



# #CantonForward

## ETOWAH TO THE LOOP

Livable Centers Initiative Plan Update, May 2016



## // ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

#CantonForward is a collaborative effort between the Atlanta Regional Commission, the City of Canton, a consultant team, and the people of Canton. The study was funded by the Livable Centers Initiative and the City of Canton.

The consultant team was lead by TSW and included Southeastern Engineering, Noell Consulting Group, and Morris & Fellows



**“THE CITY OF CANTON WILL NURTURE ALL RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS BY LINKING THEIR RESOURCES TOGETHER AND PROVIDING NEW INNOVATIVE OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE A HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE WHILE PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE AND NATURAL RESOURCES”** // Vision for the Future of Canton from the Canton Comprehensive Plan, 2008

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# CHAPTER 1 // WHAT'S IN CANTON?

// Progress to Date

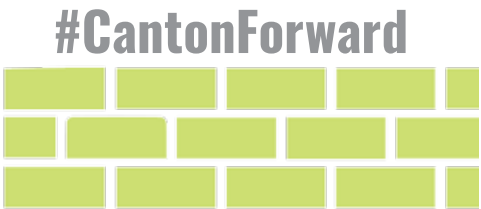
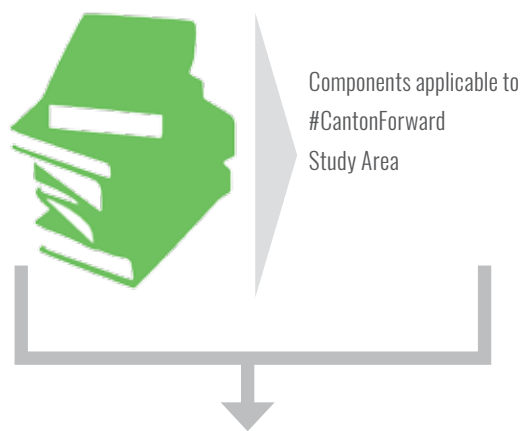
// What's Driving Canton's Future?

// What Does Canton Look Like Today?

// What Could Canton Look Like Tomorrow?

# PROGRESS TO DATE

Several previous planning studies in the City of Canton are the foundation for #CantonForward, the 2015 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Plan Update, and key points are summarized on the following pages.



# RIVER MILL DISTRICT LCI // 2001

## Vision //

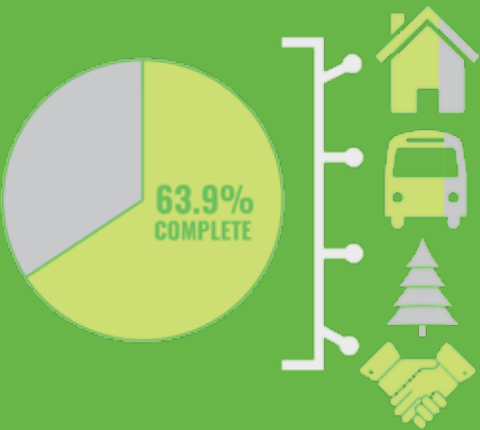
To create an attractive, dynamic, and economically successful community in Downtown Canton.

## Goals & Objectives //

- Increase accessibility and availability of transportation options in and around Downtown
- Provide open space and recreation opportunities near the Etowah River
- Provide attractive and safe commercial and residential areas
- Create an active Downtown

## Strategic Action Plan //

35 projects in categories: Land Use & Housing; Transportation; Parks and Open Space; Local Initiatives



## PRIORITIES



Commuter Rail Station



Transportation Options



Development Opportunities

## LCI Completed Projects Checklist //

### Transportation

- ☒ Hickory Flat Rd. Streetscape (I-575 to Marietta Road)
- ☐ Hickory Flat Rd. Extension
- ☒ Marietta Rd. Streetscape (Old Marietta to E. Marietta)
- ☒ Railroad St. Streetscape (E. Marietta to Waleska)
- ☒ Main St. Streetscape
- ☒ Waleska St. Streetscape
- ☒ W. Marietta St. Streetscape
- ☐ E. Marietta S. Streetscape
- ☐ Riverdale Circle Enhancements
- ☒ Intersection of Hickory Flat Rd. & Marietta Rd.
- ☐ Intersection of W. Marietta St., E. Marietta St., Marietta Rd., etc.
- ☒ Railroad St. & Waleska St. Intersection
- ☒ Waleska St., Main St., & North St. Intersection
- ☐ Pedestrian Corridor
- ☒ Bus System Service Expansion
- ☐ Commuter Rail & Train Station

### Land Use & Housing

- ☒ Changes to Zoning and Land Use
- ☒ River Mill District Enterprise Zone
- ☒ Preserve Residential Integrity
- ☐ CDBG Funding Allocation
- ☐ Assess Water & Sewer Infrastructure
- ☒ Increased Code Enforcement
- ☒ Building Materials Standards
- ☐ Railroad Street Townhomes
- ☐ The Mill Development
- ☒ Restaurants

### Park, River, Stream Improvements

- ☐ Riverfront Park
- ☐ Etowah River Streambank Restoration
- ☐ Canton Creek Streambank Restoration

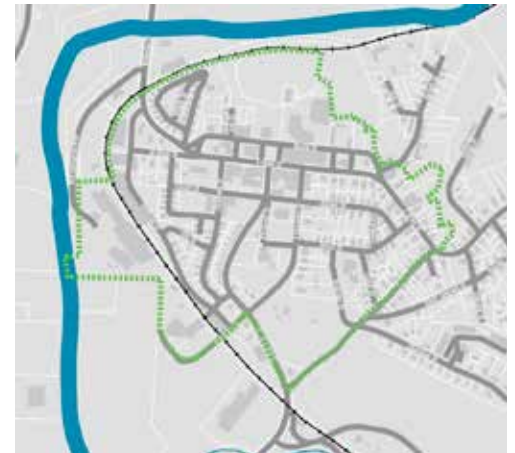
### Local Initiatives

- ☒ Host Developers Day
- ☒ Development Incentives
- ☒ Support Mayor's Youth Design Team
- ☒ Boys and Girls Club Activities
- ☒ Provide Environmental Education
- ☒ Improve Police Enforcement
- ☒ Support Downtown Events

## HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES // 2015

### Boundaries //

The railroad, Waleska Street, North Street, East Main Street, Dr. John T. Pettit Street, West Marietta Street, Marietta Road.



### Purpose //

To help protect and enhance the historic character and traditional development patterns of Downtown Canton, and to protect history and support positive community change.

## Guiding Principles //

- Retain a sense of place:  
Preserve the existing building stock and ensure that new development contributes to the area's history by respecting building types, styles, materials, placement.
- Recognize change:  
Find a balance between old and new by accommodating change with appropriate new construction to generate new investment.

## Guideline Features //

- Design Review Process
- Character Definition (materials, building types, etc.)
- Site Design Guidelines (for example: setbacks; development patterns; spacing and orientation; building heights, landscaping)
- Architecture Guidelines (for example: commercial buildings; entrances and storefronts; façade treatments)
- New Construction / Additions / Conversions Guidelines (for example, building placement; height, width, scale; style elements)
- Sign Guidelines

# HORIZON 2030 // 2008

## Vision //

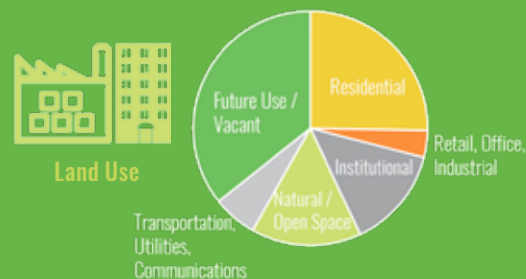
- Create vision for where and how growth should occur
- Revitalize the Downtown core and support new job opportunities in other employment centers

## Points Applicable to #CantonForward //

- Character Areas created (Historic Canton, Central City, Neighborhood Living - Sunnyside, Emerald Trail)
- Growth Boundary established to encourage compact development
- Focus development on Downtown core and continue implementing projects from 2001 LCI Study
- Balance growth with protecting natural resources and maintaining existing character
- Community Assessment of DCA quality community objectives
- Analysis of existing and changing Demographics, Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, Natural Resources, Cultural / Historic Resources, Transportation, Community Facilities / Infrastructure

## Issues & Opportunities //

These were defined for different categories for the City of Canton. This section describes those applicable to Downtown and the River Mill District.



Redevelop Downtown and River Mill District for mixed-use and high-density development and add affordable housing.



Etowah River corridor should be reserved for recreation. Water supply watersheds should meet minimum criteria. Protect wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, and habitat.





### Economic Development

Add more jobs so that people do not leave Canton, and build on environmental, human, technology resources. Emphasize corporate, professional, technical job creation with redevelopment of Downtown.



### Community Facilities

Expand waste water treatment capacity and infrastructure, add new reservoir on Hickory Log Road, increase police staff, 3 police substations and fire station, no immediate expansion of parks.



### Historic Resources

Properties, including the Canton Commercial Historic District, are on the National Register of Historic Places. Some properties are on the Cherokee County Historical Society Database.



### Transportation

Incorporate pedestrian & bike facilities with new roads, commuter rail station in Downtown, and balance land use with transportation.

## DOWNTOWN PARKING ANALYSIS // 2014

This plan took a comprehensive look at the Downtown parking system and made operational and management recommendations for existing and future parking developments. The study included an analysis of existing parking operations and potential future parking needs. A steering committee and public involvement was used to gain input from the community. There is and will continue to be a surplus of parking spaces Downtown.

### IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

| RECOMMENDATION  | COMPLETE?     |
|---|---------------|
| Create a Parking Manager Position within the City                           | No            |
| Manage parking duration / allocation through signage and parking management | In progress   |
| Hire Parking Enforcement Officers   | Yes           |
| Create Parking Fine Structure   | Yes           |
| Make pedestrian improvements (ADA, landscaping, aesthetic)                  | In progress   |
| Add bike racks and marketing to promote bicycle ridership                   | No            |
| Improve signage location, spacing, marketing                                | In progress   |
| Marketing strategies to attract and direct people Downtown                  | In discussion |
| Add more public parking and less private parking                            | In discussion |

## URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN // 2014

### Vision //

- Maintain the character of the community
- Provide affordable housing and balanced land use mix
- Create economic development opportunities
- Protect environmental and historical resources
- Expand and enhance community facilities and services
- Improve the City's transportation network for automobiles and pedestrians
- Ensure that future development patterns and infrastructure are fiscally sustainable

### Key Points //

- Strong economic outlook because of development potential as an employment center, availability of workforce housing, and local revitalization projects
- Policies complement the development strategies of Character Areas outlined in the Comprehensive Plan

## Goals Summary //

- Support a growing economy offering high-wage jobs and ensuring a high-level of workforce adequacy
- Provide infrastructure, community facilities, and public services
- Ensure access to adequate and affordable housing options
- Coordinate planning efforts with other local service providers, authorities, neighborhoods, state / regional planning agencies
- Ensure growth occurs in a well-integrated manner to protect resources, promote efficient use of infrastructure and transportation facilities, support quality economic development
- Provide for the continued protection of natural and cultural resources
- Coordinate land use and transportation planning to support sustainable economic development

## Implementation Strategies //

- Opportunity Zone designation
- Main Street Corridor project
- Repair broken sidewalks
- Provide public water and sewer services

## ETOWAH RIVER GREENWAY MASTER PLAN // 1999

This plan recommends a greenway and recreation along the Etowah River from I-575 to Boling Park. Recommendations include regional and city-wide connections, stream buffers, and trails along the river and through Downtown and other parts of the city. The plan also includes recommendations for memorializing and honoring the Cherokee history and sites with educational plaques and trailheads. Other features include mixed-use development fronting the river, pedestrian bridges, a park with a large amphitheater, retaining existing retention ponds, a nature center, a canoe and kayak launch, observation towers, and ball fields for Cherokee High School.

The Etowah River Park, part of the Conceptual Plan for the I-575 to Mill #2 area, and accessible from Brown Industrial Parkway, opened in summer 2015. Heritage Park, which was part of the Concept Plan for the Mill #2 to Waleska Street area, is also open.



“THE UNIQUE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ETOWAH RIVER WATERSHED MAKE IT ONE OF THE MOST BIODIVERSE RIVER SYSTEMS IN THE U.S. ITS PROXIMITY TO ONE OF THE COUNTRY’S MOST RAPIDLY GROWING URBAN AREAS MAKES IT ONE OF THE MOST THREATENED” // Canton Comprehensive Plan, 2008



## #CANTONFORWARD: ETOWAH TO THE LOOP STUDY AREA

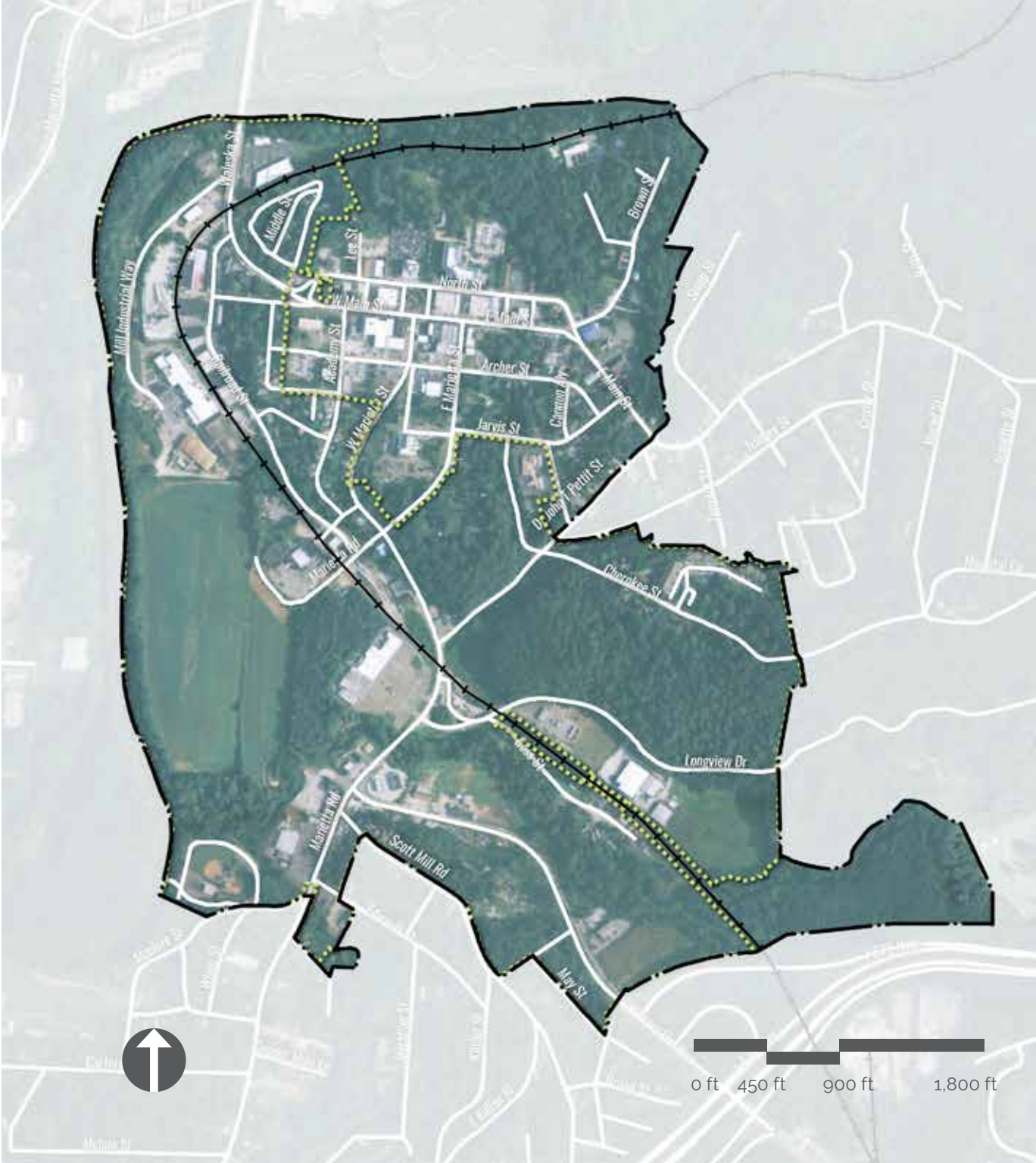
The 2001 LCI study area (shown in the dashed light green line on the map on the adjacent page) focused primarily on the River Mill District. As noted in the previous planning studies section, many of these projects have been implemented since the adoption of the plan due to the emphasis placed on these projects in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan (Horizon 2030) and Zoning Ordinance. #CantonForward: Etowah to the Loop, the 2015 LCI Update, expands on the 2001 LCI. The new boundary is shown in the thick black line on the map and includes all of the 2001 LCI study area and the Historic Downtown District.



**“THE CITY NEEDS TO FOCUS ON  
THE REVITALIZATION OF THE  
DOWNTOWN CORE AND SUPPORTING  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW JOB  
OPPORTUNITIES IN...OTHER  
EMPLOYMENT CENTERS” // Canton  
Comprehensive Plan, 2008**

Top Left: The Canton Cotton Mill

Top Right: The Historic Downtown  
District (City of Canton)



## LEGEND

— #CantonForward / 2015  
LCI Boundary

..... 2002 LCI Boundary

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## THE RIVER & STEEP SLOPES

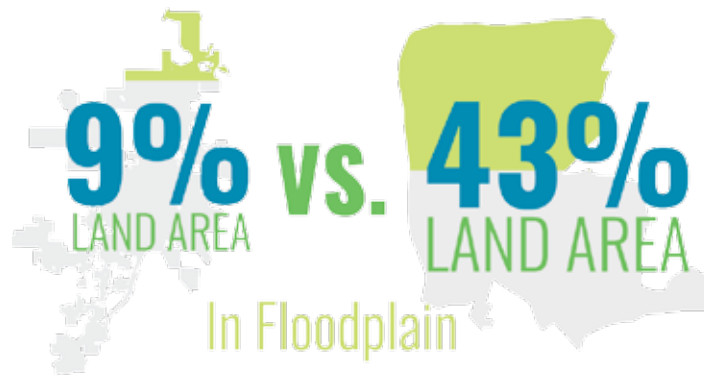


### THE RIVER

The #CantonForward Study Area is bounded to the west and north by the Etowah River, which also has significant floodplains that comprise many acres in the study area and a required 100 foot buffer on both sides of the banks that prevents certain types of development. The Etowah River qualifies as a protected river, and could be used as an asset for the City with recreation and appropriate development. The dark green on the map to the right shows which land is within the 100-year floodplain.

### STEEP SLOPES

Canton was developed on top of a hill, and much of the study area and city still have hills with slopes preventing connectivity and development. Hills with a slope of 25% or greater are protected from development (shown in the map to the right in light green).



The City of Canton has 1,093 acres of land located in the floodplain, making up 9% of the city's total land area. However, the study area has 194 of the acres (18% of the total acres for the city), and this makes up more than 43% of the land area of the study area, limiting the amount and types of development that can occur.

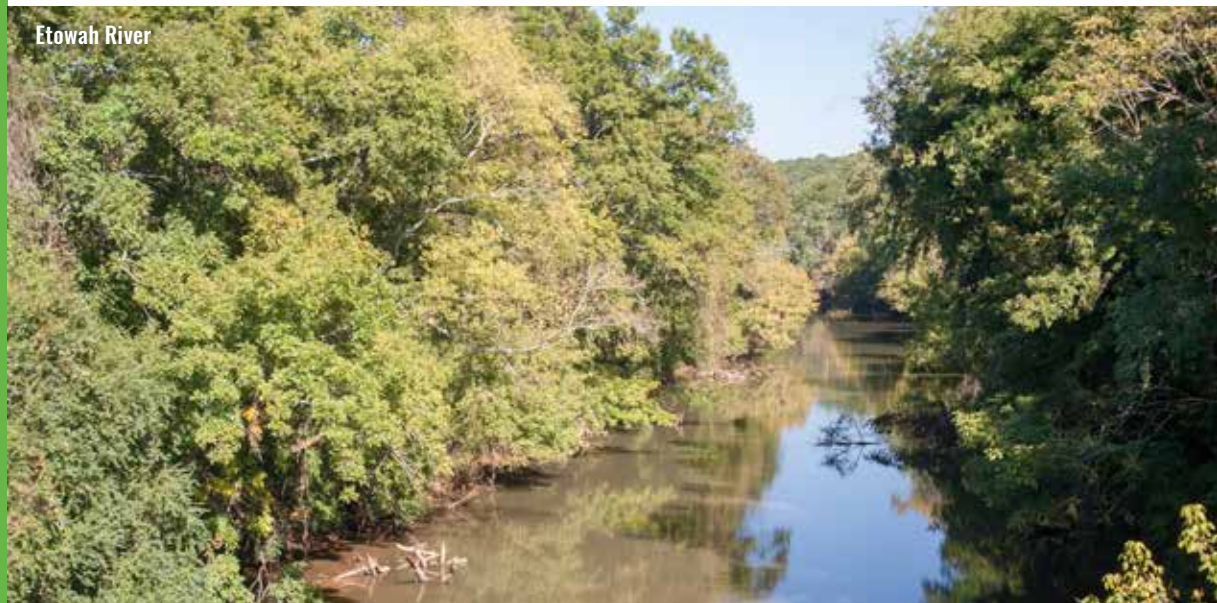
**100 FT.**  
Stream Buffer  
ETOWAH RIVER

**194 ACRES**  
Floodplains  
STUDY AREA

**≥ 25% Grade**  
PROTECTED  
Steep Slopes

The Etowah River requires a 100 foot stream buffer from development on each side of the banks. The study area has 194 acres of land located in flood plain, removing a significant amount of land from intense development. Finally, slopes of 25% change in elevation or greater require protection from development, and a significant amount of undeveloped land in the study area falls under this category.

Etowah River





# THE RIVER & STEEP SLOPES MAP

## LEGEND

- Average of 25% + Slope
- 100-year Floodplain
- Parcels
- Water / River



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## HISTORY IN PLACE



### CANTON HISTORY BRIEF

Canton became an industrial town because of the railroad and the opening of the Cotton Mill in 1899. Canton Cotton Mill #2 opened in 1924, and the city became a manufacturer of denim. The mills were the primary employers and they built homes for employees, schools, and community facilities before closing in 1981.

### BUILDINGS & PROPERTIES

Downtown Canton and the River Mill District have retained many of the historic buildings that are important to the city's character. Many buildings within the Canton city limits are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and others are listed on the Cherokee County Historical Society (CCHS) database (Horizon 2030, 2008). Additional buildings and sites, particularly within the Historic District boundary, are noted as significant by the CCHS, including Riverview Cemetery, Brown Park, the Mill houses, and many commercial buildings along the Loop.



**“OVER THE YEARS, CANTON  
EVOLVED FROM UNSETTLED  
TERRITORY TO A PROSPEROUS  
MILL TOWN KNOWN THE WORLD  
OVER FOR ITS ‘CANTON DENIM’”**



**// Cherokee County Historical  
Society Historic Downtown Walking  
Tour Brochure, 2008**

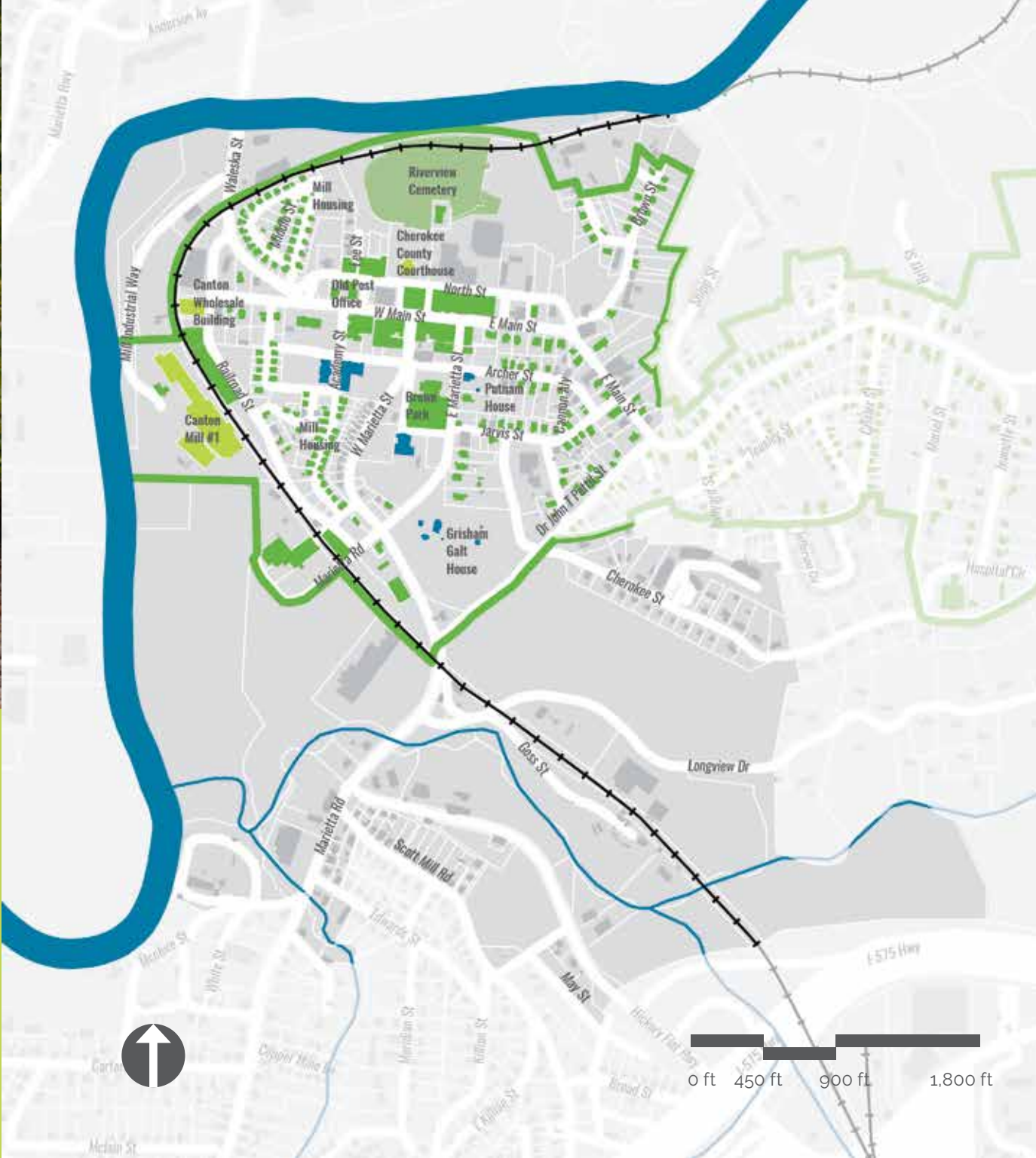
Top: The above image shows  
Canton Mill #1 and the adjacent  
railroad tracks.



# HISTORY IN PLACE MAP

## LEGEND

-  National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) District Boundary
-  Contributing Resource to NRHP
-  Building on National Register of Historic Places
-  Building on Cherokee County Historical Society Database & Contributing Resource to NRHP
-  Existing Building
-  Parcels



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## CONNECTIVITY



### TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

The street network dissolves outside of the Downtown core. In the blocks adjacent to the one-way pair of E. Main Street and North Street, the street network is well-connected, and the pedestrian environment is inviting with wide, connected sidewalks. The one-way pair presents connectivity barriers for vehicles and forces drivers around Downtown, rather than connecting easily through the existing street grid. Some streets cannot support the addition of sidewalks because of the right-of-way width or proximity of the buildings to the street edge, but some streets lack sidewalks on both sides of the street or have interruptions in the network, and could support the addition of sidewalks.

South of the Downtown area, minimal connectivity exists, particularly surrounding the undeveloped woodland parcels. If development is appropriate in this area

in the future, it will be necessary to add complete street and sidewalk networks to connect the new development internally and to Downtown. Large travel lanes and few to no sidewalks currently encourage higher travel speeds for drivers and reduce pedestrian safety.



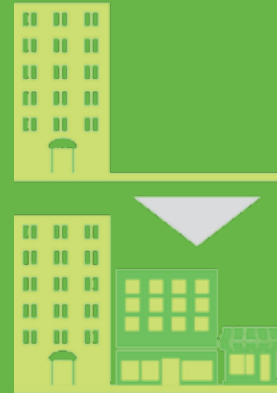
### CONNECTIVITY BARRIERS

The railroad, wide rights-of-way, and steep slopes on much of the undeveloped land create barriers to connectivity. The railroad has few crossings for both drivers and pedestrians, which blocks access to the Etowah River and developments west of the railroad tracks. West Marietta Street and Hickory Flat Road south of the Downtown area have large rights-of-way and turning radii that increase driving speeds, effectively eliminating pedestrian safety.

Steep slopes over 25% in grade cover large tracts of land within the study area. They are protected hillsides and cannot be developed, which reduces the number of parcels available for new streets, sidewalks, and development.









## PARCELS & DEVELOPMENT

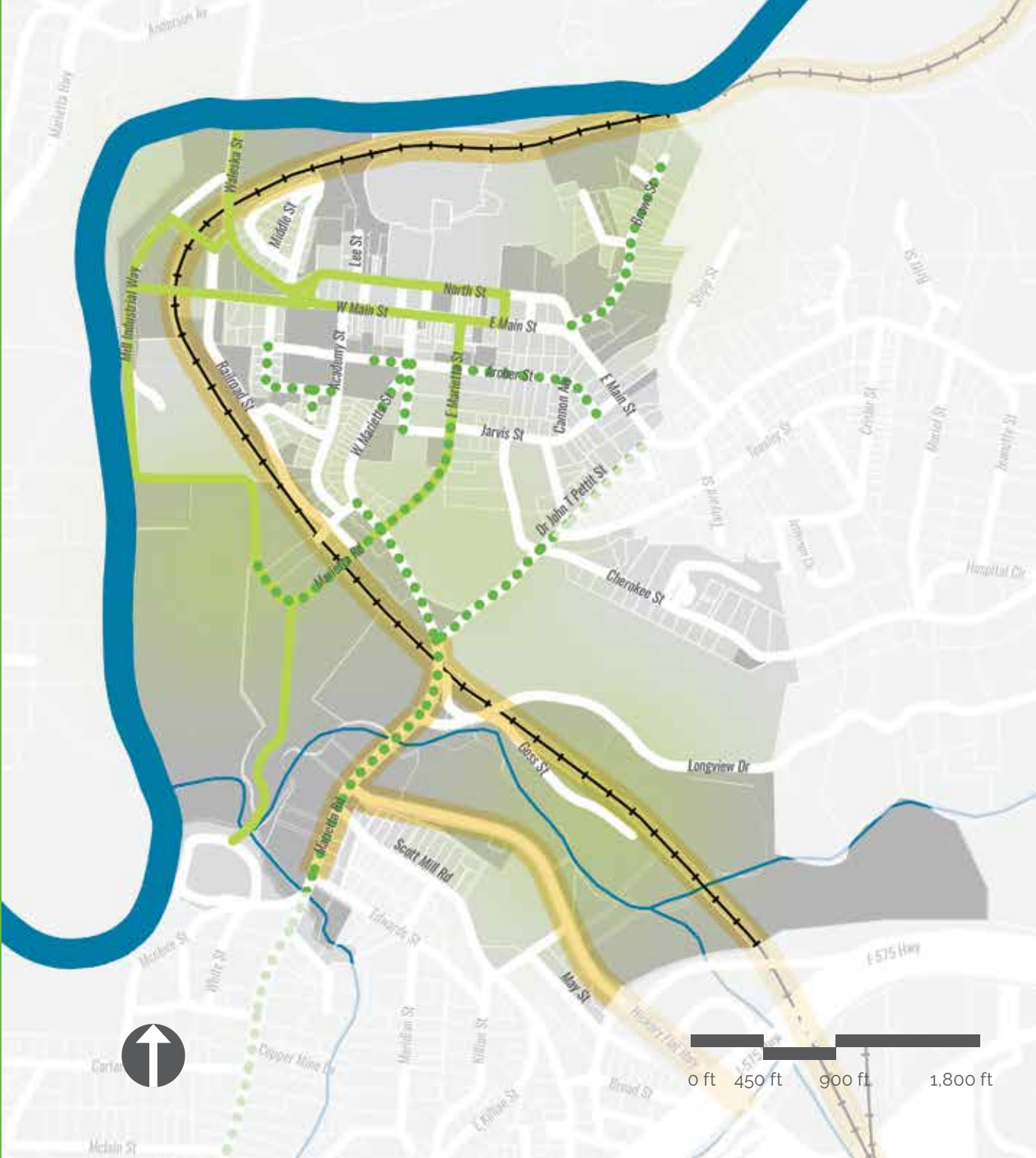
Connectivity is reduced due to the presence of parcels that are vacant or underdeveloped, which create "holes" in the urban fabric or function as barriers to accessibility to other areas. Examples of this are the empty parcels and surface parking lots along the streets in the Downtown core, and the large fields adjacent to the Etowah River that prevent access to the river. Adding development, which could include additional streets and sidewalks to key areas needing connectivity, would enhance the walkability and connectivity visually and physically.



# CONNECTIVITY MAP

## LEGEND

-  Areas Lacking Connectivity
-  Parcels that Would Enhance Connectivity and are Likely to Change
-  Parcels
-  Barriers to Connectivity
-  Streets that Need Sidewalks and Have Room for Them
-  Proposed Etowah River Greenway Connection
-  Water (River, Stream)
-  Railroad



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#CANTONFORWARD 19

## WHAT COULD CHANGE?



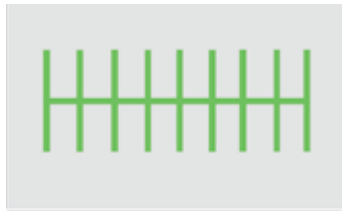
Canton has many opportunities to potentially change the use of parcels and buildings. The map to the right shows the susceptibility to change by parcel for the #CantonForward study area. The susceptibility to change is divided into three categories, which are:

### Parcels Not Susceptible to Change //

Parcels not susceptible to change either have historic structures on them, newly-constructed buildings, single-family housing, or the land use is a public facility, such as a park or the courthouse.

### Parcels Somewhat Susceptible to Change //

Parcels that are somewhat susceptible to change generally have structures that are not historically significant, land uses that can relocate, or older multi-family housing.



Surface parking lots and vacant structures present immediate opportunities for redevelopment.

### Parcels Highly Susceptible to Change //

Parcels marked as highly susceptible to change have surface parking, vacant structures, or uses that could relocate given a larger development goal.

Although noted as “not susceptible to change,” historic structures that are underutilized could be potential opportunities for adaptive re-use while maintaining the character of the area.



**Top:** The above image shows the former Cherokee County Courthouse and the Town Square. These are examples of parcels that are not susceptible to change (Akhenaton06, Wikimedia).



**Left:** This image shows the Canton Village Shopping Center, which is an example of a parcel highly susceptible to change because of the prevalence of surface parking and vacant structures.



# SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE MAP

## LEGEND

- Highly Susceptible to Change
- Somewhat Susceptible to Change
- Not Susceptible to Change
- Parcels



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## THE ARTS



### CHEROKEE ARTS CENTER

The Cherokee Arts Center is located in Downtown Canton, occupying a historic, former church building on North Street. The organization aims to provide high-quality arts and cultural events and programs. The classes include visual arts, dancing, and children's classes. The facility includes a gallery, 220-seat theater, and a small meeting room (Cherokee Arts Center, 2015).

#### Events & Programs //

- Annual Canton Festival of the Arts, which is a juried show for fine arts and crafts held in the Spring
- Weekly classes
- Comedy shows, music performances, plays

### CANTON THEATRE

#### Theatre History //

The theatre opened in 1911 and showed silent movies and magic lantern slide shows, then, later, moving pictures. The theatre was sold in the 1930's and underwent extensive remodeling before re-opening as the Canton Theatre in 1940. The theatre's popularity declined by the 1970's, and for many years, the building sat idle. The theatre was restored in 1994 and is currently owned by the City of Canton.

#### Events & Programs //

The Theatre showcases numerous live performances produced by the Cherokee Theatre Company and Reinhardt University. It currently seats 170.

### SERVICE LEAGUE OF CHEROKEE COUNTY

#### RiverFest //

The service league of Cherokee County hosts RiverFest at Boling Park each year. The event is a well-attended arts and crafts festival with hundreds of vendors, entertainers (music, dancing, etc.), and concessions. This is a juried show and a fundraising effort for the children of Cherokee County (Service League of Cherokee County, 2015).

#### Other Arts Events & Programs //

- Annual Ball and Celebrity Dance Challenge Competition

Canton Theatre (City of Canton)



Cherokee Arts Center





## UNIQUE BUSINESS MIX



Canton is home a unique business mix, including retail, manufacturing, and potential for the film industry.

High-quality restaurants serve as regional attractions for people from Atlanta and north of Canton. Northside Hospital, currently under construction, will bring a significant number of jobs, including nursing jobs, to Canton and the surrounding area. The Jones Building may be purchased for a film industry-related employer, which could bring high-quality, well-paying jobs

to people of the millennial generation. In addition, offices and retail in the Downtown core serve daily needs and provide professional services.

### CANTON MILL #1

Creative and boutique industrial businesses in Canton Mill #1 serve unique markets. The businesses located in this property include a furniture maker, concrete product manufacturer, and a church.

### NORTHSIDE HOSPITAL CHEROKEE // REPLACEMENT FACILITY

The Northside Hospital Cherokee Replacement Facility is currently under construction and is set to open in 2017. The new facility is located off I-575 on the new Northside Cherokee Boulevard. The 50-acre complex will include the hospital, medical office building, and 900 parking spaces, but will eventually expand to 300 acres with more facilities. This new facility will generate 300 more jobs and add 21 beds to the hospital bed count.



(Northside Hospital)



Canton Mill #1



Downtown Businesses

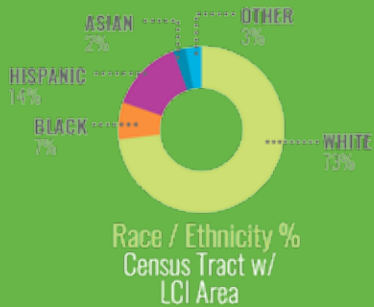


## POPULATION



## RACE / ETHNICITY

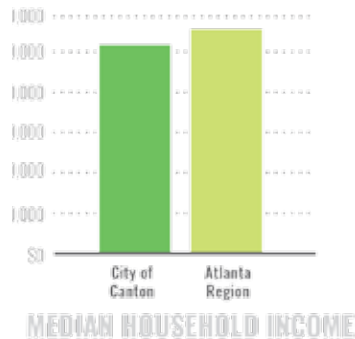
Canton has a much larger Hispanic population than the region, but the white population is the predominant race / ethnicity.



## AGE

The Baby Boomer and Millennial generations make up the largest age cohort groups for households in Canton.

See infographics to the right and more information on pages ## and ## to see how the demographics affect the housing and retail demand for the study area and the whole city.



Canton's 2013 median household income (\$50,900) is very close to the Atlanta Region's median household income (\$55,295).



The age cohort data represent the age of householders in the City of Canton. More than 50% of the householders are in the Millennial and Baby Boomer generations.



In both the Atlanta Region and the City of Canton, most households are married couples / families, at around 50% for both areas. The next most common household type is individuals living alone (singles).

## HOUSING

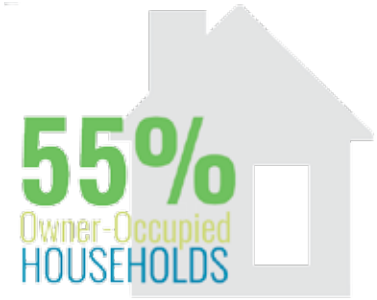


The #CantonForward study area lacks a diversity of housing options, and generally, has a low number of housing units. Downtown does not have any housing units; the addition of housing could support existing and future commercial development. The primary type of housing in the study area is single-family detached housing. However, many of the historic mill houses north and south of Downtown are used for rental units and are in deteriorating conditions. Rehabilitation and preservation

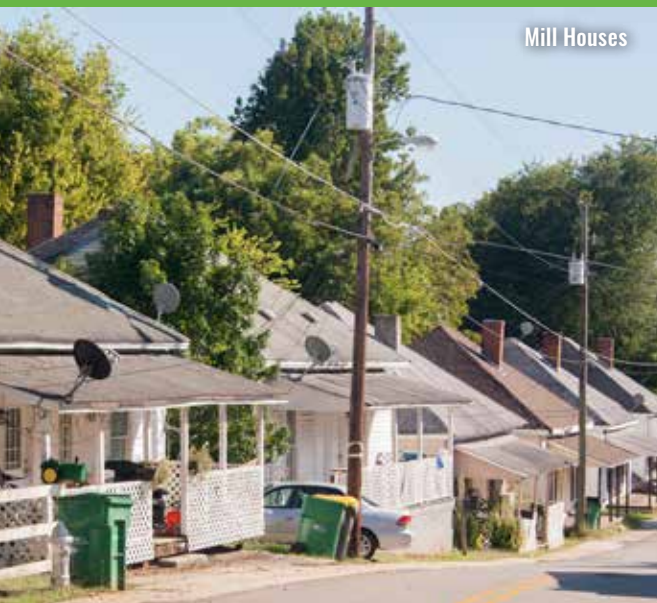
of the houses would increase the quality of housing offered in the study area while retaining historic character.

As stated previously, over 50% of the City of Canton's households are part of the Baby Boomer and Millennial generations. Generally, these populations seek mixed-use, walkable environments. The addition of multi-family housing options, particularly in the Downtown core, would accommodate the growing senior population and the millennial generation. The senior population is currently served outside the study area by multiple senior living communities and facilities.

More household information and market possibilities are on pages ## to ##.



Just over half of the households in Canton are owner-occupied, leaving a fairly substantial rental unit percentage.



Mill Houses

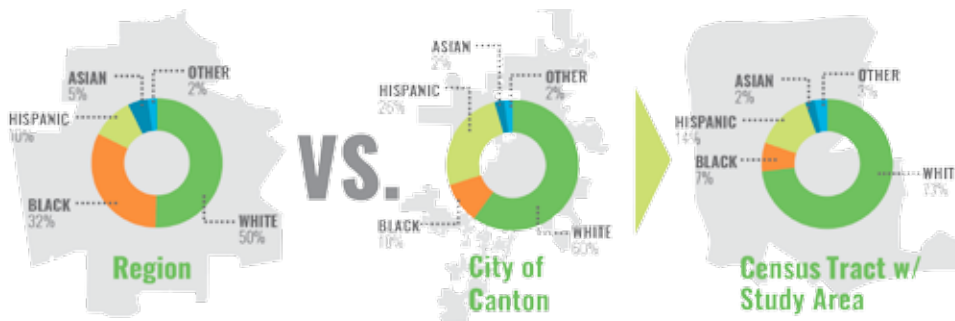


Recent Single-Family Development

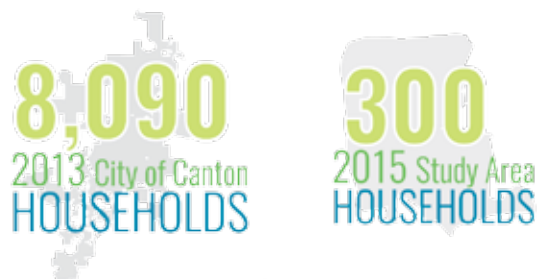
## WHAT DOES CANTON LOOK LIKE TODAY?

Canton is home to a diverse population with retail nodes outside the study area that provide adequate access to daily needs and services. However, few people who live in Canton, also work in Canton. The adjacent infographics show how Canton compares to the Atlanta 28-County Region (Region) and state in terms of educational attainment, household characteristics, race and ethnicity distribution, and other demographic indicators. Generally, Canton has the following characteristics:

- Most of the City's population falls into the "Baby Boomer" and the "Millennial" generations (over 50% of households)
- Much higher Hispanic and White populations than the Region average
- Slightly more families with children than the Region
- Adequate retail service within a 3-mile radius of the #CantonForward study area for chain and big box stores
- Lower educational attainment levels for people over the age of 25 than the Region, but quality primary and secondary schools

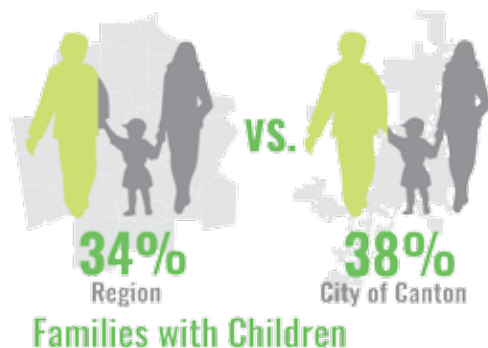


Canton has a larger percentage of white population than the Region, and the Census tract containing the study area is comprised of 73% white residents. Canton has a much lower Black population percentage than the Region, but a significantly higher percentage of Hispanic residents.



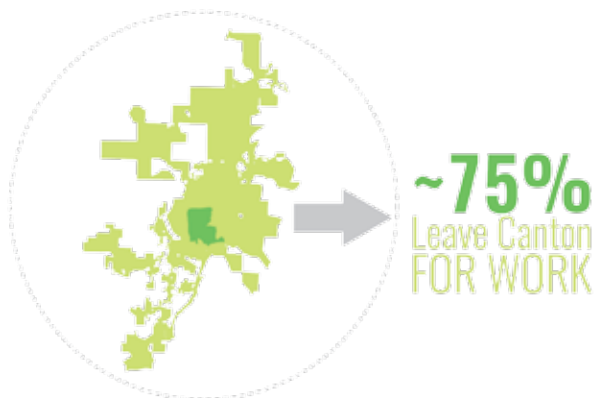
### Household Information

There are 8,090 households within the City of Canton, and approximately 300 (4%) of them are located within the #CantonForward study area.



The City of Canton's population is made up of 38% of households with children under 18, comparable to the Atlanta Region's percentage of 34%.

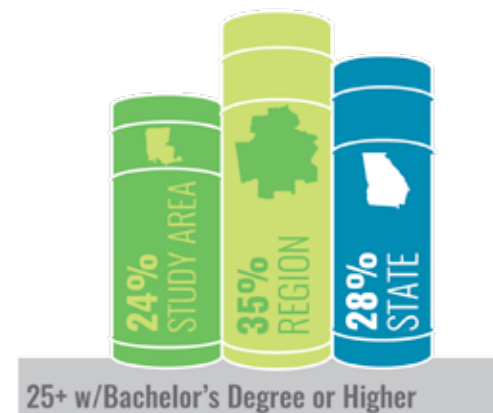




Residents within 5 miles of the #CantonForward study boundary commute throughout the Atlanta Region. Approximately 34% of these people commute to North Fulton, Marietta, Woodstock, and Kennesaw. More than 20% of the residents commute even farther to Atlanta business districts.



The study area has adequate access to retail establishments, particularly within a 3-mile radius. Big box retailers are located close to the study area limits, and grocery stores expand farther, closer to the 3-mile boundary. Some mom and pop / local stores provide access and some of the retail buildings on the south side sit primarily vacant.



Overall, the schools in Canton serve their populations well. The Study area has 24% of residents over 25 with a bachelor degree, lower than the Atlanta 28-county Region at 35% and the State at 28%.

Downtown Canton received a "Walk Score" of 51, which is higher than the rest of the City and many suburban areas. This is due to the access to different types of retail and uses.

# WHAT COULD CANTON LOOK LIKE TOMORROW?

## RETAIL & RESIDENTIAL

The infographics on these pages show how Canton and the #CantonForward study area can grow in the future. Canton is well-served by retail and grocery stores; however, most of the stores are outside of Downtown. Downtown primarily includes local businesses and restaurants, a strength for creating a distinct identity. Both the City and study area have market demand for additional housing units and retail opportunities. Despite current retail square footage at 2.2 million, more demand exists; this demonstrates that Downtown Canton could serve as a regional draw with local, unique businesses. The potential development for the study area includes:

- For-sale attached townhomes,
- For-sale detached homes,
- Rental apartments with parking lots,
- Independent / assisted living,
- For-sale attached condos with parking lots,
- Single-story commercial buildings,
- Multi-story or mixed-use commercial with parking lots



\*The colors of the "40,000 SF" (SF = square feet) show the percentage breakdown for the types of businesses in demand in the study area.

## RETAIL TYPE DEMAND

Canton has a market demand for an additional 40,000 sq. ft. of retail space. This retail demand is made up of industries that can easily become local businesses. These are:

- Special Food Service (food trucks, food carts, establishments providing food services at the customer's location),
- Drinking establishments,
- Full-service restaurants,
- A florist,
- Clothing / shoe stores.

### NOTE:

- Demand could grow as Downtown Canton becomes more of a regional draw, and "steals" demand from other places because of the addition of unique retail uses.
- These numbers show what the market supports and does not consider the possibility of pioneering individuals and go-getters.
- The housing demand numbers do not indicate that someone will build that number in a given year, but it is the average over time.



## POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR RETAIL & HOUSING



**8 UNITS**  
PER YEAR

For-sale  
Detached Homes



**90 BEDS**  
PER 2 YEARS

Independent /Assisted Living



**4 UNITS**  
PER YEAR

For-Sale Attached  
Townhome



**100 UNITS**  
PER 5 YEARS

Apartments w/ Parking Lots



**2 UNITS**  
PER YEAR

For-sale Attached  
Condos



**8,700 SF**  
PER YEAR

Commercial Single-Story &  
Mixed-Use



For-Sale Attached Townhomes



For-Sale Detached Homes



Apartments w/ Parking Lots  
Mixed-Use



**DRAFT**

#CANTONFORWARD 29









## CHAPTER 2 // WHAT WE HEARD

// RiverFest, Share Your Care, Concert

// What do the People of Canton Want?

// What Are the Priorities?

# OUTREACH // EVENTS

## SHARE YOUR CARE

The TSW team visited the City of Canton at Fincher-Adkins Park on September 9, 2015, for the "Share Your Care" event. The team provided background information on the #CantonForward project and encouraged citizens to participate in the forthcoming outreach and input opportunities.

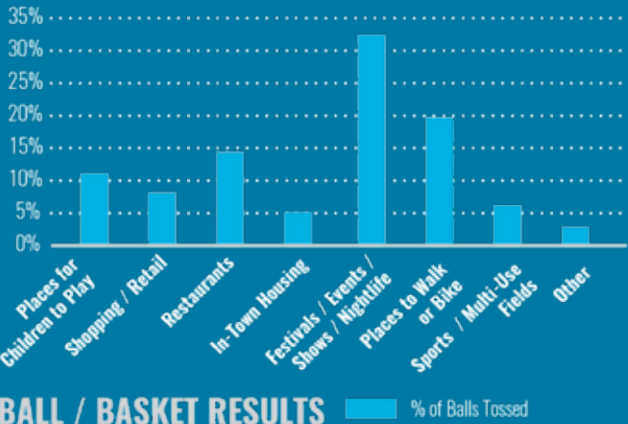
## RIVERFEST

The TSW team set up a booth during RiverFest on September 27th, 2015, to gain the first round of input for the project. The booth included paper surveys, and an interactive activity to determine what people want to see in Canton in the future. Visitors could toss a ball into a basket with labels for different options and provide other feedback if their ideas were not represented.

## ROCKIN' THE RIVER

The TSW team set up a booth during the concert and festival to gain similar input as received during RiverFest. The booth included paper surveys and the same interactive activities. Between both events, 354 balls were tossed into the baskets (visitors could toss more than one).

### WHAT WOULD ENHANCE YOUR DAILY LIFE?



The most frequently chosen improvements for Canton's Future during the Ball / Basket activity were festivals / events and places to walk or bike.

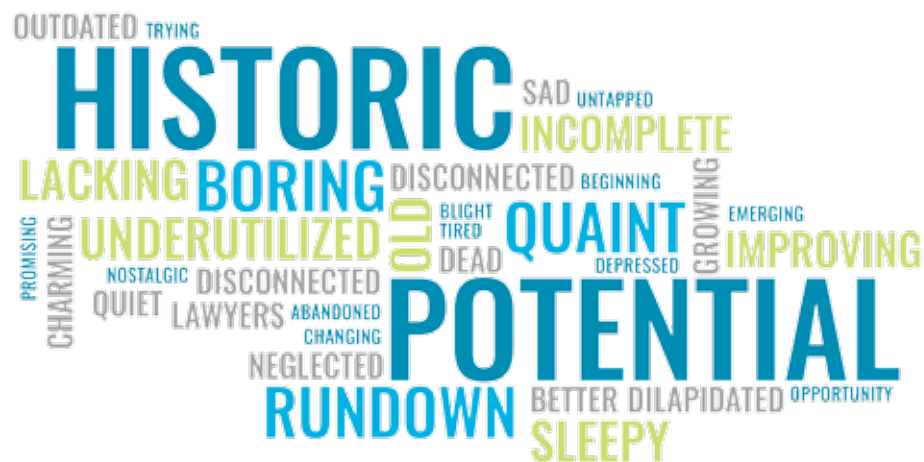
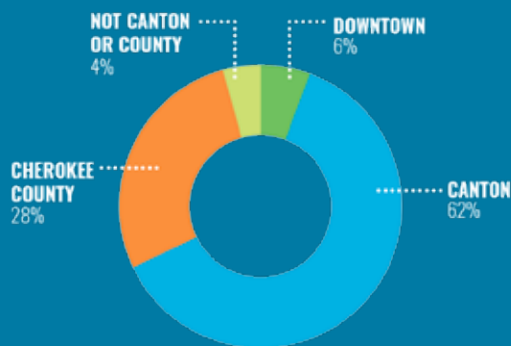
Below: The Booth at the Rockin' the River concert event.





## OUTREACH // SURVEYS

#CantonForward outreach efforts included an online survey, which received 239 responses. The survey questions were written to gain an understanding of how people use Downtown Canton and the River Mill District now, and what would enhance their experience or bring them back to the area. Most questions were in multiple choice format, but allowed open-ended responses if a respondent had other ideas. Most survey respondents live in the City of Canton city limits (71% of those who provided an answer) and 37% of respondents visit the study area more than 5 times per month.



The first two questions of the online survey asked "What's one word to describe Canton today?" and "What's one word to describe Canton tomorrow?" The above graphics illustrate the words that people wrote more than once. The size of the words represents how frequent that word was written relative to the others. Although many of the initial words have a negative connotation, the most commonly noted words were "Historic" and "Potential," showing an optimistic outlook for Canton's Future. The second question uncovered respondents' increased optimism for Downtown and the River Mill District.

## OTHER POINTS TO NOTE

The last survey question asked for final thoughts to be included in the planning process. The most frequently noted "other thoughts" were:

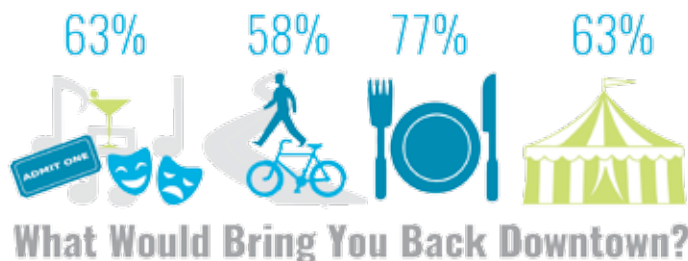
- Add Restaurants
- Add Shopping / Retail
- Make the study area similar to Woodstock, Georgia
- Keep Canton Family-Friendly
- Allow River Access
- Add Walking & Biking Trails
- Maintain the "Old Town Feeling" with Modern Considerations
- Add In-town Housing

The key points to note are that:

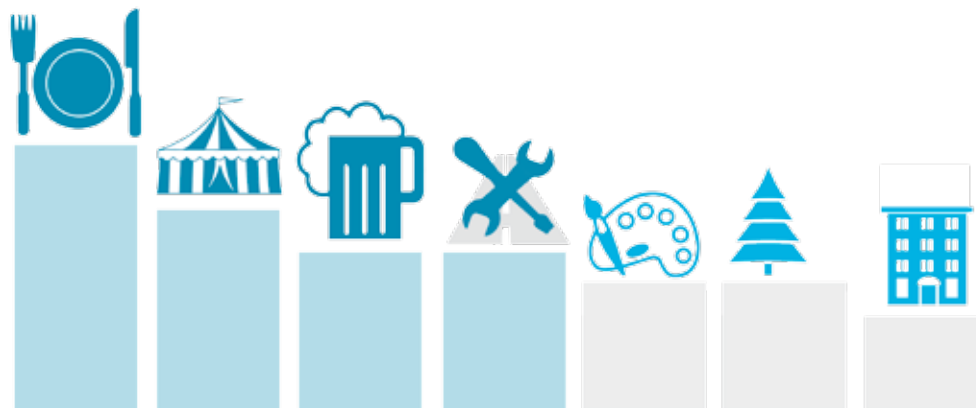
- Residents realize the potential for the study area
- Restaurants, shopping, bars / breweries are and will continue to be a major draw to the area
- Events are popular, and people would attend more
- Walking and biking trails are desired throughout town
- Residents recognize the importance of the Etowah River and want to access it
- In-town housing is desired
- Parking, sidewalk maintenance, and more sidewalks are important



The top 3 choices for reasons that people visit Downtown and the River Mill District were the restaurants, festivals and events, and shopping.



The top choices for reasons people would come back to Downtown and the River Mill District would be to add more restaurants, host more festivals and events, create more nightlife, and add walking and biking options.



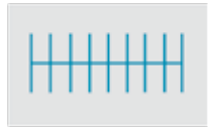
## HOW SHOULD THE RIVER MILL DISTRICT BE REVITALIZED?

Respondents said that to revitalize the River Mill District, the City should focus on attracting restaurants (both fine and casual dining), bars and breweries, hosting more festivals and events, and maintaining the existing infrastructure. Other options that scored close percentages include attracting the arts, adding parks, and offering housing options at various income levels.

## TRANSPORTATION

### ISSUES

41%



15%



13%



Many people said that parking was the biggest transportation issue in the study area, while others noted walkability and bike-ability as issues. Respondents could write more than one.

### IMPROVEMENTS



23% TRAILS  
+ 9% RIVER TRAILS



27%



17%

Many respondents said that to improve walking and biking in the study area, trails throughout town and along the Etowah River would be the best enhancement. Others noted a need for more and wider sidewalks or that additional parking is necessary. Respondents could write more than one issue.

## HOUSING

38%  
WOULD MOVE  
DOWNTOWN &  
RIVER DISTRICT



The survey asked if respondents would choose to live in the Downtown and River Mill District; 38% said they would if the option was available.

Respondents stated preferences for single-family homes, townhomes, and condominiums as the preferred unit types to live in (they could choose more than one type). If they owned the unit, most would be willing to spend between \$100,000 and \$250,00 in the study area. If renting, most would be willing to spend \$500 to \$800 per month for a one-bedroom unit (they could choose one option only).

### Housing Preferences



### Spending Preferences





## OUTREACH // MEETINGS

### COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Nearly 120 people attended the #CantonForward Community Workshop at Canton City Hall on January 14, 2016. The workshop began with a presentation about key factors influencing the future of Canton, as well as the results of initial public outreach.

Participants then broke into focus tables to brainstorm ideas for the future of Downtown Canton, the River Mill District, and topics related to the larger area, such as walking and bicycling, housing, and redevelopment. Sample photos from other communities provided inspiration. Ideas from 4th and 5th grade students at Hasty Elementary were also on display, showing their ideas for the future of Canton.

Feedback from the Community Workshop was used to create the draft plans for the future of Downtown Canton and the River Mill District.



Top: an initial presentation covered existing factors contributing to the future of Canton.

Top, right: Focus tables used maps and images to brainstorm ideas for the future.

Bottom, left: Participants wrote their key ideas to share with the group.

Bottom, right: Local 4th and 5th grade students also contributed their ideas.



# 120

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**  
**PARTICIPANTS**





## OUTREACH // MEETINGS

### OPEN HOUSE

On March 22, 2016, more than 90 people stopped in for an informal Draft Plan Open House at Cup Up coffee shop on Main Street in Downtown Canton.

The draft #CantonForward section of this document was on display on a series of boards around the room, and citizens were given sticky notes to leave comments on each board. Many positive comments were received, as well as other suggestions that were incorporated into the plan.

The planning team was present to answer questions and record comments from the public. There was also a comment box and a screen that allowed participants to create a word cloud using text messages about how they would describe the future of Canton.







# 90+

**PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE**  
**PARTICIPANTS**

Participants at the open house used sticky notes to comment on draft plans. Planning team members were present to answer questions and record ideas.







## CHAPTER 3 // CANTON FORWARD

// Framework Plan

// Concept Plan & Recommendations

// River Mill District Plan

// Downtown District Plan





# #CANTONFORWARD FRAMEWORK PLAN

The framework plan is intended to be a general guide for the character of redevelopment. Photos show possible alternatives for what may be appropriate in each category.

## MIXED USE/BOUQUETTE MANUFACTURING

- A mix of small scale artisanal manufacturing, art studios, maker spaces, offices, restaurants, bars or a microbrewery, and shops.

## DOWNTOWN MIXED USE

- A walkable mix of restaurants, shops, offices, civic buildings, and urban residences, in historic commercial buildings, historic homes, or new buildings.

## INDUSTRIAL

- Conventional light industrial businesses as allowed by existing city codes.

## COMMERCIAL

- Shops and restaurants in an attractive but suburban form.

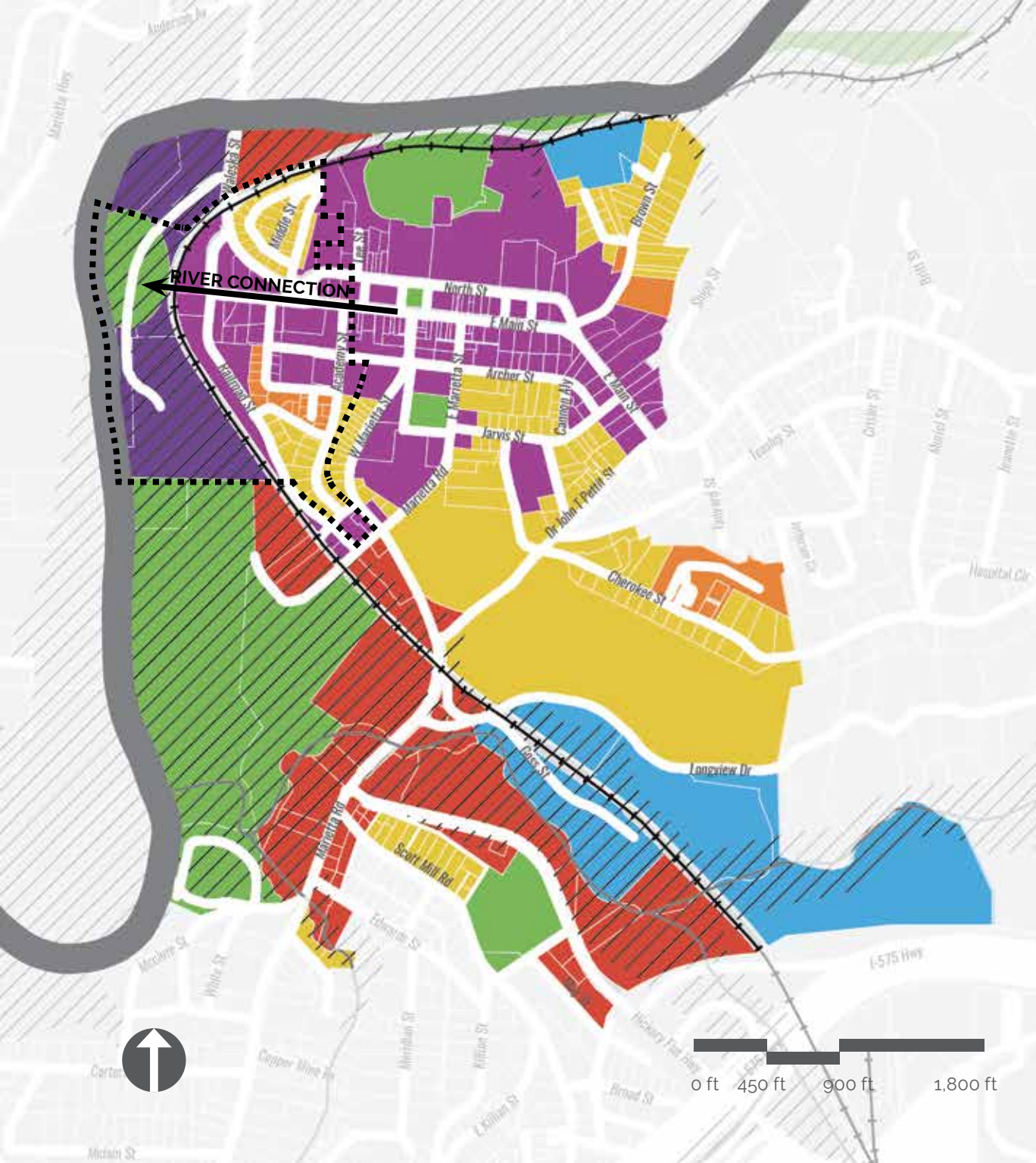




# FRAMEWORK PLAN

## LEGEND

- Mixed Use/Boutique Manufacturing
- Downtown Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Multi-Family Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Open Space/Agriculture
- 100-year Floodplain
- Rivers/ Streams
- Railroad
- See detailed Concept Plan



**DRAFT**

#CANTONFORWARD 43



# #CANTONFORWARD FRAMEWORK PLAN

## MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

- Apartments, condominiums, senior housing, fourplexes, and other similar residences compatible with a small town feel.



MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL



MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

## SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

- Historic homes as well as new detached houses, townhouses, and cottages.



SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

## OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURE

- Parks, cemeteries, and farmland.



OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURE



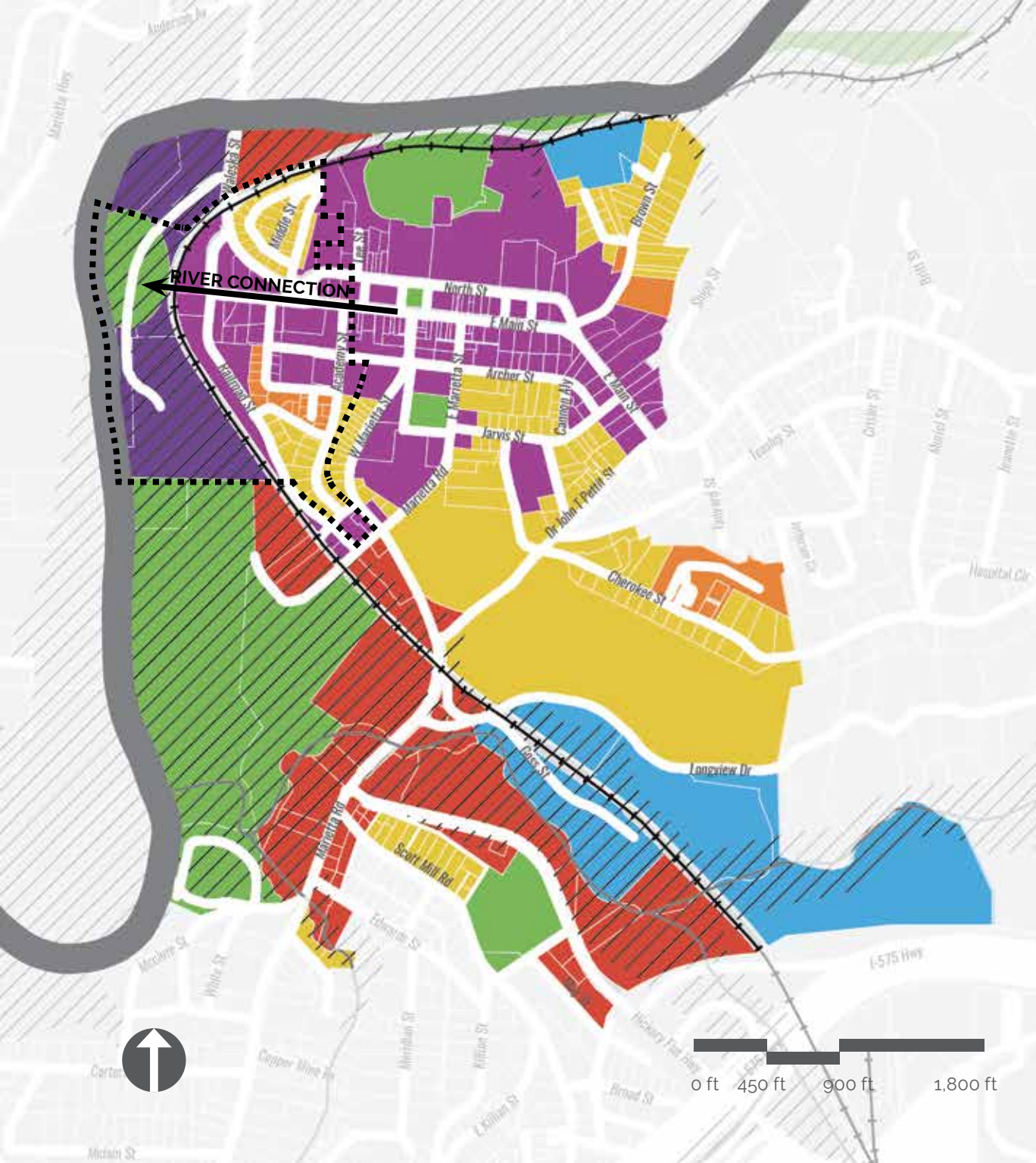
OPEN SPACE/AGRICULTURE



# FRAMEWORK PLAN

## LEGEND

- Mixed Use/Boutique Manufacturing
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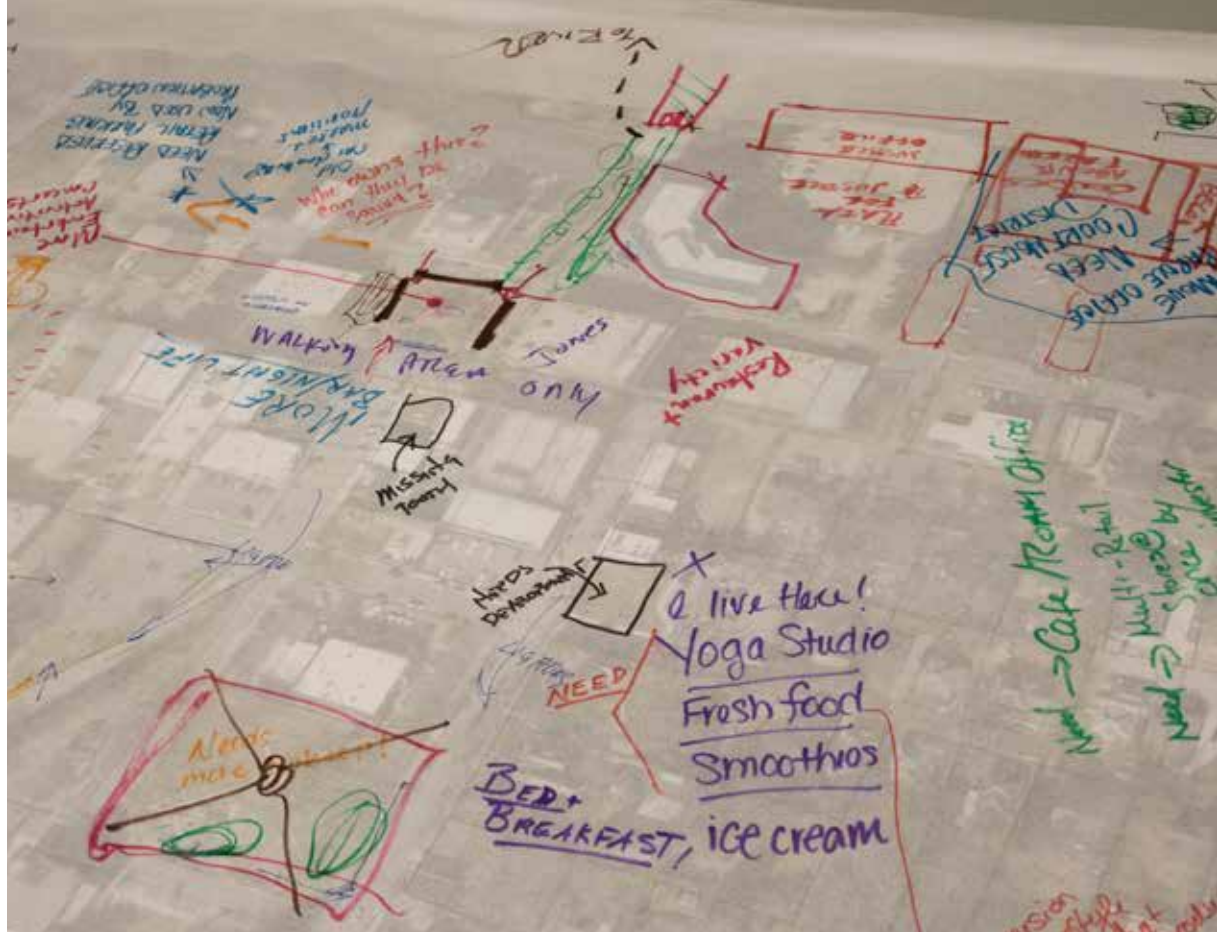
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#CANTONFORWARD 45

# RIVER MILL DISTRICT & DOWNTOWN CONCEPT PLAN

The concept plan to the right is a more detailed plan for the area outlined with a dotted line in the Framework Plan. This plan represents one possibility for redevelopment and is for illustrative purposes only. This plan assumes that any future development will occur when willing developers cooperate with the City of Canton. It is also assumed that development would occur in phases. More detailed descriptions of these plans are shown below.

Input from the Community Workshop was used to draft this concept plan. The photo to the right shows some of the feedback from workshop participants. In addition to the entertainment, live/work spaces, boutique hotels, and fitness center recommendations, Canton residents desired more downtown housing options, improved pedestrian safety, and access to the Etowah River.



Top: This image shows one group's ideas for the Downtown and River Mill District concept plan from the Community Workshop.





# CONCEPT PLAN

## LEGEND

- Mixed Use (Existing Building)
- Multifamily Housing
- Townhouses
- Single-Family Housing

## SUMMARY

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Renovated Canton Mill Buildings | 50,000 sq. ft.<br>Commercial Space &<br>38 Residential Units             |
| Mill Annex                      | 52,000 sq. ft.<br>Commercial Space                                       |
| Makerspace                      | 25,000 sq. ft.<br>Commercial Space                                       |
| New Housing                     | 156 multifamily residential units<br>84 townhouses<br>62 detached houses |





# PROPOSED CONNECTIONS

Improving connectivity and transportation will make downtown Canton more accessible for everyone, especially as a place to walk, bike, and ride the bus. The improvements described below are shown on the map on the following page.

## STREET & SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

- Convert Main street and North Street from one-way to two-way, including intersection improvements
- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Etowah River and a connecting promenade along West Main Street to connect Downtown to the River
- Convert Riverdale Circle to one-way
- Add new sidewalks, parallel parking, and trees along Hill Street, Hill Street Circle, and Academy Street
- Add new sidewalks, parallel parking, and trees along Riverdale Circle and Middle Street
- Add new sidewalks along West Marietta Street between Pettit Street and West Marietta Connection



## BICYCLING

- Install bicycle racks throughout Downtown
- Conduct a bicycle marketing campaign
- Construct a bicycle loop from the Etowah River through Downtown, to consist of a mix of bike route signage, sharrows, and bicycle lanes, as appropriate



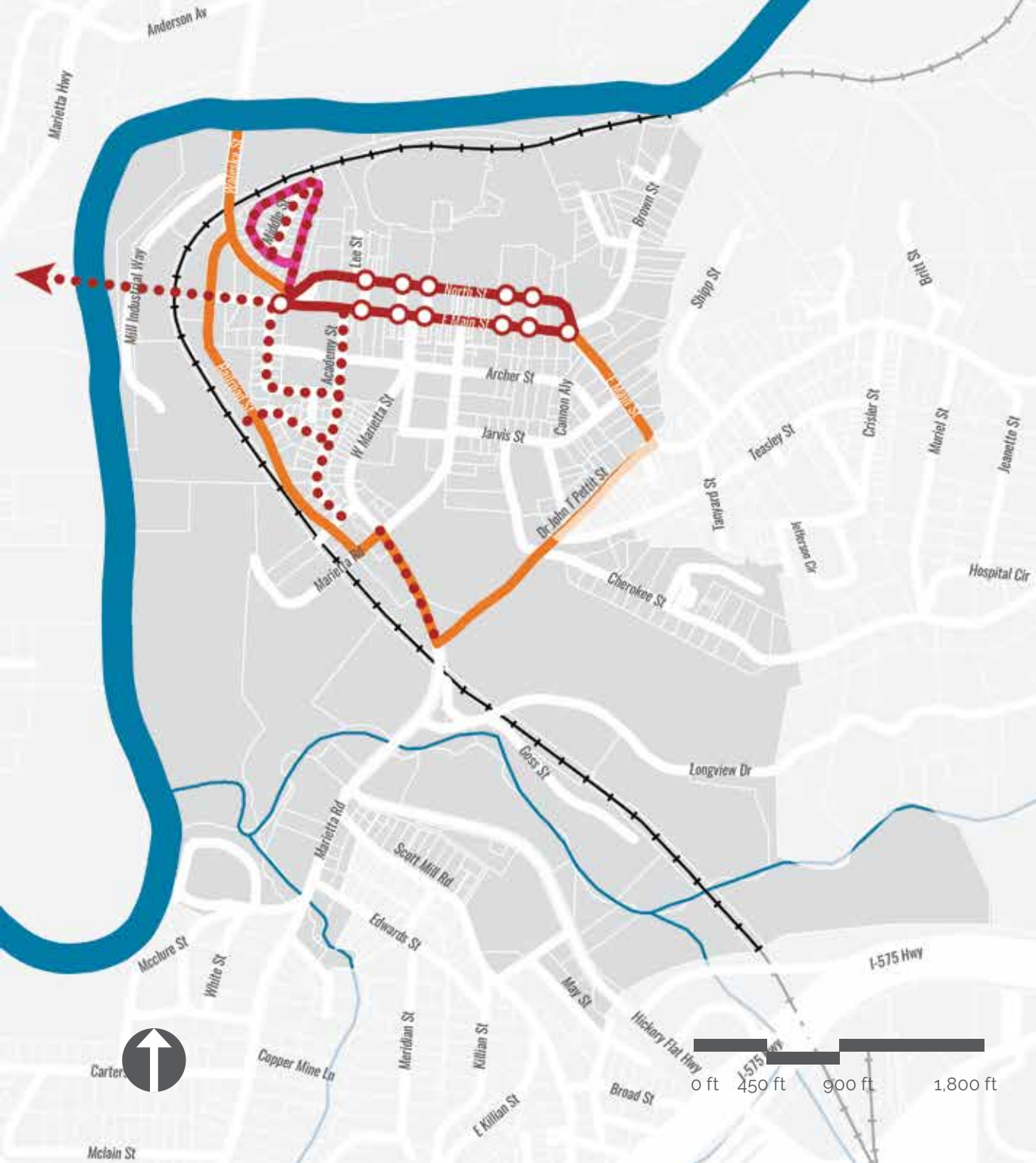
## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Continue to promote a long-term commuter rail connection to Canton, as well as the compact development necessary to support it
- Continue to support and promote existing CATS bus service

Top left: Studies show that two-way streets are good for businesses because they make navigating downtowns easier.

Top right: Sidewalk improvements will make it easier to walk around downtown and to the Etowah River.

Middle right: The proposed greenway loop would connect downtown with the Etowah River and existing riverfront parks.



# CONNECTIONS

## LEGEND

-  Intersection Improvements
-  Street Conversion to Two-Way
-  Street Conversion to One-Way
-  Pedestrian Improvements
-  Greenway Loop to Etowah River through Downtown
-  Water (River, Stream)
-  Railroad

## PUBLIC SPACES & THE ARTS

Canton already has a great foundation in the arts, but should continue to leverage this to improve parks and public spaces, enhance Downtown and the River Mill District, attract visitors, and strengthen the economy.

### THE ARTS

- Create a public art program to encourage the installation of temporary or permanent public art, including pieces that focus on Canton's industrial history
- Continue to host and promote events as economic development drivers and to increase awareness of all that Canton has to offer and to attract diverse audiences

### PUBLIC SPACE

- Create a new riverfront park, including a splash pad and kayak/canoe launch, to create a gateway between Downtown and the Etowah River
- Make Canton a dog friendly city and establish a dog park in the Downtown area



### PUBLIC SPACE, CONTINUED

- Add or enhance family-friendly public spaces near the Square (splash pad, playground, or "safety town")
- Construct an information kiosk on the Square
- Stabilize streambanks with native plantings along Canton Creek

Above: Participants at the Community Workshop share their "big ideas" for Canton's future, including these great ideas for public spaces.

Above, right: The conversion of historic Canton Mill #1 to apartments is an excellent example of preserving history while allowing for redevelopment.





## HISTORY & APPROPRIATE GROWTH PATTERNS

Canton's historic development patterns and architecture should be considered as future growth occurs. A town's history is a unique asset that can never be duplicated or rebuilt once lost. Celebrating and preserving Canton's history will also foster economic growth.

### HISTORY

- Ensure appropriate transitions between single-family areas and new development
- Ensure that the character of new buildings is compatible with Canton's historic buildings
- Adopt the 2015 Historic District Design Guidelines
- Protect historic buildings and encourage their rehabilitation where feasible
- Install historic markers at historic buildings and sites

## APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized properties
- Promote compact infill development to serve the community and increase the residential population
- Promote a variety of housing types to accommodate people of all ages, abilities, and lifestyles, including the provision of a Class A rental community
- Encourage new for-sale housing under \$300,000 with small lot homes, maintenance-free homes, and townhomes
- Revitalize the Canton Village Shopping Center and Sandy Hook Shopping Center with facade improvements, new tenants, and landscaping

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

A successful plan will lead to stronger businesses, new investment, and job creation. Canton should focus on growing its existing businesses, leveraging its assets as a County seat, and attracting employers.

## DOWNTOWN & FUNDING

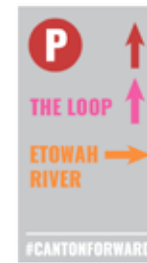
- Brand Downtown as more of a destination, with a focus on businesses with established clientele, those unique enough to draw from a larger area, and those that also have an online presence
- Implement gateway improvements and creative signage at key approaches to Downtown, especially from Riverstone Parkway and I-575
- Designate a City staff position to outreach and engage with the Hispanic Community
- Explore additional funding options and development incentives for desirable projects, including the creation of a Tax Allocation District or Community Improvement District



Brand Canton as a destination and attract businesses with an online component, such as breweries and used bookstores (middle, top), or destination businesses, like hair stylists, doctors, and lawyers (middle, bottom.)



Engage all citizens, especially the Hispanic population



HISTORIC DOWNTOWN CANTON →

Add creative signage at key approaches to Downtown

## THE MARKET

- Grow the economy and add new high wage jobs from diverse businesses, including attracting new mid- to large size employers
- Capitalize on larger market shifts occurring in the Atlanta region as a whole (desire for walkable places, generational shifts, park access, experiential retail, etc.)

The infographics above describe the types of businesses and techniques for economic growth that will help strengthen Downtown Canton as a destination.





Image courtesy Billy Wilson



Image courtesy Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism

## LOCAL BUSINESSES

There is an existing demand for new businesses and restaurants in Downtown Canton and the River Mill District. The potential new businesses listed below could help create a critical mass to support existing businesses, attract visitors, and grow the local economy.

- Attract an anchor (small grocer, fitness center, entertainment venue, or additional civic / arts theater)
- Attract more chef-driven, local, unique fine dining options
- Attract more family-friendly dining and fast-casual options
- Attract a bed & breakfast or boutique hotel

Community input supported the need for more local businesses, dining options, and arts & entertainment venues.

Top left: Fine dining or casual dining options could help strengthen downtown.

Lower left: A fitness studio or other retail anchor could draw more people downtown and support existing businesses.

Right: A bed & breakfast or boutique hotel could serve visitors.

**“CANTON NEEDS NEW BUSINESS DOWNTOWN THAT BRINGS PEOPLE INTO THE DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR AND EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO STAY AND PLAY.”**  
// SURVEY PARTICIPANT

## RIVER MILL DISTRICT

The Etowah River and historic mill buildings make the River Mill district one of Canton's most important assets. Incremental renovations can allow existing tenants to stay, while creating a vibrant district that will become a regional destination.

- Leverage the unique architectural character for commercial reuse (non-profit, art, event space, light manufacturing / maker space, and flex office, etc.), including a restaurant district along Railroad Street
- Demolish the historic mill housing and redevelop it with a mix of housing types
- Amend Canton's Unified Development Code to create an overlay district allowing a mix of uses along the Etowah River, but allowing all existing industrial uses to be grandfathered
- Establish steep slope development guidelines



**“THIS IS CANTON’S HISTORIC HEART. KEEP OUR HERITAGE IN PLACE BUT ENCOURAGE NEW USES TO KEEP THE AREA THE VITAL CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY.” // SURVEY PARTICIPANT**

The images above show potential revitalization of the River Mill District, including a new riverfront park, public art that reflects local history, and new restaurants and public plazas.





# RIVER MILL DISTRICT CONCEPT

## LEGEND

- Mixed Use (Existing Building)
- Multifamily Housing
- Townhouses
- Single-Family Housing



**DRAFT**



## DOWNTOWN AREA

Canton can build on its already successful downtown to create a more vibrant area with public improvements, private investment, and new residences and businesses.

- Renovate the historic Canton Elementary School and redevelop its immediate surroundings as shown on the conceptual plan
- Create aesthetic improvements for the back of the retail along North Street; designate a dumpster pad elsewhere in downtown to relocate some of the existing trash bins
- Work with private and public sector partners to reuse the historic Jones Building as a significant economic anchor
- Amend Canton's Unified Development Code to create an overlay district prohibiting offices on the sidewalk level of key retail streets Downtown, but allowing existing offices to be grandfathered
- Expand parking enforcement and increase fines, as recommended in the 2014 Parking Analysis
- Improve wayfinding signage, especially for public parking



Above: The historic Jones Building, which could become a large economic driver for Downtown if rehabilitated and filled with retail establishments.



Left: A branded and effective wayfinding system could direct visitors to businesses and parking.



# DOWNTOWN CONCEPT

## LEGEND

- Mixed Use (Existing Building)
- Multifamily Housing
- Townhouses
- Single-Family Housing











## CHAPTER 4 // FROM VISION TO REALITY

// Overview & Timeline

// LCI Consistency

// Action Matrix & Priority Projects

## OVERVIEW

### HOW WILL THIS PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

The ambitious vision for the future of Downtown Canton and the River Mill District that is outlined in the plan will require the long-term cooperation of the public and private sectors to come to fruition. The Action Matrix on the following pages lists every project described in this plan, along with responsible parties, potential funding sources, and a general implementation timeline. Some guiding policies in the plan above do not appear in the Action Matrix because they are more general in nature.

### WHEN WILL EVERYTHING HAPPEN?

Some projects, such as amendments to the Unified Development Code, can be implemented immediately. Other efforts are more long term. The Action Matrix gives an approximate start date for each project. Given the longer timeline for parts of the plan, it is important that citizens continue to be involved and that the City of Canton regularly review and update the plan as necessary.

### WHO WILL PAY FOR EVERYTHING?

In order for the vision of #CantonForward to become reality, public and private partners must work together. The City of Canton will be involved in most aspects of implementation, but will need to work with Cherokee County, the Atlanta Regional Commission, local non-profit organizations and businesses, and local developers.

The Action Matrix on the following pages provides a rough cost estimate and potential funding sources for each project.

A number of grants and other public funding sources will ensure that the burden for implementation does not fall entirely on local taxpayers.

Funding for some transportation improvements may be available through competitive grants from the Livable Centers Initiative, with a local government contribution of 20% of the cost.

A number of grants and other public funding sources will ensure that the burden for implementation does not fall entirely on local taxpayers.



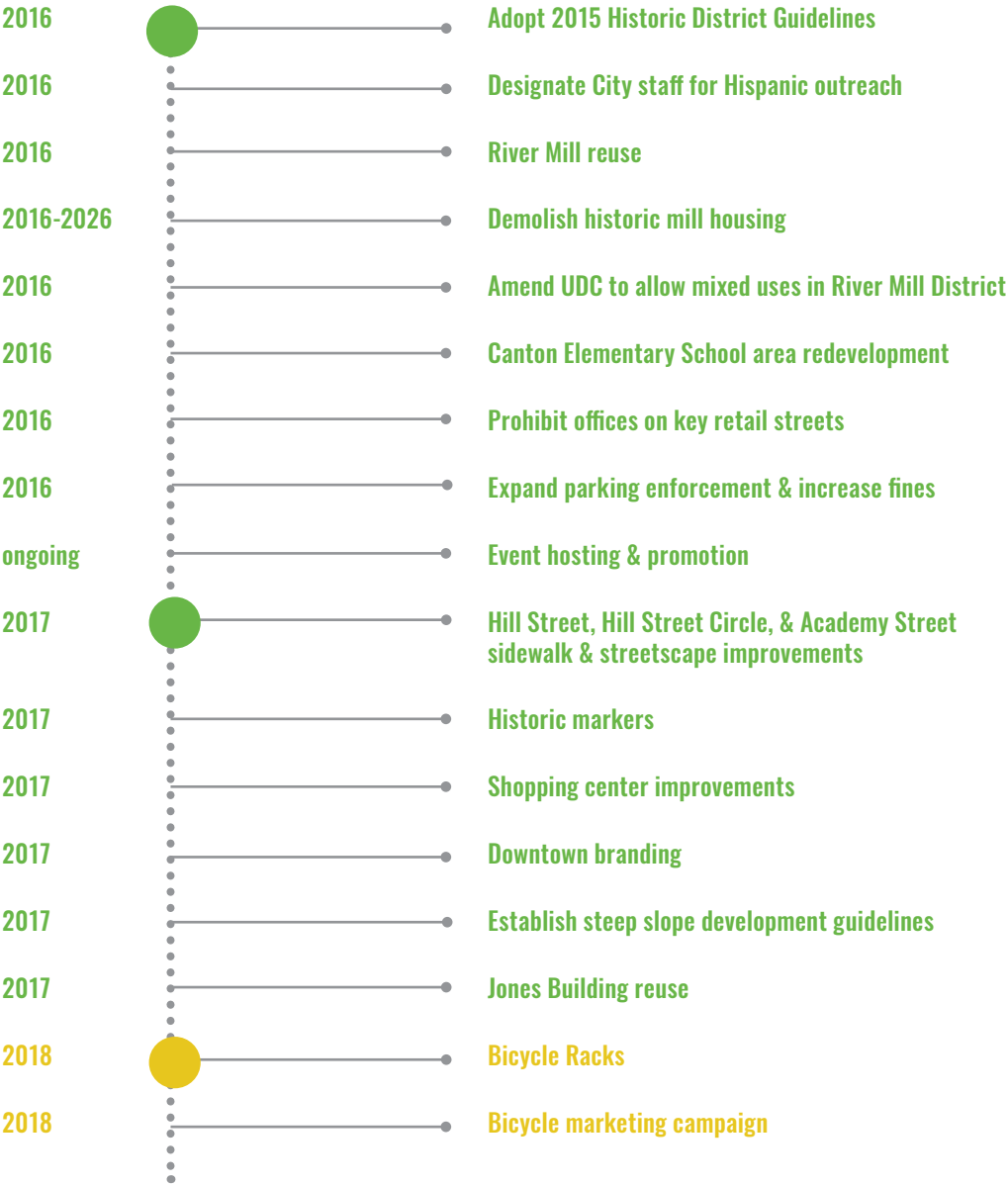


Funding for some transportation improvements may be available through competitive grants from the Livable Centers Initiative, with a local government contribution of 20% of the cost.

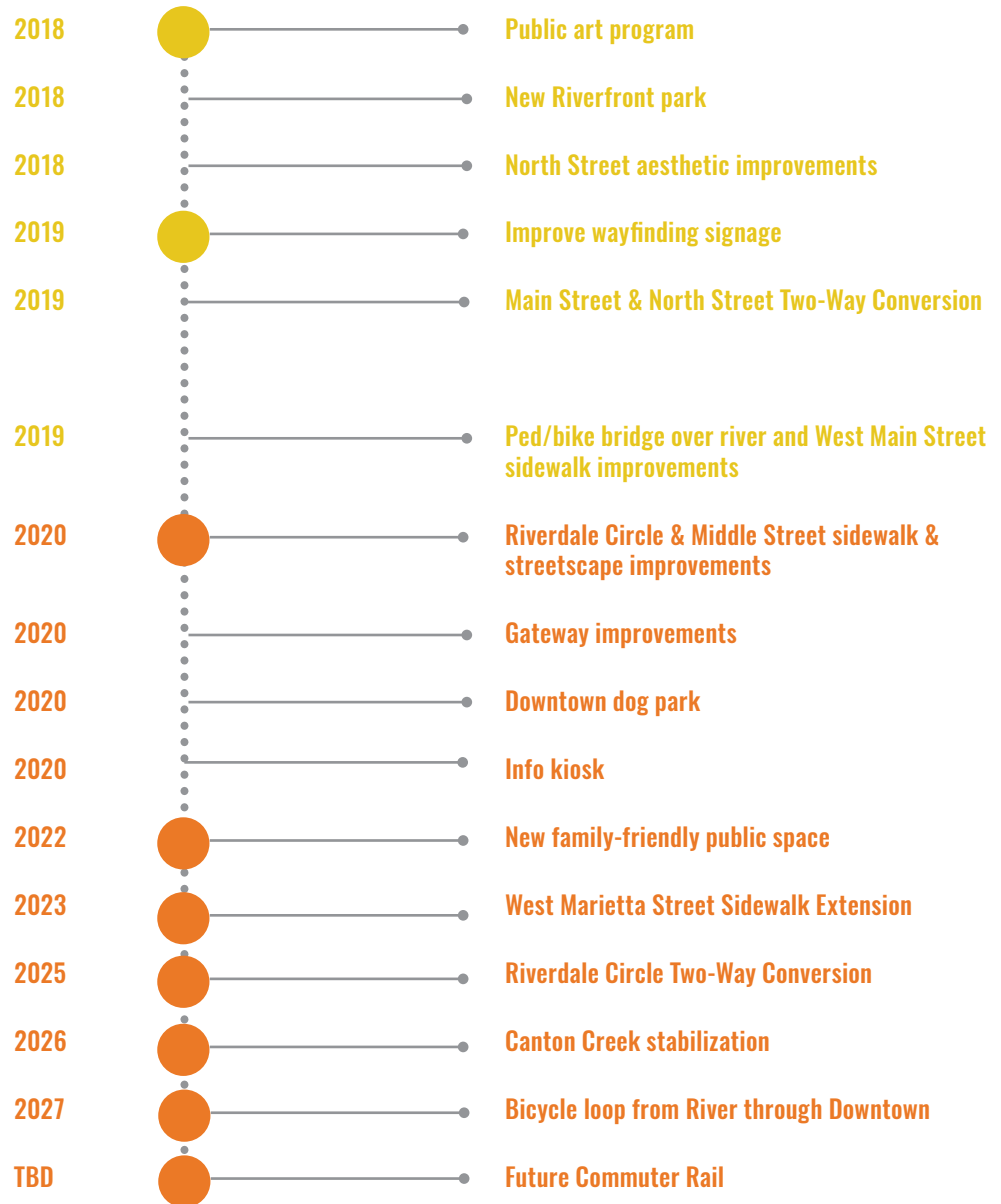
### TIMELINE

The timeline to the right and on the following page provides an estimate for which projects can be expected to be implemented in each year.

Photo: Implementation will require both public and private investment and cooperation.



## TIMELINE





## #CANTONFORWARD // ACTION MATRIX

| PROJECT   | START DATE | EST. COST | RESPONSIBLE PARTIES | FUNDING SOURCES              |
|---|------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>CONNECTIONS</b>  |            |           |                     |                              |
| Main & North Streets two-way conversion   | 2019       | TBD       | City                | City, LCI                    |
| Ped/bike bridge over river and West Main Street sidewalk improvements                 | 2019       | TBD       | City                | City, LCI, TAP, SPLOST, CDBG |
| Riverdale Circle two way conversion   | 2025       | TBD       | Private, City       | Private                      |
| Hill Street, Hill Street Circle, & Academy Street sidewalk & streetscape improvements | 2017       | \$2.2M    | Private, City       | Private, City                |
| Riverdale Circle & Middle Street sidewalk & streetscape improvements                  | 2020       | \$1.8M    | Private, City       | Private, City                |
| West Marietta Street sidewalk extension   | 2023       | \$140,000 | City                | City                         |
| Bicycle racks   | 2018       | \$1,000   | City                | City                         |
| Bicycle marketing campaign  | 2018       | \$5,000   | City, DDA           | City, DDA                    |
| Bicycle loop from River through Downtown  | 2027       | \$1.5M    | City                | City                         |
| Future commuter rail service  | TBD        | TBD       | TBD                 | TBD                          |

## ACTION MATRIX // FROM VISION TO REALITY

The projects on the following page are described in more detail above, but are provided here for quick reference, along with rough cost estimates and other information.

### PRIORITY PROJECTS

The timeline above shows a rough overall implementation schedule. The following projects are the highest priority and should be implemented first.

- Main Street & North Streets two-way conversion
- New riverfront park
- Adopt Historic District guidelines
- River Mill adaptive reuse/redevelopment
- Redevelopment near Canton Elementary School
- Jones Building reuse

## ACTION MATRIX //

### FROM VISION TO REALITY

| PROJECT                                      | START DATE | EST. COST | RESPONSIBLE PARTIES                | FUNDING SOURCES  |
|--|------------|-----------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>PUBLIC SPACES &amp; THE ARTS</b>          |            |           |                                    |  |
| Public art program                           | 2018       | \$100,000 | City, Cherokee Arts Council        | City, private, Atlanta Regional Commission                           |
| Event hosting and promotion                  | on-going   | admin.    | City                               | City, private  |
| New riverfront park                          | 2018       | TBD       | City                               | City   |
| Downtown dog park                            | 2020       | \$500,000 | City                               | City   |
| New family-friendly public space             | 2022       | \$150,000 | City                               | City   |
| Info kiosk                                   | 2020       | \$10,000  | City                               | City   |
| Canton Creek stabilization                   | 2026       | \$200,000 | City                               | City   |
| <b>HISTORY &amp; APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT</b> |            |           |                                    |  |
| Adopt Historic District Guidelines           | 2016       | admin.    | City                               | City   |
| Historic markers                             | 2017       | \$15,000  | Cherokee County Historical Society | City, Cherokee County Historical Society, Georgia Historical Society |
| Shopping center improvements                 | 2017       | TBD       | private                            | private  |



## ACTION MATRIX //

### FROM VISION TO REALITY

| PROJECT  | START DATE | EST. COST | RESPONSIBLE PARTIES | FUNDING SOURCES                            |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| <b>ECONOMIC GROWTH</b>                               |            |           |                     |  |
| Downtown branding                                    | 2017       | \$15,000  | Canton Main Street  | DDA, City                                  |
| Gateway improvements                                 | 2020       | \$168,000 | City                | City                                       |
| Designate City staff for Hispanic outreach           | 2016       | admin.    | City                | City                                       |
| <b>RIVER MILL DISTRICT</b>                           |            |           |                     |  |
| River Mill adaptive reuse/redevelopment              | 2016       | TBD       | Private, City       | Private, Historic tax Credits              |
| Demolish historic mill housing                       | 2016-2026  | TBD       | Private, City       | Private, Historic tax Credits              |
| Amend UDC to allow mixed uses in River Mill District | 2016       | admin.    | City                | City                                       |
| Establish steep slope development guidelines         | 2017       | \$10,000  | City                | City                                       |
| <b>DOWNTOWN AREA</b>                                 |            |           |                     |  |
| Canton Elementary School area redevelopment          | 2016       | TBD       | Private, City       | Private, Historic tax Credits              |
| North Street aesthetic improvements                  | 2018       | \$15,000  |                     |  |
| Jones Building reuse                                 | 2017       | TBD       | Private, City       | Private, Historic tax Credits, County, DDA |
| Prohibit offices on key retail streets               | 2016       | admin.    | City                | City                                       |
| Expand parking enforcement & increase fines          | 2016       | admin.    | City                | City                                       |
| Improve wayfinding signage                           | 2019       | \$75,000  | City                | City, DDA                                  |

# LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE CONSISTENCY

#CantonForward is consistent with the components of the Livable Centers Initiative as described below.

## **1. Efficiency/feasibility of land uses and mix appropriate for future growth including new and/or revised land use regulations needed to complete the development program.**

The plan puts forth a vision for a more mixed-use land use pattern that would increase efficiency by providing more services, gathering spaces, and employment near existing residences, and by increasing residential density with redevelopment. These incremental changes in land use patterns are feasible given market constraints, the proposed transportation system, and local conditions, but require some small updates to Canton's Unified Development Code.

## **2. Transportation demand reduction measures.**

A reduction in the demand for vehicular trips is proposed via a combination of new sidewalks, more compact development, new bicycle facilities, and greater diversity of land uses.

## **3. Internal mobility requirements – traffic calming, pedestrian circulation, transit circulation, bicycle circulation including safety and security of pedestrians.**

Pedestrian improvements are provided along a variety of streets, including traffic calming measures and elements to promote pedestrian and bicycle circulation. An interconnected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities is proposed, with a focus on safety and connecting key nodes.

## **4. Mixed-income housing, job/housing match and social issues.**

Housing types and sizes for people of a variety of ages and incomes are proposed, including apartments, condominiums, townhouses, single-family residences, and cottages that could serve as traditional or senior housing. The plan will significantly increase the stock of middle-income housing. Proposed public and private improvements will help provide disadvantaged groups better access to parks, public facilities, services, and public transit. The jobs/housing balance will be improved by providing new high-paying local jobs and reducing commutes.

## **5. Continuity of local streets in the study area and the development of a network of minor roads.**

Canton already possesses a basic street grid that is significantly constrained by steep slopes, the river, and the railroad tracks. This plan focuses largely on pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with new and improved sidewalks and bike trails to bridge gaps in connectivity, especially the psychological gap between downtown and the river.

## **6. Need/identification of future transit circulation systems.**

There is existing bus service in the study area which connects with regional commuter buses. Commuter rail is recommended in the long term.

## **7. Connectivity of transportation system to other centers.**

There are no regional centers within the study area except downtown Canton, but proposed improvements will better connect downtown to the river and adjacent areas.





An efficient mix and concentration of land uses, combined with transportation improvements, are key principles of this plan

#### **8. Center development organization, management, promotion, and economic restructuring.**

More effective organization, management, and promotion of existing and proposed assets in and near downtown Canton are needed. Recommendations in the areas of marketing and economic development begin to address these needs and move toward a more vibrant future that capitalizes on local assets, particularly the River Mill District.

#### **9. Stakeholder participation and support.**

Public participation was solicited throughout the planning process through a combination of individual interviews, creative outreach, and community meetings. More information about outreach can be found on pages 31-39.

#### **10. Public and private investment policy.**

Successful implementation of the plan depends on a marriage of public and private investment policy, in which significant public investments in transportation improvements and other areas are complemented by private investments in redevelopment. Projects may draw from a variety of funding sources, including city, state, and federal dollars; non-profit investment; and private sources.



**#CantonForward**  
ETOWAH TO THE LOOP

