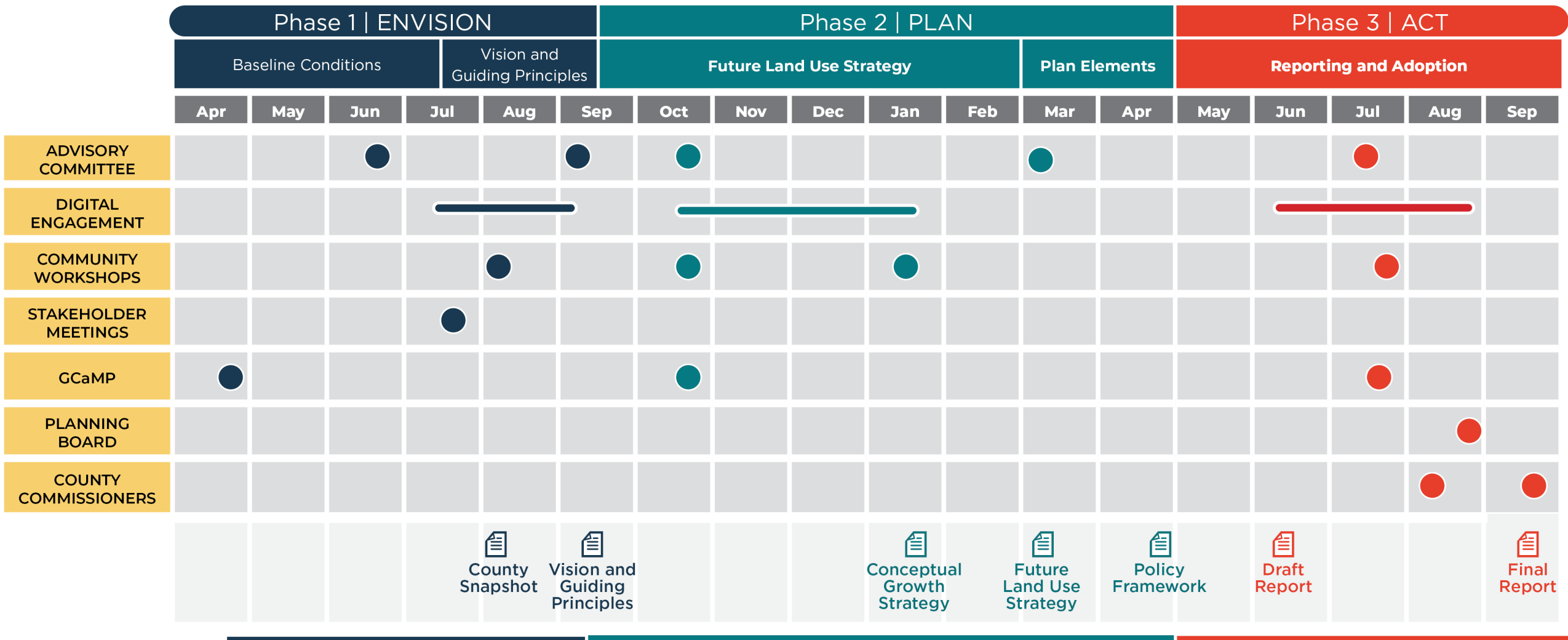


August 11, 2026

Work Session

County Commission

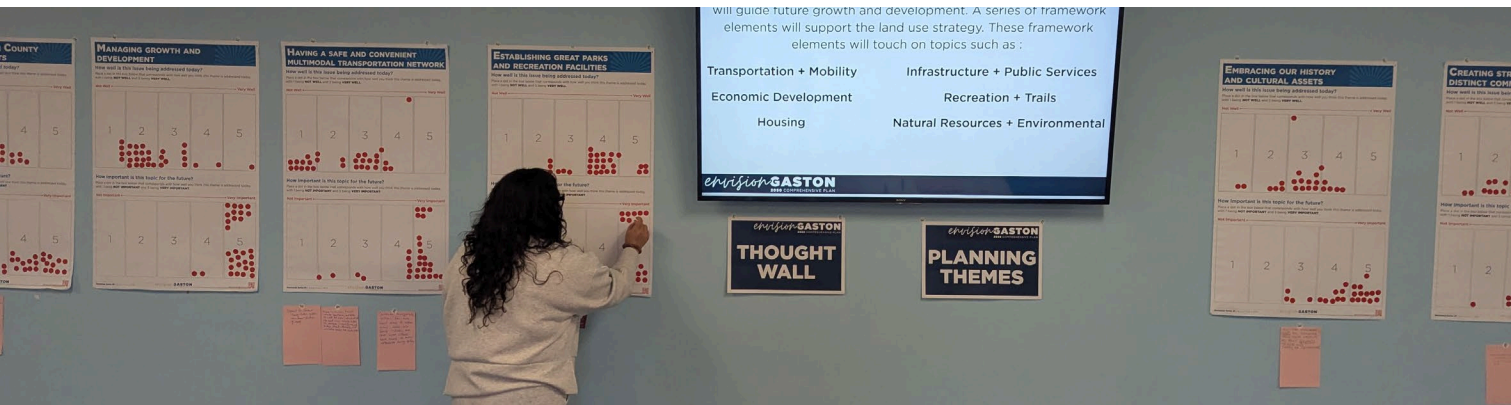
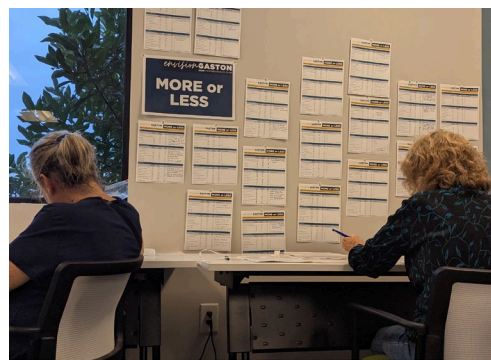


We are here!

Report Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 County Snapshot
- 3 Vision and Planning Themes
- 4 Land Use Strategy
- 5 Policy Framework
- 6 Implementation and Next Steps





Workshops, Meetings, and Surveys



500+ *touchpoints*



6,500+ *individual data points*



1,750+ *written comments*



590+ *hours invested*

Project Website

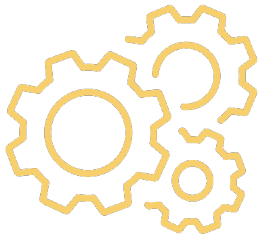


2,460+ *visits*



1,790+ *visitors*

Path to the Future Land Use Map



Scenario
Planning



Future
Land Use Map



County Characteristics

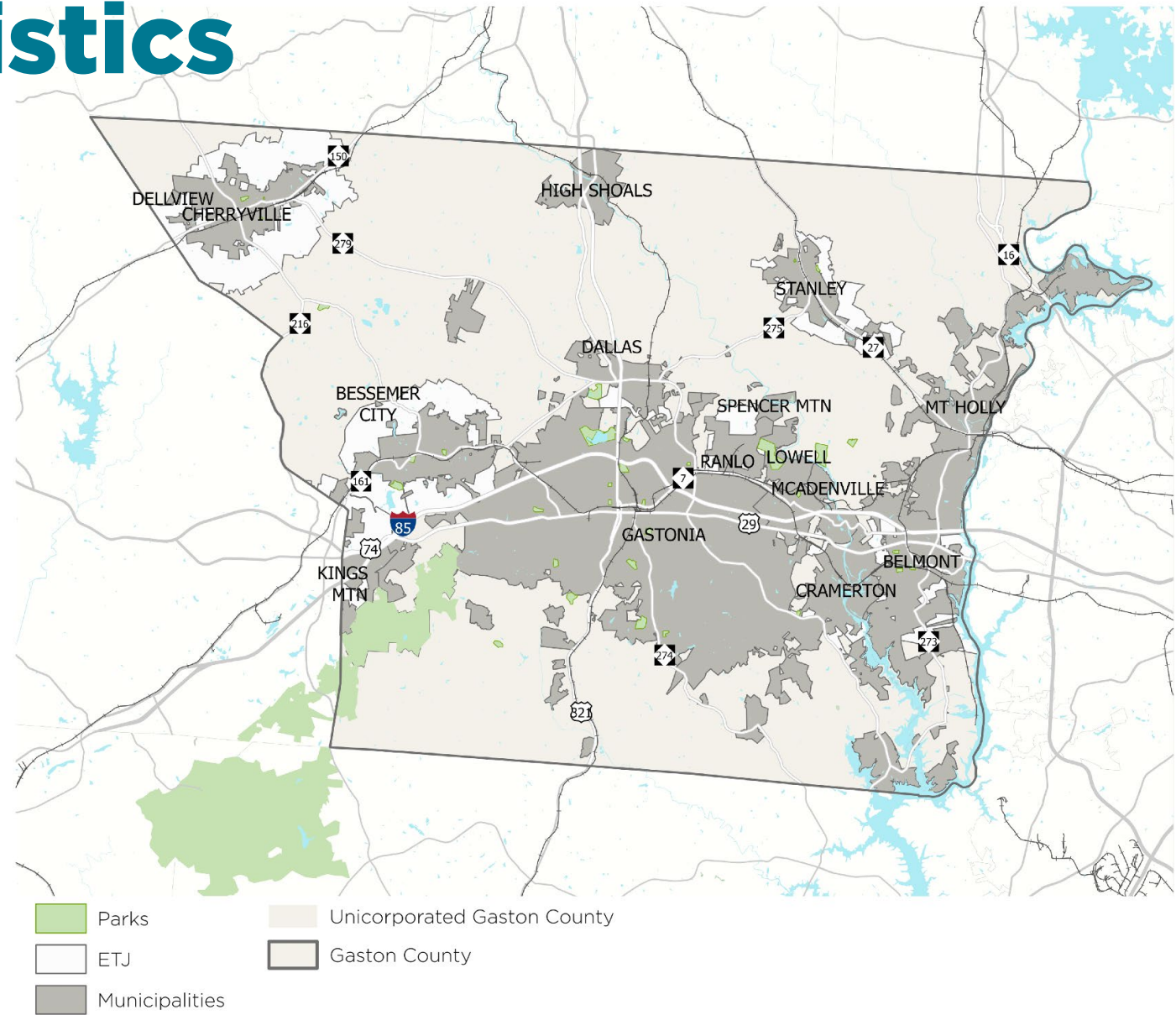
People

Housing

Economy

Built Environment

Natural Resources



Vision

Gaston County will be a model of intentional collaboration, innovation, and efficiency to expand local opportunity and attract global investment.

- *Adopted by County Commissioners on August 26, 2025, as part of the FY26-28 Strategic Plan*

Planning Themes

Responsible Growth

Gaston County will take a proactive and efficient approach to growth and development.

- Meeting our housing needs with a range of types and price points
- Providing public facilities and community services that support everyday life
- Collaborating with municipal partners for a coordinated approach to community borders

Gaston Heritage

Gaston County will protect places with ecological, agricultural, and cultural value.

- Safeguarding our forests, rivers, natural areas, scenic vistas, and open spaces
- Preserving and protecting our active farmland and enhancing our agricultural heritage
- Maintaining our historic and cultural assets for future generations

Economic Prosperity

Gaston County will retain and attract a mix of local businesses and larger industries.

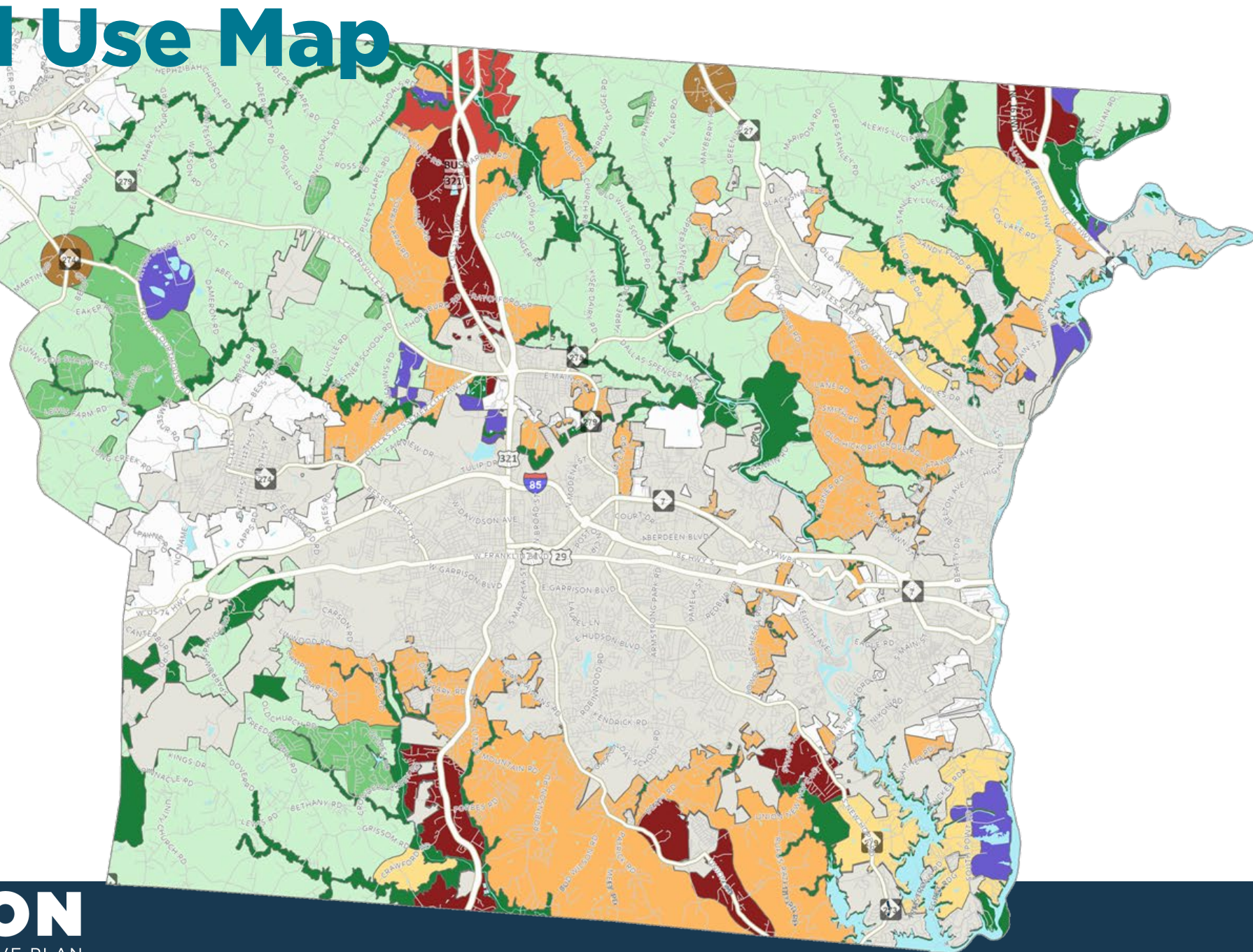
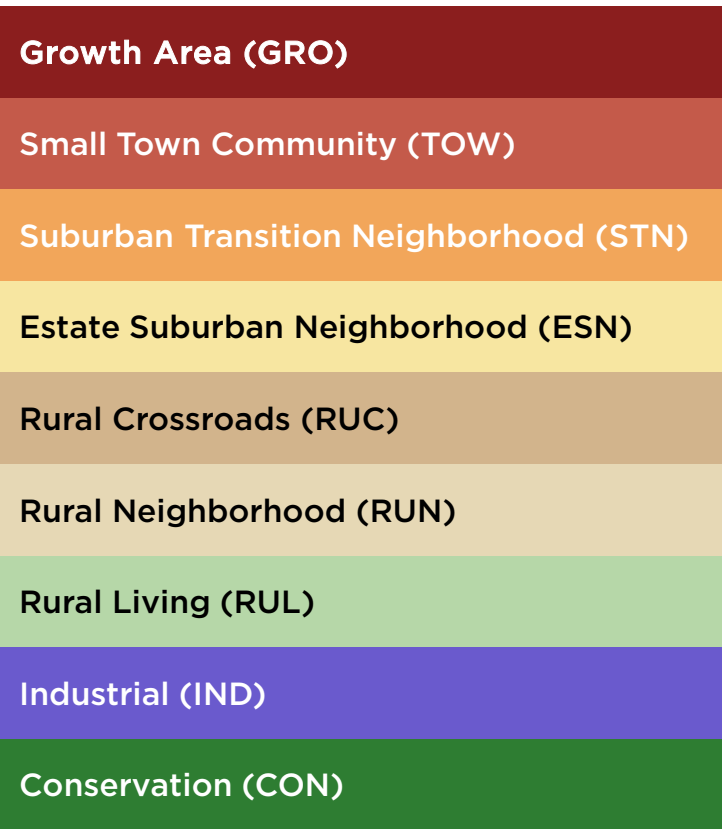
- Fostering a resilient economy with more jobs and higher wages
- Leveraging known economic assets and creating opportunities for new investment
- Strengthening our schools and developing a productive and resilient workforce

Community Wellbeing

Gaston County will enhance health and welfare through active and connected lifestyles.

- Expanding access to parks, greenways, and recreational facilities
- Making us safer and more connected through an enhanced transportation network
- Connecting people to facilities and services that enhance their quality of life

Future Land Use Map

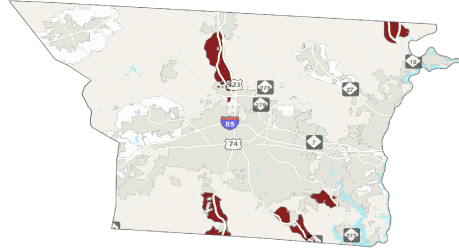


Growth Center (GRO)

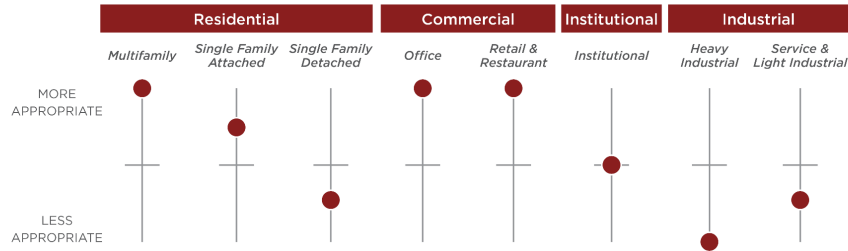
Growth Center areas are compact, mixed-use districts strategically located along key corridors with existing infrastructure capacity to support future development. These areas are intended to accommodate higher-intensity growth while promoting walkability, connectivity, and efficient use of public services. By focusing development in these corridors, Growth Centers help guide sustainable, coordinated expansion.

INTENT

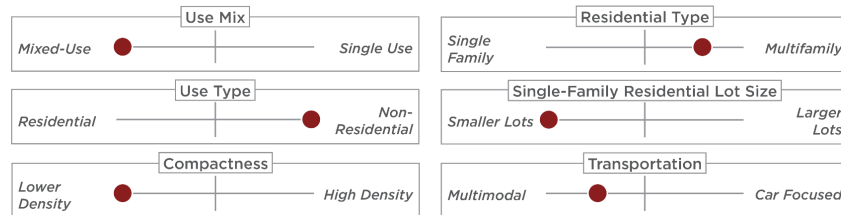
- Direct higher intensity development to targeted corridors and nodes with existing or planned infrastructure and transportation capacity.
- Support a mix of employment, commercial, residential, and civic uses in compact, efficient patterns.
- Encourage infill, redevelopment, and site consolidation over greenfield expansion.
- Require access management, multimodal connectivity, and site design standards that improve transportation efficiency.
- Reduce pressure for scattered growth in rural and low-density areas.



APPROPRIATE LAND USES



DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS



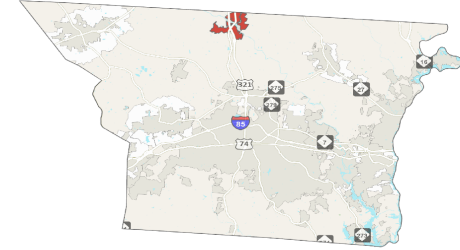
52

Small Town Community (TOW)

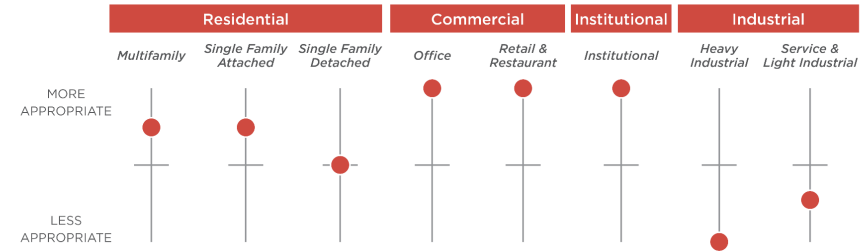
Small Town Community areas reflect historic, small-town character while supporting a mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses. Development in these areas is guided by town center policies that emphasize walkability, local identity, and preservation of traditional development patterns. These communities serve as focal points for surrounding areas, balancing growth with the protection of their unique character.

INTENT

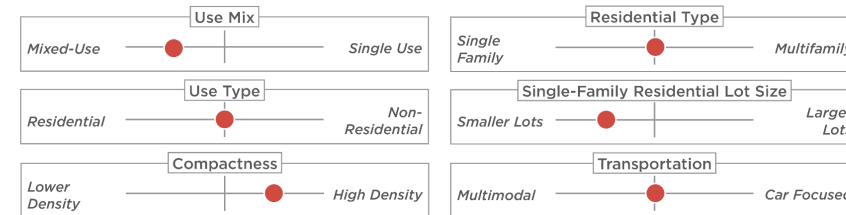
- Recognize and reinforce the historic small-town character, scale, and identity of High Shoals.
- Support a mix of residential, civic, institutional, and small-scale commercial uses appropriate to a town setting.
- Encourage redevelopment and infill that is compatible with existing scale, infrastructure capacity, and neighborhood context.
- Respect municipal land use authority and local planning policies.
- Promote walkability, community connectivity, and preservation of established neighborhoods.



APPROPRIATE LAND USES



DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS



53

LAND USE STRATEGY

Policy Framework + Implementation

Connects themes to action

by translating community priorities into guidance for decisions and investment.

Aligns efforts across the County

with initiatives, policies, projects, and studies in a coordinated, data-informed approach.

Supports flexibility and

accountability so the plan can adapt over time while explaining how decisions are made and progress is measured.

Responsible Growth

Gaston County will take a proactive and efficient approach to growth and development.

Gaston Heritage

Gaston County will protect places with ecological, agricultural, and cultural value.

Economic Prosperity

Gaston County will retain and attract a mix of local businesses and larger industries.

Community Wellbeing

Gaston County will enhance health and welfare through active and connected lifestyles.

August 11, 2026

Thank you!

Work Session
County Commission