

# Analysis of Data and Information: Land Use

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## ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INFORMATION: LAND USE

Area: *17.37 square miles* or  
*11,115 acres*  
Parcels: *11,222*  
Primary land use:  
*residential*  
Vacancy: *4.90%*  
Employment-based uses:  
*29.21%*

The City of Peachtree Corners began as the frontier farming settlement of Pinckneyville, established in the 1820s. Originally, the town was at a crossroads that stagecoach travelers, both north-south and east-west, would come through. This traffic supported the inn and other commerce in Pinckneyville, and through the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town prospered as an agricultural community. Around 1870, though, the growth of the railroad changed Pinckneyville’s luck. The railroad was built just a few miles east, in Norcross. Norcross, now only a short train ride from Atlanta and a commercial center, grew very quickly while Pinckneyville declined.

Pinckneyville remained a quiet rural community until the 1960s when Paul Duke envisioned a planned community called Peachtree Corners on the Pinckneyville land he had purchased in the 1950s. Duke, the manager of a steel company and a Georgia Tech educated engineer, saw the community as a place where people could live, work, and play. In particular, he hoped to attract Georgia Tech graduates with high tech businesses. Duke’s vision resulted in the balance of land use we still see in Peachtree Corners today: Technology Park is the 500 acre campus of office and light industrial buildings that was intended to house high-tech firms, and the residential neighborhoods northwest of Technology Park still make up nearly half of the city (Randy Wyles, Peachtree Corners Patch and UPCCA).

### EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY

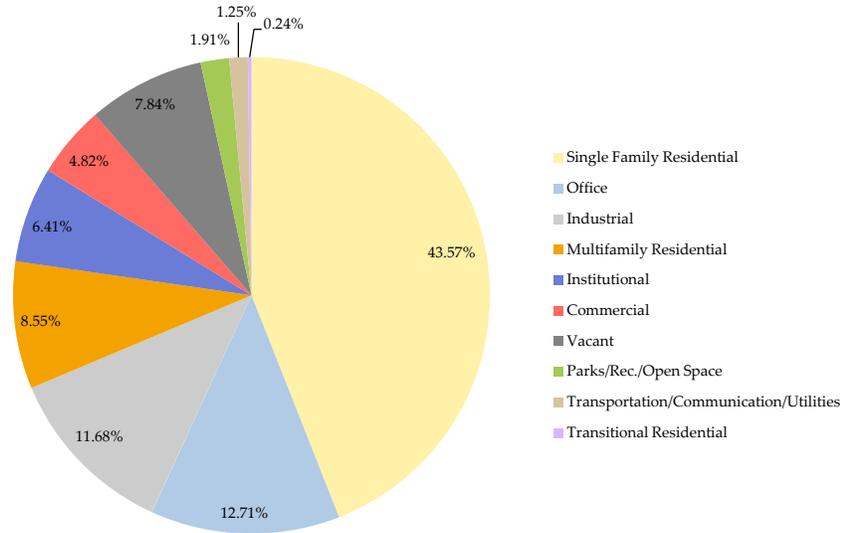
The City of Peachtree Corners (approximately 11,115 acres or 17.37 square miles total) has about 9,106 acres, or 14.23 square miles, of land that is subdivided and developed or available for development. The remaining acres, roughly 2,009, are in use as public right of way. Each parcel of land is associated with a **land use category** that describes its current function. These categories come from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, and their geographic distribution was calculated using mapping and spatial analysis software (ArcGIS). Table 1 shows the land use categories in Peachtree Corners along with how many acres, how many parcels, and what percentage of all the developable acres in the city they occupy. This section discusses each land use type in greater detail.

Table 1. Existing Land Use by Parcels, Acres, and Percent

| Land Use Type             | Parcels | Total Acres | % (by acre) |
|---------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| Commercial                | 186     | 438.91      | 4.82%       |
| Institutional             | 56      | 583.30      | 6.41%       |
| Industrial                | 1482    | 1063.86     | 11.68%      |
| Transitional Residential  | 26      | 22.26       | 0.24%       |
| Multifamily Residential   | 133     | 778.36      | 8.55%       |
| Office                    | 269     | 1157.45     | 12.71%      |
| Parks/Rec./Open Space     | 17      | 266.26      | 2.92%       |
| Single Family Residential | 8644    | 3967.26     | 43.57%      |
| TCU                       | 10      | 113.79      | 1.25%       |
| Vacant                    | 399     | 714.01      | 7.84%       |



Figure 4. Land Use Breakdown by Acres



## RESIDENTIAL

Residential uses occupy over half of Peachtree Corners. In Figure 4 and Table 1, residential land uses are split into two categories: single family residential and multifamily residential. Multifamily residential includes apartments, condominiums, mobile homes, and all the common spaces associated with these types of residences. Single family residential includes both the land use for single family homes and any land managed by an HOA.

While multifamily constitutes 8.55% of the parcel acres in Peachtree Corners, single family parcels are the dominant land use type in Peachtree Corners, occupying 43.57% of the City's developable acres. This percentage is more than three times the amount of land any other use occupies in the City. This designation includes single family detached houses and single family attached home such as duplexes, quadraplexes, and townhomes.

Most of the multifamily residential land in Peachtree Corners is west of Jimmy Carter Boulevard / Holcomb Bridge Road, between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Spalding Drive, or east of Medlock Bridge Road north of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. Apartments occupy the largest portion of multifamily residential acres, roughly three quarters.

Single family homes are by far the dominant land use type in Peachtree Corners. There is over three times as much land in single family residential as there is in any other type of land use. As evident in the Existing Land Use Map, most of these lots have a suburban character. Between Peachtree Parkway, Spalding Drive, and the Chattahoochee River, the residential neighborhoods are characterized by large lots, dead ends and cul-de-sacs, and an absence of non-residential land use types. There are also some older neighborhoods with smaller lots along the southern edge of the City. These neighborhoods have less developed infrastructure and these houses are smaller and more varied than the ones in north of the City. Townhomes and quadraplexes also account for a smaller but significant part of residential land use (see Figure 3, the existing land use map).



Peachtree Corners is predominantly residential. Shown above are several different housing types: single-family detached houses, multi-family apartment buildings, and single-family attached buildings or townhomes.

## COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses include any non-office or non-industrial business uses: Sales, service, entertainment, hotels, banks, and auto service, for instance. In Peachtree Corners, commercial uses only occupy 4.82% of the developable land. Most of these parcels are clustered along Peachtree Parkway and Jimmy Carter Boulevard / Holcomb Bridge Road, where the commercial buildings are primarily in strip malls or in single use buildings. However, one of the largest commercial developments in Peachtree Corners is the Forum, an outdoor shopping mall with a large number of national chain stores on approximately 44 acres.

The Forum is a popular outdoor shopping mall in Peachtree Corners.



Peachtree Corners has many office parks, which were an integral part of the City's original conception as a suburban live/work/play environment.



Most of Peachtree Corners' industrial land is in industrial parks made up of small manufacturing operations and warehouses.

## OFFICE

Office accounts for 12.71% of the developable land in Peachtree Corners. This space includes warehouses, low-rise office buildings, and high-rise office buildings. Low-rise office makes up about half of all this land, and most of these offices are arranged in office parks such as those at Technology Park. These campuses are characterized by a lot of greenery, spread out development, and low connectivity. In some cases, institutional uses such as City Hall have moved into space that is still considered under this category.

## INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional land use is a broad category, including county services, like fire stations, libraries, water resources, and other vacant land; churches and other religious facilities; recreational facilities (except those that are included in Parks/Open Space/Recreation, see below); and schools.

There are several schools in Peachtree Corners. There are three public schools—Simpson Elementary School, Pinckneyville Middle School, and Peachtree Elementary School—and there is one private school, Wesleyan School. The three public schools are mostly surrounded by residential uses, tucked into neighborhoods. Wesleyan is much larger and is situated near office and commercial uses as well. Although Norcross High School is not in the city itself, it serves Peachtree Corners students and has a large presence across the street from Wesleyan and from a Peachtree Corners neighborhood.

## INDUSTRIAL

Industrial land uses have a strong presence in Peachtree Corners. Occupying 11.68 % of developable land in Peachtree Corners, they dominate the southwestern and southeastern parts of the City, particularly along the railroad. There are also some industrial lands further north though, bordering office parks and multifamily housing. These industrial uses vary quite a bit in character. On one hand, there are several light industrial complexes that house warehouses and distribution operations. On the other, there are some heavier industrial operations including a large landfill and several manufacturing facilities.

## TRANSITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

There are a handful of transitional residential sites in Peachtree Corners, all at the City's southeastern tip. This designation usually describes a lot that is primarily commercially but might still have a home on it. All of these lots are zoned either light or heavy industrial, and they make up only 0.24% of the developable land in Peachtree Corners.

## PARKS/RECREATION/OPEN SPACE

Parks/recreation/open space makes up only 2.92%, 266.26 acres, of the developable land in Peachtree Corners. Included in this figure are Peachtree Memorial Cemetery (33.10 acres) on S. Old Peachtree Road, a large tennis club (21.86 acres), and Pinckneyville Park (58.80 acres), none of which are public parks. However, Peachtree Corners also has several large park areas on the Chattahoochee River; Jones Bridge Park, the Medlock Bridge Unit, and Holcomb Bridge Park make up the majority of the rest of this land use category. These parks are discussed further in Community Facilities and Cultural Resources.

## TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES

The transportation/communication/utilities (TCU) land use category includes utility corridors, power plants, reservoirs, truck terminals, power stations, communications facilities, and other such uses. This land is usually owned by the government or by a public utility. In Peachtree Corners, TCU occupies only 1.25% of the City's developable land. Most of this land is in the reservoir on the western edge of the City, but some of it is used for truck terminals, for telephone equipment storage, for cell towers, and as a power changing station.

## VACANT LAND

Vacant land, which includes land that is currently undeveloped but is zoned residential, commercial, and industrial, accounts for 7.48% of the developable land in Peachtree Corners. About a third of this land is zoned for single family residential uses, about one fifth is zoned commercial, and almost half of it is zoned for industrial uses.

There are individual vacant parcels interspersed throughout the city, many in office parks and some in single family residential neighborhoods. However, there are four major clusters of vacant land: On the northern edge of the city, there are several parcels along the Chattahoochee River. Owned by investment or property management companies, they are currently zoned residential and office-institutional. Further west, there is another cluster of parcels south of Spalding Drive zoned residential. Among the industrial uses and office parks on either side of Peachtree Industrial are more vacant parcels that are zoned industrial. Finally, there is the large site across Peachtree Parkway from the Forum. The subject of much recent debate, this site has recently been bought by a developer who plans to develop it as mixed use. Currently, it is zoned RM-13, multifamily.

## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE RELATIONSHIPS

Between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Buford Highway are a number of adjacencies between incompatible land uses. Industrial uses are interspersed with residential, most egregiously in the southwest part of Peachtree Corners. There, the landfill and other industrial operations are adjacent to a small residential neighborhood, which gets smells, noise, and truck traffic from them.

In several places, heavy industrial uses are situated very near residential neighborhoods.



# RELATIONSHIP OF LAND USE AND ZONING CATEGORIES

## EXISTING ZONING

The City’s zoning tells us what uses are legally allowed on each parcel. Assigning zoning categories is one of the primary tools a city uses to shape its development. Table 3 and Figure 6, the current zoning map, provide an inventory of Peachtree Corners’ current zoning. Current **land uses** largely conform to the **zoning** code.

Figure 5. Zoning Types

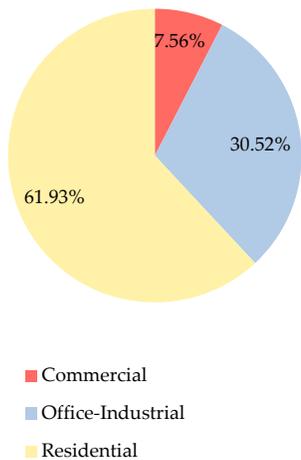
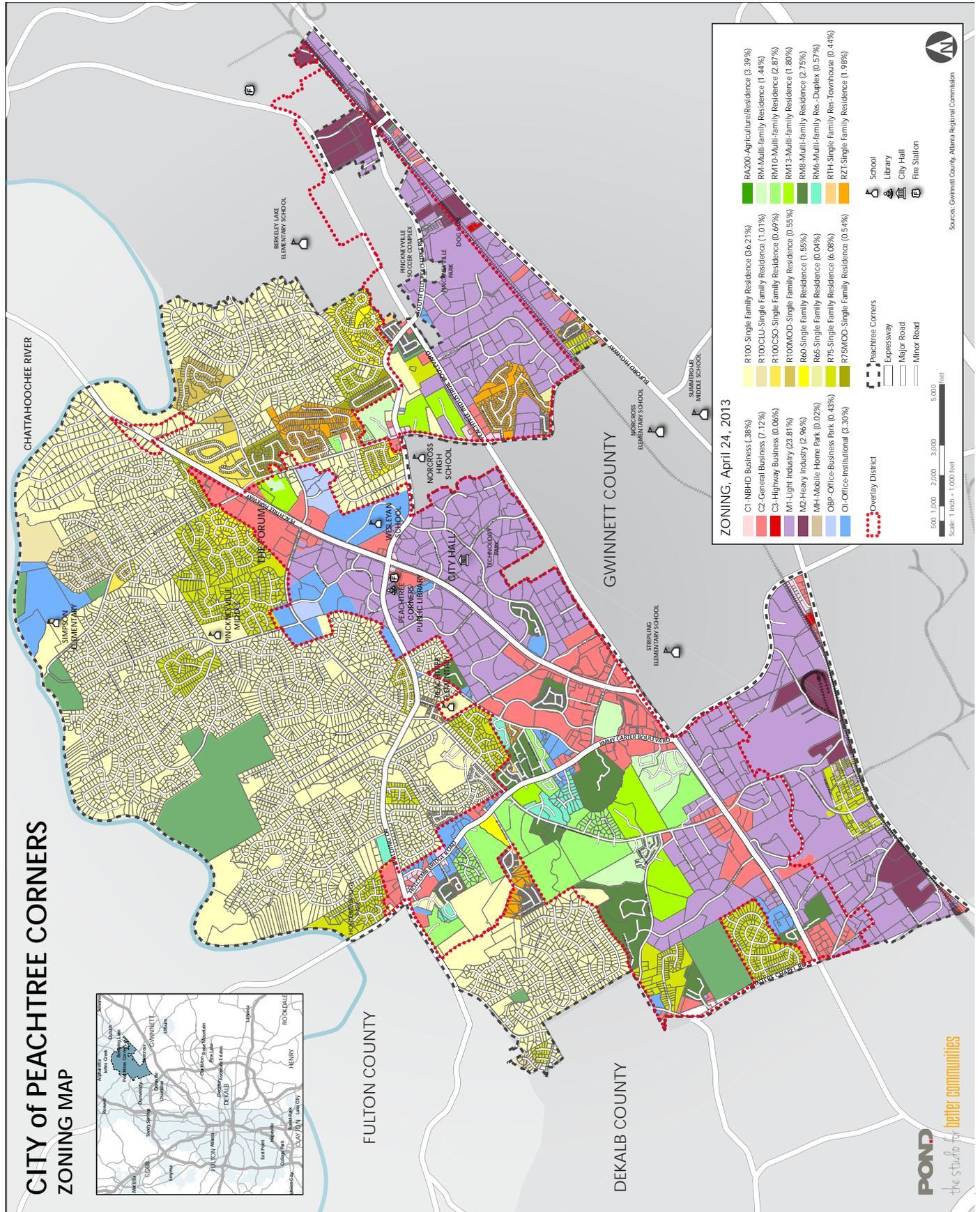


Table 3. Existing Zoning by Acres and Percent

| Zoning District                       | Acres          | %             |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>All Commercial</b>                 | <b>823.22</b>  | <b>7.56%</b>  |
| C1 - NBHD Business                    | 41.03          | 0.38%         |
| C2 - General Business                 | 776.01         | 7.12%         |
| C3 - Highway Business                 | 6.18           | 0.06%         |
| <b>All Office-Industrial</b>          | <b>3324.10</b> | <b>30.52%</b> |
| MI - Light Industry                   | 2594.10        | 23.81%        |
| M2 - Heavy Industry                   | 321.91         | 2.96%         |
| MH - Mobile Home Park                 | 1.73           | 0.02%         |
| OBP - Office-Business Park            | 46.96          | 0.43%         |
| OI - Office - Institutional           | 359.40         | 3.30%         |
| <b>All Residential</b>                | <b>6745.99</b> | <b>61.93%</b> |
| R100 - Single Family Residential      | 3944.87        | 36.21%        |
| R100CLU - Single Family Residential   | 110.41         | 1.01%         |
| R100CSO - Single Family Residential   | 75.66          | 0.69%         |
| R100MOD - Single Family Residential   | 59.39          | 0.55%         |
| R60 - Single Family Residential       | 169.22         | 1.55%         |
| R65 - Single Family Residential       | 4.28           | 0.04%         |
| R75 - Single Family Residential       | 662.57         | 6.08%         |
| R75MOD - Single Family Residential    | 58.32          | 0.54%         |
| RA200 - Agriculture/Residential       | 369.80         | 3.39%         |
| RM - Multi-family Residential         | 157.14         | 1.44%         |
| RM10 - Multi-family Residential       | 312.47         | 2.87%         |
| RM13 - Multi-family Residential       | 196.40         | 1.80%         |
| RM6 - Multi-family Residential Duplex | 62.60          | 0.57%         |
| RM8 - Multi-family Residential        | 299.10         | 2.75%         |
| RTH - Single Fam. Res. Townhouse      | 48.47          | 0.44%         |
| RZT - Single Family Residential       | 215.29         | 1.98%         |

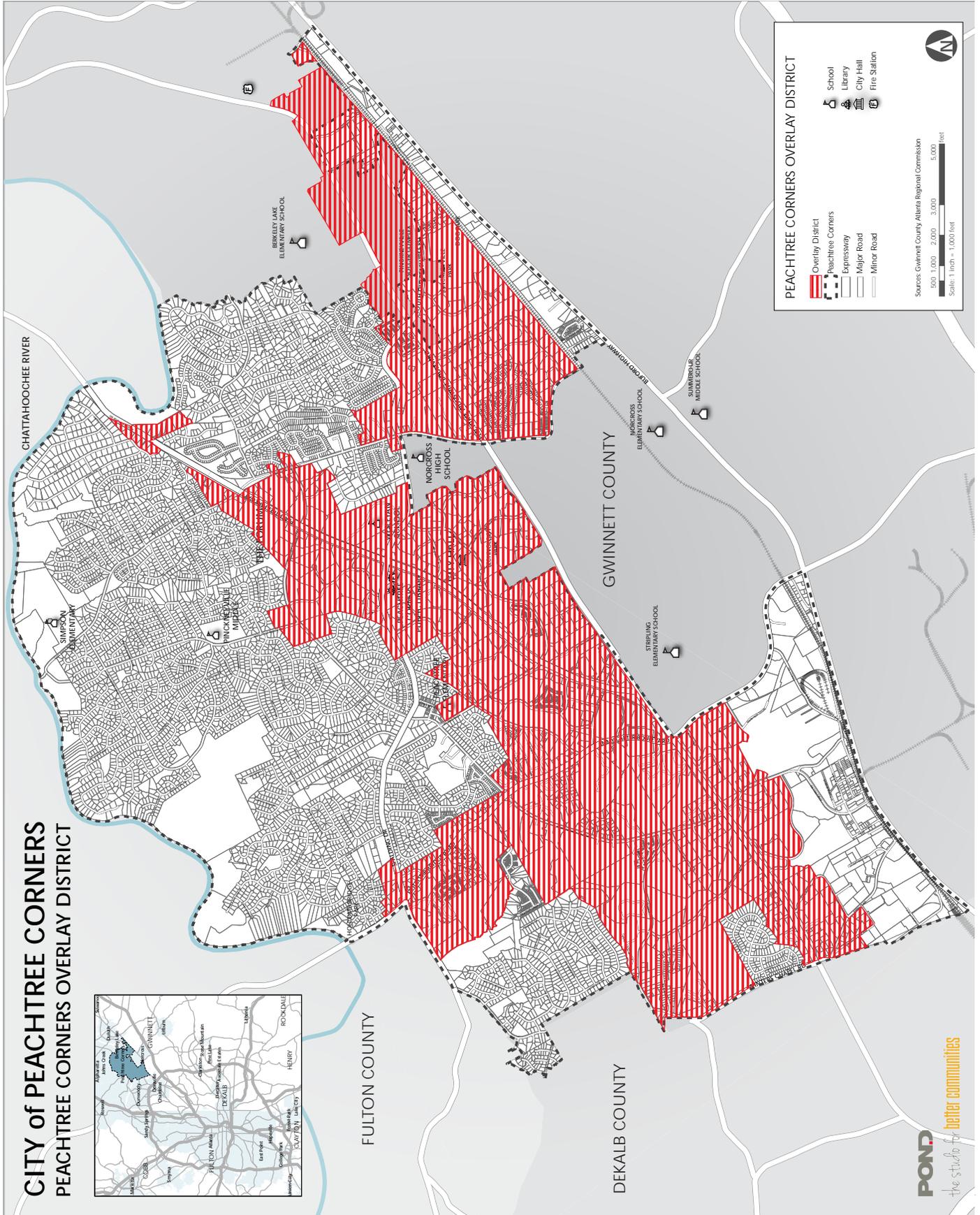
Figure 6. Map: Zoning



## PEACHTREE CORNERS OVERLAY DISTRICT

There is an overlay district within the city, as shown in Figure 7. The requirements of the overlay district apply to non-residential and attached residential properties. The overlay district is intended to achieve a unified and aesthetically pleasing built environment and to promote walking and public transit within the district. As such, it outlines standards for transportation and infrastructure, landscaping, parking, signage, dumpster screening, and architectural design.

Figure 7. Map: Peachtree Corners Overlay District



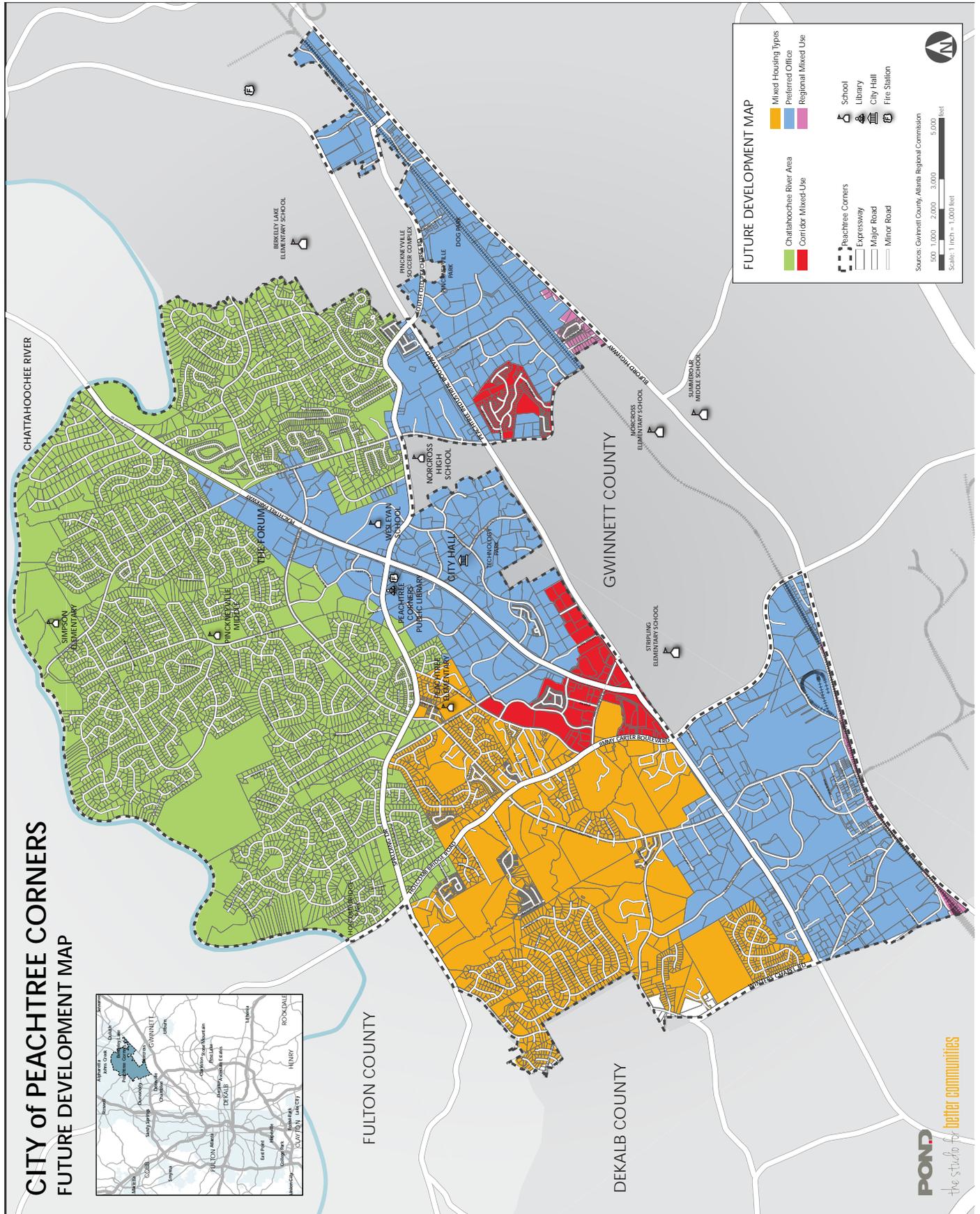
## GWINNETT COUNTY FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

The Gwinnett County Unified Development Plan describes character areas for the entire county. These areas are zones that share issues and opportunities and will benefit from the same planning policies and programs. The plan delineates five character areas in Peachtree Corners: regional mixed use, corridor mixed use, preferred office, Chattahoochee River area, and mixed housing (Gwinnett Unified Development Plan). (See Table 4 for encouraged and discouraged uses in these areas, and see the Gwinnett County Unified Development Plan for more complete descriptions.) Much of the future development map agrees with the current zoning of Peachtree Corners. The most notable disagreements are the industrial zoning districts along the south edge of the City. All of the character areas in Peachtree Corners discourage industrial uses, while the current zoning code allows them in roughly a quarter of the City.

Table 4. Gwinnett County Character Areas in Peachtree Corners

| Character Area           | Encouraged Uses  | Discouraged Uses   |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Regional Mixed Use       | Regional mixed-use<br>Office professional<br>Ultra high density residential<br>High density residential<br>Medium density residential  | Light and heavy industrial<br>Single family detached residential<br>Estate residential   |
| Corridor Mixed Use       | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>At major nodes:</b></p> Free-standing office professional<br>Free-standing commercial/retail<br>High density residential<br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>Between nodes:</b></p> Corridor mixed use development<br>Free-standing office professional<br>Free-standing commercial/retail<br>Townhouse residential<br>Free-standing multi-family buildings | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>At major nodes:</b></p> Light and heavy industrial<br>Single family residential<br>Townhouse residential<br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>Between nodes:</b></p> Light and heavy industrial<br>Single family residential |
| Preferred Office         | Office professional uses<br>Mixed-use development  | Large, free standing commercial/retail<br>All forms of industrial<br>All residential, except in mixed-use  |
| Mixed Housing Types      | Medium-density single-family housing<br>Townhouses or cluster homes<br>Medium density multi-family housing<br>Neighborhood-serving commercial  | Employment uses<br>Non-residential, non-neighborhood uses<br>All mixed-use types<br>Gas stations   |
| Chattahoochee River Area | Estate houses<br>Single family detached<br>Townhouses and cluster homes  | All mixed-use types<br>Employment uses<br>Conventional retail centers<br>All industrial uses<br>Multi-family housing<br>Gas stations   |

Figure 8. Map: Future Development



## FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

The site across from the Forum will shape the character of the city significantly. Because of the site's size, location, and prominence, its development will influence what follows.

There is also a Wal-Mart planned just outside the edge of Peachtree Corners, at Peeler Road and Winters Chapel. The planned grocery-focused store is expected to increase traffic, especially on Winters Chapel Road.

## SUMMARY OF LAND USE EXISTING CONDITIONS

### NEEDS

- The **Future Development plan** of Gwinnett County is overly broad and the City will need a more fine-grained one.
- There is **not enough park space**, particularly on the southern side of the city (see Cultural Resources and Community Facilities section).
- There is no downtown or town center. The Forum is the only “destination” in the City, and there are no **civic or public gathering spaces**.
- Arts and cultural facilities, civic and community facilities, and nightlife and entertainment options are inadequate in Peachtree Corners.
- There are few **housing options for older adults** in the City, such as cluster homes or “live/walk/play” communities.
- In certain areas, residential districts are adjacent to **incompatible uses**.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Transitions between incompatible uses can be enhanced, and the City can develop a strategy for managing **residential/industrial adjacencies** in the future.
- Several locations throughout the City, particularly commercial and industrial areas, are ripe for **redevelopment** or will be within the next few years.
- There are large **vacant parcels** along the Chattahoochee.
- There are **infill opportunities** along Peachtree Parkway.
- There are large vacant parcels on the western side of the City.
- There is an opportunity to develop a **variety of housing types**, including live/work units, condominiums, lofts/flats, townhouses, and small lot detached single-family homes. These housing types can provide options to first-time

home buyers or empty nesters.

- The City can encourage accessory dwelling units, or “granny flats” to create additional dwelling units in single-family neighborhoods without changing the urban form. They provide opportunities to **increase diversity in age or stage of life** in established neighborhoods; they allow grandparents to age in place, close to their grandchildren while maintaining independence; and they create options for renters who do not wish to live in high-density multifamily zoning districts.
- Investing in the community will help maintain its vibrancy for the next several decades. The City can invest in acquiring vacant commercial space and revitalizing aging buildings.
- Several sites within the city provide good opportunities for future public gathering spaces.
- Technology Park can be upgraded with more **advanced infrastructure** to meet current standards.