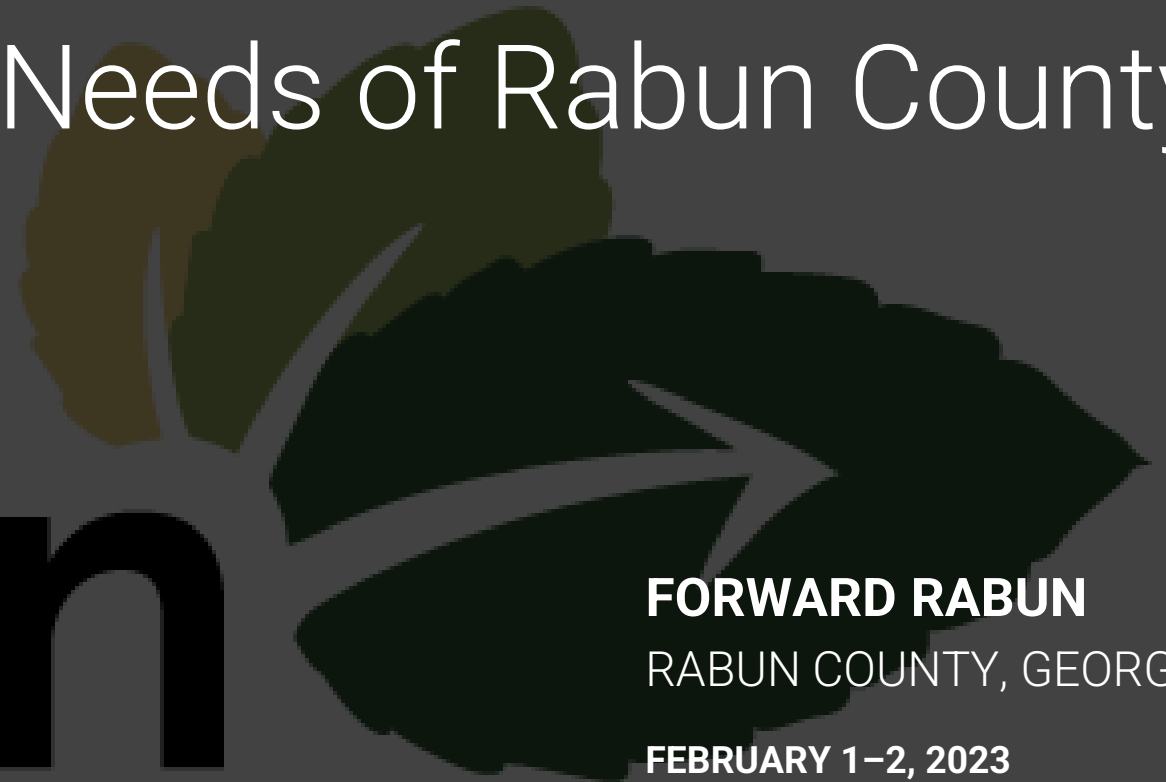




Meeting the Housing Needs of Rabun County

Forward Rabun



FORWARD RABUN
RABUN COUNTY, GEORGIA
FEBRUARY 1-2, 2023



THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

MISSION COMMITMENTS

CONNECT active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals

INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

Membership

ULI is the premiere convener of real estate and land use professionals



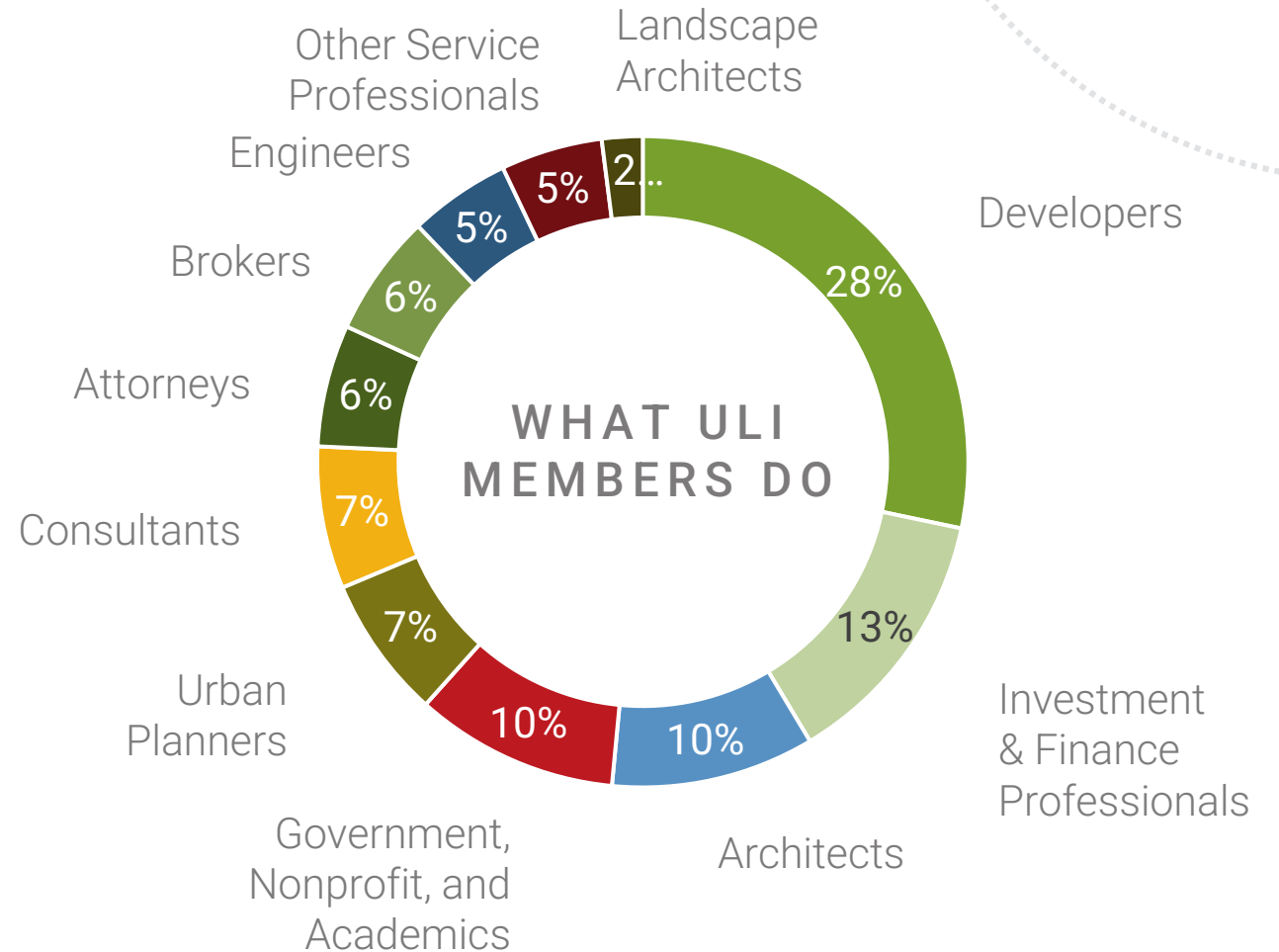
48,000+

Members in more than 80 countries



1,400+

Members in the Atlanta region and our broader geography





ULI's Global Mission Priorities

1. Increasing Housing Attainability in Communities Around the World
2. Decarbonization and Net Zero
3. Educating the Next Generation of Diverse Real Estate Leaders

Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

Why a TAP?

- ❑ Assemble a multidisciplinary team of volunteers within our membership who are senior practitioners to serve as panelists
- ❑ Central considerations are market viability and economic realities of community and place
- ❑ We can leverage national and global resources as case studies
- ❑ Utilize local knowledge through stakeholder engagement process to help inform recommendations



Snapshot of Communities and orgs served

- ✓ All Saints' Episcopal Church
- ✓ Atlanta BeltLine
- ✓ City of Alpharetta (forthcoming)
- ✓ City of Clarkston
- ✓ City of East Point
- ✓ City of Powder Springs
- ✓ City of Savannah
- ✓ City of Doraville
- ✓ Clayton Co.
- ✓ Fulton Co.
- ✓ Hall County
- ✓ Invest Atlanta
- ✓ MARTA
- ✓ Rabun County

Key Facts

- Program is over 25 years old
- 100+ Georgia based TAPs since 1997
- Reports are published w/ client permissions at <https://atlanta.uli.org/resources/reports/>

Rabun County Housing TAP

Sponsor:



Partners:



Additional Support:



The Clayton Tribune

THURSDAY, February 2, 2023

theclaytontribune.com

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Rabun selected for housing study

By Megan Broome
News Editor

The growing need for affordable housing in Rabun County continues to be a hot-button issue as an influx of tourism and people moving to the area as permanent residents have affected housing availability for many working families within the past few years.

Lack of affordable housing a critical problem

Commissioners, city officials and members of Forward Rabun, a public-private partnership for community and economic development, have held numerous town halls and grappled with how to manage growth throughout the county

while providing affordable and available housing and jobs for people.

Public officials are working to address the housing crisis and Rabun County was recently selected for a housing study.

A panel from a prestigious

international association of real estate and land use experts visited Rabun County this week on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 1-2, for a hands-on study of ways to address housing affordability and availability in the county, according to a press release from Forward Rabun.

Please see **STUDY, A7**



Today, Feb. 2, before 5 p.m. is the deadline to cast your ballots for Rabun County's best of 2023. Ballots are available at *The Clayton Tribune* office at 84 Plaza Way in Clayton.



STAR Student Krockum strikes academic chord with Leff as her 2023 STAR Teacher

County library has limited opening after water damage



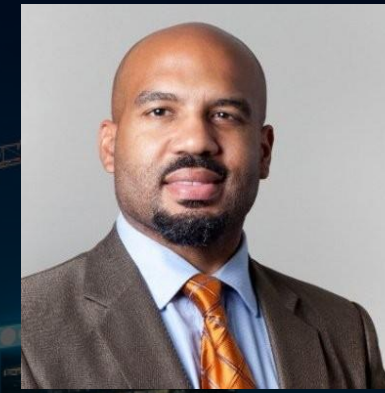
Jonathan Bartlett
(Panel Chair)
Senior Consultant
Jacobs



Ann Carpenter
Vice President
Federal Reserve Bank
of Atlanta



Alan Ferguson, Sr
President & CEO
Atlanta Habitat for
Humanity



Kenwin Hayes
Managing Principle
ReUrbanis Advisors



Will Johnston
Executive Director
MicroLife Institute



Christopher Ptomey
Executive Director
ULI Terwilliger Center for
Housing



Bob Voyles
Principal & Founder
Seven Oaks Company



Kelly Annis
(Technical Writer)
ULI St. Louis



THE SCOPE OF WORK

- 1) How is workforce housing defined for Rabun County?
- 2) Are there regulation or policy changes the community (county and cities within) could adopt to help incentivize workforce housing?
- 3) How can denser, less land-intensive housing be encouraged in a county that has traditionally relied on larger-lot single family housing? What land development opportunities exist in Dillard and Clayton that prioritizing housing? What partnerships are needed to execute?
- 4) Are there natural partners or resources that could be leveraged to incentivize and accelerate the development of workforce housing? What are some ideas and programs that have worked in other communities that could be used as a reference point?



TAP Process

- Briefing documents provided by Forward Rabun (i.e. Recent comp plan, Forward Rabun strategic plan, etc.)
- Study area tour of Dillard and Clayton, led by city leadership
- Stakeholder interviews with community leaders, businesses owners, school leaders, health care institutions
- Panel discussions
- Recommendation formation



There is no place like Rabun County

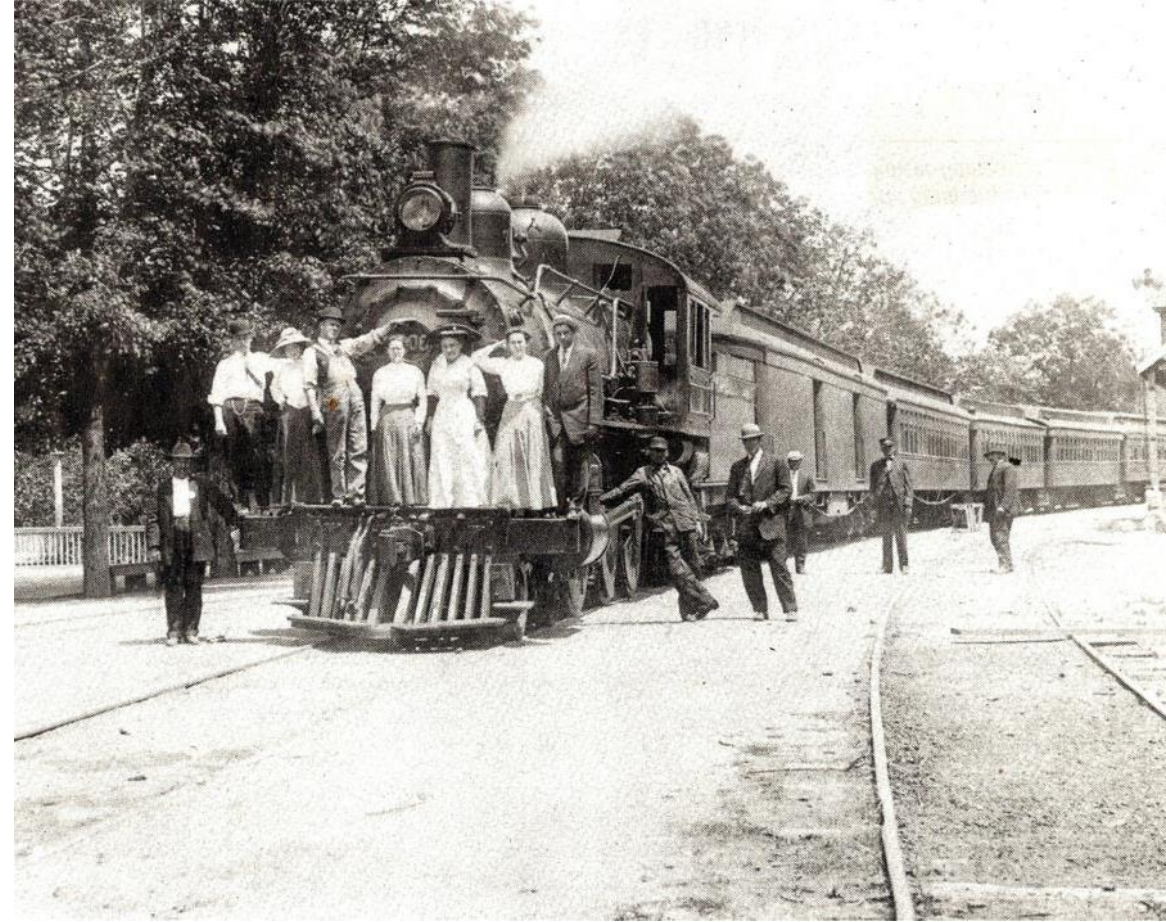
- Beautiful, unique, and loved
- Known globally, part of Georgia's identity
- Places that are loved face a lot of pressure
- Rabun won't stay lovable by mistake



Explore Rabun

Change is here... again

- Growth is happening, and growth can be managed
- Other changes are harder to control



Things that are changing

- The cost of everything
- How people work
 - Remote, reshoring
- How people experience Rabun County
 - As residents, employees, visitors
- Demographics
 - Generation Alpha
- The road in, out, and through



Time for some choices

- We heard what you DON'T want to happen
- But what DO you want to happen?
- Can't do nothing
- Can't go back



Education
+
Economics
+
Partnerships

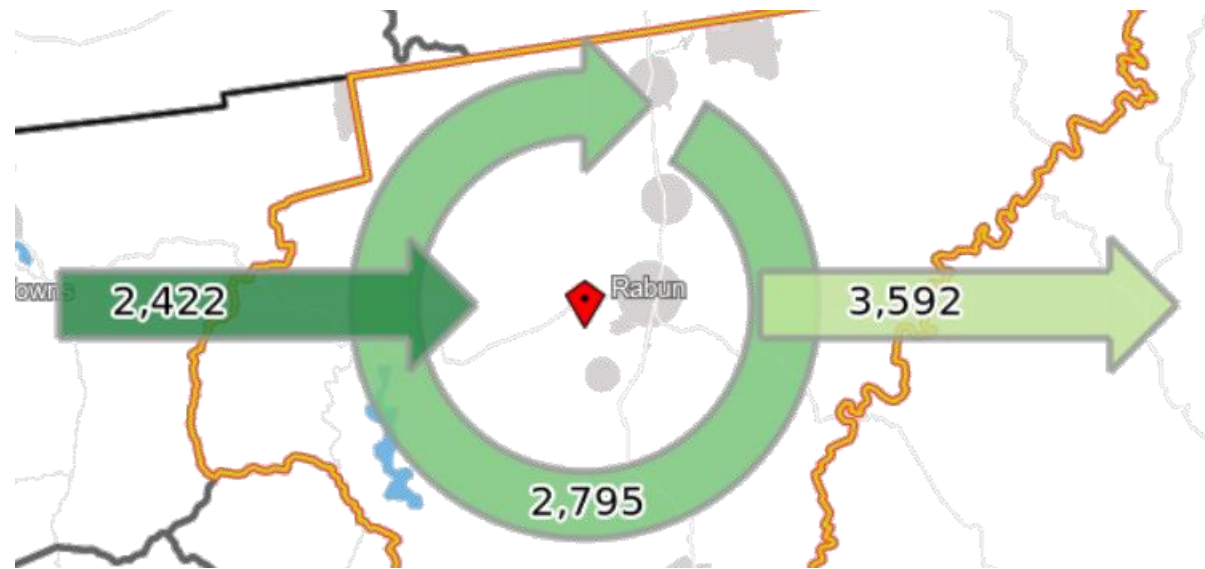
HENRY E
DILLARD
MEMORIAL BRIDGE

How many residents live and work in Rabun? Who works here and lives elsewhere?

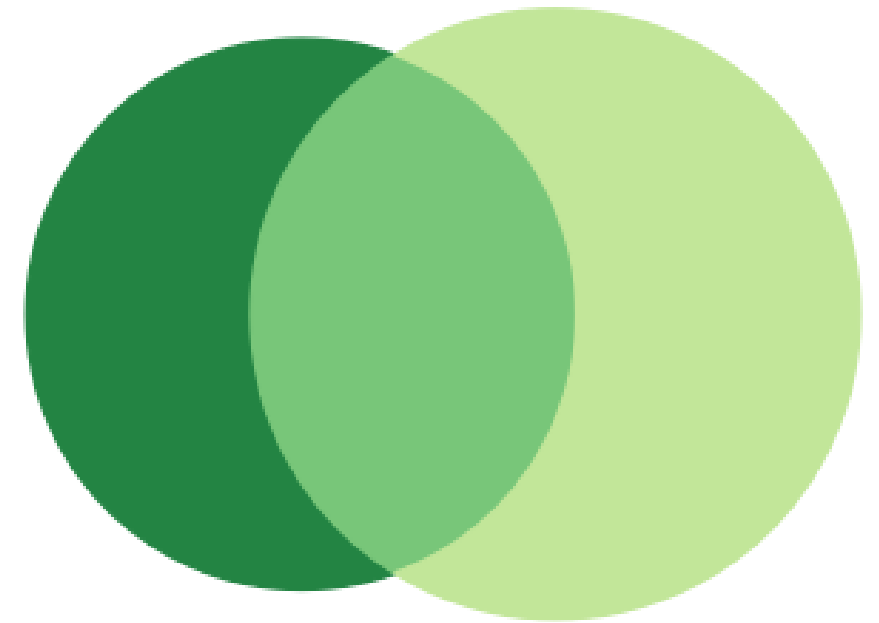
Rabun County jobs and Rabun County residents only partially overlap

44% (2,795) of employed adult residents of Rabun both live and work in Rabun, the rest commute out.

46% of the workforce (2,422) in Rabun commutes from outside.



Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2019

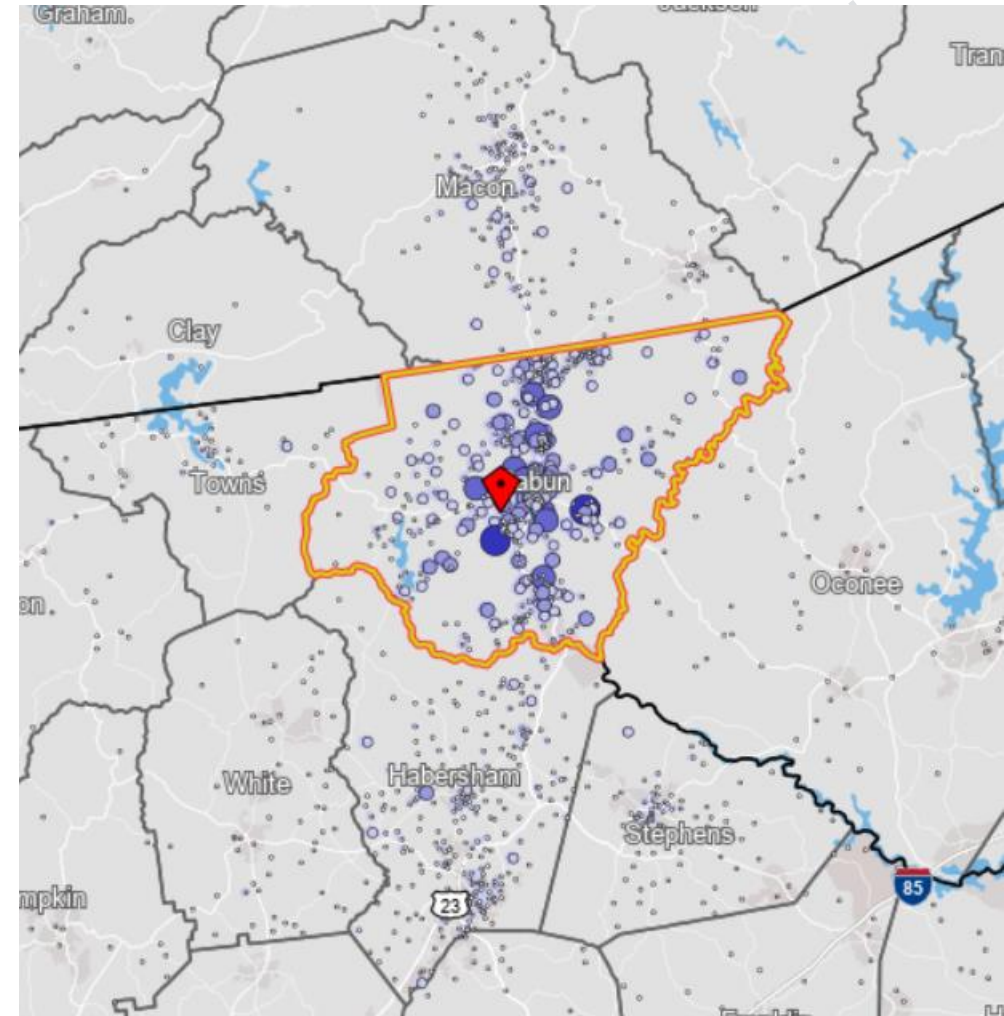


- 2,422 - Employed in Selection Area, Live Outside
- 3,592 - Live in Selection Area, Employed Outside
- 2,795 - Employed and Live in Selection Area

From where are non-Rabun resident workers commuting?

1 in 5 have commute of 50 minutes or more, a burden on workers and infrastructure

- As noted in interviews, Habersham, Stephens, Towns, and Macon County house many Rabun workers across several job categories
- Places with more available land, greater housing supply, and lower housing costs tend to house Rabun's external workforce

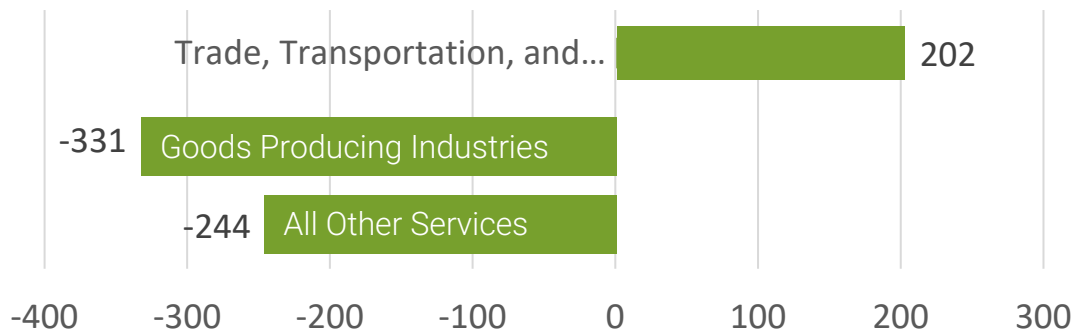


What is driving the mismatch?

In the words of Forward Rabun survey respondents, two factors are in play

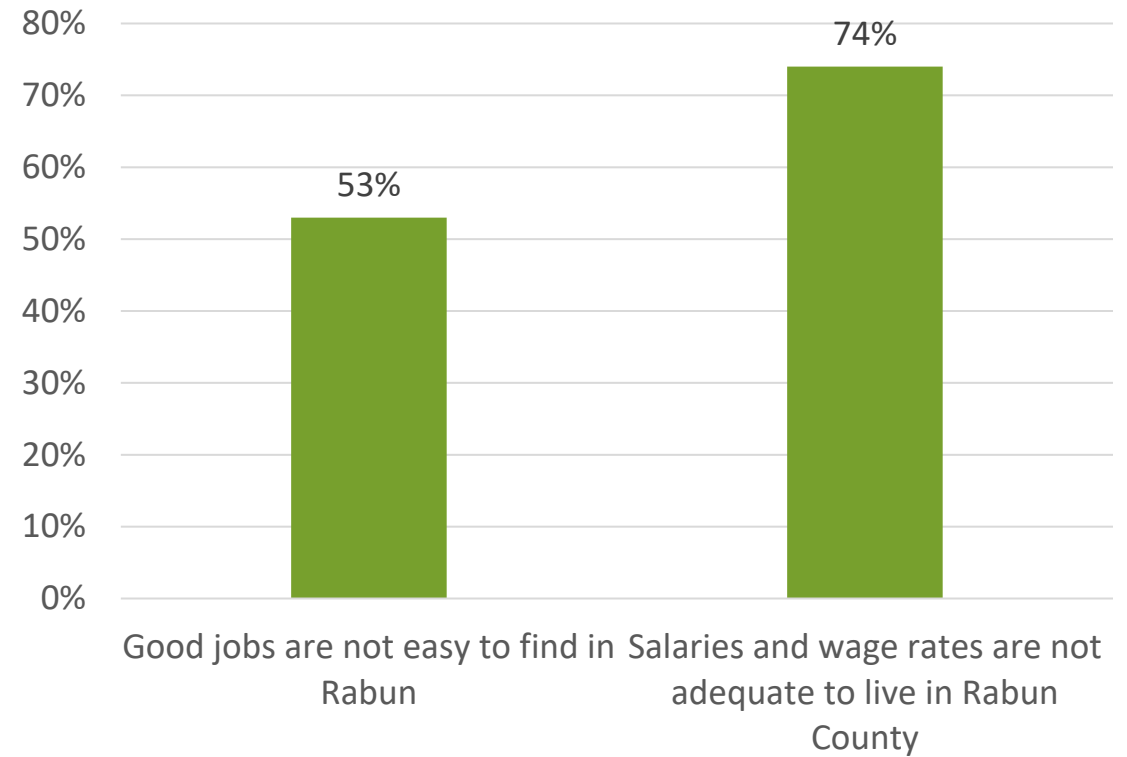
- Survey and interviews point to the lack of good (we read as higher-skilled or higher-wage) jobs in Rabun, leading to residents seeking jobs elsewhere and
- Those that do work in Rabun cannot afford to live here because wages have not kept pace with housing costs.

Difference between N residents and N workers by sector



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD, 2019

Percent of Survey Respondents who Responded "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"



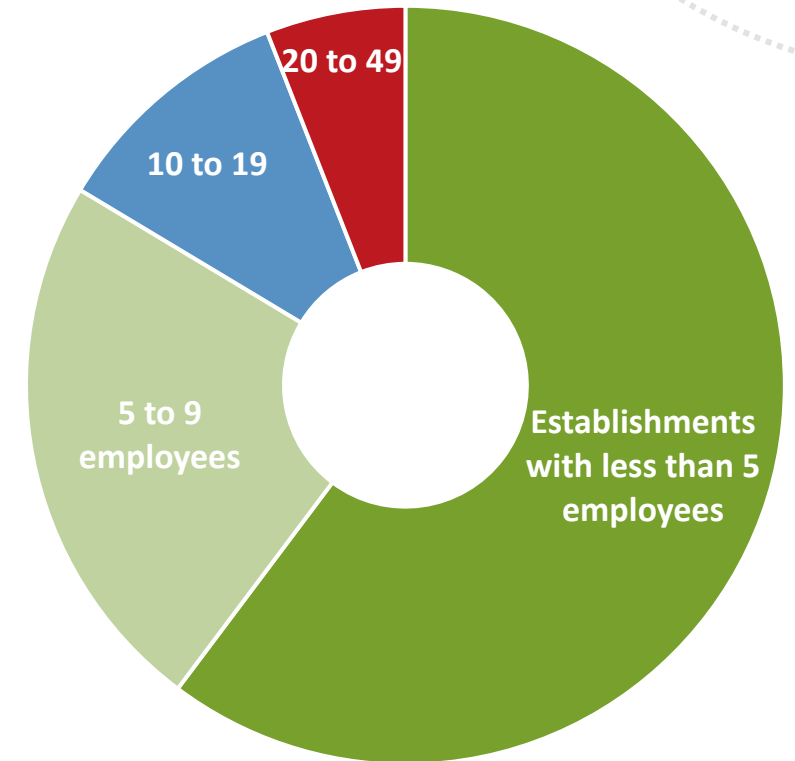
Source: Forward Rabun, recent survey of 500 residents

What are the impacts on employers?

Lack of work force housing in Rabun is already being felt

- Employers have difficulty attracting and retaining workers, sometimes leading to one-off solutions that are quite costly or disruptive to the business
- Many workers from essential, front-line, community-serving occupations are among those that have few housing choices and may be more likely to live in outlying areas
- The county could face business retention issues if these trends continue
- Small businesses (503 in Rabun) have less buffer to withstand the stresses
- Could Rabun's service and tourism based economy continue to thrive and can you diversify an economy when this sector is struggling?

Rabun County Employer Establishments by the Number of Employees



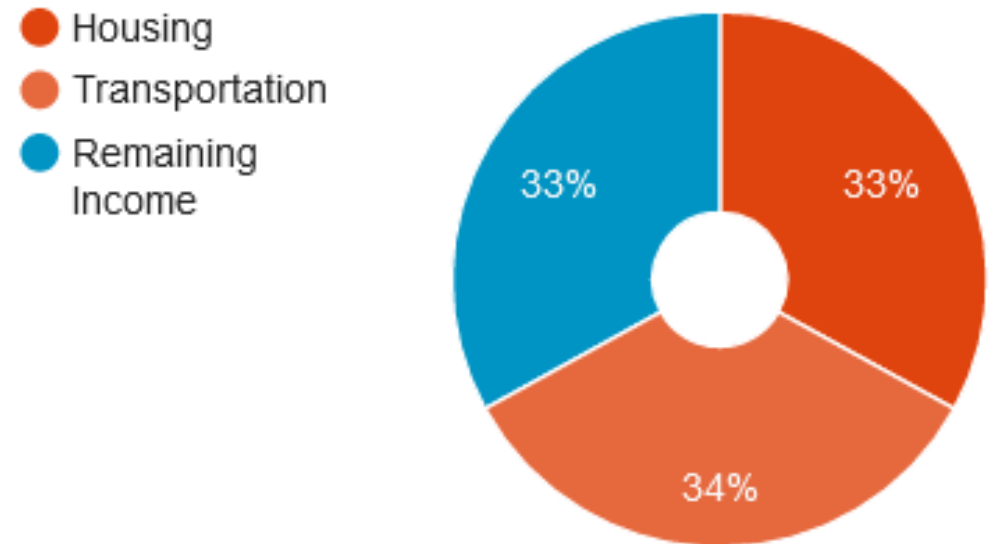
Source: 2020 ECNSVY Business Patterns County Business Patterns

What are the impacts on residents and communities?

Rabun households spend a very large proportion of their income on housing and transportation

- Workers have challenges identifying, securing, and maintaining employment
- Housing near employment centers that is unaffordable to the work force requires workers to drop out of the workforce, accept inadequate housing conditions, or commute longer distances (with greater transport and childcare barriers)
- Households earning \$42,000 have low residual income after housing and transportation costs
- Locally, can transportation networks support additional commuters? Impacts on schools, health and healthcare access, and community engagement.

Average Housing + Transportation Costs % Income, \$42,000 income household



\$14,511

Annual Transportation Costs

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology

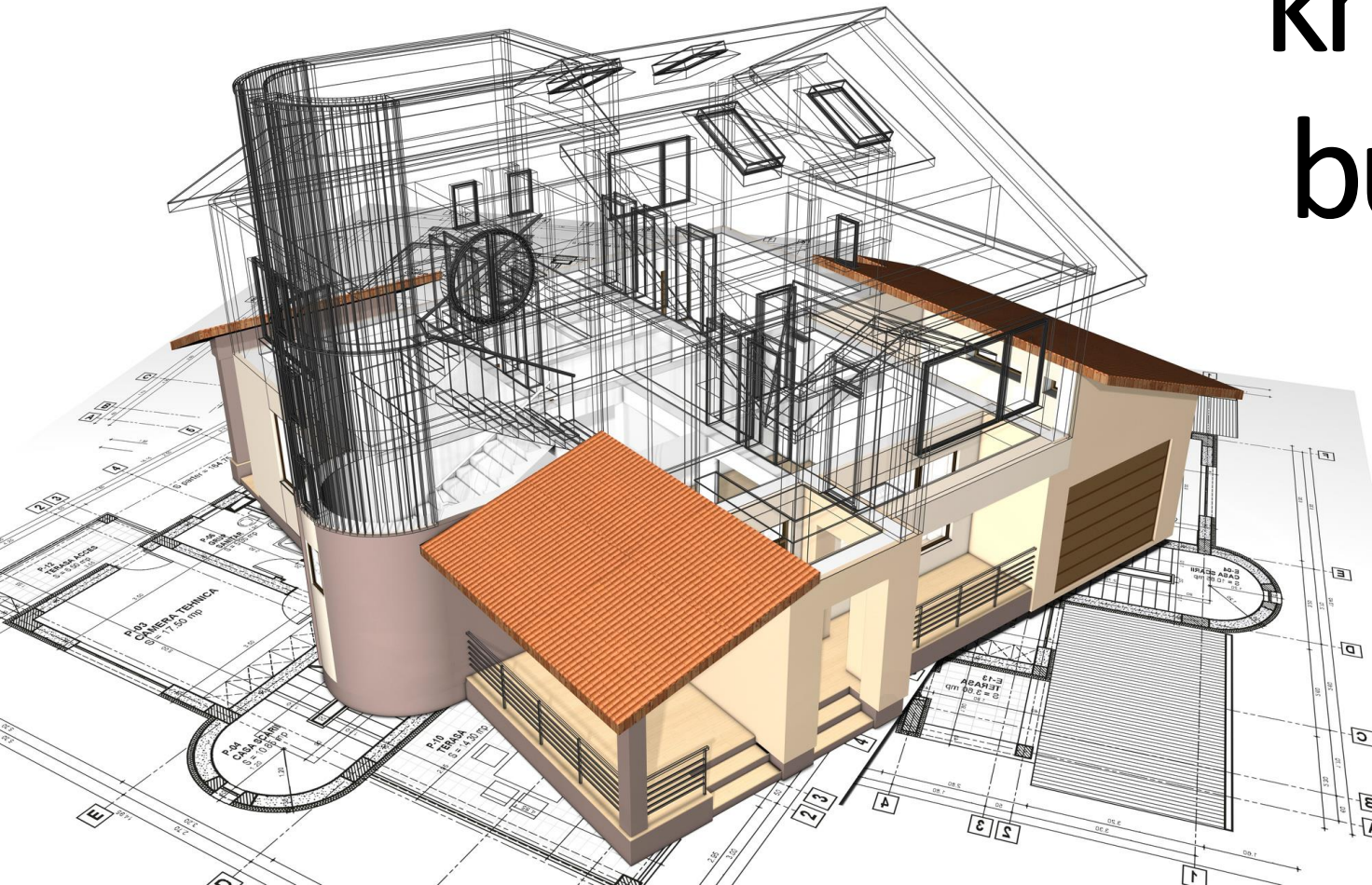


Education



Atlanta

Education: Building the knowledge and building Rabun



Business
Owners/
Employers

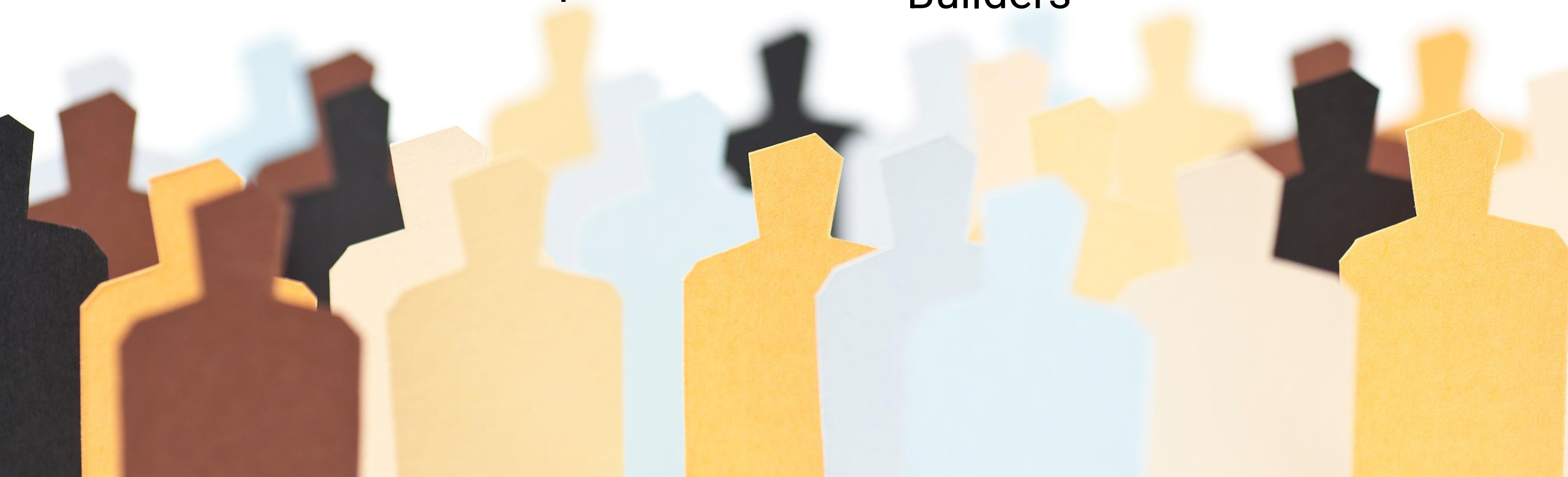
Citizens

Religious
Leaders

Financing/
Banks

Local
Leadership

Developers/
Builders





Transition from Single Family to Higher Density Housing



Abundant housing options

Missing middle housing

Workforce housing

Affordable housing (as defined by HUD)

Accessory dwelling unit (ADU)

Duplex/Triplex/Multiplex

Cottage court

Townhouse

Multifamily housing

Live-work housing

Conservation community

Conservation Community Districts

A conservation community are a type of residential subdivision that are designed in order to preserve open space while accommodating the full extent of development that would otherwise be possible under conventional subdivision designs by concentrating the development in a higher density in one area of the property while conserving a large percentage of land in the remaining area.

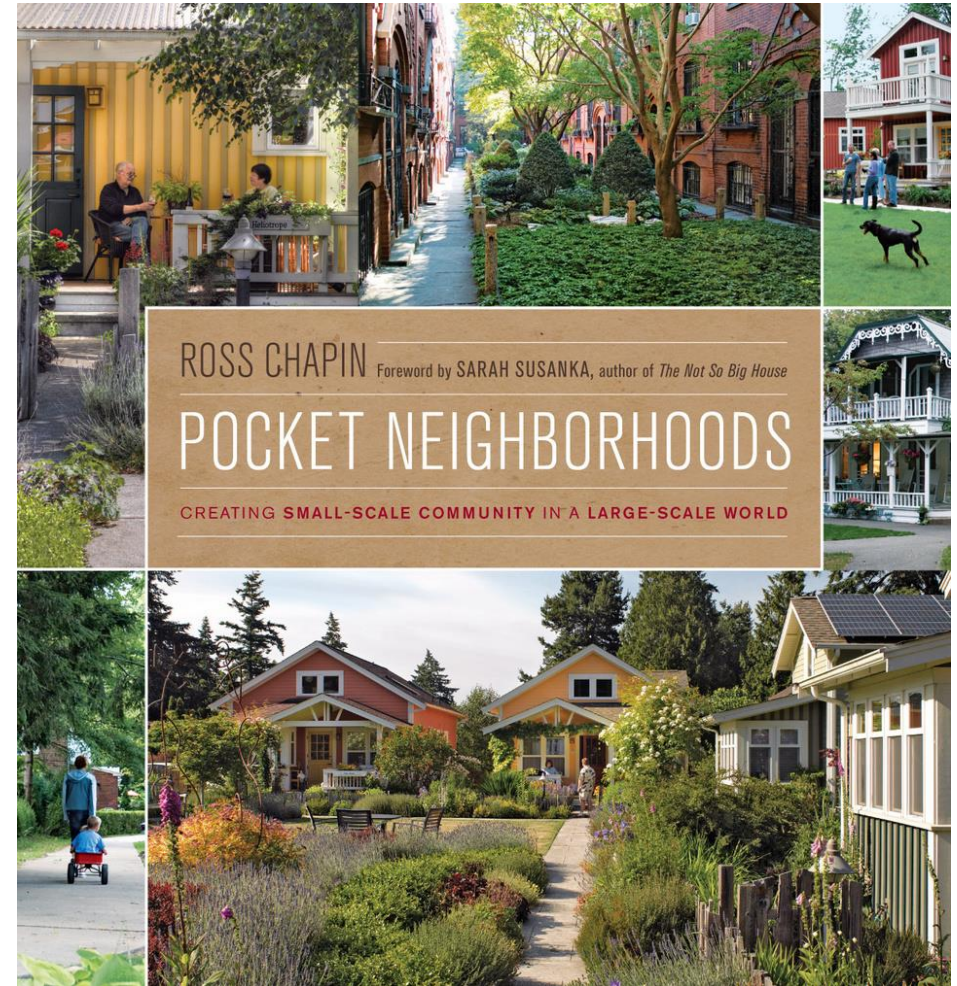
What is the problem and how does this solve it?

- Prevent suburban sprawl and maintain rural character of the area
- Expensive and unsustainable infrastructure due to homes being so spread out
- Lack of housing
- Lack of diversity of types of housing
- Traditional development that clear cuts property
- Maintain rural character by keeping housing close to main street
- Spread out housing that creates isolation and loneliness-->Stronger communities by cluster housing types
- Streamline process

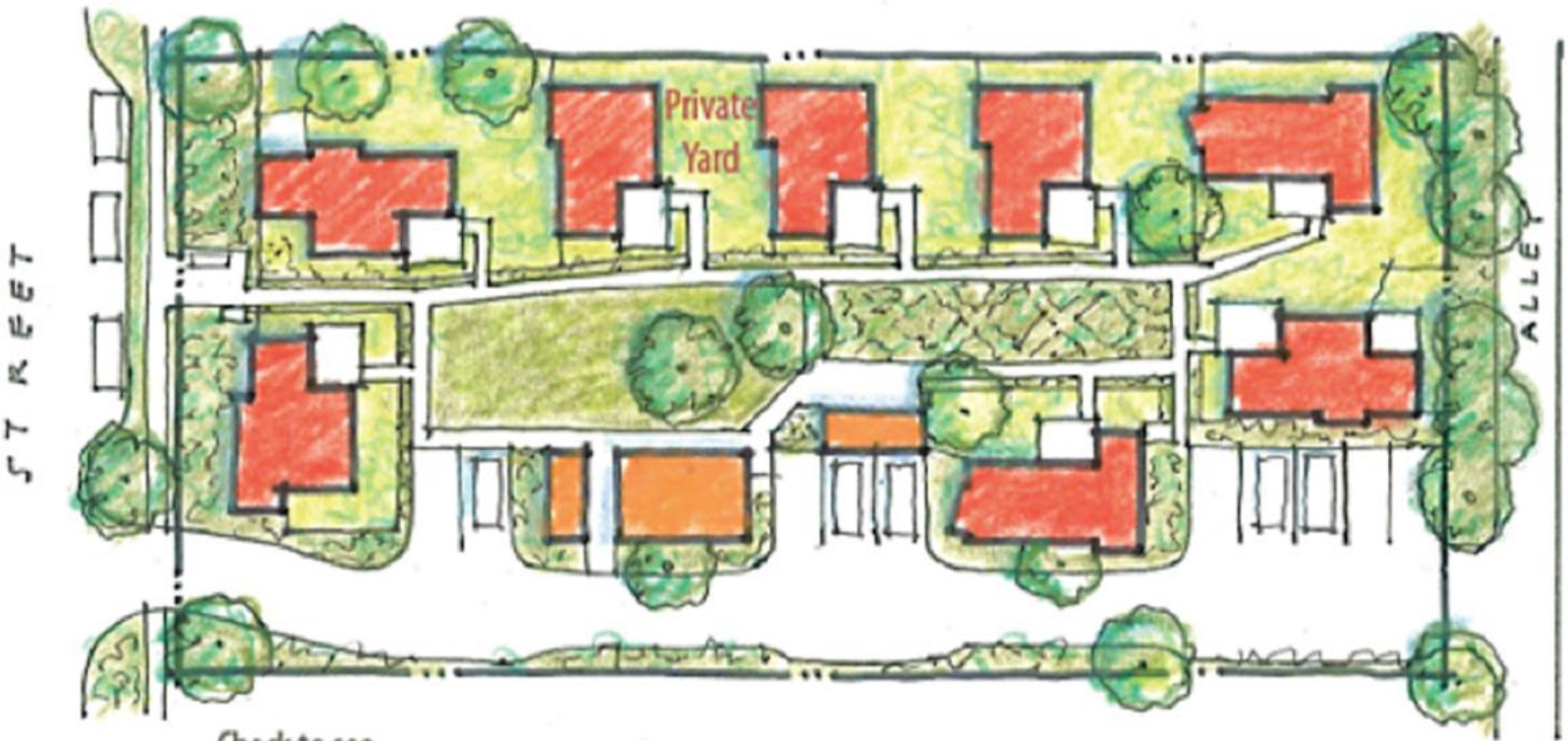


Pocket Neighborhoods

Right-sized housing
clustered around
common area that
creates community.



Single Cluster 1



Check to see

Neighborhood Elements

Double Cluster

- Check to see
- Pocket Neighborhood Clusters
 - Streets and Walkways
 - Neighborhood Elements













THE COTTAGES
ON VAUGHAN

A COTTAGE COMMUNITY
CLARKSTON, GEORGIA



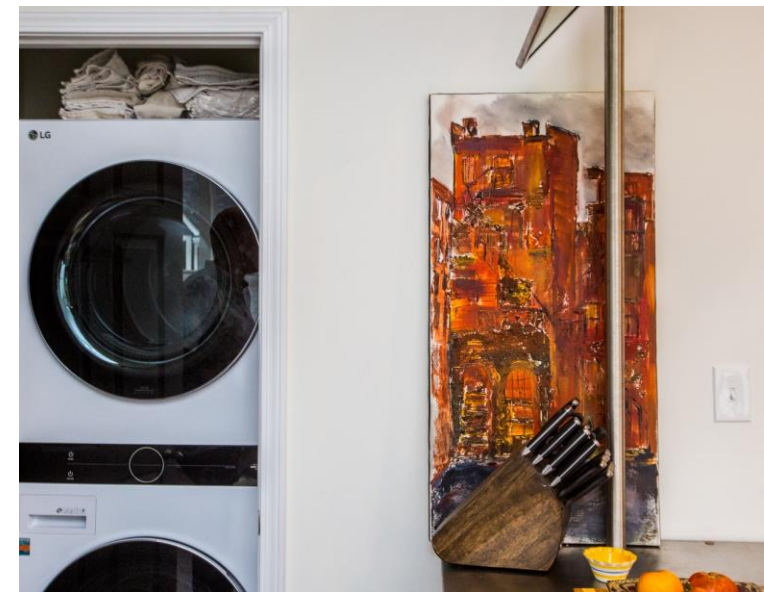
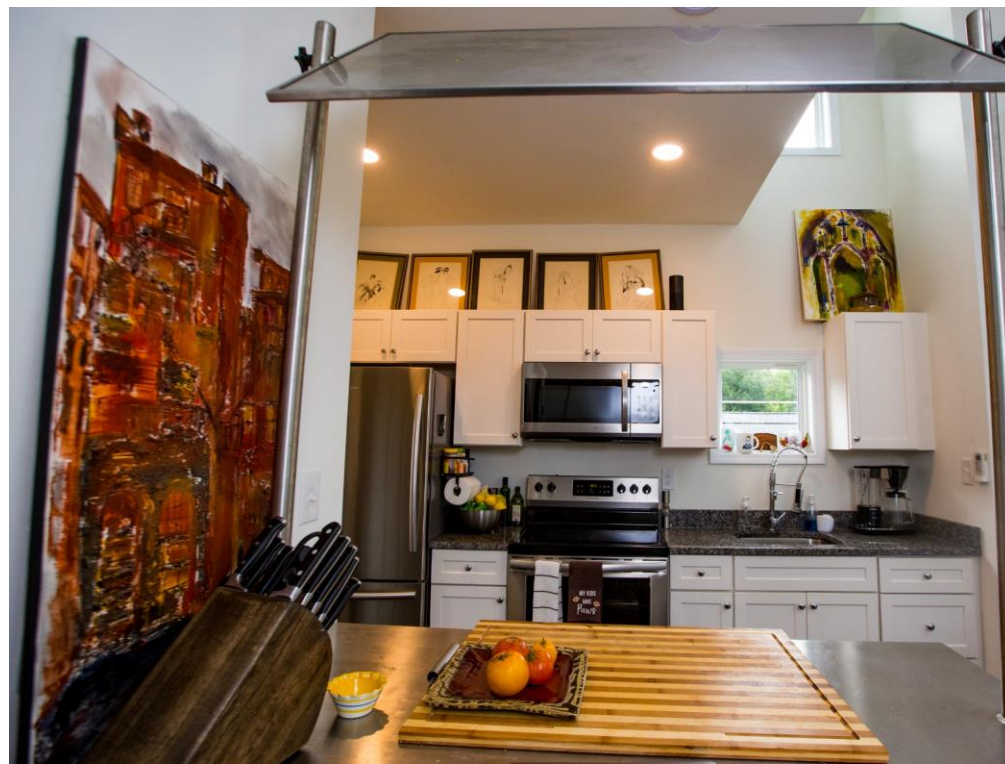
THE COTTAGES ON VAUGHAN

A COTTAGE COMMUNITY
CLARKSTON, GEORGIA











Plan for your plans

Economics

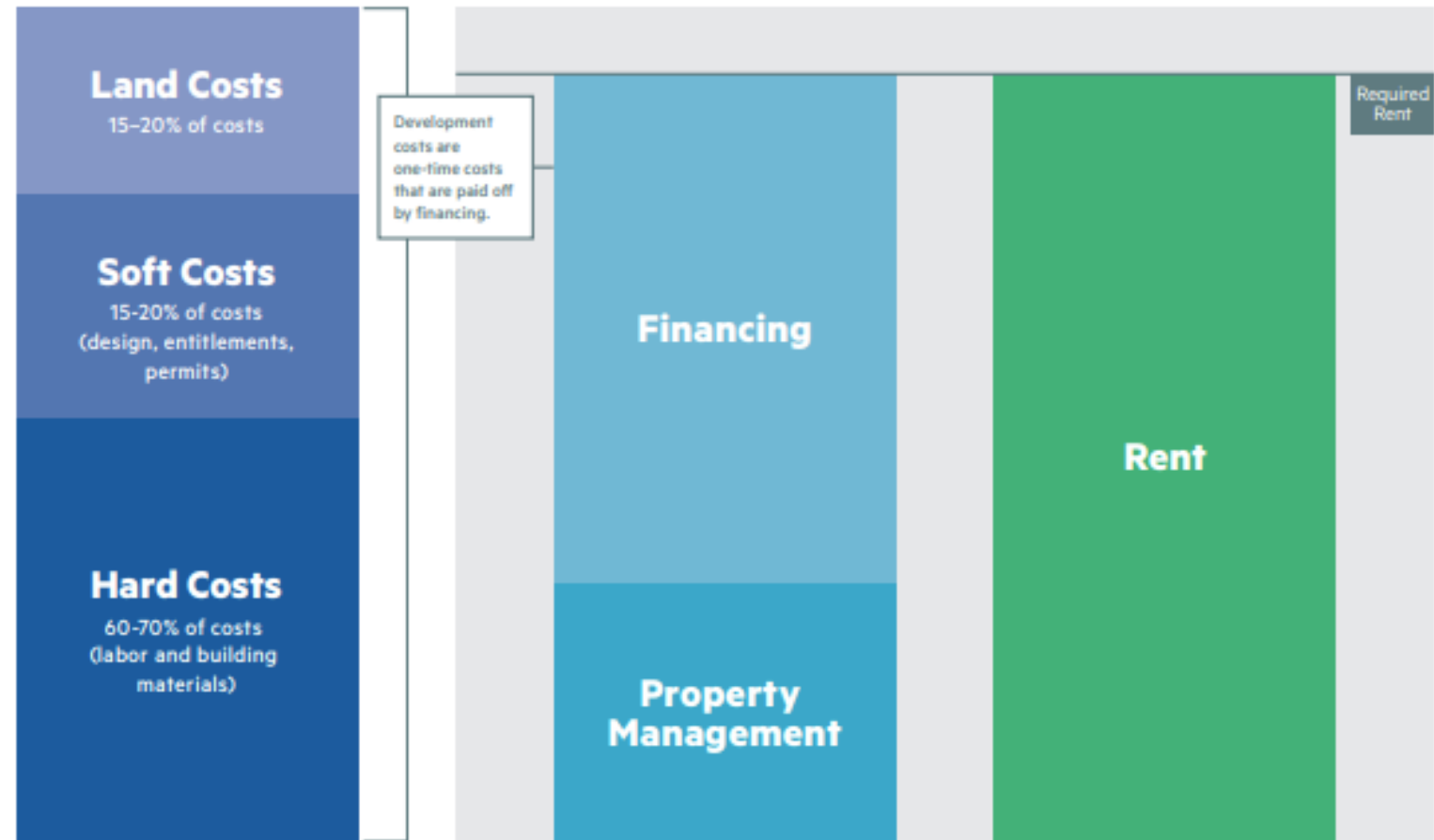
Workforce housing costs (rental)

- Median income: \$35,472
 - Target rent (30% income): \$886
 - Average rent: \$836
- Retail trade (17.8% of population) income: \$31,747
 - Target rent: \$793
- Accommodations and food services (14.8% of population) income: \$23,880
 - Target Rent: \$597

Housing development cost drivers

SIMPLIFIED APARTMENT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework below is a simplified representation of the apartment development process, illustrating the relationship between costs and rents



DEVELOPMENT COSTS

The project's **Development Costs** determine the amount of financing required.

OPERATING EXPENSES

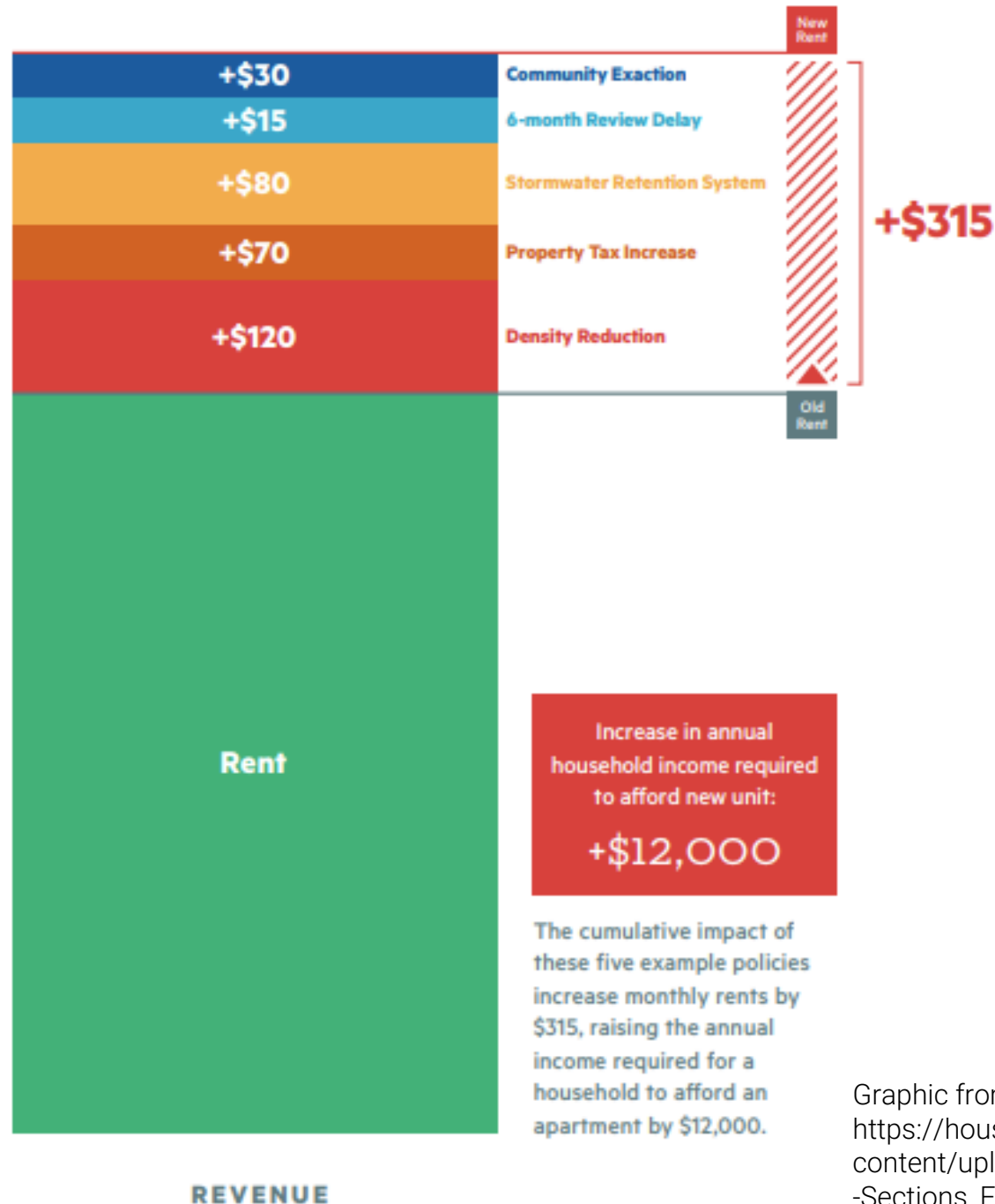
Financing Costs combined with property management costs make up the **Operating Expenses**.

REVENUE

The project's revenues must cover the operating project's revenue. The **Required Rent** is the minimum average rent necessary for the project to be viable.

Graphic from NMHC,
https://housingtoolkit.nmhc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/NMHC_PDF-Sections_Full-Doc.pdf

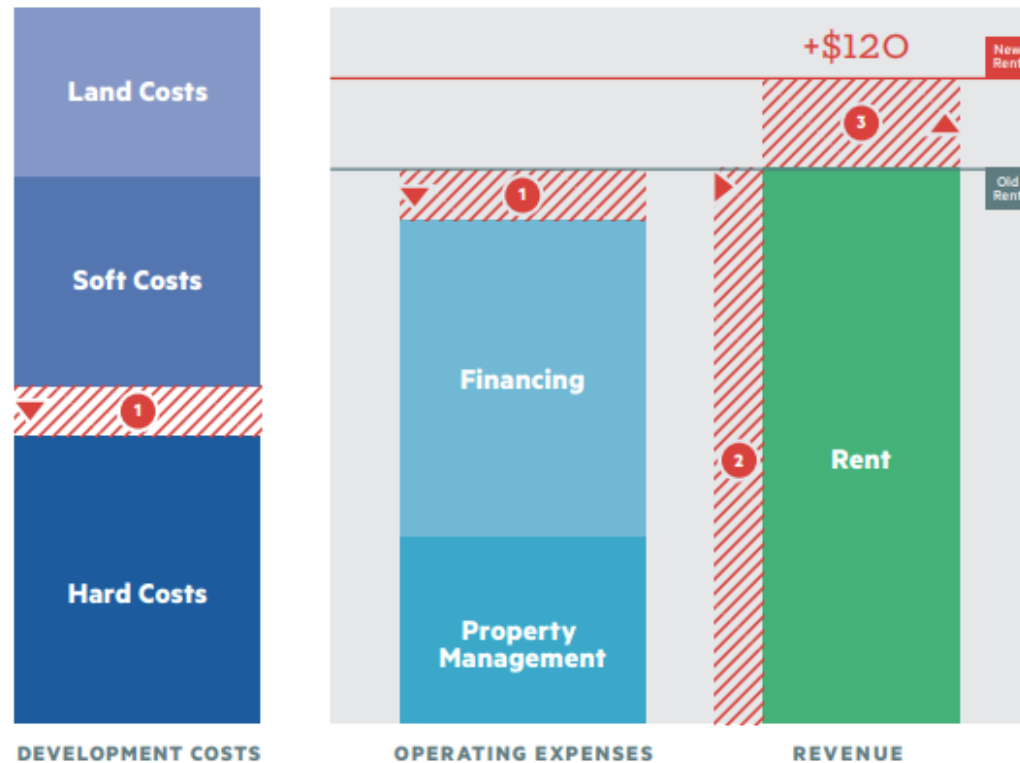
Cumulative impact of government policies



Density Reduction

A reduction of 30 units for a 200-unit project can result in a **\$70 to \$140** increase in required rent.

The loss of units in the project reduces the total rents the property generates, but also decreases hard costs as there is less building space constructed and as a result lowers operating expenses slightly. Overall the decrease in revenues exceeds the limited reduction in operating expenses. The result is that rents on the remaining units must increase so that revenues once again equal operating expenses.



1. Reduction in Hard Costs and Financing. Reducing the number of units and the amount of building space decreases overall construction costs.

2. Reduction in Revenue. Reducing the number of units decreases the amount of rent produced by the property.

3. Rents on the remaining units must rise to cover the lost revenue so that the property continues to cover the operating expenses. If the market cannot support higher rents, the development will not proceed.

Leveraging land to improve housing attainability

- Donate or lease public land for development of low-cost housing
- Consider founding a community land trust to create low-cost ownership opportunities
- Engage churches and schools to commit land for housing development

Enhancing the local development toolbox

- Development authority: expand and improve use of available tools
 - Ad valorem tax abatement (bonds-for-title structure)
 - Sales tax holiday on all project building materials
 - Land donation, reduced value sale, or ground lease
- Business improvement district formation
 - Funding: mileage rate increase
 - Commercial landowners control funds
- Special tax district creation
 - Funding: mileage rate increase
 - City/county controls funds for specific purpose
- Tax allocation district formation
 - Bonds issued against future project revenue
 - School board and city/county must approve
 - “Pay as you go” TAD – tax rebates



Partnerships



Atlanta

Partnership and Possibilities

City/County Owned Property

- Long-term leases for mixed-income rental
- Create land trust structure for attainable homeownership
- Allows for more control/input
- Supports mixed-use development

Create New Partnerships

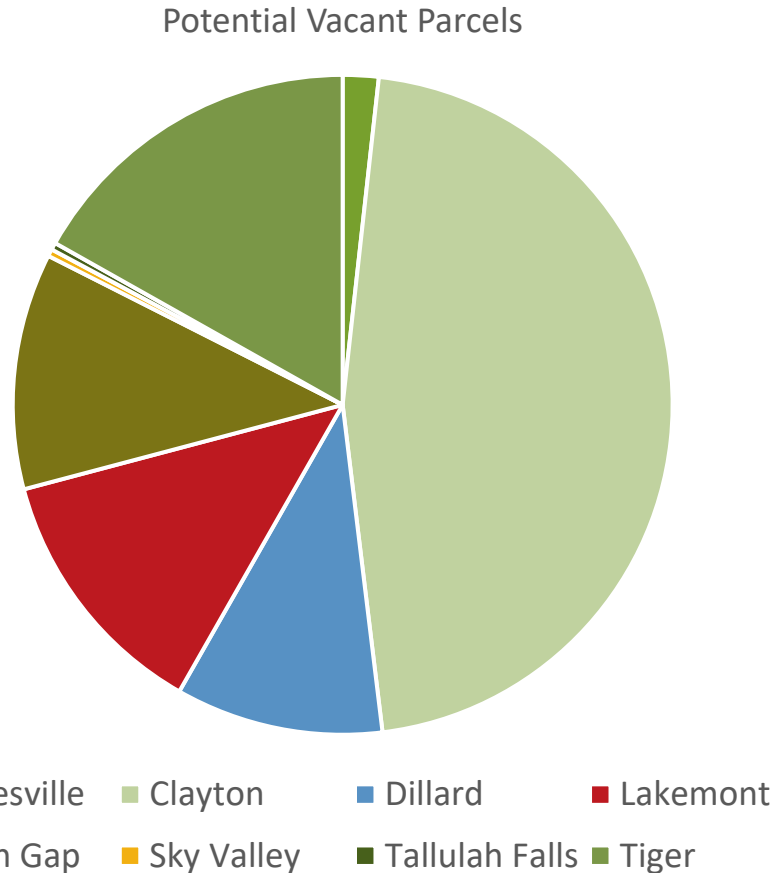
- Tap into your employer base
- Tap into your philanthropic citizenry
- Consider creating an Attainable Housing Fund
- Consider creating an Employer Assisted Housing Fund

Expertise and Relationships

- Leverage ULI
- Connect Regionally
- Don't re-invent the wheel, model and customize to Rabun County

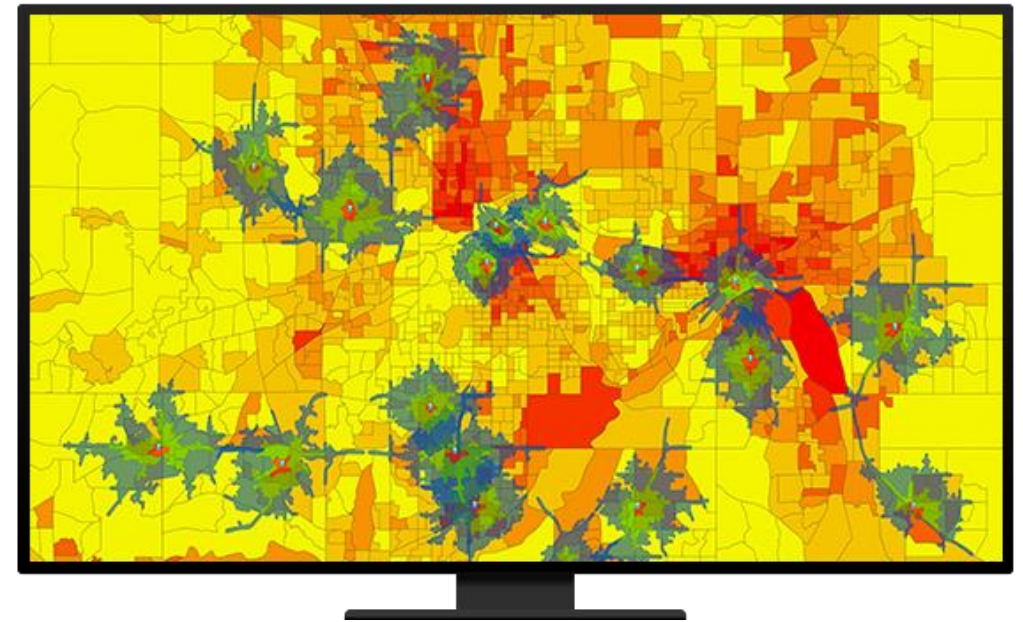
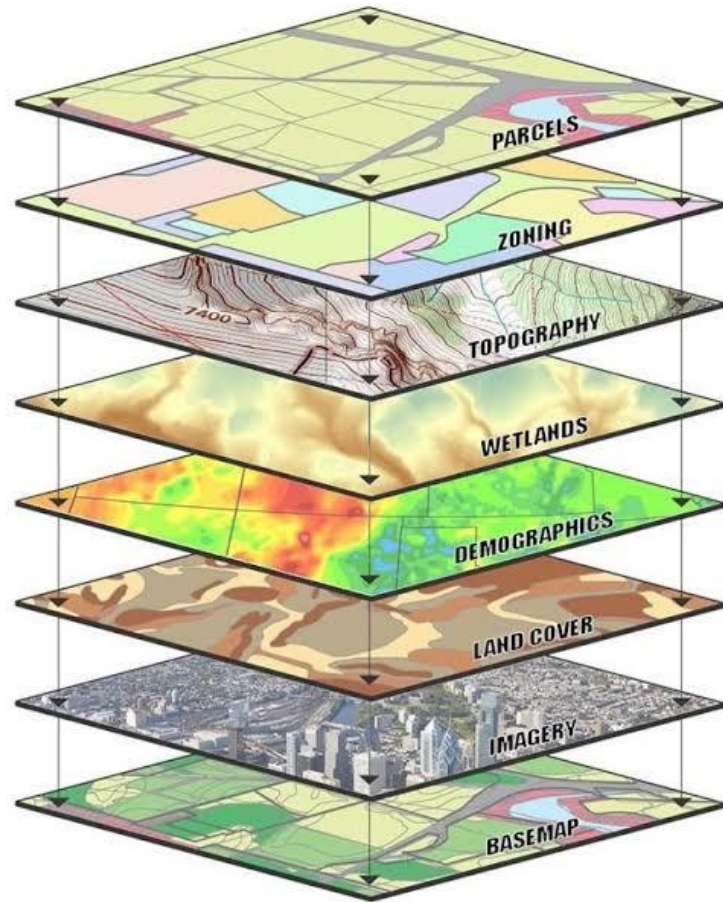
Challenge: Where to focus more intense development

RECOMMENDATIONS



- Take inventory of large buildings that can be renovated or redeveloped.
- Development suitability analysis which considers including transportation network, sewer, rivers/streams/floodplains, water, slope, fiber, etc.
- Discuss potential special districts (...or tools) to support the vision of the community (i.e. BID, TADs, land trust, etc.)

Development Suitability Analysis



Challenge: How to support zoning and code enforcement staff so that the ordinances can help regulate the character the vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS



- Creation of design guidelines and overlay/historic districts
- Update to zoning regulations and building code
- Expand the current Citizen Academy to include planning, real estate economics, and municipal financing.
- Work with GDOT and GPC to coordinate the beautification of US441
- Discuss the cost of expanding/aging infrastructure (i.e. sewer expansion; septic fields)

Challenge: How to better maximize the benefits of the local Housing Authority

RECOMMENDATIONS



- Discuss the potential of redeveloping the site with local HUD office.
- Complete a site analysis to determine if it is possible to redevelop the three (3) public housing sites to increase the density and provide additional units.
- Consider increasing the affordability range and market units to a redevelopment
- Partnership with an affordable housing developer
- Remain competitive with other mountain communities and open to new opportunities



Recommendations

Monday Morning

- Establish monthly meetings on housing
**w/Forward Rabun taking lead*
- Kick-off county wide land suitability analysis
- Building inventory analysis
- Plan for education and community outreach strategy
- Plan desired project tours
- Plan for a county housing coordinator

By end of 2023

- Need a housing and community development vision
- Refresh and assess all zoning procedures and building codes
- Policies and procedures: research and establish enabling entities (BIDs, TADs, SpTDs)
- Host a housing symposium and/or ULI's UrbanPlan for Community Leaders workshop

2024 and beyond

- Broadband Investments
- Utility coordination
- Catalyze housing authority
- Create design standards
- Build a demonstration project

Q&A

Daphne Bond-Godfrey
Executive Director, ULI Atlanta
Daphne.bondgodfrey@uli.org

Jonathan Bartlett
Panel Chair
Senior Consultant, Business and Real
Estate Strategy, Jacobs