



House Rural Development Council

August 29, 2023

GEORGIA'S RURAL CENTER

Powered by Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College



Section I – 10 minutes

**Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation
Update**

Section II – 10 minutes

Rural Georgia – Back to the Future!!

Section III – 10 minutes

Your questions and comments

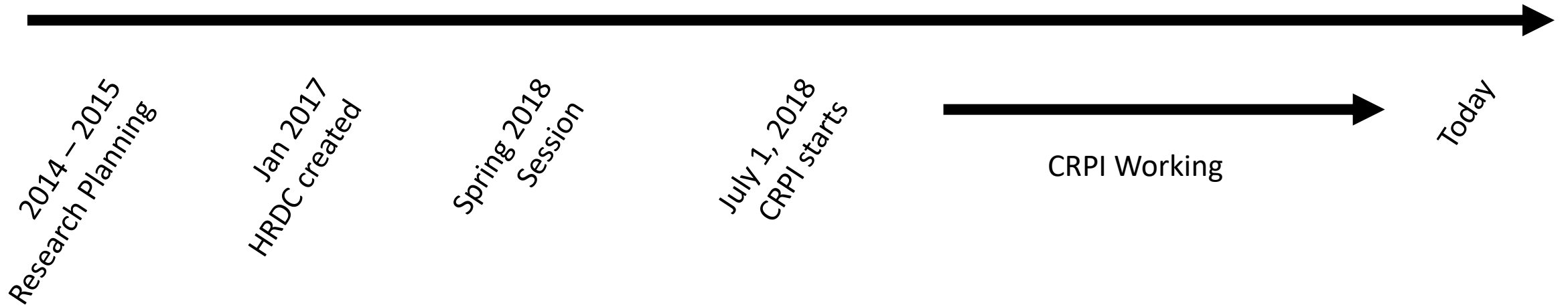
Agenda



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History and Timeline



Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation



MISSION

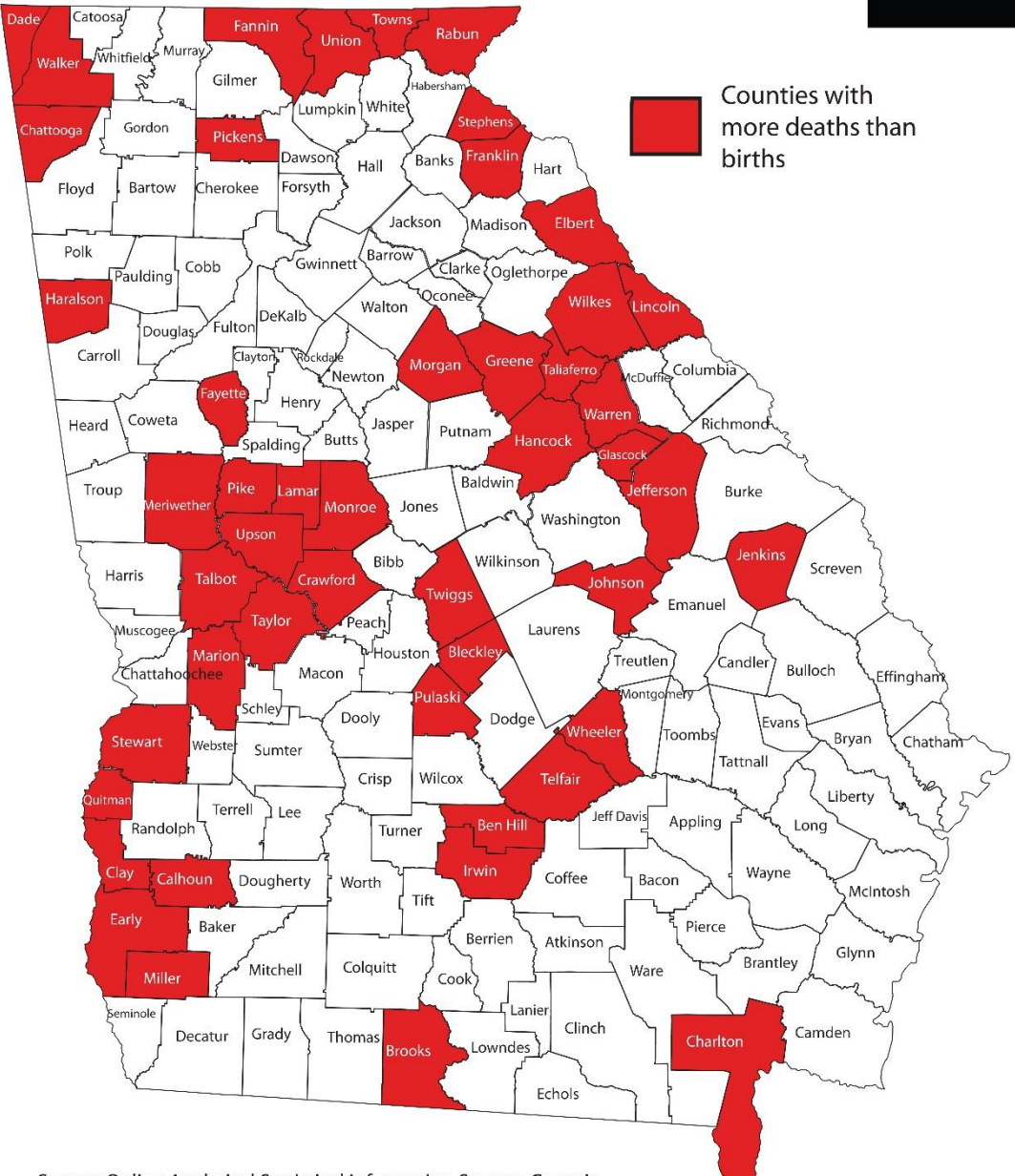
Georgia's Rural Center exists to **RECONNECT** the state's rural and urban people and places, **REDISCOVERING** all that is unique and extraordinary in the State's less populated areas and reminding all Georgians of the power and potential present in small towns and crossroads communities.

We work to recognize successful businesses and efforts and help other communities **RECREATE** those models throughout the State.

Believing that people are Georgia's most valuable asset, we **REINVEST** human capital in the state's rural fringes through internship placement and innovative projects.

Restated....

Georgia Counties with More Deaths than Births: 2013



Source: Online Analytical Statistical Information System, Georgia Department of Public Health.

Is Rural Georgia Dying? Literally?

by Charles Hayslett on August 17, 2015

Maybe, maybe not!
But, if it does it will not go away!

Either way, the people of Georgia pay!



FUNCTION

Approach - outcome based relying on ABAC, CRPI, and partner strengths\assets

- Advocacy,
- Interagency coordination,
- Resource management,
- Human capital provider, and
- Intensive project management

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We learned

- Many rural communities have very limited, if any, people with whom to work.
- Strong, inspired, and capable leadership is often lacking.
- Confusion abounds.
- Strained local government financials:
 - ✓ Tax base is very narrow – residential, ag, and timber
 - ✓ Sales tax revenue is limited because of loss of businesses
 - ✓ Costs of maintaining infrastructure has skyrocketed
 - ✓ School taxes have often risen, and county government doesn't want to raise property taxes.
- ✓ Workforce issues – numbers, quality, reliability, etc

Reconsidering how we work!



Our focus has become

- Just do it! Meaning jump start the project. They will come around.
 - ✓ Go out and find the opportunities,
 - ✓ Don't expect too much out of community, and
 - ✓ Demystify the process – cut through the ... for them.
- Partner with the private sector.
- Help existing small business despite the fact that established metrics are often not applicable.
- Get the beneficiary on board first and then try to leverage authorities.

Challenges we all face!

More on what we do

Doing! Focus on doing it rather than facilitating it! Find the opportunity; find the solution; find the resources; get the project across the finish line.

Infrastructure planning. Without adequate water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure rural communities cannot be successful in attracting new business. Provide services to assess capacity and condition and prepare improvement plans that include the necessary engineering documentation, specifications for bid preparation, and project management.

Planning for growth and opportunities. Assist communities in preparing a roadmap, masterplan, and marketing/promotion plan for their communities.

Funding the gap. CRPI has invested in healthcare where communities are at the brink of losing access. Stand the gap when emergencies arise that would otherwise challenge service delivery.

Grant preparation. Prepared 20 Georgia Cares (ARP) funding proposals seeking more than \$50 million to fund fund improvements to infrastructure and equipment to innovate rural communities.

Innovation and disruption. Invested time, effort, and money in projects that were conceived to disrupt, prove concept, and/or illustrate opportunity.



Make it happen!

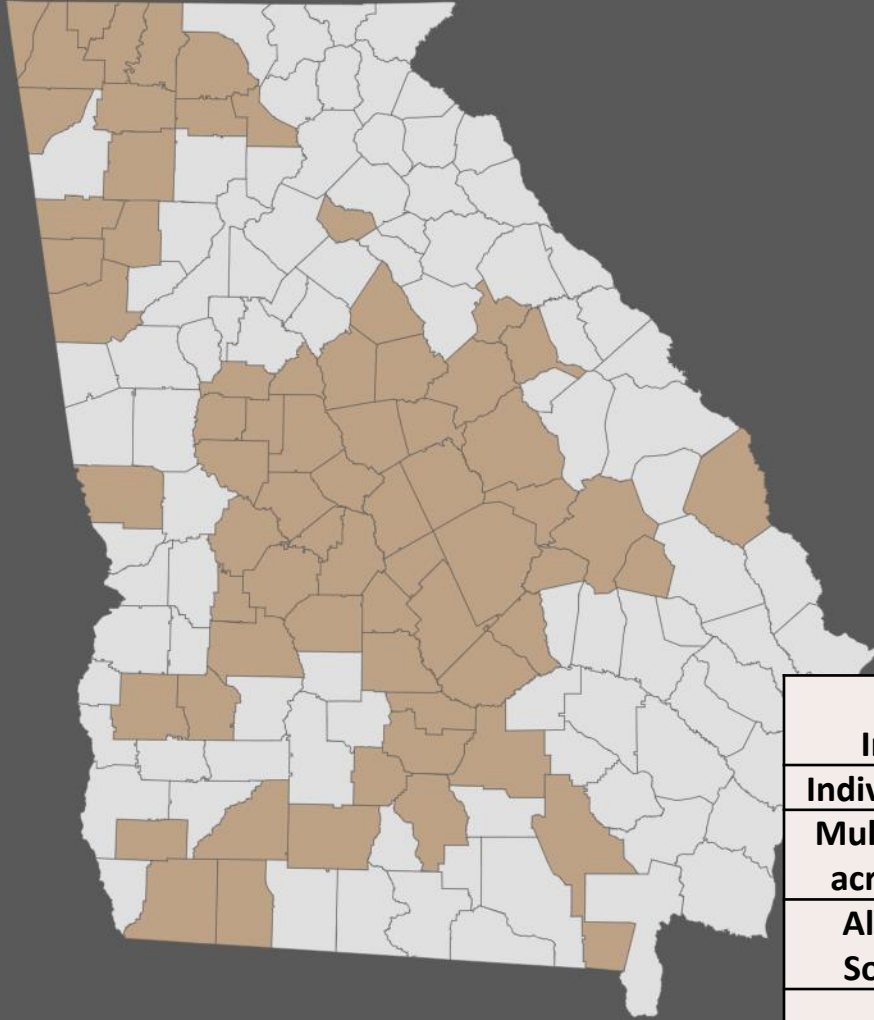


What we don't do

- Run leadership development programs.
- Run community certification programs.
- Charge for services.
- Expect too much.
- Certain program areas
 - ✓ Housing – that's DCA and USDA Rural Development's arena,
 - ✓ Rural broadband – there is already ample public/private investment, and
 - ✓ Education *per se*. We do engage on workforce development, but K-12 education is too complex.

Would be duplication!

Our Work!



1. More than 50 projects completed across the State:
2. Georgia Cares – 3 projects under management
 - ✓ Warthen Water Well (Washington County)
 - ✓ Parrott Water Well (Terrell County)
 - ✓ ABAC Water Well (Tift County)
3. Publications
 - ✓ 160 report/documents, most beyond and above the 50+ projects.

Impact area	Number of projects serving
Individual counties	69
Multiple Counties across the State	9
All counties of Southwest GA	2
Statewide	14

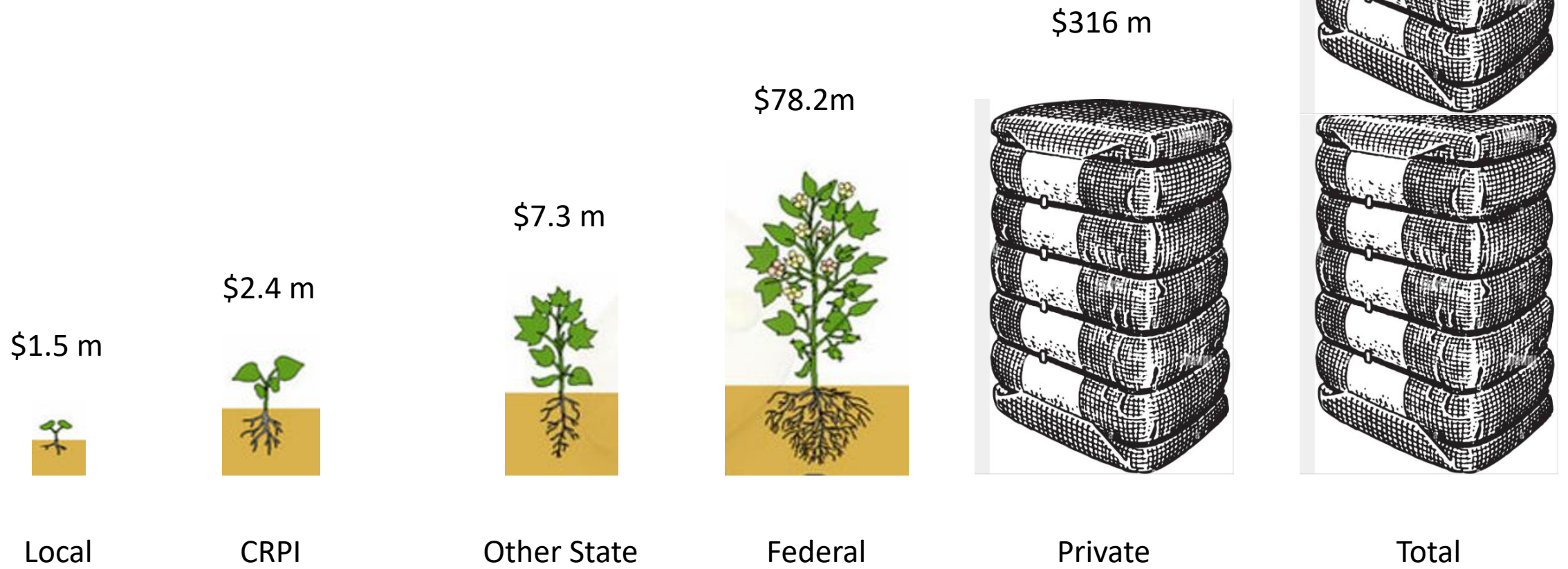
Our Impact!

Funding, fund sources, and leverage!

		Fund Sources					
Project inception (FY)	# Projects	CRPI	Other State	Local Public	Federal Funds	Private investment	
2019 Summary	14	\$ 147,824.95	\$ 1,500,000.00	\$ -	\$ 12,000,000.00	\$ 310,050,000.00	\$ 323,697,824.95
2020 Summary	6	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 6,193.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 36,193.00
2021 Summary	5	\$ 272,807.00	\$ -	\$ 190,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,050,000.00	\$ 1,512,807.00
2022 Summary	13	\$ 1,557,947.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 1,280,000.00	\$ 1,228,951.00	\$ 4,879,519.22	\$ 9,696,417.22
2023 Summary	14	\$ 397,747.00	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 65,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ 70,420,247.00
Totals Project Expenditures	52	\$ 2,401,325.95	\$ 7,255,000.00	\$ 1,498,693.00	\$ 78,228,951.00	\$ 315,979,519.22	\$ 405,363,489.17
						Return multiplier	170

Source: CRPI running project list. Updated July 14, 2023

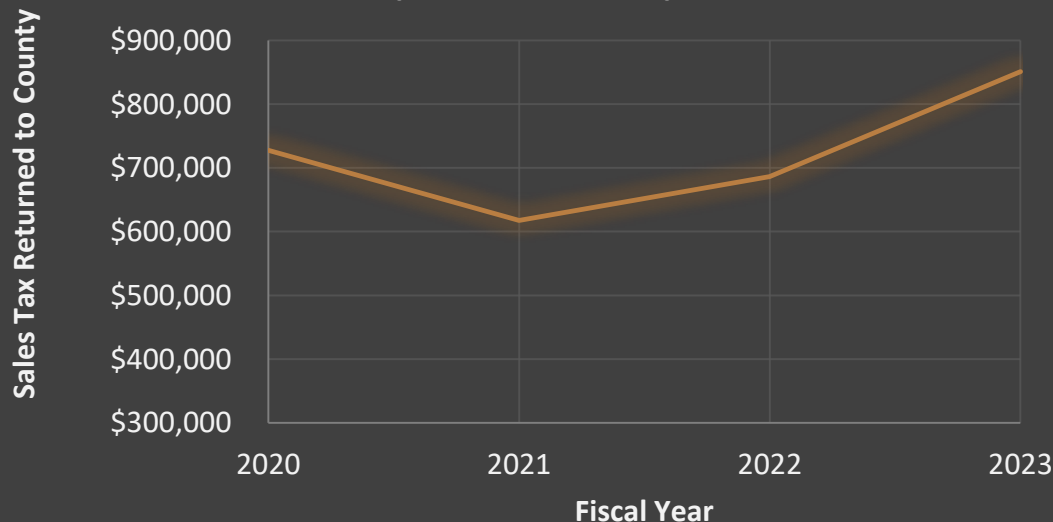
Plant a few small cotton seeds and you can make a bale!
CRPI's seed-size investment of \$2.4 million to 51 projects
has leveraged a total investment of more than \$405
million!!!!



Impacts and Outcomes

- ✓ Support Taliaferro County and their request for state and federal aid with a feasibility study and an economic impact study.
- ✓ \$300,000 million construction project in Taliaferro Co.
- ✓ \$1 million One Georgia Grant.
- ✓ \$18 million in tax credits.
- ✓ 50 new full-time jobs in Taliaferro County.
- ✓ 266 new full-time jobs in Barrow County.
- ✓ Double digit job growth in Wilkes, Oglethorpe, and Lincoln Counties.
- ✓ Broiler house construction in five counties.

Taliaferro County Sales Tax Collection - By FY
(Source - GDOR)



CENTER FOR RURAL PROSPERITY AND INNOVATION

Harrison Poultry, Inc.: Potential
Economic Impact of Locating in
Taliaferro Co., Georgia

Economic Impact Report

Dr. David Bridges + Scott Blount

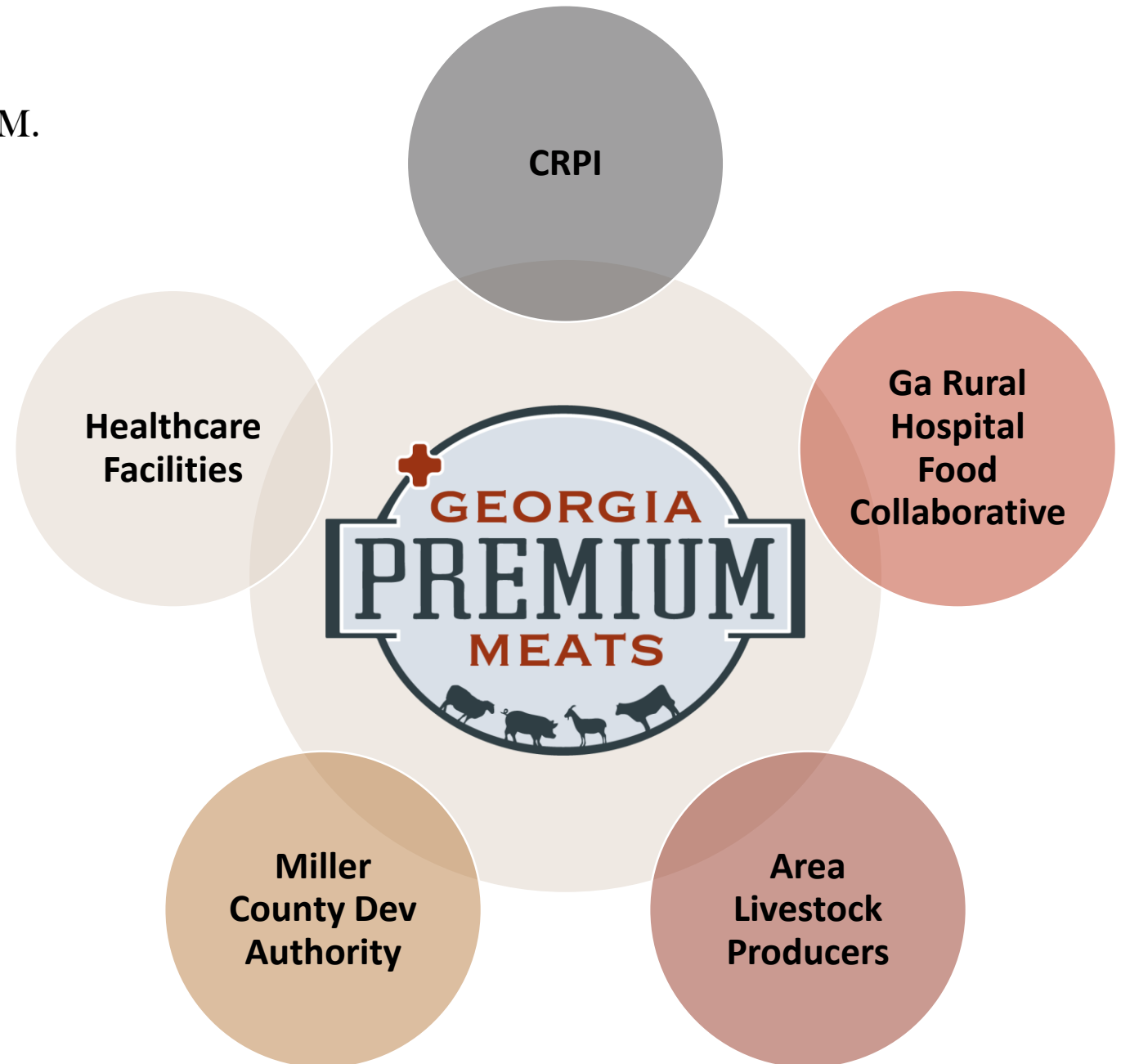


Goals...

- Mitigate economic impact of pending closure MSM.
- Preserve and expand job opportunity.
- Create option for local slaughter and processing.
- Support rural healthcare providers.
- Stabilize and transfer to private ownership.

Status...

- Start of operations - December 2021.
- Management support from CRPI.
- 7 FT, non-exempt waged employees.
- Currently providing services to more than a dozen farmers.
- Processing - beef, pork, lamb, and goat.
- Sausage contract with large LTHC group.
- Pursuing transfer of operations to a for private operator.



Impacts and Outcomes

News Center

Calendar | Categories | Media Contacts | Daily Digest | Whistle | Social Media | Subscribe | Featured exper

Economic Development Administration Awards Georgia Tech \$65 Million for AI Manufacturing Project

Largest grant ever awarded to a Georgia Tech-led coalition of partners to drive Build Back Better initiatives



Sep 02, 2022

The Georgia Institute of Technology has been awarded a \$65 million grant from the U.S. Department of

CRPI Administered \$5 million State Match Funding

GA EDA AIM Hub Counties

TCSG - Statewide

UGA Engineering

Georgia Cyber Center - AU

21st Century Project

SW GA Reg Commission

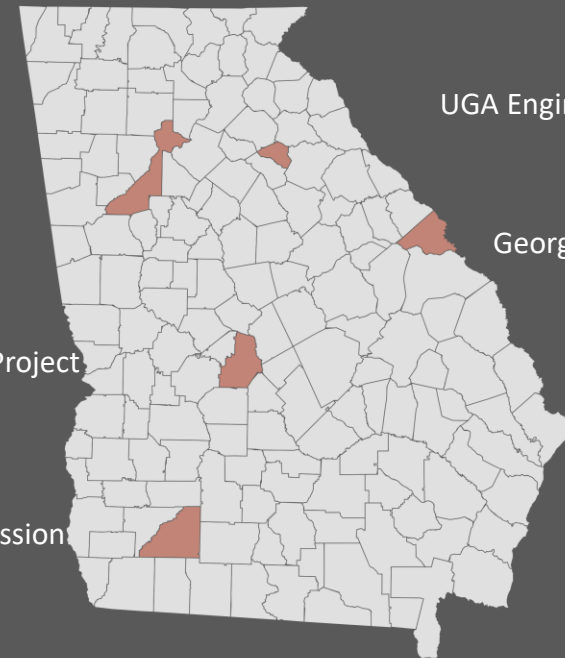


Table edited and updated July 14 2023		Fund Sources					
Date of project inception (FY)	Counties Impacted	CRPI	Other State	Local Public	Federal Funds	Private investment	Total investment
2023							
Harris County Strategic Economic Development Planning	Harris	\$ -					
Terrell County Industrial Park Improvements	Terrell	\$ -					
Code Red Guard School Security	Statewide	\$ 43,900					
Georgia Grown Agricultural Innovation Spotlight	Statewide	\$ 70,000					
Georgia Forest Innovation Education Center	Statewide	\$ -					
Ocilla/Irwin County Industrial Development Authority - 2nd Century Ag	Irwin, Coffee, Turner, Ben Hill	\$ 200,000					
Georgia AIM EDA State Match Administration	Statewide	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000		\$ 65,000,000		
Greater Gilmer Workforce Housing Study	Gilmer and surrounding	\$ 10,000		\$ 22,500			
Waycross-Ware County Development Authority	Ware	\$ 14,500					
SOWEGA - Apiculture Education Grant	SW Georgia	\$ 10,000					
Feasibility Studies (3) - Georgia Loggers and Paper producers	Central Georgia ~ 20 counties	\$ -					
Sunbelt WIFI Service and social media interns	Statewide	\$ 44,250					
Tifton Judicial Circuit Shelter, Inc. dba Ruth's Cottage and The Patticake House	Tift, Worth, Irwin, Turner, Berrien	\$ 5,000					
Lumber City Water Authority	Telfair	\$ 97					
2023 Summary		\$ 397,747	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 22,500	\$ 65,000,000	\$ -	\$ 70,420,247

Projects Initiated During FY2023

A Collaborative Project in Support of Georgia's Forest Industry

#1 Forestry State in the US!



GEORGIA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION



Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



\$27.2 Billion

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Two-thirds of Georgia is timberland. It covers 23 to 25 million acres.



Georgia's pulp and paper industry continues to dominate all sectors within the forest industry at 67 percent of total revenue output.



BECAUSE THE NET GROWTH OF FORESTS HAS CONSISTENTLY EXCEEDED NET REMOVALS, THE VOLUME OF TIMBER IN GEORGIA IS GREATER NOW THAN IT WAS IN THE 1930S.

FORESTRY RANKS 3RD IN TOTAL EMPLOYMENT AMONG GEORGIA INDUSTRY SEGMENTS.



TREE CENTER

TIMBER RESOURCE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE TREE.

The TREE Center at ABAC will create a program for educational opportunities, classroom experiences, events, and more demonstrated through a building centered on the use of mass timber products.

MISSION

Create an experience in a space that utilizes mass timber products to educate visitors on modern and innovative uses of Georgia's forestry products.

VISION

Enhance the value of Georgia's forestry industry through the use of mass timber and other novel forest products.

TREE CENTER MEANING

T TIMBER

mass timber and forest products in action and working.

R RESOURCE

source for all things mass timber that supports Georgia forests.

E EDUCATION

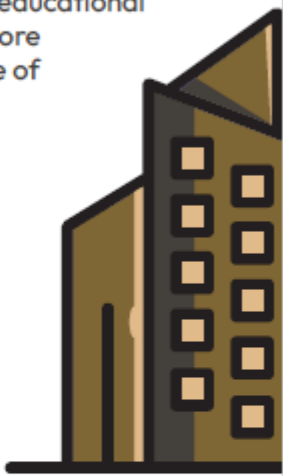
training and learning facility for all things forestry and more.

E EXPERIENCE

explore the beauty of mass timber. Get to know Georgia forestry.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO YOU

Through education, prepare the next generation to be good forest stewards in the #1 forestry state in the country and inspire the building of structures that care for our world.



Strain has frayed the rope!



Population

Revenue



RURAL RUINS

The urbanization of the South has left countless small towns to wither and — in some cases — to die. South Georgian Brian Brown has dedicated his life to photographing the “vanishing” buildings of Georgia — not just for the historical record, but for the memories they evoke when we see them.

BY TRACY THOMPSON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMANDA GREENE
AND FROM THE VANISHING SOUTH GEORGIA AND
VANISHING NORTH GEORGIA WEBSITES

Costs



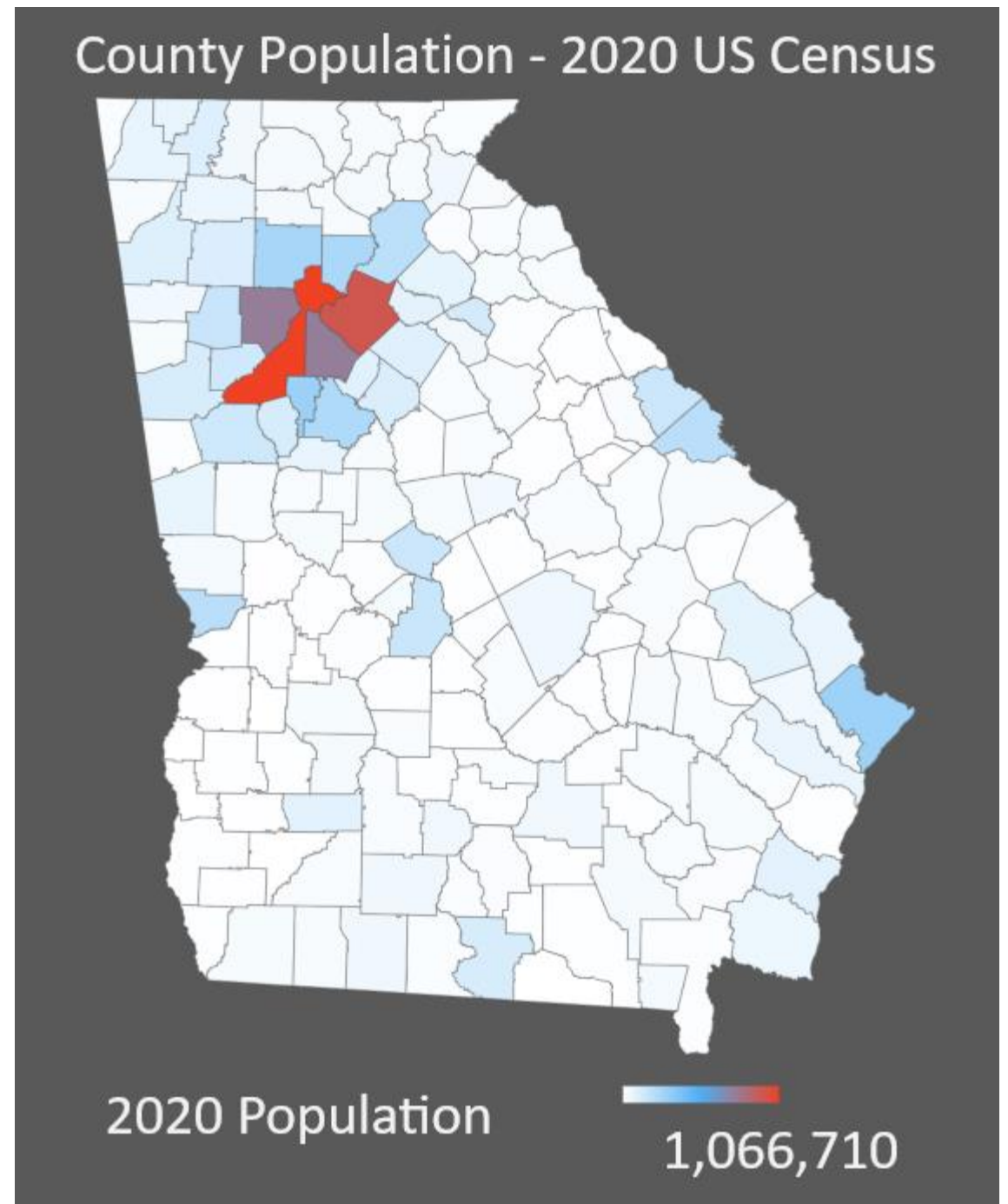
Primary Indicators

- Per capita income – more counties and persons in the lowest quartile of national PCI.
- Population decline – overall and persons <18 years of age.
- Aging of rural counties – growing percentage of population 65-84 years old.
- Brain drain continues – portion of 18-year-olds leave for school, jobs, etc.
- Relative to costs, tax digest and taxes have stagnated or declined – data later.
- GAP between county revenue and cost of infrastructure maintenance or construction has widened – data later.
- Educational attainment has declined – nationwide and in Georgia.
- Access to healthcare is becoming more limited – 6-10 hospitals at risk of closing and more communities without primary healthcare; ob/gyn desert in South Ga.
- Workforce is a major issue and getting worse, not better – hiring is challenging; lack of education, lack of skill, lack of work ethic, and lack of desire to have a job.
- Political power is diminishing – population decline driven.

Not a pretty story!

Where do Georgians Live?

Population range	Number of Counties	Cumulative Count
< 15,000	53	
15,000 – 50,000	65	118
50,000 – 100,000	16	134
100,000 – 250,000	17	151
> 250,000	8	159



Population Change in Georgia from 2010 to 2020 - All Ages

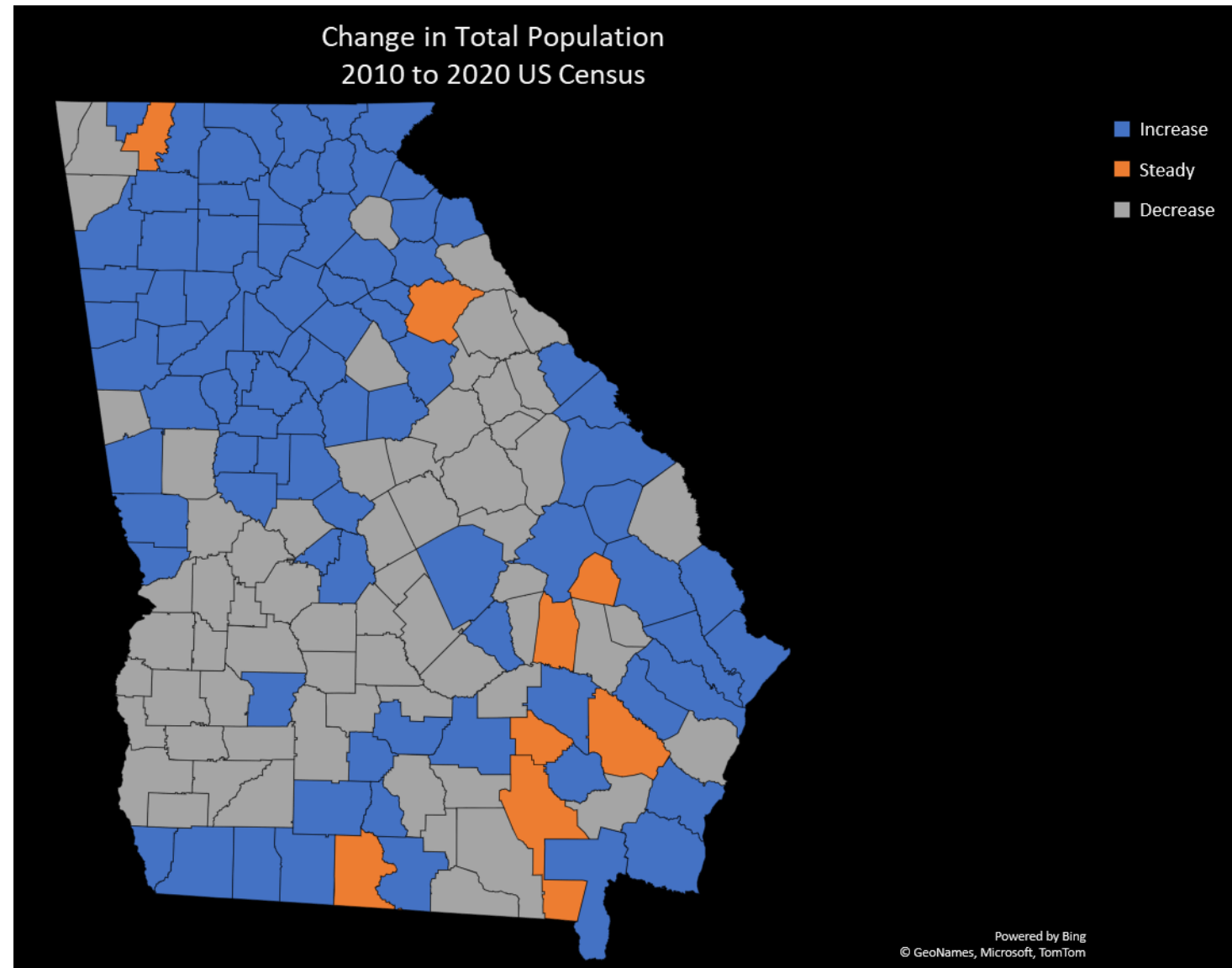
Details

Population range	Increase	Same	Decrease	Total
< 15,000	9	0	44	53
15,000 to 50,000	44	0	21	65
50,000 to 100,000	14	0	2	16
100,000 to 250,000	17	0	0	17
> 250,000	8	0	0	8
Totals	92	0	67	159
	58%	0%	42%	

Note:

67 of 159 (42%) counties declined in population (shaded yellow).

44 of 53 (82%) counties with populations less than 15,000 declined (text red).



Georgia Is Aging!

65 to 84-Year-olds

All 159 Counties saw an increase in the percentage of persons from 65 to 84 years old. Even the ones who had an overall population decline.

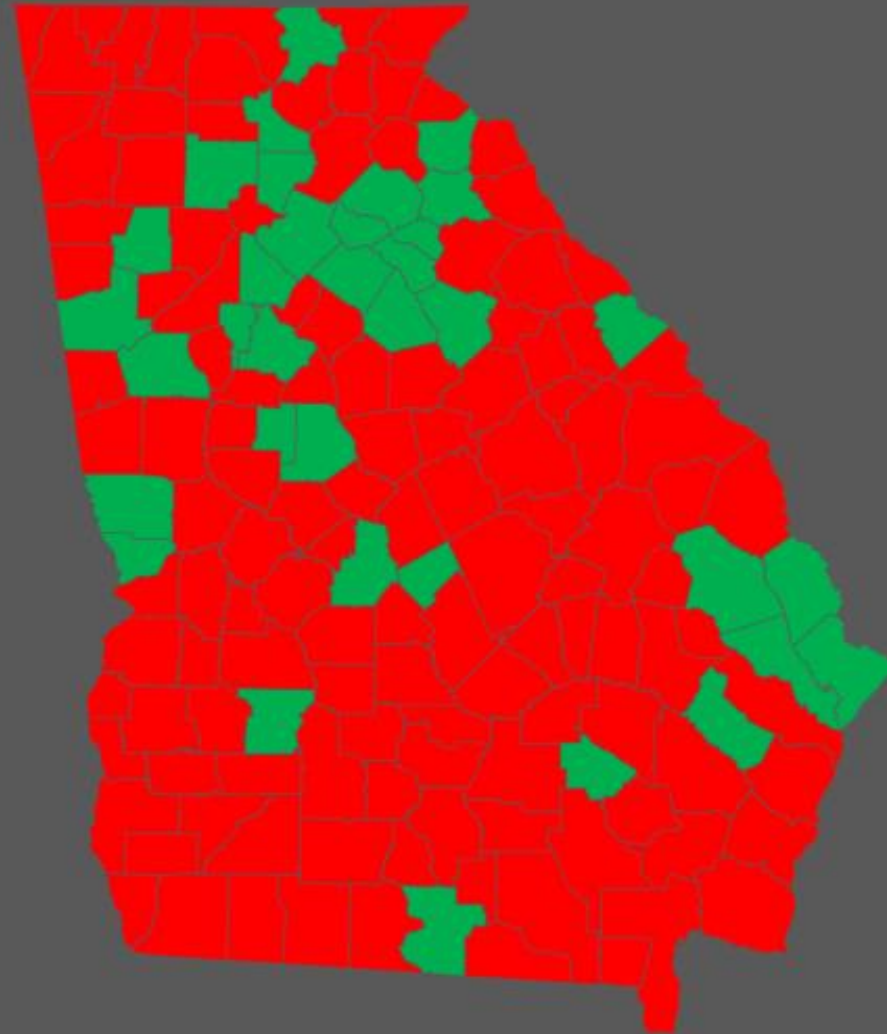
Less than 18 years old

124 out of 159 counties saw a reduction in the number of persons less than 18 years-old.

51 out of Georgia's 53 least populated counties saw a reduction in the number of persons less than 18 years-old.

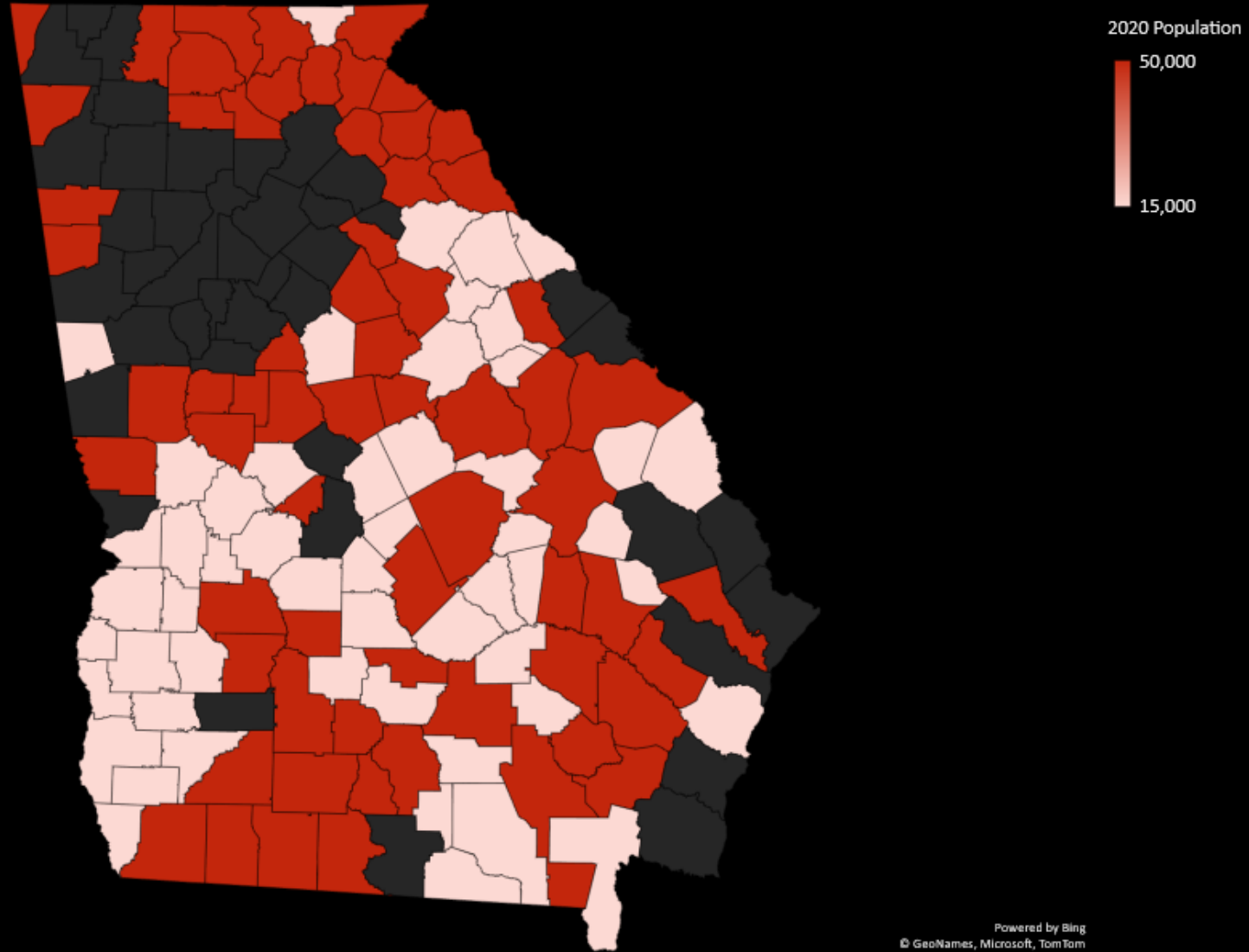
Population change <18 yrs old			
Population range	Increase	Decrease	Total
< 15,000	2	51	53
15,000 to 50,000	13	52	65
50,000 to 100,000	5	11	16
100,000 to 250,000	9	8	17
> 250,000	6	2	8
Totals	35	124	159
	22%	78%	

Population Less than 18 Years Old (Change from 2010 to 2020)



Georgia's 118 Least Populated Counties

118 Counties with Populations Less than 50,000
2020 Census



Strain has frayed the rope!



Population

Revenue

Costs

RURAL RUINS

The urbanization of the South has left countless small towns to wither and — in some cases — to die. South Georgian Brian Brown has dedicated his life to photographing the “vanishing” buildings of Georgia — not just for the historical record, but for the memories they evoke when we see them.

BY TRACY THOMPSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMANDA GREENE
AND FROM THE VANISHING SOUTH GEORGIA AND
VANISHING NORTH GEORGIA WEBSITES



Change in Financial Position from 1991 to 2021

(Digests, taxes, and revenue for Georgia's 53 Least Populated Counties)

	Digest ¹	Taxes ²	Revenue ²
Change <2	9	4	4
2 to 3x	35	5	2
3 to 4x	5	13	9
4 to 5x	4	10	12
More than 5x	0	21	26
Average	2.6x	4.5X	4.6x

¹Digest – source Ga Dept Revenue.

²Taxes and revenue – source CVIOG with adjustments for missing data.

Strain has frayed the rope!



Population

Revenue



RURAL RUINS

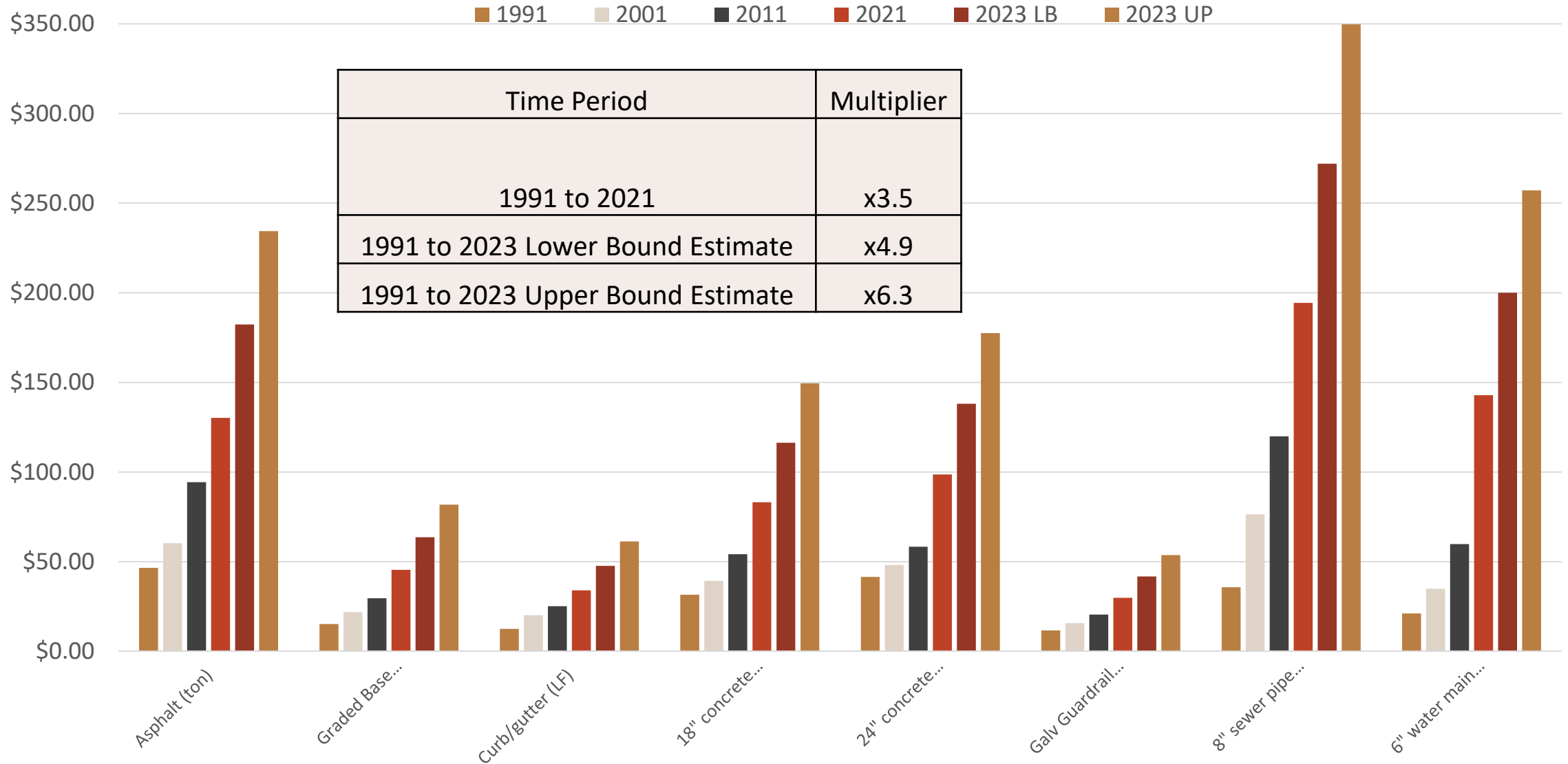
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Costs



Change in Cost for Infrastructure Proxies 1991 to 2023



Source: GDOT and Georgia civil engineering firms.

Revenue Expense GAP for Georgia's 53 Least Populated Counties

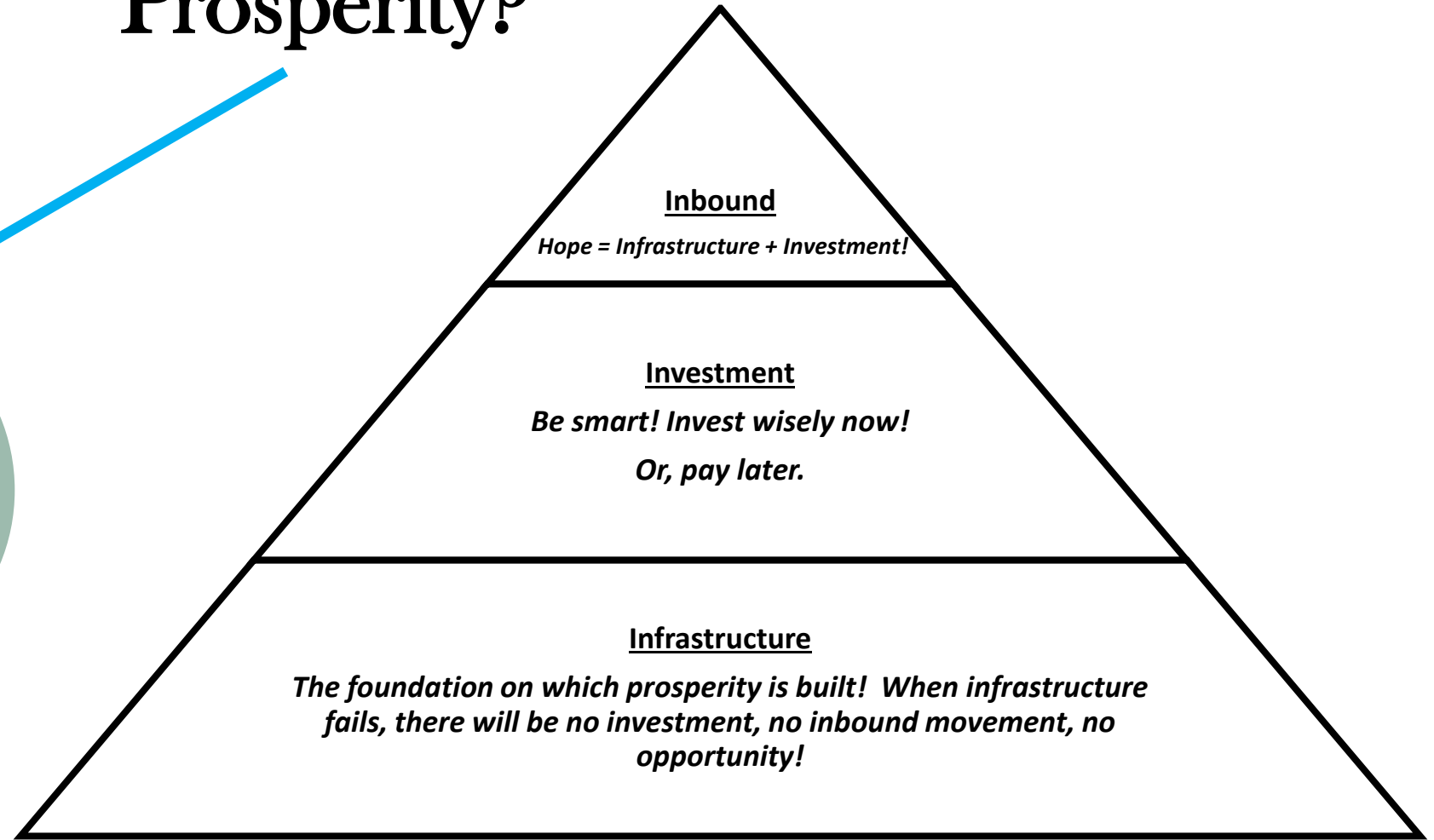
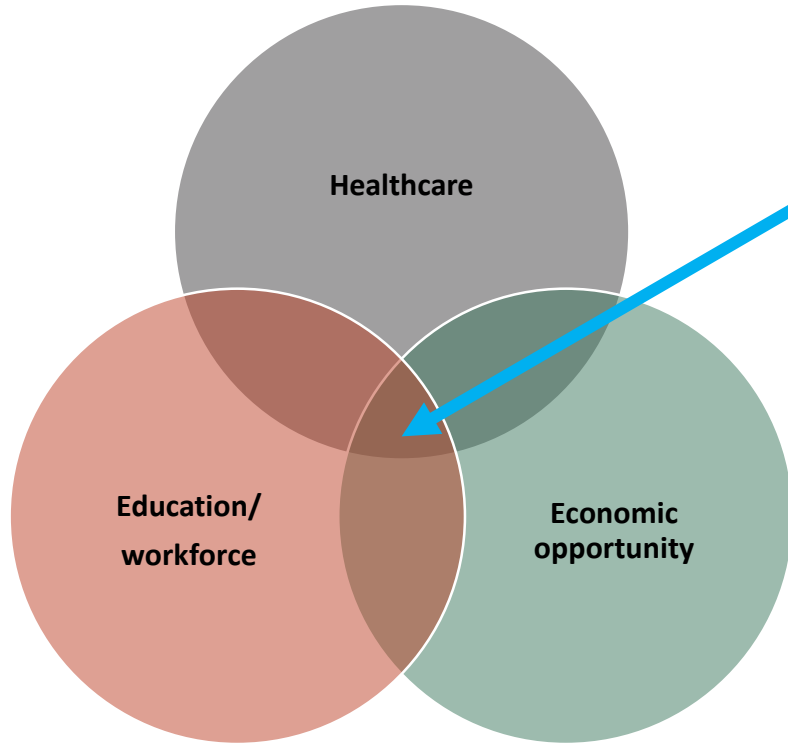
(1991 to Present)

	Taxes	Revenue
Change <2	4	4
2 to 3x	5	2
3 to 4x	13	9
4 to 5x	10	12
# counties	32	27
More than 5x	21	26
Validate	53	53
Average	4.5X	4.6x

Remember the costs!

Time Period	Multiplier
1991 to 2021	x3.5
1991 to 2023 Lower Bound Estimate	x4.9
1991 to 2023 Upper Bound Estimate	x6.3

Prosperity?



Restoring prosperity must be built on a strong foundation – infrastructure!



Your Questions or Comments!

House Rural Development Council

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