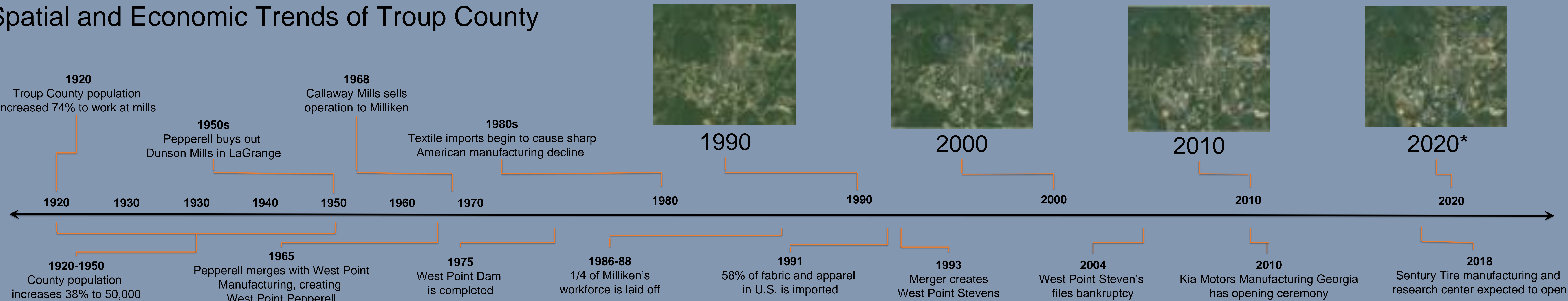


A Geodemographic and Historical Analysis of LaGrange, Georgia

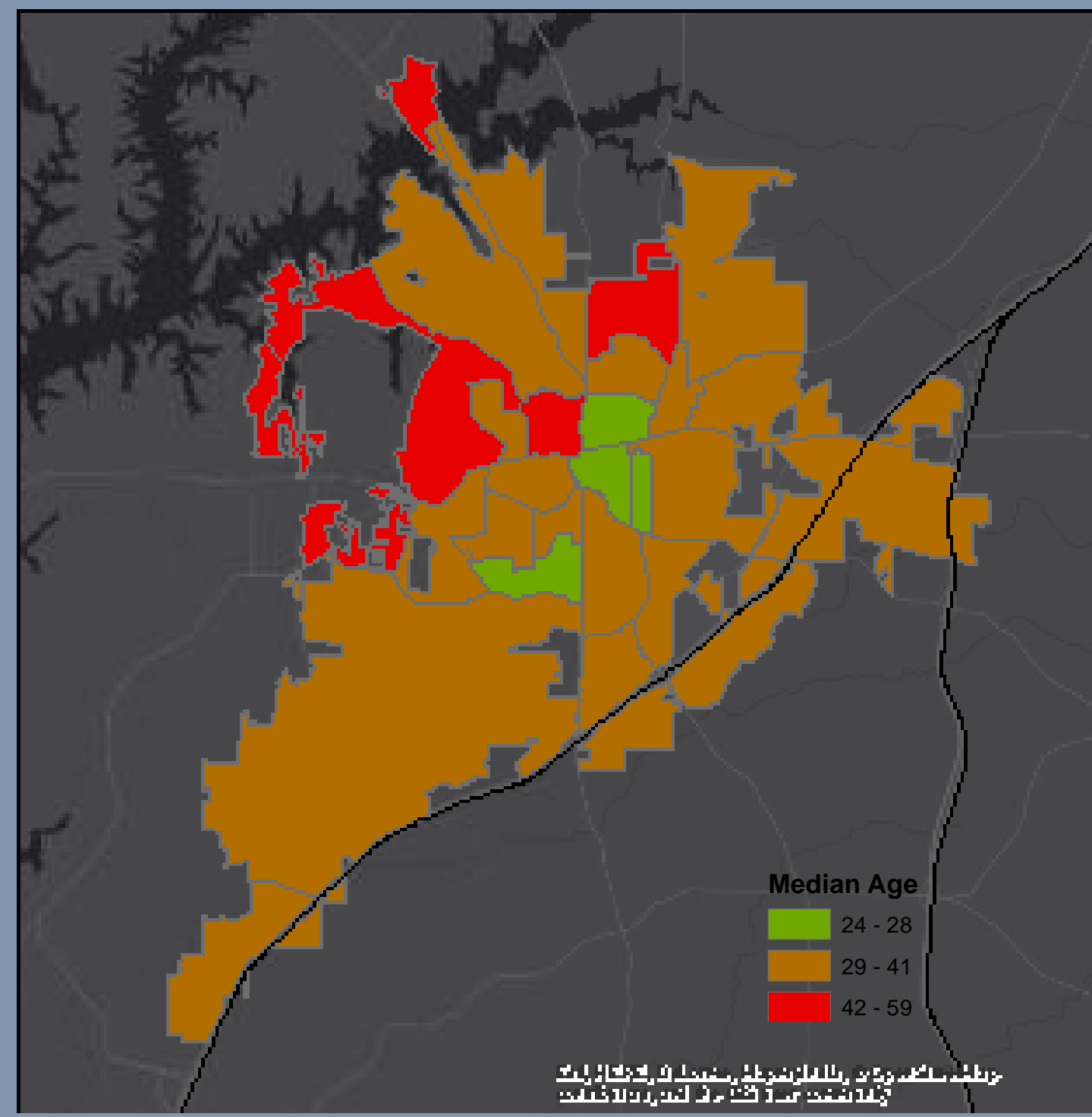
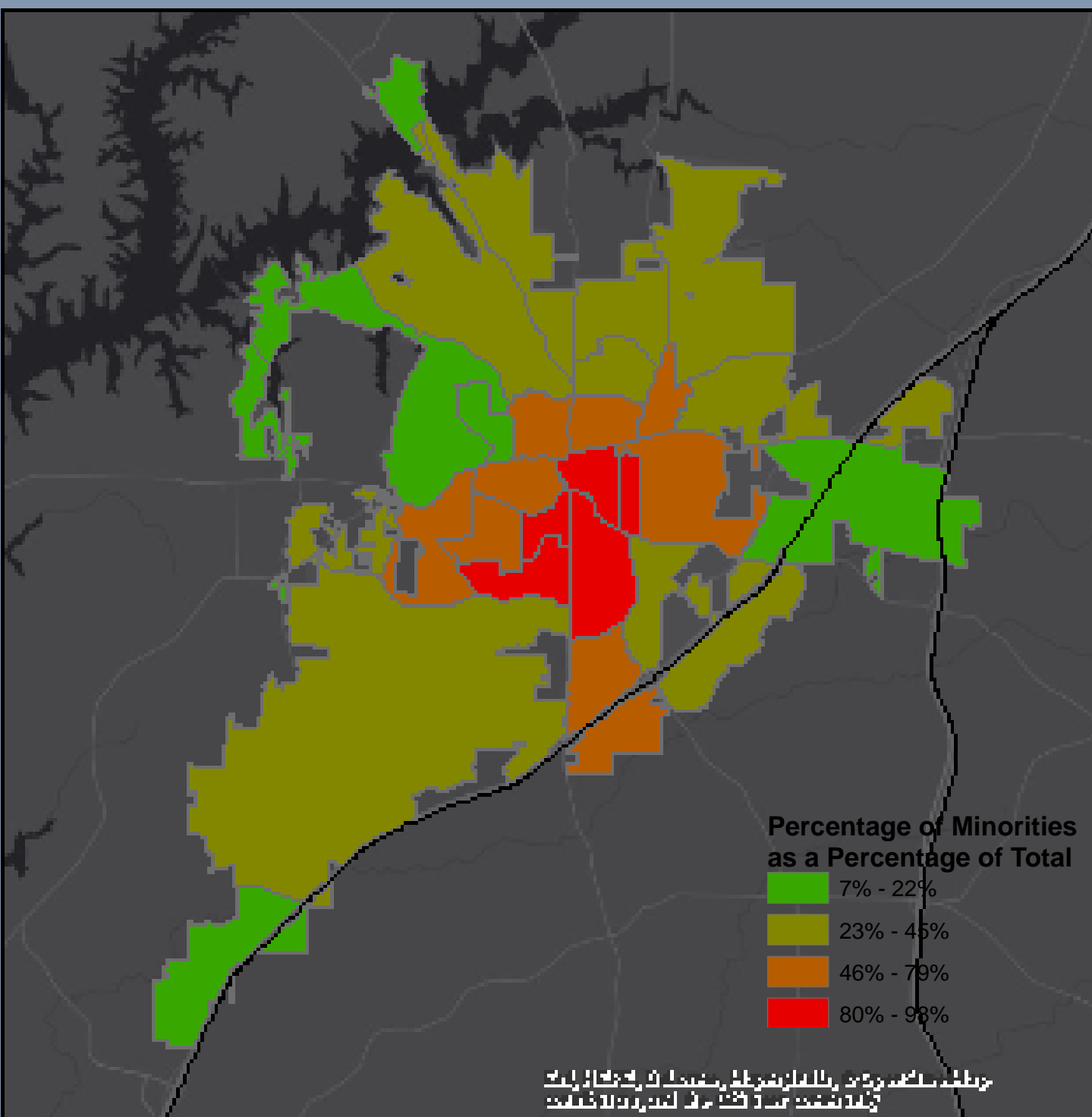
Auburn University Masters of Community Planning
Casey Hill, Michael Kay, Kendall Shipp,
& Dan Yurcaba
November 14th, 2016



Spatial and Economic Trends of Troup County

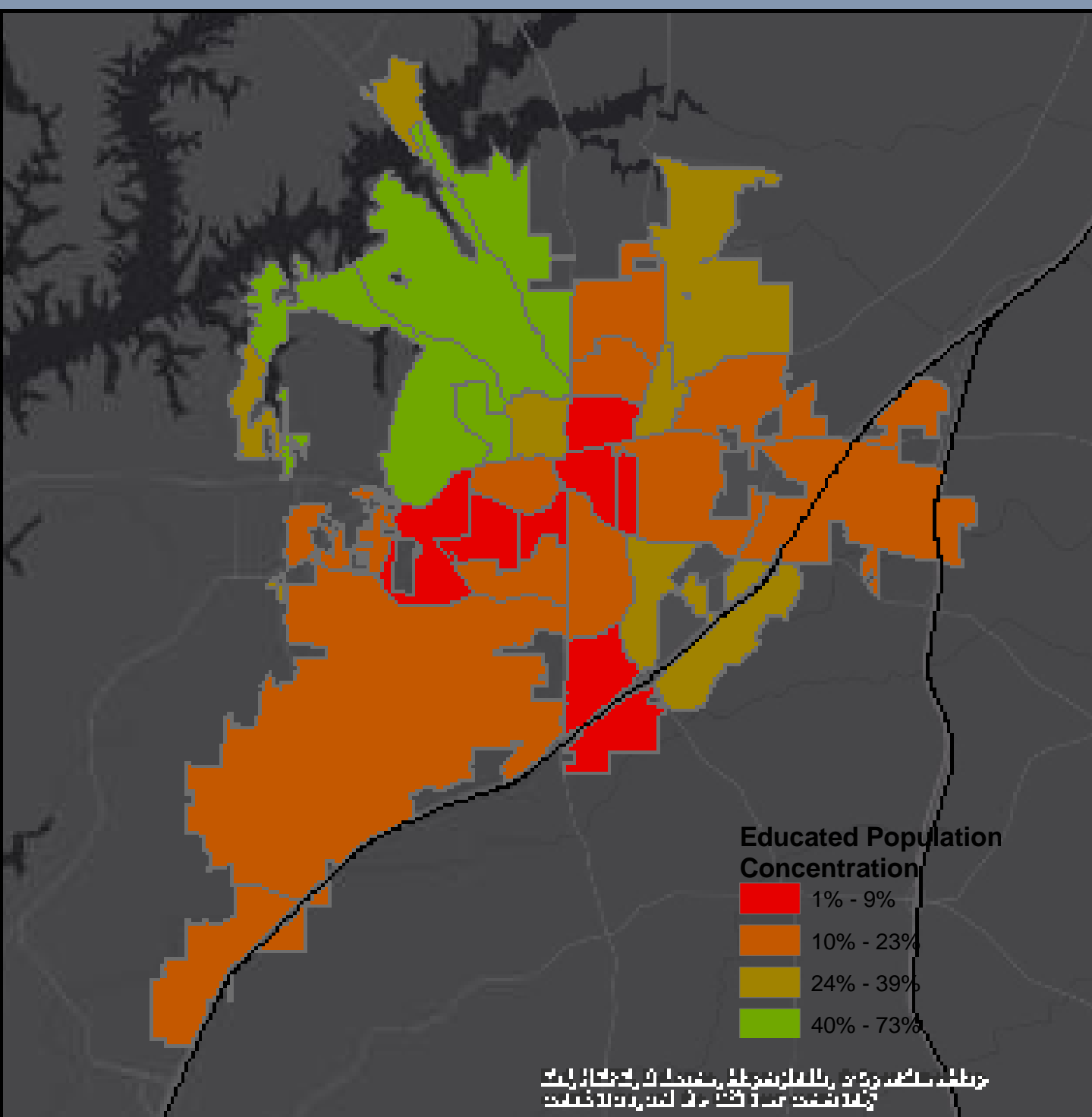
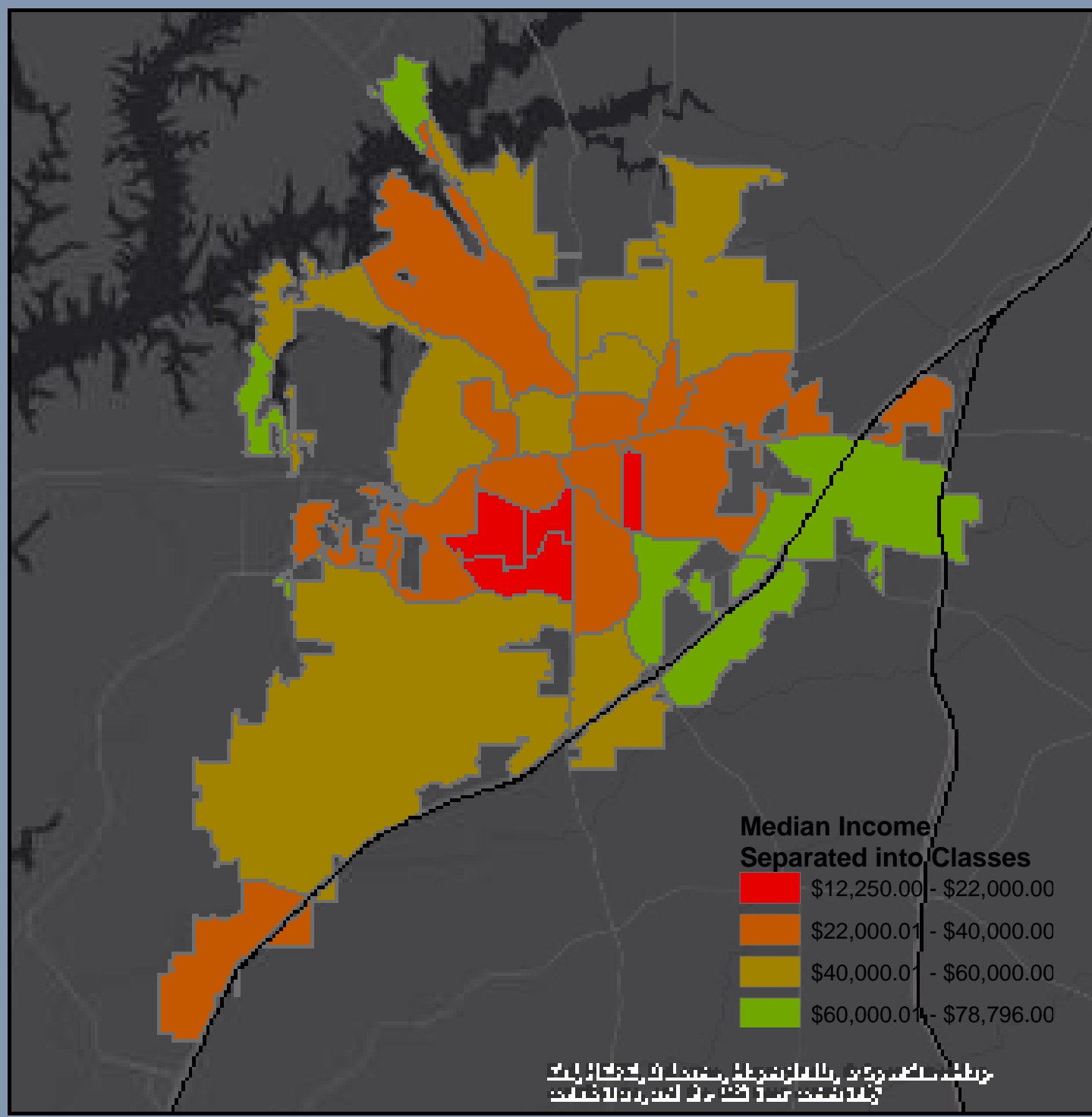


Key Issue #1: Segregation



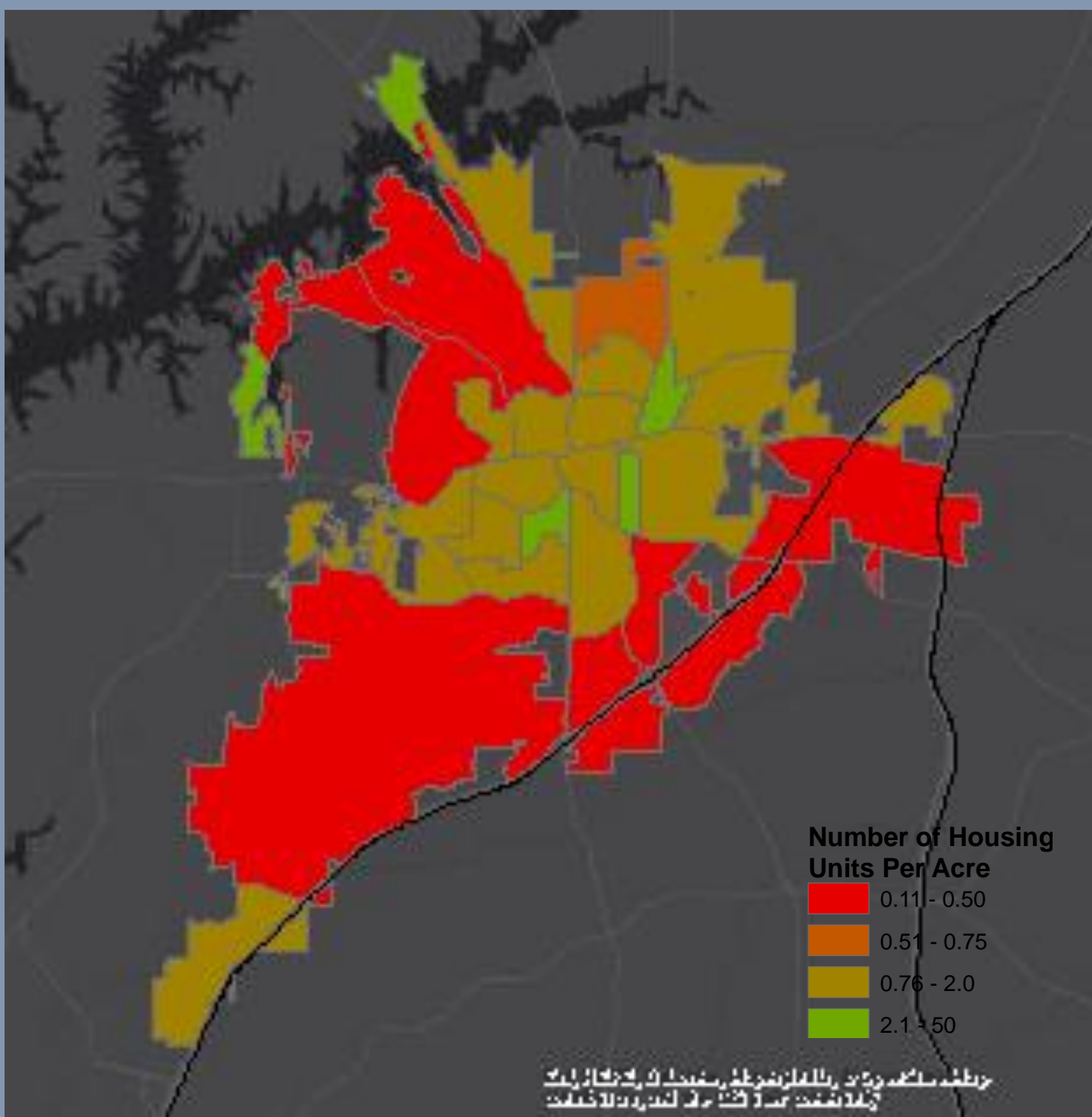
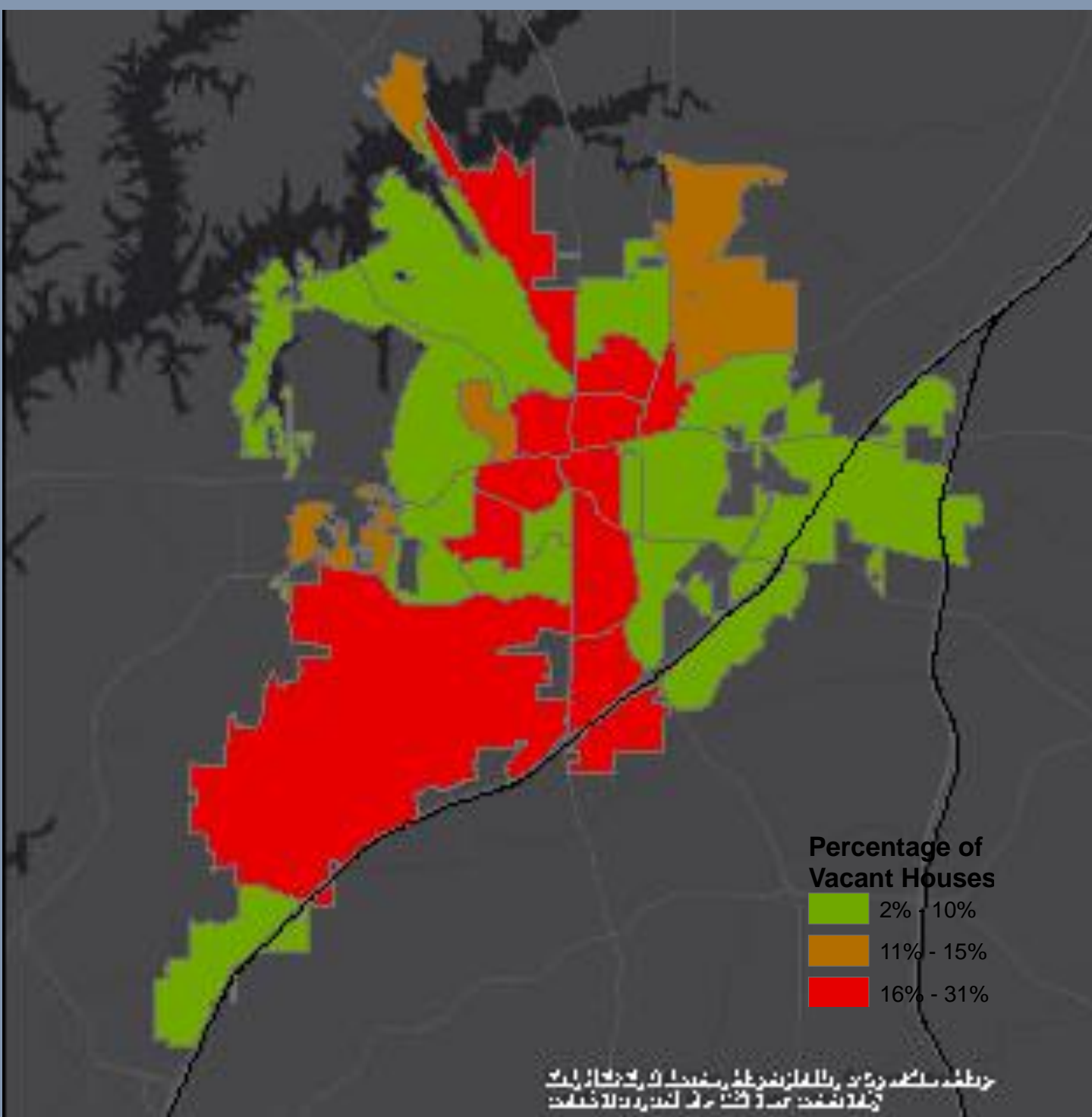
LaGrange is segregated in terms of both ethnicity and age. Despite an almost even ratio of minorities to Caucasians, they are strongly concentrated in different areas.

Key Issue #2: Poverty



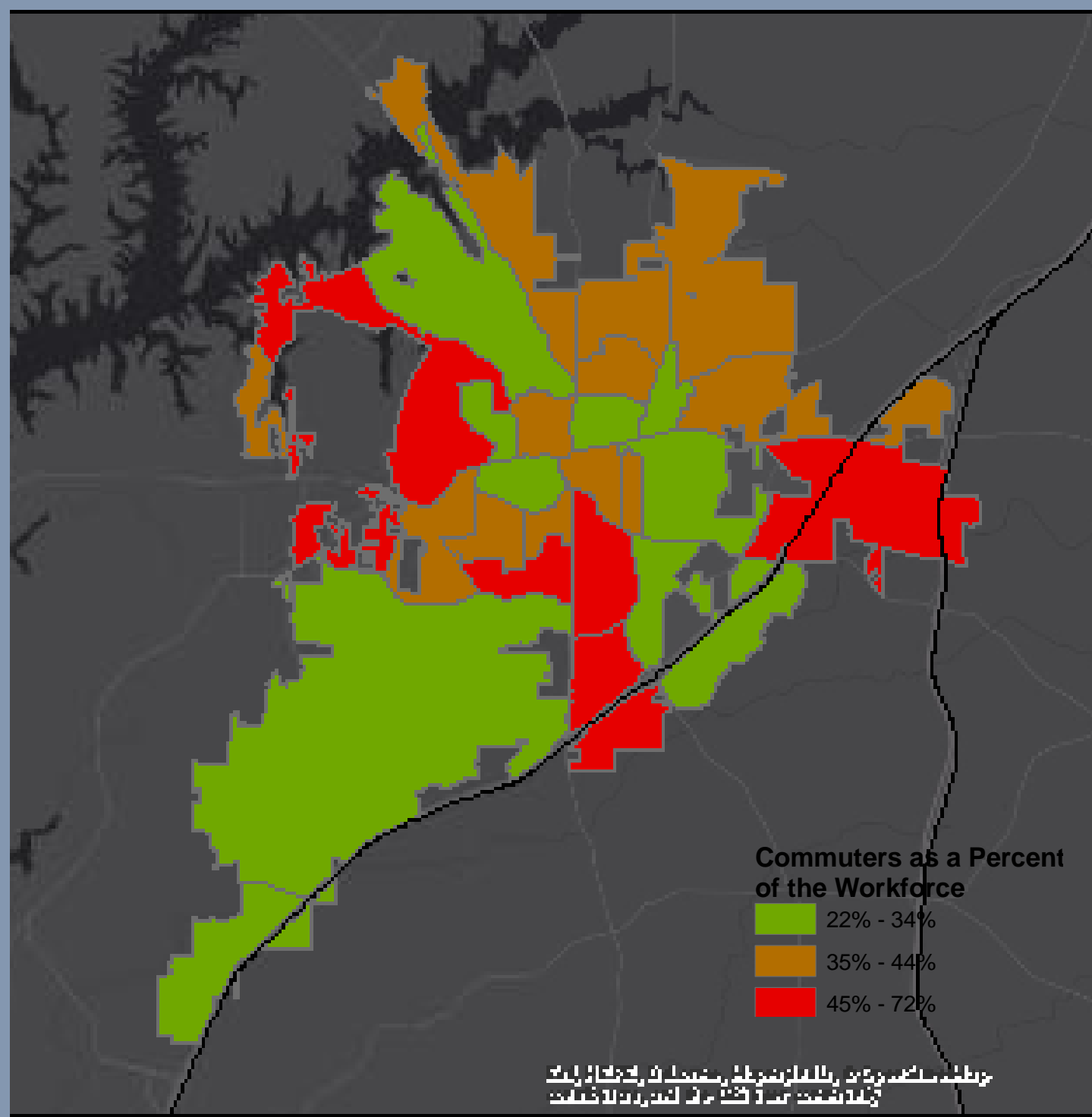
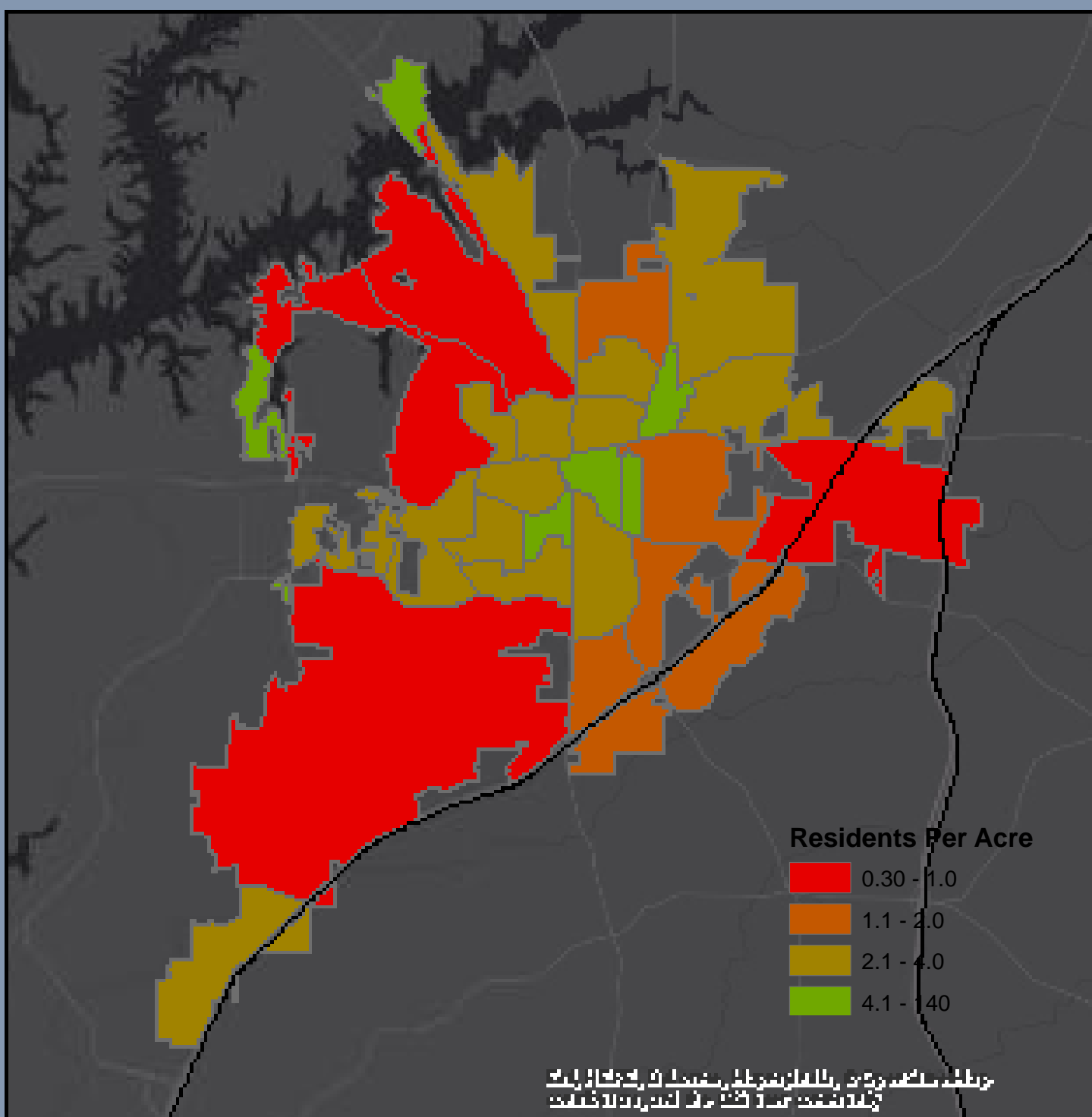
LaGrange also contains concentrations of education and wealth. The core of the town is largely not degraded and lives closer to the poverty line than citizens who reside by West Point Lake.

Key Issue #3: Housing

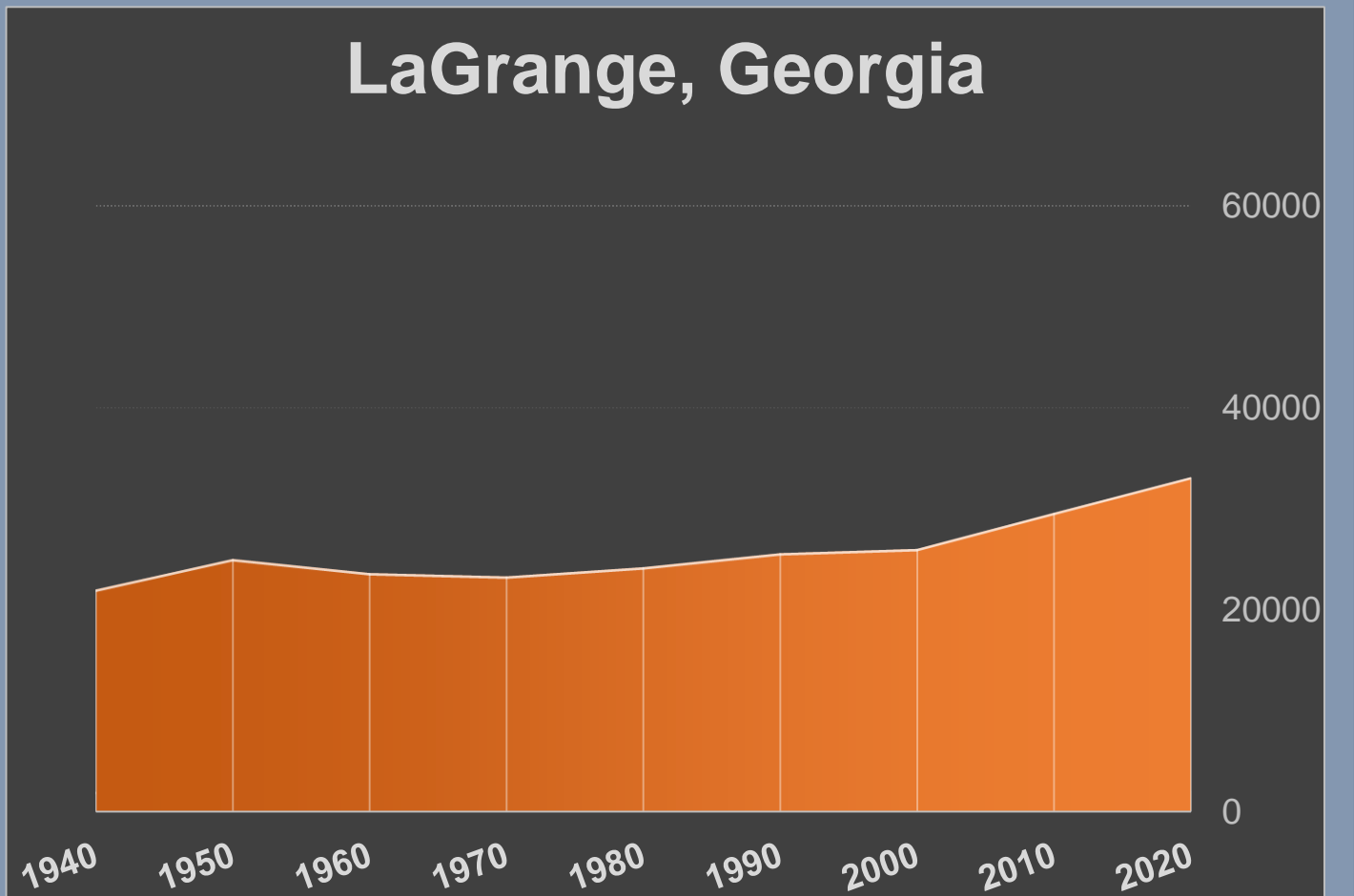
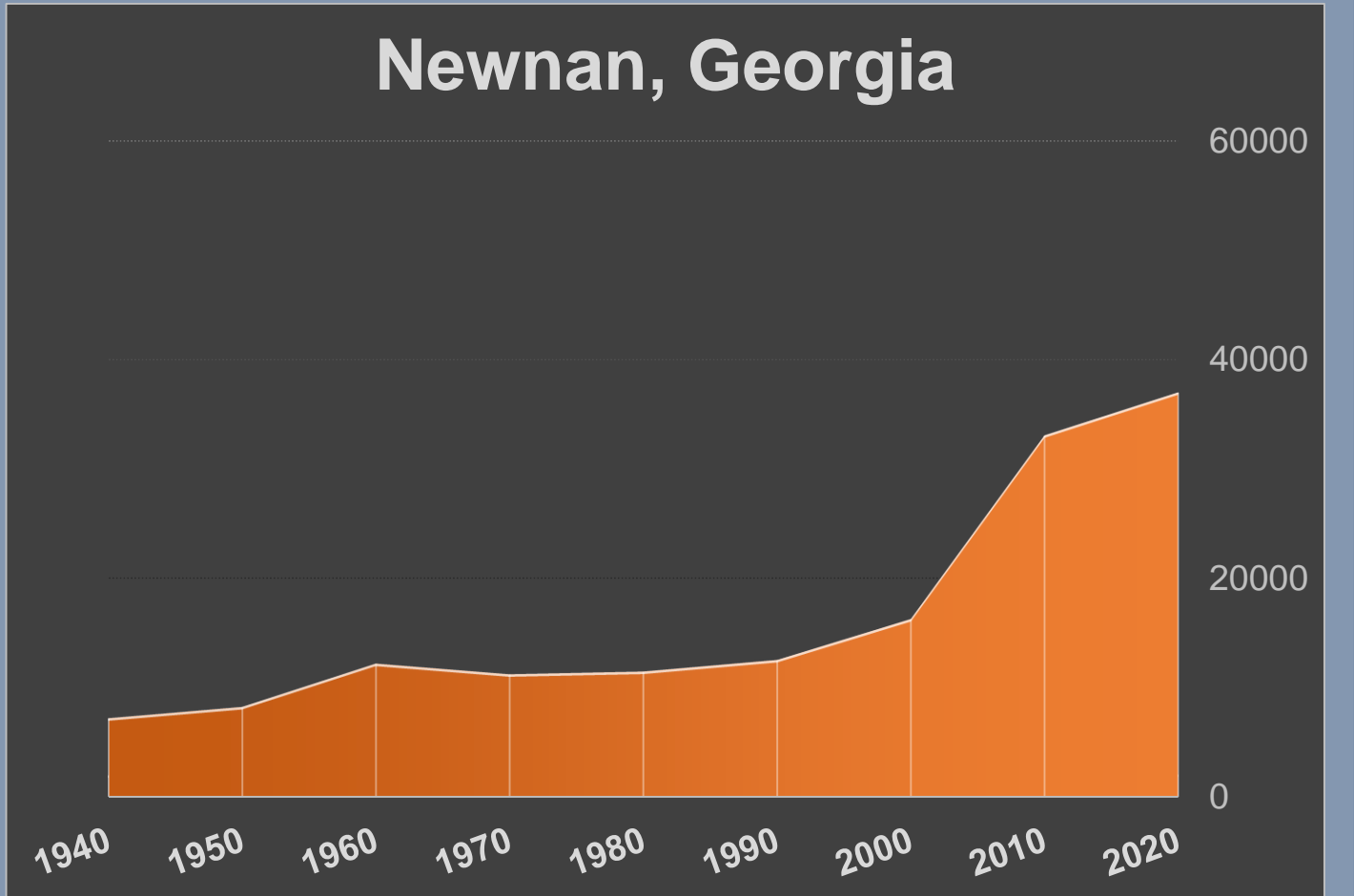
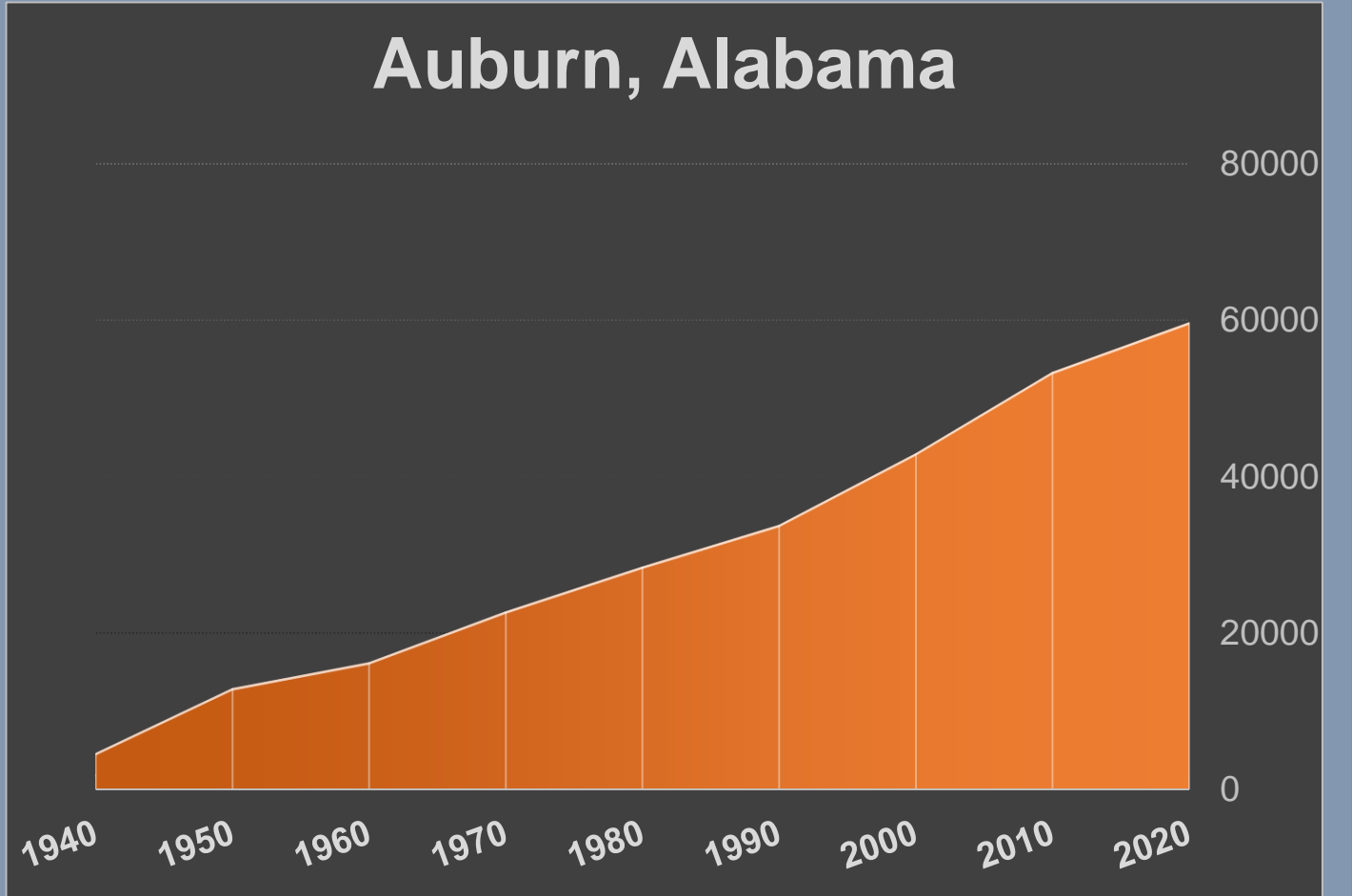


Housing is a mixed bag of results. Despite the core of the city having more housing density, it also has the largest portion of vacancies. The single-family region, the South-Southeast, is the least developed yet has the least vacancies.

Key Issue #4: Residency



Residency is an issue because a large portion of citizens are choosing to commute to work in the LaGrange city limits. This is strongly tied to areas with higher education and family income.



2020 Population Estimates*:
LaGrange: 33,000
Auburn: 60,000
Newnan: 36,000

Sources: data.worldbank.org
census.gov

Economic Background

Employment data for Troup County and the surrounding counties shows that the major employers tend to cluster in the urban cores of the prominent cities in the region (LaGrange, Auburn, Newnan, Columbus, West Point).

Looking at the spatial distribution of businesses across varying employment thresholds, manufacturing industries stand out as the major employers for Troup County. The majority of manufacturing employers are located along the I-85 corridor between the cities.

Recognizing that the broad economic trends for Troup County point towards manufacturing as the main base economic activity in the region, there is opportunity for economic growth with the city's assistance. Regional stakeholders need to understand the significance that manufacturing plays in the area so that they can focus efforts on bolstering the region's key industry.

Data Source: 2016 Infogroup Employment Dataset

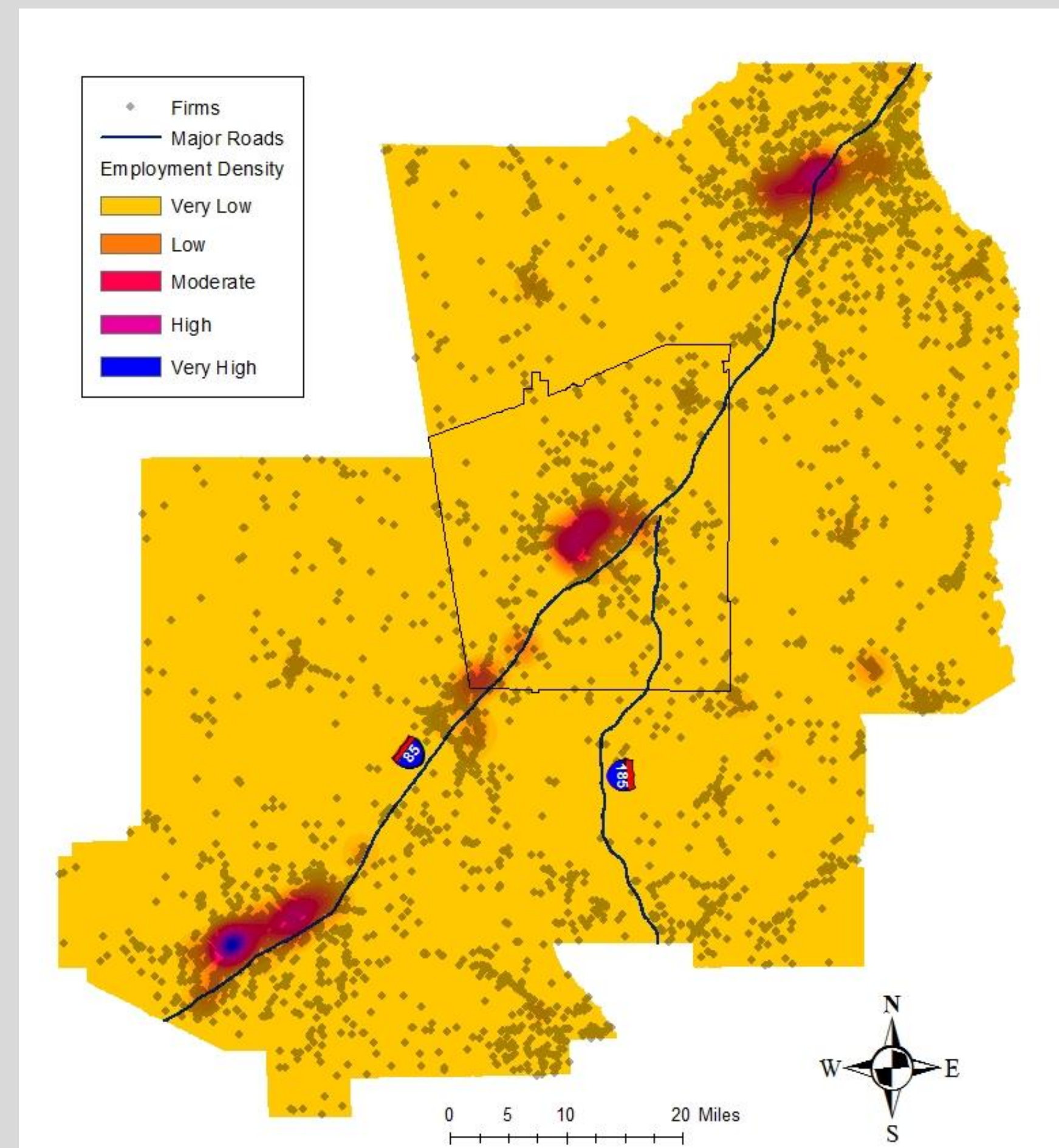


Figure 1. Businesses Locations and Employment Density

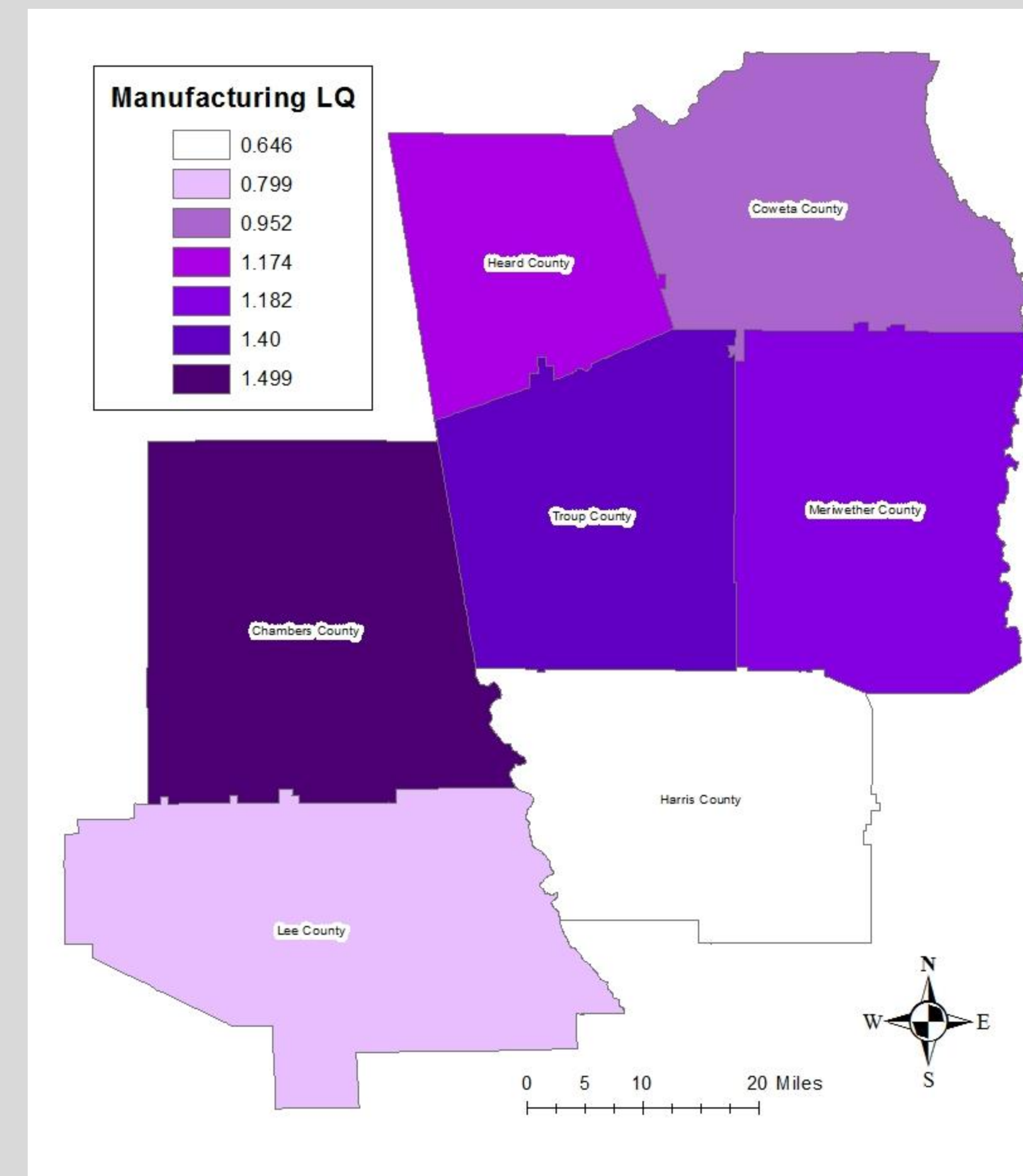


Figure 2. Location Quotient for Manufacturing Industry

Location Quotient

- Highly Competitive Manufacturing Industry
- While the Engineering Industry is a non-basic activity, Troup County is performing better than the surrounding area.
- Illustrates potential to develop a localization economy for production technology.
- Manufacturing presence provides comparative advantage over neighboring counties to attract production technology firms.

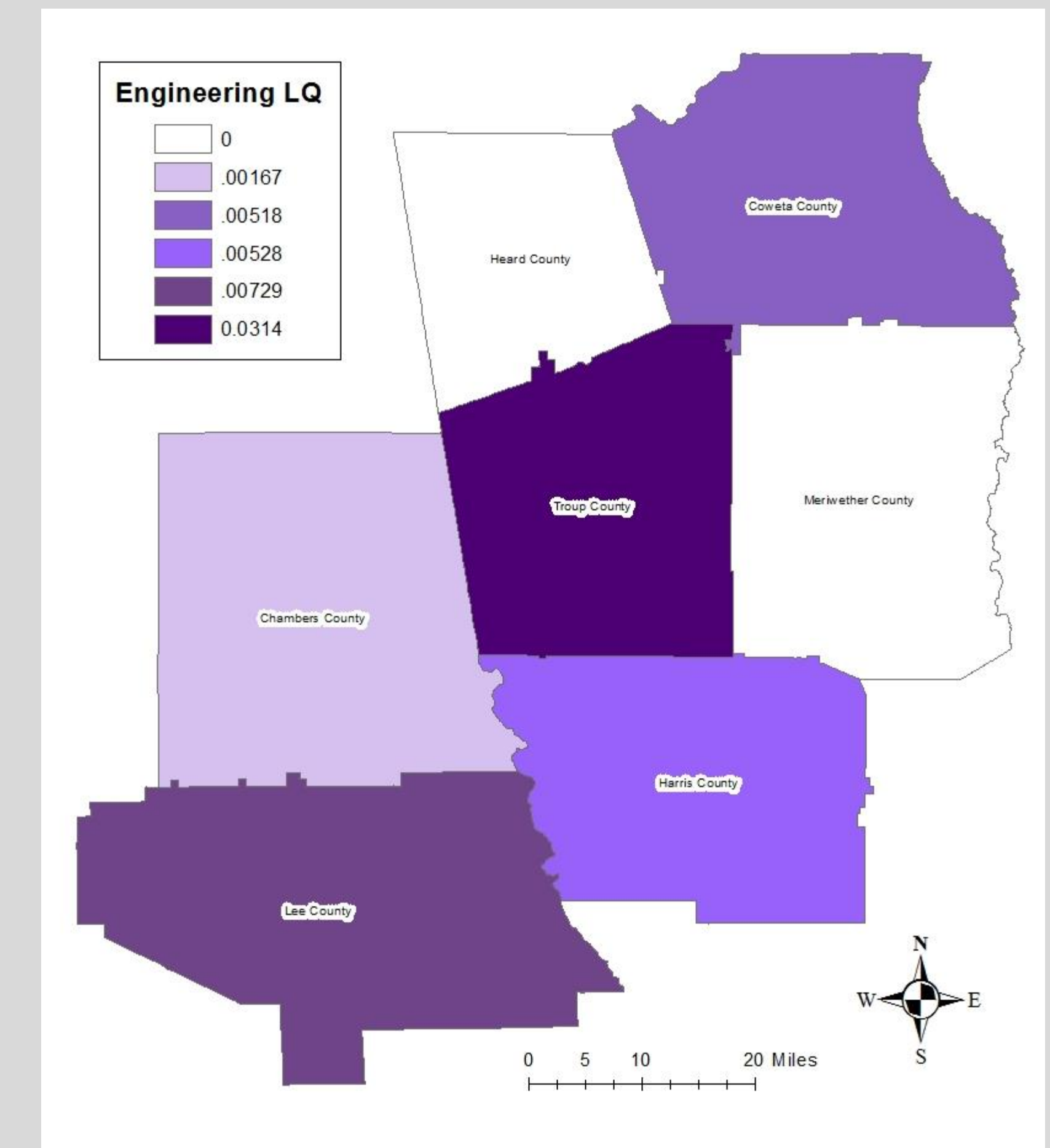


Figure 3. Location Quotient for Engineering Industry

Case Study: Comparable Micropolitans

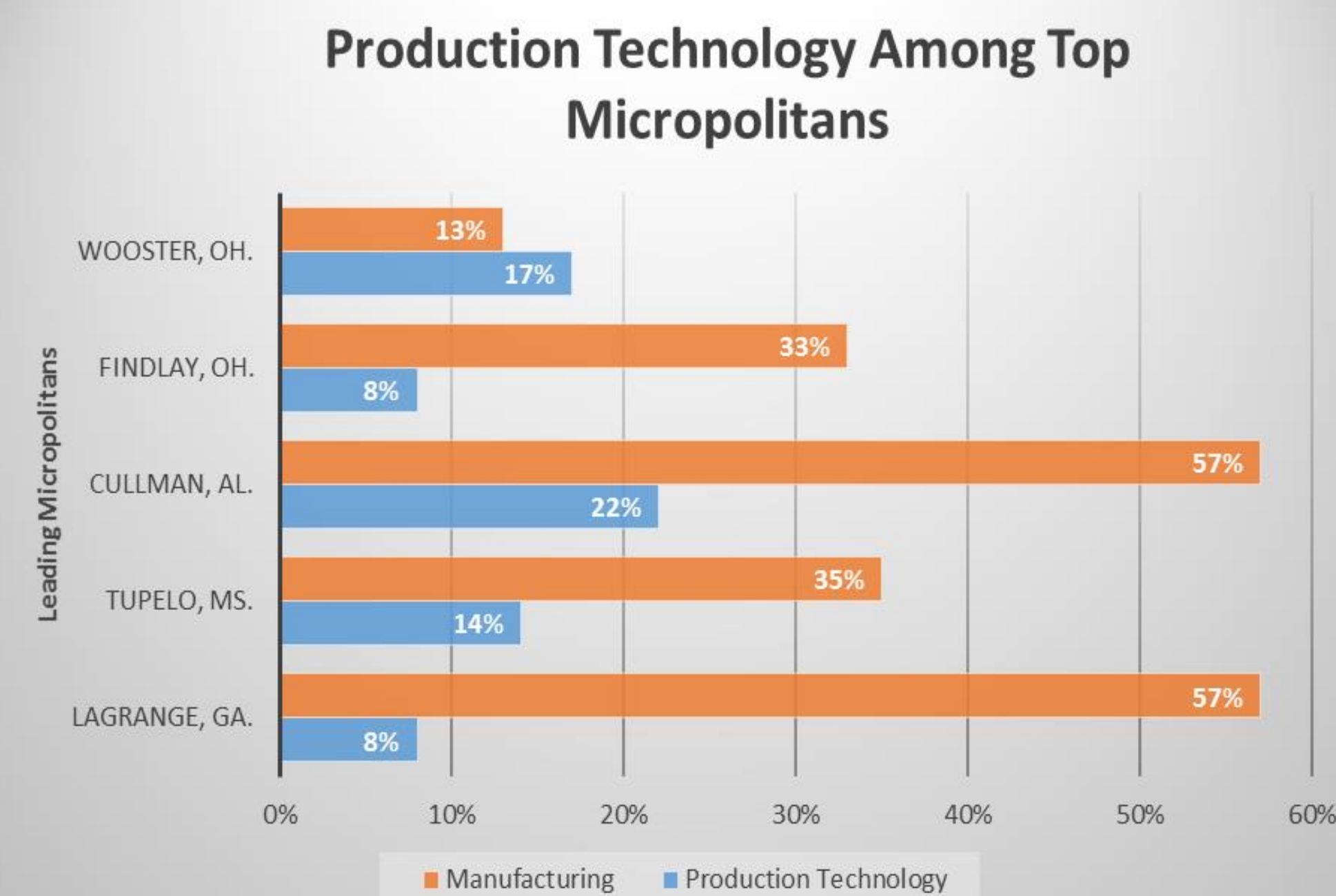


Figure 1. Among the 575 Micropolitan in the United States, Lagrange ranks 16th. Compared to the top 4 Micropolitans in the country, Lagrange is competitive with Cullman, Alabama and outpaces the other three top cities. However, compared to the top four micropolitans, Lagrange's production technology industry has a small effect on regional employment.

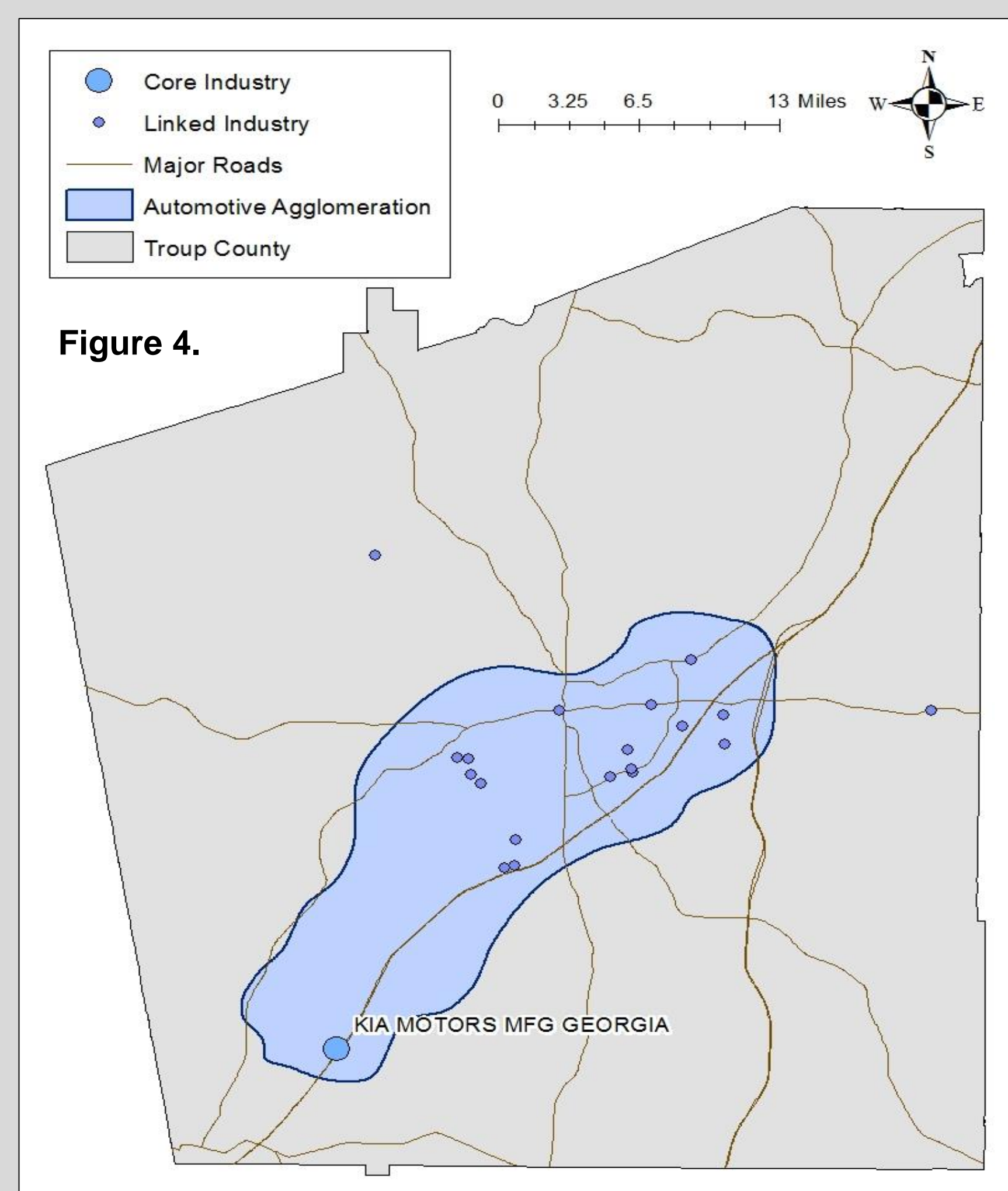


Figure 4.

Automotive & Production Technology Growth Poles

- These figures portray agglomeration in linked industries
- Figure 4 illustrates the growth of the automotive industry around KIA
- As the core industry, KIA attracts linked industries such as plastics, metal working, and production technology
 - Figure 5 illustrates the growth of a secondary industry, Production technology around Piedmont Mechanical Inc, the largest mechanical contractor in Lagrange.
- Production technology growth will attract lighting, recreational goods, and medical device manufacturing

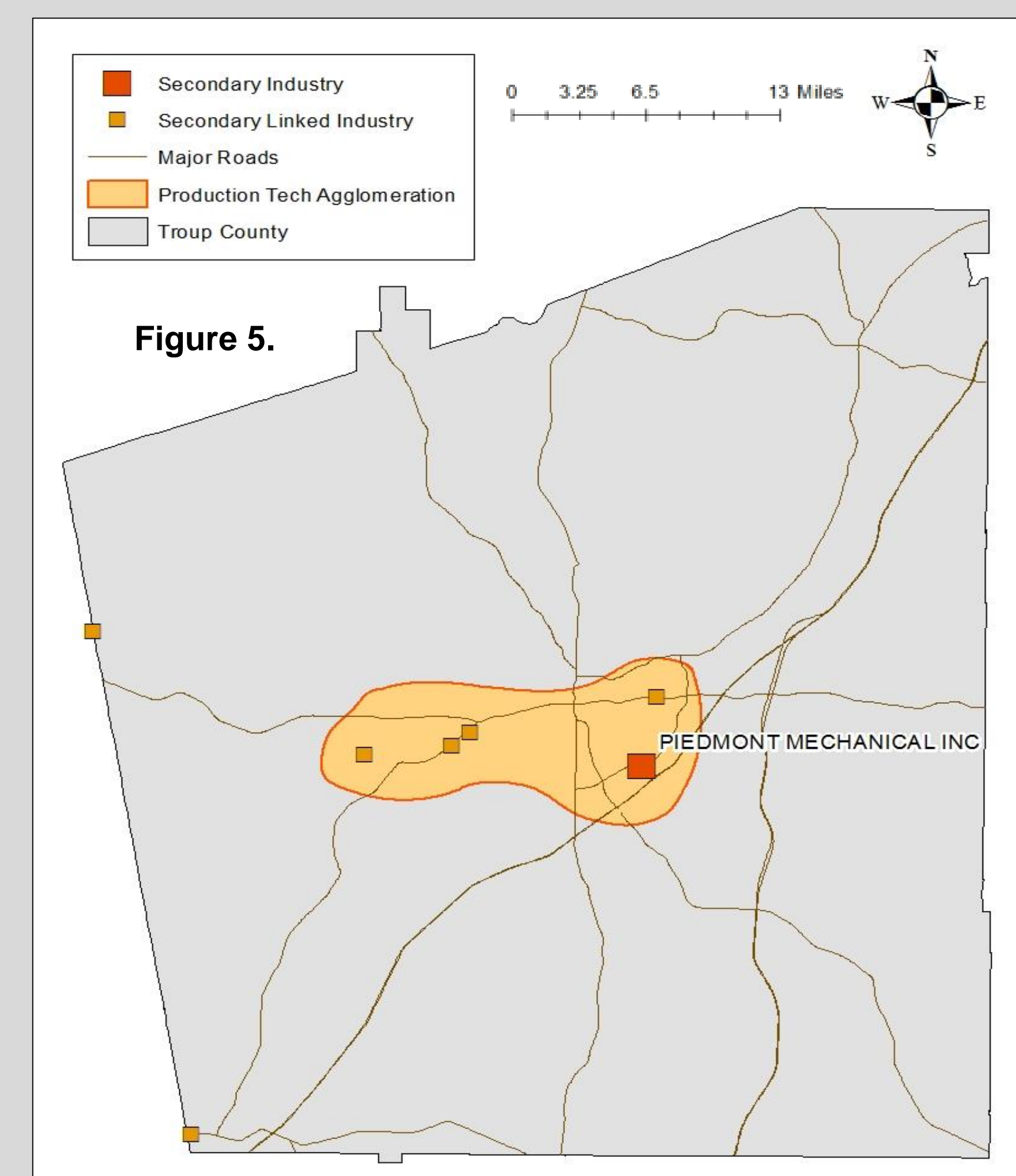


Figure 5.

Industry Linkage

- Figure 6 illustrates intra-industry linkages for the Automotive Industry
- Figure 7 illustrates the intra-industry linkages for Production technology
- Growth in production technology will attract new types of manufacturers.

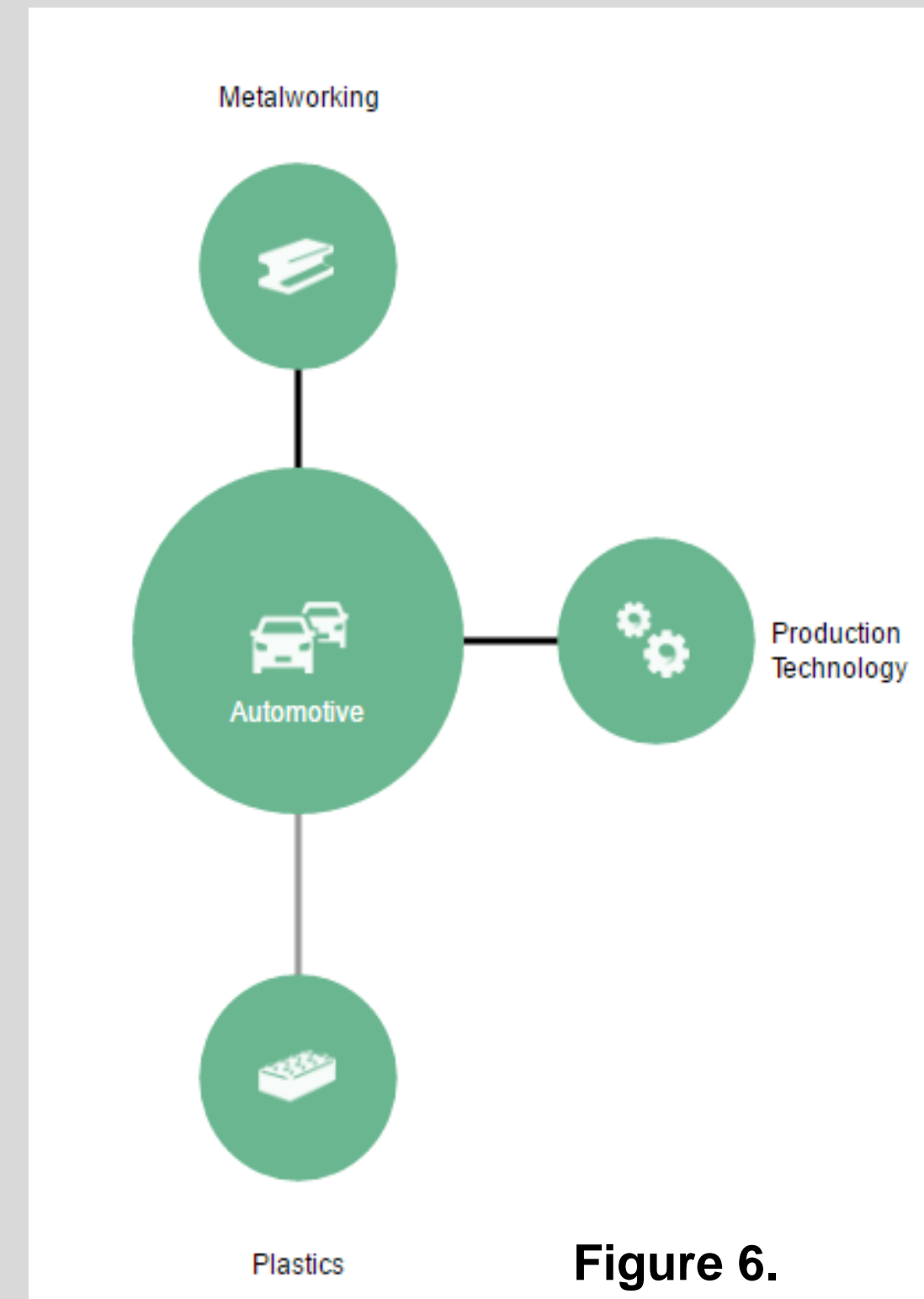


Figure 6.

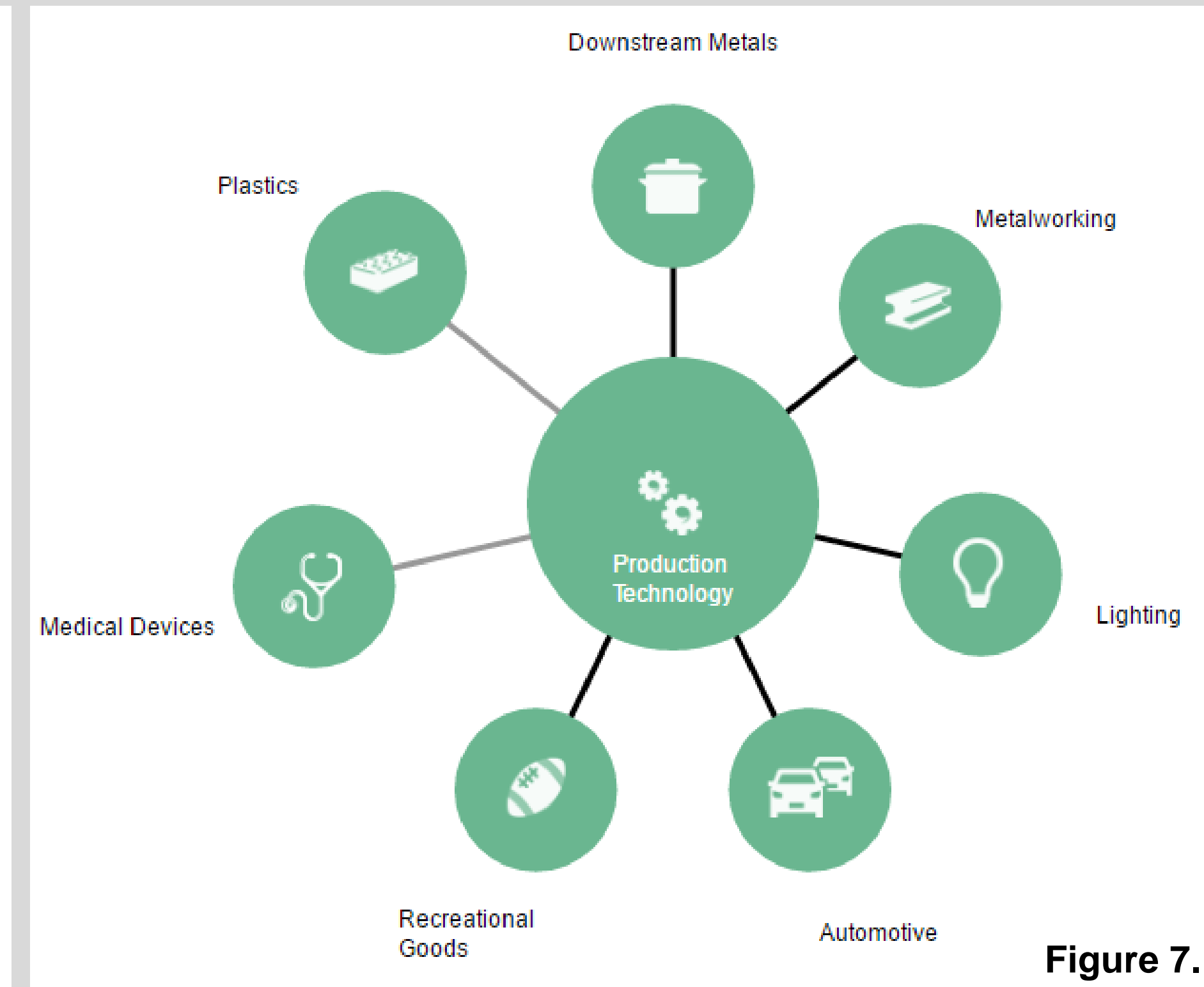


Figure 7.

Investment in Regional Higher Education



- Limited to a pre-professional program
- Engineers must finish degree at Auburn or Georgia Tech
- Major push factor; contributes to difficulty of retaining young recent graduates
- Recommendation: pilot program for 4-year engineering degree

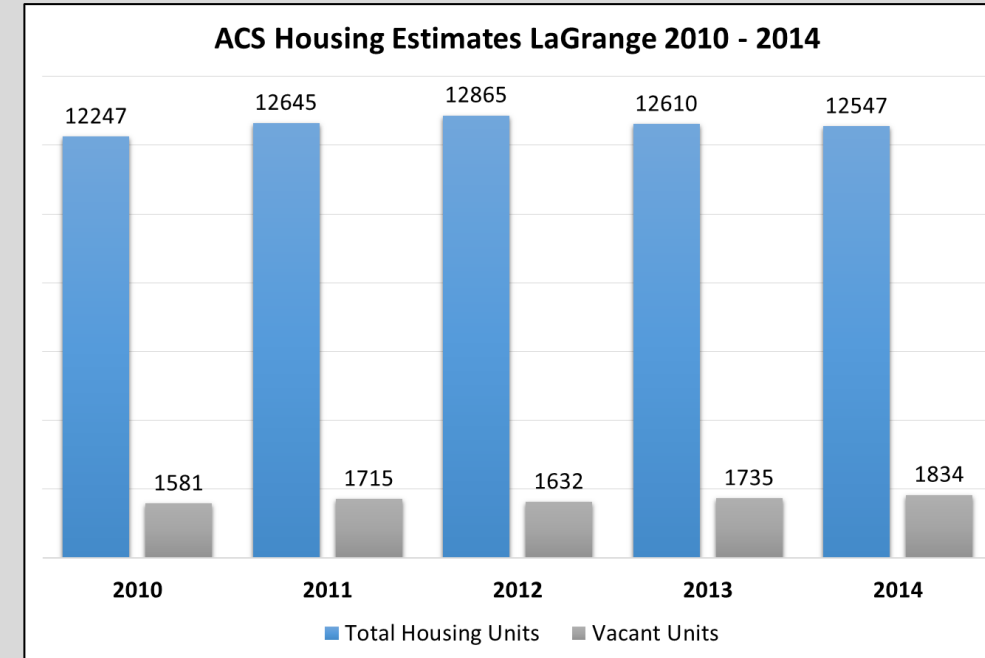


- Does not offer Engineering degree
- Trade-skill oriented
- Ideal for manufacturing growth; discourages production technology industry
- Focus should be on assisting with development of engineering programs

Housing Market Trends in Troup County and LaGrange

Housing Unit Trends

Total LaGrange Housing Units 2000: 11000
Total LaGrange Housing Units 2010: 12846



LaGrange experienced growth in Housing units between 2000-2010, however the increase has stagnated over the past 5 years.

Data source: 2015 ACS, 2010 US Census Bureau

Criteria for Determining High Priority Areas

- Median Household Income
- Housing Unit Vacancy Rates
- Employment Location Hotspots
- Crime Report Locations
- Assumed Age of Housing Units
- Proximity to Pull Factors (Schools, Parks, Retail)
- Presence of Infrastructure
- Accessibility to Needs
- Character of Area (i.e. Historic)

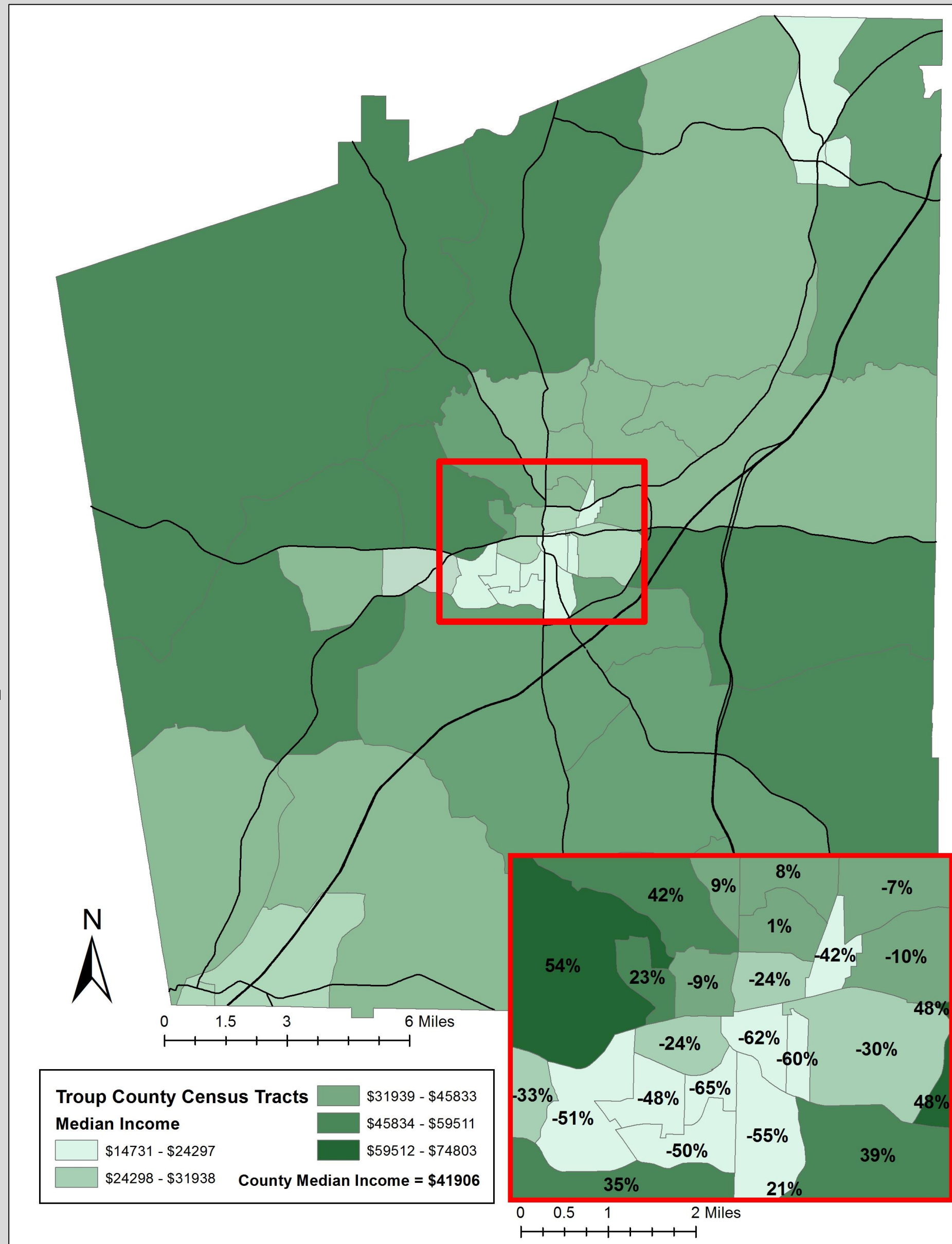


Figure 1. Median Household Income for Troup County. Inset Map represents % above or below Troup County Median Income (\$41,906). Lower Median Incomes can be seen in the central region of LaGrange, with higher incomes towards West Point Lake.

Data source: 2015 ACS, 2010 US Census Bureau

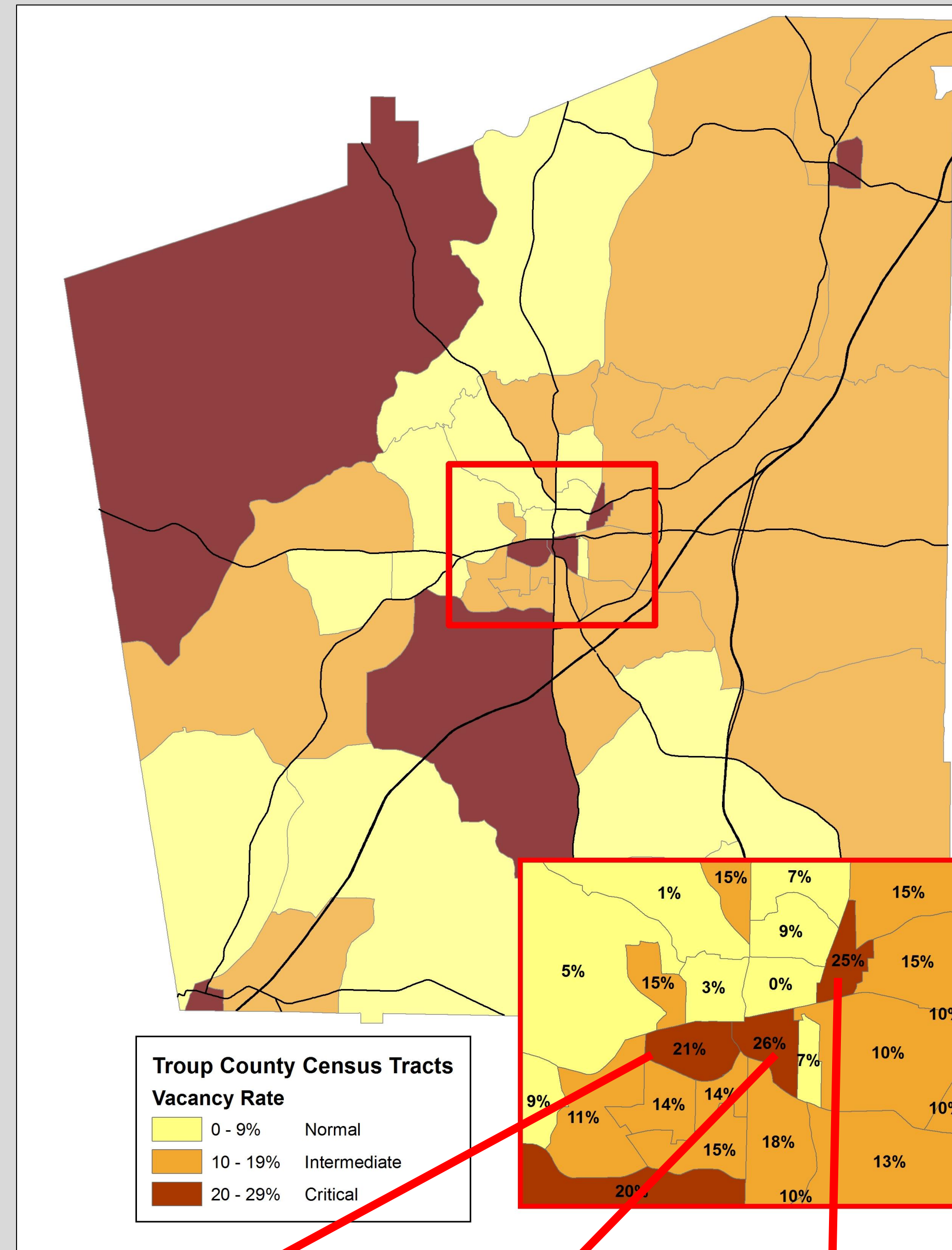


Figure 2. Housing Unit Vacancy Rates for Troup County. Inset Map represents the specific vacancy rate for each tract in central LaGrange. Higher vacancy rates appear near south-central LaGrange and in the north-west near West Point Lake.

Data source: 2015 ACS, 2010 US Census Bureau

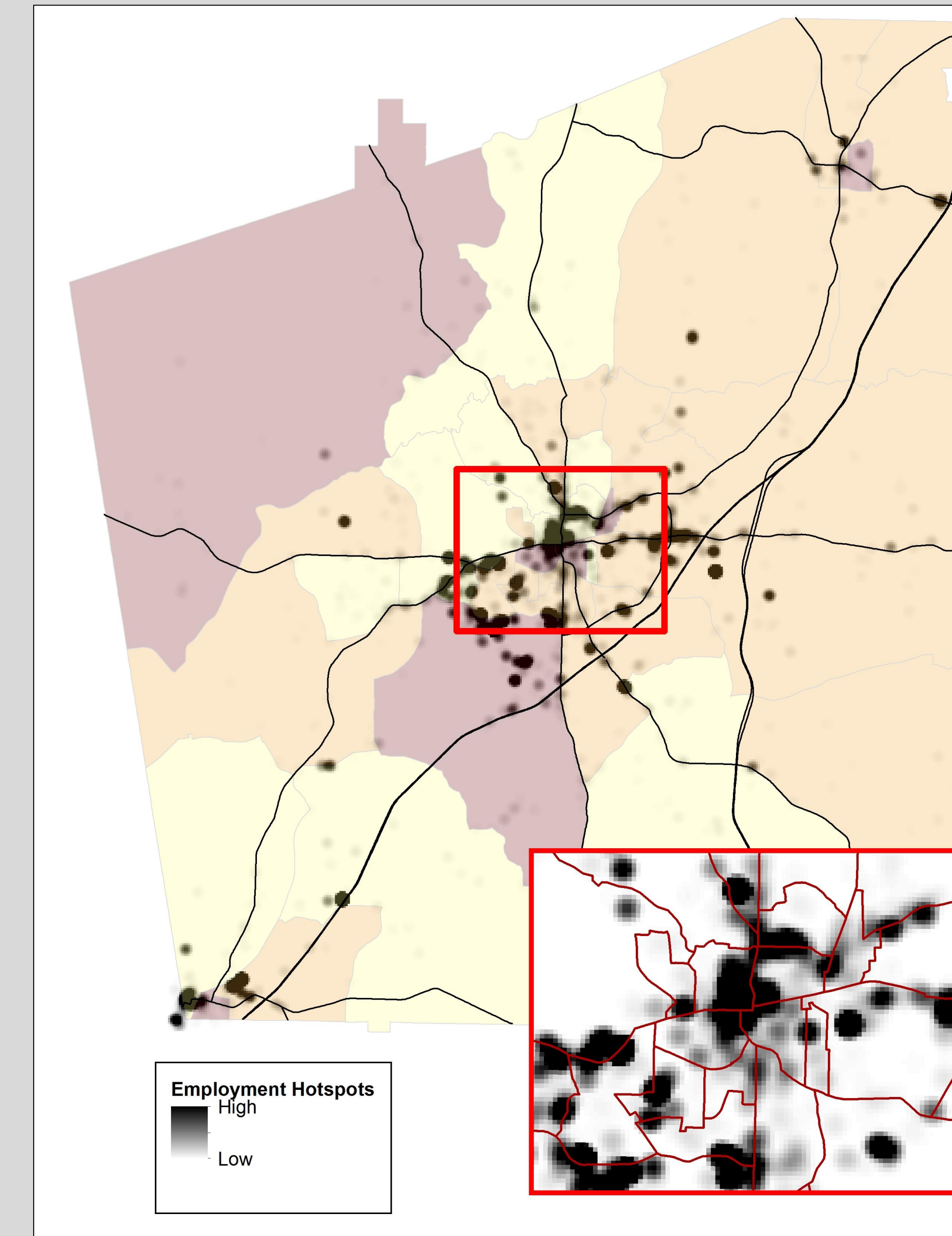


Figure 3. Employment location hotspots for Troup County. Hotspots are based on number of people employed per business. Significant employment clusters appear along transportation corridors in LaGrange.

Data source: Infogroup 2016 Employment Dataset

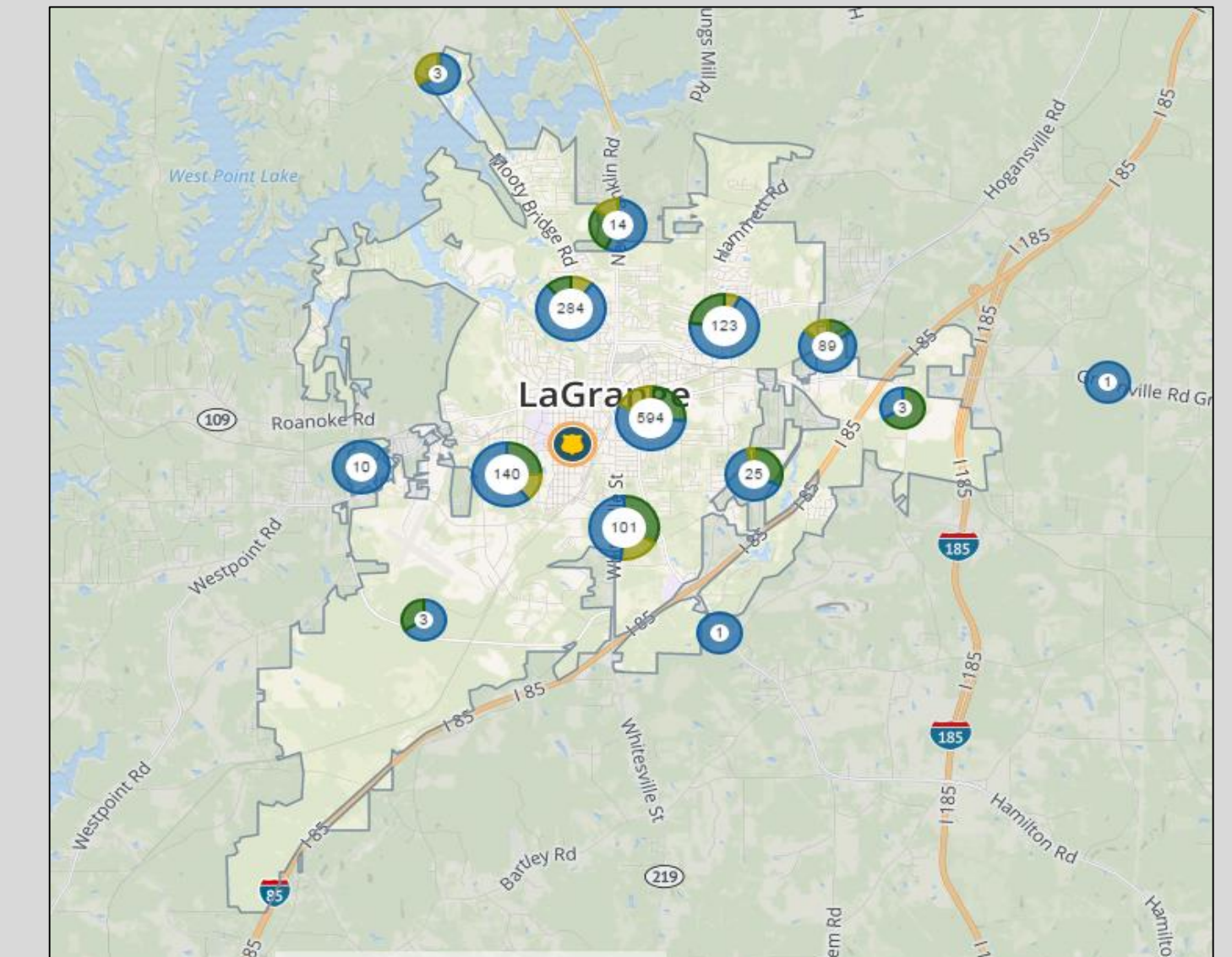


Figure 4. Crime Reports for past 6 months. Looking at the spatial patterns of crime in LaGrange, the majority of crime clusters in the downtown, and gradually tapers outward.

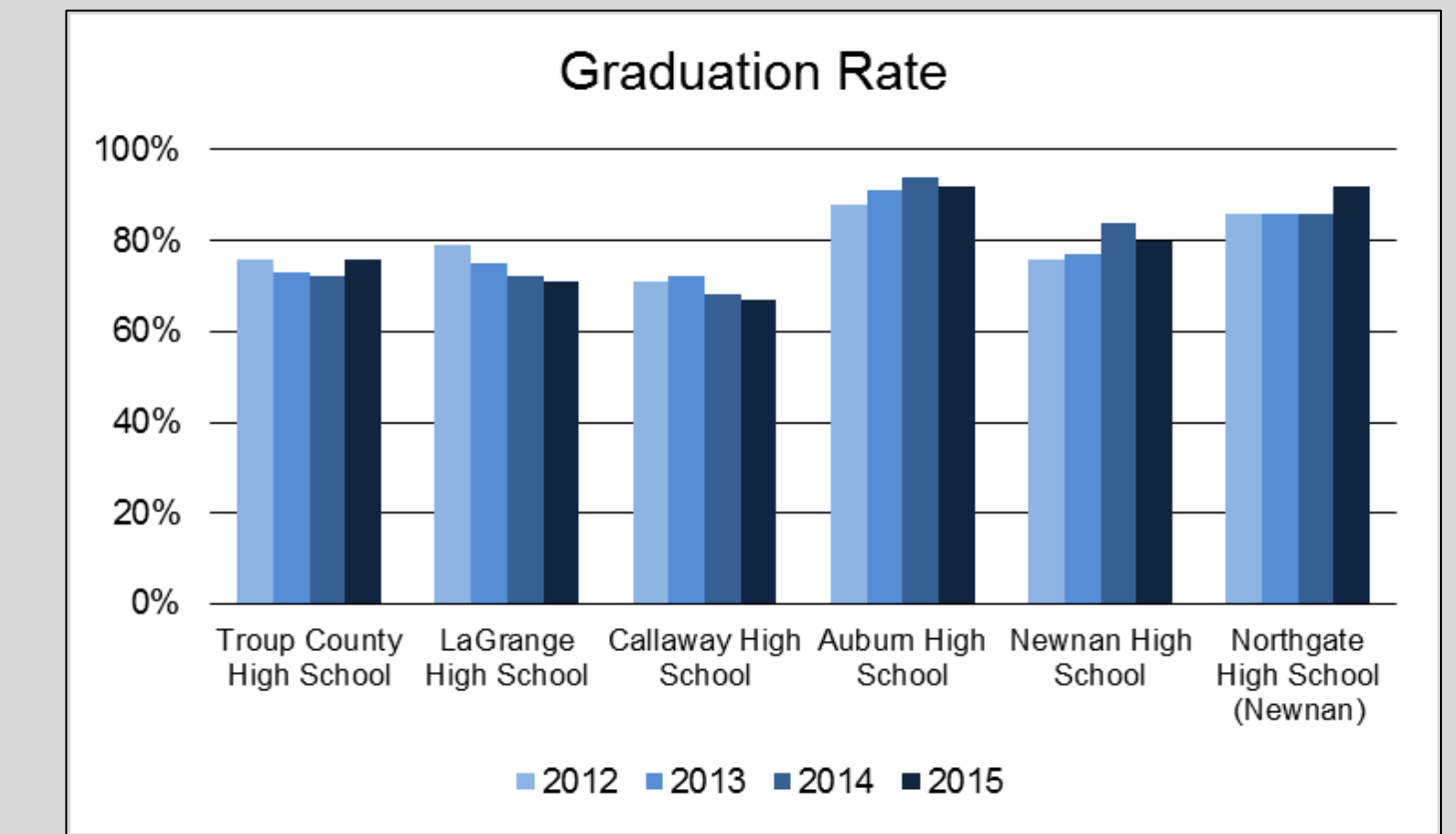


Figure 5. School District Competitors LaGrange High Schools have consistently performed lower than it's competitors, Auburn & Newnan for the previous 4+ years (based on Graduation Rates). Strong school districts in neighboring cities is a major pull factor from residency in LaGrange.

Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education

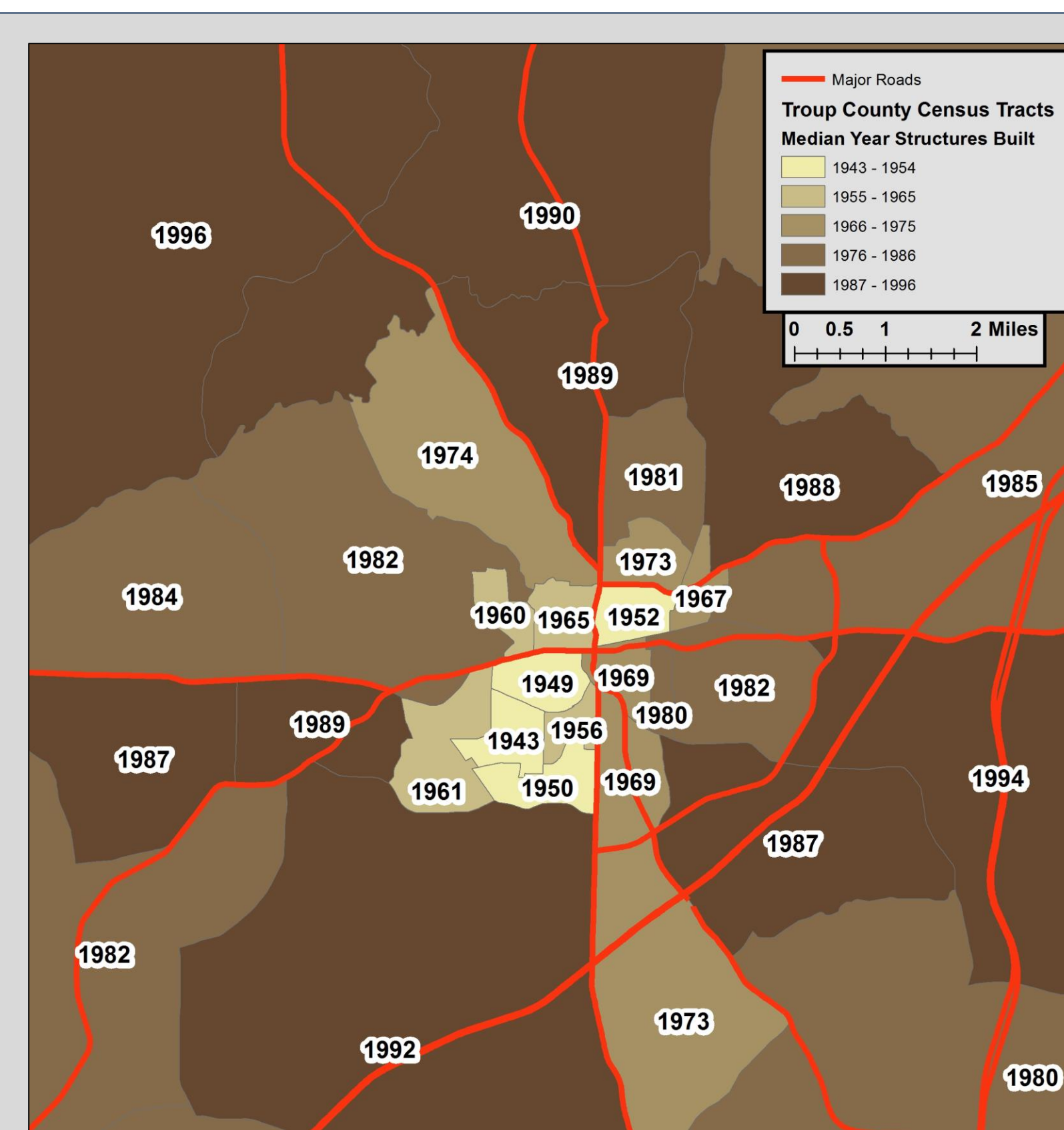


Figure 6. Median Year Structures Built for Troup County These values represent the median year structures were built within each Census Tract. Although these are not exact years for specific housing units, the values illustrate that there is a concentration of older structures in south-central LaGrange.

Case Study Solutions: Focusing in on High Priority Areas

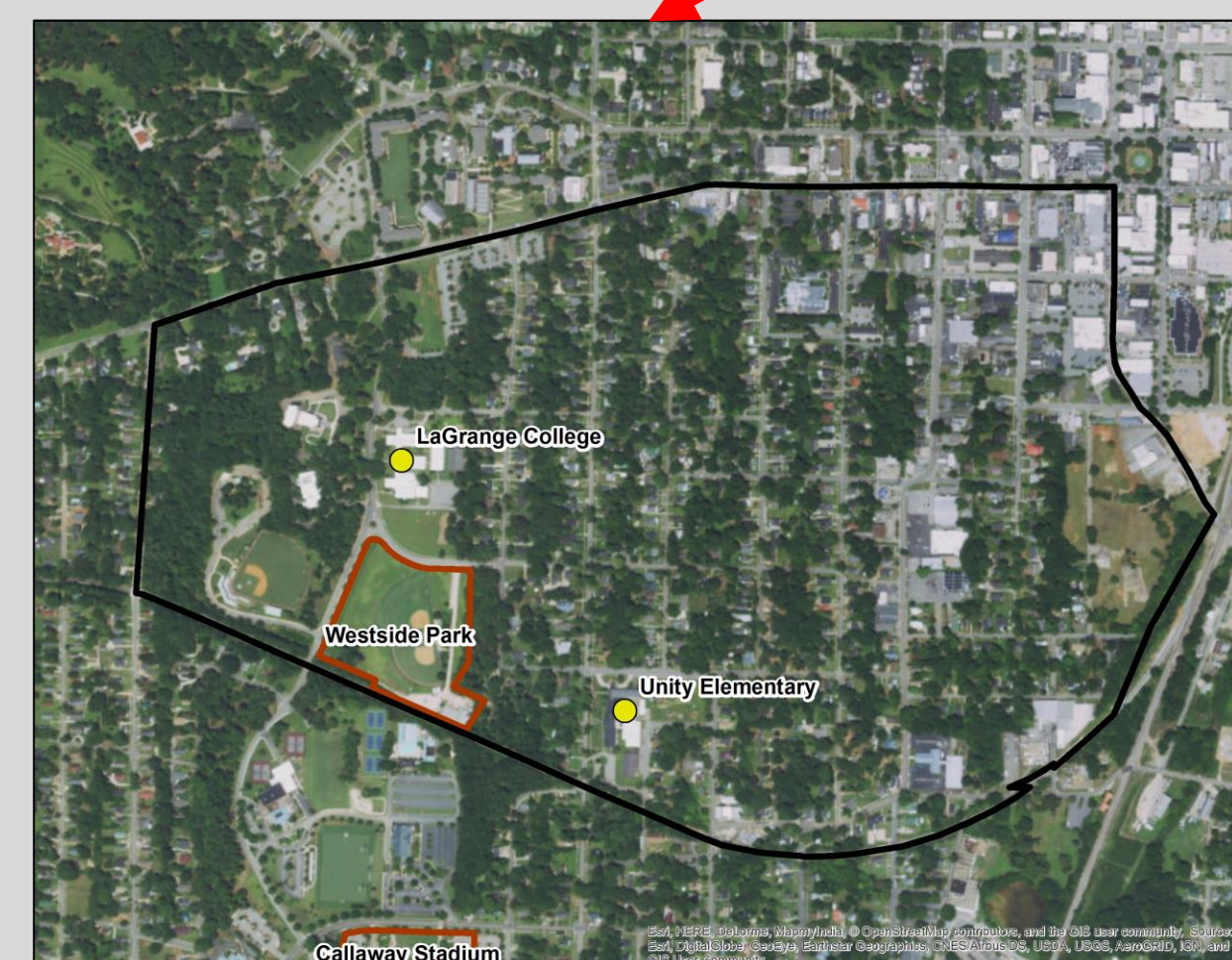


Figure 7a. High Priority Tract 1

- Median Year Structures Built 1949
- 31% Renter Occupied
- 593 Housing Units (21% Vacancy)

This tract contains older structures, with high vacancy rates, and lower household incomes. By improving the area's attractions (walkability, access to micro-parks, access to relevant retail) the city can potentially harness the "family oriented" character of the area and attract more residents.

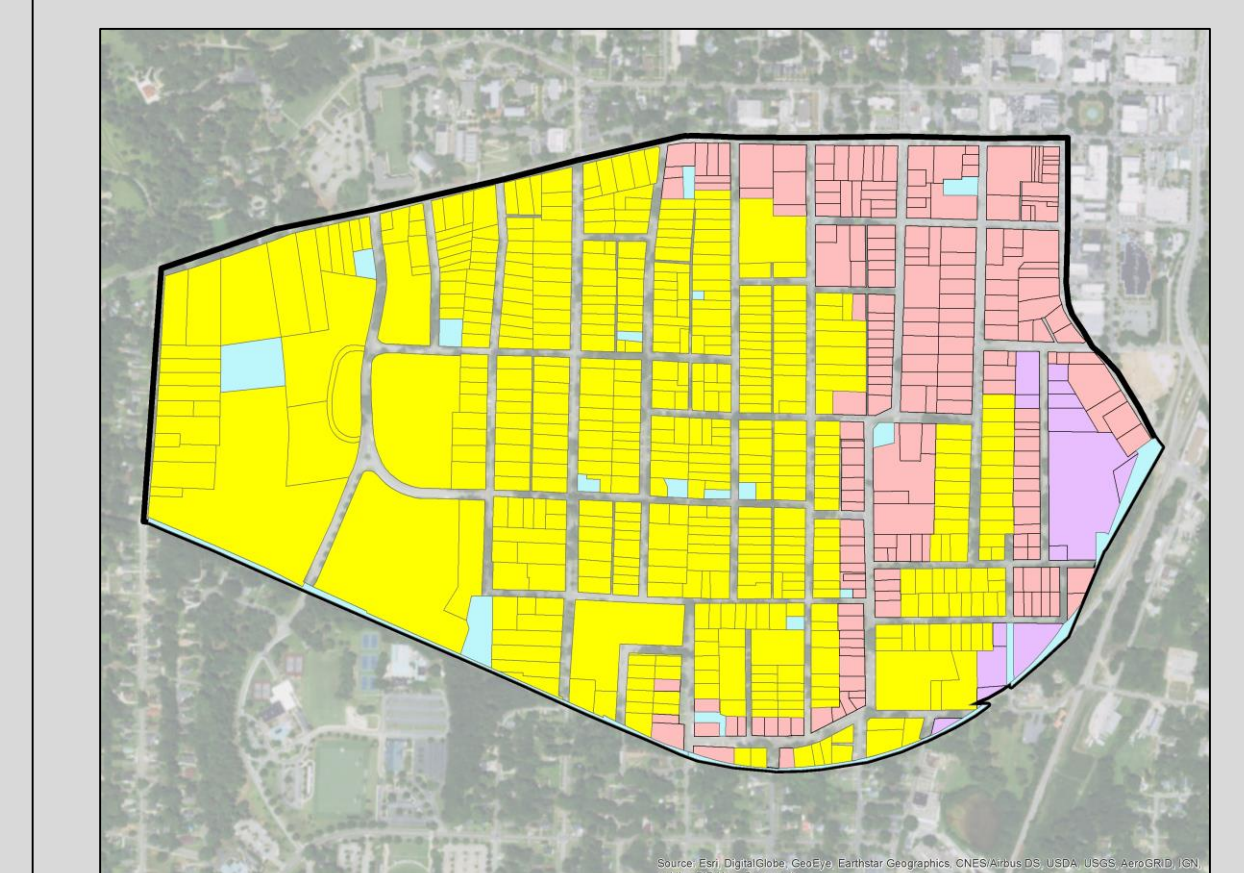


Figure 7b. High Priority Tract 2

- Median Year Structures Built 1969
- 52% Renter Occupied
- 613 Housing Units (26% Vacancy)

This tract contains older structures, with high vacancy rates, and lower household incomes. There is a higher presence of properties in disrepair, as well as a higher presence of non-residential uses penetrating the residential area. Implementing stricter guidelines for commercial uses to properly maintain their sites can help improve the neighborhoods' character. Blighted properties should be redeveloped for potential residents.

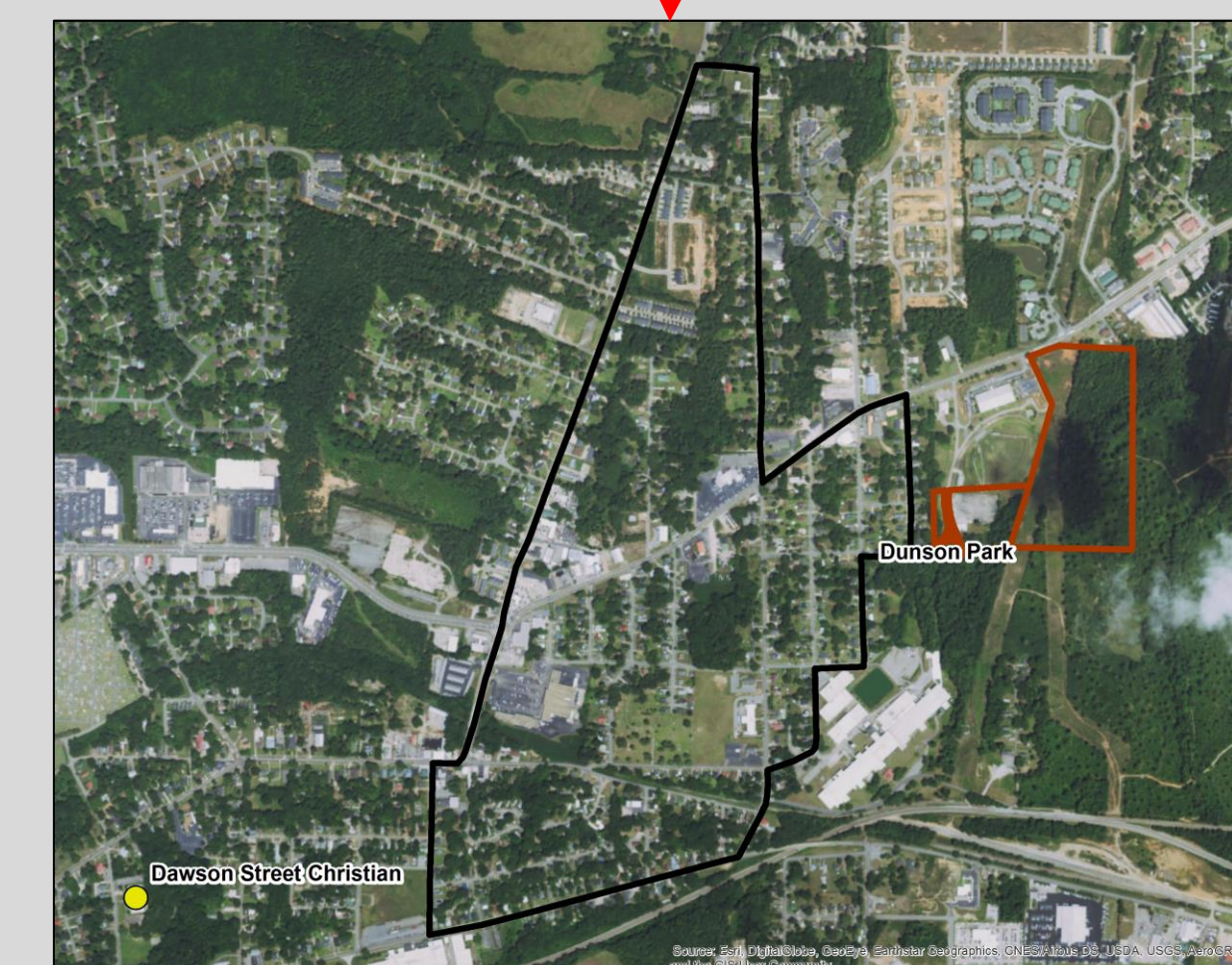
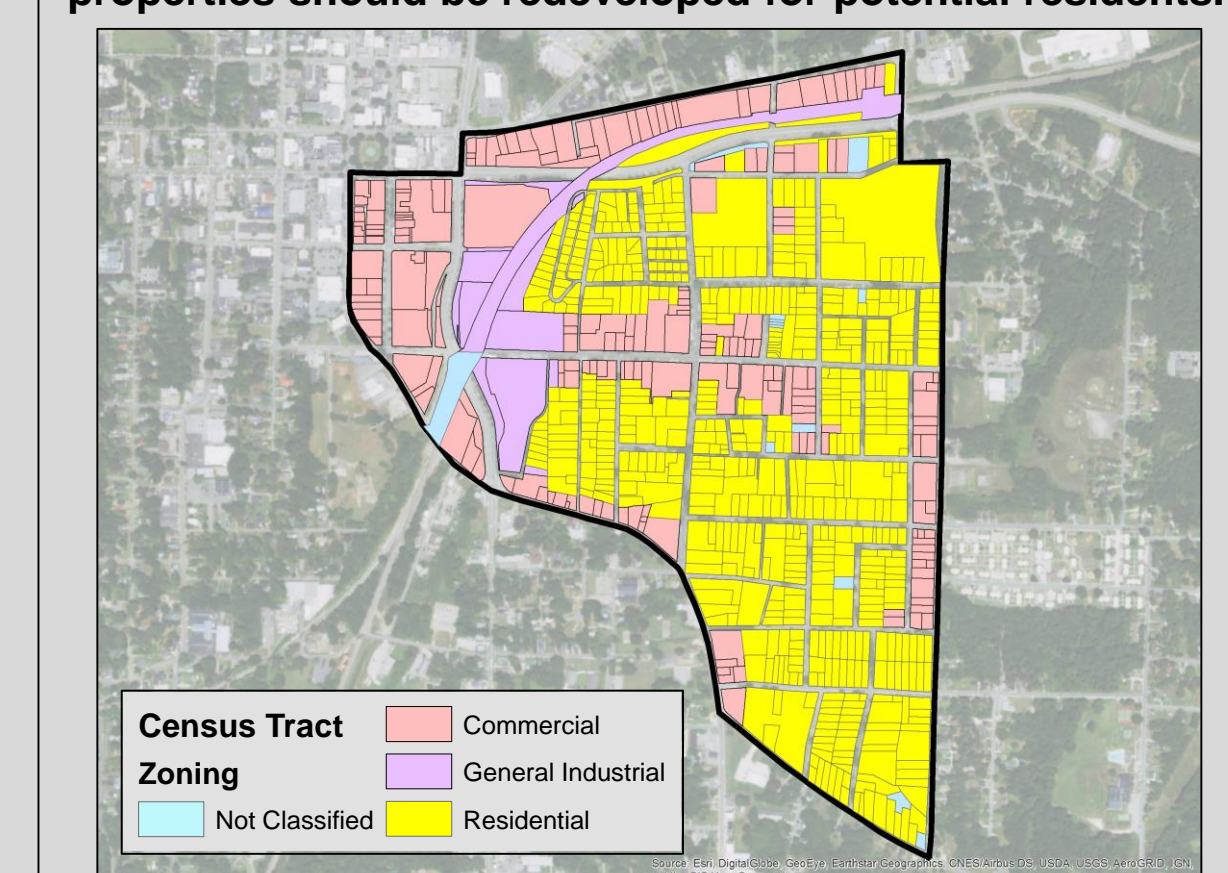


Figure 7c. High Priority Tract 3

- Median Year Structures Built 1967
- 38% Renter Occupied
- 580 Housing Units (25% Vacancy)

This tract contains older structures, with high vacancy rates, and lower household incomes. Many houses/properties in the tract are blighted, or are in need of redevelopment. Accessibility is discontinuous, so improvements in walkability might improve conditions. There is opportunity for temporary solutions on vacant lots, such as micro-parks or community gardens.

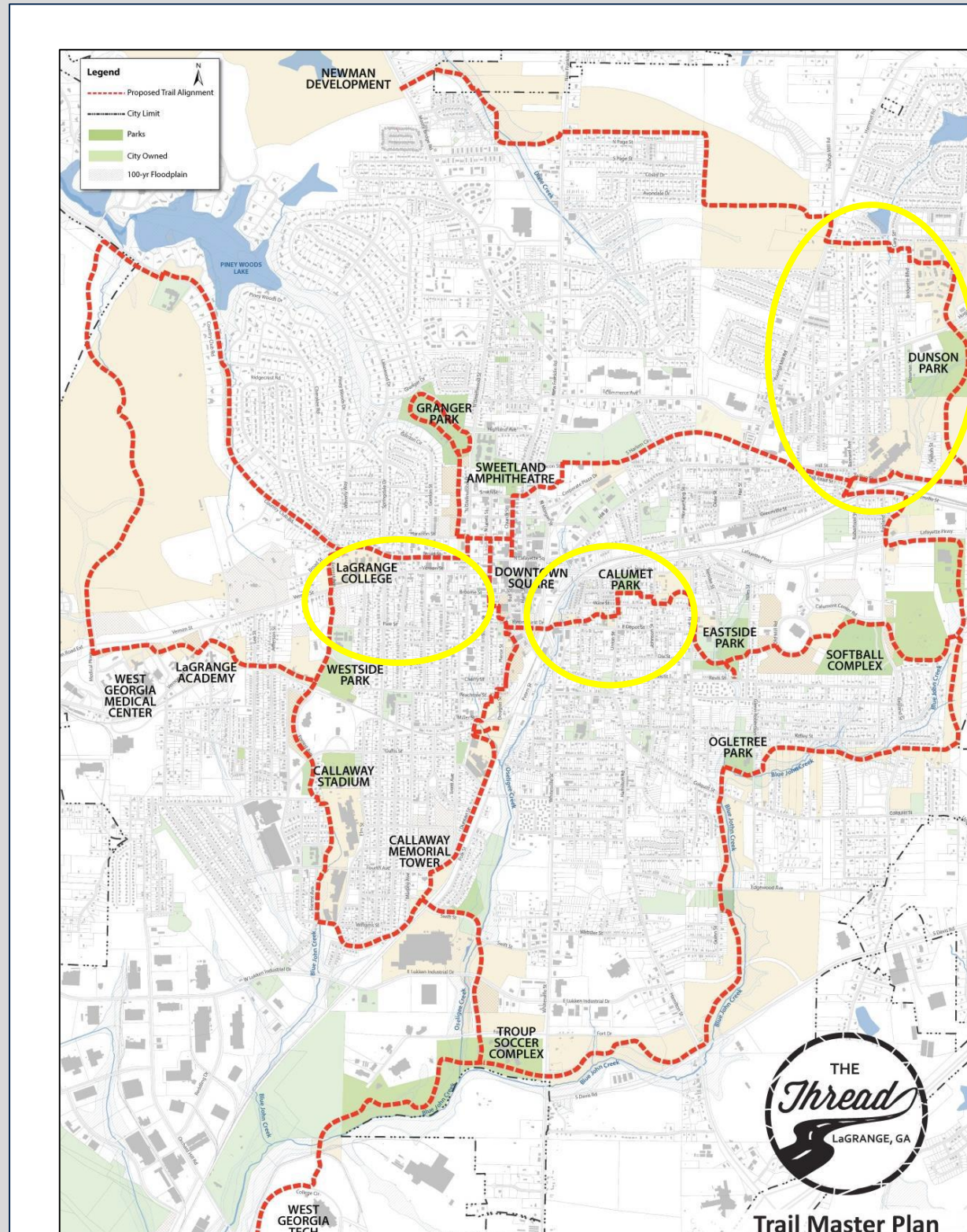
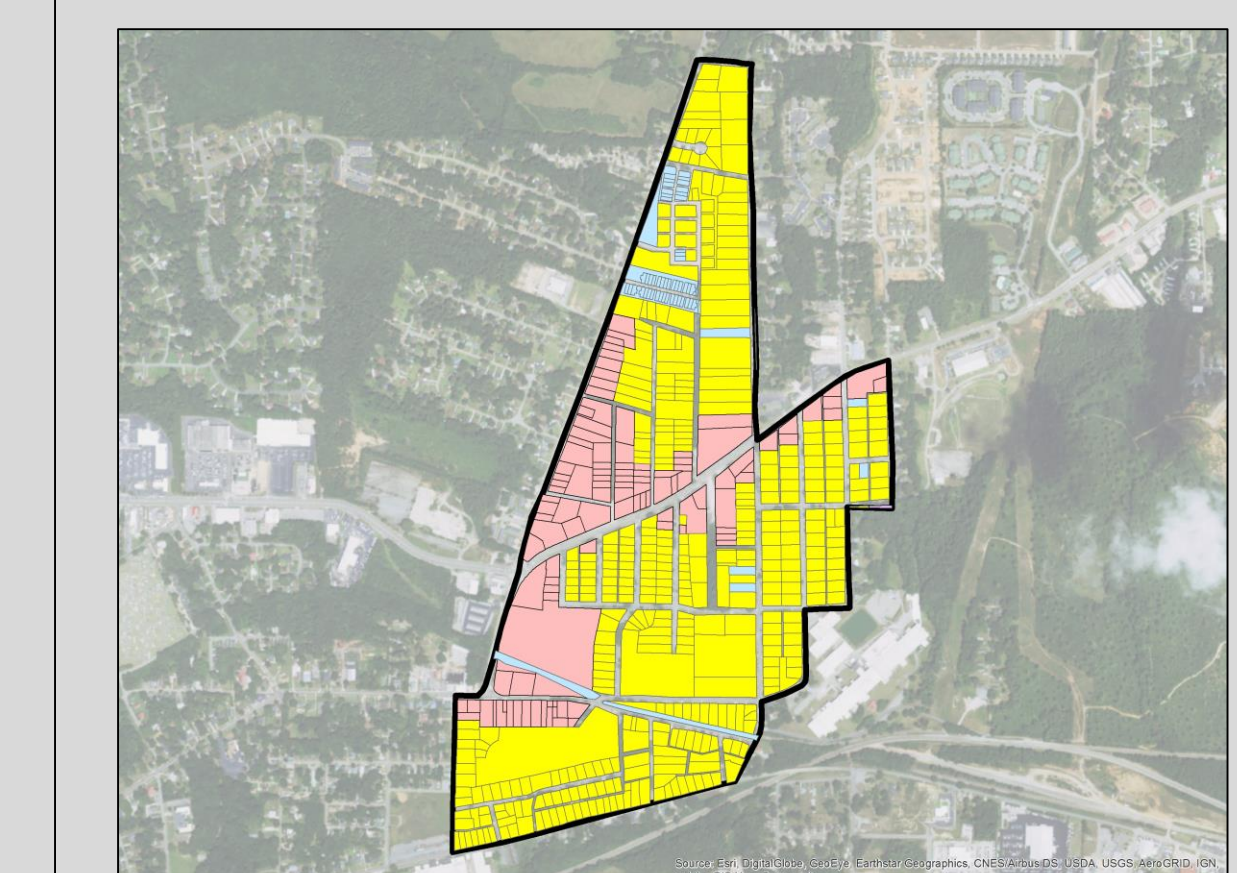


Figure 8. Tracts' interaction with "The Thread" trail. There is opportunity to integrate "The Thread" into high priority areas for urban renewal. Creation of small-scale recreational parks in these areas, along the trail, has the potential to increase the neighborhoods' attraction to potential residents.

Need for Community Engagement & Involvement

- Survey Residents in High Priority Areas
- Promote sense of ownership in community
 - Create shared public spaces
- Implement small-scale community garden(s)
- Gauge residents' suggestions on "The Thread"
 - Generate involvement with local schools
- Determine common "vision" for each community

Data sources: 2010 US Census Bureau, Troup County GIS Database, The Thread Master Plan

Turning Vacant Lots into Temporary Solutions:

Turning this →

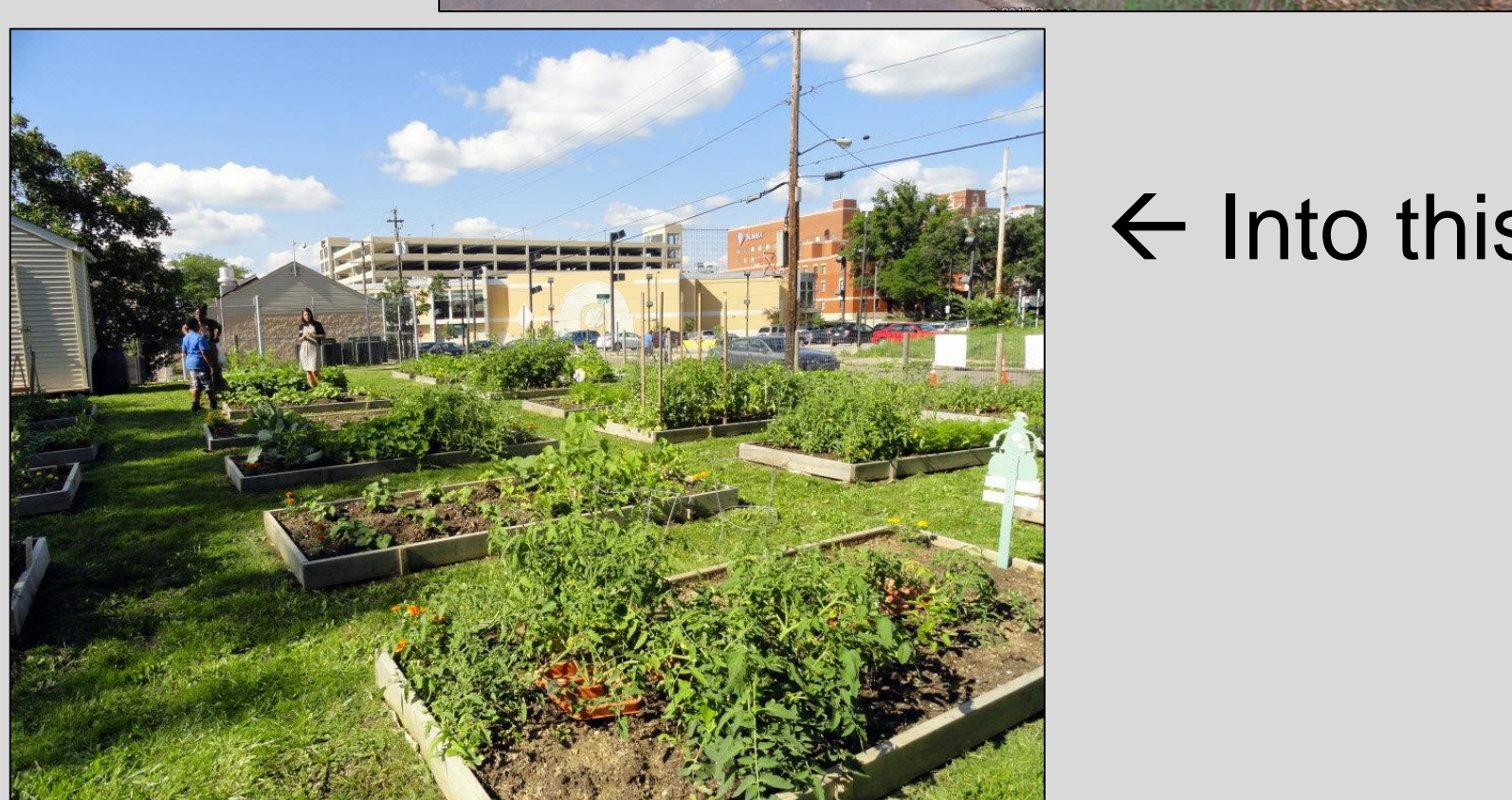


Image sources: Google Earth Street view, Cuyahoga Land Bank

Proposals/Strategies to Improve Housing Status:

- Assess code enforcement for blighted properties
- Incorporate micro-parks, community gardens, & cost-effective solutions for vacant properties
- Improve sense of community ownership with residents
- Focus more efforts on infill redevelopment, less on sprawl development
- Promote resident involvement in redevelopment process

The Need for Urban Renewal

In areas considered to be High Priority, there is a need for targeted redevelopment and renewal. Central LaGrange could benefit from focused beautification efforts, walkability improvements, and emphasis on preserving the historic character of the older neighborhoods.

