, the meandering nature of wetlands combined with abundant vegetation reduce flood velocities.





Source: Broad River Watershed Association

Protected River Corridors

River corridors and their immediate shore land environment (sometimes referred to as the riparian zone) are areas of critical environmental significance. They provide a number of benefits including: drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, flood storage capacity, and assimilative capacity for wastewater discharges – the river or stream’s ability to dilute wastewater to a point when it is no longer a threat to human health.

Section 305(b) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires that all states biennially list navigable waters throughout the state and provide a description of the water quality of such streams and its impact on its designated uses. Consistent with these requirements, DNR has developed minimum planning criteria for its river corridors in order to protect these vital resources. Wilkes County has one protected river corridor currently on EPA’s list of protected rivers, the Broad River. Broad River forms the northern border of the county.



Source: Google Maps, Photo Taken May 2023

Floodplains

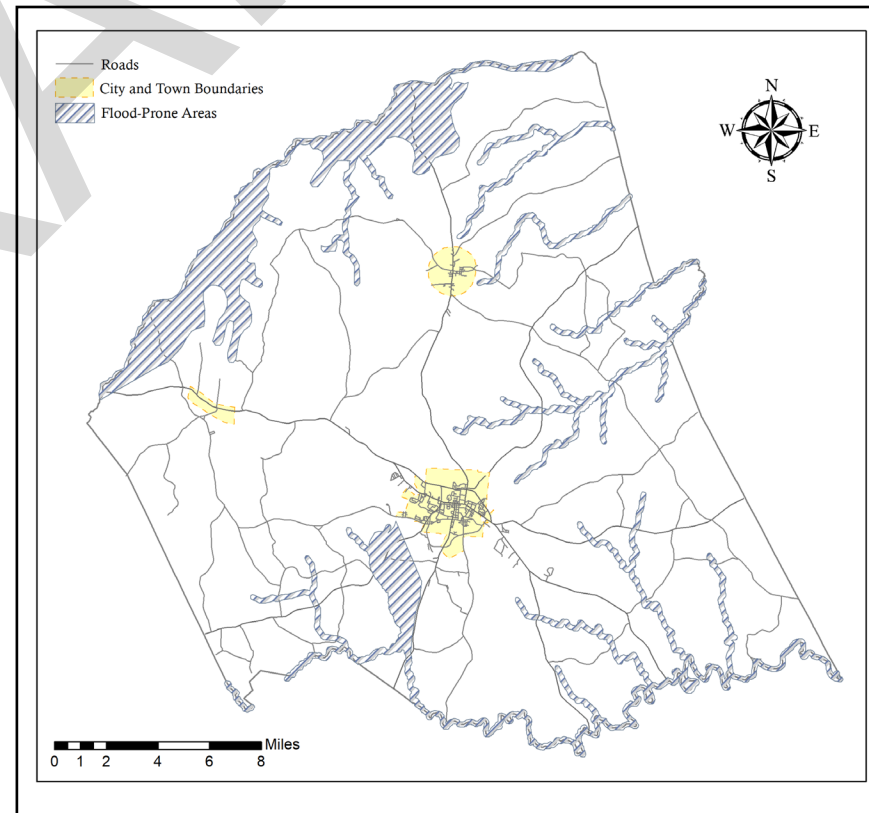
Flood plains are relatively flat lands that border streams and rivers that are normally dry, but are covered with water during substantial rain events. The severity of a flood is usually measured in terms of loss to human life or property, which is directly proportional to the amount of development in the flood plain surrounding the stream or river.

Flooding occurs when the volume of water exceeds the ability of a water body (stream, river, or lake) to contain it within its normal banks. Floodplains serve three major purposes: Natural water storage and conveyance, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. These three purposes are greatly inhibited when floodplains are misused or abused through improper and unsuitable land development. Floodplain development is usually discouraged with the exception of recreational facilities.

The steps that Washington-Wilkes has taken to address floodplain management are consistent with many communities across the country. Jurisdictions should monitor existing development standards to determine whether their current floodplain related provisions should be amended in the future to balance development and its impacts. In addition, all Washington-Wilkes communities should consider amendments to existing land development ordinances that increase stream-side buffers and reduce allowable development activity in the floodplain above and beyond minimum state and federal requirements. Such amendments can provide for a large percentage of open space necessary to preserve natural wildlife corridors and ultimately, a county-wide trail system.



Above: Erosion from flooding washes out Rocker Road, leaving one woman injured.
Source: WRDW web article published Jan. 13, 2020



Historic and Cultural Resources

Wilkes County and the cities of Washington, Tignall, and Rayle have a rich history with many historic resources they are responsible for preserving and maintaining. Listed below are 23 historic individual and 5 historic district nominations, documented architecturally and historically, that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR), National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. In 2004, the Washington Historic District was listed as a citywide NR nomination and encompasses almost all contiguous historic properties in the city of Washington, including those already NR listed as one large district. One additional historic property was recently added in 2019 to the Georgia Register of Historic Places in Wilkes County, Cherry Grove Baptist Church Schoolhouse.

In 2010, as a way of learning about and planning for preservation of historic resources located in unincorporated Wilkes County, the University of Georgia's Find It program used students in the Masters of Historic Preservation Program to inventory all historic properties. A total of 234 resources were recorded ranging from 1790 to 1984; the greatest number of historic resources were inventoried in the period from 1890-1899 with 50 (21.4 percent) followed by 1900-1909 with 49 (21 percent). The identified resources were buildings (92 percent) and sites (3.4 percent) and one object. There are 36 cemeteries, 5 religious structures, 43 vacant structures, and 144 single family dwellings. The most common styles identified among the single dwellings were Folk Victorian (14), Craftsman (31), and Queen Anne Revival (33). The majority of buildings (126) did not exhibit any type of High Style architecture, and are considered to be of no academic style.

(Citation: Website: <https://ced.uga.edu/psa/findit/>)

Washington NR Individual Listings

- Arnold-Callaway Plantation, NW of Washington (owned by City of Washington)
- Campbell-Jordan House, Liberty Street
- The Cedars, Sims Street
- Fitzpatrick Hotel, Public Square
- Gilbert-Alexander House, Alexander Drive
- Holly Court, Alexander Street
- Mary Willis Library, E. Liberty and S. Jefferson Streets
- Old Jail, Court Street
- Peacewood (Wingfield-Cade-Saunders House), Tignall Road
- Popular Corner, Liberty Street
- Robert Shand Smith House, Spring Street
- Robert Toombs House, Robert Toombs Avenue (also National Historic Landmark)
- Tupper-Barnett House (also National Historic Landmark)
- Washington Presbyterian Church, Robert Toombs Avenue
- Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum (owned by City of Washington) (Barnett-Slaton House)

Wilkes County NR Listings

- Anderson House, Danburg
- Willis-Sale-Stennett House (Great Oaks), north of Danburg
- James and Cunningham Daniel House (Kettle Creek Manor), south of Rayle
- Gartrell Family House (Joseph Gartrell House), Tignall
- Thomas M. Gilmer House, W of Washington
- Pharr-Callaway-Sethness House (Old Pharr Place), north of Tignall
- Kettle Creek Battlefield, SW of Washington
- Wilkes County Courthouse (owned by Wilkes County located in City of Washington, part of a statewide NR thematic courthouse nomination)

Certified Local Government

The CLG program extends federal and state preservation programs to the local level, expanding the scope of local responsibilities and opportunities for preservation. Georgia has the highest number of CLG designated communities in the United States, and the City of Washington is among the 99 designated cities that have successfully pursued the CLG program in the state. Participation requires the community to create a preservation ordinance that establishes a design review commission as well as other state and federal requirements. The program is based on the Georgia Historic Preservation Act (O.C.G.A. 44-10-20) and is established in the Washington City Code, Chapter 42 – Historical Preservation (codified).

This program is based in the National Park Service and extends through the DNR/Historic Preservation Division to the City of Washington.

In order to preserve the exterior of historic properties and their environment, the City is active in the Certified Local Government program. The City of Washington has adopted an historic preservation “enabling” ordinance, set up bylaws and rules of procedure, appointed an historic preservation commission (HPC) that meets regularly, has design guidelines, and has by ordinance adopted a “local district for design review.” When an owner wishes to make an external change to a property in the local district that requires a building permit, the building inspector then gives the owner an application called a Certificate of Appropriateness that triggers the owner of the property to present their plans before the HPC. Ninety-seven percent of all COAs are approved, but the program helps the City with preservation of properties through the review of additions, alterations, moved buildings, demolitions, and in-fill construction.

As part of the required program elements, the historic preservation commission is required to have a preservation professional conduct a historic resources survey every 10 years. The last historic resources survey in the City of Washington was conducted in 1997 through a CLG grant with the DNR/Historic Preservation Division that inventoried 489 historic resources in the city pre-dating 1947.

The City of Washington received a 2018 CLG grant and is updating the historic resources survey with a digital component that was completed in 2019.



Source:
The Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation

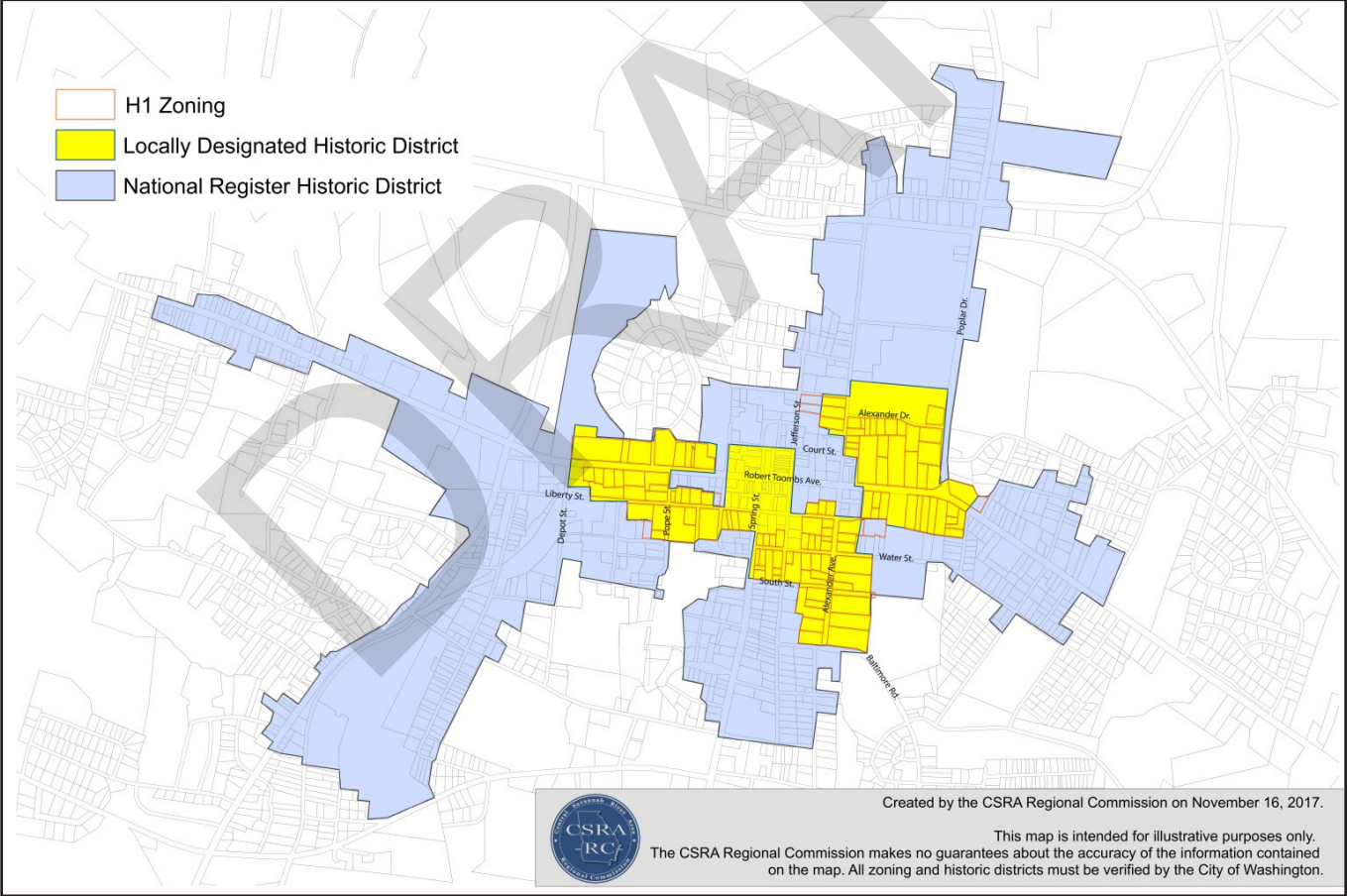
City of Washington Historic Districts and H1 Zoning

Washington NR District Listings

- East Robert Toombs Historic District
- North Washington District
- Washington Commercial Historic District
- Washington Historic District
- West Robert Toombs District

H-1 Zoning

In the zoning ordinance for the City of Washington (Chapter 90 Zoning, Article V. Special Districts, Division 2. H-1 Historic District, Sec. 90-442 Conditional uses of land and structures) the H-1 Special District regulates uses that may be permitted in the H-1 historic district subject to the planning commission’s favorable decision.



Tourism and Cultural Resources

Tourism is economic development, and Wilkes County and its local governments are promoting historic sites for public and private visitation. The Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authority, and Main Street Washington are involved in tourism and economic development. The Chamber of Commerce can arrange tours for any group.

The Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation promotes tourism and historical projects within the county. The Kettle Creek Battlefield Association is promoting development of the Revolutionary War Era Kettle Creek Battlefield at War Hill.

Historically Significant Sites

Kettle Creek Battlefield

Kettle Creek Battlefield is a 430-acre park dedicated to the first major victory for the Patriot forces in the back country of Georgia on February 14, 1779, during the Revolutionary War. The area is centered around “War Hill”, a 500-foot-high hill, topped with the Kettle Creek Monument which the War Department erected in 1930. The battlefield has been part of the National Register of Historic Places since 1975. Wilkes County currently works with the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association, Inc. (KCBA) in developing the battlefield.

The park officially became an Affiliated Area of the National Parks Service in January 2021 after Georgia Rep. Jody Hice introduced H.R. 7077, The Kettle Creek Battlefield Study Act, in 2018.

In February 2023, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced the selection of the 2022-2023 Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) “Conserve Georgia” grants for conservation and outdoor recreation projects. The grant will provide \$1.4 million for the estimated \$2 million project entitled “Conserving Georgia’s Revolutionary War Victory”.

The GOSP grant will allow Wilkes County to acquire two parcels of land totaling approximately 178 acres. The project will construct handicap-accessible trails, hiking trails of dirt surfaces, mountain biking trails, restrooms, outdoor classrooms/education pavilion, wildlife viewing, RV and primitive camping sites, a parking lot, and an electric park access gate. The grant money will also fund the installation of additional monuments, interpretive signage, and way-finding signage.

The existing half-mile “War Hill Trail” opened to the public in 2018 through DNR/Recreational Trails Grant and local funding and labor. The project required an archaeological study of the trail, which yielded artifacts now on display at the Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum.

The park has at least 332 different plant species, according to UGA Botanical Gardens’ floristic inventory of the area. A pedestrian-friendly geological rock study guide is available for the battlefield area put together by a volunteer.

Previous funding and land acquisitions were made possible by the American Battlefield Trust (180 acres via the American Battlefield Protection Program and the Watson-Brown Foundation) and The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution (60 acres).

Affiliated Area of the National Parks Service

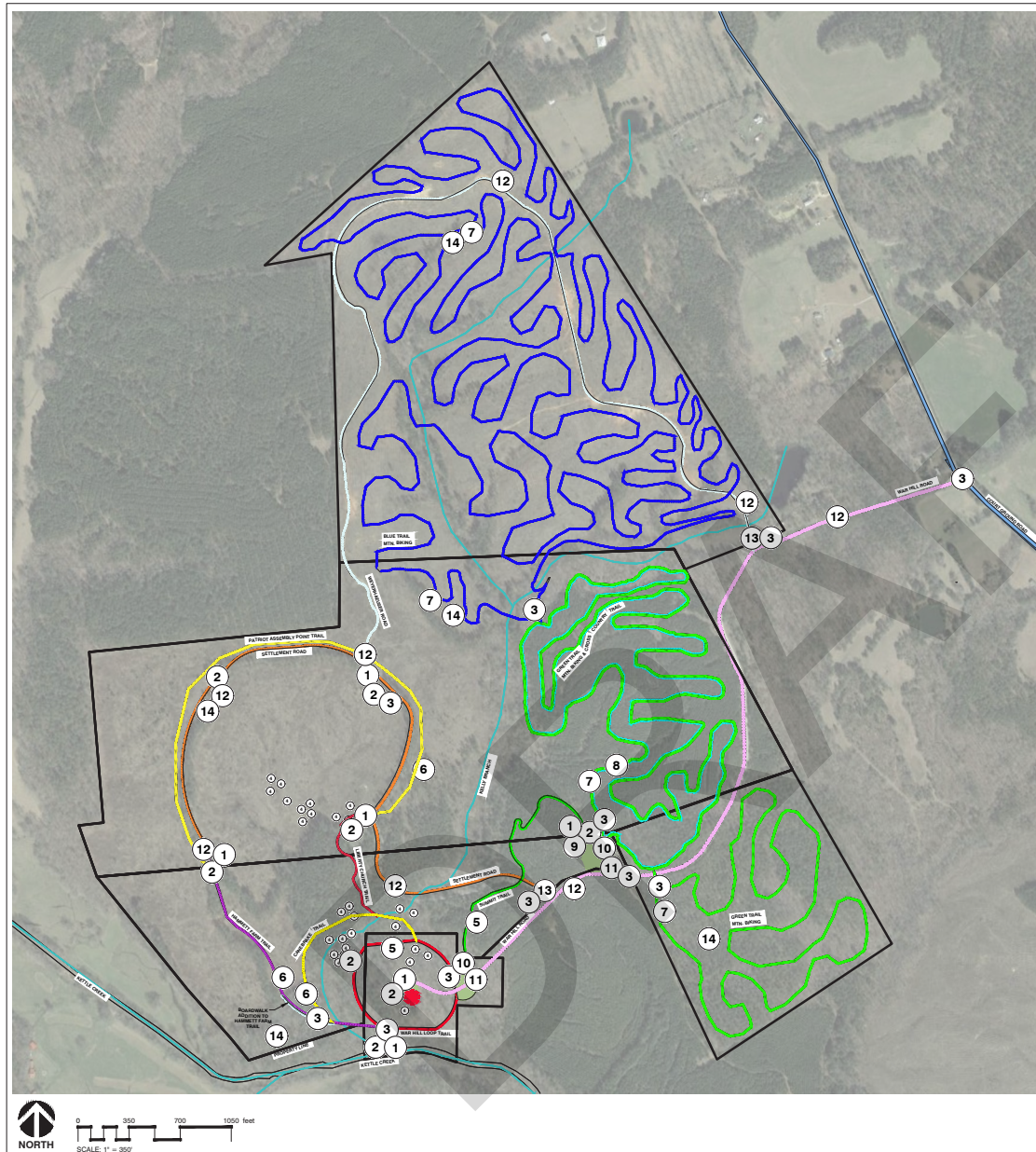
On January 14, 2021, U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Burkhardt signed the approval for the site to be designated as an Affiliated Area of the National Park Service (NPS). Rep. Jody Hice spearheaded the effort, with the KCBA unveiling the new signage to reflect the designation in October 2022.



“Conserving Georgia’s Revolutionary War Victory”

This project, funded by the 2023 GOSP Grant will include the acquisition of two parcels of land known as Livsey Tract, and Weyerhauser Tract totaling approximately 178.5 acres. It will also include the construction of:

- *Dirt hiking trails - 5 miles*
- *Mountain Bike Trails*
- *Blue Trail - 8.5 miles*
- *Green Trail - 5 miles (with Cross-County Running section)*
- *ADA-Accessible restrooms*
- *Camping areas*
- *RV Sites*
- *Signage*



Proposed Park Activities:

- #1 Park Destinations with Overlooks and Monuments
 - War Hill
 - Orientation Area
 - Assembly Point
 - Liberty Church Point
 - Hammett Farm Point
- #2 Interpretive Signage
 - Revolutionary War Timeline
 - Location map of Kettle Creek Revolutionary War grave sites found and those suspected across Kettle Creek
 - United States Timeline
 - Local Flora & Fauna signage
 - Importance of local flora: cane that created canebrakes during battle, locate on site where canebrakes were likely
 - Clearview Signage with depictions of Battle on War Hill Trail
 - Clearview Signage at Liberty Church Point
 - Overlook at Hammett Farm Point pointing towards: 1) Assembly Point, 2) Liberty Church Point, 3) War Hill
- #3 Wayfinding Signage
 - Master Plan Maps of trails with "you are here" stars at: 1) Main Parking Lot, 2) Base of War Hill Loop Trail, 3) Beginning of Settlement Road, 4) Intersection of Green & Blue mtn. bike trails 5) Crossover of Green Trail on War Hill Road, 6) Assembly Point, Liberty Church Point, 8) Hammett Farm Point
 - Trail directional signage
 - National Park Monument Sign at Entrance
 - National Park road signs leading into park (from I-20 and 5 roads leading from I-20 exit)
- #4 Revolutionary Soldier Grave Markers
 - 28 existing crosses
- #5 Handicap Accessible Trails
 - War Hill Switchback Trail, crushed stone surface, 0.1 miles
- #6 Hiking Trails
 - Summit Trail, dirt surface, 0.4 miles
 - Monument Trail, gravel surface, 0.1 miles
 - War Hill Loop Trail, boardwalk, gravel & dirt surface, 0.7 miles
 - Canebreak Trail, dirt surface, 0.28 miles
 - Hammett Farm Trail, dirt surface improved with 0.07 boardwalk surface, total with boardwalk is 0.38 miles
 - Liberty Church Trail, dirt surface, 0.2 miles
 - Patriot Assembly Point Trail, dirt surface, 0.75 miles
- #7 Mountain Biking Trails (can also be used for hiking, running)
 - Green Trail, single track dirt surface, 5 miles
 - Blue Trail, single track dirt surface, 8.5 miles
- #8 Cross Country Running Competition Course
 - First 3.1 mile section of Green Trail, dirt surface
- #9 Outdoor Classroom
 - 30' x 50' shelter
- #10 Restrooms
 - Multiple male & female bathroom stalls + 1 family stall at Main Parking Lot/ Orientation Area
- #11 Parking with Shuttle Dropoff
 - Located at main parking lot, shuttle to take visitors from main parking lot to War Hill during large events
- #12 Vehicular Access Through Site
 - War Hill Road (existing gravel Wilkes County road in good condition)
 - Settlement Road (existing dirt road in disrepair), 1 mile
 - Weyerhaeuser Road (existing dirt road, needs gravel), 1.5 miles
- #13 Electric Park Access Gate
 - Signage posting hours Park Access Gate opens & closes
- #14 Wildlife Viewing
 - Local fauna thrives on this site that has been undisturbed in recent history. Evidence of abundant wildlife is easy to see.

The red circle (above) represents the completed DNR/Recreational Trails Grant as part of "The War Hill Trail: 1779 Battle of Kettle Creek". All other colors indicate new activity funded through the 2023-awarded Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program, Conserve Georgia grant.

The Robert Toombs House

The Robert Toombs House is owned by the State of Georgia but managed by Wilkes County. Robert Toombs led a turbulent career as a state legislator, U.S. Congressman and Senator. During the Civil War, Georgia seceded from the Union and Toombs served five months as Secretary of State of the Confederacy. He resigned and served as brigadier general in the Army of Northern Virginia. In 1870, Toombs helped create the Georgia Constitution of 1877 which was not amended until 1945. Visitors may tour the Greek Revival style house, grounds, and view exhibits in the museum.



The Robert Toombs House

The Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum

The Washington Wilkes Historical Museum is located in an 1835 house that has exhibits of local history including Civil War history and an exhibit of the artifacts from Kettle Creek Battlefield. There are also period rooms of furnishings and a bookstore. The City of Washington-owned museum is open year round.



The Washington-Wilkes Historical Museum

The Callaway Plantation

This brick Greek Revival House dates to 1869 and is situated on 56 acres of farm land. The Callaway House was lived in by the family from 1869-1910, and it is furnished with period rooms containing much original furniture. The brick house is important as it has never been modernized so it does not have indoor plumbing or electricity. Other buildings include the Grey House, the second residence of the family until the main house was finished, a school house, two cabins dating to circa 1785 and circa 1840, a general store, and other buildings. The City of Washington owns and maintains Callaway Plantation for public visitation.



The Callaway Plantation



(Left): This log cabin is a replica of an instrumental part of everyday Colonial life.

(Right): The Grey House was built around 1790. Once a home, the two-story structure currently serves as a museum to Colonial period artifacts



Historically Significant Sites

The Mary Willis Library

The Mary Willis Library was the first free library to check out books in the state of Georgia, and opened in 1889. It was given as a gift by Dr. Francis T. Willis in memory of his daughter, Mary. Dr. Willis donated his own collection of books and \$15,000 for the library's construction, \$2,000 to purchase furnishings and additional books, and \$10,000 as an endowment fund. The library is designed in the Queen Anne style as a brick building with detailed brickwork and a dome-capped tower. Tiffany Studio designed the central memorial window. The library is part of the PINES/ Bartram Trail Regional Library system, and is the only public building available in Wilkes County with free usage of computers and broadband.



Local Events

Mule Day

Mule Day takes place annually at Callaway Plantation, and brings historic traditions to life through hands on demonstration. Thousands of people attend the event to see soap-making, chair caning, weaving, basket-making and other traditional crafts, as well as mule drawn plows, livestock and other agricultural demonstrations. In its 38th year, Mule Day has the largest draw of any event on the property throughout the year. The event is produced through a partnership between City of Washington and Washington Wilkes Chamber of Commerce



Local Events (cont'd)

Revolutionary Days

The anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek, the only Revolutionary War battle won by the Patriots, is celebrated each Valentine's Day weekend in Washington and Wilkes County. A citywide event, the program starts downtown with a parade of reenactors in period appropriate garb, followed by a musket volley and flag raising. The event continues at the battlefield site in the afternoon hours for a reenactment and historic demonstrators. This event is organized by the Kettle Creek Battlefield Association and the Sons of the American Revolution.



Local Events (cont'd)

Freedom Fireworks Extravaganza

The City of Washington holds its annual Independence Day celebration on July 3rd. The downtown area around the Wilkes County Courthouse in Washington, GA, are blocked off for this event featuring vendors, food, junior beauty pageants, a watermelon eating contest, live music, and other attractions ending in an evening fireworks display.





Community Facilities

Community Facilities

In order to promote community-wide economic development and improve the quality of life for a community’s residents, the effective maintenance of public facilities and services is crucial. rural communities like as Wilkes County which have experienced population decline may find it particularly difficult to maintain existing infrastructure in a manner that does not stress the personal finances of the existing population - not to mention searching for resources to fund new infrastructure to attract additional growth.

Wilkes County communities collectively provide or support numerous public services which benefit citizens, business owners and property owners. Local public services include standard infrastructure categories such as: water, sewer, streets, public safety, EMS, educational facilities, among other. In addition, the jurisdictions have collaborative arrangements for specialized service categories such as: economic development, community development, code enforcement, and parks and recreation.

This section does not provide a detailed inventory, but rather an overview of key community-provided services and facilities.

Service Delivery Strategy

Wilkes County, Rayle, Tignall, and Washington jointly maintain the Wilkes County, Georgia, Service Delivery Strategy document – prepared and maintained in accordance with the state of Georgia’s “Service Delivery Act” (O.C.G.A. § 36-70-20). The purpose of the service delivery strategy is to ensure that public facilities and services are provided to citizens in an efficient and consistent manner – in part through the elimination of overlapping or duplicative services which may result in local government competition. Consistent with the Service Delivery Act, Washington-Wilkes communities have reviewed the Wilkes County, Georgia, Service Delivery Strategy document in conjunction with the comprehensive planning process, and have taken steps to extend local service delivery arrangements, with some modifications.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY FORM 1
 COUNTY: **WILKES COUNTY**

I. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- FORM 1 is required for ALL SDS submittals. Only one set of these forms should be submitted per county. The completed forms shall clearly present the collective agreement reached by all cities and counties that were party to the service delivery strategy.
- List each local government and/or authority that provides services included in the service delivery strategy in Section II below.
- List all services provided or primarily funded by each general purpose local government and/or authority within the county that are continuing *without change* in Section III, below. (It is acceptable to break a service into separate components if this will facilitate description of the service delivery strategy.)

OPTION A Revising or Adding to the SDS	OPTION B Extending the Existing SDS
4. List all services provided or primarily funded by each general purpose local government and authority within the county which are revised or added to the SDS in Section IV, below. (It is acceptable to break a service into separate components if this will facilitate description of the service delivery strategy.) 5. For each service or service component listed in Section IV, complete a separate, updated Summary of Service Delivery Arrangements form (FORM 2). 6. Complete one copy of the Certifications form (FORM 4) and have it signed by the authorized representatives of participating local governments. (Please note that DCA cannot validate the strategy unless it is signed by the local governments required by law (see Instructions, FORM 4).)	4. In Section IV type, "NONE." 5. Complete one copy of the Certifications for Extension of Existing SDS form (FORM 5) and have it signed by the authorized representatives of the participating local governments. (Please note that DCA cannot validate the strategy unless it is signed by the local governments required by law (see Instructions, FORM 5).) 6. Proceed to step 7, below.

For answers to most frequently asked questions on Georgia's Service Delivery Act, links and helpful publications, visit DCA's website at <http://www.dca.ga.gov/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/servicedelivery.asp>, or call the Office of Planning and Quality Growth at (404) 679-5279.

7. If any of the conditions described in the existing Summary of Land Use Agreements form (FORM 3) have changed or if it has been ten (10) or more years since the most recent FORM 3 was filed, update and include FORM 3 with the submittal.
 8. Provide the completed forms and any attachments to your regional commission. The regional commission will upload digital copies of the SDS documents to the Department's password-protected web-server.

NOTE: ANY FUTURE CHANGES TO THE SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS DESCRIBED ON THESE FORMS WILL REQUIRE AN UPDATE OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY AND SUBMITTAL OF REVISED FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS TO THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNDER THE "OPTION A" PROCESS DESCRIBED, ABOVE.

Page 1 of 2

II. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS INCLUDED IN THE SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY:
In this section, list all local governments (including cities located partially within the county) and authorities that provide services included in the service delivery strategy: Wilkes County City of Washington Town of Rayle City of Tignall The Housing Authority of the City of Washington Wilkes County Payroll Development Authority Wilkes County Board of Education Athens Technical College
III. SERVICES INCLUDED IN THE EXISTING SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY THAT ARE BEING EXTENDED WITHOUT CHANGE:
In this section, list each service or service component already included in the existing SDS which will continue as previously agreed with no need for modification: Administration Animal Shelter Cemeteries Code Enforcement Coroner County Extension District Attorney E-911 Economic Development Emergency Medical Services Family Connection Forestry Health Department Hospital Indigent Legal Defense Library Magistrate Court Municipal Court Parks and Recreation Payroll Development Authority Planning and Development Police Probate Judge Recycling Service Senior Center Sheriff - Jail Superior Court Tax Assessor Tax Collection Tax Commissioner Zoning

Shown: 2021 Service Delivery Strategy

Government Management Indicators Survey (GOMI)

In an effort to understand and compare local government operations across the State, DCA administers a survey to each municipality soliciting information about the nature of services and facilities provided within their boundaries. The data is self-reported, which presents challenges with regard to accuracy. However, the information provided is insightful, nonetheless, to understand how Georgia’s local governments go about providing much-needed community services and facilities to their residents and stakeholders

Information about government operations in Wilkes County, the City of Washington, the Town of Rayle, and the Town of Tignall was obtained from the published 2023 GOMI.

Survey of Community Services and Facilities

Service/Facility	Wilkes	Tignall	Washington	Rayle
Water Supply/Distribution	Not Provided	Own Govt	Own Govt	Own Govt
Wastewater Collection/Treatment	Not Provided	Own Govt	Own Govt	Not Provided
Law Enforcement	Own Govt	Available	Other Govt	Authority
Emergency Medical Services	Own Govt	Other Govt	Available	Authority
E911	Other Govt	Other Govt	Other Govt	Authority
Fire	Own Govt	Own Govt	Own Govt	Own Govt
Parks and Rec	Authority	Own Govt	Agreement	Not Provided
Libraries	Authority	Available	Agreement	Not Provided
Public Hospital	Authority	Available	Available	Available
Transit	Own Govt	Available	Available	Available
Senior Citizen Program	Own Govt	Available	Other Govt	Available
Community Center	Available	Own Govt	Agreement	Own Govt
Airport	Own Govt	Available	Available	Available
Zoning Ordinance	Yes	No	Yes	No
Building Inspection	Own Govt	Not Provided	Own Govt	Authority
Building permits	Own Govt	Not Provided	Own Govt	Authority
Construction and Code Enforcement	Own Govt	Not Provided	Own Govt	Authority

Own Govt - Service provided directly by the local government

Other Govt - Service available through agreement with other local government(s)

Authority - Service provided through a local government authority

Agreement - Service available through agreement with other local government(s)

Available - Service or facility available, but not through local government

Not Provided - Service or facility not available

Water & Waste Management

Water

The Towns of Rayle and Tignall, and the City of Washington operate independent municipal water systems. All three communities serve primarily residential and commercial customers within the municipal limits. A major exception is the provision of water from Washington's municipal system to industrial clients in the unincorporated portion of the county just south of the city. The City of Washington's water system is by far the largest in the county and is dependent on surface water sources for its water supply. Because of their small customer base, the water systems for Rayle and Tignall are supplied exclusively by groundwater sources. With some limited exceptions, residents within the unincorporated portions of Wilkes County rely on private wells for potable water.

In the forthcoming five-year work program, The Town of Rayle intends to address growing concerns regarding its water supply. Among identified issues with the water system are three dead-end lines, which tend to cause low water pressure and stagnant water, and aging clay pipes which were installed in 1968. The City will apply for a 2020 Community Development Block Grant to dig a new, more reliable well, replace clay pipes, loop water lines, and replace service line connections to households. The Town Council recently adopted an updated water ordinance to provide greater efficiency and management of the water system.

The City of Washington currently has approximately 2,101 residential water customers, 293 commercial water customers and 3 industrial water customers for a total of 2,397 water customers. The water system consists of two surface water treatment plants, water distribution and elevated storage tanks. Water is currently available to each resident in Washington.

The City of Washington has applied for a 2023 American Rescue Plan Act Federal Grant to replace 2 high service pumps, motors and valves at the Aonia water treatment plant. The City was also awarded a 2019 Community Development Block Grant for Water System Improvements in two targets. The target areas include: 1) Merriweather Drive, Tate Street, Old Skull Shoals Road and 2) Washington Heights Apartments, Lincoln Circle, Meredith Circle, Meredith Court, Abbey Court, Dexter Court, and Bishop Court. The CDBG grant would benefit 299 beneficiaries, of whom 297, or 99 percent are considered low to moderate income. Planned CDBG projects would address water system improvements in all the low-income areas of Washington where infrastructure is failing.



The Aonia Water Treatment Facility opened in 1978 and provided a capacity of 2 million gallons per day.

Wastewater Treatment/Sewer

The City of Washington owns and operates their sanitary sewerage system. Recently, the City took over operation of the system from OMI, a contract operations company. The system consists of primarily 8-inch gravity sewers, but they also have 10, 12, 15, 18 and 24-inch sewer trunk lines. A variety of materials have been used over the years to construct the gravity sewer pipes including vitrified clay, PVC, concrete, and ductile iron pipes. The sewerage collection system also has several pump stations and force mains and one (1) activated sludge wastewater treatment plant to treat the raw sewage before it is discharged to a nearby creek. The wastewater treatment plant is permitted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division at 4.0 MGD and is in compliance with its permit conditions. There are approximately 1,778 residential, 293 commercial and 3 industrial sewer customers for a total of 2,074 sewer customers.

The City is faced with Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades to replace failing equipment, and preliminary design indicates the City will incur an additional \$4-6 million in debt to make those necessary upgrades.

Solid Waste

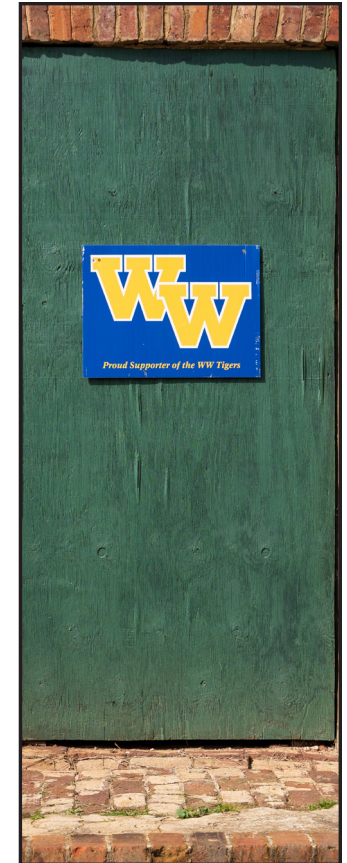
Solid waste generated by the residents of Rayle, Tignall and Wilkes County may be disposed of throughout the county at a number of unstaffed green-box collection sites. All four communities consolidate their waste at the Wilkes County Transfer Facility. This consolidated waste is then transported by Republic Services to the Oak Grove MSW landfill located in Winder, Georgia, per the 2007 *Joint Solid Waste Management Plan* (SWMP). According to the EPD, this solid waste disposal facility has a life span of approximately 10 years, with an anticipated fill date in 2029. The SWMP should be updated to reflect waste management needs of the County in the future, and to explore the adoption of policies aimed at the overall reduction of solid waste.



Educational Facilities



(Above): A painted rock outside of Washington-Wilkes Middle School and Comprehensive High School displays the local sense of pride (Right): Signs supporting the school system can be found around the city of Washington and county-wide.



Wilkes County Schools

Total student enrollment in the Wilkes County School District for the 2022-2023 school year is approximately 1,980 students. The district is regarded as Title I for its high proportion of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Title I is part of the Every Student Succeeds Act, a federal legislative effort to ensure all pupils have the resources needed to meet high State educational achievement standards. The *Governor's Office of Student Achievement* has given the District a grade of "C" for the past three years, indicating that approximately 83.5% of graduates are "college and career ready."

Community Centers

In the process of building community, community centers, much like parks and recreational facilities, act as vital anchors. People of all ages and walks of life gather at these facilities for shared enrichment, often academic, social or spiritual. Currently, the Pope Center and Mary Willis Library are the primary facilities that serve this purpose in Wilkes County.

These community centers could play an important role in helping the County realize the full benefits of its broadband access. The Pope Center and other community buildings can be fitted with equipment to enable high-speed internet access by residents, whether for students completing assignments, job seekers, or residents conducting business online.

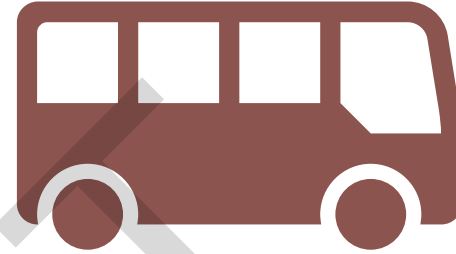
Transportation

Transportation Investment Act (TIA)

In 2012, Wilkes County voters, and the voters in the 12 other CSRA counties approved a one (1) cent sales tax increase in a referendum established by the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 (TIA). Approval of the TIA referendum will bring nearly \$6,000,000 for the construction of three (3) specific projects in Wilkes County, and the allocation of discretionary funds directly to Wilkes County, Rayle, Tignall, and Washington governments for use on transportation projects of their choosing. Wilkes County's projects include the resurfacing of Robert Toombs Avenue, the widening of SR 17, and the installation of passing lanes on SR 10. TIA is nearing its date for reauthorization, and Wilkes, along with the 12 other CSRA counties, is currently involved in the regional roundtable process to determine a potential second round of projects.

Trails

The term "active transportation" refers collectively to non-motorized means of transportation (e.g. bicycling, walking). Bicycle-specific transportation facilities are absent across Wilkes County, and communities have not incorporated bicycle facility requirements into their development regulations. The local pedestrian network is largely limited to established neighborhoods in Tignall and Washington. Sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities are largely lacking in more recently developed areas – in part due to omissions in local land development regulations. Detailed recommendations regarding the development of bicycle and pedestrian networks are contained within the Washington Multi-use Trails Plan.



Transit

Residents are currently served by Wilkes County Transit – a direct demand rural transit system largely funded by the federal Rural Transit Assistance Program. The system operates Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 7:30 a.m. to noon. Generally, riders can travel one-way for a cost of \$3.00, with reduced fares for children and seniors. This van service is available by appointment and can provide customers with access to destinations within Wilkes County. Wilkes County's rural transit development plan provides a periodic analysis of system efficiency, and should be reviewed in the near future to determine how the system can be modified to meet resident travel needs.



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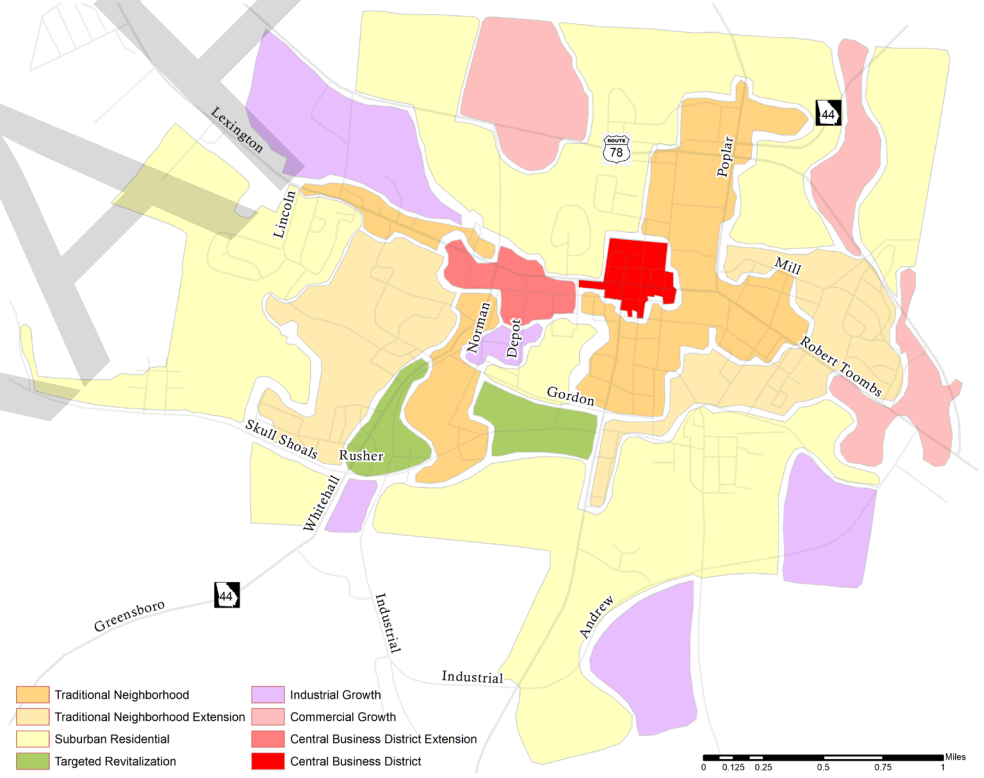
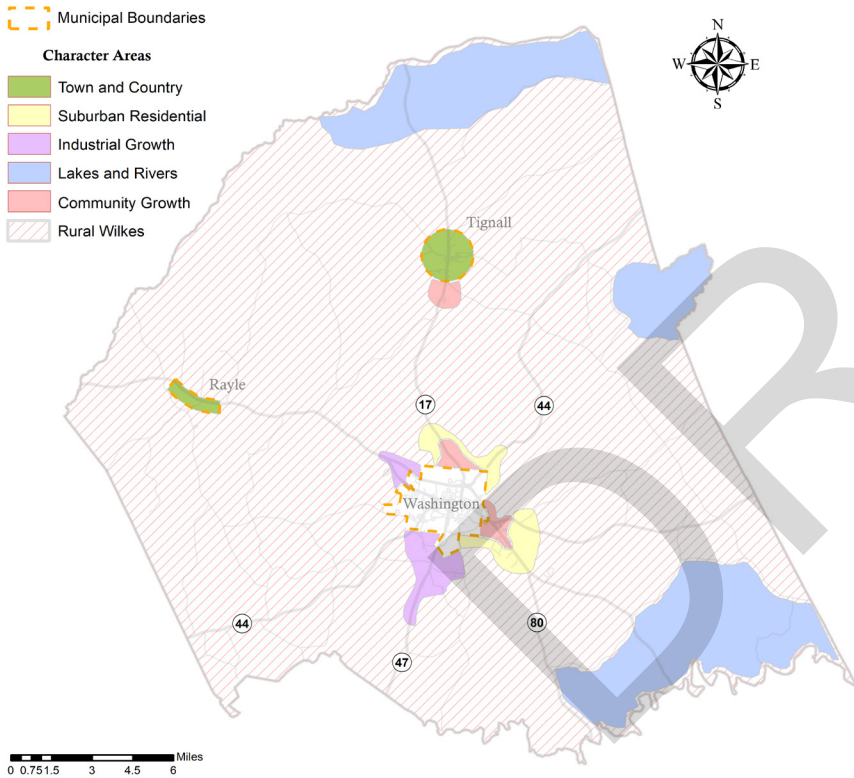


Character Areas



Wilkes County Character Areas

City of Washington Character Areas



Land Use Regulations

Zoning

The City of Washington administers and enforces a city-wide zoning ordinance containing 16 base, overlay and special zoning districts. The ordinance has undergone recent changes to incorporate a new form-based district related to land uses and building design in the city's Rusher Street Revitalization Area.

Wilkes County administers and enforces a zoning ordinance referred to as the Wilkes County Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance. The ordinance was adopted by the county in 2004, includes four (4) mapped zoning districts, sign standards, mobile home requirements, and the county's environmental protection ordinances.

Subdivision Regulations

Only the City of Washington administers and enforces subdivision regulations, which govern the subdivision of land and placement of new public infrastructure to support development. Recent changes to the city's subdivision regulations resulted in the adoption of context sensitive street design standards that can be required by the City when a development is proposed within, or in close proximity to, historic areas of the city.

Historic Preservation

The Washington (Local) Historic District was created by ordinance in 1999, and is referenced in Chapter 42 (Historic Preservation) of municipal code. The district standards establish and give duties to the City's Historic Preservation Commission, and formalize the process of improving historic properties. Wilkes County, Rayle, and Tignall do not administer land development regulations related to historic preservation.

Character Areas

The County's preliminary development scenario is presented in the form of a "character areas" map. Character areas not only identify existing and future land uses that may be appropriate for a particular area, they can highlight a variety of other factors such as: the desired form, function and style new development will take; existing features that should be incorporated into future development scenarios; and, relationships to adjacent development. In short, a character area addresses not only *what* a piece of land should be used for; but, also *how* that land should be used.

Unlike a parcel-specific future land use map, boundaries on a character area map are conceptual and may cross parcel lines. The character area boundaries in this document are intended to represent an approximation. This flexibility allows the governing body charged with implementing the plan to make decisions based on changing conditions while reducing the need to continually update the future land use map. All jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to initiate amendments to their future development map whenever they intend to promote a development pattern in an area that is inconsistent with the adopted map and attending land use policy documents.



Wilkes County

Community Growth

Description:

“Community Growth” character areas can be found in close proximity to the cities of Tignall and Washington. These areas are either slowly developing - or are intended for more intense development. Community Growth areas contain large lots adjacent to major thoroughfares, and provide the room and visibility to accommodate large-scale regional commercial development should Wilkes County begin experience population growth. Community Growth areas are intended to limit most new commercial development to areas adjacent to current population centers – rather than promoting their linear extension down long expanses of highway.

Implementation Measures:

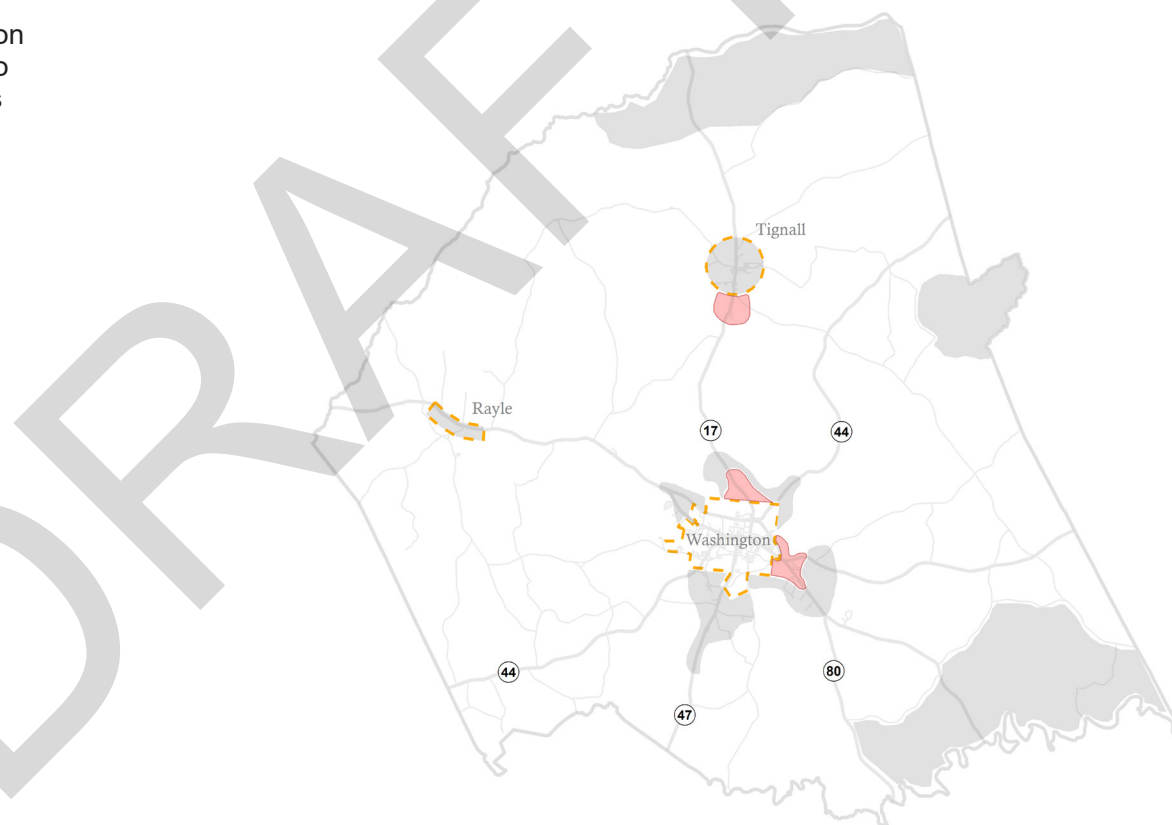
The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Community Growth recommended development patterns:

Access Management. Develop an ordinance to manage motor vehicle ingress and egress from development sites through design controls and shared-access easement agreements.

Corridor Overlay. Zoning provisions to address recommended development patterns regarding corridor character.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Public/Institutional
- Residential



Industrial Growth

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Low Density Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Description:

The “Industrial Growth” character area extends south of the city of Washington along S.R. 47, and projects west of the Washington municipal limits along U.S. 78. In both locations, the character area extends industrial growth areas within the city of Washington. Industrial Growth areas contain a variety of manufacturing facilities close to the city - transitioning to low-density residential uses or undeveloped tracts further into the county. Partially serviced by city of Washington water and sewer, transportation links and infrastructure in the area provide growth potential for major employers seeking new locations or room for expansion. Development of the area for industrial or warehousing activities will not preclude the continuing use of surrounding tracts of land for agrarian uses.

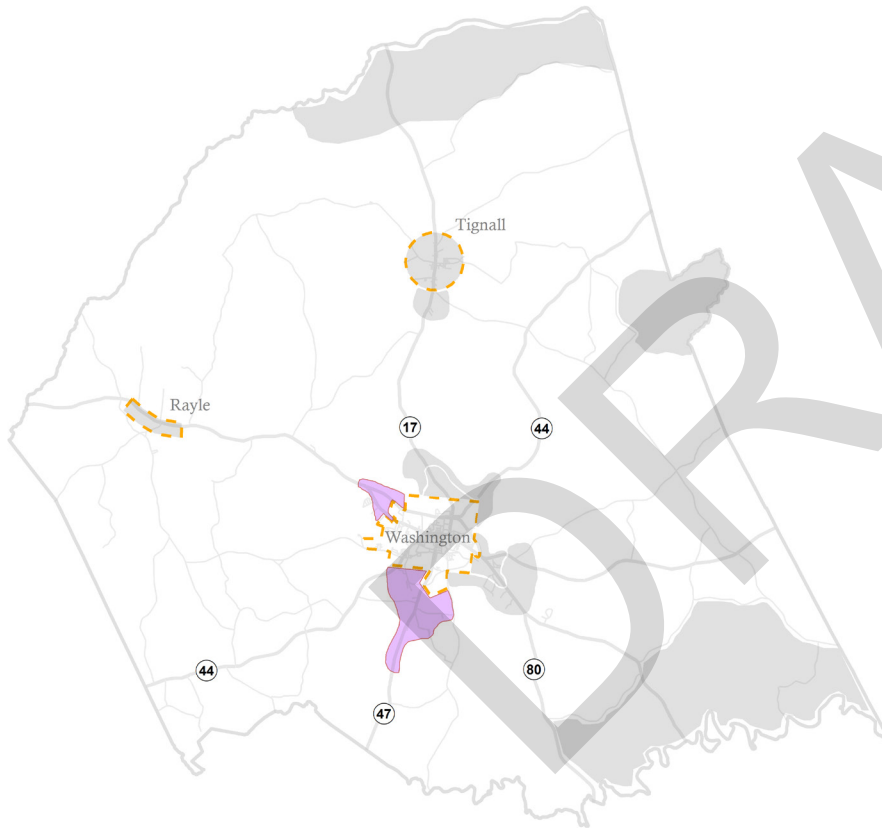
Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Industrial Growth recommended development patterns:

Open space. Maintain minimum open space requirements into county ordinances.

Landscaping. Follow vegetative screening and buffer yard requirements.

Transportation Improvements. Require the improvement of existing county roads where motor vehicle access into new development is proposed. Draft industrial street standards for large and overloaded vehicles to prevent unnecessary wear on infrastructure.



Lakes and Rivers

Description:

The “Lakes and Rivers” character area of unincorporated Wilkes County is distinguished from other rural portions of the county by the combined presence of significant low-lying wetland areas and increased development pressure due to the proximity to Clarks Hill Lake, the Broad River and wildlife management areas. With no direct access to public water or sewer, and significant distance from shopping and public services, development in these environmentally sensitive/significant areas should remain limited. Development features must include techniques to reduce impacts of the built-environment to adjacent natural areas.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Lakes and Rivers recommended development patterns:

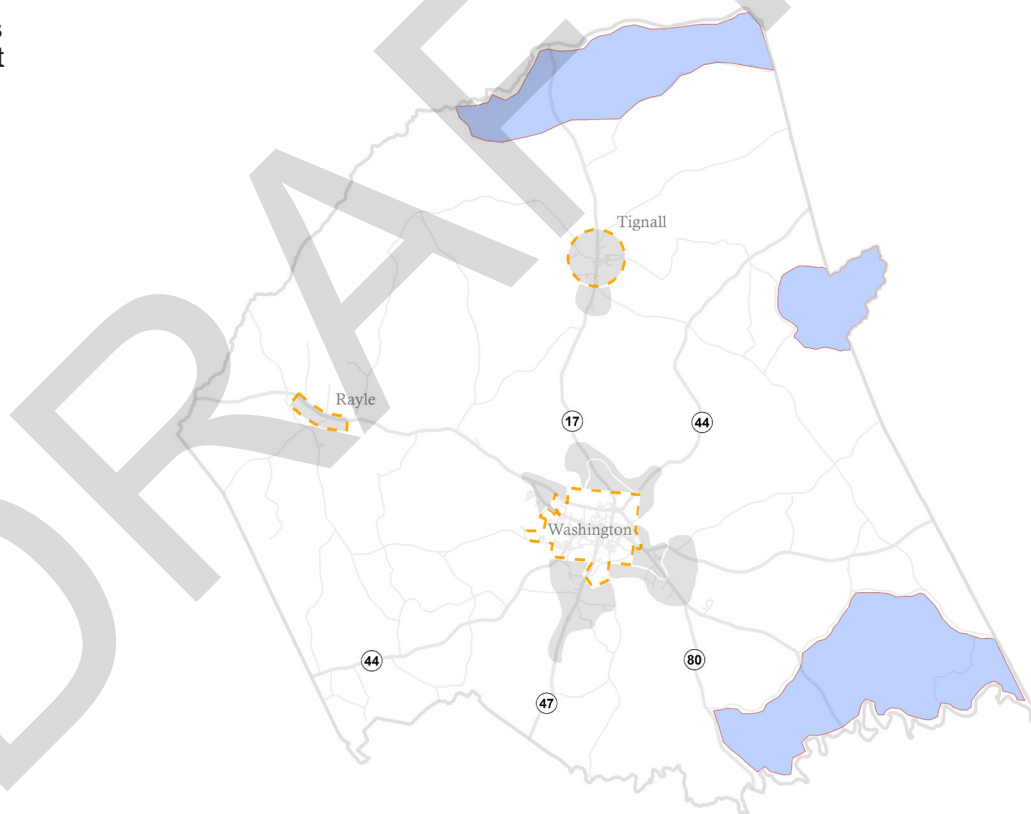
Conservation Subdivision. Develop standards to promote low-impact development through clustering, open space preservation, retention of tree canopy.

Transfer of Development Rights. Develop a program linking conservation subdivisions with developments in other character areas.

Agricultural Zoning District. Amend current standards to require 10 to 20 acre minimum lot sizes for most types of development.

Appropriate Land Uses:

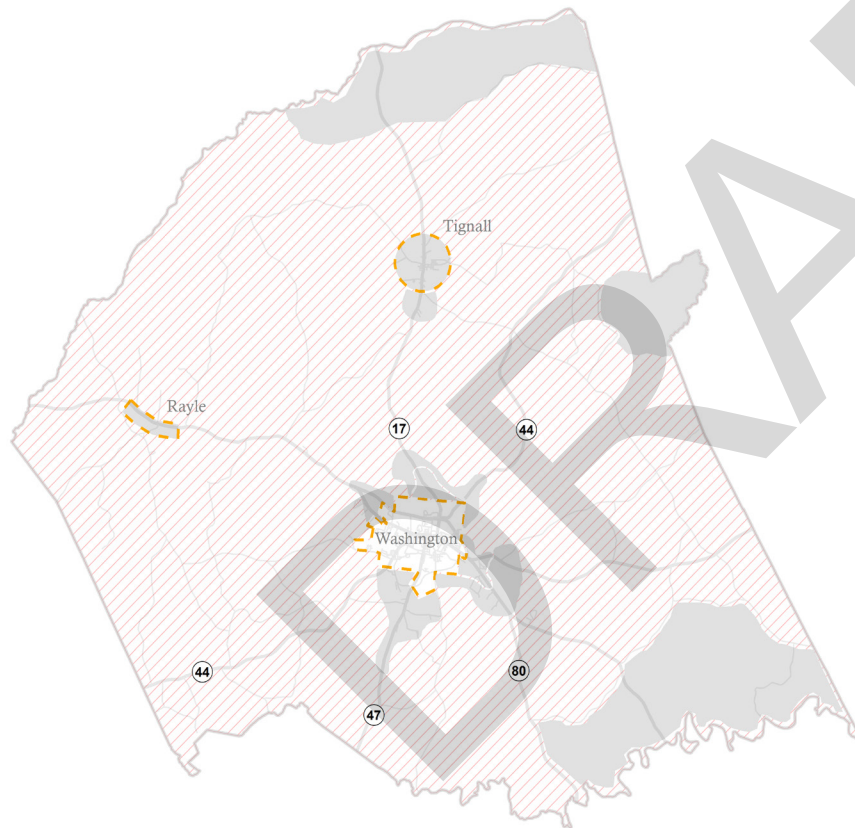
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Industrial
- Residential (Single-family, large tract)
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Rural Wilkes

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Residential (Single-family, large tract)
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities



Description:

Comprising the vast majority of unincorporated Wilkes County, the “Rural Wilkes” character area is primarily comprised of agricultural/pasture lands, woodlands, and very low density residential development. The area includes clusters of buildings which are the remnants of settlements from a time when Wilkes County’s population was greater than it is today. While character areas in Tignall, and in and around Washington provide for future concentrated growth, the Rural Wilkes character area will remain largely undeveloped – preserving Wilkes County’s rural heritage and increasing its attraction for nature enthusiasts. Public infrastructure improvements will be limited only to those that are necessary to support the existing population rather than to promote development.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Rural Wilkes recommended development patterns:

Kettle Creek. Implement the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park Master Plan (2013) with multi-million dollar enhancement projects included in GOSP grant .

Transfer of Development Rights. Develop a program linking conservation subdivisions with developments in other character areas.

Agricultural Zoning District. Amend current standards to require 10 to 20 acre minimum lot sizes for most types of development.

Scenic By-Way. Develop a scenic by-ways master plan.

Suburban Residential

Description:

Largely displaying the same characteristics as the Rural Wilkes character area, the “Suburban Residential” character area’s proximity to Washington has gradually resulted in the construction of new large-lot suburban style residential development – particularly to the southeast of the city. While still predominantly rural in character, the Suburban Residential character area provides a location to channel future residential development by substantially increasing housing density and housing type options, in conjunction with the provision of city water and sewer. The Suburban Residential character area will essentially develop as an extension of the city grid – promoting traffic dispersal through interconnectivity.

Implementation Measures:

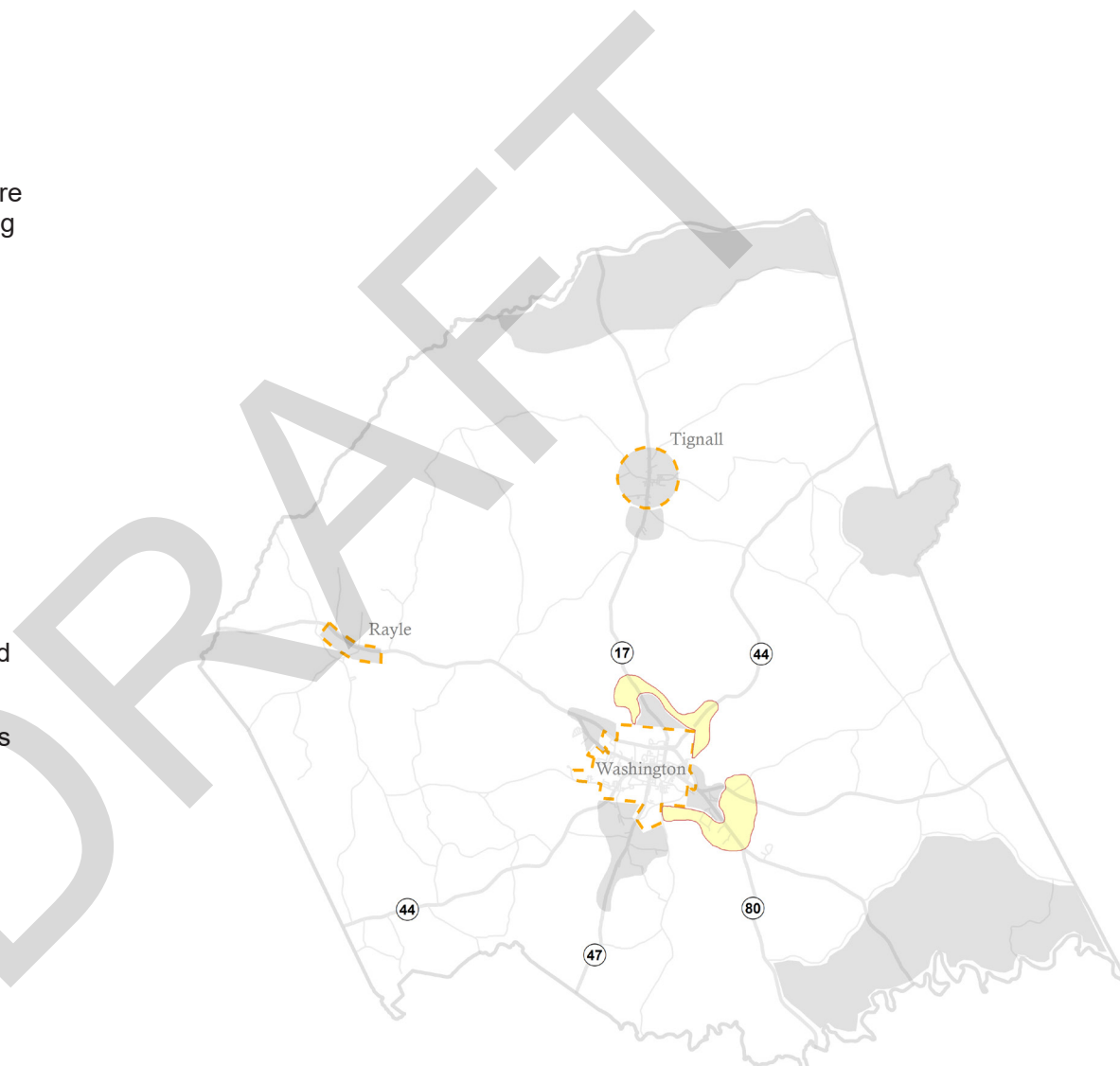
The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Suburban Residential recommended development patterns:

Subdivision Regulations. Draft a county subdivision ordinance to ensure orderly growth and development.

Zoning Ordinance. Adjust county zoning standards to allow for greater variety in residential densities and limit location of manufactured housing.

Appropriate Land Uses:

Residential
Parks/Recreation/Conservation



Town and Country

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Residential
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Description:

Wilkes County's rural municipalities of Rayle and Tignall provide an additional focal point for future potential county growth. Containing a small central business district and low-density residential development, Tignall provides public water and sewer and other community services to its residents. Rayle provides city sewer service. With upgrades to public infrastructure, adequate land exists within the municipal limits of Rayle and Tignall to provide an additional option for concentrated residential and non-residential growth in Wilkes County.



Implementation

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Town and Country recommended development patterns:

Subdivision Regulations. Draft municipal subdivision ordinances to ensure orderly growth and development.

Design Guidelines. Follow recommended design parameters in Tignall.

Nuisance Codes. Develop health and sanitation ordinances.

Intergovernmental Agreement. Enter into agreements with city of Washington or Wilkes County to provide code administration and enforcement.

City of Washington

Central Business District

Description:

The “Central Business District” character area provides Washington with a mixed-use built environment attractive to pedestrian activity, and serving as Wilkes County’s focal point and activity center. The historic Washington square and surrounding blocks should remain the center of business and pleasure in Washington-Wilkes, and will develop in a traditional characteristic – with an even greater concentration of structures that promote a live and work environment – combined with public spaces that enhance Washington’s status as a destination. A renewed focus on appropriate design will gradually extend the historic streetscape to the edge of residential neighborhoods and eliminate inappropriate building and site design which caters to the automobile.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Central Business District recommended development patterns:

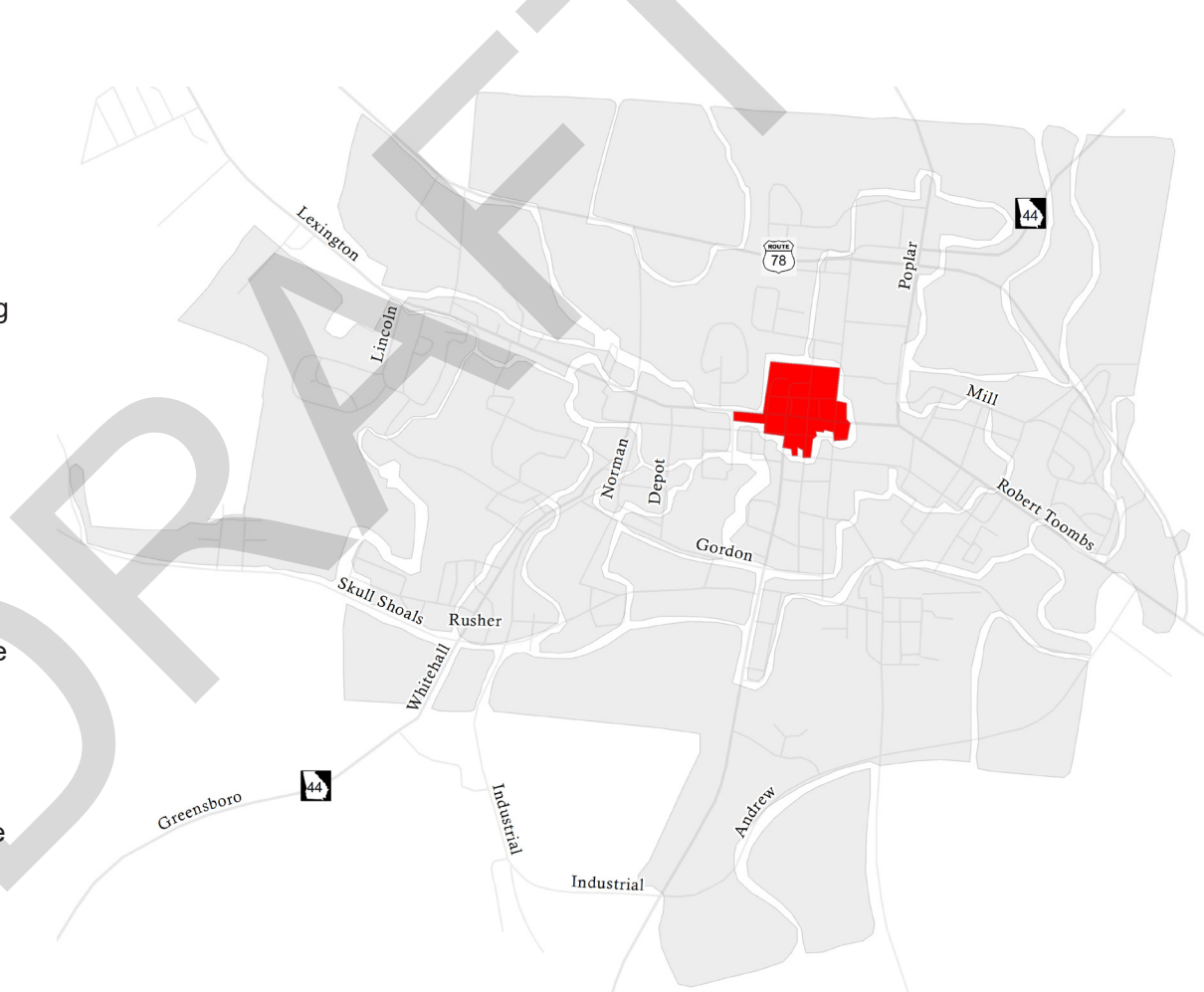
Historic Preservation Code Modification. Washington’s varying local historic preservation standards and codes should be modified to provide for clear administration and design guidance. The City is also looking to expand the local historic district.

Form-Based Standards. In conjunction with historic preservation code modification, incorporate basic property standards governing basic building elements, building form, and site arrangement. Utilize the existing district standards as a base resource.

Rails to Trails: Develop a strategy to connect the Business District and its extension to Reese Booker Park via the Rails to Trails project.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Public/Institutional



Central Business District Extension

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Public/Institutional
- Residential

Description:

The “Central Business District Extension” character area contains a diverse collection of land uses in varying conditions. Although historic residential properties in the character area must be protected and preserved, redevelopment potential on many underutilized parcels in the character area make it the most appropriate area to extend denser mixed-use urban style development. Most streetscapes and private property should develop in a traditional pattern similar to the downtown core, but with a greater percentage and mix of housing types. The Central Business District Extension will allow downtown to expand, and will create a western gateway for the community with greater engagement with the street.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Central Business District Extension recommended development patterns:

Historic Preservation Code Modification. Washington’s varying local historic preservation standards are confusing, overlapping, and unstructured. The codes should be modified to provide for clear administration and design guidance.

Form-Based Standards. In conjunction with historic preservation code modification, incorporate basic property standards governing basic building elements, building form, and site arrangement. Utilize the existing district standards as a base resource.

Maintenance Fund. Create a locally-managed revolving fund to assist in the maintenance of contributing historic properties in the character area.

Rails to Trails: Develop a strategy to connect the Business District and its extension to Reese Booker Park via the Rails to Trails project.



Commercial Growth

Description:

Washington’s “Commercial Growth” character areas are areas intended for more intense development – and which contain large lots adjacent to major thoroughfares. These areas provide room for large-scale regional commercial development should Washington-Wilkes begin to experience population growth. The Commercial Growth character areas are intended to limit most new commercial development to areas adjacent to current population centers – rather than promoting their linear extension down long expanses of highway.

Implementation Measures:

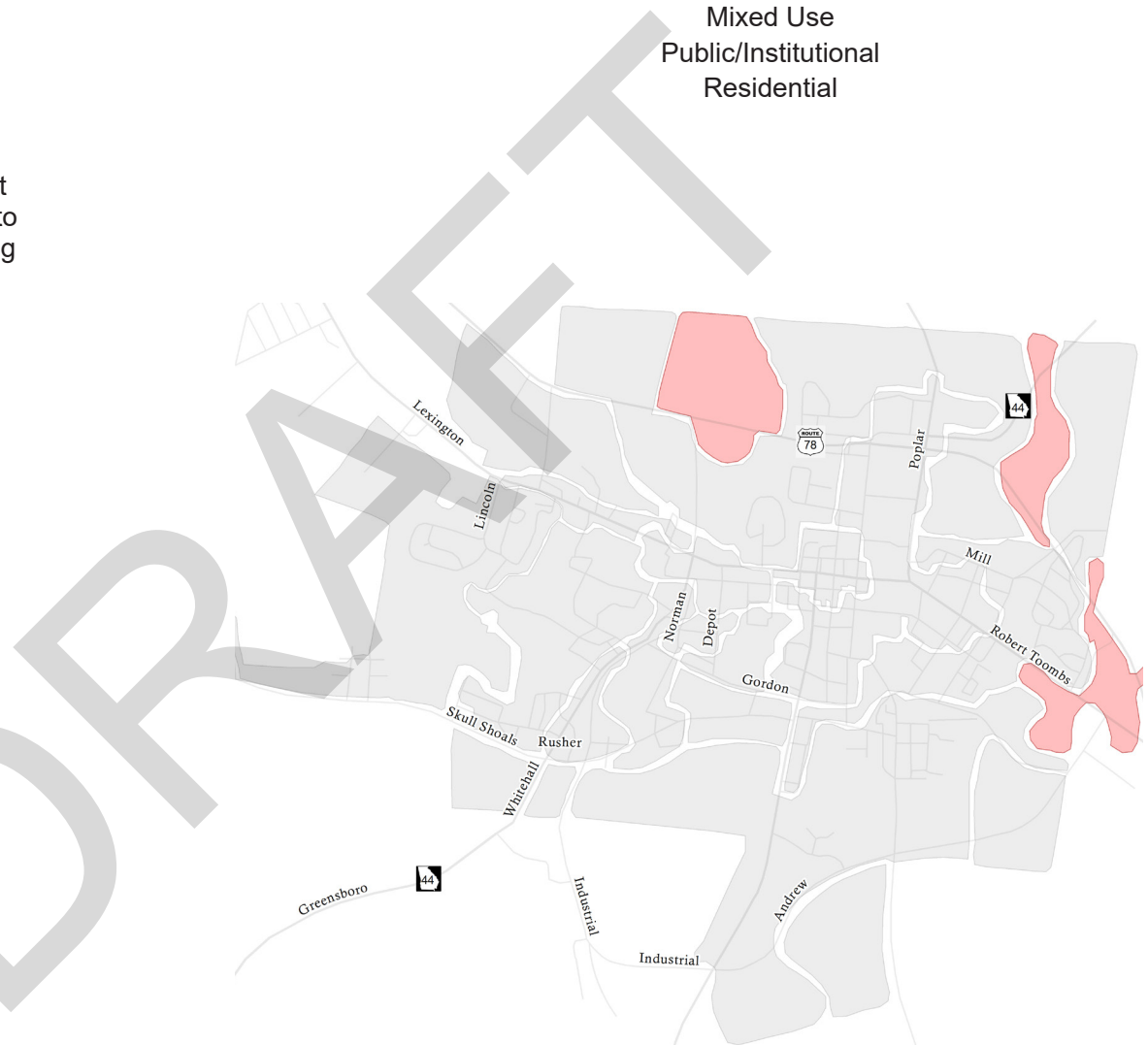
The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Commercial Growth recommended development patterns:

Access Management. Develop an ordinance to manage motor vehicle ingress and egress from development sites through design controls and shared-access easement agreements.

Corridor Overlay. Zoning provisions to address recommended development patterns regarding corridor character.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Public/Institutional
- Residential



Industrial Growth

Appropriate Land Uses:

Industrial
Transportation/Communication/Utilities

Description:

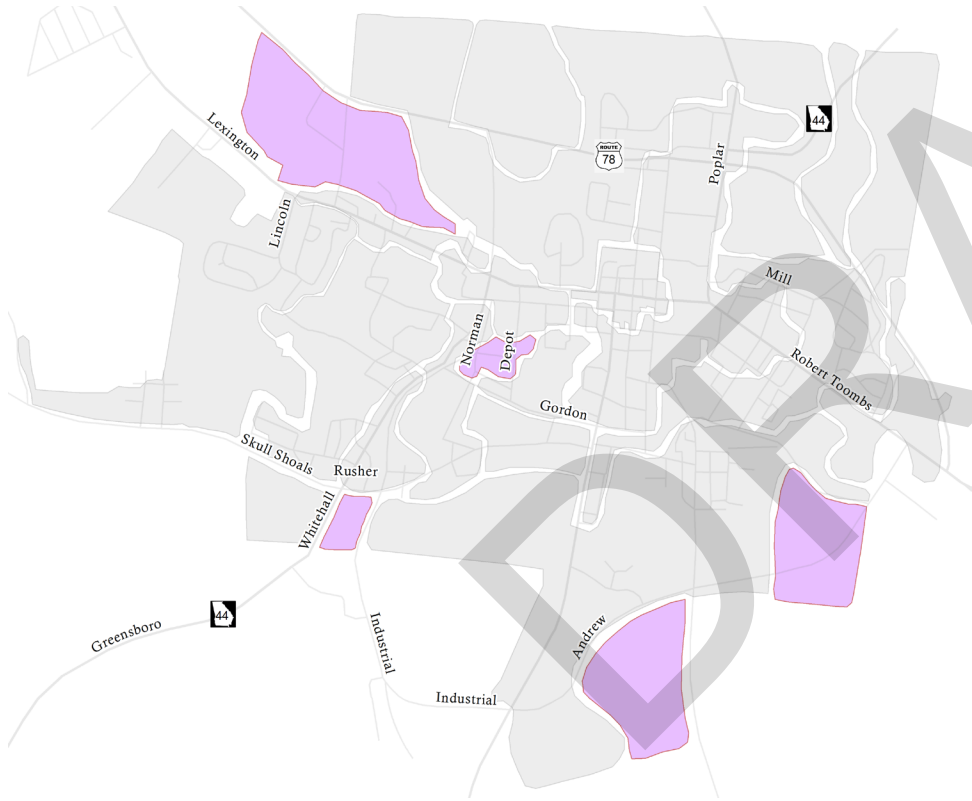
Washington's "Industrial Growth" character areas are scattered throughout the municipal limits. Industrial Growth areas closer to the center of town are of smaller scale and lend themselves to enterprises of limited scale. Industrial Growth areas along the periphery of town roughly correspond to the location of corresponding Wilkes County character areas and - when used in conjunction - provide room for modern and larger-scale corporate operations. Industrial Growth areas already contain a variety of manufacturing facilities of varying age and condition. Serviced by city of Washington water and sewer, transportation links and infrastructure in the area provide growth potential for major employers seeking new locations or room for expansion.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Industrial Growth recommended development patterns:

Landscaping. Draft vegetative screening and buffer yard requirements.

Transportation Improvements. Require the improvement of existing city streets where motor vehicle access into new development is proposed. Draft industrial street standards for large vehicles.



Suburban Residential

Description:

The “Suburban Residential” character areas include developed and undeveloped properties intended for a range of low to high density residential land uses including single-family dwellings, duplexes, townhouses, multi-family dwellings; and small-scale non-residential uses that are directly associated with and support residents. The area allows for flexibility in residential building design, but encourages street block and lot arrangements that promote interconnectivity between tracts, and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Appropriate Land Uses:

Residential
Parks/Recreation/Conservation
Transportation/Communication/Utilities

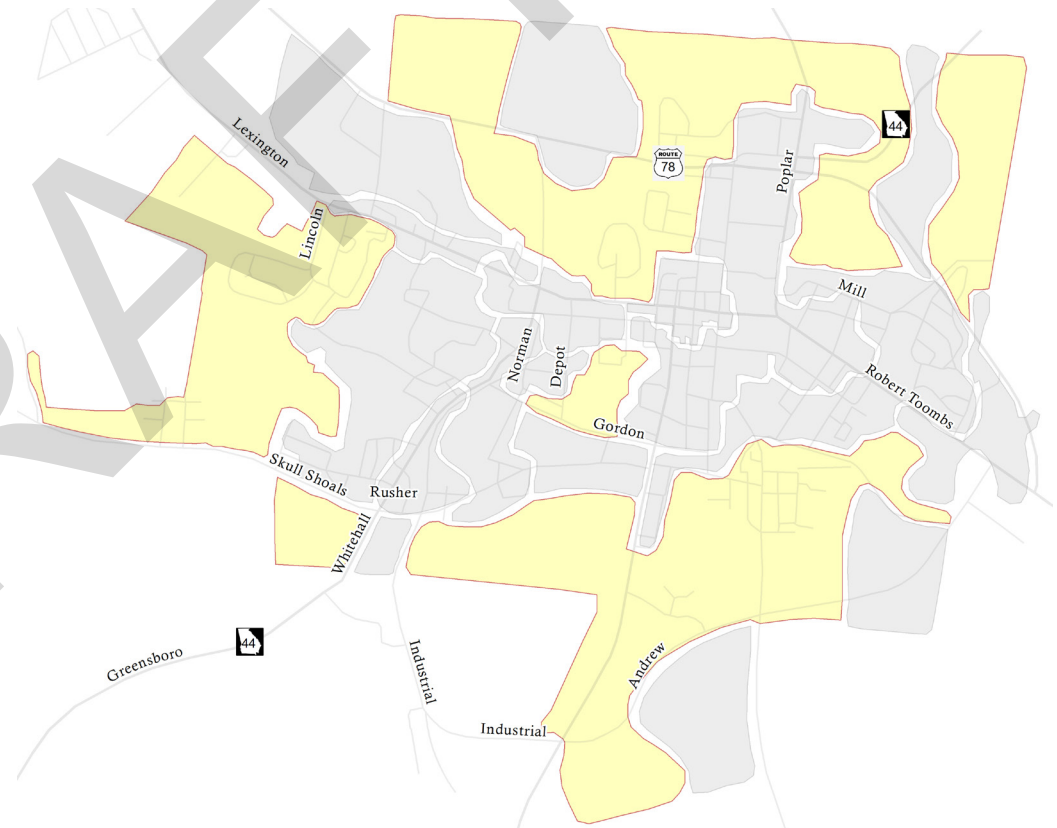
Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Suburban Residential recommended development patterns:

Form-Based Standards. Apply basic property standards governing basic building elements, building form, and site arrangement. Utilize the existing district standards as a base resource.

Urban Street Standards. Apply the city subdivision regulations’ “character district” street standards to this character area.

Active Transportation. Adopt active transportation standards to ensure interconnectivity of the non-motorized transportation network between neighborhoods and activity centers.



Targeted Revitalization

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial (limited to major streets)
- Mixed use
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation

Description:

“Target Revitalization Area” character areas are located exclusively within the boundaries of the Southwest Washington Redevelopment Area and contain the city’s greatest concentration of poverty and blight. Substantial public sector activity is necessary to generate redevelopment which would gradually transition to privately driven activity. Extensive city energy will be focused on these areas through infrastructure improvements, property acquisition, site preparation, and home-building activity. Redevelopment should incorporate building and site features that create “neighborhoods” through physical uniformity via streetscaping and select building elements; and, should adhere to the recommendations of both of the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plans (URP & URP2).

Implementation Measures:

Targeted Revitalization character area implementation measures shall adhere to the recommendations of the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) and Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan 2 (URP2).



Description:

“Traditional Neighborhood” character areas contain the largest concentration of Washington’s National Register and locally protected historic properties. Along with the central business district, these properties establish Washington’s status as one of Georgia’s most aesthetically pleasing small communities. Existing historic development patterns must be maintained and enhanced, while infill development must further compliment existing neighborhood characteristics. Long-term protection of historic properties in the Traditional Neighborhood character area will not only require the application of proper design standards, but also the development of incentives that expand the attractiveness Washington’s residential properties to broader investment interests.

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Traditional Neighborhood recommended development patterns:

Historic Preservation Code Modification. Washington’s codes should be modified to provide for clear administration and design guidance.

Form-Based Standards. In conjunction with historic preservation code modification, incorporate basic property standards governing basic building elements, building form, and site arrangement. Utilize the existing district standards as a base resource.

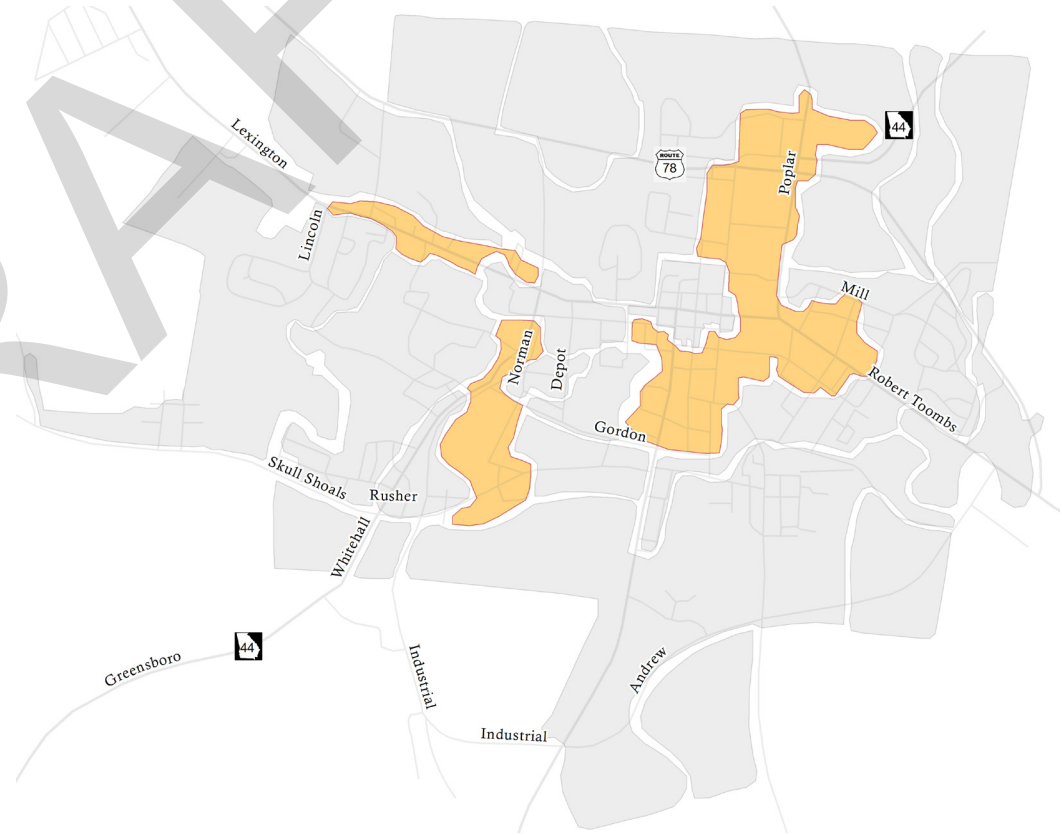
Urban Street Standards. Apply the city subdivision regulations’ “character district” street standards to this character area.

Adaptive Land-Uses. Expand the list and allowable location of non-residential uses for contributing historic properties in the character area.

Traditional Neighborhood

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial (Neighborhood Service)
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation



Traditional Neighborhood Extension

Description:

Containing largely developed portions of the city extending beyond recognized historic districts, “Traditional Neighborhood Extension” character areas should continue to support residential uses at low to medium densities while incorporating form-based building and site design features that compliment historic areas. Variation of residential densities and building types should be promoted on a block-by-block basis – rather than lot-by-lot. Infill on single lots should maintain existing residential density while higher density single-family residential use should be targeted to new street segments. Street network expansions should provide for interconnectivity unless topographically constrained and connections can otherwise be promoted by trail and walkway extensions.

Appropriate Land Uses:

- Commercial (Neighborhood Service)
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation

Implementation Measures:

The following measures may assist in the implementation of the Traditional Neighborhood recommended development patterns:

Form-Based Standards. Apply basic property standards governing basic building elements, building form, and site arrangement. Utilize the existing district standards as a base resource.

Urban Street Standards. Apply the city subdivision regulations’ “character district” street standards to this character area.

Active Transportation. Adopt active transportation standards to ensure interconnectivity of the non-motorized transportation network between neighborhoods and activity centers.





Report of Accomplishments



Wilkes County

Economic Development

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce industry mix, and available assets.		X			WW Labor study and a Targeted Industry Study produced by Electric Cities of Georgia analysts in 2022 identified labor force characteristics and made recommendations on which industry sectors and industries the PDA might focus its strategic resources. Target industries identified included Wood Products, Agriculture, Textiles and Transportation Manufacturing & Suppliers.
Conduct clearance and other site preparation work on County property being marketed for development (Harris Road, Paper Pak Pkwy, Branham Road).	X				Paper Pak Pkwy/Branham Rd properties preliminary clearing completed.
Pursue targeted expansion of infrastructure in areas deemed appropriate to support new industrial growth (Harris Road and Paper Pak Pkwy.).		X			This activity has been revised and included in the CWP under Natural and Cultural Resources as “develop a coordinated marketing strategy for Wilkes County’s historic properties and assets in support of heritage tourism.”
Assess the feasibility of fixed-route transit to increase options for local workers			X		Wilkes County provides demand response transit to residents of Washington, Tignall, Rayle and rural areas of Wilkes County weekdays from 7:30- 5:00 pm at a manageable cost to the County.
Sponsor the establishment of a rural innovation hub to support local entrepreneurship, business creation and small business development.				X	Not a priority at this time
Provide the RC with a list of important County locations and events for inclusion in the regional database of historic landmarks, festivals, and attractions.				X	Lack of staff capacity

Natural and Cultural Resources					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Purchase additional acreage to expand the boundaries of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park.		X			Georgia Department of Natural Resources awarded Kettle Creek Battlefield Association a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant. \$1,423,990 grant to fund improvements at the Battlefield. Project scope of work includes acquisition of 2 parcels of land totaling approximately 178.5 acres known as Livsey Tract and Weyerhauser Tract. Total park acreage will be 430 acres after acquisition.
Complete Recreational Trails Program grant for "War Hill Trail: 1779 Battle of Kettle Creek"	X				GA DNR GOSP funding announcement made February 24, 2023
Develop walking, biking, and driving tours to show off Washington-Wilkes variety of attractions.				X	Countywide tour development not accomplished due to lack of staff capacity
Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for Wilkes County's historic properties and assets in support of heritage tourism.		X			Washington Wilkes Chamber of Commerce revives marketing plan annually; ; Hotel Motel Tax collections spent on tourism marketing.Heritage tourism is one component of overall marketing strategy.
Apply for funding to clear and widen to 6 feet the existing hiking trails at Kettle Creek Battlefield, including Hammett, Patriot's Point, Settlement, Liberty Church, Cane Break, and Summit Trails. Install necessary culverts and railroad ties with gravel.	X				GOSP funding to make improvements to trails including ADA accessible trails, dirt surface trails, mountain biking/hiking/cross country trails.
Kettle Creek Battlefield: Apply for Recreation Trails Program grant for trail development of Patriot's Point – a new trail to be improved along with other existing trails to include landscape design, amenities, informational and safety signage, and signage for history and flora and fauna.	X				(Recreation Trails Program grant was not applied for because GOSP grant was awarded.) GOSP grant funded trail improvements including 5 trailhead kiosks, 5 directional signs, 5 battlefield informational signs, 2 mountain bike trail signs, 15 battle site informational signs, 40 wildlife informational signs, 5 battlefield leader themed marble obelisks, and revolutionary soldier grave markers.
Kettle Creek Battlefield: Apply for funding to construct an educational seating area for 40 students with podium at new parking area.An informational kiosk will be included	X				GOSP grant funded 30'X50' Outdoor Classroom/Education Pavilion.

Natural and Cultural Resources (cont'd)					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Kettle Creek Battlefield: Apply for funding to install electricity along War Hill Road to educational seating area at new parking area. This will provide a future interpretive center.			X		GOSP grant funded electrical improvements along War Hill Rd and educational pavilion.
Housing					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Update land development regulations to accommodate the addition of accessory dwelling units where appropriate			X		Rural/low density population renders ADU infill a low priority; state regulation of lot size relative to septic tank overrides local regulations; exceptions made on a case by case basis depending on availability of sewer infrastructure at property
Land Use					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Prepare and adopt recommended design guidelines for use in identified character areas (includes facades, signs, etc.).				X	Not a priority at this time
Identify potential key gateways and corridors for improvement.		X			Gateway signage at Kettle Creek Battlefield Park

Transportation

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Pave/resurface the following county roads based on a prioritized annual schedule: Aonia Rd., Delhi Rd., Holliday Rd, Quaker Springs Rd., Philomath Rd., West Rd., Rocker Rd., Bartram Trace Rd., Wheatley Rd. and Matasville Rd.		X			LMIG funded projects: 2020: Quaker Springs, Walker, Sandtown, 2021: Billy Lindsey, Quaker Springs 2022: Bradford, West, Wheatley 2023: Bailey, Oscar Thornton
Maintain and actively promote the rail link of the Georgia Woodlands Railroad provides for the county.		X			Wilkes County does not own the rail line and does not maintain it. Wilkes County Payroll Development Authority does partner with Georgia Woodlands Railroad parent company OmniTrax to promote available rail served sites in Wilkes County to potential rail customers
Develop a list of projects for the next regional TSPLOST initiative.		X			Wilkes County Chairman Sam Moore sat on the CSRA Transportation Roundtable in 2019 to decide TSPLOST allocation and identify projects. TSPLOST project list for resurfacing 2023-2027: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amity Road • Bartram Trace Rd • Metasville Rd • Newtown Rd • Oak Grove Rd • Lundburg Rd • Stoney Ridge Rd • Aonia Rd • Delhi Rd
Update the Wilkes County Rural Transit Development Plan.	X				Title VI plan adopted October 14, 2021.

Community Facilities

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Fund renovations and enhancements of the Robert Toombs House and associated exhibits.		X			Repairs funded for windows and dry well as part on ongoing maintenance program. State of Georgia funding planned for exterior paint.
Upgrade Holliday Park RV electrical hookups.		X			Water hookups and electrical hookups added to park to expand campground by 12 spaces
Update the Wilkes County Joint Solid Waste Management Plan.	X				Solid waste management plan amended/extended through 2033
Provide the RC with a list of school and community gardens and farmer's markets for inclusion in regional food asset mapping.				X	Not accomplished due to lack of staff capacity

Broadband

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Evaluate County buildings in an effort to create one or more connected community centers or wi-fi hotspots offering public access to high speed internet.	X				Action item accomplished by City of Washington and WW Chamber of Commerce
Assist the RC in collection of address data, which will assist DCA with address-level evaluation of broadband service.				X	Not a priority at this time

City of Washington

Economic Development

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.		X			Electric Cities of Georgia completed a Labor Study in June 2022 and a Targeted Industry Study in June 2020
Redevelop the former Gordon Street School in accordance with the recommendations of the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan 2.		X			Sizemore Group completed feasibility study for mixed use housing/commercial June 2021, City seeking LIHTC affordable housing for 50% of Gordon St. property
Create a Revitalization Area Strategy to improve potential access to funds that assist in the implementation of the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plans.		X			The City of Washington is considering updating the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan.
Sponsor the establishment of a rural innovation hub to support local entrepreneurship, business creation and small business development.				X	Lack of staff capacity.
Complete CDBG Redevelopment Grant for Gordon Street School	X				Gordon St. School CDBG Redevelopment Grant closed out.

Land Use

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Prepare and adopt recommended design guidelines for use in identified character areas.		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Identify potential key gateways and corridors for improvement.		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.

Housing

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Assist Hands on Washington with their efforts to improve housing conditions for seniors through maintenance assistance.				X	No longer a priority.
Rehabilitate historic homes for low-to- moderate-income households		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Promote homeownership through maintenance of the City of Washington’s down-payment assistance program.				X	Lack of staff capacity.
Increase quality multi-family options in the Green’s Grove, Depot Street and Lincoln Street areas.		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Construct single-family homes in the Rusher Street and Norman Street Target Areas (SW Washington URP & URP2). Continued implementation of housing recommendations of the adopted SW Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan.		X			4 CHIP houses completed and closed in 2023; two vacant lots purchased in target area for next phase of development.
Update land development regulations to accommodate the addition of accessory dwelling units where appropriate				X	City is prioritizing other housing initiatives .

Natural and Cultural Resources					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Inventory historic structures and sites appropriate for adaptive reuse and infill development	X				
Develop walking, biking, and driving tours to show off Washington-Wilkes variety of attractions.		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Community Facilities					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Purchase new City vehicles and equipment for ROW cutting and street cleaning.	X				
Conduct phased assessment of City water and sewer systems, and conduct targeted repair and maintenance of the system.	X				
Rehab tennis courts at Simpson Park and redevelop Fort Washington Park		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Implement the recommendations of the adopted Washington Multi-Use Trails Plan.		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.

Town of Rayle

Economic Development

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.				X	Lack of staff capacity.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for Rayle's historic properties and assets in support of heritage tourism.				X	Lack of staff capacity.
Purchase land for walking track (.5 miles)	X				
Construct walking track (.5 miles)		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.
Purchase benches and trash receptacles for walking track.				X	No longer a priority.

Report of Accomplishments - Town of Rayle

Broadband					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Create one or more connected community centers or wi-fi hotspots offering public access to high speed internet.	X				Wifi at City Hall Open.
Community Facilities					
Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Apply for 2020 CDBG for city-wide water system improvements (replace asbestos water lines, loop water mains and lines, and dig new well).	X				
Replace asbestos water lines, and loop water mains and lines.		X			Lack of funding.
Dig new well				X	Not a priority at this time.
Purchase land for fire station within City limits	X				
Construct new fire station		X			Item will be included in 2024-2029 Community Work Program.

Town of Tignall

Economic Development

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.				X	Lack of staff capacity.

Community Facilities

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Improve wastewater aeration ponds.		X			Received grant and are waiting on bids for engineers, contractors, etc.
Assess condition of local roads and prepare a prioritized list for paving/repaving.	X				

Broadband

Project	Completed	Ongoing	Postponed	Not Accomplished	Comments
Create one or more connected community centers or wi-fi hotspots offering public access to high speed internet				X	Not a priority at this time.



Community Work Program



The Work Program consists of the specific activities that Wilkes County and each of its contained jurisdictions will undertake in the five-year period from 2025 through 2029 to meet identified community needs and advance local goals. Although the plan was developed jointly, each jurisdiction has developed its own set of work program activities. Some activities will be completed as joint effort with participation by all local governments. Each work program entry includes: a description of the activity, a timeframe for completion, parties responsible for implementation, a cost estimate, and a funding source

Wilkes County

Economic Development								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Update a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce industry mix, and available assets.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co., Rayle, Tignall, Washington	TBD, Staff Time	General Funds
Pursue targeted expansion of infrastructure in areas deemed appropriate to support new and expanding industrial growth (Harris Road and Paper Pak Pkwy.).	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County Roads Dept.	\$30-\$40,000 Annually	General Fund, Payroll Development Authority (PDA)
Continue to pursue expansion of wood products industry in the community	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County	TBD	Private, Grant Funding
Leverage partnerships between industry, educational, and community development entities to develop the Wilkes County workforce	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County	TBD	General Funds
Continue to seek resources to expand infrastructure to and within the industrial park	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County	Staff Time	General Funds

Natural and Cultural Resources								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for Wilkes County's tourism assets including heritage and recreation tourism. This includes implementing market research to inform decisions regarding tourism.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County	TBD	General Funds
Resource expansion of Lake Boline property as a recreation destination	X	X				Wilkes County, City of Washington,	TBD	General funds, Staff time
<p><i>The following items in this section are efforts with the Conversing Georgia's Revolutionary War Victory grant project at Kettle Creek Battle Field (KKBF) in association with the Kettle Creek Battle Field Association (KCBA) as part of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) Trust Fund Project.</i></p>								
Purchase additional acreage to expand the boundaries of the Kettle Creek Battlefield Park.	X	X				Wilkes County, KCBA, Washington Wilkes Historical Foundation	\$190,920	GOSP Funding. Partnership funds from KCBA Washington Wilkes Historical Foundation
New South Associates, required Phase I Archaeological Study, Hiking Trails, Mountain Bike Trails, Education Center, Restrooms & Roads	X	X	X			KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$56,000	GOSP Funding
War Hill improvements including adding grass, removing of old concrete picnic tables, and adding a gravel travel circle in parking area with ADA parking spaces.	X	X	X			KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$20,000	GOSP Funding
Five miles of hiking trails will be cut with a flailing machine to create a walking surface for visitors. Pot holes will be filled to remove safety hazards and tree limbs removed.	X	X				KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$23,000	GOSP Funding

Wilkes County

Natural and Cultural Resources (Continued)								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Multi-user fully ADA accessible flush restroom facility, 24.0 Ft x 19.4 Ft. Reinforced concrete block masonry wall with storage area. Metal roofing. Included is a 1,500 SF Septic system with cost of \$30,000 for Engineer drawings.	X	X				KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$270,000 (\$50,000 in-kind match)	GOSP Funding
Improve signage: Time line showing the evolution of battlefield through geological, Creek Indian occupation, settlers, Colonial occupation, Revolutionary War in a garden setting; Five (5) Trailhead Kiosks for signage; Five (5) - 33"x 42" You Are Here directional signs; Five (5) - 33"x 42" Battlefield informational signs; Two (2) - Mountain Bike Trail signs 33"x 42"; Mountain Bike mile marker posts; Fifteen (15) Battle site informational signs 15"x 22" with mounting posts; Forty (40) - 12"x 15" Animal and Floral nature information signage; Twelve (12) Overlook informational signs 33" x 42"; Five (5) Marble obelisks indicating battlefield leaders information for Pickens, Dooly, Clarke and Boyd. Construction will by contractor and Wilkes County employees.	X	X				KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$154,070	GOSP Funding

Natural and Cultural Resources (Continued)

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Mountain Bike Trails will be constructed on newly acquired property for Mountain Biking and Hiking enthusiasts. Ten miles of biking and hiking trails will be constructed with minimum ground disturbance, Much of the construction work will be performed by Mountain Biking Association members.	X	X	X			Wilkes County, KCBA, Mountain Biking Association	\$75,000 (\$20,000 in-kind match)	GOSP Funding
Settlement Road, Hammett Road, and Weyerhaeuser Road are gravel surfaced interior park roads used by visitors to gain access to the northern portion of Kettle Creek Battlefield. These are one-way roads that allow the visitor to enter on War Hill Road, travel through the park and then, exit back out onto War Hill Road. The road will contain three parking areas for ten vehicles each and have adequate pulls off where needed. Wilkes County Road crews will be used to improve the existing roads by grading and adding gravel surface. Settlement Road and Weyheuser Road will have security gates for closing off the areas at night.	X	X	X			KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$196,000 (\$155,000 in-kind match)	GOSP Funding
RV and primitive Camping spaces, five each to be located in Livesy Tract	X	X	X			KCBA, Wilkes Co.	\$50,000 (\$20,00 in-kind match)	GOSP Funding

Community Work Program -Wilkes County

Land Use

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Tighten restrictions on RV Parks.	X	X				Wilkes County	Staff Time	General Funds
Tighten restrictions on solar farms	X	X				Wilkes County	Staff Time	General Funds

Transportation

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Pave/resurface the following county roads based on a prioritized annual schedule: Aonia Rd., Delhi Rd., Holliday Rd, Quaker Springs Rd., Philomath Rd., West Rd., Rocker Rd., Bartram Trace Rd., Wheatley Rd. and Metasville Rd.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County	\$200,000 Annually	TSPLOST& LMIG
Partner with OmniTrax to actively promote the rail link of the Georgia Woodlands Railroad provides for the county.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co., Rayle, Washington	TBD	General Funds
Continue to resurface County roads; Develop a list of projects for the next regional TSPLOST initiative.	X					Wilkes County	Staff Time	General Funds

Community Work Program - Wilkes County

Broadband								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Assist the RC in collection of address data, which will assist DCA with address-level evaluation of broadband service.	X	X				Wilkes Co., CSRARC	Staff Time	General Funds

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City of Washington

Economic Development

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co., Rayle, Tignall, Washington	TBD, Staff Time	General Funds
Create a Revitalization Area Strategy to improve potential access to funds that assist in urban development to attract more workers to the area.	X	X	X	X	X	City of Washington	TBD, Staff Time	General Funds

Housing

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Increase the quality and inventory of workforce housing to attract more residents to the area.	X	X	X			City of Washington	TDB	TDB
Redevelop the former Gordon Street School.	X	X	X	X	X	City of Washington, WH Gross	TDB	LIHTC

Natural and Cultural Resources								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Improve public recreation spaces, focusing on green belt parks	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes County, City of Washington	TDB	General Funds
Improve Lake Boline property for nature-based recreation.	X	X				City of Washington	TBD	General Funds
Community Facilities								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Rehab tennis courts at Simpson Park and redevelop Fort Washington Park	X	X	X			City of Washington	TBD	General Funds
Install a new dog park and splash pad at Reese Booker Park		X	X			City of Washington	TBD	General Funds
Implement the recommendations of the adopted Washington Multi-Use Trails Plan.				X	X	City of Washington	TBD	TBD
Participate in an update of the Wilkes County Rural Transit Development Plan.		X	X			PDA, CSRARC	Staff Time	General Funds
Apply for funding to correct infrastructure issues in low-income areas serviced by city utilities.		X	X	X	X	City of Washington	\$750K CDBG Funds, Local Funds	Grant Funds, General Funds

City of Washington

Land Use								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Identify potential key gateways and corridors for improvement.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co, Washington	Staff Time	General Funds
Develop and implement land-use regulations for the 27-acre Gordon Street Site	X	X	X	X	X	City of Washington	TDB	Staff Time
Implement zoning regulations for additional housing developments inside the City of Washington	X	X	X	X	X	City of Washington	TBD	Staff Time
Broadband								
Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Evaluate City buildings in an effort to create one or more connected community centers or wi-fi hotspots offering public access to high-speed Internet.	X	X				City of Washington	Staff Time	USDA

Town of Rayle

Economic Development

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co., Rayle, Tignall, Washington	TBD, Staff Time	General Funds

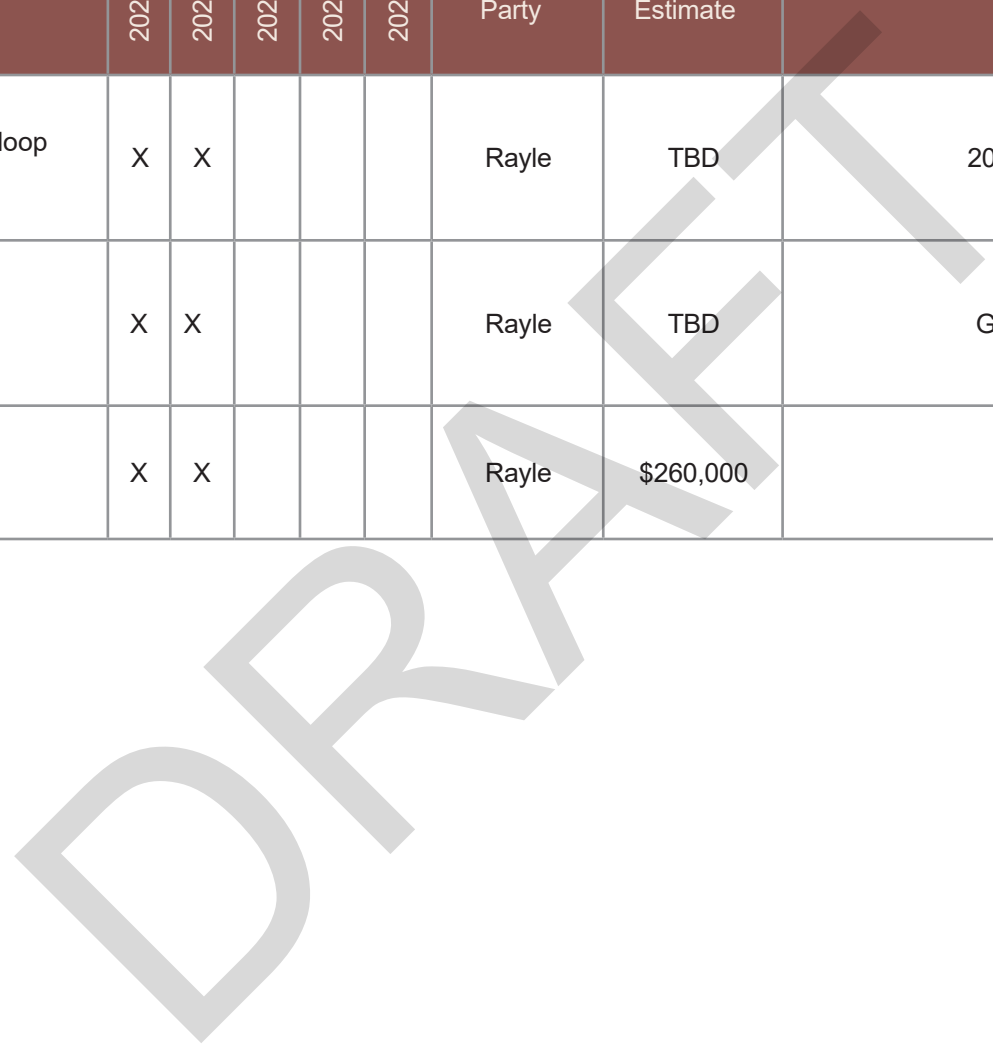
Natural and Cultural Resources

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for Rayle's historic properties and assets in support of heritage tourism.	X	X	X	X	X	Wilkes Co., Rayle, Tignall, Washington	Staff Time	General Funds
Construct walking track (.5 miles)	X	X				Rayle	TBD	Local Funds
Purchase benches and trash receptacles for walking track.	X	X				Rayle	\$1,500	Local Funds

Community Work Program - Town of Rayle

Community Facilities

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Replace asbestos water lines, and loop water mains and lines.	X	X				Rayle	TBD	2021 CDBG, Local Funds
Dig new well.	X	X				Rayle	TBD	Grants, Loans, Local Funds
Construct new fire station.	X	X				Rayle	\$260,000	FEMA



Town of Tignall

Economic Development

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Develop a targeted industry strategy to identify industries most suitable based on the local workforce, industry mix, and available assets.	X	X				Wilkes Co., Rayle, Tignall, Washington	TBD, Staff Time	General Funds

Community Facilities

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Improve wastewater aeration ponds.		X	X	X		Tignall	TBD	Grants, Local Funds

Broadband

Project	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source(s)
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029			
Create one or more connected community centers or wi-fi hotspots offering public access to high-speed internet.		X	X	X		Wilkes Co., Tignall, Washington	TBD	USDA



Appendix

Public Participation

This section of the Plan focuses on its development at the local level. It details the agencies responsible, the steps taken, and provides documentation of the outcomes of public participation in the process. The public participated in the planning process through the following outreach methods:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Public hearings
- Public engagement at a local event
- Survey
- Social media posts

Stakeholder Committee

A Stakeholder Committee comprised of one or more representatives from each jurisdiction was appointed to lead the planning process. The primary purpose of this committee was assuring the CSRA RC staff reflect the aforementioned shared vision, goals, and objectives of the community. Representatives included mayors, commissioners, administrators, and other municipal staff. Following is a list of members of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee:

Wilkes County

Sam Moore, Chairman of the Wilkes County Commission
 Karen Burton, Clerk of the Wilkes County Commission
 Brittany Buttrey, President, Chamber of Commerce
 Janet Parker, Economic Development Director
 Dann Standard, Board of Education Chairman
 Dan Wright, EMS Director

City of Washington

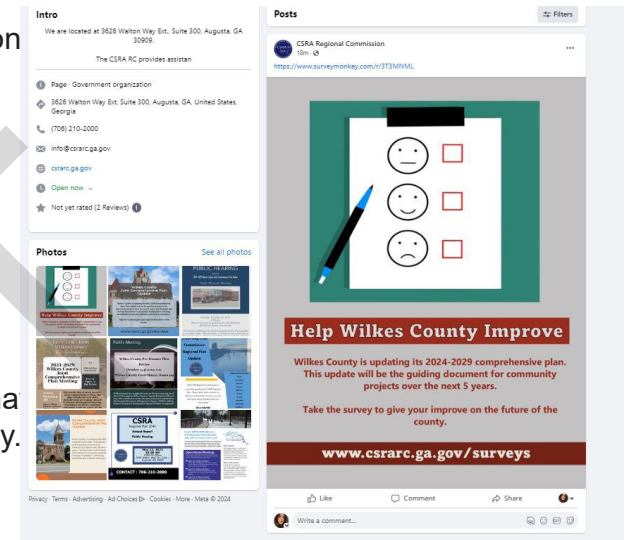
Bill DeGolian, Mayor of the City of Washington (Left Office Dec. 2023)
 Bruce Bailey, Mayor of the City of Washington (Took Office Jan. 2024)
 Jerri deBin, City Administrator
 Wanda Dingler, Clerk of the City of Washington (Resigned Jan.2024)
 Debbie Bazemore, Clerk of the City of Washington (Started Jan. 2024)
 Joselyn Torres, Community Development Director

City of Tignall

Henry Brown, Mayor of the Town of Tignall
 Holley Kangeter, Clerk for the Town of Tignall

City of Rayle

Jake Buff, Mayor of the Town of Rayle
 Lisa Buff, Clerk for Town of Rayle



Stakeholder Meetings

A joint Stakeholder Committee kickoff meeting was held on December 04, 2023 with topics covering items such as the purpose and goals of comprehensive planning, components of the plan document, the timeline for plan development and submittal, recent demographic and economic trends, and completion of a S.W.O.T (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) exercise.

The second Stakeholder Committee meeting was held on January 24, 2024. At this meeting, topics discussed included: needs and opportunities, community goals, and potential policies. Each representative was provided with The Community Work Program from the previous Comprehensive Plan and asked to provide feedback regarding the status of the projects that were identified as priorities for that five-year period. Representatives were also asked to discuss new projects for the upcoming five-year Work Program period.

A third Stakeholder Committee meeting was held March 6, 2024 to discuss character areas and land use maps.

Public Hearings

A joint public hearing was held October 30, 2023 to formally announce the initiation of the comprehensive planning process. A second public hearing was held on April 29, 2024 to solicit public feedback on the contents of the draft document.

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Stakeholder Meeting #1

October 30, 2023

SWOT Analysis

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Meeting #1 December 4, 2023, 10:00a.m. Wilkes County Courthouse		
Name	Organization/Jurisdiction	Email
1. Amy Thorne	CSRA RC	athorne@csra.rc.ga.gov
2. Jaselyn Torres	City of Washington	JTorres@wga.gov
3. Holly Hargetter	City of Tignall	Cityoftignall@nu-2.net
4. Dan Wright	Ems/EMA	dwright@wilkescountyems.com
5. SAM Moore	Wilkes Co.	wilkescoboc@xahed.com
6. Janet Parker	Wilkes Co. PAYROLL DEV. AUTH.	wwpda@wilkescountyga.org
7. Jerry deBin	CITY OF WESTMINSTER	jdebin@wga.gov
8. Bill deGolia	CITY OF WASHINGTON	bdegolia@wga.gov
9. Ed Geddins	Wilkes Co.	Egeddins@nu-2.net
10.		



Stakeholder Meeting #2

January 24, 2024

Discussion of needs, opportunities, and goals

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan
Stakeholder Meeting #2
January 24, 2024, 10:00a.m. | Wilkes County Courthouse

Name	Organization/Jurisdiction	Email
1. Sam Moore	Wilkes Co	
2. Jake Bull	Town of Raybe	
3. April Yang	CSRA RC	ayoung@csrarc.ga.gov
4. Amy Thorne	CSRA RC	athorne@csrarc.ga.gov
5. Janet Parker	Wilkes County	
6. Jerry deBin	City of Washington	jdebin@wga.gov
7. Bruce Bailey	City of WAshg	BBailey@wga.Gov.
8.		

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Meeting #3 March 6, 2024, 10:00a.m. Wilkes County Courthouse		
Name	Organization/Jurisdiction	Email
1. Amy Thorne	CSRA RC	athorne@csrarc.ga.gov
2. Janet Parker	Wilkes County	wmpda@wilkescountyga.org
3. Jimmy Toto	CITY of WASHINGTON Wilkes County	jtoto@wga.gov
4. Dan Wright	EMA/EMS	dwright@wilkescountyems.com
5. Holley Hargett	Town of Tignall	cityoftignall@nu-2.net
6. Robert Vick	Chamber of Commerce	wvchamberofcommerce@gmail.com
7. Brittany Buttrey	Chamber of Commerce	info@thefirstparryckhotel.com info@thefirstparryckhotel.com
8. Delli Benzmore	City of Washington ^{Washington}	DBAZEMORE@uga.gov
9. Jerry de Bin	City of Washington	
10. Sam Moore	Wilkes Co.	
11.		

Stakeholder Meeting #3

March 3, 2024

Discussion of Community Work Program and Character Areas



CSRA Regional Commission
 Page · Government organization
 (706) 210-2000
 info@csrarc.ga.gov
 csrarc.ga.gov
 Open now
 Not yet rated (2 Reviews)

Photos See all photos

Grid of photos including: Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Update, Public Hearings, 2024-2029 Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Meeting, Wilkes County Pre-Discussion Plan Review, Regional Plan Update, and CSRA Regional Plan 2016 Annual Report Public Hearing.

Write a comment...

CSRA Regional Commission
 October 6 at 4:51 PM · 🌐

Let's Talk about Wilkes County
 Rayle - Tignal - Washington

2024-2029 Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Meeting

Official Plan Discussion
 Free & Open to the Public

Monday, October 30
 6:30 pm - 7:00 pm
 Wilkes Co. Courthouse,
 23 East Court Street,
 Washington, GA

The county has started its new Joint Comprehensive plan details the jurisdictions are taking economic development, community facilities, and more. Come be a part of the process.

For More Information: www.csrarc.gov

1 Like Comment

Social media advertisement of the comprehensive planning process

All stakeholders received a digital flyer, hyperlink, and QR code to promote the public to participate in the survey.

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

Wilkes County is updating the 2024-2029 comprehensive plan. This update will be the guiding document for community projects over the next 5 years. The final plan will include information on economic development, housing, broadband, community facilities, and cultural resources.

Take the survey to give your input on the future of the county.

www.csrarc.ga.gov/surveys

Joint Public Hearing Notice
Initiation of Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029

Wilkes County, the City of Rayle, the City of Tignall, and the City of Washington will hold a Joint Public Hearing on October 30, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at the Wilkes County Courthouse, 23 East Court Street, Washington, GA.

The purpose of the joint public hearing will be to initiate the Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan by briefing members of the community on the process for plan development, discuss pending opportunities for public participation, and gather general input. The jurisdictions of Wilkes County, the City of Rayle, the City of Tignall, and the City of Washington are collaborating to prepare the Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan. Residents wishing to comment or make suggestions should be in attendance.

Persons with special needs relating to handicapped accessibility or foreign language should contact Karen Burton, Clerk of the Wilkes County Commission, at (706)-678-2511 by October 30, 2023. Ms. Burton can be found at the Wilkes County Courthouse, 23 East Court Street, Washington, GA, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. except holidays.

Persons with hearing disabilities can contact the Georgia Relay Service, at (TDD) 1-800-255-0056 or (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

Public Hearing #1

October 30, 2023,
 Wilkes County Courthouse



Ad Published in the October 19, 2023 in The Journal Messenger & Reporter.

SIGN-IN SHEET			
Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing, October 30, at 6:30 p.m. Wilkes County Courthouse, 23 East Court Street, Washington, GA			
NAME	EMAIL	JURISDICTION REPRESENTED	PHONE
1. Janet Parker	wwpda@wilkescountyga.org	county	(770) 324-7...
2. Carol Jackson	boardofcommissioners@wilkescountyga.org	County	(706) 678-2...
3. Jam Moore		county	()
4. Jan Wright	dwright@wilkescountypens.com	county	(706) 678-7...
5. Brittany Buttrey	info@thefitzpatrickhotel.com	county	(706) 820-0...
6. Amy Thorne	athorne@xsta.ga.gov		(706) 993-8...
7.			()

Public Hearing #2

April 29, 2024

Published April 11, 2024

Wilkes News-Reporter

Meeting flyers were physically posted in high-traffic areas as well as digitally posted on the RC's social media platforms

csrarc.ga.gov/planning-documents'."/>

Last Chance to Make Your Voice Heard

Rayle - Tignal - Washington

**2024-2029
Wilkes County
Joint
Comprehensive
Plan Meeting**

Free & Open to the Public

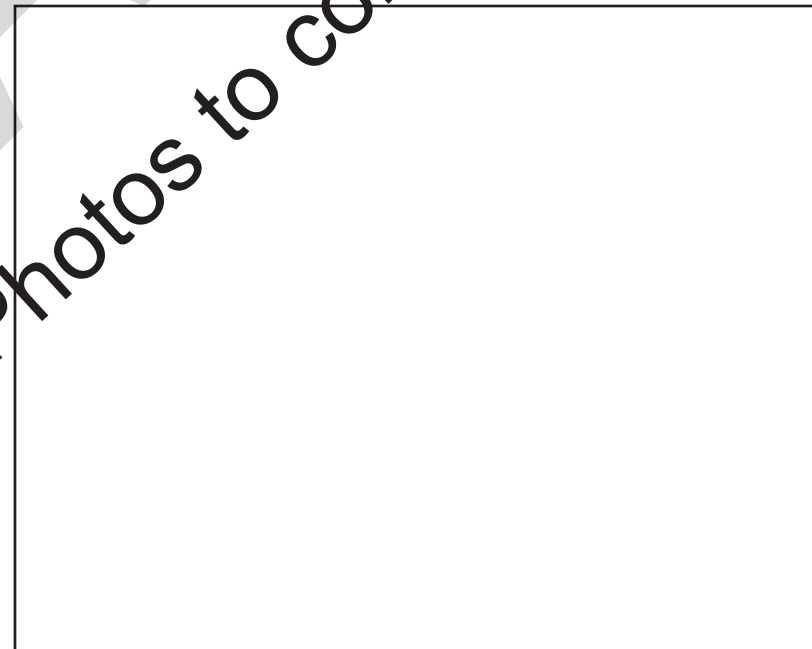
**Monday,
April 29**

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Wilkes Co. Courthouse,
23 East Court Street,
Washington, GA

The county's latest Joint Comprehensive Plan is almost done. We want to hear your thoughts before the plan goes to the state for review.

Scan the QR code above or follow the link below to read the plan. Then join us at the public meeting to share your ideas.

VIEW THE PLAN NOW AT csrarc.ga.gov/planning-documents

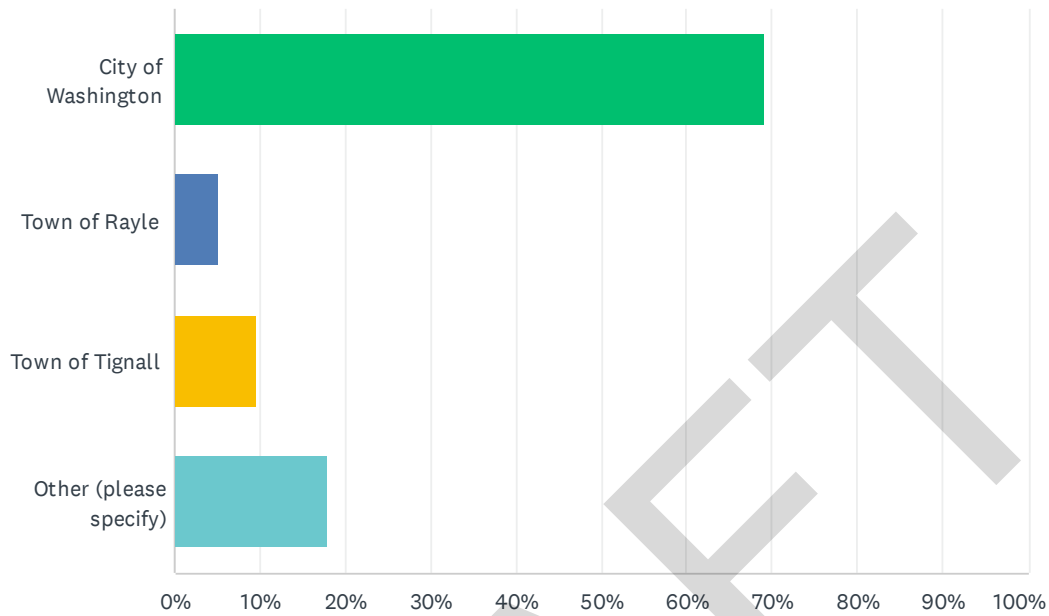


RAFT
Photos to come after event

**The following pages are results
of the public survey.**

Q1 Which community do you live in? (select best that applies)

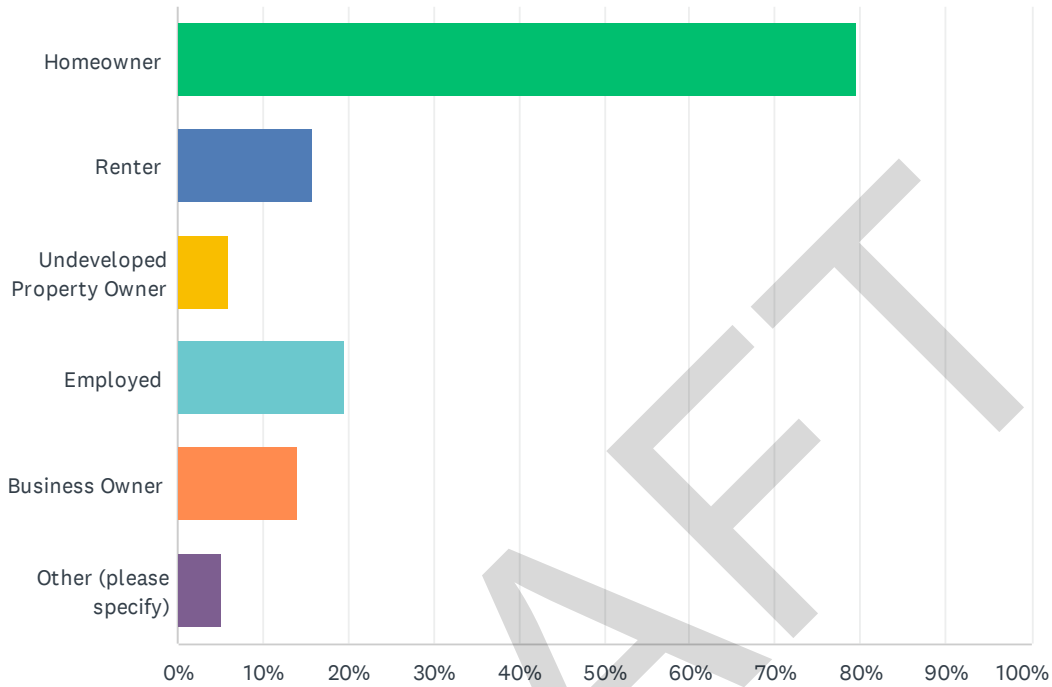
Answered: 239 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
City of Washington	69.04% 165
Town of Rayle	5.02% 12
Town of Tignall	9.62% 23
Other (please specify)	17.99% 43
Total Respondents: 239	

Q2 Which of the following categories currently describes your relationship to Wilkes County? Check all that apply.

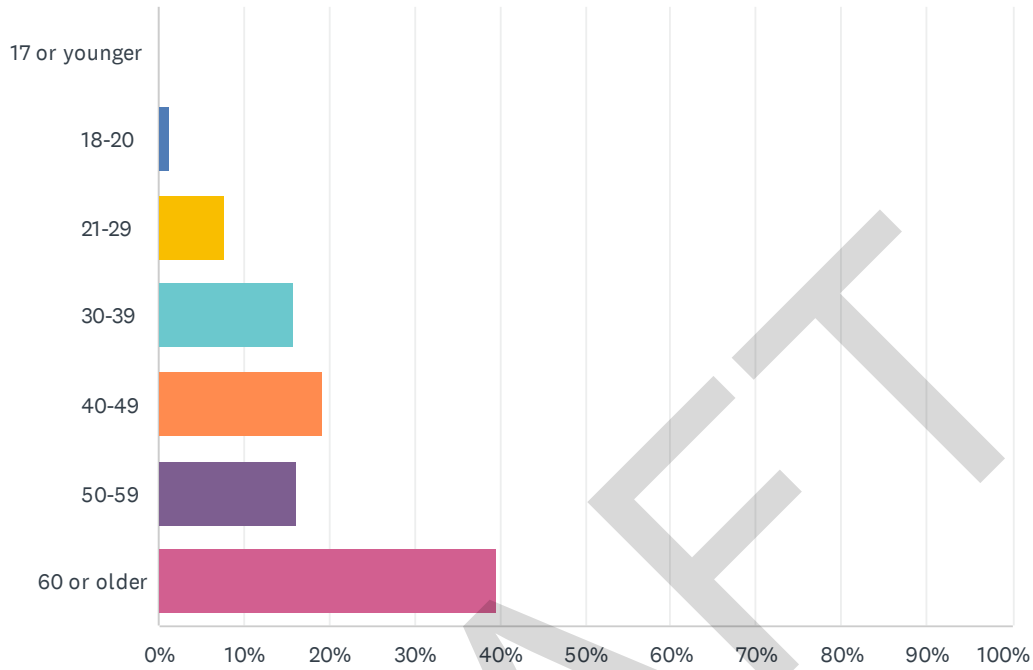
Answered: 234 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Homeowner	79.49%	186
Renter	15.81%	37
Undeveloped Property Owner	5.98%	14
Employed	19.66%	46
Business Owner	14.10%	33
Other (please specify)	5.13%	12
Total Respondents: 234		

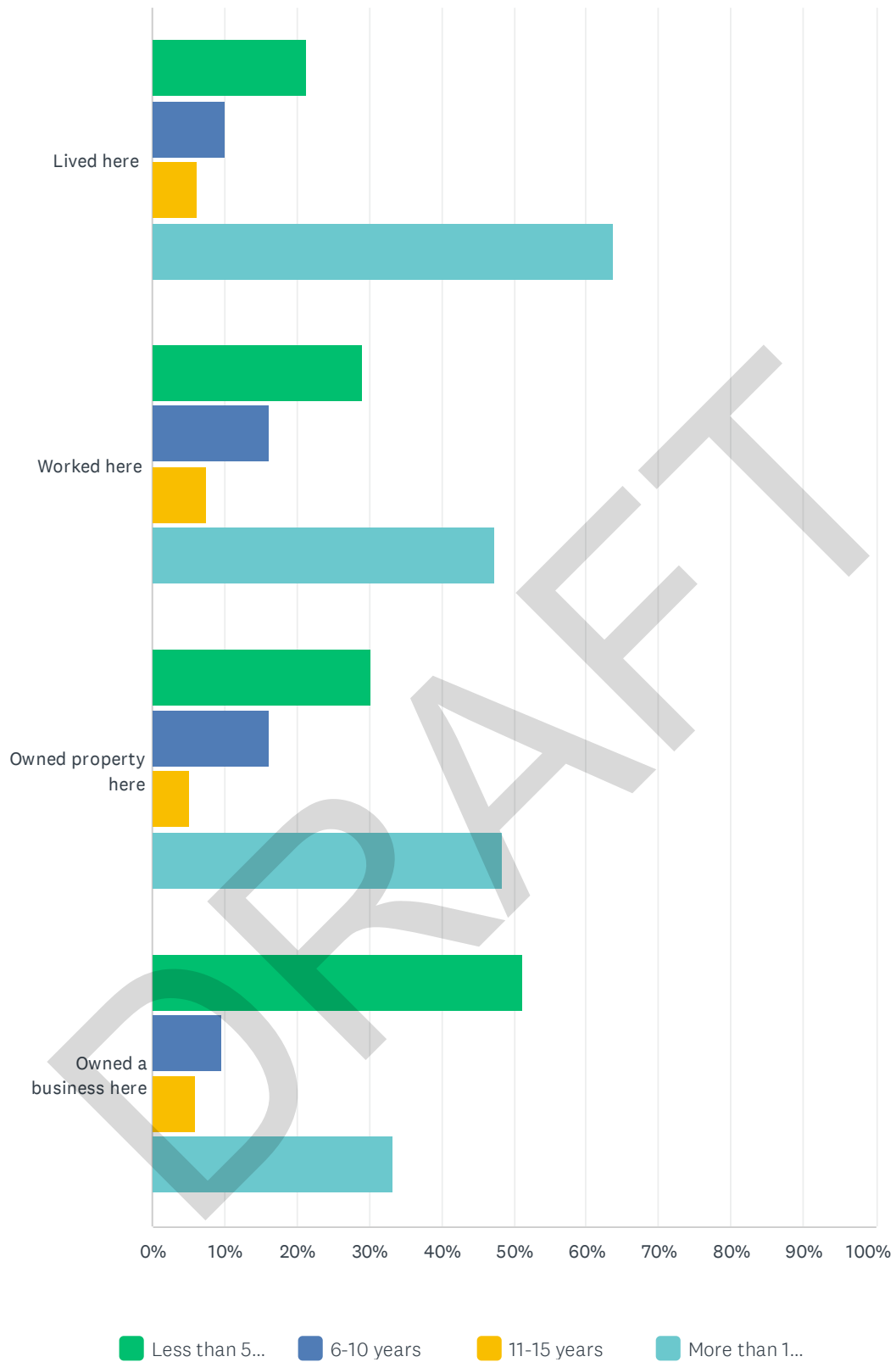
Q3 What is your age?

Answered: 234 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
17 or younger	0.00%	0
18-20	1.28%	3
21-29	7.69%	18
30-39	15.81%	37
40-49	19.23%	45
50-59	16.24%	38
60 or older	39.74%	93
TOTAL		234

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey



Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

	LESS THAN 5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	MORE THAN 15 YEARS	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Lived here	21.40% 49	10.04% 23	6.11% 14	63.76% 146	229
Worked here	29.03% 54	16.13% 30	7.53% 14	47.31% 88	186
Owned property here	30.30% 60	16.16% 32	5.05% 10	48.48% 96	198
Owned a business here	51.19% 43	9.52% 8	5.95% 5	33.33% 28	84

DRAFT

Q5 What are the greatest strengths of our community?

Answered: 123 Skipped: 117

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	100.00% 123
2	71.54% 88

#	1	DATE
1	A great place to settle raise a family	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	A great place to live	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	Downtown area	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
4	Natural resources	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
5	Ample Natural Resources such as timber, farmland. Low crime rates, non existent traffic problems, mostly due to the small population. We have a great quality of life compared to other more developed over commercialized places.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
6	Rich historical and agroeconomic draw that affords solid opportunity for tourism	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
7	Have yet to see any	1/21/2024 10:07 PM
8	Safety	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
9	The people	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
10	Agriculture	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
11	Simplicity	1/21/2024 2:13 AM
12	None	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
13	Location	1/20/2024 8:04 PM
14	location	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
15	Citizens	1/20/2024 7:59 PM
16	An overall sense of caring	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
17	Diversity and youth in our community	1/20/2024 7:16 PM
18	Cheaper housing	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
19	The people	1/20/2024 5:05 PM
20	The people	1/20/2024 4:59 PM
21	People who invest in it	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
22	history and architecture	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
23	N/A	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
24	Small community atmosphere	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
25	Country setting	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
26	Most part good community	1/20/2024 1:30 PM
27	Quaint, friendly	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
28	quiet	1/20/2024 1:14 PM

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29	Close knit. So many people related to each other it's in everyone's best interest for community to thrive	1/20/2024 1:01 PM
30	Schools	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
31	community itself	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
32	The people	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
33	None right now	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
34	close knit community	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
35	Small town atomsphere	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
36	Small town feel	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
37	Working together	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
38	Community	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
39	Hallmark type city	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
40	Nature	1/20/2024 10:38 AM
41	Can come together as a whole in bad situations.	1/20/2024 10:19 AM
42	We have beautiful landscapes and picturesque views.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
43	Natural resources	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
44	Town Square, historic homes, friendly population, surrounding farms and undeveloped land in the county	1/20/2024 9:56 AM
45	History, The Arts, Shopping Small, Education, Safety, Environment	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
46	The unspoiled land surrounding the county	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
47	The few local friends I have.	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
48	Open rural spaces with an urban core	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
49	Affordability of real estate compared to major towns	1/19/2024 2:08 PM
50	Good school system	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
51	Our hospital	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
52	When there is need the community cones together to help out!	1/18/2024 7:31 PM
53	Downtown	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
54	Friendly people	1/18/2024 6:38 PM
55	Helping in a time of crisis	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
56	The community rallies together when needed	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
57	Historic beautiful homes	1/16/2024 5:35 PM
58	Historical Beauty	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
59	Cute boutiques	1/15/2024 9:33 AM
60	Community pride	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
61	beautiful community	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
62	Volunteerism	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
63	Beautiful environs	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
64	community volunteer activities	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
65	Small town charm	1/12/2024 6:30 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

66	Slow pace of life, attractive community	1/12/2024 3:10 PM
67	Community events	1/12/2024 10:29 AM
68	None	1/12/2024 9:48 AM
69	Its beauty.	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
70	Over all safety	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
71	Closeness	1/11/2024 9:44 PM
72	Friendliness of the people, The downtown Square	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
73	Downtown businesses with owners of shops and restaurants that treat you like family	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
74	The people	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
75	Friendly community	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
76	the kindness of the people	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
77	People rally together	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
78	Leadership currently	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
79	The people	1/11/2024 2:32 PM
80	Small towns	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
81	History/historical structures	1/11/2024 12:03 PM
82	Low traffic	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
83	Nothing I could think of	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
84	Small business	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
85	Events	11/9/2023 7:36 AM
86	Peaceful	11/8/2023 11:08 PM
87	Faith and hope	11/8/2023 8:59 PM
88	Awareness and appreciation of history	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
89	our town is beautiful	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
90	Sense of community & heritage	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
91	The closeness and friendliness	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
92	Citizen involvement	11/8/2023 11:00 AM
93	Small town	11/8/2023 5:34 AM
94	Sense of community & coming together in times of great neex	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
95	School system	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
96	Closeness	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
97	History and tourism	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
98	None	11/7/2023 8:49 PM
99	N/a	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
100	Sense of community	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
101	People are still mostly kind to one another r	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
102	The small community aspect	11/7/2023 6:27 PM
103	Location	11/7/2023 5:32 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

104	rural and quiet	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
105	Cost of living	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
106	Beauty	11/7/2023 4:32 PM
107	Tour of homes	11/7/2023 3:23 PM
108	History	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
109	Small town living	11/7/2023 2:26 PM
110	The people	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
111	Celebrations of events & holidays	11/7/2023 1:51 PM
112	Historic Architecture and Museums	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
113	Located between Athens and Augusta	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
114	Small town charm with convenient access to larger cities	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
115	We can come together when needed	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
116	Charm	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
117	None	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
118	None	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
119	Organizations collaborate, but we could do better with that	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
120	friendly, helpful people	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
121	Location	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
122	Possibilities	10/30/2023 11:37 AM
123	Great county leadership	10/30/2023 11:15 AM
#	2	DATE
1	Everyone knows about pretty much everyone great for networking	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	Small town	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	We can draw in large crowds - Mule Day , 4th of July, etc	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
4	Friendly, welcoming atmosphere	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
5	Good people with values conducive to what makes a location a desirable place to live.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
6	Close proximity to Augusta and Athens, while creating a more insulated environment for true "bedroom community" dynamic.	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
7	Open space	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
8	Beautiful countryside	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
9	Ecology	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
10	infrastructure	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
11	Religion	1/20/2024 7:59 PM
12	Local businesses	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
13	committed people	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
14	N/A	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
15	Walkable	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
16	History	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
17	Good school system	1/20/2024 1:30 PM

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18	Small, quite, no traffic	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
19	Land/opportunity for business	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
20	Quality of life	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
21	potential for growth	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
22	Beautiful homes	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
23	History	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
24	Churches	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
25	Church	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
26	Property/houses cheaper	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
27	Our history and our future	1/20/2024 10:19 AM
28	We have people.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
29	Clean air	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
30	Dumping of nasty materials and too many chicken houses - all of which will destroy precious resources- clean soil, water and air	1/20/2024 9:56 AM
31	Commitment to unity and cooperation over the years.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
32	Safeguarding the residents in the county from industrial assault	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
33	None	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
34	Wide range of people with varied interests	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
35	Our schools	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
36	Small businesses	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
37	Relaxed living	1/18/2024 6:38 PM
38	Pride in community	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
39	Most people work together for the good of the community	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
40	County government and hospital	1/16/2024 5:35 PM
41	Friendly Community	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
42	Safe	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
43	friendly polite people	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
44	Respect for historic spaces	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
45	People	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
46	local owned businesses	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
47	Leadership	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
48	Small business	1/12/2024 10:29 AM
49	Community minded citizens.	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
50	Antebellum homes - Fitzpatrick Hotel	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
51	Shopping local	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
52	The beauty of the land	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
53	Low cost of living	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
54	the willingness of the people to help	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
55	Financial gains with people out of town buying	1/11/2024 2:59 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

56	New business owners	1/11/2024 2:32 PM
57	Everyone knows everyone	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
58	Low taxes	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
59	Events	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
60	People	11/9/2023 7:36 AM
61	School pride	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
62	advertimentfor town square activities	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
63	Passion for growth	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
64	Our small town traits	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
65	Tourism	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
66	Welcoming to tourists abs newcomers	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
67	Downtown	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
68	Medical facilities	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
69	Beautiful town	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
70	Friendly people	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
71	Washington is a very clean and pretty area	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
72	Low traffic	11/7/2023 6:27 PM
73	People	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
74	young people in school and not in jail	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
75	Beautiful	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
76	History	11/7/2023 4:32 PM
77	N/A	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
78	Small town charm	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
79	Close Knit	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
80	Small town atmosphere and controlled growth.	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
81	Abundant natural resources and rural culture	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
82	People	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
83	None	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
84	None	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
85	We communicate based on needs, but this can be improved	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
86	personal safety, low crime rate	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
87	Low congestion of population	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
88	Land	10/30/2023 11:37 AM

Q6 What are the greatest weaknesses of our community?

Answered: 134 Skipped: 106

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
1		100.00% 134
2		84.33% 113

#	1	DATE
1	not enough jobs poor pay	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	Utility bill	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	Lack of successful leadership	1/22/2024 10:21 PM
4	high prices on downtown locals - small business fail	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
5	Segregation of races	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
6	A populace that is generally not engaged in working with its governing representatives, not possessing a strong interest in getting involved. This attitude creates the opportunity for bad players to enter the picture and take advantage.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
7	Lack of vision related to tourism growth opportunities	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
8	The inability to progress	1/22/2024 10:47 AM
9	Mayor and his family are a complete debacle on social media	1/21/2024 10:07 PM
10	Lack of info in order to know what's going on	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
11	Lack of policing redneck activities.	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
12	Environmental mismanagement	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
13	Racially divided	1/21/2024 2:13 AM
14	not getting along	1/21/2024 1:46 AM
15	Racist	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
16	Don't like change.	1/20/2024 8:04 PM
17	County Commission that is only concerned with their property tax rates that they themselves have to pay.	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
18	Division	1/20/2024 7:59 PM
19	The racial divide- perpetuated by BOTH races	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
20	Old Segregationist still exists	1/20/2024 7:16 PM
21	Not en	1/20/2024 7:03 PM
22	Very expense utility cost	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
23	Lack of local business opportunities	1/20/2024 5:05 PM
24	The businesses	1/20/2024 4:59 PM
25	Lack of employment opportunities	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
26	lack of dialog	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
27	Divided	1/20/2024 2:54 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

28	No industry so you're becoming Talliferro	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
29	Utility prices	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
30	Nothing for kids	1/20/2024 1:30 PM
31	Bringing in environmentally unsafe business	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
32	racism	1/20/2024 1:14 PM
33	People throwing out the "racism" card at every situation/decision they don't agree with.	1/20/2024 1:01 PM
34	not enough jobs	1/20/2024 12:35 PM
35	Lack of jobs and cost of living	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
36	Outdated with technology	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
37	still segregated	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
38	Racial division	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
39	Transparency	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
40	if you aren't from here or in the elite it's hard to get community support	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
41	Lack of speed control on main streets	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
42	Supporting local businesses	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
43	People trying to push racial discord	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
44	City Government	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
45	Not enough businesses or variety	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
46	Agribusinesses reducing quality of life	1/20/2024 10:38 AM
47	Grocery stores, businesses other than little what not shops.	1/20/2024 10:19 AM
48	Some care more about the colonial homes than the do the people.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
49	Poor economic development	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
50	Land use planners support individual corporate interests rather than prudent long-term and comprehensive land use planning	1/20/2024 9:56 AM
51	Retaining graduates for high paying jobs.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
52	The county does not protect county residents from being victims of industrial uses like the chicken house industry. Also this industry pays almost nothing in taxes leaving the residents of the county to fix the roads from the heavy truck traffic and dealing on a daily basis with the smell of chicken excrement	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
53	Declining population	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
54	Weak planning, vision and leadership	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
55	Ignorance and lack of motivation to grow to maintain local power	1/19/2024 2:08 PM
56	Government Housing	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
57	Our law enforcement	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
58	People living in the past and making it divided.	1/18/2024 7:31 PM
59	Many places are closed early in the week	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
60	Lack of grocery stores	1/18/2024 6:38 PM
61	Access to basic necessities that aren't over priced	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
62	It's isolated and few businesses want to come here	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
63	City government, lack of employment opportunities	1/16/2024 5:35 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

64	Not enough community events	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
65	Having to drive 30 mins to get fast food other than Zaxby's or McDonald's	1/15/2024 9:33 AM
66	Laborforce	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
67	utility rates	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
68	Lack of clear communication	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
69	Unwillingness to change	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
70	extremely high utility rates	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
71	City Council	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
72	Lack of leadership, school system,	1/12/2024 3:10 PM
73	Nothing to do for kids or adults	1/12/2024 10:29 AM
74	Grocery, restaurant, and shopping options. Inconsistent hours.	1/12/2024 9:48 AM
75	Gangs	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
76	No business growth	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
77	Racial disparity	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
78	We turn our backs on each other so fast	1/11/2024 9:44 PM
79	Not enough Camaraderie among citizens	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
80	People not supporting small business and going to bigger cities like Augusta	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
81	Negativity	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
82	Safety	1/11/2024 7:55 PM
83	Racism	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
84	No new business	1/11/2024 6:56 PM
85	resistance to change	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
86	Inconsistencies	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
87	Housing affordable	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
88	Racism	1/11/2024 2:32 PM
89	shopping, mainly food	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
90	Racism from whites against blacks and from blacks against whites.	1/11/2024 12:03 PM
91	high cost of gas and food	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
92	Government does not support all	11/17/2023 12:12 PM
93	Utilities cost	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
94	Parks are in disrepair	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
95	Roads outside of town are trashy.	11/9/2023 7:36 AM
96	Poor economic outlook	11/8/2023 11:08 PM
97	lack of affordable, low cost senior housing	11/8/2023 8:59 PM
98	Division in city government	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
99	lack of community activities geared towards youth	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
100	Our children are lacking in resources to support their development and safety in schools	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
101	Communication	11/8/2023 11:36 AM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

102	Lack of economic & job options	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
103	Divided efforts	11/8/2023 11:00 AM
104	Division	11/8/2023 5:34 AM
105	No industry	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
106	Racial Divide	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
107	'Elites' thinking they're better	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
108	Dr Sessom's home needs to be a museum	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
109	Not addressing the needsfor the black community	11/7/2023 8:49 PM
110	Divided	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
111	Lack of grocery stores	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
112	The division that is creeping in from every direction	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
113	Limited shopping options	11/7/2023 6:27 PM
114	People who divide us based on race	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
115	young people leave to work elsewhere	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
116	Lack of restaurants	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
117	High utility costs	11/7/2023 4:32 PM
118	Gun violence	11/7/2023 3:23 PM
119	Racial Division	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
120	A select few individuals in both districts 1 and 2 that don't want to work together	11/7/2023 2:26 PM
121	City and county relationships	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
122	Move forward but keep southern history.	11/7/2023 1:51 PM
123	No Vision in County or City Leaders	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
124	Washington city council having to deal with racism among some council	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
125	Racial division fueled by a select few militants	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
126	City elections	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
127	Sidewalks/lighting. Not enough or either busted up and trip hazard. I'm a runner. My friend is in a wheelchair, he can't access most sidewalks because they aren't simply not handicap friendly. It's odd seeing him in the road on a wheelchair. Because he doesn't have a choice	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
128	Not having facilities for kids to enjoy such as skating rings and arcades	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
129	Everything	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
130	We don't have 100% support from all of our partners	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
131	racial divisiveness among some elected officials	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
132	New home ownership	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
133	Affordable Housing	10/30/2023 11:37 AM
134	Racial divide	10/30/2023 11:15 AM
#	2	DATE
1	not enough stores chains of business	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	Not enough stores for shopping	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	Lack of industry	1/22/2024 10:21 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

4	Lack of focus on Young adults 21+	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
5	Short sighted land owners	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
6	The residents of the County and City of Washington not recognizing their common needs which require them to work together for the good of everyone and the good for future smart development of the entire county. This lack of cohesiveness creates openings for bad future outcomes. If the City fails the County will suffer, we are all in this together.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
7	Lacking definition and expectations for downtown, inclusive of holding building owners to a standard that reflects the values of growth and preservation in the community	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
8	No housing or jobs	1/22/2024 10:47 AM
9	Stubborn, rude, small minded to new ideas	1/21/2024 10:07 PM
10	Not enough support for those with community friendly businesses	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
11	Over expansion	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
12	Gang members	1/21/2024 2:13 AM
13	No jobs	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
14	Color games.	1/20/2024 8:04 PM
15	City officials still stuck in the 1960's civil rights movement	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
16	Communications	1/20/2024 7:59 PM
17	Refusal to accept the past is the past and the refusal to move forward	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
18	Lack of repairman that will come to Washington	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
19	Lack of infrastructure to attract people	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
20	lack of properly trained labor force	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
21	Work Force	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
22	Everyone needs to stop complaining and stirring up drama and start making things happen	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
23	Few jobs of quality	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
24	Light bill to high	1/20/2024 1:30 PM
25	Trying to grow beyond infrastructure	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
26	instigators	1/20/2024 1:14 PM
27	Not enough jobs. Too many people have to make long commute for gainful employment	1/20/2024 1:01 PM
28	not enough housing	1/20/2024 12:35 PM
29	Lack of resources for community - youth activities, medical specialists, mental health, housing	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
30	No unity	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
31	Lack of mental health services	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
32	Poor Leadership	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
33	not enough restaurants	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
34	Road and street sign conditions	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
35	Marketing events(on 78...more visible	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
36	People who complain and don't truly work for answers	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
37	City Government transparency	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
38	Businesses high price and closed a lot	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
39	We need our leadership to be more progressive and definitive regarding betterment of the	1/20/2024 10:13 AM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

	community.	
40	Racial inequality	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
41	Technical College level training for graduates.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
42	County needs engaged and informed members on the review board	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
43	No community	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
44	Businesses using Wilkes as a place to dump their waste	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
45	crime rates (conveniently undisclosed)	1/19/2024 2:08 PM
46	Lack of industry	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
47	Lack of specialty health care	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
48	Not having people who live here to work jobs	1/18/2024 7:31 PM
49	Instigators re: race relations	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
50	Racial division	1/18/2024 6:38 PM
51	Getting information out to the citizens of Washington about important updates/emergencies	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
52	Few options for shopping especially grocery stores. Nothing for the younger generations to do here	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
53	Lack of restaurants and businesses	1/16/2024 5:35 PM
54	Involvement in the community	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
55	Having to drive 30 mins to go to Walmart, Ingles prices are too high	1/15/2024 9:33 AM
56	Ability to get supplies of various types in Wilkes county	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
57	shopping opportunities	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
58	Inclusiveness	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
59	Inequities (rich & very poor)	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
60	disfunction of city council	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
61	Business	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
62	Lack of decent jobs	1/12/2024 3:10 PM
63	Not many fast food options	1/12/2024 10:29 AM
64	Need better parks.	1/12/2024 9:48 AM
65	Discord among those in leadership.	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
66	No incentives for people to build here	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
67	Discrimination	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
68	Citizens don't look at big picture, but dwell on the wants of a few.	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
69	Not having another grocery store or other restaurants	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
70	Lack of support	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
71	Violence	1/11/2024 7:55 PM
72	Housing	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
73	lack of cooperation among civic organizations	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
74	Plans never seem to stick	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
75	Needing more industry	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
76	thought process of 'we've tried it, didn't work; this is how we've always done this'	1/11/2024 2:32 PM

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77	restaurants	11/11/2024 1:55 PM
78	lack of mainstream food and retail	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
79	No unity	11/17/2023 12:12 PM
80	No vision	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
81	Not enough small business	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
82	Utilities Expensive	11/9/2023 7:36 AM
83	segregation	11/8/2023 11:08 PM
84	lack of affordable grocery stores	11/8/2023 8:59 PM
85	The dumpster situation	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
86	lack of investment in children in town	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
87	Poorly administrated school system despite ample resources	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
88	Jobs	11/8/2023 11:36 AM
89	Lack of strong industrial support	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
90	Colloquialism	11/8/2023 11:00 AM
91	Racism	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
92	Lack of good jobs	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
93	Racial division stirred up by a powerful few	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
94	Racism	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
95	Lack of interests for young people to stay out of trouble	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
96	The city council members are embarrassing	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
97	No affordable housing	11/7/2023 6:27 PM
98	City administration	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
99	shortsighted leadership and lack of corporate investment to help with lowering taxes	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
100	No good parks	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
101	Lack of higher education	11/7/2023 4:32 PM
102	Safety	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
103	Having to pay city and county taxes	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
104	Zero effective marketing for our assets and businesses	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
105	Race mix too one sided in the city.	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
106	Lack of available workforce housing	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
107	Work. I wish I saw higher paying jobs.	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
108	No affordable housing	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
109	Everything	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
110	We don't have things for our youth to do that are not related to sports	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
111	rental housing opportunities at all income levels	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
112	Nepotism and lack of professional career options, too many low wage jobs	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
113	Thriving Businesses/ Restaurants	10/30/2023 11:37 AM

Q7 What are the greatest opportunities available to our community?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 131

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	100.00% 109
2	63.30% 69

#	1	DATE
1	economic development	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	N/A	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	Funding	1/22/2024 10:21 PM
4	Large areas of land to allow more businesses	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
5	Proximity to growing city centers	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
6	Washington Wilkes is more or less a blank canvas. Farming is the primary economic driver and there are opportunities to expand and create jobs and development without sacrificing the good things.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
7	Growth from relocated professionals seeking to invest and grow the community and its resources	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
8	None	1/22/2024 10:47 AM
9	Cheap land	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
10	Agriculture	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
11	A change	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
12	None	1/20/2024 8:04 PM
13	dying county-20m years too late for opportunities	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
14	Church	1/20/2024 7:59 PM
15	Presently, opportunities in Washington are nearly nonexistent	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
16	Reorganize the economy	1/20/2024 7:16 PM
17	I don't see any	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
18	Lots of space for growth	1/20/2024 5:05 PM
19	Volunteer work	1/20/2024 4:59 PM
20	Making it a desirable place for manufacturing	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
21	good health care	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
22	N/A	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
23	I really don't know.	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
24	Tourism	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
25	None	1/20/2024 1:30 PM
26	Being an example of an unspoiled small town	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
27	Utilize the manufacturing buildings we currently have	1/20/2024 12:14 PM

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28	???	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
29	sense of belonging	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
30	Providing safety for citizens	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
31	Land	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
32	good potential for business due to the lack of now	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
33	Hardly any	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
34	Community involvement	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
35	The bypass between Thomson and elberton, needs development	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
36	Development downtown and otherwise	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
37	Economic growth	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
38	Small family farming	1/20/2024 10:38 AM
39	We have the opportunity to develop our youth into viable, successful citizens.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
40	State and federal funding to help grow the community	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
41	To preserve our rural land	1/20/2024 9:56 AM
42	Attracting industry because of recent highway and internet improvements.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
43	The unspoiled land in Wilkes Co provides the opportunities for farming and livestock and recreation	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
44	None	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
45	Easily reachable from many places (Athens, Augusta, Atlanta, SC)	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
46	Possibility of Industry	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
47	Our location is excellent for bringing in all kinds of businesses	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
48	Parks and Recreation	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
49	For the seniors they are hard to find. This one is hard to answer	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
50	Agri business	1/16/2024 5:35 PM
51	the homes	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
52	Price for land and low cost should be a key to bring in new businesses	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
53	so much going on between churchs, on Square, etc	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
54	Increase tourism	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
55	Tourism	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
56	to shift away from high energy consuming industries and move into more forward looking local production of food and energy.	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
57	New leadership	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
58	Potential for small manufacturing, agricultural, and timber businesses	1/12/2024 3:10 PM
59	If we can attract remote workers to our community we can expand service and retail offerings.	1/12/2024 9:48 AM
60	Attracting outside businesses.	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
61	Build business like Walmart market or superstore	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
62	Retirement	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
63	Location lends itself for a good amount of tourists.	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
64	Local businesses collaborating	1/11/2024 8:48 PM

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65	Location	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
66	it is unique among smaller towns	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
67	Lots of available properties for thriving businesses	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
68	Having a hospital and decent medical care	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
69	Manufacturing companies taking over available properties	1/11/2024 2:32 PM
70	Improved zoning	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
71	Location between Athens and Augusta	1/11/2024 12:03 PM
72	Many empty lots and buildings that need to be utilized	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
73	Room for growth	11/17/2023 12:12 PM
74	Housing affordability	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
75	Open more shops	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
76	Monthly events, food trucks, family events.	11/9/2023 7:36 AM
77	Building low cost senior housing	11/8/2023 8:59 PM
78	Good schools, but need to expand college options	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
79	empty building opportunities to grow	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
80	Dedication to growth	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
81	N/A	11/8/2023 11:36 AM
82	We have the power to unite our community.	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
83	Growth possibilities	11/8/2023 11:00 AM
84	Unity	11/8/2023 5:34 AM
85	Small business opportunities	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
86	Attract more employers	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
87	Empty manufacturing buildings. Need businesses to fill them	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
88	Farming	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
89	N/a	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
90	Homes to purchase at affordable prices	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
91	People who love this community still want to serve it	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
92	Great location for small business opportunities	11/7/2023 6:27 PM
93	Small business opportunities	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
94	development of entrepreneurial, technical and medical jobs for young people	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
95	More big business; YMCA, grocery store, walmart, etc	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
96	Potential tourism	11/7/2023 4:32 PM
97	Activities for youth	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
98	Building up city and county relations	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
99	Mid to HIGH End Income Housing/Neighborhood Development	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
100	Easy to open a small business with low overhead	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
101	Washington is ideally situated as a bedroom community for those who want reasonable access to major cities and airports but a small town feel.	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
102	Growth	11/7/2023 12:10 PM

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103	Lots of local shops to get handmade stuff or fresh market produce.	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
104	None	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
105	None	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
106	Citizen leadership academy needed	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
107	industrial growth	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
108	Tech investment with low impact to environment	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
109	Community Redevelopment	10/30/2023 11:37 AM
#	2	DATE
1	investing in our youth development and education	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	Growing	1/22/2024 10:21 PM
3	bypass - need to add an attention grabber billboard on the land in front of mcdonalds	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
4	Chance to create a meaningful diversity	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
5	There is opportunity to create a substantive plan for future development which will allow for growth and at the same time protect the quality of life for residents and existing businesses. Changes are certainly coming in the future, it is up to us all to make sure they are positive and for the good of most of us.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
6	Energy from local business owners to create MORE reasons for dwell time downtown; desire to grow retail business	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
7	Accessibility to Athens, and Augusta	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
8	Ecology	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
9	Together (if the people are willing)	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
10	outdoor activities	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
11	N/A	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
12	Solar	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
13	None	1/20/2024 1:30 PM
14	Bring in new businesses - less focus on historic foundation more on current needs	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
15	???	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
16	Water, and Electric	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
17	availability of space	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
18	Need to entice more businesses to area	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
19	Small business	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
20	Focus education on skills for work force	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
21	Diversify and offer more jobs/higher wages	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
22	We have the opportunity to develop our vast land mass into a productive environment.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
23	Hiring new people who actually have experience running the city	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
24	More broadly promoting Washington as a destination for history, entertainment, dining, and culture.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
25	Keep the county residents safe from being impacted by these huge industrial uses that pay almost no taxes on the land!	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
26	None	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
27	Great built environmental and beautiful countryside	1/19/2024 8:13 PM

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28	Land development	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
29	High school could add more classes like building, electrical, plumbing	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
30	Available land/spaces for the opportunity of growth	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
31	the people	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
32	Another grocery store to compete with ingles	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
33	employment opportunities	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
34	Promotion of all businesses	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
35	Biogas	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
36	potential for cooperation between citizens of various backgrounds	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
37	Potential new growth	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
38	Continued revitalization of our city. Our downtown has so much potential.	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
39	Lots of "space"	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
40	To build up our city through patronizing local businesses.	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
41	Events that draw people downtown to shop local	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
42	Tourism	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
43	it allows alternative voices to be heard	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
44	People willing to make changes	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
45	School system	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
46	Senior citizen opportunities	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
47	Many resources outside of the county that could be effective at building the community	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
48	Fix the parks	11/9/2023 3:35 PM
49	Civic awareness	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
50	Attractive cost of living to facilitate local investment	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
51	Encouraging local development and providing local options to people for careers.	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
52	K-12 education	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
53	Build on our assets	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
54	Downtown events	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
55	N/a	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
56	Businesses can open here and get a reduced start up rate	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
57	Quality of life	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
58	proximity to several colleges and universities, but still too far to travel and expensive;	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
59	Build up square and parks	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
60	Education/healthcare	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
61	Develop Callaway Plantation into a "Historic Williamsburg" living history destination	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
62	Community support for our small businesses but needs to improve!	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
63	We can grow our population and attract more business/jobs AFTER we have developed workforce housing.	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
64	None	11/7/2023 12:06 PM

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65	None	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
66	Mentoring for future entrepreneurs	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
67	retail	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
68	Repurposing historical assets for actual use and growth	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
69	Visions of new residents coming into the community	10/30/2023 11:37 AM

DRAFT

Q8 What are the greatest external threats affecting our community?

Answered: 114 Skipped: 126

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	100.00% 114
2	65.79% 75

#	1	DATE
1	Not allowing anything to come in for growth	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	Peope not working together	1/23/2024 7:33 PM
3	Other surrounding counties expanding more	1/22/2024 10:21 PM
4	Non local residents moving and able to change speed limits, community guidelines	1/22/2024 10:19 PM
5	Sludge dumping	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
6	State government not looking out for the best interest of local communities. If money is involved our state officials will give in to the financial incentives and allow local communities to be harmed.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
7	Lack of subsidies for small business owners works against ability to compete with other businesses in neighboring areas (e.g. - Athens, etc.)	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
8	All threats are internal, so none	1/22/2024 10:47 AM
9	Poor water quality	1/21/2024 10:07 PM
10	Chicken houses in area	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
11	Dumping	1/21/2024 4:57 PM
12	Waste "management" from urban areas	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
13	Newcomers over take	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
14	None	1/20/2024 8:04 PM
15	gangs setting up in Wilkes County	1/20/2024 8:01 PM
16	Decline in morality	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
17	No access to Banking	1/20/2024 7:16 PM
18	No community togetherness and Districts against Districts	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
19	Outside corporate interests	1/20/2024 5:05 PM
20	I don't know...the racial divide?	1/20/2024 4:59 PM
21	Pollution and land abuse	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
22	racial division	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
23	Lack of resources	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
24	That people think that certain groups should pay for all of their stuff.	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
25	Greedy politicians	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
26	Corporations taking advantage of land owners	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
27	racism and instigators	1/20/2024 1:14 PM

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28	People create fake social media accounts to stir trouble and divisiveness	1/20/2024 1:01 PM
29	More opportunities outside of county drawing people away	1/20/2024 12:14 PM
30	Better grocery stores, restaurants	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
31	outside business that do not really contribute to our community	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
32	Corporate pollution	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
33	Safety	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
34	surrounding communities are more appealing	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
35	More stores (grocery) to shop at	1/20/2024 10:56 AM
36	Big box stores	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
37	Not getting state or federal money	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
38	Agricultural waste	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
39	People moving away because of no opportunities	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
40	Agribusiness reducing quality of life	1/20/2024 10:38 AM
41	Gangs	1/20/2024 10:19 AM
42	The greatest external threats affecting our community is people functioning in and out of politics/government who do not really care about our community.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
43	Natural disasters and lack of preparation/communication	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
44	Corporate interests pushing dumping for quick profits	1/20/2024 9:56 AM
45	Ground, air, and water pollution through sludge dumping	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
46	Allowing industrial uses to proliferate in the county without any meaningful zoning forcing people who want to live in the country to look somewhere else	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
47	Big agriculture .industrial children houses.	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
48	Waste from other counties being dumped in Wilkes	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
49	Other surrounding counties that are far more appealing and have more to offer	1/19/2024 2:08 PM
50	Gangs	1/19/2024 6:45 AM
51	Gangs	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
52	Jobs that pay more	1/18/2024 7:31 PM
53	Out of town waste	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
54	Cheaper everything just 20-40 minutes away	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
55	Crime moving in	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
56	Gangs	1/18/2024 5:03 PM
57	I haven't lived here long enough to answer this question	1/16/2024 10:01 AM
58	As a majority of the population gets government assistance if that goes down there is gaps in meeting their day to day need	1/15/2024 8:13 AM
59	population growth	1/13/2024 3:24 PM
60	greed disguised as progress	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
61	MEAG	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
62	investors that believe Washington properties can be marketed as suburbs of larger cities	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
63	Interference from those who have not lived here long	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
64	outside companies, businesses using Wilkes County as dumping ground	1/12/2024 3:10 PM

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65	Towns like Elberton with more food options, work opportunities, stores like Walmart	1/12/2024 10:29 AM
66	All the opportunities and jobs are elsewhere. In that sense, everywhere outside of Wilkes county is a threat economically.	1/12/2024 9:48 AM
67	Drugs/gang violence	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
68	No real law enforcement	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
69	No growth	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
70	Big businesses/outside moving in	1/11/2024 9:44 PM
71	People can save money by shopping out of town.	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
72	Grocery stores! We need something else for ingles to have competition!	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
73	Laws that aren't beneficial to rural areas	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
74	Gangs	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
75	young people leaving for perceived a "better life"	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
76	Divisiveness	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
77	Currently economy and cost of living/gas/rent	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
78	state government dictates and mandates	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
79	Waste dumping	1/11/2024 12:03 PM
80	Wilkes County seems to view an evolving world as a threat. County still pays by paper check even though direct deposit has been around for more than 20 years	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
81	Developers	11/17/2023 12:12 PM
82	Not valuing the concerned citizens	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
83	jobs	11/8/2023 8:59 PM
84	Lack of employment	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
85	gangs	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
86	The rising crime and infiltration of violence into our community	11/8/2023 1:24 PM
87	Jobs	11/8/2023 11:36 AM
88	National influencers creating division	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
89	Waste dumping from sludge trucks	11/8/2023 11:00 AM
90	Growth	11/8/2023 5:34 AM
91	Gang activity	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
92	Corporatization of health and other services	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
93	Drugs	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
94	Gangs	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
95	Gun violence	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
96	Drugs	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
97	People moving in with the intention to divide	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
98	Truck traffic through town	11/7/2023 5:32 PM
99	selfish business practices and contracts which benefit a small circle of people	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
100	Crime	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
101	Inflation	11/7/2023 4:32 PM

Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

102	Gun violence	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
103	Washington Wilkes Informer	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
104	City Historic Codes are NOT being enforced	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
105	Washington's perception from surrounding cities is very negative image, thanks to some in our community.	11/7/2023 12:37 PM
106	Progressive woke agenda is a major threat!	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
107	Outsiders not wanting to come in because of how city officials act	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
108	I'm not sure what this means.	11/7/2023 12:10 PM
109	People not coming together	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
110	Crime	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
111	Gang infiltration into the community	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
112	political input from outside groups/organizations	10/30/2023 4:04 PM
113	No viable long term strategy to retain young people	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
114	Homelessness	10/30/2023 11:37 AM
#	2	DATE
1	Allowing outsiders to come in and run our town instead of selecting natives that have been here know the community and have the skills	1/24/2024 10:26 PM
2	No housing	1/22/2024 10:21 PM
3	Other waste disposal issues	1/22/2024 4:11 PM
4	Being rural and small makes Wilkes vulnerable to exploitation things such as bio-sludge, co-digesters, and waste processing. We need a plan that will allow us to move forward without destroying what we have. WW does not need to become the next Evans or Thomson with massive development and all of the problems brought with it.	1/22/2024 11:47 AM
5	Lack of consumer / visitor awareness of community	1/22/2024 10:58 AM
6	Lack of good food/groceries/ no shopping	1/21/2024 10:07 PM
7	Slug problem	1/21/2024 7:39 PM
8	unchecked energy expansion	1/21/2024 11:44 AM
9	Not willing to expand	1/21/2024 12:52 AM
10	Gang activity	1/20/2024 7:58 PM
11	No Police force	1/20/2024 6:10 PM
12	Industrial uses not permitted in agricultural communities	1/20/2024 4:38 PM
13	lack of economic opportunities	1/20/2024 3:09 PM
14	N/A	1/20/2024 2:54 PM
15	Trying to hold on to the mindset of "we've always done it that way."	1/20/2024 2:25 PM
16	City manager	1/20/2024 1:33 PM
17	Corporate take over of local government	1/20/2024 1:19 PM
18	Better internet carriers/plans, community events, extracurricular activities/events	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
19	Economic development	1/20/2024 11:46 AM
20	drugs	1/20/2024 11:13 AM
21	Big box stores	1/20/2024 10:50 AM

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22	Failing infrastructure	1/20/2024 10:49 AM
23	Sludge dumping	1/20/2024 10:46 AM
24	Too much division and exclusion	1/20/2024 10:41 AM
25	Drugs	1/20/2024 10:19 AM
26	We need to address DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) positively to help raise the standard of living for ALL people.	1/20/2024 10:13 AM
27	Other nearby communities growing, offering more jobs, stores, better schools and pulling more people away	1/20/2024 10:12 AM
28	Eliminating cultural and historic sites and buildings in favor of short term financial gains.	1/20/2024 9:54 AM
29	Not enough zoning in the county to keep residents safe. The zoning review board has members who don't know how to protect the county	1/20/2024 8:48 AM
30	Liquid and solid waste dumping on land.	1/20/2024 7:19 AM
31	Businesses that would compromise agriculture, forestry, and the natural environment businesses	1/19/2024 8:13 PM
32	Drugs	1/19/2024 6:06 AM
33	Absentee landlords	1/18/2024 6:50 PM
34	Drugs/Gangs	1/18/2024 6:11 PM
35	Lack of needed health care. No specialist come here.	1/18/2024 5:25 PM
36	politics at every level	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
37	Chain stores/big box stores	1/13/2024 11:38 AM
38	potential for any of the massive chain stores locating close to Washington	1/13/2024 10:25 AM
39	Disinformation from other towns	1/12/2024 6:30 PM
40	Division	1/12/2024 5:25 AM
41	No activities or attractions (at least nothing from past few decades)	1/12/2024 12:39 AM
42	Lack of business competitors for customer option	1/11/2024 11:01 PM
43	Some young people are not prone to want to stay & live in Washington.	1/11/2024 9:43 PM
44	Different fast food restaurants	1/11/2024 8:48 PM
45	People that want to make Wilkes exactly like the area they fled	1/11/2024 8:32 PM
46	Crime	1/11/2024 7:11 PM
47	the tendency of recent times to reject what is good about the past	1/11/2024 6:10 PM
48	Gangs, crime	1/11/2024 3:30 PM
49	Poor leadership or disruptive behavior in meetings and by officials on social media	1/11/2024 2:59 PM
50	lack of stronger zoning	1/11/2024 1:55 PM
51	Wilkes County is a threat to itself, it is dying, and has nothing to drawn in people.	11/17/2023 7:52 PM
52	Lack of businesses	11/17/2023 12:12 PM
53	Lack of companies not wishing to do business their	11/10/2023 1:04 PM
54	Lack of empathy	11/8/2023 5:46 PM
55	violence	11/8/2023 4:32 PM
56	Lack of holding building owners accountable for infrastructure investment to ensure downtown preservation and afford a platform for future / sustained growth	11/8/2023 1:24 PM

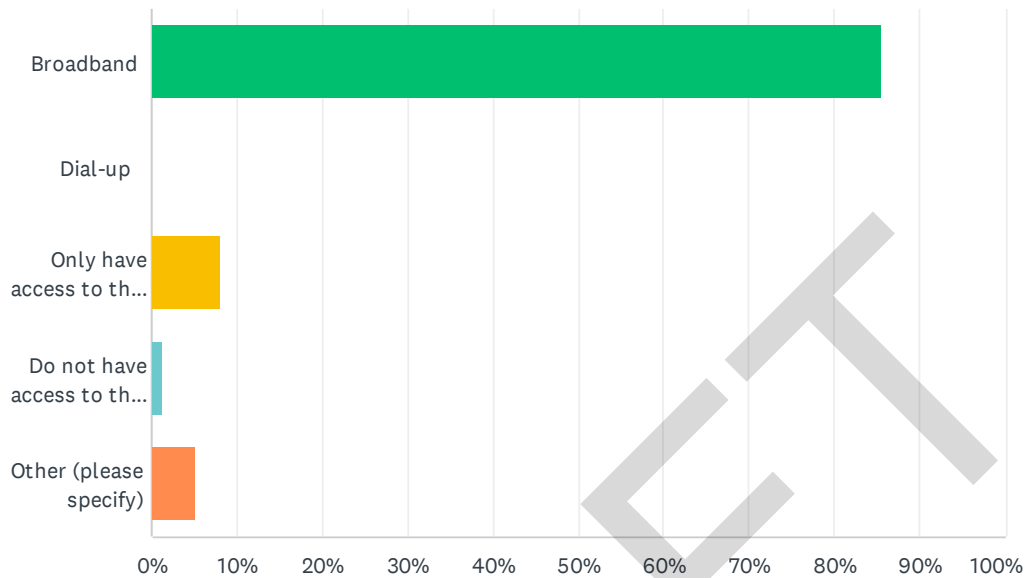
Wilkes County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2024-2029 Community Survey

57	Allowing large investors who don't care about our community to come in (such as the bio waste incident)	11/8/2023 11:07 AM
58	Liberal & marxist idealology infiltrating education/business/government	11/7/2023 10:09 PM
59	Population decline	11/7/2023 9:58 PM
60	Gangs	11/7/2023 9:44 PM
61	Drugs	11/7/2023 9:00 PM
62	Racism	11/7/2023 7:17 PM
63	Gangs	11/7/2023 7:14 PM
64	Relyant Communications has a hold on progress!	11/7/2023 6:39 PM
65	lack of investment to keep young people here and owning property	11/7/2023 5:20 PM
66	Lots of poor communities	11/7/2023 5:03 PM
67	Drugs	11/7/2023 2:41 PM
68	City council	11/7/2023 2:20 PM
69	Washington's Historic District has not been expanded to include the ENTIRE city	11/7/2023 1:50 PM
70	Government entitlements are a major threat because taxpayers are being overburdened. We have to stop paying people to NOT work.	11/7/2023 12:17 PM
71	Everyone not having a voice	11/7/2023 12:06 PM
72	More crime	10/31/2023 9:56 PM
73	Persistent poverty	10/30/2023 4:52 PM
74	Corporate greed and short sighted policy created by state politicians	10/30/2023 1:29 PM
75	Mental Health	10/30/2023 11:37 AM

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Q9 What type of internet access do you have at home?

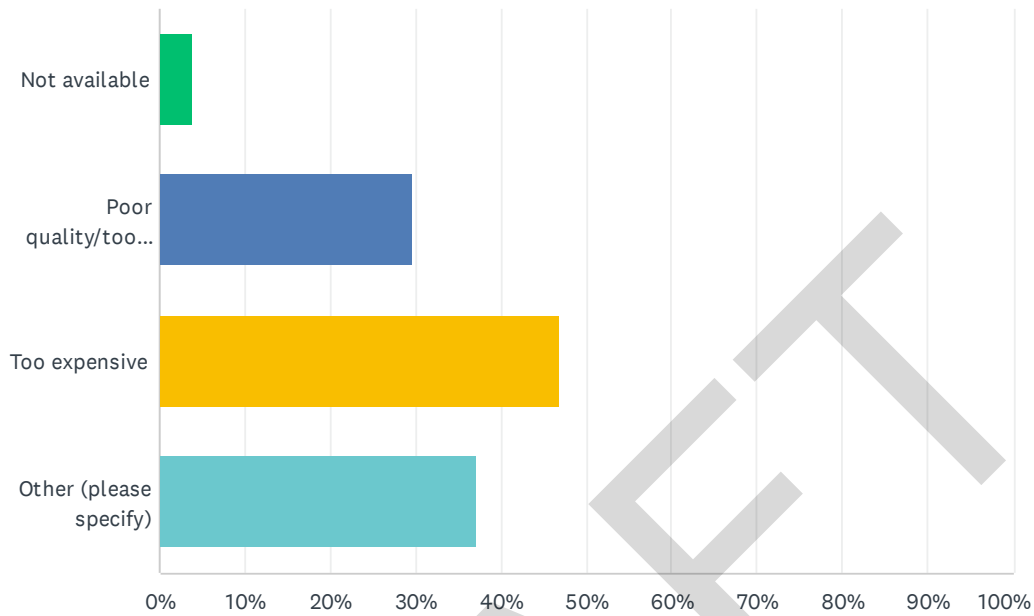
Answered: 159 Skipped: 81



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Broadband	85.53%	136
Dial-up	0.00%	0
Only have access to the internet on my cell phone	8.18%	13
Do not have access to the internet	1.26%	2
Other (please specify)	5.03%	8
TOTAL		159

Q10 What issues do you have with internet at home? Check all that apply.

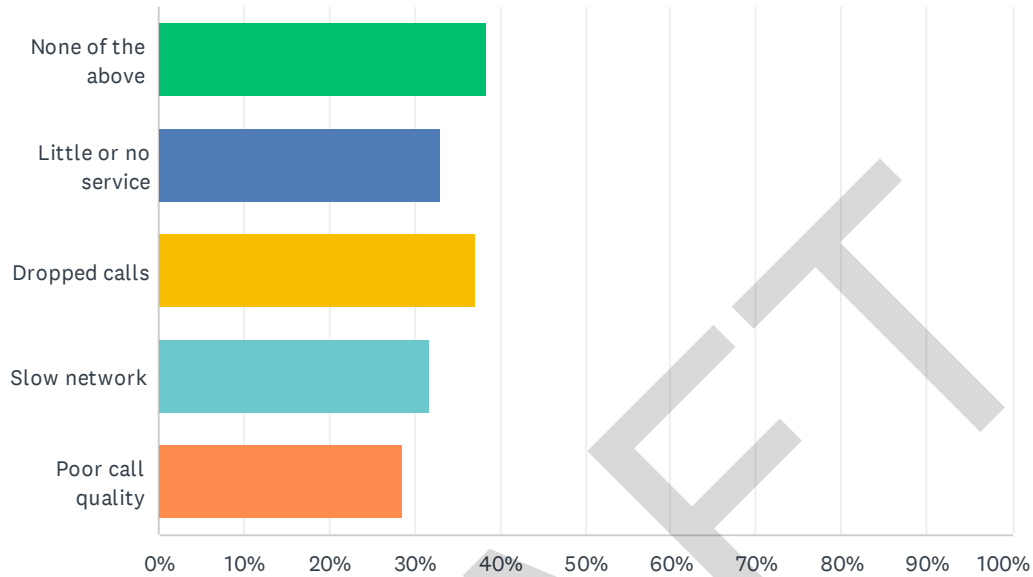
Answered: 132 Skipped: 108



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not available	3.79% 5
Poor quality/too slow	29.55% 39
Too expensive	46.97% 62
Other (please specify)	37.12% 49
Total Respondents: 132	

Q11 What issues do you have with cell phone service at home? Check all that apply.

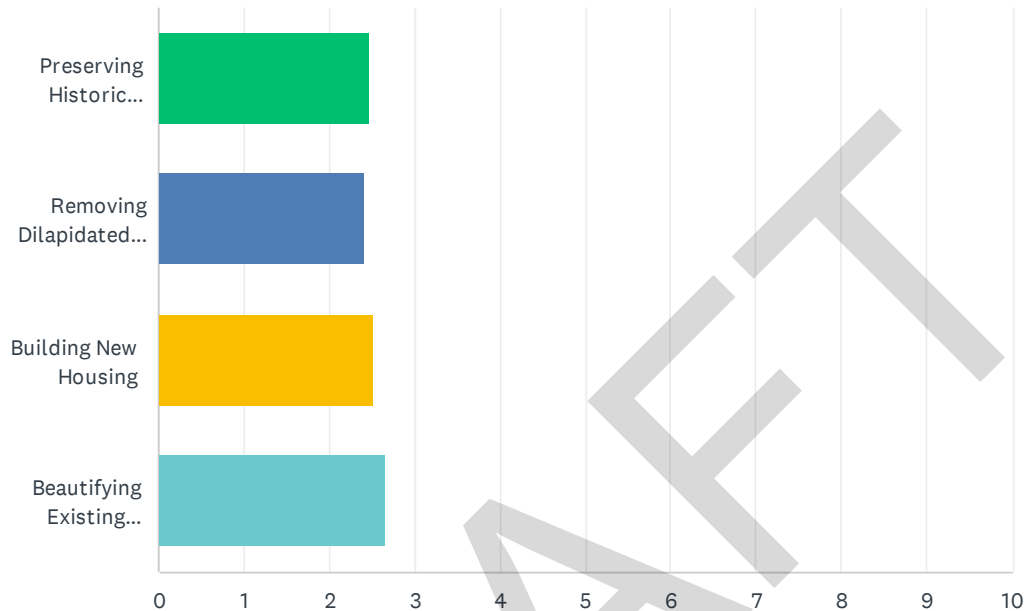
Answered: 154 Skipped: 86



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	38.31%	59
Little or no service	33.12%	51
Dropped calls	37.01%	57
Slow network	31.82%	49
Poor call quality	28.57%	44
Total Respondents: 154		

Q12 Please rank the following housing topics based on their importance to you from 1 to 4 (with 1 being most important). Each answer option does require a number rank, and each number can only be used once.

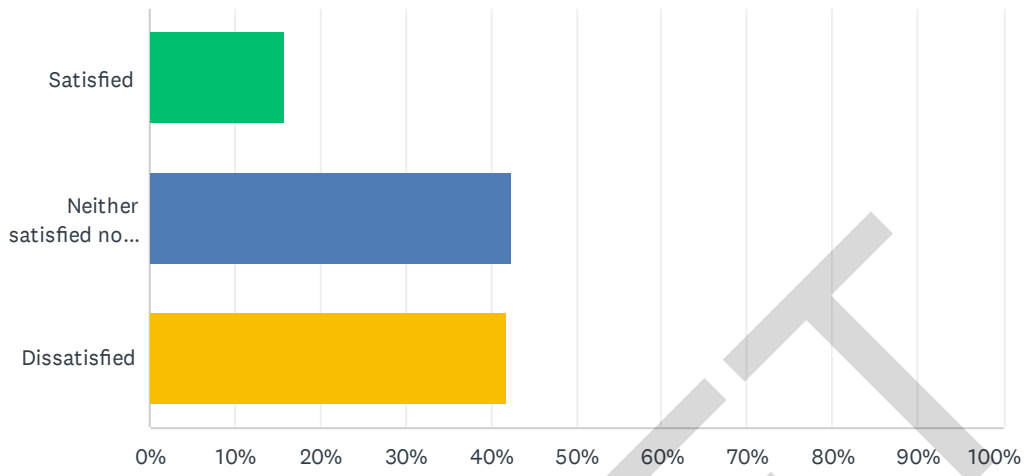
Answered: 156 Skipped: 84



	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
Preserving Historic Character	32.89% 49	16.78% 25	16.11% 24	34.23% 51	149	2.48
Removing Dilapidated Buildings	19.46% 29	21.48% 32	38.26% 57	20.81% 31	149	2.40
Building New Housing	30.00% 45	24.67% 37	12.00% 18	33.33% 50	150	2.51
Beautifying Existing Neighborhoods	20.65% 32	36.77% 57	31.61% 49	10.97% 17	155	2.67

Q13 How satisfied are you with the variety of housing in our community?

Answered: 158 Skipped: 82

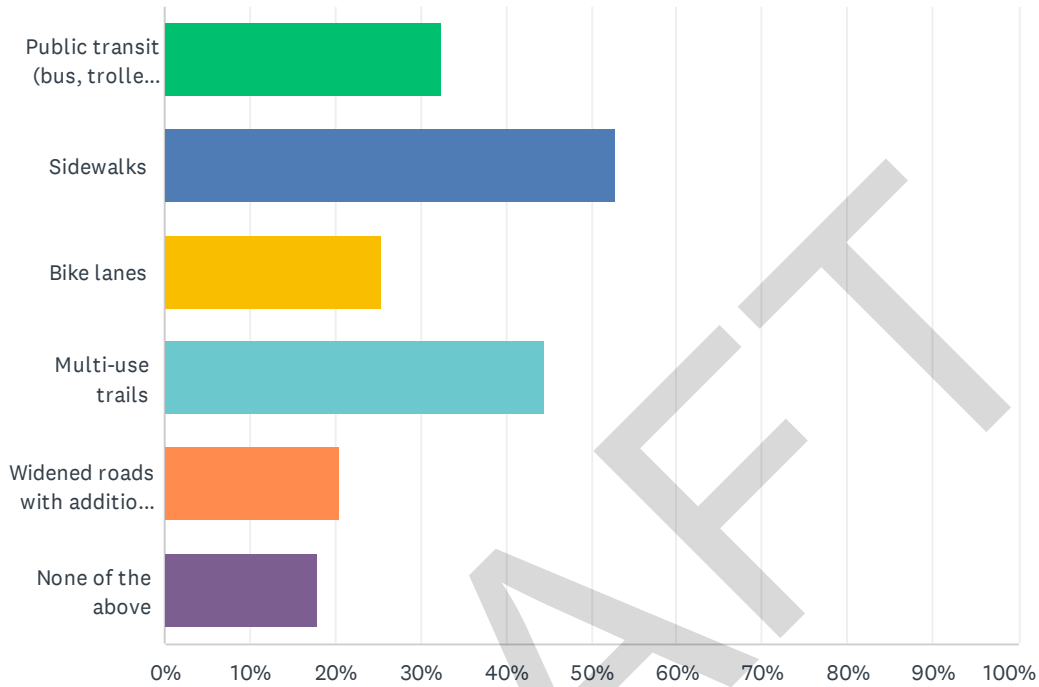


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Satisfied	15.82%	25
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	42.41%	67
Dissatisfied	41.77%	66
TOTAL		158

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Q14 Which transportation improvements would you like to see more of in our community? Check all that apply.

Answered: 157 Skipped: 83



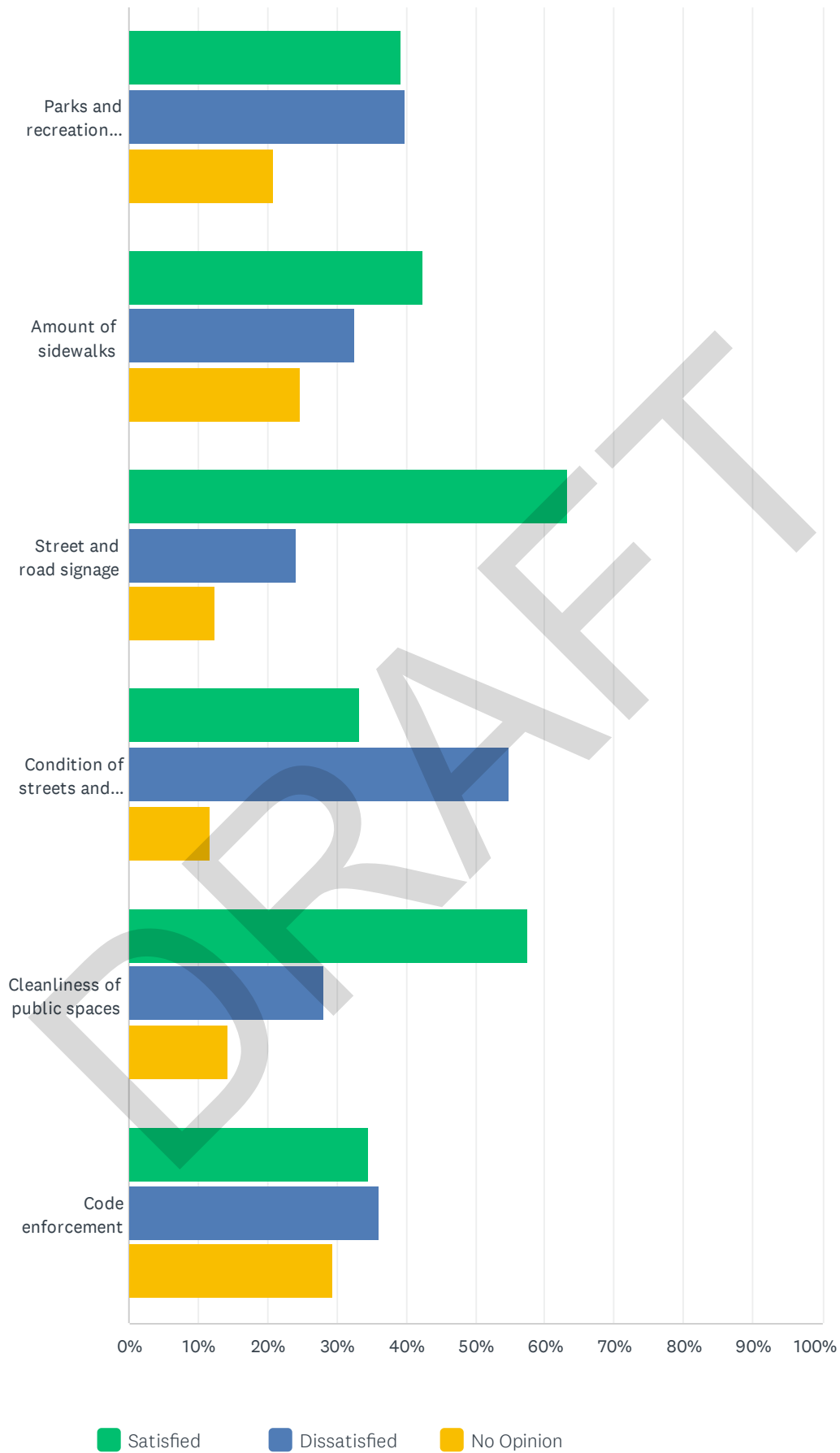
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Public transit (bus, trolley, etc)	32.48%	51
Sidewalks	52.87%	83
Bike lanes	25.48%	40
Multi-use trails	44.59%	70
Widened roads with additional lanes	20.38%	32
None of the above	17.83%	28
Total Respondents: 157		

Q15 Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following public services or facilities.

Answered: 153 Skipped: 87

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	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NO OPINION	TOTAL
Parks and recreation facilities	39.22% 60	39.87% 61	20.92% 32	153
Amount of sidewalks	42.48% 65	32.68% 50	24.84% 38	153
Street and road signage	63.40% 97	24.18% 37	12.42% 19	153
Condition of streets and sidewalks	33.33% 51	54.90% 84	11.76% 18	153
Cleanliness of public spaces	57.52% 88	28.10% 43	14.38% 22	153
Code enforcement	34.64% 53	35.95% 55	29.41% 45	153

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Q16 If you answered "dissatisfied" to any of the items above, please list the item and let us know why.

Answered: 96 Skipped: 144

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Sidewalks are in very bad condition, they are cracked and trip hazard. Check out Water street just for example. Also no parking sign posted at Ingles are never enforced by Sheriff's office	1/30/2024 10:28 PM
2	Seems sidewalks are only available in certain neighborhoods.	1/29/2024 10:17 AM
3	It can be done better needs improvement	1/24/2024 10:33 PM
4	Park with swimming pool is always pushed to the back burner. Need to open the park and pool during summers.	1/22/2024 10:23 PM
5	Some streets are more kept than others.	1/22/2024 10:22 PM
6	We need some sort of public education regarding litter. We need recycling options. We desperately need public restrooms in downtown area.	1/22/2024 4:16 PM
7	Many areas just look run down or aren't reflective of true character of the area.	1/22/2024 11:01 AM
8	Missing street signs all over the town	1/21/2024 10:09 PM
9	Parks upkeep. All road should have signage	1/21/2024 7:46 PM
10	Signs are not placed in appropriate places, particularly those meant for commercial trucking	1/21/2024 11:48 AM
11	The code enforcement is not force to all people it enforce to certain people. The roads and signs are aged and need to be updated. There isn't enough things to do at the parks and recreation.	1/21/2024 12:57 AM
12	Parks and recreation - public playground needs a lot of attention including another foot of mulch to reach the bottom of the playground set. Many pieces broken on the playground equipment also. Condition of streets and sidewalks - sidewalks on some streets are not easy to walk on. I've even seen people walking in the road to avoid bad spots in the sidewalk. Roads themselves are also poorly taken care of as far as potholes forming or poor repair jobs.	1/20/2024 9:55 PM
13	Everything needs to be updated.	1/20/2024 8:11 PM
14	No Recreation services	1/20/2024 7:19 PM
15	Many sidewalks are broken and uneven; there are potholes on many of the roads; codes are not fully enforced, parking on yards and sidewalks	1/20/2024 5:08 PM
16	Bigger signs. Road signs not covered by trees and bushes. Road signs that are readable. Some road signs so old you cant read them at night. Fix condition of side walks around downtown. Side walks uneven, bricks sticking up and more lights on side walks in downtown. Mark steps in bright colors so they can be seen better. Write tickets for cars speeding downtown and running red lights , stop signs and not stopping for people in crosswalk.	1/20/2024 4:22 PM
17	Sidewalks, especially, need repairs, expansion and maintenance. Need more parkland, walking trails, renovated tennis courts, better public recreation.	1/20/2024 3:21 PM
18	Roads and sidewalks are in need of repair.	1/20/2024 1:38 PM
19	A lot of roads need work	1/20/2024 1:31 PM
20	Judges need to support code violators	1/20/2024 1:22 PM
21	Too many county roads and streets in disrepair	1/20/2024 1:05 PM
22	Lots of roads in the county need to be replaced instead of patched	1/20/2024 12:17 PM
23	There are only certain neighborhoods and streets that are properly cared for. There are double	1/20/2024 12:10 PM

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standards with code enforcement. The entire city should be taken care of equally.

24	Some areas in our town need to be cleaned up or rules enforced.	1/20/2024 12:00 PM
25	Tennis courts lacking No real monies put into rec Could be game changer for some kids	1/20/2024 11:49 AM
26	I have only seen improvement on one side of the community.	1/20/2024 11:49 AM
27	Street signs falling and road conditions(pot holes), sidewalks need better upkeep, need more street sweepers.	1/20/2024 11:05 AM
28	Seems some yards must be kept cut but others are not enforced.	1/20/2024 10:55 AM
29	City parks, nothing in the county. Get killed trying to walk in county between roads and yards	1/20/2024 10:53 AM
30	Poor shape	1/20/2024 10:44 AM
31	Subdivision roads are to narrow. These roads are all patched or in terrible shape. No park with grass, trees, benches, trails to walk on. No good park for kids to play on.	1/20/2024 10:30 AM
32	There is too much dilapidation in several neighborhoods. * We need sidewalks and street repairs in many neighborhoods.	1/20/2024 10:21 AM
33	There is a stark difference between the upkeep of district 1 vs. district 2	1/20/2024 10:14 AM
34	Parks...existing tennis courts are in terrible condition and we need at least 6 more, to include pickleball, basketball, skateboard areas, large Olympic size swimming pool, water splash park area, volleyball sand court, and more benches and picnic areas.	1/20/2024 10:03 AM
35	Properties are allowed to be over grown in brush, falling apart.	1/20/2024 9:59 AM
36	County governments priorities are with the large land owning farmers.	1/20/2024 7:27 AM
37	Too many outdated and confusing signs. Too few helpful signs. Not enough focus on pedestrians/bicyclists.	1/19/2024 8:16 PM
38	parks and rec - the facilities are in desperate need of updating. the only real facility is the basketball courts but would question if it is just a cover for illegal activity. Code enforcement only matters when you are not on right terms with the officials... several business along W and E Robert Toombs should be addressed and mandated to clean up their appearances. The motel by McDondals is just a disgrace.	1/19/2024 2:16 PM
39	Fix the block and broken culverts.	1/19/2024 1:34 PM
40	Parks and rec department need to redo the baseball fields or either move them to a centralized location. Possibly off of 78 highway. Sidewalks are in disrepair all throughout the city.	1/19/2024 6:48 AM
41	Needs repaving roads secondary to all the poy holes from fixing water pipes. Also sidewalks need repairing. I twisted my ankle while walking on unlevel sidewalks.	1/18/2024 7:38 PM
42	The "slow down" flashing lights are so ugly	1/18/2024 6:54 PM
43	There are several potholes on my road.	1/18/2024 6:40 PM
44	Lacking sidewalks to places in town with foot traffic, like schools and stores. The existing sidewalks will give your infants/toddlers trauma if you try to use a stroller on it because of it being uneven. Codes are not enforced at curbing or public parks.	1/18/2024 6:16 PM
45	It seems if you have a problem and call the city to complain about something the next week you get a threatening letter from code enforcement the next week. Some people never cut their grass in the summer and there yard is full of disabled cars and they never get anything from code enforcement but others who have a few spring flowers that pop up and are over 12 inches tall get a threat of a huge fine. It's taught me not to call the city.	1/18/2024 5:35 PM
46	the parks especially behind the courthouse is terrible and we do the farmers market there	1/16/2024 10:04 AM
47	Side walks are always cluttered with debris. Not enough side walks around, having to walk on the roads until you get to the mail street. Side walks are uneven and cracked on the main street	1/15/2024 9:37 AM
48	Uneven sidewalks	1/15/2024 5:53 AM

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49	Maintenance of parks Pool?	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
50	Investors owning mulitple properties not taking care of properties	1/13/2024 11:43 AM
51	local public playgrounds and especially tennis courts have been allowed to deteriorate	1/13/2024 10:32 AM
52	We need to revamp a lot of these services and improve and add some as well.	1/12/2024 6:35 PM
53	Parks not kept clean, need more sidewalks, sidewalks not smooth, need fines for people leaving/throwing trash, laws/codes not strictly enforced.	1/12/2024 3:15 PM
54	Kids playgrounds are in rough shape. Would like to expand sidewalks.	1/12/2024 9:52 AM
55	Our streets and sidewalks need attention. Matt buildings and businesses are eye sores.	1/12/2024 5:29 AM
56	Money is spent on "preserving" when we should be updating and repairing	1/12/2024 12:42 AM
57	Pot holes and properly preparing the pot holes	1/11/2024 11:05 PM
58	Some sidewalks need to be repaired.	1/11/2024 9:50 PM
59	Often I've seen trash in city square sidewalks. Never used to see that.	1/11/2024 8:36 PM
60	Parks and Recreation. No tennis courts , no maintenance on ball fields, no adult recreation activities	1/11/2024 7:16 PM
61	Rules, codes nor laws are enforced currently	1/11/2024 6:59 PM
62	There are way too many signs stuck in the ground everywhere. Where we live, there is a sign that warns you that another sign is upcoming, and we live on a dead end road!	1/11/2024 6:16 PM
63	Streets need work, as well as, sidewalks	1/11/2024 3:33 PM
64	Sidewalks and some roads are in disarray. Especially sidewalks that can be dangerous in some locations.	1/11/2024 3:00 PM
65	Cleanliness is a matter of educating residence how to properly handled their litter and discarded household items. Next step would be to enforce fines for this problem. For code enforcement, I see homes/buildings definitely out of code that linger on for many years before any improvement/action is taken.	1/11/2024 2:38 PM
66	Street and road signage - signs falling down, not maintaining sigs or roads. Striping on some roads not existing. Road banks not properly maintained and are hazardous. Engineering of some intersections is hazardous.	1/11/2024 2:01 PM
67	Parks are dangerous, falling apart, and can hardly even be called a park. Sidewalks are limited and not well taken care of. Road signs need to be updated. Trash is limited but things are old and falling apart, looks trashy. I don't use public facilities and drive to Athens to enjoy trails, parks, and other amenities. The poor condition and standards keep me from spending any money here including the VERY poorly and OVERLY priced "grocery" store. MANY expired items.	11/17/2023 7:59 PM
68	Park on E. Liberty street is falling apart and their answer was to piece together broken pieces and label it fixed. This park needs new, up to date equipment. When people's children are in question, bandaid solutions are not going to be met with satisfaction and complacency.	11/9/2023 3:41 PM
69	Some roads are old and narrow and need repairs.	11/9/2023 7:38 AM
70	The dilapidated properties are a serious problem. The drive into town is not inviting.	11/8/2023 11:11 PM
71	The dumpsters are disasters. Unfortunately, people do not follow the rules and they are always a mess. Courtesy center drop offs would be a viable alternative.	11/8/2023 5:50 PM
72	parks and Recs need to be updated	11/8/2023 4:37 PM
73	There needs to be more standards placed against the integrity of the downtown area, specifically. As an "oasis" in Wilkes County, this needs to be a beacon of development and growth to attract local economic development. Take a cue from Madison: a focus here can create a thriving environment to develop the community and enhance the tax base.	11/8/2023 1:27 PM
74	Our roads needs alot of work, versus just patching them.	11/8/2023 11:39 AM

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75	Codes should be enforced after sufficient warnings, time, and appropriate aid to get things fixed.	11/8/2023 11:09 AM
76	Sidewalks are in disrepair. Haven't really been worked on since the 60s and 70s. Streets are going down in maintenance over time.	11/8/2023 11:05 AM
77	Parks and rec - not much variety in options to do there Sidewalks are narrow Road signage - seems we are paying for a ton of road signs to be put up all over the place. They haven't been there for years and everyone was driving just fine. Public spaces are limited or old and need upgrades	11/8/2023 5:38 AM
78	With the tax money we pay, our parks and rec facilities should be state of the art. When families look to move to a new town they look at school systems and parks & rec facilities for their children. Ashley Park looks horrible and the play park beside it looks horrible. The pavement at the track needs to be resurfaced as well. Counties around us have absolutely beautiful parks and rec facilities. Why can't we? The streets need sweepers and pot holes need to be fixed. The sidewalks need replacement or repair and the sidewalks around the square need to be pressure washed at least once a year before Spring Tour.	11/7/2023 10:18 PM
79	Lady had items stored on her front porch for over a year. (Fridge, bins, trash bags, etc.) nothing was done	11/7/2023 9:48 PM
80	-A lot of sidewalks are dangerous with multiple cracks and holes -Additional sidewalk added to Poplar Drive due to emergency vehicles usage -A light is needed at Tignall Rd and the bypass at the middle/high school -replacing traffic light at spring st and Robert toombs -old Essex building, pet milk building, vacancy in former BiLo shopping center needs to be addressed with owners	11/7/2023 9:09 PM
81	The condition of the inside of some of these houses floors have rotted out on the inside	11/7/2023 9:01 PM
82	Uneven roads and side walks uneven and over grown.	11/7/2023 7:20 PM
83	trash along highways, beer cans and fast food wrappers. speeding	11/7/2023 5:24 PM
84	Need to enforce no littering and give heavy fines. I hate seeing the massive amounts of litter in our beautiful town	11/7/2023 5:08 PM
85	Parks are run down	11/7/2023 4:34 PM
86	Sidewalks - small and difficult to walk on unless solo Cleanliness - the responsibility (in my opinion) falls on citizens to respect public spaces and ensure cleanliness after use	11/7/2023 2:44 PM
87	Working on sidewalks, streets, and housing	11/7/2023 2:25 PM
88	Subdivisions roads are really bad.	11/7/2023 2:04 PM
89	Sidewalks are two neglected and hazardous. Certain areas take no pride in their public spaces and constantly litter. Codes: Our architectural assets are being allowed to go neglected and risk demolition.	11/7/2023 2:03 PM
90	Sidewalks are busted in many places. Most are not handicap accessible. Ask my friend who is in his wheelchair on the side of the road!! At night, I think I counted before. There is only a street lamp every 3-4 phone poles. That is unacceptable considering the busted sidewalks. Nothing but a trip hazard! Oh and the awful people who puts their garbage cans and leaves/limbs directly on the sidewalk until pick up comes. I assume code enforcement is the sheriffs dept? The amount of people I see flying around the square and running that new temporary 4-way stop is outrageous. Also that was poor planning by the way. I don't know how the decision was made to remove the lights for many months was smart for a little dent in it. You know another truck is going to hit it again. At least thanks for place the stop signs a bit more appropriately. They were all over the sidewalks before.	11/7/2023 12:22 PM
91	Our aging infrastructure needs updating.	11/7/2023 12:20 PM
92	Sidewalks are horrible	11/7/2023 12:12 PM
93	Parks & Recreation - Parks & Recreation should add to their focus. Senior activities need to be done there also. Seniors activities could be in the mornings. Activities for middle-aged individuals would also be nice.	10/30/2023 5:11 PM
94	Streets/sidewalks - several in the city are in disrepair Code enforcement - homes/buildings that	10/30/2023 4:10 PM

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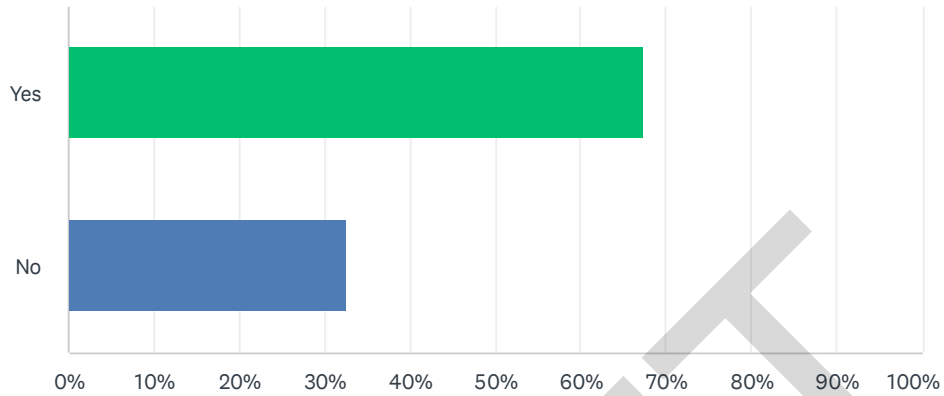
are in poor shape, are owners being held responsible for improvements?

95	Potholes, signage with bullet holes or stolen signs, county roads littered with beer cans and fast-food containers, no safe bike lanes or walking paths, bridge and walking path in fort washington park broken for years, sadness. Once a frequent user of parks but afraid to get injured on cracks and unsafe equipment	10/30/2023 1:36 PM
96	Limited and dilapidated dated equipment. Not lighted trails. A need for an aquatic center, not just a splash pad that has been proposed. The children have been banned from using skateboards or skates. There needs to be a skateboard park. Sidewalks are more an issue in the county and neighborhoods of Color. County street signage needs to be replaced, especially in the Tyrone area. Right of way is only cut once our twice a year. Bridges and roads wash out during storms.	10/30/2023 11:50 AM

DRAFT

Q17 Do you use public facilities such as parks, trails, and ball fields?

Answered: 153 Skipped: 87



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	67.32%	103
No	32.68%	50
TOTAL		153

DRAFT

Q18 Describe any activities you would like to do in our community but cannot.

Answered: 77 Skipped: 163

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Skate shopping jazz nice place to sit eat maybe a vegan food place Community center shopping strips swimming	1/24/2024 10:46 PM
2	See a movie	1/23/2024 7:43 PM
3	would like more cultural events	1/23/2024 6:26 PM
4	Adult sports, Walking trails,	1/22/2024 10:30 PM
5	Long hikes	1/21/2024 11:53 AM
6	Bowling but we don't have means to do it. Go to watch a movie instead of going out of town. Go swimming.	1/21/2024 1:05 AM
7	I would like to feel safe, but with increasing crime and gang activity, I do not feel truly safe. Also, growing vitriol against the white race makes me feel less than safe, even with just going to the grocery store.	1/20/2024 8:12 PM
8	Grocery Shop in Tignall	1/20/2024 7:21 PM
9	An indoor and well-maintained swimming pool for seniors and therapy would be nice. Shopping for sturdy and well-made clothing and shoes would be helpful, as would a bookstore. A full time newspaper would be helpful and a fully staffed car wash.	1/20/2024 5:11 PM
10	Exercise. No gyms or activities or classes	1/20/2024 5:07 PM
11	Go to downtown shopping because it is not well lighted. Walk after dark on sidewalks.	1/20/2024 4:50 PM
12	Pickleball, exercise classes	1/20/2024 4:44 PM
13	We live in the county and receive Wilkes power yet we cannot vote in the city.	1/20/2024 1:44 PM
14	N/a	1/20/2024 1:28 PM
15	Affordable/variety shopping Lack of variety dining options	1/20/2024 12:21 PM
16	Fine dining, wine tasting, go to a local theater, a pickleball court.	1/20/2024 12:20 PM
17	My children would like to play tennis but courts not kept up.	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
18	Comedy shows	1/20/2024 11:52 AM
19	The tennis courts need to be refurbished and we need a walking track or trail outside of the sports field.	1/20/2024 11:19 AM
20	Play tennis, pickleball, and swimming.	1/20/2024 11:10 AM
21	Swimming lessons for seniors, and water aerobics and therapy.	1/20/2024 11:03 AM
22	Coffee Shop More events on Saturdays than on Sundays and weekdays Food truck Fridays	1/20/2024 11:01 AM
23	Hiking, biking trails.	1/20/2024 10:57 AM
24	Better parks and recreation Nicer stores/hotels	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
25	Shop at a grocery store and get what I need like a good variety of fresh produce.	1/20/2024 10:17 AM
26	Riding my bicycle on a bike lane or bike trail. Hiking on a hiking trail. Riding my horse on a horse trail.	1/20/2024 10:11 AM
27	Access to boating on the Broad River	1/20/2024 10:02 AM

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28	Play tennis on a court that is playable	1/20/2024 8:57 AM
29	Better walking and biking paths/trails/routes. Public tennis courts. Enlarge Fort Washington Park (The park behind the Courthouse), and kill/cut the privet and wild growth.	1/19/2024 8:20 PM
30	Basic grocery shopping would be a nice start. IGA is disgusting and the quality is questionable and Ingles is also just as bad with their price gouging and lack of variety.	1/19/2024 2:27 PM
31	Have more amenities or things to do for the youth.	1/19/2024 6:49 AM
32	I would love to try pickleball.	1/18/2024 7:04 PM
33	Have a safe place to walk at and/or have children play at that follows codes and are updated.	1/18/2024 6:21 PM
34	Have an option of cell phone companies. Companies that show 99 percent of the country covered. Most likely Washington isn't covered. I can't go to a decent grocery store or buy shoes or clothing. We shouldn't have to go out of town for most of what we need.	1/18/2024 5:44 PM
35	I just wish there were more festivals and events in the square. it's a beautiful and perfect location for more community events and everyone seems to like them	1/16/2024 10:07 AM
36	Adult basketball league would be nice. Again having to walk or run on the roads instead of a side walk.	1/15/2024 9:42 AM
37	Summer Saturday movie night in square, or live music.. something to just have activity there when weather allows	1/15/2024 8:22 AM
38	perhaps create some trails for small motor scooters and four wheelers.	1/13/2024 3:33 PM
39	Bike riding - the level of commercial traffic through town is prohibitive	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
40	Play tennis on a safe court; grocery shopping with reasonable prices (have to drive out of town to buy groceries); drink water that doesn't taste bad	1/13/2024 11:54 AM
41	To play tennis on public courts that have been resurfaced in this century, have consistently clean, palatable drinking water out of our taps and filtered drinking water dispensing machines nearby so that I don't have to drive to Athens or Grovetown to buy 5 gallons of drinking water.	1/13/2024 10:54 AM
42	Pickle ball Bike safer Walking trails Swimming pool that someone could actually swim laps in	1/12/2024 6:37 PM
43	Anything with children that is not the park. Or a better and bigger playground. Bowling, skating, trampoline park or kids indoor playground, target or walmart shopping, more fast food options	1/12/2024 10:37 AM
44	Spend money, my wife and I work out of county and don't really have any place we want to spend money here. Some of the restaurants are ok when they are open but we buy everything else out of town. We go to Athens with coolers to buy groceries.	1/12/2024 10:02 AM
45	Movies, bowling, grocery shopping.	1/12/2024 5:35 AM
46	Bowling, movies, arcades, go karts, zoo	1/12/2024 12:46 AM
47	More free walking	1/11/2024 9:46 PM
48	Tennis, Pickell ball	1/11/2024 7:18 PM
49	We have a tremendous--no, beyond tremendous facility lying dormant at Holiday Park, at the lake. I would like to participate in letting people everywhere know we have this wonderful opportunity (think glamping) that is not being taken advantage of. At the same time, I would like to keep the whole place to myself.	1/11/2024 6:23 PM
50	Walking trails, more activities for children	1/11/2024 3:35 PM
51	See a movie/drive in Play pickleball Splash pads	1/11/2024 3:01 PM
52	Art for individuals. Musical training, piano, etc..	1/11/2024 2:05 PM
53	Shop in a decent grocery store.	1/11/2024 12:12 PM
54	Walk to and enjoy parks, casual eating, grocery shops, retail shops, and access to recreational activities and sports.	11/17/2023 8:08 PM
55	We can't go to a lot of the paid events because the charge for adults and children are too	11/9/2023 3:47 PM

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expensive. For example; the resthaven cemetery and ghost walk would have been over \$100 for just 2 adults and one child which is a little bonkers considering children are only going because the parents are. Not too mention more popular places for children i.e., zoo, aquarium, etc., charge a cheaper price for children.

56	Sporting leagues for adults. Softball, pickleball, tennis, etc	11/9/2023 7:40 AM
57	Shopping and Dining are quite limited. I often leave town for basic services.	11/8/2023 11:17 PM
58	Public walking trail.	11/8/2023 6:04 PM
59	fitness activities and group classes for adults	11/8/2023 4:42 PM
60	Teach tennis lessons at the public courts Take my daughter to the park and feel safe Splash pad/shaded areas of play for summer	11/8/2023 4:33 PM
61	Swim lessons , gymnastics	11/8/2023 11:41 AM
62	We need YOUTH activities that are local, safe, and fun. Give kids an alternative to being inside/on their phones/joining gangs. Support the 4-E Organization and other organizations that support child and youth development.	11/8/2023 11:13 AM
63	Yoga and other exercise classes; shopping	11/7/2023 10:03 PM
64	-Resurfacing needed on tennis/pickle ball courts; too dangerous to play on -indoor swimming pool for water aerobics year round, swimming lessons for those who can't afford private lessons (like a ymca); possibly add a swim team for our high school	11/7/2023 9:25 PM
65	N/a	11/7/2023 7:22 PM
66	sit in a park on safe equipment with lighting, ride a bicycle not with cars, i don't trust the sidewalks	11/7/2023 5:31 PM
67	Community pool, I'm willing to pay a yearly fee for use but I also want to see that the \$ is being used to upkeep pool.	11/7/2023 5:17 PM
68	Fitness gym	11/7/2023 5:13 PM
69	Movie Theater/Outdoor movies in the park Paved trails for walking	11/7/2023 2:51 PM
70	Play tennis and swim	11/7/2023 2:19 PM
71	Pickaball. Existing courts need updating	11/7/2023 12:45 PM
72	We used to have a couple 5k races. Jason Chapman and the optimist. I miss those. I'd volunteer to help organize them if that's what it takes.	11/7/2023 12:33 PM
73	I would like to see a new sports complex capable of hosting soccer and baseball tournaments.	11/7/2023 12:23 PM
74	nothing comes to mind other than more retail and another grocery store	10/31/2023 8:02 AM
75	It would be nice if we had nice public tennis courts in town. I currently go out of town to play tennis. I travel with my tennis gear in my car so I can play whenever I visit a community if public courts are available. When people come into a community, even when visiting, they often look for free things to do and this could be a health source of entertainment for many individuals.	10/30/2023 5:20 PM
76	Multi use track and park amenities. More recycling programs, maybe more adoption of county roads by civic groups and churches to clean up, invite road races and competitions that encourage exercise and being in fresh air	10/30/2023 1:47 PM
77	Tennis, the courts are deplorable. There needs to be handball court, chess/ checker tables, outdoor gym equipment. Handball courts. Consider looking at parks in other communities that have drawn our citizens out of the area. There needs to be regular outdoor concerts, movies in the parks and at parks and recreation.	10/30/2023 12:01 PM

Q19 Describe areas of our community in need of revitalization/improvement (e.g. a particular street, building, etc.) and what needs improving.

Answered: 90 Skipped: 150

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Sidewalks and red light on the square that has not worked for almost a year!	1/30/2024 10:28 PM
2	BAD PAVED ROADS IN MANY NEIGHBORHOODS AND NO SIDEWALKS.	1/29/2024 10:21 AM
3	The old high school on Gordon Street The elementary School the old huddle house the open space where the home cafe used to sit The open space from across Mcdonalds all the empty space where the high school Lexington road etc	1/24/2024 10:46 PM
4	Old Skull Shoals Road need Sidewalks	1/23/2024 7:43 PM
5	house needs to be repaired/boarded up that burned on Greens Grove Rd	1/23/2024 6:26 PM
6	the roads/area around the football stadium, the Whitehall area main road, The area in front of McDonalds (this is the first thing folks from Thomson see, not sure why nothing has ever been done there. Expand state farm building; where dollar general used to be Put benches with cover for kids waiting on bus, or adults waiting on transportation	1/22/2024 10:30 PM
7	Whitehall and surrounding streets	1/22/2024 10:25 PM
8	Junkyard on Lexington Ave needs screening from roadway. That's an entryway to the city and it's horrible looking. So are most of the buildings in that area. Whitehall needs cleaning up. Get those railcars moved and encourage beautification.	1/22/2024 4:22 PM
9	The downtown business district needs attention and a plan to attract businesses, restaurants, or something to get the vacant buildings occupied with something which will attract customers and make the area a more desirable place to live and visit. It is really time to place on the back burner the notion that visitors are going to come to Wilkes County to relive the antebellum experience. Kettle Creek is a better option for historical visitors,	1/22/2024 11:52 AM
10	Walk the Square and look at the windows and color schemes of the buildings. Buildings along Robert Toombs are abandoned looking, or are updated and NEVER open? Building owners need to be held to a higher standard to reflect the values. Also, that parking lot across from First Baptist needs repaving. It's a blight.	1/22/2024 11:17 AM
11	Pressure put on building and home owners who don't maintain property	1/21/2024 7:58 PM
12	No specifics	1/21/2024 11:53 AM
13	The roads need to be re-pave. Old buildings need to be torn down if it has been sitting empty for 10 years or more. Our city looks like a ghost town at times.	1/21/2024 1:05 AM
14	The playground on Liberty/Simpson Street	1/20/2024 9:56 PM
15	Whitehall needs to modernize the street lights they are still Mercury lights. As a matter of fact All City lights need to be updated. To intersection in 78 and 378 needs lighting black when you enter the city.	1/20/2024 8:18 PM
16	The roads on all areas between Robert Toombs and Gordon Street could stand some attention.	1/20/2024 8:12 PM
17	Public Housing	1/20/2024 7:21 PM
18	School street and the areas around rest haven cemetery could use some improvements.	1/20/2024 5:11 PM
19	East St. Holes and bumps. More benches to sit on around the square. Ask building owners to lower rent on stores so more places can open on square .Lower rent is better than empty buildings.	1/20/2024 4:50 PM

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20	Liberty St. park/tennis Gordon St. property Liberty St. sidewalks, particularly between Allison & Pope Zoning for the county and enforcement policies	1/20/2024 3:22 PM
21	City roads are terrible. Please fund the shelter properly and hire an animal control officer as we have stray dogs/cats in abundance.	1/20/2024 1:44 PM
22	I hate even riding by the Whitehall playground it's so dull for the kids add a bounce pillow or something.	1/20/2024 1:34 PM
23	Businesses along Toombs need cleaning up. Pave parking lots, remove old gas pumps, plant trees in mow strips to screen trucking businesses. Enforce building codes more strictly.	1/20/2024 1:28 PM
24	Please utilize the old high school - the track, gym, school building could be used in so many ways	1/20/2024 12:21 PM
25	Alabama Street. There's a church there and the road directly in front of New Sutton Temple is horrendous. It seems most roads in black neighborhoods are poorly cared for and badly patched when any work is finally done.	1/20/2024 12:20 PM
26	The Washington Tavern outside needs to be updated as well as the back of some of the buildings behind the hotel Fitzpatrick.	1/20/2024 12:03 PM
27	Cedar St houses improved	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
28	Whitehall, synita ct, jackson st	1/20/2024 11:52 AM
29	The main streets are not inviting. Signs are leaning, trash/weeds growing on sidewalks and sides of road. Uneven or broken sidewalks on Robert Toombs, Water St, Spring St.	1/20/2024 11:10 AM
30	Jackson Street and other streets in that area, along with streets off Whitehall, such as Peachtree, Alabama, etc. need immense improvement. There are no sidewalks, obviously underground work to alleviate street flooding is needed. The landscaping is horrible and/or nonexistent.	1/20/2024 11:03 AM
31	Statue of Jesus in cemetery next to admin building.	1/20/2024 11:01 AM
32	Not familiar enough with entire county	1/20/2024 10:50 AM
33	Sheffield Ln. Sheraton Dr East St. (Public school) Replant dogwood trees along main rd- dying out, looked great in the spring. Some kind of pole lighting when you enter city at the red light near package store/Mcdonalds- down to the Quality Inn. Not only pretty but a lot of accidents have happened there.	1/20/2024 10:38 AM
34	All of district 1	1/20/2024 10:17 AM
35	The North Alexander School could be a Fine Arts Community Center...restored and used to attract artists, musicians, craftsmen, to teach and perform.	1/20/2024 10:11 AM
36	Remove the Confederate statue to Resthaven	1/20/2024 10:02 AM
37	Fort Washington park need to be improved	1/20/2024 8:57 AM
38	See #18	1/19/2024 8:20 PM
39	1. The area and neighborhood surrounding Tiger Stadium. WW hosts a variety of schools and our facilities are embarrassing not to mention the the area gives the impression of being in the hood. 2. all businesses along east and west robert toombs especially the areas between the pig and bull going up towards the motel by mcdonalds (that place needs to be shut down). 3. downtown needs more revitalization but that does not mean another antique store or bar... that is all this community resorts to. 4. how do we get tourists to come back? this is a beautiful town but you can literally see everything it has to offer in one day.	1/19/2024 2:27 PM
40	Depot street needs buildings removed and redone along with the PET milk building.	1/19/2024 6:49 AM
41	Parks and recreation	1/18/2024 7:39 PM
42	Get the empty stores eg BiLo, Fred's, old CVS , shopping center behind McDonald's filled with new businesses.	1/18/2024 7:04 PM
43	Bilo plaza center needs a new grocery store. The street by the elementary school needs to be reworked. The traffic and parking lot blends together waiting for an accident to happen.	1/18/2024 6:21 PM

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44	The areas of S.Alexander and S. Jefferson. This area has been overlooked.	1/18/2024 5:44 PM
45	Mercer street area needs improving	1/16/2024 10:07 AM
46	Side walks needs to be fixed on Robert toombs, trees need to be cut back having to duck around them while walking.	1/15/2024 9:42 AM
47	Allot of empty businesses	1/15/2024 8:22 AM
48	n.a.	1/13/2024 3:33 PM
49	Still so many empty storefronts	1/13/2024 1:23 PM
50	Water system	1/13/2024 11:54 AM
51	Depot Street and East Toombs storefronts need rehabilitation or repurposing. Dozens of under-utilized residential and commercial properties (many owned by the same people) need to be maintained or sold to someone who will maintain them.	1/13/2024 10:54 AM
52	Southwest District	1/12/2024 6:37 PM
53	Bilo needs to be turned into a Walmart or target	1/12/2024 10:37 AM
54	Playgrounds at parks. There are companies that specialize in buying and rehabbing old playground equipment for resale. We could get nice stuff for a fraction of the new price.	1/12/2024 10:02 AM
55	Our parks need improving. Many streets and roads are in bad shape.	1/12/2024 5:35 AM
56	Something needs to be done to fill up the old bilo shopping center with shops. Also the old school should be transformed into a hotel or even apartments for people instead of falling apart.	1/12/2024 12:46 AM
57	Most of the town tbh	1/11/2024 9:46 PM
58	We need to take advantage of what is already here in terms of existing buildings (i.e.--the old hotel adjacent to where the railroad terminal used to be). We need to focus on that part of town. By that, I mean the warehouse area. What a fantastic open air "mall" that could be.	1/11/2024 6:23 PM
59	Fort Washington Park needs major attention, awnings at Liberty St Park, splash pad, tennis Courts, paved walking trails	1/11/2024 3:35 PM
60	The abandoned buildings need to be destroyed or refurbished Several sidewalks are broken and have gaps all over we need new ball fields or a new complex	1/11/2024 3:01 PM
61	The crime rate is too high. Too many murders and gangs. Too much drug activity. I don't consider any area of the city safe. There was a robbery in broad daylight at Fievet's.	1/11/2024 12:12 PM
62	GROCERY STORE. Kroger, Publix, or Walmart Market Place.	11/17/2023 8:08 PM
63	Simpson Park. Sidewalk needs to be put in by F&M bank going towards Ingles.	11/9/2023 3:47 PM
64	Roads and dilapidated buildings removed.	11/9/2023 7:40 AM
65	The building on Robert Toombs with the Chinese restaurant and convenience store is hideous. Houses on Lexington Ave across from the rec center are falling down. Litter collects along the street.	11/8/2023 11:17 PM
66	The old high school area is a mess. This could be a walking track if it was in a more secure neighborhood.	11/8/2023 6:04 PM
67	playgrounds Whitehall road needs updates and attention. old school on gordon street is an eye sore and a huge amount of wasted space, that can be used for something to enrich that part of town.	11/8/2023 4:42 PM
68	Activities for children younger than preschool Activities for teenagers on weekends/week nights	11/8/2023 4:33 PM
69	Drive the Whitehall area and take it all in. This area screams "wrong side of the tracks" and UNNECESSARILY so. Too many assistance programs are available to restore and invest in this area, as well as hold local businesses accountable for responsible community presentation. This is often the first view of Washington that people see. Are we really proud of that? Are we doing our best to assist this aspect of our community?	11/8/2023 1:30 PM

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70	A new tennis court	11/8/2023 11:41 AM
71	Columbus Granade Road repaving instead of patching.	11/8/2023 11:14 AM
72	Not exactly a revitalization, but I would like to see the old Waffle House and used car lot on the corners be put to use, as well as the lot across from the Quality Inn on the bypass. We need to get more businesses in these areas!	11/8/2023 11:13 AM
73	-Ashley Park and the play park beside it. You have new housing going up on Ashley Avenue so make Ashley Park look good for that area. -Fort Washington Park behind the courthouse trails and bridges need to be revitalized. -Depot Street could use some revitalization. -The Royal Food/China building and parking lot is an eyesore to our community. What can be done?	11/7/2023 10:30 PM
74	Many of our poorer areas need housing improvements, especially energy efficiency	11/7/2023 10:03 PM
75	We need another grocery store. Get businesses into downtown. One more fastfood restaurant.	11/7/2023 9:48 PM
76	-Depot street from liberty to Robert toombs could become an outdoor Saturday open market - Ashley park playground -ball field by Tiger stadium -Bilo shopping center -addition of more food trucks in area across from McDonald's; add hookups picnic tables; a food truck plaza where any out of town food trucks could be located -area where Home Cafe was located -upkeep at Fort Washington, in particular the erosion issues and additional lighting plus open it up more so it's doesn't have "hidden" areas -upkeep and historical markers in gully town by the old jail -the abandoned/empty industrial buildings on Hwy 47	11/7/2023 9:25 PM
77	Parks, side walk, road another grocery store	11/7/2023 7:22 PM
78	Town square benches Liberty St park upgrades for people Lower utility rates Invest more in tourism, support the Chamber who's doing a great job	11/7/2023 5:46 PM
79	The abandoned gas station on Robert Toombs by Dollar General is a blight.	11/7/2023 5:35 PM
80	Laprade st, skinny old road, street sign doesn't even have the road spelled correctly.	11/7/2023 5:17 PM
81	N/A	11/7/2023 2:51 PM
82	Slum lords that own downtown buildings are negating the new improvements being made. Example: M&M Bldg, Dave's TV, The Fitzpatrick, Washington Loan Bank (Ruffin), back two of Verizon, Tupper-Barnett, Royal	11/7/2023 2:19 PM
83	Up town stores that are empty need to stay maintained by owner. A Lot neighborhoods roads need paving.	11/7/2023 2:09 PM
84	Sewage plant needs immediate updating! Grants need to be applied for, this plant is a time bomb for the city right now.	11/7/2023 12:45 PM
85	all sidewalks need to have a ramp style entry/exit for wheelchairs. I don't know what you'd call that design. Some have it already but most areas don't. We could use better lighting from one end of Robert toombs to the other.	11/7/2023 12:33 PM
86	Gordon Street school needs to be redeveloped into new housing units. Maybe a combination of affordable housing and workforce housing.	11/7/2023 12:23 PM
87	Simpson Park tennis courts	10/31/2023 8:02 AM
88	Tennis courts - Liberty Street, Gordon Street, Pope Center	10/30/2023 5:20 PM
89	Larger plan for an integrated multi use pathways for city; county can address out of town hunters that leave litter behind in the wilderness areas; more regulation on heavy trucks on county roads, discourage light pollution during certain hours, public wifi in parks or areas where one can do work outside, review archaic ordinances that discourage growth and heavy fines/deposits	10/30/2023 1:47 PM
90	If I would focus in the Tyrone area, there is absolutely nothing for citizens in the County. The only store out there has been closed for over a year. No emergency gas or air at this time. Lights are needed to illuminate county roads. Whitehall area needs to be brought back to the thriving community it once was. Before decisions are made to place need businesses. What is the lost history of this area and tie it in with the City's plans for historical tours. Look into getting antique trolley buses to give tours, which double as residential transportation.	10/30/2023 12:01 PM

Q20 List three small actions or activities our local governments could undertake to improve the quality of life in your neighborhood or the community as a whole.

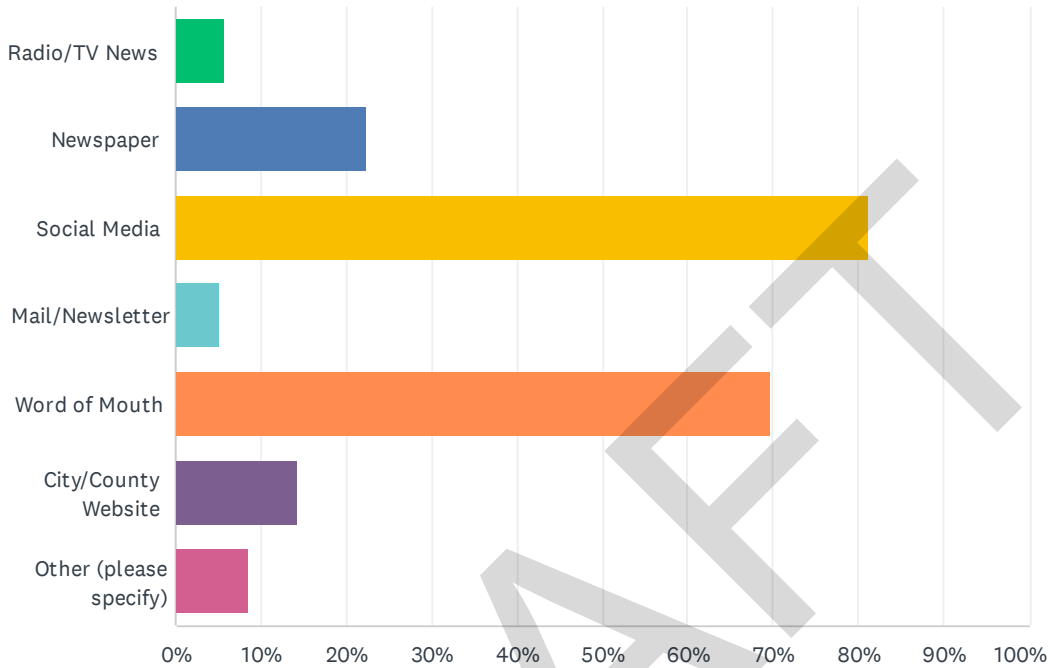
Answered: 101 Skipped: 139

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	100.00%	101
2	88.12%	89
3	66.34%	67

DRAFT

Q21 How do you typically find out about what's happening in our community? Check all that apply.

Answered: 139 Skipped: 101



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Radio/TV News	5.76%	8
Newspaper	22.30%	31
Social Media	81.29%	113
Mail/Newsletter	5.04%	7
Word of Mouth	69.78%	97
City/County Website	14.39%	20
Other (please specify)	8.63%	12
Total Respondents: 139		

Q22 Please share any other comments you have below:

Answered: 56 Skipped: 184

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE CITY BE MORE REPONSIVE TO CITIZENS REQUEST FOR OPEN RECORDS.	1/29/2024 10:23 AM
2	This is not about black and white it is about doing whats best for the community and the people in the community	1/24/2024 10:48 PM
3	Thank you for creating these surveys! Keep doing these often	1/22/2024 10:30 PM
4	Spread the wealth	1/22/2024 10:26 PM
5	Washington/Wilkes has permanent potential! Let's get past this.	1/22/2024 4:23 PM
6	Both the City and the County need to move forward and make use of computer technology to post on-line, in a timely manner any government business which is being considered. These topics can be made available to citizens for their review and input, so they can offer their suggestions and comments without having to attend meetings in person or go to the courthouse or city hall to seek out what is currently taking place. The technology for this is here it just needs to be implemented.	1/22/2024 11:57 AM
7	Get rid of Jerry deBin!	1/22/2024 10:51 AM
8	We do not live in town so are not really impacted by the city as much as others.	1/21/2024 5:01 PM
9	Wilkes is worth preserving, it does not need to fall into the trap of endless economic growth that has destroyed so many nearby communities	1/21/2024 11:54 AM
10	The Tour of Homes, Mule Day, and Cruise-in take up a lot of profit. It seems that people in city do not have a vote. Everyone one want city to grow but no one really going again people who has a lot of pull or money. Stopped going on the old principle but some new guidelines and rules need to be establish that will benefit everyone (Republicans and Democrats).	1/21/2024 1:10 AM
11	In many respects the community is regressing because there is no reliable way to get the news out about activities and government activity.	1/20/2024 5:12 PM
12	Washington needs more shops and restaurants and better PR to bring in visitors and young people.	1/20/2024 5:10 PM
13	Desperately need a county zoning plan to maintain a safe environment and incentives for sensible growth and appropriate development.	1/20/2024 3:24 PM
14	N/A	1/20/2024 2:58 PM
15	Thanks	1/20/2024 1:45 PM
16	Ask all the newcomers why they chose Washington. It's not for building bigger, more housing, more businesses, more traffic. That is what we are trying to get away from. It's because Washington is a gem as it is. If it's not broken, don't try to fix it.	1/20/2024 1:32 PM
17	Before moving away I was born and raised in Washington and don't recall the inequality I have witnessed since returning. It's disheartening and I know God is not pleased with the disrespect and hate shown among elected officials. Reaping season isn't far away and those responsible will be met with the same measure given.	1/20/2024 12:24 PM
18	I hate the four way stop on Robert Toombs-it is just too confusing. We need a stop light.	1/20/2024 12:04 PM
19	There needs to be complete openness in govt and sensitivity to the citizens.	1/20/2024 11:55 AM
20	The local not Transparent, need a better source of news like the Informer	1/20/2024 11:53 AM
21	Our town has missed out on several oppotunities for growth and prosperity since the 1960s, such as I-20 and Walmart. We have lost more than the "power players" at those times thought.	1/20/2024 11:10 AM

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Thus, I hope that we will seize the opportunity to progress via reaching out to businesses and companies to help us grow and prosper. We also need to implement incentives for businesses.

22	Washington is a beautiful, hidden small town. I pray the community can work together to keep the small town feel but yet bring tourist in to help support the area. Nicely done marketing on 78 would be greatly beneficial. The previous billboards were a great effort but the quality was lacking and did not represent the character of the town. Washington has so much to offer to those who love to step back in time, slow down and soak in the small town feel.	1/20/2024 11:05 AM
23	Until the politicians, especially the city of Washington, comes together and do what's right for everyone and not just a district, we never truly move forward	1/20/2024 10:59 AM
24	Try and embrace changes and be respectful of everyone	1/20/2024 10:53 AM
25	No more chicken house construction	1/20/2024 10:43 AM
26	I am very worried about the trend of diminishing population, closing businesses and mismanagement of city funds	1/20/2024 10:18 AM
27	Fresh eyes on our community are an asset. Listen to the new members of our city and county who chose to move here and to invest their savings and their talents here	1/20/2024 10:15 AM
28	Protect the residents of the county!!! Please!! Provide some sensible planning and help improve the county and make it a place that people want to live in!	1/20/2024 9:00 AM
29	Wilkes County's population is declining rapidly. Due to big agriculture investment in industrial chicken house construction and operations. The air quality and smell ts often bad.	1/20/2024 7:38 AM
30	Focus is needed on protecting Wilkes' Agricultural Districts. Businesses are looking to use farming and forestry areas for non-agricultural purposes (e.g., solar farms, methane plants, dumping sludge). Farming/forestry is our #1 business. Don't take if for granted; establish rules and a vision for the future, and encourage best practices.	1/19/2024 8:24 PM
31	this entire town is headed down fast. public officials only care about their own share of wallet and will protect them at all costs. Washington will be nothing more than one big government housing project before the decade is over.	1/19/2024 2:28 PM
32	Help the VFW become what it uswd to be.	1/19/2024 1:36 PM
33	While I see the information via social media, it may be hours or days later. So, the information is no longer relevant.	1/18/2024 6:22 PM
34	I hope the new administration will be better and stop the fighting and backstabbing and start working together for the betterment of all people.	1/18/2024 5:46 PM
35	only been here 18 months so I dont know a lot about things here.	1/13/2024 3:34 PM
36	Promote tourism (I talk to people from all over the south that have never heard of Washington - we are Georgia's best kept secret)	1/13/2024 11:58 AM
37	We moved here because this beautiful town is unique and people can be kind. We need to change how we operate to preserve this livable community into the future.	1/13/2024 10:58 AM
38	Would like to see more people come together and quit fighting with others.	1/12/2024 6:38 PM
39	We moved here a few years ago. Once we settled in and discovered the local government infighting, the lack of shopping and dining options, high utility and Internet costs, and bad cell issues. The daycare has been the best thing we've encountered. Unless changes happen, we plan on moving closer to our jobs as soon as the market improves or the interest rates go down.	1/12/2024 10:25 AM
40	The main thing we need is another grocery store. Know tons of people from warren county that came to Washington specifically for Bilo. Now all we have is ingles and prices are outrageous due to no competition (and of course inflation.) we along with many people take our business to Kroger. Sam's or Costco because it's too expensive to shop for a family for a week at ingles. Would love to see some competition so we can give our money to a business in washington	1/11/2024 8:53 PM
41	We need a movement which lacks the egos that prevent several positive groups both governmental and public from coordinating their efforts. If those egos could be put aside in the	1/11/2024 6:28 PM

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name of cooperative effort, and event planning on a large scale could be coordinated, then positive results would emerge.

42	A new entire recreation complex would be awesome. So many around us have gotten new facilities with everything in one place.	1/11/2024 3:02 PM
43	The city strives to shop local but the grocery store is limited in what they offer, their prices are outrageous, customer service is awful, and the building along with equipment is severely outdated. Local business owners do not offer items for everyday life. The city forces people to go else where.	11/17/2023 8:14 PM
44	Where their is no vision the whole entire community will perish	11/10/2023 1:10 PM
45	I love Wilkes County. We have lived here nearly 40 years, but still often do not feel like we belong. I guess it's a Georgia thing, because Lincolnton is even worse. You welcome ideas until they do not follow the old rules. The county has lost over two thousand people since we moved here. Many businesses have been closed as well as industries. The city is dwindling due to narrow mindedness and lack of respect for all.	11/8/2023 6:09 PM
46	Our city needs to embrace supporting the Arts (music, painting, drama/theater, etc). The Arts help people connect with each other and relate to those from differing backgrounds far better than most other means. Some of the most thriving communities have strong Arts and Cultural support.	11/8/2023 11:15 AM
47	Please put bunting back on the courthouse (under the windows) for Independence Day. It was missing at this year's celebration. Picnic table(s) or pavilion with picnic table (s) at Simpson Park & Ft. Washington Park. Ashley Park building needs to be remodeled or torn down/rebuilt. The fencing fixed or replaced. Play equipment beside it replaced. Downtown brick sidewalks need to be pressure washed. Track at parks and rec resurfaced. Pope Center is starting to look like it needs some TLC (exterior paint?) Eye sores: Angus Motel and old Napa store beside it. Old Ford dealership and the Royal/Chinese restaurant building. What can be done? Old Huddle House building...what restaurant can be brought in? Old Freds building...what business can be brought in? Old Washington Auto Parts/BP store across from WWPS...what gas station or convenience store can be brought in? Can we obtain another grocery store? Can our current Ingles be turned into an Ingles like Elberton and Madison has? I am not for a full fledge Walmart, but what about a Walmart Neighborhood Market? I really think our town could be a lot like Madison, Ga. Still have small town charm, but progressing and thriving with retail and numerous restaurants.	11/7/2023 10:48 PM
48	-Promote tourism by including black history like the Jackson AME Church, Dr Sessoms home/office -promote tourism through the farming and agricultural portions of our county (Barnett farms, the Stockyard, Wilkes Mill and Feed, Smith Farm)	11/7/2023 9:26 PM
49	I have heard several people complain about the difficulties in reviewing city council minutes. this is not good. can the minutes for each meeting be posted online? this seems to be a basic issue that is not being managed properly.	11/7/2023 5:33 PM
50	Thanks for all you do!	11/7/2023 2:52 PM
51	Overall our city is doing a good job!	11/7/2023 12:46 PM
52	My complaints are pretty much just the sidewalks. I can't say much else really. And I know it's probably one of the more expensive things to target but we have to get wheelchair people out of the road. And people who are able to use sidewalks shouldn't be tripping over busted spots of concrete. Feel free to contact me and I can show you every spot.	11/7/2023 12:36 PM
53	thank you for sharing this survey	10/31/2023 8:03 AM
54	I think it would be beneficial to survey young/middle-aged adults who have left Washington/Wilkes County and ask them what the community needs to have that would entice them to move back here.	10/30/2023 5:23 PM
55	Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this survey	10/30/2023 1:49 PM
56	Stop all the infighting and work together. This Community can be reconstituted it we all work together.	10/30/2023 12:02 PM