

# DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

## CITY OF WOODBURY, GA

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Georgia Tech  Center for  
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# 1. OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM (EDRP)

## Providing Communities Affordable Economic Development Research

Georgia Tech has played a role in Georgia's economic development for decades. Between 1985 and 2000, the Economic Development Research Program (EDRP) provided affordable research services to communities throughout the state. The goal of this research was to find new industries that could profitably use the resources of Georgia communities. During that period, EDRP relied on state funding to support most of the research along with limited funding from communities requesting the research.



In 2012, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded Georgia Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI<sup>2</sup>) a five-year grant to leverage the university's assets to build regional economic ecosystems that support high-growth entrepreneurship, and improve community capacity to achieve and sustain economic growth. Upon receiving the EDA University Center grant, EI<sup>2</sup> reintroduced EDRP as a competitive RFP process to provide affordable economic development consulting services to communities throughout Georgia.

Each EDRP project request that EI<sup>2</sup> receives is evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Probability of Success**: What is the likelihood that actions resulting from the project will be successful?
- **Requestor Involvement**: Has the requestor indicated a willingness to become actively involved in the project during the study phase and in the follow-up and implementation phases?
- **Magnitude of Impact**: What is the expected impact in terms of capital investment, jobs created, jobs preserved, or some other measure that can be quantified?
- **Innovation**: Does the project idea show innovative thinking on how to enhance economic development? Not all ideas lend themselves to new approaches, but thinking outside the box to achieve a goal is important.

**The program's goal is to enhance the development opportunities in counties and communities throughout Georgia by pinpointing significant investment possibilities based on a particular area's comparative advantage.** The program also strives to assist policy decision-making and to help governmental organizations carry out their missions through in-depth research.

Although EDRP continues to rely heavily upon the funding from the EDA University Center grant in order to carry out projects, a funding commitment from each community applying for a research project is still important. It helps extend project resources so more can be done, and it makes the community a committed partner in the project.

Economic development is by nature and necessity a team endeavor. The combined skills and energies of Georgia Tech researchers, state and local officials, and resource development specialists will complement existing efforts to foster a healthier economy and to better the quality of life for all of Georgia. **Visit [www.edrp.org](http://www.edrp.org) for more details about the program.**

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### About the Team

The Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI<sup>2</sup>) is Georgia Tech's chief business outreach and economic development organization. Since its inception in 1960, its core mission is to help business, industry, entrepreneurs, and economic developers across Georgia grow and remain competitive. EI<sup>2</sup> continues Georgia Tech's sixty-year legacy of commitment to community economic development by providing research and technical assistance to support economic development efforts in communities in Georgia and around the world.

The Center for Economic Development Research (CEDR) is an applied economic development unit of EI<sup>2</sup>. CEDR assists local elected officials, economic developers, policy makers, and community and state leaders who seek innovative tools and methods to leverage their local advantage and quality of life for their residents by attracting, maintaining, and growing business and industry within their areas.

CEDR's economic development team are experts with decades of experience in advising economic development and community leaders on how to stay competitive in an ever-changing global economy. CEDR's staff includes:

- Economists,
- City Planners,
- Economic Development Analysts, and
- Public Policy Researchers.

The expertise of the CEDR team is concentrated in the areas of strategic planning, organizational development, labor market and workforce analysis, market analysis, facilitation, conducting research, and economic and fiscal impact analyses. All have extensive experience in performing applied research for the economic development community. When needed, staff can supplement their skills by calling on Georgia Tech academic faculty to assist in specific research projects. Through its research, CEDR helps its clients understand the opportunities and challenges in fostering local and regional economic development.

For purposes of this report, the research team at CEDR will simply be referred to as "Georgia Tech".

### Project Overview

Georgia Tech is pleased to present this **Downtown Development Strategic Assessment** assisting the City of Woodbury, in their pursuit of economic growth and development. Georgia Tech has provided assistance to support economic development efforts in Georgia for decades, including research, facilitation, technical and management expertise. These services are available through its headquarters in Atlanta, GA and a network of regional offices located throughout the state. Georgia Tech assisted the City of Woodbury by conducting research and analysis through the U.S. Economic Development Administration's University Center grant program.

Georgia is filled with quaint downtowns that are rich in history and culture. Georgia towns like Senoia, Covington, Juliette, and even the City of Woodbury have become popular destinations for Georgia’s thriving film industry, due in part to the “Americana” aesthetic and character of the communities. But film and tourism aren’t the only thing bringing some of Georgia’s historically distressed towns back to life. In the years since the Great Recession, rural downtowns across the country have experienced a rural renaissance.

As the coronavirus pandemic swept through cities and urban centers, it has taken its toll in some rural areas. For example, Albany-Dougherty County, Georgia (pop. 75,000) had one of the highest number of cases per capita in the country.<sup>1</sup> Rural areas comprise 15 percent of the U.S. population, but are vulnerable to the outbreak due to their demographics and lack of resources. In Woodbury’s zip code 30293, over 25% of the population is over the age of 65. In addition, many people in rural areas live miles away from the nearest hospital. For Woodbury, the closest medical center is Georgia Baptist in Warm Springs (no ICU beds), about 10 miles away. Upson Regional Medical Center is about 18 miles away (28 ICU beds). According to the online tool [PolicyMap](#), Woodbury is considered “medically underserved”.

With the coronavirus pandemic hitting nearly every corner of the globe, rural communities like Woodbury are again proving their resilience. Popular spring and summer events (large concerts, festivals, and other mass gatherings) are on hold. Summer vacations to the traditional theme parks and tourist destinations may be difficult. AAA estimates that travel will be down 15 percent or more this summer, the first decline since 2009.<sup>2</sup> Many vacation and tourist destinations are either closed indefinitely or limiting their capacity, and air travel is at an all-time low. When travelers do take to the road during the 2020 summer, 97 percent of those trips will be by car.<sup>3</sup> People are seeking relaxation and refuge close to home, and off the beaten path. States like Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Wyoming are initiating campaigns to draw tourists based on their remote nature. Woodbury’s economy does not currently rely on tourism, so it presents an opportunity for the city to refresh, rebrand, and redevelop itself with a clean slate.

In addition, as some workers are able to leave the traditional office setting and transition to alternate work arrangements, telecommuting has opened up a new avenue for communities outside of major employment centers to potentially attract new residents looking to relocate, with one caveat: internet access. According to a recent article by Brookings, half of all working adults and 71 percent of high income earners could work from home during the pandemic.<sup>4</sup> With high-speed internet already in downtown Woodbury’s infrastructure (and expanding), the city is laying the foundation necessary to bring the digital economy to Meriwether County. For example, Traverse City, Michigan – a small, coastal community off the beaten path – is creating “brain gain” by turning its community into a tech center for remote workers through the [Rural Innovation Initiative](#). While wealth has historically been concentrated in a few major cities,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/rural-america-hardest-hit-by-covid-19-outbreak>

<sup>2</sup> <https://newsroom.aaa.com/2020/06/aaa-forecasts-americans-will-take-700-million-trips-this-summer/>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/04/06/telecommuting-will-likely-continue-long-after-the-pandemic/>

smaller communities boasting fast internet speeds now have the ability to access remote workers who want a lifestyle shift that gives them both affordability and quality of life.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing this opportunity, the City of Woodbury submitted a successful application to the Economic Development Research Program (EDRP) for an assessment of their strategic priorities for the local government to use as a roadmap to pursue their economic development goals. First and foremost, the city will use this plan to applying for the Georgia Rural Zone program through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This program will allow the city to offer incentives for job creation, commercial investment, and business activities in the designated rural zone for a five-year period. For a community to be eligible to apply for the Rural Zone program, it must have a strategic plan designed to assist public and private investment.

This Strategic Priorities Assessment consisted of three fundamental tasks: (1) interviews and meetings with local and regional stakeholders, (2) formulation of recommendations based on research and community feedback mechanisms, and (3) creation of an economic development action plan for the City of Woodbury to address during their Rural Zone designation period, and beyond.

## Strategic Planning Process

Georgia Tech used an established process to guide the recommendations provided in this Strategic Assessment. The first step in this process is the use of research to gain the greatest understanding possible of the challenges and opportunities facing the City of Woodbury. The second step is the focus on identifying recommendations and priorities based on areas of broad agreement within the community. Finally, the third step is the formulation of concrete, actionable steps to guide the community toward achieving its economic development goals.

To accomplish these goals, Georgia Tech worked with leadership from the city's local government, business, cultural, and civic sectors to develop its planning approach:

### 1. KICK-OFF MEETING WITH THE WOODBURY TEAM

A kick-off meeting was held via video call with the Woodbury and Georgia Tech teams on May 4, 2020 to review the planning process, goals for the Rural Zone application, discuss the interview process and other opportunities for community involvement, as well as the project timeline.

### 2. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

During May 2020, Georgia Tech conducted one-on-one, confidential interviews with 51 community and regional stakeholders to evaluate Woodbury's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These interviews provided valuable insight into the community's history and current challenges, as well as their perspectives on downtown development opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2020-06-29/how-teleworking-may-accelerate-the-shift-away-from-big-cities>

### 3. COMMUNITY MEETING & SURVEY

Georgia Tech held a community meeting for attendees both in-person and via video conference at Woodbury’s City Hall on June 1, 2020. This informational meeting was held to discuss the importance and need for the Rural Zone designation, explain the EDRP and strategic plan process, and review preliminary results from the stakeholder interviews. The meeting was also an opportunity to gain feedback via a virtual interactive platform (Mentimeter) and introduce the online community survey, being made available to the public.

### 4. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Georgia Tech provided Woodbury with a review of downtown development opportunities to meet the guidelines for their Rural Zone application from the DCA. Because downtown development has been expressed by Woodbury’s leadership as an economic development priority, Georgia Tech has reviewed existing studies and analyzed interview results that specifically relate to downtown development and redevelopment opportunities, and formulated its recommendations based on the projects most likely to result in investment in downtown properties and businesses.

### 5. DEVELOPING THE STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

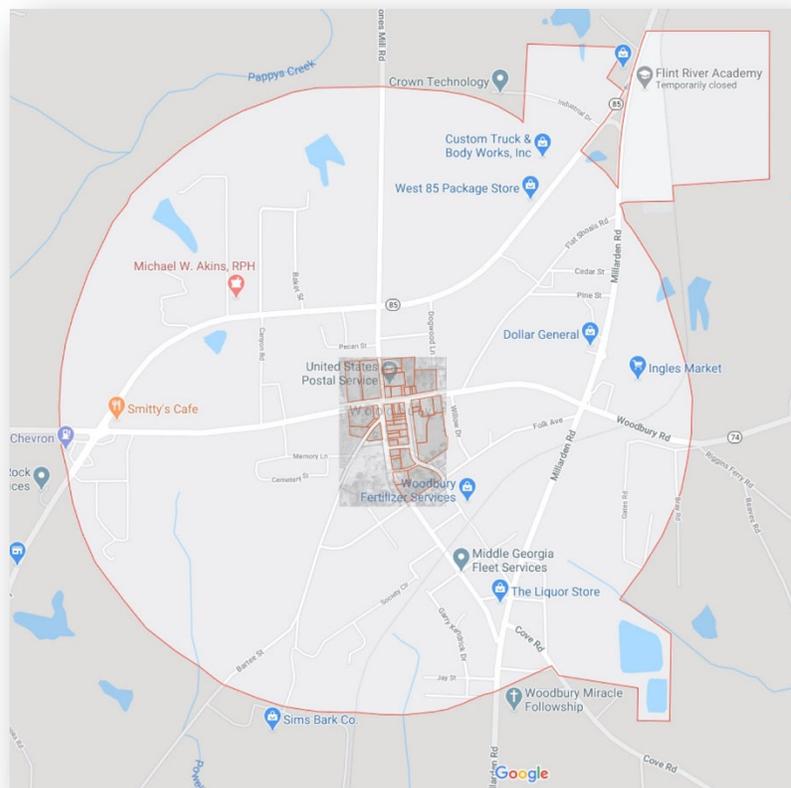
Drawing from stakeholder interviews and meeting with the community, reviewing downtown development opportunities and conducting additional research, the Georgia Tech team worked with the City of Woodbury to create a Downtown Development Strategic Assessment focused on growing opportunities and creating economic prosperity in Woodbury.

## Study Area and Proposed Rural Zone Boundary

### CITY OF WOODBURY

Georgia Tech used the Woodbury city limits as the boundary for the study area. Located in east-central Meriwether County, the City of Woodbury is approximately two sq. mi. in area and at the “crossroads” of several physical features.

Georgia State Hwy. 85 runs north south and carries between 1,100 and 2,600 vehicles per day. GA-85 can be followed from Woodbury to the Atlanta Airport, approximately one hour away. Georgia Hwy. 74 (Woodbury Rd.) runs east west through downtown and carries between 4,500 and 6,400 cars



and trucks per day. On the east-west corridor, the city is located approximately halfway between I-85 and I-75, making this connector a popular choice for trucks carrying goods from manufacturers in cities to the west like LaGrange and West Point (about 30 to 40 minutes to the east) to the Port of Savannah.

As the former “Pimento Pepper Capitol of the World” the City of Woodbury has a rich history and natural features that are recreational assets for the region. Lake Meriwether Park is located two miles west, and the Flint River is three miles east. Lake Meriwether features include disc golf, fishing, and camping. The Flint River can be accessed via the Woodbury Hwy. 18 bridge. Just north of downtown, the Red Oak Creek covered bridge is the longest covered bridge in Georgia and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Located near the Red Oak Creek covered bridge is Fitzgerald Fruit Farms, known for growing fresh peaches and berries. Several episodes of the series “The Walking Dead” were filmed near Woodbury, and Meriwether County has created its own Zombie GeoQuest geocache “trail” for film tourists and fans of the series. Antique stores within Woodbury’s downtown regularly draw visitors from outside the community.



#### MERIWETHER COUNTY

Woodbury is one of five cities in Meriwether County, which is located within the 29-county Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). At 505 sq. mi., Meriwether County is one of the largest counties in the MSA (second only to Fulton), and one of the only counties in the MSA to lose population between 2010 and 2018, declining approximately four percent (second only to Morgan County, which declined approximately 11 percent over the same period). Meriwether County is located within the 10-county Three Rivers Regional Commission economic

development district (EDD).

For the Georgia Tech team to understand the full scope of conditions in Woodbury, interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Woodbury, Meriwether County, Columbus, Newnan and LaGrange.

# 3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Woodbury is a small community in Meriwether County, GA. It is part of the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell Metropolitan Statistical Area and borders the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area. Summary statistics and figures are presented throughout this section, and the county, these MSAs, and the State of Georgia are used as points of comparison. These figures illustrate some of the common themes found throughout interviews conducted with internal and external stakeholders.

## Demographics

### POPULATION

As shown in Table 1, Woodbury’s population has grown slightly since 2000. Meanwhile, Meriwether County’s population has declined by 6 percent. However, Woodbury’s growth is far behind the paces at which the Columbus and Atlanta MSAs are growing.

TABLE 1: POPULATION 2000, 2018, PERCENT CHANGE

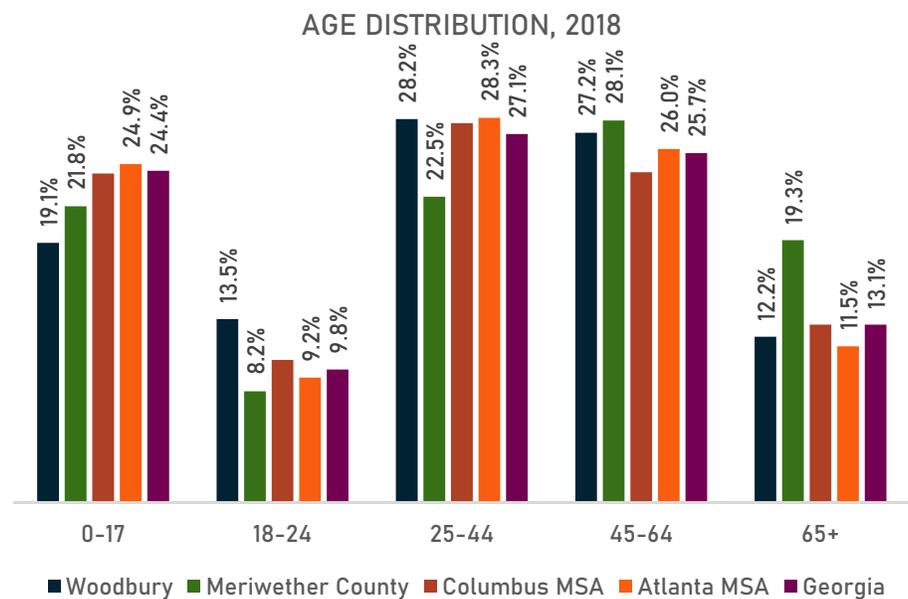
GEOGRAPHY	2000	2018	CHANGE
WOODBURY	1,184	1,203	1.6%
MERIWETHER COUNTY	22,534	21,113	-6.3%
COLUMBUS MSA	274,624	307,724	12.1%
ATLANTA MSA	4,112,198	5,779,463	40.5%
GEORGIA	8,186,453	10,297,484	25.8%

Source: Social Explorer, derived from U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Decennial Census; 2014-2018 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey (ACS)

### AGE

Figure 1 shows that Woodbury’s age distribution is mostly on par with its comparative geographies. One prominent difference is its small share of children 0-17 years of age. While there are young adults in the community, this affirms the perception seen in interviews that Woodbury needs to attract young families. Due to a suffering public school system and recent closure of Woodbury’s elementary school, this is a difficult challenge.

FIGURE 1: AGE DISTRIBUTION



## RACE

Table 2 shows that Woodbury’s racial diversity is primarily limited to White and Black/African American groups. Unlike the other geographies, there is no measurable Hispanic or Latino population in the city. Additionally, the City of Woodbury is a “majority-minority” community, meaning over half of the population is nonwhite.

TABLE 2: RACE, 2018

RACIAL GROUP	WOODBURY	MERIWETHER COUNTY	COLUMBUS MSA	ATLANTA MSA	GEORGIA
WHITE ALONE	29.8%	56.3%	47.0%	47.7%	53.2%
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN ALONE	69.8%	38.5%	40.2%	33.4%	31.0%
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE ALONE	--	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
ASIAN ALONE	--	0.6%	2.0%	5.7%	3.9%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER ALONE	--	--	0.2%	--	0.1%
SOME OTHER RACE	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
TWO OR MORE RACES	0.2%	1.9%	3.1%	2.1%	2.0%
HISPANIC OR LATINO	--	2.1%	7.0%	10.6%	9.4%

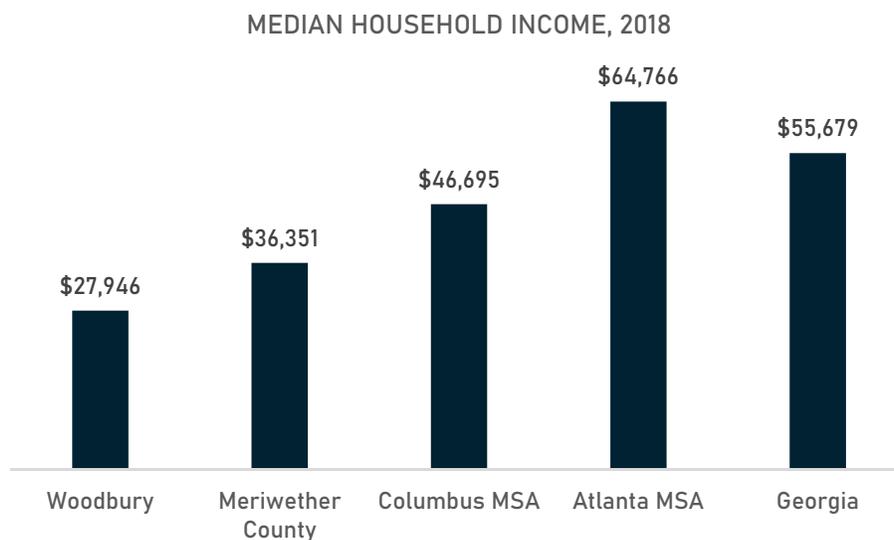
Source: Social Explorer, derived from 2014–2018 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey (ACS)

Note: Blank cells had no representation or less than 0.05%. These values are suppressed to improve readability.

## INCOME

Woodbury’s median household income is lowest among the comparative geographies, as shown in Figure 2. At nearly \$28,000, this is about half of the State of Georgia’s median household income. Figure 3 shows per capita income, where Woodbury is also the lowest. There is a lower variance between Woodbury and Meriwether County in this instance, however. These figures

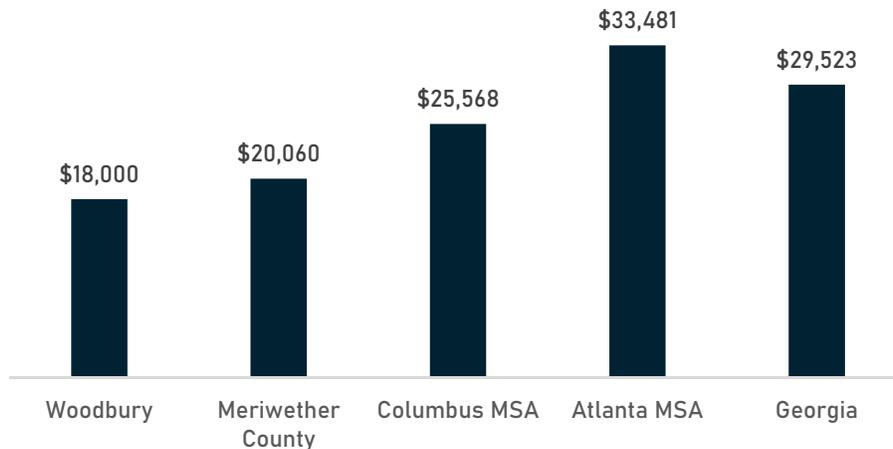
FIGURE 2: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



demonstrate the problems with generational poverty that many interviewees discussed as a weakness in their community.

**FIGURE 3: PER CAPITA INCOME**

PER CAPITA INCOME, 2018



**EDUCATION**

Educational attainment for Woodbury’s 25 and older population is low in comparison to the county, MSAs, and the state as shown in Table 3. Over 28 percent of residents have a “less than high school” education, and nearly 72 percent have received a high school diploma or equivalent. Georgia has an 87 percent high school graduation rate, so Woodbury has much room to improve in this area. Another stark difference between Woodbury and the State of Georgia is in Bachelor’s degrees attained.

**TABLE 3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR POPULATION 25+, 2018**

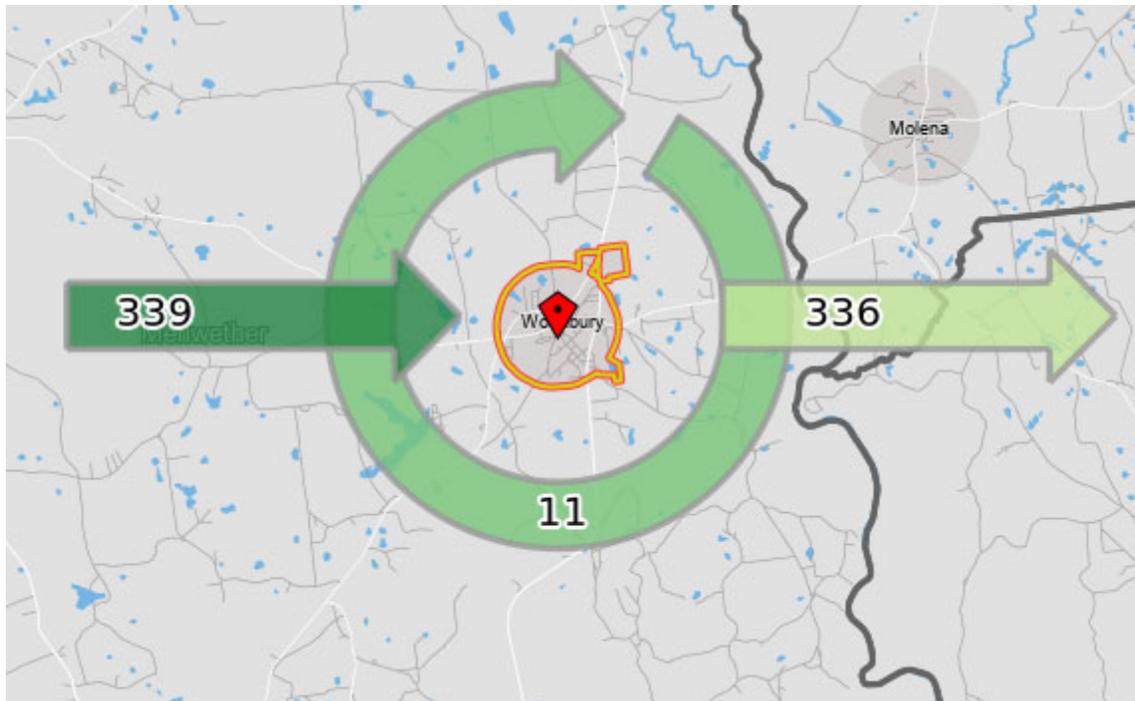
EDUCATION LEVEL	WOODBURY	MERIWETHER COUNTY	COLUMBUS MSA	ATLANTA MSA	GEORGIA
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	28.4%	20.9%	13.2%	10.8%	13.3%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE/EQUIVALENT OR MORE	71.6%	79.1%	86.8%	89.2%	86.7%
SOME COLLEGE OR MORE	29.9%	40.3%	58.7%	65.1%	58.8%
BACHELOR’S DEGREE OR MORE	6.9%	11.5%	24.5%	37.8%	30.7%
MASTER’S DEGREE OR MORE	3.7%	4.4%	9.4%	14.2%	11.8%
PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL DEGREE OR MORE	0.3%	0.8%	2.7%	3.9%	3.4%
DOCTORATE DEGREE	--	0.2%	1.1%	1.5%	1.3%

Source: Social Explorer, derived from 2014-2018 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey (ACS)

## Labor Force

### COMMUTING PATTERNS

FIGURE 4: WOODBURY WORKER INFLOW/OUTFLOW, 2017



Source: Census OnTheMap Tool, 2017

FIGURE 5: WOODBURY RESIDENTS' COMMUTING PATTERNS, 2017

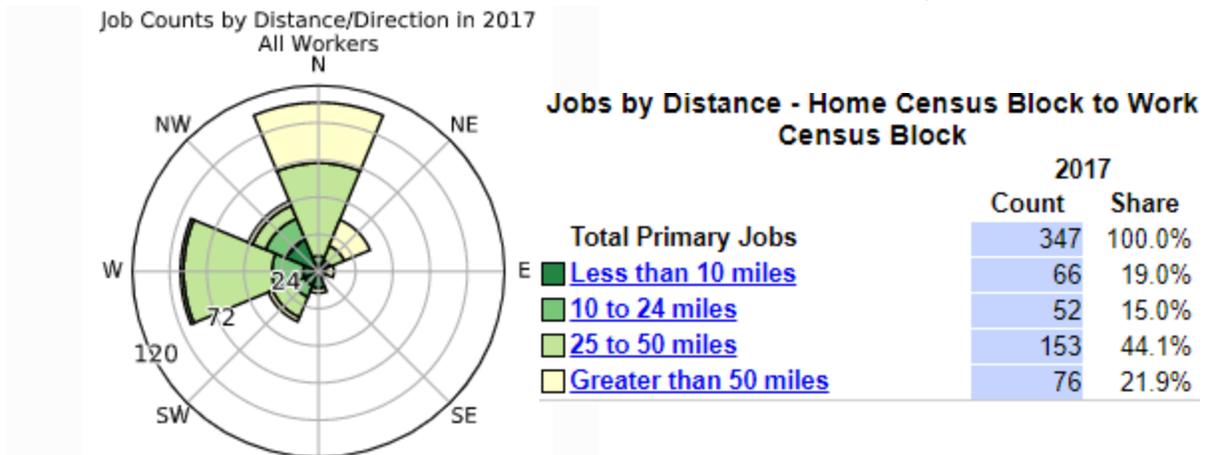


Figure 4 illustrates the worker inflow and outflow for Woodbury's city limits. Almost the same amount of people commute into Woodbury to work as the number that leave to work. However, only 11 people both live and work in the City of Woodbury. Figure 5 provides detail on where Woodbury residents work. Generally, workers are leaving the city and commuting to cities to the north, northwest, or west. Most (44 percent) are commuting between 25 and 50 miles for work.

## INDUSTRY

Total jobs in Woodbury have grown by 52 percent in the last 10 years. Table 4 shows that all of this growth has come from the manufacturing sector, while losses in other sectors offset some of its growth.

TABLE 4: WOODBURY JOBS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR 2009, 2019

2-DIGIT NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2009 JOBS	2019 JOBS	2009-2019 CHANGE	2009-2019 % CHANGE
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0	0%
22	Utilities	0	0	0	0%
23	Construction	22	39	17	77%
31	Manufacturing	80	511	431	539%
42	Wholesale Trade	0	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
44	Retail Trade	85	71	(14)	(16%)
48	Transportation and Warehousing	50	52	2	4%
51	Information	0	0	0	0%
52	Finance and Insurance	29	14	(15)	(52%)
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0	0	0	0%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	0%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	114	129	15	13%
61	Educational Services	70	58	(12)	(17%)
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10	12	2	20%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	61	42	(19)	(31%)
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	42	34	(8)	(19%)
90	Government	126	92	(34)	(27%)
99	Unclassified Industry	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
	<b>Total</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>52%</b>

Source: EMSI, Industry Table, 2019

## OCCUPATIONS

Production jobs lead Woodbury's growth by occupation type by adding over 200 jobs since 2009 (Figure 5). Other smaller gains are coming from Management, Business and Financial Operations, and Office and Administrative Support occupation types.

TABLE 5: WOODBURY JOBS BY OCCUPATION TYPE 2009, 2019

2-DIGIT SOC	DESCRIPTION	2009 JOBS	2019 JOBS	2009-2019 CHANGE	2009-2019 % CHANGE
11	Management Occupations	37	66	29	78%
13	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	28	43	15	54%
15	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	12	19	7	58%
17	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	<10	24	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
21	Community and Social Service Occupations	14	12	(2)	(14%)
23	Legal Occupations	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
25	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	48	39	(9)	(19%)
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	<10	11	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
31	Healthcare Support Occupations	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
33	Protective Service Occupations	29	23	(6)	(21%)
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	66	47	(19)	(29%)
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	121	127	6	5%
39	Personal Care and Service Occupations	22	20	(2)	(9%)
41	Sales and Related Occupations	59	72	13	22%
43	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	79	99	20	25%
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	<10	<10	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
47	Construction and Extraction Occupations	24	38	14	58%
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	17	38	21	124%
51	Production Occupations	49	294	245	500%
53	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	63	85	22	35%
55	Military-only occupations	0	0	0	0%
99	Unclassified Occupation	0	0	0	0%
	Total	712	1,080	368	52%

Source: EMSI, Occupation Table, 2019

## Retail Leakage

An analysis of Woodbury’s retail market reveals existing retail strengths and new opportunities in terms of local retail spending and leakage of dollars outside the city. The strongest performers in the local market that keep retail dollars from residents and bring outside customers into Woodbury include: Food and Beverage Stores; Grocery Stores; Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores; Other General and Miscellaneous Store Retailers; Used Merchandise; and Florists.

Over two dozen retail categories are not represented in Woodbury, requiring residents to spend entirely outside of the city limits for goods not currently available. This illustrates an enormous opportunity for Woodbury to recruit new local businesses to support current retail demand that is not being met within the city limits. For the following retail goods, residents are spending 100% of their dollars outside of Woodbury: Auto and Vehicle Dealers, Furniture Stores; Electronics & Appliances; Building Materials and Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies; Specialty Food Stores; Health and Personal Care Stores; Clothing, Accessories, and Shoe Stores; Jewelry, Luggage and Leather Goods; Sporting Goods and Hobbies; Books and Music; Department Stores; Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gift Stores; Direct Selling and Mail Order Houses; and Drinking Establishments.

Other retail needs that are also not being fully met in Woodbury include: Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tires; General Merchandise Stores; Gas Stations; Food Services and Drinking Places; and Restaurants. Such a wide variety of unfulfilled potential retail needs shows that Woodbury has an opportunity to bring new businesses to the area that will meet current demands for retail goods and fill vacant commercial properties.

Woodbury's complete Retail MarketPlace Profile in Appendix D shows the dollar potential for each retail industry group and the amount of retail spending that is being lost to businesses located outside of the city limits.

Potential barriers to new business recruitment downtown include:

- Poor condition of the existing building stock; lack of move-in-ready locations
- Continued loss of historic buildings due to demolition by neglect
- Inactivity from the City of Woodbury and Woodbury Development Authority; failure to upgrade downtown sidewalks, landscapes, and buildings
- Lack of investment and commitment to revitalization from property owners
- Limited support of local businesses from the community

## Crime

During interviews, the Georgia Tech team heard several comments regarding a reputation of high crime and drug activity in the City of Woodbury. Leadership has taken action by hiring a new police chief and bringing new officers into the city. To assess the validity of this reputation, the Georgia Tech team sought out crime data from the City of Woodbury.

Since 2016, Part I offenses, which include crimes such as homicide, rape, and aggravated assault have declined by 40 percent, as shown in Figure 6. Of the Part I crimes that did occur in 2019, most were larceny. So far in 2020, Woodbury appears to be on track to have a similar amount of Part I offenses as the prior year.

FIGURE 6: WOODBURY PART I OFFENSES BY YEAR

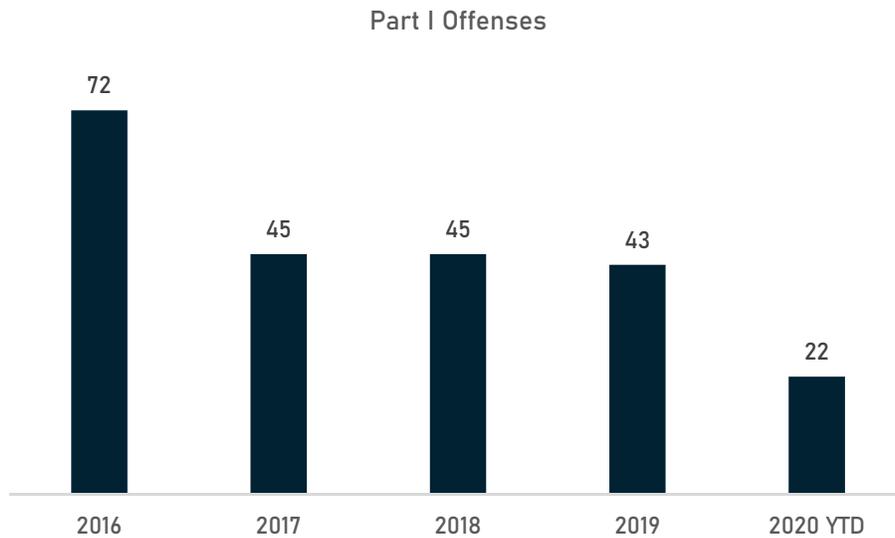
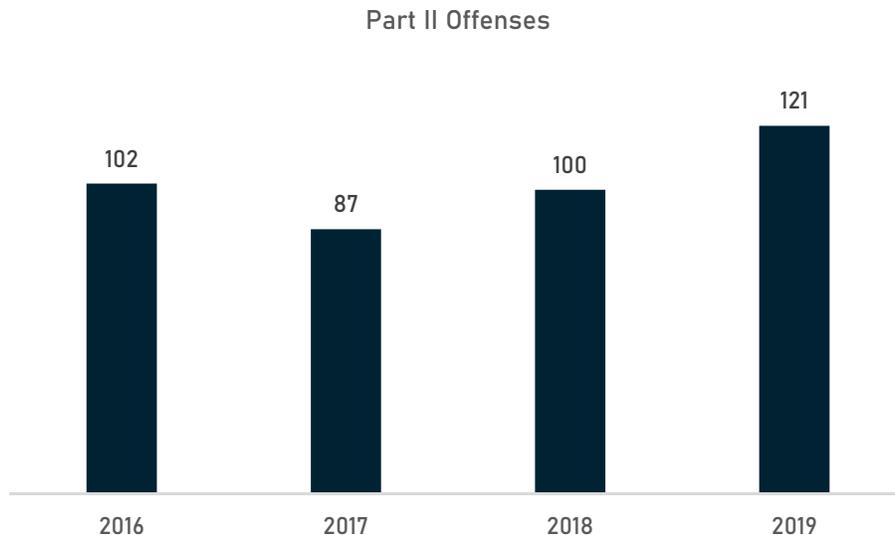


FIGURE 7: WOODBURY PART II OFFENSES BY YEAR



At the same time, however, Part II offenses have increased by 19 percent since 2016, as shown in Figure 7. This category includes more minor crimes such as disorderly conduct, assault, and vandalism. While the diminishing rate of more severe offenses is encouraging, the rise seen in Part II offenses can certainly contribute to Woodbury’s reputation for high crime. This reputation can be a weakness for Woodbury as it works to attract new residents and businesses.

# 4. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

The Georgia Tech team created three interview guides to collect information on the City of Woodbury’s unique strengths, weaknesses, and challenges from varying perspectives. First, the team interviewed 34 internal stakeholders, which are directly involved in the City of Woodbury. External stakeholders include those that work at the regional or state level that have familiarity with Woodbury, but do not typically involve themselves directly with the city. Lastly, a community survey allowed Woodbury’s citizens to voice their opinions on the growth of the city.

## Internal Stakeholder Interview Results

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

During May 2020, the Georgia Tech team conducted phone and video call interviews with local stakeholders. The interview guide focused on six categories of development:

- 1. Downtown Revitalization
- 2. Job Creation
- 3. Public Infrastructure Improvements
- 4. Housing Improvements
- 5. Small Business Development
- 6. Tourism

### SUMMARY

**FIGURE 8: RANKING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**  
WHAT SHOULD BE MOST HIGHLY PRIORITIZED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WOODBURY?

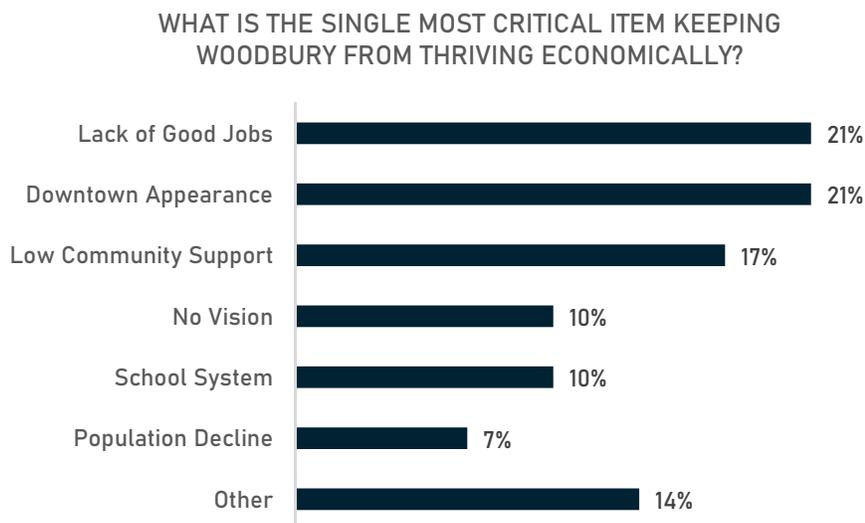


Figure 8 gives the resulting scores when the interviewees were asked to rank various development initiatives. Internal stakeholders prioritized downtown development first. The next prioritization is job creation, as many expressed that there are very few quality jobs in the City of Woodbury. Notably, tourism ranks last, but stakeholders were eager to say that they did not think tourism was unimportant. Rather, other improvements just need to occur first before Woodbury can successfully draw tourists.

One of the final questions, after discussing thoroughly Woodbury’s assets, challenges, and hopes for the future, was to identify only one critical item that is holding the city back. Figure 9 shows that their primary answers closely resemble the prioritization of initiatives asked at the beginning of the interview, as a lack of quality jobs and the downtown area’s poor appearance each claim 21 percent of responses. This further shows that downtown development and job creation are very important to the internal stakeholders, and that these are the most prominent obstacles for the city.

Additionally, they felt that low community support is another obstacle, which 17 percent of interviewees chose as the most critical challenge. The statement that some residents resist positive change was a common theme throughout the interviews, and that shows here. There is a fear among some that redeveloping Woodbury is an unwelcome idea for some residents, and that these resident will prevent positive change.

**FIGURE 9: WOODBURY'S PRIMARY THREATS TO GROWTH**

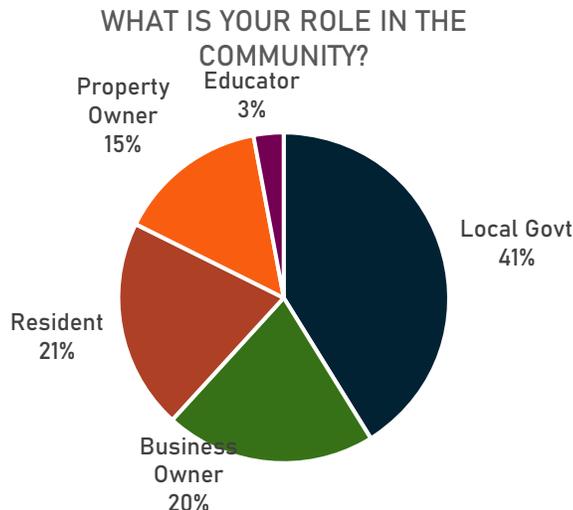


Another issue that is important for the city to correct is a lack of vision. Internal stakeholders are generally supportive of growth, but they also want to feel confident and involved in the city’s initiatives. A clear vision statement and subsequent marketing of that statement will help them to take ownership of the future of Woodbury. A proposed vision for the city is contained in Section 6 of this report.

### PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 10 represents each of the 34 internal stakeholders by their most official relationship to the City of Woodbury. For example, while several business owners or local government workers are also Woodbury residents, they are presented in this chart by their professional roles. Majority of these interviewees have a role in local government at 41 percent of participants. Business and property owners together have a financial interest in the growth of Woodbury, and they make up 35 percent of the total participants.

FIGURE 10: STAKEHOLDER ROLES



**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS**

The SWOT analysis portion of the interview gave guidance on Woodbury’s competitiveness with other communities. It sheds light on what the City of Woodbury is doing well, what it needs to do better, and what its future could look like. This allows the Georgia Tech team to better craft recommendations for the city, as the internal stakeholders have a strong grasp on what they want their community to be and what is keeping that from being realized.

**STRENGTHS**

FIGURE 11: WOODBURY’S STRENGTHS  
WHAT ARE WOODBURY’S CURRENT KEY STRENGTHS?

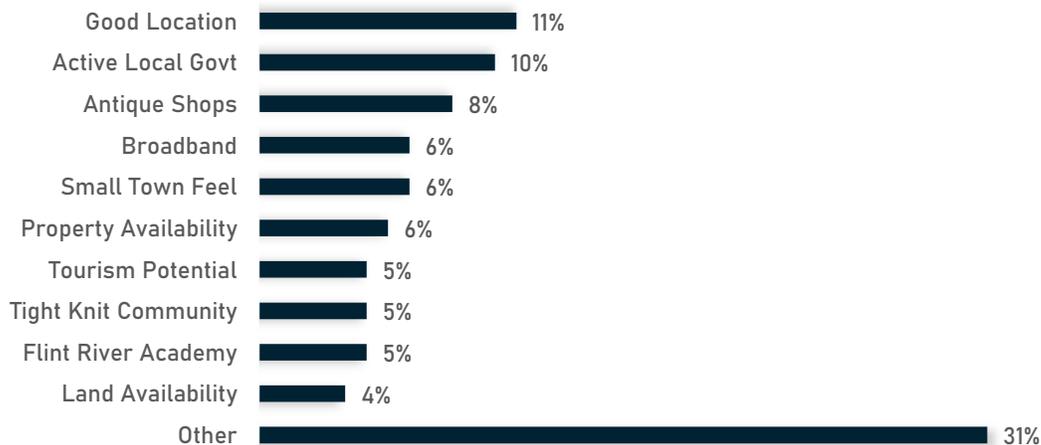


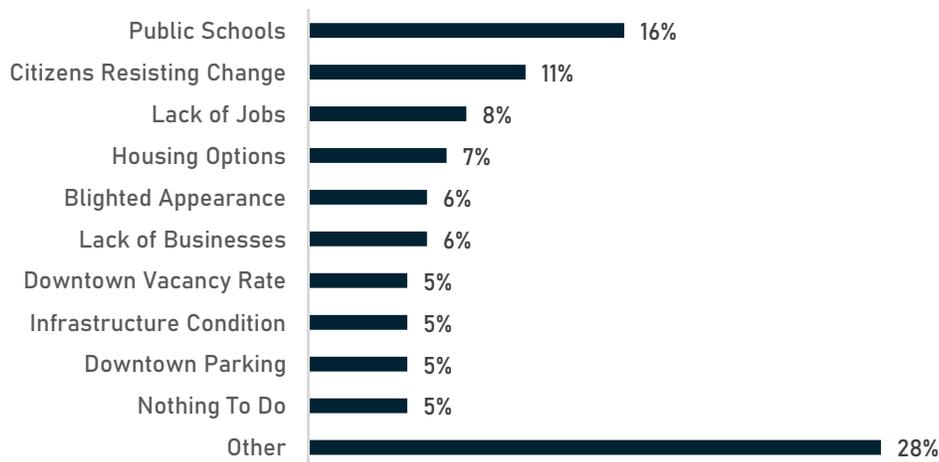
Figure 11 summarizes over 100 responses to the question regarding Woodbury’s current strengths and assets. Woodbury’s primary strengths are its good location and active local government, which each garnered more than 10 percent of responses. Stakeholders mentioned a few location-based benefits, such as the high traffic count that comes with its position along a state highway and its proximity to Columbus, Newnan, LaGrange, and other large employment centers. Additionally, many interviewees expressed excitement for the current mayor, city council, and city staff, explaining that their involvement and zeal to grow Woodbury is a measurable, palatable change from previous leadership.

Other prominent answers include Woodbury’s growing antique shop cluster, its upcoming high speed broadband, and its small town feel. Rural broadband access is a key differentiator for the City of Woodbury as it competes with other small communities for business and resident attraction. Many of these responses paint a picture of potential, as property availability, tourism potential, and land availability garner six, five, and four percent of responses respectively. Stakeholder often described Woodbury as a community that has what it needs to bounce back, and they show confidence that while investment is needed to grow the city, it has the foundation it needs.

As some common themes emerged, several one-off answers fall into the “Other” category’s 31 percent of responses in Figure 11. These responses range from successful restaurants and established downtown businesses to historic homes and affordability. While stakeholder input did not neatly fit into a few ideas, the fact that 70 percent of a myriad of over 100 responses fits into 10 categories demonstrates a decent cohesion among the group.

## WEAKNESSES

**FIGURE 12: WOODBURY’S WEAKNESSES**  
WHAT ARE WOODBURY’S CURRENT KEY WEAKNESSES?



Similar to Woodbury’s strengths, stakeholders had over 100 responses for its weaknesses summarized in Figure 12. Its chief weakness is the public school system represented in 16 percent of responses. Most interviewees told the same story of the recent closure of George E. Washington Elementary School, as this loss now means that there is no public school in Woodbury’s city limits. Furthermore, the distance to other elementary schools in Meriwether County is not ideal, leaving young children living in Woodbury with long bus rides that stakeholders feel is detrimental. There is significant concern that this will exacerbate Woodbury’s population decline as young families may move elsewhere, and new residents will be less likely to locate in Woodbury if they have school-aged children.

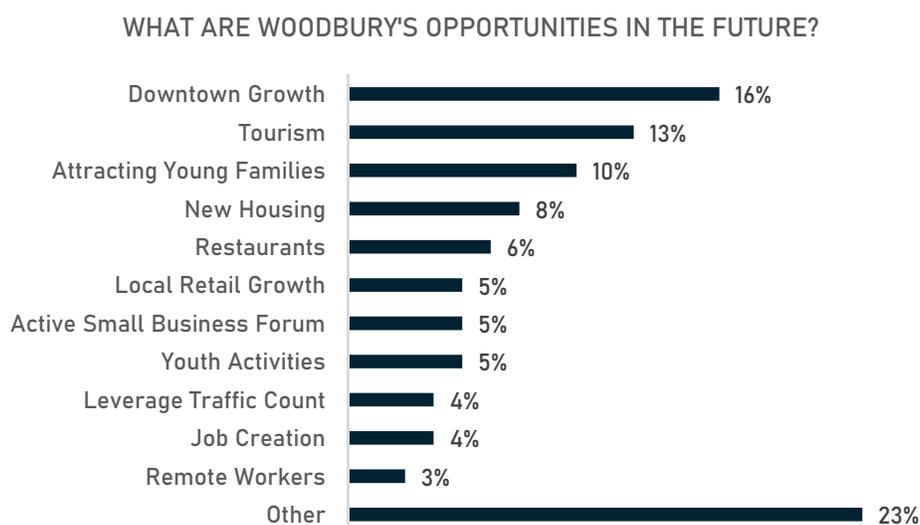
With 11 percent of responses, another key weakness is a divide among the community where there is a group resisting change and growth. Some portrayed this as tension between young and old residents or established and new residents regardless of age. The tension between

these two groups causes dampened hopes for growth and redevelopment, and there is a strong desire to have the entire community on board as the City of Woodbury pursues new investment.

Other weaknesses mostly relate to a lack of resources, such as a lack of jobs, poor housing options, and a blighted, vacant downtown. As seen with the question of strengths, not all responses can fit neatly into the ten categories that rose to the top in Figure 13. Important weaknesses to note that were infrequently mentioned include population decline, a perception of high crime, and generational poverty.

## OPPORTUNITIES

FIGURE 13: WOODBURY'S OPPORTUNITIES



Next, stakeholders were asked to take an aspirational look toward Woodbury's future. Downtown growth/revitalization is the primary path respondents see to improve the City of Woodbury with 16 percent of responses. Tourism is another avenue for growth that many envision. Figure 13 shows the ranking of various development actions, places tourism at the bottom, stakeholders are clearly not against tourism – most just felt Woodbury simply is not ready for it yet. This shows that 13 percent think it is an avenue for growth, but it is clear there are issues Woodbury must tackle first before it can have a destination downtown.

Another opportunity for Woodbury is attracting new residents, specifically young families, which garnered 10 percent of responses. This feeds into the need and opportunity for new housing, mentioned in 8 percent of responses. Job and retail growth are other key opportunities that stakeholders feel would grow the City of Woodbury.

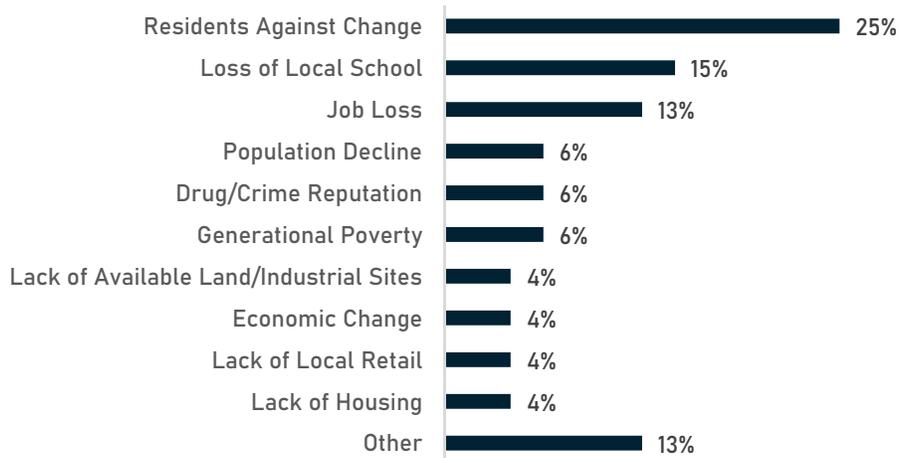
While not mentioned extensively, attracting remote workers could be a unique opportunity for the City of Woodbury. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, telecommuting has risen significantly, which has pressed some workers to look for more affordable cities to live away from dense city centers. If this trend holds, Woodbury's investment in broadband access will significantly set it apart from other rural communities as remote workers relocate. It will be

extremely important for Woodbury to communicate its broadband access to capitalize on this economic shift.

## THREATS

FIGURE 14: WOODBURY'S THREATS

WHAT ARE THE THREATS FACING WOODBURY IN THE FUTURE?



Woodbury's threats for the future in Figure 14 closely resemble its current weaknesses. Residents resisting change makes up 25 percent of responses, which communicates significant concern of pushback on redevelopment opportunities and new investment. The closure of George E. Washington Elementary School is another chief threat with 15 percent of responses. Stakeholders felt this loss to the community would further fuel the already measurable population decline and make attracting new residents more difficult. Other threats include a reputation of high crime, generational poverty, and a lack of both residential and industrial property.

## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Several interviewees described the importance of Downtown Woodbury as a central location with potential to be a meaningful gathering place for citizens. At present, there are some businesses established like restaurants, antique stores, and a pharmacy. However, it is not the bustling town center that it could be. Many see potential for Downtown Woodbury to undergo revitalization due to its vacant historic buildings and investor interest. The action of revitalizing downtown was the most highly ranked by the stakeholders to grow the City of Woodbury, and this section provides further detail.

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*"[Downtown Woodbury] used to be great during its glory days. It is the heart of the community with the main thoroughfare, post office, and city hall. It is filled with history and sentimental value."*

---

CAUSES OF CURRENT CONDITION

FIGURE 15: CAUSES OF DOWNTOWN DISTRESS

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE CAUSE OF DOWNTOWN WOODBURY'S CURRENT STATE OF DISTRESS?

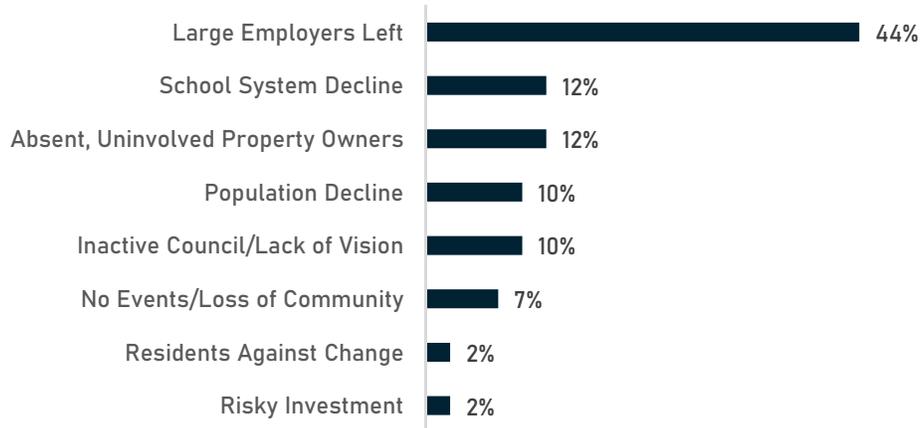
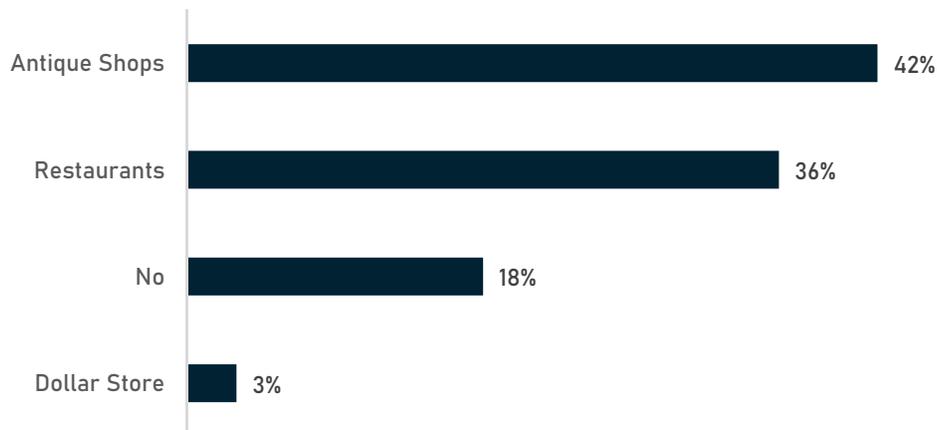


Figure 15 shows a very cohesive story among the stakeholders when asked about the cause of downtown’s decline. Forty-four percent of responses mention the loss of large industrial employers that occurred in the 1980s. When those jobs left, residents had to relocate, which caused Woodbury to enter into economic distress. Over time, the downtown area’s historic building became largely vacant, leading to its current state. The decline of Meriwether County’s public schools is another reason that stakeholders believe to be a cause. Specific to the condition of downtown’s buildings, 12 percent of responses say that property owners are absent and uninvolved which has contributed to the city’s current blighted appearance.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ATTRACTION

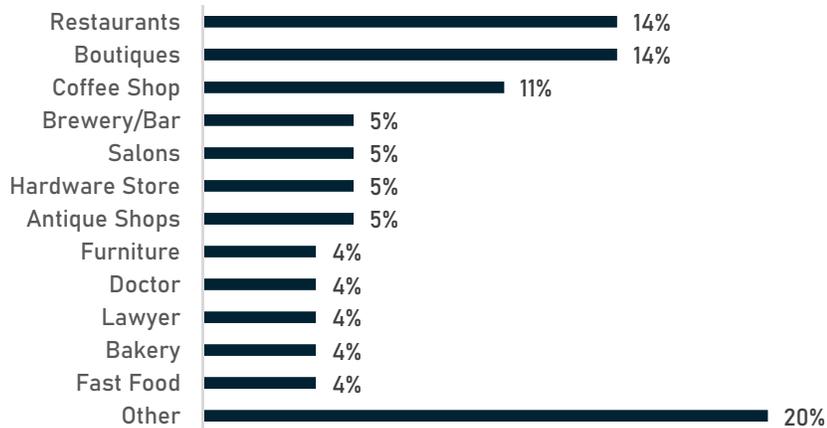
FIGURE 16: ESTABLISHED DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

HAS THE CITY HAD SUCCESS IN ATTRACTING ANY PARTICULAR TYPE OF BUSINESS?



Woodbury has established success with a cluster of antique shops in its downtown area, and that is the most frequent answer given by interviewees in Figure 16. Additionally, there are some successful restaurants occupying downtown. Beyond that, there is not much more business activity.

**FIGURE 17: POTENTIALLY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES**  
WHAT TYPE OF BUSINESSES DO YOU BELIEVE WOULD FLOURISH IN A REDEVELOPED DOWNTOWN?

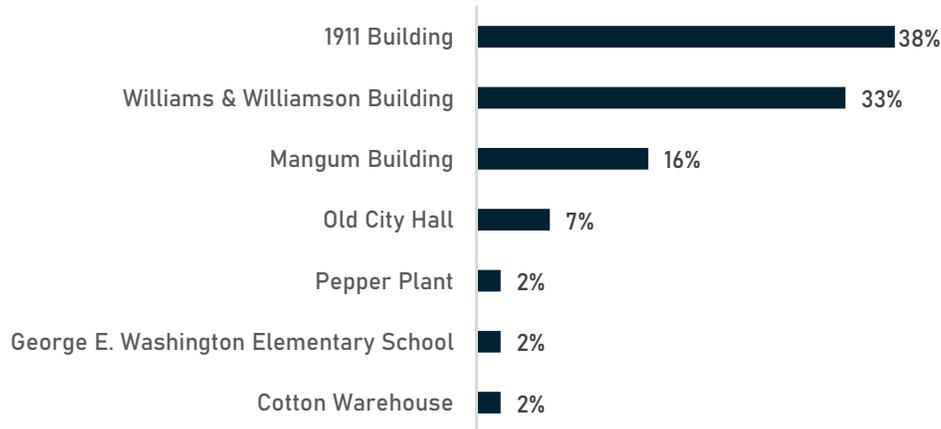


Next, interviewees were asked what businesses would flourish or succeed in a revitalized Woodbury, as shown in Figure 17. Most prominent responses were restaurants and boutiques or local specialty shops, each claiming 14 percent of responses. Another common answer was a coffee shop, as many interviewees mentioned a desire for a gathering and meeting space for the community. Coffee shops often fill this void, and a brewery or bar could also accomplish that. Other frequent answers included salons, a hardware store, or professional offices like lawyers or tax preparation services.

## UNDERUTILIZED SPACES

### FIGURE 18: MOST UNDERUTILIZED SPACES

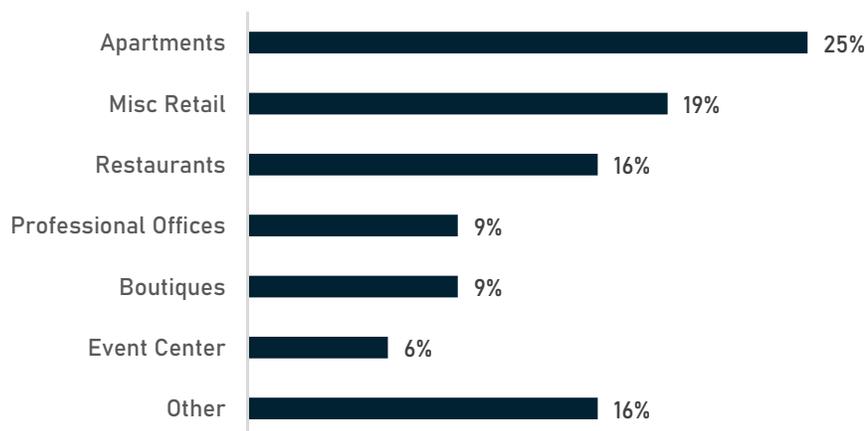
WHAT ARE THE TOP 3 UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES IN DOWNTOWN WOODBURY?



Stakeholders agree on the underutilized properties in Downtown Woodbury. These include the 1911 Building, the Williams & Williamson Building, and the Mangum Building, which in total comprise 87 percent of all responses in Figure 18. Each of these buildings are historic anchoring properties, and revitalizing them would greatly improve the appearance of the downtown area. Other mentions include the cotton warehouse and the newly vacant elementary school building.

### FIGURE 19: REDEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

DESCRIBE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES YOU SEE FOR UNDERUTILIZED SPACES:



As a follow up, interviewees were then asked to envision successful redevelopment of the properties they listed. Most described a multi-use redevelopment where the lower floors of the buildings could house restaurants, miscellaneous retail, or offices, while loft apartments could occupy the upstairs. Figure 19 recounts these responses, showing that apartments made up 25

percent of answers. The variance in other prominent answers stems from different ideas for the lower floor occupants, while there is strong agreement to have apartments occupy the upper floors of these buildings. Loft apartment would diversify Woodbury’s housing stock and provide new inventory, both of which are needed for the city.

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

### INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITION

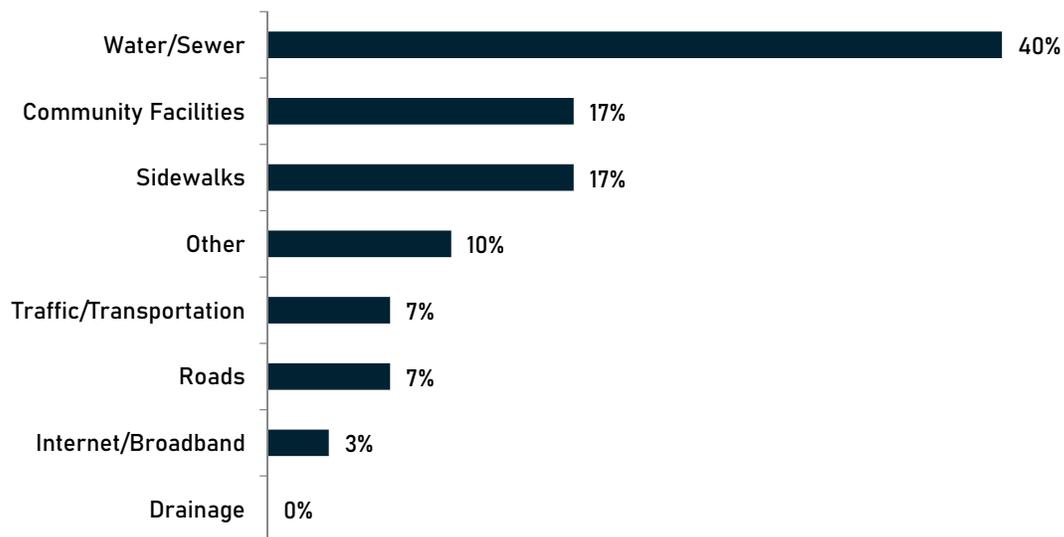
The City of Woodbury is already at work improving some of its infrastructure. A phased approach is tackling the water issue that many interviewees mentioned. Additionally, the installment of broadband will be a huge asset to the city once completed.

### PRIORITIZING IMPROVEMENTS

The water and sewer system should be improved first, as shown in Figure 20. Forty percent of stakeholders chose this option. Community facilities, such as parks and libraries, and sidewalks each have 17 percent of responses. Improving sidewalks could be a quick and attainable victory for the City of Woodbury depending on their current condition. This is also an important piece of downtown revitalization to create a safe, walkable area.

FIGURE 20: INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIZATION

WHAT TYPE OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD BE FIRST PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT?

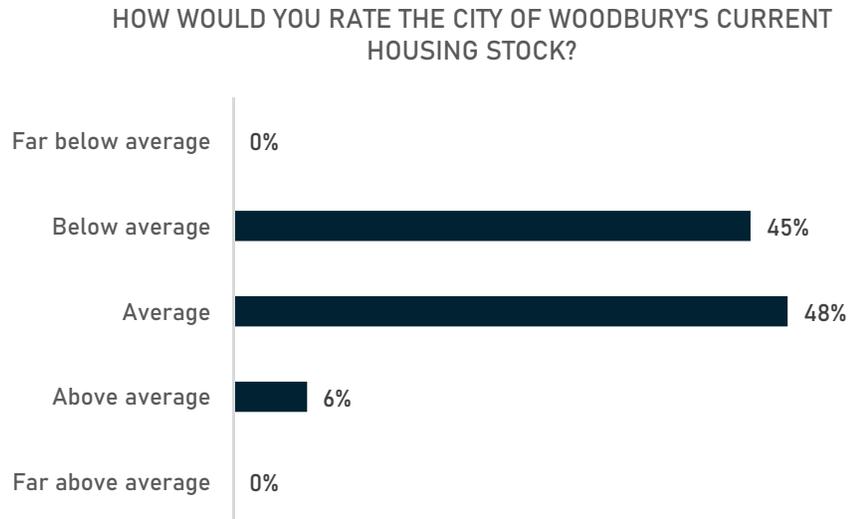


## HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS

### CURRENT CONDITION

The internal stakeholders firmly rate the housing stock as below average or average, as these categories claim 93 percent of responses shown in Figure 21. There is room for improvement, and while the interview guide did not specifically mention housing availability, this was another issue stakeholders mentioned. As Woodbury wants to grow and counteract population decline, home availability is low, both to purchase or to rent.

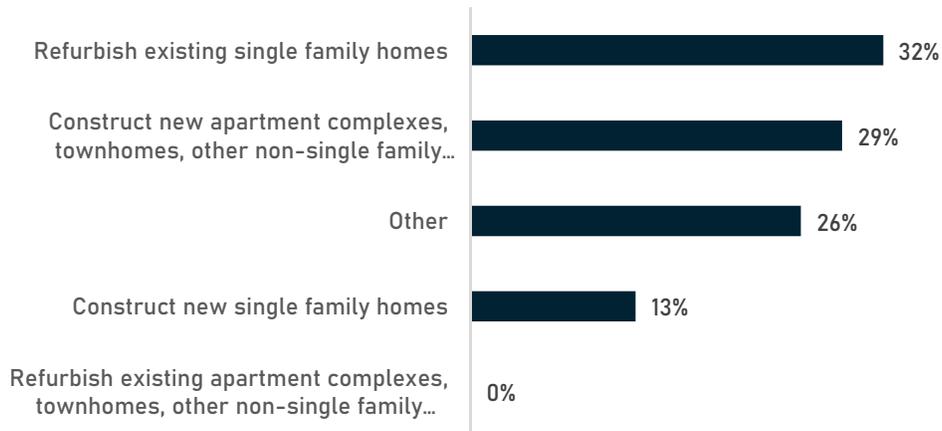
FIGURE 21: HOUSING STOCK CONDITION



### ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is not much agreement on the most immediate need to improve Woodbury's housing stock. The most popular answer in Figure 22 was to refurbish existing single family housing with 32 percent. This is followed closely by constructing new apartment complexes or other non-single family housing with 29 percent of responses. Many interviewees noted that Woodbury does not have much to offer in this form of housing and needs to diversify. In addition, 26 percent of interviewees chose "other" as an option, proposing that all of these options are equally needed, or saying that code enforcement is an issue.

**FIGURE 22: PRIMARY NEED FOR HOUSING**  
**WHICH OF THESE IS THE MOST IMMEDIATE NEED FOR THE HOUSING MARKET IN WOODBURY?**



### QUALITY OF LIFE

While there were no specific questions within the interview guide addressing quality of life elements, some common issues did surface throughout the interviews. As Woodbury seeks redevelopment, business attraction, and population growth, quality of life must improve to succeed at these goals. Table 6 lists some areas to consider. Some issues are outside of city leadership’s direct control, requiring collaboration at the county or regional level.

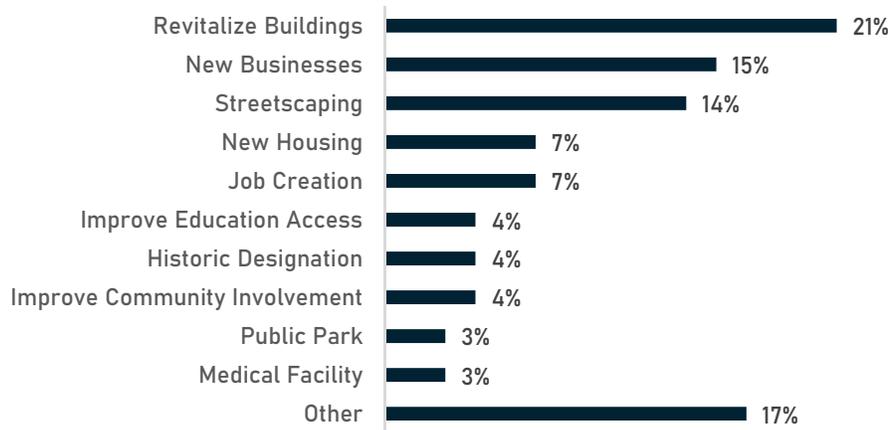
**TABLE 6: QUALITY OF LIFE FACTORS**

QUALITY OF LIFE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS	
CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY	HOUSING OPTIONS
BEAUTIFICATION	COMMUNITY FACILITIES
PUBLIC SCHOOLS	HEALTHCARE ACCESS

**PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

**FIGURE 23: 5 YEAR GOALS**

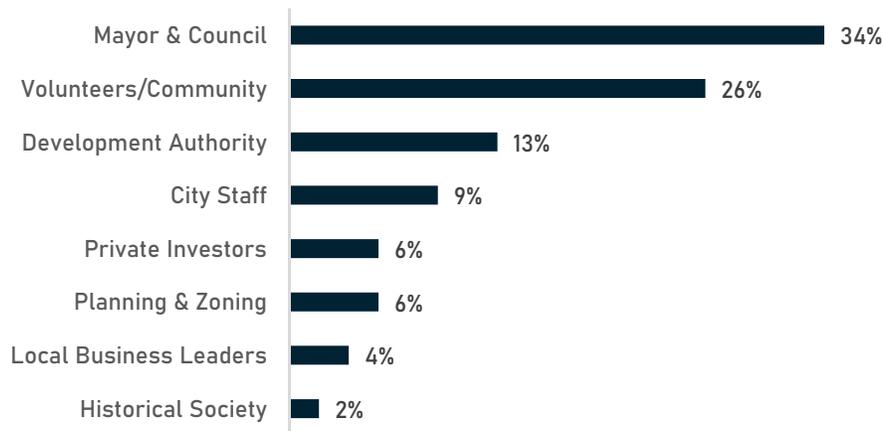
IF DESIGNATED AS A RURAL ZONE, WHAT SHOULD THE CITY SEEK TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?



If the City of Woodbury is awarded a Rural Zone designation, this would incentivize investment in the community for five years. The internal stakeholders think that revitalizing downtown’s buildings is the most prominent goal to accomplish in that time (Figure 23). At the same time, this would bring new businesses into the community.

**FIGURE 24: ACCOUNTABLE PARTIES**

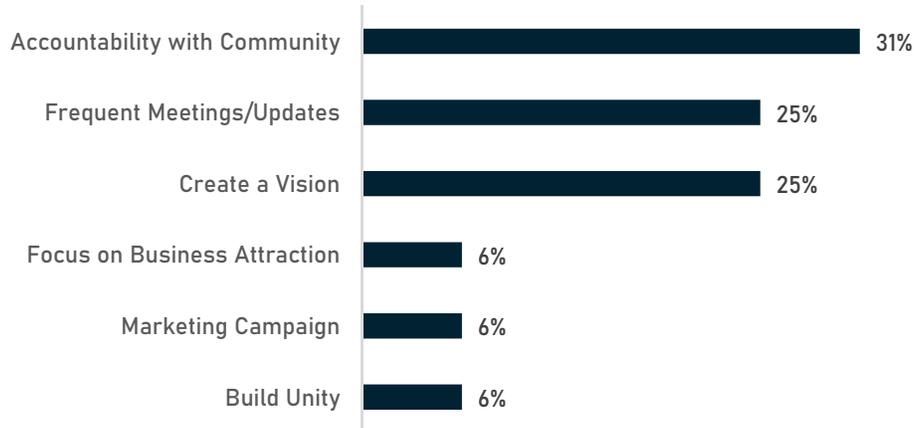
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS?



Accountability is important to ensure that plans are carried out by the city. Most stakeholders felt the city’s mayor and council are chiefly responsible for this (Figure 24). However, it is also the responsibility of the greater community, particularly volunteers and involved residents. It is clear from these responses that both the private and public sectors have a role in Woodbury’s redevelopment, as private investors and local business owners also have a stake in the city’s growth.

FIGURE 25: ENSURING PROGRESS

WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE FORWARD PROGRESS AFTER PLANNING IS COMPLETE?



Most interviewees want to see more accountability with the greater community (Figure 25). They want to see action and have a voice to spur the city leadership forward if necessary. A crucial part of this is to develop a vision statement, as this would set a standard for the community to hold city leadership accountable. Frequent, established meetings would also provide the structure needed for the community to contribute to city leadership’s goals.

### External Stakeholder Interview Results

In addition to the internal stakeholders, the Georgia Tech team worked alongside the City of Woodbury to identify external stakeholders. External stakeholders are individuals that predominantly work at the regional or state level that are familiar with Woodbury, but may not be in the community daily, as would the internal stakeholders. The interviewees in this group generally have roles in a development field, so their perspectives are valuable in understanding the redevelopment opportunities possible for Woodbury. Fourteen individuals participated as external stakeholders, and their interview responses are recounted throughout this section.

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE

These interviewees were asked fewer questions compared to internal stakeholders. Some questions overlap, but development and business attraction take primary focus with the external stakeholders, as these are typically within their area of professional expertise. Additionally, this interview guide addresses the stakeholders’ familiarity with Woodbury’s development program and contacts. The full list of questions in this interview guide is in Appendix A.

#### SUMMARY

Most external stakeholders are reasonably familiar with the City of Woodbury. The majority mentioned the mayor as their primary person of contact for economic development in the city. These interviewees were slightly more critical of Woodbury’s location than the internal stakeholders, as they viewed its distance from major interstates as a stumbling

---

*“Woodbury is a great example of a small city trying to do economic development, making the most of what they have.”*

block to industry attraction. However, they highlighted several business expansion opportunities for Woodbury that included tourism, advanced manufacturing, restaurants, breweries, and call centers.

## DEVELOPMENT IN WOODBURY

**FIGURE 26: FAMILIARITY WITH WOODBURY**  
 HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH WOODBURY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM?  
 (1-LOWEST, 5-HIGHEST)

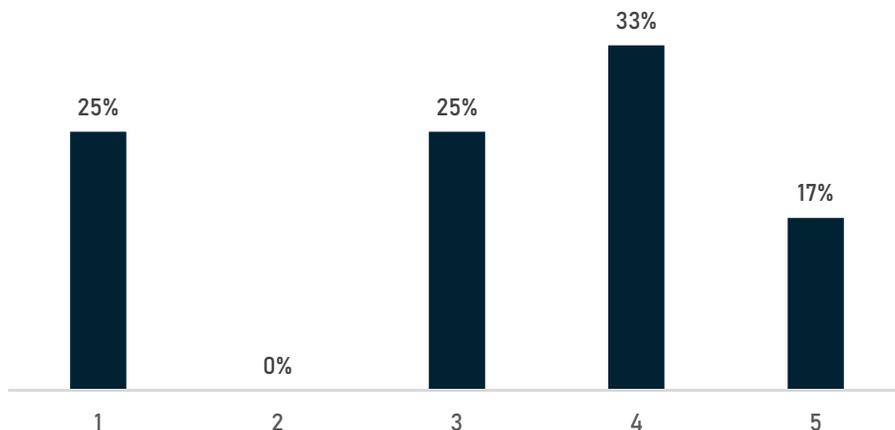


Figure 26 shows variability among the stakeholders when gauging their familiarity with Woodbury's development program and initiatives. Only 17 percent answered as highly familiar, and 25 percent are not familiar. Majority fall into the middle, rating themselves with either a 3 or a 4. This suggests room for improvement where the City of Woodbury could better communicate and market itself to others, but it does show a start.

**FIGURE 27: RANKING DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

RANK THE DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS FOR THE CITY OF WOODBURY FROM MOST TO LEAST IMPACTFUL.

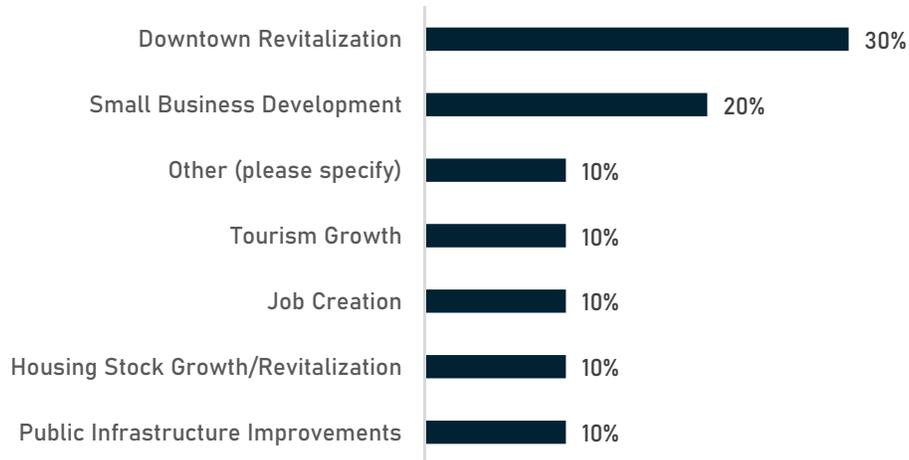


The external stakeholders slightly depart from the internal stakeholders when asked to rank the same six categories of development, as shown in Figure 27. Small business development ranks

as most impactful for the City of Woodbury, which is closely followed by downtown revitalization. Similar to the internal stakeholders, tourism ranks toward the bottom, but public infrastructure improvements seem to be less of a pressing issue for the external stakeholders. This could be for multiple reasons, but it may be a function of a lack of familiarity with issues specific to the city.

**FIGURE 28: INITIATIVE TO PURSUE FIRST**

WHICH OF THESE ACTIONS SHOULD BE COMPLETED FIRST?



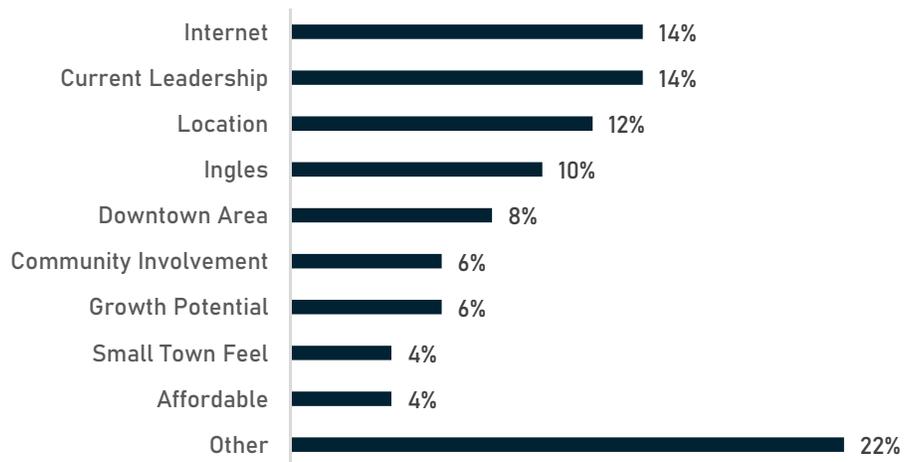
Most interviewees think that downtown revitalization should occur first, with 30 percent of responses. The one “other” answer suggesting prioritizing industrial growth and internet access.

**STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES**

**STRENGTHS**

**FIGURE 29: WOODBURY'S STRENGTHS**

WHAT ARE WOODBURY'S CURRENT KEY STRENGTHS?



External stakeholders spoke well of Woodbury’s internet access and its current city leadership, each garnering 14 percent of responses, shown in Figure 29. It also has a favorable centralized

location, and its Ingles location attracts people to the community to shop. Other important strengths include Woodbury’s downtown area and its growth potential, as these mentions demonstrate a knowledge and belief that the city has a solid foundation to grow.

## WEAKNESSES

FIGURE 30: WOODBURY’S WEAKNESSES

WHAT ARE WOODBURY’S CURRENT KEY WEAKNESSES?

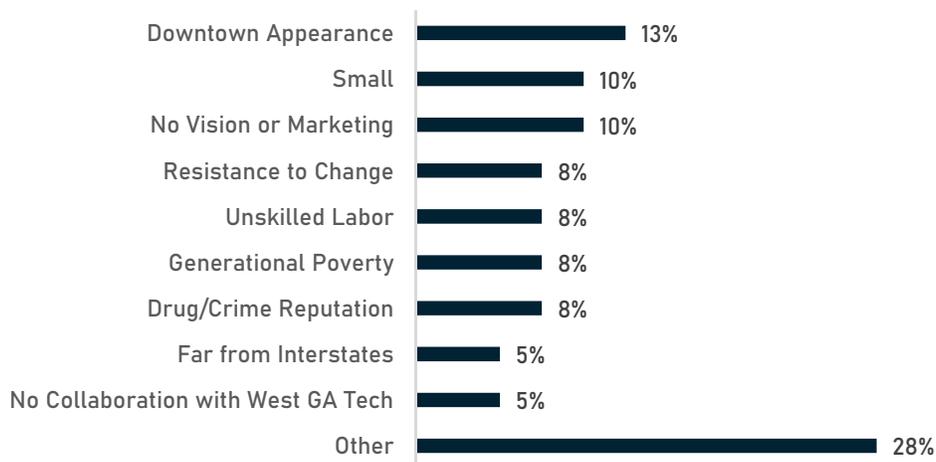
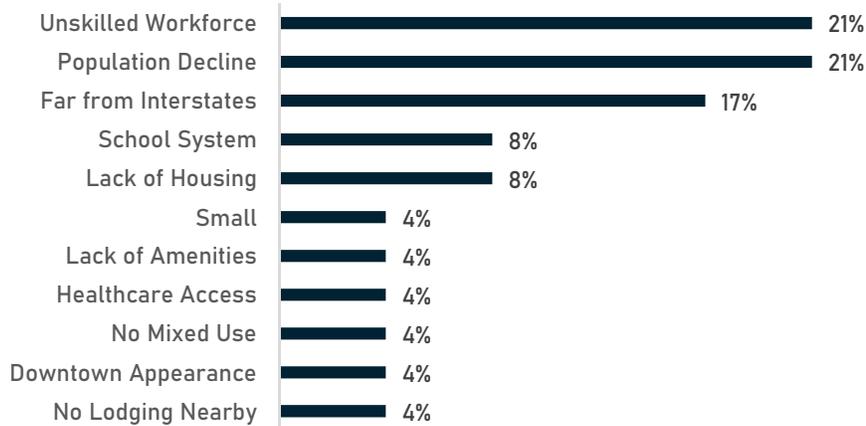


Figure 30 shows that Woodbury’s primary weakness, according to the external stakeholders, is its downtown appearance. While its small town feel what listed as a strength, its size also comes in as a weakness with 10 percent of responses. Through the lens of business attraction, a small population can be a weakness. Another unique item that surfaces among this group of participants is Woodbury’s distance from major interstates, which can make recruitment for certain types of industries hard.

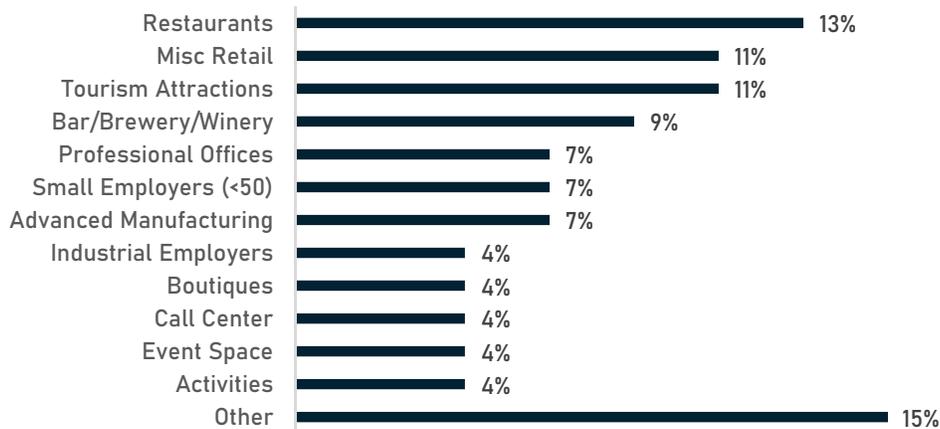
## BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ATTRACTION

Restaurants, miscellaneous retail, and tourism attractions are the predominant businesses that external stakeholders believe make sense for Woodbury, as shown in Figure 31. A smaller subset of stakeholders wants to see industrial employers return to Woodbury, suggesting advanced manufacturing and expanding its industrial park. This would bring a larger number of jobs to Woodbury, but unless a company relocated to the former Nabisco Brands property, these businesses would indirectly contribute to downtown revitalization as they would be housed outside of city limits.

**FIGURE 31: DETRACTORS FOR BUSINESS ATTRACTION**  
**WHAT WOULD PREVENT COMPANIES FROM WANTING TO LOCATE IN WOODBURY?**



**FIGURE 32: BUSINESSES TO ATTRACT**  
**WHAT TYPES OF BUSINESSES MAKE SENSE FOR WOODBURY TO TRY TO ATTRACT?**



Responses in Figure 32 closely resembled the already established weaknesses. An unskilled workforce and population decline are the primary obstacles to business attraction. Additionally, Woodbury’s distance from interstates will hurt its viability for certain industries. Most of the other issues identified relate to quality of life, which makes attracting employees to support businesses difficult. These issues include a poor school system, low housing availability, and a lack of amenities or things to do.

**COMPETITION**

Interviewees were asked to identify other communities that could act as competitors for Woodbury. The question was not limited to Georgia, but all responses are communities within the state. A broad geographic range of cities and counties are shown in Table 7. However,

several are neighboring cities and counties to Woodbury with large populations and employers that are more established. There was no clear majority identifying one or two major competitors.

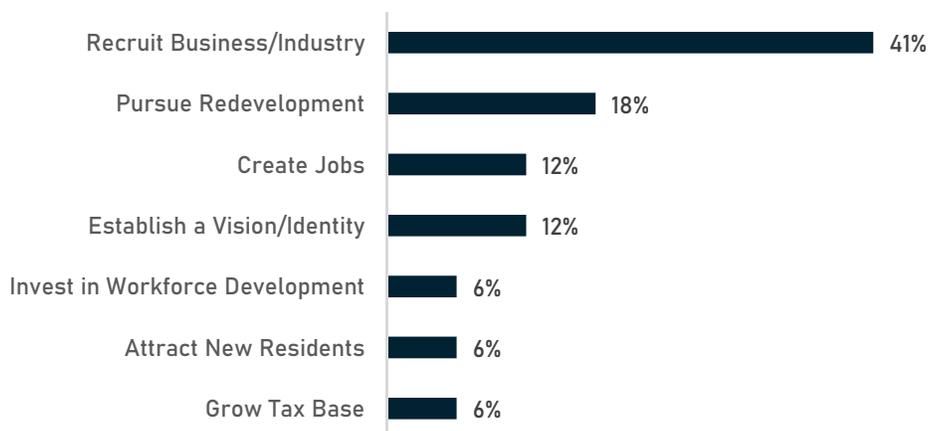
**TABLE 7: COMPETITORS FOR BUSINESS ATTRACTION**

WHAT COMMUNITIES (OTHER CITIES OR COUNTIES, WHETHER IN GA OR NOT) WOULD YOU CONSIDER AS COMPETITORS FOR BUSINESS ATTRACTION TO WOODBURY?				
BARNESVILLE, GA	COWETA COUNTY, GA	LAGRANGE, GA	SENOIA, GA	WARM SPRINGS, GA
CAVE SPRING, GA	GREENVILLE, GA	MANCHESTER, GA	SPRINGFIELD, GA	ZEBULON, GA
COLLEGE PARK, GA	GRIFFIN, GA	PERRY, GA	TROUP COUNTY, GA	
COLUMBUS, GA	HABERSHAM COUNTY, GA	PIKE COUNTY, GA	UPSON COUNTY, GA	
CORNELIA, GA	HOGANSVILLE, GA	ROOPVILLE, GA	VIENNA, GA	

## RURAL ZONE DESIGNATION

**FIGURE 33: RURAL ZONE DESIGNATION**

HOW CAN WOODBURY BEST USE A RURAL ZONE DESIGNATION FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE CITY?



External stakeholders, due to their professions, are generally more familiar with the meaning of a Rural Zone designation than the internal stakeholders. Figure 33 shows that over 40 percent think that recruiting new businesses should be top priority, as the Rural Zone designation provides valuable investment incentives. Additionally, these new businesses should allow the city to pursue redevelopment of its downtown area. Woodbury should be strategic in attracting employers that will revitalize its historic buildings while also creating new jobs. If Woodbury successfully grows its tax base, it should leverage that to invest in workforce development and attract new residents.

## Community Survey Results

In addition to stakeholders, the City of Woodbury also shared an online survey for people in the community to express their thoughts on Woodbury’s redevelopment. Twenty-one people participated in the survey. Most are residents of the city, but residents of nearby cities also participated.

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview guide, also listed in full in Appendix A, is based on the internal stakeholder survey. It is optimized for an online format, rather than phone or video calls. This included more questions with preset options and “select all that apply” instructions, rather than providing space for open-ended responses.

## SUMMARY

Residents of Woodbury and surrounding cities generally agree that Downtown Woodbury is in a state of distress at present. The majority attribute that to a lack of things to do, lack of good jobs in the area, and a struggle to attract new residents to the community. They would like to see several new types of businesses downtown, but most prominent responses include new retail, a hardware store, and a brewery or distillery.

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*“The city has been making great progress the last two years to get going in the right direction and put the town in a good position for growth. The City needs that one thing to jump-start downtown development. Housing will quickly become a priority once business takes off.”*

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## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

FIGURE 35: WOODBURY RESIDENTS

ARE YOU A CURRENT RESIDENT OF WOODBURY?

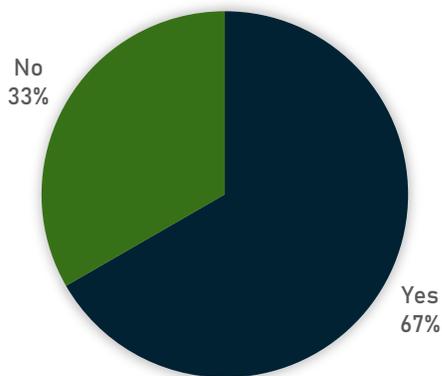
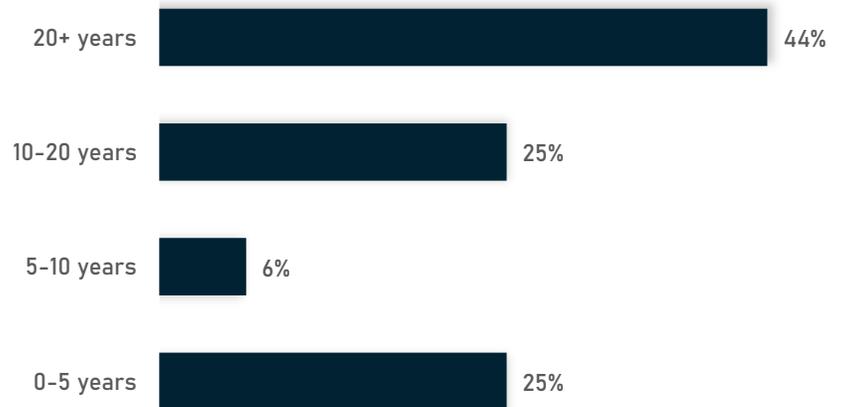


FIGURE 34: RESIDENT TENURE

IF YES, HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED HERE?



Most survey participants are current Woodbury residents. Additionally, most have lived in the city for twenty or more years. There was decent participation from new residents, though, representing 25 percent of respondents. Of the 33 percent that do not live in Woodbury, they are mostly living in neighboring communities like Thomaston, Coweta County, and Greenville.

## WORK & SHOPPING

The interview guide asked participants where they work and where they shop to see how much their daily activities occur within the City of Woodbury. Figure 36 shows that most interviewees that elaborated in their answers had similar shopping habits. While they do their grocery shopping in Woodbury, any other purchases occurred elsewhere in the region. Nearby cities that are shopping destinations include Newnan, Peachtree City, and Thomaston.



When asked to provide their place of work, several respondents said they are retired. For those that are of working age, a majority work in Woodbury. Other cities are listed in Table 8, which includes major job centers in all directions from Woodbury.

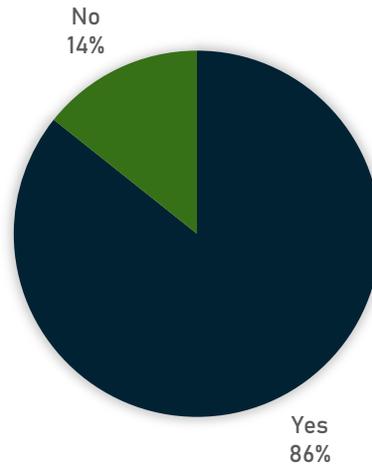
**TABLE 8: EMPLOYMENT**  
WHERE DO YOU WORK?

ATLANTA	MCDONOUGH
COLUMBUS	PEACHTREE CITY
GAINESVILLE	SENOIA
GRIFFIN	WOODBURY

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**  
CURRENT CONDITION

**FIGURE 37: DOWNTOWN DISTRESS**

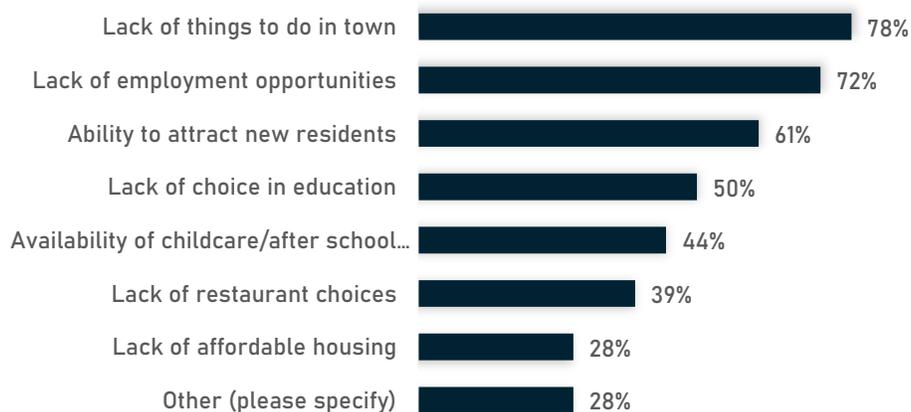
WOULD YOU SAY WOODBURY'S DOWNTOWN IS IN A STATE OF DECLINE OR DISTRESS?



Survey participants overwhelmingly agree that Woodbury’s downtown is currently distresses, as show in Figure 37. When asked why they think that is, most popular responses include a lack of things to do downtown, a lack of employment opportunities, and inability to attract new residents. Education and housing availability are also problems identified by the community (Figure 38).

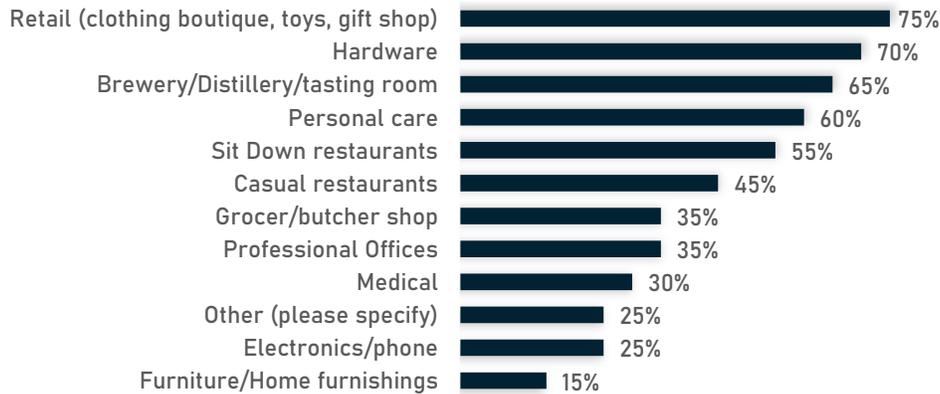
**FIGURE 38: CAUSES OF DISTRESS**

IF YES, WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE PRIMARY CAUSES?  
(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



**BUSINESS ATTRACTION**

**FIGURE 39: BUSINESS TO ATTRACT DOWNTOWN**  
**WHAT TYPES OF BUSINESSES DO YOU BELIEVE WOULD FLOURISH IN A REDEVELOPED DOWNTOWN?**  
 (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



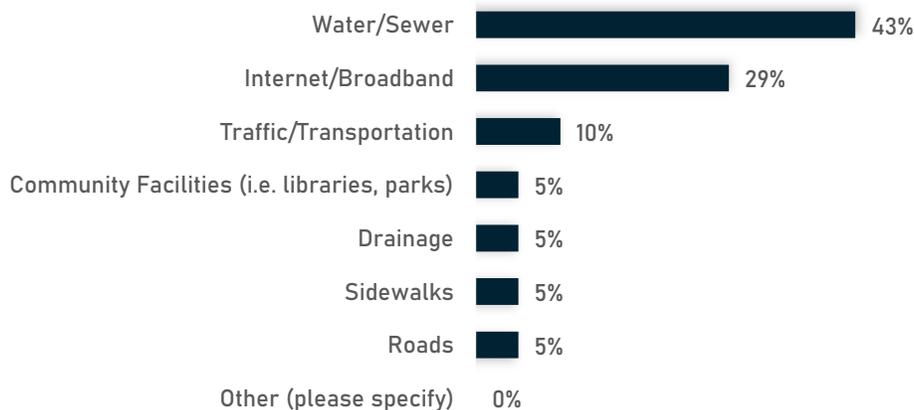
According to the community, the most popular businesses to attract are miscellaneous retail, hardware, and a brewery or distillery (Figure 39). There is also significant desire for all types of restaurants and personal care such as hair salons, nail salons, and barber shops. Some of the businesses that rank at the top of this list do point to a desire for more gathering spaces, and a brewery and new restaurants could accomplish that.

**INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING**

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

**FIGURE 40: PRIORITIZING INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT**

**WHAT TYPE OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD BE FIRST PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT?**



Woodbury’s residents want to see the water and sewer system improved, as 43 percent say this should be top priority (Figure 40). Although the city is currently tackling the issue, the residents have yet to see the total fix that they desire. Internet access is another prominent response where the city has its improvement in the works. It is encouraging to see that the most pressing issues for the community are already being addressed by the city’s leadership.

FIGURE 41: HOUSING IMPROVEMENT

WHICH OF THESE ACTIONS IS THE MOST IMMEDIATE NEED FOR THE HOUSING MARKET IN WOODBURY?

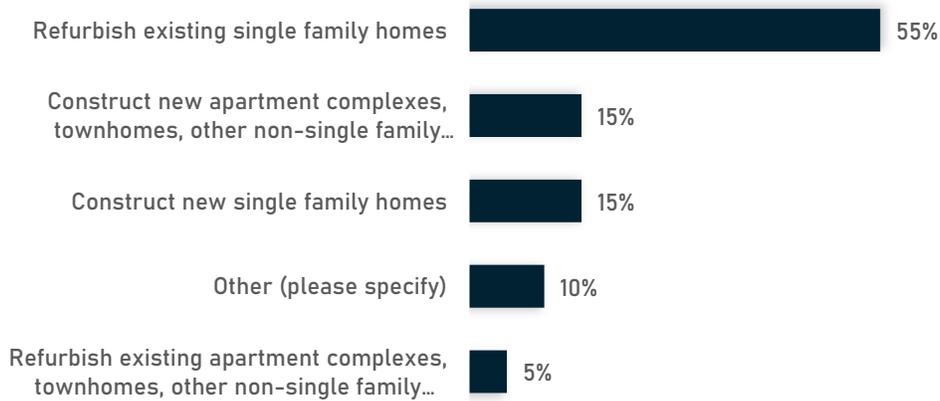


Figure 41 shows that a majority of survey participants want to see existing homes refurbished. However, this would not combat the issue that Woodbury has with low housing availability. It would improve the appearance of the city, though, which can contribute to attracting new residents when property to buy or rent does become available. The next most popular responses do want to see new housing constructed, both single family and non-single family.

## 5. COMMUNITY MEETING TAKEAWAYS

Georgia Tech held a community meeting for attendees both in-person and via video conference at Woodbury's City Hall on June 1, 2020. This informational meeting was held to discuss the importance and need for the Rural Zone designation, explain the EDRP and strategic plan process, and review preliminary results from the stakeholder interviews. The meeting was also an opportunity to gain feedback via a virtual interactive platform (Mentimeter) and introduce the online community survey, being made available to the public.

Some attendees were just being introduced to the project, while others in attendance were interview participants. Attendees included community leaders, leaders in faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, educators, law enforcement, residents, and business owners. During this meeting, Georgia Tech discussed the goals for the Strategic Assessment and gave the community opportunities to ask questions and voice their opinions.

### Interactive Feedback

Since the community meeting was held both virtually and in-person, Georgia Tech developed an interactive survey using the Mentimeter tool. Attendees who wished to respond answered the questions by submitting their answers online. Responses are summarized in this section, and a copy of the presentation with survey results is presented in Appendix B.

#### DESCRIBE DOWNTOWN

The most prominent answers center on the opportunity and potential for the revitalization of downtown Woodbury. The community is ready for the Rural Zone designation, and is eager to see it used to enhance its existing character by improving its downtown "bones". Other descriptive words for the community included "peaceful," "memories," "hometown," and "survivor".

#### DOWNTOWN POTENTIAL

Meeting participants strongly agreed (4.7 out of 5) that Woodbury has the potential to become a vibrant downtown destination. While the community already has several small downtown businesses that are a regional draw for those living outside Woodbury, it was noted that there needs to be more "things to do" for those who live there.

#### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

When asked about how involved residents were in the initiatives to make Woodbury a great place to live, responses were slightly higher than neutral, meaning that there was some agreement. As is often seen in smaller communities, a handful of individuals wear a number of different volunteer hats. Based on the responses at the meeting, the Georgia Tech team believes that there is room to expand involvement in community initiatives, making an effort to carve out roles for those who don't currently volunteer in the city's improvement.

#### IMAGE PREFERENCE

Meeting attendees were shown a series of four image comparisons representing different uses in the community: 1) a streetscape, 2) re-use of a two-story "Main Street" signature brick building, 3) use of a side yard parking area, and 4) re-use of a one-story "Main Street" building.

Images compared current uses in Woodbury with images of improved spaces or rehabbed properties from outside Georgia. In nearly every set of images presented, attendees unanimously chose the improved use. In the case of the two-story “Main Street” signature brick building, the improved image was overwhelmingly chosen, but some attendees hesitated based on the intensity depicted in the artist’s rendering.

## DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

During interviews held with stakeholders, it was noted that a common weakness was that residents were eager for “things to do” in Woodbury, in addition to the potential that diversification in small businesses would have on tourism growth. Meeting attendees were asked to indicate their preference (0 – 5 scale, with 0 indicating no preference and 5 indicating the strongest preference) for attracting several different types of businesses to the downtown. Results were as follows, in order of preference:

1. Wine/beer tasting (4.4)
2. Restaurants (4.3)
3. Retail/boutiques (4.0)
4. Coffee shops (3.8)
5. Small offices (3.3)
6. Sporting goods store (3.1)

## PRIORITIZATION

If awarded the Rural Zone designation, meeting attendees were asked to prioritize a number of activities that can be catalysts for the revitalization of downtown. Results were as follows, in order of preference:

1. Streetscape/Beautification Plan
2. Marketing and Branding Woodbury (tie)
3. Festivals/Events/Space Activation (tie)
4. Improve the City Gateway
5. Creating more Housing Choices
6. Grow Tourism
7. Blight/Code Enforcement

Respondents believed that creating a streetscape/downtown beautification plan should be top priority for the City of Woodbury during its Rural Zone designation period. Meeting attendees noted that creating a consistent aesthetic in downtown, combined with investments in building renovations, would draw potential business locations and create investment confidence in downtown. Marketing Woodbury and activating the downtown and its underutilized spaces tied for the next priority. This could be an area for Woodbury to engage residents who may be new to volunteering in “virtual community involvement” through campaigns like video submissions, marketing slogans and city logo design submissions. In addition to marketing, the city should create a presence on popular social media platforms and tourism boards – which may be an avenue for promoting downtown festivals and other events.

## Open Discussion

At the end of the meeting, several questions were asked of the team with regard to further clarification on what the team heard during the interview process. For example, a meeting attendee asked the group to identify why some people in the community were so resistant to change. Long-time residents may have a vision of what Woodbury was when they were growing up, but Woodbury has changed over time and doesn't have a unified vision yet for what it can be. There is an opportunity to create a unified vision, and that can start with this strategic assessment.

The availability of public schools was also a high priority issue raised during the interview process (particularly the recent closure of George Washington Elementary), but those in attendance were unsure how to fix it. Georgia Tech suggested that Woodbury find several individuals to run for school board who would represent Woodbury's interests and have some say in how decisions are made with regard to the future use of that building. Without good public schools, the city may have a challenge attracting younger families to the community, even with great internet connectivity.

Another attendee indicated that the internet speed is the infrastructure, and that promotion of the city's investment in its internet speed is a huge asset for existing and prospective Woodbury residents and businesses. Several attendees agreed with the statement that "private dollars follow public investment" – there could be an appetite for a business/downtown association to support and amplify the efforts of the DDA. While there is already a community "business forum," and several other volunteer improvement organizations like TEAM Woodbury (community events committee), these groups are loosely organized and promoted. There are also several open positions on the Development Authority and the Planning & Zoning Commission. There is an opportunity to engage a broader swath of the community serve in roles critical to the city's future.

# 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

## Overview

The following section includes a review of previous studies and initiatives conducted for Woodbury, common themes from these studies and the priorities upon which Woodbury should focus, and draft Vision and Mission Statements developed by Georgia Tech. The vision statement crafted for Woodbury broadly states what the community aspires to accomplish through economic development initiatives in the future, and the mission statement indicates how the community would ideally move forward to achieve its vision.

## Common Themes & Priorities

This EDRP study has examined the strategic priorities that Woodbury should pursue in an effort to better prioritize downtown development efforts in Woodbury during its Rural Zone designation period and beyond. With limited budget and staff resources to dedicate to downtown development, Woodbury would benefit from a work plan as to the most critical areas upon which to focus during the five-year designation period.

To assess the city's top priorities, this study included a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The Community Profile is an important first step as it provides a framework to understand metrics affecting immediate community and surrounding areas. Information analyzed includes population growth, age distribution, race/ethnicity, and income. After reviewing the data, Georgia Tech interviewed community stakeholders who regularly work in Woodbury for an "inside" perspective, and delved into some of the recurring issues for causes and potential solutions. Georgia Tech also spoke with Woodbury's state and regional partners who have an "outside" perspective on the city, to identify any common areas of concern. These conversations were held through a series of phone and video interviews. Based on the feedback from interviews, the community meeting, and the team's in-depth research on current conditions, several patterns emerged from which Woodbury should prioritize its downtown development efforts.

There was general agreement from stakeholders that **downtown redevelopment** projects should be a top priority for Woodbury. The Georgia Tech team agrees that with the Rural Zone designation, these projects have the potential to create a domino effect of activity in downtown, ranging from small business development to tourism growth. Several historic buildings have had a considerable amount of speculative interest in redeveloping and are waiting for the tax incentives that come with the Rural Zone designation, so it is anticipated that outside investment will occur in the near future. It is recommended that Woodbury focus on redeveloping its downtown –in terms of real estate, streetscaping, parking, walkability, and activation of its underutilized spaces. Marketing Woodbury's assets (proximity to major thoroughfares, natural amenities, high speed internet access, affordability, etc.) and branding the community to new residents and visitors will be important steps in the redevelopment and revitalization process.

Once re-investment activity in downtown begins, Georgia Tech anticipates that **small businesses** will begin to express interest in locating in Woodbury. Small businesses are catalysts for job creation. Building on Woodbury's history and the affordability of available space downtown, Woodbury can market itself as a welcoming place for artists, musicians,

film/digital media, and other creative talents to locate. Woodbury is the ideal location for cultivating a local food and dining scene that highlights the region’s agricultural assets. While the Ingles in Woodbury is a countywide draw for groceries, most Woodbury residents have to go outside the community to shop. The need exists for more local shopping options, like a hardware/tractor supply store, an outdoor retailer, gift store, a community market, and other retail goods. The addition of downtown dining options – like coffee shops, ice cream stores, sit-down restaurant options, pizza shops, or tasting rooms collocated with a local winery/distillery – could provide walkable entertainment options for families, visitors, and residents alike, while highlighting local food. In an era where people identify where they want to live first and find a job second, communities are realizing that these “quality of life” factors are what differentiate many places from destinations.

The lack of jobs and businesses was repeatedly cited as a weakness for Woodbury. Stakeholders noted that the city has been in decline since the Nabisco Brands plant closed and took 900 jobs from the community. The **creation of new jobs** in the area will mean a demand for other services from the city and county, including a need for adequate housing and a range of housing choices. The majority of working-age Woodbury residents work outside the community. With the activation of underutilized properties in Woodbury and the creation of jobs from small business development, the need for housing will inevitably follow. During site visits made by Georgia Tech team members during the project, housing quality appears to be adequate for existing residents, but when it comes to having an affordable mix of housing types, **more housing choice and availability is needed**. In the immediate vicinity of downtown, there is almost zero housing product for sale. While a new housing development is in the planning stages near downtown, Georgia Tech recommends that city encourage housing that is both affordable to different price points, and accessible to downtown. When housing becomes part of the downtown fabric, it will create a flow of activity that helps activate and sustain downtown shops and businesses.

**Public infrastructure** received mixed responses during interviews and speaking with stakeholders. This category includes “hard” infrastructure like roadways, parking, utilities, sidewalks and streetscapes. For purposes of this report, community facilities are also included in this category – places like community centers, libraries, parks, and schools. Overall, some stakeholders felt that the hard public infrastructure was adequate – roads are being paved, there is available water and sewer capacity (some of which is being upgraded), and internet service is being implemented and expanded downtown. However, a lack of parking was brought up as a concern when events are held downtown on the weekends.

The general sentiment from respondents on community infrastructure was that investment was needed in facilities, particularly in infrastructure that provided a community support function, like a boy’s and girl’s club or a recreation center. Woodbury’s nearest public library is 10 miles away in Warm Springs. The closure of Woodbury’s only public school due to decreased enrollment, George Washington Elementary, has only compounded this perception. While the lack of a public school in the community is a loss, Meriwether County Schools plans to keep the building and eventually re-purpose it. In the meantime, Woodbury can work to revitalize its downtown, attract young families to the community, and identify candidates from within the community to run for county school board.

With respect to tourism and its recommended priority position, **Woodbury has significant tourism potential.** However, the city must first address strengthening its “bones” before it can become a tourist destination. Woodbury benefits from its proximity to natural assets and consistent vehicular traffic along the state highways that crisscross downtown. Woodbury can capitalize on its existing assets (the antiques experience, bed and breakfasts nearby, historic structures) and its natural assets (Flint River, Lake Meriwether, eco- and agritourism and the potential for “sip and see” tourism), by creating a downtown and destinations in the community where people are drawn to stop and bring outside dollars into the community. With RV’s, boats, and motorcycles passing through on the weekend, it may benefit Woodbury to know where travelers are originating from and going to, in order to determine the types of businesses that cater to potential visitors.

Table 9 shows a comparison of the priority areas indicated by internal versus external stakeholders, as well as Georgia Tech’s recommended priorities, all ranked in order of importance.

TABLE 9: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR WOODBURY\*

RANKING	INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	GT RECOMMENDED PRIORITY*
1	Downtown Redevelopment	Small Business Development	Downtown Redevelopment
2	Job Creation	Downtown Redevelopment	Small Business Development
3	Public Infrastructure	Job Creation	Job Creation
4	Small Business Development	Housing Improvements	Housing Improvements
5	Housing Improvements	Tourism	Public Infrastructure
6	Tourism	Public Infrastructure	Tourism Growth

*\*Based on interviews with community stakeholders as to what would types of priority projects would impact Woodbury the most.*

## A Downtown Development Vision for Woodbury

It was noted during interviews that Woodbury is lacking identity and a vision for “what it wants to be,” as well as the leadership capacity within the city to carry out desired economic development initiatives. While Woodbury has a general vision statement outlined in the Meriwether County CEDS, there was not a broad awareness among community members that this vision was one that represented the entire community. Woodbury’s website includes the following description of their vision:<sup>6</sup>

*“Too many Georgia towns are fading from the history pages. Our vision is to grow our small town into a thriving ‘live, work, play’ community. Woodbury is ideal for newcomers who wish to have home, office, shopping, and recreation within easy reach.*

*Residents enjoy the clean, relaxing settings, with nearby lakes, parks, and walking trails, that enhance everyday life. For newcomers who wish to live, work, play, and shop in the heart of the city, Woodbury would be an excellent choice.*

*Come join us. Make Woodbury your home for family and business!”*

<sup>6</sup> “Our Vision” from the City of Woodbury website: <https://www.cityofwoodburyga.gov/>

With these concepts in mind, Georgia Tech used feedback received from interviews and the community to draft a place for the community to begin to coalesce.

» **Vision Statement:** The following is an *example* vision statement that could be modified and adopted for Woodbury.

***“Woodbury’s vision is to ignite its gigabit connectivity to be a community where small business start-ups and innovative entrepreneurs thrive, and a place where residents and visitors can enjoy a vibrant downtown that stays true to its roots.”***

» **Mission Statement:** Woodbury will write its story of success by:

- » Restoring and revitalizing Woodbury’s heritage buildings and downtown, while maintaining their historic character.
- » Attracting mobile talent and encouraging home grown businesses by providing them with the resources that enable and advance their success.
- » Promoting Woodbury as the “Community at the Crossroads” due to its connectivity, and its physical accessibility to highways, major markets, and natural assets.
- » Ensuring that Woodbury’s public infrastructure (internet, water and sewer, roads and drainage) is sound and ready to handle downtown growth.
- » Investing in Woodbury’s community infrastructure (libraries, parks, community centers, and schools) to support the city’s youth, making Woodbury an appealing place to raise a family.
- » Supporting the diversity of housing choice and affordability, and keeping Woodbury an affordable place to live and invest by marketing its connectivity and availability buildings.
- » Transforming the historic downtown area into a vibrant, active community gathering place for festivals and events by re-imagining underutilized spaces and vacant lots.

## Recommended Downtown Development Priorities & Actions

The goal of this study is to suggest actions that will enable the City of Woodbury to prioritize their most pressing needs, and to help enhance and strengthen the work of the Development Authority. The recommendations are from Georgia Tech, given their professional expertise in planning and downtown redevelopment, as well as observations made throughout the study. These suggested strategies and recommendations will help the City of Woodbury use its vision to bring much-needed investment to the community. For each priority area and recommendation, several characteristics are included that will help ensure its viability. The definition for each is provided below and recommendations are in Table 10.

- **Leadership:** Indicates the entity or type of organization needed to be the lead partner (e.g., public entity, private organization).

- **Partnerships Needed:** Indicates whether the strategy will require the formation of a partnership (public, private, or a combination) to be viable.
- **Timeframe:** Indicates the time frame that would be required to implement the strategy – either a short-term project (immediate to one year), medium-term project (one to three years), or a long-term project (three to five years, or longer).
- **Cost:** Indicates the cost that would be required to implement the strategy – either a low-cost project (less than \$50k), medium-cost project (\$50k to \$100k), or a high-cost project (more than \$100k).
- **Funding Source(s):** Indicates potential funding sources and mechanisms that Woodbury can use to complete the project (local, state, federal, or a combination thereof). These funding sources may be used alone or combined to leverage additional funds. Federal funds may require a local match. Additional resources that could be considered are provided in Appendix E.

## Community Volunteer Organizations

Due to the city's size, staff limitations, and funding restraints, Woodbury must rely on volunteers from the community to help move the downtown area forward. In addition to a very active Mayor and City Council, a framework of community volunteer organizations with energetic and engaged citizens already exists. Some organizations are more active than others, and would benefit from clearly defining their purpose by creating specific mission/vision/goals. This includes considering:

- Why does our organization exist?
- What do we hope to contribute to Woodbury?
- What are the kinds of projects we should pursue?
- Are there specific tasks that we can assist the city with accomplishing?
- How much time do we realistically have to help accomplish goals?

Once each organization has answered these questions, elements from Woodbury's five-year work plan can be assigned to appropriate volunteer groups to oversee. For example, the Woodbury DDA is already responsible for downtown development efforts and should be encouraged to learn the principles of the Georgia Main Street Program. The Historical Society can assist with surveying historic properties, preparing National Register of Historic Places nominations, and collecting historic photographs of downtown buildings for the Historic Preservation Commission to refer to for building alterations. Team Woodbury could explore how to address citizens' desire for more downtown events and festivals. The Woodbury Business Forum can work with the Meriwether Chamber of Commerce and Tourism to help attract new customers to the area through marketing and tourism promotion. The Kiwanis and Rotary clubs could explore establishing an Adopt a Highway Program, constructing attractive gateway entrances into the city, or raising private funds to sponsor a new downtown park. There are also opportunities to create new citizen volunteer groups to address areas of concern within the city such as crime rates, disadvantaged neighborhoods, minority involvement, and education.

TABLE 10: RECOMMENDED FIVE-YEAR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION WORK PLAN FOR WOODBURY (2021 – 2026)

Priority Area	Recommendation	Leadership	Partnerships	Timeframe	Cost	Funding Source(s)
#1. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE	Finish road paving, water and sewer utility upgrades.	Woodbury Public Works	City of Woodbury, DCA	Medium	High	<u>Federal</u> : USDA, EDA Public Works <u>State</u> : GEFA, OneGeorgia Equity Fund
	Continue to expand internet service throughout downtown.	City of Woodbury	Spectrum, DCA	Short	Low	Staff Time, OneGeorgia Equity Fund
	Re-purpose George Washington Elementary as a college & career academy (high school) or public charter elementary school. Establish Woodbury leadership on school board.	Meriwether Co., City of Woodbury	TCSG	Medium-Long	Low-Medium	Meriwether Co. Schools
	Build a library and/or youth community center in downtown.	City of Woodbury	DDA	Medium-Long	High	Georgia Public Libraries Service, SPLOST, state buildings grants
#2. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT	Create a “Downtown Association” through the Georgia Association of Downtowns.	City of Woodbury	Georgia Downtown Association	Short	Low	Staff Time
	Enable rehabilitation and infill development in downtown via building codes and ordinances. Create design guidelines for the Rural Zone.	City of Woodbury Planning & Zoning	DDA, Historic Preservation Commission, community input	Medium-Long	Medium	Staff Time
	Create distinctive “gateways” along Woodbury Rd./GA 74 and GA-85 at the city limits.	City of Woodbury	DDA	Medium	Medium-High	<u>State</u> : GDOT, CDBG <u>Local</u> : Woodbury bond issue, Meriwether Co. T-SPLOST
	Develop and implement a façade improvement program for downtown.	DDA	City of Woodbury	Short	Low	Woodbury bond issue, City of Woodbury/ Meriwether Co. general funds, CDBG
	Apply for the “Georgia Main	DDA	City of Woodbury,	Short	Low	City of Woodbury

Priority Area	Recommendation	Leadership	Partnerships	Timeframe	Cost	Funding Source(s)
	Street” program (Tier 1, Downtown Affiliate).		Georgia DCA Office of Downtown Development			
	Establish a Master Plan for downtown development.	DDA	Private architecture/landscape architecture firm	Medium	Medium	City of Woodbury
	Establish a 501c3 nonprofit for tax deductions and donations related to revitalization efforts called “Woodbury Tomorrow”.	DDA	City of Woodbury	Short	Low	Staff Time, (legal fees, filing for nonprofit)
	Conduct a historic structure analysis/condition assessment for downtown buildings.	Historic Preservation Commission	DDA	Medium	Medium	<a href="#">State Historic Preservation grants</a> , local foundations
	Establish a Land Bank Authority to facilitate the redevelopment of vacant, blighted, and tax delinquent properties.	City of Woodbury and Meriwether Co.	Local banks	Medium	Low	Staff Time
	Expand the city’s website to include available buildings and sites, and information on redevelopment procedures, the Georgia Rural Zone financing incentives, and the permitting process.	City of Woodbury	City of Woodbury Planning & Zoning	Medium	Low-Medium	Staff Time
	Create a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for downtown	City of Woodbury	DDA	Short	Low	CARES Act Recovery Assistance RLF grants (EDA); Downtown Development RLF (DCA); Georgia Cities Foundation RLF
<b>#3. SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>	Connect potential investors with funding sources to renovate and improve existing buildings. Market these resources on the city’s	City of Woodbury	DDA, Georgia DCA, SBDC, local financial institutions	On-Going	Low	Staff Time, local financial institutions

Priority Area	Recommendation	Leadership	Partnerships	Timeframe	Cost	Funding Source(s)
	website.					
	Market properties, available sites, and potential work spaces as affordable business options to entrepreneurs, makers, artists, and producers. Market these resources via social media and on the city's website.	DDA	Meriwether Co. Chamber of Commerce	Short-Medium	Medium	Local foundations
#4. HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS	Partner with a developer to create a "tiny house" village near downtown. <i>Best practice example: Clarkston, GA</i>	City of Woodbury	<a href="#">MicroLife Institute</a>	Long	Low	Staff Time
	Enable rehabilitation and infill housing near downtown to build the stock of affordable housing options.	City of Woodbury Code Enforcement	Private developers, property owners	Medium	Low	Staff Time
	Establish a neighborhood revitalization program.	City of Woodbury	City of Woodbury Code Enforcement	Medium-Long	Low	Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GMA), Staff Time
#5. JOB CREATION	Support and market resources like the state job tax credits for Tier 1 counties, Rural Zone, and the Georgia Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). Make these resources readily available on the city's website.	Woodbury DDA	City of Woodbury, DCA	On-Going	Low	Staff Time
#6. TOURISM	Implement a marketing, branding, and signage campaign for Woodbury, building on its rich, agricultural history.	Woodbury DDA	Meriwether Co. Chamber of Commerce	Short-Medium	Medium	Grants from local foundations
	Expand social media campaign.	City of Woodbury	Media programs at local schools and career academies	Short	Low	Staff Time for website maintenance and social media

# APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

## Internal Stakeholder Interview Guide

1. Please tell us about the organization/company/institution you represent, and your role there:
2. What should be most highly prioritized for economic development in Woodbury?
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Public Infrastructure Improvements
  - Housing Stock Growth/Revitalization
  - Job Creation
  - Tourism Growth
  - Small Business Development
3. What are Woodbury's *current* key strengths?
4. What are Woodbury's *current* key weaknesses?
5. What are Woodbury's *opportunities* in the future?
6. What are the *threats* facing Woodbury in the future?
7. Describe the importance of downtown Woodbury to the overall community.
8. What do you believe to be the cause of downtown Woodbury's current state of distress?
9. Has the city had success in attracting any particular type of business?
10. What types of businesses do you believe would flourish in a redeveloped downtown?
11. What types of businesses have not succeeded in the downtown area?
12. What are the top 3 assets the city possesses that could help attract companies to its downtown area?
13. What types of companies make sense for Woodbury to try to attract to its downtown?
14. What type of public infrastructure should be first priority for improvement?
  - Roads
  - Traffic/Transportation
  - Sidewalks
  - Community Facilities
  - Water/Sewer

- Drainage
  - Internet/Broadband
  - Other (please specify)
15. What are the top 3 underutilized spaces/properties in Woodbury?
16. Describe the redevelopment opportunities you see for these underutilized spaces.
17. How would you rate the City of Woodbury's current housing stock?
- Far above average
  - Above average
  - Average
  - Below average
  - Far below average
18. Which of these actions is the most immediate need for the housing market in Woodbury?
- Construct new single family homes
  - Refurbish existing single family homes
  - Construct new apartment complexes, townhomes, other non-single family housing
  - Refurbish existing apartment complexes, townhomes, other non-single family housing
  - Other (please specify)
19. If Downtown Woodbury becomes a rural zone, what should the city seek to accomplish in the 5-year period of designation?
20. Who is responsible for successful implementation of recommendations?
21. What immediate steps should be put in place to make sure forward progress occurs after the planning process is complete?
22. What funding mechanisms (state grants, bonds, foundations, etc.) should be sought for implementation of recommendations and action steps?
23. If you had to choose the single most critical items that is keeping Woodbury from thriving economically, what would it be?
24. Is there anything else you would like to share with us about Woodbury, its strengths and challenges, and its priorities going forward with regard to development?

## External Stakeholder Interview Guide

1. Respondent Name:
2. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, how familiar are you with Woodbury's economic development program?
3. Who is the primary point of contact for economic development in Woodbury?

4. What are Woodbury's *current* key *strengths*?
5. What are Woodbury's *current* key *weaknesses*?
6. What types of businesses does it make sense for Woodbury to try to attract?
7. What would prevent companies from wanting to locate in Woodbury?
8. What communities (other cities or counties, whether in Georgia or elsewhere) would you consider as competitors for business attraction to Woodbury?
9. Rank the actions below for the future of economic development in the City of Woodbury, from most to least impactful.
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Public Infrastructure Improvements
  - Housing Stock Growth/Revitalization
  - Job Creation
  - Tourism Growth
  - Small Business Development
10. Which of these actions should be completed first?
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Public Infrastructure Improvements
  - Housing Stock Growth/Revitalization
  - Job Creation
  - Tourism Growth
  - Small Business Development
  - Other (please specify)
11. How can Woodbury best use a Rural Zone designation for the betterment of the city?
12. Optional additional question: If you were a site selector visiting Woodbury, what would be the positives and negatives identified?
13. Optional additional question: What should Woodbury do to address the negatives Question 12?

## Community Survey Guide

1. Are you a current resident of Woodbury?
  - Yes
  - No
2. If yes, how long have you lived here?

- 0-5 years
  - 5-10 years
  - 10-20 years
  - 20+ years
3. If no, where do you live?
  4. If you work outside your home, where do you work? (City name)
  5. Where do you do most of your shopping? (City name)
  6. Rank the below economic development actions for the City of Woodbury, with 1 being most important and 6 being least important:
    - Downtown Revitalization
    - Public Infrastructure Improvements
    - Housing Stock Growth/Revitalization
    - Job Creation
    - Tourism Growth
    - Small Business Development
  7. What is the City of Woodbury doing really well right now?
  8. What is the City of Woodbury doing now that could use improvement?
  9. What opportunities exist for the City of Woodbury to make it a better place to live and do business?
  10. What are some of the things standing in the way of its progress?
  11. Would you say Woodbury's downtown is in a state of decline or distress?
    - Yes
    - No
  12. If you answered "yes" to the previous question, what do you think are the primary causes? (Please select all that apply.)
    - Lack of restaurant choices
    - Availability of childcare/after school options
    - Lack of choice in education
    - Ability to attract new residents
    - Lack of employment opportunities
    - Lack of things to do in town
    - Lack of affordable housing
    - Other (please specify)

13. What types of businesses do you believe would flourish in a redeveloped downtown?

- Retail (clothing boutique, toys, gift shop)
- Hardware
- Brewery/Distillery/Tasting Room
- Sit Down Restaurants
- Casual Restaurants
- Grocer/Butcher Shop
- Personal Care
- Professional Offices
- Medical
- Electronics/Phone
- Furniture/Home Furnishings
- Other (please specify)

14. What type of public infrastructure should be first priority for improvement?

- Roads
- Sidewalks
- Water/Sewer
- Drainage
- Community Facilities (i.e. libraries, parks)
- Internet/Broadband
- Traffic/Transportation (i.e. signage, signals, traffic flow)
- Other (please specify)

15. Which of these actions is the most immediate need for the housing market in Woodbury?

- Construct new single family homes
- Refurbish existing single family homes
- Construct new apartment complexes, townhomes, other non-single family housing
- Refurbish existing apartment complexes, townhomes, other non-single family housing
- Other (please specify)

16. Congratulations! A major newspaper has chosen to profile the City of Woodbury on its front page (May 2025 edition). What's the headline?

17. Is there anything else you'd like to share with us? Anything about the future of Woodbury, its strengths and challenges, and its priorities going forward?

# APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY MEETING



# CITY OF WOODBURY STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY MEETING  
JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2020

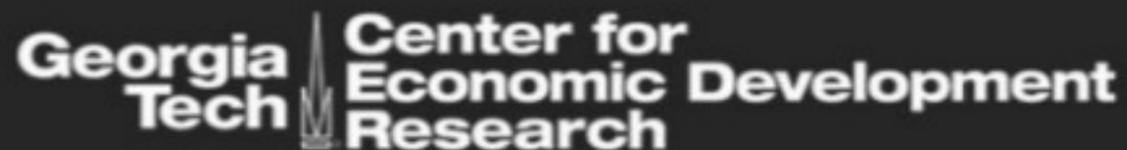
CREATING THE NEXT®

# About the Team

<http://cedr.gatech.edu>



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[SEARCH](#)



Our talented economic development professionals have the research and implementation experience needed to help economic developers, community leaders, and industries alike understand the **opportunities and challenges** in fostering local economic development.

[See Our Services](#)

## Contact Us

[Alfie Meek, Ph.D.](#)

Director

404-385-1340

75 Fifth Street NW

Suite 300

Atlanta, GA 30308

[Directions to the Atlanta Office](#)

## Become a Subscriber

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# Rural Zone Designation

## What is the Georgia “Rural Zone” Program?

- Up to 10 zones designated per year
- Zones are groups of properties in a downtown
- 5-year designation
- Tax credits for: 1) job creation, 2) investment, and 3) building rehabilitation within the zone
- Eligibility based on:
  - Pop. < 15,000
  - Concentration of historic buildings
  - Economic “distress”
- Credits can be combined with each other, but **job creation** is the basis for claiming credits
- A **strategic plan** is one requirement of the application



# Chicken & Egg



# Economic Development Research Program



Providing  
Communities  
Affordable  
Economic  
Development  
Research

The mission of the **Economic Development Research Program (EDRP)** is to assist local communities by providing affordable economic development and policy research to enhance their competitive positions.

EDRP's goal is to provide communities with much-needed economic development research that they may not otherwise be able to afford.



## City of Rossville Strategic Priorities Assessment (2019)

- **Goal:** prioritize projects that will bring greater investment into the city based on its strengths, real and tourism estate assets, and proximity to regional economic hubs.
- **Tasks:** community assessment, stakeholder and state partner interviews, SWOT analysis, a review of recent studies, and direction for the community to leverage its federal opportunity zone (OZ) designation.
- **Result:** *Received Rural Zone designation from DCA. Community leaders gained a better understanding of how to prioritize recommendations for economic growth.*

## Washington County Workforce Analysis (2018)

- **Goal:** evaluate the jobs available to the community, the skills held by members of the labor force, and the skills and training required by the county's focus industries.
- **Tasks:** assess workforce supply and demand through analysis of demographic data, commuting patterns, and industry and occupation data.
- **Result:** *Provided community with recommendations for workforce development and retention, industry engagement, educational partnerships, and community development.*

# What's in the Plan?

## Pieces of a Strategic Plan

- “SWOT” Analysis (interviews)
- Current state of downtown
- Conditions causing need for redevelopment
- Create a draft vision: what can Woodbury be long-term?
- Implementation actions during 5-year designation
- Desired businesses downtown



**GOAL >> to help the city obtain DCA's Rural Zone designation**

# Strategic Plan

*The Strategic Plan will establish action items and projects that leverage the Rural Zone*

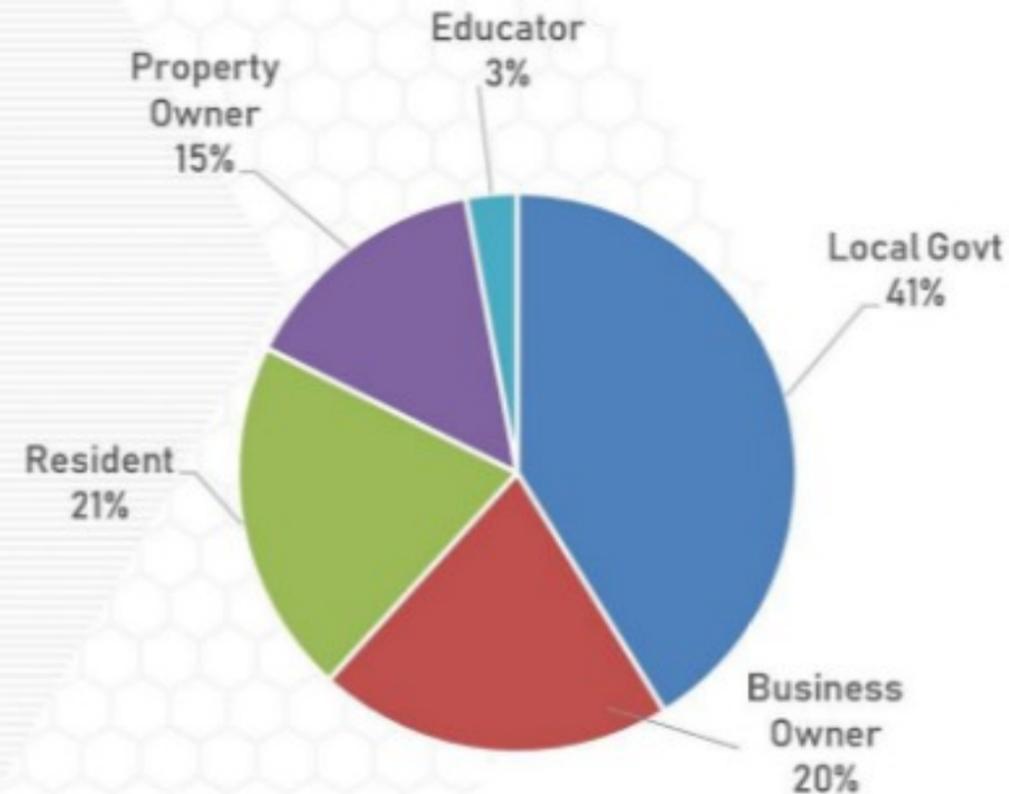
## Action Items will be based on:

- Projects with the greatest impact (e.g., jobs/investment, social, QOL)
- Cost/time to implement
- Ability to leverage long-term investment/revenue
- Ability to implement within the 5-year designation period



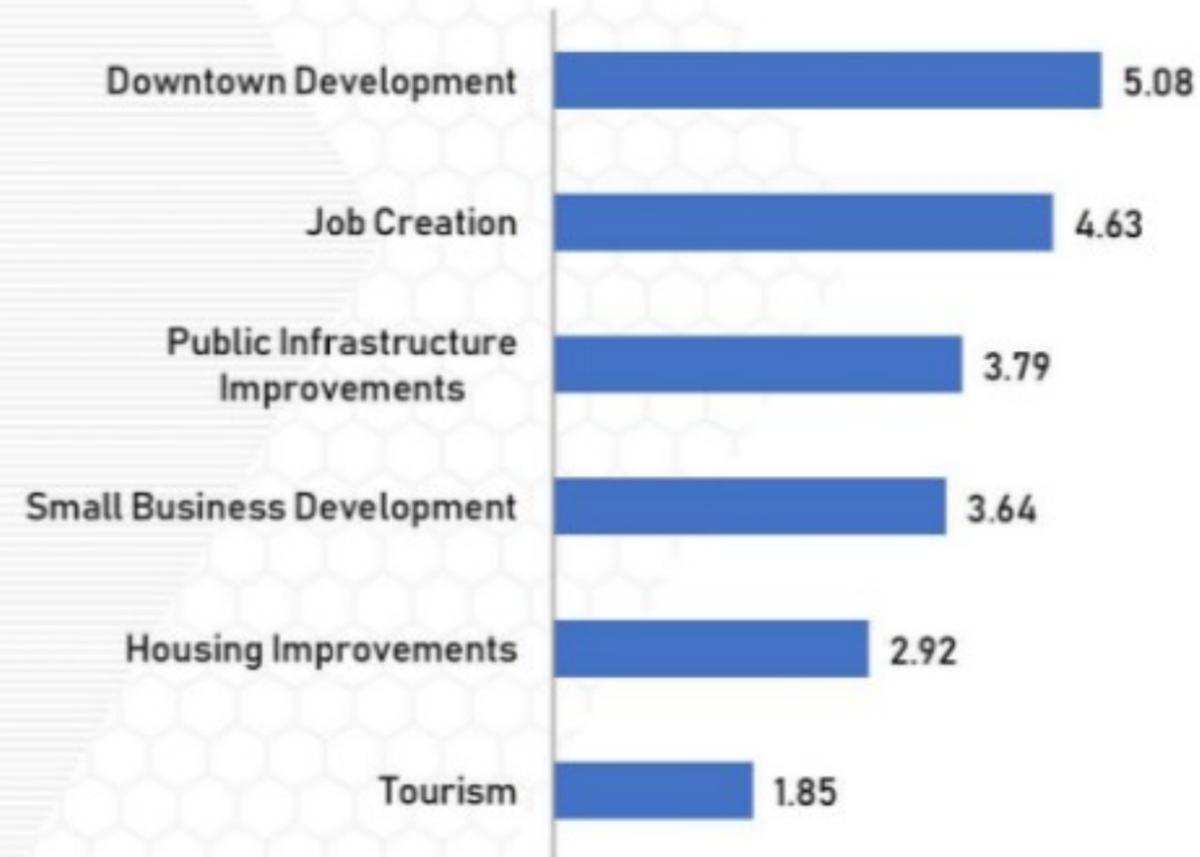
- “Internal” stakeholders
- Respondents are represented by their most “official” role with the city
- Varying roles in local government and economic development
- 35% have a stake in the local community by owning a business or property

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY?

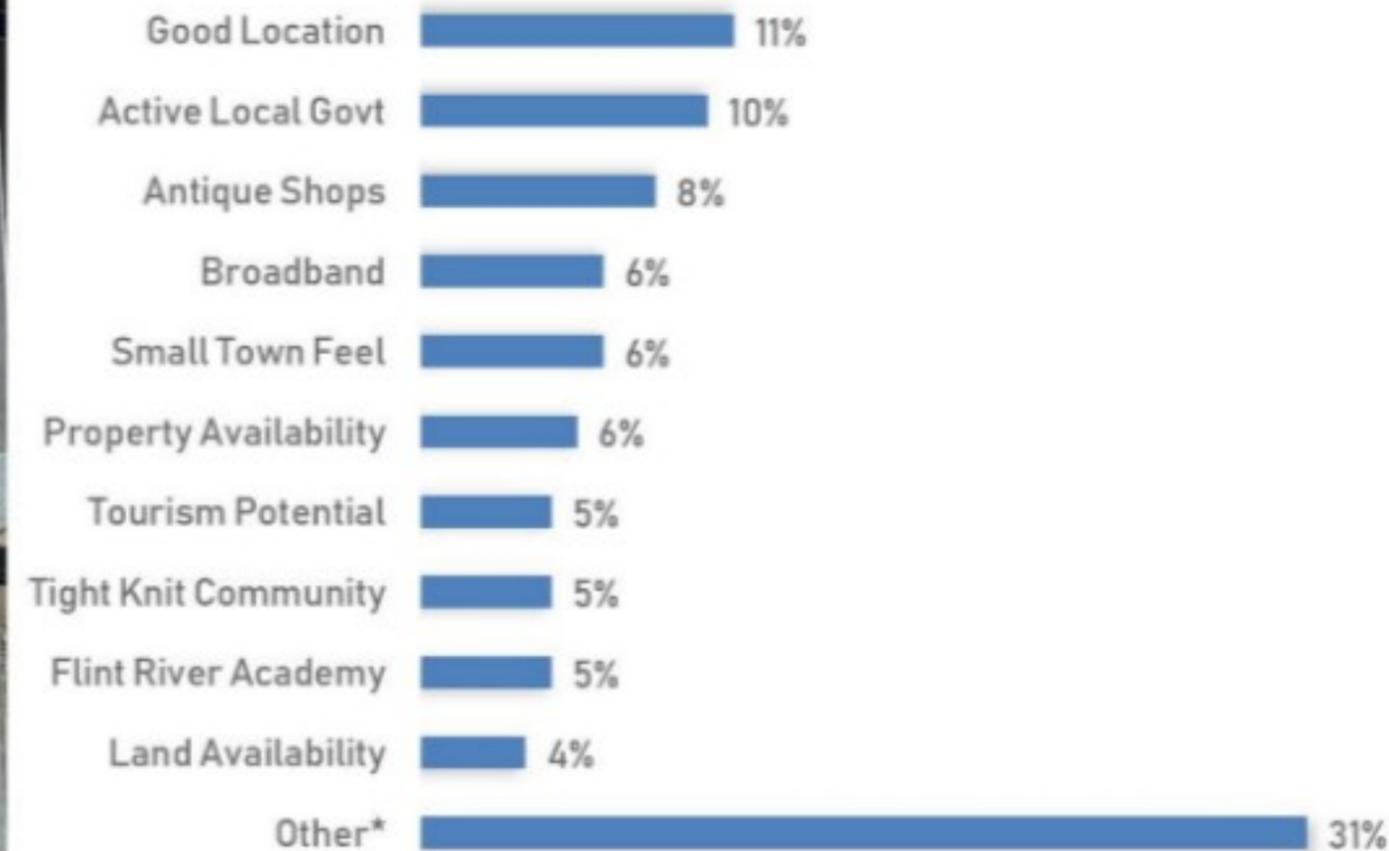


- **Downtown Development** is of primary importance for interviewees, with half of respondents ranking it at the top
- Many noted that while other areas are also important, redeveloping downtown is the first step from which everything else can follow

## WHAT SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WOODBURY?

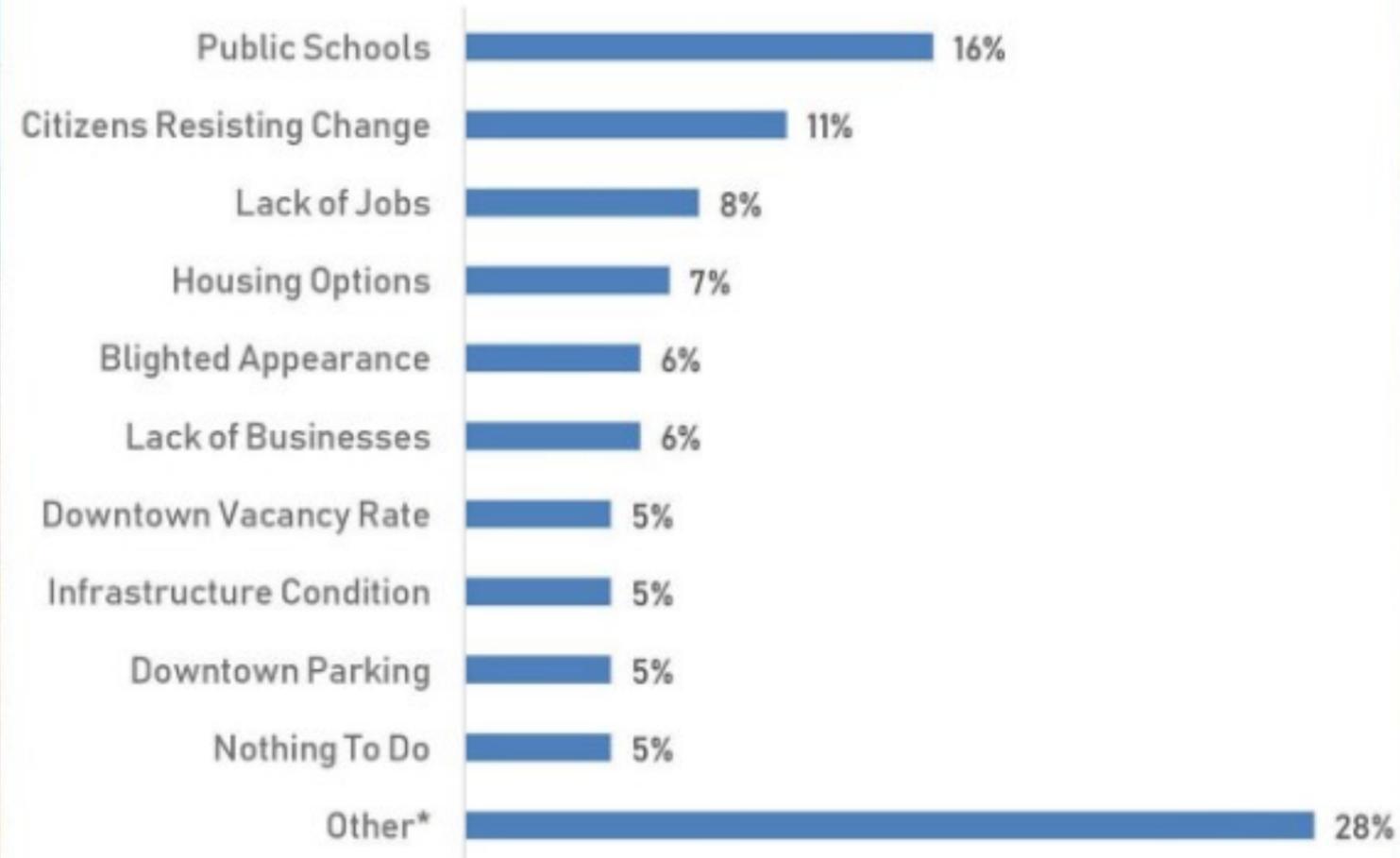


## WHAT ARE WOODBURY'S STRENGTHS?



\*"Other" includes...historic homes, high traffic counts, good community for retirees

## WHAT ARE WOODBURY'S WEAKNESSES?



\*"Other" includes...neglect from county, declining population, pervasive crime

# Focus Areas

## Downtown District

- Honor history and character...know your audience
- Proposed Rural Zone covers the downtown area

## Public Infrastructure

- Lack of streetscape/sidewalks/curbs
- Downtown parking availability is a concern

## Housing

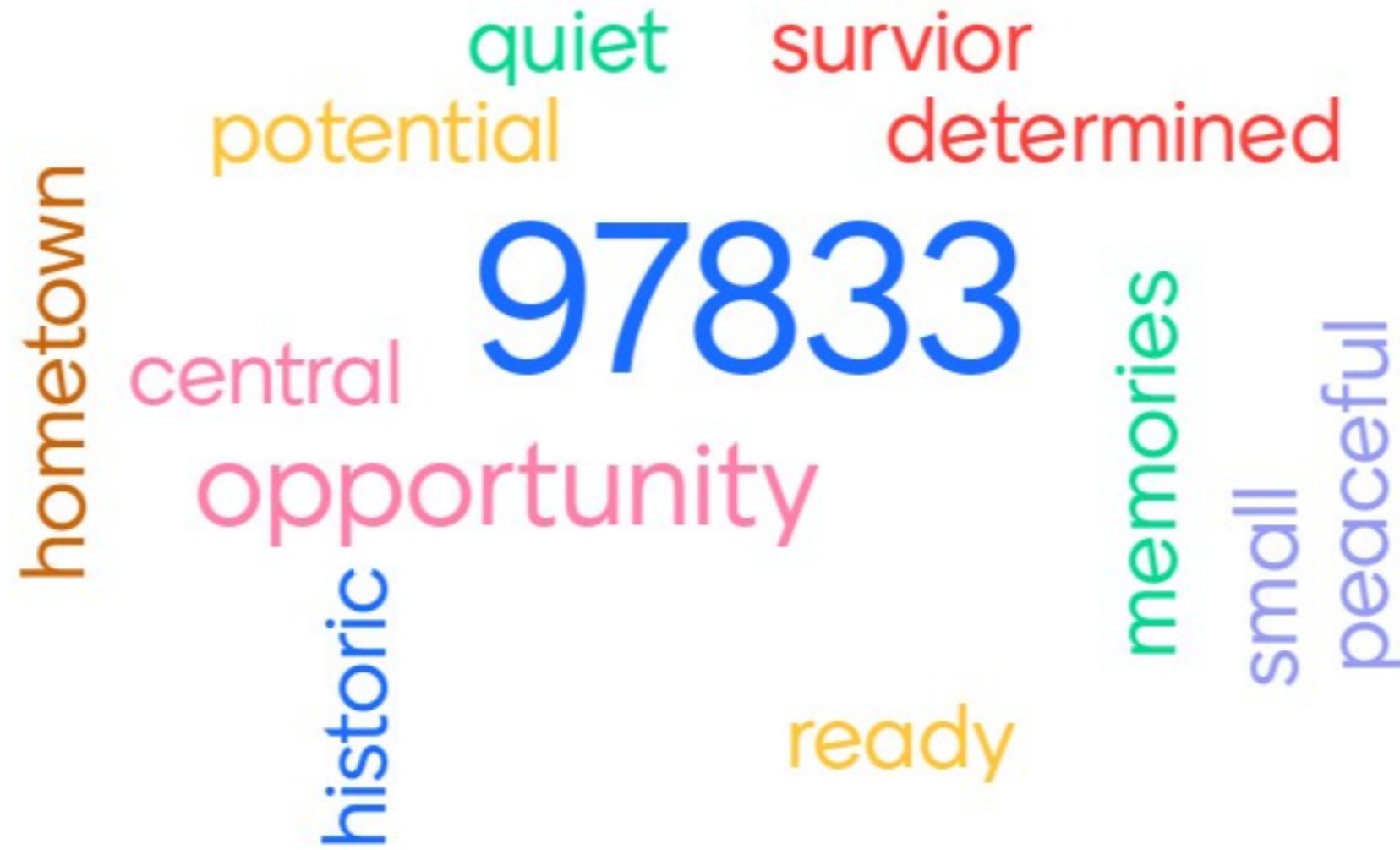
- Population slight decline, with a -0.5% decrease anticipated 2019-2024
- Rental rate 26%; vacancy rate is 19%

## Job Creation

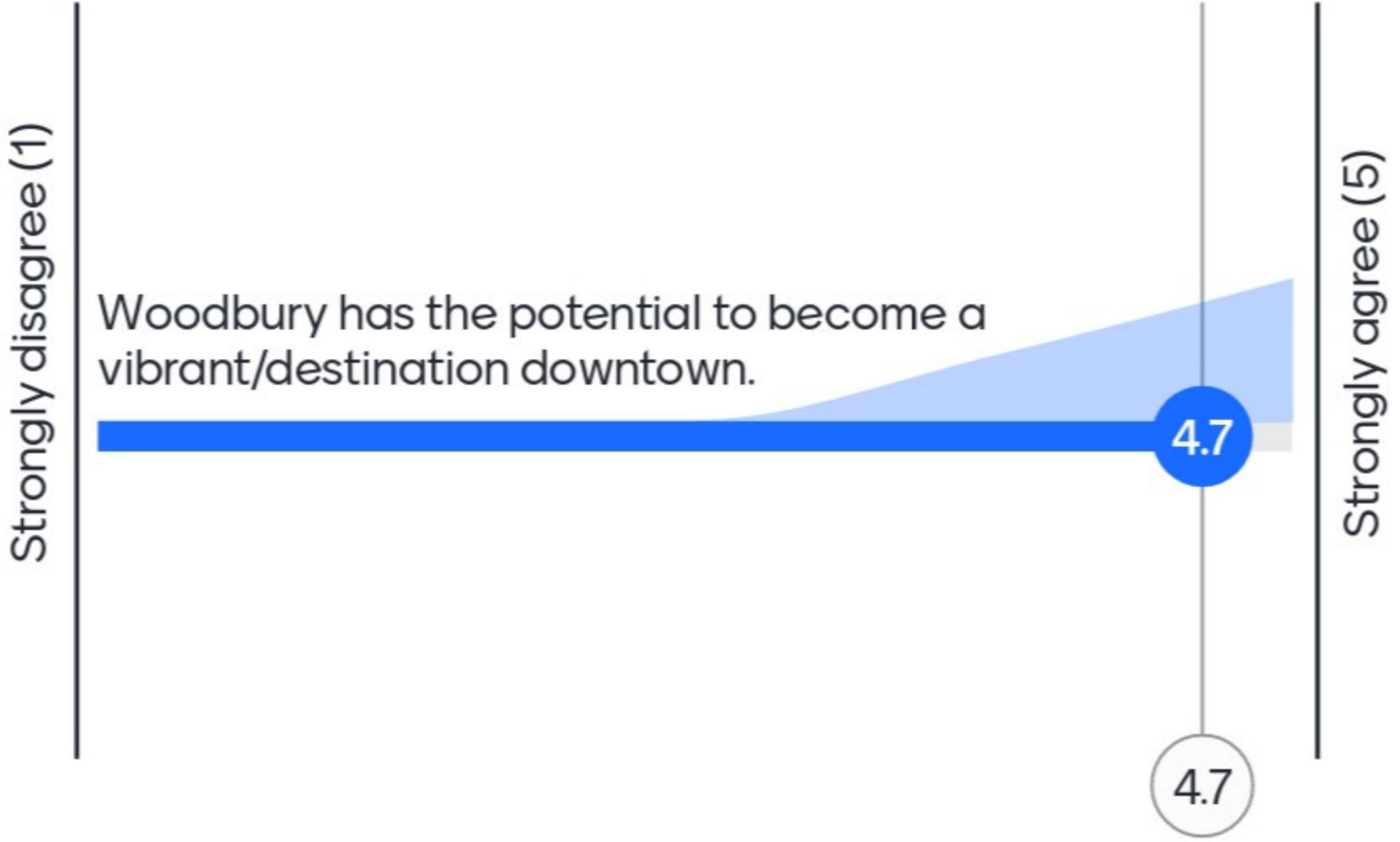
- Woodbury's median age of 44.9 years is significantly higher than Georgia's 36.8 years
- Working age cohort (25-64) represents a similar share of the population (52.4% compared to Georgia's 53.0%)



# Choose one word to describe downtown Woodbury.



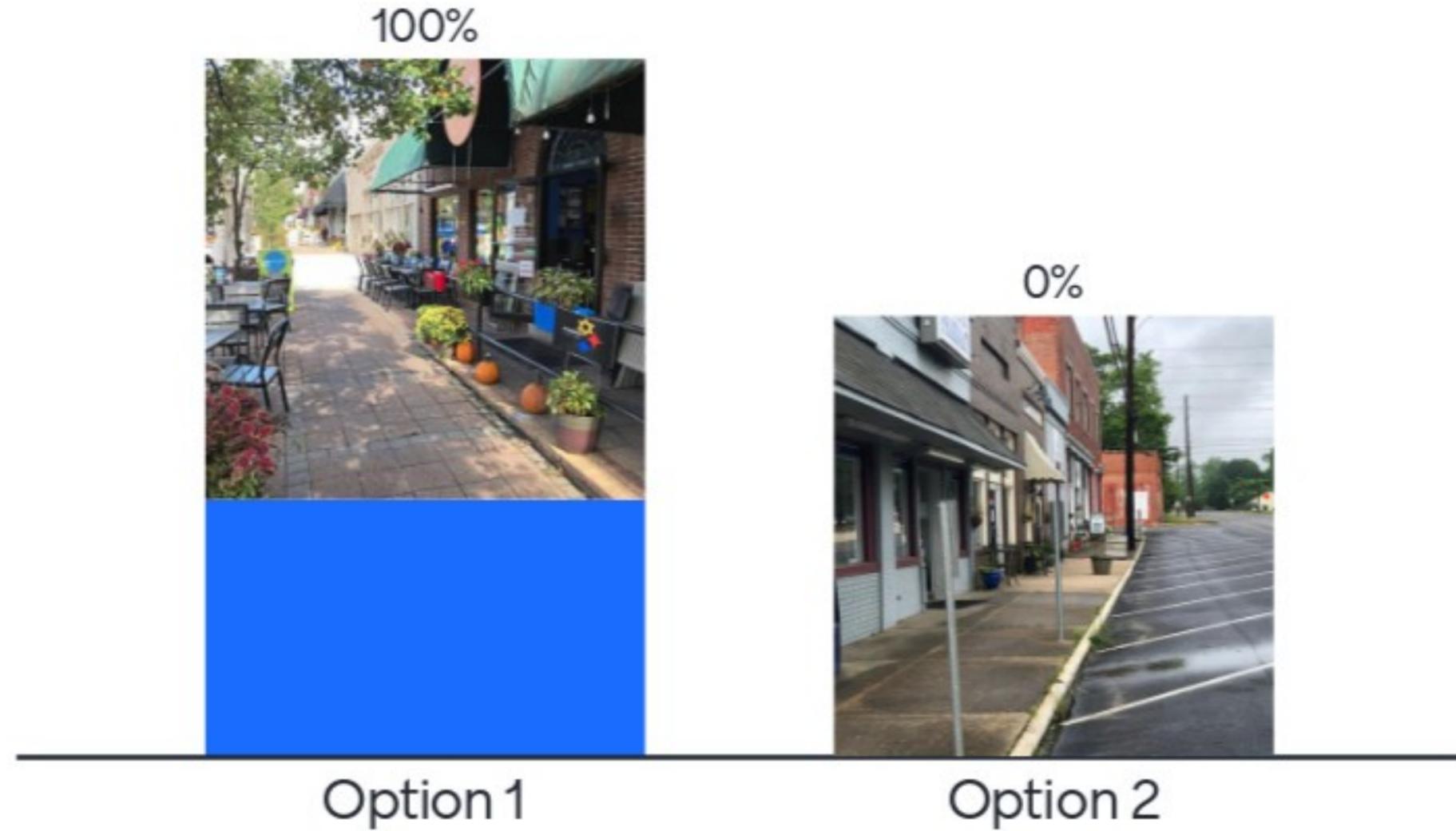
# Scales



# Scales



# Which image best represents your vision for the future of downtown Woodbury?



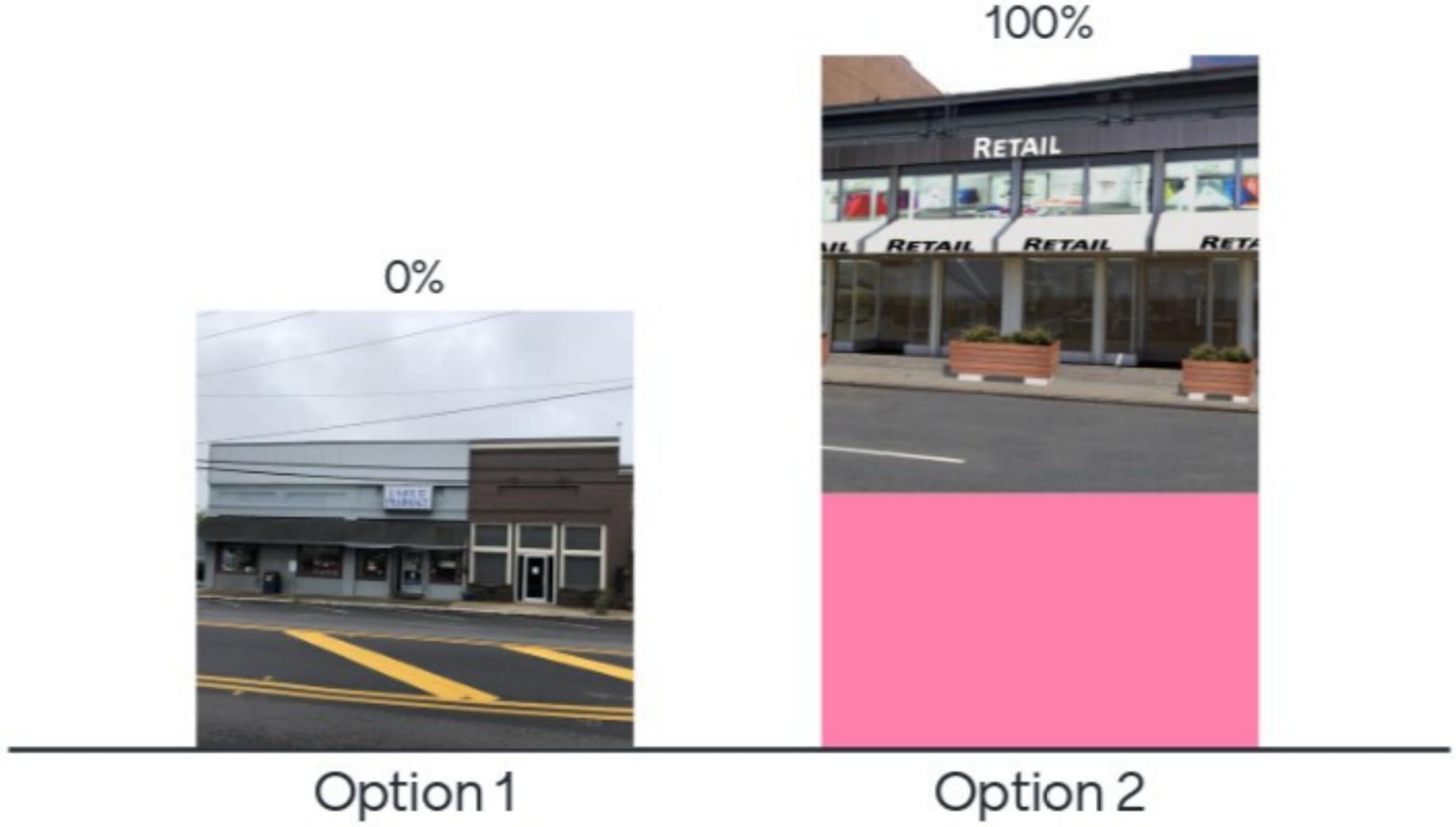
# Which image best represents your vision for the future of downtown Woodbury?



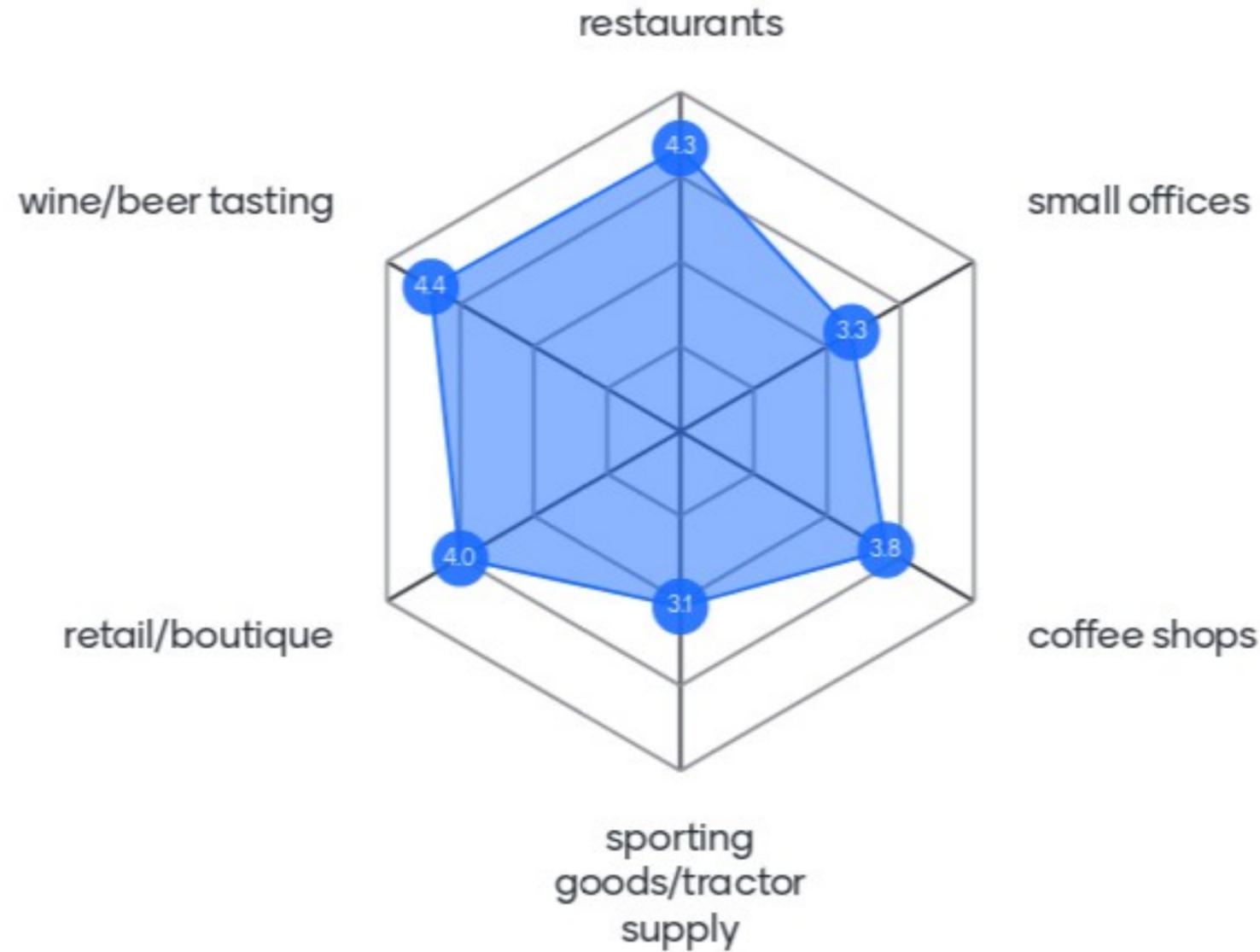
# Which image best represents your vision for the future of downtown Woodbury?



# Which image best represents your vision for the future of downtown Woodbury?



# What types of businesses would you like to see in downtown Woodbury?



# In addition to revitalizing downtown, what would you like to see happen first?



# What's Next?

## Please Complete the Survey!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/woodburyruralzone>

- ✓ Conduct remainder of interviews
- ✓ Analyze interviews and survey data
- ✓ Identify top priorities and steps needed to complete projects
- ✓ Build support and capacity
- ✓ Finish the strategic plan (July 2020)
- ✓ City submits the Rural Zone application to DCA (August 2020)



*Scan the code to take the survey!*

# QUESTIONS?

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Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research

[www.cedr.gatech.edu](http://www.cedr.gatech.edu)

# APPENDIX C: WOODBURY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

## Downtown Woodbury

*“People can be resistant to change, but it is not possible to keep things exactly as they are today or to return to the way things were in the past. Doing nothing is always an option, but if a community isn’t growing, it’s dying. Communities that support positive change always win.”*

As one of Meriwether County’s oldest cities, Woodbury retains a small historic commercial center with significant opportunities for revitalization, mixed-use redevelopment, and new infill construction. Several significant projects have already changed the face of the downtown business district including Blackbird Café and High Cotton Antiques. The downtown area is becoming a destination for antiques, attracting designers and collectors from larger cities. The city should continue to promote these types of businesses and adaptive uses; the more retail and restaurant opportunities present in downtown Woodbury, the larger the visitor draw will be.

While a few successful new businesses have opened downtown, a significant number of historic properties remain vacant, some in severely deteriorated condition. There are also multiple vacant or underutilized lots in the downtown area that should be evaluated for use as in-fill sites, park space, outdoor venue opportunities, and public parking to accommodate future demand. Since these issues are outside the scope of work for this strategic analysis, CEDR strongly recommends retaining a qualified consultant to solicit public input and create a downtown redevelopment plan that incorporates these elements.

The City of Woodbury and its development authority are responsible for creating an attractive and safe downtown area that serves as a community gathering place and central location for the community’s businesses. Woodbury’s development authority has the ability to focus on industrial and economic development as well as downtown development. The development authority can help provide incentives to encourage the restoration of historic downtown buildings through the creation of public/private partnerships, façade grants, revolving loan funds, tax credits, infrastructure improvements, streetscapes and sidewalks, marketing of the downtown area, special financing districts such as tax allocation districts, and a variety of other tools.

### MERIWETHER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2018-2038

Meriwether County’s Joint Comprehensive Plan (JCP) recommends land uses in the downtown and surrounding area that includes single-family residential, mixed-use, small scale commercial, parks and community gathering spaces, governmental buildings and civic spaces, and local institutions such as churches, schools, and fire stations. The county’s JCP encourages historic downtowns to promote the reinvestment and revitalization of historic buildings and structures. Implementation strategies in the plan include the installation of street trees, lighting, and other physical public improvements. It also emphasizes increased marketing and branding efforts to create a stronger sense of place to attract potential new tenants and developers. Other recommendations in the JCP relevant to Woodbury include adopting a strict sign ordinance and nominating historic properties and districts to the National Register of Historic Places.

## Woodbury Retail Market Analysis

An analysis of Woodbury's retail market reveals existing retail strengths and new opportunities in terms of local retail spending and leakage of dollars outside the city. The strongest performers in the local market that keep retail dollars from residents and bring outside customers into Woodbury include: Food and Beverage Stores; Grocery Stores; Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores; Other General and Miscellaneous Store Retailers; Florists; Used Merchandise; and Florists.

Over two dozen retail categories are not represented in Woodbury, requiring residents to spend entirely outside of the city limits for goods not currently available. This illustrates an enormous opportunity for Woodbury to recruit new local businesses to support current retail demand that is not being met within the city limits. For the following retail goods, residents are spending 100% of their dollars outside of Woodbury: Auto and Vehicle Dealers, Furniture Stores; Electronics & Appliances; Building Materials and Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies; Specialty Food Stores; Health and Personal Care Stores; Clothing, Accessories, and Shoe Stores; Jewelry, Luggage and Leather Goods; Sporting Goods and Hobbies; Books and Music; Department Stores; Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gift Stores; Direct Selling and Mail Order Houses; and Drinking Establishments.

Other retail needs that are also not being fully met in Woodbury include: Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tires; General Merchandise Stores; Gas Stations; Food Services and Drinking Places; and Restaurants. Such a wide variety of unfulfilled potential retail needs shows that Woodbury has an opportunity to bring new businesses to the area that will meet current demands for retail goods and fill vacant commercial properties.

Woodbury's complete *Retail MarketPlace Profile* in Appendix C shows the dollar potential for each retail industry group and the amount of retail spending that is being lost to businesses located outside of the city limits.

Potential barriers to new business recruitment include:

- Poor condition of the existing building stock; lack of move-in-ready locations
- Continued loss of historic buildings due to demolition by neglect
- Inactivity from the City of Woodbury and Woodbury Development Authority; failure to upgrade downtown sidewalks, landscapes, and buildings
- Lack of investment and commitment to revitalization from property owners
- Limited support of local businesses from the community

## Downtown Woodbury Priorities

While the Meriwether County Joint Comprehensive Plan contains important action items to be completed, the City of Woodbury will benefit from a more detailed strategy and work program to address the priorities and investments needed in the downtown central business district.

***It is important to note that downtown development does not happen overnight. A thriving downtown requires a concerted long-term effort involving the entire community including***

*elected officials, appointed boards, volunteers, and most importantly, the citizens of Woodbury. Downtown Woodbury is everyone's responsibility.*

#### WOODBURY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The most important aspect of downtown development is having a legal and active development authority. Smaller communities rarely have the funds available for a full-time staff person dedicated to downtown development, so volunteers and elected officials are required to sacrifice their time and energy to keep the community moving forward. The JCP has recommended another option; the creation and cost sharing of a 'floating position' to act as the downtown development director for all of the small cities throughout Meriwether County. This scenario should be explored with other cities to see if there is interest and funding available to create a position dedicated solely to downtown development efforts throughout the county.

The appointed downtown development authority board members must have and maintain at all times one of the following qualifications:

- City resident
- Resident of the authority's county and own or operate a business in the downtown development area
- Qualified under both 1 and 2
- Member of the city's governing body

In addition to meeting the qualification for the appointment of DDA board members, the WDA is also required to meet the Local Government Authorities Registration Act (O.G.G.A. 36-80-16). This act requires local government authorities to register annually with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The act also specifies that local government authorities that are not duly registered by January 1 are prohibited from incurring any debt or credit obligations. If an authority has registered in previous years, the online registration form on DCA's website should already be populated with information from the most current registration on file. The registration form must be updated to reflect any changes in board members, contact information, etc. Furthermore, Georgia law requires all board members of the DDA engaged in promoting the development of trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities to complete at least eight hours of training within the first 12 months of their appointments.

Since there is such strong support for downtown development, those who wish to contribute ideas and opinions should be encouraged to attend open public authority meetings. Regular monthly meetings should continue to be held to keep the flow of momentum and ideas moving forward. Participants should be welcome to share their perspective and ideas but only appointed authority directors are allowed to cast a vote. Each monthly meeting should focus on a specific project or issue. If there are no active projects or issues of concern, the authority should focus the meeting agenda on one of the four pillars of the Georgia Main Street Program:

1. Promotion/Marketing
2. Economic Vitality
3. Organization
4. Design

#### WOODBURY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Conduct regular public meetings
- 2) Meet legal requirements for development authority training within one year of appointment of new directors
- 3) Adopt mission, vision, goals as well as a five-year work plan
- 4) Consider purchasing downtown property now before prices increase. This give the authority control of key historic properties and lots that can be utilized in the future as demand increases

#### ESTABLISH A LEGAL NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) FOR WOODBURY REVITALIZATION

The creation of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the revitalization of Woodbury is important because it allows financial and in-kind donations from individuals and businesses to be eligible for tax deductions. The 501(c)(3) should be integrated into a public/private partnership (P3) between the City of Woodbury, the Woodbury Development Authority, dedicated individuals, and the private corporate sector. The board of directors for this non-profit could have a much broader and effective constitution than the development authority board which is limited to only city residents and/or county residents who own businesses in the downtown district. The 501(c)(3) board could include valuable and influential members from local banks, utility companies, and corporations interested in the revitalization of Woodbury who may not be eligible to be appointed as a director on the authority due to residency requirements. Such a collaborative P3 effort has the potential to raise a significant amount of private and corporate funds to assist with restoration and revitalization projects throughout the city.

If possible, this 501(c)(3) non-profit should be created and managed under the umbrella of the WDA in order to ensure the organization remains politically impartial and focused entirely on revitalization efforts.

#### NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Create and file required paperwork to form a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- 2) Appoint non-profit board of directors (can be same as development authority)
- 3) Create separate banking accounts to hold funds for the non-profit separate from development authority accounts
- 4) Hold meeting as needed to establish bylaws, mission, vision, goals, and work plan

#### DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

The Woodbury Development Authority, with funding from the city, should hire a qualified planning consultant to conduct a comprehensive downtown development master plan to address key issues and help consistently guide future growth and policy decisions. Most downtown development plans typically include household data, demographics, market analysis information, and retail trends. Much of this data has already been collected and analyzed as part of this plan, so the downtown development master plan should focus primarily on the following items:

- **Parcel and Building Survey:** Identify historic buildings to be preserved and restored; evaluate non-historic buildings that can be demolished or significantly remodeled; and identify vacant lots that can be used for shared public parking, new infill development, and pocket parks.

- **Downtown Parking Plan:** Establish shared public parking lots and evaluate the availability of on-street parking that will be needed in the future.
- **Streetscape and Road Improvements:** Identify and address traffic flow issues, signalization, future bike lanes, and pedestrian crosswalks. Plan future streetscape improvements including gateway signage, lighting, intersection mast arms, and landscaping/street trees. Incorporate sidewalk furniture including benches, garbage receptacles, downtown directional signage, and decorative banners. Road improvement plans on all state routes should be coordinated through the GDOT district office.
- **Pocket Parks:** Identify large expanses of existing lots that are unused, underutilized, and poorly maintained that could be better suited for use as downtown greenspace. Signature downtown pocket parks could include water features, historical markers, sitting areas, and/or artwork from local artists that highlights the city and region's unique history. Identify possible public/private sponsors to help fund downtown park improvements.

The Downtown Development Master Plan should include a five-year work program that identifies specific action items, assigns responsibility for completing each task to an individual or organization, provides an estimated budget for each task, identifies possible funding sources, and determines a reasonable date for project completion. These action items should be incorporated into every annual city budget in order to ensure progress.

#### DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN FUNDING SOURCES:

- 1) City of Woodbury and/or Meriwether County general funds
- 2) Woodbury bond issuance
- 3) GDOT, foundations, state and federal grants

#### DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Conduct an inventory of existing sidewalk conditions and identify areas in need of immediate repair
- 2) Discuss creating a streetscape project with gateway entrances along SR 109/Woodbury Road with the GDOT regional office. Address the lack of crosswalks and possible addition of a signal light to slow traffic passing through the downtown.
- 3) Hire a qualified landscape architecture/planning firm to design a comprehensive development, sidewalk, landscape, and pedestrian plan throughout the central business district.
- 4) City Council should formally adopt the final plan and implement recommendations

#### DOWNTOWN HISTORIC STRUCTURE ANALYSIS/CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Downtown Woodbury has been in a state of decline for such an extended period of time that residents and commuters have a difficult time picturing the city as anything other than it already is. When people have seen vacant dilapidated buildings in disrepair for decades, it becomes difficult to imagine anything better.

Minor exterior cosmetic improvements can have an enormous impact on a historic building and the public's perception of the area. Unfortunately, historic buildings that sit vacant for extended

periods of time face additional issues. For example, water infiltration from a leaking roof will eventually lead to the deterioration of a building's structural elements. Broken storefront windows may have caused the storefront to be boarded up with plywood to prevent further damage to the property. Lack of temperature control inside the building might lead to the proliferation of mildew and toxic mold. Over time, insect or rodent infestation in a vacant structure could cause significant damage to structural elements, electrical wiring, and original historic wood flooring and wall paneling, ceilings, and trim. Lead or iron plumbing from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that is still present must be replaced. Historic buildings may be contaminated with lead paint and asbestos products that will have to be abated in order to find future tenants.

The structural condition and interior issues of historic buildings in the central business district are currently unknown. The Woodbury Development Authority should conduct a Downtown Historic Structure Analysis/Conditions Assessment of its downtown buildings in order to assess the true condition of vacant historic buildings and determine the feasibility of saving and renovating these structures. Unfortunately, some buildings may be too far deteriorated to preserve. It is important for the DDA to know which buildings can be rehabilitated and what the potential costs could be for the property owner in order to plan programs and identify funding sources to help address the problems.

The best way for the city/development authority to conduct a Downtown Historic Structure Analysis/Conditions Assessment is to contract with certified building professionals such as engineers, architects, building inspectors, or construction contractors for their services and request a discounted rate for analyzing multiple properties. The authority could also identify qualified volunteers to donate their time and expertise to accomplish this effort. In order to conduct this survey, property owners will have to agree to allow access to the interior of their building; therefore, anyone entering the property should have an appropriate level of insurance coverage or agree to sign a 'hold harmless' agreement before entering a potentially dangerous building. An attorney should be consulted before implementing this program. Establishing a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the preservation of Woodbury's history and the revitalization of downtown will allow financial and in-kind donations from individuals and businesses for projects such as a Downtown Historic Structure Analysis/Conditions Assessment to be eligible as a tax deductible charitable contribution.

The Downtown Historic Structure Analysis/Conditions Assessment would not be an official code enforcement activity by the City of Woodbury, but an analysis by the development authority for planning efforts and grant program development. Owners should understand (and the city must agree) owners would not be cited for maintenance issues, code violations, or safety concerns as a result of participating in this planning effort. The benefits to a property owner for participating in the authority's Downtown Historic Structure Analysis include a free building inspection, identification of interior and exterior issues and challenges, and a cost estimate to correct the problems in order to return the building to a leasable condition.

If a downtown property owner does not wish to participate in the program, they should at least be encouraged to discuss significant issues and obstacles they may have with repairs required before tenant occupancy. Property owners who participate or cooperate by providing insights into specific building issues that constitute a roadblock to renovation should be considered eligible to participate in any future programs and partnerships developed to assist with building improvements in the downtown area.

Once the downtown historic structure analysis is completed for participating buildings, the findings will result in a ranking of individual building conditions; for example:

Move in ready (fully renovated and ready for occupancy)

- a. Ready for occupancy with minor cosmetic repairs (excellent building condition, all systems upgraded, minor cosmetic tenant finishing needed such as awnings, signage, lighting, or paint)
- b. Good condition with minor repairs needed (solid building requiring new paint, replacement of broken storefront windows, new flooring, new bathrooms)
- c. Structurally sound with significant repairs required (solid roof and floor systems but electrical wiring and plumbing needs replaced, HVAC needed)
- d. Structurally unsound and in need of significant repairs (deteriorated roof framing, termite damage to floor joists, exterior walls require extensive brick mortar repointing)
- e. Unsalvageable (demolition required)

The restoration and conversion of vacant historic structures into move-in condition will vary widely depending on the amount of existing damage; however, very few buildings will ultimately be considered unsalvageable, even if only the brick walls remain intact. For unsalvageable properties, the City of Woodbury should consider the judicious use of condemnation proceedings. Properties that score on the low end of habitability will be less concerned with façade grant improvements and more interested in assistance with addressing structural deficiencies, roof repairs, water infiltration, obsolete electrical wiring, plumbing issues, and hazardous material abatement.

Once the results of a Downtown Historic Structure Analysis/Conditions Assessment are analyzed, the authority will likely find many of these buildings require the total replacement of electrical wiring, water/sewer lines, and other obstacles difficult for the property owner to finance. The good news is power and water/sewer providers are eager to find new customers for their services and may be able to assist with a downtown development program to bring Woodbury's historic buildings up to code to help generate new businesses. The data collected from this analysis could also be utilized to encourage local area banks to create a program to provide low/no interest loans for a limited period of time to help property owners restore historic downtown buildings and bring in new tenants. New businesses will likely generate future loans and income streams for these banks creating a win-win-win-win relationship between the banks, the City of Woodbury, the Woodbury Development Authority, and new downtown businesses.

#### DOWNTOWN HISTORIC STRUCTURE ANALYSIS/CONDITION ASSESSMENT FUNDING SOURCES:

1. Woodbury Development Authority funds already in reserve
2. City bond issuance
3. Foundations, banks, local area businesses

#### DOWNTOWN HISTORIC STRUCTURE ANALYSIS/CONDITION ASSESSMENT ACTION ITEMS:

1. Identify buildings in the central business district that are 50 years of age or older
2. Assign the survey/inventory to staff, authority member, or consultant
3. Create survey form format to identify and explain issues with each building in a uniform and consistent manner
4. Obtain cost estimates to address necessary repairs

5. Develop programs to assist businesses and owners with downtown building rehabilitation

### FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM

The Woodbury Development Authority should create and administer a façade grant program to assist property owners with upgrades to the storefronts of historic buildings in the downtown central business district. The façade grant program should provide matching funds to property or business owners at appropriate levels, i.e. 80% private and 20% grant, or even 50% private and 50% grant for early users of the program to generate interest and produce immediate results.

The intent of a façade grant program is to assist property owners with the restoration and enhancement of existing historic downtown buildings that are in visually poor condition. Eligible projects should visibly improve the unique historic and architectural character of the storefront. Examples include but are not limited to replacing unattractive signs, installing new awnings, exterior painting, window or door replacement, wiring and installation of exterior lighting, and other general storefront restoration activities. In addition to providing grant funds for exterior improvements, the City of Woodbury could agree to waive any permit and inspection fees for grant recipients as an additional monetary incentive.

The façade grant program should not be utilized for interior improvements, routine maintenance like roof repair/replacement, soft costs and contractor fees (i.e. architectural blueprints), or other activities that do not significantly improve the exterior appearance of the building. Grant funds should not be utilized for alterations that are not historically appropriate, that remove or damage historic architectural details, or for buildings that are less than fifty years old until a majority of the downtown historic buildings have been restored.

All façade grant applications would be processed and approved by the Woodbury Development Authority through impartial project evaluation based on clear scoring/ranking criteria to avoid the arbitrary and capricious awarding of funds. Establishing a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the preservation of Woodbury's history and the revitalization of downtown will allow donations from individuals and businesses for projects such as a façade grant program to be eligible for tax deductions.

#### FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING SOURCES:

1. City of Woodbury general funds
2. Woodbury Development Authority reserve funds
3. Woodbury bond issuance
4. Private foundations, banks, area businesses
5. Explore creating a self-taxing Community Improvement District (CID) for downtown, once downtown businesses are established and vacancy is low

#### FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM ACTION ITEMS:

1. Identify façade improvement grant program budget and secure committed funds
2. WDA creates and administers the façade grant program including application forms and fees, maximum grant award amounts, matching fund requirements, impartial application scoring system, and conditions of grant awards

3. Identify WDA directors and/or interested citizens with a design background to participate in a façade advisory capacity including architects, designers, historic preservationists, etc.
4. Ensure grants awarded are NOT used to diminish the historical integrity of buildings or to fund inappropriate alterations

#### SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Multiple stakeholder interviews identified the deteriorated condition of Woodbury’s sidewalks as a major concern. In addition to creating the visual impression of a neglected city, the crumbling sidewalk infrastructure is a safety hazard and not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Without investment in improving the quality of the city’s sidewalks, it will be difficult to find investors willing to invest in significant improvements to Woodbury’s downtown historic building stock. Typically, private sector investment follows public sector improvements and most investors are unwilling to spend significant sums of money in a community that is unwilling to invest in basic infrastructure improvements.

***“Private development chases public sector improvements. Developers are more likely to take risk investing in an area where public upgrades are being made.”***

Since the SR 109/Woodbury Road corridor is a state highway, the corridor may be eligible for Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) streetscape project funds to improve sidewalks, introduce street trees and lighting, and create a new landscaped median with pedestrian safe zones for crossing the road. Any work within the right-of-way of this road will require extensive coordination with GDOT. The funding source for streetscapes requires a lengthy planning process, taking a minimum of two to three years to complete required federal and state planning and environmental permitting processes.

Secondary roads through the central business district could be addressed more quickly utilizing local funds once the downtown development plan has identified the optimal road and sidewalk widths. Many of the downtown side streets could benefit from a ‘road diet’ that shrinks the size of the travel lanes and provides wider sidewalks and bike paths. The city or WDA should contract with a qualified landscape architecture design firm to design future sidewalk improvements, landscaping, bike paths, pedestrian crossings, street furniture, and on-street parking strategies, as permitted by GDOT as part of the downtown development master plan.

#### SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDING SOURCES:

1. City of Woodbury local match
2. GDOT surface transportation funds
3. Woodbury bond issuance
4. County financial assistance where possible

#### SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ACTION ITEMS:

1. Conduct an inventory of existing sidewalk conditions and identify areas in need of immediate repair

2. Discuss the possibility of creating a streetscape project and gateway entrance along SR 109/Woodbury Road with the GDOT regional office.
3. Hire a qualified landscape architecture/planning firm to design a comprehensive sidewalk, landscape, and pedestrian plan throughout the central business district and side streets.

#### **DOWNTOWN REVOLVING LOAD FUND (DCA)**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers the Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to provide financial assistance to cities, counties and development authorities involved in downtown development. The RLF provides below-market rate gap financing to fund projects in core historic downtown areas and adjacent historic neighborhoods where investment will spur commercial redevelopment.

The City of Woodbury and the Woodbury Development Authority meet eligibility requirements to participate in this program, which requires a city's population to be 100,000 or less with active projects in a historic central business district. The users of RLF funds may be a private business or a public entity such as a city or development authority. Loan amounts range from a minimum loan of \$50,000 to a maximum amount of \$250,000 per project, not to exceed 40% of total eligible project costs.

Applicants for the DCA program must demonstrate they have a viable downtown development project and clearly identify the proposed uses of the loan proceeds. Once approved, funds may be used for a variety of redevelopment activities including: real estate acquisition, development, redevelopment, rehabilitation and new construction; the rehabilitation of public buildings (on a limited basis); the purchase of equipment and other assets (on a limited basis).

RLF interest rates are typically below-market; Main Street cities currently receive a 2% rate and all other undesignated cities qualify a 3% rate. The repayment period of the loan is 15 years with a fifteen-year amortization. Security is typically project collateral and/or personal guarantees. RLF applications are accepted throughout the calendar year and awarded as loan funds become available. A copy of the Initial Project Assessment form can be downloaded at [www.dca.ga.gov](http://www.dca.ga.gov).

#### **DOWNTOWN REVOLVING LOAN FUND ACTION ITEMS:**

- Contact Cherie Bennett at DCA to explore project financing options with the RLF for downtown development projects
- The Woodbury Development Authority should discuss the possibility of acquiring key downtown buildings and/or lots before prices increase
- Discuss the RLF funding option with developers to assist with project gap financing if standard loans do not fully meet project costs

#### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

The City of Woodbury has recently established a local Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to help preserve and guide exterior renovations to historically significant properties. As part of this process, Woodbury needs to ensure that the commission members receive the required

training needed to successfully guide changes within their designated district(s). A survey of historic properties should be conducted to determine the historic district boundaries and identify which properties fall under the jurisdiction of the HPC. Once the historic district boundaries are determined, the HPC and development authority should seek Main Street Design assistance to prepare conceptual renderings for historically appropriate improvements to exterior facades that preserve the unique characteristics of buildings.

The Historic Resource Survey should first be conducted in the downtown commercial area to create the first HPC commercial historic district. This will keep the level of responsibility manageable while the commission learns how to manage and implement its processes and policies. Designating the downtown commercial area will likely receive broad support initially whereas residential historic districts may be met with more resistance until the positive effects of the commission can be widely observed.

#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS:

1. Historic Preservation Commission members attend required training
2. Survey the downtown commercial buildings and establish an appropriate historic district boundary
3. Establish design guidelines for commercial building exterior renovations that retain and enhance the historic features of buildings in the district
4. Establish commission policies and procedures to be followed for obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness for any changes made to the exterior of buildings in the district
5. Once the commission's policies and procedures become standardized and familiar, the commission can look into expanding the initial historic district or creating a new residential district following the same process
6. If the HPC does not have qualified members able to advise applicants or are unsure about building alterations, professional consultants can be called upon for assistance

# APPENDIX D: RETAIL MARKETPLACE PROFILE



# Retail MarketPlace Profile

Woodbury City, GA  
 Woodbury City, GA (1383896)  
 Geography: Place

Prepared by Esri

## Summary Demographics

2020 Population	920
2020 Households	373
2020 Median Disposable Income	\$29,838
2020 Per Capita Income	\$18,776

**NOTE: This database is in mature status. While the data are presented in current year geography, all supply- and demand-related estimates remain vintage 2017.**

2017 Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplu Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-	\$9,318,695	\$9,245,638	\$73,057	0.4	15
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$8,587,922	\$8,874,572	-\$286,650	-1.6	12
Total Food & Drink	722	\$730,773	\$371,066	\$359,707	32.6	3

2017 Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplu Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$2,044,773	\$118,094	\$1,926,679	89.1	1
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$1,699,959	\$0	\$1,699,959	100.0	0
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$181,198	\$0	\$181,198	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$163,616	\$118,094	\$45,522	16.2	1
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$268,455	\$0	\$268,455	100.0	0
Furniture Stores	4421	\$143,735	\$0	\$143,735	100.0	0
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$124,720	\$0	\$124,720	100.0	0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$240,321	\$0	\$240,321	100.0	0
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$606,711	\$0	\$606,711	100.0	0
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$567,780	\$0	\$567,780	100.0	0
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$38,931	\$0	\$38,931	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$1,441,495	\$7,288,094	-\$5,846,599	-67.0	6
Grocery Stores	4451	\$1,284,405	\$6,942,825	-\$5,658,420	-68.8	4
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$83,645	\$0	\$83,645	100.0	0
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$73,445	\$345,269	-\$271,824	-64.9	2
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$567,905	\$0	\$567,905	100.0	0
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$1,104,917	\$612,663	\$492,254	28.7	1
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$321,247	\$0	\$321,247	100.0	0
Clothing Stores	4481	\$223,188	\$0	\$223,188	100.0	0
Shoe Stores	4482	\$52,877	\$0	\$52,877	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$45,182	\$0	\$45,182	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$195,277	\$0	\$195,277	100.0	0
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$172,038	\$0	\$172,038	100.0	0
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$23,239	\$0	\$23,239	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$1,362,627	\$520,344	\$842,283	44.7	1
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$951,976	\$0	\$951,976	100.0	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$410,651	\$520,344	-\$109,693	-11.8	1
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$319,205	\$335,377	-\$16,172	-2.5	3
Florists	4531	\$9,087	\$39,233	-\$30,146	-62.4	1
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$47,838	\$0	\$47,838	100.0	0
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$36,331	\$296,144	-\$259,813	-78.1	2
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$225,949	\$0	\$225,949	100.0	0
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$114,989	\$0	\$114,989	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$64,951	\$0	\$64,951	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$6,239	\$0	\$6,239	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$43,799	\$0	\$43,799	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$730,773	\$371,066	\$359,707	32.6	3
Special Food Services	7223	\$8,114	\$0	\$8,114	100.0	0
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$14,031	\$0	\$14,031	100.0	0
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$708,628	\$371,066	\$337,562	31.3	3

**Data Note:** Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

**Source:** Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2020 Updated Demographics. Esri 2017 Retail MarketPlace. ©2020 Esri. ©2017 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

# APPENDIX E: FEDERAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Selected Federal Resources that can support broad-based Economic Development Strategies for US Regions and Communities.**

**To add or update a program entry, email us at [edi@eda.gov](mailto:edi@eda.gov).**

**User Tips:** General information for programs listed below can be found in the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA), maintained at <https://beta.sam.gov>

Please visit the **program office link** for current status, funding availability, points of contact and other information.

Use the **filter function** at the top of each column heading to narrow your search.

**\*\* Opportunity Zone info is based on completed actions of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council, as of April 2019. Additional targeting, preference and support may be forthcoming.**

Program title	Federal Office	CFDA Number	Link to more info	Filter Function															
				Provides project grants?	Direct assistance to individual or business?	Serves urban (U), rural areas (R) or both (B)?	Opportunity Zone Priority, flexibility or other incentives**	Most Common Uses	construction/facilities/equip	planning / capacity building	job training/workforce development	R&D/ innovation/commercialization	entrepreneurship/ development	loans/equity/ business incentives	resilience/ other financial	international trade	other uses		
Appalachian Local Development District Assistance	ARC	23.009	<a href="https://www.arc.gov/fu">https://www.arc.gov/fu</a>	X		B					X							X	
Appalachian Research, Technical Assistance, and Demonstration Projects (includes RLF)	ARC	23.011	<a href="https://www.arc.gov/fu">https://www.arc.gov/fu</a>	X		B					X							X	
Appalachian Area Development	ARC	23.002	<a href="https://www.arc.gov/fu">https://www.arc.gov/fu</a>	x		B	X		X	X	X		X	X	X			X	
Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA)	CNCS	94.013	<a href="https://www.nationalse">https://www.nationalse</a>	X		B					x						x	X	
Homeland Security Preparedness Technical Assistance Program	DHS-FEMA	97.007	<a href="https://www.fema.gov/">https://www.fema.gov/</a>		X	B					X						X		
Cluster Grants - Regional Innovation Strategies Program	DOC-EDA	11.02	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/oc">https://www.eda.gov/oc</a>	X		B					X		X	X					
Investments for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities	DOC-EDA	11.3	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>	X		B			X								X		
Economic Development_Support for Planning Organizations	DOC-EDA	11.302	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>	X		B					X								
Economic Development_Technical Assistance	DOC-EDA	11.303	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>	X		B					X							X	
Economic Adjustment Assistance	DOC-EDA	12.617	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>	X		B			X	X		X			X	X		X	
Research and Evaluation Program	DOC-EDA	11.312	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>	X		B					X							X	
Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms	DOC-EDA	11.313	<a href="https://www.eda.gov/ps">https://www.eda.gov/ps</a>		X	B												X	
Foreign-Trade Zones in the United States	DOC-ITA	n/a	<a href="http://enforcement.trade">http://enforcement.trade</a>		X	B											X		
SelectUSA	DOC-ITA	n/a	<a href="https://www.selectusa.g">https://www.selectusa.g</a>		X	B											X	X	
Commercial Service	DOC-ITA	n/a	<a href="http://www.trade.gov/c">http://www.trade.gov/c</a>		X	B											X		
Minority Business Resource Development	DOC-MBDA	11.802	<a href="http://www.mbda.gov/t">http://www.mbda.gov/t</a>	X	X	B							X					X	

Program title	Federal Office	CFDA Number	Link to more info	Provides project grants?		Direct assistance to individual or business?		Serves urban (U), rural areas (R) or both (B)?		Opportunity Zone, Priority, flexibility or other incentives**		Most Common Uses		construction/facilities/equip		planning / capacity building		job training /workforce development		R&D / innovation/ commercialization		entrepreneurship/ development		loans/equity/ business incentives		resilience/ other financial		international trade		other uses	
MBDA Business Center - American Indian and Alaska Native	DOC-MBDA	11.804	<a href="http://www.mbda.gov/">http://www.mbda.gov/</a>	X		B																X								X	
MBDA Business Center	DOC-MBDA	11.805	<a href="http://www.mbda.gov/">http://www.mbda.gov/</a>	X		B																X								X	
Manufacturing USA	DOC-NIST	n/a	<a href="https://www.manufactu">https://www.manufactu</a>		X	B													X												
Measurement and Engineering Research and Standards	DOC-NIST	11.609	<a href="https://www.nist.gov/st">https://www.nist.gov/st</a>	X		B													X											X	
Manufacturing Extension Partnership	DOC-NIST	11.611	<a href="https://www.nist.gov/m">https://www.nist.gov/m</a>	X	X	B													X	X											
Science, Technology, Business and/or Education Outreach	DOC-NIST	11.62	<a href="https://www.nist.gov/te">https://www.nist.gov/te</a>	X	x	B													X	x										X	
Broadband USA Technical Assistance	DOC-NTIA	n/a	<a href="https://www2.ntia.doc">https://www2.ntia.doc</a>		X	B								X																X	
State and Local Implementation Grant Program	DOC-NTIA	11.549	<a href="https://www.ntia.doc">https://www.ntia.doc</a>	X		B							X												x	X				X	
Research and Technology Development	DOD-DARPA	12.91	<a href="https://www.darpa.mil/">https://www.darpa.mil/</a>	X	x	B													X	x											
Procurement Technical Assistance For Business Firms	DOD-DLA	12.002	<a href="http://www.dla.mil/HQ">http://www.dla.mil/HQ</a>	X	x	B																X									
Community Economic Adjustment Assistance for Realignment or Closure of a Military Installation	DOD-OEA	12.607	<a href="http://www.oea.gov/ho">http://www.oea.gov/ho</a>	X		B							X	x								x									
Community Economic Adjustment Assistance for Reductions in Defense Industry Employment	DOD-OEA	12.611	<a href="http://www.oea.gov/ho">http://www.oea.gov/ho</a>	X		B							X	x								x									
Community Economic Adjustment Assistance for Advance Planning and Economic Diversification	DOD-OEA	12.614	<a href="https://www.oea.gov">https://www.oea.gov</a>	X		B							X	x								x									
Research and Technical Assistance	DOD-OEA	12.615	<a href="http://www.oea.gov">http://www.oea.gov</a>	X		B							X																	X	
Economic Adjustment Assistance for State Governments	DOD-OEA	12.617	<a href="http://www.oea.gov/">http://www.oea.gov/</a>	X		B							X	x								x								X	
Renewable Energy Research and Development	DOE	81.087	<a href="https://www.energy.gov">https://www.energy.gov</a>	X		B				X									X						x				X		
Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy	DOE	81.135	<a href="https://www.arpa-e.ene">https://www.arpa-e.ene</a>	X		B													X												
Minority Economic Impact	DOE	81.137	<a href="https://www.energy.gov">https://www.energy.gov</a>	X		B									X	X														X	
Minerals and Mining on Indian Lands	DOI-BIA	15.038	<a href="https://www.bia.gov/as">https://www.bia.gov/as</a>		X	*								X																X	







Program title	Federal Office	CFDA Number	Link to more info	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 0;"> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-45deg); font-size: 0.8em;">Provides project grants?</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-45deg); font-size: 0.8em;">Direct assistance to individual or business?</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-45deg); font-size: 0.8em;">Serves urban (U), rural areas (R) or both (B)?</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-45deg); font-size: 0.8em;">Opportunity Zone Priority, flexibility or other incentives**</div> <div style="width: 20%; background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-45deg); font-size: 0.8em;">Most Common Uses</div> </div>													
				construction/facilities/equip	planning / capacity building	job training/workforce development	R&D / innovation/commercialization	entrepreneurship/ development	loans/equity/ business incentives	resilience/ disaster financial	international trade	other uses					
504 Certified Development Loans	SBA	59.041	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/lo">https://www.sba.gov/lo</a>		X	B	x						x	X			
Women's Business Ownership Assistance	SBA	59.043	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/of">https://www.sba.gov/of</a>		X	B							x				
Veterans Outreach Program	SBA	59.044	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/to">https://www.sba.gov/to</a>		X	B							x				
Microloan Program	SBA	59.046	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/lo">https://www.sba.gov/lo</a>		X	B							x	X			
Prime Technical Assistance	SBA	59.05	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/ct">https://www.sba.gov/ct</a>		X	B							x				
Native American Outreach	SBA	59.052	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/of">https://www.sba.gov/of</a>		X	B							x				
HUBZone Program	SBA	59.055	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/cc">https://www.sba.gov/cc</a>		X	B							x				
Federal and State Technology (FAST) Partnership Program	SBA	59.058	<a href="https://www.sbir.gov/at">https://www.sbir.gov/at</a>	X		B					X	X					
State Trade Expansion Program (STEP)	SBA	59.061	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/dg">https://www.sba.gov/dg</a>	X		B							x			X	
Growth Accelerator Fund Competition	SBA	n/a	<a href="http://www.sba.gov/act">http://www.sba.gov/act</a>	X	X	B					X	X	x				
Transition Assistance Entrepreneurship Track (Boots to Business)	SBA	59.066	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/of">https://www.sba.gov/of</a>		X	B							x				
SBA Emerging Leaders initiative	SBA	59.069	<a href="https://www.sba.gov/at">https://www.sba.gov/at</a>		X	B							x				
Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer	SBA	n/a	<a href="https://www.sbir.gov/">https://www.sbir.gov/</a>	X	X	B					X	x					
Social Impact Partnerships to Pay for Results Act Demonstration Projects (SIPRA)	TREAS	21.017	<a href="https://home.treasury.g">https://home.treasury.g</a>	X		B	x			X	X						X
Capital Magnet Fund	TREAS-CDFI	21.011	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.g">https://www.cdfifund.g</a>	X		B			x						X		
Native Initiatives	TREAS-CDFI	21.012	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.g">https://www.cdfifund.g</a>	X	x	B			x	X			x	X			
Community Development Financial Institutions Bond Guarantee Program	TREAS-CDFI	21.014	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.g">https://www.cdfifund.g</a>		X	B			x					X			
Community Development Financial Institutions Program	TREAS-CDFI	21.02	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.g">https://www.cdfifund.g</a>	X		B			x	X				X			
Bank Enterprise Award Program	TREAS-CDFI	21.021	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.g">https://www.cdfifund.g</a>	X		B			x					X			x

Program title	Federal Office	CFDA Number	Link to more info	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; padding: 2px;"> <span>Provides project grants?</span> <span>Direct assistance to individual or business?</span> <span>Serves urban (U), rural areas (R) or both (B)?</span> <span>Opportunity Zone Priority, flexibility or other incentives**</span> <span>Most Common Uses</span> <span>construction/facilities/equip</span> <span>planning /capacity building</span> <span>job training/workforce development</span> <span>R&amp;D / innovation/commercialization</span> <span>entrepreneurship/ business development</span> <span>loans/equity/other financial incentives</span> <span>resilience/ disaster financial</span> <span>international trade</span> <span>other uses</span> </div>													
New Markets Tax Credit	TREAS-CDFI	n/a	<a href="https://www.cdfifund.gov">https://www.cdfifund.gov</a>		X	B			X						X		
Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers	USDA	10.443	<a href="https://www.outreach.usda.gov">https://www.outreach.usda.gov</a>	X	x				X	x				x			
Emerging Markets Program	USDA-FAS	10.603	<a href="https://www.fas.usda.gov">https://www.fas.usda.gov</a>	x	X	R								X	X		X
Rural Business Development Grant	USDA-RD	10.351	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R	x		X	X	X	X	X		x		X
Value-Added Producer Grants	USDA-RD	10.352	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X	x	R			X	X				X			
Business and Industry Loans	USDA-RD	10.768	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>		X	R			X					X	X		X
Rural Cooperative Development Grants	USDA-RD	10.771	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R				X							X
Rural Business Opportunity Grants	USDA-RD	10.773	<a href="http://www.rd.usda.gov">http://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R			X	X				X			X
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants	USDA-RD	10.854	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X	X	R									X		X
Rural Energy for America Program	USDA-RD	10.868	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R			X	X				X	X		X
Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program	USDA-RD	10.87	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R				x				x	X		
Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant	USDA-RD	10.871	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R				X							x
Delta Health Care Services Grant Program	USDA-RD	10.874	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R			X	X	X						X
Rural Community Development Initiative	USDA-RD	10.446	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	x	X	R				X							x
Community Facilities Loans and Grants	USDA-RD	10.766	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X	X	R			X						X		
Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loans and Grants	USDA-RD	10.855	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X	X	R			X						X		
Community Connect Grant Program	USDA-RD	10.863	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R			X					x			x
Technical Assistance and Training for Rural Water Systems	USDA-RUS	10.761	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R	x			X	x						X
Solid Waste Management Technical Assistance Grants	USDA-RUS	10.762	<a href="https://www.rd.usda.gov">https://www.rd.usda.gov</a>	X		R	x			X	X						X

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Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization - Strategic Outreach	VA	n/a	<a href="https://www.va.gov/OS">https://www.va.gov/OS</a>		X	B						X				
Export - Loan Guarantee/Insured Loans	EXIM	31-007	<a href="http://www.exim.gov/w">http://www.exim.gov/w</a>		X	B		X				X	X		X	