



City of Kingsport Comprehensive Plan





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A stylized, light blue map of a city grid is overlaid on a dark blue background. The map features a mix of straight and curved lines representing streets and highways. The large number '01' is centered in the upper half of the image, rendered in a light blue, semi-transparent font that allows the map lines to be seen through it.

01

**THE
KINGSPORT
SPIRIT**

The Kingsport Spirit



INTRODUCTION

Kingsport's Comprehensive Plan is a strategic blueprint outlining a shared vision of the community's desired future. It addresses key topics such as land use, zoning, community character, economic development, housing, quality of life, and infrastructure, and includes recommendations to guide the city's growth and development in the coming years.

WHY DO WE PLAN?

Kingsport's history of successful, forward thinking planning was established by its first leaders when the City was refounded as a professionally planned city in 1917. The Kingsport Spirit has provided the community with a shared sense of purpose - making decisions that do the most good for the greatest number of people, which has allowed the community to grow and thrive.

The City's future land use map was last updated in 2014, and this plan will update the map to reflect current community priorities. It will also respond to current market conditions and the challenges and opportunities facing the city.

The city has developed several small area plans, corridor plans, and a new strategic plan in recent years, and this comprehensive plan will create an overarching plan to align these efforts and create a unified vision for future development and decision making

HOW IS THE PLAN USED?

The comprehensive plan is an important tool used to guide the establishment of development regulations. It will serve as a basis for future zoning decisions to ensure that development aligns with our community's vision and values, though it does not constitute formal zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

The plan is a policy document that also provides recommendations and initiatives aimed at enhancing community character, promoting jobs and economic development, increasing attainable housing options, improving quality of life, and upgrading infrastructure. It provides guidance for public investments in transportation and other infrastructure improvements to aide in guiding future development, and an implementation plan for use by public officials.

The comprehensive Plan is not a static document, but is intended to function as a living document that can be updated when needed to reflect changes in the community. It's focus on community vision and values will help to ensure that Kingsport remains a dynamic and welcoming place, well-equipped to meet the needs of its residents now and in the future.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2025, the City of Kingsport developed a strategic plan that identified key community values and established a series of seven strategic focus areas to address community needs. It is a high-level, guiding document for the city's operational and capital investments over the next 3-5 years.

This Comprehensive Plan is complimentary to that effort and intended primarily to guide the city's physical growth and development over the next 5-10 years. Recent community input and feedback from the strategic plan served as the starting point for the comprehensive planning process, and the priorities, recommendations, and action items identified in the comprehensive plan expand upon the direction provided in the strategic plan

KINGSPORT 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

VALUES

SAFETY

Providing a safe community and working environment

PEOPLE

In all we do - provide quality customer service to our community

INTEGRITY

In all aspects of our operation

RESPONSIBILITY

By being accountable stewards of the resources entrusted to us

INNOVATION

By committing to continuous improvement

TEAMWORK

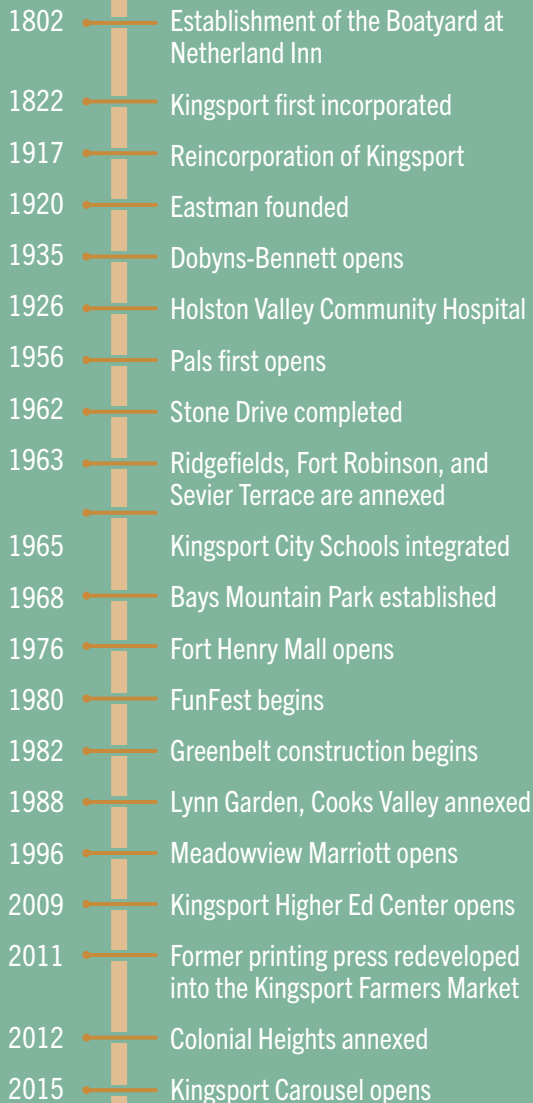
By collaborating to serve our community

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

1. Efficient and Responsive Government
2. Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Exceptional Cultural and Recreational Opportunities
4. Safe and Welcoming Community
5. Thriving Local Economy
6. Strong and Vibrant Neighborhoods
7. World Class Education

The Model City

KING'S PORT ON THE HOLSTON



1802	Establishment of the Boatyard at Netherland Inn
1822	Kingsport first incorporated
1917	Reincorporation of Kingsport
1920	Eastman founded
1935	Dobyns-Bennett opens
1926	Holston Valley Community Hospital
1956	Pals first opens
1962	Stone Drive completed
1963	Ridgefields, Fort Robinson, and Sevier Terrace are annexed
1965	Kingsport City Schools integrated
1968	Bays Mountain Park established
1976	Fort Henry Mall opens
1980	FunFest begins
1982	Greenbelt construction begins
1988	Lynn Garden, Cooks Valley annexed
1996	Meadowview Marriott opens
2009	Kingsport Higher Ed Center opens
2011	Former printing press redeveloped into the Kingsport Farmers Market
2012	Colonial Heights annexed
2015	Kingsport Carousel opens

* Dates and events references from Kingsport 100.org

Kingsport is a vibrant city of 57,000 located in the heart of the Great Valley Region of Appalachia. Situated at the base of the northern end of Bays Mountain, the city encompasses over 53 square miles at the confluence of the North and South forks of the Holston River.

The region was originally home to the Cherokee Indians, whose presence is still reflected in the names of some local places and streets. The city can trace its history back to the early 1800s when William King established a boatyard along the Holston River, “King’s Port,” which developed into a local center of shipping and commerce. The City of Kingsport was officially chartered in 1822 with the joining of the villages of Christianville and Rossville. However, an economic downturn following the Civil War and the establishment of rail lines in nearby Bristol and Johnson City led to the loss of Kingsport’s initial charter in 1879.

A MODEL CITY

Kingsport can trace its current form back to reincorporation in 1917 as the first thoroughly diversified, professionally planned, and privately financed city in 20th-century America. The city’s development was jump-started by the wall street owners of the *Carolina, Clinchfield, and Ohio Railroad*, who planned and financed the new City of Kingsport to boost industry and commerce following construction of the railway. Renowned landscape architect John Nolen was hired to design a modern, “Model” city, incorporating the principles of the City Beautiful movement. The plan included a modern street grid, neighborhoods with affordable, high-quality housing, and designated spaces for commercial development, industry, parks, and civic buildings.

Kingsport also benefited from the industrious spirit of its residents and strong city leadership who established a high-quality school system and a new council-manager form of government. However, the real key to Kingsport’s success was the hardworking, community-minded spirit of its residents. They had enthusiasm and a unity of purpose to make Kingsport a great place to live, described by city founder J. Fred Johnson as a commitment to “mutual helpfulness and the willingness to put community over self.”

CONTEMPORARY KINGSFORT

Following reincorporation, the city experienced rapid growth marked by the development of walkable neighborhoods and a large, modern downtown that remains the region's largest. From the outset, the city pursued an industrial-based economy rooted in the area's natural resources. The establishment of the Tennessee Eastman Corporation in 1920 was a pivotal moment, anchoring the city's industrial success for more than a century. Eastman employed more than 12,000 workers at its peak in the 1960s and remains the city's largest employer today with over 6,000 employees at its Kingsport facilities. This strong industrial base helped the city emerge—and remain—a leading regional employment center. During its early decades, the city also invested in cultural institutions, including the founding of Symphony of the Mountains (1946), the Theatre Guild (1947), and the Arts Guild (1949). Although population growth slowed in the 1970s, the city continued to expand its infrastructure and recreational amenities, including the Greenbelt, Bays Mountain Park, and the launch of FunFest in 1981. Despite major economic shifts in the 1990s and 2000s that reduced regional manufacturing employment by over 40%, the city has demonstrated long-term resilience.

“Frequently, we are asked what motivating spirit has been apparent in the building of this city of industries, schools, churches, and homes. Were I to undertake to define the spirit underlying every step in the growth of Kingsport, from the days of its humblest beginning until now, I could not avoid the assertion that the spirit, is one of mutual helpfulness and willingness to submerge selfish interest beneath the individual effort to assure the greater good for the greatest number”

- J. Fred Johnson, 1937



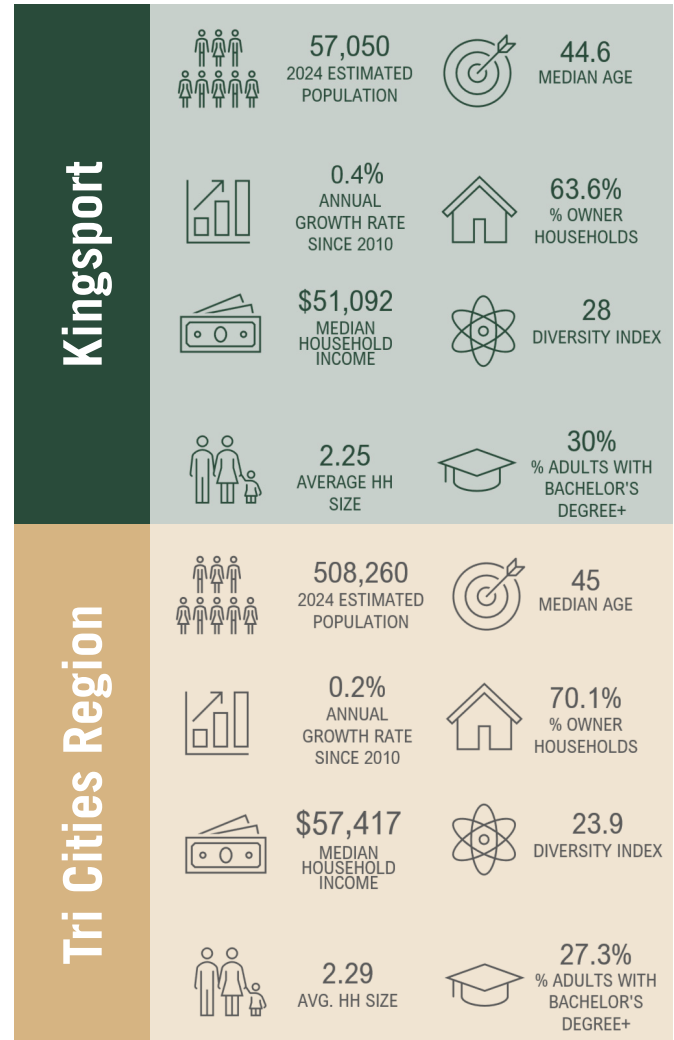
In recent decades, Kingsport has positioned itself for renewed 21st-century growth by building on its historic strengths. The city's longstanding commitment to education continues through Kingsport City Schools, one of the highest-performing school systems in Tennessee, and through new initiatives such as the Academic Village, Inventor Center, and Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing. Supported by a strong transportation network and high-quality public infrastructure, Kingsport remains a competitive location for economic development and high-wage jobs. Strategic partnerships and catalytic projects have

driven downtown revitalization, including the Brickyard development, Town Park Lofts, Main Street reconstruction, and the Farmers Market and Carousel. Continued investments in quality-of-life assets—such as the Public Transit Center, Aquatics Center, Greenbelt expansions, and new schools, parks, and sports facilities—have further strengthened the city's attractiveness to residents and employers. Today, Kingsport is experiencing renewed population growth as it attracts residents from across the country drawn by its natural setting, affordability, and strong community spirit. This influx presents both opportunities and challenges, but over the next 25 years, the city can address them by continuing to build on the enduring “Kingsport Spirit.”

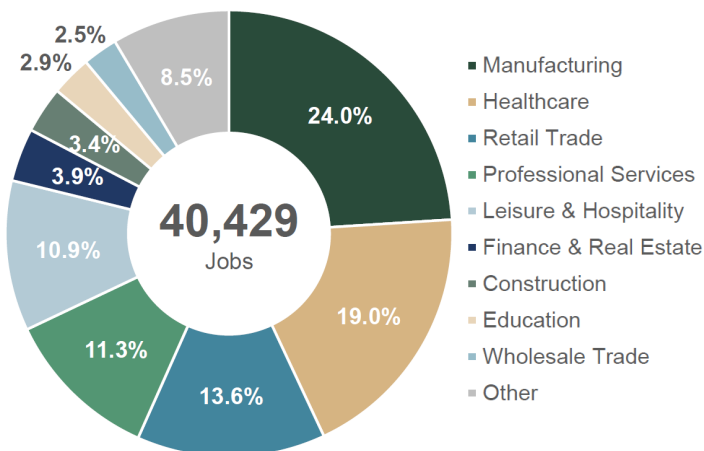
Existing Conditions

KINGSPORT TODAY

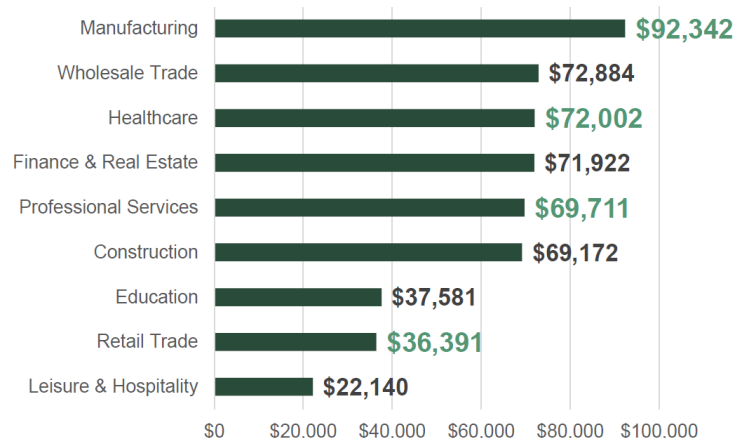
A baseline conditions assessment was conducted to provide a snapshot of current conditions and trends within the community. This included reviewing previous and current community plans, mapping physical and policy conditions, conducting demographic and socio-economic analyses, a high-level market assessment, and series of interviews with key stakeholders. The value of comprehensive plans lies in identifying strategies that align physical realities, market conditions, and community values and priorities. Establishing a comprehensive baseline allows the community to understand current strengths, weaknesses, key challenges, and opportunities. This helps identify available options, potential consequences, trade-offs, and resources for making economically sustainable decisions and advancing community objectives.



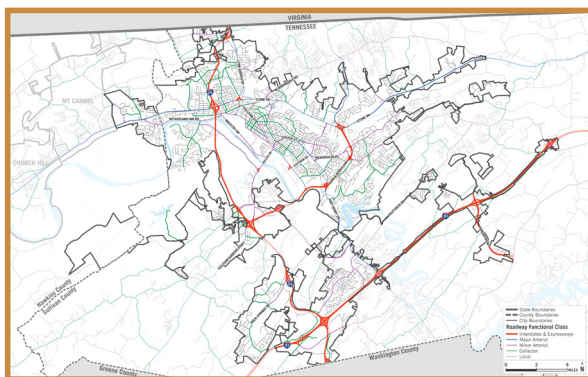
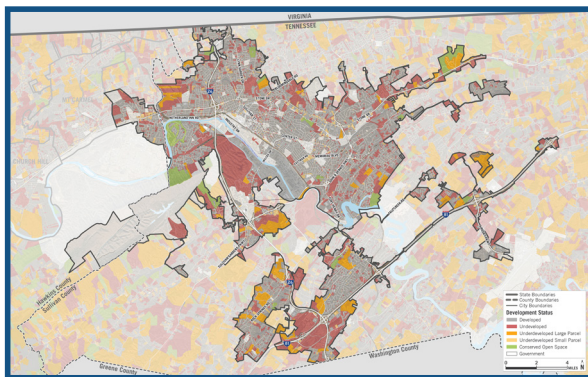
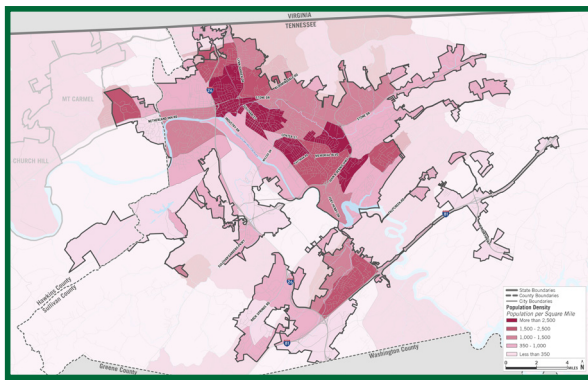
Kingsport Jobs by Industry, 2022
Source: LEHD On The Map



Wages by Industry, Sullivan County, 2023
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Existing conditions maps provide a clear, factual baseline of a community's current physical, social, economic, and environmental context, establishing a shared understanding of existing land use, infrastructure, mobility, and resources at the outset of the planning process. These maps help identify key issues, constraints, and opportunities by illustrating where development patterns, systems, and assets intersect, and they serve as the analytical foundation for evaluating trends and changes over time.



EXISTING CONDITIONS MAPPING

◇ LAND USE

◇ ZONING

◇ POPULATION GROWTH

◇ DENSITY

◇ EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

◇ DEVELOPMENT STATUS

◇ PROPERTY VALUES

◇ HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

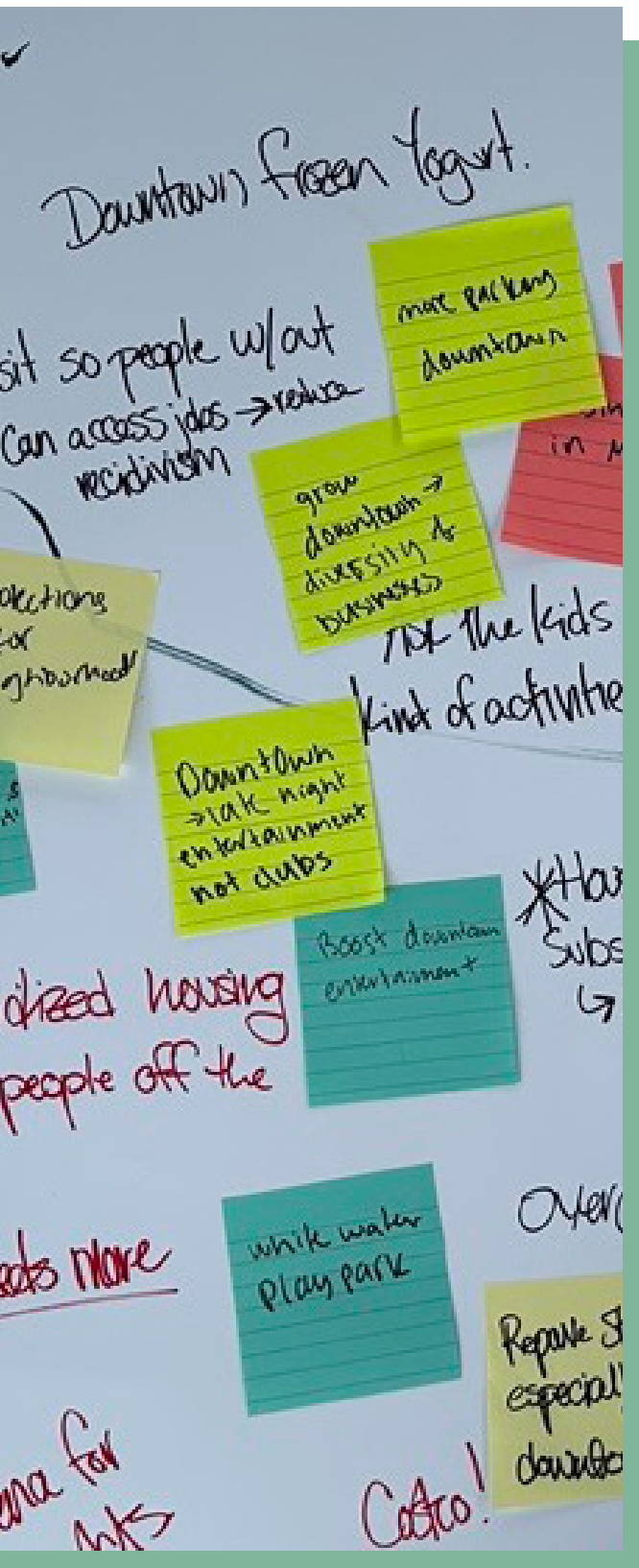
◇ TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

◇ TOPOGRAPHY

◇ ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

* Additional analysis and large-scale maps can be found in Appendix A.

Public Feedback



THE PEOPLE'S PLAN

Community engagement was essential to developing the comprehensive plan. Insights from Kingsport residents helped shape the vision, guiding principles, and ultimately the plan's recommendations. A combination of online and in-person community and stakeholder meetings, along with pop-up events, were held to meaningfully engage residents and gather robust guidance for the plan.

The process kicked off with an in-person Community Workshop and a series of stakeholder meetings. At the Community Workshop, participants were asked to share their vision for Kingsport. Key stakeholders, including representatives from the City, economic development organizations, major industries, education, housing, development, and parks and recreation, also took part in early discussions. Additionally, the Steering Committee, which met throughout the process, began its work at this stage to provide ongoing direction. These initial touchpoints with stakeholders and residents helped identify Kingsport's challenges and opportunities, as well as the community's vision for the city.

Online engagement was also a critical part of the community engagement process. A project website remained active throughout the duration of the project to share key updates and resources. For those unable to attend the in-person Community Workshop, a virtual option was offered so participants could still share their thoughts and provide input.

Pop-up events at Kingsport's Fun Fest created opportunities to meet people where they were, confirm emerging plan priorities, and gather more ideas about what residents would like to see in their community.

Finally, a Community Open House gave Kingsport residents the chance to review the final vision, guiding principles, and plan recommendations, and to offer feedback on the final product.

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

7

Stakeholder Interviews



2

Community Workshops
and Open Houses



4

Pop-Up Events at Fun Fest



3

Steering Committee Meetings



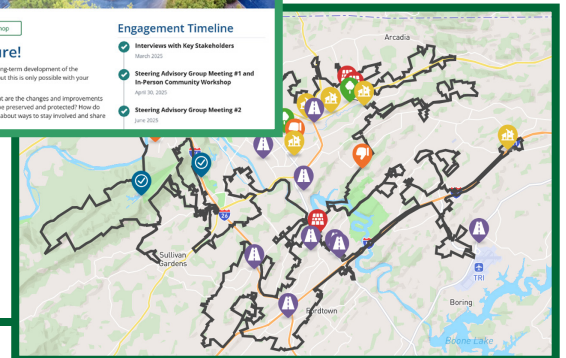
953

Website Views



99

Virtual Community
Workshop Responses



Issues and Opportunities

The baseline conditions analysis, informed by stakeholder and community input, identified the key challenges and opportunities shaping Kingsport's future and reflects the aspirations of those who live and work in the city. As remote work reshapes national economic and social trends, Kingsport is at a critical inflection point, competing with other Tri-Cities to attract residents, businesses, and amenities by offering a high quality of life. These identified issues and opportunities provided the foundation for strategies and priorities designed to leverage the city's assets and advance the community's vision

ISSUES

- Limited supply of quality, affordable housing in desirable areas for middle-income families
- Shortages of key housing types, including high-end units, higher-density housing in walkable areas, and senior housing (patio homes and assisted living)
- Much of the affordable housing stock is outdated, poorly maintained, or located in less desirable areas, with ownership concentrated among owners unwilling or unable to reinvest
- Residential development is constrained by limited large parcels, challenging topography, utility access issues, and strict state annexation requirements that increase costs
- Limited dining, retail, and recreational options—particularly for teens, young adults, and single professionals—drive residents to Johnson City or Bristol; additional senior services are also needed
- Downtown contains numerous vacant lots and buildings and lacks strong anchors and a diverse mix of late-opening entertainment and retail uses
- Many corridors and older neighborhoods suffer from derelict properties and deferred maintenance, creating perceptions of disinvestment and the need for public realm and aesthetic improvements
- Several commercial and activity centers require reinvestment, including Lynn Garden, Bloomingdale, Allandale, Fort Henry Mall, and parts of Colonial Heights
- Limited intergovernmental coordination has increased competition for sales tax revenues and reinforced expectations of tax abatements for new development
- Ongoing outmigration of younger, highly educated residents due to limited employment diversity and perceived overreliance on industrial sectors
- Despite a strong employment base with above-median wages, many residents have fixed incomes, and roughly half of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch
- Concerns about preserving Kingsport's hometown character, resistance to change, and the absence of an executable strategic vision constrain progress and competitiveness
- Gaps in training, business preparedness, professionalism, and access to capital limit the long-term viability of new businesses
- Consolidation of healthcare services in Johnson City has reduced local access and well-paying jobs, creating challenges for Kingsport's large senior population
- Limited coordination among transit agencies and state regulatory constraints restrict regional accessibility
- Infrequent service and limited hours reduce mobility options for low-income residents and seniors
- Growing homelessness, addiction, and mental health needs have outpaced local service capacity, with visible downtown impacts affecting perceptions of the area
- Real and perceived impacts from local industry—particularly odors and water pollution—continue to affect quality of life and housing desirability

OPPORTUNITIES

- Kingsport's family-friendly, small-town character attracts new residents and young families
- The city is home to one of the state's top public school systems, with strong academic, athletic, arts, and vocational programs
- Kingsport has a strong faith community and deep tradition of volunteerism and civic engagement
- A low crime rate, well-funded public safety services, and the region's safest downtown enhance quality of life
- The city supports a diverse and active arts community, including Kingsport Cultural Arts, Engage Kingsport, the Arts Guild, Theater Guild, and Symphony of the Mountains.
- A robust calendar of community events—anchored by FunFest—draws residents and visitors from across the region
- Family ties and community connections encourage younger residents to return after college
- Kingsport has the region's largest and most walkable downtown, with unmatched potential, historic buildings, and key assets such as the farmers market, carousel, Church Circle, parking deck, academic village, and transit center
- Successful downtown lofts, apartments, and the forthcoming Brickyard development demonstrate market demand, with significant opportunities for infill and redevelopment to enhance vibrancy
- Sullivan Gardens and the Tri-Cities Crossing area present major opportunities for high-end residential and regionally scaled development with the right partnerships and strategy
- Several commercial nodes, particularly around Fort Henry Mall and Allandale, are well-positioned for reinvestment and infill development
- Kingsport boasts a strong network of desirable neighborhoods, including Ridgefields, Fair Acres, Preston Forest, Orebank, and Fall Creek
- Historic, walkable neighborhoods around downtown offer strong infill opportunities that will grow more attractive as downtown continues redeveloping
- The city benefits from robust educational and workforce infrastructure, including the Academic Village, Innovation Village, and the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing
- Downtown Kingsport Association and the Kingsport Chamber serve as strong partners supporting business and workforce development
- A longstanding manufacturing legacy and a diverse industrial base continue to provide high-quality employment opportunities
- Kingsport's central eastern U.S. location, supported by an airport, rail access, and proximity to two major interstates, strengthens its competitiveness for business attraction
- The city offers extensive outdoor recreation and park amenities, including Bays Mountain and the Holston River corridor, with underutilized riverfront areas presenting unique redevelopment potential
- Best-in-class sports facilities host regional tournaments and events, enhancing quality of life and supporting economic development
- The Greenbelt is a unique regional asset providing multimodal connectivity and opportunities for trail-oriented development, with Reedy Creek offering potential for a transformative new greenspace



Participants in the Public Workshop were asked:

“What is one word you would use to describe your vision for Kingsport in the future?”



Vision and Guiding Principles

This Vision Statement expresses the values most important to the community and sets a direction for the rest of the plan. With the adoption of The Kingsport Comprehensive Plan, this statement will be a reminder of the community's hopes for the future and, on a day-to-day basis, will inform decision-making, community action, and plan implementation.

THE COMMUNITY VISION

The Vision and Guiding Principles on the following pages have been derived from the community through public engagement events, stakeholder meetings, and other recently completed citywide planning efforts, including the Kingsport Strategic Plan. The initial seeds for the statement came from the first community open house, where participants were asked to envision and describe “Kingsport... at its best... in the future.” They considered issues such as economic development and jobs, housing and community character, transportation, and quality of life.

The feedback was used to develop the following vision statement, which was refined using further input from the steering committee and public engagement.

In 2050, Kingsport will be a vibrant, attractive, and welcoming community where one can live, work, play, and learn.

Rooted in its heritage of forward thinking and innovation as the region's Model City, the community will celebrate its natural assets and provide diverse housing options, recreational activities, and economic opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to flourish.

Kingsport will have the amenities and opportunities of a modern city while maintaining its family friendly, small-town feel and strong community spirit.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Focus Areas

The Kingsport Comprehensive Plan is intended primarily to address the physical development of the City. As such, the plan was organized around **5 Focus Areas** which make up the building blocks of the plan.



Land Use and Community Character

Each of these focus areas is accompanied by a series of Guiding Principles that align with the community vision. These principles were developed and vetted through community engagement events, including stakeholder meetings, the Project Management Teams and Steering Committee, focus group discussions, and community meetings and pop-up events. These principles also incorporated feedback from Kingsport's recently completed strategic plan, which had a robust survey and engagement program to understand the community's priorities.



Jobs and Economic Development

These principles are intended to support the community's priorities and inform the city's decision-making over the next 10 years. They are supported by a series of more detailed recommendations in the following chapters to help the city take measurable actions to help the city work towards its future vision.



Attainable Housing



Quality of Life



Infrastructure

Guiding Principles



LAND USE & COMMUNITY CHARACTER

1. Promote responsible, measured growth and development that meets the needs of the community while maintaining Kingsport's small-town feel and strong community spirit.
2. Continue to prioritize new development and infill in Downtown Kingsport to strengthen the area's vibrancy and appeal and increase community pride.
3. As developable land within the city decreases, proactively encourage infill and redevelopment opportunities.
4. Explore strategic opportunities for annexation to provide additional areas for single family development within the city.
5. Leverage city tools to encourage turnover of vacant or dilapidated properties and support regulatory adjustments to encourage mixed-use development.



JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Strengthen and increase awareness of existing workforce development and higher education opportunities available to Kingsport residents.
2. Leverage Kingsport's unique assets to boost regional competitiveness and drive economic growth.
3. Invest in improved city aesthetics and placemaking efforts to attract businesses and support economic development and quality of life.
4. Improve corridors and gateways into Downtown Kingsport to enhance the sense of place and frame downtown as a destination.
5. Provide incentives for redevelopment and reinvestment across the city to support economic development.



ATTAINABLE HOUSING

1. Promote a variety of housing types at a range of price points to provide all Kingsport residents, from young professionals and young families to older households, with access to diverse housing choices at all stages of life.
2. Encourage development of "missing middle" housing products including townhomes, duplexes, and quadplexes.
3. Encourage multifamily development in areas within walkable distance to jobs, services and amenities to appeal to young professionals and younger families.



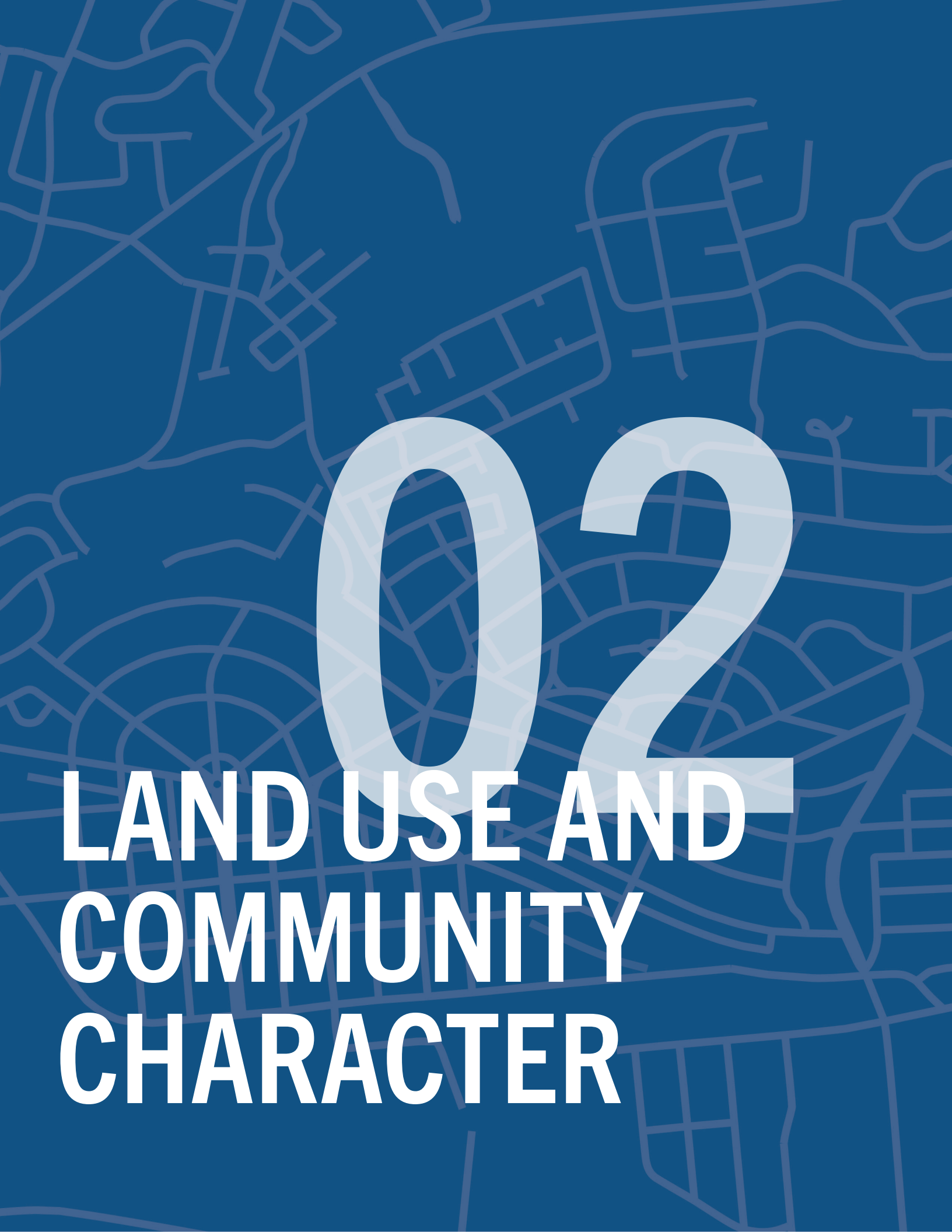
QUALITY OF LIFE

1. Preserve and enhance Kingsport's numerous greenspaces and outdoor recreation opportunities, including Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, and other state and local parks and trails, and advertise Kingsport as a destination for these activities.
2. Continue providing and expanding Kingsport's wide range of community events.
3. Promote the establishment of greater diversity of local choices for retail, dining, entertainment, recreational opportunities and public social spaces.
4. Prioritize the availability of services for seniors, including assisted living options and improved public transportation.
5. Pursue opportunities to expand the availability of a robust and comprehensive network of health and human services that support the needs of all Kingsport residents.
6. Continue to prioritize education and promote the reputation of Kingsport's excellent public school system.
7. Partner with industrial businesses to reduce negative environmental impacts.
8. Maintain Kingsport's high quality of public safety.



INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Invest in the maintenance of city streets and sidewalks.
2. Continue to invest in transportation infrastructure to increase transportation choices and provide convenient, multimodal connections between residential areas and businesses.
3. Provide and maintain infrastructure and other public investments to support economic development and improve quality of life.
4. Ensure city buildings and facilities are regularly and well maintained.
5. Pursue strategic investments in infrastructure to make the city more competitive in the region.

A dark blue background with a light blue, stylized map overlay. The map features a network of lines representing roads and boundaries, with some areas enclosed in rectangles to suggest building footprints or land parcels.

02

**LAND USE AND
COMMUNITY
CHARACTER**



Land Use and Community Character

OVERVIEW

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to guide development patterns throughout the city and inform decisions on the timing, phasing, and scale of infrastructure investments. These decisions impact where residents can live, the types of jobs that are attracted, and the services and amenities available. They also influence land use patterns and connectivity within the community, affecting how people interact, travel, and prioritize their transportation choices.

Kingsport's original form and historic planning legacy owe much to the strong foundation laid by renowned urban planner John Nolen at the turn of the 20th century. Its history as a Planned Garden City has profoundly shaped the city's physical development and land use patterns. Today, Kingsport boasts a well-connected transportation network, the region's largest and most dynamic downtown, charming and historic walkable neighborhoods around the downtown core, and numerous parks, trails, and quality of life amenities.

Kingsport has a strong job base with large industrial, medical, and professional service sectors, but is seeking to attract new businesses and commercial and retail options to enhance the community's quality of life and improve its competitiveness relative to other cities in the region. Like many cities across the nation, Kingsport is also focused on ensuring that the city has quality housing options that provide opportunities for both existing and future residents to live in the city. This chapter establishes the foundation for land use policies and decision-making in Kingsport over the next ten years, guiding both policy implementation and the development of physical infrastructure to support expected growth. It emphasizes the general use of land and the character and quality of Kingsport's diverse neighborhoods. The Kingsport Comprehensive Plan is crafted with the flexibility needed for a city that is both growing and evolving in a dynamic marketplace.

Included in this chapter are the overarching growth strategy, the Future Land Use Plan with detailed place type descriptions, and the Guiding Principles that provide a framework for implementing the plan. Recommended Action Items are presented to support the achievement of these guiding principles.

Guiding Principles and Recommendations

These principles provide goals for land use and development decisions across the city. Each guiding principle has a set of specific recommendations to achieve these goals.

Growth and Development Strategies

These strategies combine stakeholder feedback, analysis of existing conditions and other community characteristics to identify key opportunities for growth and improvement.

Future Placetype Map

The Future Placetype Map identifies twelve distinct placetypes across Kingsport. It provides the vision, preferred land use, and other characteristics for each placetype to guide future development decisions.

we are
**MODEL
CITY**



Land Use and Community Character

LU1.0

Promote responsible, measured growth and development that meets the needs of the community while maintaining Kingsport's small-town feel and strong community spirit.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage redevelopment of underutilized assets and properties, including surface parked or overparked properties.
- Focus on context-sensitive and context-appropriate development with a compatible mix of uses to ensure development is compatible with adjacent uses.
- Proactively explore opportunities for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- Incentivize community-centric design principles in development to meet the diverse needs of all members of the community
- Encourage community involvement in planning processes to ensure development aligns with community values.
- Work with the Historic Zoning Commission to develop historic design guidelines, including preferred colors, façade standards, etc.
- Work with the Historic Zoning Commission to develop historic design guidelines and strategies, including preferred colors, façade standards, etc

LU2.0

Continue to prioritize new development and infill in Downtown Kingsport to strengthen the area's vibrancy and appeal and increase community pride.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Explore opportunities for tactical urbanism projects and temporary activations of vacant spaces as placemaking efforts to increase public interest and attract private investment in underutilized areas.
- Proactively update land use regulations and invest in public amenities such as high-quality streetscapes to encourage walkable, mixed-use development in priority community nodes and corridors, as outlined in the priority nodes and corridors map.
- Evaluate opportunities for public-private partnerships to fund key infrastructure improvements in downtown areas.
- Prioritize improvements to the Broad Street streetscape to bolster future development and redevelopment downtown.
- Build on the growing investment in downtown Kingsport by continuing to implement the city's downtown plan, further enhancing its appeal as a regional commercial, entertainment, and employment destination.
- Identify and conduct streetscape efforts on key corridors into downtown.
- Explore additional tools and programs to support downtown development, such as a revolving loan fund for building improvements.

LU3.0

As developable land within the city decreases, proactively encourage infill and redevelopment opportunities



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote mixed-use infill development focused in areas where there is significant infrastructure to support it.
- Evaluate the potential for restructuring of the Tax Allocation District in the downtown area to ensure infill development and redevelopment has the appropriate infrastructure in place.
- Explore strategies to reduce barriers to redeveloping challenging buildings or parcels in downtown to encourage the use of existing structures instead of allowing them to sit vacant, detracting from a vibrant downtown environment.

LU4.0

Explore strategic opportunities for annexation to provide additional areas for single family development within the city.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct a feasibility study to identify suitable areas for annexation between interstate 26 and downtown, prioritizing areas with lower infrastructure development costs.
- Partner proactively with developers and land owners to annex and develop areas that support the city's growth and development goals.

LU5.0

Leverage city tools to encourage turnover of vacant or dilapidated properties and support regulatory adjustments to encourage mixed-use development.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage increased heights and densities in the downtown core in lieu of continued outward development.
- Evaluate the potential to develop a vacant property registry to track the condition and status of vacant parcels and assess graduated annual fees for properties left in a state of vacancy and neglect.
- Increase enforcement of property code violations, especially in areas where violations have an outsized negative influence on the perception and property values of adjacent properties or neighborhoods.
- Offer incentives such as tax credits for mixed-use development.



Growth and Development

OVERVIEW

The map shown in Figure 2.1 illustrated a series of community development strategies intended to focus growth and support reinvestment in key areas of Kingsport. These strategies aim to preserve the city's small-town character, expand access to neighborhood services, and leverage the city's existing infrastructure to minimize additional maintenance costs. Together, they establish an overarching growth framework to guide decision-making and focus development efforts.

These growth and development strategies, illustrated in Figure 2.1, include:

Activity Nodes – These areas serve as concentrated centers of activity for surrounding neighborhoods and the city, usually with a mix of commercial and residential uses. More intense development and reinvestment will be focused in these areas, supporting continued growth in the city of new services, amenities, and residential development while protecting the character of existing neighborhoods.

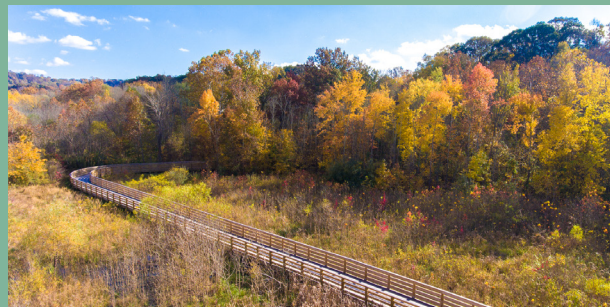
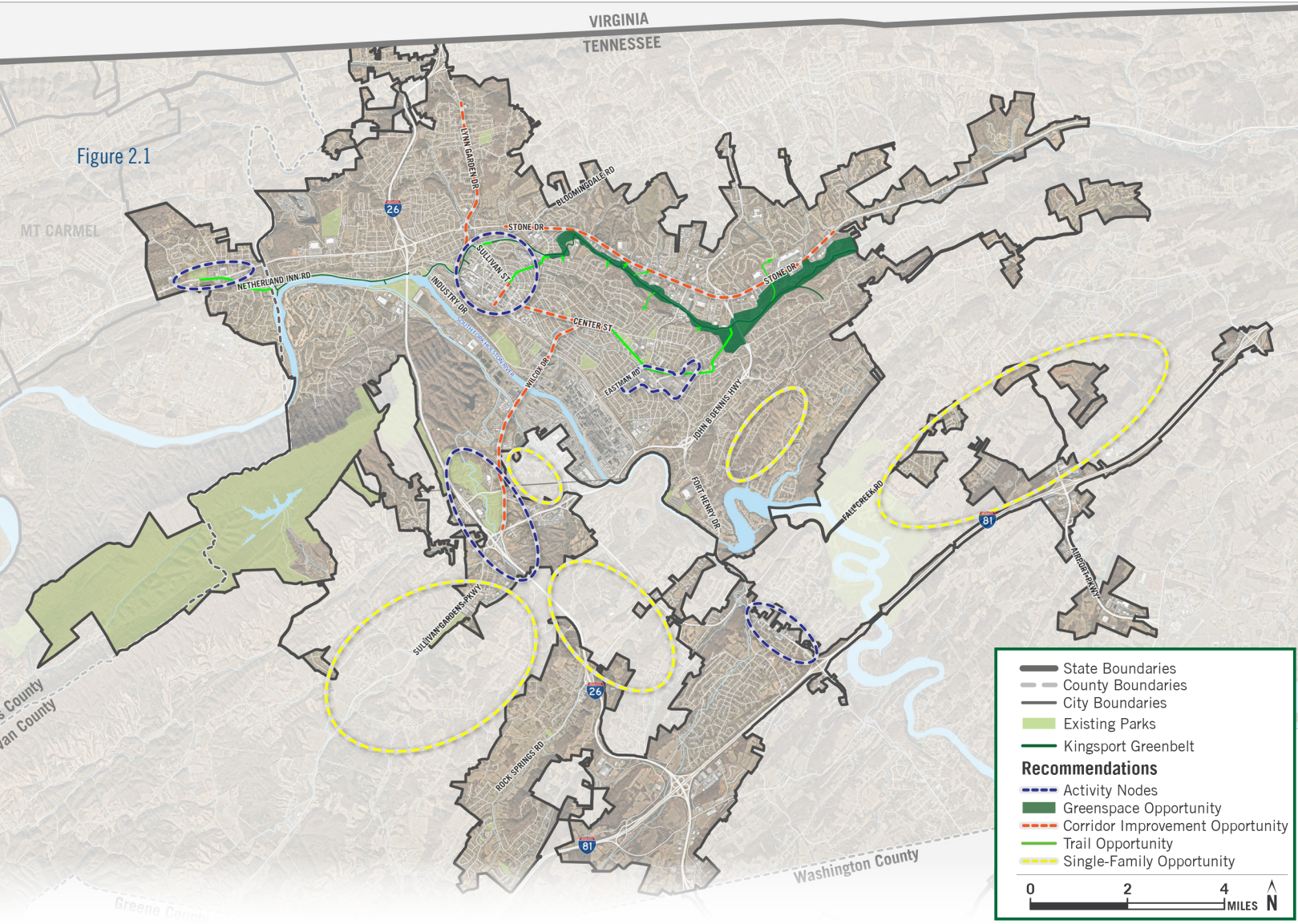
Corridor Improvements – Strategic partnerships and focused investments in catalytic projects, together with improvements to the public realm, can support neighborhood redevelopment and improve pedestrian connectivity along key corridors like Lynn Garden, East Stone Drive, and Wilcox Drive.

Greenspace Opportunities – Large, undeveloped floodplains along Reedy Creek could be preserved as a series of community green spaces to create a new cornerstone for Kingsport's robust park and recreation system.

Trail Opportunities – New trail connections linking residential and commercial areas to the Greenbelt and other greenspaces.

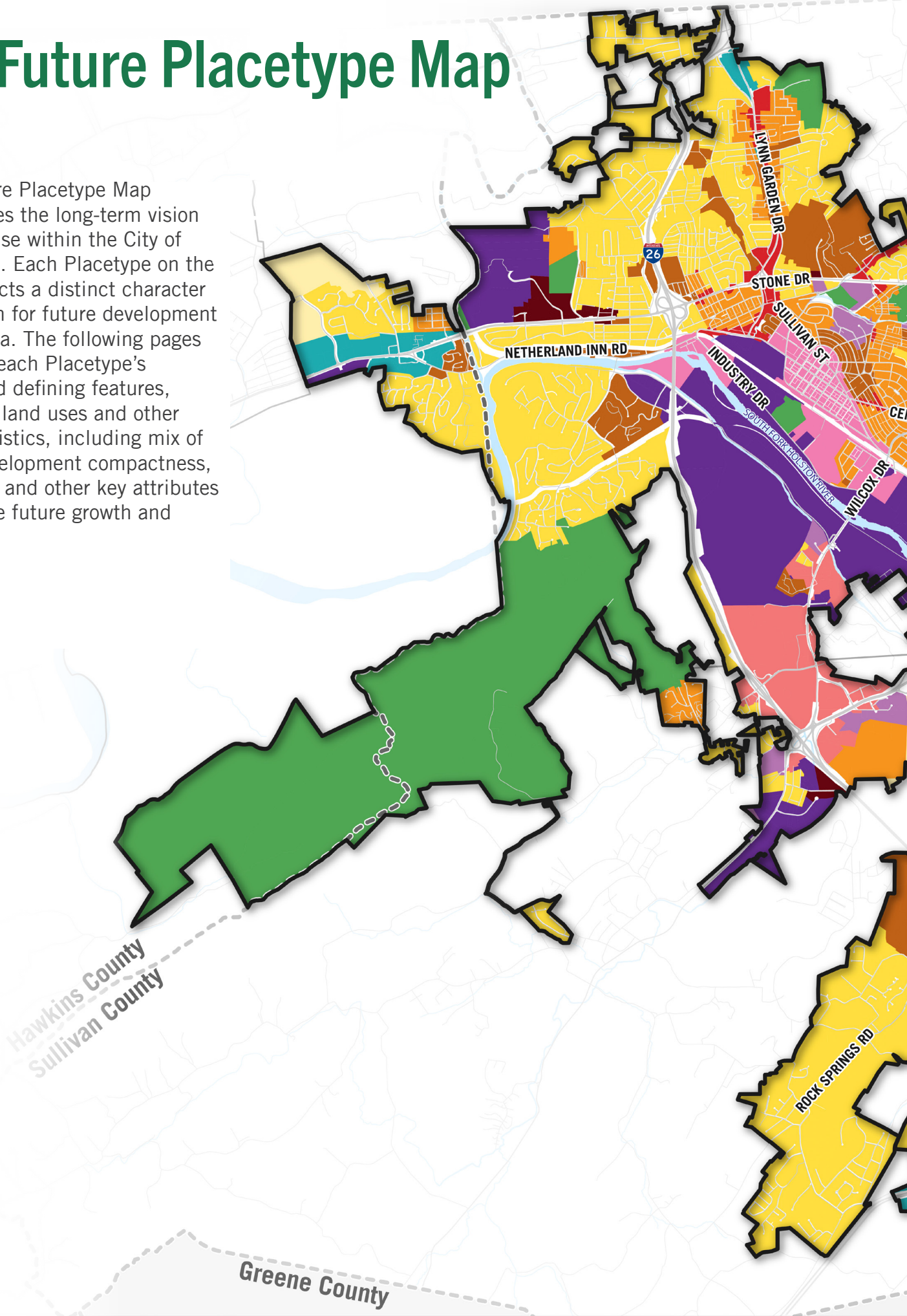
Single-Family Opportunities – Largely undeveloped areas near the southern and western edges of the city provide the best opportunities for new single family developments, but may require partnership and strategic annexation.

Figure 2.1

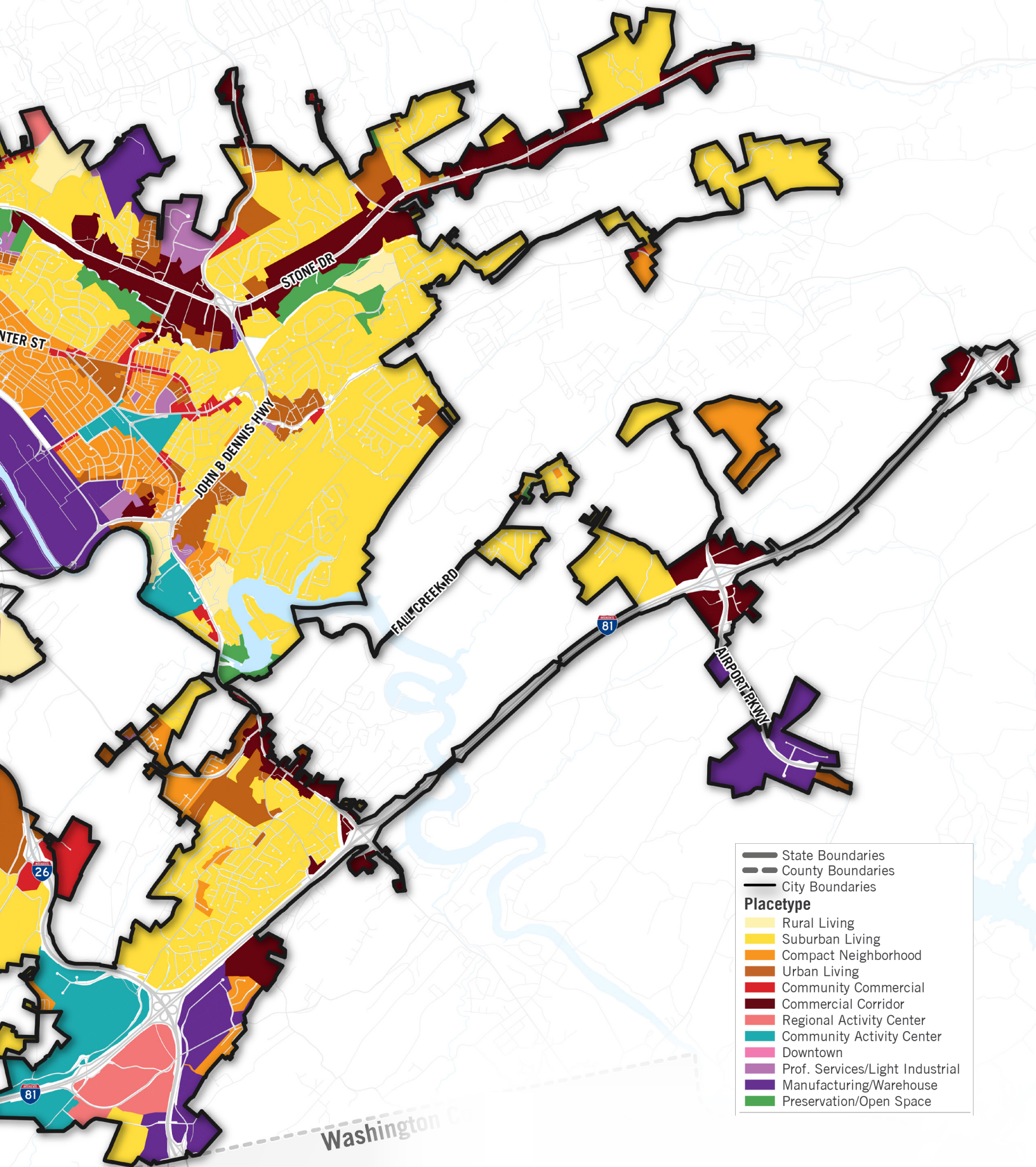


Future Placetype Map

The Future Placetype Map establishes the long-term vision for land use within the City of Kingsport. Each Placetype on the map reflects a distinct character and vision for future development in the area. The following pages describe each Placetype's intent and defining features, preferred land uses and other characteristics, including mix of uses, development compactness, setbacks, and other key attributes that guide future growth and design.



VIRGINIA
TENNESSEE



- State Boundaries
 - County Boundaries
 - City Boundaries
- Placetype**
- Rural Living
 - Suburban Living
 - Compact Neighborhood
 - Urban Living
 - Community Commercial
 - Commercial Corridor
 - Regional Activity Center
 - Community Activity Center
 - Downtown
 - Prof. Services/Light Industrial
 - Manufacturing/Warehouse
 - Preservation/Open Space

CHARACTER AND INTENT

The Downtown Area is the traditional core of the community and a center of economic, entertainment, and civic activity. This area serves as an employment, education, and shopping destination for the community, with a comprehensive and interconnected network of walkable streets. The Downtown Area is a center for local gatherings and activities, fostering community connection. The historic character of the area should be preserved, with new infill designed to complement existing historic structures.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Residential townhomes
- Urban apartments or condominiums
- Offices
- Civic and institutional uses
- Hospitality
- Entertainment

Secondary Uses

- Parks and open space

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential Lot Size



Use-Mix



Compactness



Setbacks



Use Type



Transportation



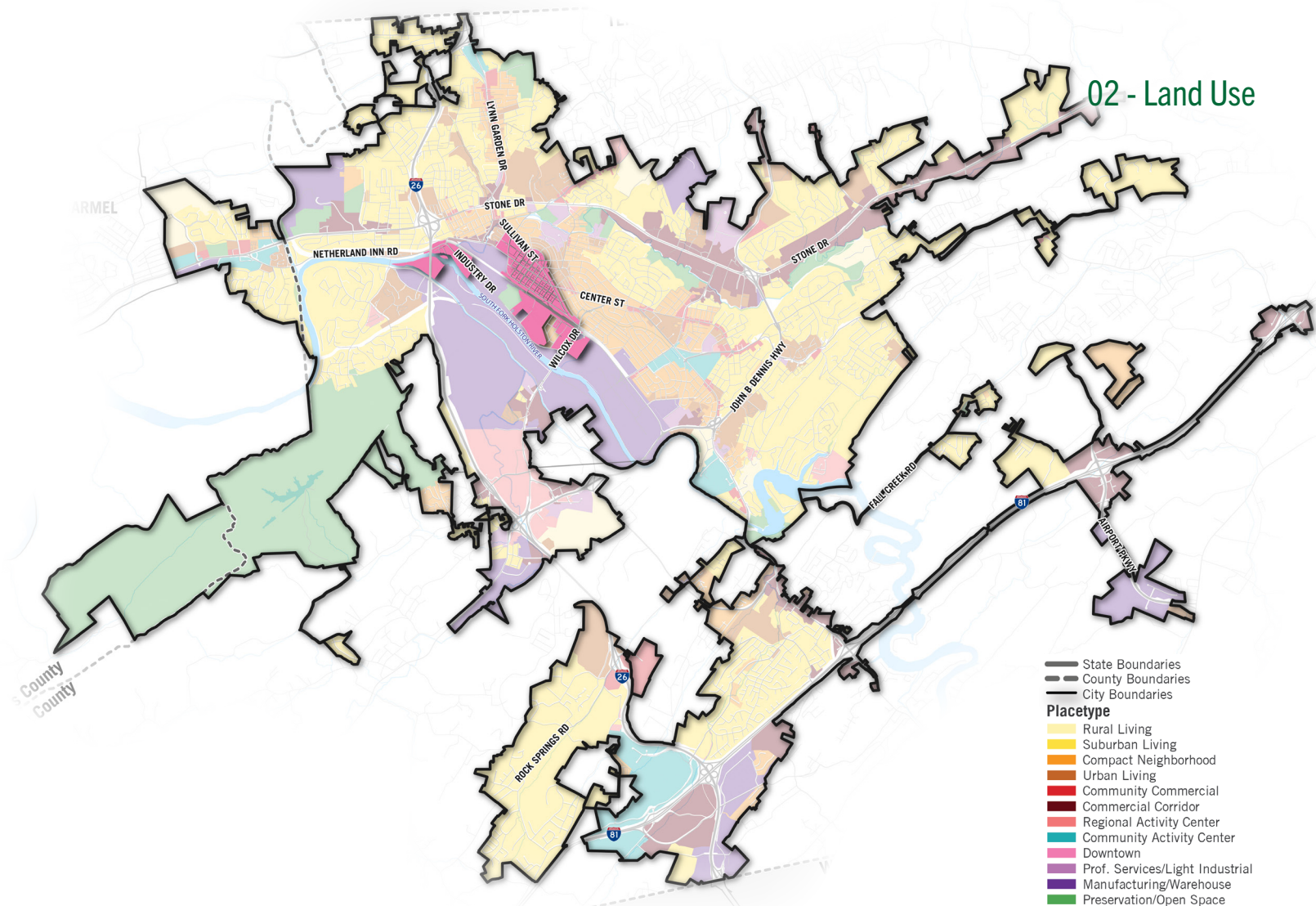
Residential Type



Open Space



02 - Land Use



Downtown Street



Mixed-Use Residential



Mixed-Use Residential



Outdoor Seating



Downtown Pocket Park



Community Activity Center

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Community Activity Centers offer the ability to live, work, and play in one geographically compact area, with a high intensity of uses organized around nodes of activity. This place type may serve as an employment center and shopping destination for adjacent neighborhoods and can include a mixture of different housing options within close proximity to the goods and services that residents use on a daily basis. Buildings typically stand two or more stories, with residences or offices located above street level storefronts. The design and scale of development in a mixed-use center encourages active living through a comprehensive network of walkable, complete streets.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

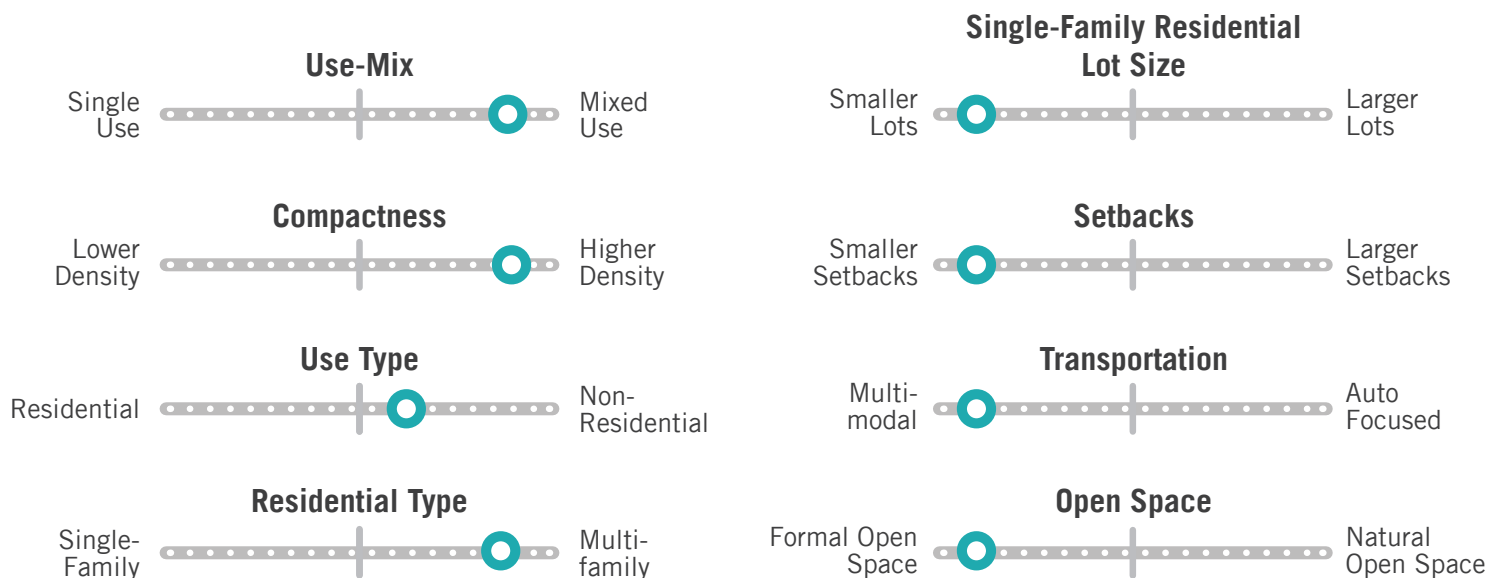
- Retail
- Commercial
- Condominiums
- Apartments
- Offices
- Hotels
- Entertainment centers
- Service and office uses

Secondary Uses

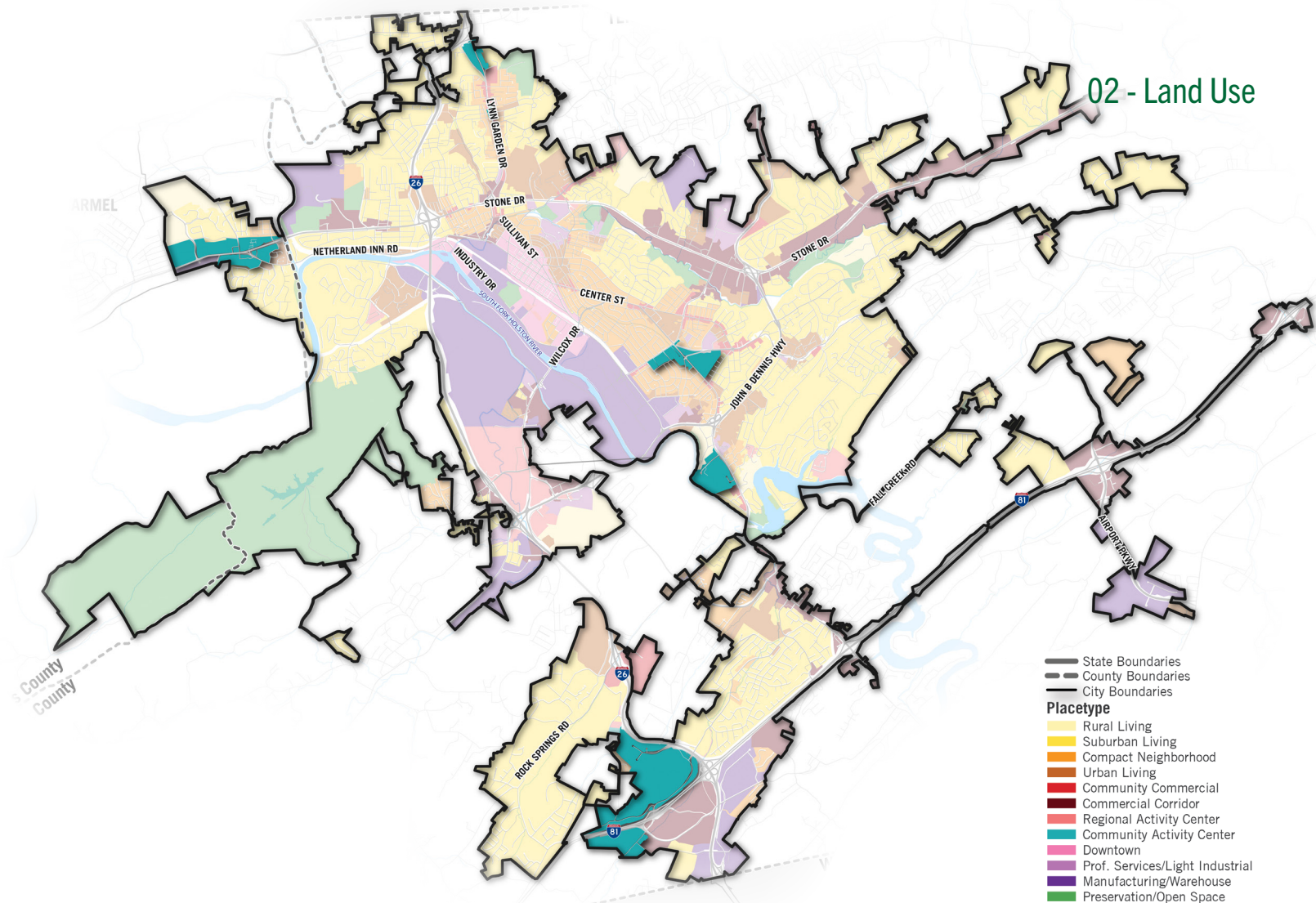
- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use



Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial



Mixed-Use Activity Center



Mixed-Use Office



Mixed-Use Commercial



Mixed-Use

Regional Activity Center

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Region-serving commercial development containing a variety of uses and activities and often characterized by big box store, multi-tenant commercial centers. Sometimes developed with a large scale master plan, they may include destination retail, restaurants, employment opportunities, and commercial uses. They may have anchors such as traditional shopping malls, event centers, or lifestyle areas, and may contain entertainment uses such as theaters, fine dining, or recreational facilities. This place type is typically located at high volume intersections, interchanges, or along both sides of highways or large arterial streets.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

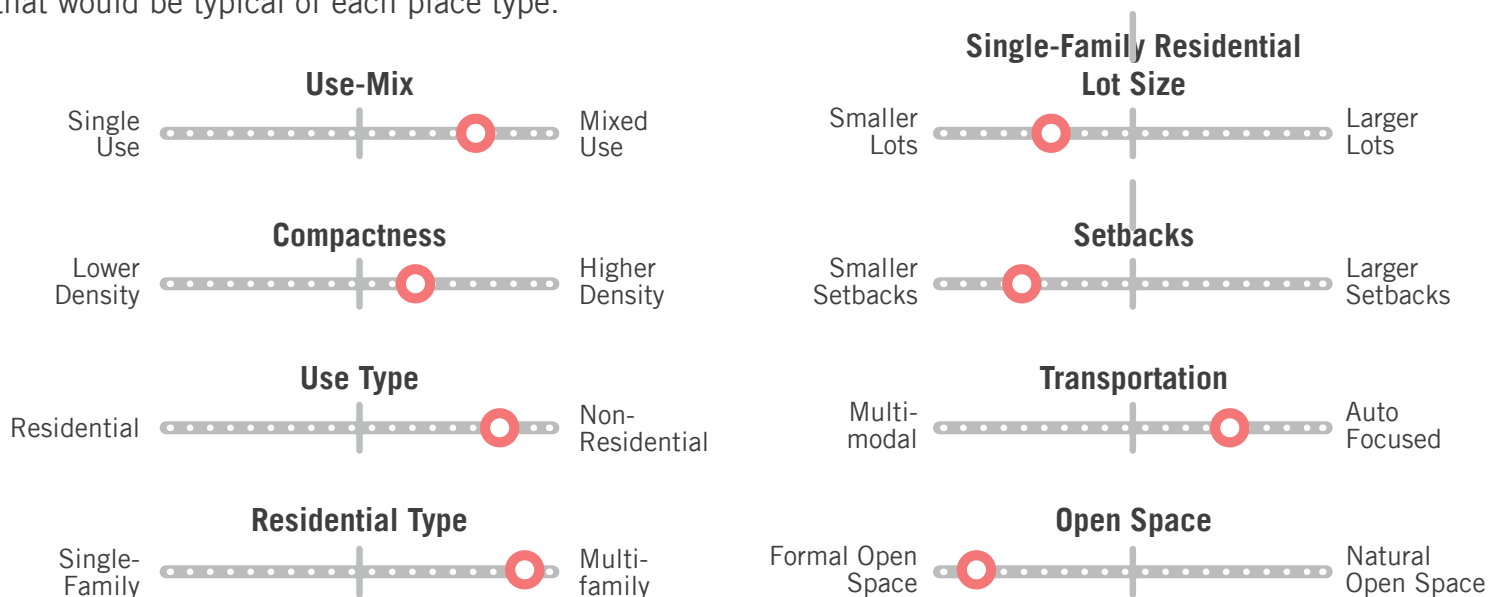
- Retail
- Commercial
- Business parks
- Hotels
- Entertainment centers
- Automotive uses
- Service and office uses

Secondary Uses

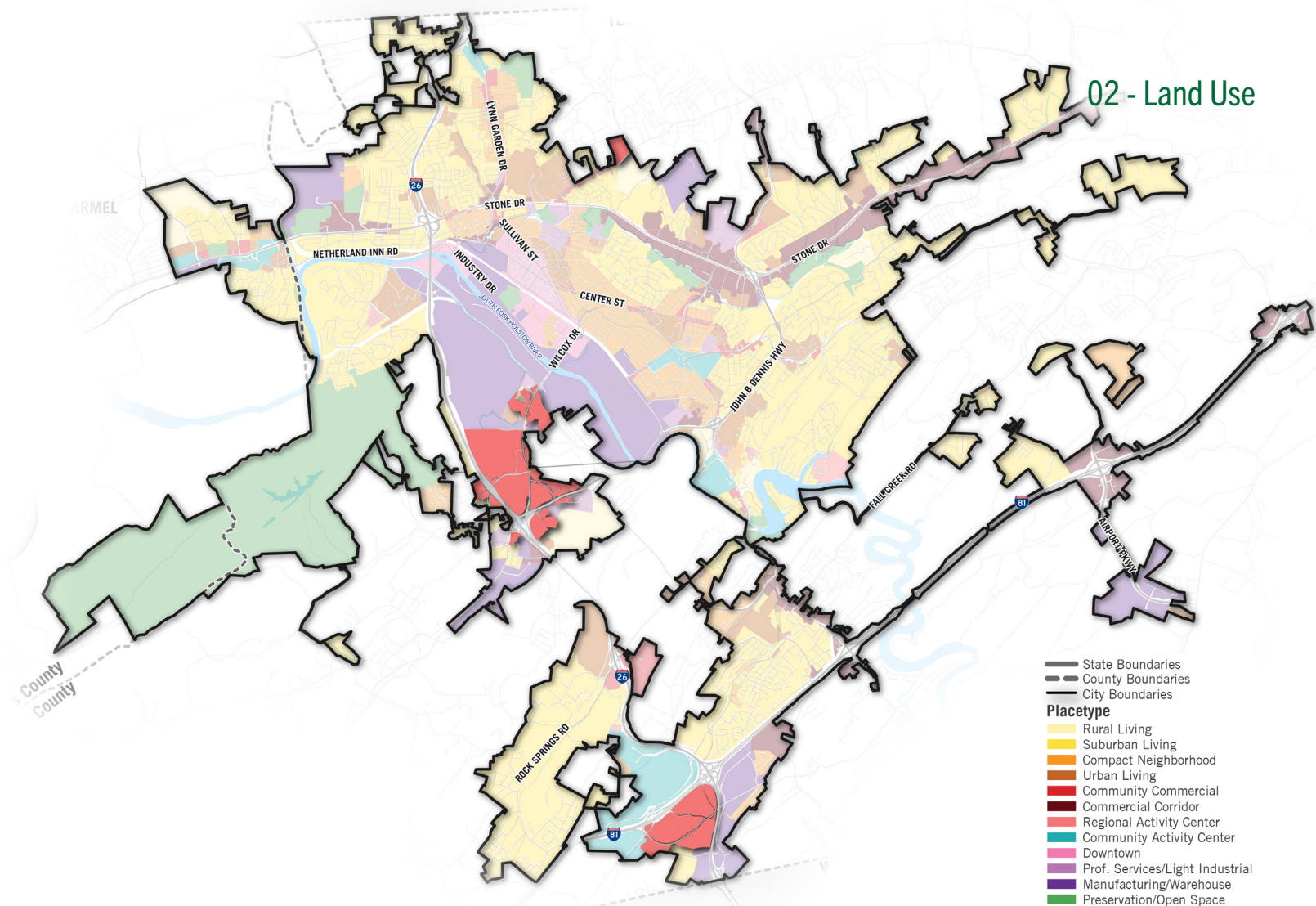
- Civic and institutional uses
- Apartments
- Condominiums

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use





Commercial Corridors

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Commercial Corridor development areas serve the city or region and are oriented along major corridors and predominantly consist of strip-style shopping centers, with buildings typically set back from the road behind large surface parking lots with accessibility provided primarily by automobiles. They are typically characterized by high levels of vehicular traffic and large parcel sizes. These centers may include a variety of uses including retail and commercial uses, restaurants, employment centers, and medical centers. Adjacent to these centers, higher density housing such as apartments or condominiums may be an appropriate use. Because development is oriented along a corridor rather than a larger development core, floor-area-ratios should be moderate, with a maximum density of 30 dwelling units per acre and a maximum height of 3 stories.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Retail
- Commercial
- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Business parks
- Hotels
- Entertainment centers
- Automotive uses
- Service and office uses

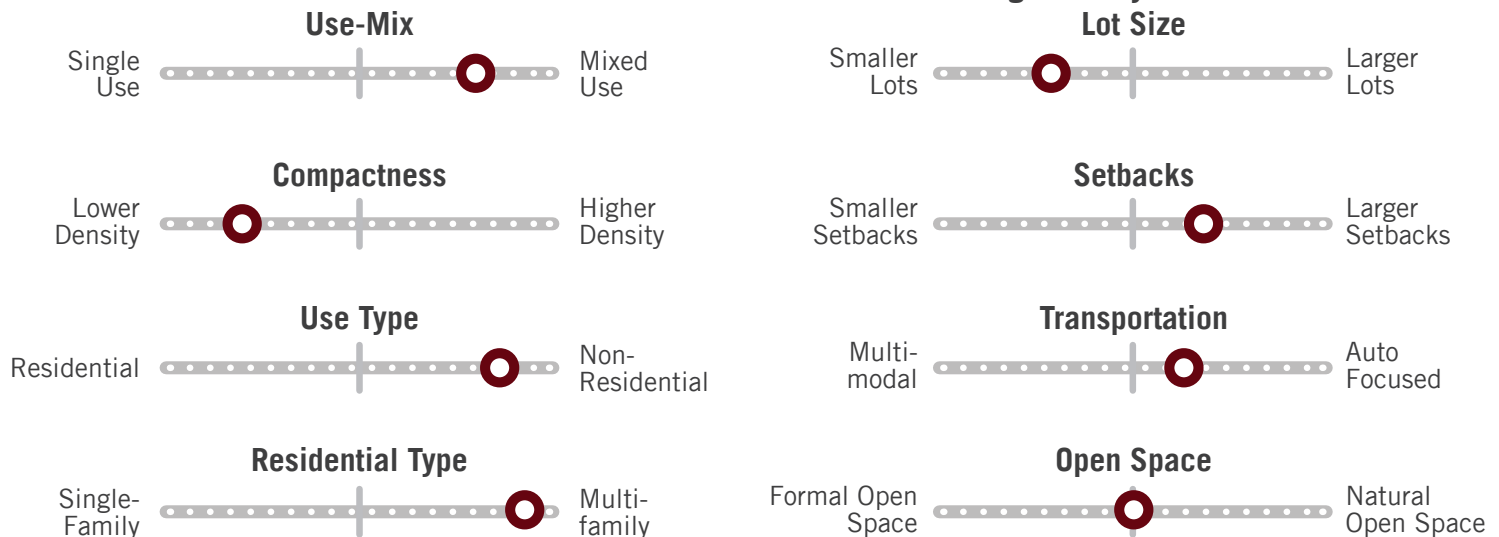
Secondary Uses

- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space

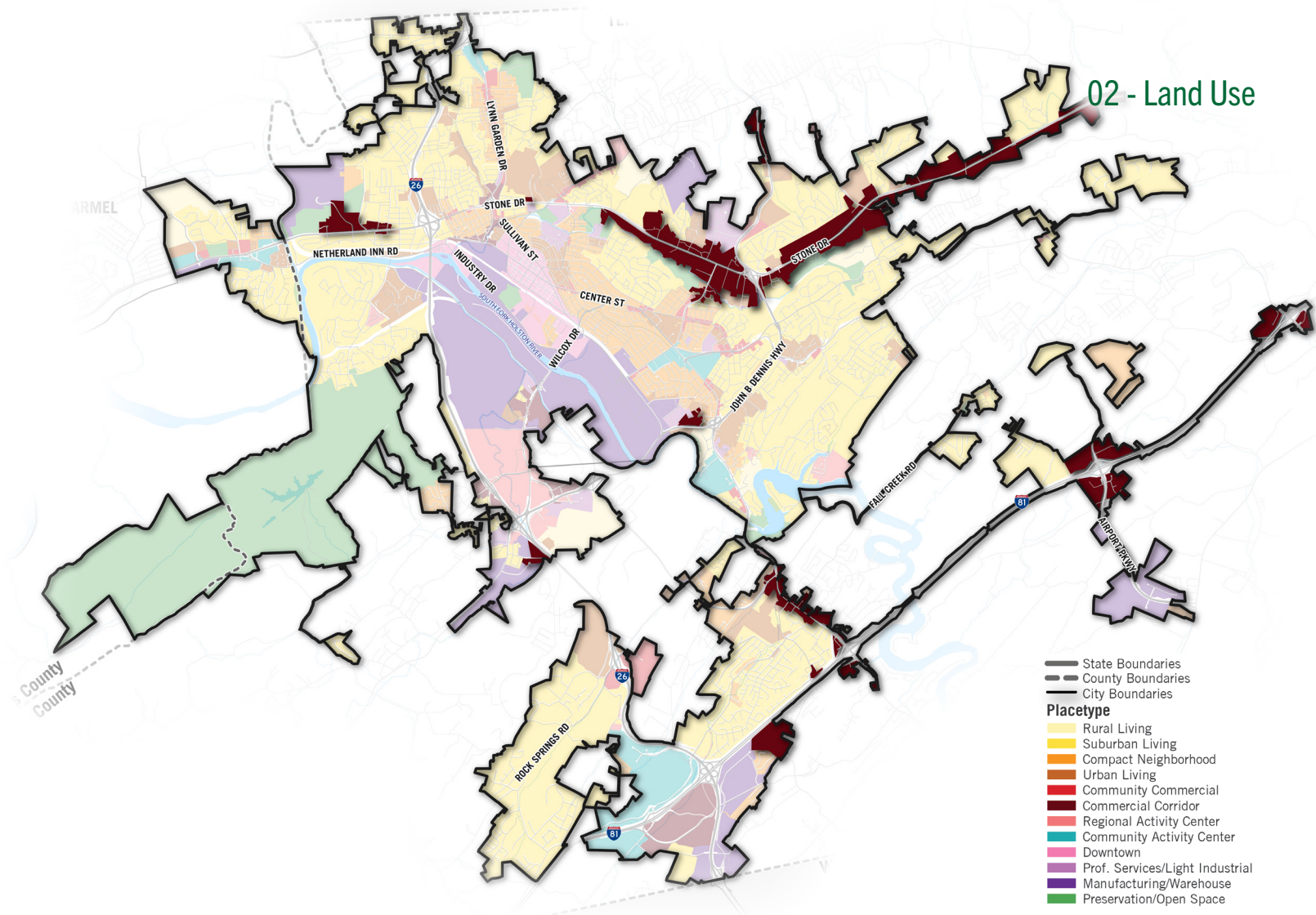
CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential



02 - Land Use





Community Commercial

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Community Commercial development is characterized by small, free standing buildings containing one or more businesses. Unlike larger shopping centers that may attract regional customers, Community Commercial primarily provides services for the surrounding neighborhoods and city. Business types may include restaurants, local retail, medical offices, banks, and other retail and service uses.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

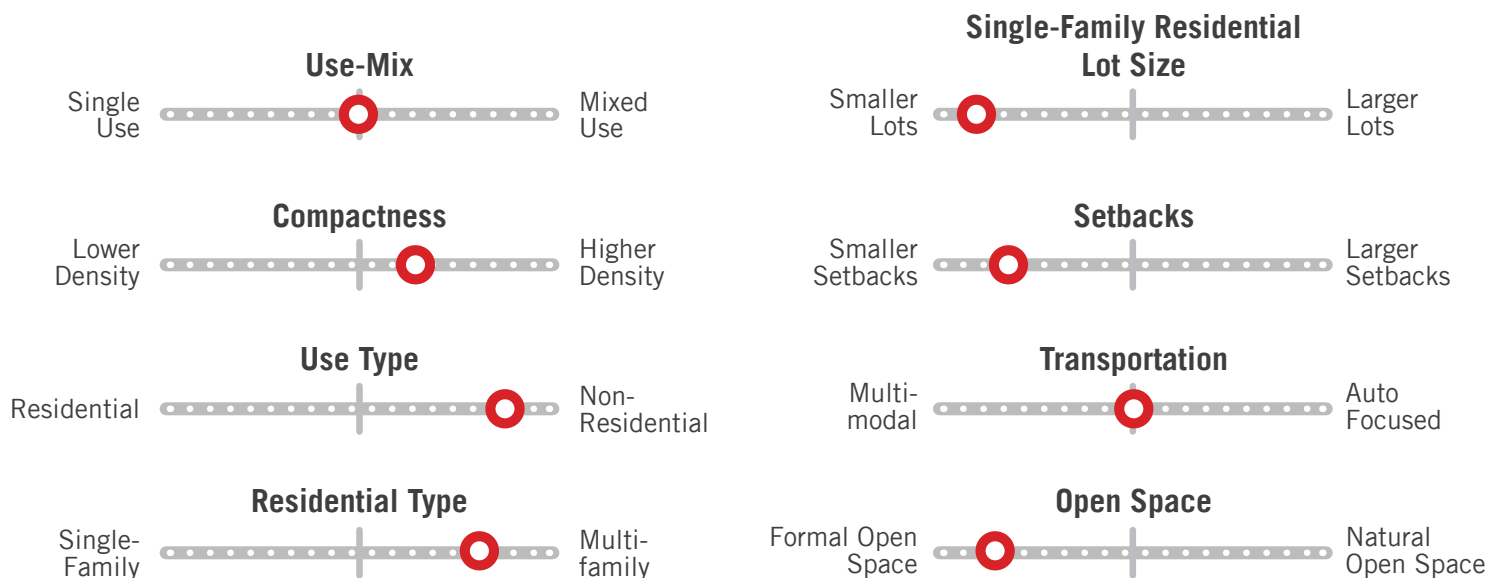
- Retail
- Commercial
- Service and office uses

Secondary Uses

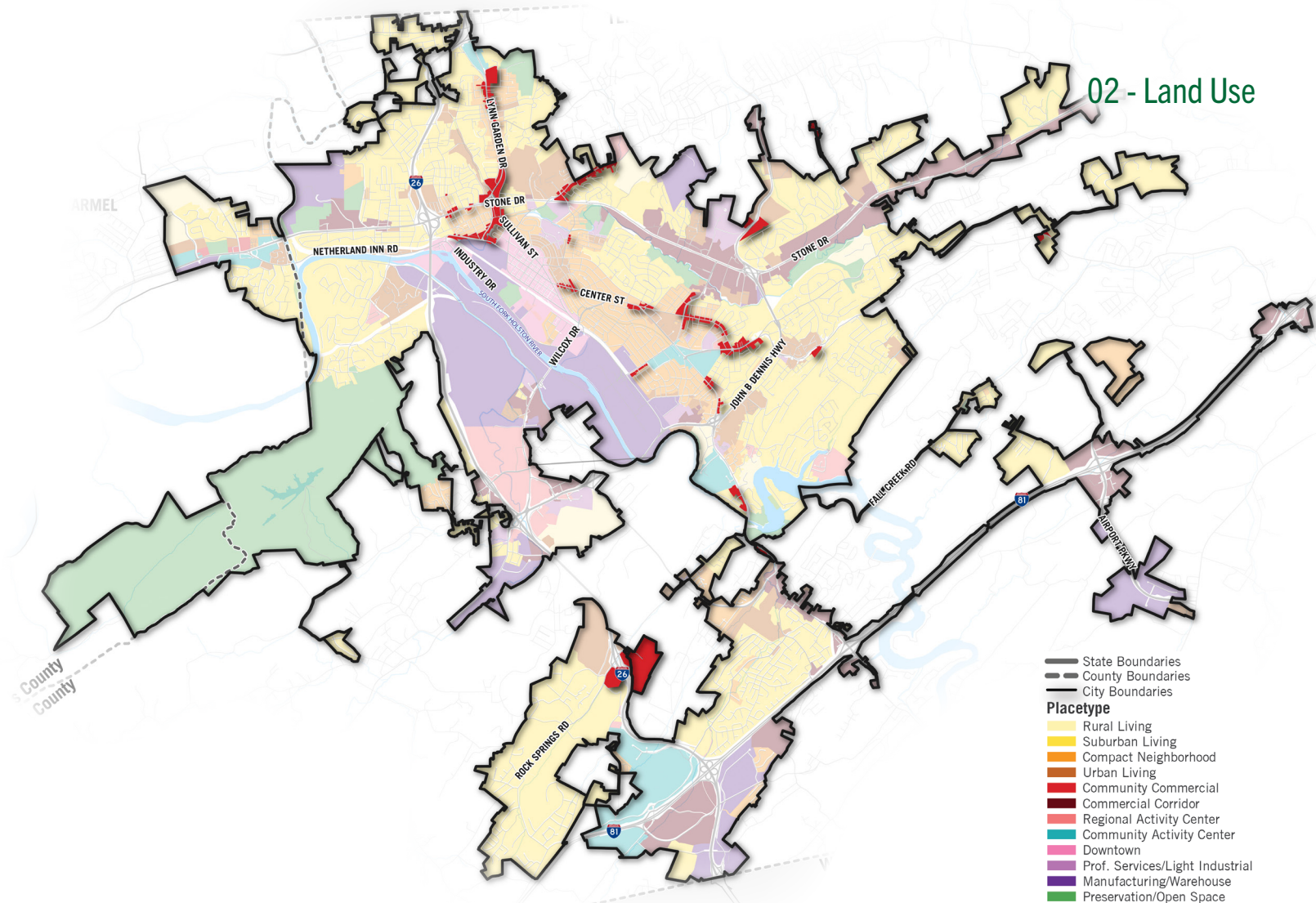
- Civic and institutional uses

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use



Small Shopping Center



Small Shopping Center



Book Store



Small Grocery Store



Coffee Shop

CHARACTER AND INTENT

The Urban Living place type supports a variety of housing types, including small-lot single family detached, patio homes, townhomes, duplexes, condominiums, or urban style apartments in a compact network of complete, walkable streets that are easy to navigate by car, bicycle, or foot. May contain a small number of commercial businesses, either on the ground floor of residential buildings or urban-style stand alone, to support the neighborhood.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

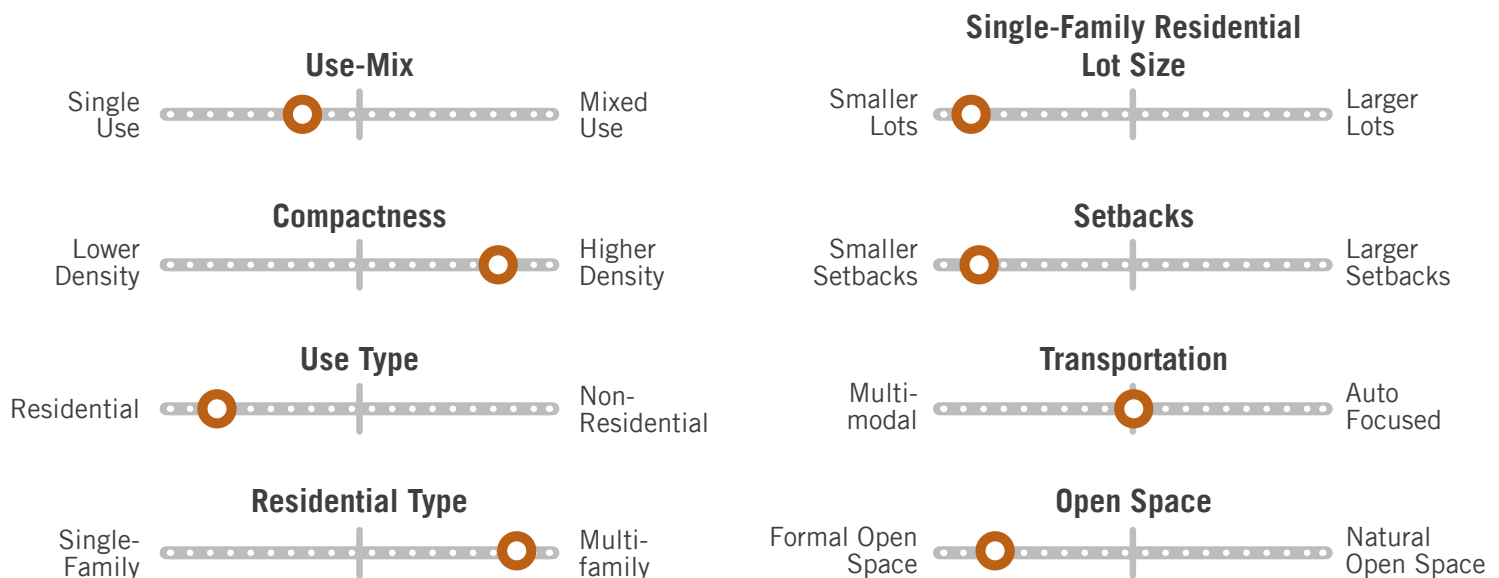
- Patio homes
- Townhomes
- Duplexes
- Multiplexes
- Condominiums
- Apartments

Secondary Uses

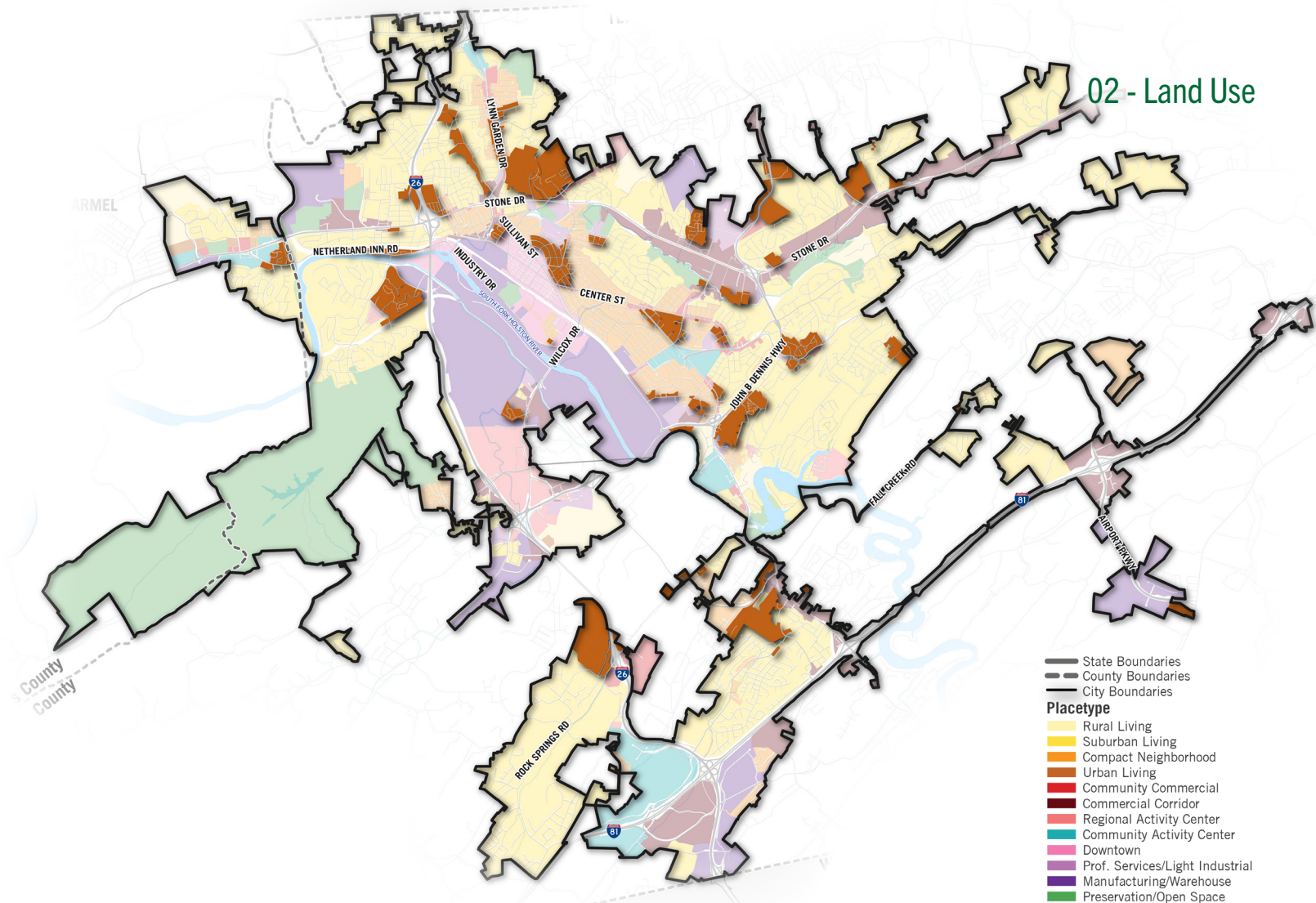
- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space
- Retail
- Commercial

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use



Small Residential Building



Garden Apartments



Small Apartments



Stacked Flats



Townhomes



Compact Neighborhood

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Can support a variety of housing types, including small-lot single-family detached homes, patio homes, townhomes, and duplexes, in a compact network of complete, walkable streets that are easy to navigate by car, bicycle, or foot. Many of Kingsport's original neighborhoods reflect this compact neighborhood pattern, with smaller lot sizes, a diversity of housing types, and a cohesive neighborhood scale. This traditional, walkable form of development has become increasingly desirable in recent decades and will continue to play an important role in Kingsport's residential land use mix as the city builds out its remaining developable areas.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Townhomes
- Cottage Court
- Patio homes
- Small-lot-single-family residential
- Neighborhood scale multiplexes
- Neighborhood scale duplexes

Secondary Uses

- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential Lot Size



Use-Mix



Compactness



Setbacks



Use Type



Transportation



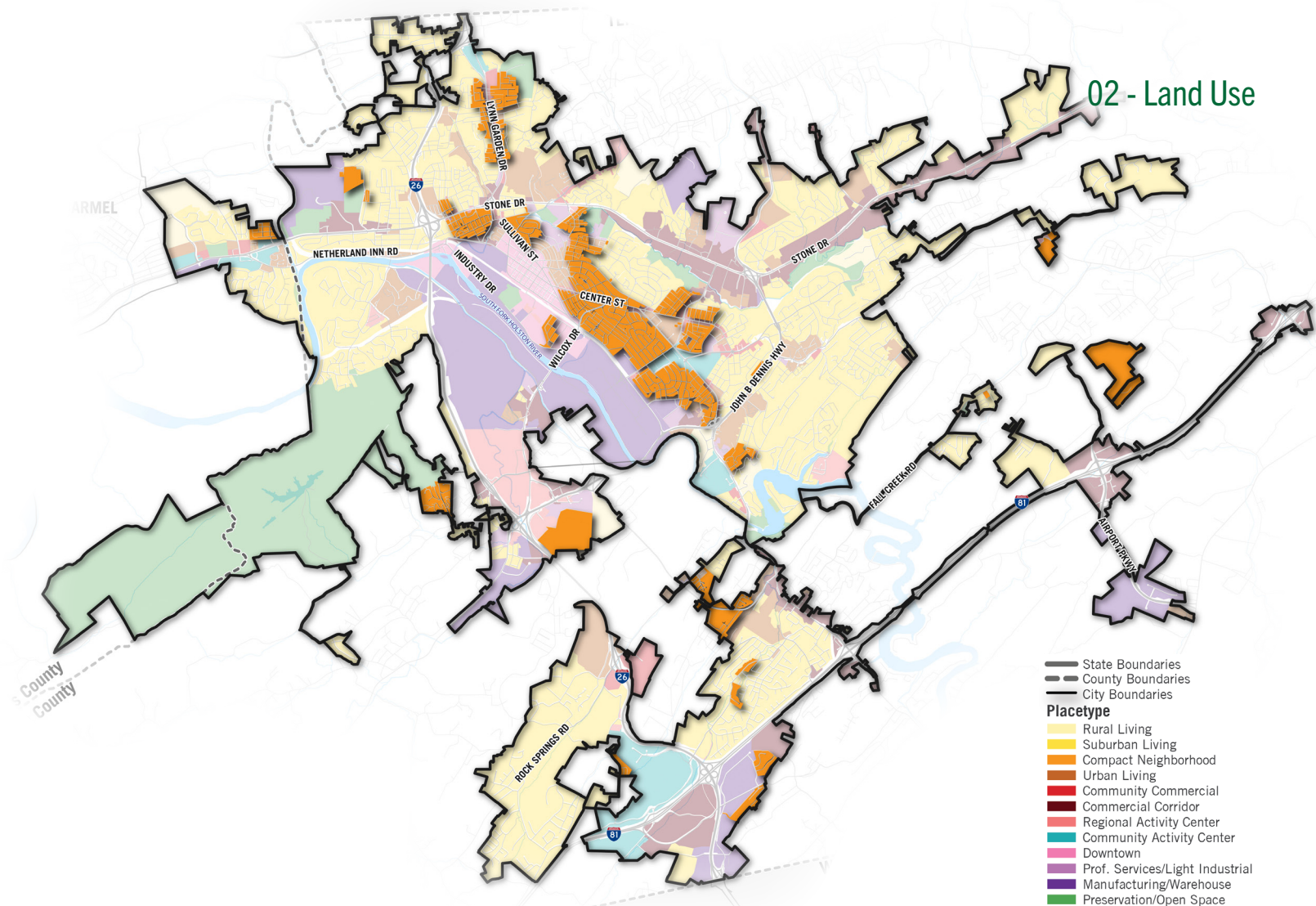
Residential Type



Open Space



02 - Land Use



Suburban Living

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Predominately single-family housing on detached lots. Homes generally located in platted subdivisions with all utilities, residential streets, and sidewalks. This area is predominately outside of the historic core of the city and primarily developed post World War II.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Single-family detached homes

Secondary Uses

- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential Lot Size



Use-Mix



Compactness



Setbacks



Use Type



Transportation



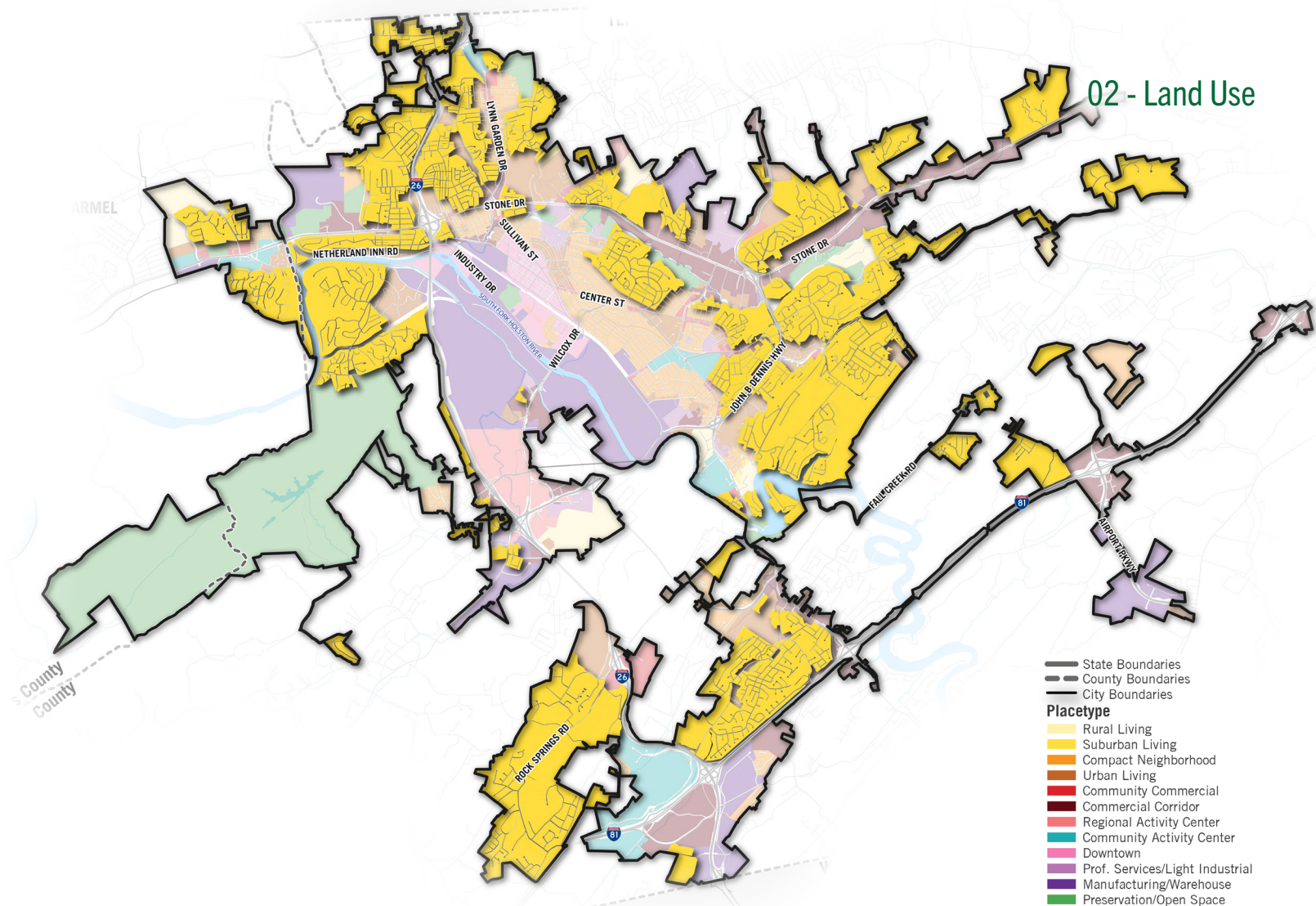
Residential Type



Open Space



02 - Land Use



Single-Family Detached



Single-Family Detached



Patio Home



Single-Family Neighborhood



Single-Family Detached

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Areas characterized predominantly by a mix of single-family housing on large lots with a high degree of separation on the outskirts of the community or enclaves within the city, though this may include platted subdivisions with very large lots. Areas may also be mixed with undeveloped land utilized for open space or agricultural / forest production. These tracts provide much of the open space character, scale, and scenic values in the surrounding area. These areas are typically not connected to city utilities and utilize private well water and septic systems.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Single-family detached homes

Secondary Uses

- Agricultural land
- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space
- Local food production

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential Lot Size



Use-Mix



Compactness



Setbacks



Use Type



Transportation



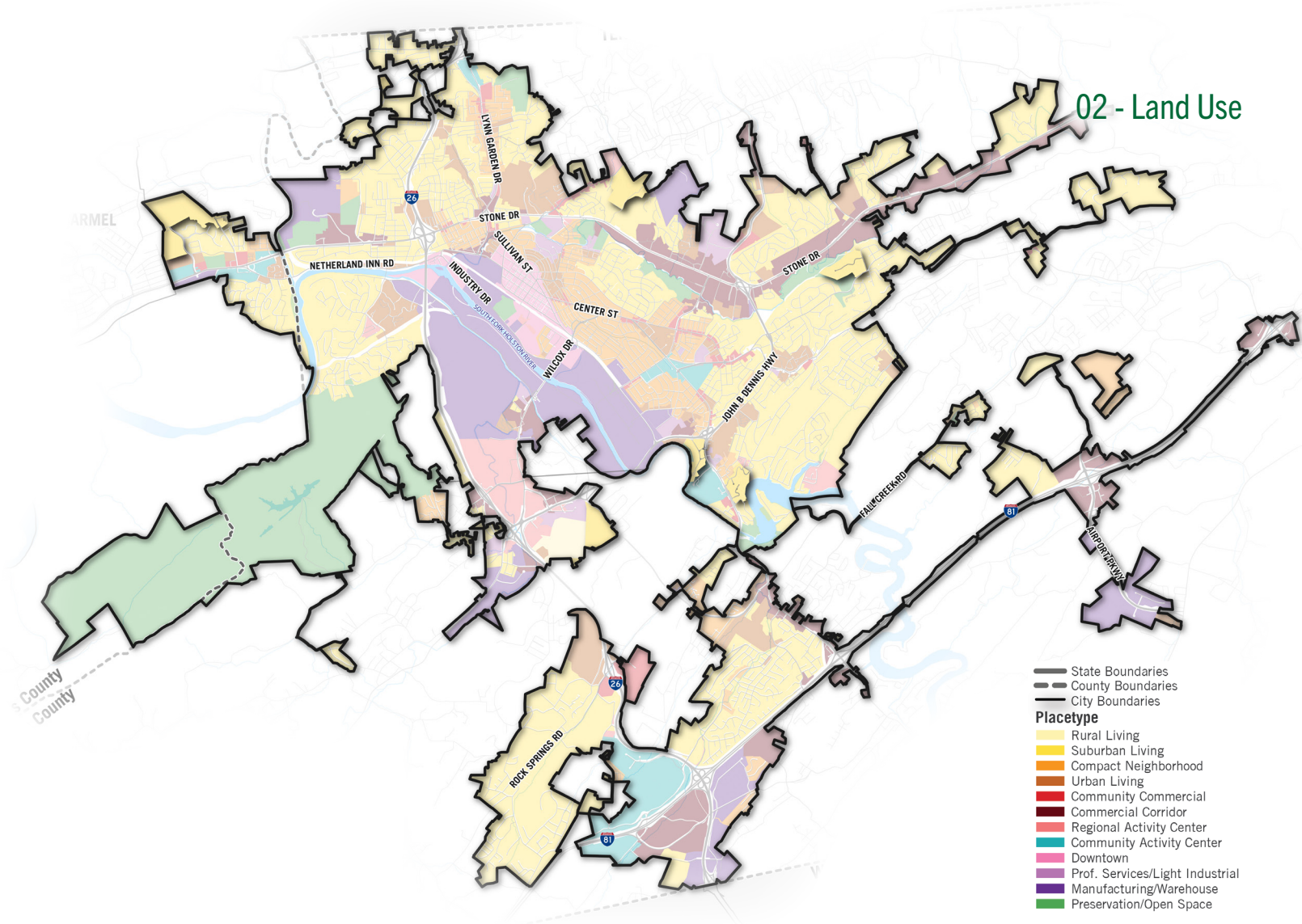
Residential Type



Open Space



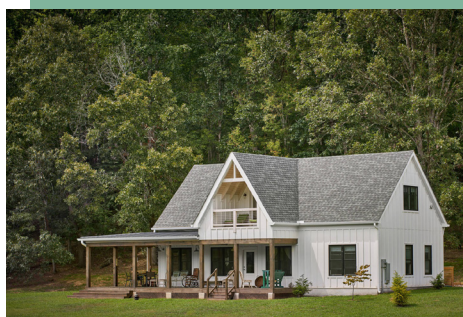
02 - Land Use



Single-Family Detached



Single-Family Detached



Single-Family Detached



Single-Family Detached



Single-Family Detached



Preservation and Open Space

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Areas characterized by large tracts of undeveloped land utilized for outdoor recreation, wildlife, management, or agricultural production. These tracts provide much of the open space and scenic character in the community and on its borders and include opportunities for additional uses that support the character and economic viability of agriculture and outdoor tourism.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

- Passive parks
- Nature trails
- Floodplains or wetlands
- Golf courses
- Athletic fields
- Amphitheaters
- Outdoor related tourism
- Local food productions

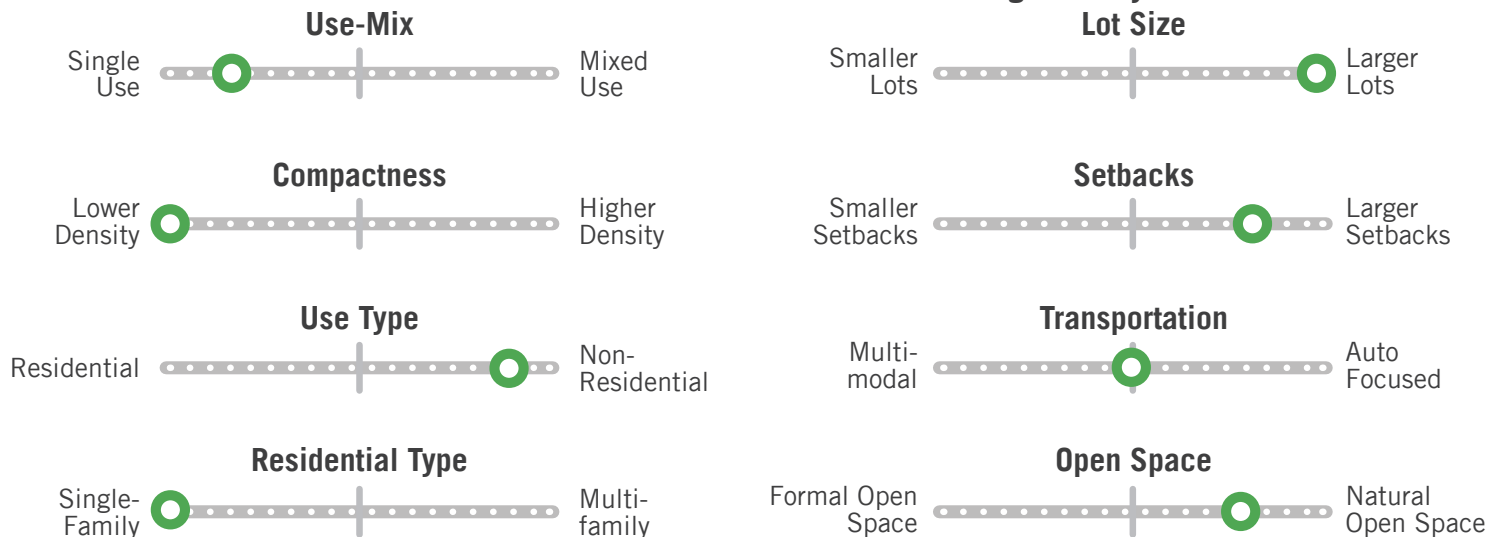
Secondary Uses

- Single-family detached homes
- Civic institutional uses
- Distributed energy production

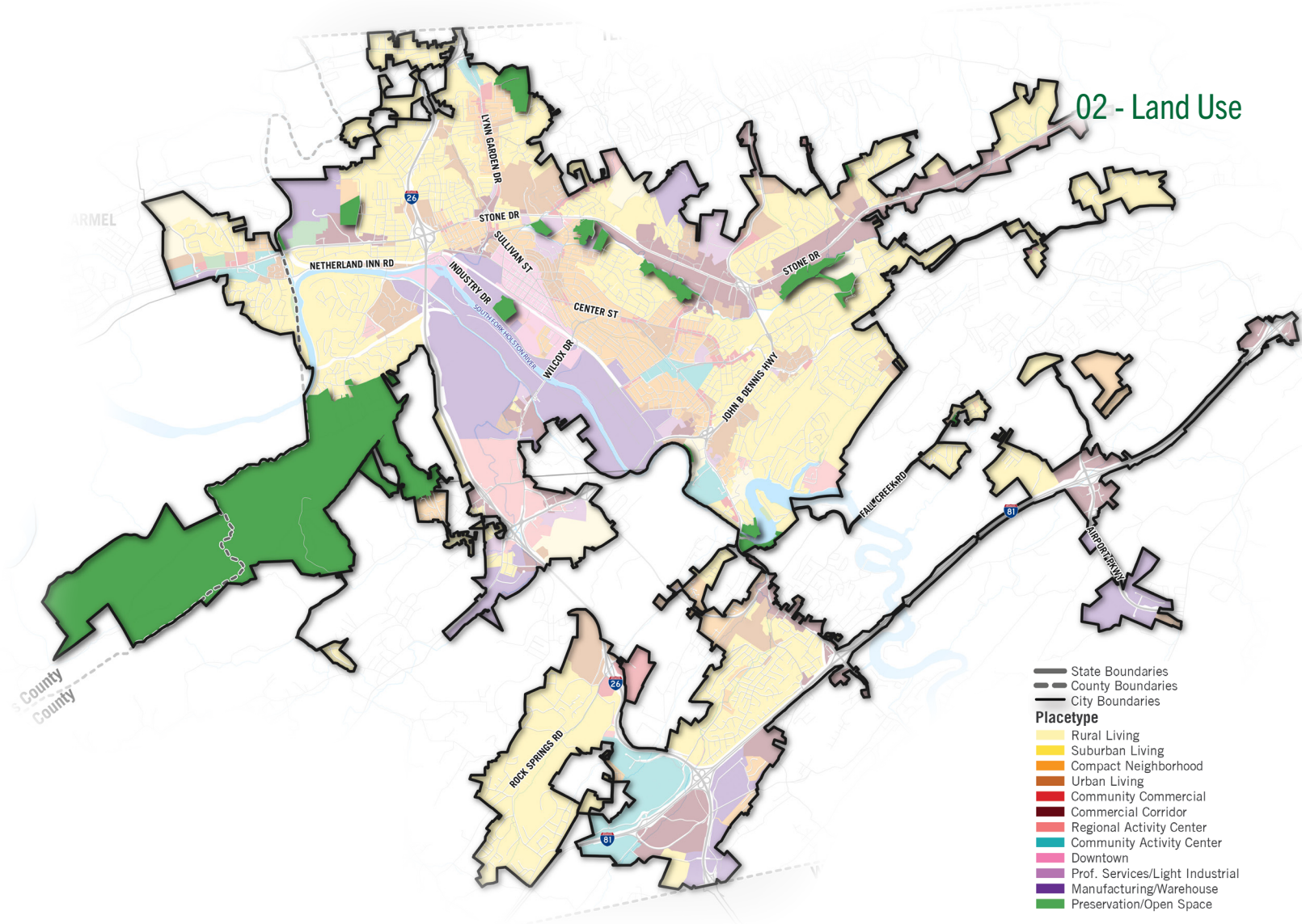
CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.

Single-Family Residential



02 - Land Use



Greenbelt on the Holston



Bays Mountain



Sports Fields



Hiking Trails



Sports Fields

Professional Services and Light Industrial

CHARACTER AND INTENT

This area is characterized by free standing buildings containing uses such as professional services, office jobs, or flex industry or very light manufacturing such as maker spaces. Buildings may be of varying sizes, and are typically accessed by automobiles. Uses in this place type may not be compatible with residential, and may require some level of transitional area or screening from the surrounding community.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

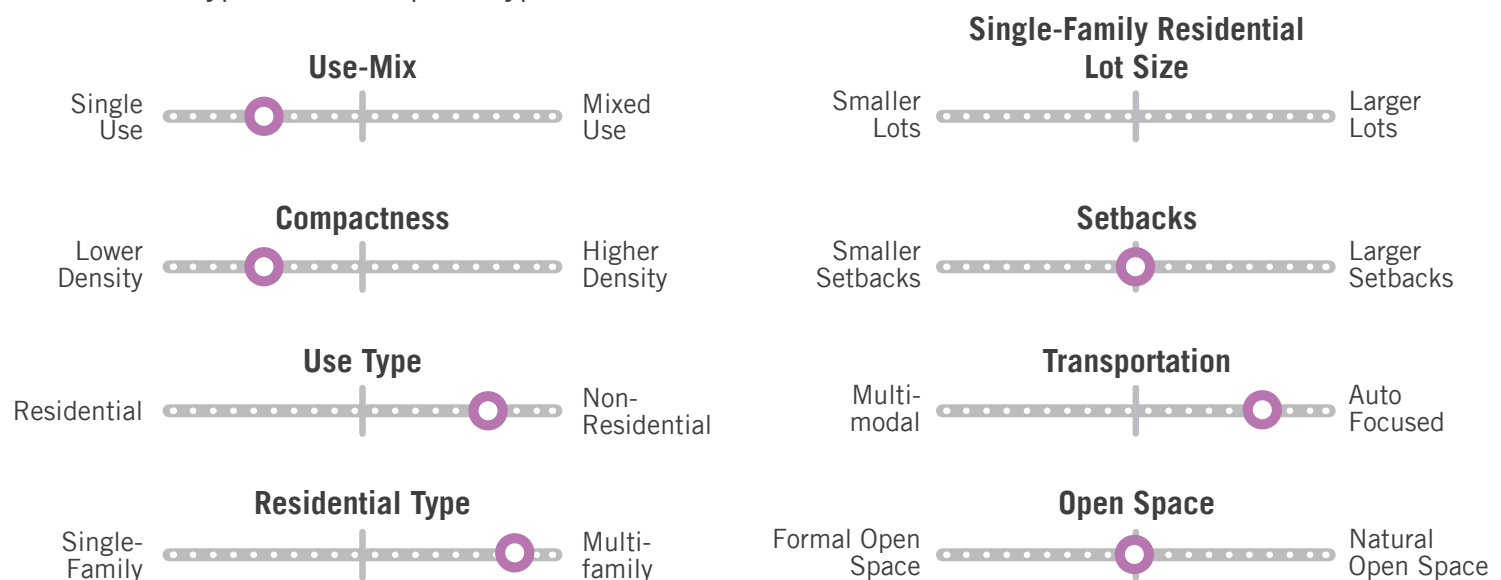
- Higher education
- Research and development
- Technology
- Professional offices
- Medical services
- Light Manufacturing
- Small warehouse distribution
- Wholesale-trade
- Flex industrial/ office

Secondary Uses

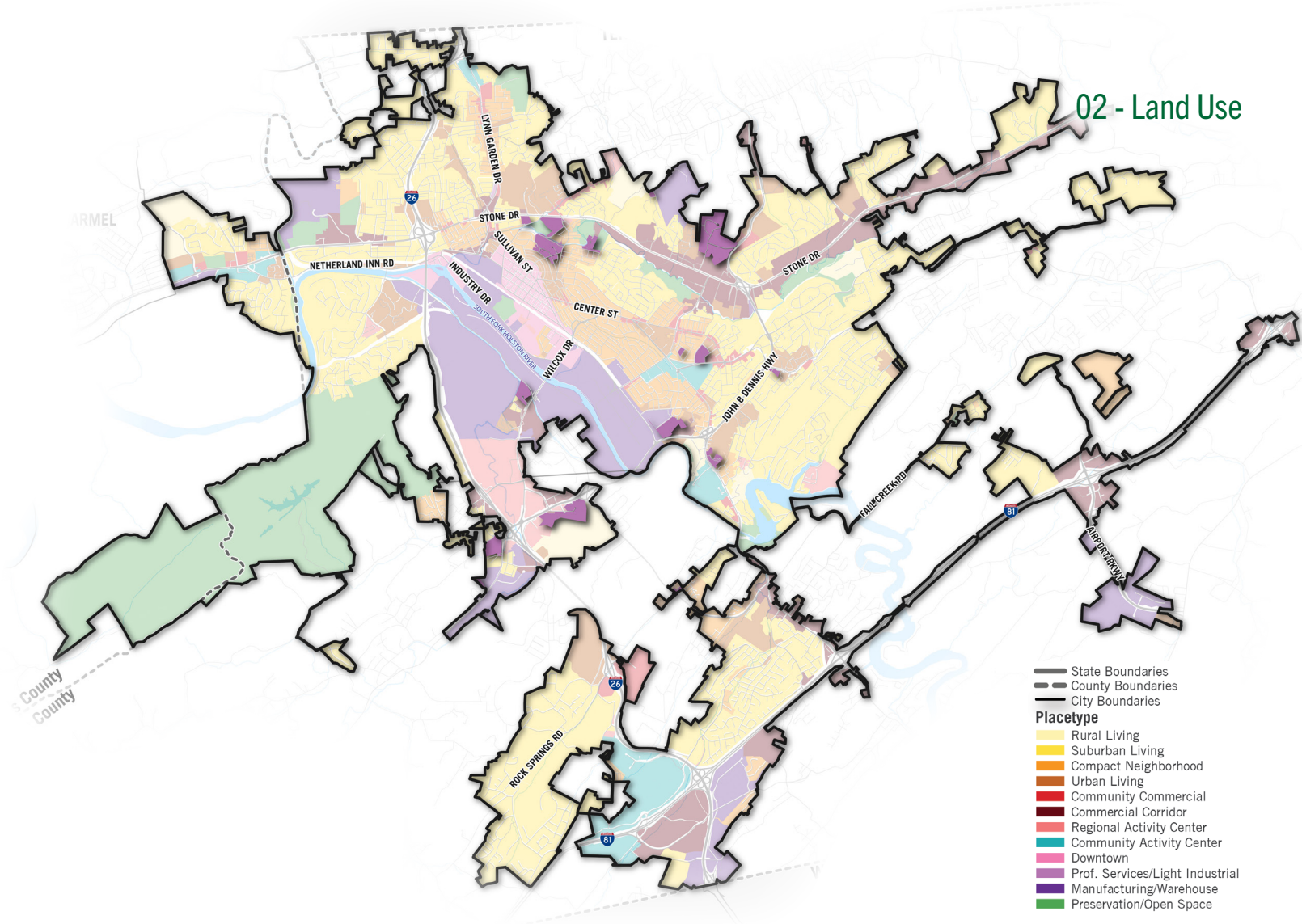
- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space
- Retail

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use



Manufacturing and Warehousing

CHARACTER AND INTENT

Kingsport has been a center of industry and manufacturing since it was first founded, and the industrial sector remains one the city's primary sectors of employment and high wage jobs. This place type is traditionally concentrated near major transportation infrastructure (e.g., highways, railways, and airports), which in Kingsport also originally included the banks of the South Holston River. This placetype includes manufacturing plants and facilities as well as mining, warehousing, and logistics hubs.

PREFERRED USES

Primary Uses

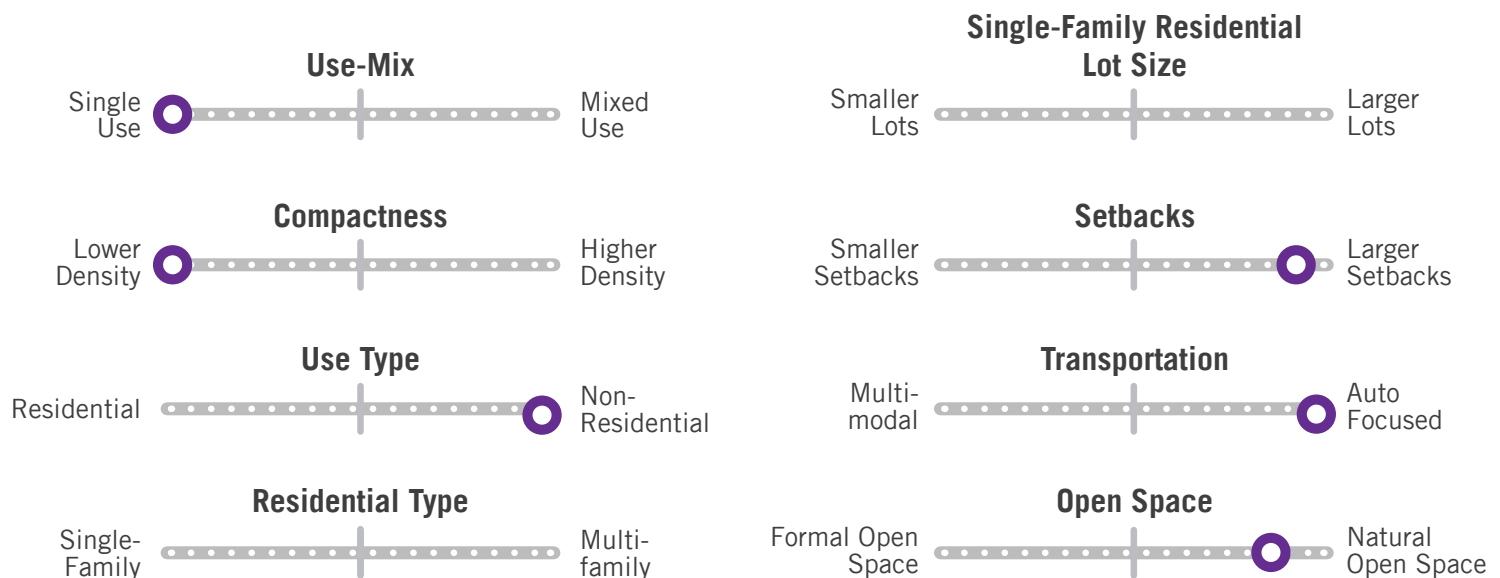
- Manufacturing
- Distribution centers
- Technology
- Data centers
- Flex office

Secondary Uses

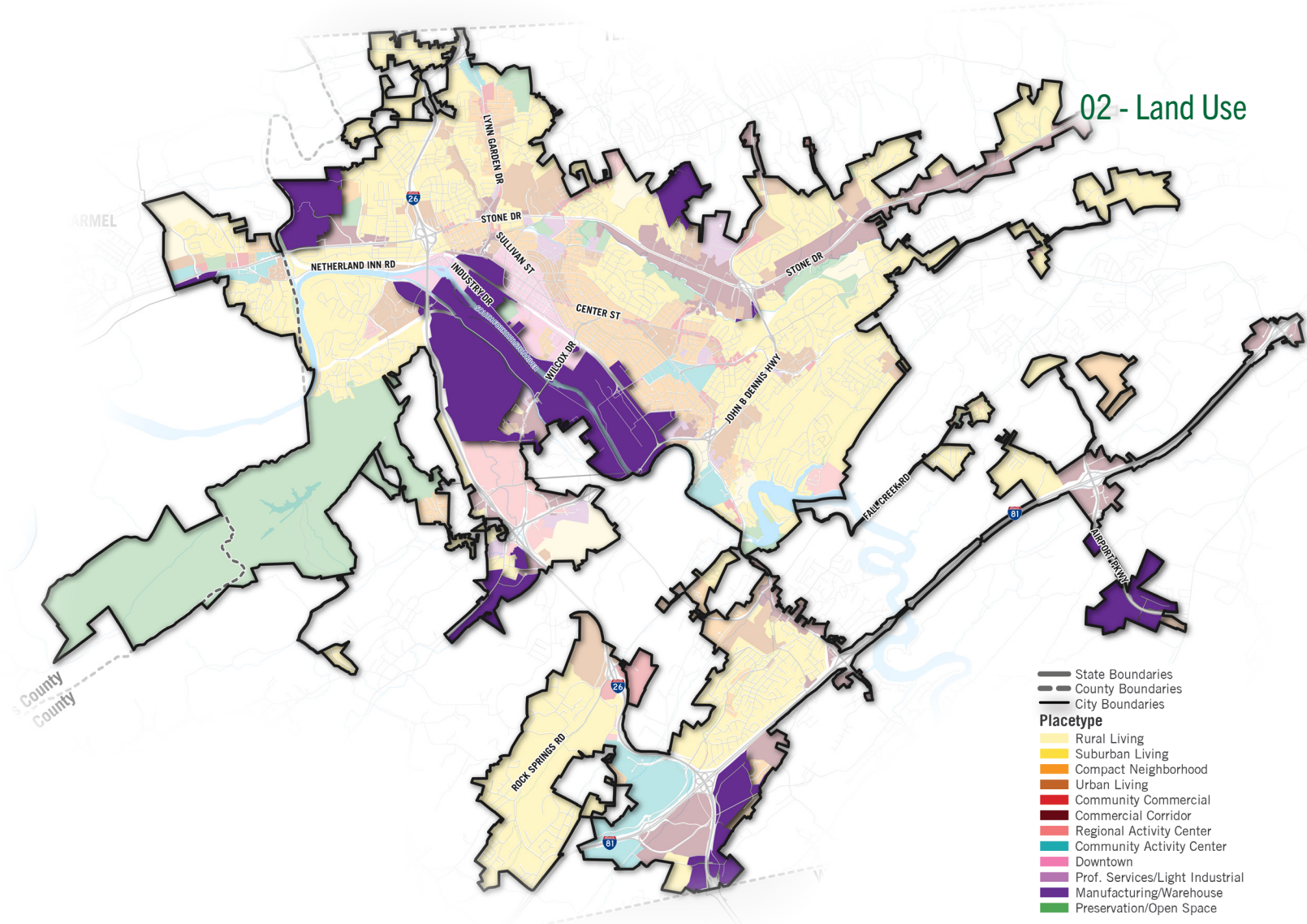
- Logistics
- Retail and office uses
- Training facilities
- Civic and institutional uses
- Parks and open space

CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below illustrates the balance between development types and development characteristics that would be typical of each place type.



02 - Land Use



Industrial Building



Industrial Building



Industrial Uses



Industrial Building



Industrial Building

A dark blue background with a light blue, stylized map of a city grid. The map features a mix of straight and curved lines representing streets and highways, with some rectangular shapes indicating building footprints or parks.

03

JOB S AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Jobs and Economic Development



OVERVIEW

The City of Kingsport is well-positioned for strong and sustained economic growth. Kingsport's largest employment sectors, manufacturing and healthcare, offer some of the region's highest annual wages. This reflects a solid employment base and reinforces Kingsport's role as an economic driver within the Tri-Cities region.

Although many of these high-paying jobs are located within the city, a significant portion of the workforce commutes from nearby communities. To address this, Kingsport's economic strategy should focus on making the city more accessible and appealing to these families and others across the region who may consider living and investing in Kingsport.

Another key strategy is a focus on expanding access for local residents to these high-wage employment opportunities through targeted workforce training and education initiatives. The plan also seeks to encourage entrepreneurship by offering technical resources and support for new and existing small businesses.

Together, the Guiding Principles and corresponding recommendations establish clear goals for economic development and outline strategies for achieving each one.

E1.0

Strengthen and increase awareness of existing workforce development and higher education opportunities available to Kingsport residents

Kingsport offers multiple workforce training and educational opportunities through local colleges and businesses. The city should collaborate with these partners to increase awareness of these programs by promoting them to Kingsport students and residents. This will help strengthen the workforce and provide valuable opportunities for residents.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Partner with local colleges and businesses to offer expanded vocational training programs and provide apprenticeships and internships to local residents.
- Pursue partnerships with KATS and NET Trans, as well as the university, to provide increased transportation options for students.
- Consider increasing funding for job placement and career counseling services.
- Leverage local resources to support the success of new and small businesses by promoting access to the Kingsport Office of Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship (KOSBE) and requiring recipients of the downtown loan program to receive technical assistance from the SBDC.



Jobs and Economic Development



E2.0

Leverage Kingsport's unique assets to boost regional competitiveness and drive economic growth

Kingsport boasts numerous assets that set it apart in the region, and is well known for its robust industrial sector and excellent public schools. The City also has many other unique assets that could be further leveraged to support continued growth, particularly the community's cultural, environmental, and recreational assets. Kingsport has the region's largest and most walkable downtown, as well as the Greenbelt trail system and Holston River, top-notch sports facilities, and a wealth of local businesses.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organize a dedicated working group that brings together agencies, non-profits, and other partners and organizations engaged in economic and workforce development to discuss these issues on a regular basis.
- Establish a program to educate local front line workers in the hospitality and retail industries about the various retail, recreational, and commercial assets in the city and encourage them to promote local Kingsport businesses to visitors and residents.
- Improve visibility to the Greenbelt and increase connections to major employment and commercial destinations to leverage the greenbelt as a tool for economic development tool and "trail-oriented development"
- Partner with developers and invest in public amenities and infrastructure to leverage Reedy Creek and the Holston River as assets to support lifestyle centered development.
- Continue expanding Kingsport's capacity to host sports tournaments and events by investing in recreational and hospitality facilities to support tourism and increase spending at local businesses.
- Continue building upon Kingsport's comparative advantages as a hub of industry and professional services to grow the City's high income employment base.

E3.0

Invest in improved city aesthetics and placemaking efforts to attract businesses and support economic development and quality of life.

While the city has undertaken placemaking efforts in key areas like Broad Street, E Main Street, and other locations, further aesthetic enhancements throughout Kingsport could help to attract new businesses.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support the expansion of placemaking projects such as the Downtown Alley Walk and Mural Trail, Sculpture Walk, particularly within downtown.
- Promote neighborhood clean-up and improvement campaigns.
- Evaluate opportunities for additional signage along Highway 36 to direct motorists to Kingsport and highlight local attractions.



Jobs and Economic Development



E4.0

Improve corridors and gateways into Downtown Kingsport to enhance the sense of place and frame downtown as a destination.

Kingsport's Downtown is the largest in the region and one of the city's greatest assets. However, many of the key gateways and corridors into downtown do not reflect the areas' vibrancy and economic vitality. The first impression given by these corridors should reflect the city's strong economy and high quality of life.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a robust strategy to improve conditions along Wilcox Drive to create a more welcoming approach into town from the interstate.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to identify and improve conditions at key gateways into downtown, such as enhancements in the public right-of-way, improved code enforcement for dilapidated properties, and promoting redevelopment of vacant or underdeveloped parcels.

E5.0

Provide incentives for redevelopment and reinvestment across the city to support economic development.

Kingsport has many areas that could benefit from reinvestment and development. Public-Private partnerships to support catalytic projects, such as those seen at The Brickyards development, new apartments downtown, or at Meadowview Hotel and Conference Center—can help attract and sustain new private sector investment. Strategic incentives for these projects, can spur additional development and economic growth, leading to long-term community revitalization in areas such as Lynn Garden or The Fort Henry Mall.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus on residential development as a key component of Kingsport's economic strategy to attract high wage jobs and ensure that people who work in Kingsport also have opportunities to live in Kingsport.
- Focus recruitment efforts on target anchors for downtown, including boutique hotels, hospitality, retail, and higher end restaurants.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic and underutilized buildings.
- Foster public-private partnerships for major redevelopment projects.
- Develop and implement strategies to identify suitable locations and support site development for industrial space.
- Implement recommendations from small area and corridor plans to guide reinvestment in disinvested areas across the city, including Lynn Garden and parts of Allandale and Sullivan Gardens.

A faint, light blue line-art pattern of a city street grid and winding roads is visible across the entire dark blue background.

04

**ATTAINABLE
HOUSING**

Attainable Housing



OVERVIEW

Kingsport is committed to fostering a community where residents of all ages, incomes, and household types can find housing that meets their needs. As the city continues to grow and evolve, ensuring access to a diverse range of housing options is essential to maintaining affordability, supporting workforce retention and growth, and enhancing quality of life.

The city has a variety of housing types, but some gaps remain in both affordability and in availability of certain product types, particularly for housing products oriented towards young professionals, young families, seniors, and those experiencing housing instability. Much of the city's multifamily housing stock is over 40 years old, even as vacancy rates remain low and median rents remain higher than elsewhere in the region and new, high-quality multifamily products such as the downtown's Town Park Loft's have waiting lists.

Opportunities for very large-scale, single-family housing developments may be constrained by the availability of large, easy to develop parcels within city limits. However, there are many opportunities for infill, small-scale development, and redevelopment across the city. Leveraging these opportunities to address gaps in the city's housing ecosystem will require a proactive and inclusive approach based on partnerships and collaboration. A willingness to innovate, support both small-scale and infill builders as well as larger institutional builders, and partner with non-profits will be needed to provide different housing options at a variety of scales and price-points to both current and future residents as the city continues to grow.

The city's strategy emphasizes the importance of walkable, well-connected neighborhoods and the integration of housing near jobs, services, and amenities. Ensuring the city has diverse, quality housing choices that appeal to all ages and backgrounds is also critical to the city's long-term economic development. Kingsport can better support the development of "missing middle" housing and multifamily options that appeal to a broad spectrum of residents by coordinating updates to zoning policies, carefully crafted incentives, and targeted infrastructure investments.

The guiding principles and corresponding recommendations outlined in this section are intended to establish a clear framework for expanding attainable housing opportunities and ensuring that Kingsport remains a welcoming and livable city for all.

H1.0

Promote a variety of housing types at a range of price points to provide all Kingsport residents, from young professionals and families to older households, with access to diverse housing choices at all stages of life

A healthy housing ecosystem must serve residents across all life stages and income levels. This is critical to ensure that those who want to live in the community can find housing that suits their needs. This will require robust partnerships and ongoing dialogue to understand the needs of the community, identify gaps in the market, and equip developers and non-profits with the resources and opportunities to support the city's housing goals.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organize essential community partners when necessary to discuss issues related to housing.
- Evaluate potential incentives for developers to build a wider range of housing options.
- Ensure continuity of character as infill development occurs.
- Consider conducting a housing study with a housing market component.
- Coordinate dialog community organizations to address needs and services for homeless and housing burdened residents based on the outcomes of a robust housing study.



Attainable Housing



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify obstacles prohibiting people from getting into stable housing. Develop strategies to remove or mitigate these obstacles.
- Identify housing types that are missing in the market, along with incentives to promote desired types.
- Develop a program to engage small-scale and infill developers.
- Develop a citywide program to identify vacant parcels and dilapidated structures
- Create an educational program for small scale developers to connect them with parcels, potential resources, etc. to support redevelopment
- Consider developing pre-approved developments/unit plans that developers can use (eliminates cost of architectural drawing development)
- In partnership with local non-profits, encourage the creation of various types of senior housing or programs to help subsidize the cost of home improvements.
- Facilitate pursuit of various funding sources for public housing. Funds can include state funds, Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) grants, or Community Reinvestment Act resources to develop exemplary public housing development.
- Consider providing resources or education on Landlord Training and Tenant education to address substandard rental properties and incentives to motivate property repair and maintenance paired with targeted code enforcement.

H2.0

Encourage development of “missing middle” housing products including townhomes, duplexes, and quadplexes

To meet the evolving needs of Kingsport’s growing population, the city is focused on encouraging the development of housing types that fall between single-family homes and large apartment complexes. Townhomes, duplexes, and quadplexes often offer more attainable options for families and individuals while supporting neighborhood diversity and density. Zoning updates and design flexibility will be key tools in promoting this housing category.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider modifications to the zoning code that allow more diverse housing options like townhomes and duplexes in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown, such as lot subdivision.



Attainable Housing



H3.0

Encourage multifamily development in areas within walkable distance to jobs, services, and amenities to appeal to young professionals and young families

By encouraging multifamily housing in walkable, well-connected areas, especially near downtown, the city can attract young professionals and families while reducing transportation barriers. This development fosters vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing options and support overall housing affordability across the city.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement walkability improvements such as better crosswalks and pedestrian pathways in targeted areas.
- Develop a targeted strategy to encourage residential development in the downtown area, especially live/work.
- Explore opportunities to promote greater density and development in development focus areas (Allandale, Lynn Garden, Colonial Heights, etc.).
- Focus on enhancing walkability to downtown from adjacent neighborhoods.

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The background of the entire image is a dark blue color. Overlaid on this background is a light blue, stylized map pattern. This pattern consists of a network of thin, interconnected lines that represent streets, rivers, and other geographical features. The lines are of varying thickness and form a complex, organic web across the entire surface.

05

**QUALITY
OF LIFE**

Quality of Life



OVERVIEW

Kingsport's quality of life is shaped by its abundant natural assets, vibrant community programming, and strong public services. From the scenic trails of Bays Mountain to the energy of downtown events and multiple arts and culture offerings like the Kingsport Arts and Theatre Guilds, the Kingsport Symphony of the Mountains, or services and programming offered at the Renaissance Center, the city offers a wide range of experiences that contribute to residents' quality of life and sense of community.

Kingsport's identity as the Model City is rooted in its strong foundation of public services, including a long-standing system of quality health and human services, one of Tennessee's best public education systems, and a safe community supported by excellent police and fire departments.

While these amenities are well-established, Kingsport's strategy focuses on expanding access and enhancing their impact. Throughout the planning process, residents expressed a desire for more retail and commercial opportunities in the city, as well as a commitment to maintaining and improving downtown's reputation as the safest in the Tri-Cities region. Additionally, despite industry being the backbone of Kingsport's economy and ongoing efforts to improve sustainability and reduce environmental impacts, many residents expressed concerns about pollution in the area.

Together, the guiding principles and corresponding recommendations aim to address resident's concerns and desires and establish a clear framework to continue to build upon Kingsport's numerous assets and high quality of life.

Q1.0

Preserve and enhance Kingsport's numerous greenspaces and outdoor recreation opportunities, including Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, and other state and local parks and trails, and advertise Kingsport as a destination for these activities

Kingsport's natural amenities, including Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, city parks, the Holston River and Reedy Creek, are central to its identity and appeal. The city also has extensive sports facilities and athletic fields that allow it to host numerous regional and national sports tournaments. By expanding access to these spaces and promoting eco-tourism, the city can strengthen its reputation as a destination for outdoor recreation, and investments in connectivity and underutilized land will ensure that all residents benefit from these resources.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand the Greenbelt and provide additional connections to neighborhoods to improve access to recreational opportunities.
- Take advantage of difficult to develop or undevelopable spaces for public recreational opportunities, such as the large floodplains adjacent to Reedy Creek south of Stone Drive.
- Develop and fund a strategic plan to connect the Greenbelt to other community assets like the Aquatic Center, Riverbend Park, and Church Circle.
- Promote eco-tourism and outdoor recreational activities through regional marketing campaigns.



Quality of Life



Q2.0

Continue providing and expanding kingsport's wide range of community events

Community events are crucial for fostering social connection and community identity. Kingsport boasts a wide variety of community and cultural events, such as Fun Fest, Racks by the Tracks, and numerous art festivals and parades. These events offer diverse programming that brings residents together, highlights the city's unique character, and attracts visitors, thereby boosting the local economy. To ensure these events remain relevant, accessible, and beneficial to both residents and local businesses, ongoing evaluation, inclusive planning, and strategic partnerships are essential.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Partner with local businesses and organizations to sponsor, host, and promote events and leverage Kingsport's unique assets to increase their draw.
- Regularly evaluate the goals, objectives, and outcomes of community events to ensure they are still relevant and successful.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that free community events are not undercutting or competing with local businesses.
- Provide a diverse program of community events appeal to people of diverse backgrounds and interests and a variety of age groups.
- Continue using social media and traditional media and explore strategies to market and broadly promote community events, both within the city and the greater region.

Q3.0

Promote the establishment of greater diversity of local choices for retail, dining, entertainment, recreational opportunities, and public social spaces

Throughout the planning process, a common sentiment from the community was the desire for more local options for retail, dining, and activities. The city should aim to cultivate a vibrant mix of unique, locally owned establishments by supporting incubators, pop-up markets, and cultural programming. Coupled with targeted investments in high-quality public gathering spaces that attract people and support nearby businesses, the city can strengthen Kingsport's distinct identity. This approach will foster a dynamic and inclusive environment that supports the growth of local services and commercial development, reflects community values, and attracts visitors.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support pop-up markets and events that feature local vendors and artists.
- Prioritize attracting and maintaining retail, dining, entertainment, and recreational businesses that are unique to Kingsport over national chains with multiple other locations in the region.



Quality of Life



Q4.0

Prioritize the availability of services for seniors, including assisted living options and improved public transportation

Kingsport has a large and growing senior population, making it increasingly important to ensure access to senior services such as assisted living, transportation, medical care, and everyday necessities. Coordinating efforts between housing development and transit services is essential to help older residents maintain their independence and stay connected to essential services and community life.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Coordinate with local transportation services to provide expanded access and extended operating times for residents of affordable and senior housing units.
- Prioritize locations that with walkable access to daily goods and services for affordable and senior housing developments.

“Through engaging programs, fitness opportunities, and lifelong learning, we provide a welcoming space where seniors can stay active, social, and inspired every day.”

- The Kingsport Senior Center

Q5.0

Pursue opportunities to expand the availability of a robust and comprehensive network of health and human services that support the needs of all Kingsport residents

Kingsport is committed to supporting the well-being of all residents through a robust network of health and human services. By collaborating with healthcare providers and exploring innovative partnerships, the city can improve access to care and create community health hubs that address a wide range of needs.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaborate with healthcare providers to increase the availability of clinics and services in the city.
- Evaluate opportunities for public/private partnerships to create community health hubs.



Quality of Life



Q6.0

Continue to prioritize education and promote the reputation of Kingsport's excellent public school system

Kingsport City Schools (KSC) has long been one of the top public education systems in both the State of Tennessee and the nation. The City's commitment to quality public education is a cornerstone of the community's success and a key driver of long term prosperity. Continuing this commitment through investments in facilities, new technology, competitive salaries, and strategic partnerships with local colleges will prepare Kingsport's students for the rigors of the modern job market. It will provide access to opportunities and high-wage jobs by ensuring Kingsport continues to be attractive to employers in need of highly skilled workers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to invest in school facilities and technologies to maintain high educational standards and position as one of the best public school systems in the region and the state.
- Expand partnerships with local colleges to increase educational opportunities.
- Evaluate the need for and capacity to successfully provide additional mentorship and scholarship program.

Q7.0

Partner with industrial businesses to reduce negative environmental impacts

Kingsport recognizes the importance of balancing industrial growth with environmental stewardship to build a healthy community. Through partnership and collaboration with the Kingsport's business community, the city can reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, and reduce pollution to preserve the natural environment that attracts so many people to the region. The city can also support more sustainable development strategies and work with industrial leaders to address negative public perception of local industry and strengthen community trust.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaborate on initiatives to reduce waste and improve energy efficiency.
- Partner collaboratively with industrial businesses to address and mitigate negative perceptions around industrial development.
- Consider implementing a composting program.



Q8.0

Maintain Kingsport's high quality of public safety

Kingsport's police and fire departments are essential to the city's strong reputation for safety and livability. Continued investment in public safety services will ensure that residents feel secure and supported, reinforcing Kingsport's status as a desirable place to live and work.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to prioritize and maintain the City's best in class police and fire departments.

A stylized, light blue line-art map of a city grid is overlaid on a solid dark blue background. The map features a mix of straight and curved lines representing streets and highways. The large number '006' is centered over the map.

006

INFRASTRUCTURE



OVERVIEW

Since its rechartering as a master-planned city, Kingsport has thrived thanks to a comprehensive, forward-thinking approach to infrastructure planning and a long-term commitment to robust funding. The city features a well-connected roadway network that provides a high level of service, a comprehensive sidewalk system in the urban core and the surrounding neighborhoods, a sewer network with significant spare capacity, extensive parks, recreational and sports complexes, and various city facilities offering a broad range of services and amenities. These assets provide a solid foundation capable of supporting significant new growth and development within the city's existing footprint.

Kingsport's infrastructure strategy is designed to align the city's infrastructure investments with its economic development goals, improve environmental sustainability, and continue building on the community's high quality of life.

The city should continue to focus on maintaining its existing infrastructure. It should also focus on providing additional tools to educate and engage the community to demonstrate value and increase transparency to build public support.

The city should prioritize the identification and integration of new technologies, such as smart traffic light systems to improve traffic flow, AI systems for maintenance tracking and automation, and electric vehicle charging stations. Technological advances and the rise of remote work options have made the modern workforce increasingly mobile, compelling cities to compete for highly educated workers who choose where to plant roots based on access to high-quality amenities. To enhance its competitiveness, Kingsport must invest in infrastructure and services that offer stronger connectivity between neighborhoods, employment centers, and recreational amenities, quality public gathering spaces, and green infrastructure to reduce maintenance costs and mitigate the growing impacts of climate change and extreme weather events.

By leveraging smart technologies, enhancing public spaces, and pursuing strategic upgrades, Kingsport aims to remain competitive in the region and responsive to the evolving needs of its residents.

I1.0

Invest in the maintenance of city streets and sidewalks

Maintaining safe and reliable streets and sidewalks is foundational to Kingsport's infrastructure strategy. By tracking conditions, engaging the community to identify high priority areas, and coordinating with regional partners, the city can prioritize improvements that enhance mobility and support neighborhood development. Transparent communication and data-driven planning will ensure that resources are allocated effectively.

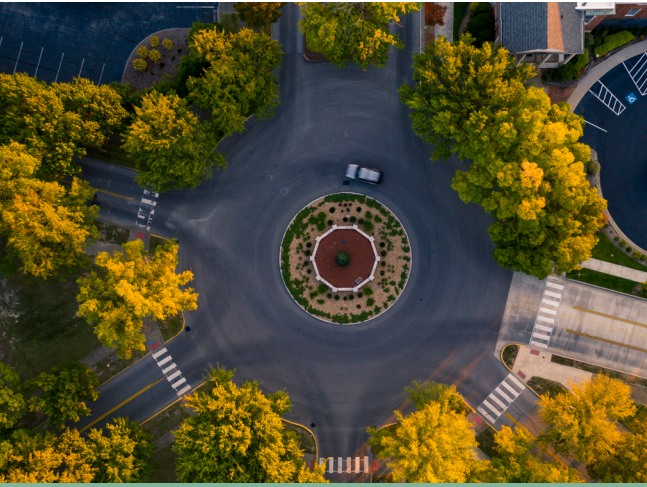


RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a public education strategy to provide regular updates on city priorities, funding allocation, and ongoing maintenance.
- Regularly track and assess infrastructure conditions to inform the planning and scheduling of maintenance projects.
- Coordinate with the County and State to identify and implement improvements to corridors into Downtown.
- Continuously evaluate opportunities to connect roadways to underdeveloped properties.



Infrastructure



12.0

Continue to invest in transportation infrastructure to increase transportation choices and provide convenient, multimodal connections between residential areas and businesses

Kingsport is committed to expanding transportation options that connect residents to jobs, services, and amenities. Investments in trails, multimodal corridors, and smart traffic systems will improve mobility and reduce congestion. Enhancing connectivity between neighborhoods and commercial centers will support economic vitality and improve daily life for residents.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Extend the greenbelt and provide additional trail spurs and access points to both residential neighborhoods and commercial and employment centers to increase the trails capacity to connect residents to jobs and services .
- Evaluate the feasibility of a secondary street grid parallel to Stone Drive where possible.
- Ensure there is a robust streetscape and direct multimodal connection from Brickyard development to downtown.
- Consider implementation of smart traffic management systems to improve traffic flow in critical areas.
- Develop an infrastructure strategy to provide secondary roadway and pedestrian connections in the Allandale area.
- Evaluate infilling sidewalks in existing neighborhoods, prioritizing those that would have the greatest impact on overall connectivity.

13.0

Provide and maintain infrastructure and other public investments to support economic development and improve quality of life

Infrastructure investments are key to fostering business growth and excellent quality of life. Kingsport aims to strengthen utilities and public amenities in commercial and industrial areas while exploring new funding mechanisms like business improvement districts. Enhancing streetscapes and implementing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will further enrich neighborhood character and livability.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue proactively investing in utilities and services in industrial and commercial areas.
- Explore the potential for the establishment of business improvement districts to fund infrastructure improvements in key areas such as downtown or along Stone Drive.
- Identify and evaluate opportunities to enhance neighborhood character with street trees and landscaping.
- Continue to implement and regularly update the vision of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Infrastructure



14.0

Ensure city buildings and facilities are regularly and well maintained

Well-maintained public buildings and facilities are essential to delivering high-quality services. Kingsport will implement preventative maintenance programs and leverage technology to gather community input and monitor infrastructure needs. Evaluating underutilized properties will help optimize public assets and return value to the community.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a preventative maintenance program for all city buildings and facilities.
- Develop an ongoing forum or a virtual platform to regularly solicit feedback from the community on needed improvements.
- Develop a mechanism to regularly identify and evaluate underutilized or vacant city facilities and return unneeded properties to the private sector.
- Leverage existing platforms, such as the Connect Kingsport App and the City's website or adopt new technologies to allow residents to notify city employees of infrastructure in need of attention.

15.0

Pursue strategic investments in infrastructure to make the city more competitive in the region

Kingsport aims to lead in sustainability and innovation through targeted infrastructure investments. Expanding electric vehicle charging stations and integrating green technologies into public buildings will position the city as a forward-thinking regional hub. These efforts will enhance Kingsport's appeal to residents, businesses, and visitors alike.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand citywide electric vehicle charging infrastructure, prioritizing locations near commercial and employment centers, and incentivizing chargers in new developments.
- Continually leverage opportunities to improve the efficiency and sustainability of public buildings and facilities, utilizing green infrastructure or renewable energy products such as solar panels.



A faint, light blue line-art pattern of a city street map is visible in the background, overlaid on a solid dark blue field.

07

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Implementation Strategy

The Implementation Strategy serves as an outline of the actions that the City of Kingsport and its partners aim to implement over the next ten years to work towards the vision set forth in Kingsport's first Comprehensive Plan. The actions are aligned with the community priorities identified in each focus area of the plan. The tables on the following pages provide a summary of the focus area recommendations, the suggested priority level, and estimated time/cost requirements.

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
L-1	Promote responsible, measured growth and development that meets the needs of the community while maintaining Kingsport's small-town feel and strong community spirit.			
L-1.01	Encourage redevelopment of underutilized assets and properties, including surface parked or overparked properties.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-1.02	Focus on context-sensitive and context-appropriate development with a compatible mix of uses to ensure development is compatible with adjacent uses.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-1.03	Proactively explore opportunities for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-1.04	Incentivize community-centric design principles in development to meet the diverse needs of all members of the community.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-1.05	Encourage community involvement in planning processes to ensure development aligns with community values.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-1.06	Work with the Historic Zoning Commission to develop historic design guidelines and strategies, including preferred colors, façade standards, etc.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-2	Continue to prioritize new development and infill in Downtown Kingsport to strengthen the area's vibrancy and appeal and increase community pride.			
L-2.01	Explore opportunities for tactical urbanism projects and temporary activations of vacant spaces as placemaking efforts to increase public interest and attract private investment in underutilized areas.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-2.02	Proactively update land use regulations and invest in public amenities such as high-quality streetscapes to encourage walkable, mixed-use development in priority community nodes and corridors, as outlined in the priority nodes and corridors map.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-2.03	Evaluate opportunities for public-private partnerships to fund key infrastructure improvements in downtown areas.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
L-2.04	Prioritize improvements to the Broad Street streetscape to bolster future development and redevelopment downtown.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs		
L-2.05	Build on the growing investment in downtown Kingsport by continuing to implement the city's downtown plan, further enhancing its appeal as a regional commercial, entertainment, and employment destination.	● ● ●	✓	TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-2.06	Identify and conduct streetscape efforts on key corridors into downtown.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-2.07	Explore additional tools and programs to support downtown development, such as a revolving loan fund for building improvements.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-3 As developable land within the city decreases, proactively encourage infill and redevelopment opportunities.						
L-3.01	Promote mixed-use infill development focused in areas where there is significant infrastructure to support it.	● ● ●	✓	TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-3.02	Evaluate the potential for restructuring of the Tax Allocation District in the downtown area to ensure infill development and redevelopment has the appropriate infrastructure in place.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-3.03	Explore strategies to reduce barriers to redeveloping challenging buildings or parcels in downtown to encourage the use of existing structures instead of allowing them to sit vacant, detracting from a vibrant downtown environment.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-4 Explore strategic opportunities for annexation to provide additional areas for single family development within the city.						
L-4.01	Identify suitable areas for development between Interstate 26 and downtown, prioritizing areas with lower infrastructure development costs.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-4.02	Partner proactively with developers and land owners to annex and develop areas that support the city's growth and development goals.	● ● ●	✓	TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-5 Leverage city tools to encourage turnover of vacant or dilapidated properties and support regulatory adjustments to encourage mixed-use development.						
L-5.01	Encourage increased heights and densities in the downtown core in lieu of continued outward development.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-5.02	Evaluate the potential to develop a vacant property registry to track the condition and status of vacant parcels and assess graduated annual fees for properties left in a state of vacancy and neglect.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-5.03	Increase enforcement of property code violations, especially in areas where violations have an outsized negative influence on the perception and property values of adjacent properties or neighborhoods.	● ● ●	✓	TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●
L-5.04	Offer incentives such as tax credits for mixed-use development.	● ● ●		TIME	● ● ●	● ● ●



Implementation Strategy

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
H-1	Promote a variety of housing types at a range of price points to provide all Kingsport residents, from young professionals and young families to older households, with access to diverse housing choices at all stages of life.			
H-1.01	Organize essential community partners when necessary to discuss issues related to housing.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.02	Evaluate potential incentives for developers to build a wider range of housing options.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.03	Ensure continuity of character as infill development occurs.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.04	Consider conducting a housing study with a housing market component.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.05	Coordinate dialog with community organizations to address services for homeless (including precariously housed) based on outcomes of a robust housing study.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.06	Identify obstacles prohibiting people from getting into stable housing, and develop strategies to remove or mitigate these obstacles.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.07	Identify housing types that are missing in the market along with incentives to promote desired types.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.08	Develop a strategy to engage small-scale and infill developers.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.09	Develop a citywide program to identify vacant parcels and dilapidated structures.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.10	Create an educational program for small scale developers to support redevelopment and connect them with parcels, potential resources, etc.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.11	Consider developing pre-approved developments/unit plans that developers can use (to reduce permitting processes and design costs).	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.12	In partnership with local non-profits, encourage the creation of various types of senior housing or programs to help subsidize the cost of home improvements.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-1.13	Facilitate pursuit of various funding sources for public housing. Funds can include state funds, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants, or Community Reinvestment Act resources to develop exemplary subsidized housing development.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
H-1.14	Consider providing resources or education on Landlord Training and Tenant education to address substandard rental properties and incentives to motivate property repair and maintenance paired with targeted code enforcement.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-2	Encourage development of “missing middle” housing products, including townhomes, duplexes, and quadplexes.			
H-2.01	Consider modifications to the zoning code that allow more diverse housing options like townhomes and duplexes in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown, such as lot subdivision.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-3	Encourage multifamily development in areas within walkable distance to jobs, services and amenities to appeal to young professionals and younger families.			
H-3.01	Implement walkability improvements such as better crosswalks and pedestrian pathways in targeted areas.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-3.02	Develop a targeted strategy to encourage residential development in the downtown area, especially live/work.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-3.03	Explore opportunities to promote greater density and development in development focus areas (Allandale, Lynn Garden, Colonial Heights, etc.).	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
H-3.04	Focus on enhancing walkability to downtown from adjacent neighborhoods.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●



Implementation Strategy

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs		
I-1 Invest in the maintenance of city streets and sidewalks.						
I-1.01	Develop a public education and communication strategy to provide regular updates on city priorities, funding allocation, and ongoing maintenance.			TIME		
				COST		
I-1.02	Regularly track and assess infrastructure conditions to inform the planning and scheduling of maintenance projects.			TIME		
				COST		
I-1.03	Coordinate with the County and State to identify and implement improvements to corridors into Downtown.			TIME		
				COST		
I-1.04	Continuously evaluate opportunities for additional transportation connections that support the city’s economic development goals.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2 Continue to invest in transportation infrastructure to increase transportation choices and provide convenient, multimodal connections between residential areas and businesses.						
I-2.01	Extend the greenbelt and provide additional trail spurs and access points to both residential neighborhoods and commercial and employment centers to increase the trails capacity to connect residents to jobs and services.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2.02	Evaluate the feasibility of a secondary street grid parallel to Stone Drive where possible.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2.03	Ensure there is a robust streetscape and direct multimodal connection from Brickyard development to downtown.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2.04	Consider implementation of smart traffic management systems to improve traffic flow in critical areas.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2.05	Develop an infrastructure strategy to provide secondary roadway and pedestrian connections in the Allandale area.			TIME		
				COST		
I-2.06	Focus on sidewalk infill in existing neighborhoods, prioritizing those that would have the greatest impact on overall connectivity.			TIME		
				COST		

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
I-3	Provide and maintain infrastructure and other public investments to support economic development and improve quality of life.			
I-3.01	Continue proactively investing in utilities and services in industrial and commercial areas.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-3.02	Explore the potential for the establishment of business improvement districts to fund infrastructure improvements in key areas such as downtown or along Stone Drive.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-3.03	Identify and evaluate opportunities to enhance neighborhood character with street trees and landscaping.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-3.04	Continue to implement and regularly update the vision of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-4	Ensure city buildings and facilities are regularly and well maintained.			
I-4.01	Develop a preventative maintenance program for all city buildings and facilities.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-4.02	Develop an ongoing forum or a virtual platform to regularly solicit feedback from the community on needed improvements.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-4.03	Develop a mechanism to regularly identify and evaluate underutilized or vacant city facilities and return unneeded properties to the private sector.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-4.04	Continue to leverage existing platforms, such as the Connect Kingsport App and the City's website or adopt new technologies to allow residents to notify city employees of infrastructure in need of attention.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-5	Pursue strategic investments in infrastructure to make the city more competitive in the region.			
I-5.01	Expand citywide electric vehicle charging infrastructure, prioritizing locations near commercial and employment centers, and incentivizing chargers in new developments.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
I-5.02	Continually leverage opportunities to improve the efficiency and sustainability of public buildings and facilities, utilizing green infrastructure or renewable energy products such as solar panels.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●



Implementation Strategy

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
Q-1	Preserve and enhance Kingsport's numerous greenspaces and outdoor recreation opportunities, including Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, and other state and local parks and trails, and advertise Kingsport as a destination for these activities.			
Q-1.01	Expand the Greenbelt and provide additional connections to neighborhoods to improve access to recreational opportunities.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-1.02	Take advantage of difficult to develop or undevelopable spaces for public recreational opportunities, such as the large floodplains adjacent to Reedy Creek south of Stone Drive.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-1.03	Develop and fund a strategic plan to connect the Greenbelt to other community assets like the Aquatic Center, Riverbend Park, and Church Circle.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-1.04	Promote eco-tourism and outdoor recreational activities through regional marketing campaigns.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-2	Continue providing and expanding Kingsport's wide range of community events.			
Q-2.01	Partner with local businesses and organizations to sponsor, host, and promote events and leverage Kingsport's unique assets to increase their draw.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-2.02	Regularly evaluate the goals, objectives, and outcomes of community events to ensure they are still relevant and successful.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-2.03	Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that free community events are not undercutting or competing with local businesses.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-2.04	Provide a diverse program of community events that appeal to people of diverse backgrounds and interests and a variety of age groups.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-2.05	Continue using social media and traditional media and explore strategies to market and broadly promote community events, both within the city and the greater region.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-3	Promote the establishment of greater diversity of local choices for retail, dining, entertainment, recreational opportunities and public social spaces.			
Q-3.01	Support pop-up markets and events that feature local vendors and artists.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-3.02	Prioritize attracting and maintaining retail, dining, entertainment, and recreational businesses that are unique to Kingsport over national chains with multiple other locations in the region.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
Q-4	Prioritize the availability of services for seniors, including assisted living options and improved public transportation.			
Q-4.01	Coordinate with local transportation services to provide expanded access and extended operating times for residents of affordable and senior housing units.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-4.02	Prioritize locations with walkable access to daily goods and services for affordable and senior housing developments.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-5	Pursue opportunities to expand the availability of a robust and comprehensive network of health and human services that support the needs of all Kingsport residents.			
Q-5.01	Collaborate with healthcare providers to increase the availability of clinics and services in the city.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-5.02	Evaluate opportunities for public/private partnerships to create community health hubs.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-6	Continue to prioritize education and promote the reputation of Kingsport's excellent public school system.			
Q-6.01	Continue to invest in school facilities and technologies to maintain high educational standards and position as one of the best public school systems in the region and the state.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-6.02	Expand partnerships with local colleges to increase educational opportunities.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-6.03	Evaluate the need for and capacity to successfully provide additional mentorship and scholarship programs.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-7	Partner with industrial businesses to reduce negative environmental impacts.			
Q-7.01	Identify strategies and initiatives to reduce waste and improve energy efficiency.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-7.02	Partner collaboratively with industrial businesses to address and mitigate negative perceptions around industrial development.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
Q-8	Maintain Kingsport's high quality of public safety.			
Q-8.01	Continue to prioritize and maintain the City's best in class police and fire departments.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●



Implementation Strategy

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
E-1	Strengthen and increase awareness of existing workforce development and higher education opportunities available to Kingsport residents.			
E-1.01	Organize a dedicated working group that brings together agencies, non-profits, and other partners and organizations engaged in economic and workforce development to regularly discuss these issues.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-1.02	Partner with local colleges and businesses to offer expanded vocational training programs and provide apprenticeships and internships to local residents.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-1.03	Pursue partnerships with KATS and NET Trans, as well as the university, to provide increased transportation options for students.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-1.04	Consider increasing funding for job placement and career counseling services.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-1.05	Leverage local resources to support the success of new and small businesses by promoting access to the KOSBE and requiring recipients of the downtown loan program to receive technical assistance from the SPDC.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-2	Leverage Kingsport's unique assets to boost regional competitiveness and drive economic growth			
E-2.01	Establish a program to educate local front line workers in the hospitality and retail industries about the various retail, recreational, and commercial assets in the city and encourage them to promote local Kingsport businesses to visitors and residents	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-2.02	Improve visibility to the Greenbelt and increase connections to major employment and commercial destinations to leverage the greenbelt as a tool for economic development tool and "trail-oriented development".	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-2.03	Partner with developers and invest in public amenities and infrastructure to leverage Reedy Creek and the Holston River as assets to support lifestyle centered development.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-2.04	Continue expanding Kingsport's capacity to host sports tournaments and events by investing in recreational and hospitality facilities to support tourism and increase spending at local businesses.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-2.05	Continue building upon Kingsport's comparative advantages as a hub of industry and professional services to grow the City's high income employment base.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●

ID	Recommendation / Description	Priority Level	Ongoing Action	Resource Needs
E-3	Invest in improved city aesthetics and placemaking efforts to attract businesses and support economic development and quality of life.			
E-3.01	Support the expansion of placemaking projects such as the Downtown Alley Walk and Mural Trail, Sculpture Walk, particularly within downtown.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-3.02	Promote neighborhood clean-up and improvement campaigns.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-3.03	Evaluate opportunities for additional signage along Highway 36 to direct motorists to Kingsport and highlight local attractions.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-4	Improve corridors and gateways into Downtown Kingsport to enhance the sense of place and frame downtown as a destination.			
E-4.01	Develop a robust strategy to improve conditions along Wilcox Drive to create a more welcoming approach into town from the interstate.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-4.02	Develop a comprehensive strategy to identify and improve conditions at key gateways into downtown, such as enhancements in the public right-of-way, improved code enforcement for dilapidated properties, and promoting redevelopment of vacant or underdeveloped parcels.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-5	Provide incentives for redevelopment and reinvestment across the city to support economic development.			
E-5.01	Focus on residential development as a key component of Kingsport's economic strategy to attract high wage jobs and ensure that people who work in Kingsport also have opportunities to live in Kingsport.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-5.02	Focus recruitment efforts on target anchors for downtown, including boutique hotels, hospitality, retail, and higher end restaurants.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-5.03	Encourage adaptive reuse of historic and underutilized buildings.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-5.04	Foster public-private partnerships for major redevelopment projects.	● ● ●	✓	TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●
E-5.05	Develop and implement strategies to identify suitable locations and support site development for industrial space.	● ● ●		TIME ● ● ● COST ● ● ●



A

**EXISTING
CONDITIONS**

Existing Conditions



OVERVIEW

The Existing Conditions chapter presents baseline demographic, economic, and real estate trends for Kingsport and the broader Tri-Cities region. This report equipped the project team, City staff, stakeholders, and others involved in developing the comprehensive plan with reliable data to better understand Kingsport's challenges and opportunities and to craft relevant, actionable solutions.

The chapter is organized into four sections, each offering a distinct set of facts and trends that help illustrate Kingsport's current conditions.



Previous Plan Review



Demographic Profile



Economic Profile



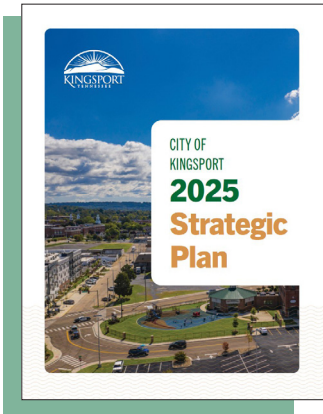
Land Use Conditions



Market Analysis

PREVIOUS PLAN REVIEW

The Kingsport Comprehensive Plan pulls from plans and policies from across the city and region to advance other relevant initiatives.

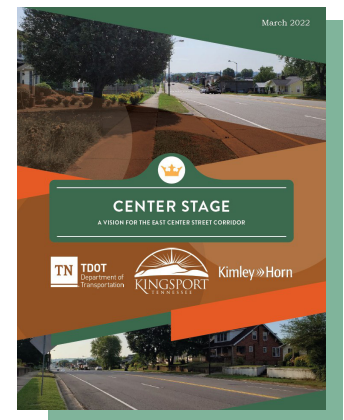


City of Kingsport 2025 Strategic Plan

Kingsport's 2025 Strategic Plan set the city's vision and mission, identifying goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan engaged a wide range of Kingsport residents and laid the groundwork for the Kingsport Comprehensive Plan. The Strategic Plan identified seven focus areas reflective of the needs of Kingsport residents and businesses, including Efficient and Responsive Government, Sustainable Infrastructure, Exceptional Cultural and Recreational Opportunities, Safe and Welcoming Community, Thriving Local Economy, Strong and Vibrant Neighborhoods, and World-Class Education.

Center Stage: A Vision for the East Center Street Corridor, 2022

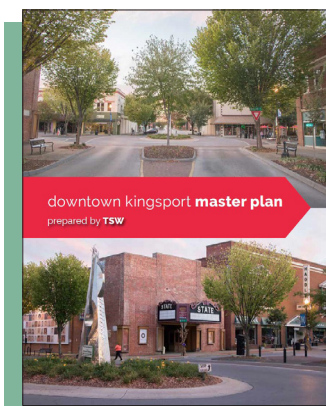
In 2022, the City of Kingsport and the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) partnered to create a long-term visioning and planning document for East Center Street. The study aimed to identify street design improvements for East Center Street with the goal of improving the corridor's livability while recognizing the historic legacy of the street. The plan provided a Preferred Vision for East Center Street, integrating community feedback and technical analysis to create a strategy that promoted safe multimodal travel, improved the aesthetic of the corridor, and supported continued reinvestment.



Lynn Garden: Corridor Study, 2022

In 2023, the City of Kingsport commissioned the comprehensive corridor enhancement study to address issues of space activation, public safety, and community and economic development along the Lynn Garden Drive corridor. The study aimed to provide land use and community design recommendations to improve Lynn Garden. The plan provided a Future Land Use Map, identifying seven Placetypes to articulate the community's goals and vision and other key recommendations to implement the plan.

Existing Conditions

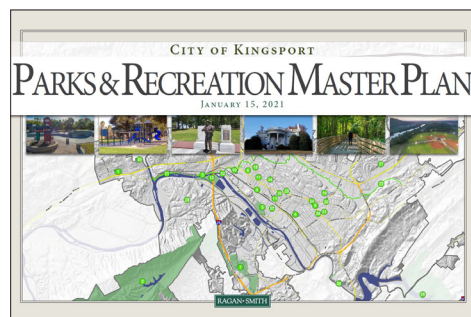


Downtown Kingsport Master Plan, 2018

In 2018, the Downtown Kingsport Master Plan updated 20-year-old plans for downtown identified in the Gateways & City Development Plan. The plan aimed to create a vision and reinforce and magnify downtown Kingsport's role as the economic and cultural heart of the community. To achieve this vision, the plan established a Framework Plan to recommend development and redevelopment opportunities, policy recommendations for each aspect of the Framework Plan, and an implementation plan with additional details on cost, phasing, responsible parties, and funding sources to make recommendations in the following areas: Land Use + Development, Economic Development, Transportation, Arts & Culture, and Academic Village.

City of Kingsport Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2021

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2021 to protect greenspace and environmental assets and provide opportunities for healthy, fun activities for Kingsport residents and visitors. The plan establishes “12 Big Ideas” which summarize recommendations. Short-term projects included constructing Riverbend Park, implementing the master plan for recreational facilities, constructing a Greenbelt link from downtown across the railroad, upgrading the Lynn View Community Center and parks, reviewing/upgrading the master plan for Rock Springs Park, acquiring land for parks in service gap areas, and extending the Greenbelt.

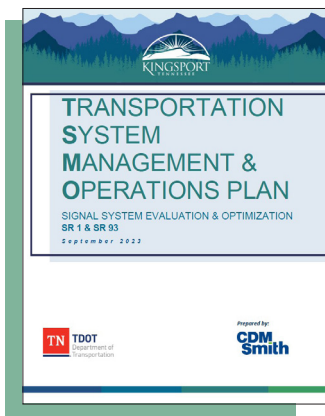
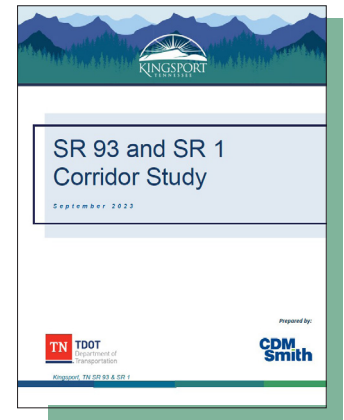


The City of Kingsport Land Use Plan

The City of Kingsport Land Use Plan – 2030, adopted in 2010, updated the existing 1998 to further expand the long-range planning into areas not covered as Kingsport's Planning Region of the Urban Growth Boundary Area. The plan provided a future land use map, defining multiple land use areas including Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Public. Each land use has a set of objectives to guide the type and character of development that occurs.

SR 93 and SR 1 Corridor Study, 2023

The SR 93 and SR 1 Corridor Study was adopted in 2023 after the City of Kingsport was awarded a TDOT Planning Grant to address safety, traffic flow, and operation for all modes of travel along the corridors. The study assesses the existing conditions of the E Stone Drive (SR 1) and N John B Dennis Highway (SR 93) to provide recommendations for safety enhancements, operational improvements, and multimodal infrastructure. The Implementation Plan provided a high-level planning cost for each project and prioritized them based on complexity, safety, public concern and cost as high-priority, medium-priority, and lowest priority.

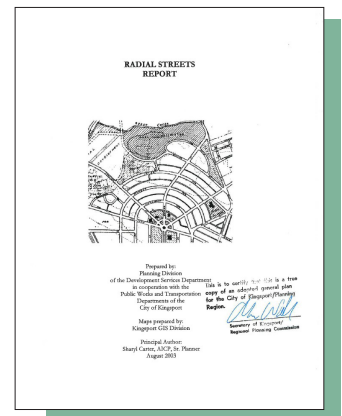


Transportation System Management and Operation Plan, 2023

The Transportation System Management and Operation (TSMO) Plan was created in tandem with the SR 93 and SR 1 Corridor Study to focus on the safe and efficient operation of signalized intersections within the study area. The TSMO plan provided guidance on how the City of Kingsport may enhance its transportation network through effective traffic signal management to ultimately achieve its vision of a safe, efficient, and future-ready transportation system. The plan provides an existing conditions report and traffic signal analysis to make multiple recommendations including implementation of optimized signal timing, turn lane improvements Stone Drive & John B Dennis Highway and Stone Drive & John B Dennis Highway, upgrades to pedestrian facilities, and the incorporation of alternative vehicle detection technologies.

Radial Streets Report, 2003

The Radial Streets Report, adopted in 2003, identified land use trends and projected future uses in the study area, with a goal of balancing land uses that allow development to occur while maintaining the residential areas. The plan provided multiple recommendations, including establishing a neighborhood district or conservation overlay, creating development standards, implementing traffic calming measures, ensuring landscaping requirements are met by new development, and establishing a redevelopment district.



Existing Conditions



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

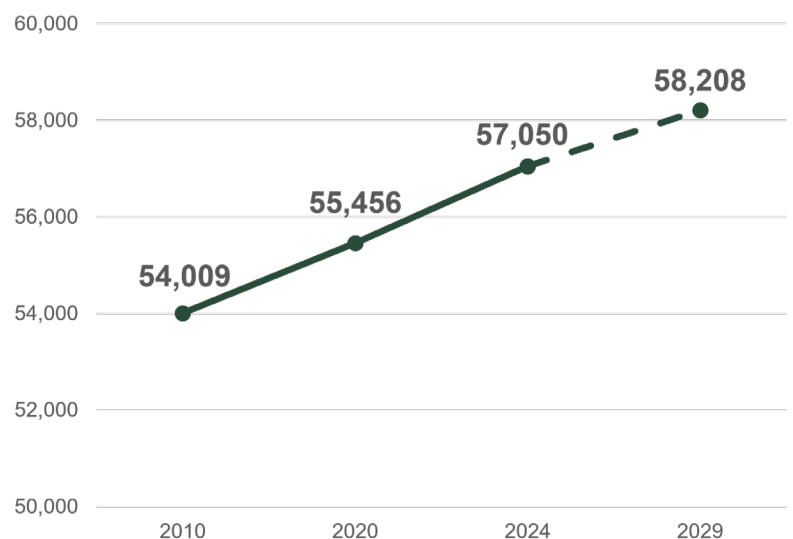
The Demographic Profile provides insight into Kingsport's population. Data was retrieved for both the City of Kingsport and the Tri-Cities region, which includes both the Kingsport-Bristol metropolitan area and the Johnson City metropolitan area to provide a comprehensive regional context. The Tri-Cities region includes seven counties across eastern Tennessee and western Virginia and the City of Bristol, Virginia.

Demographics and Population

In 2024, Kingsport had a population of approximately 57,050. Since 2010, the city has added nearly 4,200 residents growing at a rate greater than the Tri-Cities region and increasing their population by 5.6% while the region grew by 2.6%.

Population Trends, City of Kingsport, 2010 - 2024

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)

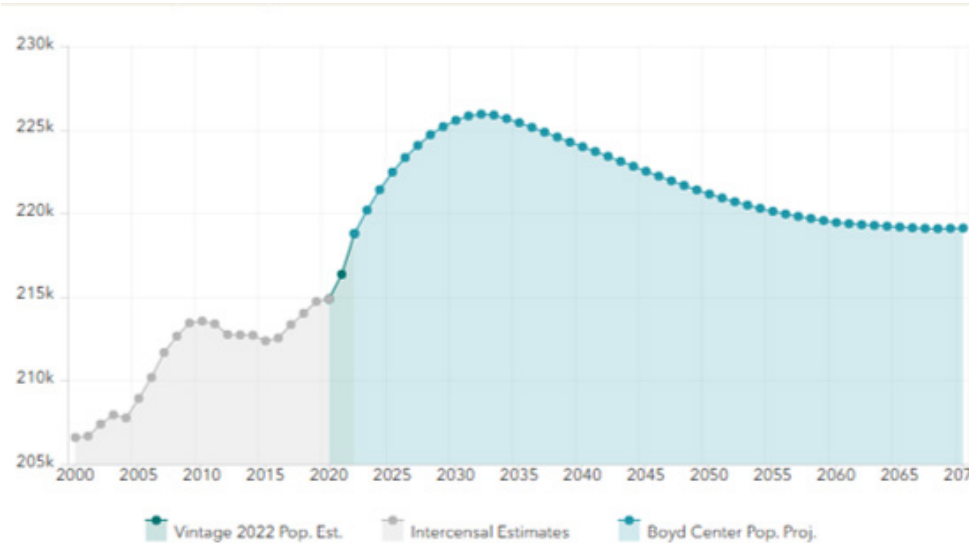


Population Projections

Population growth in Kingsport has accelerated following the 2020 pandemic likely due in part to increased flexibility of remote work.

Hawkins County’s population is expected to peak in 2034, with a population just over 235,000, then level out to a population of 220,000. While this estimate is not a guarantee, the projection is helpful in understanding how the population is expected to grow so the city and region can appropriately accomodate expected trends.

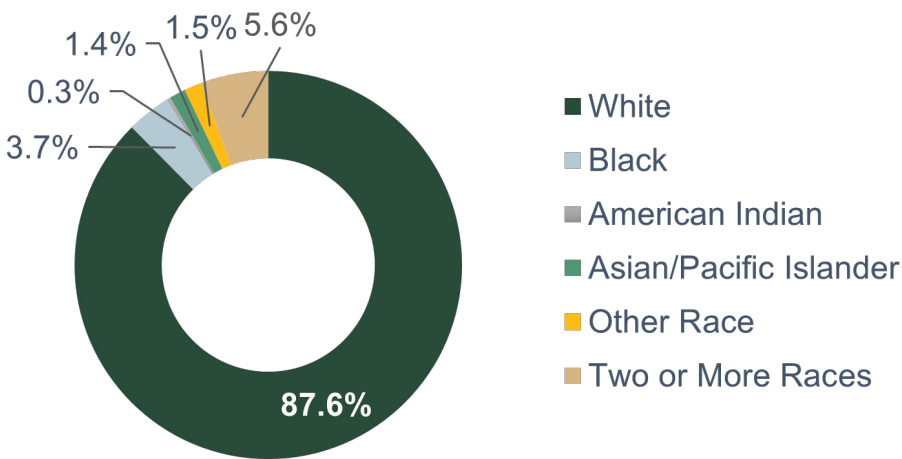
Estimated and Projected Population, Hawkins County
Source: Tennessee State Data Center



Race and Ethnicity

Nearly 88% of Kingsport residents identify as white; with 5.6% of people identifying as Two or More Races and 3.7% of people identify as Black or African American. Just 3.4% of residents identify as Hispanic.

Population By Race, City of Kingsport, 2024
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)



Existing Conditions

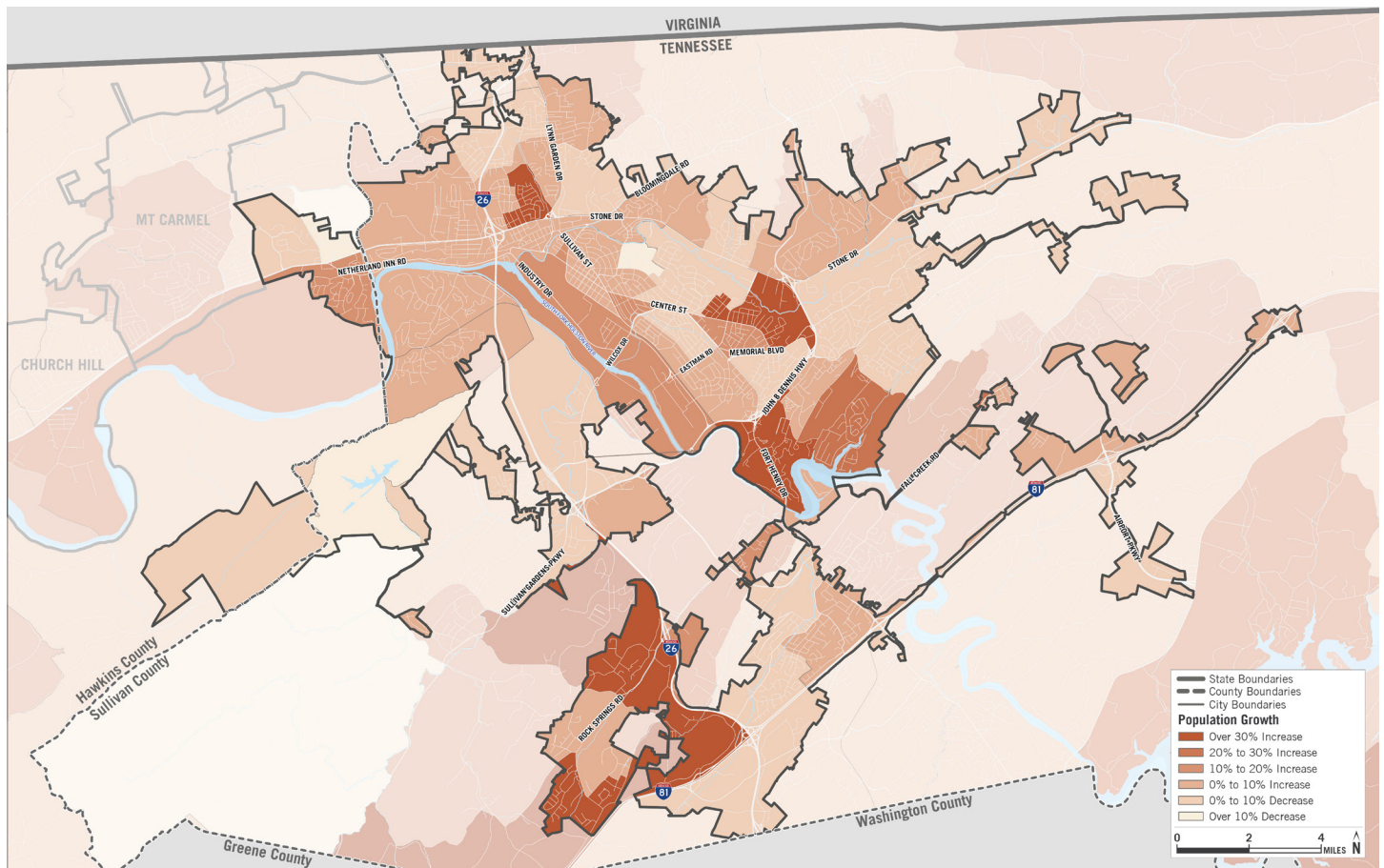
Population Growth

Since 2010, the majority of Kingsport's population growth has occurred on the southern and eastern sides of the city, primarily along Rock Springs Road and in the Cooks Valley area. The rest of the city has remained relatively stable, with isolated pockets of infill along East Center Street and in the Stonegate area, as illustrated in the map below. These growth patterns reflect the fact that much of the city's current land is built out; infill and redevelopment opportunities will become increasingly important to support future growth.

Most of Kingsport's population growth has occurred on the southern and eastern sides, while other areas have remained stable, highlighting the importance of infill and redevelopment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Population Growth Map



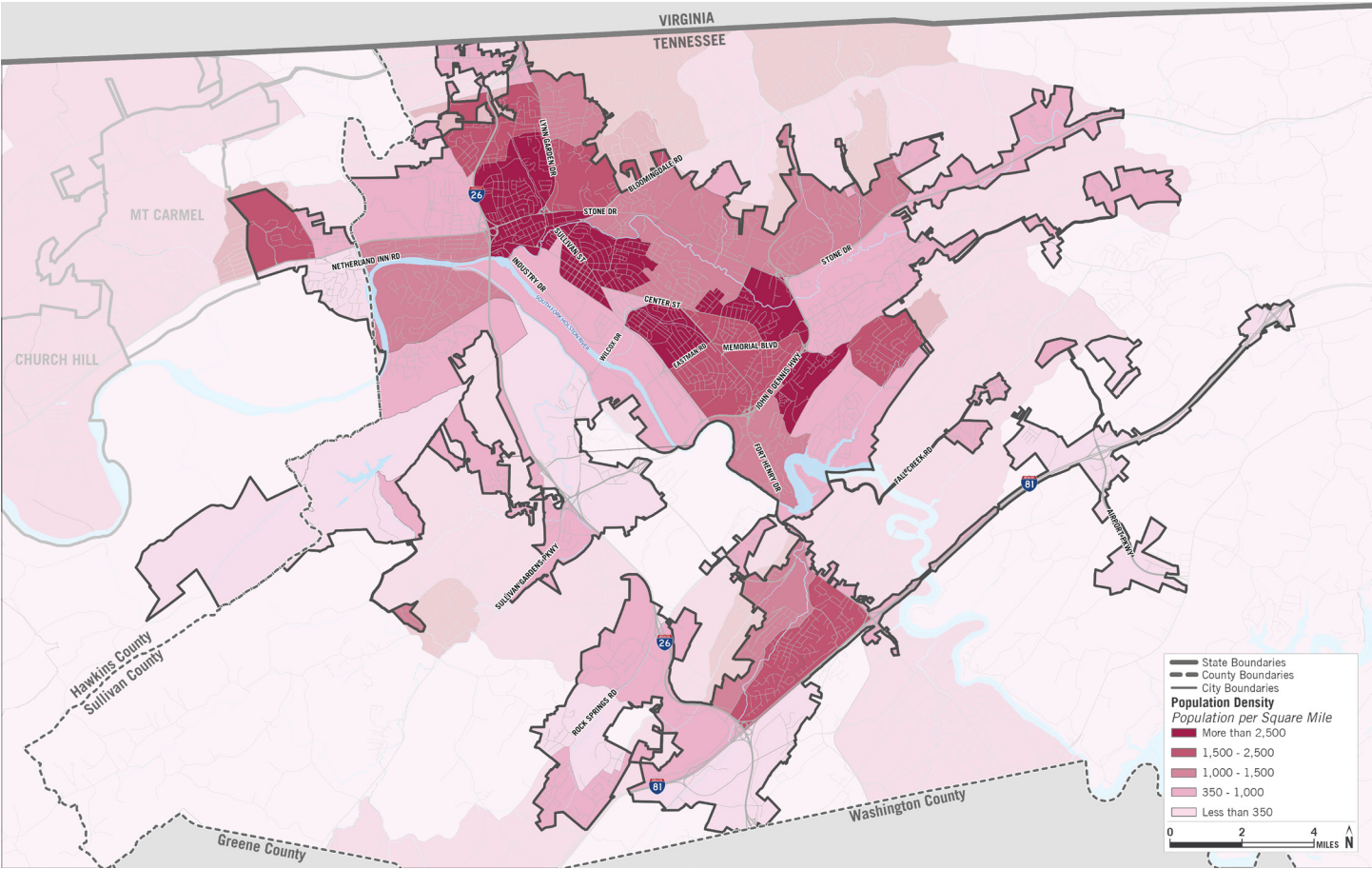
Population Density

The map below illustrates the population density across the city, highlighting some distinct patterns. While population densities are generally low, giving many parts of the community a small-town character, there are areas where the density is notably higher. These higher-density areas are typically located outside the industrial and commercial zones near the geographic center of the city. Furthermore, several neighborhoods with elevated population density can be found just outside the city limits, particularly around Colonial Heights and Rock Springs Road. This distribution of population density highlights the varying characteristics of different parts of the city and its surroundings.

Kingsport's population is densest in near the center of the city. Neighborhoods just outside the city, around Colonial Heights and Rock Springs Road, also have a greater population density.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Population Density Map



Existing Conditions

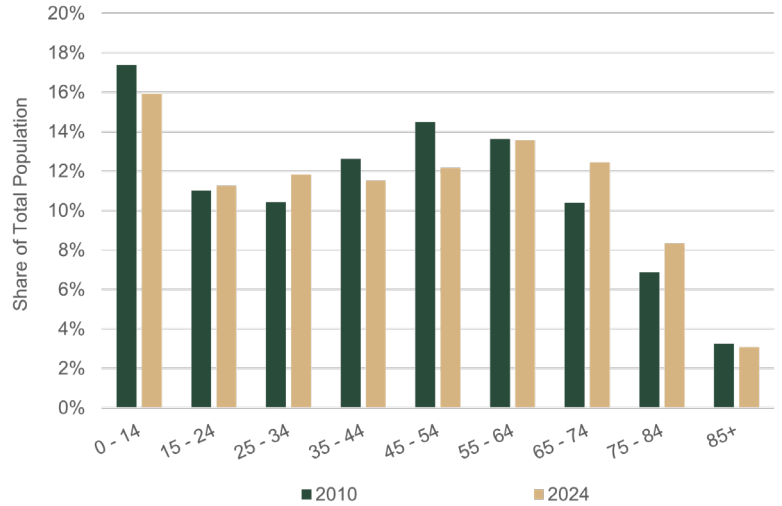
Age Characteristics

Since 2010, the share of residents younger than 14 in Kingsport has decreased from 17.4% to 15.9%. Conversely, the share of residents aged 66 to 84 has increased, reflecting an aging population in the city.

The median age in Kingsport is 44.6, which is similar to the overall Tri-Cities region. However, Kingsport's median age is higher than the state's median age of 39.6, indicating a relatively older population in Kingsport.

Population Share by Age Cohort, 2010 - 2024

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)



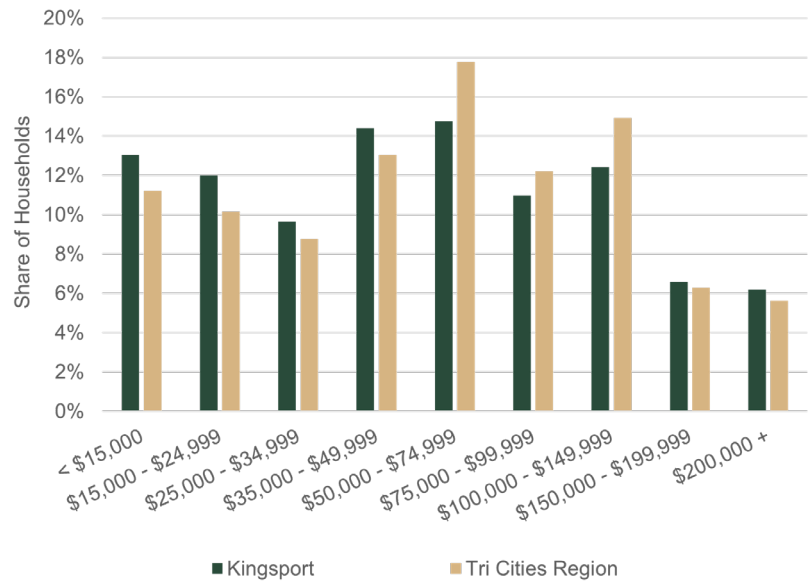
Household Characteristics

The median household income in Kingsport is \$51,092, which is relatively lower than the Tri-Cities' median household income of \$57,417. Nearly 30% of households earn between \$35,000 and \$74,000 annually. Additionally, nearly 35% of Kingsport households earn below \$35,000, which is a greater share compared to the Tri-Cities region. This indicates that Kingsport's population generally has lower incomes than the Tri-Cities region.

The average household size in Kingsport is 2.25, slightly lower than the Tri-Cities region's average of 2.29. In 2020, about 68% of households in Kingsport were one- or two-person households, compared to approximately 63% across the state. This suggests that Kingsport may have fewer families than other areas in the state.

Household Income, City of Kingsport 2024

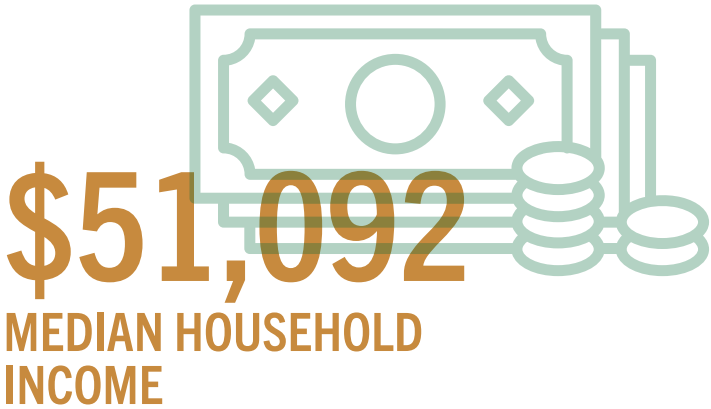
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)



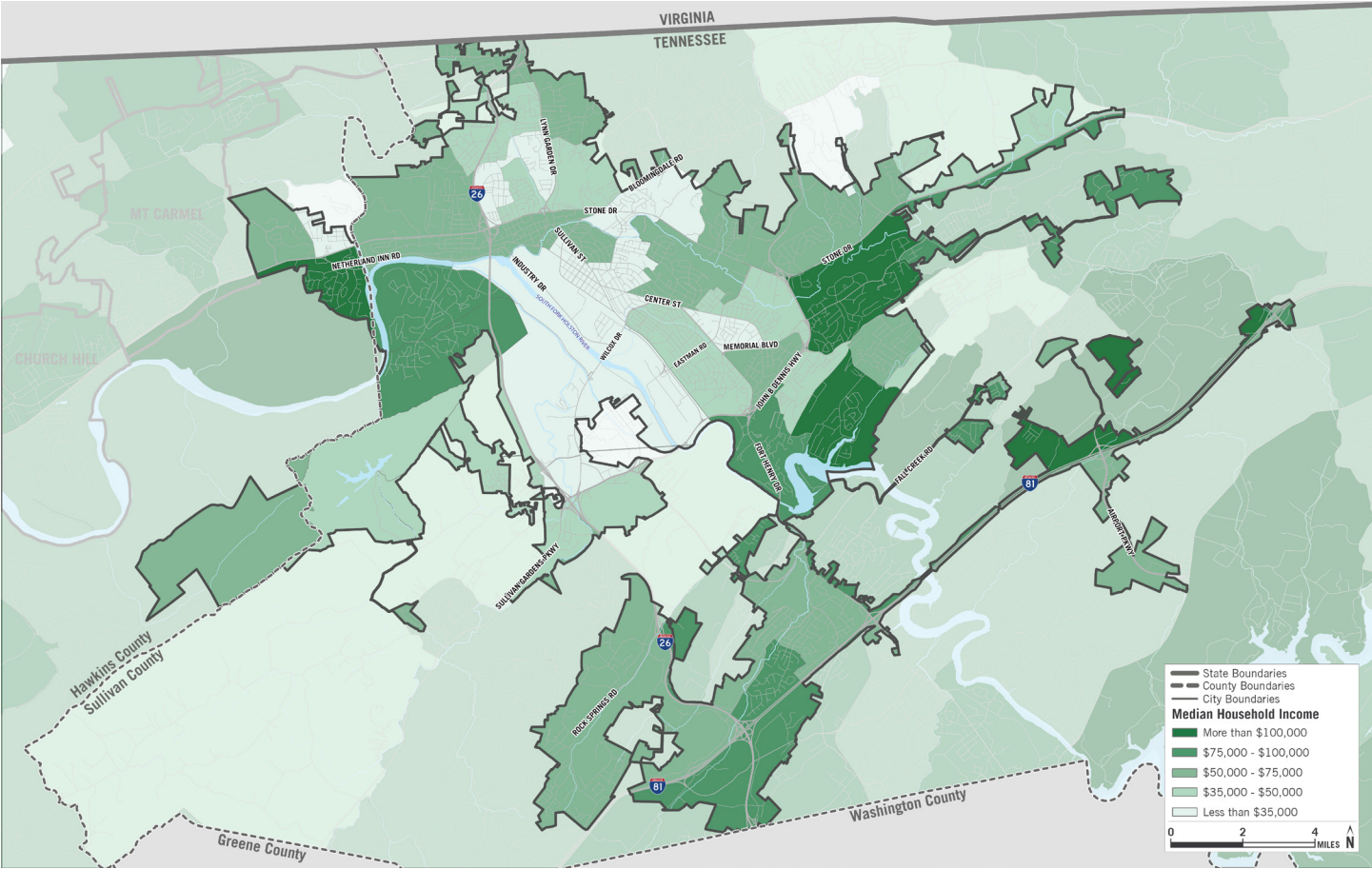
2.25
AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Median Household Income

Areas with the highest median household incomes are predominantly located on the eastern and western peripheries of the city, as shown on the map below. Many of the city’s central and Pre-WWII neighborhoods have household incomes of \$75,000 or less, which is below the national median of \$78,500. Household incomes generally increase as one moves further from the industrial areas in the center of the city.



Median Household Income Map



Existing Conditions

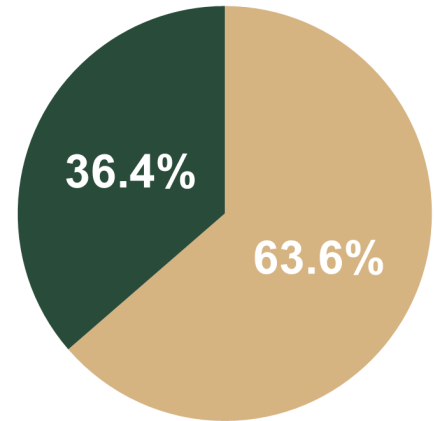
Housing Characteristics

A majority of housing units in Kingsport are owner-occupied, making up 63.6% of all housing units. Approximately 36.4% of housing units are renter-occupied.

Most housing units in Kingsport, nearly 66%, are single-family detached homes. Kingsport has a larger share of multifamily housing units at 27%, compared to 16.1% in the rest of the Tri-Cities region. Notably, Kingsport has a substantially lower share of mobile homes, accounting for just 4.5% of housing units, compared to 13.3% in the Tri-Cities region.

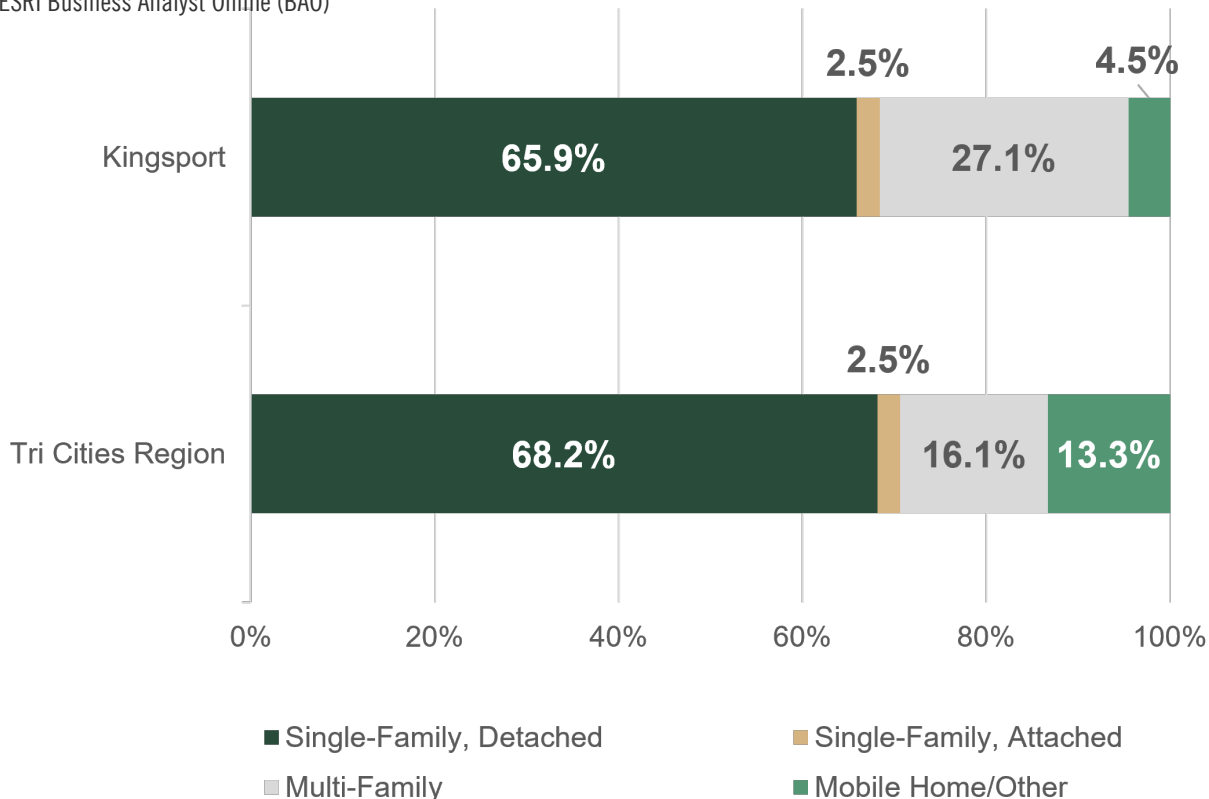
The city's greater share of multifamily housing may indicate a demand for this housing type, which will be further explored in the forthcoming market analysis.

Tenure, City of Kingsport, 2024
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)



■ Owner-Occupied
■ Renter-Occupied

Share of Housing Unit Type, 2024
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)

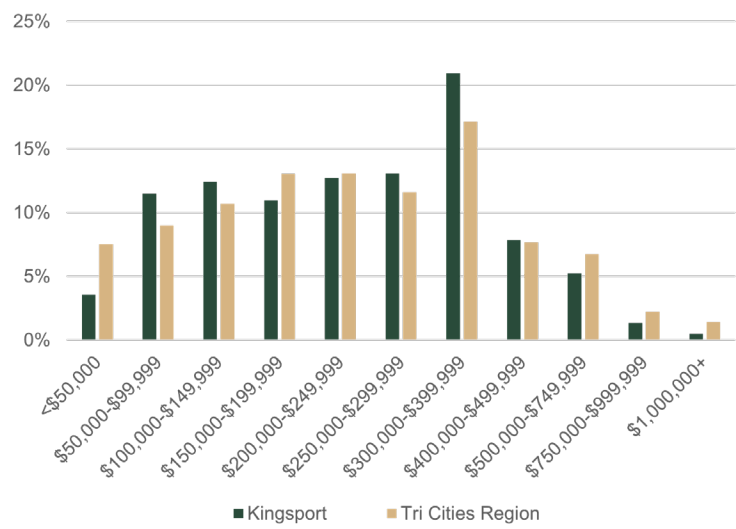


Residential Property Values

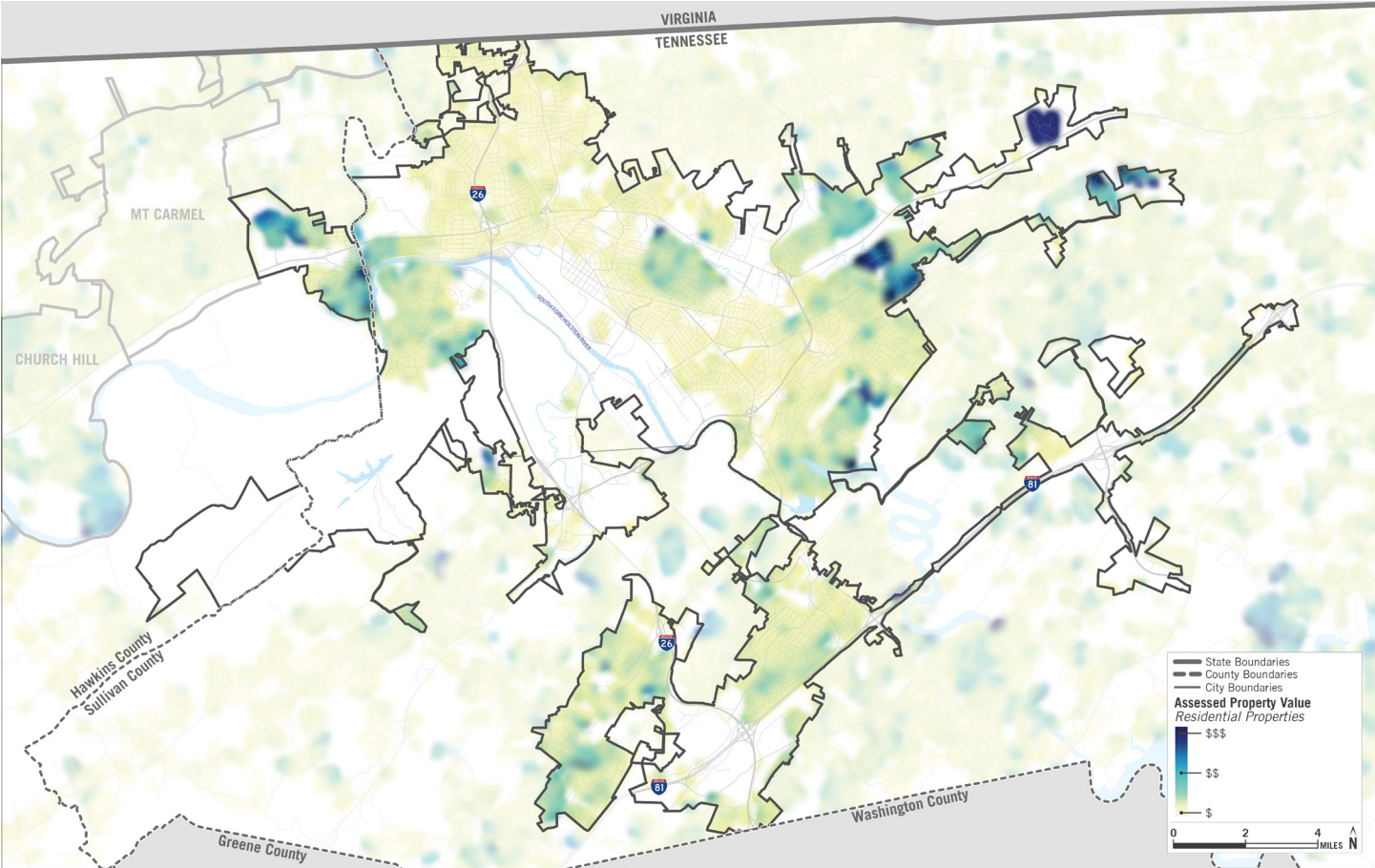
A higher percentage of the city’s housing stock is valued at \$300,000 or less relative to the rest of Tri-Cities Region. The median home value in Kingsport is \$245,589, and most homes are valued at \$400,000 or less, representing 85% of the city’s housing stock. Only 7% of Kingsport’s housing stock is valued at \$500,000 or greater.

Residential property values in Kingsport show a distinct pattern across the city. With the exception of Fair Acres, the highest home values are on the far edges of the city. Additionally, there are very limited housing options within the city above the \$600K mark.

Home Value by Cohort, 2024
Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO)



Assessed Property Value Map



Existing Conditions



ECONOMIC PROFILE

The Economic Profile provides information on employment, wages and commuting patterns in Kingsport, revealing key insights into economic conditions in the city.

Employment Characteristics

In 2022, Kingsport had approximately 40,429 jobs. An estimated 22,652 city residents are employed, reflecting a labor participation rate of 54.4%, and the city has a 5.3% unemployment rate.

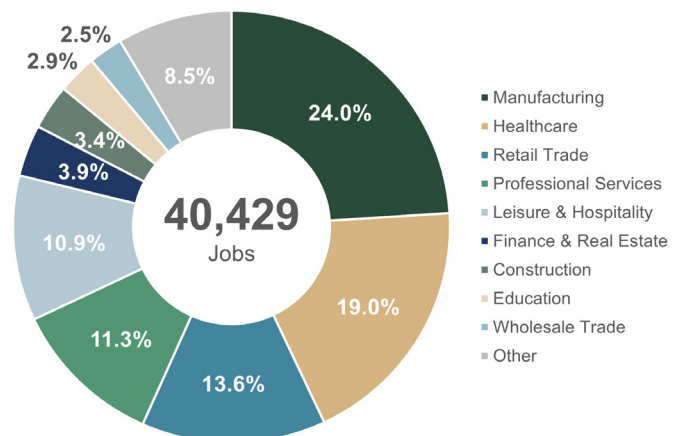
Kingsport is home to a diversity of industries, with manufacturing representing the largest share of jobs in Kingsport at 24%, followed by Healthcare (19%), and Retail Trade (13.6%). These three sectors comprise just over 56.6% of all jobs in the Kingsport.

Over a five-year period between 2017 and 2022, the sectors with the strongest absolute growth during the five-year period were:

- Professional and Technical Services (+1,127)
- Administrative and Waste Services (+506)
- Manufacturing (+428)

Kingsport Jobs by Industry, 2022

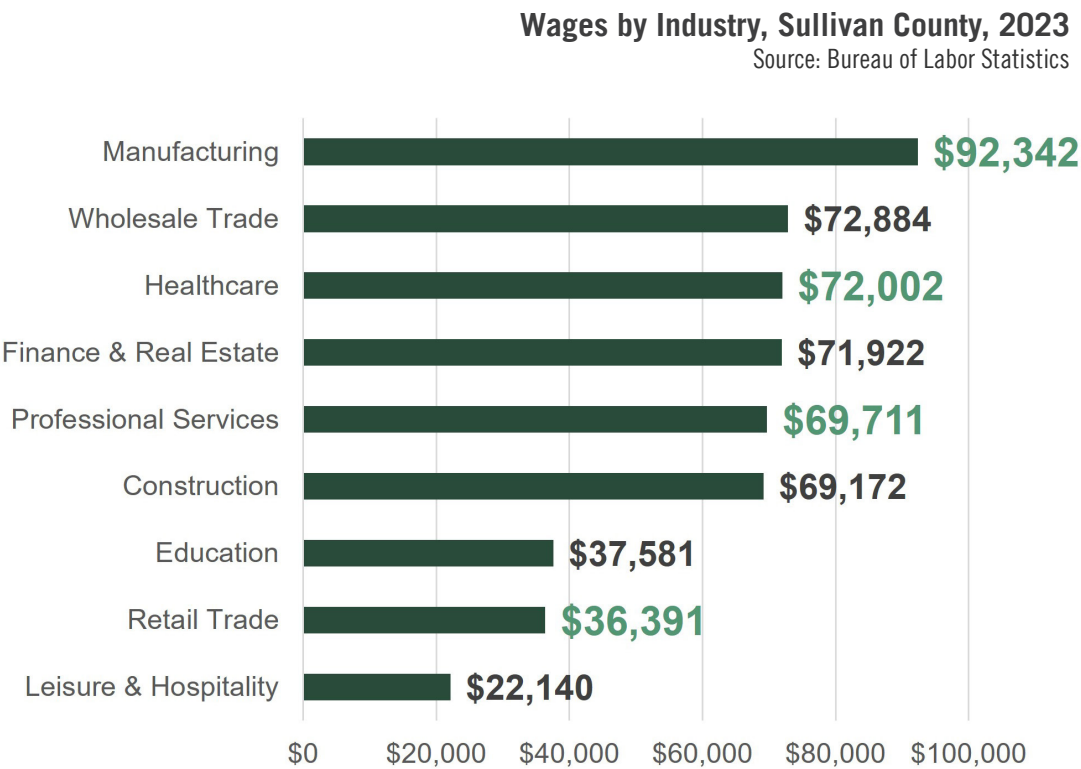
Source: LEHD On The Map



Wages

Many of Kingsport’s largest sectors provide some of the highest wages. The manufacturing sector has an average annual wage of \$92,342, making it both the highest earning and largest sector by employment in the city. Healthcare, the city’s second largest sector, has an average annual wage of \$72,002. Retail Trade jobs, which account for 13.6% of jobs in Kingsport, earn amongst the lowest wages, with an average annual wage of \$36,391.

Over 64% of jobs in Kingsport are in sectors with median wages above \$69,000. However, the median household income in Kingsport is just over \$51,000. This disparity suggests that many people employed in high-earning sectors within the city may not reside in Kingsport and thus do not contribute to its median household income. Additionally, approximately 44.2% of households in Kingsport received Social Security in 2023, in contrast to Johnson City, where only 31.6% of the population received Social Security. The higher proportion of Social Security recipients in Kingsport could also be influencing the city’s lower median household income.



Wages for the top 4 employment sectors in the city are highlighted in green, making up nearly 68% of the city's job base.

Existing Conditions

Commuting Patterns

In 2022, approximately 77% of all jobs in Kingsport were held by those who lived outside of the city and commuted into the area.

- 31,190 people commute to Kingsport for work.
- 13,413 Kingsport residents commute outside of the city for work.
- 9,239 people live and work in Kingsport.

Of those working in Kingsport:

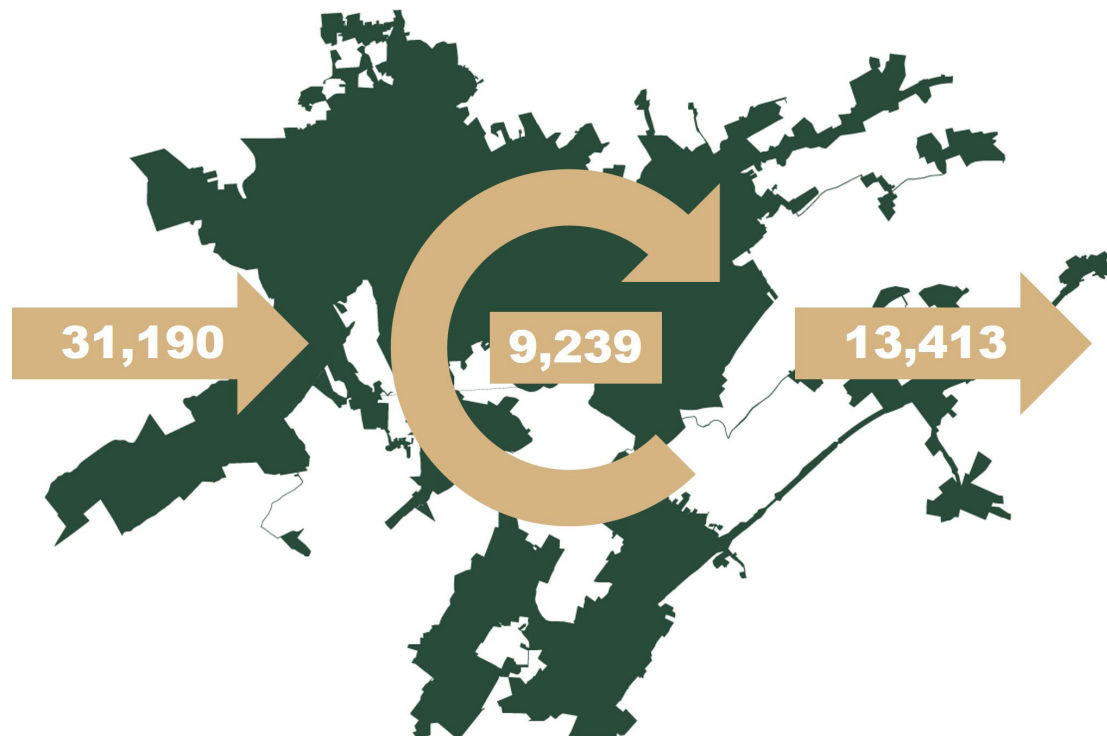
- 22.9% live in Kingsport.
- 6.3% commute from Johnson City
- 3.6% commute from Bloomingdale
- 2.7% commute from Bristol
- 2.6% commute from Church Hill
- 2.2% commute from Mount Carmel
- 59.7% commute from other locations.



77%
**OF ALL JOBS IN
KINGSPORT WERE
HELD BY THOSE WHO
LIVED OUTSIDE OF THE
CITY AND COMMUTED
TO THE AREA**

Commuting Patterns, Kingsport, 2024

Source: LEHD On The Map, 2022, Kimley-Horn



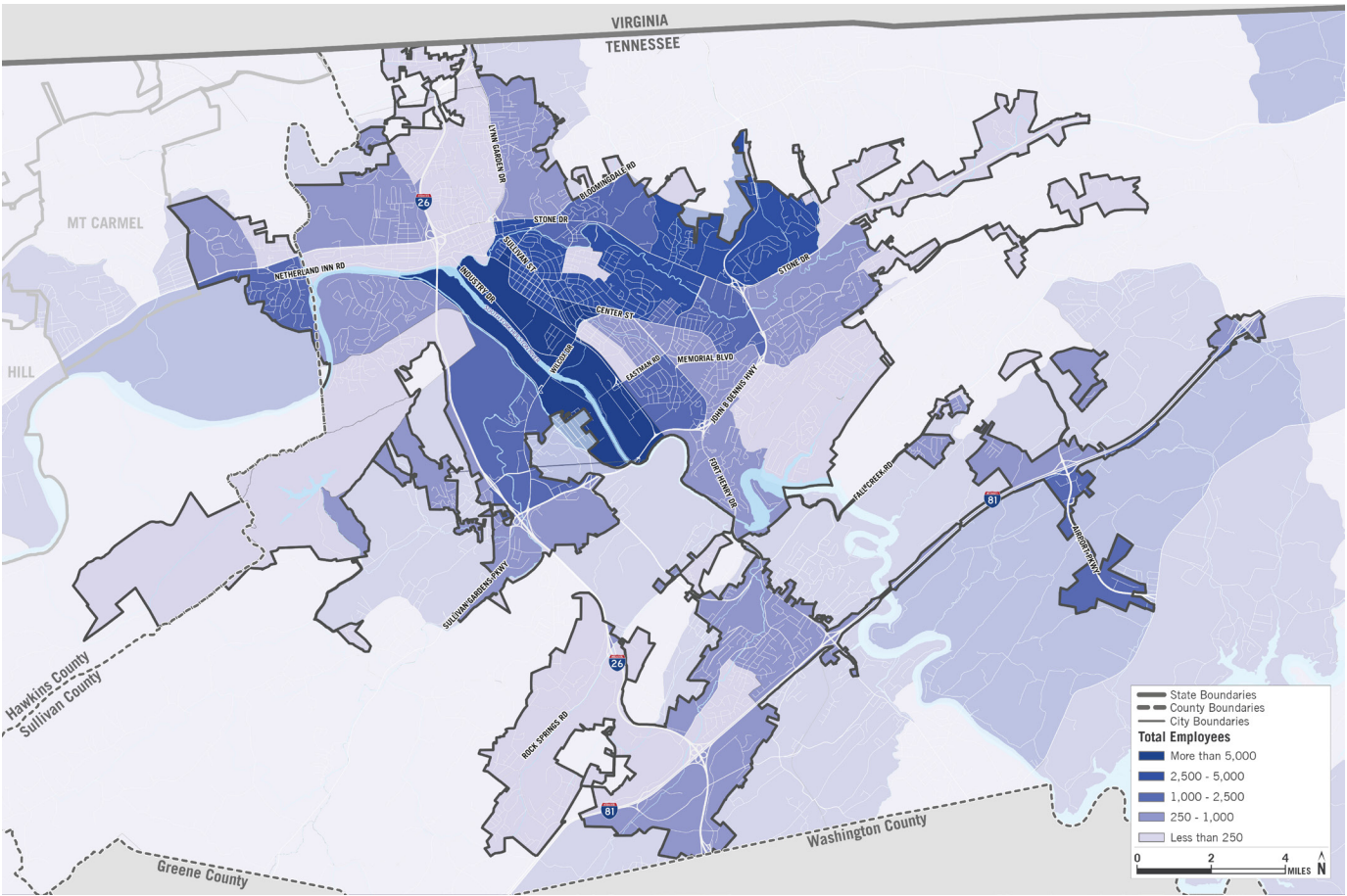
Total Employees

Employment in Kingsport is concentrated primarily in Downtown, Eastman, adjacent industrial areas, and along Stone Drive due to the presence of hospitals and medical facilities. The map below highlights this distribution. With a job base nearly twice as large as the city's labor force, Kingsport serves as an economic hub for the entire region. The city's median household income of \$51,092 falls below the median wages of key employment sectors that comprise over two-thirds of the job base. This trend suggests that residents from the surrounding region commute into Kingsport for higher-wage jobs, while many city residents may commute to other locations for lower-wage employment.

The city serving as an economic hub due to a job base nearly double its labor force, indicating regional commuting patterns for higher-wage jobs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Total Employees Map



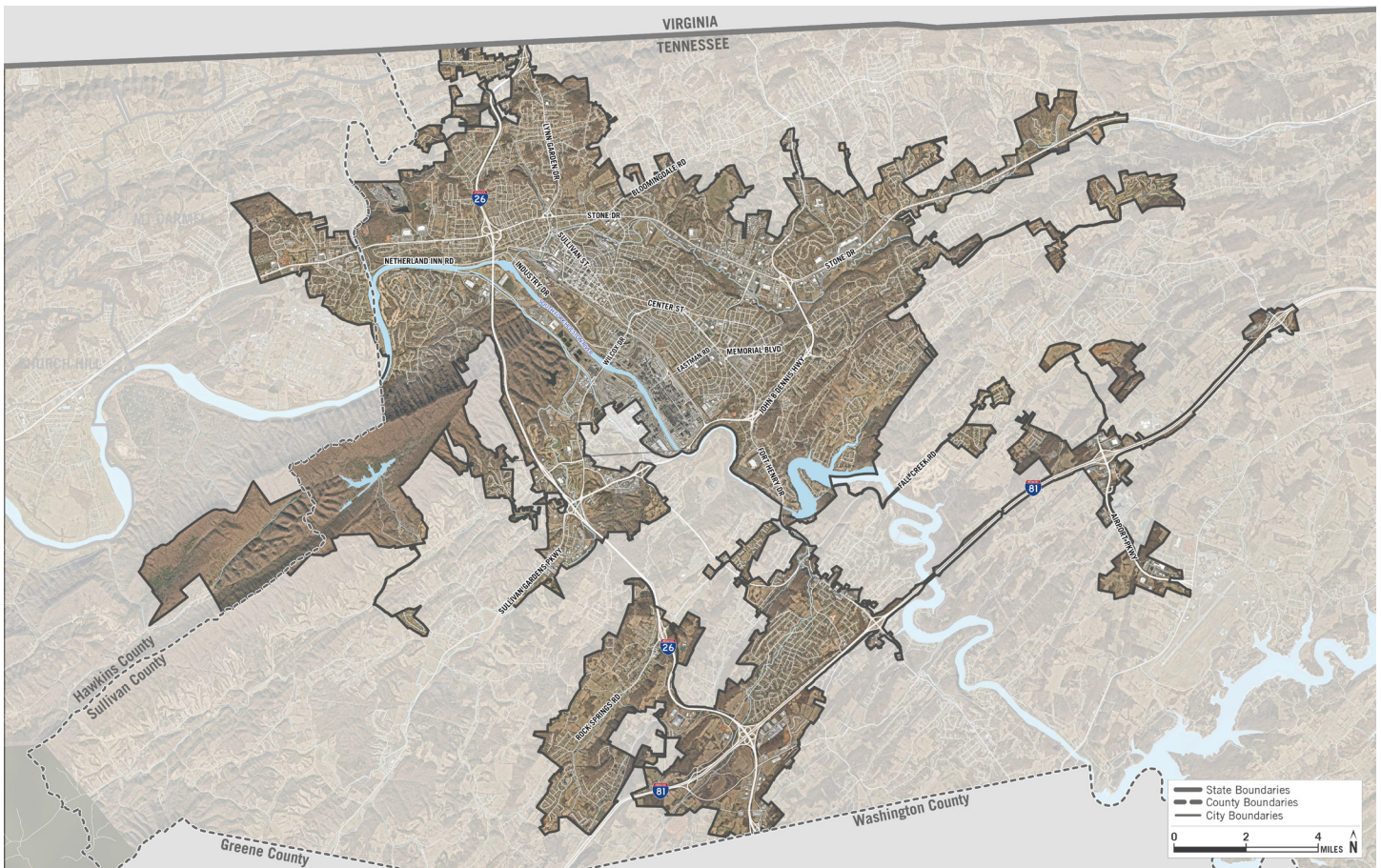
Existing Conditions

LAND USE CONDITIONS

Citywide Context

Kingsport lies in the Ridge and Valley physiographic region of the Appalachian Mountains and was rechartered in 1917 during the Garden City movement, which aimed to create balanced urban development integrating ample green spaces. The city is situated in Northeast Tennessee, primarily within Sullivan County, with a small portion extending into Hawkins County, adding to its geographic and administrative diversity. Kingsport plays a crucial role as the largest population and employment hub for the Kingsport-Bristol Metropolitan Area and serves as the second largest hub for the larger Kingsport-Bristol-Johnson City Combined Statistical Area. These geographical and economic highlights underscore Kingsport's significance in the region, as shown in the map below, making it a notable center for both living and working within Northeast Tennessee.

Citywide Context Map



Points of Interest

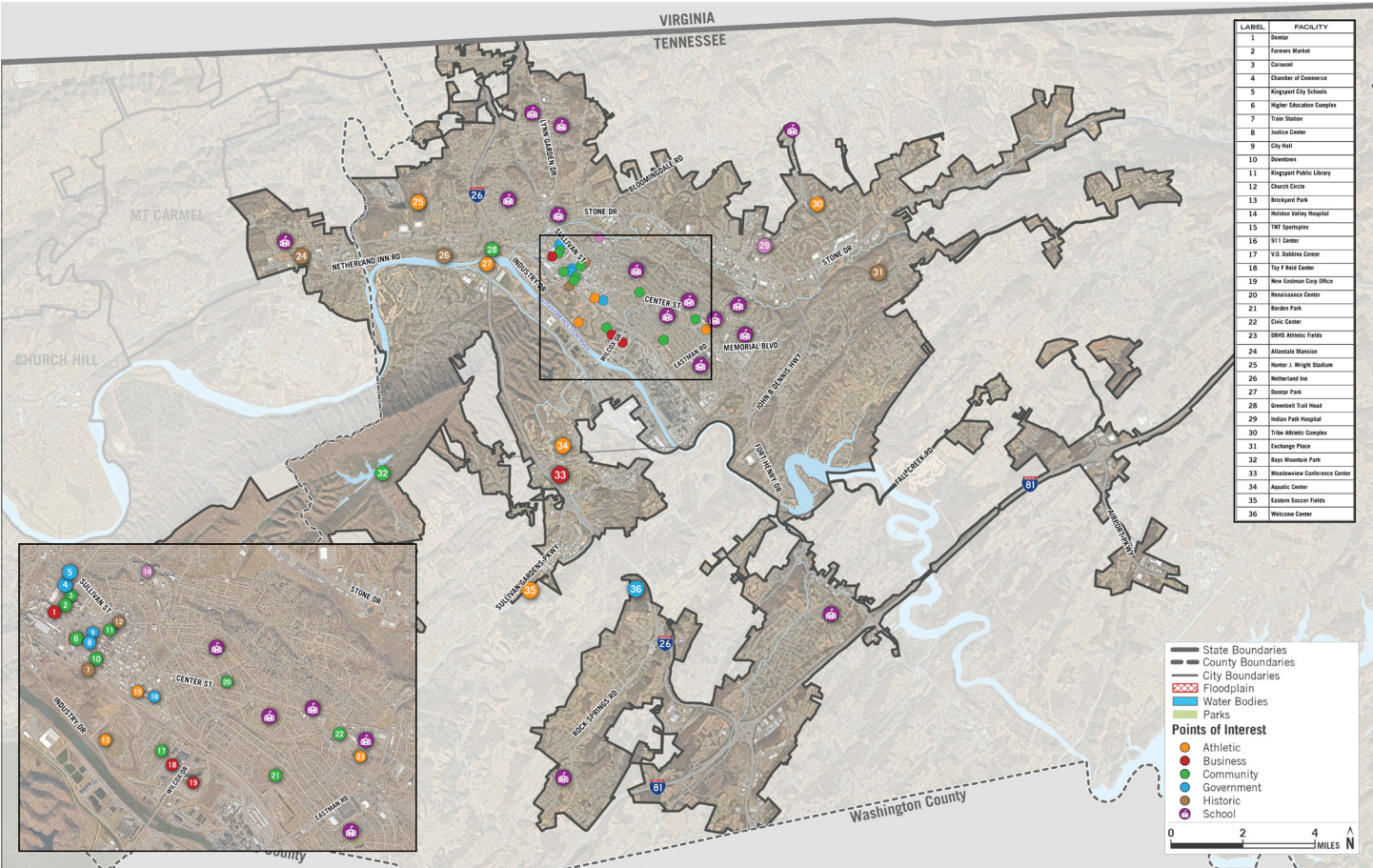
Kingsport has a wide range of assets that contribute to the community’s overall quality of life. These “Points of Interest,” shown on the map below, include athletic facilities, notable businesses, community centers, historic landmarks, and schools.

This analysis was conducted to better understand the breadth and spatial distribution of amenities and resources across the city. Mapping these features makes it easier to identify patterns, highlight strengths, and reveal potential gaps in access that can help guide future planning and investment.

Kingsport’s Points of Interest map below helps illustrate the distribution of key community amenities and highlight areas where additional resources may be needed.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Points of Interest Map



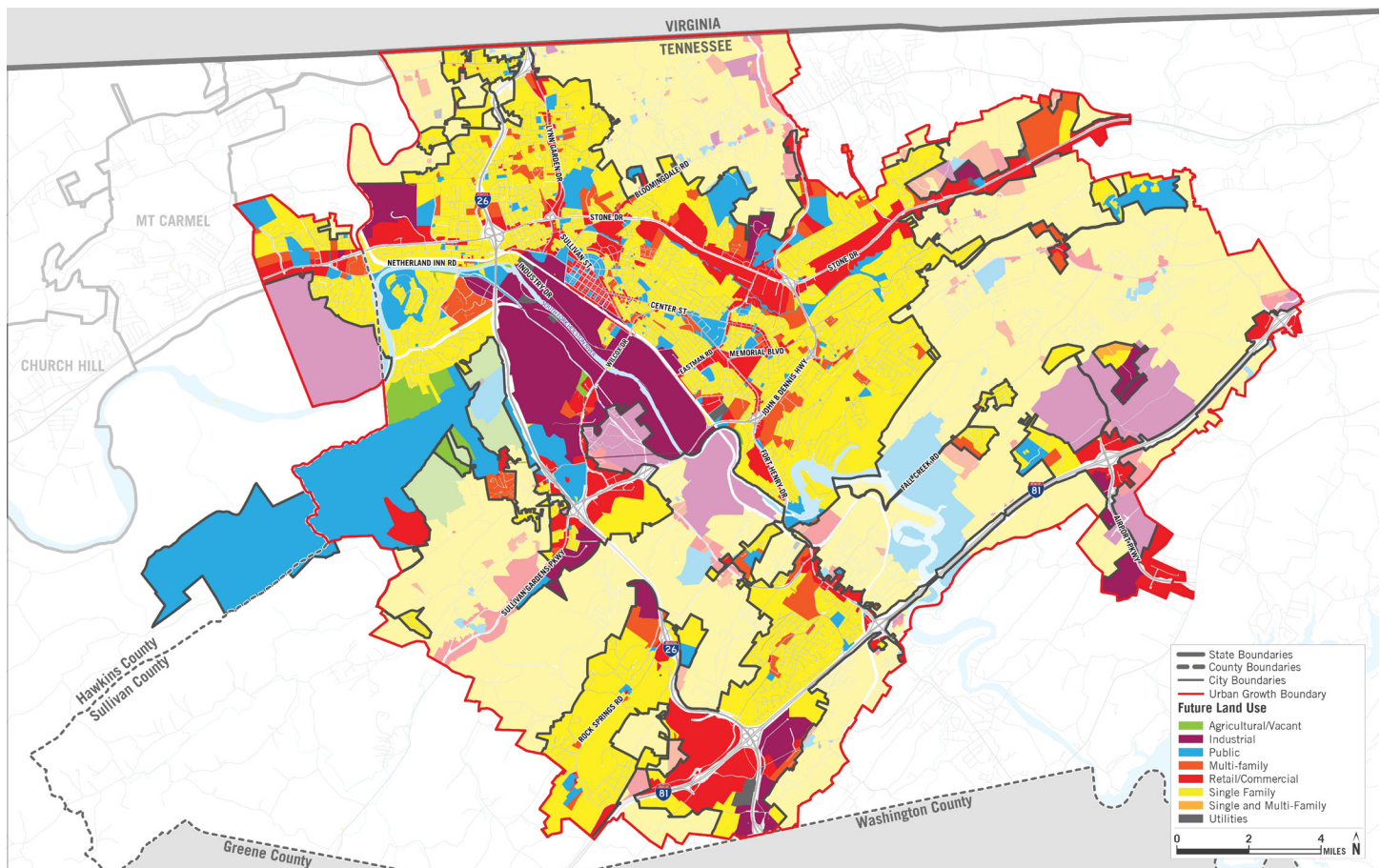
Existing Conditions

Previous and Future Land Use

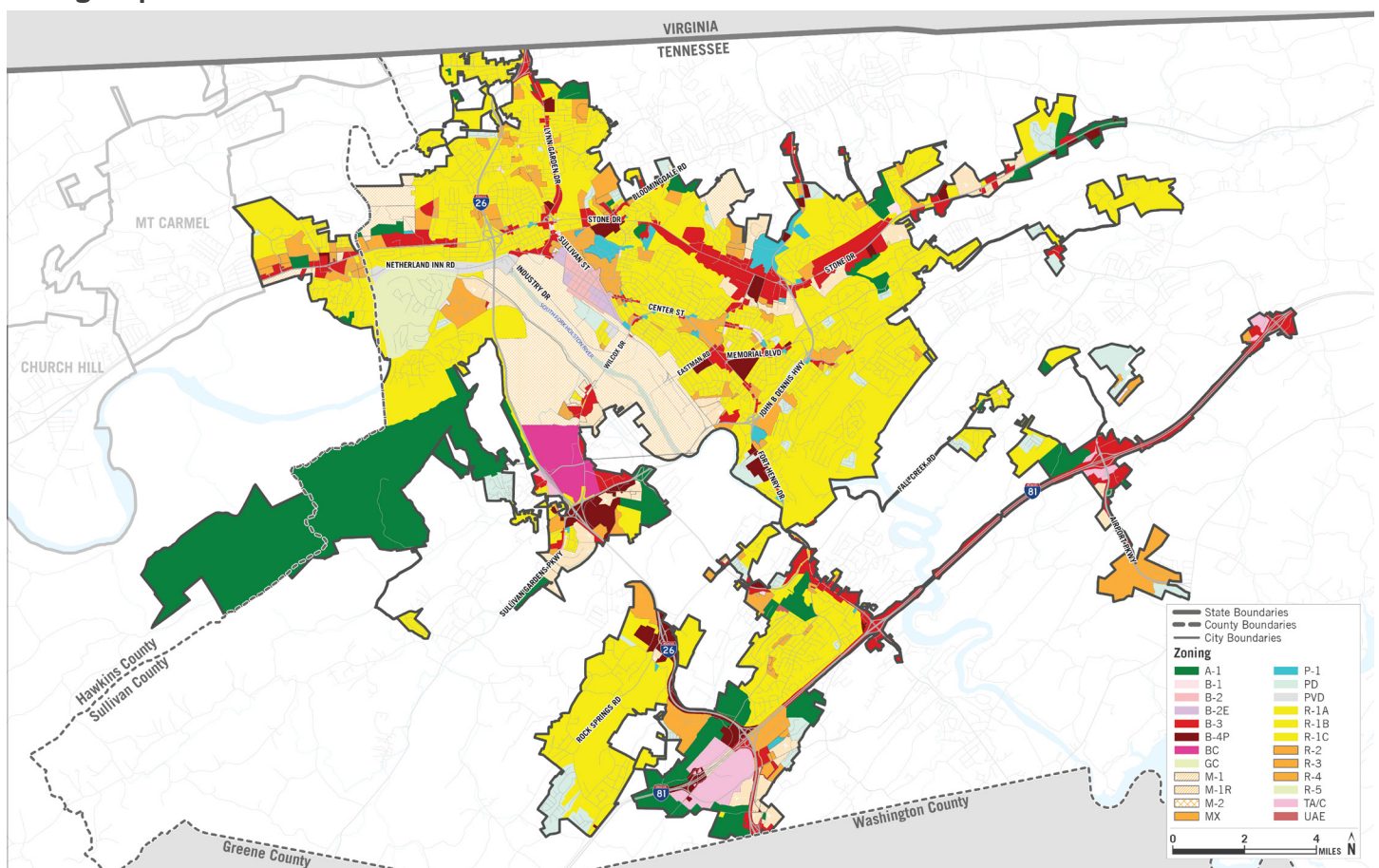
Future Land Use (FLU) guides long-term development by designating areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational purposes, ensuring sustainable and organized growth. FLU outside the city boundary but within the Extraterrestrial Jurisdiction (ETJ) allows the city to plan and regulate land use in surrounding areas, ensuring coordinated development as the city expands. The predominant FLU within the city is single-family, representing over 40% of the city and over 50% of the ETJ.

Future Land Use	Acreage in City	Acreage in ETJ	Percent of City	Percent of ETJ
Agricultural/Vacant	364	1,024	1.16%	1.68%
Industrial	3,676	7,128	11.73%	11.69%
Multi-Family	1,943	2,623	6.20%	4.30%
Public	6,768	8,255	21.60%	13.54%
Retail/Commercial	5,051	6,207	16.12%	10.18%
Single and Multi-Family	42	42	0.14%	0.07%
Single Family	13,347	35,517	42.60%	58.26%
Utilities	137	167	0.44%	0.27%

Previous and Future Land Use Map



Kingsport's zoning regulations are designed to manage land use and development within the city, ensuring organized growth and the preservation of the community's character. The city's zoning map designates various areas for specific uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use developments. As you can see in the map below, the primary land use is residential, making Kingsport a welcoming place for people to call home. This structured approach helps balance residential needs, commercial activities, and industrial operations, promoting economic growth while maintaining quality of life for residents.



Existing Conditions

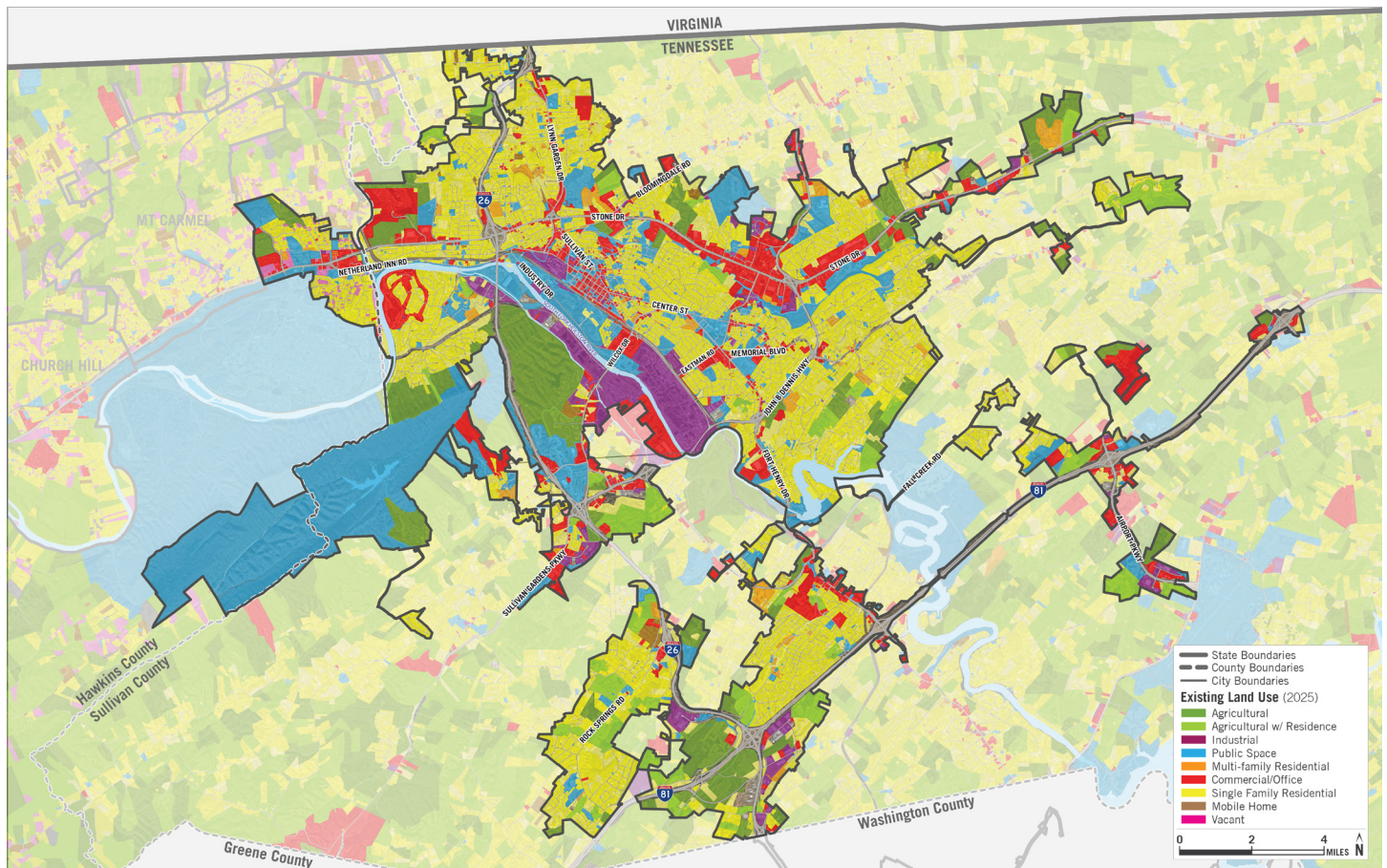
Existing Land Use

Existing land use in Kingsport is organized according to a zoning map that allocates land for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational purposes. This distribution is intended to support the city's development needs and manage the use of space effectively. In Kingsport, the zoning helps guide where various types of buildings and activities can take place, aiming to create an orderly and functional urban environment. The city's land use plan plays a key role in structuring its growth and infrastructure development. The map below shows the existing land use map for Kingsport.

Kingsport's zoning map organizes land for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses to support development needs and create an orderly urban environment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Existing Land Use



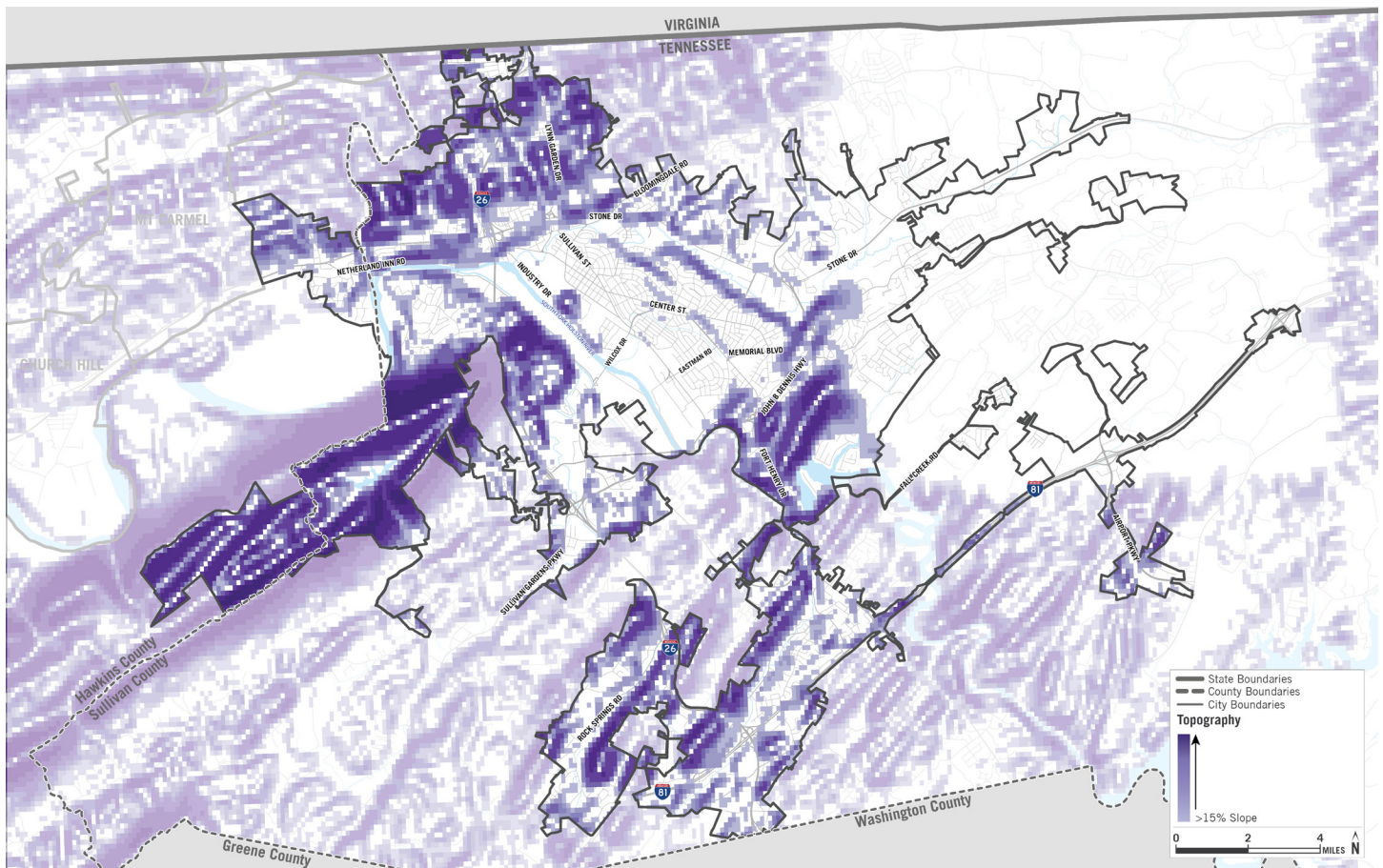
Topography

The city's topography varies significantly, affecting development potential. Areas with slopes of 15% or greater are shaded on the map below, with darker shades of purple indicating steeper slopes. Steep slopes present barriers to development, including challenges related to accessibility, erosion, and increased infrastructure and development costs. While downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods are generally flat, many other areas of the city feature steep slopes that limit redevelopment potential.

Kingsport's varied topography, particularly slopes over 15%, affects development potential, with steep areas posing challenges such as accessibility, erosion, and higher costs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Topography Map



Existing Conditions

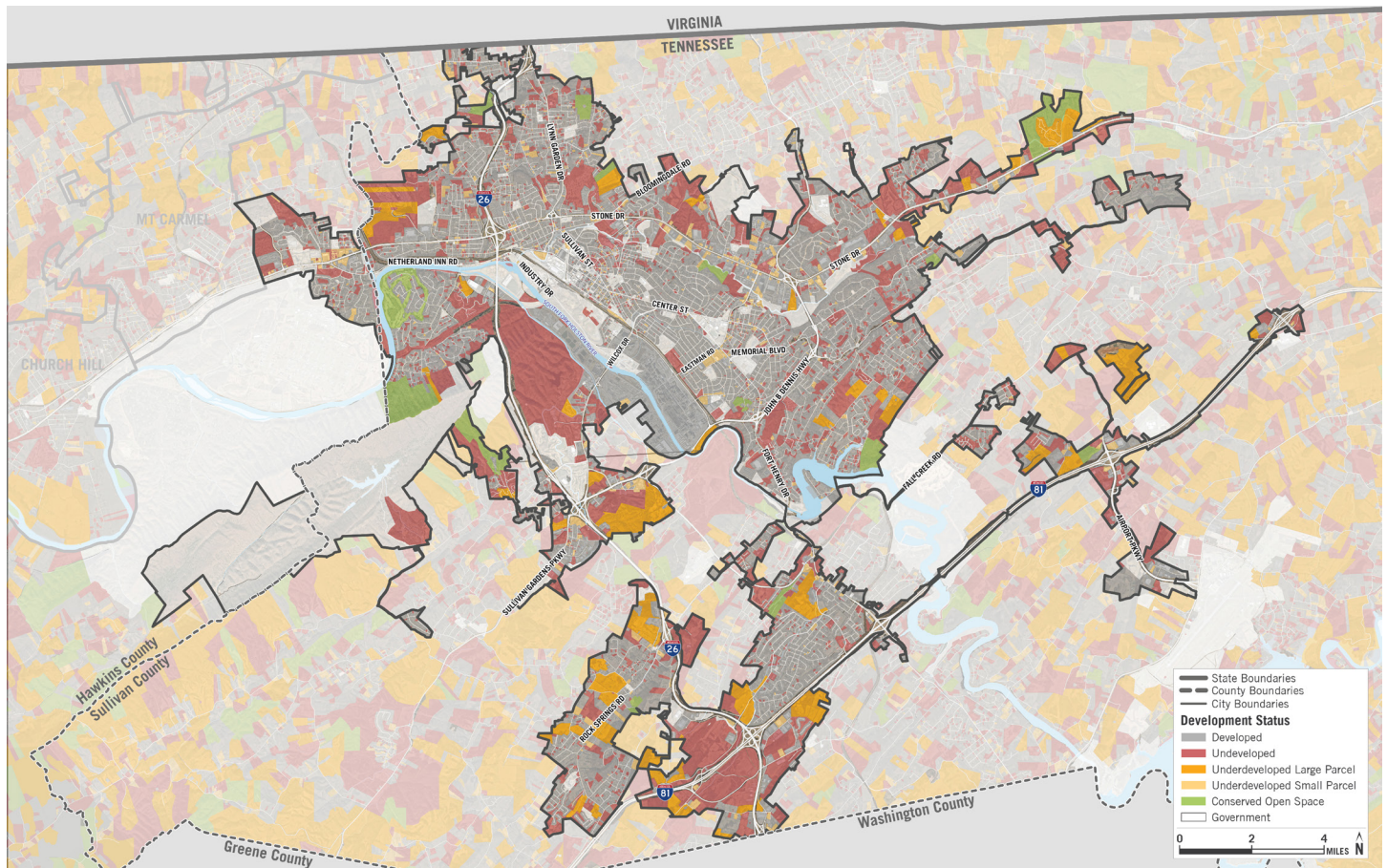
Development Status

The map below shows various classifications of land use and value in the area. Developed areas are those where the building value is greater than the land value. Undeveloped areas are identified as vacant lands or parcels with a building value of zero. Underdeveloped large parcels are defined as those larger than 10 acres where the building value is less than the land value but still greater than zero. Similarly, underdeveloped small parcels are those smaller than 10 acres where the building value is less than the land value but still greater than zero. Conserved open spaces include preserved open spaces, parks, and other regions not available for further development. Government properties are those owned or used by City, County, State, or Federal entities.

The map below classifies land use and value, identifying developed, undeveloped, and underdeveloped parcels, as well as conserved open spaces and government properties.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Development Status Map



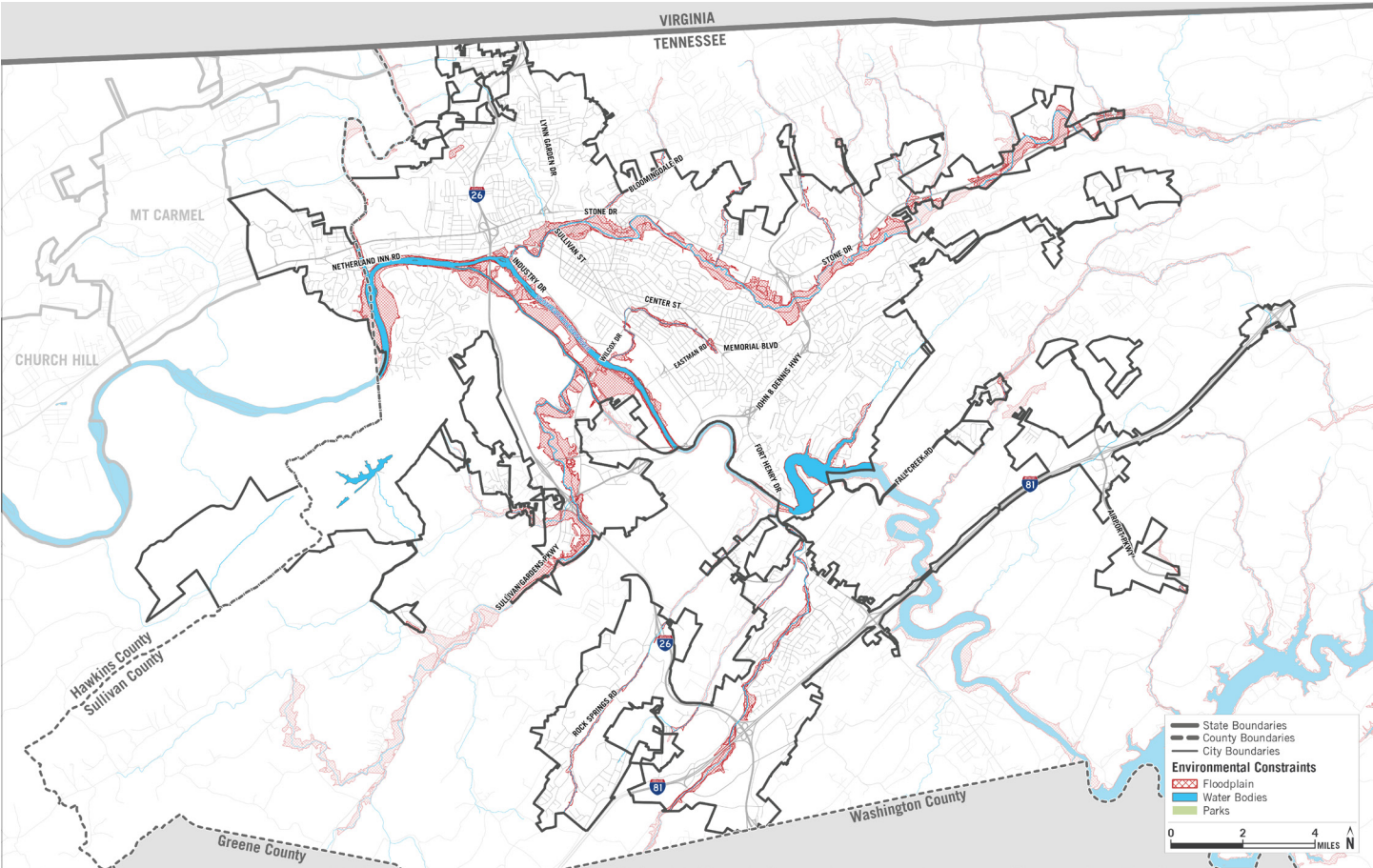
Environmental Constraints

The city boasts a wealth of environmental assets, including Bays Mountain Park, Warriors Path State Park, the Greenbelt, and various smaller parks and athletic facilities. Kingsport is home to numerous rivers and streams, such as the North and South Forks of the Holston River, Reedy Creek, and Fort Patrick Henry Lake. The map below illustrates these features as well as the large areas of floodplain present in the city, particularly along Reedy Creek near Stone Drive.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Kingsport features numerous environmental assets like Bays Mountain Park, Warriors Path State Park, the Greenbelt, various parks, athletic facilities, rivers, streams, and large floodplain areas

Environmental Constraint Map



Existing Conditions

Roadway Function Classification

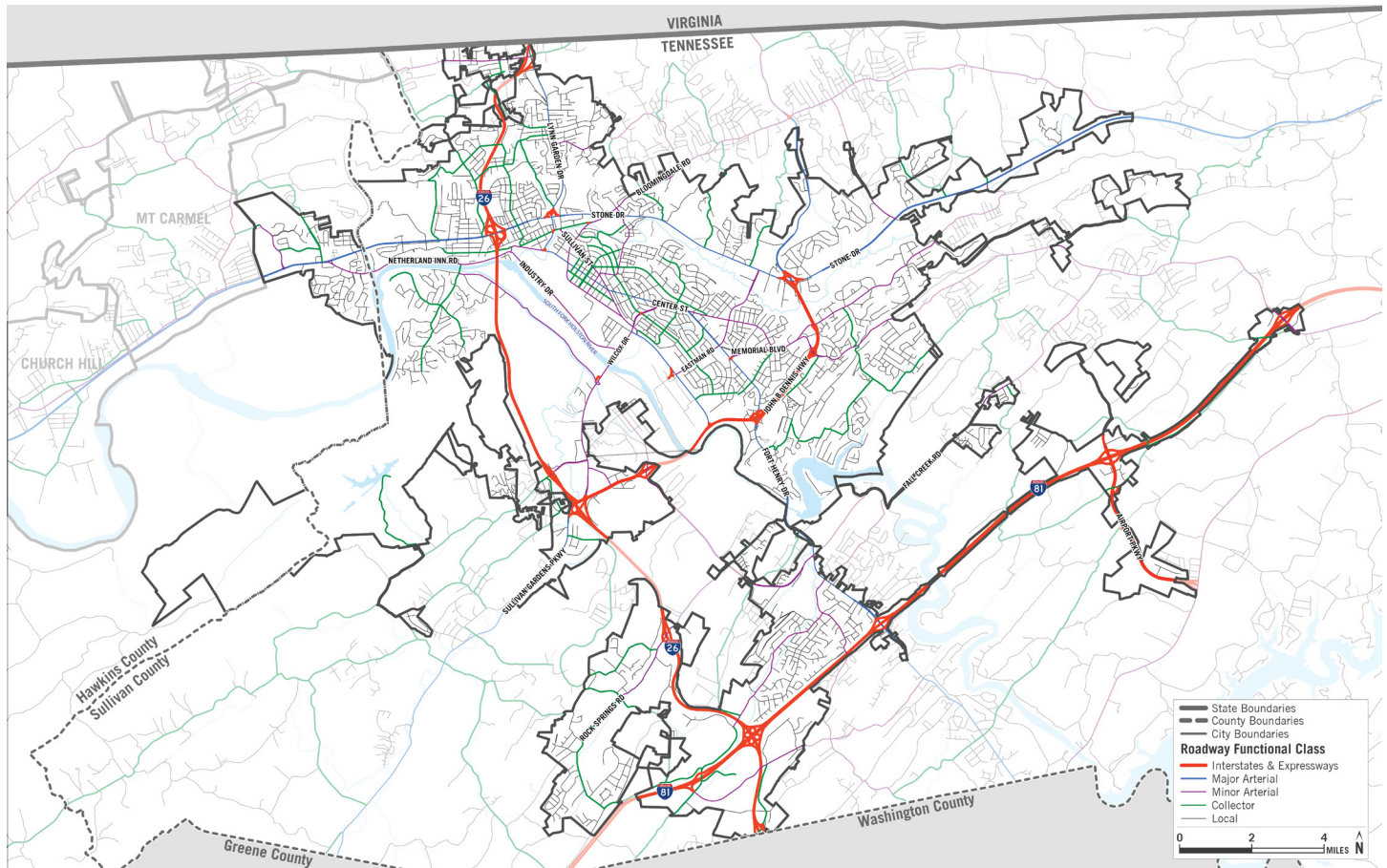
Kingsport has a well-developed transportation network, with interstate and state highway connections providing access to the rest of the region.

The map below shows these connections, highlighting the city's accessibility. Tri-Cities Airport and the railway network provide connections to the rest of the country, with over half the US population accessible within a two-hour flight.

The map below classifies land use and value, identifying developed, undeveloped, and underdeveloped parcels, as well as conserved open spaces and government properties.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Environmental Constraint Map



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Existing Conditions



MARKET ANALYSIS

A limited market analysis was prepared to inform future land planning efforts in Kingsport. This analysis documents high-level real estate existing conditions and provides baseline market statistics to inform visioning for catalytic development opportunities identified through public process in Kingsport. The following process was utilized to inform the outcomes of the analysis:



Prepare a baseline limited market assessment to build the visual and narrative story for Kingsport. This work documents the people who live, work, and play in or near the city.



Estimate market potential by assessing how local and regional real estate markets are performing today and how that's changed over time. This phase reviews both macro- and micro-level influences on the real estate market.



Describe future demand and the types of development that would attract through the identification of categories of real estate product types that represent opportunities for the future.

Analysis Area

The limited market analysis reviews data for multiple geographies, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of trends, both locally and throughout the region. Demographic, employment, and real estate profiles were created for Kingsport and the Tri-Cities region, which combines both the Kingsport-Bristol metropolitan area and the Johnson City metropolitan area to provide a comprehensive regional context. The Tri-Cities region includes seven counties across eastern Tennessee and western Virginia and the City of Bristol, Virginia.

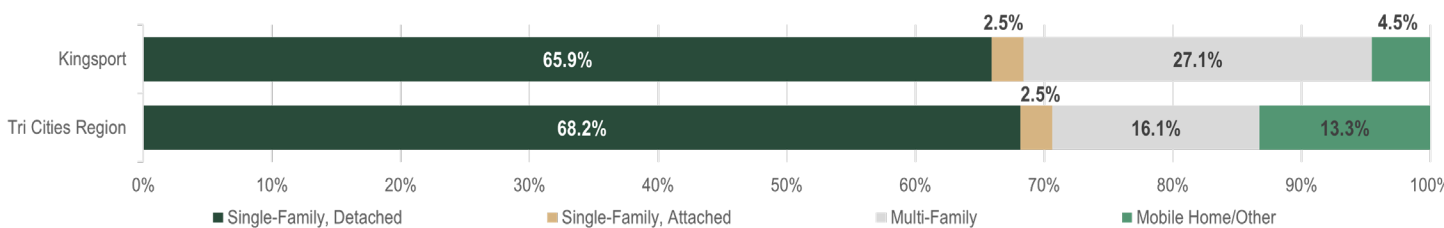
Housing Characteristics

Homes in Kingsport are somewhat older than the region with a median year built of 1971. Kingsport homes also have a slightly greater median home value, with a premium of over \$8,000 at nearly \$245,798. Almost two-thirds of the housing units in Kingsport are owner-occupied. Most housing units, nearly two-thirds, are classified as single-family detached homes. At 27%, a larger share of Kingsport’s housing units are classified as multifamily relative to the rest of the Tri-Cities region. As a point of comparison, Johnson City has a 36.7% share of multifamily, driven by the presence of ETSU.

2024	Kingsport	Tri-Cities Region
Median Year Built	1971	1979
Median Home Value	\$245,598	\$237,469
Owner-Occupied	65.8%	71.8%
Renter-Occupied	34.2%	28.2%
Vacant	11.2%	11.1%

Share of Housing Unit Type, 2024

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Kimley-Horn



Kingsport’s housing stock is older than the Tri-Cities region. Nearly 62% of Kingsport’s housing stock was built before the 1980s. The city has a lower share of residential deliveries post-1990 when compared to the region. Kingsport’s home values are similar to the region, with just over 20% of homes valued between \$300,000 and \$400,000. While Kingsport has a greater median home value than the Tri-Cities region, the region has a greater share of homes priced \$500,000 and above.

Share of Housing Units by Decade Complete, 2024

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Kimley-Horn



Share of Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Value, 2024

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Kimley-Horn



Existing Conditions

For-Sale Residential Trends

Single-family detached residential home sales represent most home sales in Kingsport. The number of home sales have remained relatively stable since 2021, with approximately 1,100 to 1,400 sold each year. A year-to-date view of home sales in 2025 demonstrates a similar trajectory as previous years, indicating continued momentum.

The for-sale single family residential median sale prices have steadily increased since 2020, rising from approximately \$209,000 in 2020 to over \$303,000 in 2025. Townhome prices have also risen since 2020, falling slightly in 2023 and 2024 and rising to nearly \$325,000 in 2025. The sporadic nature of the townhouse pricing is reflective of the smaller base of units where price change creates more noticeable change year over year.

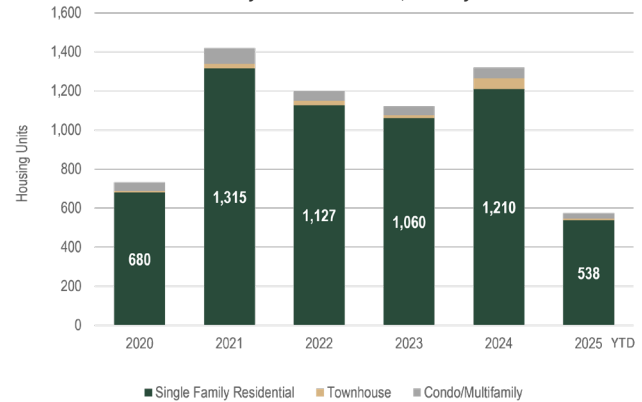
Hotel Inventory

There are a total of 1,584 hotel rooms in Kingsport across seventeen properties.

The existing hotel properties mostly have between 50 and 120 hotel rooms, ranging scale from economy, midscale, upper midscale, and independent. Hotel occupancy rates have largely remained between 40% and 70%, rising to 66.3% in April of 2025. Hotel occupancy appears to be greatest during the spring and summer months and fall during winter months.

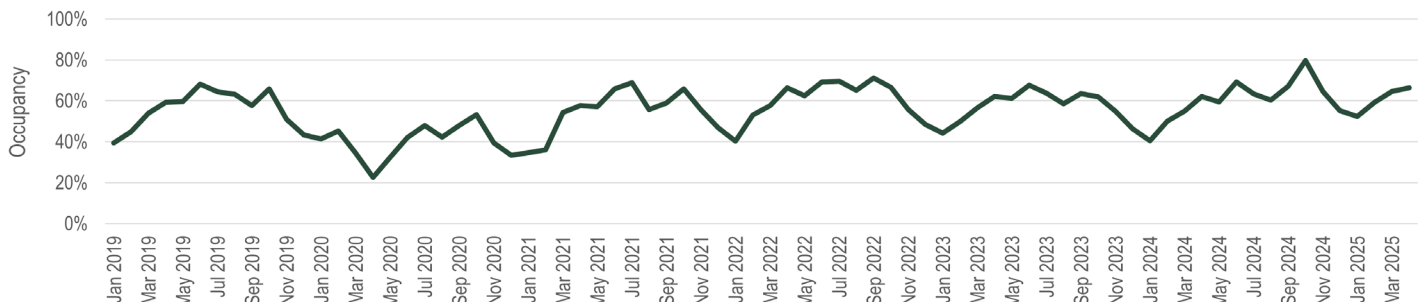
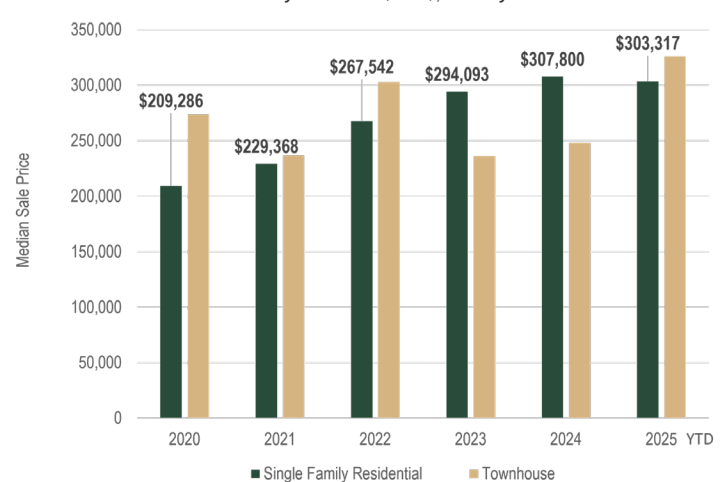
For-Sale Closings by Unit Type, 2020 - 2025 (YTD)

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Kimley-Horn



For-Sale Closings by Sale Price, 2020 - 2025 (YTD)

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Kimley-Horn



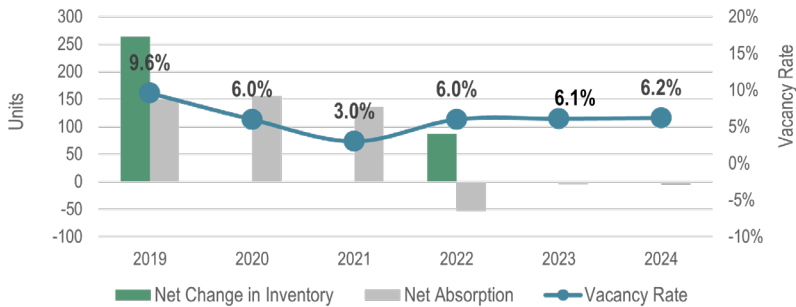
Multifamily Inventory

Kingsport has a total of 4,570 multifamily housing units. Since 2019, there have been 350 units delivered in the city. Nearly 75% of Kingsport’s multifamily housing was built before the 1990s.

Recent mixed-use, multifamily development includes the Town Park Lofts Apartments, built near downtown Kingsport in 2019 with 263 units.

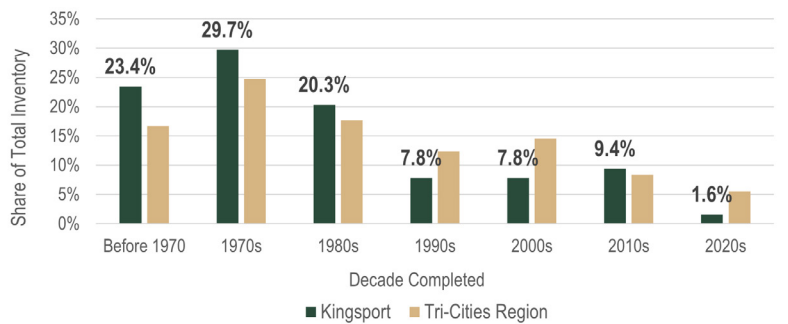
Multifamily Performance Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Multifamily Units by Decade Complete, 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn

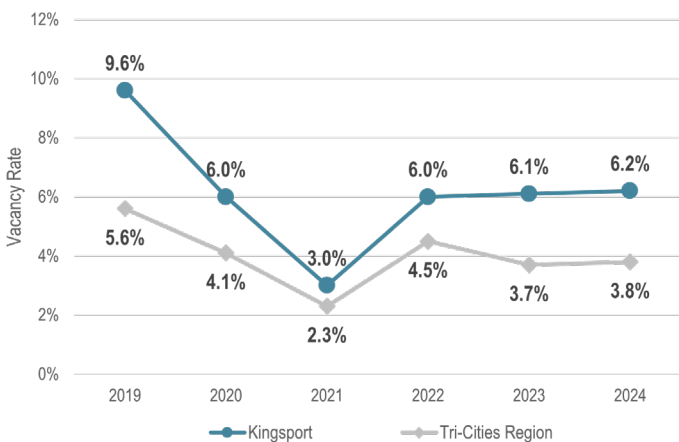


Multifamily Trends

Kingsport’s multifamily vacancy rate is greater than the Tri-Cities region. The city’s vacancy rate has decreased since 2019, remaining around 6% since 2022. Kingsport’s average rent has increased by over \$200 since 2019 to \$1,144 in 2024. The city’s average rent is greater than that of the Tri-Cities region.

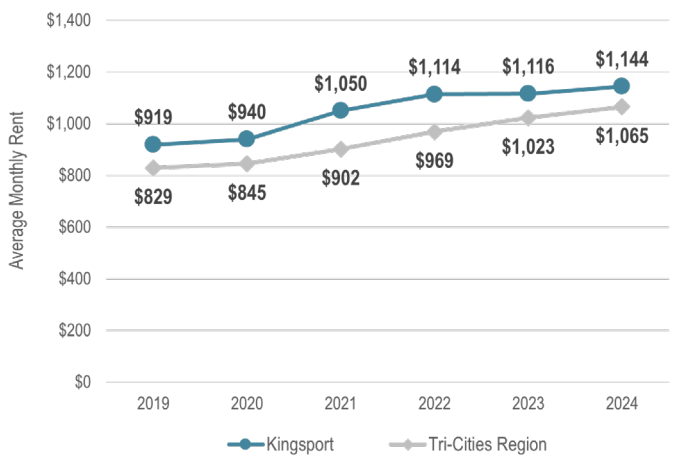
Multifamily Vacancy Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Multifamily Monthly Rent Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Existing Conditions

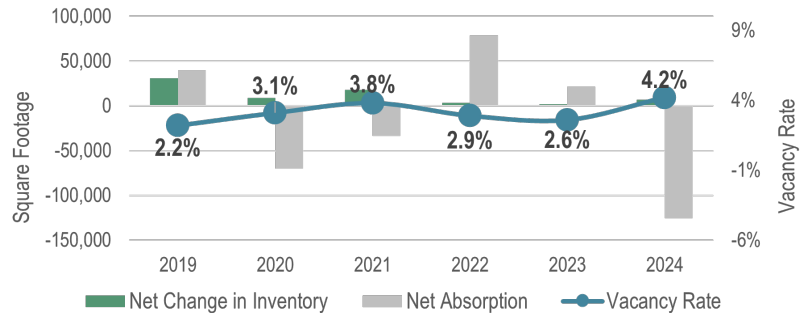
Retail Inventory

Kingsport added an estimated 70,430 square feet of retail since 2019. A majority of retail product delivered since 2019 is suburban-style product, including Dollar Generals, vehicular uses like Take 5 Oil Change and Firestone, and coffee shops.

Retail vacancy rates in Kingsport increased in 2024, rising to 4.2%. The Town Park Lofts development delivered 7,200 square feet of mixed-use retail.

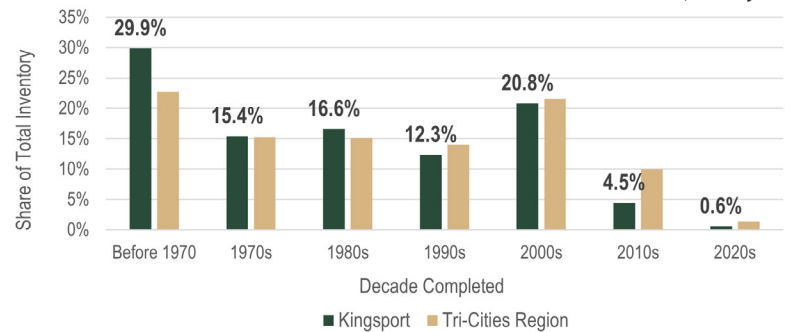
Retail Performance Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Retail Inventory by Decade Complete, 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn

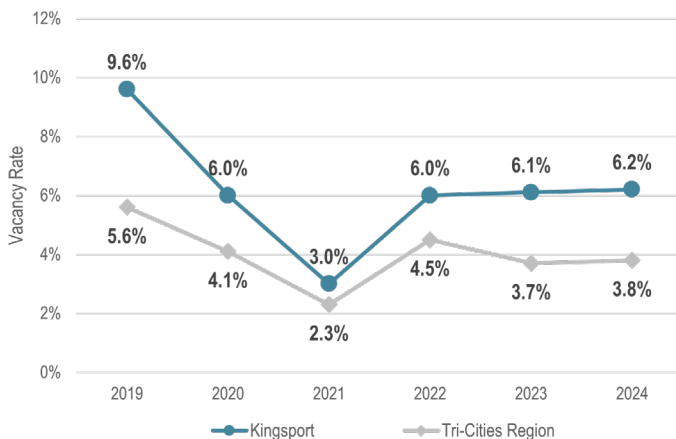


Retail Trends

Between 2019 and 2021, Kingsport's retail vacancy rates surpassed those of the Tri-Cities region, remaining higher through 2024. this could be influenced, in part, by the comparably older inventory of space when compared to the region. Retail rents in Kingsport have increased since 2019, rising to \$14.28 in 2024. Rents in the Tri-Cities region also increased over the same period and were just below Kingsport's in 2024.

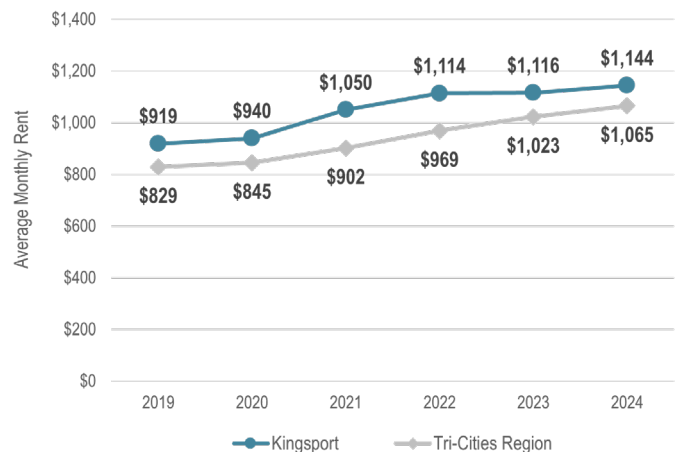
Retail Vacancy Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Retail Monthly Rent Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Office Inventory

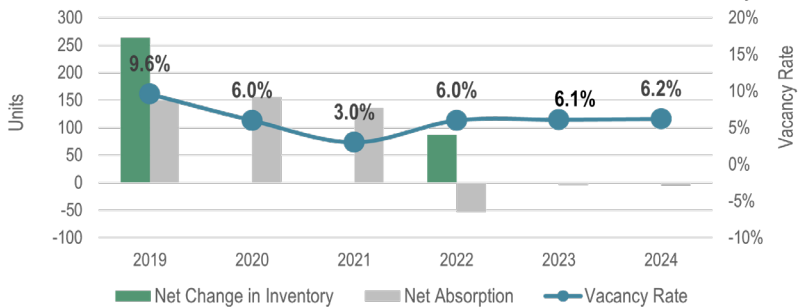
Since 2019, approximately 108,000 square feet of office product was built in Kingsport, both deliveries occurring in 2019.

The two office projects that were completed since 2019 are the Eastman Credit Union (100,000) and the Mountain Region Family Medicine (8,000).

Kingsport’s office product is older than the Tri-Cities region with a majority built before 1970 and during the 2000s.

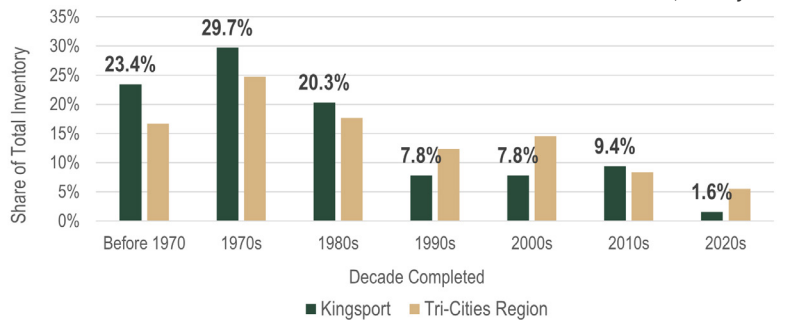
Office Performance Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Office Inventory by Decade Complete, 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



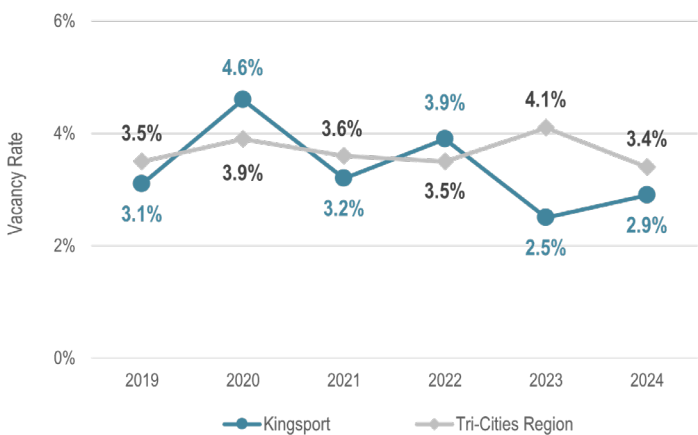
Office Trends

The office market has remained relatively healthy in Kingsport. As office vacancy is on the rise nationally, vacancies have remained relatively low in Kingsport, falling to 2.9% in 2024. This low office vacancy indicates a potential demand for office product in the city.

Office rents in Kingsport are similar to those in the Tri-Cities region. The average office rent in Kingsport was approximately \$11.84 per square foot in 2024.

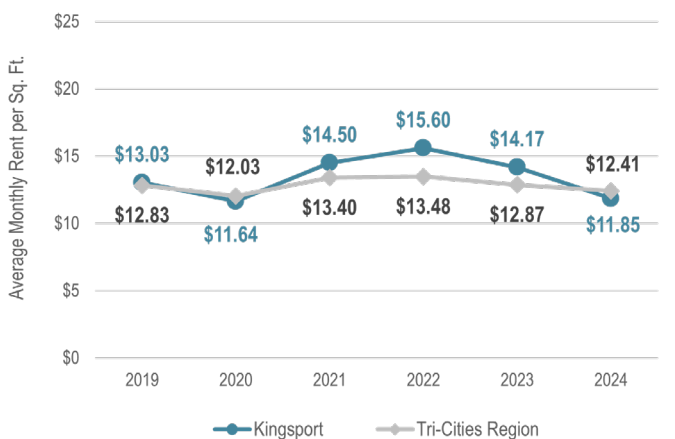
Office Vacancy Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn



Office Monthly Rent Trends, 2019 - 2024

Source: CoStar, Kimley-Horn

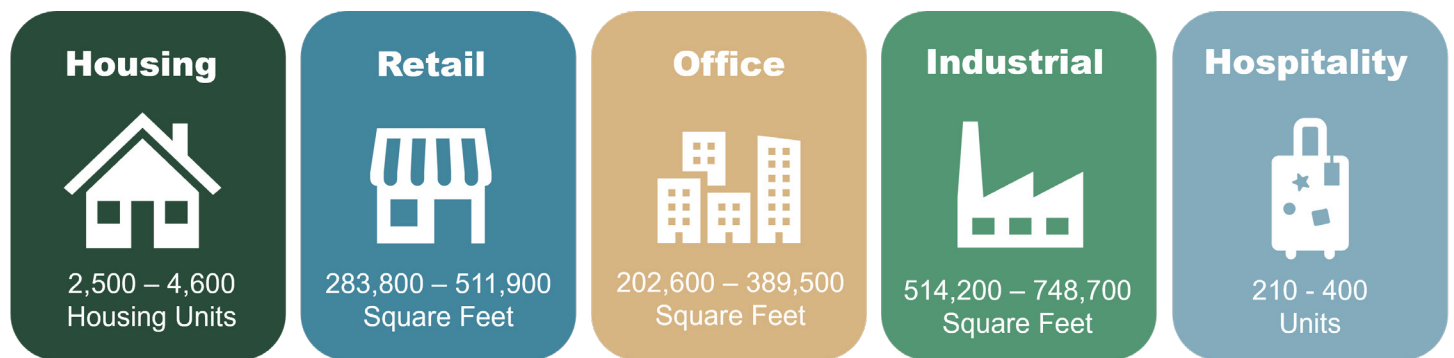


Existing Conditions

Demand Forecast

Real estate demand was prepared for a 20-year period (2025-2045) for Kingsport. Incentivization, investment, and other projects and initiatives could help accelerate capture and could result in additional demand. Housing and retail forecasts are based on population and household growth, as well as consumer spending trends. Office and industrial forecasts are based on current market performance and increases in jobs that demand that type of space. Additionally, hotel demand is based on employment and tourism projections.

20-YEAR NET DEMAND (2025 - 2045), APPROXIMATE DEMAND FORECAST



Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), Woods and Poole, CoStar, LEHD, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Kimley-Horn

	Housing Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Housing  2,500 – 4,600 Housing Units	- Single-Family Detached - Townhome and Missing Middle - Rental Multifamily - Senior Housing	Short-Term	- New walkable multifamily development including Town Park Lofts and Brickyards indicates a growing demand for apartments and townhomes in Kingsport - Kingsport has a balanced multifamily rental market with a healthy vacancy rate - Kingsport has a lower share of higher-end housing than the Tri-Cities region - As the availability of developable land decreases, denser housing product may become more prevalent
	Housing Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Retail  283,800 – 511,900 Square Feet	- Walkable retail - Restaurants and dining - Retail delivering apparel and services - Entertainment	Short-Term to Mid-Term	- Retail has rebounded from the pandemic - Retail demand dependent on household growth - Desire for walkable retail and dining product across the city, but particularly in Downtown Kingsport - Experiential retail could drive demand from outside the city or region

	Housing Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Office  202,600 – 389,500 Square Feet	- Flex/industrial office spaces - Flexible workspaces - Traditional office - Medical or healthcare related office	Mid-Term to Long-Term	- Continued recovery from pandemic - Office inventory and vacancy rates in Kingsport are low, indicating demand for office product - Availability of Class A office space may incentivize business location/re-location to Kingsport - Office space could also support medical and healthcare users; often located near medical anchors - Some professional office space may co-locate in retail shopping centers, particularly those that host tenants that want to be near customers
	Housing Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Industrial  514,200 – 748,700 Square Feet	- Flex/industrial office spaces - Flexible workspaces - Traditional office - Medical or healthcare related office	Mid-Term to Long-Term	- Continued recovery from pandemic - Office inventory and vacancy rates in Kingsport are low, indicating demand for office product - Availability of Class A office space may incentivize business location/re-location to Kingsport - Office space could also support medical and healthcare users; often located near medical anchors - Some professional office space may co-locate in retail shopping centers, particularly those that host tenants that want to be near customers
	Housing Products	Demand Timeframe	Market Considerations
Hospitality  210 - 400 Units	- Hotels - Boutique hotels	Long-Term	- Kingsport's hospitality vacancy indicates a healthy market - Demand will initially be driven by economy and mid-level hotels - Small/boutique hotel opportunities may arise as redevelopment occurs in Downtown Kingsport - Hotels will seek locations near activity centers and employment concentrations, including Downtown Kingsport

Community Engagement



OVERVIEW

Community engagement played a crucial role in developing the comprehensive plan, with insights from Kingsport residents helping to shape the city's vision, guiding principles, and final recommendations.

A variety of engagement methods were employed to ensure broad and representative participation from residents, workers, and visitors. These included in-person and online meetings, pop-up events, stakeholder interviews and focus groups, a virtual Community Workshop, and guidance from a Steering Committee. This chapter summarizes each of these efforts and highlights the key takeaways that informed the comprehensive plan.

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

- Kingsport Comprehensive Plan project website
- Kingsport Alerts Facebook page
- Stakeholder interviews and Focus area group meetings
- Steering Committee comprised of key stakeholders
- In-person and online Community Workshop
- Pop-up events at Kingsport's Fun Fest and Farmer's Market
- Community Open House
- Joint Work Session with the Board of Mayor and Alderman and the Kingsport Regional Planning Commission

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A Steering Committee comprised of stakeholders in Kingsport met throughout the planning process to provide key insights and guide plan development. These representatives included individuals from the City and public works departments, economic development entities, realtors, developers, the Kingsport City Schools, health organizations, and non-profit organizations.

Steering Committee Meeting #1

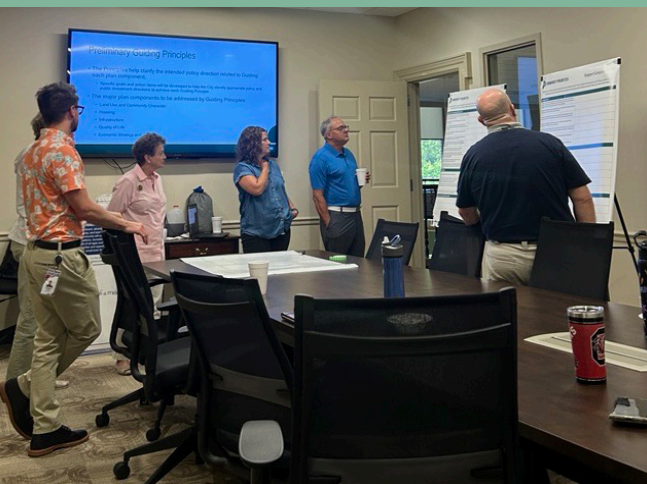
The first Steering Committee meeting occurred on August 30th at 11:00am. Committee members began by describing Kingsport today in one word, then describe their ideal Kingsport in one word. The committee then discussed strengths and opportunities in Kingsport. Identifying how these should change or stay the same in the future. Finally, the project team presented draft “Place Types”, which describe the character and preferred land uses in an area. Committee members then identified areas in the city where they thought specific Place Types would be appropriate. Key takeaways from the meeting are summarized below.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The committee described Kingsport today as a friendly community with good schools, progressive, dynamic, practical, with new businesses, and services, and experiencing decline in some aspects.
- In the future, the committee hopes Kingsport will maintain the sense of community and be progressive, inclusive, creative, modern, strong, sustainable, with opportunities for all.
- Kingsport's greatest strengths are its small-town feel, outdoor recreational opportunities, schools, workforce development and higher education opportunities, faith based community, volunteer network, relative affordability, healthcare networks, and assets like the Farmer's Market, Meadowview Hotel and Conference Center, and Aquatic Center.
- Kingsport's greatest weaknesses are affordability for many in the city and region, concerns around healthcare access, ability to attract businesses, and perceived negative environmental impacts from industry.

Community Engagement



Steering Committee Meeting #2

The second Steering Committee meeting occurred on July 17th at 5:30pm. During this meeting, committee members received and update on plan progress and an overview of feedback from the in-person and virtual Community Workshops. The committee then reviewed the draft vision statement, guiding principles and Place Type map to provide feedback.

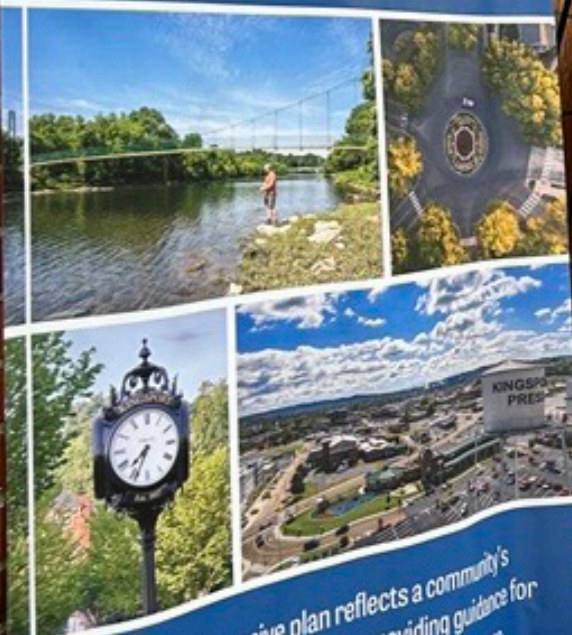


KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The community wants to protect historic places but hasn't been proactive; there's a desire to prioritize preservation and better communicate what "Model City" means.
- Strong, well-maintained infrastructure is seen as essential, with concerns about past neglect, reduced traffic operations capacity, and the need to maintain public facilities.
- There is growing support for mixed-use redevelopment and for removing or transforming underperforming properties while ensuring new development fits local character.
- Growth of about 5–10% is considered healthy, but there are worries about limited developable land, the need for annexation options, and the importance of balancing demographics and housing types (including smaller/affordable and senior-friendly homes).
- The drafted Community Priorities were generally correct, with additional emphasis placed on safety, diversity, and opportunity for all ages.
- People liked downtown-scale activity centers but may not connect with technical planning terms like "mixed-use activity center." Using terms people understand and giving context is helpful for communicating the plan and recommendations.

Shape Kingsport's Future

Share your vision to shape
Kingsport's Comprehensive Plan!



A comprehensive plan reflects a community's
desired vision for the future, providing guidance for
future land use and zoning, infrastructure
investments, and quality of life.

Visit the Kingsport
Comprehensive Plan
website to learn more
about the project and
provide your input!

<https://engagekh.mysocialpinpoint.com/kingsportcomplan>



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Community Engagement



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

The Community Workshop was held on April 30, 2025, from 6:30–8:30 p.m. Participants received a brief presentation on the comprehensive planning effort and existing conditions in the City and the broader Tri-Cities region. The project team then facilitated several activities to better understand residents' priorities and vision for Kingsport. For those unable to attend in person, a Virtual Community Workshop was available from early May through mid-August. Key takeaways from these activities are summarized below.

Strengths and Challenges

Kingsport's greatest strengths include its education system, employment opportunities with high-paying jobs, recreational activities, natural beauty, strong sense of community, relative affordability, robust industrial base, and overall safety.

The city's biggest challenges include pollution, homelessness and addiction, access to healthcare, housing affordability, limited land for future development, lack of diversity in retail and service industries, and limited opportunities for young people.

To Stay The Same or Change?

Participants felt that many aspects of the city should remain the same, including its education system, community events, natural resources, well-paying jobs, strong community spirit, family-friendly atmosphere, and small-town feel.

At the same time, participants identified areas for improvement, including enhancing the city's visual appeal, expanding pedestrian infrastructure, improving access to healthcare, increasing the variety of retail and dining options, providing more affordable housing, strengthening environmental protection, expanding community-wide activities, and fostering a more inclusive community for all.

A VISION FOR KINGSPORT

When asked about their vision for Kingsport in 2025, community members said the City will be...

- **Growing with Community Spirit**
- **Family-Friendly**
- **Innovative Leader**
- **Vibrant, Clean, and Attractive**
- **Thriving and Inclusive**
- **Educational Hub**
- **Healthy Environment**

Team Exercise #1 - VISIONING

What is a Vision Statement?

Description of the community's image of itself...at its best....in the future

What does a Vision Statement do?

- Expresses community values
- Sets direction for the rest of the plan (especially goals and plan principles)
- Provides a basis for decision-making and community action after adoption

In preparing a Vision Statement, think about:

- Shared community values - Kingsport's history and legacy (future) - Community character/appearance - Quality of life - Community engagement/involvement - Economic vitality/Economic development - Jobs/Employment opportunities - Growth and resiliency	- Housing and neighborhoods - Education and learning - Parks and recreation - Transportation and infrastructure - Public health and safety - Preservation of the environment - Arts and culture - Kingsport's role in the region - Other
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I will be:

Create a statement that is easy to understand. Speak in broad, general terms.
Focus on community values. Think long term / big picture.
Be uplifting, aspirational. Be realistic.

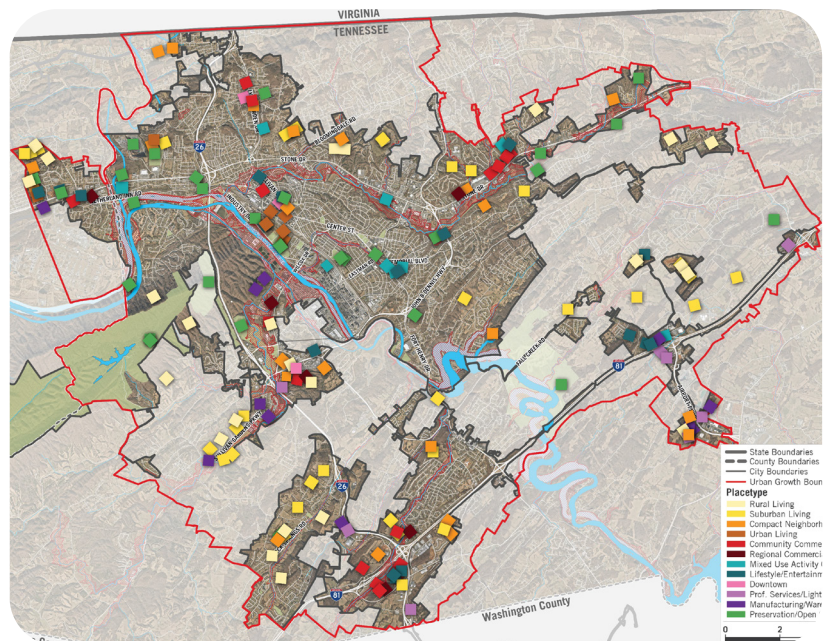
DRAFT VISION STATEMENT:

In 2050, Kingsport will be _____



Mapping Alternative Futures

Community workshop participants were asked to create a map of “alternative futures” for Kingsport, identifying where they would like to see different types of land uses, from suburban neighborhoods to community commercial areas and mixed-use activity centers. The map to the right summarizes this feedback, which was ultimately used to develop the Future Land Use Map.



Community Engagement



POP-UP EVENTS

To connect with the Kingsport community where they are, the project team attended multiple events during Kingsport's Fun Fest.

Activities included visiting the Pickleball Tournament, attending the Fun Fest parade and downtown concert, and engaging with residents at the Saturday morning farmers market. The team gathered feedback from Kingsport residents and visitors on a draft vision statement and community priorities developed after the Community Workshop. Participants were also invited to share their ideas and aspirations for Kingsport using post-it notes.

Kingsport residents hope to share that

- Develop parks and green spaces
- Increase retail stores and amenities
- Create walkable pedestrian areas
- Add more restaurants and evening activities
- Offer community events and entertainment options
- Ensure amenities for all ages (kids, teens)
- Provide public restrooms and sufficient parking
- Improve lighting and property maintenance
- Enhance downtown beautification and signage
- Maintain recreational areas and landscape
- Ensure accessibility and medical access
- Address public safety, homelessness, and affordable housing issues
- Preserve historic buildings and public art
- Promote diversity and support veterans
- Improve transportation access and subsidized housing

Kingsport residents were asked which **Community Priorities** they thought were most important. The highest ranked priorities are...

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Promote affordable housing
- Encourage mixed-use development
- Prioritize infill development

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Invest in city streets and sidewalks
- Invest in transportation infrastructure to increase transportation choices

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Preserve and enhance greenspaces
- Extend the Greenbelt and improve access
- Promote a greater diversity of retail

ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND JOBS

- Support local small businesses
- Maintain and strong industrial base



Community Engagement

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The final public open house took place on December 9th, 2025, from 6-8 PM at Kingsport City Hall. Designed as an open-format event, it did not feature a formal presentation. Instead, the structure was intended to encourage attendees to become acquainted with the project's process and the proposed recommendations. Participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback on the prioritization of implementing these recommendations.

Activities

Stations were strategically spread throughout the room, allowing participants to “walk through” the draft document at their own pace. This setup encouraged attendees to engage with different sections and provide their input on each aspect as they moved through the space.

The stations included an overview explaining what a comprehensive plan is and the reasons for updating it. Information on the process for this comprehensive plan and the timeline of events and milestones was also provided. Participants were given a summary of the engagement activities conducted throughout the process and introduced to the high-level guiding principles across five key topic areas: land use and community character, attainable housing, infrastructure, jobs and economy, and quality of life

Separate stations dedicated to each of these topic areas were placed around the room. The land use and community character station featured the placetype map along with details such as character descriptions, use mix, recommended policies, and images for each of the placetypes, as well as the recommendations matrix for this topic. The subsequent stations included the recommendations matrix for their respective topics, where participants were asked to rank the recommendations as high priority, medium priority, or low priority. Additionally, a “What Did We Miss?” station was located towards the end, complemented by a comment card dropbox to capture any additional feedback from attendees.

Jobs and Economic Development		
Economy and jobs recommendations aim to strengthen Kingsport's economic base by attracting high-wage jobs, supporting local businesses, and fostering workforce development. These strategies help boost regional competitiveness, drive economic growth, and improve employment opportunities for residents.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
E-3 Invest in improved city aesthetics and placemaking efforts to attract businesses and support economic development and quality of life.		
E-3.01	Support the expansion of placemaking projects such as the Downtown Alley Walk and Mutual Trail, Sculpture Walk, particularly within downtown.	High Priority
E-3.02	Provide neighborhood clean-up and improvement campaigns.	Medium Priority
E-3.03	Create opportunities for additional signage along Highway 36 to direct motorists to Kingsport and highlight local attractions.	Low Priority
E-4 Improve corridors and gateways into Downtown Kingsport to enhance the sense of place and frame downtown as a destination.		
E-4.01	Develop a robust strategy to improve conditions along Wilcox Drive to create a more welcoming approach into town from the interstate.	High Priority
E-4.02	Develop a comprehensive strategy to identify and improve conditions at key gateways into downtown, such as enhancements in the public right-of-way, prepared code enforcement for disordered properties, and promoting redevelopment of vacant or underutilized parcels.	Medium Priority
E-5 Provide incentives for redevelopment and reinvestment across the city to support economic development.		
E-5.01	Focus on incidental development as a key component of Kingsport's economic strategy to attract high-wage jobs and ensure that people who work in Kingsport also have opportunities to live in Kingsport.	High Priority
E-5.02	Focus recruitment efforts on target anchors for downtown, including boutique hotels, hospitality, retail, and higher-end restaurants.	Medium Priority
E-5.03	Encourage adaptive reuse of historic and underutilized buildings.	Medium Priority
E-5.04	Foster public-private partnerships for major redevelopment projects.	Medium Priority
E-5.05	Develop and implement strategies to identify suitable locations and support site development for industrial space.	Medium Priority

Land Use and Community Character		
The land use and community character recommendations aim to guide how Kingsport grows and develops, emphasizing responsible and measured growth while preserving the city's unique charm. They focus on context-sensitive development, adaptive reuse, and engaging the community in planning processes to ensure that growth aligns with local values and needs.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
L-1 Promote responsible, measured growth and development that meets the needs of the community while maintaining Kingsport's small-town feel and strong community spirit.		
L-1.01	Encourage redevelopment of underutilized assets and properties, including surface parked or overparked properties.	High Priority
L-1.02	Focus on context-sensitive and context-appropriate development with a compatible mix of uses to ensure development is compatible with adjacent uses.	Medium Priority
L-1.03	Proactively explore opportunities for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures.	Medium Priority
L-1.04	Incentivize community-centric design principles in development to meet the diverse needs of all members of the community.	Medium Priority
L-1.05	Encourage community involvement in planning processes to ensure development aligns with community values.	Medium Priority
L-1.06	Work with the Historic Zoning Commission to develop historic design guidelines and strategies, including preferred colors, facade standards, etc.	Medium Priority
L-2 Continue to prioritize new development and infill in Downtown Kingsport to strengthen the area's vibrancy and appeal and increase community pride.		
L-2.01	Explore opportunities for tactical urbanism projects and temporary activations of vacant spaces as placemaking efforts to increase public interest and attract private investment in underutilized areas.	Medium Priority
L-2.02	Proactively update land use regulations and invest in public amenities such as high-quality streetscapes to encourage walkable, mixed-use development in priority community nodes and corridors, as defined in the priority nodes and corridors map.	Medium Priority
L-2.03	Evaluate opportunities for public-private partnerships to fund key infrastructure improvements in downtown areas.	Medium Priority
L-2.04	Prioritize improvements to the Broad Street streetscape to bolster future development and redevelopment downtown.	Medium Priority
L-2.05	Build on the growing investment in downtown Kingsport by continuing to implement the city's downtown plan, further enhancing its appeal as a regional commercial, entertainment, and employment destination.	Medium Priority
L-2.06	Identify and conduct streetscape efforts on key corridors into downtown.	Medium Priority
L-2.07	Explore additional tools and programs to support downtown development, such as a revolving loan fund for building improvements.	Medium Priority

Attainable Housing		
Housing recommendations seek to provide diverse and affordable housing options for all residents, from young professionals to seniors. The goal is to ensure everyone has access to suitable living spaces that enhance quality of life, promote community stability, and accommodate different stages of life.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
H-1 Promote a variety of housing types at a range of price points to provide all Kingsport residents, from young professionals and young families to older households, with access to diverse housing choices at all stages of life.		
H-1.01	Organize essential community partners when necessary to discuss issues related to housing.	High Priority
H-1.02	Evaluate potential incentives for developers to build a wider range of housing options.	Medium Priority
H-1.03	Ensure continuity of character as infill development occurs.	Medium Priority
H-1.04	Consider conducting a housing study with a housing market component.	Medium Priority
H-1.05	Coordinate dialog with community organizations to address services for homeless (including previously housed) based on outcomes of a robust housing study.	Medium Priority
H-1.06	Identify obstacles prohibiting people from getting into stable housing, and develop strategies to remove or mitigate these obstacles.	Medium Priority
H-1.07	Identify housing types that are missing in the market along with incentives to promote desired types.	Medium Priority
H-1.08	Develop a program to engage small-scale and infill developers.	Medium Priority
H-1.09	Develop a citywide program to identify vacant parcels and disordered structures.	Medium Priority
H-1.10	Create an educational program for small-scale developers to support redevelopment and connect them with parcels, potential resources, etc.	Medium Priority
H-1.11	Consider developing pre-approved developments/unit plans that developers can use to reduce permitting processes and design costs.	Medium Priority
H-1.12	Partnering with local non-profits, encourage the creation of various types of senior housing or programs to help subsidize the cost of home improvements.	Medium Priority
H-1.13	Facilitate quality of vacant funding sources for public housing. Funds can include state funds, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants, or Community Reinvestment Act resources to develop affordable public housing development.	Medium Priority
H-1.14	Consider providing education or education on Landlord Training and Tenant education to address substantial rental properties and incentives to motivate property repair and maintenance paired with targeted code enforcement.	Medium Priority

Kingsport residents were asked which recommendations they thought were most important. The highest priority recommendations are...

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Proactively explore opportunities for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Extend the Greenbelt and provide additional trail spurs and access points to both residential neighborhoods and commercial and employment centers to increase the trails capacity to connect residents to jobs and services

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Prioritize attracting and maintaining retail, dining, entertainment, and recreational businesses that are unique to Kingsport over national chains with multiple other locations in the region

ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND JOBS

- Focus recruitment efforts on target anchors for downtown, including boutique hotels, hospitality, retail, and higher end restaurants

ATTAINABLE HOUSING

- Focus on enhancing walkability to downtown from adjacent neighborhoods

Quality of Life		
Quality of life recommendations focus on enhancing the overall well-being of Kingsport residents through improved recreational opportunities, community events, health services, and public safety. They aim to create a vibrant, inclusive community where people enjoy living, working, and visiting.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
Q-1 Preserve and enhance Kingsport's numerous greenspaces and outdoor recreation opportunities, including Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, and other state and local parks and trails, and advertise Kingsport as a destination for these activities.		
Q-1.01	Expand the Greenbelt and provide additional connections to neighborhoods to improve access to recreational opportunities.	High Priority
Q-1.02	Take advantage of difficult to develop or undevelopable spaces for public recreational opportunities, such as the large floodplains adjacent to Reedy Creek South of Stone Drive.	Medium Priority
Q-1.03	Develop and fund a strategic plan to connect the Greenbelt to other community assets like the Aquatic Center, Riverwood Park, and Church Circle.	Low Priority
Q-1.04	Promote eco-tourism and outdoor recreational activities through regional marketing campaigns.	Medium Priority
Q-2 Continue providing and expanding Kingsport's wide range of community events.		
Q-2.01	Partner with local businesses and organizations to sponsor, host, and promote events and leverage Kingsport's unique assets to increase their draw.	High Priority
Q-2.02	Regularly evaluate the goals, objectives, and outcomes of community events to ensure they are still relevant and successful.	Medium Priority
Q-2.03	Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure that free community events are not undercutting or competing with local businesses.	Low Priority
Q-2.04	Provide a diverse program of community events appeal to people of diverse backgrounds and interests and a variety of age groups.	Medium Priority
Q-2.05	Continue using social media and traditional media and explore strategies to market and broadly promote community events, both within the city and the greater region.	Low Priority
Q-3 Promote the establishment of greater diversity of local choices for retail, dining, entertainment, recreational opportunities, and public social spaces.		
Q-3.01	Support pop-up markets and events that feature local vendors and artists.	Medium Priority
Q-3.02	Prioritize attracting and maintaining retail, dining, entertainment, and recreational businesses that are unique to Kingsport over national chains with multiple other locations in the region.	High Priority

Infrastructure		
Infrastructure recommendations focus on maintaining and improving the city's foundational systems, including roads, sidewalks, utilities, and public buildings. These efforts are intended to enhance connectivity, safety, and the overall quality of life for residents, while supporting economic development and sustainable growth.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
I-3 Provide and maintain infrastructure and other public investments to support economic development and improve quality of life.		
I-3.01	Continue proactively investing in utilities and services in industrial and commercial areas.	Medium Priority
I-3.02	Explore the potential for the establishment of business improvement districts to fund infrastructure improvements in key areas such as downtown or along Stone Drive.	Medium Priority
I-3.03	Identify and evaluate opportunities to enhance neighborhood character with street trees and landscaping.	Low Priority
I-3.04	Continue to implement and regularly update the vision of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Medium Priority
I-4 Ensure city buildings and facilities are regularly and well maintained.		
I-4.01	Develop a preventative maintenance program for all city buildings and facilities.	High Priority
I-4.02	Develop an ongoing forum or a virtual platform to regularly solicit feedback from the community on needed improvements.	Medium Priority
I-4.03	Develop a mechanism to regularly identify and evaluate underutilized or vacant city facilities and return unwanted properties to the private sector.	Low Priority
I-4.04	Leverage existing platforms, such as the Connect Kingsport App and the City's website to allow residents to report city employees of infrastructure in need of attention.	Medium Priority
I-5 Pursue strategic investments in infrastructure to make the city more competitive in the region.		
I-5.01	Expand on-demand electric vehicle charging infrastructure, prioritizing locations near commercial and employment centers, and incentivizing chargers in new developments.	Medium Priority
I-5.02	Continually leverage opportunities to improve the efficiency and sustainability of public buildings and facilities, utilizing green infrastructure or renewable energy products such as solar panels.	Low Priority

Jobs and Economic Development		
Economy and jobs recommendations aim to strengthen Kingsport's economic base by attracting high-wage jobs, supporting local businesses, and fostering workforce development. These strategies help boost regional competitiveness, drive economic growth, and improve employment opportunities for residents.		
ID	Recommendation / Description	Level of Priority?
E-1 Strengthen and increase awareness of existing workforce development and higher education opportunities available to Kingsport residents.		
E-1.01	Organize a dedicated working group that brings together agencies, non-profits, and other partners and organizations engaged in economic and workforce development to regularly discuss their issues.	Medium Priority
E-1.02	Partner with local colleges and businesses to offer expanded vocational training programs and provide apprenticeships and internships to local residents.	Low Priority
E-1.03	Pursue partnerships with KATS and NET Trans, as well as the university, to provide increased transportation options for students.	Medium Priority
E-1.04	Consider increasing funding for job placement and career counseling services.	Low Priority
E-1.05	Leverage local resources to support the success of new and small businesses by providing access to the Pats Business Excellence Institute and requiring participants of the downtown loan program to receive technical assistance from the SBDC.	Medium Priority
E-2 Leverage Kingsport's unique assets to boost regional competitiveness and drive economic growth.		
E-2.01	Establish a program to educate local front-line workers in the hospitality and retail industries about the various recreational, cultural, and commercial assets in the city and encourage them to promote local Kingsport businesses to visitors and residents.	Medium Priority
E-2.02	Improve visibility to the Greenbelt and increase connections to major employment and commercial destinations to leverage the Greenbelt as a tool for economic development and "high-orientation development."	Low Priority
E-2.03	Partner with developers and invest in public amenities and infrastructure to leverage Reedy Creek and the Hobson River as assets to support lifestyle-oriented development.	Medium Priority
E-2.04	Continue expanding Kingsport's capacity to host sports tournaments and events by investing in recreational and hospitality facilities to support tourism and increase spending at local businesses.	High Priority
E-2.05	Continue building upon Kingsport's comparative advantages as a hub of industry and professional services to grow the City's high-income employment base.	Medium Priority

Community Engagement



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The project team met with stakeholders from all walks of life in Kingsport.

Participants included representatives from City staff, higher education institutions, industrial groups, housing developers, the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development organizations, and local non-profits. Meetings were organized around five key topic areas: community character, physical development, economics, people, natural and regional assets, and transportation.

Community Character

- Vision for 2050: Kingsport grows sustainably while preserving its small-town charm, expands as a regional economic hub, enhances downtown vibrancy, and offers diverse housing, amenities, and family-friendly opportunities.
- Barriers: Lack of a clear actionable plan, resistance to change, limited land and redevelopment challenges, and shortages in housing diversity, employment variety, and cross-jurisdictional service capacity.
- Hidden Treasures / Assets: Exceptional natural amenities (Bays Mountain, Greenbelt, Riverfront), a walkable and culturally rich downtown, strong education–workforce partnerships, and a safe, family-oriented community.
- Differentiating Features: Unmatched outdoor assets, the region's largest downtown with major potential, a strong industrial and engineering talent base, and a reputation for safety, academic excellence, and family-friendly living.

Physical Development

- Critical Development Areas: Focus on downtown infill/redevelopment, invest in southern/southeastern areas of city, advance Tri-Cities Crossing and key corridors, and support housing opportunities.
- Areas that Bring the Most Pride: Community identity centers on Church Circle, Brickyard, and Main Street, supported by strong investment in parks and athletic facilities, valued recreation areas, and established neighborhoods like Fair Acres and Ridgefields.
- Areas that Cause Concern: Areas in need of reinvestment including Lynn Garden, Bloomingdale, parts of Colonial Heights, Fort Henry Mall; concentrated property ownership limiting redevelopment and infrastructure gaps in areas like Allendale.
- Housing Types: Strong need for high-end and middle-income housing in desirable areas, plus more patio homes, senior housing, and high-density options.
- Encouraging Downtown Reinvestment: Incentivize redevelopment, support business owners, use regulatory and code tools, pursue beautification and targeted infill.

Economics

- Economic Drivers: Anchored by major employers with ongoing efforts to diversify the business base.
- Attracting Businesses: Define city vision, offer redevelopment incentives, strengthen small-business support, elevate aesthetics, and target high income industries.
- Barriers for Start-Ups: Increase investment in young talent, improve access to funding and business readiness, centrally located, affordable, attractive spaces
- Promoting Industries: Prioritize innovation, technology, industrial growth, and healthcare expansion while broadening dining, retail, and recreational amenities.
- City and Tri-Cities Partnership: Enhance regional collaboration and explore improved transit connections between Kingsport and Johnson City.



Community Engagement



People

- Important Institutions/Organizations: Key anchors include the Chamber of Commerce, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and local educational institutions.
- Retention of Former Residents: Strong community ties draw people back, but broader job opportunities are needed to keep younger residents.
- Living for Long-term Residents: Expand services and housing for older adults and improve public transportation for those who don't drive.

Natural Environmental and Regional Assets

- Notable Natural Areas: Bays Mountain, the Greenbelt, local lakes, hiking trails, and the planned Brickyard greenspace.
- Overlooked Natural Areas: Untapped potential along East Center Street and Cement Hill, plus the need to boost Greenbelt access and visibility.

Transportation

- Capital Investments: Reinforce parks and downtown infrastructure while advancing major projects that strengthen regional connectivity.
- Travel Choices: Improve downtown walkability and bike access, extend transit hours, and expand sidewalk networks.
- Areas Inviting for Walking/Biking: Invest in sidewalks in older neighborhoods and create cohesive wayfinding to support safe, connected mobility.

FOCUS GROUPS

After plan recommendations were refined through ongoing engagement with the community and stakeholders, a final round of consultation with key stakeholders further refined the draft before presenting it at the final Community Open House. Five focus group meetings were held, covering Jobs and Economic Development, Housing, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Land Use and Community Character, where draft Guiding Principles and Recommendations were discussed. The following recommendations were modified or added as a result of these meetings.

Land Use and Community Character

Work with the Historic Zoning Commission to develop historic design guidelines and strategies, including preferred colors, façade standards, etc.

- Conduct streetscape efforts on Broad Street and Wilcox Drive as key corridors in Downtown.

Housing

- Partner with community organizations to address services for homeless (including precariously housed) based on outcomes of a robust housing study.
- Facilitate pursuit of various funding sources for public housing. Funds can include state funds, Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) grants, or Community Reinvestment Act resources to develop exemplary public housing development.
- Consider providing resources or education on Landlord Training and Tenant education to address substandard rental properties and incentives to motivate property repair and maintenance paired with targeted code enforcement.
- Consider modifications to the zoning code that allow more diverse housing options like townhomes and duplexes in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown, such as lot subdivision.

Infrastructure

- Develop a public education and communication strategy to provide regular updates on city priorities, funding allocation, and ongoing maintenance.
- Continuously evaluate opportunities for additional transportation connections that support the city's economic development goals.

